DEEP BATTLE: WHO'S IN CHARGE?

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARK H. SKATTUM
United States Air Force

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

Lieutenant Colonel Mark H. Skattum
United States Air Force

Colonel Robert Mabus
Project Adviser

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Mark H. Skattum, Lt Col, USAF

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Both the United States Army and the United States Air Force are in disagreement over which service should control the deep battle. At the root of the problem is current interpretation of both joint and service doctrine, and a reluctance to cede control of service assets to another service. This paper details those views and presents a possible solution in the form of the Korean theater's response to handling deep attack.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States Air Force and the U.S. Army are currently engaged in a debate over which service should have proponency for the deep battle. The U. S. Army is convinced the land component commander has the necessary means and a requirement to both see and attack targets in the deep battle area. The U.S. Air Force is equally convinced they bring a preponderance of force to the deep battle and should therefore control assets and targets allocated to this battle through the joint force air component commander (JFACC). In this paper, I will briefly explore the concept of the Fire Support Coordination Line (FSCL) and how it relates to the deep battle argument. I will also look at the doctrine and the concerns of both the Army and Air Force over this battle area. Next, I will examine the Combined Forces Korea solution to partitioning the deep battle in detail. Finally, I will propose a compromise to the control of deep battle using the current method of operations in the Republic of Korea (ROK), and show why this method of coordinating deep attack can work for all services, particularly when our national strategy requires the ability to engage in two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts.
Much of the argument surrounding the deep battle stems from joint experiences in Desert Storm. During the latter air phases of that conflict, army commanders below the level of the Joint Force Commander (JFC) did not feel the JFACC fully accomplished their desires on targeting the deep battle for battle field preparation within their area of operations.¹ These corps commanders felt it anathema to their roles as commanders not to have control of any targets beyond the FSCL. Their view was and remains that to adequately control their area of operations, they should be the supported commander throughout their area of operations, not just up to the FSCL. This situation was exacerbated in Desert Storm due to the JFC retaining the title of land component commander. Today, both land component commanders and corps commanders have advanced organic weapons systems (Apache helicopters and Advanced Tactical Missile Systems [ATACMS]) that can reach targets well past the FSCL. Since land commanders control these weapons systems, they want to control their targeting as well.

It is the FSCL that is at the heart of the problem. This is currently defined as the line beyond which coordination for fires is not required, provided no adverse effects will be felt on or to the rear of the FSCL; subordinate friendly fires must coordinate short of the FSCL with the appropriate land component commander. ² Typically, the FSCL is placed such that it does not include deep
targets. The Air Force considers fires beyond the FSCL as interdiction and the responsibility of the JFACC to plan and execute. Joint Pub 3-0 defines interdiction as "an action to divert, disrupt, delay, or destroy the enemy's surface military potential before it can be used effectively against friendly forces." The problem lies with the Army and the Air Force interpretation of what the doctrine says and means. As in all interpretations, the true meaning is lost as the services argue for proponency. In the following chapter, I will present the Army's case for the land component commander's control of the deep battle.
CHAPTER 2

THE ARMY VIEW OF DEEP ATTACK

According to Field Manual FM 100-5, Operations, deep operations are activities, directed against enemy forces not in contact, designed to influence the conditions in which future close operations will be conducted. The Army feels that to win quickly and decisively with minimal losses, the land component commander must synchronize all actions both within and above their area of operations. The Army believes that any attempt to divide or cut up the battle space can adversely affect the outcome of the battle. This chapter will address why the Army feels it must fight deep, the joint doctrine that the Army uses to substantiate their claim to the deep battle, systems the Army has to fight the deep battle, and their arguments against Air Force control of the deep battle.

