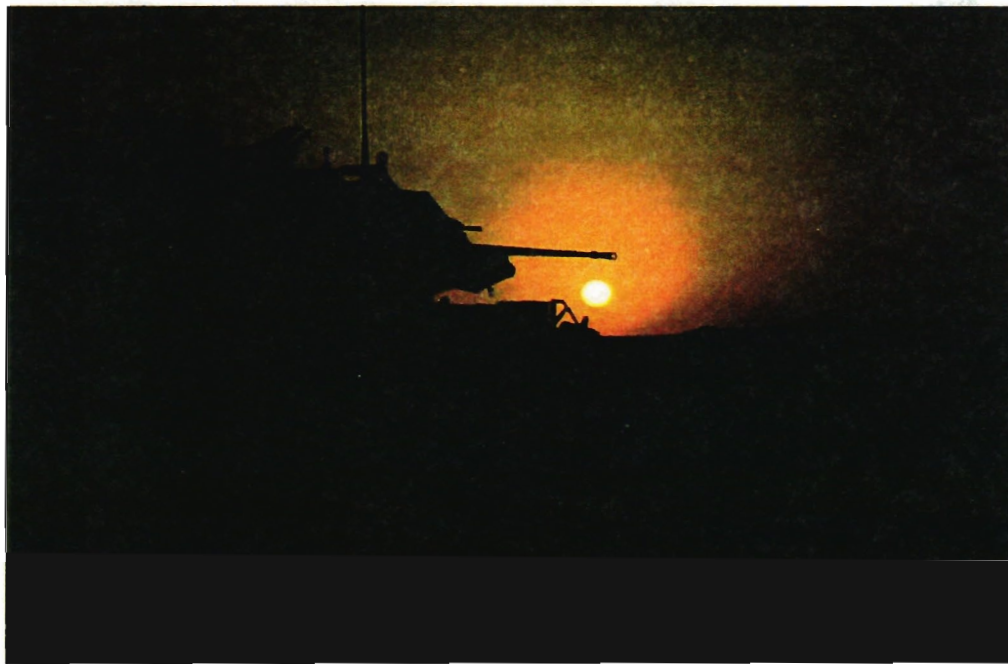


# The Victory Division in Desert Storm



**General Barry R. McCaffrey**  
**USA Ret.**  
**Director,**  
**Office of National Drug Control Policy**



20 September 1997



As of 1 February 1997

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**  
**OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY**  
Washington, D. C. 20503

**Biography of Barry R. McCaffrey**  
**Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy**

Barry McCaffrey was confirmed by unanimous vote of the U.S. Senate as the Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) on 29 February 1996. He serves as a full member of the President's Cabinet and as the senior drug policy official in the Executive Branch. He is also a member of the National Security Council and the President's Drug Policy Council. Prior to confirmation as ONDCP Director, he was the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Armed Forces Southern Command coordinating all national security operations in Latin America.

General McCaffrey began his military career as a 17-year old Cadet at West Point. He served four combat tours: Dominican Republic, Vietnam (twice), and Iraq. When he retired from active duty, he was the most highly decorated and the youngest four star general in the U.S. Army. He twice received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest award for valor. He also received two awards of the Silver Star for heroism and three Purple Heart medals for wounds sustained in combat. During Operation Desert Storm, he commanded the 24th Infantry Division and led the 200 kilometer "left hook" attack into the Euphrates River Valley.

Director McCaffrey graduated from Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts and the U.S. Military Academy. He has a Master of Arts degree in Civil Government from American University and taught American Government, National Security Studies, and Comparative Politics at West Point. He also attended the Harvard University National Security Program. Director McCaffrey is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an associate member of the Inter-American Dialogue.

General McCaffrey served as the JCS assistant to General Colin Powell. While serving as the Director for Strategic Plans and Policy on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he supported the Chairman as the principal JCS Staff advisor to the Secretary of State and to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Among the many awards he has received for his service are: the Department of State's Superior Honor Award for support of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks; the NAACP Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award; and decorations from the French, Brazilian, and Argentine governments.

Barry McCaffrey is married to the former Jill Ann Faulkner. They have three married children: Sean, a U.S. Army infantry Captain; Tara, a U.S. Army Washington National Guard nurse; and Amy, a school teacher.

