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**THE COMBAT SUPPORT COMPANY
--RISING FROM ITS OWN ASHES**

**A Monograph
by
Major Jack E. Pattison
Infantry**

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THREE TIMES SINCE WWII THE HEAVY WEAPONS COMPANY OR COMBAT SUPPORT COMPANY HAS BEEN DISESTABLISHED. TWICE IT WAS REESTABLISHED WITHIN A FEW YEARS. THE PRESENT INFANTRY BATTALION DOES NOT HAVE A COMBAT SUPPORT COMPANY. NEXT, THE THREAT THAT WILL OPPOSE THE INFANTRY BATTALION ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT IS ANALYZED. THE THREAT IS VIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOVIET AND WARSAW PACT FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE, MID TO HIGH INTENSITY CONFLICT, TO THE VARIETY OF MISSIONS THAT FALL INTO THE REALM OF LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT. THIRD, AN ANALYSIS OF AIRLAND BATTLE DOCTRINE (ALB) AS EXPRESSED IN OUR CURRENT MANUALS (FROM PARADIGMS DOWN THROUGH BATTALION LEVEL MANUALS) REVEALS THE INFANTRY BATTALION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE NEEDED IS ONE THAT IS FLEXIBLE, CAPABLE OF LIMITED INDEPENDENT OPERATIONS AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, ENHANCES COMMAND AND CONTROL. LAST, A REVIEW OF ARMY TRAINING TODAY REVEALS THAT THE COMBAT TRAINING CENTERS (CTC) OFFER A QUANTUM LEAP IN TRAINING LEADERS AND UNITS. THE CTCs WILL CLOSE THE EXPERIENCE AND LACK OF SKILLS GAP THAT WAS EXPRESSED IN VARIOUS COMBAT DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY STUDIES OF THE MID AND LATE 1970s.

THIS MONOGRAPH CONCLUDES THAT THE U.S. INFANTRY BATTALION NEEDS A COMBAT SUPPORT COMPANY. HISTORY, THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED THREAT, OUR DOCTRINE OF HOW WE EXPECT TO FIGHT NOW AND IN THE FUTURE ACCORDING TO ALB DOCTRINE, AND THE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE AT OUR CTCs ALL COMBINE TO JUSTIFY THE NEED FOR A CSC.

THE COMBAT SUPPORT COMPANY
--RISING FROM ITS OWN ASHES

by

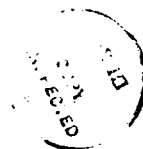
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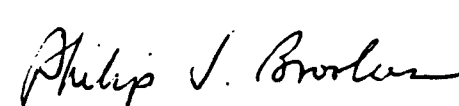
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ABSTRACT

THE COMBAT SUPPORT COMPANY--RISING FROM ITS OWN ASHES by
Major Jack E. Pattison, USA, 52 pages.

This monograph discusses Infantry battalion organizational structure. Specifically, the issue is whether the Infantry battalion needs a combat support company (CSC). In keeping with the current thinking of the Infantry school, there is one Infantry. Regardless of whether it is airborne, air assault, light, mechanized, or Bradley equipped, we have one Infantry.)

This monograph first discusses how Infantry battalion organizational structure has evolved from prior to World War II to the present, 1988. This includes a look at the German Army of WWII and the history of the U.S. Army's heavy weapons company and combat support company. Three times since WWII the heavy weapons company or combat support company has been disestablished. Twice it was resurrected within a few years. The present Infantry battalion does not have a combat support company. Next, the threat that will oppose the Infantry battalion across the spectrum of conflict is analyzed. The threat is viewed from the perspective of Soviet and Warsaw Pact Forces in central Europe, mid to high intensity conflict, to the variety of missions that fall into the realm of Low Intensity Conflict. Third, an analysis of AirLand Battle doctrine (ALB) as expressed in our current manuals (from FM 100-5 down through battalion level manuals) reveals the Infantry battalion organizational structure needed is one that is flexible, capable of limited independent operations and most importantly, enhances command and control. Last, a review of Army training today reveals that the Combat Training Centers (CTC) offer a quantum leap in training leaders and units. The CTCs will close the experience and lack of skills gap that was expressed in various Combat Development community studies of the mid and late 1970s. (K)

This monograph concludes that the U.S. Infantry battalion needs a combat support company. History, the current and projected threat, our doctrine of how we expect to fight now and in the future according to ALB doctrine, and the training opportunities available at our CTCs all combine to justify the need for a CSC.

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I. Introduction

Does the U.S. Army Infantry battalion need a Combat Support Company? This question has had a number of answers over the past several decades. It is a question that often spurs lively conversation and debate. The purpose of this paper is to provide a solution to that organizational structure question.

The word "Infantry" means all types of Infantry. Whether it is motorized, mechanized, airborne, air assault, light, or Bradley equipped Infantry, the author is speaking about one Infantry. The position of the Chief of Infantry, as expressed by his Infantry School Training Team at the Command and General Staff College in May 1988, is that there is one Infantry.¹

The U.S. Infantry Battalion has been organized a number of different ways over the past half century. Some of those organizations placed the heavy weapons and reconnaissance platoons in the battalion's headquarters and headquarters company (HHC). Other organizational structures placed those platoons in a heavy weapons company (HWC) or a combat support company (CSC). Invariably when those platoons were placed in the HHC, the battalion organizational structure did not survive long. The HWC or CSC was usually reestablished within a few years.

At the time of this writing (Fall-1988), the current infantry battalion has a separate anti-armor company but

has eliminated the combat support company. The battalion scout platoon and heavy mortar platoon are organic to the HHC. Additionally, the rifle company no longer has a weapons platoon or mortar platoon.

One of the theoretical underpinnings of organizational structure is command and control.² The focused application of combat power is based to a great degree on how units are organized. Measuring unit effectiveness and efficiency is not an exact science, but the organizational structure of a unit is directly linked to command and control and hence, unit effectiveness.

