



Commandant's NOTE

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A Review of the Future Infantry Force

The single threat once posed by the Soviet Union and its surrogates has been replaced by an array of lesser threats, each of which nevertheless has the potential for complex, long-term involvement. The demands of our nation's economy, domestic priorities, and the historical American disdain for a large peacetime Army have dictated the transition to a smaller force. At the same time, technological advances have changed much of the very nature of warfare, to some extent offsetting the possible disadvantage of a smaller force.

The Army has already met the challenge of change in shifting from a *forward deployed* to a *force projection stance*. The evolution of doctrine in such manuals as FM 100-5, *Operations*, and those that derive from it, has led to the impetus for developing a new force design that will make the Army more deployable, versatile, and lethal. Throughout the Army, the proponent branches are aligning themselves with the force projection requirements and are looking at the way they intend to do business in the future. The Infantry will continue to play a leading role in that initiative as the core force for the rapid projection requirements.

In order to accurately anticipate and influence change, the Infantry School is conducting an overall holistic review of what the infantry force requirements are expected to be out to the year 2005. That vision will be the basis for a plan that ensures the efficient incorporation and sustainment of infantry doctrine, organization, equipment, and training for the future. This plan will also support infantry participation in the next redesign of the total Army force.

Salient characteristics of this review include the following:

- A detailed appraisal of the changing threat, the emerging doctrine, the downsizing of the Army, the restructure of the force, and the effects of limited resources. This appraisal will consider all echelons of infantry, from fighting position through battalion, and will include some consideration of selected brigade issues as well.

- A process that integrates and prioritizes the development of future infantry doctrine, organizations, and systems over which the school has preponency, and the training strategies that will best support our vision of what the infantry should be. Although this process is largely introspective, it will also involve coordination with other branches and schools.

- A phased approach that first establishes a baseline of current program information, articulates the vision, identifies the requirements of that vision, and then organizes and prioritizes our programs for the future. This is not to be considered a completed project. It is a continuation of the 1993 infantry branch assessment process and will include validation—by modeling and testing—of the desired infantry force and of the road we will take to achieve our goal.

An integral part of this process is a redefinition of the concept of *lethality*. We intend to use this redefined concept as the basis for assessing the alternatives that will go into structuring the infantry force of the year 2005.

Historically, we have tended to measure lethality in terms of the purely technical capabilities of

a particular weapon. Originally, lethality involved the ability of a round to hit the intended target and to kill or destroy what it hits. Recently, we have added the soldier's ability to acquire the target under conditions of limited visibility, or to acquire multiple targets either simultaneously or in rapid succession. While this view of lethality is still valid in assessing individual weapons, it falls short of assessing the lethality of the Infantry as a whole.

Historically, the *lethality* of the Infantry's weapons has steadily improved in terms of their range, accuracy, and killing power. Yet, the advantage gained by these improvements has been at best only temporary. All of the infantryman's gains in this area have been, or can be, nullified by corresponding or overmatching advances in the enemy's technology. Unprotected, he is still subject to indirect fires as he attempts to move about, and he faces many of the same problems his predecessors have faced through the ages.

The edge, at least in close combat, must be something more than a technological advantage. It must derive from all the future elements of combat power—maneuver, firepower, protection, and battle command—and must include the ability of the force to sustain the infantryman while he fights. Stated this way, this concept is in keeping with evolving ideas about lethality such as the following, quoted from the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-200-2, *Early Entry and Survivability Battle Dynamic Concept*:

Lethality involves more than simply maneuver and the application of firepower. Lethality is obtained from the synergism of force agility, technologically superior weapons, sound doctrine, and realistic training emphasizing the integration and synchronization of total force capabilities to achieve maximum combat power.

With this as a starting point, we can now develop a means of measuring lethality. Additionally, we must consider the lethality of units—the squad, platoon, company, and battalion. The measure of lethality in infantry units is greater than the sum of the elements described above; indeed, it encompasses the whole art and science of warfare.

Finally, within the Infantry School, this concept

of lethality is supported by the functional areas of doctrine, training, leader development, organization, materiel, and the soldier (DTLOMS). The unit organization that we want at each level must combine the elements of combat power with the most efficient means of sustainment at each echelon of the infantry force. It must be more than a tactical headquarters and a collection of subordinate units. Our goal is the attainment of a synergistic, enhanced, fighting entity as part of the power projection force.

Over the past two months, we have schooled ourselves on the baseline, the current force design, and then rolled up our sleeves and set to work. We have met our goal of having completed, by mid-May 1994, a detailed laydown of the force we envision. During the Infantry Commander's Conference in early May, we drew upon the collective experience of selected infantry commanders during a review and discussion of our vision.

Before the end of the summer, we expect to publish a White Paper that details our findings on and proposal for the infantry force of the future. This White Paper will address conditions of future conflict as they affect the Infantry, the requirement for a strong dismounted infantry force (mechanized and light), and the vision. It will also articulate the rationale behind the vision. I believe that, in light of the changing world political and economic situation, this is the most important contribution the Infantry School can make to the Army that will serve our nation beyond the year 2000.

This review will result in a more versatile, lethal, mobile, and deployable infantry force with an active and relevant role in combat operations and in operations other than war; a force that will wed technology to our evolving concepts of *battle command, battlespace, and information operations*; a force that is provided with the best doctrine, organizations, equipment, and training available; and—in the words of Army Regulation 10-6, *Branches of the Army*, describing the Infantry—a force that will remain “the nucleus of the Army's fighting strength around which the other arms and service are grouped.”