UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
OFFICER CANDIDATES SCHOOL
TRAINING COMMAND
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HIST 1007
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MARINE CORPS HISTORY 7

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

1. Without the aid of references, identify significant events in Marine Corps history without omitting key components. (OCS-HIST-1002)

ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

1. Without the aid of references, identify influential contributors to the history of the Marine Corps from 2001 to present without omission. (OCS-HIST-1002ac)

2. Without the aid of references, describe Marine participation in Limited-scale Operations throughout Marine Corps history from 2001 to present without omitting key components. (OCS-HIST-1002ad)

3. Without the aid of references, describe Marine participation in Major Operations throughout Marine Corps history from 2001 to present without omitting key components. (OCS-HIST-1002ae)

4. Without the aid of references, trace the history of Marine Corps Amphibious Doctrine from 2001 to present without omitting key components. (OCS-HIST-1002af)

5. Without the aid of references, trace the history of Marine Corps Aviation from 2001 to present without omitting key components. (OCS-HIST-1002ag)

1. **INTRODUCTION**. This lesson will cover events occurring between 2001 and the present. In the case of Operation Enduring Freedom, the cutoff will be around 2009, since this is an ongoing operation, and has not had the benefit of historical analysis, it is not appropriate for a history class. The information provided regarding Military Operation Other Than War (MOOTW) includes later events that have already ended and are therefore matters of fact.

2. **11 SEPTEMBER 2001**

a. On 11 September 2001, unprecedented terrorist attacks struck the American homeland. Four separate airliners, full of fuel and passengers, were hijacked by 19 terrorists and purposely crashed into three targets meant to symbolize American might.

b. The north and south towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, symbolizing American financial power, were each struck by an airliner, the former at 0846 and the latter at 0903. Fires fueled by the full load of aviation fuel on board the planes caused massive structural damage and the south tower collapsed nearly an hour after the impact, while the north tower burned 102 minutes before collapsing. A distressing number of the victims of this attack were New York City Police and Firefighters who were racing to save lives inside the buildings. The plane crash, accompanied by the raging fire and smoke, and eventually the collapse of the towers resulted in the death of 2,753.

c. The Pentagon, symbolizing American military might, was struck by an airliner at 0937 precisely at the spot where the Marine Corps Aviation Branch had been headquartered up until shortly before the attacks, however, they had recently moved to allow renovations of their offices. The resulting explosion and fires killed 125 in the Pentagon.

d. The fourth airliner was presumed to be heading for the Capitol building or White House, symbolizing American government power. However, passengers, after hearing on cell phones what was happening elsewhere, were determined to regain control of the aircraft bound for the Capitol. They attacked the terrorists, who, once

they were convinced that the passengers would re-take the aircraft, intentionally crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

e. **12 September 2001**. For the first time in history, Marine aviators made combat air patrols in the skies over the United States (U.S.), Washington, D.C. was guarded by F/A-18 Hornets flown by pilots from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 321 based out of Andrews Air Force Base in southern Maryland. The Marine pilots flew the patrols to give a days respite to the Washington Air National Guard, which had flown the patrols on 11 September, and resumed command of the mission on 13 September.

f. The terrorist organization Al Qaeda, and its leader, a Saudi Arabian named Osama bin Laden, were determined to have planned and executed the attacks. At the time of the attacks, Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda were based in Afghanistan, which, in the aftermath of the Soviet Invasion of 1979 to 1989 had seen a hardline Islamic Fundamentalist faction called the Taliban seize power. Osama bin Laden had come to Afghanistan in 1979 to join the resistance against the Soviet occupation. He had become an effective conduit for foreign money and fighters in support of the Afghan resistance to the invasion. By 2001, Bin Laden had a mature terrorist organization, and used Afghanistan as a secure base to launch the 9/11 attacks.

3. **OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM**

a. **The Ultimatum and Initial Moves**. Following the 9/11 attacks, President George W. Bush let it be known that any country harboring perpetrators of the attacks would either turn them over, or be considered equally responsible. President Bush issued an ultimatum to the Taliban, who controlled Afghanistan, to give up Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. When they failed to comply, President Bush launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) on 7 October 2001.

