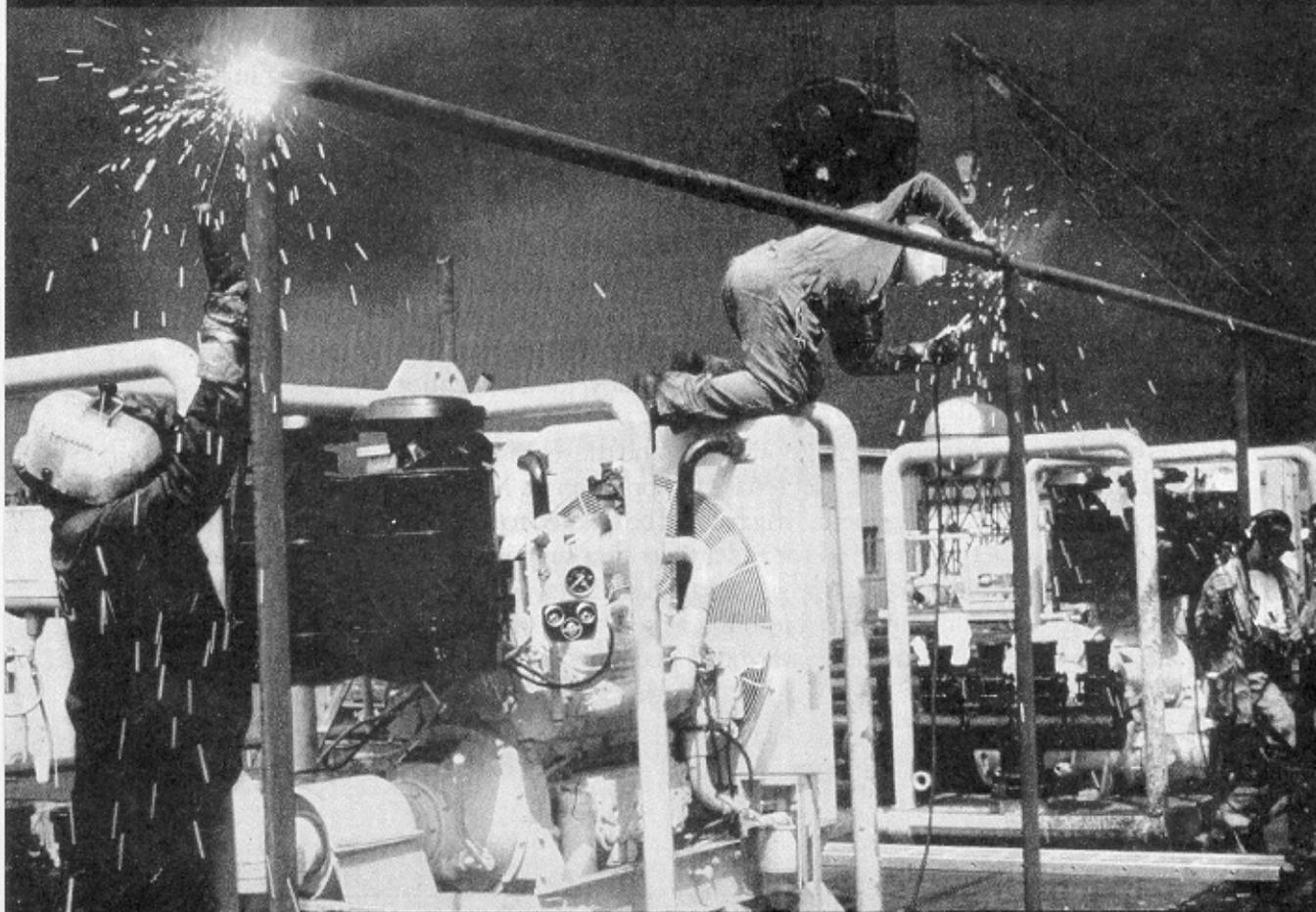


# Task Force **FREEDOM** and the Restoration of Kuwait

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*During operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Task Force Freedom was designed to work with representatives of the Kuwaiti government in exile. The authors present an account of the efforts made by this organization and other coalition forces during the restoration and rebuilding of Kuwait after the hostilities ended. They cite examples of citizen-soldiers performing the same job with the Civil Affairs units that they had previously performed in their home units.*



**T**HE RAPID transition from offensive operations to the restoration of a liberated Kuwait marked a historic turning point in the classic application of civil–military operations (CMO). This unprecedented effort was one of many examples of the full integration of the Active Component (AC), the Reserve Components (RCs) and Army civilians during the Gulf War, truly reflecting the Total Army.

