

The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters

Volume 34
Number 2 *Parameters Summer 2004*

Article 8

5-1-2004

The Army's Dilemma

John Gordon IV

Jerry Sollinger

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

Recommended Citation

John Gordon IV & Jerry Sollinger, "The Army's Dilemma," *Parameters* 34, no. 2 (2004), doi:10.55540/0031-1723.2202.

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.

The Army's Dilemma

JOHN GORDON IV and JERRY SOLLINGER

© 2004 John Gordon IV and Jerry Sollinger

Given its performance in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Army's stock should be at an all-time high. It carried out a bold plan that was both operationally and logistically challenging against a larger if unmotivated force. It routed the Iraqi army and adapted well to the unexpected attacks by the fedayeen. It also fought well in the cities, often a killing field for attackers. It took few casualties, just over 100 dead before the declared end of hostilities. More impressively, it reversed the historical ratio of battle to non-battle injuries. Typically, the latter outnumber the former significantly, but in Iraq non-battle deaths were about one-third of those caused by combat.¹ Few non-battle injuries are widely seen as a characteristic of a well-trained and disciplined force. By any measure, the Army performed superbly.

Additionally, the Army has embarked on what is arguably the most dramatic and radical "transformation" of any of the services. The current Army plan calls for a dramatic shift away from heavy armor to a family of 16- to 20-ton fighting vehicles that will rely heavily on a networked system of information and situational awareness for battlefield success as opposed to heavy armor plate. The Army's rapid deployment goals are truly daunting (a brigade-sized force "anywhere in the world" in 96 hours, followed by the rest of a division by 120 hours). These ambitious goals are taxing all aspects of the Army's combat and support organizations to streamline to an unprecedented degree to even come close to meeting those timelines.

How is it, then, that according to many reports the Army is perceived by senior defense policymakers as unimaginative, obstructionist, and wedded to concepts of warfare that are increasingly irrelevant to the current geopolitical environment? The Army's diminished status reflects in the filling of high-level joint billets by officers from the other services, including the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, which had been held by an Army offi-

cer for more than 40 years.² This article suggests an explanation for this perception and ways the Army might alter it.

How the Army Sees Itself

The Army has long seen itself as the “supported service,” the one with the primary responsibility to win the nation’s wars. Indeed, the Army’s vision statement describes “fighting and winning our nation’s wars” as its “nonnegotiable contract” with the American people.³ It does not qualify the vision by indicating that it wins the wars in conjunction with the other services. This view finds more formal expression in Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, the Army’s capstone doctrinal manual:

Land operations determine the outcome of major theater wars (MTWs). In an MTW, the nation employs large joint and multinational forces in major combat operations to defeat an enemy nation, coalition, or alliance. The Gulf War of 1991 is an example of an MTW. Army forces are the decisive forces for sustained land combat, war termination, and postwar stability. JFCs [joint force commanders] normally designate the land component as the supported force during those phases of a campaign.⁴

The logic is clear: land operations are decisive in major theater wars, and Army forces are the decisive ones in land combat. Cast as a syllogism, it would read as follows:

- Major premise: Land operations determine the outcome of major theater wars.
- Minor premise: Army forces determine the outcome of land operations.
- Conclusion: Army forces determine the outcome of major theater wars.

The logic is impeccable. But as with all syllogisms, the validity hinges on the major and minor premises.

Lieutenant Colonel John Gordon IV, USA Ret., has been with the RAND Corporation since 1997. A graduate of The Citadel, he holds master’s degrees in international relations and business and is completing a Ph.D. in public policy at George Mason University. He has authored or coauthored numerous RAND studies and published some 30 articles in defense journals.

Colonel Jerry M. Sollinger, USA Ret., Ph.D., is a senior research communicator at the RAND Corporation. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh and also holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from that institution. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and the National War College, where he was a research fellow. He has authored or coauthored numerous studies on issues related to national defense.