(1) The initial operations of OEF were air strikes and ground assaults by Afghan factions opposed to the Taliban and supported by Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Air attacks continued for five days, finally running out of targets worthy of attacking. SOF and CIA teams found ready allies in the Northern Alliance, one of the factions that had been defeated by the Taliban after the Soviets withdrew.

(2) On 18 October 2001, pilots of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 251 became the first Marines known to be engaged in combat in Afghanistan, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. The Marine Hornets, flying from the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, flew bombing missions in northern Afghanistan. The USS Theodore Roosevelt, carrying approximately 195 Marines, was leading one of the four Navy battle groups in the region.

(3) On 20 October 2001, CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Special Operations Capable (SOC) conducted a tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) to salvage the wreckage of a U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk that had crashed in Pakistan during a raid on a Taliban compound the night before. Deployed from Camp Pendleton, California, since August, the 15th MEU SOC had been in the Arabian Sea and surrounding areas since September, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

(4) Northern Alliance forces, supported by air strikes and heavy weapons devastated the Taliban. By mid-November, the Taliban capital of Kabul was in Northern Alliance hands.

b. **Marine Corps Operations**

(1) On 11 September 2001, the 15th MEU SOC was in Darwin, Australia preparing to deliver humanitarian aid to civil war-ravaged East Timor. They completed this mission, and then sailed to the northern Arabian Sea. In October, they sent detachments into Northern Pakistan to establish a forward operating base (FOB), which was immediately occupied by Air Force personnel, with the MEU providing security.

(2) Brigadier General (BGen) James Mattis, serving as commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), also became the commanding general for Marine Corps Forces, Central Command (Forward). BGen Mattis was then given command of all amphibious forces in the theater, establishing Naval Expeditionary Task Force 58. This included the 15th MEU, already in Central Command, and later the 26th MEU that was moved into theater, along with their respective Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG), which were the naval ships that carried the Marines.

(3) On 25 November, the 15th MEU seized FOB Rhino, an airfield 90 miles southwest of Kandahar previously raided by Army airborne units. Their mission constituted the first deployment of conventional

American troops into Afghanistan, and set a new standard in operational reach and flexibility, requiring a heliborne movement from the sea, flying non-stop over 400 nautical miles to develop America's first fixed operating base in Afghanistan.

(4) From 22 to 24 November 2001, the 26th MEU arrives in the Arabian Sea from the Mediterranean Sea. This brought the total number of Marines on standby in the area to more than 4,000.

(5) After being relieved at FOB Rhino by the 26th MEU, Light Armored Reconnaissance (LAR) elements of the 26th and 15th MEUs moved north to secure Kandahar International Airport as a flow-through point for logistical support for continued operations. Immediately after securing it, a rifle company of the 26th MEU flew in and took over security. Before anything could be done, the airport had to be swept for mines as it was rife with them. The 26th MEU later established a detainee holding facility for the numerous Taliban prisoners captured during combat operations.

c. **Formation of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Involvement of North Alliance Treaty Organization (NATO)**

(1) By December the Taliban and al-Qaeda had largely fled to Pakistan or remote rural and mountainous regions of Afghanistan. Although some key leaders had been killed, the Taliban and al-Qaeda had not been entirely destroyed. On 27 April 2003, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld announced that major combat activity had come to an end in Afghanistan. He stated that the focus would move into stabilization and reconstruction activities and that the military would stay involved in the efforts.

(2) The ISAF was formed by the United Nations (UN) Security Council to oversee the establishment of an Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) and the training of an Afghan National Army. Hamid Karzai, a veteran Afghan politician was selected to head the interim ATA. In 2004, Karzai was elected president of the newly formed Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

(3) By the end of 2003, the U.S. had 13,100 total troops with ISAF in Afghanistan. With the ramp up to war with Iraq, American focus (and the majority of their personnel) shifted from Afghanistan to Iraq.

