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The Brigade-Based New Army

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The time has come for the United States Army to adopt the combat brigade as its basic combined arms organization instead of the division. New weapons provide increased lethality and range for all parties to a future conflict, making it desirable to reduce the size and increase the flexibility of fighting formations. New communications and information processing capabilities make it possible to do so.[1]

The division has served the Army well in previous wars, but the division is too large and cumbersome to fit the needs of the battlefields of the 21st century. The Army adopted divisions in the Civil War for an Army equipped with short-range rifled muskets and artillery that could shoot about as far as the musket. Although the conditions and technology of warfare have changed drastically, the Army has stayed with the division.

Over the years, the size of the division has ranged from 10,000 to 28,000 but the general idea has stayed the same. In World War I, the square infantry division had 28,000 soldiers, was organized into two brigades of two infantry regiments each, and was designed to provide sufficient strength and slugging power to make the frontal attacks used in the trench warfare of that era. During World War II, the triangular infantry division had about 15,500 troops, was organized into three infantry regiments, and was designed for simplicity and flexibility. This triangular division was not entirely satisfactory because it did not have all the kinds of units needed for combined arms warfare. Additional tank, tank destroyer, cavalry, and anti-aircraft artillery battalions were habitually attached to the World War II infantry divisions to beef them up. The World War II armored division was designed to provide shock power and flexibility and had about 11,000 troops organized into six tank and armored infantry battalions that were assigned to one of three tactical control headquarters (combat commands) as the combat situation indicated. The airborne division of World War II had a strength of about 10,000 troops and was designed to fit into the aircraft of that era. The Army fought the Korean War with beefed-up World War II infantry divisions of about 17,500 personnel. In both World War II and the Korean War, a common practice was to task-organize divisions into three regimental combat teams (RCTs), each consisting of an infantry regiment, a battalion of artillery, a company of engineers, a reconnaissance element, a tank battalion, and some support elements. There were also numerous separate RCTs that were not part of divisions.[2]

Since the Korean War, the Army has adjusted its division structure several times to meet changing conditions. The Pentomic Division of the 1950s was designed for nuclear warfare with 13,500 troops organized into five battle groups; it eventually was believed to be too light for conventional warfare. In the 1970s, the Army adopted a standard design for all of its divisions that had about 16,000 soldiers organized into 9 to 11 infantry and tank battalions that were assigned to one of three tactical control elements called brigades in accordance with the tactical situation. This design is still in effect in theory, although in practice the desired flexibility has diminished as administrative constraints and conservative tactics have reduced the amount of flexibility attained.

The current division is in reality a combined arms formation composed of three relatively fixed combat brigade task forces (BTFs), an aviation brigade, and a small division base. Each BTF has a mix of infantry and tank battalions, a direct support artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, a composite service forward support battalion, and companies and detachments to provide reconnaissance, signal, and other support capability.[3] The aviation brigade provides a capability for aerial attack and tactical mobility. The residual division base (once the BTFs have been formed) provides capabilities for reconnaissance, communications, and additional combat service support. Each BTF has a mix of combat units and enough combat support and combat service support units to conduct operations as a (partially) self-contained combined arms team. BTFs closely resemble the RCTs of World War II and Korea.

The de facto organization of divisions into three brigade task forces diminishes the ability of the division commander and staff, division engineer, division support command commander, and (to a lesser extent) the division artillery commander to influence combat operations. Most of the division base is dispersed to the BTFs. Since we have effectively abandoned the practice of habitual reassignment of combat battalions and combat support elements from one brigade to another during combat, the division level adds little that the corps level cannot provide directly. This creates the opportunity to employ the brigade task forces directly under corps command without disrupting the general organizational scheme of the army-in-the-field.

All large organizations tend to be conservative in retaining outmoded policies and organizational concepts. This is true in particular of military organizations for whom the tried and true is understandably more attractive than the new and risky. However, the time is ripe for the Army to eschew the conventional wisdom, shed the legacy of the past, and look to the future.

