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plan called “Instant Thunder.” Col Warden briefed *Instant Thunder* to General Schwarzkopf, who liked the plan and began coordinating for its implementation. *Instant Thunder* was the genesis for the plan that would eventually become the Operation DESERT STORM air campaign, which crushed Saddam Hussein’s forces over 40 days and contributed to their surrender after only 100 hours of land operations.

Why it matters today: The Checkmate Division continues to provide analysis and strategic options to the Air Staff at the Pentagon. Checkmate’s success is due to the diversity of education, experience, and backgrounds of its planners. Checkmate planners are well versed in airpower theory and doctrine, and they also understand operational design and planning methodologies such as the Joint Planning Process (Joint Publication 5-0) and the Joint Planning Process for Air (Joint Publication 3-30). In the future, as Airmen find themselves on planning teams and air staffs for air task forces or theater air components, understanding airpower theory and the methodology behind operational design and planning will enable Airmen to create, refine, and execute plans for successful operations in distributed environments.

To hear more about airpower strategy from Col (ret) John Warden himself, check out the latest Air Force Doctrine Podcast episode: “Deciphering Doctrine - Ep 17 - Col Warden (of 5 Rings’ fame) challenges our paradigms: China as a peer, US’ survival, strategy, time, and geography in conflict” available at www.doctrine.af.mil and on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon Music, and DVIDS.

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