This view has important implications. Chief among them is that the Army, a believer in joint operations, perceives the role of the other services as being, fundamentally, to support the Army. The Air Force and Navy get the Army to the theater and provide it such important combat support as naval gunfire, interdiction, and close air support. The Marines are regarded as the “junior partner” in land operations. To be sure, the sister services fulfill other roles: clearing the air of enemy aircraft and the seas of enemy vessels. But in the Army view, these are subsidiary roles and ultimately intended to facilitate the Army’s mission of winning the land battle. The Army closes with and destroys enemy forces, with the other services in support.⁵

The Army has long felt that its operational concepts should dominate campaign planning, and the focus of a campaign plan is to facilitate getting Army forces engaged with the enemy. A key feature of the current Army transformation plan is to find ways to get the Army into the operational area faster than ever before, hence the very ambitious “96 and 120” deployment timelines. Another implication that flows from this view is that the Army thinks mostly in terms of major theater wars. This type of war means large and heavy combat formations with the division as the primary organizational element. It also means large numbers of support forces: artillery, supply, maintenance, and so forth.

A Changing Approach to Warfare

The problem with the Army’s perception of itself is that the nature of warfare is changing in ways that undercut the Army’s major premise: that land operations determine the outcome of wars. Recent conflicts are instructive in this regard. Consider Operation Allied Force, the NATO operation that brought about the surrender (and eventual collapse) of Slobodan Milosevic’s regime in Yugoslavia. The cumulative effect of air attacks was the primary factor leading to Milosevic’s decision to surrender.⁶ Of note is the fact that the Yugoslavian army forces, dispersed and hidden in the broken terrain of Kosovo, suffered almost no damage from allied air forces.⁷ The Yugoslav army, the natural target of US ground forces, was not the center of gravity.

The fact that the Serbs lost only 20 to 30 armored vehicles due to the air attacks did not concern US and NATO decisionmakers, nor did the fact that it took 78 days to batter a relatively weak power into submission. The NATO political objectives were achieved, there were no NATO combat deaths, and the potentially politically explosive issue of a ground attack into Kosovo or Yugoslavia proper never materialized. Meanwhile, the Army played a relatively small role. The Army deployed a 5,000-member task force built around Apache attack helicopters to Albania, but it was never employed because the risks were perceived as being too great and the benefits too few.

A second example is Enduring Freedom, the US operation in Afghanistan. US airpower, directed by special operations forces and Air Force control parties operating in conjunction with indigenous forces, crushed the Taliban and scattered al Qaeda in a matter of a few weeks. The conventional Army was not employed until Operation Anaconda in March 2002, after the Taliban regime had fallen. Before Anaconda, the first conventional Army units that were sent into the region were given the mission of protecting air bases around the periphery of Afghanistan. Although the struggle against the remnants of the Taliban and al Qaeda continues, they no longer have a sanctuary for training terrorists and planning attacks. The Army's role in these operations (which are vitally important to the long-term stability of Afghanistan) has been to eliminate Taliban and al Qaeda remnants and to serve as backer of the new government in Kabul.

Of course, the ability to employ similar tactics in the future will depend on the specifics of the situation. As more than one observer has noted, the tactic worked best when the Northern Alliance, backed by US special operations forces and airpower, confronted the Taliban—who, in spite of some tactical successes, generally were ineffective.⁸ The better trained and more motivated al Qaeda fighters put up much stiffer resistance at Tora Bora. And the fight in the Shah-i-Kot Valley against US forces was quite sharp indeed, causing the United States its heaviest casualties in the war.

The model to keep in mind, however, is not simply one of US special operations forces operating with indigenous troops, although that model may prove useful in future situations. The model to think of is the employment of US airpower in a fundamentally different way. Three examples from Operation Iraqi Freedom bound the spectrum of possibilities.

The first mirrors the efforts of the Northern Alliance against the Taliban. In this case, it was the Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq against the regular Iraqi army north of Baghdad. The refusal of the Turks to allow the US 4th Infantry Division to stage from Turkey posed a major operational dilemma for General Tommy Franks, in charge of Operation Iraqi Freedom as the Commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM). Absent a credible threat from the north, Iraqi forces could have repositioned major elements south to slow the coalition advance and assist in the defense of Baghdad. The CENTCOM Commander used the 10th Special Forces Group to open a second front in the north. Elements of the 10th Group, augmented by elements of the 3d Special Forces Group, formed Task Force Viking, whose mission was to work with both the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Party for a United Kurdistan to engage the Iraqi army in the north, collectively called the Peshmerga.⁹ Task Force Viking's commander had three missions: attack terrorist base camps along the Iranian border, attack Iraqi forces, and capture the oil fields in the region while

stabilizing the cities of Kirkuk and Mosul.¹⁰ Of interest here are the operations against the Iraqi regular army. Operating with US fighter aircraft and AC-130 gunships, the Peshmerga forces, which subsequently were augmented by some US regular ground forces, tied up four Iraqi corps, one Republican Guard and three regular. To be sure, the Iraqi forces set a new standard for ineptness. But the fact remains that a relatively small US force, operating with indigenous forces, was able to tie down and eventually defeat a larger army. Whenever the Iraqis were able to cobble together any type of defense, aerial firepower either destroyed them or drove them off their positions. The introduction of the Army's 173d Airborne Brigade, augmented with a small number of tanks, proved to be marginal to the outcome of the overall campaign.