(4) Despite the best efforts of the UN and ISAF to assist the ATA to establish themselves as a true national government, factional tensions continued to pull Afghanistan apart. Between 2003 and 2005, the insurgency began to grow again as the Taliban were able to use secure bases in the Pakistani border provinces, and adapt their tactics to better oppose government and coalition forces.

(5) The number of Marines deployed to Afghanistan was limited until 2009, when American troops were freed up from fighting in Iraq and the Afghan "surge" campaign began. In 2011, Marine General (Gen) John A. Allen was selected to lead all ISAF in Afghanistan, and in 2013 he was replaced by Marine Gen Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.

d. **The Surge in Afghanistan**. U.S. troop levels started in 2009 at 37,400 and ended at 67,400, and reached a peak of 100,000 in August of 2011. The initial troop surge announced by President Obama in January 2009 called for 27,000 additional troops, 11,000 of which were Marines. During this troop surge, the 2d MEB was pushed into Helmand Province; an area ran previously by mostly British forces under NATO command. In order to initiate this, Operation Khanjar was launched on 2 July 2009, the largest Marine action since the 2004 invasion of Fallujah, and the biggest airlift by Marines since Vietnam. 4,000 Marines deployed into Helmand Province, with 2d Battalion, 8th Marines reinforcing Garmsir, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines securing Nawa-i-Barakzay to the south of Lashkar Gar, and 2d LAR taking Khanashin.

e. **Operation Moshtarak (Battle of Marjah)**

(1) In late 2009, the town of Marjah was the last Taliban stronghold in Helmand Province. It had been controlled by the Taliban and drug traffickers for the past two years, using the town as a refuge to build roadside bombs and a supply center for opium poppies, which served as a revenue source for the Taliban. Operation Moshtarak was an ISAF offensive to remove the Taliban from Marjah. Comprised of 15,000 troops from the U.S., Afghanistan, and other ISAF member nations, this was the largest joint operation up to that point in the war. Not only were 3,500 Marines involved, but the force consisted of 60 percent Afghan soldiers.

(2) Marjah was estimated to hold approximately 500 Taliban fighters. However, the greatest threat the coalition force faced was from the minefields and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), believed to be the largest

concentration of mines and IEDs NATO had ever confronted. Marines would have to clear these obstacles while assaulting the town.

(3) Before dawn on 13 February 2010, Marines, British troops, and SOF seized multiple canal crossings and helicopter landing zones. After isolating Marjah, waves of Marines landed in helicopters followed by additional units moving over land. After days of skirmishes and traversing IEDs, Marines and Afghan soldiers raised the Afghan national flag over the bazaar in Marjah on 18 February. Small pockets of resistance continued throughout February and March, but the Marines had effectively secured the town.

f. **Operation Enduring Freedom 2010 to Present**

(1) During this stage of the war, the Marine Corps mainly operated in Regimental Command, Southwest (RC SW) in Helmand and Nimruz provinces (although Marines were also still involved in Kunar, Khandahar, and other provinces).

(2) The war was fought with a high level of decentralization. Companies often served at great distances from their battalion headquarters, and platoons often were separated by kilometers. Young platoon commanders often found themselves responsible for patrol bases and a portion of the company area of operations, requiring them to operate under broad commander's intent to defeat local insurgencies and build relationships with local national leaders. To the present, the Marine Corps continues to conduct counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan, holding key terrain while providing security to the populace and assisting in the development of infrastructure and Afghan National Security Forces.