During the defensive phase and prior to combat operations, the US Army Forces Central Command (ARCENT) Third Army had been designated the executive agent for CMO. This meant that ARCENT exercised command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) over all echelon above corps (EAC) Civil Affairs units in theater. With the size of the force that was on the ground in the Gulf War, the Army is assigned the Civil Affairs mission. Historically, the Army is ideally organized, trained and equipped for CMO. Not since World War II has the Army conducted large-scale CMO.

The RCs brought a wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise to the task force that could not be acquired during a normal 20- or 30-year career in the AC. Their civilian occupational specialties spanned the spectrum from executives at the State Department, managers of utility companies, public school administrators, lawyers, firemen, doctors, mechanics, policemen, to college students and day-care center administrators. Their empathy, as citizen-soldiers, with the devastated Kuwaiti citizens was invaluable.

As the executive agent, ARCENT/Third Army assumed the mission of theater CMO. As such, ARCENT/Third Army was charged with the responsibility for restoring civil order and emergency services to Kuwait. This was preceded by an agreement between the governments of the United States and Kuwait. The United States agreed to establish an organization to provide post-combat operations for restoring vital public services.

The Kuwaiti Task Force (KTF) was established in December 1990. Its mission was to work with representatives of the Kuwaiti govern-

ment-in-exile to formulate a plan for the restoration and reconstruction of Kuwait.

The KTF was made up of Army reservists from the 352d Civil Affairs Command. Under the supervision of Colonel Randall Elliott, the KTF was organized into teams that established a one-on-one relationship with each ministry of the Kuwaiti government. The members of each team were uniquely qualified in the particulars of their assigned ministry by virtue of their civilian job experiences. The KTF dealt directly with the 12 ministries of the Kuwaiti government on the overall restoration and reconstruction of liberated Kuwait.

This was a clear example of citizen-soldiers bringing their civilian knowledge and expertise to the tasks that they were called to do for the Army. It is no accident that the team that was aligned with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Finance consisted of citizen-soldiers who were managers and chief operating officers of some of America's largest banks. The same held true for teams working with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Power, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Defense and all other ministries in the Kuwait government.

The KTF focused on the entire spectrum of getting liberated Kuwait back on its feet and ultimately reconstructed. While the KTF was planning for the long haul, ARCENT/Third Army set its sights on clearing the way for major reconstruction to begin. To accomplish this, ARCENT/Third Army had to restore civil order and restore emergency services. Task Force *Freedom* was organized by ARCENT/Third Army for this CMO in early January 1991. Extensive preparations were made during the air campaign of Operation *Desert Storm*.

Two hours after the suspension of offensive operations, the advanced party was on the ground at the Kuwait International Airport. Two hours later, the KTF's forward command post and the ARCENT/Third Army mobile command post (MCP), or the LUCKY TAC, were fully operational at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education Supply Compound in Subhan, east of

the airport. We designated that location Camp Freedom.

After we established our foothold at Camp Freedom, all elements that made up Task Force Freedom closed on that location within 48 hours. Task Force Freedom was a joint/combined Civil Affairs organization that was called to assist with the restoration of emergency services in Kuwait.

At its peak, the task force reached a strength of over 3,650. The majority and strength of the task force came from the RCs. The leaders and soldiers from these components brought a great deal more than strength in numbers to the task force.

Our first priority was to assess the damage that had been done in many areas: food, water, electric power, desalinization plants, lines of communication (secure and restore), public buildings, telecommunication, public communication/civil information, disease/vector control, police protection/security, hospitals and medical supplies.