A second Iraqi Freedom example played out between conventional forces. In a relatively low-level tactical engagement, according to retired Major General Robert Scales, the 3/7 Armored Cavalry Squadron deliberately maneuvered in front of an Iraqi unit in the Karbala gap to draw it out into the open so it could be destroyed by airpower.¹¹ This was a good example of the synergy of air and land forces operating in conjunction. The land force's actions provoked a response (i.e., maneuver) by the concealed Iraqi defenders, thus making them a much better target for US air attack.

A third example occurred at a more operational level when Iraqi armored units maneuvered during a sandstorm stirred up by the *shamal* (a hot, dry wind that blows from the northwest in Iraq) in an attempt to meet coalition forces as they closed on Baghdad. Iraq's Medina, Baghdad, and Hammurabi divisions, apparently counting on the cover of the sandstorm, repositioned to meet the coalition threat. JSTARS¹² and long-range UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) detected the movement and guided B-1 and fighter bombers to intercept them. Using infrared targeting devices that could penetrate the clouds of sand, the aircraft may have inflicted severe damage on these units, with some estimates of the damage to some elements of the Republican Guard Medina division being as high as 86 percent.¹³

Unknown, at least at this point, are the second-order effects of such air strikes. Many Iraqi fighting vehicles were destroyed, but anecdotal information indicates many were simply abandoned. According to Scales and historian Williamson Murray, interviews of Iraqis following the first Gulf War revealed that airpower had a devastating psychological effect that simply destroyed their will to fight.¹⁴ It is reasonable to assume that air attacks had a similar effect in this second conflict, but its extent remains a matter of speculation. An abandoned vehicle might be a silent witness to the perceived effectiveness of airpower. It also could reflect inept leadership and undisciplined forces.

The common denominator of these operations is the ability of US Air Force and Navy aviation to deliver precision-guided munitions, either in

direct support of ground forces or in strike operations where ground forces are not participating. This capability constitutes, if not a sea change in military operations, then certainly a new tool in the toolbox. The “reconnaissance strike complex” (to use the old Soviet term) that the United States now possesses provides decisionmakers with a very appealing option with regard to military force, one that allows them to launch a devastating attack with the prospect of few or no friendly casualties.

Factors Favoring an “Air-First” Response

The US ability to find targets with overhead and airborne sensors, process the information, and attack the target with precision munitions has been growing since the end of the Vietnam War, when laser-guided bombs were first used in combat. Over the three decades since, the quality, variety, and quantity of precision munitions have increased. Additionally, the number and variety of sensors have steadily grown. This trend is still increasing, and as it does, the likelihood that risk-averse senior civilian and military decisionmakers will reach first for this option is also growing. Why risk deploying ground forces quickly into a dangerous situation when a period of precision attack possibly could achieve the desired results? Even if precision attack does not by itself accomplish the desired military or political goals, at least the decisionmakers will have the satisfaction of knowing that when ground forces do have to be committed, the enemy already will have been mauled by precision strike operations. This is the new operational reality.

Another reality that may tilt decisionmakers to favor airpower, at least as an initial gambit, is the potential difficulty of gaining access to ports, airfields, and other staging areas. The problem the United States faced in Turkey during Operation Iraqi Freedom is probably not going to be an isolated incident. In spite of a long history of cooperation, severe diplomatic arm-twisting, and the promise of substantial financial reward, the Turks denied the United States permission to stage through their country. As one analyst has noted, a growing trend is that access is more difficult, and the Bush Administration’s emphasis on preventive war is likely to accelerate that trend.¹⁵ The advantage of long-range airpower is that the planes can fly from bases in countries sympathetic to the US cause, from aircraft carriers operating in international waters, or, if necessary, from the United States.

