



President George W. Bush Oral History Project

BRIEFING MATERIALS

Tommy Franks

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Presidential Oral History Program

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TOMMY FRANKS NEWS TIMELINE

Prepared by Rob Martin

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2000

July Tommy Franks succeeds General Anthony Zinni as commander of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) on the 6th. As commander of CENTCOM, Franks is in charge of military operations for 25 countries in Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East. (*Fox Wire*, 07/14/2002)

2001

January On the 19th, Franks meets with President Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan, where the two discuss al Qaeda and the Taliban, amongst other issues. (Tommy Franks, *American Solider*, New York: Regan Books, 2004, pp. 227-228)

On the 26th, Donald Rumsfeld is sworn in as secretary of defense. (Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, New York: Sentinel, 2001, pp. 275- 291)

February Franks and the other unified commanders-in-chief (CINCs) meet with Rumsfeld at the Pentagon and then with President George W. Bush and his national security team at the White House. (George W. Bush, *Decision Points*, New York: Crown, 2010, pp. 193-194; Franks, pp. 229-230)

On the 16th, the U.S. launches air strikes against military communication targets deep in Iraq. (Elisabeth Bumiller, *Condoleezza Rice: An American Life*, New York: Random House, 2007, pp. 144-145)

March During an extended meeting at the Pentagon on the 7th, Rumsfeld says that Iraqi sanctions are collapsing and directs Franks to think “outside the box” to find new ways to deal with Saddam Hussein. (Franks, pp. 231-234)

Summer Special Assistant Stephen Cambone oversees the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), a mandatory review detailing U.S. long-term defense requirements and the structure of forces needed to execute them. (Andrew Cockburn, *Rumsfeld*, New York: Scribner, 2007, p. 113)

September On the 7th, Franks tells the CENTCOM intelligence staff that the fear that keeps him up at night is a terrorist attack against the World Trade Center, in which U.S. military forces might have to serve as combatants on U.S. soil for the first time since Reconstruction. (Franks, p. 236)

Franks works with Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet to set up a meeting with General Mahmoud Ahmed, head of Pakistan’s Inter-Services

Intelligence Directorate, on the 10th to discuss Osama bin Laden. Franks makes clear that the provision of aid Pakistan has requested from the U.S. is contingent on receiving intelligence on al Qaeda in Afghanistan. (Franks, p. 236)

Al-Qaeda launches terrorist attacks against the U.S. on the 11th. Franks and his wife Cathy are in Crete for a night refueling en route to Pakistan when they learn of the attacks. Franks gets on a secure line with officials in the U.S. and starts planning for the U.S. response against the Taliban and al Qaeda. After hours of awaiting clearance to enter U.S. airspace, Franks orders his plane to Tampa, hoping clearance would come mid-flight back from Crete. Franks returns to Tampa on the 12th. Franks is told “the president is determined to act” and that Rumsfeld wants a full range of military options for Afghanistan. (Dick Cheney, *In My Time*, New York: Threshold Editions, 2011, p. 5; Bush, p. 133; Franks, pp. 238-248; Rumsfeld, pp. 337, 351; *CNN*, 01/12/2002; *The Washington Post*, 06/23/2003)

At a National Security Council (NSC) meeting at Camp David on the 15th, Bush decides to focus the immediate U.S. response to 9/11 on those directly responsible for the terrorist attacks, al Qaeda and the Taliban. Bush decides to hold off on taking action against Iraq unless definitive proof is found linking Saddam to the attacks. (Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003, pp. 90-91; Bush, pp. 185-189)

On the 18th, Bush signs the Authorization for Use of Military Force Act. Two days later, he addresses a special joint session of Congress declaring there is no longer a distinction between those nations that launch terrorist attacks and those that harbor terrorists. (*The Washington Post*, 09/21/2001)

On the 20th, Franks flies from Tampa to Washington to present his war plans to Rumsfeld and senior DOD officials. Afterwards Franks has some blunt words for the Joint Chiefs of Staff criticizing them for acting parochially and calling for greater cooperation between the service chiefs to create a truly joint operation. (Franks, pp. 272-277)

On the 21st, Franks briefs the president and his national security team on the initial operational concept of his military plan for Afghanistan. Franks’ plans call for taking an innovative approach by linking Special Operations Forces (SOF) with anti-Taliban Afghan forces on the ground. Franks tells Bush that his plans could be ready within two weeks. (Bush, pp. 193-197; Cheney, pp. 336-337; Franks, pp. 278-282; Rumsfeld, pp. 370-371)

On the 27th, Rice phones Rumsfeld to report that the president wants a final plan for Afghanistan. Rumsfeld presents it on the 28th. (Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor*, New York: Crown, 2011, pp. 94-95)

On the 30th, the Pentagon releases the 2001 QDR. It emphasizes a “capabilities-based” strategy, which focuses on how an adversary might fight, rather than who or where the adversary is. (<http://www.comw.org/qdr/qdr2001.pdf>)

October

Richard Myers begins serving as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Peter Pace as vice chairman on the 1st.

