

Full-Dimensional Operations: A Doctrine for an Era of Change

General Frederick M. Franks Jr., US Army

The 1993 version of US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations, was distributed on the Army's 218th birthday. General Frederick M. Franks Jr. notes in this December 1993 article that the new manual "goes beyond AirLand Battle to full-dimension operations." The new manual did not dilute or supplant AirLand Battle doctrine; it simply adjusted the doctrine for the times. Doctrine cannot be static. As Franks points out, it must be adapted as necessary to meet threat, technology and national strategy changes, as well as to take into account lessons learned and warfare's changing nature.

JUST FOUR YEARS AGO, the Berlin Wall was razed, symbolically announcing the end of the Cold War and declaring the dawn of a new era—an era of great change. The strategic landscape is now different and we are in a pivotal and uncommonly challenging period for our nation, our Army and the US Army Training and Doctrine Command. This new strategic context establishes a whole new set of conditions for us. Unlike the relatively predictable environment of the Cold War, we are now faced with much uncertainty in a world of rapidly accelerating change, as events since 1989 have demonstrated. This new environment—this new era—requires a different posture for our nation and our Army, both physically and intellectually. This is a different—decidedly different—challenge from what we faced only a few years ago.

Historically, there are about five categories—warning lights if you will—that light up to indicate that it is time to adjust to a changing environment. These five warning lights are defined by threats and unknown dangers, by our national military strategy, by our history and the lessons we have learned from it, by the changing nature of warfare and by technology.

At times, there may have been only one indicator, dimly lit. At other times, maybe two or three were glowing with some intensity. But today, and for the last few years, all of them have been burning brightly to announce that not only are we in a period requiring some significant change, but perhaps that we, too, are entering an entirely new era—a period requiring some bold adjustments in how we think about warfare, war-

fighting and the conduct of operations other than war.

Today, we are confronted with a wide array of new threats and unknown dangers in an environment of worldwide proliferation of warfighting technologies, to include weapons of mass destruction. Our post-Cold War strategic position has demanded a new national military strategy of force projection and the imperative that when we fight, we do it by the application of overwhelming combat power.

Likewise, the nature of competition has changed commensurate with the strategic landscape. Today, availability of off-the-shelf technologies are fueling the rapidly changing nature of warfare and operations other than war. No longer can we gauge and develop doctrinal, training and modernization relevance by a single, well-defined Soviet model. In this new era,

Indicators of Change

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National
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"The world is changing rapidly... if you do not work to make change our friend, then it can become our enemy."

President Bill Clinton
US Military Academy
29 May 93

requirements and capabilities evolve and proliferate at an unprecedented pace. Potential enemies have the resources and access to high-technology weaponry that, even if purchased in relatively small quantities, have high battlefield leverage. Tactical ballistic missiles are but one example, as are weapons of mass destruction. Others are Global Positioning Systems (GPS), a precious commodity in *Desert Storm*, which are now available to anyone through mail-order catalogues, while cellular telephonic communications provide an unprecedented capability to potential opponents in operations other than war. Capabilities available to our potential enemies are rapidly accelerating and are creating the need for us to field new capabilities much more rapidly than before if we are to maintain the edge.

The last indicator of change is technology. Information age technologies are beginning to revolutionize the battlefield and even change the basic nature of warfare. We are approaching what some call “Third-Wave” warfare or knowledge-based warfare. I believe we are in a revolution in methods of commanding soldiers and units in battle similar to the one that took place in the 1920s with the wireless radio and track-laying technology.

Amid all this we have not been standing still waiting for the signal to begin work. We have aggressively attacked within this new environment of change so that we can continue to grow as an army. We began our attack focusing on the revision of our doctrine. Doctrine continues to be the engine of change. Thus, as a doctrine-based army, change begins by changing our body of ideas—changing how we think about warfighting and conducting operations other than war. We captured the collective wisdom and experience we have gained through history on past and very recent battlefields, on training practice fields, in classrooms and other service to our nation. Then we refined these ideas into our revised doctrine that will frame how we think about warfighting and conducting operations other than war. Thus, we have become a force-projection army, and our revised doctrine, US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*, is our engine of change.