The criteria used to distill a cogent recommendation will be: (1) an historical analysis of how the battalion was organized in the past; (2) an analysis of the threat from both high to low intensity warfare perspectives; (3) a review of doctrine to ascertain how we expect to fight now and in the future; and (4) a review of the current training opportunities available today. It seems prudent that the optimum infantry battalion organization for the future should be based on an analysis of these areas.

II. Historical Analysis

From the period immediately prior to World War II through the mid 1950s, the U.S. infantry battalion had a heavy weapons company. The purpose of the HWC was to provide long-range fires, protect the forward movement of the battalion's maneuver companies, provide antiaircraft

and antimechanized protection, and protect the front and flanks of the battalion.³ As the United States was about to enter World War II (WWII), the infantry battalion HWC had two 30-caliber machinegun platoons, one 50 caliber machinegun platoon and an 81mm mortar platoon. Although the weapons and equipment changed based on the enemy, technology, and other factors, the WWII infantry battalion structure remained essentially unchanged; a headquarters detachment or company, three maneuver companies and an HWC.

During the early years of WWII, General Lesley J. McNair was the commander of Army Ground Forces. He was a strong proponent for organizing "lean and mean", reducing personnel "overhead", and pooling equipment at higher headquarters. Infantry battalion strength in early 1943 was reduced from 916 to 850. Generally, although not always, when personnel strength was cut, firepower was increased. An example of an exception to this general rule was the retention of the 37mm anti-tank gun in spite of poor reports from North Africa. It was determined the 37mm gun was available, effective when used within the proper range, and was easier to manhandle than the 57mm gun. Battalion personnel strength fluctuated throughout WWII, but it averaged 876.⁴

It may be worth a pause to look at the German infantry battalion of WWII. The Germans believed the infantry battalion must be equipped and organized for

independent operations. They assumed higher headquarters would lose contact with subordinate units. In most cases, the battalion had three maneuver companies and an HWC.⁵

The Germans also found great utility in light mortars and a weapons platoon organic to the rifle company. They believed a heavy weapons platoon must be an integral part of the company. They found that temporary attachment led to disintegration rather than integration and unit cohesion. Light mortars, in the range of 50mm to 70mm were easily employed by two men, easy to train and maintain, and had a great effect on the enemy.⁶ Interestingly, after the 1939 Poland Campaign and the 1940 France Campaign, the Germans removed machineguns and mortars from their rifle company table of organization and equipment. Because of rifle company firepower ineffectiveness in the Russian Campaign, both weapons systems were put back in the rifle company.⁷ Many German commanders were interviewed and debriefed after the war. As a body, these former German infantry commanders' final proposal for infantry battalion structure was a battalion with three rifle companies and a heavy weapons company. In their view, mortars should be organic to both the rifle company and the heavy weapons company.⁸

From the end of World War II through the Korean War, little change occurred in the U.S. battalion

organizational structure. The April 1948 Table of Organization and Equipment maintained an HHC, three rifle companies, and an HWC. In June 1949, an ordered reduction decreased the battalion strength by twenty-two percent, to 717.⁹

With the Russians detonating their first atomic weapon in 1949 came the need to prepare to fight on the nuclear battlefield. Smaller organizations tailored to fight independent operations became a requirement. The political policy of containment meant the Army had to be prepared to fight with little warning anywhere in the world.^{10.11}

The Pentomic division of the 1950s brought about massive change in force structure. The regiment, as an organization, was disbanded; never to return. Even the battalion was removed from the force structure for a few years. Battle groups were substituted for regiments and battalions. The end result of this reorganization yielded in 1956 the ROCID Division (Reorganization of the Combat Infantry Division). The division had five battle groups, each battle group consisting of an HHC, four rifle companies and a mortar company.^{12.13.14}

With the removal of regiments and battalions, the HWC disappeared from the organizational structure. Although the first Pentomic battle group had a mortar company (manned by artillerymen, not infantrymen), there was no heavy weapons company. The battle group combat

support company (CSC) first appeared in November 1960. This CSC had a radar section, reconnaissance platoon, heavy mortar platoon, and an assault weapons platoon (anti-tank platoon).¹⁵⁻¹⁶ By this time, however, the international situation was changing.

The era of massive retaliation was yielding to a strategy of flexible response. Flexible response brought about the demise of the battle group. Army force designers believed that the battle group had a poor capability to respond to the demands of low intensity conflict and unconventional warfare.¹⁷⁻¹⁸ Some parts of the Pentomic division's battle group remained with the follow-on organization. The 4.2 inch mortar company became a platoon at battalion level. The 81mm mortar remained a rifle company weapon, and the rifle squad kept the two fire team concept.¹⁹

The follow-on organization was the ROAD division (Reorganization Objective Army Division). The purpose of the reorganization was to create flexible, versatile, streamlined units responsive to modern twentieth century warfare. The division's organizational structure of three brigades came from the old triangular armored division's three combat commands of WWII.²⁰⁻²¹ The ROAD division infantry battalion had an HHC and three rifle companies. The ROAD division was employed in Vietnam. As we were to learn, added to the conventional dimension

of warfare, was guerilla or unconventional warfare and non-violent warfare or civic action.^{22,23}

Early during the Vietnam War, the Army Chief of Staff directed a study and evaluation of U.S. Army combat operations in Vietnam. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine if we had the right doctrine, organization and equipment as we entered this new type of conflict.²⁴ Headed by BG George Mabry, the evaluation (hereafter referred to as the Mabry Study) took place in early 1966. The team studied four maneuver battalion organizations from the 1st Infantry Division, 101st Airborne Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and the 1st Cavalry Division. At the time, only the 1st Cavalry Division had a CSC in the infantry battalion consisting of mortar, reconnaissance and anti-tank platoons.