On the 2nd, Rumsfeld begins a three-day trip to Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Uzbekistan, and Turkey. (Douglas Feith, *War and Decision*, New York: Harper Perennial, 2009, pp. 91, 94-95)

On the 3rd, Rumsfeld approves “Strategic Guidance” instructions for his commanders addressing threats from terrorists who could use WMD, as well as how the U.S. must convince states who support terrorism to sever their terrorist ties. The instructions call for the Pentagon to work with other government agencies and use multiple methods in a global campaign. (Feith, pp. 84-85)

Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan begins on the 7th. The U.S. military, which had had no war plan set up for removing the Taliban or al Qaeda from Afghanistan prior to 9/11, had to move quickly to create a plan. Franks’ job is further complicated by the assassination of the leader of the Northern Alliance just prior to the 9/11 attacks, leaving the anti-Taliban group in disarray. The operation includes 40,000 men and women, 393 aircraft and 32 ships. The coalition includes involvement from 31 nations. Franks has made many phone calls over the past few weeks to help line up partners in the growing coalition, particularly among Afghanistan’s neighbors. Franks had also assembled a “coalition village” at CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa to bring together representatives of coalition allies from around the world. Franks keeps Bush and his national security team briefed on progress in the war from his CENTCOM office in Tampa. Reportedly, Rumsfeld is initially frustrated with delays in moving SOF into Afghanistan and also has lingering concerns about the CIA’s role in the theater of battle. Rumsfeld had initially arranged with Tenet for CENTCOM to have operational control over CIA activities on the ground in Afghanistan once military forces arrive. Over the next two weeks, reporters ask Franks and Rumsfeld why the operation has not progressed faster. Rumsfeld responds that they cannot expect instant victory. (George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm*, New York: Harper, 2007, p. 208; Woodward, *Bush at War*, pp. 240, 286; Franks, pp. 283-296; Rumsfeld, pp. 374, 393-394; *CBS News*, 03/23/2003)

A Deputies Committee meeting on the 9th discusses whether the U.S. should try to restrain the Northern Alliance fighters from taking Kabul before the winter. The CIA reportedly fears that if the Northern Alliance advances too quickly it could trigger a civil war by alienating the Pashtuns in the South. Reportedly State likes the idea of having more time to train the Northern Alliance fighters, but Cheney, Rumsfeld, Myers and Pace support encouraging the Northern Alliance to take Kabul before winter. (Feith, pp. 97-98)

The first U.S. SOF enter Afghanistan on the 19th. (Franks, pp. 301-305)

In a conference call on the 27th, Franks, Rumsfeld and Pace discuss the possibility that a large U.S. ground force might have to enter the war should the Northern Alliance be unable to win the war on the ground themselves. Pace notes, "Process of organizing for it would be very, very useful... It would become visible and people would know that we're not kidding, we are coming, if you don't change sides now, we are going to continue the process." (Woodward, *Bush at War*, pp. 265-266)

Franks meets with leaders in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, the U.A.E., Qatar, Egypt, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan at the end of the month to discuss the ongoing military operations in Afghanistan. One of the goals of the trips is to secure support for military operations to continue into Ramadan if necessary. (Franks, pp. 307-310; <http://avalon.law.yale.edu>)

November Franks and Rumsfeld meet and then hold a press conference in Washington on the 8th. (*NBC News*, 11/09/2001)

Pentagon officials announce that Franks plans to ask Bush for more warplanes, particularly north of Kabul. Progress in the bombing campaign flushing Taliban forces out in the open coupled with increased intelligence gathering on the ground are reportedly generating many new targets. Additional countries, including France, Italy, Spain, Germany, and the Japanese, have also begun contributing military forces to the coalition the last few weeks. (*NBC News*, 11/09/2001)

On the 13th, Kabul falls as Northern Alliance forces enter the city with some anti-Taliban southern forces. The anti-Taliban forces are able to take the city with the support of U.S. airpower and SOF on the ground. Rumsfeld and Powell had helped pull together a British-led international coalition under a mandate from the UN Security Council to stabilize the city. (Feith, p. 132; *NBC News*, 11/09/2001)

Also on the 13th, Bush issues a military order appointing the Pentagon as the "detention authority" for captured prisoners. The order sets up facilities and military commissions. Rumsfeld states, "It's not something we want to deal with on an ad hoc basis as it happens." (Rumsfeld, p. 556) Rumsfeld signs a memorandum in December authorizing the use of eighteen counter-resistance techniques at Guantánamo Bay. (*The New York Times*, 11/16/2001; <http://www.findlaw.com>)