The Army fights deep because in their view, wars are won on land. This calls for the land component commander to orchestrate all aspects of the land battle to include his own organic firepower and those fires brought to bear by the other services. This requires the land component commander to have a robust organic deep attack capability, plus the ability to orchestrate the fires of the other components to ensure a synchronized, coordinated attack in the land
The Army sees three different levels for deep attack, corresponding to the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. All three levels are required to meet the intent of the theater commander, the subordinate joint force commander, and the land component commander. The deep battle is essential for rapid and decisive victory with a minimum amount of casualties. Additionally, fighting deep allows the Army to increase the land commander's dominance of his area of operations (AO), it allows for high operational tempo to retain the initiative, it provides for all weather, day or night attack, is highly responsive, and complements the deep strike capability of the other Services.

The key doctrinal document for the Army's position is Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations. This manual was published in September 1993, and was agreed to by all the services. This publication stressed the need for the joint force commander to synchronize all the components under his command and also formalized the concept of an AO for surface commanders, which included land and naval commanders. The Army stresses this concept of AO is not based upon weapons capabilities. Rather, the AO is based upon how a joint force commander plans to employ land and naval forces. Conspicuously absent is any discussion of air forces. These areas are based upon the size and the mission of the forces assigned and must be sufficiently
large enough to allow for rapid maneuver, protection of forces, and fighting at extended ranges. Within these areas, the land and naval commanders are designated supported commanders who determine the timing, priority, and effects of fires other components bring into the area.11

The ability of the land component commander to influence his AO by deep attack rests upon his systems and his ability to see the deep battle area. The Army feels it has this capability. By the beginning of the next decade, the Army will have fielded four versions of the ATACMS missile.12 This system provides the land component commander with the ability to hit targets day or night and all weather. The Block I and IA versions of the missile can carry antipersonnel and anti material warheads with ranges of over 120 kilometers and 300 kilometers, respectively.13 The Block II and IIA versions will receive the brilliant antitank munitions (BAT), with comparable ranges to the Block I and IA missiles. The AH-64 Apache attack helicopter adds another dimension to the Army's capability to fight deep. Finally, the addition of surveillance systems such as the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) aircraft give the land component commander the ability to see deep targets and then react quickly with his systems.

The Army sees six basic disadvantages to allowing the Air Force to control all deep fires. First of all, it is
doctrinally the responsibility of the land component commander to take and control land objectives. The JFACC does not have that responsibility. Second, the JFACC controlling the deep battle violates the principle of unity of command. The Army feels only one commander should be responsible for orchestrating land operations. If the JFACC is given the mantle of supported commander for air interdiction, he is then directly influencing and in charge of a portion of the land commander's battle in what the Army considers an essential part of their AO. Third, the Army feels the current Air Tasking Order (ATO) system is too slow and unwieldy to allow rapid response to deep battle targets. The 72 hour cycle of the ATO does not keep pace with the high operations tempo of modern warfare. Fourth, centralizing control at the JFACC slows the process of choosing and attacking targets. Fifth, failure to capitalize on the expanding capabilities of ATACMS would take a proven weapons system out of future battles. Finally, the JFACC does not have the same number of personnel at risk in supporting the land operations. The Army feels protecting the lives of soldiers can best be accomplished by the land component commander.

Thus, the Army feels the land component commander should remain in charge of all operations within his AO, to include deep battle. The Army position is that it is doctrinally correct, Army weapon systems exist to both see and attack
deep targets, and the JFACC does not have the ability to attack as responsively as the land component commander. Unfortunately, the Air Force is not in complete agreement. The next chapter will detail the Air Force's position on deep battle.
CHAPTER 3

THE AIR FORCE POSITION

The Air Force has an opposing view to that of the Army. It feels there are two essential questions to be answered in this issue: first, will the deep battle be controlled by the land component commander or the JFACC, and second, who should control the assets (including the ATACMS) to be used to attack deep targets? This chapter will detail why the Air Force believes the JFACC should control the deep battle, how that control should be accomplished, and the disadvantages of land component commander control over the deep battle.