In many cases the battalion's reconnaissance platoon was not used in its primary role of reconnaissance. It was used as a rifle platoon, command post or base camp security force or as a battalion reserve or reaction force. Often the battalion commander would use it as a base to form a "composite" rifle unit to give the battalion a fourth maneuver element.

The evaluation team recommended: a) a fourth rifle company was needed; b) the battalion reconnaissance platoon be eliminated; and c) although a battalion CSC was not needed, a training officer should be assigned to HHC to help that company commander with his wide and

diverse duties.²⁵ General William C. Westmoreland, the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, agreed with the team's findings except for the elimination of the reconnaissance platoon.

The Department of the Army approved a battalion organization that had an HHC, four rifle companies and a combat support company that included a reconnaissance platoon! The reconnaissance platoon was retained because the enemy initiated fire 88% of the time.²⁶ A fourth rifle company would obviously add foxhole strength to the battalion, increase the battalion's flexibility and security, and improve its capability for independent operations. Additionally, it would enable the reconnaissance platoon to focus on reconnaissance and security. A separate CSC would increase the efficiency of combat operations of the battalion by improving command and control.²⁷

The Yom-Kippur War of 1973 had a dramatic effect on the U.S. Army's review of force structure. Lessons learned from that war include: the increased lethality of modern weapons, rapid attrition of materiel, rapid consumption of ammunition, a battle of faster tempo, the necessity of combined arms, and the emergence of the antitank missile as a weapon with which to be reckoned.

The next look at infantry battalion structure came as part of the Division Restructuring Study (DRS) of the

mid-1970s. This study focused on the organization needed to fight the Central European battle.

The DRS focused on the employment of weapons systems. It was believed the organic and attached firepower available to the company commander exceeded his ability to manage and control. Hence, smaller, single weapons platform companies were to be formed. The combining of the arms would occur at battalion, not company level. This would keep the tasks narrowed and within the experience level of the company commander. Also, smaller companies with fewer weapons would simplify training.^{28,29} The Division Restructuring Study ended with the Division Restructuring Evaluation (DRE) from September 1977 through April 1979. The DRE was not conclusive and led to further study. The Battlefield Development Plan (BDP) categorized battlefield activities into critical tasks. The BDP was, in part, developed to redirect the focus of DRS into a larger framework which became the "Division 86 Study".

The Division 86 Study project was begun by General Donn Starry, the Commander of Training and Doctrine Command, in September 1978. The study directive articulated the need "to develop an effective organization for the Army's heavy division in order to integrate new systems, operational concepts, and human resources".³⁰ Key factors in building the organization were to maximize firepower forward, improve command and

control, increase fire support, increase the leader-to-led ratio, improve the combining of the arms, and create less complex fighting companies and platoons.^{31.32.33} A key dimension of the Division 86 Study was to reduce and simplify the operational and training responsibilities for commanders at all echelons, particularly at the platoon and company level. In part, this was based on the need for fighting outnumbered and winning, continuous combat, and faster tempo operations. All of this brought about the perceived need to fight smaller, single weapons system companies.

The command and control underpinnings were to decentralize tactical authority, increase leader-to-led ratio, and create redundancy for continuous battle. The focus of the division commander would be to locate and interdict the enemy, concentrate forces and fight the AirLand Battle. The Brigade Commander's focus would be to mix arms and allocate ground. The Battalion Commander would integrate and fight combined arms. The company commander would simply "fight the weapons system".³⁴ A continuing, common thread throughout the Division Restructuring Study and Division 86 Study was to reduce and simplify the requirements and duties of the company commander.

The Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) approved the Division 86 Study in August 1980. The infantry battalion organizational structure was significantly different than

the ROAD division's infantry battalion. The Division 86 battalion had a HHC, four rifle companies, an anti-armor company, a maintenance company, and a combat service support company. The battalion motor officer would be dual-hatted as the maintenance company commander, and the battalion S4 would be dual-hatted as the combat service support company commander. The battalion's heavy mortar platoon and scout platoon were organic to HHC. The mortar platoon was to have nine mortars and three fire direction centers. The anti-armor company would have sixteen Improved TOW Vehicles (ITVs).^{35,34}

With the requirement in June 1982 to design a light division and to accommodate other fiscal realities, it became necessary to design a more affordable infantry battalion. This caused the CSA in July 1983 to direct the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command to conduct a feasibility study for restructuring the Army. The Army of Excellence (AOE) study group was formed. The AOE study group's charter was "to determine what reductions or modifications could be made to the Division 86 structure in order to provide manpower and resource savings while maintaining the division's capability to perform according to AirLand Battle doctrine."³⁷ The resulting AOE infantry battalion was far different than its Division 86 forerunner. The maintenance company and combat service support company were eliminated. The HHC would increase significantly to accommodate those

changes. The heavy mortar platoon was reduced from nine to six guns and from three to two fire direction centers. The anti-armor company was reduced to twelve from sixteen ITVs. Initially, the AOE infantry battalion HHC commander would be a major. That position was later reduced to a captain's position.

This AOE battalion structure began implementation in the Continental United States during summer of 1983 and in Europe during the fall of 1983. In short, the infantry battalion had a huge HHC, nearly 350 strong, which included the battalion scout platoon and heavy mortar platoon. There were four maneuver companies and an anti-armor company. The maneuver companies had three rifle platoons but no weapons platoon, and there were no company level mortars. A key reason for not having a CSC in the battalion structure was to create a separate command and control (C²) headquarters for the battalion's anti-armor systems. This organizational structure is in effect at the present time.

