



# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Armed Forces—

U.S. Air Force (Marvin Lynchard)



## *Joint Vision 2010*

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The report of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces (CORM) which appeared in 1995 revealed a subtle deficiency in the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Under what can be viewed as a bicameral defense process, near-term visions developed by unified commands about longer-term service concepts. CINC visions reflect diverse regional interests and service visions indicate the particular mediums in which they specialize. Although this has enabled us to better understand the core competencies of each service as well as the regional insights of the warfighting CINCs, it has also led to tension and wasted effort. Sensing the need to integrate both types of vision, CORM recommended that the Chairman articulate a unifying vision. The resulting document, developed in close consultation with the Joint Chiefs and CINCs, is *Joint Vision 2010*.

The template in *JV 2010* "provides a common direction for our services in developing their unique capabilities." The Air Force fully embraces the document for three overarching reasons. First, as an integrating vehicle it releases tremendous

energy once dedicated to competing visions with little return. Second, it frees the services from legacy thinking that, for example, con-

strained the airpower contribution to joint warfighting. For decades the Air Force consumed a lot of energy perfecting auxiliary roles, fine-tuning capabilities which proved extremely useful in the Gulf War. At the same time that conflict emphasized the potential of airpower to more directly and effectively achieve joint objectives. The advantages of the world's leading aerospace nation can be employed to their full capacity within the framework provided by *JV 2010*.

The third reason that airmen embraced this document is because it leans toward the future. In the dynamic world that is unfolding in the wake of the Cold War the only reality is uncertainty. We cannot exactly predict future crises, but *JV 2010* prepares us for them by describing the

global security environment and fine-tuning our forces for the range of challenges we may face. The lack of Cold War confrontation has increased sensitivity to costs, casualties, public opinion, and media scrutiny. More will be expected of the Armed Forces than in the past. *JV 2010* responds to these challenges with this concept: fight with every available advantage.

The vision of military excellence found in *JV 2010* promises to play a key role in national security. If we supposed that the United States had a fifteen-year lead in military development over any potential adversary, we might choose to invest so that in fifteen years we can acquit ourselves well in a conflict with a peer competitor. But instead, *JV 2010* lays a foundation for investing in ways to keep the prospect of actually fighting a peer competitor fifteen years off.

### Unifying Constructs

As the Chairman states in its preface, *JV 2010* "provides an operationally based template for the evolution of the Armed Forces for a challenging and uncertain future." It therefore builds on proven military concepts. But unlike earlier frameworks, it explains ways in which joint forces interlock with, strengthen, and benefit each other.

Our bedrock strength as a fighting force is core service competencies—reflecting distinctive capabilities, cultures, and traditions—that offer a broad range of options to the National Command Authorities. As the services bring their unique styles of warfighting and problem solving to battle, they are difficult to defend against in their diversity and might in the aggregate.

Each service is responsible for developing competencies to prevail in its medium, training to common standards, and presenting its role to the Nation. The joint force commander fits these assets into a cohesive warfighting team, fueled by professional pride, operating with joint doctrine, and trained for a common purpose. *JV 2010* provides a conceptual underpinning for assembling service core competencies to conduct fully joint military operations.

### Operational Vision

On the level of joint force, *JV 2010* delineates four operational tasks: dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full-dimensional protection, and focused logistics—enabled by information superiority.

*Information superiority* is the ability to collect, process, and disseminate an uninterrupted flow of information while denying an enemy from doing the same. Air and space based platforms such as the airborne warning and control system

**the services are difficult to defend against in their diversity and mighty in the aggregate**



U.S. Air Force

C-17 Globemaster III.

AWACS.



U.S. Air Force (Mike Reinhardt)

(AWACS), joint surveillance and target attack radar system (JSTARS), Rivet Joint, and advanced unmanned autonomous vehicles (UAVs) exploit elevation to provide theater-wide surveillance, reconnaissance, and C<sup>3</sup> advantages. Joint force commanders gain edges in information by shielding and moving friendly information assets and applying combat power to destroy, neutralize, disable, or disrupt an enemy's means of gaining information and controlling forces. Information superiority can turn an adversary's "fog of war" into a wall of ignorance.

