



AUSA BACKGROUND BRIEF



No. 48

February 1993

Army Issue: LAND FORCE DOMINANCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The post-Cold War era of the 1990s reflects national, ethnic and cultural confrontations on every continent, many involving the use of military force. The United States has already been involved in some of the regional crises, and the potential for greater involvement in the future has increased.

U.S. security concerns are further heightened as nations acquire sophisticated, lethal military weapon systems. Consequently, future military confrontations will be increasingly dominated by high-cost, high-technology equipment and conducted over great distances.

The Army must be prepared, in coordination with the other services, to deploy anywhere in the world with the capabilities to achieve land force dominance over any adversary. As the Army downsizes, the more modern and technologically overmatching it must become.

The predominant armed forces of potential regional adversaries are land forces. Therefore, true dominance, including control by U.S. and coalition forces, is going to require land power with long term sustaining capacity. This is best provided by the U.S. Army which is trained and equipped with overmatching capabilities. Such recognized capabilities also provide the strongest deterrent.

The Army has identified five modernization objectives to attain land force dominance: project and sustain the force; protect the force; win the battlefield information war; conduct precision strikes; and dominate the battlefield.

In line with the objectives above, the modernization of the Army's military capabilities must continue in order to maintain an overwhelming advantage — land force dominance — over potential adversaries. The overall objective must be to achieve quick, decisive victory with minimum friendly casualties. To do otherwise will result in prolonged operations and increased U.S. casualties.

In order to retain overmatch capabilities, the process of modernization by the Army must be continuous because the regional power threats we wish to deter are also modernizing rapidly.

Budget pressures are putting a significant squeeze on Army resources, threatening to virtually wipe out major research, development and acquisition programs in the future. This would be a fatal mistake. We must modernize to maintain the lead in land power capabilities.

Our Army must continue to be equipped with the best weapons in the world. Essential budget resources must be provided and earmarked for this purpose. Otherwise, we could find ourselves sometime in the future (as in Korea in 1950) facing a third-rate power with weapons superior to ours.

ISSUE

At issue is the need for continued modernization of the Army. The argument for continued modernization has to point to the varied, global nature of threats to U.S. interests. The capability of the Army to win on future battlefields will be assured only through modernization to stay ahead of the capabilities obtained by potential adversaries.

BACKGROUND

Despite the end of the Cold War and the diminished threat of a major conventional and nuclear war, the United States and its allies continue to face threats that are cause for concern.

In a world that is more disorderly, more unstable and more uncertain than in the past, a well trained — albeit smaller — Army must maintain an overwhelming modernization advantage to ensure a capability for land force dominance over potential adversaries.

In conjunction with the other military services, the U.S. Army provides America the ultimate guarantee of decisive victory. When committed to war, it presents to an adversary the prospect of confronting a dramatically superior land force specifically designed to close with and defeat its military forces. When the U.S. Army occupies and controls territory, this establishes the basis for achievement of U.S. objectives.

When U.S. military forces are committed to future combat operations, the American people will demand nothing less than quick, decisive victories with minimal loss of life. This requires the capability for land force dominance.

Notwithstanding the changing world environment, diminishing funding, and a reduction in force structure, the U.S. military is still expected to win and to do so with minimum casualties. An overwhelming land force can defeat a determined enemy swiftly enough to minimize loss of life and provide the security and stability necessary to resolve regional conflicts.

Warfare, as demonstrated in Operation Desert Storm, is becoming increasingly dependent on high-cost, high-technology equipment and will be conducted over extended distances. The essence of warfare, however, remains the same — to dominate and to win. To achieve this, America's Army must maintain overmatching technological capabilities through continuous modernization.

During the next decade, regional military forces will continue to improve their capabilities by acquiring increasingly lethal and sophisticated weapons. This will occur as a result of transfers of high-technology hardware from major arms-exporting countries and the expansion of indigenous production capabilities. Accordingly, future battlefields will be characterized by:

- near real-time information necessary to develop intelligence and synchronize the employment of forces to destroy the adversary's capability to wage war;
- sensors to accurately locate targets;
- engagements using lethal weapons, many well beyond visual range;
- land maneuver forces with lethal capabilities operating at a much faster tempo, overwhelming and destroying the enemy around the clock in all types of weather.

