OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF A LIGHT INFANTRY DIVISION IN A CONTINGENCY SCENARIO (U)

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Operational Considerations for the Employment of a Light Infantry Division in a Contingency Scenario

by

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21 May 1987

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The factors that led to the division's creation along with its unique characteristics, are examined. The range of appropriate scenarios and the implications of the joint command structure, are considered as components of the environment. Two historical examples of peacetime contingency operations (American intervention in Lebanon in 1958 and the Dominican
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ABSTRACT

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INTRODUCTION

...in power projection terms, the United States is an island nation with far-flung defense commitments that require an ability to deploy forces rapidly over great distances. The Army, realizing that most of its forces are oriented toward Europe, has also sought a role in the use of its forces in the world beyond Europe.

William J. Olson

In April 1984 the Chief of Staff of the Army, General John A. Wickham, Jr., initiated a period of intense debate and force development when he directed that light infantry divisions would be added to the Army force structure. General Wickham's 1984 White Paper on this subject responded to what he perceived as a new requirement:

Army leadership is convinced, based on careful examination of studies which postulate the kind of world in which we will be living and the nature of conflict we can expect to face, that an important need exists for highly trained, rapidly deployable light forces.

That requirement, which is not unique to our time, reflects changing national interests, a new perception of the threat, and significant limitations on this nation's ability to project landpower worldwide. The division that was created to meet this requirement is distinct from other Army divisions in the physical aspects of force structure and in the intangible aspects of


leadership, discipline, and training. The development of the Army's newest division continues today, built upon a long tradition of light infantry.

Different perceptions of future conflict in which the light infantry division would participate represent a major point of contention between advocates and opponents of the initiative. Most critics of the light infantry division generally agree with the Department of the Army's assessment that evolving political, economic, and sociological factors "...argue for the high likelihood of conflict continuing to occur in more or less a low-intensity [conflict short of major conventional war] configuration,..." There have been disagreements, however, over the level of sophistication of the potential low-intensity threat and the manner in which it should be countered.

The light infantry division concept contains both strengths and weaknesses that are sensitive to the environment in which the division is employed and to the degree of augmentation it receives. The division was created to respond to crises worldwide within constraints established by current and projected strategic lift capabilities. This approach has produced a division with great strategic deployability, while creating potential employment problems in the areas of operations and sustainment. Strategic deployment constraints forced developers to move many combat support and combat service support units to corps. Without augmentation the division deploys rapidly, but has limited "staying power". In addition, the level of threat the division can effectively counter is dependent upon

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5Congressional testimony, p. 879.
6William J. Olson, Light Force Initiative, p. 9.
the type of terrain in which it is employed and the type of augmentation it receives. The division's ability to sustain itself and the range of threats it can handle increases with augmentation, as do the amount of time and resources required to deploy it.

Contingency planners have little to assist them in assessing these factors as they plan for the division's employment in peacetime contingency operations. The division was created to provide the capability to respond to a crisis before the situation deteriorated to the point where a much larger force would be required to restore stability. However, many recent articles, studies, and academic papers have focused on issues of employment in NATO and effective mixes of heavy and light forces. There has been little discussion of the operational level considerations for the employment of a light division outside NATO. This study attempts to identify some of these considerations. It asks the question, "What are the factors that operational level planners should consider in the employment of a light infantry division in a peacetime contingency scenario?"

Before describing the methodology for addressing the research question, it is necessary to consider the assumptions and limitations that are critical to this study. Three assumptions were considered key to the effort. First, that the light infantry division is an effective organization for conducting stability operations and that it will be used for that purpose. Second, that the definition of low-intensity conflict and the description of the U.S. Army's mission in low-intensity conflict presented in Field Circular (FC) 100-20, Low-Intensity Conflict, are valid. Lastly, that U.S. contingency operations will be multiservice efforts.

Four limitations were imposed to restrict the scope of this effort. First, the study does not examine the use of the light infantry division in a
mid-intensity or high-intensity scenario. It is recognized that the division's secondary mission is to fight in a mid- to high-intensity environment when properly augmented and that its suitability for this type of mission is questioned. This issue has already been analyzed in numerous articles and studies. Second, no attempt is made to determine if the light infantry division is better suited than other forces to execute contingency operations. This study considers the employment of the light infantry division in conjunction with other contingency forces, such as the 82d Airborne Division. Third, the study does not examine the political justification for intervention in contingency crises. While it is true that theater planners play a key role in initiating the application of force in regional crises, this issue is also beyond the scope of this effort. Lastly, this study does not address the employment of a light infantry division in a counterinsurgency role as part of foreign internal defense. This subject is worthy of examination, but it is also beyond the scope of this study.

The methodology of the study is the final topic before examining the research question. The factors that led to division's creation, along with its unique characteristics, are examined in the second section of this paper. The range of appropriate scenarios and the implications of the command structure, as components of the environment, are considered in the third section. Two historical examples of peacetime contingency operations (American intervention in Lebanon in 1958 and the Dominican Republic in 1965) are then examined in the fourth section. The intent is to identify a historical perspective to compare with current perceptions described in earlier sections. The study concludes by establishing the linkage between strategic means, ways, and ends and the use of the light infantry division, and by summarizing the issues identified in the second, third, and fourth
sections. The goal is to identify a set of considerations, based on historical perspectives and current conditions, that provides a basis for operational level planning.  