We charged our damage assessment survey teams (DASTs) to determine how long it would take to bring these areas to a functional status. The DASTs were supported by US Navy and British engineers. Action teams went to work immediately after the surveys were completed. The results of the initial survey are shown in the figure at right.

Kuwait had the appearance of a ravaged, war-torn country. Roads were filled with potholes, craters and burned vehicles. Portions of buildings had been destroyed by demolitions, while the remainder of the buildings had been gutted by fires. Antiarmor and antipersonnel minefields along the beaches were still intact and lethal. Unexploded ordnance was scattered throughout residential areas, as well as public places. Domestic livestock and zoo animals had been maimed and were starving. Black smoke clouds from burning oil well fires hung so heavily over Kuwait that one could not differentiate between noon and midnight. Tracers and the rattle of gunfire punctured the darkness. It was like a scene from Dante's *Inferno*.

Early during the planning phase of this restoration mission, there was some concern as to

whether the RCs would be able to succeed at this important and challenging mission. Since ARCENT/Third Army already had significant positive experiences during Operation *Desert Shield* with RC soldiers and units, there were no doubts about the capability of the RC soldiers, Army civilians and organizations. We felt strongly that the appropriate mix of Active and Reserve components—the Total Army—would guarantee success for this unique mission, and it did.

By appropriate mix, we meant assigning an element or a unit the tasks and missions for which it was best suited. For instance, the MCP was the operations center for the task force. All subordinate elements in the task force had their own internal operations centers. The MCP exercised C<sup>2</sup> over all subordinate elements' operations. The MCP had operated in this capacity throughout *Desert Storm*.

Prior to combat operations, the ARCENT/Third Army MCP moved to the forward area early in January 1991 and occupied a central position between the VII and XVIII corps' rear boundaries. Our mission there was to exercise C<sup>2</sup> over the EAC elements in the forward area

### Damage Assessment Areas of Concern

|   | Status | Target Date   |
|---|--------|---------------|
| Water                                       | Amber  | 4 April 1991  |
| Food  | Green  | —             |
| Electricity                                 | Amber  | 4 April 1991  |
| Desalinization Plants                       | Amber  | 24 April 1991 |
| Lines of Communication (secure and restore) | Amber  | 4 April 1991  |
| Public Buildings                            | Red    | 4 May 1991    |
| Telecommunication                           | Amber  | 4 April 1991  |
| Public Communication                        |        |               |
| Civil Information                           |        |               |
| Disease/Vector Control                      | Amber  | 4 April 1991  |
| Police Protection/Security                  | Red    | 4 April 1991  |
| Police Security (city)                      | Amber  | 4 April 1991  |
| Hospitals                                   | Green  | —             |
| Medical Supplies                            | Green  | —             |

The *Target Date* is when we anticipated upgrading a Red or Amber status to Green.

A member of a Task Force *Freedom* damage assessment team checks for radiation in a Kuwait City building and (below) 3d Armored Division personnel engaged in the tedious process of enrolling all refugees and displaced civilians at the Safwan refugee camp.



and ensure execution of the ARCENT/Third Army commander's intent. At Camp Freedom, the players were different, but the mission was the same for the MCP.

According to all operation plans prior to *Desert Shield*, the commander, Brigadier General Howard T. Mooney, of the 352d Civil Affairs Command was the ARCENT/Third Army commander's senior adviser on all Civil Affairs. The restoration mission in Kuwait was the most critical and complex Civil Affairs mission in *Desert Storm*. Hence, the 352d Civil Affairs Command was the right choice for the major Civil Affairs element in Task Force *Freedom*. The task force became a combined task force with the addition of elements from France, Canada, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Task Force *Freedom* was a de facto joint task force in that we were augmented with elements from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. Each of these services had a unique contribution to make, and each performed magnificently.

The same holds true for the forward elements from the 416th Engineer Command, the 22d Support Command (SUPCOM), the 2d Aviation Brigade and all other subordinate elements in Task Force *Freedom*.

As we conducted our ground and aerial observations of Kuwait and reviewed the findings of the DASTs, it became apparent that restoring electric power to Kuwait was the most critical area to the success of our total civil-military mission. As we saw it, restoring electric power had a physical, as well as a psychological, impact on the well-being of the Kuwaiti people.