In its deliberations about Force XXI, the Army highlights dominant battlefield awareness, digitization, the electronic battlefield, getting inside the "OODA loop," and other worthwhile new things, but stays with the same old hierarchy for the army-in-the-field. It is easy to talk about new operational concepts, but it is hard even to contemplate discarding the division. It is encouraging, however, that one of the main vehicles being used by the Army to evaluate change is the brigade combat team of the EXFOR.[4] This may indicate that the Army realizes that a "revolution" in military affairs has to be more than merely adding new weapons and converting to digital devices. Previous such revolutions have produced significant changes in organization and tactics to suit new weapons and technology and to maximize combat potential.[5] Indeed, previous revolutions in military affairs have been epitomized by major changes in organizational structure.

A simple but substantial change would be to eliminate the division level entirely and create an army-in-the-field composed of new combat brigades as the basic fighting formations organized into new corps.

New Combat Brigades

New combat brigades would include three or four infantry or tank maneuver battalions, as well as reconnaissance, aviation, engineer, combat support, and service support battalions, and a headquarters battalion with a variety of combat support elements. These brigades would vary from 5000 to 6000 in strength, as opposed to 10,000 to 18,000 for divisions. Modern technology, however, could provide the same--or more--combat power as current divisions. Figure 1, below, shows one possible version of a new combat brigade.

3-4 Maneuver Battalions @ 600-800 troops	3,000
1 Reconnaissance Battalion	400
1 Artillery Battalion	600
1 Air Defense Battery	150
1 Engineer Battalion	450
1 Headquarters Battalion	650
.....1 Headquarters & Headquarters Company	
.....1 Signal Company	
.....1 Military Police Platoon	
.....1 Chemical Company	
.....1 Civil Affairs Company	
1 Brigade Support Battalion	750
.....1 Headquarters & Headquarters Company	
.....1 Logistical Operations Center	
.....1 Supply & Services Company	
.....1 Light-Medium Truck Company	
.....1 DS-GS Maintenance Company	
.....1 Medical Company	
Total strength:	6,000

Figure 1. A New Combat Brigade.

The same basic kinds of combined arms organizations that are in the division-based army would exist in the new brigade-based army. There would be brigades of light infantry, armor, mechanized infantry, airborne, and air assault forces. Cavalry brigades similar to the current armored cavalry regiments would be corps-level reconnaissance elements.

The new combat brigades would be powerful combined arms organizations with more combat potential than World War II divisions. Figure 2, below, compares the strength and major weapons and equipment of the World War II divisions, current divisions, and new combat brigades.[6] The current light infantry division is comparable to the World War II infantry division in strength and numbers of infantry and artillery weapons but has much higher combat potential because of its attack helicopters and improved fire control systems. The current armored division is not quite twice as large as its World War II predecessor but has much more than twice the combat potential. The proposed new armored brigade would have about one-third the strength but almost half the capability of the current armored division. The new light infantry brigade would have one-half the strength and more than half the capability of the light infantry division.

	WWII Infantry Division	WWII Armored Division	Light Infantry Division	Heavy Armored Division	New Heavy Brigade	New Light Brigade
Strength:	13,412	10,937	11,146	18,538	6,000	5,000
Battalion Mix						
Light Infantry Battalions	0	0	9	0	0	4
Infantry Battalions	9	0	0	0	0	0
Mechanized Infantry Battalions	0	3	0	4	2	0
Tank Battalions	0	6	0	6	2	0
Apache Battalions	0	0	1	2	1	2
Weapons & Equipment						
Rifles, automatic weapons	6,465	4,866	7,686	11,825	5,000	4,000
Machine guns	656	869	1,212	1,561	600	600
Grenade machine guns	0	0	119	331	100	50
Anti-tank guns	63	0	0	0	0	0
Anti-tank missile launchers	0	604	206	633	40	24
Mortars	144	0	0	66	40	0
105mm howitzers	54	54	54	0	0	32
155mm howitzers	12	0	8	72	32	8
MLRS launchers	0	0	0	9	9	3
Air defense guns	0	0	0	24	8	8
Helicopters	0	0	117	91	30	60
Tanks	0	263	0	375	125	0
Armored fighting vehicles	0	0	0	363	125	0

Armored personnel carriers	0	501	0	365	180	0
Other armored vehicles	0	0	0	439	140	0
Wheeled vehicles	1,640	2,653	1,856	3,575	1,000	1,000

Figure 2. Comparison of World War II and Current Divisions and New Brigades.