7 The use of the light infantry division in peacetime contingency operations will cut across the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war. This study is approached from the joint task force level. It is difficult, however, to distinguish between the operational employment by the task force commander in a theater of operations and the strategic employment by a unified commander-in-chief (CINC) in a theater of war. Many of the considerations will be pertinent to more than one level. This issue is discussed in more detail later in this document.
LIGHT INFANTRY DIVISION

Throughout mankind's recorded history, people have tried to develop wonder weapons which would end the foot soldier's primacy on the battlefield...Today's firepower advocates are quick to cite individual triumphs by the English longbow, the machinegun, grapeshot, gas, tanks and even massive aerial bombing, but none can show us a non-nuclear weapon which consistently or conclusively proves its superiority over the infantry soldier.

General Fredrick J. Kroesen

Examination of the light infantry division involves identifying the factors that initiated and guided the development of its concept, describing its physical and intangible characteristics, and examining the manner in which it is expected to be employed. This process will describe some of the pertinent conditions relating to the operational level use of this military instrument.

IMPERATIVES AND CONSTRAINTS

The development of the division was influenced by two distinct sets of factors. The first of these concerned strategic issues relating to the threat, world conditions, and the mission; while the other reflected constraints placed on the Army and the National Command Authority for the employment of combat forces outside of Europe. The Army Chief of Staff emphasized the impact of the former, stressing the "geo-strategic value" of

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the light divisions. However, with initial design parameters that reflected restrictions on the division's size instead of its employment, some authors believe that the constraints were more influential.

The importance of the strategic factors in initiating and shaping the development of the light infantry division concept was stressed by identifying them as "strategic imperatives". The Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans provided a detailed picture of these imperatives during Congressional testimony in March of 1984. His argument in support of the new concept raised two key points. First, in general, armed conflict over the past 40 years has occurred at the lower end of the conflict spectrum and often in the lesser developed countries. Conflicts and crises in Lebanon (1958), Berlin, Cuba, Vietnam, Dominican Republic, and Grenada were among the examples offered to support his claim. Second, recent and on-going crises and insurgencies had also taken the form of low-intensity conflict in less developed countries in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Southwest Asia. With the exception of the war between Iran and Iraq, this last point remains valid today.

The Army's senior leadership believed these and other related trends, which pointed towards an increased likelihood of low-intensity conflict, contained key indicators for strategy and force development. Their vision of the future environment included the conditions shown in Table 1. These factors created a need for rapidly deployable "...modernized light combat

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11 Congressional testimony, pp. 877-878.
formations..." and "...regional mission-oriented special operations forces..." to support a balanced force structure and posture.12

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Table 1: Future Environment.13

The key constraints on the development of a globally oriented strategy and force structure were those of limited resources. The crux of the problem was insufficient resources (materiel and manpower) to provide the strategic lift and the forces necessary to meet world-wide commitments. This problem was more acute for the Army than it was for the Air Force and the Navy, because the Army lacked strategic lift assets. The Army was (and still is) dependent upon the availability of these critical resources and upon the priorities which others establish for their development.14 The Army's

12 Ibid., p. 880.
13 Ibid., p. 879.
total end strength was also constrained, a factor which prevented force developers from using existing force structure as a template for new organizations.

In an attempt to balance the strategic imperatives and resource constraints, the Army established design principles for a 10,000-man infantry division. The new light infantry division was to be rapidly deployable (defined as capable of being transported in fewer than 500 sorties of C-141B aircraft); effective in low-, medium-, and high-intensity conflict; and effective in an economy of force role. An increase in the infantry fighting strength, a reduction in the required support structure, and an overall decrease in division strength were also critical.15

CHARACTERISTICS

The physical conversion of a regular infantry division to a light infantry division significantly reduced its size while increasing its foxhole strength. Reductions in personnel and equipment produced a decrease of 46% in personnel and 56% in weight and a 66% reduction in total C-141B sorties required to move the division. The end result was that the light infantry division could be transported by air to Southwest Asia in four days compared to 12.4 days for the regular infantry division, while the foxhole strength increased by approximately 240 soldiers.16

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15 Congressional testimony, p. 889.
16 Congressional testimony, p. 891. By comparison, at the time the light infantry division was created, the airborne division could accomplish the same deployment in 8.5 days with 1004 sorties of C141B (Congressional testimony, p. 884). It has also been reduced in size and can deploy in less than 740 sorties (7th Infantry Division (Light) Capabilities Book: (Fort Ord: Headquarters 7th Infantry Division (Light), 27 May 1986), p. 1-6).
Unfortunately, the numbers do not point out that the elements that were eliminated from the division may often be deployed along with it. These and other units would be required as augmentation if the division were expected to fight in mid- or high-intensity conflict or for an extended length of time in a low-intensity conflict. Field Circular 71-101 identifies 54 different units, in ten functional areas, that could augment the light infantry division. Examples include: a civil affairs team or company; a military police platoon, company, or battalion; an area signal company or battalion; and a combat support or evacuation hospital. These units would be provided by corps or echelon above corps commands. Additional sorties associated with this augmentation would increase the resources and time required to deploy the force.

The resulting light infantry division structure is similar to that of the regular infantry division from which it evolved. The division is distinguished by its nine light infantry battalions, which generally are controlled by three brigades; an aviation brigade consisting of one attack helicopter battalion, a reconnaissance squadron, and two combat aviation companies; and a division artillery of three direct support 105mm howitzer battalions and a general support 155mm howitzer battery. The current table of organization and equipment (TOE) structure is shown in Figure 1.

