

A Role for Land Warfare Forces in Overcoming A2/AD

Col. Vincent Alcazar, U.S. Air Force, and
Col. Thomas M. Laffeur, U.S. Army

Col. Vincent Alcazar, U.S. Air Force, is the Air Attache to Iraq. Col Alcazar was formerly the Air Force lead for Air-Sea Battle (ASB) and co-lead of the ASB Office at the Pentagon. He served on the ASB concept development team from its founding in September 2009. He was a core contributor to the eventual ASB concept document, and also was the Air Force's author for the Joint Operational Access Concept released by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in January 2012.

Col. Thomas M. Laffeur is assigned at the Combined Arms Center, School of Military Studies (SAMS), with duty at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kan., pursuing a Ph.D. in security studies. Previously, he served as an Army strategist for the Air-Sea Battle Team. He holds an M.A. from the University of Washington and M.M.A.S. degrees from the Command and General Staff Officer's Course and SAMS.

PHOTO: A U.S. Army soldier (left) from 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, observes the firing of a D-30 122-mm howitzer by Afghan National Army soldiers from 4th Kandak, 3rd Brigade, 201st Corps, during certification exercises at Forward Operating Base Tagab, Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, 5 September 2013. (U.S. Army National Guard, Sgt. Margaret Taylor)

IN A SPEECH to students at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan., Gen. Raymond Odierno stated that we are currently living in the most uncertain international scene that he has ever experienced in his 37-year military career.¹ Terrorism, ethnic strife, the overthrow of despotic leaders, and the threat of nuclear weapons in conventional war are just a few reasons many long for the “good old days” of the Cold War. The bad news is that in the face of all these security challenges, the rise of anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) weapons systems poses major challenges that could potentially erode the deterrent effect of America’s land warfare forces and render America’s preferred way of battle unexecutable. *The good news* is that overcoming A2/AD weapons systems is possible, but requires a new focus for portions of America’s land warfare forces. These forces have an essential role in mitigating A2/AD, indeed, refocused land warfare forces will bolster steady state shaping, enhance deterrence, and ensure that in an A2/AD conflict the joint force commander has fully developed, prepared, versatile, and tailorable options. In a nutshell, in a counter-A2/AD campaign, land warfare forces are essential to create, expand, then potentially amplify the tactical gains delivered by the joint force to gain and maintain U.S. advantage.

Central Idea—Land Forces in A2/AD Environments

The *so what* of A2/AD is that it focuses on mitigating America’s ability to project military force. Strategically, it stymies America’s ability to protect its vital interests in key regions. Operationally, A2/AD prevents America from executing its preferred way of battle. Tactically, A2/AD presents a robust multi-domain defense with long-range offensive capabilities and fires. Figure 1 depicts current land warfare competencies that are *directly* applicable to overcoming A2/AD in any battle space. Figure 2 depicts three broad mission areas for land warfare forces to mitigate A2/AD: reconnaissance, raids, and seizures. The mission areas of figure 2 suggest the use of counter-A2/AD land warfare forces that include light infantry brigade combat team (BCT) and below-sized units that are rapidly deliverable using high-speed, survivable, horizontal/vertical lift platforms and, in certain scenarios, movement

via undersea vehicles. To facilitate rapid objective area movement, assaulting land warfare forces must utilize a new generation of smart, light, armed, and all-terrain vehicles. Those ground-forces mobility attributes are consistent with current Department of Defense (DOD) strategic guidance for a lean, agile, flexible, and ready force.² But at the BCT level and below—where fighting happens—existing land warfare forces tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) must be adapted and new ones created to overcome A2/AD’s effects on force security, movement, intelligence, signal, fires, and logistics. These counter-A2/AD TTPs will be different from the permissive condition ones found in counterinsurgency environments.

Lighter units will need to know they are supported in tough A2/AD conditions and that those supporting them understand the mechanics and possess the required expertise. Likewise, BCT systems and equipment must be purpose-built with the rigors of the A2/AD fight in mind. For example, land warfare forces will require integrated, survivable, self-healing tactical and strategic communications; rapidly responsive high-speed joint force fires; and secure, fused national-to-tactical multisource intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Overall, in winning an A2/AD fight, each service has much to offer, but no single service can establish the conditions to win that fight. Now, in the years before the A2/AD confrontation America will need to win, service chiefs and combatant commanders must understand A2/AD, the role of land warfare forces in mitigating A2/AD, and joint force vulnerabilities and dependencies. This ensures the best survivable capabilities are developed and once delivered, put into place as the enabling matrix on which to fix counter-A2/AD TTPs and concepts of operations

Countering A2/AD—Why Land Warfare Forces Matter?

Land warfare forces are vital in prevailing against A2/AD because at the end of the day, not every adversary A2/AD capability of consequence can be mitigated through air force or naval means. Even in A2/AD warfare, with all of its anticipated and appropriate emphasis on technological strength, much warfighting will remain to be done as it has always needed doing: boots on ground at eyeball level.