4. **OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**

a. By 2002, the American focus of the Global War on Terror had broadened to include not only Afghanistan, but also Iraq, where Dictator Saddam Hussein was feared to be stockpiling weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and contributing to de-stabilization in the region. Despite American demands for the UN to enforce harsher sanctions, backed by the threat of military force, the UN Security Council could not be convinced to support direct military action.

b. On 20 March 2003, after the expiration of an ultimatum to Saddam Hussein and his sons that they must leave Iraq or be subject to a military attack, President Bush commenced a pre-emptive campaign to remove him and his regime.

c. The attack began with the launch of Tomahawk cruise missiles, and Stealth Bomber attacks against suspected locations where Saddam or his sons might be and command and control nodes throughout the country. The air attacks, (the results of which were broadcast on live television) ushered in a period of what GEN Tommy Franks, the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Commander, called "Shock and Awe."

d. The spearhead of the invasion from Kuwait to Iraq was the Army's 3d Infantry Division (ID) and the 1st Marine Division (MARDIV) supported by Task Force Tarawa, a regimental Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) from II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF). Standardized training and common experiences allowed the east and west coast Marines to operate together almost seamlessly. The 1st MARDIV's role was to attack straight up Highways 1 and 7, and cover 3d ID's right flank.

e. **Preparation for War**

(1) On 2 August 2002, 1st MARDIV principal staff meets the new Commanding General (CG), Major General (MajGen) James Mattis. The message was that war with Iraq was inevitable, barring a sudden collapse of the Hussein regime from within. The division's motto, "No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy" would be the CG's guidance to all Marines. He expected them to ruthlessly destroy any Iraqi formations that attempted to interfere with their offensive, yet retain the strictest rules of engagement with non-combatant or anyone surrendering. This invasion had been planned as a war of liberation, and kinetic force must be tempered with respect for the law of war.

(2) The terrain of southern Iraq was a major concern for division planners. The planners knew from history (specifically, the British in WWI) that the swampy terrain of the Fertile Crescent would cause all maneuver to be canalized onto roads. Thus, the first phases of the battle would be a fight for the bridges. The following months would see the scheme of maneuver (dictated by the Coalition Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC)) modified dozens of times. Fortunately, the numerous CFLCC changes gave the Marine planners a broader vision of the battlespace, and made rapid changes on the fly that were more effective.

(3) On 11 January 2003, the President released the Deployment Order and 1st MARDIV's main body began to flow into Iraq. Due to a new Pentagon philosophy, previously organized unit deployment plans were abandoned, and units were requested piecemeal. This caused massive headaches for logistics planners, and had an effect on the orderly deployment of forces. The CG's planning also had to include the loss of four battalions, tasked with supporting the MEU program and in unit deployments to Okinawa.

f. **The March to Baghdad**

(1) The mission of the MARDIV was determined by the CFLCC, Army Lieutenant General David McKiernan, posted in Qatar. Their overarching mission was to serve as the right or eastern arm of the invasion towards Baghdad, and to support 3d ID's big left hook.

(2) Beginning on 20 March 2003, MajGen Mattis used three of his Regimental Combat Teams (RCT) and 2d MEB (named Task Force Tarawa) to leapfrog through the Iraqi defenses. The Marines bypassed enemy forces that were deemed not to be a threat, and decisively destroyed any that were. As the Marines secured an objective, they would hand off to the 1st (UK) Division to occupy, thus maintaining their momentum and the speed of their advance. The main concerns were avenues of approach and bridges.

(3) On 23 March, Task Force Tarawa lost 18 Marines as they pushed into the city of An Nasiriyah to secure key bridges over the Euphrates River and Saddam Canal, an important route into Baghdad. One company of Marines aboard assault amphibious vehicles (AAV) drove directly into a two-mile stretch of roadway in a residential area, which soon became known as "Ambush Alley," filled with uniformed Iraqi army troops. A second trip through Ambush Alley trying to evacuate casualties from the early firefight resulted in the loss of nearly half of all Marines killed that day. On that day, Navy Hospitalman Apprentice (E-2) Luis Fonseca earned the Navy Cross for his exertions, under intense enemy fire, to treat and evacuate wounded Marines.

(4) Following many small engagements with both Iraqi Army troops and paramilitary units called Saddam Fedayeen, Iraqi resistance in Baghdad collapsed and U.S. Forces occupied the remainder of the capital on 9 April. Marines assisted Iraqi civilians in toppling a large statue of Saddam Hussein in downtown Firdaus Square.

