

Behind the placid surface of the vision statements, several fires are burning briskly.

Visions

By John T. Correll, Editor in Chief

UNTIL the past decade or so, nobody had even heard of vision statements.

They grew out of the Total Quality Management movement of the 1980s and have become an inextricable part of corporate culture. Every large organization has one. So do the Joint Chiefs of Staff and each of the armed services.

Vision statements express a sense of identity, purpose, and direction. And since top management tends to take a personal interest in them, they are often a good indication of an organization's innermost beliefs and intentions.

In May, the Joint Chiefs published "Joint Vision 2020," updating their previous statement from 1996. Both the Air Force and the Army have put out new vision statements as well in the past year, and a revised Navy vision is circulating in draft form.

In theory, the visions of the individual services are derived from the joint vision and fit together like a matched set. In actuality, what they do, mostly, is coexist.

Beneath the placid surface, several fires are burning briskly.

1. Joint Vision 2020

In the inspirational style of vision statements, Joint Vision 2020 calls for “full spectrum dominance” and a joint force that will be “persuasive in peace, decisive in war, and pre-eminent in any form of conflict.”

That is standard stuff, built essentially on the assumptions four years ago in “Joint Vision 2010” that the United States would not only keep but also expand its technological advantage.

What’s new this time around is that information operations are elevated to the same level of importance as dominant maneuver and precision engagement.

On this point, the new joint vision pulls out all the stops.

“Operations within the information domain will become as important as those conducted in the domains of sea, land, air, and space,” it says, adding that “information operations may evolve into a separate mission area requiring the services to maintain appropriately designed organizations and trained specialists.”

Even so, the vision warns that information superiority is “transitory in nature” and is not an end in itself. Superior information must be converted to superior knowledge to achieve “decision superiority”—better decisions “arrived at and implemented faster than an opponent can react.”

There is also a puzzling omission in the new document.

A leading point in Joint Vision 2010 in 1996, repeated in the follow-on “Concept for Future Joint Operations” in 1997, was that “we should be increasingly able to accomplish the effects of mass—the necessary concentration of combat power at the decisive time and place—with less need to physically mass forces than in the past.”

That point has disappeared without a trace in Joint Vision 2020. In its place are assorted nuggets about the rapid massing of forces. (See box.)

The strong suspicion is that the change demonstrates the influence on the Joint Staff of those with a vested interest in the massing of forces. If so, it culminates the sniping campaign of recent years against

The Going and Coming of Mass

Joint Vision 2010

“Instead of relying on massed forces and sequential operations, we will achieve massed effects in other ways.”

“With precision targeting and longer range systems, commanders can achieve the necessary destruction or suppression of enemy forces with fewer systems, thereby reducing the need for time-consuming and risky massing of people and equipment.”

“[W]e will be increasingly able to accomplish the effects of mass—the necessary concentration of combat power at the decisive time and place—with less need to mass forces physically than in the past.”

Joint Vision 2020

“Overseas or US-based units will mass forces or effects directly to the operational theater.”

“The capability to rapidly mass force or forces and the effects of dispersed forces allow the joint force commander to establish control of the battlespace at the proper time and place.”

“Beyond the actual physical presence of the force, dominant maneuver creates an impact in the minds of opponents and others in the operational area. ... In a conflict, for example, the presence or anticipated presence of a decisive force might well cause an enemy to surrender after minimal resistance.”

Completely purged from Joint Vision 2020 is the idea that the effects of mass might be achieved without the actual massing of forces. This suggests a Pentagon staff victory for those who have a vested interest in the massing of forces.

technology and the “revolution in military affairs.” To some extent, it would also mark the return to the traditional force-on-force models of attrition warfare.

A curious passage in the new joint vision says that “the presence or anticipated presence of a decisive force might well cause an enemy to surrender.”

That sounds very much like the claim of some Army officials and enthusiasts that it was the presence of an unengaged Army ground force in Albania, not the 11-week air campaign, that caused the Serbs to surrender to NATO in 1999.

For its part, the Air Force seems confident in its own capabilities and expresses support for the revised joint vision.

“We believe that Joint Vision 2020 provides the Air Force the latitude to do what we need to and can do to contribute to full spectrum dominance for the nation,” said Maj. Gen. John W. Brooks, special assistant to the Chief of Staff for the development and communication of Air Force vision, policy, and plans.

2. Air Force 2020

The first of the military vision statements—although it was not called that at the time—was a white paper, “Global Reach–Global Power,” published by the Air Force in June 1990.