There are also a number of less visible differences between regular and light infantry. General Wickham highlighted some of these differences under the category of "Soldier Power". He identified four characteristics that would make the light infantry division "...uniquely effective: vigorous training, physical and mental toughness, excellence in basic infantry skills, competent, resourceful leadership." These attributes represent more than an attempt to give the division something to sustain itself in the absence of materiel resources: they describe the nature of light infantry.

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18 Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) Series 77, (Washington: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1 October 1986); 7th Infantry Division (Light) Capabilities Book, p. 1-5
The personality of light infantry expresses itself in a distinct tactical style. Major Scott R. McMichael presented this idea in an article entitled "Proverbs of Light Infantry." He offered three characteristics, based upon examination of European light infantry, that he felt distinguished light infantry units from their regular infantry counterparts. The first, an attitude of self-reliance, was considered the most important. It produced innovation, imagination, and perseverance and lead to mission accomplishment in the face of unfavorable circumstances. The second characteristic, a propensity for improvisation and flexibility, was a product of self-reliance. Together these attributes produce the third characteristic, a tactical style that is unique to light infantry: a style based on surprise, stealth, shock, initiative, and offensive action. Colonel Huba Wass de Czege identified the product of this style when he stated, "Light infantry is specialized for rapid air transportability, clandestine insertion, very rugged terrain, night operations, infiltration, raids, and ambushes;..."

Light infantry operations are also characterized by decentralized control. Edward Luttwak argues that the tendency to centralize command and control in the European Theater to maximize the efficiency of human and materiel resources is logical. But because the light division is inefficient in its application of firepower and cannot afford to wage attrition warfare, effectiveness must be its objective. When efficiency is no longer the goal, centralized control "...gives way to an 'optional-control' [decentralized]..."
method of command, whereby action and reporting are concurrent." This type of control takes advantage of the tactical style mentioned above, emphasizing self-reliance, improvisation, flexibility, and initiative.

EXPECTED EMPLOYMENT

Two issues concerning expected employment of the light infantry division require consideration. The first involves the division’s mission, which states that it: “Rapidly deploys to defeat enemy forces in low-intensity conflict and, when properly augmented, reinforces U.S. forces committed to a mid- to high-intensity conflict.” Although the division is required to be able to “defeat enemy forces in low-intensity conflict” it is expected to prevent war through deterrence. The Army Chief of Staff envisioned a rapidly deployable force that would provide decisionmakers the ability to position a division-sized unit in a contingency area before a major conflict could be initiated. The product of his efforts also provides operational and strategic planners the capability to escalate U.S. involvement above a demonstration of force in the crisis area. If deterrence fails, the division’s employment may involve armed conflict. However the level conflict will be lower than that expected if the crisis is allowed to ferment until heavier forces can arrive.

The light infantry division’s lack of a forced entry capability is the second consideration concerning expected employment. The division requires a secure port of entry (airfield, seaport, or coastline) into its

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23 Ibid., p. 39.
24 JOE Series 77, p. 6.
26 Ibid.
lodgement area because it is not capable of conducting forced entry operations. It must rely upon other U.S., host nation, allied, and/or irregular forces to secure its access into the crisis area.²⁷ Those who consider this a significant limitation must remember that the division was not created to replace airborne, ranger, or marine units. Luttwak, in his report on the strategic utility of the U.S. light infantry division, contends that the division should not acquire a forcible entry capability. Instead, U.S. contingency forces should be task organized to provide a brigade-size marine or airborne "prompt intervention" force to secure a beachhead or airhead for the division's insertion.²⁸ This approach is identical to the manner in which a division with forcible entry capability would deploy. In the case of the 82d Airborne Division, once the airhead was secure the remainder of the division would be airlanded.

If a brigade of the 82d Airborne Division was employed with a light infantry division, the remainder of the 82d would be available to continue its critical strategic reserve mission or to support other theater level operations. The light infantry division could also free units capable of forcible entry for other missions in those scenarios that allow forces to enter administratively and those in which an ally or the host nation could ensure security.

ENVIRONMENT

Three examples of small wars one would imagine the United States fighting in the next decade are: a war to preserve the independence of Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama; a war to prevent Iranian disruption of Western and Japanese oil supplies; a war to preserve the independence of Thailand.

Elliot A. Cohen29

This section builds upon the description of the light infantry division by examining the environment within which it would be employed. Two areas are considered: the range of appropriate scenarios and the division's impact on the joint command structure.

SCENARIOS

The phrase low-intensity conflict has been used repeatedly within this paper and in other works to describe conflict short of major conventional war, the type of conflict for which the light infantry division was designed. The Chief of Staff confused the issue somewhat by expanding the division's role to include mid-intensity conflict (major conventional war) in his discussion of how a rapidly deployable force could defuse a crisis situation.30 However, his representatives were more restrictive in their testimony before Congress. They predicted that future conflict would be low-intensity in nature and they emphasized the light infantry division's utility in that environment. Even the division's mission reflects this focus

on the lower end of the conflict spectrum: the light infantry division “Rapidly deploys to defeat enemy forces in low-intensity conflict...(emphasis added)"\(^{31}\)

Low-intensity conflict is a very broad subject. Its scope needs to be identified along with those areas in which the light infantry division is best suited to respond. Field Circular 100-20, *Low-Intensity Conflict*, provides the following definition of this term:

...a limited politico-military struggle to achieve political, military, social, economic or psychological objectives. It is often protracted and ranges from diplomatic, economic, and psychosocial pressures through terrorism and insurgency. LIC is generally confined to a geographic area and is often characterized by constraints on the weaponry, tactics, and the level of violence. LIC involves the actual or contemplated use of military capabilities up to, but not including, combat between regular forces.(emphasis added)\(^{32}\)

