

The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 17
Number 1 *Parameters* 1987

Article 29

7-4-1987

DOD REORGANIZATION: PART II, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Don M. Snider

Follow this and additional works at: <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters>

Recommended Citation

Snider, Don M.. "DOD REORGANIZATION: PART II, NEW OPPORTUNITIES." *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* 17, 1 (1987). <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol17/iss1/29>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by USAWC Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters by an authorized editor of USAWC Press.

DOD Reorganization: Part II, New Opportunities

DON M. SNIDER

In his article in the September issue of Parameters, "DOD Reorganization: Part I, New Imperatives," Colonel Snider discussed in some detail the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and related initiatives aimed at military reform. Here the author takes the next step, addressing how the Army can implement those legislative and executive initiatives to its advantage, and to the advantage of the nation.—Editor

Having taken a look at the legislation and drawn some broad conclusions about the post-reorganization environment, what can we infer about effects on the future of the Army? Does it matter at all, or is this really a case of business as usual for the institution, albeit in a somewhat different environment? The answer is that the Army is *already* making changes, for example, implementing the joint operational specialty as a part of the Army's officer personnel management system, reducing and reorganizing HQDA to realign functions in accordance with the mandated shifts between the Army Staff and the Office of the Secretary of the Army, and working closely with the Joint Staff to implement the joint aspects of the reorganization. These efforts alone are consuming large amounts of organizational energy, particularly from our leaders. But when these efforts are completed in the coming months, is it then back to business as usual? I think not. The lofty intentions of the legislation will not all be realized, and some skepticism about what will really change is warranted. But, I believe enough will have changed to create clear opportunities for the Army—opportunities that we should pursue aggressively.

The First Opportunity: Articulating the Army's Resource Needs

It is impossible to approach the subject of Army resource needs without an awareness of three critical factors that influence the post-reorganization environment. For brevity these facts are simply stated:

1. The Army has been relatively ineffective at the political level in stating our resource needs. We are receiving a declining share of overall defense resources; we have a modernization program only one-third completed and now stretched out at a rate greater than our sister services'; and we are still attempting to support a defense strategy that is mismatched by current land force capabilities.

2. In the foreseeable future there will continue to be strong downward pressure on defense and Army budgets owing to the nation's enormous deficits, both domestic and trade, and the fundamentally broken federal budget process. At best the Army can expect to receive zero real growth in resources for fiscal years 1988-1992.

3. Arms control negotiations will provide no relief to this very constrained resource picture, and at worst may contribute to it by calls for overseas troop reductions.

Hostile as it might appear, the post-reorganization environment will give the Army new opportunities to better cope with these factors. The first opportunity for the Army in the post-reorganization environment is to use the more explicit and rational national security process to legitimately link Army roles, missions, and forces to national commitments and then for the leadership, both civilian and uniformed, to publicly articulate that linkage. That linkage, with its inherent political legitimacy, becomes the underlying rationale for Army resources. It is imperative for leadership at the political level to provide the uniformed Army with definitive vision and strategic direction, and a political strategy to accomplish the same.¹

To make this explicit linkage correctly, we will need to rethink fundamentally the basics of "Why an Army?" and more specifically "Why this particular Army?" This should not be thinking at the margin of the organization or its missions. Rather it should be deep-based thinking that insures the Army is on the right track for the first half-decade of the new environment in which Congress explicitly links strategy and forces, services decline in influence, cross-service analyses become routine for OJCS and OSD, and CINCs define theater operational concepts and influence the coalition division of labor and military roles and missions. Our rethinking should challenge Army positions on at least the following: the military

Colonel Snider prepared this article while serving as the Army's fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. He has subsequently been assigned to the staff of the National Security Council. Colonel Snider has served in several infantry, faculty, and military planning assignments, most recently as Theater Army planner in Europe; joint planner in Headquarters, Department of the Army; and Deputy Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy, HQDA. He holds graduate degrees from the University of Wisconsin and recently completed the Executive Development Program in strategic planning at Texas A&M University.

strategy (which will not last much longer in any case given the fact that it can't be resourced), allied and coalition burden-sharing, the appropriate division of labor in each global region, the split of roles and missions with our sister services, and such political constraints as the size of the Army and the future of the volunteer force. In sum, it should produce a clear organizational direction for the Army, initially independent of those of the other players, that shows how the Army wants to move into and through the new environment.