Address of General Barry R. McCaffrey, USA Ret.  
To the 24th Infantry Division Association  
Colorado Springs, Colorado  
September 20, 1997

## **The Victory Division in Operation Desert Storm: Continuing the Tradition**

Thank you for inviting me here today to address this assemblage of distinguished combat veterans, all united by our service in the Victory Division. It is an honor to be here in Colorado Springs with the men and women who served with the Army's greatest division in both peace and war.

- **The Victory Division's Legacy.**

Our shared legacy is one of excellence. It is one of individual valor and battlefield glory. Whether on the bloody fields of Flanders, the brutal cliffs of Normandy, surrounded by communists in Taejon, or in the Euphrates river valley, the men and women who fought as part of our division's combat teams established a record other U.S. Army divisions are jealous of. They have also shown our foes the folly of taking on the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Those of us who followed in your footsteps in the Middle East in 1991 were proud to carry into battle the Taro Leaf emblem and the campaign streamers that represent your sacrifice when our nation called: St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne from World War I; Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe from World War II; and UN Defensive, UN Offensive, CCF Intervention, First UN Counteroffensive, CCF Spring Offensive, UN Summer-Fall Offensive, Second Korean Winter, and Korea, Summer 1953 from the Korean War.

Today some of those who helped forge that tradition are assembled in Colorado Springs. I would like to honor three of them, the leaders of our Association. Kenwood Ross is, to many people, the Association. A founding member and past president, he was the Secretary/Treasurer and Editor for forty-five years. Today he is the Association's "Elder Statesman" and an example to all of us of how effectively one person can honor his comrades through dedication and perseverance. Rudy Mullins has been an inspirational spark plug for the association in recent years, editing the *Taro Leaf* and organizing many difficult projects for the Association. Finally, Dutch Nelson, our President, who took over from Kenwood and who asked me here today. You gentlemen do all the soldiers of the Victory Division a great honor by your dedication and example.

- **The Victory Division in the Gulf War; the keys to our success.**

In the summer of 1990, Saddam Hussein's Army invaded and overwhelmed the tiny nation-state of Kuwait. The world's fourth largest Army was pointed like a dagger at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, threatening the world's oil supplies. As was the case before, the men and women of Victory Division were ready when the nation called. We rapidly deployed to the Gulf as part of Operation Desert Shield. We were an integral part of a six month build-up of coalition forces. When the order to attack came in February 1991, we stood poised to be the

point of a swift attack that in just 100 hours would destroy the Iraqi Armed Forces. The story of our lightning-fast flanking movement and crossing of the Euphrates has been told many times. What is less well known are the conditions that made this stunning victory possible. I will outline those conditions in my remarks this evening, identifying the keys to our success.

### **1. Our troops: the most educated ever to go to battle.**

The men and women who fought in Desert Storm were the cream of American youth. Ninety percent of our soldiers were high school graduates -- this in a society that averages about 75% high school graduates. How did we achieve this? Through great effort over an entire decade. In 1979, 12 years before Desert Storm, the Army had bottomed out and missed its recruiting goals. Morale, readiness and training were low. Drug abuse, crime, and indiscipline were high. The Army leadership and the American people decided then that enough was enough, and committed themselves to building an Army that America could be proud of. It wasn't easy, and there were many heroes who made it possible, but by the time of Operation Desert Storm we could honestly say that we had the best trained and most technologically advanced Army in our history. The Victory Division was a key part of that rebuilding process. In 1990, we were a disciplined, well-trained, and cohesive unit, ready to go as the only mechanized element in the rapid deployment XVIII Airborne Corps.

### **2. Our Equipment: the best in the world.**

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, our division did not have the latest generation main battle tanks and other recently fielded weapons systems. Yet we did have the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and M1A1 main battle tanks that represented a two decade-long force modernization effort. Once deployed, we were able to quickly integrate new systems such as the M1A2 tank without problems thanks to the competence of our sergeants, junior officers, mechanics, and tankers. We quickly proved that criticism of our weapons was unfounded. The Bradley could survive in tank battles, it was an accurate and dependable weapons platform. The Abrams' gas turbine engine showed its ruggedness in the extreme weather conditions of desert warfare. Our Apache attack helicopters proved that they could kill tanks at ten kilometer ranges. Iraqi soldiers fled their tanks as they exploded around them, not knowing where the punishing gun fire was coming from. Our equipment worked the way it was designed to because of the soldiers who maintained and operated these state-of-the-art systems.