*Dominant maneuver* seeks to control the depth, breadth, and height of battlespace and the tempo of operations by positioning capabilities

for a decisive advantage. Airpower creates leverage by controlling battlespace and threatening attacks on what an enemy values wherever it is located. Air and space assets can find hostile strengths and weaknesses over the entire theater and, once specific vulnerabilities are identified, avoid strongpoints, apply power with surgical lethality, and take away enemy sanctuaries—the essence of dominant maneuver. Air superiority is a prerequisite to making the full array of dominant maneuver possibilities available to the joint force commander. With air dominance every part of our force has greater value. In the Gulf War it protected all the components and made coalition forces impossible to defend against.

*Precision engagement* is the most militarily distinctive capability each service brings to joint operations. Joint force commanders strive to apply combat power in ways that maximize friendly force strengths, reduce vulnerabilities, and accomplish the mission. Air forces, for example, use precision engagement throughout theater airspace



and in an enemy nation against war sustaining capabilities, air forces, and surface forces. Precision engagement and information superiority are enabling factors for dominant maneuver. In fact, precision engagement is its “kill mechanism.”

*Full-dimensional protection.* The aim of full-dimensional protection is battlespace control so our

**dominating the air is pivotal  
because it protects all forces  
and enables all operations**

forces are not just protected but control the environment and initiative in all operations. It guards our information, maneuver, forces, and logistics. Air and space assets

protect our airspace and forces from enemy engagement and maneuver capabilities, providing not only freedom *from* attack but also freedom *to* attack. Full-dimensional protection is key to dominant maneuver and precision engagement. It is also essential to the information and logistics advantages upon which tomorrow's joint force will depend.



U.S. Air Force (Dixie Trawick)

**F-16C taking off from  
Aviano Air Base, Italy.**

*Focused logistics* will reduce reliance on stockpiles, prepositioning, redundant logistics infrastructure, and cumbersome support systems. The goal is to create an environment in which you never run out of logistics. It is designed to eliminate the “iron mountain” associated with past operations, thus reducing the tooth-to-tail ratio. The Air Force has been developing practices that support focused logistics since 1994 through advances in lean logistics, total asset visibility, and better use of commercial services and advanced airlifters like the C-17. Focused logistics puts the agility and responsiveness of our global mobility forces to full use.

Dominant maneuver, precision engagement, and full-dimensional protection form a trinity of combat power that will realize the ideal of full spectrum dominance presented in *JV 2010* if enabled by information superiority and focused logistics. Individually, new warfighting concepts provide the means to discriminately apply deterrent, coercive, or destructive power against enemy centers of gravity. When integrated, the total result greatly exceeds the sum of the parts.

Each element of *JV 2010* is necessary, but our warfighting concept does not stand alone. It requires excellent component forces. It requires resources. And its operational vision clearly relies on friendly control of the air. Dominating the air is pivotal in modern warfare missions because it protects all forces and enables all operations. In the Gulf War it shielded all of the components and made it impossible to defend against coalition forces.

### **Joint Vision 2010**

*JV 2010* provides 21<sup>st</sup> century forces guided by 21<sup>st</sup> century thinking. The payoff will be 21<sup>st</sup> century security. In an era of unparalleled change—with simultaneous exponential advances in many fields—this may seem a tremendous challenge. *JV 2010* meets it by providing dynamic options for uncertain times, underpinning a revised “American way of war.”

Modern airpower attuned to *JV 2010* will be better suited than in the past to directly pursue political-military objectives. First, it can contribute to deterrence and, if that fails, it can reduce or eliminate an enemy's ability to achieve its war aims, as the Gulf War displayed. It will also attack selected enemy capabilities and either reduce or eliminate the ability of an enemy to resist our policy objectives, as Deliberate Force in Bosnia illustrated. The speed, reach, perspective, and freedom of action of aerospace forces can create extraordinary advantages for surface elements even as they proceed to a crisis area. And once they arrive, airpower can greatly magnify their combat power.