It predicted that “advanced technologies will provide United States forces decisive capabilities against potentially well-equipped foes at minimum cost in casualties.” It said that air operations could support land campaigns or sea campaigns, but could also project power directly in an air campaign.

Within a year, events of the Gulf War had confirmed all of that, but by 1996, the Air Force felt the need for a change and published a new vision called “Global Engagement.” The best remembered line of it said that “we are now transitioning from an air force into an air and space force on an evolutionary path to a space and air force.”

That was a hard proposition to live with. It was taken to mean that

airpower would gradually decline in favor of space power. It was also interpreted to mean, in the words of Sen. Bob Smith (R-N.H.), that tomorrow's space force would be paid for by "shedding big chunks of today's Air Force."

The reality was that airpower was becoming more important to military operations, not less so, and that the requirement for both airpower and space power was increasing. To the discontent of some space advocates like Senator Smith, the Air Force began talking about integration of air and space into an operational aerospace regime.

"Air Force Vision 2020: Global Vigilance, Reach, and Power," published June 19, confirms the service's commitment to an integrated aerospace domain that "stretches from the Earth's surface to the outer reaches of space in a seamless operational medium."

Global reach and power are longstanding elements of the Air Force credo, but "global vigilance" is new this time. "By vigilance, we think in terms of the Air Force being on watch across our domain," Brooks said. "The aspect of it that people may think of first is surveillance. That's an important part of it, but it's not the only part. It's also F-15s on combat air patrol in Northern Watch. It's security forces on watch at Tuzla. It's missileers."

Secretary of the Air Force F. Whitten Peters and Gen. Michael E. Ryan, the Chief of Staff, were closely involved with development of the new vision, and all of the Air Force's four-star generals took part several times in the scrub down.

The emphasis is on effects "regardless of where platforms reside, fly, or orbit."

"It doesn't say command goes to people who are pilots," Peters explained. "It doesn't say command goes to people who are just space people. It says it goes to the brightest people in the Air Force we can find who understand all these types of technologies and how to use them effectively as a basis for systems."

Brooks said the Air Force was building on rather than completely throwing out the ideas in the 1996 vision statement. "Global Engagement made a useful point in causing us to think in that sense," he said. The issue is not "whether the capa-

bilities are largely air or largely space" but how best to put them together. However, "will they be more space capabilities in the future than they are now? I believe they will be."

The Air Force contributes about 90 percent of the resources for the military space program—although it never received any budget increase for doing so—but it does not have clear title to the space mission.

Later this year, a Congressionally mandated panel will make recommendations on the best way to organize the military space effort.

Expeditionary Force

The Air Force has grouped its combat forces into 10 Aerospace Expeditionary Forces (AEFs), two of which will be deployed or on call at any given time.

The expeditionary concept was designed for two purposes: to provide tailored forces to theater commanders and to put some stability and predictability back into the lives of Air Force people who go on the deployments.

The concept did not officially go into effect until October 1999, but the Kosovo air campaign earlier that year provided a test of it. In addition

to forces operating from the United States—notably, the B-2 bombers—and from existing bases overseas, the Air Force established 21 expeditionary bases where there had been no bases before.

The vision statement says that an AEF task force, packaged for a smaller-scale contingency, "can provide intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and command and control of aerospace forces over an area roughly half the size of Texas." It can also provide air superiority and strike about 200 targets a day.

As capabilities improve, the Air Force will be able to deploy an AEF in 48 hours, "fast enough to curb many crises before they escalate," and up to five AEFs in 15 days. The Air Force also proposes to expand the battlespace an AEF can control and increase the number of targets it can strike per day.

The Air Force seeks to reduce its "forward support footprint" by having the deployed forces use links to space systems to "reach back" to bases in the United States for combat support.

Inclusiveness is a recurring theme in the vision statement. Just as "vigilance" means all of the aerospace forces on watch and on guard, not just those engaged in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, the AEFs are part, but not all, of the expeditionary concept.

"Airmen from all across the Air Force contribute to our ability to deploy and sustain powerful aerospace capabilities," Ryan said. "Air expeditionary forces are an important part of that, but so are the capabilities—ranging from the mobility to get them where they need to go to the acquisition, logistics, health care, education, and training—they depend on."

Ryan uses the term "AEF prime" to refer to operational capabilities, such as those of Space Command, that are essential to a deployment but which are not an organic part of the AEF.