On 14 June 1993, our Army’s 218th birthday, we unveiled the new FM 100-5, which provides the operational framework to guide our approach to warfighting and conducting operations other than war in a force-projection environment. It goes beyond AirLand Battle to full-dimensional operations, with the Army at the center of the joint team addressing the fundamentals and inherent requirements for a force-projection army. It applies to the Total Army—

reserve, civilian and active components. It is firmly rooted in time-tested, battle-proven principles and builds, where appropriate, on preceding doctrine while addressing contemporary realities and uncertainty and the evolving nature of warfare.

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There are some major departures from the previous doctrine, but great continuity as well. Within our national military strategy of power projection, force projection is a major theme and, as such, the new doctrine addresses the more complex demands of that environment in a separate chapter. FM 100-5 continues to emphasize the ideas that military forces should only be committed when the end state is clearly defined and the campaign is not terminated with the cessation of hostilities. Post-combat operations require the same planning effort as does the conduct of war. The doctrine introduces operations other than war in a separate chapter. These types of missions are not new to our Army, yet for the first time how to think about conducting them is in FM 100-5. Just as with combat operations, these missions require planning and execution considerations and application of proven principles. Operations other than war does not mean an absence of combat. They can coexist with, precede, follow or exist independent of war.

As our Army addresses the wide array of missions in the vague and uncertain post-Cold War environment that poses a multitude of diverse threats, our forces must be more versatile. We must prepare to fight and win our nation’s wars. Yet, we must be able to transition from that readiness to conduct other operations then quickly transition back, perhaps in the same theater of operations. In view of this requirement, we have introduced *versatility* as a fifth tenet of the doctrine, reflecting the fundamental requirements of a force-projection army in this new era.

The battlefield framework is refined to address more complex and varied battlefields. For most of the last 40 years, the Army was given a battlefield

framework dictated by the strategy of the Cold War. It was linear and relatively tightly structured and even lent itself to some rather precise quantitative analysis. That is gone. Our revised doctrine acknowledges this new era by stating that commanders will have to devise their battlefield framework, that is, array their forces on the ground in a specific set of mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time available (METT-T) circumstances that will result in accomplishing the mission at least cost. That framework is not necessarily given; nor are the strategic parameters

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predictable far in advance. Thus, unlike the tactical and operational battlefield framework in the given set-piece strategic conditions of the Cold War, the force-projection battlefield framework can and probably will vary from linear to nonlinear, with separation of units in time, space and distance.

This revised thinking of a battlefield framework, so different from central Europe or Korea, saw its beginnings in operations *Just Cause* and *Desert Storm*. It represents a significant departure from the AirLand battlefield framework but also includes the possibility that a commander might choose that framework for a given set of METT-T conditions.

The doctrine also introduces five new concepts in the conduct of operations. The first one is *battle command*, a commander—not command post—centered construct to focus combat power from wherever the commander needs to be on the battlefield. Within the demands of the modern battlefield is the need to rapidly evolve from a process-oriented control system within a tightly structured and linear battlefield framework to a commander-oriented method of commanding forces where commanders and smaller staffs have rapid access to information and intelligence when they need it from wherever they choose to be on the battlefield.

The second concept is *battle space*, a new thought to expand our thinking beyond the necessarily linear

confines of the Cold War. The battlefield construct of close, deep and rear are related in time, space and distance to reflect a commander's focus beyond the immediate confines of the defined area of operations. It should force us to remember that battle does not have to be linear or contiguous and that concentrating effects, not necessarily always forces, is the aim of mass. The deep battle does not always have the aim of shaping enemy forces for follow-on close battlefield operations.