Jalalabad surrenders on the 14th. The Deputies Committee discusses the Taliban's ongoing losses later that day. Stephen Hadley, the deputy national security adviser, asks how the U.S. should handle a Taliban surrender and cease-fire. Wolfowitz responds that the military mission against al-Qaeda is not over, so a cease-fire would be premature. Feith suggests the U.S. protect its right to

intervene if terrorists return to Afghanistan. Pace is reportedly concerned about maintaining U.S. military commanders' freedom of action while U.S. forces are still on the ground in Afghanistan. (Feith, p. 133)

Franks travels to Afghanistan on the 20th to meet with Northern Alliance leaders in Kabul. Franks holds a press conference in Uzbekistan the next day. (*ABC News*, 11/21/2001)

Pace announces that U.S. warships will begin intercepting ships in the North Arabian Sea suspected of carrying fleeing Taliban and al Qaeda forces. (*The New York Times*, 11/22/2001)

Franks and Rumsfeld meet on the 27th to discuss various possible military strategies to neutralize Iraq's WMD program, including "decapitation of government." Rumsfeld directs Franks to update military plans for Iraq. (<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv>; Feith, p. 219; Franks, p. 315)

December Rumsfeld officially orders Franks to begin work outlining an Iraqi battle plan on the 1st. Franks splits up the assignment to different parts of the Joint Staff's planning apparatus to help maintain secrecy. (Rice, p. 172)

On the 4th, Franks presents his first "Commander's Concept" on initial military plans for Iraq in a video teleconference with Rumsfeld, Myers, Pace and Feith. They follow up on the 11th, with Franks recommending the U.S. begin to improve its force posture in the region. (Franks, pp. 329-335)

On the 5th, the UN holds a conference in Bonn, Germany to set up a governance plan for Afghanistan. The Bonn Process is ratified by the UN, and Hamid Karzai is named chairman of the interim government. DOD officials support a "smaller footprint" to avoid the U.S. from being seen as occupiers. (Feith, pp. 134, 140)

Kandahar, the Taliban's seat of power, falls on the 9th.

On the 16th, Rumsfeld visits Afghanistan and meets with the incoming president, Hamid Karzai. Rumsfeld attends a NATO conference, urging the organization to think beyond Afghanistan in the war on terror. "The only way to deal with a terrorist network that is global is to go after it where it is." (*The New York Times*, 12/19/2001; Rumsfeld, p. 404)

On the 22nd Franks and his wife attend the ceremonies marking the installation of Karzai's interim government in Afghanistan. After the ceremonies, Franks and his wife visit numerous countries and military bases within CENTCOM's area of responsibility before returning to the U.S. (Franks, pp. 316-328)

On the 28th, Franks briefs Bush on Afghanistan and the revised military plans for Iraq in Crawford, Texas. Franks says he is adapting lessons from Afghanistan to

revise the war plans from the first Gulf War to incorporate a lighter footprint using speed and multiple SOF on the ground to identify targets for precision airstrikes. Rumsfeld and other members of the NSC participate via videoconference. After the briefing, Bush and Franks hold a press conference. (Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004, pp. 53-64; Bush, p. 234; Cheney, pp. 369-370; Franks, pp. 345-360)

On the 31st, Rumsfeld tells Franks that the president would like him to stay on at CENTCOM for one more year. Franks' current term is due to end in July, 2002. After talking with his wife, Franks agrees. (Franks, pp. 360-361)

2002

January On the 12th, the U.S. begins moving the first al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners from Kandahar to Guantanamo Bay. (*CNN*, 01/12/2002)

Franks visits U.S. Air Force troops deployed at the Manas airport in Kyrgyzstan and meets with Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev in Bishek. (*Defense & Security*, 01/28/2002)

February On the 7th, Bush announces that Taliban and al-Qaeda detainees will be treated humanely in accord with the Geneva Conventions, but neither are entitled to POW status. However the detainees will be provided with many POW privileges. (Feith, pp. 162-165; Philippe Sands, *Torture Team*, New York: Palgrave, 2008, p. 33)

Franks briefs the president and the NSC on the 7th in the White House Situation Room on Afghanistan and the status of war planning for Iraq. Franks envisions a "revolution in warfare," featuring "fast and flexible maneuver, coupled with precise, lethal firepower." (Franks, pp. 369-372)

On the 28th, Rumsfeld and Myers review the Iraq war plans with identified targets. (Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp. 109-111)

March Coalition forces launch Operation Anaconda on the 7th, which is the largest battle since Tora Bora in December and the first that includes a large number of conventional U.S. ground forces participating in direct combat operations. The coalition victory destroys al Qaeda's last stronghold in Afghanistan. (Franks, pp. 377-381)