The comparisons in Figure 2 suggest that the new brigades would be formidable combined arms organizations. New weapons, such as armed helicopters and infantry fighting vehicles, improved weapons, such as artillery, and greater numbers of weapons and equipment, such as tanks and wheeled vehicles, allow organizations with the same number of soldiers to generate much greater combat potential than before.

New Corps

Corps would be formed with a mix of combat brigades, as well as artillery, air defense, engineer, signal, and military police brigades, plus combat support brigades of various other types. Combat service support would be provided by a corps support command organized into brigade direct support battalions and general support groups. Doctrine, organization, and procedures would be about the same as now, but the formations would be smaller.

The new corps would have a strength of about 65,000 troops and would consist of smaller versions of the same kinds of organizations that constitute the current large corps. Figure 3, below, shows a possible corps for the brigade-based Army.

Corps Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion	500
6 Combat Brigades	36,000
1 Cavalry Brigade	4,500
1 Combat Aviation Brigade	3,500
2-3 Artillery Brigades	5,000
1 Air Defense Brigade	2,000
1 Combat Engineer Brigade	2,500
1 Corps Signal Brigade	1,500
1 Corps Military Intelligence Battalion	750
1 Corps Military Police Battalion	750
1 Corps Chemical Battalion	500
1 Corps Civil Affairs Brigade	500
1 Corps Support Command	7,000
.....6 Brigade Support Battalions	
.....2 General Support Groups	
Total strength:	65,000

Figure 3. A New Corps.

Conversion to New Combat Brigades

It would be possible to change to a brigade-based Army by converting the divisional brigades in each of the existing active and National Guard divisions to separate brigades. Figure 4, below, shows a possible alignment were all of the 73 divisional and separate brigades in the active and reserve components in June 1997 to be converted to separate brigades of generally the same type as the divisions from which they would be drawn. For comparison, the same figure portrays a concept for conversion if the force is reduced to the levels recommended by DOD in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The latter reflects some changes in the post-QDR force consistent with my argument in this article.

Type	Current Force			QDR Force		
	Active	Reserve	Total	Active	Reserve	Total

		Component			Component	
Airborne	3	0	3	1	0	1
Air Assault	3	0	3	1	0	1
Light Infantry	6	10	16	2	6	8
Infantry	3	10	13	0	0	0
Mechanized	9	13	22	13	12	25
Armored	6	7	13	10	8	18
Cavalry	2	1	3	5	4	9
Totals	32	41	73	32	30	62

Figure 4. New Brigades from Conversion of the Current Force and the QDR Force.

One result of the QDR and the Off-Site Agreement among the Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, however, is that the Army National Guard could lose 11 combat brigades. Such a post-QDR Army force structure would have only 62 brigades: 32 active and 30 National Guard, as indicated in Figure 4. At this writing there have been no decisions on the number and mix of brigade types in the Army QDR force structure.

The Army has indicated its desire to convert all 30 National Guard brigades to light infantry to provide a constabulary force primarily for domestic operations, a proposal unacceptable to the National Guard. A possible outcome of the ongoing assessment of Army force structure is a series of marginal changes that produces a politically palatable mix, but one that is not necessarily consistent with the needs of the national military strategy.

On the basis of six new combat brigades and one new cavalry brigade per corps, nine new corps headquarters would be needed to command the 62 combat brigades in the post-QDR force structure compared to 10 headquarters if the current force were to be retained. The post-QDR force would require about 585,000 personnel in combat, combat support, and combat service support organizations in the corps themselves. Additional military personnel and external support would have to be provided in the echelons above corps to round out the structure for a mature theater of operations.