(5) On 13 April, Marines of Task Force Tripoli (a composition of three Marine LAR battalions) took control of Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown and the last significant city held by the regime. On that same day, Marines from a LAR battalion sent to Samarra, 75 miles north of Baghdad, to prevent enemy forces from interfering with Task Force Tripoli's movement to Tikrit, acting on a tip, conducted a hasty raid and rescued seven U.S. soldiers from Iraqi forces.

(6) On 14 April, a Pentagon spokesman announced that, although some fighting continued in Iraq, major military operations in the country had ended. Ominously, immediately after the fall of the Hussein government, the population of Iraq began looting. Starting with government offices, and then moving to public buildings including museums containing antiquities from biblical times, they stripped many places bare, while American Forces were restrained from intervening.

(7) In the end, the 1st MARDIV covered 808 kilometers in 17 days of sustained combat, the longest sequence of coordinated overland attacks in Marine Corps history, as they went from the border between Kuwait and Iraq to north of Baghdad.

g. **The Insurgency**

(1) West of Baghdad was Al Anbar Province, the largest province in Iraq and home to 1.2 million Sunni Arabs. With a relatively penetrable border between Syria, allowing foreign fighters to enter Iraq, as well as being home to numerous former Ba'ath Party members, al Anbar became a hotbed for insurgent activity. After the initial invasion, many fighters simply retreated from Baghdad and the east to Anbar because U.S. Forces weren't yet concentrated in the area.

(2) In March 2004, MajGen Mattis formally assumed responsibility for Al Anbar and Northern Babil provinces from the Army's 82d Airborne Division. His area of operations included the major cities of Fallujah and Ramadi. Nearly two-thirds of the 1st MARDIV Marines were part of the original forces from a year ago but they had a new mission the second time around. This was to establish a stable environment and help set the stage for the establishment of some kind of democratic Iraq. MajGen Mattis had established his credentials as a warrior in the drive to Baghdad. His actions during the counter-insurgency would reveal his diplomatic skills as well as he strove to maintain tenuous alliances with sheiks, Iraqi government officials, and local residents.

(3) For the Marines, this began a regular rotation that would carry through until the end of the American involvement. I and II MEF alternated sending RCT for 7 month deployments, as well as sending available MEU's to provide a strategic reserve.

(4) Acting as an occupation force was a different mission for the expeditionary Marine Corps. They had little recent experience in extended counter-insurgency, though experience in Vietnam and the Banana Wars before that had certainly established their credentials as an effective counter insurgent force.

(5) Battles for Fallujah. Fallujah is a city of 250-300,000 inhabitants along the Euphrates River west of Baghdad. The 2003 invasion had minimal effect on the city, since Iraqi Army units stationed there deserted en masse rather than face the American attack. A local Sheik, originally pro-American, was elected as mayor, and he maintained the peace until April 2003 when the 82d Airborne occupied the city. Escalating tensions between the soldiers and the citizens ended with the murder and mutilation of four American security contractors in March 2004. MajGen Mattis's initial plan was not to rush into anything, but a decision was made that Fallujah needed to be pacified with swift military action.

(6) Operation Vigilant Resolve. On 5 April 2004, Marines from 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, and 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, along with a battalion from the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, shut down access to Fallujah in order to isolate and seek out insurgents holding up in the city following the incident with the American contractors.

(a) On 6 April, the assault into the city commenced as 2d Battalion, 2d Marines blocked the southern exits from the city, 2d Battalion, 1st Marines attacked from the northwest corner of the city, and 1st Battalion, 5th Marines attacked from the east. Although 2,000 Iraqi police and military forces were assigned to the mission, the vast majority of these forces deserted and disappeared even before the assault began.

(b) The next 6 days consisted of urban combat with Marines pushing in the city, but not fully clearing it. The insurgents proved highly capable, in three to five man teams, utilizing shoot-and-run tactics, sniper fire, indiscriminate indirect fire, and command and control via cell phones, pigeons, and civilian spotters.