Additionally, there is less need today than in the past for a ground unit to get into a direct-fire battle with an enemy armored unit, especially in open terrain. The axiom that the best weapon against a tank is another tank no longer holds true. In open terrain, airborne reconnaissance can detect the movement of such units, and aircraft can attack and destroy them with precision weapons. The chances that a US ground force will be engaged in open

terrain by a large enemy armored force that has not been seriously weakened by US air attack is now remote. Yet open desert tank battles against an essentially unattritted foe are still the scenarios employed at the Army's National Training Center (NTC). While the NTC has a lot of general training benefit for the Army forces that experience it, the scenario that motivates the event is becoming less relevant.

The still-growing capability of US airpower is not simply an issue of providing better indirect fire support to maneuver forces in a different way. This situation is conceptually different. In certain circumstances, it could easily transform the Air Force or Navy from the supporting force to the supported one. The Army in many cases will fulfill a "find-fix-flush" function to position enemy forces so that airpower can destroy them, as it apparently did in Iraq on at least some occasions.

Of course, this new way of war does not work in all situations. Against armored forces in open terrain, it should be the approach of choice. But the equation changes in cities, jungles, or heavily forested terrain. In these situations, the current suite of sensors has great difficulty locating targets. This was the case in Iraq when Apache helicopters tried to attack the Medina division near Karbala. In spite of sophisticated sensors on the Apaches, the Iraqis successfully hid their forces in tree lines and among buildings. Furthermore, the weapons available to the Air Force and Navy—principally 500-, 1000-, and 2000-pound bombs—are usually too destructive for urban combat. Also, the delay between sensing and shooting may be too long in close combat when a response of seconds, not minutes, is needed. Finally, it simply may not be appropriate to give airpower a major role in urban combat or in low-intensity conflict.

Even Operation Iraqi Freedom, where a ground force was essential to topple Saddam Hussein's regime, helps reinforce this approach. Months of political and diplomatic efforts (conducted simultaneously with the deployment of forces to the Gulf region) took place before the United States attacked Iraq. When the invasion began, it was against an Iraqi military weakened by more than a decade of sanctions, and whose air defense system had been largely shattered by literally years of coalition air attacks. When the ground force was committed, it was far smaller than the force used in Operation Desert Storm a decade earlier, despite the much more ambitious mission of overrunning the entire country. Indeed, before the war started and in the first few days of operations, many Army supporters were predicting the possible failure of the mission given the small size of the ground force. We all know the result: a force of roughly four divisions, supported by US and UK air forces armed with far more precision weapons than was the case in 1991, overwhelmed Saddam's poorly trained, demoralized, and badly equipped forces. The advocates of greater use

of precision weapons in lieu of a large number of ground forces can certainly point to the winning formula of the 2003 Iraq War.

This growing penchant for an air-first response calls into question the Army's recent emphasis on rapid deployment and then near-immediate employment of ground forces. That approach seems increasingly unlikely, at least for large forces. Decisionmakers will employ ground forces immediately if operational or political considerations leave them no other option, but the early commitment of conventional ground forces will almost certainly not be the first choice if other options are available, as is usually the case.

Indeed, it is not even clear that the Army can achieve its deployment goals. The new Stryker brigades, the precursors to the Future Force, can deploy much faster than can heavy units. But even these much lighter units cannot meet the Army's stringent deployment guideline of a brigade anywhere in the world within 96 hours. Recent research shows that a Stryker brigade stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, would take more than seven days to deploy to Skopje, Macedonia, even with favorable assumptions concerning how much airlift the Army would receive.¹⁶ In part, this time requirement results from limitations in the capacity of destination airports to offload the C-17 aircraft. Yet the Army will frequently have to confront infrastructure limitations, since many areas of the world where conflicts are likely lack seaports and airports capable of processing large volumes of traffic.¹⁷ A number of methods are available that could enable the brigade to meet the 96-hour goal to some critical locations, including improving the deployment process and forward-positioning either the entire brigade or its tactical vehicles, which take up substantial airlift but represent only about ten percent of the procurement cost for a Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT).¹⁸ But even if an SBCT can be delivered to specified locations in 96 hours, the larger point remains: deployment times can be greatly affected by influences that fall outside the Army's control, e.g., the capacity or availability of ports and airfields in other countries, as well as by the joint commander's decisions about how to allocate aircraft among the components.