The general categories of activity grouped under this topic include a wide range of functions: foreign internal defense, terrorism counteraction, peacekeeping operations, and peacetime contingency operations.\(^{33}\) The strategic imperatives that led to the development of the division align closely with peacetime contingency operations. Field Circular 100-20 identifies these operations as "...politically sensitive military operations normally characterized by the short term rapid projection or employment of forces in conditions short of conventional war,..."\(^{34}\) These operations may take the form of intelligence gathering missions, rescue/noncombatant evacuation, strike/raid, demonstration/show of force, peacemaking, uncond-

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\(^{31}\) TO&E Series 77, p. 6.
\(^{32}\) Field Circular (FC) 100-20, *Low-Intensity Conflict*, (Fort Leavenworth: Command and General Staff College, 16 July 1986), p. v.
\(^{33}\) FC 100-20, pp. v-viii.
\(^{34}\) Ibid., p. 9-1.
ventional warfare, and humanitarian assistance. Peacemaking involves operations to support threatened governments or to establish/maintain civil order.

The light infantry division is not the most effective force for accomplishing all the specific activities grouped under the heading of peacetime contingency operations. Special operations forces are best suited to conduct unconventional warfare, intelligence gathering operations, rescues, and strikes/raids. Noncombatant evacuation, demonstrations/show of force, peacemaking, and support of special operations forces in strike/raid operations are the types of missions the light infantry division should be expected to perform. The division is also capable of performing independent strike operations. The division can provide humanitarian assistance when it is augmented with necessary support units such as engineers, medical, and civil affairs. Therefore, when writers state that the division is well suited to conduct contingency operations in low-intensity conflict, they should be speaking of "short term projections or employment of force" to conduct noncombatant evacuation, demonstrations/show of force, peacemaking, or strike/raid operations.

**COMMAND STRUCTURE**

An operational level planner considering the use of a light infantry division in peacetime contingency operations must also consider the command structure. It is impossible to imagine the unilateral employment

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36 Ibid., p. 9-3.
37 Lieutenant Colonel Peter A. Bond, "In Search of LIC," Military Review, August 1986, pp. 84-85.
of an Army division. If it is necessary to project landpower somewhere outside of those areas where the U.S. has forward deployed forces, the Army will depend on the Air Force and Navy for support and the operation will be controlled by a joint headquarters within the Unified Command System. This headquarters will be either a unified command or one of its joint subordinate headquarters (a sub-unified command or a joint task force (JTF), most likely the latter). Figure 2 shows an example of Army forces employed as part of a joint task force.

Figure 2: Possible Command Structure for Contingency Operations

The Unified Command System is a complex piece of the U.S. Armed Forces. Observers both in and out of government who attempt to make sense

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of the system often focus their attention on the higher levels of command. They consider the role of the Joint Chiefs, the Chairman, and their relationship to the unified and specified commands; the powers invested in the unified commanders; or the relationship of the operational and administrative (or service) lines of command.\footnote{Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act to 1986, (Washington: The House of Representatives, 12 September 1986); Lieutenant General (Retired) John H. Cushman, Command and Control of Theater Forces: Korea Command and Other Cases, (Cambridge: Harvard University, April 1985), draft.} The light infantry division will create additional command and control issues at the lower end of this joint command system.

The light infantry division further complicates the command structure by requiring an intermediate headquarters between itself and the joint command. The light infantry division may represent a small portion of the Army component. Conversely, time and strategic lift constraints might cause it to represent the bulk of the Army element. In either case, the division will probably not be the senior Army headquarters participating in the operation. While there is no direct conflict among key references on this issue, there is some ambiguity. Field Circular 71-101 states that "A corps or JTF will normally assume command of the division as soon as its command and control and logistic base is established."\footnote{FC 71-101, p. 1-16.} Congressional testimony cited earlier and the 7th Infantry Division (Light) Capabilities Book state that the division would "usually fight" or "usually be deployed" as part of an Army Corps.\footnote{Congressional testimony, p 907; 7th Infantry Division (Light) Capabilities Book, p. 1-6.}

The light infantry division's requirement for augmentation generates a need for a corps headquarters. If the crisis can be averted with a demonstration of force in 48 hours or less, the division may not require
augmentation. If, however, it is likely that operations will be extended, the
division will depend on augmentation from corps and echelons above corps.\textsuperscript{43}
The division's ability to control these supporting units is limited, although
the headquarters is designed to accept command and control "plugs" "...for
the rapid and efficient receipt, integration, and employment of aug-
mentation assets."\textsuperscript{44} At least a portion of the corps command and control
apparatus will be required to control the additional units if augmentation is
extensive. It would also be prudent to provide a portion of the headquarters
initially to allow for smooth expansion of the effort if operations continue
longer than expected.

\textsuperscript{43}FC 71-101, p. B-3.
\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., pp. B-6 to B-7.
HISTORICAL EXAMPLES

If the situation has been allowed to deteriorate, we had better think twice before we commit our force to a larger country—it may be a bottomless pit. ...the secret of successful counterinsurgency is to nip it in the bud; once it has taken root, it may, often as not, be too late.

Lieutenant General Bruce Palmer, Jr. - 31 August 1965

The concept for the employment of the light infantry division and the motivation behind its development are not unique. This section explores two examples of American projection of landpower during peacetime contingency operations to identify considerations for the employment of the light infantry division. The first example, the 1958 intervention in Lebanon, was this nation's largest troop deployment between the Korean and Vietnam wars, while the second, the 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic, took place as the U.S. escalated its involvement in Vietnam.