The new vision statement says that aerospace power can "strike directly from the United States or from regional bases." With advanced capabilities, it says, "we'll provide the ability to find, fix, assess, track, target, and engage anything of military significance anywhere. We'll transition from the ability to do that in



hours to the ability to do it in minutes.”

The Air Force will continue “providing the mobility to rapidly position and reposition forces in any environment, anywhere in the world.”

3. Soldiers On Point for the Nation

When the Army adopted its previous vision statement in 1996, it saw no need to be humble. The contribution of land forces, it said, was “to make permanent the otherwise transitory advantages achieved by air and naval forces.”

In aid of living up to that, the Army launched a project to develop a powerful “Army After Next” by 2025, getting there by means of a “knowledge-based” intermediary step in 2010 called “Force XXI.”

The Army has now pulled the plug on all of that and is looking at a radically different future.

For many years, both the Army and many leaders assumed that the land battle would be the central focus of any conflict. The Gulf War of 1991 called that into question. Army boosters claimed that the 100-hour ground campaign was the decisive factor, but the general consensus was that the 38-day air campaign, which took most of the starch out of the Iraqis, was the pivotal element.

Harsher questions arose from Operation Allied Force in the Balkans in 1999. Army forces were not engaged, although it deployed a brigade-sized unit with 24 Apache helicopters to Albania. Army advocates continue to argue that the reason the Serbs gave up was not the air campaign but rather the intimidating presence of the helicopter task force.

By most estimates, it would have taken several months or longer to prepare and execute a ground invasion.

In August 1999, the Army took two warning shots from defense officials. Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre said that “if the Army only holds onto nostalgic versions of its grand past, it is going to atrophy and die.” Jacques Gansler, undersecretary of defense for acquisition and technology, told an Army audience that crises of the future will call for a response within hours, not days, and that “massed forces will be re-

placed by massed firepower, precisely placed on targets.”

The Army was in danger of becoming marginal. Gen. Eric Shinseki, who became Chief of Staff in June 1999, acknowledged that the Army’s heavy divisions were too cumbersome for deployment and its light divisions lacked lethality and staying power.

In a landmark speech to the Association of the US Army Oct. 12, 1999, Shinseki declared a new vision.

The Army would rebuild around lighter divisions and strike brigades. A combat brigade would be able to deploy anywhere in the world in 96 hours. A division could be on the ground in 120 hours, and five divisions in 30 days.

The heavy tank would give way to a 20-ton combat vehicle that runs on wheels rather than tracks and which can be transported by a C-130.

The new Army vision statement, “Soldiers On Point for the Nation,” calls the force Shinseki described the “*objective force*.” It says the Army will keep portions of the “*legacy force*” for the next 15 years and bridge the gap between the two with capabilities developed in an “*interim force*.”

Money and Other Complications

The Army has canceled some programs to help pay for this but is still about \$35 billion short. Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera, meeting with the Defense Writers Group in March, said that decision-makers should look at the cost “to transform the Army once in a generation” compared to what the other services were planning to spend on aircraft programs. “You’ve got to ask the question, where is the smart investment for the nation?”

“No wonder the Army wants more money,” said Jeffery Barnett, writing in *Armed Forces Journal International*. “It wants both transformation and the status quo. It wants to modernize its heavy divisions until the objective force is fielded throughout the Army. This will require funding two forces at once.”

Finances aside, Shinseki and Caldera have encountered flak from inside the Army. The heavy armor community is not enthusiastic about replacing tanks with light combat vehicles that run on wheels. The helicopter forces feel left out of the new vision.

Other questions await answers. The practicality of putting five ground divisions into a combat theater in 30 days is debatable unless the Air Force and the Navy have established air supremacy and have weakened the enemy considerably. An enemy of a size to call for five Army divisions would take a lot of weakening.

That leads to the problem of airlift. To get to the fight early, the Army wants priority on a large share of the Air Force’s airlift capacity. An Army staff paper, circulating in the Pentagon several months ago, complained about the “large lift requirement for Air Force wings” early in a conflict.

Indeed, the Air Force would need airlift to move its own units, especially the five AEFs in 15 days promised by the new vision statement. The Air Force says it takes about 16 airlift sorties to support deployment of a fighter squadron with 24 aircraft to an established base like Aviano in Italy. Deployment to a bare base would take additional airlift.

Moving the Army’s 24 Apache helicopters, tanks, and troops of Task Force Hawk from Ramstein AB, Germany, to Tirana, Albania, in 1999

took 30 days and 542 C-17 airlift missions.

