

COMMANDANT'S HATCH

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Reconnaissance and Security

"You can never have too much reconnaissance." - GEN George S. Patton Jr., *War As I Knew It*, 1947

As the Army transitions to the regionally aligned forces concept and to the Brigade Combat Team 2020 structure, we are analyzing our reconnaissance formations at every level. We are focusing the discussion on reconnaissance and security in the Army by having conversations with stakeholders and are drafting white papers and articles to shape the debate and inform a wide audience. Our intent is to mature these thoughts with your input and then discuss them at the 2013 Reconnaissance Summit/Maneuver Conference this fall. With this effort in mind, here are some initial thoughts on the future of reconnaissance and security operations.

Any time we are talking about reconnaissance and security, we must ensure we are speaking from a common doctrinal reference. Recommend we look to the past to inform our future and that we emphasize the established fundamentals of reconnaissance and the fundamentals of security. These fundamentals are time-tested and are applicable in all environments and at all levels when conducting either reconnaissance or security operations. The first priority must be to ensure that our reconnaissance formations can still apply these fundamentals in any and all environments.

Second, our scouts, even with all the intelligence assets they may have access to, must always be able to fight for information. To do this, they require tactical mobility to maneuver and ability to occupy the terrain required to achieve the commander's intent, the protection to survive encounter actions with a superior force, and sufficient direct and indirect firepower to defeat threats when necessary. These capabilities will help ensure that our scouts can report the commander's information requirements in a timely manner and continue to report throughout the

length of the engagement. This, in turn, enables the commander to make contact with the enemy under the most favorable conditions possible.

Some within the Army are proposing that reconnaissance units place a larger emphasis on surveillance vs. security. Surveillance is a tactical task that we integrate into all reconnaissance and security missions and is not a separate, distinct task. Experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan and the demands of future conflict place a premium on effective security operations. We conduct security operations to protect forces, facilities and critical activities and to prevent surprise. Area security across wide areas will remain a critical Cavalry competency, as will offensive and defensive security operations. Our Cavalry and scouts must be able to provide the commander with early warning, prevent the premature deployment of maneuver forces and protect freedom of movement along our lines of communication. Our reconnaissance and security elements must be resourced to screen, guard and, at times, cover their parent organizations when tasked to do so.

As we talk about our Cavalry's requirement to conduct both reconnaissance and security, one need only think of the 1st U.S. Cavalry's actions at Gettysburg. In that battle, GEN John Buford was able to first find the enemy and report their presence to his commander. As the situation developed, Buford did what all good Cavalrymen do – he sent reports to every commander who needed to share the common picture. These commanders, armed with knowledge of the situation, deployed effectively upon arrival. Most importantly, Buford's force was able to fight effectively on the first day to ensure Union forces gained situational awareness, retained the key terrain and prepared for battle. Buford's ability to fight for information set the conditions for the Union Army's victory at Gettysburg. This vi-

gnette reminds us of the words spoken in the late 1970s by then-COL Crosbie E. Saint as he defined the ideal scout:

"He must be capable of finding the enemy and knowing what he sees. He should be able to go forward to find the enemy and have the firepower with and behind him to get out of trouble. Most of all, he must be capable of semi-independent operations on the battlefield. He must be resourceful – he must be the most clever of all fellows. He takes individual actions that are not dictated by the actions of what other squads or platoons are taking; no one is constantly looking over his shoulder."

The requirement to conduct both reconnaissance and security belongs in all organizations: infantry, Stryker and armored BCTs as well as in the echelons above the brigade level. This will be the major focus for the Armor School as we work to deliver outcomes that will shape future Cavalry forces across all BCTs. Those outcomes will address the doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, leadership, personnel and facilities considerations the Army must consider to get the future of reconnaissance right. Our Army is at a critical juncture in determining the future of reconnaissance and security, so please take the time to contribute to the debate when you read our products, and prepare and disseminate your own papers. Please consider attending our Reconnaissance Summit/Maneuver Conference in the fall.

Forge the Thunderbolt!

Giddyup! 47