

---

# Defense Report

AUSA



---

## The Army's Fighting Forces—How Much is Enough?

Second guessing the leadership of the Defense Department and the military services is not a new phenomenon, and it is always open season on decisions regarding strategy, force structure and military commitments for the intellectuals of the world. They are questioning now the soundness of the Army's recent decisions regarding light infantry divisions and the addition of four divisions to the structure—two active, two reserve.

Critics include those who wring their hands over the impossible demands for more manpower and more equipment, to those who scoff that this is a meaningless gesture because we are so over-committed by our defense agreements that these additions will do nothing toward increasing our security. The truth is that, in the eyes of those critics, the Army can never be right.

In the present case, the Army has realized that, although real progress is being made, the problem of inadequate air and sealift is a long way from being solved and that the alternative is a better utilization of what we have on hand. The light infantry division is a way of making the most out of what is available now.

We also know that the Army force structure has been inadequate to the requirements expressed over the years by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as they analyze our worldwide defense commitments. Granted that we seem to remain continually over-committed, it is better to seek ways to address these commitments than to resign ourselves to inadequacy.

The Army, through such programs as logistics modernization, is finding ways of building the needed divisions within its self-imposed 780,000 manpower ceiling. We should not back down from our resolution that we need a larger Army, that we do not have an adequate support structure, but at the same time we should applaud the Army's efforts to do better with what it now has.

The sooner we achieve 18 active Army divisions and ten reserve component divisions, the sooner our credible deterrence will be enhanced. And, until someone invents self-deployable five-ton trucks or flying tanks and howitzers, the light infantry division is a good decision.