(c) On 9 April, a ceasefire was announced to allow the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC; the acting Iraqi government) to negotiate the surrender of the enemy. Insurgents had used false statements about the number of civilian casualties to garner public opinion and cause the IGC to reconsider their support for the operation. While the Marines stopped their assault they remained in place, only to fight off continuous attacks by insurgent forces, which continued for three more weeks as negotiations failed.

(d) On 30 April, a brigade of the New Iraqi Army, called the "Fallujah Brigade," was sent into Fallujah to disrupt and disarm the insurgents. With Marines maintaining an outer cordon, the Fallujah Brigade entered the city and essentially dissolved, taking all of the weapons that had been provided to them by the government and handing them over to insurgents. Insurgent forces in Fallujah grew stronger and the number of insurgent attacks elsewhere in Al Anbar increased sharply, particularly in the city of Ramadi.

(7) Finally, the situation demanded resolution. Operation Phantom Fury (renamed Al Fajr or New Dawn because of objections to the name by the IGC) began on 7 November with RCT-1 attacking from north to south on the west side of the city, and RCT-7 doing the same on the east side. Each RCT consisted of two Marine infantry battalions, one Army battalion with Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles, and an Iraqi battalion. Overall, 10 battalions of Marines and soldiers were staged around the city for the attack.

(a) The Marines met hardcore insurgents who had months to prepare fortified and complex defenses throughout the city. They fought in small groups of 4 to 12, often to the death, with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades. The interval between April and November had given them ample time to set IEDs throughout the city and create bunkers and tunnel systems inside buildings where they could inflict the greatest casualties on Marines. It was estimated that there were over 3,000 insurgent fighters in Fallujah before the attack. Many were on amphetamines in order to prepare for the ordeal.

(b) Over the next few days, six battalions systematically cleared south to Highway 10 (named Phase Line Fran). On 10 November, the units paused at the highway and the Marines' Hymn was played over loudspeakers for all to celebrate the Marine Corps' Birthday. The Marines had advanced quickly through heavy resistance and by 12 November, the majority of both RCTs had crossed Highway 10. While the insurgent forces began to break apart, there were still determined and heavily armed insurgent forces in the southern half of the city.

(c) Despite ferocious close quarters fighting, the city was considered taken on 20 November, and the phase of stability operations commenced. On 23 December, the operation was complete. It was the bloodiest battle of the Iraq War and the worst urban combat since Hue City, Vietnam in 1968. The Marine Corps suffered 70 killed in action and 651 wounded. Four Marines were awarded the Navy Cross for actions during the second battle of Fallujah.

h. **The Al Anbar Awakening**

(1) In late 2006, a group of tribal leaders in Iraq's al Anbar Province, particularly in Ramadi, known as the Anbar Salvation Council (ASC) aligned themselves with the U.S. and Iraqi government against the insurgency.

(2) This movement became known as the "Al Anbar Awakening." The second battle of Fallujah in 2004, the national elections in 2005, and the formation of the Iraqi government in May 2006 illustrated to Iraqi leaders that it was more beneficial to participate in the new political process than take up arms.

(3) The actions of the insurgency also demonstrated that their goals were out of line with the tribal leadership's. There was speculation that the insurgency was competing with tribal leadership for control of revenue sources, both legal and illegal. However, the fact remained that insurgent tactics and operations were continuing to hurt innocent civilians and the aspirations of the province. The Awakening marked a turning point in the insurgency, as the support of key sheiks and tribal leaders made a marked difference in the stability and legitimacy of the Iraqi government in Al Anbar Province.

i. **Transition and Withdraw**. The U.S. and Iraq signed a status of forces agreement that planned for U.S. troops to be out of Iraqi cities by 30 June 2009. In February 2008, U.S. Marines began to hand over Al Anbar to Iraqi forces. By October 2009, the last two Marine regiments left Al Anbar.