In summary, several factors have influenced force structure designs since WWII. Three times the platoons from the heavy weapons company or combat support company have been taken and assigned to the HHC. The HWC was first disestablished in the Pentomic division of the 1950s. The second time was the removal of the combat support company in the ROAD division of the 1960s. The third and latest occurrence is in the present AOE

battalion of the 1980s. In WWII the Germans used an infantry battalion which had a heavy weapons company with great success. Also, the Germans usually had company level mortars and a weapons platoon in the company. The U.S. Army fought WWII, the Korean War and most of the Vietnam War with a heavy weapons company or combat support company organic to the infantry battalion. Also, a weapons platoon in the companies and company level mortars have been the norm.

The need and justification for company level mortars could be persuasively argued. The issues of company level mortars and a CSC organic to the battalion are linked very closely. Based on this historical analysis, there is a need for company level mortars.

Invariably, when the HWC or CSC platoons were assigned to HHC, that battalion structure did not survive long. The CSC soon reappeared on the force structure scene. As our historical analysis of the past indicates, the CSC was an important and much needed element in the infantry battalion.

III. The Threat

Arguably the greatest or severest, although probably the most unlikely threat, pits the U.S. and NATO forces against Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces in central Europe. This type of warfare, mid to high intensity conflict, would more than likely be characterized by violent

actions, fast tempo, and continuous operations at all levels.

The U.S. is a global power with global responsibilities. Hence, the U.S. infantry battalion must be organized, equipped, trained and manned to respond to aggression across the spectrum of conflict.

As Mr. Chris Donnelly, Head of the Soviet Studies Centre, Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, England, has pointed out rather emphatically at lectures, the Soviet Union's methods of warfare and attack formations have not changed significantly over time.³⁸ He draws this conclusion by highlighting the remarkable similarities between attack formations depicted in a 1906 Russian manual of the czarist era and a mid-1970s manual of the Soviet Union.

Generally, the U.S. infantry battalion must be capable of defending against a Soviet regimental level attack, and be capable of attacking and defeating a Soviet company level defense.

The Soviet regiment making a main attack will usually attack on a three to eight kilometer front echeloned to a depth of fifteen kilometers. Doctrinally, the regiment's immediate objective would be the forward defenses of the enemy battalion. The subsequent objective would be the enemy battalion's rear area. The attacking regiment will usually deploy into battalion columns eight to twelve kilometers in front of the

defender. Deployment to company column will occur at four to six kilometers, and platoon column at one to four kilometers.³⁹

The Soviet company level defense is usually a strongpoint defense. The strongpoint is normally five hundred to a thousand meters wide and up to five hundred meters in depth. Usually, all three platoons are in one echelon.⁴⁰

In Soviet offensive doctrine, a great deal of emphasis is placed on surprise, shock action, a fast tempo, speed and echelonment for attacking in depth, concentrating on the main effort, and aggressiveness in battle.⁴¹⁻⁴² The Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces will continue to field balanced, combined arms forces at the battalion and regimental level.⁴³ There has been no let up in the continuation of the Soviet effort to modernize their forces.

Because the mid to high intensity threat has not changed appreciably as evidenced by little change in Soviet offensive doctrine, the question remains as to why the U.S. infantry battalion was reorganized and the CSC was eliminated from the organizational structure. Since the threat has not changed, apparently it was not a driving factor in disestablishing the CSC. As threat is certainly one of the components of force design, it seems logical that from the threat perspective, the CSC should have been retained. A CSC in the U.S. infantry battalion

today, as it was in the past, would enhance command and control of our fighting units on the battlefield.

Another advantage provided by the CSC against the mid to high intensity threat is in the area of fire support. One of the missions of the old HWC was to build a base of fire for the battalion.⁴⁴ A better way to maximize firepower forward, to increase fire support and to improve combining the arms, would be to reintroduce company level mortars and the CSC.⁴⁵ One Combat Development study indicated company-level mortars created a "too expensive personnel bill".⁴⁶ While this may be a consideration, it still does not negate the need for company level mortars.

The Division Restructuring Study indicated that the state of the art of current weapons systems exceeded the capability of platoon leaders to exploit fully that combat power.⁴⁷ The HHC Commander of the AOE infantry battalion commands a company that is larger than a Military Intelligence battalion. The preponderance of the HHC commander's duties lie in the combat service support arena as evidenced by his location on the battlefield--the field trains. The CSC commander can give closer supervision to those lieutenants in the supporting arms business.

Another dimension for the CSC commander in fire support is the integration of fire support and combat support elements from outside the battalion. The

engineer, air defense, and military intelligence type squads and platoons normally join the battalion in an attached, direct support, or operational control role. The CSC commander could play a vital role for the battalion commander and operations officer by acting as the controlling administrative and support headquarters for these various elements and assist them in integrating their efforts into the battalion tactical plan.

One of the findings of the Division Restructuring Evaluation at III Corps, Fort Hood, Texas, was that the organic anti-armor company significantly increased the target servicing capability of the maneuver battalion. Additionally, the report indicated that the battalion mortar platoon and scout platoon organic to the HHC was satisfactory as long as the battalion structure included an anti-armor company, combat service support company (CSSC), and maintenance company.⁴⁰ Indications from the National Training Center (NTC) are that TOWs (Tube launched, optically tracked, wire guided missiles) in the anti-armor company are not very effective. The current infantry battalion structure also has the scout and mortar platoon in HHC, but the CSSC and maintenance company were never established.