Future conflicts involving U.S. military forces will likely involve an allied international coalition, or combined force; adversaries may also involve coalitions. For the foreseeable future, allied military coalitions will continue to rely on U.S. assistance, including high-technology weapon systems such as those used in Operation Desert Storm.

Although smaller in size, the Army will be structured to execute its modern operational warfighting doctrine. Guided by this doctrine, the Army achieved resounding victories on the recent battlefields of Panama (Operation Just Cause) and Iraq (Operation Desert Storm). These operations demonstrated the importance of land force dominance — the results of Army programs that emphasized a viable doctrine, realistic training and quality soldiers. The Army's future warfighting capabilities, based on these criteria, will have to continue to evolve to meet the challenging demands of future battlefields.

In a changing strategic environment, America's Army is not simply a smaller Cold War Army but an Army that is proactive. It seeks to direct change rather than react to external events. Threats to U.S. national interests may no longer be military forces attacking across some political boundary. Instabilities which threaten U.S. interests include those associated with ethnic strife, regional conflicts, drug-trafficking and declining resources in the international arena.

In moving toward the 21st century, the senior leadership of the U.S. Army is committed to insuring that America's Army remains the premier land force in the world, with the capabilities to deliver decisive victory anywhere and anytime that the nation requires. As America's Army becomes smaller, the more modern and technologically capable it must be.

Given a changing security environment along with the lessons learned from Just Cause and Desert Storm, the Army has identified five modernization objectives which establish the capabilities necessary to establish land force dominance. A synopsis of the five essential modernization objectives follows.

Project and sustain the force. The CONUS-based Army must be able to project and sustain its forces anywhere in the world. The limiting factor to attaining this objective is air- and sealift. Acquiring sufficient strategic mobility lift to deploy forces rapidly and to sustain them is a matter of national priority. The Army is downsizing and increasing automation to enhance its projection and

sustainment capabilities. It should be noted that the Army, unique among the services, has the mission and capability for establishing and maintaining long-term sustaining support bases on land areas.

The Army will make use of technology that provides lighter, more effective and lethal equipment to offset the reduced size of the force. To improve responsiveness in a regional crisis, the Army is reconstituting and enhancing prepositioned supplies and equipment ashore and afloat. Special attention is being paid to establishing the necessary military-related infrastructure in regions with the greatest probability of conflict, thus improving the Army's power projection capability.

Protect the force. Potential adversaries, such as China, Iran, Syria and Iraq, are quickly learning the lessons of Operation Desert Storm by acquiring modern military technology and equipment. Worldwide weapons proliferation is unprecedented and of major U.S. concern, particularly because international arms sales are being made to any country that has the money. The purchase of weapons and delivery systems is a means for countries to quickly achieve a high-technology military capability. Also, the purchase of production technology and technical expertise can significantly shorten the time for their own weapon development efforts.

Protecting U.S. forces is a critical capability and will be even more important in the future. Tactical missile defense of critical airfields, ports, population centers, troop concentrations, and command and control centers will be required in all foreseeable contingencies. Effective counterfire systems are required to destroy threat artillery forces. Combat identification — to minimize fratricide — through passive and nonpassive means is essential to identify friend and foe in all conditions to the maximum range of weapon systems.

Even with the best Air Force in the world, the Army must protect itself against enemy air threats to include ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, rockets, artillery and aircraft. Additional biological and chemical defense improvements will allow soldiers to accomplish their mission.

Win the battlefield information war. Information is key to the generation of combat power. On the battlefield, information is key to retaining the initiative and precluding casualties. A key factor in modern warfare is the ability to collect, process and use information about your adversary while preventing him from obtaining similar information about your forces.

To win the information war, America's Army will employ a wide array of electronic warfare systems to disrupt, deny and damage enemy information-gathering systems. Early on, while the threat is still blind and deaf, Army forces will use their sensors to accurately locate targets. Next, enemy locations will be relayed to appropriate commands in near real-time. Lethal weapons will then engage enemy forces, many of which will be beyond visual range, and Army maneuver forces will overwhelm and destroy enemy forces around the clock in all types of weather.