The psychological impact due to the lack of electric power was clear. Throughout the occupation, Kuwaitis were tormented and devastated by the Iraqi forces. Even after the liberation, the Kuwaitis were still in a state of shock and fear. We sensed this initially by the uneasiness and reluctance of people in residential communities to come out of their homes and start to pull their lives, communities and country back together. Their central need was a sense of security. In actuality, the city was secured. For example, immediately upon liberation, the Kuwaiti military and

resistance forces established joint checkpoints on all arteries leading into Kuwait City. The checkpoints were manned around the clock. Nevertheless, the Kuwaitis still sensed a lack of personal security.

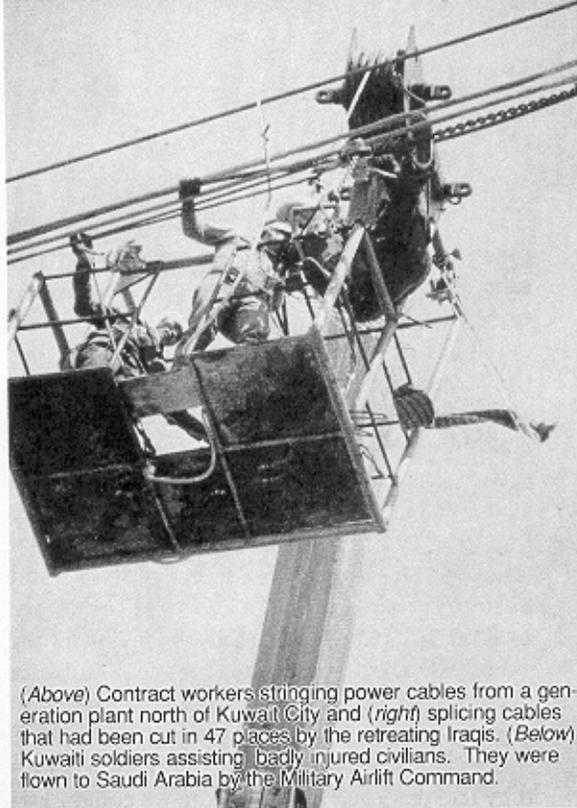
Rumors of Iraqi forces remaining in Kuwait, plus the sound of gunfire bursts coupled with the absence of street lights and no power at home, presented a perceived danger to the Kuwaitis. We felt that their ability to look out their windows at night and observe what was going on around them was a critical step toward reestablishing the confidence of the people in their communities. The all-too-familiar setting of being in their homes and hearing movement outside, yet not seeing anything or anyone as they peeked out of their windows, was a condition that kept the Kuwaitis tied to their homes as their sanctuary.

The citizen-soldiers from the 416th Engineer and the 352d Civil Affairs commands worked around the clock at the Doha and the Shuaybah power plants. Drawing from their wealth of technical knowledge and on-the-job experience, those American and British soldiers overcame this monumental challenge in the fastest time possible.