The Army's Comparative Advantage

All the above notwithstanding, the fact remains that only ground forces can accomplish some missions, particularly those carried out in complex terrain. Such terrain includes cities, jungles, and dense forests, but it also includes open terrain when it is mountainous or broken, affording the enemy numerous hiding places. The situation in the Shah-i-Kot Valley during Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan offers a case in point. The terrain resembled a moonscape, devoid of vegetation. The relatively small battlefield was flanked by high ridges and snow-filled passes. Armored vehicles, had they been there,

could have maneuvered only on the valley floor and partway up some trails. Reconnaissance was unable to pinpoint enemy formations. It took light infantry to develop the situation, forcing the foreign and al Qaeda fighters to reveal themselves. Once the infantry had either flushed the fighters or forced them to reveal themselves, airpower could be brought to bear on them.

Similarly, ground forces are needed for combat in cities. Urban clutter makes it difficult to find the enemy, who can hide in buildings and move through subterranean passageways. Such tactics defeat many of the sensors used by reconnaissance assets. Heavy armor has proved its worth in cities, providing both the protection and firepower needed. Data from Operation Iraqi Freedom indicate that the M-1A2 tanks were relatively invulnerable to the weapons the Iraqis could bring to bear against them. Interestingly, this new reality of focusing heavy armored forces on urban operations parallels the Israeli experience of the past decade. The tank has become the Israeli army's weapon of choice in dangerous urban operations. It is also true that the defenders of Baghdad showed little skill at urban combat, and that better-trained forces could well have exacted a much higher price. But this does not negate the value of properly employed heavy forces in urban combat.

As has been demonstrated several times since the Gulf War, ground forces are critical for peacekeeping and peace enforcement, as well as other stability operations. It takes large numbers of ground forces—well armed, well equipped, and with the necessary command and control apparatus—to carry out these types of operations. Importantly, these are precisely the kinds of missions that will predominate in the next decade or longer. It is also worth noting that the Army has had to do some extensive tailoring of units to ensure that headquarters in these operations had the needed capabilities. The ability of ground forces to control terrain and populations is still their greatest strength, something that neither the Navy nor Air Force can do.

Given that only ground forces can do certain things, the Army should focus on those missions where it has a comparative or unique advantage. It is the service that has the broadest suite of capabilities for missions across the spectrum of conflict, low to high. It is also the force best suited for sustained land combat because it has more forces and the extensive support units required for such long-term operations. As noted above, the Army also has a comparative advantage in operations in complex terrain.

But the Army, as a result of tradition and inclination, wants to focus on the high end of the spectrum of conflict—precisely the point of the spectrum where the still-increasing capabilities of the Air Force and Navy provide the greatest appeal to risk-averse decisionmakers. While the Army should and must keep most of its focus on the high end of the conflict spectrum (that is, ultimately, what armed forces are created for), the reality is that the world and the

nature of warfare are changing—indeed, much has changed already—and the Army must take a realistic approach to its current situation.

What the Army Needs to Do

How should the Army respond to this situation? First, it needs to be more flexible in how it views its role in joint operations. In many operations or in some phases of operations, Army forces will still be the supported component. But in other cases, the Army will support and enable the application of airpower. Second, the Army should place more emphasis on mid- to lower-end conflicts. Those operations will occur far more frequently than the Desert Storms or Iraqi Freedoms, and land forces will play the leading role. Third, the Army needs to be more judicious in the emphasis it places on rapid deployment. Unquestionably, it needs a quick-reaction capability. But simply because Army forces can get to the theater quickly does not mean that decisionmakers will be willing to employ them any sooner when other, lower-risk options are available. Finally, the Army should recognize that whereas in the past its campaign concepts have prevailed, they may not in the future. The strong emphasis on jointness, plus political considerations, may dictate that some future operations be air-only.

In light of the issues laid out above, the Army should revise its doctrine with respect to planning operations so that it explicitly includes increased reliance on Air Force and Navy aviation. In the past, the concern was always whether air support would be available when needed—for example, at night or in bad weather. The current capability of US fighters and bombers to deliver precision-strike munitions in bad weather and poor visibility should assuage most of those concerns and prompt Army planners to make explicit provisions for using this capability.

Second, the Army should restructure itself to place more emphasis on the mid- to low-end of the conflict spectrum. Recently the Army has started the process of reducing the number of corps-level field artillery and divisional air defense units in order to free manpower for an increased number of combat service support units in the active component. This is an important step in the right direction. More active component support forces will relieve the Army of the need to call up reserve component units so often and would help expedite deployments. More units of Special Operations Forces, another critical force type that merits an increase given the global strategic situation, would give the Army a more robust capability in missions at the lower end of the conflict spectrum where it is likely most future operations will take place.