LEBANON - 1958

On 15 July 1958 U.S. military forces entered Lebanon in a contingency operation (Operation BLUEBIRD) that continued until mid-October. The intervention was initiated at the request of Lebanon's president Camille Palmer.


Chamoun who feared his government would be toppled by opponents. Operation BLUEBAT was implemented by the Specified Command, Middle East (SPECOMME), a temporary command created for the employment of U.S. European forces in Middle East contingencies. The Army component of SPECOMME consisted of elements of the 24th Infantry Division (ID) (stationed in Germany) and selected units of the U.S. Army Europe Communications Zone.

Operation BLUEBAT is an excellent case study for examining joint contingency operations. At least two of the many lessons and issues identified during the operation are applicable to the employment of the light infantry division. The first of these issues concerned whether the division would be employed. In this operation there was some question as to whether or not Army forces were required to deploy to Lebanon. The U.S. intervention began with an amphibious landing opposite the Beirut Airport conducted by the Marine component of SPECOMME. Some observers believed that the Marines had stabilized the situation by 16 July after securing the airport and moving into the city, thereby eliminating any need for the task forces from the 24th ID. President Eisenhower had even stated that he did not want any "further sizeable increases" in forces. The deployment of the 24th, which had been initiated prior to that time, continued through the 16th and 17th as the division moved to an intermediate staging base at Adana Air Base, Turkey. On the 18th of July

47 Ibid., p. 17.
48 Ibid., p. 10.
50 Spiller, Not War, pp. 25, 33.
the operational commander decided to bring these forces forward into Lebanon. The issue that tipped the scales in favor of their deployment is unknown, but three factors have been offered for consideration. First, the intermediate staging base at Adana was very congested. Movement to Lebanon may have been seen as a means of relieving the overcrowding. Second, even though the situation in Beirut had stabilized, there had been a great deal of unrest in Tripoli (the Army and Air Force component commanders were instructed initially to prepare for an airborne drop on Tripoli). Lastly, there was the possibility that after the Army had deployed over 2,000 miles "...it had to have a part to play in the intervention."51

The second issue which resulted from the operation was related to the first: it concerned the command and control structure employed by the contingency force. Brigadier General David W. Gray commanded the Army component of SPECOMME during the deployment and early employment phases. On 23 July a joint land component command was created and an Army major general was selected as its commander. The elements of the 24th ID, the 21st Logistics Command, and the Provisional Marine Force were each placed under the new American Land Forces (AMLANFOR) Command.52 General Gray agreed with this move to improve the coordination between ground forces although it relieved him of control of the support element. In his review of the operation he stated that:

No one likes to be superseded, but looking back I believe I was more relieved than sorry. More and more of my time was being spent coordinating with CINCSPECOMME, General Wade (Marine component commander), Admiral Yeager (Navy component commander), Amb. Robert McClintock (U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon), and the

51 Ibid., p. 33.
52 Wade, Logistics, pp. 44-45.
Lebanese. It was becoming apparent to me that most of that co-
ordination could better be done at a higher level than my
own.(*emphasis added*)

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - 1965

The U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic also provides an excel-
 lent example of peacetime contingency operations. On 30 April 1965 U.S.
military forces entered the Dominican Republic to protect U.S. civilians, to
stabilize a revolutionary situation, and to prevent communist revolutionar-
ies from establishing control over the government. The intervention,
which followed the Marine Corps' evacuation of almost 2000 U.S. civilians,
lasted for a year as peacemaking operations transitioned into peacekeeping
and humanitarian assistance. Lieutenant General Bruce Palmer, Jr. was
designated as the commander of the U.S. Forces, Dominican Republic
(USFORDOMREP), which contained Army, Marine, and Air Force components.
The 82d Airborne Division (ABN DIV) comprised the bulk of the Army
contingent.

This operation provides at least three lessons that are applicable to
the employment of the light infantry division. The first concerned the size
of the ground component of the contingency response force. General Palmer

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53 Major General David W. Gray (retired), The U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958: A
Commander’s Reminiscence, (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College,
August 1984), p. 27.
54 Major Lawrence M. Greenberg, The United States Army in the Dominican Republic:
Unilateral and Coalition Operations: the Dominican Intervention of 1965, draft, (Washington
55 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
and his staff concluded that the size of the force deployed in a crisis situation was a vital issue. General Palmer stated that:

"...the Dominican Republic presents a special case, wherein the country is relatively small and readily containable because of its island location. Moreover, he who controls the capital city, Santo Domingo, controls the country. Hence, the force necessary to control the area of Santo Domingo could be considered adequate on the whole. This is not necessarily true in other countries, each of which presents a peculiarly different problem. I suspect that for larger countries, the Dominican Republic size force might only suffice for the capital city or one province, or state, and that much larger forces might be necessary in the event of a country-wide involvement...Our plans should commit a minimum of a division-size task force on stability operations (emphasis added)."

The composition of the initial elements of the response force was the subject of a second lesson. General Palmer's staff concluded that "...it is necessary to deploy as many infantry units as possible into the objective area in the initial parachute or airlanded assault. This approach is important for two reasons. First, there is a shortage of forces to control critical installations and facilities. Second, it is important to avoid a piecemeal commitment of forces. This point is related to the previous issue, that of providing overwhelming force at the decisive point. General Palmer stressed that the psychological impact may be the difference between the success and failure of the operation.