### **3. Our Doctrine: An offensive spirit proven in the Sands of the Mojave.**

History has demonstrated that good soldiers with good equipment can be defeated if their doctrine does not allow them to exploit those advantages. Fortunately, our doctrine had completed a revolutionary process of transformation of our Army as a whole. We had moved over the course of a decade from a defensive mindset to an offensive one. AirLand battle, our inter-service doctrine published in 1986, spelled out to all commanders an organizational concept that was adopted at all levels. Ours was a competitive strategy. It sought to bring our strengths against enemy weaknesses. This doctrine had been refined in one of the Nation's most valuable resources -- the force-on-force National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California, where a

decade of grueling exercises refined and validated its lessons time and time again. Perhaps the greatest benefit of NTC, however, was that it allowed us to fight a “bloodless war” -- it let a generation of soldiers and leaders make their fatal first mistakes in a demanding training laboratory and got them past the initial shock of combat. The atmosphere of candor and openness at NTC -- epitomized by the practice of the After Action Review -- allowed the entire Army to improve in a healthy and creative manner. The result was that doctrinal innovations were rigorously tested in the crucible of NTC for almost a decade -- allowing Americans for the first time to go into battle with a developed way of fighting before the first shot was fired.

#### **4. Our Non-Commissioned Officers: the backbone of the Army.**

The Army in the last few decades has developed a system of Non-Commissioned Officer Education and Development that is the most structured and challenging in the world. I would argue that it is perhaps the greatest investment the Army has made this century. Through far-sighted leadership, we invested in developing a network of schools and -- more importantly-- a professional ethos in the non-commissioned officer corps that led to a tough, compassionate corps of junior leaders who were smarter than officers in previous wars. Our corporals and sergeants were the trainers that had the Division ready to deploy. They were the logisticians who kept our tanks, helicopters, and fighting vehicles, armed, fueled, and operational. They were the vehicle commanders who took on thousands of Iraqi tanks and fighting positions.

#### **5. Our Officers: equal to the task**

Our officers were raised in an environment that focused on combat skills above all else. They developed the philosophy that the only unforgivable sin is to fail to learn. They had been selected, trained, promoted, and developed under a most exacting system. Its purpose was to develop young men and women who could lead America’s sons and daughters under the most demanding combat situations. The results, of course, was a competent, caring officer corps that could meet any challenge and that was committed to the welfare of the American soldier.

#### **6. The American People: behind us 100 percent.**

One of the most important contributing factors to our victory was the enormous support of the American People. There was not a single soldier in the division who did not know that the entire nation was behind us. Soldiers felt this support in many ways: visits from community leaders; visits from the nation’s senior leaders, to include the President, the First Lady, and the Secretary of Defense; shiploads of mail and packages that were addressed to “Any Victory Division Soldier;” in the accurate and respectful coverage of the media; and, finally, in the Victory Parade upon our return. People around the world have always known that the American people united cannot be defeated. The American people proved this axiom again in Desert. Thanks for your support.

- **Challenges we must address.**

## **1. Keeping a capable Army.**

I have identified the keys to our success in Iraq. As all combat veterans know, a successful Army isn't built overnight. In the 1930s, the Louisiana maneuvers were essential to the development of the armored formations that punched their way across France and into the heart of Germany. In the 1970s and 1980s our nation again invested wisely in its armed forces and was rewarded by a ready force that could accomplish its assigned missions with minimal loss of friendly life. Today, we continue to refine that force. While we have the smallest Army since my father was commissioned in 1939, it is also one of the busiest ever. Operational deployments have increased more than 300 percent since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Our sons and daughters are serving with distinction in more than 100 nations. The tasks range from peacekeeping operations in Bosnia, deterrence in Korea, counterdrug missions in Latin America, institution building in the former Warsaw Pact nations, to support of domestic law enforcement agencies along the Southwest border.

We must as a nation continue to invest in that force. We must recruit our best and brightest, integrate technology, prove our doctrine and tactics in demanding training, and take care of our soldiers' families. It is not an inexpensive proposition, but it is an essential undertaking. Our Division's flag may be temporarily furled, but when it is called out once again as it surely will, we need to make sure that we have combat, combat support, and combat service support units that are ready to roll out, fight, and win. This will require the required the dedication and commitment of the entire American people. By continuing to participate in patriotic organizations such as the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Association, you can help build that national commitment.