To link Army roles, missions, and forces to national commitments will also solve one of the more vexing problems of the past. With a global military strategy, the Army did not have sufficient combat forces to allocate to the multiple threats; thus we had to continue, and even increase, multiple taskings of our forces to respond to more than one theater. At the political level, this was articulated as the "spectrum of conflict" rationale, with combat forces arrayed to cover the entire spectrum. It was, and is, a valid rationale if our nation wants a capability to cover the entire spectrum on a global basis. And to a large degree that justification worked, or at least appeared to, since we were allowed to create four new divisions and additional special operations forces to fill the real void of capability at the lower end of the spectrum. However, at the political level of activity it was a cheap solution for DOD and Congress since they were not forced to make any trade-offs. The expansion was basically funded out of the Army's existent share of both manpower and budget authority.² And worse, our sister services have not supported our initiative by buying sufficient strategic lift and combat support to create a truly joint national capability at the low end of the spectrum.

As an alternative, defining the Army's role in terms of our nation's current and future commitments to other nations, alliances, and causes should enable the Army to convincingly relate combat forces, via the regional military strategy of the CINC, to a commitment that already has political legitimacy. In essence the Army has done this for years with respect to NATO and the nation's ten-division commitment there. But we could also do it elsewhere. For example, the 7th Light Infantry Division could be linked to the Pacific region in support of the CINC's deterrence of and defense against insurgencies, such as in the Philippines. This type of regional linkage, particularly for forces in the continental United States, would allow the Army to "show force" via training and nation-building missions in the region, thereby increasing public awareness and legitimacy for both Army forces and sustained security assistance programs. Explicit linkage of Army resources to national commitments through the CINC's strategy will also make it much easier at the political and strategic levels for the contributions of the other services to be seen and evaluated in terms of their ability to contribute to land warfare.

Admittedly, there is some risk to this alternative rationale when viewed from the Army's perspective in that a changing national commitment could mean loss of legitimacy for a portion of the Army. However, when viewed from the larger perspective, the nation's commitments change relatively slowly, and it always has been and will be the Army's role to expand and contract and otherwise change internal form as needed to serve the democracy. We should trust the democratic system, and take the gains that accrue in the post-reorganization environment by explicitly linking the Army, its capabilities, and its forces to clearly articulated national commitments such as NATO and Central Europe, Berlin, the peacekeeping force in Korea, access to Middle East oil, and assistance to struggling but long-standing democracies such as the Philippines and selected Latin American nations.

Before these explicit linkages can be made for the post-reorganization environment, however, the Army will need to carefully rethink where it should stand on some major political constraints and at least three major components of each linkage: (a) the appropriate burden-sharing for defense within each region, alliance, or bilateral relationship; (b) the appropriate division of military labor that is best supported by the burden-sharing potentials and also supports the combined or joint military operational concept; and (c) within the US contribution, the correct division of missions for each service. Only by knowing where the Army should stand on these constraints and each of these components can we enter the more explicit, rational environment confident of our organizational direction and ready to present an aggressive articulation of the needs of the Army. In many cases, perhaps even most of them, this rethinking will simply validate current organizational directions, but in others it could produce some significant changes. Here are some examples:

- *Alliance Burden-sharing.* Our nation's commitments are derived from economic as well as security interests, and they are normally based on an understanding of the total burden to be borne and an "equitable" distribution of defense shares. This includes some notion of our own net advantage as well as our allies' ability to pay for their part of the collective effort.³ Thus the nation, and the Army, have recently increased efforts in the Pacific region to keep US activities roughly in line with current and future economic interests.

However, it is clear that our Pacific allies' ability to pay for regional defense is greater than that of our allies in any other region of the world, and will remain so for the foreseeable future.⁴ Conversely, the capability of our Western European allies has diminished significantly, with nothing but slow growth predicted for the future. Understanding that for at least the next four years the Army's capabilities will fail to grow, we should rethink how much of our limited capabilities we should commit to the

Pacific region, at least until our allies are making a contribution more in line with their capabilities. While some of them, notably Japan, have increased their allocation of resources for their defense, it is quite another thing to say that they are contributing to the regional defense commensurate with their economic ability.⁵

Given the relative intractability of our bilateral economic relations, this anomaly will not soon be lost at the US political level, witness the sentiment for protectionist trade legislation emerging from the 100th Congress. Neither should it be lost in the Army's rethinking. In a post-reorganization environment in which the elements of a grand strategy are explicit before Congress, and in which economic policy and national security policy must be publicly rationalized, the Army should be cautious with military initiatives in the most economically capable region of the world until acceptable burden-sharing is established.