On the 21st, Franks meets with CENTCOM's component commanders in Germany to discuss war planning in Iraq. Franks stresses the importance of joint operations and preventing leaks to the press. The following week the service chiefs are briefed on the state of planning. Details of the meeting are later leaked to the press, appearing in an article in the *Los Angeles Times*. (Franks, pp. 382-384)

- April* On the 17th, Rumsfeld announces the creation of the U.S. Northern Command to support the civilian authority in the event of another domestic terrorist attack. (*The Washington Post*, 04/18/2002)
- On the 29th, the Deputies Committee teleconferences with Franks and Zalmay Khalilzad, Bush's special envoy in Kabul, to discuss the conflict between Karzai and Pacha Khan, an Afghan warlord. Pace asks if any Afghans were requesting U.S. help. Franks assures the Deputies Committee that no coalition forces had gotten pulled into the conflict. Hadley, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin raise concerns about Karzai's vulnerability but Pace and Franks argue it is too early to decide whether coalition action is prudent. The president decides in May not to intervene. Powell, Rice, Cheney and Tenet had reportedly favored intervention while Rumsfeld and Myers opposed it. In the end Karzai is able to convince Khan to stand down. (Feith, pp. 140-146; <http://www.waranddecision.com>)
- May* Franks updates the president and the NSC at Camp David on military planning for Iraq and also provides an update at the White House on the 10th. (Cheney, p. 383; Franks, p. 385)
- Pace announces that Army Lieutenant General Dan McNeil will assume responsibilities for the majority of U.S. troops in Afghanistan and that U.S. SOF have begun working with several other countries to train an Afghan national army. (*National Post*, 05/15/2002)
- June* On the 5th, Rumsfeld begins a 10-day European, Persian Gulf, and South Asia tour. In Kuwait, he discusses Iraq's WMD program, asserting, "They have them, and they continue to develop them, and they have weaponized chemical weapons." (*The New York Times*, 06/11/2002; *The Washington Post*, 06/06/2002)
- Myers presents Franks' "Running Start" option to Rumsfeld. It is a plan to begin the Iraq war before all U.S. forces are in the region. Rumsfeld approves the option and Franks presents the plan to Bush. (Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp. 134-135)
- On the 24th, Bush reiterates his calls for the creation of an independent Palestinian state and controversially calls for the Palestinian people to replace Arafat. (Bush, p. 404; Abrams, p. 43; Rice, pp. 146-147; *The Washington Post*, 06/25/2002)
- August* On the 5th, Franks briefs the president and NSC on OPLAN 1003V, which has been developed from the early "Commander's Concept" into a full military plan for Iraq. Franks discusses the "Generated" and "Running Start" options, as well as the "Hybrid," which is a combination of the first two plans. Franks also discusses concerns about "Fortress Baghdad" regarding the possibility of urban warfare. (Bush, p. 235; Cheney, p. 386; Franks, pp. 385-393)

September

Powell calls Franks and tells him that he plans to raise the issue of troop levels for the operation in Iraq at the NSC meeting scheduled on the 7th. Franks plan, which relies more on speed than numbers, diverges from the Powell Doctrine calling for the deployment of a massive, decisive force. Powell also has concerns about the length of the supply lines. (Karen DeYoung, *Soldier: The Life of Colin Powell*, New York: Knopf, 2005, p. 426; Bush, p. 251; Rumsfeld, p. 437)

Franks meets with the president and NSC on the 7th at Camp David to update them on planning for Iraq. Franks argues that military and technological changes call for a different kind of war plan than had been used in the first Gulf War. Powell argues in favor of seeking a UN resolution. Cheney and Rumsfeld reportedly oppose it as it could “trigger a long bureaucratic process that would leave Saddam even more dangerous.” (Bush, p. 237) Bush decides to seek the resolution. (Franks, pp. 393-397; Rice, p. 180; Rumsfeld, p. 438)

On the 12th, Bush speaks before the UN General Assembly on Saddam Hussein to call the international community to action. (*The New York Times*, 09/21/2002)

The Pentagon announces it has shifted tactics in Iraq to bombing major air defense sites in no-flight-zones, which could help clear the airspace above Iraq for a possible allied attack. Pace notes that the shift in tactics has “degraded the air defense capabilities” of Iraq. (*The New York Times*, 09/17/2002)

The Joint Staff completes “Joint Publication 3-06: Doctrine for Joint Urban Operations,” which incorporates lessons from Somalia, Serbia and Haiti to revise the military’s urban strategy for fighting in cities. It calls for isolating the city and relying on overwhelming combat power to capture or destroy crucial targets. (*The New York Times*, 10/22/2002)

Franks meets with foreign leaders in Qatar, Jordan, Yemen, Pakistan, and Turkey at the end of the month to discuss Saddam Hussein. Franks also visits the troops in Afghanistan. (Franks, pp. 403-405)

October

As the Iraq war plans are being adjusted, Rumsfeld, Feith, Wolfowitz, Pace, and Franks review a list of potential problems and disasters during a prospective war with Iraq. The list, later named the “Parade of Horribles,” is discussed by the NSC. (Feith, pp. 332-334)

On the 5th, Rumsfeld argues in a memo to Bush that a new UN resolution against Iraq would be politically advantageous in helping to build a coalition but not legally necessary, because the 1991 UN resolutions and the right of self-defense in the UN Charter already provide the U.S. with the authority it needs to go to war. (Feith, pp. 313-314)

On the 12th, Congress passes a resolution authorizing the use of military force against Iraq.