Conversion to a new brigade-based Army would provide an opportunity to establish the mix of separate brigades that makes the most sense in light of the kinds of wars we think we may have to fight. To examine how the new combat brigades could be formed into new corps in the post-QDR force, the mix will be adjusted to show one way that this can be done.

Changes in the Brigade Mix

In the process of allocating new combat brigades to the new corps, some changes in the mix of brigades from that of the division-based Army are considered here to illustrate how the organization of the corps demands certain changes and permits consideration of others that--depending on one's viewpoint--may or may not be desirable.

- . In the new Army, each of the nine corps would be allocated a cavalry brigade to perform the reconnaissance and screening function. In the division-based Army the cavalry function was diminished, and the doctrinal allocation of one armored cavalry regiment per corps was not provided. If this is an important function for modern combat, this or some other allocation of cavalry forces is required.

- . Light infantry brigades would be assigned on the basis of one per corps. The current division-based Army's light infantry brigades have proved to be of limited utility in major regional conflict scenarios, so some reduction is warranted. However, light infantry can be useful to a corps commander in a variety of roles, and some of them should

be retained for regional wars and also for small-scale contingencies.

. The number of airborne and air assault brigades would be reduced from six to two. The unique feature of an airborne brigade is its capability to conduct a parachute assault to seize an airhead or airfield. In a smaller Army, there is probably a need for only one brigade with this specialized capability. Similarly, there is less need for specialized air assault units now that aviation has become an integral element of most other combat formations. The real requirement for special air assault brigades may well be zero, but one is retained in this example in case the capability is required.

. The remainder of the brigades--two-thirds of the total--would be mechanized infantry or armored brigades. It is tempting to combine these two types into the single category of heavy brigades because they have the same kind of brigade base. In the past they have differed only in whether there was a slight predominance of mechanized infantry battalions or tank battalions within the brigade. The new Army should probably resist the temptation to have a single heavy brigade type; we should differentiate between essentially infantry formations with tank support and armored forces with balanced tank-infantry teams. This doctrinal issue is important as the Army faces the future, and it should be addressed directly in the process of establishing the new Army.

. Each of the corps would have an aviation brigade. Army aviation assets should be reconfigured to conform to the new brigades, with an aviation battalion for each new combat brigade and an aviation brigade for each of the nine new corps.

. Field artillery, air defense, combat engineer, and other combat support and combat service support units and headquarters would also be assigned or earmarked for the nine new corps as corps troops.

Figure 5, below, illustrates a possible allocation of combat brigades to the nine new corps (numbered from one to nine for convenience) in the post-QDR force. The figure also shows possible locations of the corps headquarters. The locations may indicate the missions for some of the corps, but they do not mean that all corps units have to be in that location. I Corps, for example, would include all units located in South Korea, but it would also include units on the West Coast of the United States earmarked for I Corps. Each corps would be an integrated formation with forces assigned or earmarked from all branches and components of the Army and from other services as appropriate. Corps commanders would have responsibility in peacetime for the readiness and training of their assigned active units and designated reserve component units, and they would have responsibility in wartime for fighting these units.

	Airborne	Air Assault	Light Infantry	Mechanized	Armored	Cavalry	Total
I Corps (Korea)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
II Corps (Ft. Drum)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
III Corps (Ft. Hood)	0	0	1	2	3	1	7
IV Corps (Ft. Bragg)	1	1	0	2	1	1	6
V Corps (Europe)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
VI Corps (Ft. Lewis)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
VII Corps (Ft. Stewart)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
VIII Corps (Ft. Riley)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
IX Corps (Ft. Knox)	0	0	1	3	2	1	7
Totals	1	1	8	25	18	9	62

Figure 5. Allocation of New Combat Brigades to New Corps.