## **2. Reducing drug use and its consequences in America.**

If America is to remain strong and to continue being the preeminent nation in the world, we must assure that we limit the debilitating consequences of drug use. We estimate that in this decade alone, drug use has cost our society more than 100,000 dead and some \$300 billion. Each year, some 500,000 Americans go to hospital emergency rooms because of drug-induced problems and 14,000 suffer drug-related deaths. Our children view drugs as the most important problem they face. Drugs and crime are a problem for all Americans, not just city residents, the poor, or minorities. Americans from every social and economic background, race, and ethnic group are concerned about the interrelated problems of crime, violence, and drugs. We fear the violence that surrounds drug markets. We abhor the effect it has on our children's lives. Americans are especially concerned about the increased use of drugs by young people. Today, dangerous drugs like cocaine, heroine, and methamphetamines are cheaper and more potent than they were at the height of our domestic drug problem fifteen or twenty years ago. In Arizona, ninety percent of homicides last year were related to methamphetamines. No nation can afford such devastating social, health, and criminal consequences.

No one should doubt that we can reduce the demand for illegal drugs. Over the past two decades, our national drug control efforts have made more progress against this problem than in any other public health area. The number of Americans who are casual drug users has dropped by fifty percent since 1979, going from twenty-five million to twelve million. The number of casual cocaine users has also dropped seventy-five percent over the past decade. Our challenges now are to further reduce drug use by half again. We've got to help the 3.6 million addicted Americans who consume two-thirds of the illegal drugs enter treatment programs. We must also help our children understand the dangers these drugs pose so that they can make smart, informed decisions about illegal drugs.

Accordingly, our *National Drug Control Policy's* number one goal is to prevent the sixty-eight million Americans under eighteen from becoming a new generation of addicts. We find it unacceptable that drug use rates have doubled among our youth since 1992; we must and will reverse this trend. In November, our government will kick-off the largest ever anti-drug media campaign. We expect to spend up to 350 million dollars a year to change social attitudes towards illegal drugs. While we know that we can't arrest our way out of the drug problem, we will also continue to uphold our severe drug laws. A million and a half Americans are now behind bars, many for drug law violations. More than a million more Americans are arrested every year for drug offenses. Incarceration is entirely appropriate for many drug-related crimes. There must be strong incentives to stay clear of drug trafficking, and prison sentences can motivate people to obey the law. Our challenge is to address the problem of chronic drug use by bringing drug testing, assessment, referral, treatment, and supervision within the oversight of the U.S. criminal justice system. We are doing so by increasing the number of drug courts that oversee treatment and rehabilitation for drug law violators and by validating other "Break the Cycle" concepts. We have also increased federal spending on drug prevention efforts by twenty-one percent in the next fiscal year. Finally, we are also investing in community-based anti-drug coalitions. Our goal is to increase the number of towns and cities that have private-public coalitions from 4,300 to more than 10,000.

### **3. A call to action.**

Each one of us can help in this important undertaking. Each Taro Division veteran has demonstrated a commitment to duty and to our society. You are leaders in your communities. When you go back home, go learn about your community's response to the drug problem. That's where the heavy lifting must be done. The drug problem is not going to be solved in Washington. It will require a commitment by parents, mentors, ministers, coaches, teachers, and community leaders to keeping illegal drugs out of your schools, neighborhoods, and towns. If this were a war, you would be on the front lines. I've provided sample speaker kits that you can take away this evening and use in your efforts back home. I encourage you to take one and to consider how you can once again help our nation in an hour of need.

CLASSIFIED UNTIL 1 March 1991



VICTORY DIVISION  
15 February 1991

24th ID (Mech)  
GENERAL ORDER TO ATTACK

Soldiers of the Victory Division--we now begin a great battle to destroy an aggressor Army and free two million Kuwaiti people. We will fight under the American flag and with the authority of the United Nations. By force-of-arms we will make the Iraqi war machine surrender the country they hold prisoner.