- *The Military Division of Labor.* Each of the linkages to a national commitment must also evince the most efficient division of military labor among contributors so as to gain political legitimacy for each contributor and to allow the Army to carefully husband and allocate its capabilities among several commitments. The Army's theater air defense and tactical missile defense capabilities are cases in point. Because of the nature of the military function, and the principle of a nation's sovereign right to control its own airspace, these forces will almost always be forward-deployed in peacetime and under the control of the host nation's military or civilian agencies. Should the Army continue to provide overseas operational air defense forces other than bare base commitments? Or is this not a logical candidate for a different division of labor which will return some manpower resources back to the Army to perform functions our allies cannot, and simultaneously rationalize alliance contributions for greater political legitimacy on both sides? This is not to single out the air defenders; the same question could and should be asked of several other military functions as the Army rethinks its commitments.

- *US Services' Roles and Missions.* This component has recently received much attention with the passage of the DOD Reorganization Act and subsequent publication of a new statement of guidance for joint activities.⁶ Many issues, formerly intractable, now should be workable.⁷ It is also clear, to repeat, that Congress will continue to require periodic public reviews. Thus the Army's rethinking should continually be based on the most effective support of the CINC's operational concepts and the most efficient use of the military department's support and training capabilities. In the future economic environment it will be increasingly difficult to defend the creation by two services of the capability to execute the same military function in the same region while other functions go unfulfilled, e.g. both the Army and the Air Force creating close air support capabilities for the

We should reflect on the Navy's Maritime Strategy It is not a statement of approved US military strategy.

main battle in central Europe while sufficient strategic airlift does not exist to reinforce that or other regional commitments. The Army's rethinking should isolate those few changes, if any, we would want to make in the roles and missions component and provide the integrated rationale to make that a part of the linkage to national commitments.

The most apparent of the political constraints the Army must rethink is the active-duty strength ceiling that has been negotiated with Congress and maintained for the past six years and the inflexible manning approach used in the reserve components. Certainly the ceiling has provided some major benefits in terms of stability and it has kept the manpower share of force costs from exploding in the all-volunteer era. But it has also forced a shift of major missions into the reserve components, where the constraint on manning and training means that the Army will always have critical, early deploying reserve component units that are not mission-ready.

In sum, it is in the Army's best interest to carefully sort out, very early in the post-reorganization environment, where the Army should stand on each of these problems, and then articulate the Army's needs in terms of clear, rational linkages to our national commitments. We should then lead the other participants, not as an honest broker, but as an aggressive player at the political and strategic levels, for the resolution the Army needs. If we do not, many of these issues may be resolved in the new environment to our detriment by the Congress, our sister services, the CJCS and the Joint Staff, or even the think tanks, with only our reactive involvement.

It should be noted, of course, that there are other levels of military activity besides the political where such an articulation of aims is currently needed. In the next few years as the DOD reorganization takes effect, military organizational activity at the strategic and operational levels will expand from its historical focus on the service staffs in Washington to the staffs of the combatant commands, allied headquarters, and defense agencies around the world. The Army's needs and views should be clearly and consistently articulated at all of these levels simultaneously. We should reflect on the Navy's Maritime Strategy and recognize it for what it does, as well as what it does not do, as is more normally the case. Contrary to much public opinion, it is not a statement of approved US military strategy,³ and even as a statement of desirable military strategy elements of it have been

roundly criticized throughout the literature.⁹ But what it does is superbly articulate organizational direction from a high, politically connected level. The Army could do the same, even better, since in our case we would build, at least initially, upon already approved national commitments and military strategy.¹⁰ Once the anomalies among commitments, strategy, missions, and forces are clear to all, the situation might call for some changes to commitments within what is politically feasible, some strategic innovations, or even changes to force deployments, including the Army's. But at least a consistent articulation of the Army's needs would be present in all of these dispersed locations at once, locations from which major influences upon the Army are going to be created by staff officers of all services serving the CINC at the operational level. And therein lies the Army's second opportunity.

The Second Opportunity: Filling the Joint Doctrinal Void

The second and third opportunities are logical extensions of the first. The second lies at the operational level of activity: those activities that analyze, select, and develop institutional concepts and doctrines for employing major forces to achieve strategic objectives within a theater of war.