As late as April 1979, MG William Livsey, then the Commandant of the Infantry School and the Chief of Infantry, strongly recommended returning the scout and mortar platoon to a CSC, combining those platoons with

the anti-armor company.⁴⁹ That recommendation was denied based on the desire to maintain symmetry between armor and infantry battalions. It appears that argument would be well founded if the armor and infantry battalions performed the same missions. However, that is not the case. Infantry battalions may, in fact, need a different organizational structure. In the past, pure anti-tank units were of limited use. By the time the U.S. Army organized them in WWII, the Germans changed their method of warfare from massed armor formations to balanced combined arms of Infantry, Armor, and Artillery.⁵⁰ The U.S. Army is in a similar position today. As indicated earlier, rather than Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces solely relying on massed armor formations, they will likely focus on combined arms, motorized rifle regiments supported by tanks and artillery.⁵¹

Reconnaissance is another area that could be improved by a CSC. Much of the success of German infantry units in WWII was due to thorough terrain reconnaissance. S.L.A. Marshall pointed out in Infantry Operations in Korea, platoons, companies, and battalions had to operate on extended frontages. This created a tactical concern of how to conduct the proper reconnaissance under those conditions and how to accept gaps.⁵² A key factor in the Department of the Army retaining the scout platoon in the newly reestablished

CSC in 1966 was to improve the reconnaissance capability of the infantry battalion.⁵³

An October 1987 Rand Corporation report for the U.S. Army indicated that units training at the National Training Center performed reconnaissance poorly.⁵⁴ That report identified the task force scout platoon as inadequate to accomplish the required reconnaissance tasks in the allotted time. The CSC commander could improve this by augmenting the scout platoon with assets organic to the battalion, such as TOW platoons, or by using external assets such as engineers, ground surveillance radars, chemical, and air defense artillery. The CSC commander can properly organize and integrate that effort and is uniquely qualified for such a mission. In the current organization the HHC commander has no internal assets with which to augment the scouts and his focus is on the combat service support of the battalion, not on reconnaissance. From the company commander perspective, the CSC commander can do that, organizing battalion level reconnaissance, far better than the HHC commander.

The Rand report also identified individual, collective and unit training as lacking in reconnaissance activities. For the reasons already mentioned, the CSC commander would have a favorable impact on training the scout platoon and helping it prepare and plan reconnaissance missions.

FM 71-2, The Tank and Mechanized Infantry Battalion Task Force, clearly expresses the fundamentals of the defense and threat offensive doctrine. Discussions of both these subjects support the need for a CSC in the infantry battalion.

The planning and execution of threat offensive doctrine calls for aggressive reconnaissance and attacks along unit boundaries. The threat will seek weaknesses, then mass and attack those weaknesses with combined arms formations after a strong indirect fire preparation.⁵⁵

The CSC commander would be the best choice to command and lead the important counter-reconnaissance effort. By using the scout and anti-armor assets of the battalion and the necessary attached and direct support elements such as engineers and military intelligence, he would be able to delay, disrupt and confuse the enemy to the point of rendering his (the enemy) pre-attack efforts ineffective.

In describing the fundamentals of the defense, FM 71-2 states, "flexibility and concentration are the keys to defense".⁵⁶ In describing the characteristics of concentration and flexibility, it is evident there is a doctrinal need for company level mortars and a CSC in the battalion.

Concentration is outlined as the ability to gain local superiority and the proper employment of reconnaissance and security elements to "see" the

battlefield. Flexibility is defined as the positioning of forces in depth, preparing for continuous operations, and understanding the commander's intent in order to facilitate shifting the main effort when required and exploiting enemy weaknesses.⁵⁷

The CSC commander could do a far better job at planning, organizing, and conducting the reconnaissance and security actions of the battalion than the HHC commander. The HHC commander, because of his wide and diverse duties and responsibilities, cannot synchronize that effort into a coherent whole. The CSC commander can.

Company level mortars would significantly increase the number of indirect fire systems in the battalion. This would give the rifle company commander the ability to reach out and engage threat forces before they close to within range of their direct fire systems. Company level mortars give an added ability to gain and maintain local superiority by giving the company commander increased destructive and suppressive firepower. Flexibility is enhanced through an increased capacity for covering the depth of the battlefield and conducting continuous operations.

FM 71-2 outlines the fundamentals of offensive operations and describes threat defensive doctrine. Again, a CSC in the battalion and company level mortars would improve the battalion's ability to conduct

offensive operations successfully according to current Army doctrine and be better able to counter the opposing threat.

The threat will defend using obstacles, strong security zone forces, and numerous anti-tank systems. He will often use strong point defenses and attempt to draw enemy forces into fire sacks through deception and channelizing forces. Threat vulnerabilities include poor communications at low tactical levels, poor night vision capabilities, and an indirect fire system that is anchored to artillery command observation posts.⁵⁸

Having a CSC would better enable the U.S. battalion to bypass or to breach the enemy's obstacles, disrupt his security zone force operations and prevent being drawn into his fire sacks. Company level mortars would aid in suppressing and obscuring the threat's anti-tank systems.

FM 71-2 states that offensive operations are characterized by surprise, concentration, speed and flexibility.⁵⁹ The CSC commander would help the battalion achieve surprise by overseeing a rigorous reconnaissance and security operation. He could help concentrate combat power by quickly locating the enemy's weak points, fixing the enemy and assisting in rapidly massing strength at the decisive point. He could improve the battalion's flexibility by assisting in faster dissemination of decisions, by planning and conducting aggressive reconnaissance to locate the enemy's

weaknesses and flanks, and by allowing a smoother transition to a shift in the main effort.⁴⁰

Company level mortars favorably affect these offensive characteristics. Attacking from an unexpected direction and location enhances surprise. Rapid massing of fires, an increased ability to fix the enemy and suppress him all contribute to speed and concentration of effort.

Based on the offensive and defensive fundamentals and the threat portrayal in current doctrinal manuals, a CSC in the battalion organizational structure and company level mortars are required. Their presence in the battalion would significantly improve the battalion's warfighting capability.

Since WWII, fighting in undeclared wars has been the norm. It appears the most likely conflict will occur at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. Regional conflicts and instability in the Third World have the potential to become global in nature. Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) is that foggy area that lies between friendly competition among nations at peace and conventional war. LIC is a broad continuum that includes subversion, terrorism, insurgency, counterinsurgency, peacekeeping operations and peacetime contingency operations. The threat to the U.S. in LIC is the exploitation of instability by groups opposed to U.S. goals.⁴¹ Because the threat in LIC is broad and

multifaceted, it becomes increasingly more important for the U.S. to field an infantry battalion that has broad capabilities in order to respond to the diversity of missions that would be categorized as Low Intensity Conflict. The improved command and control offered by the CSC would clearly enhance the unit's effectiveness, particularly during independent operations.