On a happier note, the Army and the Marine Corps seem to have buried the hatchet. The Army used to resent the Marine Corps as being “a second land army,” and the Marines worried that the Army wanted to take away their mission.

After a meeting last year with Gen. James Jones, Commandant of the Marine Corps, Shinseki announced that “we have both agreed that neither of us have been on a battlefield so crowded that you couldn’t have more capability there.” The Army and the Marine Corps have since formed a working group to enhance cooperation between the two land forces.

4. The Future ... From the Sea

It has been a long time since the last big battle at sea, and in recent years, the Navy has turned its attention toward the shore.

The first big step was in 1992, when the Navy shelved its ambitious “Maritime Strategy” and replaced it with a concept called “... From the Sea,” which concentrated on operations along the littorals and coastlines of continents.

That gave way, in turn, to a revised vision statement entitled “Forward ... From the Sea” in 1994. The main difference was that the new vision put more emphasis on forward presence. The concept was updated in 1997.

A new vision statement, “The Future ... From the Sea,” has been circulating in draft this year to Navy reviewers. It says it is building on the “landward focus” of previous

visions and that “the Navy and Marine Corps are on course with a heading landward.”

Defense News reported in March that a new strategic vision, “Power and Influence ... From the Sea,” was the brainchild of Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig and that in it, the sea services would play “a more central role in operations ashore.”

The paper that *Air Force* Magazine downloaded from a Navy Web site appears to be a subsequent version of that.

It says that “by remaining forward, naval expeditionary forces guarantee that the landward reach of US influence is present to favorably shape regions of vital interest.”

These forces “project power deep inland.” How they do so is not specified, but the reference is presumably to sea-launched cruise missiles since it would be a risky task for the Navy’s nonstealthy F/A-18 fighters.

Naval forces will “project a defensive umbrella landward” to include “air and missile defense; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities; naval surface fires; and precision strike.”

Much of what the draft vision says—although not the declaration of being “on course with a heading landward”—is also found in a current Navy program guide called “Vision ... Presence ... Power.”

Hitting on the theme of access that permeates the draft vision as well, the program guide says that “naval forces can sustain combat-credible presence in forward areas without the need for expensive and inherently vulnerable land-based regional support infrastructures.”

This is the familiar Navy pitch that Air Force and Army forces will be denied theater bases in the event

of conflict and that only the Navy can provide access to foreign battle areas.

That problem was anticipated by the Air Force’s first vision statement in June 1990, which said that “when the interests of allies are threatened, basing will normally be made available.” And so it happened, both in the Gulf War and in Kosovo.

The Navy does acknowledge that its own forces will be “challenged” by such anti-access capabilities as land-based cruise missiles and space-based satellite targeting.

The emphasis on forward presence dates back to 1993, when the Bottom-Up Review said that 10 carriers would be enough for the Navy to carry out its wartime tasking but that additional carriers were justified by a naval-oriented presence mission. The decision of the BUR, confirmed by the Quadrennial Defense Review in 1997, was to allocate the Navy 12 carriers, the number it has today.

Seeing no reason to challenge either the logic or the results, the Navy defines itself by its peacetime mission instead of its wartime requirements. In February, Adm. Jay Johnson, then the Chief of Naval Operations, told Congress that “the sizing and shaping metric for the United States Navy is not two MTWs [major theater wars], it’s the day-to-day business that we’re asked to conduct out forward.”

The Navy is now trying to parlay the presence mission into a big increase in force structure.

Pressed by powerful Navy supporters in Congress, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen signed on June 26 a report on “the Department of Defense’s Naval Vessel Force Structure Requirements.”

It says that covering “all likely joint and combined warfighting requirements, overseas presence, and support to contingency operations” would call for 15 big-deck aircraft carriers—up from 12 now—plus a 20 percent increase in attack submarines and a 10 to 15 percent increase in surface combatants.

Cohen presented the list as an option instead of a budget request, but so far, none of the other services has been favored with a similar statement from the Department of Defense about their force structure requirements.

Visions Online

- “*Joint Vision 2020*,” May 30, 2000
www.dtic.mil/jv2020
- “*Air Force Vision 2020: Global Vigilance, Reach, and Power*,” June 19, 2000
www.af.mil/vision
- “*The Army Vision: Soldiers On Point for the Nation ... Persuasive in Peace, Invincible in War*,” Oct. 12, 1999
www.army.mil/armyvision
- “*Naval Vision 2020: The Future ... From the Sea*,” Draft, March 2000
www.hq.navy.mil/n3n5/rrmo/NV2020.htm