These proposed changes in brigade mix will undoubtedly be contentious, but they make sense in terms of the new

Army organization. As the final corps composition is determined in the process of converting to the new Army, considerations of mission and stationing would likely result in different mixes. One option would be to design each corps to include brigades from roughly the same geographic region, which could help in training. But the proposed lineup is not completely satisfactory; consider, for example, whether I Corps Headquarters should be in Korea or Hawaii. The solution might be to put I Corps Headquarters in Korea with a Deputy Corps Commander and a small staff in Hawaii. The proposed changes in brigade composition are significant. Furthermore, many of the current light infantry brigades have been converted in this example to mechanized infantry or armored brigades. These changes cannot be made overnight nor without some effort, but they can occur in such a way as to provide a better overall combat structure than the current organization. It is entirely likely that were the Army to convert to a brigade-based Army, the mix would differ from my illustrative example--perhaps substantially.

Advantages of a Brigade-Based Army

A decision by the Army to adopt a brigade-based structure would:

- . Eliminate an entire layer of field command. By having separate brigades report directly to corps, the entire division layer of command would be eliminated. This would simplify command and control; headquarters staff and support personnel would probably be absorbed into the new corps structure. New communications technology and the application of computers make it possible for a combined arms headquarters to command and control a larger number of subordinate headquarters than was previously considered feasible. This flatter organization would make it possible to eliminate overhead without diminishing combat potential.
- . Improve the mix of combat forces. The Army could concentrate more of its limited resources into general-purpose combat formations capable of engaging in a wide range of combat operations. The current Army has half of its active combat brigades in special-purpose divisions--one airborne, one air assault, and three light infantry. These divisions are ill-suited for conventional operations in Korea, Southwest Asia, and many other potential combat theaters. Moving down to the brigade level would allow the Army to retain adequate amounts of these specialized capabilities in smaller packages. It would not be necessary to maintain an entire airborne division to have a parachute assault capability that can be provided by one separate airborne brigade. The active Army would have fewer light brigades (airborne, air assault, and light infantry) and more of the more generally useful mechanized and armored brigades.
- . Simplify the stationing of active formations. Five of the Army's ten active divisions are not stationed entirely at the same post because of the imperatives of forward deployment and the desire to occupy installations that might otherwise become targets for base closures. Divisions in Korea, Germany, and Hawaii have only two brigades each, with their third brigades stationed in the continental United States as de facto separate brigades. The 10th Mountain Division has two brigades at Fort Drum; its third brigade is stationed in Alaska to provide a presence there. These awkward arrangements that attempt to fit whole divisions into a reduced active Army would no longer be necessary if the divisions were converted to new combat brigades. Some installations that currently cannot be "covered" by a major formation might become the homes of some of the new combat brigades.
- . Improve support to National Guard organizations. Five of the eight current National Guard divisions are spread among two or three states. This arrangement is workable, but it creates some funding and administrative problems. In a brigade-based Army, new National Guard combat brigades could be created with units from within a single state.
- . Preserve the lineage of historical combat organizations. A not-unimportant advantage of the brigade-based Army is that the new Army could preserve as new combat brigades the lineage and colors of as many as 62 of the 89 divisions and 15 separate regimental combat teams that fought in World War II.
- . Accommodate to force structure changes. Organizing the combat potential of the Army in smaller packages would make it easier to accommodate force structure changes, such as the reductions mandated in the recent QDR. It would also make it easier in the future to expand combat power by obtaining cadres from separate brigades to form and train

new separate brigades.

. Integrate active and reserve component combat formations at the corps level. Converting to a brigade-based Army would make it normal to have both active and National Guard brigades in each new corps. The corps headquarters and the active brigades would be able to deploy rapidly, to be joined after suitable post-mobilization, pre-deployment training by the National Guard brigades. Making active corps commanders responsible for both their active and National Guard brigades would increase the likelihood that National Guard brigades would be both ready and used. In a climate of fiscal austerity, it makes good sense to make best use of both the active and National Guard brigades to maximize combat potential for both the short term and the long haul.

The Probable Major Defect

Every good idea has at least one drawback. The biggest defect of a brigade-based Army might be the question of the rank of the commanders of the combat brigades. The one characteristic of a division that has not changed since the Civil War is the rank of its commander--major general.