The Mabry Study of combat operations in Vietnam indicated the HHC commander controlled the combat support platoons during operations about one-third of the time. The other two-thirds of the time, those separate platoons were controlled by the platoon leader or a staff officer.⁶² The establishment of the CSC put those platoons under the supervision of a company commander whose primary mission was the control, employment and training of those platoons.

The fire support necessary in the LIC environment, as the Mabry Study pointed out, requires the firepower of 81mm mortars in the rifle company.⁶³ As there was always a LIC dimension present during the the Vietnam war, it seems logical that company level mortars are needed in the future to counter the increasingly diverse LIC threat.

The reconnaissance dimension of LIC is equally, if not more, important than in mid to high intensity conflict. The CSC commander would again use those organic battalion assets and outside attachments to

ensure the reconnaissance, information gathering, and security tasks for the battalion were properly addressed. As the Mabry Study indicated, security requirements have the potential of directing rifle platoon and company strength away from other combat missions. Additionally, when operating in an immature theatre, semi-permanent base camps require special security considerations and possibly more resources from outside the battalion.⁶⁴

Clearly there is a compelling need for the infantry battalion to have a CSC when operating in a LIC environment. The current and projected threat at that end of the conflict spectrum leads to that conclusion.

IV. Current U.S. Doctrine

AirLand Battle doctrine is our current doctrine and is an expression of how we expect to fight now and in the future. It is defined in FM 100-5 Operations. The doctrine for how an infantry battalion will fight on the AirLand Battlefield is anchored to FM 100-5. The tenets expressed in FM 100-5 apply to conflict across the spectrum, to include LIC. The requirement exists now to field an infantry battalion that has a capability to conduct independent operations and has highly articulated command and control systems. An organization designed with those capabilities in mind is an infantry battalion with a CSC. FM 100-5 states that meeting the challenge of superior performance in combat is "done through well-

thought out organizational design."⁴⁵ Command and control and the capability for independent operations applies directly to the tenet initiative, setting or changing the terms of battle. The disruption in command and control (C²) that can be expected on the battlefield will often lead to fighting alone; hence, the need for being organized for independent operations.

Agility, the need for commanders and units to respond physically and psychologically to rapidly changing requirements, supports the need for a CSC in an infantry battalion. In describing agility, FM 100-5 states, "Formations at every level must be capable of shifting the main effort with minimum delay and with the least possible necessity for reconfiguration and coordination".⁴⁶ The CSC commander would be the focal point in the battalion task force for rapidly shifting the reconnaissance and security, mortar and anti-armor effort to better support the main effort. He would act as the subordinate headquarters responsible for ensuring the attached and direct support elements from outside the battalion were fully aware and supportive of the shift in effort.

FM 71-2 states successful operations requires a C² process that effectively uses available assets.⁴⁷ A dimension of C² is structural, or organizational design. Quite simply, it is how we are organized. C² is both process and content. Content, in this case, is

organizational design. In short, to be agile, to demonstrate initiative and to achieve synchronization requires a highly refined C². Having a CSC would provide for better C², improved reconnaissance and security, enhance the capability to conduct independent operations, and create a battalion organizational structure that is more flexible and better able to focus, reconfigure and shift resources to support the main effort.

In the current infantry battalion organization, the HHC commander is located in the field trains, well to the rear of where his scout and mortar platoons are performing their duties. In the old organization, the CSC Commander was well forward where he could influence the action of his platoons supporting the battalion operation. Also, the CSC Commander was required to act as the Alternate Battalion Main Command Post. In current doctrinal manuals, there is no mention of the anti-armor company commander having that responsibility.

In investigating and researching the need for a CSC, the subject of mortars organic to the rifle company continued to appear. With the requirement to fight anywhere in the world, on any type of terrain, the diverse capability of mortars may necessitate a relook of the company level mortar issue. Mortars can be used in virtually all types of terrain and weather conditions. The variety of ammunition allows broad application in employment; i.e., destruction, suppression, obscuration,

and illumination missions. Indirectly, FM 71-2 supports the need for company mortars by stating, "In fast moving offensive operations there is a need for decentralized control. The mortar platoon or a mortar section may be given a Direct Support (DS) or attached mission to a rifle company."⁴⁸ Fixing and by-passing enemy forces may certainly require mortar support. One of the primary missions for mortars during a deliberate attack is to use smoke for obscuring parts of the battlefield. Additionally, the Division 86 study stated "the consolidation of mortars, limited to 107mm, seemed to run counter to established need and the doctrinal emphasis on smoke."⁴⁹ The clear implication here is there is a doctrinal need for both company level mortars assigned to the rifle company and battalion level mortars. The battalion level mortars should be organic to the battalion's combat support company.

Small caliber mortars (81mm and smaller) give an added advantage in that their minimum effective range, seventy-two meters in the case of the 81mm, allows the company commander to employ mortars co-located with him in support of his close fight. These small caliber mortars give the company commander greater flexibility and capability than sole reliance on external indirect fire support. The company commander's employment flexibility is greater because the range of missions he can accomplish is increased. His destruction and

suppression capability is enhanced with company level mortars. This is particularly true at the mid to high intensity conflict range. Company level mortars could easily cause disruption and confusion as threat forces deploy from company to platoon column formation one to four kilometers in front of the line of contact. This is within the range of most small caliber mortars.

With the modernized armies of the world on the threshold of developing directed energy weapons, we may find new uses for this old weapon. There may be a role for mortars in interrupting, delaying, or obscuring the effects of particle beams, lasers, and microwave emitters.