Currently, joint operational doctrine is essentially a void, at least for conventional warfare and low-intensity conflict. This has been one of the major areas of weakness in military operations since Vietnam. It has been a theme throughout the reform movement, and the DOD reorganization legislation makes explicit provisions for filling this void. As was noted earlier, the CJCS has full authority now to resolve doctrinal issues, and he has already reorganized the Joint Staff for this and other purposes. Clearly, in the post-reorganization environment, joint doctrine is going to be created. The only question is by whom. The Army can be the leader in its development. This is entirely logical for the Army since we are the service most in need of such doctrine to assure our sister services' support for our primary mission, and since we are the service that has already led the way with the Joint Force Development Process.¹¹

This is also logical when viewed within the hierarchy of activities taking place at the strategic and operational levels. Theoretically, at least, service doctrine supports joint doctrine which the CINCs use to fight theater campaigns in support of regional military strategies, each an integral part of the overall national military strategy. And, theoretically, the CINCs are to do this with service forces that have unique capabilities based on roles and missions that have been rationalized among each other and with the allies. But nothing is yet this clear and sequential in the current world, so the filling of the joint doctrinal void will be an iterative process with a lot of feedback among strategy, roles, missions, and joint doctrine. The location of this innovative work will shift away from the service staffs in Washington to the

CINC staffs and those of their components and allies, all working in coordination with the Joint Staff. In the past each service has developed its own service doctrine at different organizational levels, and with different intents as to whether or not it was even supportive of joint operations (the exception is the Joint Force Development Process). However, to the extent that the post-reorganization environment fosters more explicit relationships and trade-offs among commitments, strategy, and forces, joint and coalition doctrine become the key linchpins between strategy and forces, and thus the basis for legitimate requests for resources. Simply stated, in the future joint and coalition doctrine will support resource requests much better than will independent service doctrine. If the post-reorganization environment develops as intended by the Congress, political legitimacy will simply not accrue to independent service doctrine.

The Army should start now to be the leader in this area, leading in each region with each CINC's staff. We should start by rethinking how the Army's doctrinal community can best interface with the doctrinal development apparatus of the CINC, and that of the regional coalition if applicable. We need to rethink both the process and the roles of each player, particularly those of the service component commander and his staff. It should be expected that a flexible approach, uniquely fitting the needs of each region, might be the most effective. But regardless of process or organization, the most critical element from the Army's perspective will be the individual officers out in these separate locations doing this innovative, creative doctrinal work. Therein lies the Army's third opportunity.

The Third Opportunity: Manning the Joint Arena

The third opportunity for the Army in this post-reorganization environment is to man critical positions throughout DOD with some of our best young officers, particularly at the combatant command, allied, and defense agency headquarters. This will be difficult to do because the Army, as much as the other services, has strong cultural biases as to how Army officers should be developed and used, particularly general officers. As always, the critical question is to determine for the future environment what Army officers should be, and be capable of doing. Being and doing are the essence; the education and training systems should then be conformed to support those conceptions.

The importance of this third opportunity offered by the DOD Reorganization Act should not be overlooked. Some believe that it will be, over the long run, the single most important aspect of the legislation. Professionally we must recognize that quality people are absolutely essential to the efficient operation of macro organizations, particularly those undergoing extensive change. The current CJCS, Admiral William Crowe, puts it this way:

No matter how much we tinker with the system, one problem will remain: How do we get the people who can deal with such thorny problems—people in uniform who are expert in their warfighting specialties and also able to assist the National Command Authorities in matters of strategy, policy, resource allocation, and operations?¹²

Thus, the clear intent of the reorganization legislation is for each service to develop a set of “joint specialists” to be used throughout the joint arena. The Army should fulfill that intent in spirit as well as letter for several reasons. First, we have the quality people that are needed. Second, critical decisions are going to be made starting early in the post-reorganization environment, and many of them will not be made in Washington. The Army needs to be strongly represented in that decentralized process.

There is a third reason the Army should fully support the intent of the legislation. It is the logical thing to do. Now, and increasingly in the future, there simply is not enough time in a normal career for an officer to be trained and developed to the depth required, both as a branch specialist fully proficient in Army operations and doctrines, and also as a joint specialist in areas such as strategy, joint planning, and joint operations. The eventual solution, once Congress is convinced of our desire to meet the legislative intent, will be to move toward a separate developmental track for joint specialists that essentially leaves them in that specialty once entered, probably after battalion command. As the complexity of war continues to increase, specialization of officers by education, training, and utilization will inevitably follow.