The Air Force position was first established by General Merrill A. McPeak prior to his retirement from Chief of Staff of the Air Force in October 1994. McPeak saw the battlefield as encompassing four battles: the rear battle, the close battle, the deep battle, and the high battle. Having established the different areas of the modern battlefield, McPeak next assigned responsibilities for those areas. He felt the rear and close battles were the responsibility of a land component commander (either Army or Marine) and the deep and high battles were the
responsibility of the air commander (Air Force or Navy). He based this breakdown of the battlefield on the assumption that even though the land component commander has a great interest in what happens in the deep and high battle, he has neither the preponderance of forces capable of attacking those targets nor the means to control them. In General McPeak's view, the Air Force has the ability for both attack and control. While the new Chief of Staff, General Fogleman, has not taken McPeak's outspoken approach to the problem, he has not backed down from the Air Force's position that the JFACC should control the deep battle on the battlefield.

One of the proposals currently under consideration is to move the FSCL to accommodate the advanced weapons systems brought to battle by the U.S. Army. The FSCL currently is the coordination line for fires. The current ATACMS with a 120 kilometer range and the advanced version with 300 kilometers range would allow the land component commander to significantly move the FSCL forward. This would place the FSCL into territory normally considered the JFACC's area of operations. The Air Force position is that moving the line this far forward would effectively limit the flexibility of the Joint Force Commander (CINC) by severely hampering the ability of air forces to attack targets in a large and critical portion of the battlefield. This places targets under land component commander control that the Air Force
would normally strike as interdiction, as well as offensive
counterair targets. Since flexibility is one of the key
tenets of air power, the Air Force sees land component
commander control of interdiction targets as violating this
key air power doctrinal principle, since the JFACC would
then have to coordinate all targets with the land component
commander prior to striking any targets within this new,
deeper FSCL. A situation could arise where enemy targets
lie at the edge of the FSCL, and neither Army or Air Force
weapons could be employed: Army weapons because of lack of
range, and Air Force systems because of lack of
coordination. This could be extremely critical for the Air
Force, especially in the case of attacking or suppressing
enemy air defenses that pose a significant threat to air
assets.

The Air Force sees an additional problem in extending
the FSCL for ATACMS. The artillery firing zone will be
appreciably extended. Current artillery firing deep has a
maximum ordnance trajectory altitude of 20,000 feet. The
advent of the advanced ATACMS could extend that altitude to
more than 100,000 feet.26 To preclude fratricide with
friendly aircraft, someone must coordinate and control the
firing of ATACMS and aircraft flights. The Air Force sees
the JFACC and the ATO as the logical tool to accomplish this
mission, particularly since the JFACC is also normally
designated as the Airspace Control Authority by the CINC.
The Air Force realizes the significance of ATACMS on the battlefield, but it believes its use against deep targets must be coordinated by the JFACC, just as fires short of the FSCL must be coordinated by the land component commander.

The Air Force believes the JFACC and his assets will normally conduct the preponderance of deep attacks. Beyond the FSCL, aircraft are currently the primary means of attacking targets. The Air Force is also responsible for offensive counter air, interdiction, and strategic attack operations throughout the theater. Since the JFACC is the supported commander for both counter air and the overall air interdiction effort, the Air Force feels the JFACC should be the commander that selects the targets for deep attack to meet the CINC's guidance. However, the land component commander's recommendations must be taken into consideration. The Air Force also retains the command and control system that can coordinate and control air attacks beyond the FSCL in the Tactical Air Control system.