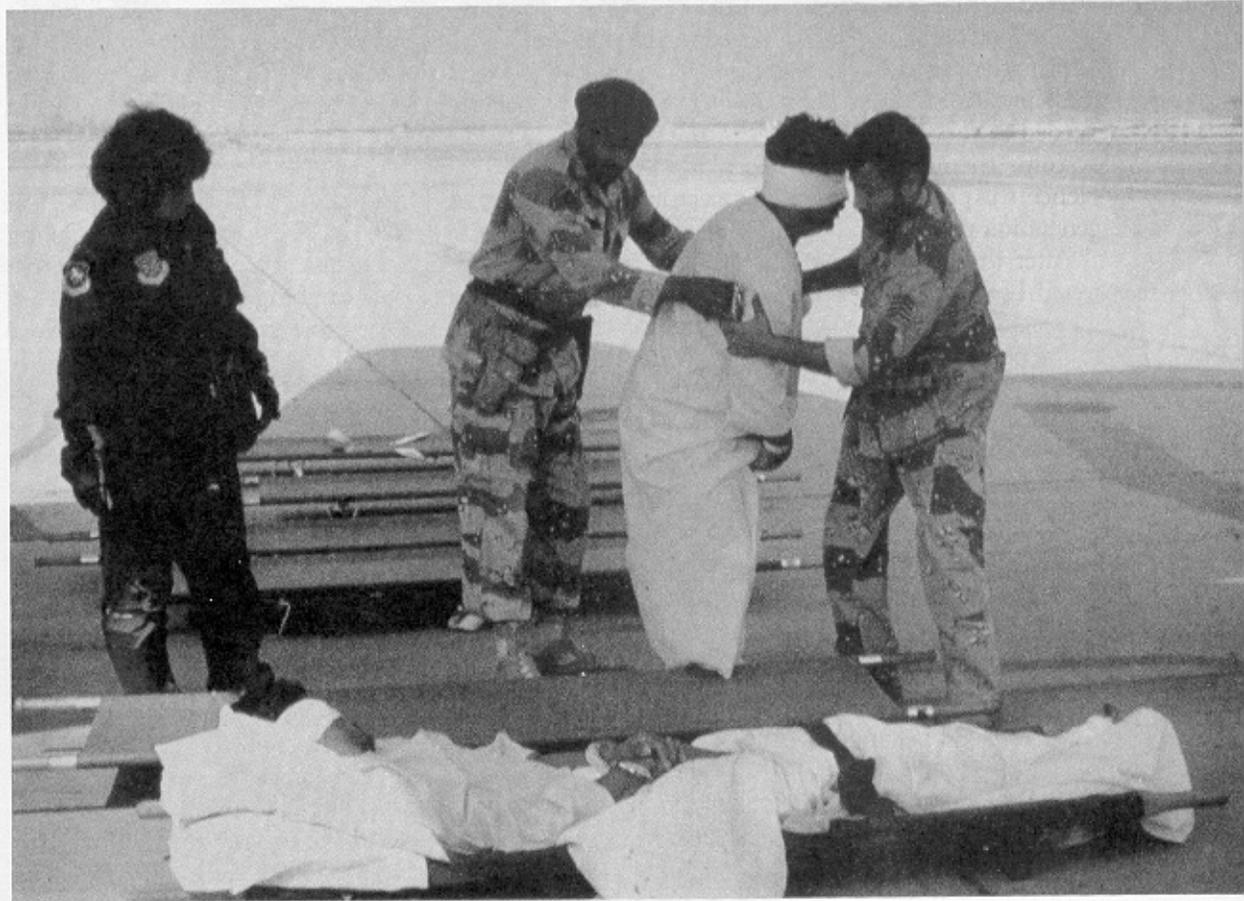
Power generation depends on transmission cables between power plants and communities. These connections were out in 47 places over a total distance of 22 kilometers, as a result of deliberate sabotage by retreating Iraqis. The physical inspection of transmission cables showed clean cuts, with 5-foot sections removed from the area.

As the 416th and the 352d worked diligently at the power plants, the 22d SUPCOM transported portable light sets from Saudi Arabia to Kuwait. These light sets were used in the residential communities until electric power was restored. On 15 April, sufficient electric power had been restored and the portable light sets were returned to Saudi Arabia.

Ten automotive mechanics from an Army Reserve maintenance company and two Tennessee Army Guardsmen reassembled more than 50 vehicles from nearly 500 wrecked police cars.



(Above) Contract workers stringing power cables from a generation plant north of Kuwait City and (right) splicing cables that had been cut in 47 places by the retreating Iraqis. (Below) Kuwaiti soldiers assisting badly injured civilians. They were flown to Saudi Arabia by the Military Airlift Command.



They gathered all abandoned police cars at one central location and conducted automotive triage. Vehicles that were not damaged heavily were repaired first. The heavily damaged cars were cannibalized to provide repair parts for other vehicles. Repairing the police cars contributed to Kuwait's internal security and the people's sense of security. However, electric power had to be generated and transmitted to the Kuwaiti police department before the public security system could be restored.