On the 25th, U.S. Southern Command's General James Hill forwards a request to Myers about approving some interrogation techniques beyond the Army Field Manual. The DOD's general counsel, William Haynes, discusses the issue with Myers and Wolfowitz. On November 27th, Haynes writes a memo to Rumsfeld recommending using only Hill's Categories I and II and the fourth technique in Category III, but declining SOUTHCOM's more severe Category III techniques, like waterboarding, fear of death, and severe pain. Rumsfeld approves the memo. (Rumsfeld, pp. 578-579; Sands, p. 92)

November On the 8th, the UN Security Council unanimously passes Resolution 1441 giving Iraq a final opportunity to disarm. The resolution gives Iraq one month to issue a declaration of its weapons programs and to begin the verification process. (Rice, pp. 183-185; DeYoung, p. 420; *The Washington Post*, 01/14/2003)

On the 26th, Franks officially requests "the mother of all deployment orders" for the "Pre-N-Day" force in Iraq, which would bring 128,000 to the Gulf region by February 15th. (Rumsfeld, p. 439) Franks also requests additional deployments that would bring the total number to 210,000 troops by March 20th, 2003. (Franks, pp. 409-410)

Franks travels throughout CENTCOM's area of responsibility at the end of the month. Jim Wilkinson, who is sent over from the White House to help Franks with media relations, joins Franks on the trip. Wilkinson goes on to serve as director of strategic communications at CENTCOM through December, 2003 and serves as Franks' principal spokesman during Operation Iraqi Freedom. At CENTCOM's Joint Operations Center in Qatar, Franks oversees a successful simulation of the 1003V OPLAN based on the Hybrid option for destroying Iraq's military forces and removing Saddam from power. Franks later writes that he is pleased with simulation's effectiveness in getting the four services to perform jointly. (Franks, pp. 411-416; <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov>)

December On the 10th, Rumsfeld visits Eritrea, Djibouti, and Qatar to discuss al-Qaeda and Iraq. (*The New York Times*, 12/11/2002)

2003

January Franks meets with Bush and the NSC on the 8th to discuss Iraq and the status of the deployment of U.S. military forces to the region. The group also reportedly discusses plans to shift the U.S. military command to Qatar. (*CNN*, 01/08/2003)

On the 10th, Haynes tells Rumsfeld the techniques used on Muhammed al-Qahtani might be seen as mistreatment. Rumsfeld suspends approval of the additional techniques and convenes a panel of military and civilian personnel that had raised concerns about Haynes' December 2002 interrogation memo to review the guidelines. In April, Rumsfeld approves 24 of 35 interrogation methods that are

cleared by the panel. Myers and Pace and the service secretaries also sign off on the 24 techniques. (John Yoo, *War by Other Means*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006, pp. 195-198; Jane Mayer, *The Dark Side*, New York: Doubleday, 2008, p. 234; Rumsfeld, pp. 581-582)

On the 20th, Bush signs National Security Presidential Directive 24, stating that the Defense Department will coordinate postwar reconstruction in Iraq and establishes the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), which is to be led by Lt. General Jay Garner. (Bush, p. 249; Rumsfeld, p. 487)

On the 23rd, King Abdullah II of Jordan tells Franks in Amman that Jordan has reliable intelligence suggesting that Saddam has chemical and biological weapons. Several days later in Egypt, President Hosni Mubarek warns Franks that Saddam has biological weapons and is prepared to use them on U.S. troops. (Bush, p. 247; Franks, pp. 418-419)

On the 30th, Rumsfeld, the JCS, and Bush review the final war plans against Iraq. No objections or issues are raised. (Rumsfeld, pp. 453-454)

On the 31st, Prime Minister Tony Blair meets with Bush in Washington to argue for a second UN resolution against Saddam. Cheney, Rice, Powell, and Rumsfeld are against it, but Blair states he needs it for political support at home. Bush agrees to proceed but the resolution negotiations fail by March. (Cheney, pp. 397-398)

March

Rumsfeld begins holding War Council meetings every morning at 7 a.m. to discuss Iraq strategy and current developments around the world. The group includes Pace, Myers, Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Cambone, and other senior DOD officials. After each meeting, Rumsfeld holds a secure videoconference with Franks. (*The New York Times*, 03/19/2003)