Even though Joint Pub 3-0 does not clearly define or assign responsibility and authority for coordinating attacks beyond the FSCL, the Air Force believes that since the JFACC brings the preponderance of firepower and the means to control that firepower, the JFACC should be the supported commander for deep attack. To do otherwise is duplicating effort and wasting assets. The solution to this problem may be resolved by looking at how the deep battle is handled by
forces in the Republic of South Korea.
CHAPTER 4

THE KOREAN SOLUTION

In February of 1995, the Headquarters for the Republic of Korea (ROK)-US Combined Forces Command published their Deep Operations Primer-Korea. This document explains how the Combined Forces Command plans to conduct deep operations in the event of hostilities on the Korean peninsula. In its introduction, the primer lays out the details of the publication, noting that it describes procedures and responsibilities for the planning, synchronization, and execution of deep operations in the Korean theater by the armed forces of ROK-US Combined Forces Command. It establishes the guidance for the exercise of authority by component commanders and prescribes the procedures to be used for integrating and deconflicting deep strike weapons systems and munitions for members of a Combined Targeting Board. The Korean model provides one solution to the dilemma of who controls what airspace or geography in the deep battle. It is this solution that I will detail in this chapter. (Note: the Korean theater uses the term ACC in place of JFACC in this primer.)
In the ROK, deep operations extend from the FSCL to the horizontal overland boundaries of the theater and vertically into space.30 These operations are planned to delay, disrupt, divert, and destroy enemy air, sea, and land forces before they can engage friendly forces—the classic definition of interdiction, surface attack, and offensive counterair missions. Deep operations require anticipation and a complete understanding of the commander's intent to achieve success. The solution to controlling and coordinating the deep battle in the Korean theater of operations is the Deep Battle Synchronization Line (DBSL).

The DBSL is a line established beyond the FSCL. The land component commander is the supported commander for all operations between the FSCL and the DBSL. The ACC is the coordinating authority for all air operations and fires between the two lines. The land component commander informs the ACC of any organic fires from any weapon system in this area in sufficient time to allow for coordination of fires and to prevent fratricide. Beyond the DBSL out to the theater boundaries, the ACC is the supported commander. To accomplish the required coordination and synchronization, the CINC establishes and maintains a Combined Targeting Board that accounts for all fires and target nominations across the forces to synchronize available combat power and preclude fratricide.31 This board works under the ACC.
The primary purpose of this board is to synchronize air operations theater-wide with both ground and maritime operations. This board is the commander's tool for coordinating, deconflicting, and synchronizing deep operations in the ROK. The Combined Forces Command realized that coordination among units and Services did not guarantee the proper synchronization unless commanders understood the intent and the consequences to be produced. This is an important point. In the words of the primer, "Synchronization takes place first in the minds of commanders and then in actual planning and coordination of movements, fires, and supporting activities." To accomplish this synchronization, the Combined Targeting Board was established. This board uses targeting as the methodology to focus all systems against the enemy to achieve the commander's intent. The board uses the standard decide, detect, deliver, and assess system to determine what targets need to be attacked. The ROK-US Combined Forces Command realized that each service and component has its own doctrine and procedures for targeting, but all recognized the four areas of decide, detect, deliver, and assess.

The responsibility for making synchronization happen in the Korean theater of operations has been delegated to the ACC. He, in turn, establishes the Combined Targeting Board (CTB). The makeup of the CTB is: the Executive Board, the
Synchronization Cell, the Advisory Cell, the Combined Targeting Cell, the Combined Planning Cell, and the Combined Execution Cell. These cells provide the necessary expertise and guidance required to carry out the theater commander's intent and achieve the required orchestration of Service and combined fires. The following paragraphs will explain each section and how the system works to carry out the intent of the theater commander.

The Executive Board is the senior committee within the CTB. It holds the responsibility for overseeing the entire synchronization and integration process. It reviews the theater CINC's overall guidance and intent, reviews the Synchronization Cell's future courses of action, identifies the requirements of the components, issues instructions to the Combined Targeting Cell, and approves the single prioritized integrated target list. This Board is central to the entire integration process, and is composed of members from all the components.

The Combined Targeting Cell prepares the single prioritized integrated target list. It checks for invalid, duplicate, or conflicting targets to enhance firepower. Each of the components provides a targeting cell to the Combined Targeting Cell.