Immediately after the liberation, food purchased by the Kuwaiti government was brought to Kuwait by trucks. Elements of the 22d SUPCOM transported the food and provided all other necessary support (see figure). Elements of the 352d established distribution points and disbursed the food. The truck drivers and food distributors were reservists and guardsmen who worked in shipping and receiving in civilian jobs.

The food brought in by trucks did not require refrigeration, and it met the immediate needs of the Kuwaitis. Refrigeration and lighting were needed to reestablish normal food distribution systems through supermarkets and stores. Hence, this process was tied to the electric power generation problem.

After the water in the reservoirs had been tested by Naval Preventive Medicine detachments and found to be safe, it was gravity-fed to the northern portion of Kuwait. Water had to be brought in by trucks to the southern half of Kuwait. Here again, the 22d SUPCOM transported the water, and the 352d Civil Affairs Command distributed it at predesignated distribution points.

### **Emergency Services/Supplies Provided**

**Food**—12,500 metric tons.

**Water**—12.8 million liters.

**Power**—2.8 million liters of diesel fuel.  
—25 truckloads of compressed gas.  
—64 generators.  
—200 batteries.

**Medical supplies**—1,250 tons.

**Telecommunications**—2 truckloads.

**Transportation**—764 vehicles.

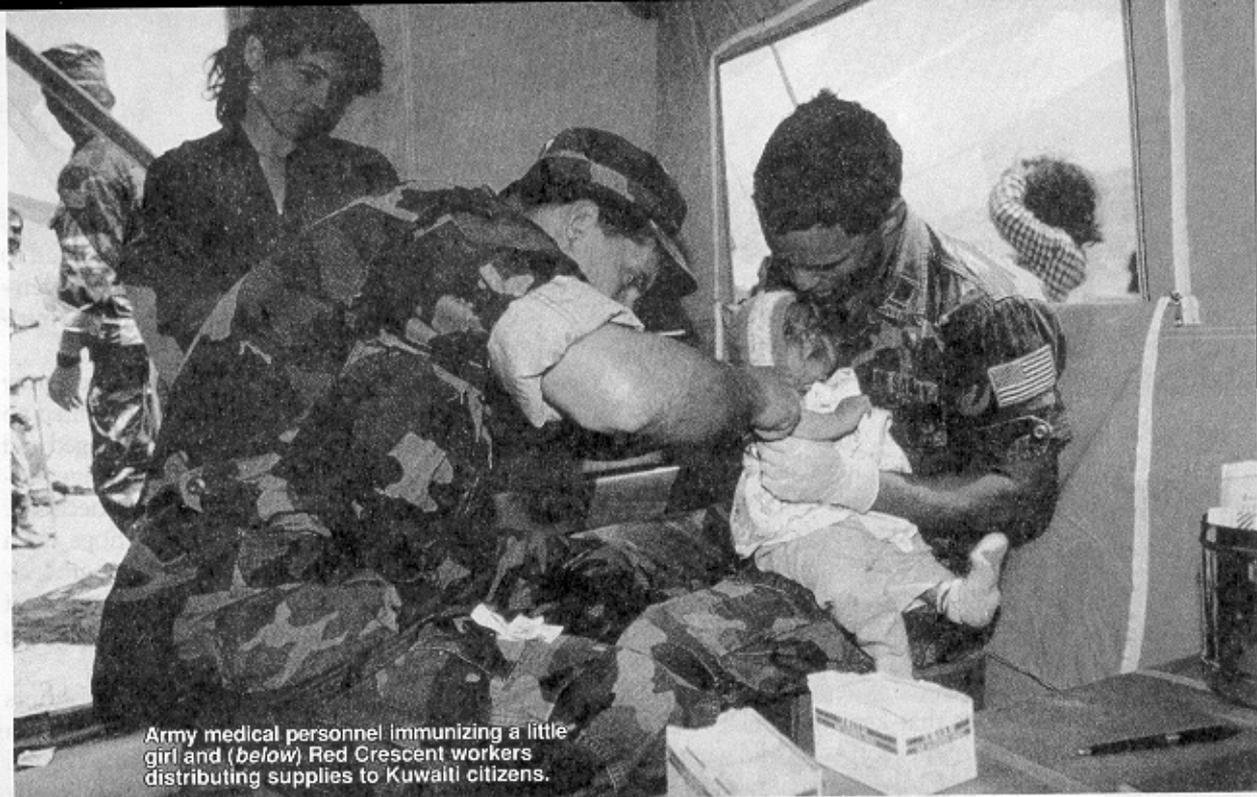
Critical to water flow was the desalination process. Water had to be processed through desalination plants to make it fit for food preparation, washing and human consumption. The desalination plants were repaired quickly, but they could not function without electric power.