Franks attends a meeting with Myers, Pace, Wolfowitz and others where Rumsfeld asks how long will the war in Iraq last. The group's answers range from 7 to 30 days. Franks answers, "weeks, not months." Rumsfeld himself does not offer a guess. (Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp. 325-326)

On the 5th, Franks briefs Bush and the NSC in the White House on Iraq. Franks tells Bush that he would like 48 hours notice to make final preparations should the president decide to invade Iraq. Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Powell discuss giving Saddam a final ultimatum and decide on 48 hours. Franks returns to CENTCOM Forward in Qatar after the briefing. (Franks, pp. 428-429; Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, pp. 329-332)

On the 19th, Bush gives the order to launch the Hybrid 1003V OPLAN, Operation Iraqi Freedom. Lieutenant General David McKiernan serves as commander of the Coalition Forces Land Component Command. The coalition's first task is to

destroy Iraq's visual observation posts to blind the enemy. The plan is changed last minute when new intelligence suggests that Hussein will be meeting with his sons at Dora Farms the next day. Bush decides to target the location with airstrikes. Franks also decides to revise the war plan after receiving last minute intelligence that Saddam is planning to burn oilfields in southern Iraq after the initiation of the air campaign. The original plan had called for the near simultaneous start of the air and ground assaults but Franks decides to initiate the G-Day ground attack before A-Day to help secure the oilfields. Franks runs the war from his forward command center in Qatar. The coalition forces total to 290,000 from 23 countries, including the U.S. U.K., Australia and Europe. Franks is able to gain operational surprise not only by launching the ground attack before the air attack, but also by passing misleading intelligence to Saddam that a major portion of the coalition forces will attack from the north through Turkey. Furthermore, since Franks plan hinges on speed and momentum rather than superior numbers, the plan does not necessitate the same large force build-up as there had been in the first Gulf War to tip off the Iraqis that the invasion was imminent. Franks' plan calls for roughly about one-third as many troops as the first Gulf War. Franks, who is very concerned about WMDs, issues the troops chemical and biological protective suits. (Bush, pp. 250-251; Franks, pp. 432-440; Rumsfeld, pp. 460-461; *ABC News*, 03/13/2003; *CBS News*, 03/23/2003)

Pace attends a meeting with Bush at Camp David on the 22nd, where the group discusses the possibility that the war in Iraq could last longer than expected. Some Republican Guard forces were reportedly expected to negotiate a surrender with allied forces, only to reverse course and continue fighting. (*The New York Times*, 03/23/2003)

Coalition forces are able to take advantage of a strong sandstorm the 25th to 27th to gain a tactical advantage in destroying hunkered down Republican Guard units. (Franks, pp. 501-504)

Pace announces on the 27th that Iraq has executed American POWs, used women and children as human shields, and pretended to surrender and then opened fire. (*The Australian*, 03/28/2003)

Bush teleconferences with Pace and Rumsfeld's War Council from Camp David on the 29th. The group reportedly discusses the plan to keep pushing towards Baghdad despite facing unexpectedly tough resistance south of the capital, particularly from Fedayeen militia loyal to Saddam. Cheney, Rice, Powell, Tenet and White House Chief of Staff Andy Card also participate in the teleconference. (*The Washington Post*, 03/30/2003; *CNN*, 07/04/2003)

April

On the 1st, coalition forces find new Iraqi chemical-biological protection suits and masks in Fedayeen barracks. Franks later writes that he believed a WMD was coming and would likely occur as the coalition forces closed in on Baghdad. (Franks, pp. 513-515)

Appearing on the *Newshour with Jim Lehrer* on the 1st, Pace says that there is no evidence that any senior Iraqi leadership is providing direction to the Republican Guard divisions fighting around Baghdad. (*The New York Times*, 04/01/2003)

Plans to form a national government are delayed in favor of a U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) that will oversee reconstruction efforts. The CPA reports to Rumsfeld. (Rice, p. 211)

Appearing on ABC's *This Week* on the 7th, Pace announces that hundreds of Iraqi fighters opposed to Saddam are being airlifted into southern Iraq to battle Saddam's remaining army in the region. Pace adds that the fighters will serve as the core of a new free Iraqi national army. The forces were assembled by the Iraqi National Congress from both exile volunteers and volunteers from within Iraq. (*The New York Times*, 04/07/2003)

On the 9th, Baghdad falls. Franks is praised for drafting an innovative, joint war plan.

