
Defense Report

AUSA



Victory in the Persian Gulf — Only America Could Do It

The full dimensions of the Persian Gulf epic are yet to be fathomed. The big ticket weapons are only half of the story. The truth is that in the past seven months the United States has emerged as the sole surviving super-power on the globe.

No other country could get the UN Security Council to agree to a common economic and military effort on this scale. No one else could have cobbled together such a heterogeneous group as the coalition in the Gulf, and coordinated its participation in a war. No other country could have deployed a host of armored, mechanized, airborne and marine divisions, together with huge air and sea armadas, to the other side of the world the way we did, and plunged into battle in such a short period of time. No one else could sustain a force of over a half million souls in the desert, with everything from full anti-chemical gear to tooth brushes and drinking water — and still deliver the mail and make arrangements for the troops to call home. No one else. Only the United States — with our first class Armed Forces.

Desert Shield/Desert Storm was a set of operations which no other country could possibly replicate. Soviet military leaders may have had some doubts before, but it is certainly clear to them now: The USSR simply is not in the same class. Whatever prestige they may have won in the 1960s with their strategic missiles — ratified by the SALT accords — has now been overtaken by a whole new array of military capabilities which their bankrupt nation cannot afford and which they probably could not build even if they had the money. While the Voroshilov Academy has been retraining Russian officers to fight defensive engagements, young American officers have been out in the desert executing AirLand Battle concepts against a Soviet-equipped and Soviet-trained army, and “cleaning the enemy clocks,” as the troops like to say.

This is not a time for jingoistic chest beating, but neither is it a time to shy from the facts in the case. America is a great nation. The greatest of all. And the U.S. Army has played an important part in proving it. We don't have to argue about it any more. Everybody knows it.