In the process, the Army has become space dependent, using satellites and other space systems to achieve this superiority. The Army's role in space and space requirements must be recognized.

The electronic communications process that will allow the Army to win the battlefield information war is called "digitization." This capability will allow the Army to fuse near-real-time data from various sources and form the intelligence needed to issue orders to appropriate commands.

Conduct precision strikes. The Army will locate, attack and destroy the enemy's capability to wage war throughout the operational area. To be effective, this requires the use of massive fires against threat maneuver formations, logistical facilities, command and control centers and all lines of communication. Fires will be launched simultaneously and at great depth throughout the battlefield. The ground commander must possess and be able to control the use of his precision weapons (such as the surface-to-surface Army Tactical Missile System) throughout the depth of the battlefield.

Precision strikes will particularly target high-value targets, at great ranges and on very short timelines, to disrupt the enemy's plans and degrade his ability to see, move and fight. At the same time the friendly forces will be protected from enemy capabilities which otherwise would be employed.

Paramount to achieving this objective are real-time intelligence coupled with concentrated, coordinated strikes by weapon systems using "smart" and "brilliant" munitions.

Dominate the maneuver battle. The American people expect, and the National Military Strategy demands, decisive and quick victories with minimum casualties. Such victories are attained by direct fire battle as maneuver forces overwhelm threat forces and destroy their combat capabilities. Thus, future Army equipment upgrades and the introduction of new weapon systems must emphasize increased range and lethality. Insertion of proven leap-ahead technologies can be made to achieve definitive overmatch capabilities in the areas of maneuver, firepower, mobility, and the digitized battlefield. System integration and access to real-time fused intelligence are key to these capabilities. All this requires a positive research and development modernization program regardless of the size of the force. Resources to do this are essential.

To guarantee decisive victory for all likely contingencies, America's Army must maintain a deployable force. The deploying Army organization would be flexible, with the appropriate mix of combat divisions, combat support and combat service support forces. The foundation for this combat structure is a viable training base, continuing weapons development and acquisition, a mobilization infrastructure and a responsive industrial base.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the new security environment, which is both unpredictable and unstable, America's Army must retain the capability to deploy to crisis areas and successfully accomplish assigned missions, be they combat or humanitarian.

Future battlefields will be characterized by increased lethality, speed and depth. U.S. criteria for success on these battlefields are to win decisively and swiftly with minimum casualties — to dominate.

America's Army is reshaping to a smaller, contingency oriented, power projection Army. The imperative to maintain a viable, continuous modernization program has never been more important. The Army must keep overmatching fielded technological capabilities and continue to modernize in the future to maintain the lead in land power capabilities. Essential budget resources must be provided and earmarked for this purpose.

To achieve land force dominance, America's Army must continually field high-payoff technologies that provide capabilities to:

- project and sustain the force;
- protect the force;
- win the battlefield information war;
- conduct precision strikes;
- dominate the maneuver battle.

Land force dominance involves adequate lift for rapid, sustainable response to a crisis; the ability to protect our forces from enemy capabilities; the ability to transfer data in a manner to enhance operational success; the employment of modern systems which leads to the destruction of enemy capabilities throughout the operational area; and well designed formations, weaponry and battlefield mobility systems to overwhelm enemy forces.

The Total Army — active and reserve components — must continue to provide the United States with the finest land force in the world. The Army must be capable of land force dominance on any battlefield while maintaining the versatility to apply its organizational skills and capabilities in support of operations other than war.

The Army is America's strategic force, in the fullest sense of the word. With a modern, deployable Army, America signals that national interests are at stake and that the nation is prepared to respond to ensure those interests are secure. The Army provides the sustained land combat power supporting the national military strategy.

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(This *Background Brief* was prepared by Colonel James B. Motley, USA Ret., PhD, an AUSA Institute of Land Warfare (ILW) Research Fellow, and the ILW staff.)

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