On the 16th, Franks issues his "Freedom Message" to the Iraqi people, which says the coalition forces have come as liberators, not conquerors, and helps transition from Baath Party rule to the Coalition Provisional Authority. (L. Paul Bremer III, *Ambassador Paul Bremer Timeline*, 08/19/2012, 08/21/2012; Franks, pp. 528-529)

On the 17th, General John Abizaid, Deputy Commander CENTOM, reports that not a single unit of the Iraqi Army is left intact anywhere in the country. (*Bremer Timeline*, 08/19/2012)

On the 24th, Rumsfeld tells Garner that Bush is preparing to shift from the major combat operations phase of the Iraq plan to stabilization and reconstruction in phase IV, which entails the transitioning of coalition leadership in Iraq from the military to a political ambassador. Rumsfeld says Bush's selection will be Paul Bremer as presidential envoy to Iraq. (Bob Woodward, *State of Denial*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006, pp. 180-181)

On the 28th, Rumsfeld travels to Iraq. (Rumsfeld, p. 494; Graham, p. 435)

In late April, Franks tells Rumsfeld that he and his wife have decided it was time for Franks to retire this summer. Rumsfeld tells Franks he will get back to him and, in early May, offers Franks the position of chief of staff of the Army. Franks declines the position and, by the end of May, Rumsfeld agrees to accept Franks' resignation. Franks recommends Abizaid as his replacement. (Franks, pp. 530-532)

May

On the 1st, while in Kabul, Rumsfeld announces major combat operations in Afghanistan have ended. Smaller scale operations will continue to attack remaining Taliban and al-Qaeda members. (*The Washington Post*, 05/02/2003)

On the 1st, Bush announces the end of major combat operations in Iraq. A “Mission Accomplished” banner hanging behind Bush later draws criticism. As the coalition forces transition to phase IV, additional countries begin contributing troops, including Poland, Italy, Ukraine, Japan, and nine others. Pace and Wolfowitz announce in June that between 20,000 and 30,000 allied troops from over a dozen countries will be arriving in Iraq in August to replace some U.S. forces. (Franks, pp. 523-533; Rumsfeld, p. 497; *The New York Times*, 06/19/2003)

Bush and Bremer visit Franks in Qatar on the 5th to discuss the transition to phase IV plan. (Franks, pp. 532-533)

On the 7th, Bush announces Bremer as special envoy to Iraq. The ambassador will serve as the senior coalition official in Iraq, overseeing reconstruction efforts and the transitioning to Iraqi sovereignty. He will report directly to Rumsfeld. Franks will continue to maintain command over coalition military personnel in Iraq. Franks meets with Bremer and Rumsfeld in Washington to discuss the line of authority in Iraq and how the civilian team will work with the military. Rumsfeld and Franks hold a press conference the following day. (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov>; *CNN*, 05/08/2003)

On the 16th, Bremer announces de-Baathification. He announces the dissolution of the Iraqi army the following week. (Feith, pp. 425, 433)

Franks’ retirement is announced on the 22nd.

June

On the 2nd, Bremer tells Rumsfeld that he plans to move forward with the Iraqi Interim Authority plan in the next five to six weeks. Rumsfeld agrees with this timeline as he wants to move quickly to give the Iraqis a role in governance. (Rumsfeld, p. 511)

On the 24th, Rumsfeld responds to criticism by Democrats that Iraqi WMD intelligence is proving to be incorrect by arguing it is still early in the process and pointing out that there had been no debate about whether Iraq had WMDs before the war began. (*The Washington Post*, 06/25/2003)

July

On the 4th, Bremer sends Rumsfeld a draft strategic plan called “A Vision to Empower Iraqis.” Security is the top priority. He also recommends that the Iraqis write a constitution as soon possible, ratify it, and hold elections. The other goals include economic growth, transition of power, restoring basic services, improving education and housing, and building a welfare safety net. (L. Paul Bremer III, *My Year in Iraq*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006, pp. 115-116; Rumsfeld, p. 513)

Rumsfeld oversees the change of command ceremony at CENTCOM in Tampa on the 7th as Abizaid replaces Franks as CENTCOM commander. (Franks, 533-536; *The Washington Post*, 06/23/2003)

2004

Bush awards Franks the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

TIMELINES

- Tommy Franks News Timeline, prepared by Rob Martin, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 02/19/2014.
- Timeline of the Bush Presidency, prepared by Justin Peck and Bryan Craig, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/30/2010.

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- “September 11, 2001: Attack on America; Press Conference with U.S. General Tommy Franks, Commander-in-chief of the U.S. Central Command,” 10/30/2001 <<http://avalon.law.yale.edu>> (02/27/2014).
- “President, General Franks Discuss War Effort,” 12/28/2000, <<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov>> (03/06/2014).
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- “NBC Meet the Press,” *NBC*, 03/24/2002.
- “Primetime Thursday,” *ABC News*, 03/13/2003.
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- “Profile of CENTCOM Commander General Tommy Franks,” *CNN*, 04/26/2003.