The Synchronization Cell provides the necessary interface between the long range planners and the real time executioners. The purpose of the Synchronization Cell is
to link the target plan to the theater CINC's strategy. It
does this by working with the CINC's Battle Control Working
Group to ensure air operations remain tied to the overall
campaign strategy. This information is then fed to the
air component, to ensure deep operations are tied to the
commander's intent. The cell also provides three day's
worth of planning for the war. Again, each component
provides support to the cell.

The Advisory Cell provides specialized advice to various
members of the CTB. This advice can be accessed at either
the planning or execution phases of the ATO.

The Combined Planning Cell develops the integrated
tasking order. The Combined Planning Cell plans the
employment of all resources provided to the ACC, monitors
the availability of resources and forecasts availability,
conducts tactical planning and coordination for the
integrated tasking order, and implements the air
apportionment decision by allocating tactical air
resources. This work requires a detailed knowledge of all
fixed wing and helicopter assets, as well as missile and
rocket systems. Finally, the Combined Execution Cell
ensures the supervision of executioning the integrated
tasking order.

The end result is a set of procedures that reflect the
day-to-day application of assets towards success. In Korea,
the integrated tasking order is already prepared for the
first three days of the conflict. Once the war begins, the CTB cycle kicks in and continues to flow. Here's how the system would work. The cycle begins with long range planning, intermediate planning, and mission execution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 0</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
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<td>Forecast for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Day 3</td>
<td>Day 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td>Day 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Execution for</td>
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<td>Execution for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day 0</td>
<td>Day 1</td>
<td>Day 2</td>
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(From Deep Operations Primer-Korea, p.22.)

At the end of each 24 hour cycle, a new integrated tasking order is produced. The integrated tasking order is initially formed by the CINC's Planning Directive, which arrives to the ACC 96 hours prior to starting a new concept of operation. This directive provides priorities and targeting objectives for events four days out.

65 hours before execution of an integrated tasking order, the CINC's Daily Guidance Letter arrives. This provides targeting guidance for the integrated tasking order. This letter helps the components prioritize their requests to the CTB. Here's a normal integrated tasking order timeline:
1300 Hours, Day 0:  CINC's Guidance Letter Published.
1700 Hours, Day 1:  Apportionment recommendation approved for Day 3
1800 Hours, Day 1:  Executive Board issues guidance for Day 3.
2400 Hours, Day 1:  Day 3 target nominations sent to components.
0400 Hours, Day 2:  Components forward final prioritized lists for Day 3 to CTB.
0600 Hours, Day 2:  Current ITO begins.
0900 Hours, Day 2:  Executive Board meets to approve single prioritized integrated target list.
1000-1500, Day 2:  Components relay mission data to CTB for inclusion in Day 3 ITO.
1100 Hours, Day 2:  Single prioritized integrated target list delivered to Combined Planning Cell to begin building Day 3 ITO.
1700 Hours, Day 2:  Apportionment recommendation for Day 4.
1800 Hours, Day 2:  Day 3 ITO published for execution at 0600. Executive Board issues guidance for Combined Targeting Cell to begin planning Day 4 ITO.

(From Deep Operations Primer-Korea, pp 23-25.)

The system in Korea is based upon coordination and communication, from the CINC level down to mission
execution. By integrating all the components into the CTB, the theater commander is able to ensure the best use of all his assets against the enemy.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The Korean solution to who should control what portion of the battlefield seems to be a common sense approach on how best to use the limited number of assets available to the Services. It solves some of the basic parochial issues at the root of the problem, and also provides a neat solution to the doctrinal dilemma the Air Force finds itself in vice the Army in regards to the control of deep battle.