Eliminating the divisions would also eliminate the command positions for 18 major generals. This could be a crucial factor that outweighs all the other considerations. One of the principal reasons--but not the only reason--why the Pentomic Division was abandoned was that it did not provide a command slot for lieutenant colonels (majors commanded companies, and colonels commanded battle groups). The Army did not want to disrupt its carefully tuned officer management system that called for lieutenant colonels to command battalions. Similarly, elimination of combat command positions for major generals might preclude adopting a brigade-based Army.

There are some good reasons to consider carefully the rank of the brigade commanders. In the current Army officer management system, the rank of brigadier general is the entry level into the general officer ranks, and it provides a proving ground to determine which of the new generals are good enough to move up. Only about half of the brigadier generals are promoted to major general. It might not make sense to place these apprentice generals into perhaps the most important command positions in the Army. On the other hand, it might not be acceptable to have major generals command the new combat brigades, even if they are comparable to World War II divisions.

One approach would be to have each of the new corps commanded by a lieutenant general with two major general deputies. In fast-moving modern warfare, the deputies would be valuable to command special task forces, provide adequate oversight of combat operations, and ensure that deployed brigades were being supported logistically. In peacetime, one of the deputies could be responsible for training the National Guard and Army Reserve elements of the corps. Thus, the new combat brigades could be commanded by brigadier generals with two colonels as deputy commanders. This arrangement would provide additional command and control capability in combat and provide a proving ground for combat arms colonels being considered for promotion to general officer. Finding an acceptable solution to this problem is necessary before the brigade-based Army can be adopted or even taken seriously.

The new Army would need about the same number of general officers in combined arms command positions as the old. The current structure of the Army-in-the-field requires 86 general officers: eight lieutenant generals (corps and army commanders), 26 major generals (deputy corps and army commanders and 18 division commanders), and 52 brigadier generals (36 assistant division commanders and 16 separate brigade commanders). The new structure would require 89 general officers: nine lieutenant generals (corps commanders), 18 major generals (deputy corps commanders), and 62 brigadier generals (combat brigade commanders). The generals of the new Army would command organizations that not only have more and more expensive equipment than World War II divisions, but would have much more combat potential than their predecessors.

A Basis for a Modest Revolution in Military Affairs

A brigade-based Army could serve as an interim step toward a truly new organization for the army-in-the-field in Force XXI as part of a real revolution in military affairs. Some of the possible changes that could be triggered by a brigade-based Army include:

. New combat brigades could provide mutual fire support. Brigades could use their organic fire support to cover adjacent and forward brigades. This would revolutionize the application of field artillery, which has remained unchanged in its basic principles since the Civil War. Instead of merely adjusting the number of cannons in a battery and the number of batteries in a division, the artillery could become the preeminent delivery system for lethality. Crusader, Paladin, MLRS, and GPS offer substantial technological advantages over older weapons, but the division-based Army plans to apply them in the same old geometry of linear infantry covered by artillery positioned to the rear. The first step might be to have artillery in one brigade provide fire support for other brigades, as was done in Vietnam for static warfare. The new weapons allow this same kind of mutual fire support to be used in mobile warfare. If this works, corps artillery could be eliminated altogether in favor of placing all field artillery within a protective shield of infantry and armor provided by the brigades. Alternatively, infantry units might be assigned to artillery brigades to provide a force that could maneuver outside of the traditional rear areas. Consideration of the possibilities of the new systems might lead to a truly revolutionary use of artillery protected by armor and infantry to deliver fires in a mobile mode.