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- George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010) pp. 193-199, 223-256.
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- Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown* (New York: Sentinel, 2011) pp. 367-378, 385-394, 459-469.
- L. Paul Bremer III, *My Year in Iraq* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006) pp. 23-29, 70-73.
- “Good Morning America,” *ABC News*, 10/29/2001.
- *Ottawa Citizen*, 03/18/2003.
- George W. Bush, “War Message,” 03/19/2003 <<http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com>> (03/05/2014).
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- George W. Bush, “President Talks to Troops in Qatar,” 06/05/2003, <<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov>> (03/06/2014).
- *The Washington Post*, 06/23/2003.
- “Profiles of Tommy Franks, Dick Cheney,” *CNN*, 07/04/2003.
- Judy Woodruff, “The Commemoration of Tommy Franks and John Abizaid,” *CNN*, 07/07/2003.
- George W. Bush, “President Presents Medal of Freedom,” 12/14/2004 <<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov>> (03/06/2014).

TOMMY FRANKS SUGGESTED TOPICS

Prepared by Rob Martin

Miller Center, University of Virginia, 03/11/2014

Early Relationship with George W. Bush

- When did you first meet George W. Bush? What were your early impressions of him?

Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Central Command

- Tell us about your responsibilities as CENTCOM commander in the Bush administration. In what ways was it different from your work under Clinton? Comment on the transition from the Clinton to Bush administration.
- Comment on your relationship with Bush. Did you have much regular contact with the president in the early days of the administration?
- Comment on military-civilian relations within the DOD. Tell us about your relationship with Don Rumsfeld. When did you first meet him? How was it different from your relationship with his predecessor, William Cohen? How did you get along with other senior DOD officials such as Paul Wolfowitz and Doug Feith?
- Tell us about your relationship with the chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Hugh Shelton and Richard Myers. Discuss your relationship with the service chiefs.
- With whom did you tend to work most closely? Tell us about your relationship with your top aides at CENTCOM.
- Comment on your relationship with the rest of the president's national security team, including Colin Powell and George Tenet.
- Describe the decision-making process in the Bush administration on issues regarding defense and foreign policy. Which actors had the most clout? What role did Dick Cheney play?
- Comment on the interagency process within the Bush administration. How well did the different departments and agencies work together during times of war?
- Tell us about your relationship with the press.

Afghanistan, Iraq, and the War on Terror

- Discuss your experiences on 9/11. Describe the Bush administration's response to the 9/11 attacks and the ensuing war on terror. Tell us about your work in the planning and execution of the war in Afghanistan. Discuss the challenge of building a new war plan under such short time constraints after the attacks. Comment on your efforts to create an innovative plan that included the linking of Special Operations Forces to anti-Taliban groups in Afghanistan. Did you meet any resistance within the Bush administration to your plan? Discuss your efforts to encourage the service chiefs to eschew narrow parochial interests and work together more jointly. Tell us about your work helping to build a coalition in support of the war effort in the region. Which were the most critical countries?
- What were the biggest challenges you faced in the execution of the war? Comment on the challenge of getting Special Operations Forces into Afghanistan. How was it decided whether the DOD or CIA would have authority on the ground in Afghanistan?
- Comment on the success of the UN conference in Bonn securing a post-war governance plan.
- Discuss your decision to stay on an additional year at CENTOM through July, 2003.
- Comment on how the Bush administration handled captured al-Qaeda and Taliban prisoners.

- Tell us about your work in the planning and execution of the war in Iraq. What lessons did you try to incorporate from the war in Afghanistan into your planning for Iraq? Describe the evolution of your war planning over 2002. Comment on the decision to launch the ground and air campaigns at roughly the same time. Did you meet much resistance from within the Bush administration or DOD to your plans? How did you address Powell's concerns regarding troop levels and the length of supply lines?
- Discuss your efforts to help build a coalition to support the war in Iraq. Comment on the last minute changes that were made to the war plan. What were your greatest concerns going into the war? The use of WMDs? Fedayeen resistance? What were the biggest challenges you faced during the course of the war?
- What were the biggest challenges you faced after the end of major combat operations? Tell us about your relationship with Jay Garner and Paul Bremer to help lay the groundwork for reconstruction in Iraq.
- Comment on the "Freedom Message" you issued after the war.
- Tell us about your decision to retire in 2003.

The Bush Presidency in Retrospect

- What do you consider to be your most important accomplishments during your time as commander of CENTCOM? What were the most challenging parts of your jobs? What were the most rewarding?
- What were Bush's greatest assets as commander in chief? What were some of the key differences between Bush and the other presidents you have served under?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Bush presidency with regards to national security and defense?
- Comment on Bush's leadership in the days after the 9/11 attacks.
- What features of the Bush presidency were overlooked or misunderstood by the press?
- How should the Bush presidency be viewed in history?