This is not to say that airpower can do everything, will be sufficient, or will always provide the most appropriate force. Rather, it is proper to study every military capability and limitation in the light of our unifying concept. It is important for military professionals to clarify what they bring to a joint force commander's table. Understanding each advantage our forces possess allows us to leverage each one to win at the least human, fiscal, and political cost.

Sophisticated understanding helps avoid fighting at a disadvantage. The Armed Forces are superbly trained and equipped. We are disadvantaged when fighting on equal terms. An enemy will

seize any asymmetry in its favor. We are wise to continue investing in forces that are useful, capable, and difficult or impossible to counter. Aerospace forces offer tremendous resistance to counters because, with global reach and unceasing speed, they inherently retain the advantages of the initiative. They can also defeat highly concentrated defenses by avoiding them, and if areas are uniformly defended they incur no increased penalty when attacking the most important targets.

The capability of modern aerospace forces that makes them resistant to defensive measures is stealth. Signature reduction diminishes the effectiveness of acquisition, tracking, guidance, and intercept systems all at the same time. Stealth further capitalizes on all the advantages inherent in aerospace systems. Our aerospace industrial base provides us with the means to counter a nation that concentrates its strength in either land or naval forces. Our aerospace forces in turn magnify the combat power and value of our land and naval forces.

### From the Past . . . the Future

Our forebears in the profession of arms elected time and again to use technology to reduce risks to their forces. In search of attainable advantages, they advanced metallurgy, chemistry, and physics to improve artillery. Before Henry Ford's assembly line they pioneered mass produc-

tion, standardization, and interchangeable parts. A unique aspect of our heritage is ingenuity. People in a land of freedom and opportunity have initia-

tive and open markets yield incentives. Accordingly, American inventiveness has stunned the world for more than two centuries. One result is the great technical versatility found in our Armed Forces.

As complicated as technology has become, ideas on warfighting can be just as challenging. The leading military thinker of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Frederick the Great, remarked that "the lifetime of one man is not enough to enable him to acquire perfect knowledge and experience in the art of war." Of course military systems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be more complex than any envisioned by Frederick or Napoleon. *JV 2010* is a watershed because it helps our thinking to catch up with our capabilities while simultaneously advancing them which will enable us to secure the future beyond the confines of outmoded concepts.

*JV 2010* recognizes that all warfighting capabilities brought to bear in joint operations are crafted by the services. In fulfilling their responsibilities, each of the services seeks excellence in what the vision identifies as six critical elements: people, leadership, doctrine, materiel, organizational structure, and education and training. The services prepare component forces for superior mission performance in unified operations.

This document provides a mechanism for focusing the strengths of the individual services on operational concepts to achieve full spectrum dominance. Equally important, it iterates the fact that "we will always rely on . . . America's men and women to ensure we are persuasive in peace, decisive in war, and preeminent in any form of conflict."

The six critical elements of *JV 2010* are vital to service responsibilities—the areas in which we strive for excellence. The five operational tasks offer a framework for tremendous warfighting effectiveness in a style befitting American values and interests. One could study the document to see if it confirms what has always been done and stop there. It will make a greater contribution as we use it to discover all we can do.

Regardless of background, military professionals will find *JV 2010* appealing since it helps them meet their responsibility to the Nation. Today's potential for asymmetric advantage provides military leaders unprecedented capabilities to secure victory with minimum cost. *JV 2010* outlines how we can raise that standard higher still. Its timing is especially propitious for the Air Force, which is conducting service-wide, long-range planning focused on 2025. Implementing *JV 2010* will provide valuable direction and insights to ensure those efforts produce the best results.

As Abraham Lincoln said, new conditions require us to "disenthral ourselves." The gift of *Joint Vision 2010* is that it provides a contextual framework to harness the energies of the creative and diverse American military community to build a surer, better future.

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