Third, the Army should reconsider its plans to make the entire active force rapidly deployable by air. It appears unlikely that the nation will need such a capability, particularly in light of decisionmakers' inherent propensity

to seek lower-risk options first. Furthermore, it unnecessarily subjects the design of its future forces and equipment to airlift constraints. These constraints (in particular the 16- to 20-ton limit for the Future Combat System based on the capacity of the C-130) will have important effects, particularly in the area of the survivability of vehicles.¹⁹ Additionally, the realities of airlift and sealift (intense joint competition for airlift at the start of a crisis, limited airport capacity at most Second and Third World airports, and other factors) mean that only a small number of Army forces will deploy by air. If a crisis takes place in the littoral regions (where most vital US interests are), within no more than two or three weeks ships will be arriving in the vicinity, bringing far more equipment and supplies than the airlift fleet can move (the time will be far less than two or three weeks if the equipment is prepositioned aboard ships in the crisis region). Therefore the need to “suboptimize” the entire future Army for airlift appears unnecessary.²⁰

This is an important point, since the Army seems to have focused on the idea that high-speed deployability (by air) will solve the service’s “relevance problem.” Increasing the capability of the Army’s rapid deployment via the introduction of a judicious number of medium-weight units (first the Stryker Brigades and later some number of Future Combat System [FCS] units) is an appropriate move by the Army, since the introduction of medium forces increases the options that the Army can provide future joint force commanders. As has been shown earlier, however, the Army’s essential problem is the changing relationship between air and ground forces at the high end of the conflict spectrum, especially the appeal that stand-off (usually air-delivered) precision munitions have to risk-averse decisionmakers. Therefore, stressing high-speed deployability for the entire force will not solve the basic dilemma that the Army faces.

The Army consequently should revisit the notion of making the entire Army a medium-weight force.²¹ Clearly such forces have an important role and can increase the Army’s capabilities in the portion of the spectrum of conflict that most warrants attention. But the Army’s most recent conflicts underscore the need for a range of capabilities: light forces in Afghanistan and heavy ones in Iraq. Diverse forces will provide the national-level decisionmakers with options that an all-medium-weight force will not. Importantly, at the present time there is no guarantee that medium forces—whether armed with Stryker or the FCS—can carry out all the missions that current light and heavy forces can perform. Barring unambiguous evidence that future medium units can take on the entire range of missions in all terrain types that current forces are capable of, the Army should not plan to convert the entire Future Force to FCS-based units.

Fourth, the Army should create more headquarters capable of managing the myriad of stability and support operations that seem likely to oc-

copy the Army over the next decade or longer. The approach over the last decade has been to create such headquarters as the need arose, typically using a divisional headquarters as a base and drawing additional needed units from across the Army. While this approach has worked, such cobbled-together units typically lack the training and equipment needed to be fully effective.²² Additionally, the Army often has found itself deprived of the services of a division or even corps headquarters to control a relatively small operation. And when the next operation arises, another unit has to go through the same process all over again. It would be better to have more standing headquarters trained and equipped to do the job. Key attributes would include a communications capability across much longer distances than normal for a division, and personnel knowledgeable in joint procedures. This suggestion is similar to the Marine Corps practice of maintaining Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and Brigade (MEB) headquarters to control deployed forces without having to disassemble a regimental or divisional or air wing headquarters.

Finally, the Army also should increase the resources and training devoted to mid- and low-intensity missions. This step would include developing doctrine, procuring equipment, and developing training programs and facilities to support them.

Conclusion

It is essential to remember that the US Army, the premier land force of the world's sole superpower, must maintain primarily a warfighting focus in its culture, organization, training, and modernization plans. That is unsailable as the Army's central focus. The issue for the Army is one of balance. Given the changing realities in how the United States will conduct future joint operations, plus the fact that mid- to low-intensity missions will clearly dominate in the coming decade or more (and the Army is the optimal force for such missions), the Army has to reexamine how it will balance its traditional focus on high-end combat operations with the need to perform the other missions that will predominate in the coming years.

The resolution of the Army's dilemma is in its own hands, but the task is not an easy one. It requires nothing less than a cultural change, and these are neither lightly undertaken nor easily accomplished, particularly in conservative military organizations. Furthermore, it will require the Army to revisit important aspects of the transformation that it has been pursuing for the past four years. But if the Army can embrace a truly joint vision, where sometimes it is the supported service and other times a supporting one, and focus on strengthening its comparative or unique advantages, then it will ensure its relevance to the future of the nation's security and shatter the perception of being frozen in a Cold War mindset.