The 26,000 soldiers of the reinforced 24th Infantry Division will be the First to Fight. Our mission is to attack 300 kilometers deep into Iraq to block the Euphrates River Valley. Our objective is to close the escape route for 500,000 enemy soldiers in Kuwait.

On D-Day, 24th ID (M) will be the point of the spear for a general offensive by 700,000 Coalition Allied soldiers. The Victory Division attack has the central purpose to smash into the enemy rear and destroy their will to fight. The shock action and violence of the 24th Infantry Division assault will save thousands of American lives from the bloody work of fighting through the fire trenches of Kuwait.

There will be no turning back when we attack into battle. One hundred thousand American and French soldiers of XVIII Airborne Corps will fight on our flanks. We have the weapons and the military training equal to the task. We pray that our courage and our skill will bring this war to a speedy close.

In WWII, in Korea, in Saudi Arabia...the soldiers of the Victory Division have never failed America. We shall do our duty.

BARRY R. McCAFFREY  
Commander - Victory Division  
OPERATION DESERT STORM

COPY 2 OF 46 COPIES  
HEADQUARTERS  
24TH ID (M)  
SAUDI ARABIA





VICTORY DIVISION  
21 February 1991

24th Infantry Division (Mechanized)  
DESTRUCTION OF THE IRAQI ARMED FORCES

1. SECURITY: OP/LP and Chemical
2. VIOLENCE: Speed; Flank (Shoot and Then Report)
3. ARTILLERY: Mortars; Smoke
4. RISK: Work, Work, Work to Reduce
5. MAINTENANCE: Vehicles, Weapons, Commo
6. SAFETY
7. SLEEP: Water, Shave, Teeth
8. CASUALTIES: Air Evac Combat Trains; Do Not Let Bleed; Tag
9. PROTECT YOUR HONOR: Civilians and EPWs
10. PRAY

(Original Signed)  
BARRY R. McCAFFREY  
Major General, United States Army  
Commanding



12 March 1991  
Basrah Plain, Eastern Iraq

**SOLDIERS OF THE 24TH MECHANIZED INFANTRY DIVISION:**

On 24 February 1991, the 26,000 soldiers, 1,800 armored vehicles, and 6,800 wheeled vehicles of the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division Combat Team and the attached 212th Field Artillery Brigade and 36th Engineer Group attacked into Iraq. Our primary purpose was to destroy an aggressor army and to free the two million people of Kuwait. We have accomplished our mission.

In just 100 hours of battle, you attacked 370 kilometers deep into the enemy's flank and rear. We severed the Iraqi lines of communication through the Euphrates River Valley and systematically annihilated the 26th Commando Brigade, 47th and 49th Infantry Divisions, and four Republican Guards Divisions. You destroyed over 363 tanks and armored personnel carriers, 314 artillery guns and mortars, 207 anti-aircraft guns, 1,278 trucks, 19 FROG missiles, 22 MRLs, 25 enemy high-performance fighter aircraft and helicopters, and captured over 5,000 prisoners. The Victory Division also detonated over 1,300 ammunition bunkers with more than one hundred-thousand tons of munitions. The offensive capability of the Iraqi Armed Forces has been wrecked. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States are now safe.

The 24th Infantry Division's attack spearheaded the ground offensive for the Allied Coalition Force. Our advance moved farther and faster than any other mechanized force in military history. The speed, violence, and determination with which you fulfilled your mission completely destroyed the enemy's will to fight. Tactical victories such as Talill Air Base, Battle Position #102, Jalibah Air Base, Basrah Plain, and the Rumaylah Oil Field are now engraved in the history of the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division.

Each of you will return to families and to an American public filled with a great sense of pride and respect for your personal courage and sacrifices. Your accomplishments, together with thousands of other soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who took part in this battle, have rekindled a new spirit of patriotism throughout our great country. You have revitalized America's confidence in our Armed Forces. America is more safe and prouder because of your strength, discipline, and valor.

We must not forget our fallen comrades. Eight Victory Division soldiers were killed and thirty-six were wounded in this campaign. We will remember them with both dignity and honor. Their legacy is two million free Kuwaiti citizens and an enduring message to both free and oppressed people throughout the world... There is hope; Freedom is never without cost, and; Americans will fight and die for our principles.

**FIRST TO FIGHT**

(Original Signed)  
BARRY R. McCAFFREY  
Major General, United States Army  
Commanding General