One unique situation that we experienced at Camp Freedom was that we had an Army Reserve captain commanding an AC Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) company. The fact that the captain's civilian occupation was special agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms was an added benefit. Here again, we had the right person doing the job for which they were best suited. Incidentally, our EOD mission in Kuwait was equally as important as the electric power mission. We found instances where the Iraqis had booby-trapped many facilities after they had damaged them. Before we could initiate any restoration of those facilities, EOD teams had to clear them.

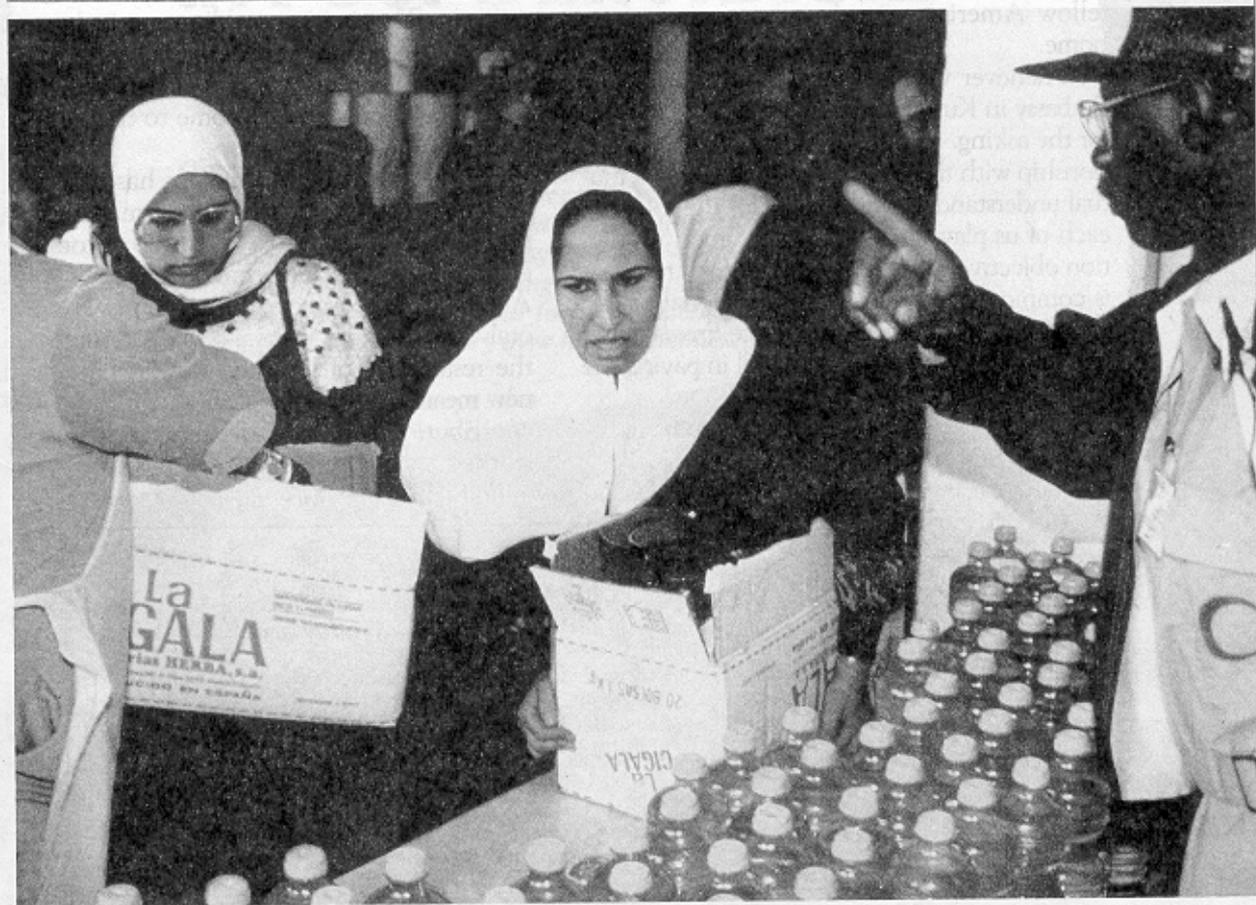
As the action teams brought their respective areas to a functional status, Task Force *Freedom* began releasing elements to Saudi Arabia. Task Force *Freedom* and the Defense Restoration Assistance Organization (DRAO) established a transition window of 15 to 30 April. During that period, the task force effected a positive handoff of all ongoing projects to DRAO, which took the projects and focused on major reconstruction.