j. **Medals of Honor from OEF and OIF**

(1) Corporal (Cpl) Jason Dunham was assigned to Kilo Company, 3d Battalion, 7th Marines in April 2004. Following an attack on his battalion commander's convoy near Husaybah, Iraq, his platoon was dispatched to investigate. As Cpl Dunham's squad advanced to investigate an occupied vehicle near the site of the attack, the driver attacked the Marines, and wrestled with Cpl Dunham, trying to escape. He dropped a grenade during the fight, and Cpl Dunham immediately took off his helmet, and shielded the rest of his squad from the blast by covering the grenade with his helmet, and dove on it. The blast left him mortally wounded, but his squad was saved from serious injury, and he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

(2) Sergeant (then Cpl) Dakota Meyer became the first living Marine in 38 years to be awarded the Medal of Honor for repeatedly risking his life to rescue a trapped partnered patrol of U.S. and Afghan service members during a 6 hour fire fight in the village of Ganjgal in Kunar Province, Afghanistan while serving with Embedded Training Team 2-8 on 8 September 2009.

(3) Cpl Kyle Carpenter was awarded the Medal of Honor on 19 June 2014 for his actions during combat operations in Marjah, Helmand Province, Afghanistan. On 21 November 2010, Cpl Carpenter, then an automatic rifleman with 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, was fighting Taliban insurgents when he threw his body between an enemy grenade and his fellow Marines. As he shielded them from the blast, he suffered severe injuries to his face and right arm. He is the eighth living recipient of the Medal of Honor awarded for actions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

5. **KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

a. On 29 October 2001, in response to the attacks of 11 September, the 4th MEB (Anti-terrorism) is reactivated. The unit, built around an existing infantry battalion, combines elements of the Marine Security Guard Battalion, Marine Security Force Regiment, and Chemical/Biological Incidence Response Force.

b. Counter-insurgency doctrine was further developed and implemented during this period. The Small Wars Manual, written by the Marine Corps using lessons learned in the Banana Wars was dusted off and re-applied, and lessons like those of the Combined Action Platoons of the Vietnam War were revisited.

c. In 2006, the Counter-insurgency Field Manual was published in a joint effort headed by Army GEN David Petraeus and Marine Gen James Mattis that consolidated these and many other lessons into the modern study of

counter-insurgency. With the use of this manual, the ultimate goal of the counter-insurgency strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan was to provide security to the population, while building infrastructure and, most importantly, developing the Afghan National Security Forces and Iraqi Security Forces to take over the security and stability of their countries.

d. Recognizing the necessity to understand a population's language and culture in a counter-insurgency environment, the Marine Corps instituted programs to increase cultural awareness and language proficiency, such as the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning and placed a strong emphasis on building local security forces. Different advisor teams were created, using a small team of Marine advisors directly training and advising larger local military or police units. Examples of these embedded teams are the current Military Transition Teams active in Afghanistan.

e. As the Corps transitioned to stability operations, it became clear that female Marines were needed to deal with females and children, as it is culturally unacceptable for male Marines to do the task of body searches. This was the impetus for the Lioness Program, which took female Marines from a variety of specialties and trained them for duty with ground combat units to serve at static checkpoints to search females and children. In 2009, the Marine Corps began to employ Female Engagement Teams (FET) to serve in a more expanded capacity, to report information on the local population through interaction with women and children (without violating cultural standards of the local population) that can be used to implement community development programs to serve the needs of the local area. FET teams in Afghanistan were eventually disbanded as the role of interacting with the female Afghan population was handed over to the Afghan Security Forces, the desired end state for most counter-insurgency operations.

f. In 2004, in response to the proliferation of IEDs, the Marine Corps began to look for a more survivable vehicle than the thin-skinned high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle. Beginning in 2007, multiple variants of mine resistant ambush protected vehicles were developed and delivered to Department of Defense.