NOTES

1. David Brown, "U.S. Troops' Injuries in Iraq Showed Body Armor's Value," *The Washington Post*, 4 May 2002, p. A28.
2. General Lauris Norstad, USAF, was SACEUR from 1956 to 1962.
3. US Army, *The Way Ahead: Our Army at War, Relevant and Ready*, <http://www.army.mil/vision/Documents/The%20Army%20Vision.PDF>
4. US Army, *Operations*, Field Manual (FM) 3-0 (Washington: GPO, 14 June 2001), pp. 1-10 to 1-11.
5. See, e.g., "Army Official: Enduring Freedom Reinforced Need for Ground Forces," *Inside the Army*, 4 March 2002, which quotes Brigadier General John Schmader describing the Army's role in Enduring Freedom as "largely a supporting force rather than 'the dominant element of battle.'" See also J. C. Wiley, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1967), pp. 53-54: "It is the soldier's tacit (and sometimes not so tacit) opinion that air and naval forces exist primarily to transport the soldier to the scene of action and support him after he gets there."
6. See, e.g., Stephen T. Hosmer, *The Conflict over Kosovo: Why Milosevic Decided to Settle When He Did* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2001).
7. It is worth noting that the absence of any ground threat enabled the Serb army to disperse. The one abortive attempt by the Kosovar rebels to mount a ground attack, Operation Arrow, was so ineffective that the Serbs were able to defeat it without massing forces and thereby remain relatively immune to airpower.
8. See, e.g., Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for the Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, November 2002).
9. Williamson Murray and Robert H. Scales, Jr., *The Iraq War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2003), p. 188.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
11. Major General Robert H. Scales, USA Ret., Statement before the US House of Representatives, Armed Services Committee, 21 October 2003, <http://www.iwar.org.uk/news-archive/iraq/lessons-learned/03-10-21-scales.htm>.
12. JSTARS is the Joint Surveillance and Target Acquisition Radar System. Operated by the Air Force, it locates and tracks the movement of enemy ground forces, providing real-time enemy locations to US ground force commanders.
13. Murray and Scales, p. 174.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
15. Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., Statement before the US House of Representatives, Armed Services Committee, <http://www.iwar.org.uk/news-archive/iraq/lessons-learned/03-10-21-krepinevich.html>.
16. See Eric Peltz, John M. Halliday, and Aimee Bower, *Speed and Power: Toward an Expeditionary Army* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2003).
17. This analysis assumes that the airport in Skopje can process three C-17 aircraft at a time, referred to as Maximum on Ground (MOG) of three. Many factors affect MOG: aircraft parking space, cargo space, material handling equipment, nature of refueling equipment (i.e., tankers or in-ground systems), road networks, airfield operating hours (i.e., round the clock or daylight only), and so forth. Deploying the SBCT brigade would consume 38 percent of the FY05 strategic airlift fleet (using only C-17s) or 46 percent using a mix of 70 C-17s and 30 C-5s.
18. See Peltz, Halliday, and Bower, p. 44.
19. It is worth noting that the Strykers in Iraq have been modified by the addition of "slat" armor to increase their survivability against RPGs, an addition which means they no longer fit in a C-130. The armor must be removed before they can be loaded. See <http://www.tribnet.com/news/iraq/stryker/story/4544450p-4519311c.html>.
20. See Alan Vick, et al., *The Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Rethinking Strategic Responsiveness and Assessing Deployment Options* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2002).
21. The authors fully understand that the Army intends for the Future Force to be a medium-weight force with the killing capability of a heavy one, a capability largely achieved through vastly improved situational awareness, networking, and organic precision fires. However, they believe that the technological risk and procurement cost (estimated at more than \$4 billion per brigade in today's dollars) of the complete suite of the Future Force are such that the full capability is unlikely to appear before 2040, if then. For example, there is no guarantee that the very high levels of situational awareness that are assumed in much of the writing about the Future Force can be achieved, especially in complex terrain such as jungles and urban areas. Therefore, the Army needs to hedge its bets substantially.
22. See, e.g., Thomas McNaughter, David Johnson, and Jerry Sollinger, *Agility by a Different Measure* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 2000).