DRAO was created as the result of the involvement of a number of US Civil Affairs agencies and other organizations in the reconstruction of Kuwait. The Kuwaiti Emergency Restoration Organization and the US Army Corps of Engineers were there. Due in part to the efforts of the Kuwaiti Task Force, a number of contracts had been let to US firms in specific areas.

With all the US involvement in the reconstruction of Kuwait, the Department of Defense (DOD) dispatched Major General Pat Kelly to oversee the reconstruction effort. Kelly's initial assessment on how long it would take DRAO to complete its mission was one year. However, when we went back to visit Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in October 1991, Kelly was well ahead



Army medical personnel immunizing a little girl and (below) Red Crescent workers distributing supplies to Kuwaiti citizens.



of schedule. He had returned 25 percent of his force to the United States at that time. With the exception of a small number of people working two specific projects, he anticipated that his entire force would be home by Christmas 1991.

With all of the restoration activity underway in liberated Kuwait, Task Force *Freedom* established a close working relationship with the US Embassy in Kuwait. Ambassador Edward Gnehm understood, appreciated and supported our efforts fully. Likewise, we made every effort to support the needs and desires of our fellow Americans at the embassy. Our citizen-soldiers repaired the roof of the embassy, purged water tanks, made plumbing repairs and ran communication wires that kept the embassy in touch with the rest of the world. We did whatever was necessary to improve the quality of life for our fellow Americans in their home away from home.

Whenever we needed support from the US Embassy in Kuwait, it was normally ours simply for the asking. Hindsight suggests that our relationship with the embassy evolved out of a mutual understanding and respect for the role that each of us played toward the common restoration objective. We shared the mutual trust that is commonly found among professionals. The unity of effort between Task Force *Freedom* and the US Embassy was instrumental in paving the way for reconstruction.

The coalition that assembled in Saudi Arabia prior to *Desert Storm* hastened the day of reckoning for the belligerents who invaded Kuwait on

2 August 1990. Kuwait is free and well on its way toward reconstruction. We should never fail to remember the contributions that the citizen-soldiers of Task Force *Freedom* made toward initiating this process.

Under the C<sup>2</sup> of the ARCENT/Third Army MCP, these dedicated Americans revitalized an austere environment that had been pillaged and decimated by Iraqi aggressors. They gave selflessly the skills and expertise that were necessary to assist the Kuwaitis in regaining hope for a brighter future. Their efforts laid the groundwork for the reconstruction that is well ahead of the best estimate that experts made prior to the liberation.

Another factor that the citizen-soldiers contributed to the restoration equation was a degree of empathy toward the Kuwaitis beyond that usually found in men and women in the military. These citizen-soldiers routinely work closely in situations similar to those they dealt with during the restoration. This made their performance and the outcome to their efforts a success.

Nowhere in modern history has any field army made the rapid transition from an aggressive ground offensive to an active restoration effort in the manner that ARCENT/Third Army did in the wake of *Desert Storm*. The pivotal role that the citizen-soldiers assumed in the restoration of liberated Kuwait has added new meaning to the application of CMO. The contributions, accomplishments and lessons learned should serve as a catalyst for civil-military doctrine. **MR**

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