History, various combat development studies, the current and projected threat, and current doctrine all support the need for company level mortars. The 81mm and smaller caliber mortars are best suited for that need. The battalion level heavy mortars (107mm or 120mm) ought to be in a CSC, not HHC. The HHC commander simply cannot devote the time necessary to effectively train, maintain and employ the heavy mortar platoon. The CSC commander could better control the training, employment, and fires because he would be located well forward of the field trains on the battlefield.

"Actions Short of War" is not a new term to the Army's lexicon. In field manuals of the late 1950s and early 1960s, the term "Situations Short of War" was used

to describe those activities that fall into the present realm of Low Intensity Conflict. The breadth of missions and operations to be performed by U.S. units described in those manuals of three decades ago ranged from parades and shows of force to limited combat against regular or partisan forces. Interestingly enough, those manuals indicated a strong need for flexibility and imagination.^{70,71}

U.S. infantry battalions must be ready to deploy and operate in those Third World countries and other regions of the world when political and economic instability has set the stage for conflict. Contributing to this instability has been the rise in nationalism in Third World countries, the search for political expression and individual rights in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, and the transformation of the world order from bi-polar to multi-polar. In LIC, the terms of victory or the conditions of success cannot be expressed in military terms alone. Political, diplomatic, economic and social conditions must all be addressed and integrated into a whole, coherent response.

The whole notion of Low Intensity Conflict requires an infantry battalion that is flexible, organized to enhance C², and is capable of operating independently. The various dimensions of LIC combine to make a complex environment for the small unit (battalion) commander.

There are a number of indicators in FM 100-20 Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict that would support having a CSC in the infantry battalion. The tenets of AirLand Battle doctrine apply to LIC. Additionally, there are special imperatives for LIC: political dominance, unity of effort, adaptability, legitimacy, and patience. All military commanders must understand the political dimension in a nation's affairs and must be aware of the political objective and its influence on military operations. A unity of effort must exist between the military commander, other governmental agencies and others such as the host nation officials, local government officials and the local populace. LIC operations require adaptability. Existing tactics, techniques and procedures may need to be modified, changed or new ones developed. The group or government supported must be legitimate and have the power to govern or make decisions. The last imperative is patience, as LIC is often a long drawn out affair sometimes without a clear beginning or end.⁷²

A principal U.S. military instrument for LIC is security assistance. This is often provided in the form of training and equipment. This effort is in support of the U.S. Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) strategy.

Direct tactical actions by military forces that could be conducted in LIC are demonstrations, shows of

force, raids, strikes, freeing hostages, patrolling, observation post manning and peacekeeping duties. General purpose forces may be required, particularly in peacekeeping duties. The peacekeeping force could range from military police and light infantry to mechanized and armored formations.⁷³ Quite simply, the point to make here is LIC is not solely in the domain of our light forces. There are occasions when part of our heavy forces would be committed to LIC.

Below are three recent examples of Infantry battalions serving in a LIC environment. Those battalions deployed to Grenada during operation "Urgent Fury" fought Cuban soldiers and Grenadian regular and militia forces. Infantry battalions were used as a show of force in Honduras during Operation "Golden Pheasant" to show our nation's resolve to support a friendly, democratic government against a potential Sandinista threat. Last, an infantry battalion serving in the Sinai Peninsula in a peacekeeping role as a component of the U.N. Peacekeeping force was observing and patrolling in a LIC environment.

In short, the wide diversity of operations that fall into the realm of LIC requires an infantry battalion that is versatile and flexible. Operating and conducting operations in geographic remote areas, against an elusive and dispersed enemy requires an infantry battalion organized for independent operations and one which has an

organizational structure that enhances C², one that can effectively accomplish a variety of reconnaissance and security tasks, an improved fire support system as evidenced by company level mortars and battalion level mortars in a CSC. Civic action type operations such as refugee control, construction projects, medical and sanitation assistance, and education programs are operations which require assistance that must come from outside the battalion. The Mabry Study identified this in 1966.⁷⁴ Just as he could integrate engineers, military intelligence assets, air defense assets, and other combat support elements into the battalion's operations, the CSC commander would be best suited and able to integrate the efforts of those who were attached or in direct support for civic action type operations.

V. Army Training Today

By all accounts, the Army is better trained today than at any other time over the past thirty years. The senior leaders of the Army are justifiably proud of the individual and collective training in both the institution and unit. Training and education in the training base is demanding, challenging and focused on warfighting tasks. Training in units is focused on the unit's wartime mission and mission essential task list. The Army's capstone training manual, FM 25-100 Training the Force, defines clearly the Army's training system.

Training continues to be a high priority for the Army as evidenced by training being designated as the Army's theme for 1988.

Various Army studies of the mid to late 1970s indicated a desire to reduce the complexity of battle for the small unit leader. This was done by creating a single weapons system company, reducing the size of the company (except HHC), and creating a separate anti-armor company.

Part of the organization design decisions of the mid to late 1970s were predicated on the basis that the small unit leader had neither the experience nor skills required to manage, lead, and fight. The complexity of war was thought to have grown too great.

The answer to these concerns is the Army's new family of Combat Training Centers (CTCs). These CTCs provide the most advanced training environment in the world and are a quantum leap over anything of the past. The CTCs were not in place during the Division Restructuring Study of 1976 or the Division 86 Study of 1978. We now have a way of closing the experience and skills gap expressed in those earlier studies: The National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, CA, the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Little Rock Air Force Base and Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, and the Combat Maneuver Training Complex (CMTC) at Hohenfels, Germany. These CTCs give battalion size Task Forces the

opportunity to conduct training and operations in an environment that is as close to actual combat as is possible today. Units conduct both maneuver and live fire training at the CTCs. (Live fire at Hohenfels will be limited). There is a dedicated Opposing Force (OPFOR) that is trained and equipped like the threat to fight against U.S. units. There is a dedicated Observer Controller team on the ground that enhances the learning experience by providing objective evaluation and to assist the units in conducting After Action Reviews. Full instrumentation, automation, and simulation combine to integrate the vital link between training and conducting operations at the CTCs. Take home packages allow the unit to continue the learning process at home station.