g. The first Osprey Squadron deployed in 2007 to al Asad Airbase in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This was the culmination of a long development process, with initial flight testing reaching back to 1999. The MV-22B replaced the CH-46 and some of the aging CH-53Ds. By 2014, most CH-46 squadrons were converted to MV-22Bs. The MV-22 is capable of taking off and landing like a helicopter, but flying like an airplane, which gives it excellent flexibility and improved range and speed on any of the helicopters it replaces.

h. On 23 December 2002, the Marine Corps forms a new Special Operations Command (MARSOC). Passing through many phases and permutations, the current MARSOC consists of a regimental MAGTF. As the U.S. Marine Corps Component of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), their mission is to train, organize, equip and, when directed by the Commander, USSOCOM, deploy task-organized, scalable and responsive U.S. Marine Corps SOFs in support of combatant commanders and other agencies.

i. The Marine Special Operations Regiment (MSOR) consists of a Headquarters Company and three Marine Special Operations Battalions (1st, 2d and 3d). MSOR deployments are coordinated by Marine SOC, through USSOCOM.

j. On 1 April 2007, the Marine Corps officially established the Wounded Warriors Regiment whose mission is to help injured Marines through their recovery. The regiment is headquartered at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, but has two established battalions, one in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and the other in Camp Pendleton, California.

6. **MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR (MOOTW)**

a. **MEU Deployments**. Even while the Marine Corps was executing combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Corps was still able to fulfill numerous missions that it would have normally conducted in peace time.

(1) In 2004, the 15th MEU responded to a humanitarian crisis following massive tsunamis in Indonesia. Displaying its flexibility, the MEU supplied food, water, medical services, and transport along with providing security and assistance in recovery and clean-up operations.

(2) In 2005 following Hurricane Katrina, the Marine Corps provided support by deploying units, to include an assault amphibian battalion, to New Orleans to provide security and assist in humanitarian relief operations in the early days after the storm.

(3) In January 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale hit Haiti, devastating the capital of Port au Prince and causing a massive humanitarian crisis. Both the 22nd and 24th MEUs were sent to provide support and the re-establishment of stability.

(4) In late July 2010, flooding as a result of heavy monsoon rains devastated Pakistan, covering approximately one-fifth of its land mass. The 15th and 26th MEUs are deployed to conduct humanitarian assistance and deliver food, water, and other supplies to the flood victims.

(5) In 2011, after massive protests against Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi turned into outright civil war to remove him, Operation Odyssey Dawn was launched to enforce a no fly zone and to conduct combat strikes in Libya by the Air Combat Element of the 26th MEU. Additionally, elements of the 26th and 22nd MEU conducted a TRAP mission to recover a U.S. Air Force pilot who ejected near Benghazi.

(6) In 2011, after a 9.0 earthquake triggered a tsunami that battered Japan, Marines were deployed in support of Operation Tomodachi, providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to Japan. Marines forward-deployed on Okinawa demonstrated their readiness by responding within hours, the 31st MEU then came in to provide further aid soon thereafter.

b. **Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team (FAST) Deployments**. In response to the civil unrest throughout the Middle East during the "Arab Spring," multiple FAST platoons deployed to defend U.S. Embassies throughout the region. As demonstrators staged mass riots and anti-government factions clashed with oppressive regimes, U.S. Embassies throughout the Middle East became unable to safely conduct their diplomatic mission. FAST platoons, armed with non-lethal weapons, small arms, and crew-served weapons, are specifically trained to reinforce embassies and defend national installations. In the winter and spring of 2011, FAST platoons deployed to U.S. Embassy Cairo, Egypt and U.S. Embassy Sana'a, Yemen. On 12 September 2012, a FAST platoon deployed to U.S. Embassy Tripoli, Libya in response to the terrorist attack on the U.S. Embassy annex in Benghazi, Libya.

c. These examples demonstrate that the Marine Corps participates in the full spectrum of military operations and that even if America is at peace, the Marine Corps is still busy performing vital tasks to national security and policy. Although Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrated that the Marine Corps is capable of sustained combat operations, these examples truly validate the Marine Corps as an expeditionary force-in-readiness.

NOTES:

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