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60 Palmer, Stability Operations, p. 2.
The third lesson identified during the Dominican Republic intervention concerned the support units which followed the assault forces. Authors of the report concluded that the final force organization would require a disproportionate share of combat support and combat service support units. Signal, military police, medical, and logistical units were specifically identified.\(^1\) The support required from military police and medical units highlights the roles played by these and other support forces during operations in the Dominican Republic. Check points were established by the military police, which in one day passed 103,111 persons and 33,625 vehicles. Detainee collection points and a holding area were also established and manned. The maximum number of detainees held in the facility equalled 400.\(^2\) Medical units played an important role in humanitarian assistance due to a breakdown in the existing medical support structure. Civil relief was considered the "biggest headache".\(^3\)

\(^2\) *Ibid., Chapter 12, Population and Resources Control, p.E-3.*
\(^3\) *Ibid., Chapter 13, Medical, p.F-3.*
EMPlOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

We see, therefore, that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means...The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose.

Carl von Clausewitz

The final steps in answering the research question involve the identification of the political-military framework within which the division might be employed and integration of the employment considerations raised in preceding sections. In the first half of this section the linkage between strategic aims and the employment of the light infantry division will be explored, operational level considerations will be examined in the second half.

LINKAGE

If the light infantry division is ever employed in a peacetime contingency operation, it should be possible to relate its use to U.S. strategic goals. Field Manual (FM) 100-5 states that the theater commander's principal task is to "...concentrate superior strength against enemy vulnerabilities at the decisive time and place to achieve strategic and policy aims." The operational level planner will operate within the hierarchy of the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. At each level scarce means will be applied in various ways to achieve critical ends. The ends of one level

65FM100-5, Operations, p. 27.
represent the means for a higher level. This relationship is highlighted below where theater of operations military success at the operational level becomes a means for theater of war success at the strategic level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC MEANS</th>
<th>STRATEGIC WAYS</th>
<th>STRATEGIC ENDS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diplomatic, Economic, Social, Political, Psychological, World-wide Military Success</td>
<td>National Strategy</td>
<td>Achievement of Policy Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliances, Armed Forces, Mobilization, Production, Theaters of War Military Success</td>
<td>National Military Strategy</td>
<td>World-wide Military Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Alliance, Reinforcement, Sustainment, Theater Reserves, Special Weapons Policy, Theaters of Operation Military Success</td>
<td>Theater of War Military Strategy</td>
<td>Theater of War Military Success</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATIONAL MEANS</th>
<th>OPERATIONAL WAYS</th>
<th>OPERATIONAL ENDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sequenced Battles</td>
<td>AirLand Plan of Operations</td>
<td>Success of Major Operations</td>
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<td>Tactics</td>
<td>Battle Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership, Maneuver, Firepower, Protection</td>
<td>Tactics and Techniques</td>
<td>Engagement Success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The Levels of War

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66 The Levels of War, United States Army Europe (USAREUR) Poster 525-5(OT), March 1987.
As mentioned above it should be possible to relate missions or ends at the operational (or tactical) level to a strategic or policy aim. Examination of the U.S. National Security Strategy provides an example of this point. U.S. national interests include maintaining a "...stable and secure world, free of major threats to U.S. interests."

which may be translated into a policy objective such as "...maintain the security of our nation and our allies." U.S. foreign policy reflects the national security strategy and a component of that policy focuses on a portion of the East Asian/Pacific Region:

In the Philippines, the new government faces major and inherited political, security and economic challenges. Through all of the tools available to us, we are determined to help this key Pacific ally to overcome these problems so it can once again achieve economic growth, counter the threat of a serious insurgency and strengthen democratic government. (emphasis added)

U.S. defense policy embodies the military means at the national level. Specifically addressed in that policy is the requirement for a "...full range of U.S. military capabilities...nuclear deterrence...[through]...general purpose forces...[to]...an effective capability for lesser contingencies and special operations...[to include the capability of]...rapid deployment to deter wider crises or conflicts." The relationship of these factors is shown below.

Table 3.: Linkage of Means, Ways, and Ends (Strategic Level of War).

| MEANS                          | STRATEGIC WAYS                                      | ENDS                                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|                                                |
| "...an effective capability for lesser contingencies...rapid deployment to deter..." | "Through all of the tools available..."            | "...maintain the security of our nation and our allies." |
|                                | "[the Philippines]...counter the threat of a serious insurgency..." |                                                |

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68 Ibid., pp. 9, 15.
69 Ibid., p. 19.
The strategic level of war contains three sub-divisions in Figure 3, but only the highest level is pictured above. The two lower sub-levels are omitted for two reasons. First, if there are specific military policies or plans that address contingencies in the Philippines, they undoubtedly are classified and could not be discussed here. Second, a peacetime contingency operation may transcend a number of levels simultaneously; theater of operations may coincide with a theater of war; and military success in a theater of operations may equate to military success on the national level. Keeping the last point in mind it is possible to consider the means, ways, and ends of a joint task force (JTF) operating in a theater of operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANS</th>
<th>OPERATIONAL WAYS</th>
<th>ENDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naval Ops, Air Ops, Rapid</td>
<td>Joint Task Force</td>
<td>Escalation of</td>
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<td>Deployment of a Light Infantry</td>
<td>Campaign Plan</td>
<td>Crisis/Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Division as a Show of Force</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deterred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Means, Ways, and Ends (Operational Level of War).

The relationship demonstrated above is not unique to the light infantry division. The 82d Airborne Division has maintained the capability to perform this type of mission and as such has supported national policies directly. It is also important to remember that if the light infantry division were employed in a similar scenario, the 82d and/or other Army units might also participate for the reasons mentioned earlier.

CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of the second half of this section is to identify specific considerations for the employment of the light infantry division by
synthesizing the material presented earlier. The second section of the study began by examining the strategic imperatives and resource constraints that impacted on the development of the division. These factors serve to bound the possible response to a crisis rather than provide guidance for the planner. The imperatives may provide some food for thought for those individuals who are not familiar with a particular theater. However, an operational level commander or staff officer who is developing a contingency plan should be aware, not only of these imperatives, but of the specific ramifications for his contingency area. Likewise, the constraints fail to generate considerations for the planner.

Although the imperatives and constraints will not impact directly on operational level planning, the force structure process that they initiated will affect it. The light infantry division was created to operate within the constraints to respond to the imperatives mentioned earlier. If crisis conditions approximate those for which the division was created, constraints may be placed on the operational level planners to use the newest entry to the Army's force structure. The 1958 intervention into Lebanon illustrates this point. In that case the crisis was defused by the time Army forces had reached their intermediate staging base. As the SPECOMME Commander may have felt compelled to give the Army a role in the intervention, so today's joint commander might be forced to employ the light infantry division.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{70}Some may consider this a political issue and therefore not an operational concern. However, peacetime contingency operations are susceptible to this type of influence and that fact should be recognized.
RESULTING CONSIDERATION:

- Constraints may be placed on the operational level planner which require the employment of the light infantry division regardless of operational requirements.

The characteristics of the light infantry division will also place external influences on the operational level planner. The two physical characteristics of the division that are the most significant are its large number of infantrymen and its limited combat support and combat service support capabilities. The light infantry division is able to field a greater percentage of infantrymen than any other U.S. division. This condition provides two key advantages in support of efforts to deter crisis escalation. First, the light infantry division provides the type of forces required to secure critical installations and facilities as part of a deterrent act or in follow-on actions in case deterrence fails. The intervention in the Dominican Republic highlighted the importance of deploying large numbers of infantry units in the first wave to provide this type of security. Second, this large deterrent force can be deployed at a relatively low cost in strategic or operational airlift.

Unfortunately, the division’s dependence on corps and echelons above corps for operations and logistics support presents the operational level planner a significant disadvantage. Lessons from the Dominican Republic emphasized the importance of population control, medical support, civil affairs, and communications. The division’s limited capabilities in the areas of military police, medical, civil affairs, and signal operations restrict its ability to perform these functions. This support will be critical
if the host nation's control of its institutions and population is disrupted, regardless of whether or not deterrence is effective.

Logistics support of the division is also a problem. If the division is required to move out of its lodgement area and conduct operations in excess of 48 hours it will require corps sustainment support. As a result, if deterrence is not effective the division will require support from corps and/or echelons above corps to support its operation. General Palmer's staff emphasized the need for a disproportionate share of combat support and combat service support in the final force organization. These forces are not found in the light infantry division table of organization and equipment and they are not counted against the 500 sortie cap.

**RESULTING CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Large numbers of infantry have a significant impact on crisis stability by providing effective security and a creditable deterrent.
- A large portion of combat service and combat service support units may be required in the final force organization regardless of the effectiveness of the deterrent; these forces are not organic to the light infantry division.

The division's intangible characteristics can have a greater influence on the division's mission accomplishment than its physical attributes. It is impossible to be definitive on this point because operational level decisions and other constraints may limit the potential impact of these characteristics. Conversely, the operational level planner may set the conditions for tactical success if he designs his operation to exploit the division's strengths. The most critical of these are the division's tactical style, its
ability to operate at night and in very restrictive terrain, and its decentralized control of operations.

The division’s offensive orientation is the most significant aspect of the unique tactical style defined by McMichael. Stealth, shock, surprise, and initiative are important, but the division’s ability to employ offensive action is the most sensitive to the operational commander’s plan. The light infantry division should be employed offensively at both the operational and tactical levels. When the defense is required at the operational level, consideration should be given to employing the division offensively or at least giving it necessary freedom of action to approach the task in an offensive manner. This might be accomplished by increasing the size of the division’s area of operations or by limiting the restrictions and constraints that are placed on the use of the division.

The light infantry division’s ability to fight effectively during darkness and in very restrictive terrain should also be considered during planning at the operational level. Night operations may have less of an impact at the operational level, but they will facilitate stealth and surprise at the tactical level. Terrain considerations will be more critical. The light infantry division’s ability to adapt to restrictive terrain is a factor that deserves consideration by the operational level planner. Operations were conducted primarily in urban terrain in both of the historical examples. This is restrictive terrain in which the light infantry division is far more capable of operating than other heavier divisions.

The light infantry division’s orientation on decentralized control must also be factored into operational level planning. Peacetime contingency operations are likely to be characterized by an extreme degree of centralized control. Light infantry division operations, on the other hand,
are characterized by decentralized control. These two facts may cause dissonance at one or more levels of command. Missions and means for controlling operations should be examined carefully to provide maximum freedom and decentralized control to the division and any intermediate headquarters.

RESULTING CONSIDERATION:

- Employment of the light infantry division should take advantage of its offensive tactical orientation, its ability to operate effectively at night and in restricted terrain, and its emphasis on decentralized control.