As the Division B6 Final Report indicated, one of the lessons learned from the 1973 Arab-Israeli War was the need for better training.⁷⁵ Having a CSC commander to help plan, direct and implement a demanding training program for the separate combat platoons of the battalion will improve the training of those platoons, and, hence, their combat readiness.

The Division Restructuring Study indicated company commanders were inexperienced and overburdened and that platoon leaders were not able to fully exploit the capability of state of the art weapons.⁷⁶ The range of simulators available today provide a significant

capability for company commanders and platoon leaders to train individual and crew tasks. As the cost of training, ammunition, ranges and facilities continue to increase, simulators will continue to be an important element in platoon and company training programs.

In summary, we have a way now of training for the complexity of war that simply has never been available before. Training at the CTCs and the use of simulators will close the lack of experience and skills gap expressed in those earlier studies. CTCs and simulators will give our officer and NCO Corps experience at employing systems and units on the battlefield that heretofore could only be done during war.

VI. Conclusion

Does the U.S. infantry battalion need a Combat Support Company? It appears that the answer is yes. Based on an historical analysis, an analysis of the current and projected threat, a look at our current doctrine of how we expect to fight now and in the future, and a review of the training opportunities available now all combine to support that position.

Over the past fifty years, the U.S. infantry battalion has employed a heavy weapons company or a combat support company during WWII, the Korean and Vietnam wars. When the HWC was removed from the force structure in the mid 1950s, it was reestablished a few

years later as a CSC. When the CSC was removed in the early 1960s, it was reestablished in the mid 1960s. The German Army of WWII had a separate heavy weapons company in their infantry battalion. They were the last to fight the Soviets on a mid to high intensity battlefield. We may well heed General Max Simon's comments, a former German Infantry Regimental Commander, "No new conceptions, merely time-honored principles which have fallen into oblivion".⁷⁷ Based on this historical analysis, a CSC is needed.

The infantry battalion must be prepared for a variety of threats that span the spectrum of conflict, anywhere in the world. The current and projected mid to high intensity threat will continue to be Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces in Central Europe. Although they will likely continue to modernize their force, their principles of offensive operations continue to be anchored to fast tempo, combined arms operations, attacking the depth of the battlefield and fighting continuous operations. The current and projected LIC threat will continue to be the undermining of U.S. goals. Regional instability in the Third World will be anchored to political and economic change. The military operations in LIC span a broad range from shows of force, providing trainers and equipment to our friends and allies, to active patrolling, raids, ambushes and civic action operations. Based on the current and projected

threat, across the spectrum of conflict, a CSC is needed. Adding a CSC to the force structure can be done now without a significant increase in spaces. The current anti-armor company headquarters would form the nucleus for the CSC headquarters. The heavy mortar platoon and scout platoon would be reassigned from HHC to CSC. The HHC elements that now provide maintenance, recovery, mess, and medical support to the anti-armor company would support the CSC. There would be a personnel bill for those units that do not have an anti-armor company.

Based on current doctrine as expressed in FM 100-5, FM 71-2, FM 7-20, and FM 100-20, the infantry battalion organization needed is one that is flexible, capable of limited independent operations, and one that has an organizational design that enhances C². Based on how the U.S. Army expects to fight now and in the future, in both low and high intensity combat, a CSC is needed.

Because of the training opportunities available now that were not just a few years ago, the force can be trained for the complexity of war. The Combat Training Centers give the capability to train realistically and thereby close the experience and skills gap expressed in earlier Combat Development Studies. Based on the training capability offered by the CTCs, the Army can train to fight any organizational design. Hence, training is no longer a significant constraining factor in force design.

The CSC is needed and affordable for the U.S. infantry battalion. A reorganization is not necessary now. The Army and the infantry do not need more turmoil. Unit performance at the CTCs as a function of organizational design ought to be tracked. The question of whether organizational design makes a difference in unit performance and effectiveness at the CTCs cannot be answered right now. However, it needs to be answered before we undergo a major reorganization. The CSC has the potential of ... 'rising from its own ashes'.

A CSC in the infantry battalion would improve command and control, reconnaissance and security, and fire support. It would better prepare the battalion for the broad ranging possibilities of LIC missions and make it more capable of conducting independent operations. The CSC commander would be better able than the HHC commander to train and prepare the scout and mortar platoons for war. The CSC would provide the battalion commander the subordinate headquarters to control attached and direct support elements from outside the battalion, thus enabling smoother integration of combined arms.

In MG Gray's article, Our Future Infantry-Can History Help Us?, he pointed out in the fifty years from the American Civil War to WWI, we had moved from a division commander's war to one by battalion commanders.⁷⁰ That transfer of the base element from

division to battalion was predicated on the need for greater flexibility and survivability, increased range and lethality of weapons, improved mobility, more rapid wire and radio communications, and a need for improved command and control. All of these factors affect how the battalion commander today will accomplish his mission.

A report written nearly two decades ago about the evolution of the U.S. infantry battalion closed with an interesting perspective on the future. It applies today.

The battalion commander of the future will have much in common with his brother officers of the past. However, with this difference, he will be operating in a context of combat which has become complicated and one wherein personal example and courage will be even more necessary than in the past. He will be required to operate, with his units, often in an independent mission at remote distances from headquarters. Hence, he must make decisions which will not be those equated normally with his rank and service. He must be able to wage combat, or plan and conduct pacification operations, simultaneously, or separately. He must be able to wage combat with either violence or with nonviolent "civic action." He must be aware of the political connotations of warfare. In essence, he will be the "educated" soldier as envisioned by Milton "skilled in the arts of war and of peace".⁷⁹

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