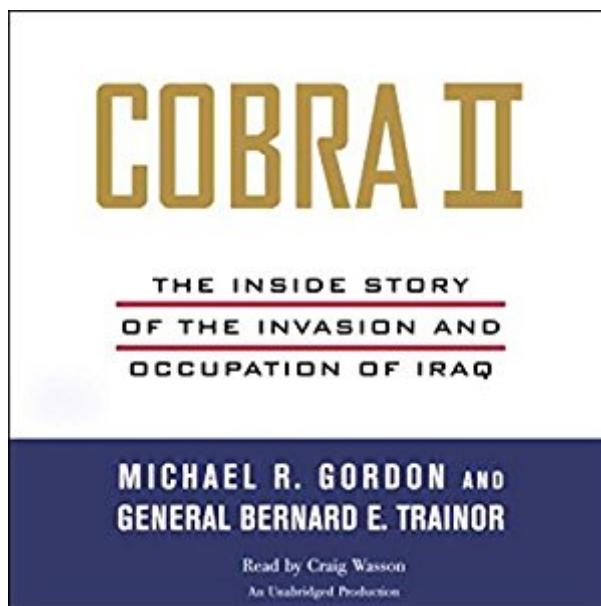


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# Cobra II: The Inside Story Of The Invasion And Occupation Of Iraq



## Synopsis

Informed by unparalleled access to still-~~secret~~ secret documents, interviews with top field commanders, and a review of the military's own internal after-action reports, *Cobra II* is the definitive chronicle of America's invasion and occupation of Iraq—a conflict that could not be lost but one that the United States failed to win decisively. From the Pentagon to the White House to the American command centers in the field, the book reveals the inside story of how the war was actually planned and fought. Drawing on classified United States government intelligence, it also provides a unique account of how Saddam Hussein and his high command developed and prosecuted their war strategy. Written by Michael R. Gordon, the chief military correspondent for The New York Times, who spent the war with the Allied land command, and Bernard E. Trainor, a retired Marine Corps lieutenant general and former director of the National Security Program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, *Cobra II* traces the interactions among the generals, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and President George W. Bush. It dramatically reconstructs the principal battles from interviews with those who fought them, providing reliable accounts of the clashes waged by conventional and Special Operations forces. It documents with precision the failures of American intelligence and the mistakes in administering postwar Iraq. Unimpeachably sourced, *Cobra II* describes how the American rush to Baghdad provided the opportunity for the virulent insurgency that followed. The brutal aftermath in Iraq was not inevitable and was a surprise to the generals on both sides; *Cobra II* provides the first authoritative account as to why. It is a book of enduring importance and incisive analysis—a comprehensive account of the most reported yet least understood war in American history. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 9 hours and 41 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 4, 2006

Language: English

ASIN: B000FAJBOG

Best Sellers Rank: #7 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Politics & Current Events > Current

## Customer Reviews

I want to give the book a review without adding a bunch of feelings concerning the subject matter. It's incredibility relevant given the rise of ISIS. It also caused me to get angry while on a beach. I had to stop reading while on vacation because it sparks so much anger. I would have like to have known more of the names of the American casualties and not simply read the numbers at times. Otherwise it was very enlightening to learn about battles I had never heard of prior. For example the Thunder Run chapter had a ton of info that I hadn't been aware about. I will say that this book helped me save some time too. I have zero desire to read Tommy Frank's book now.

Provides a good case study of how a wrong headed SECDEF can isolate the advisement community set in place by Goldwater/Nichols Act and lead and lead the Armed Forces into a quagmire. This is all too reminiscent of Vietnam and Robert McNamara. A even better written example of this is Dereliction of Duty by HR McMaster.

As a veteran of Operation Desert Spring in the months before the invasion, and as a participant of the invasion, this book helped to piece together some of the events that I experienced, but didn't understand. This is a very well-balanced and well-written book that seems to fly. It's hard to find a military history book that's a page-turner, but this is one of them. If you have any interest in the Middle East, this is a must-read.

Mind and eye opener to the extreme hardship and the ultimate sacrifice of all US forces in foreign wars. Simple men/women becoming heroes when exposed to the horror of wars. Young men/women coming home wounded and mutilated not only physically but also mentally. I realized how much I owed my own freedom to many of these heroes. The unsung heroes, the ultimate sacrifice with their life, the family they left behind, etc... make me wonder and constantly ask why. Good Lord, why? And, for certain, I am not one of those so-called liberals crying anti-war. I grew up during war time and fully understand the force of Evil. This book helps me realizing the dirty politics behind the war and also the bitterness that US men and women are sent to the killing zone without enough tools and support they are in needs. I feel angry when I read how some higher ups are making decisions without consulting the forces on the front, how some very ambitious and aggressive high rankings

decide to send their soldiers to danger. I am writing these lines because American soldiers are sacrificing for this freedom. Please read this book, it's worth your time. Warning: very emotional. Thank you soldiers. Please know that I am deeply grateful to all of you. God bless America and bless our soldiers.

"Cobra II", the recently-released book by Michael Gordon and General Bernard Trainor, tells the Iraq war story from a unique perspective. Concentrating almost entirely on the planning, invasion and occupation of Iraq, the authors relate a war strategy and deployment fraught with compound errors in judgment and administration. It is an amazingly well-told work. As in any story of conflict there are good guys and not so good ones. Gordon and Trainor are unsparingly critical of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and CENTCOM commander Tommy Franks. While Rumsfeld's views and applications have been roundly criticized before, Franks gets a harsh review in this book. The two made mistake after mistake, much of it due to their own unwillingness to hear views of others and their own self-assurance that their ways were the right ways. "Cobra II" does much to unravel their positions. If it seems early on that one easily gets bogged down by the book's heavy use of acronyms, (the military loves them and so do the authors) staying with this book is worth it. The narrative begins to unfold in a classic crescendo from the time the first U.S. troops entered Iraq and continues through a breathtaking couple of chapters describing "Thunder Run", led in part by the courageous, risk-taking Colonel Dave Perkins, with the solid overall support of Lieutenant General David McKiernan....two of the really good guys portrayed here. It's the best part of "Cobra II". What appears so new to me is that this story is a ground story (the events of the invasion, as most Americans remember them, came from reporting of air attacks). Gordon and Trainor don't just describe the plights of those who made it through... they tell also of the final moments of many soldiers who didn't come home safely. Making not much more than cameo appearances in "Cobra II" are President Bush and Vice-President Cheney, although their collective presence is channeled through Rumsfeld. The authors have, rightly I think, kept their focus on the men and women who actually were part of the invasion and occupation. The many maps (included in the front of the book) are a help in putting the invasion's movements into context. I highly recommend "Cobra II" for its sobering look at the war in Iraq. While the authors take strong positions they give a balanced account of the war, and ultimately, what went wrong with the aftermath.

Excellent details of the war at all levels. Recommended reading for military enthusiasts and practitioners. A very good read.

Cobra II and The Endgame, both books by Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, are a must read of the Iraqi war. Whether you were pro- or anti-war these books are worth reading. The story here is "wide spectrum" in the sense that they cover the political, diplomatic, and military aspects of the war. In the end it is a cautionary tale about what Barbara Tuchman called the folly of history. Excellent and highly recommended.

Outstanding book that brought together all levels of war and planning (strategic, operational, and tactical). The candid and behind-the-scenes viewpoints of the main players was spectacular.

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