Here is how it solves some of those basic issues between the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Army. The CINC sets the stage by designating the land component commander as the supported commander for operations in the area between the forward edge of the battle area and the DBSL. However, the ACC is the coordinating authority for all air operations and fires in this area. In the contested area between the FSCCL and the DBSL, the land component commander would need to coordinate with the air component commander prior to striking targets in this area. This is to ensure there is no fratricide and no duplication of effort. The ACC is the supported commander for all operations past the DBSL. This allows the ACC to employ his air assets as necessary to meet the CINC's guidance by conducting deep interdiction, offensive counter-air, and strategic attack missions. The
land component commander could still use his deep systems to
target beyond the DBSL, but that requires nomination of
targets to the ACC for inclusion on the ITO and target list.

This system allows both the land component commander and
the JFACC to recommend to the CINC a DBSL commensurate with
the CINC's intent. The land component commander can range
and strike targets short of the DBSL to influence his
battle with his own systems, and also efficiently employ Air
Force assets to support his intent. His requirement is to
coordinate with the ACC on targets to ensure no duplication
of effort and no fratricide. Interdiction targets within
this area would affect the land component commander's scheme
of maneuver, and would require ACC coordination to
prioritize and designate targets. The land component
commander can fight his battle, and the ACC does not lose
the inherent flexibility found in air power. Coordination
of fires achieves the desired results. Beyond the DBSL, the
ACC would basically have free play. Most likely, targets
beyond the DBSL are too far out to significantly influence
the land component commander's battle. This solution would
solve most, if not all, of the Air Force's disagreements
with the Army over battle space concerns, while at the same
time being doctrinally correct with Joint Pub 3-0.

By establishing the DBSL as the forward boundary of the
land component commander, the Army concerns over controlling
the entire area of operations would also be solved. The
DBSL is further forward than the FSCL, but not so far forward as to encompass the entire AO. The land component commander may still attack targets between the FSCL and the DBSL, but he must inform the ACC to ensure fires are coordinated. The land component commander cedes control over targets past the DBSL to the ACC. This system solves many of the problems that the Army has with Air Force control of the deep battle. In future wars, coordination and joint employment of firepower will be a necessity. The issue of unity of command between components is not as important as carrying out the wishes and intent of the theater commander. His intent and his plans for the conduct of the campaign are most important for success on the battlefield. Neither is the value of ATACMS lost. It is merely placed with all other weapons to ensure the commander's intent is being accomplished without duplication of effort and without regard to service ownership of weapons. The ATO cycle is still a thorny problem and still runs on a 72 hour cycle, but the Combined Targeting Board is working to resolve this problem with intermediate steps. Commanders will always have a requirement to plan 96 hours out to determine what their priorities will be, and the current ATO system is the best solution at this time. Finally, it should not matter which commander has more troops in the battle. What matters is all commanders have the responsibility for protecting forces and minimizing
casualties. To suggest that a commander with less troops in harm's way will not protect that force merely clouds the issue.

This coordination model exists now on the Korean peninsula. It appears to be a workable solution for the two services. Perhaps the reason for its success is that this system is required in the ROK due to the nature of any future conflict there. Given the small size of the theater of operations compared with other possible areas of conflict, force must be rapidly and decisively brought to bear upon the enemy if defeat is to be avoided. That may be why the services came to this solution in the Korean theater. However, the current strategy the National Command Authority embraces is a two multi-regional contingency conflict which requires the rapid and decisive application of force. This Korean model can work on any future battlefield, if the services would give up their parochial stance on who needs to control what part of the battle. If we have learned any lesson from wars past, it should be that joint operations are the future for American armed forces. Although it is anathema for any service to cede control of its assets to another service, it is a necessity if we are to be successful.45 The Joint Force Commander holds the key to making deep battle a success. If he desires to model his theater after Korea, land and air commanders will coordinate and avoid duplication of effort and fratricide.
If he doesn't make a decision, parochial and doctrinal perfectionists will create problems and less success on the battlefield by pursuing service agendas.

Any theater would benefit from the ability to coordinate and control deep battle assets as the services have in Korea. The services must concentrate on providing joint commanders with a solution for dividing the battle space in a future conflict. Compromise and coordination can readily and easily solve the question of who owns the battle space.
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