The second section concluded with examination of two additional employment considerations: expected use of the division and its requirement for a secure point of entry into the contingency area. The Army Chief of Staff envisioned that the light infantry division would be used primarily as a deterrent force in peacetime contingency operations. Its great strategic and operational mobility permits planners to move the entire division rapidly into the crisis area. General Palmer stressed that the psychological impact of overwhelming force was key and that a division was about the smallest size force that should be employed in stability operations. If deterrence fails the division is capable of engaging in low-intensity conflict, in which the augmentation requirements mentioned earlier would apply. The division does not, however, possess a forced entry capability. Other forces must secure the division’s point of entry into the crisis area.

RESULTING CONSIDERATIONS:

- Employment of the entire division is feasible and should be planned.
- The light infantry division is primarily a deterrent force that is capable of defeating a low-intensity threat when augmented.
- The light infantry division does not possess a forced entry capability.

The third section of the study focused on the environment in which the light infantry division would be employed. The various activities that comprised peacetime contingency operations were examined and those which the light infantry division was best suited to perform were identified: noncombatant evacuation, demonstrations/show of force, peacemaking, strike operations, and support of strikes/raids performed by special operations forces. These activities represent only a portion of potential U.S. missions for low-intensity conflict.

**RESULTING CONSIDERATION:**

- In peacetime contingency operations the light infantry division is best suited to perform noncombatant evacuations, demonstrations/show of force, peacemaking, strike operations, and raid/strike support missions.

The last area of consideration was that of the command structure. The joint commander may not have as much flexibility in the employment of the division as he would like. The requirement to control Army augmentation units and the need to coordinate with a host of different headquarters generates a requirement for a corps element to act as the ARFOR headquarters. While coordinating and special staffs are intended to act as receptacles for the integration of augmentation forces, the division staff must rely heavily on higher headquarters for support and for coordination of
that support. Additionally, General Gray pointed out the conflict between control of his tactical unit and coordination with other elements of the joint command in Lebanon. The light infantry division commander and his staff would experience similar problems today. The deployment of a corps headquarters, however small, would also provide long term continuity if deterrence was not sufficient to defuse the situation. If continued operations were necessary the corps headquarters could manage the expansion of the Army element effectively.

RESULTING CONSIDERATION:

- The employment of a corps headquarters as the ARFOR should be considered unless the corps is the basis for a joint task force.

71FC 101-71, pp. 3-11, 3-14.
CONCLUSION

The services and the Unified Commands must also be prepared for the effective execution of contingency and peacekeeping operations when such operations are required to protect national interests. U.S. combat forces will be introduced into Low Intensity Conflict situations only as a last resort and when vital national interests cannot otherwise be adequately protected.

President Ronald Reagan

The objective of this study is to identify the factors that operational level planners should consider in the employment of a light infantry division in a peacetime contingency scenario. Proceeding sections have reviewed the influences on the development of the light infantry division and the specific characteristics of the division. The environment has also been examined along with two historical examples. The latter provide a number of lessons that are applicable to future peacetime contingency operations. They also serve to highlight considerations gleaned from the examination of more current issues. Key considerations for the employment of the light infantry division in peacetime contingency operations are restated below.

- Constraints may be placed on the operational level planner which require the employment of the light infantry division regardless of operational requirements.

- The light infantry division is primarily a deterrent force that is capable of defeating a low-intensity threat when augmented.

- In peacetime contingency operations the light infantry division is best suited to perform noncombatant evacuations, demonstrations/show of

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72Reagan, National Security Strategy, p. 34.
force, peacemaking, strike operations, and raid/strike support missions.

- The light infantry division does not possess a forced entry capability.
- Employment of the light infantry division should take advantage of its offensive tactical orientation, its ability to operate effectively at night and in restricted terrain, and its emphasis on decentralized control.
- Employment of the entire division is feasible and should be planned.
- Large numbers of infantry have a significant impact on crisis stability.
- The employment of a corps headquarters as the ARFOR should be considered unless the it is the basis for a joint task force.
- A large portion of combat service and combat service support units may be required in the final force organization regardless of the effectiveness of the deterrent; these forces are not organic to the light infantry division.

The operational level planner must consider numerous factors as he attempts to "...concentrate overwhelming force at the decisive time and place..." His focus will include the activities necessary to sequence battles and major operations to achieve strategic aims. Intelligence, sustainment, maneuver, fires, and deception are examples of major functions he will consider. The theater specific aspects of these functions, such as associations with the country team, host nation armed forces, and other agencies to collect critical intelligence, will have a great affect on the planning and conduct of operations.

The operational level planner must also examine the instruments he intends to employ. The actions of tactical units will have a significant impact on operational level success due to uncertainty involved in crises situations, the limited resources available for employment, and the
resulting risk. The planner must understand the considerations associated with forces like the light infantry division.

Many of the considerations mentioned above are not unique to the light infantry division. The difference between these issues and those associated with other divisions is generally one of degree. For example, all divisions require support from corps and echelons above corps, it is just a question of when and how much. In the case of light infantry division, the operational level planner is able to deploy it more rapidly than other divisions without augmentation. If deterrence or limited operations do not end the crisis he must provide augmentation. Likewise, if the host nation’s control of its country has disintegrated additional augmentation will be required. The latter condition is true for contingency operations involving any quick reaction force.

The factors listed above provide a basis for theater planning. They represent a starting point for consideration of a specific crisis. There are, however, many things that the light infantry division and other Army units can do in the area of foreign internal defense to prevent a situation from deteriorating to the point of a crisis. Unfortunately, political and resource constraints may prevent the Army from employing the division until a crisis has arisen, until the stakes are high and the task more difficult. At that point the Army will be ready to apply an old means, in a new way, to achieve an old end state.
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