Some innovation will be required to do this, and the Army will have to rethink some traditions. For example, the joint specialty track will be much better supported when the Army accepts the staff model of our sister services, the joint headquarters, and most of our Western allies. This would divide the functionally overburdened DCSOPS (whose major staff functions now include strategy, planning, operations, training, and force development) into at least two positions. This change, and other innovations like it, could create a track for joint specialists from major through lieutenant general—staff officers fully proficient in the joint specialties and roughly alternating between joint and Army billets. This would free other Army officers to concentrate on the demanding branch tracks to provide fully proficient land combat commanders, acquisition specialists, etc., as is currently done from major through general.

Even with innovations and changes to deeply held traditions, the manning of the joint arena will be difficult to implement given the current and potential officer reductions. However, we should persevere. As the Army is rethinking linkages to national commitments and beginning to work

the joint doctrinal issues, we need to send out more of our best officers, understanding that we must "give up some of the grape juice to later enjoy the wine." If we believe that the reorganization has fundamentally changed things, that the future is not business as usual for the Army, then logic demands we use our current and future officer talent in this manner.

These, then, are the opportunities that the post-reorganization environment presents to the Army at the political, strategic, and operational levels of activity: to move out of the honest-broker role and become the leader in the high-level debates of the next few years by redefining and articulating organizational direction for the Army, linking it to our nation's national commitments for improved legitimacy for resource requests; taking the lead in the long, vital effort to fill the joint doctrinal void; and preparing our officer corps for the future by sending more of our best officers into the joint arena. Aggressive organizations will always be faced with more good options than they can execute, but for the Army the foregoing choices at least are mandatory.

NOTES

1. Gerald D. Keim, et al., "New Directions in Corporate Political Strategy," *Sloan Management Review*, 25 (Spring 1984), 53-62; and Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence* (New York: Random House, 1985), pp. 284-87.
2. The Army share of DOD budget authority and active-duty manpower have remained almost constant (budget authority declining slightly and active manpower increasing slightly) since FY 1984, when the light divisions were initiated. See US Department of the Army, Comptroller of the Army, *The Army Budget, Fiscal Year 1987* (Washington: GPO, 1986), pp. 3, 22.
3. Klaus Knorr, "Burdensharing in NATO: Aspects of US Policy," *Orbis*, 29 (Fall 1985), 517-21, 535.
4. Walter Galenson and David Galenson, "Japan and South Korea," in *Constraints on Strategy: The Economics of Western Security*, ed. David Denoon (Elmsford, N.Y.: Pergamon Brassey's, 1986), pp. 174-91.
5. Robert Lockwood, "Equity in Burdensharing Between US and Its Allies With an Application to Japan," *Asian Perspective*, 9 (Spring-Summer 1985), 110-15.
6. *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, better known as "JCS Pub 2," was republished by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in December 1986 to accommodate the new authorities of the Reorganization Act. However, no substantive changes in major roles and missions were made.
7. An example is the 1986 decision by the Commandant of the Marine Corps to modify the role of Marine air and allow it to come under the theater air component commander for allocation, if need be, to non-Marine ground forces. This type of decision, many of which have been stalled for years, will be much more prominent in the post-reorganization environment.
8. The Navy's Maritime Strategy as published in the press and unclassified literature is not approved US military strategy. The only source for such approved strategy is the classified Joint Strategic Planning Document, recommended by the JCS and approved by the Secretary of Defense.
9. John J. Mearsheimer, "A Strategic Misstep: The Maritime Strategy and Deterrence in Europe," *International Security*, 11 (Fall 1986), 3-57.
10. The clearest and most cogent arguments for Army support for some form of the current conventional strategy, rather than a separate landpower formulation, are in Carl Bilder, "The Army in the Strategic Planning Process: Who Shall Bell the Cat?" *US Army Concepts Analysis Agency, Technical Paper 86-12* (Bethesda, Md., 1986), pp. 86-93.
11. The Joint Force Development Process was initiated by the Army and Air Force Chiefs of Staff in May 1984 to consolidate separate and diverse service ventures into one coherent process.
12. William J. Crowe, Jr., "Senior Officer Education, Today and Tomorrow," *Parameters*, 17 (Spring 1987), 4.