. New combat brigades can maneuver flexibly. The smaller combat formations can move faster and more flexibly than the massive formations that divisions have become. Freed from dependence on fire support from the rear, brigades could move as coherent fighting forces in a nonlinear and noncontiguous manner. The principles of local control and independent operations used statically in Vietnam could be applied dynamically in other combat situations.[7]

. New forms of combat organization can result. The elimination of the division can free the Army from its preoccupation with that traditional formation. Despite changes in weapons and communications, the Army has really only tinkered with its divisions, changing the numbers of troops and adding new capabilities, such as aviation, but retaining the essential features that were present in World War II. Even the postwar movement toward flexible organization exemplified by the "ROAD" divisions has stalled, as the Army reverted to the older model of fixed regiments having administrative responsibilities and augmented to form what formerly were called regimental combat teams, now brigade task forces. Establishing robust separate brigades as the basic combat formation may make it possible to go further to examine the basic composition of the brigades and battalions. Why, for example, are mechanized and tank battalions formed and maintained separately when their companies are to be cross-attached into task forces for fighting? Why is artillery separate from the forces it is supporting? These and similar questions would need to be addressed were we to move to a brigade-based Army.

. New combat brigades provide flexibility in managing force structure. Organizing into separate brigades could make it easier to reduce or expand the force and to reconfigure the resulting structure. For example, it would no longer be necessary to try to retain a whole division of specialized capability when the need is determined to be a brigade.

. It can be done easily. The biggest advantage of this proposal is that it can be done quickly and easily without a lot of lengthy studies. The brigades already exist, and it would be necessary only to ratify the attachments and support arrangements that are already in effect to create new combat brigades from the existing force. The division headquarters and headquarters companies would provide some of the manpower spaces needed to form the new corps headquarters. Support units would be reconfigured into new forms with only minor changes. Achieving this modest but important advance in the revolution in military affairs needs only wisdom to see its virtues and courage to order it done.

It is time to look toward the next century and make real changes that would make the Army more capable and more relevant than allowed by structures inherited from the past. The division is too large and too unwieldy to serve well in the modern era. Up-gunning and digitizing the division is like putting roller skates on an elephant--more movement is likely but also less control. So, as General Creighton Abrams once suggested, let's eat this elephant one bite at a time. The first step is to cut the elephant into bite-sized chunks that can be managed. The proposal in this paper is--and is intended to be--just a start on what could be accomplished if the Army really intends to move proactively into the 21st century.

NOTES

1. The author acknowledges his debt to John Tillson and Karl Lowe, Institute for Defense Analyses, who came up with this idea before I did. In fact, I resisted this concept initially until I saw the light after trying to resolve some vexing problems with the Army's current approach to the organization of the army-in-the-field that appear to be intractable. This particular version of a brigade-based Army is my own creation, and I assume responsibility for its defects.
2. This paragraph and the next are based on an information paper by John R. Wilson, "Influences on Divisional Organization," Center for Military History, 28 December 1995. Additional data on divisions was obtained from Kent Roberts Greenfield, et al., *The Army Ground Forces, The Organization of Ground Combat Troops* (Washington: Dept. of the Army, Historical Division, 1947).
3. The fixed nature of the brigade is now so ingrained in Army practice that some officers argue that "a brigade is a task force." This is true, but the "brigade task force" terminology is used in this article to differentiate the full brigade with its "slice" of support units from a bare brigade consisting only of a headquarters and some infantry and tank battalions.
4. Dennis Steele, "Countdown to the Next Century," *Army*, November 1996, pp. 16-22.
5. Combat potential is the capability of a military force to produce combat power when engaged in combat. This definition is from "A Concise Theory of Military Combat," by Wayne Hughes, Ted Dubois, and Larry Low, members of The Military Conflict Institute, to be published in the near future by the Institute for Joint Warfare Analysis, Monterey, Calif.
6. Data on World War II divisions are from the Tables of Organization and Equipment effective in 1943 as cited in Greenfield, et al., pp. 274-75 and 320-21. Data on current generic divisions are from equipment lists provided by Robert Suchan, Institute for Defense Analysis, from the US Army Force Cost Estimate Model, Version 96.0. Data on new brigades are estimates by the author.
7. The major barrier to the concept of flexible, independent maneuver on the battlefield remains logistics. There are no really good solutions for resupplying these fast-moving organizations without some kind of logistical tail that, inevitably, restricts the speed and scope of the maneuver. Suggestions are welcome.

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