The doctrine establishes the concept of *depth and simultaneous attack*—the idea of presenting the enemy with a series of simultaneous attacks throughout the depth of the battle space as an integral requirement for decisive victory. This simultaneous application of combat power is now part of joint operations doctrine in Joint Pub 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, and frames a new preferred method that results in seamless strategic, operational and tactical levels of war. We saw this doctrinal approach in *Just Cause* and *Desert Storm*.

Finally, we have devoted an entire chapter to thoughts about *force projection* and *early entry*—a necessity for a force—projection army in war and operations other than war. Doctrine now includes the idea of split operations for both intelligence and logistics along with thoughts of force tailoring and forecasting to envision the end state or definition of success even before early entry begins.

Battle tempo or operational tempo directly affects our ability to win quickly with minimum casualties. Not necessarily equal to speed, it is the ability to focus and apply combat power at a rate the enemy cannot handle and in a way that preserves the coherence of friendly forces.

In this revision we have given a full chapter to logistics, discussing the need for split-based operations and total asset visibility as our Army operates simultaneously in many theaters of operation and has need to use and reuse scarce assets.

Likewise, we acknowledge that in a force-projection environment, we will always conduct operations as part of a joint team and usually as part of a combined operation or coalition. We have devoted a chapter to describing the fundamentals of joint operations, as well as a single chapter to combined operations. The entire manual, however, reflects the joint and combined nature of modern warfare. Joint warfare is team warfare, and the Army is part of and normally central to the joint team's success. In Chapter 2 of FM 100-5 we say, "actions by ground force units, in coordination with members of the joint team, will be the decisive means to the strategic end."

FM 100-5's introduction states, "winning wars is the primary purpose of doctrine in this manual." That is what we do, fight and win our nation's wars as part of a joint team. Although warfighting continues to be the centerpiece of our doctrine, training and leader development, the revision of FM 100-5 acknowledges in Chapter 13 that our Army will be called on to conduct a range of activities called operations other than war. Since operations other than war do not necessarily exclude combat, how to think about planning and executing these operations builds on the skills, toughness and teamwork gained from the primary focus of our doctrine—warfighting. These principles help commanders and units make the transition through training from warfighting to operations other than war and back.

Technology has a significant place in the manual. Our Army seeks to maintain the battlefield edge in technological advantage in this new strategic landscape, where potential enemies can purchase and field new capabilities at a fraction of the time the Soviets could during the Cold War. FM 100-5 accommodates new technology advances and, in particular, information technology in what I feel is an emerging revolution in the methods we use to command soldiers and units in battle.

In short, the 1993 revision of FM 100-5 represents significant growth and change in methods to meet the challenges of this new era, while at the same time, it continues to emphasize the continuity of proven principles of military operations. A product of intensive intellectual innovation and broad consultation both within and outside the Army, it is the cornerstone for operations into the 21st century and is a bold step forward.

These are challenging times—times of tremendous growth—exciting and not always predictable times for our Army. But we are confident that we have, in Michael Howard's words, "got it about right," in our revision of our keystone doctrinal manual. Without fanfare, we

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have crafted a solid, intellectually sound doctrine for this new era—for a force-projection army—a doctrine for full-dimensional operations with the Army at the center of the joint team. This issue of *Military Review*, and others to follow, contains articles from authors with significant operational experience within their subject and will expand the discussion of the principles and tenets of our new doctrine. As always, the intent is to stimulate thought about our profession in war and operations other than war in a much different strategic environment so that when called, we can accomplish our mission at least cost to our soldiers. **MR**

General Frederick M. Franks Jr., US Army, Retired, lives in Alexandria, Virginia, where he is an author and consultant. He retired in 1994 from his position as commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), Fort Monroe, Virginia. Before that assignment, he commanded VII Corps in Germany and led the corps in the coalition's main attack during Operation Desert Storm. His other commands included 1st Armored Division, Ansbach, Germany; 7th Army Training Command, Grafenwöhr, Germany; and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Fulda, Germany. He also served in Vietnam and was the first J7, director of operational plans and interoperability, on the US Joint Staff. His most recent Military Review article, "Battle Command: A Commander's Perspective," appeared in the May-June 1996 issue.