Land Warfare Competencies for A2/AD Environment

- Combined Arms
- Force Protection
- ISR
- Air & Missile Defense
- Cyberspace Operations
- Space Operations Support
- Logistics
- PSYOP/Information Operations

Mission Areas

Reconnaissance
Raids
Seizure

Figure 1: Countering A2/AD

Figure 2 provides some granularity regarding mission areas specifically designed to overcome critical A2/AD adversary capabilities the joint force will encounter in the fight’s initial conditions and throughout subsequent entry operations. Behind this vision is the imperative of gaining strategic freedom of action by specific tactical counter-A2/AD actions across a widespread denied battle space in every domain. Against that backdrop, land warfare forces are not an invasion or long-term occupation force, or utilized as the vanguard of a nation-building effort; even “kicking in the door” comes later. Early land warfare force employment against A2/AD is about tailored BCTs and slices of BCTs that enter the neighborhood to shape its places for the joint force subsequently to kick in the doors to the key houses, which themselves constitute key opponent targets.

How can land warfare forces best prepare for counter-A2/AD missions? The best way is to develop and integrate BCT TTPs within joint force concept of operations—leveraging land warfare

force capabilities that are powerful, effective, and unique. The following are key areas that should frame land warfare TTPs to concept of operations development for employment against the kinds of targets depicted in figure 3.

First, America’s land warfare forces contribute vital air/missile defense capacity, offensive/defensive cyberspace capabilities, and space operations competencies. In crucial ways, those land force capabilities are game-changers and necessary to joint mission accomplishment.

Second, in integrated cross-domain operations—an idea introduced in the Joint Operational Access Concept—land warfare forces will be America’s best means to perform reconnaissance, raids, and seizures, as well as mitigate key adversary systems

and create additional options in all five domains for the joint force commander. As expected, such land warfare force efforts will in turn set the conditions for follow-on operations.³

Third, incorporating land warfare forces into an overall redeveloped joint force with optimized counter-A2/AD TTPs and concept of operations—the capability hardware plus the better warfighting idea software—ensures commanders have the most diverse set of military tools to address a range of A2/AD situations and actors.

To ensure unity of effort, vision, and purpose, fielding a highly capable counter-A2/AD land warfare force requires planning that is informed by the counter-A2/AD forces redevelopment efforts across the Armed Services. America’s leaders are asking what the Army’s future force should look like; this article steps into that future force design discussion with a vision of restructured land warfare forces to help overcome a major challenge of the 21st century: A2/AD. To develop counter-A2/AD competencies does not mean the Army must abandon its counterinsurgency capabilities, experiences, and competencies; this is a false choice. But in asking what the future force must look like, A2/AD must inform discussions on the kind of Army needed to satisfy projected future requirements—the discussion that should serve to frame the scope of full spectrum warfare.

The Problem—What is A2/AD?

Anti-Access/Area Denial’s complexities and capabilities can approach classic definitions of total war in that A2/AD cyberspace, space, and long-range missile attacks can bring war’s effects into America’s homeland. At the policy level, an A2/AD adversary will utilize its own diplomatic-information-military-economic-finance-intelligence-law enforcement campaign to attain its national objectives. In this way A2/AD is the adversary’s countershaping corollary to America’s diplomacy and security cooperation. Practically speaking, in steady state, A2/AD is a style of aggressive peace and an aggressive style of war—both will mean the effects of instability and war is not likely confined to a distant locality or region. In simplest terms, A2/AD is a portfolio of ways and means developed to thwart joint force access, reduce freedom of action, and curtail operational latitude.⁴ As a way

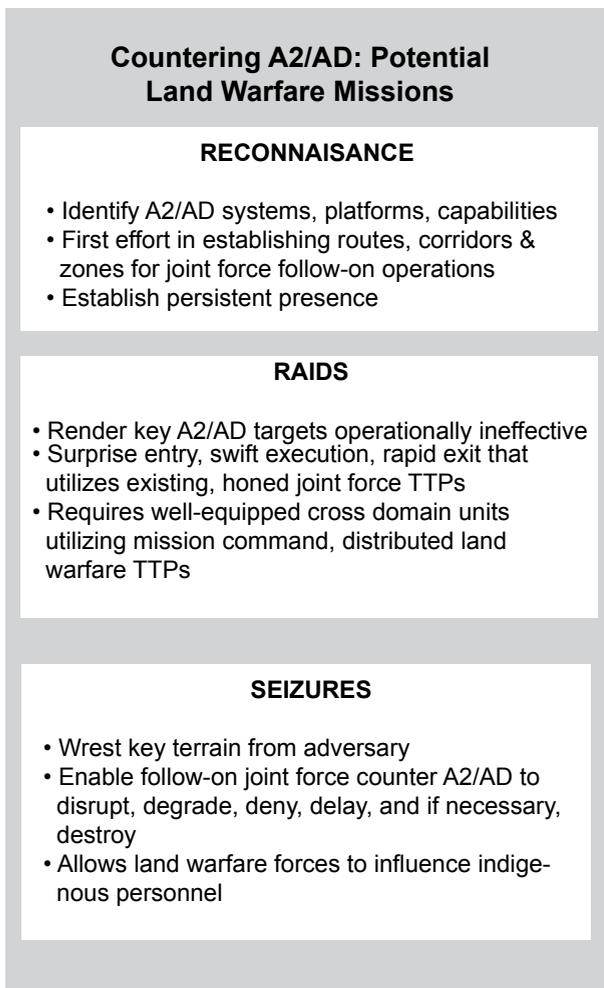


Figure 2: Land Forces Utilization

of warfare, A2/AD specializes in avoiding U.S. strengths while targeting American vulnerabilities and dependencies.

Fighting against A2/AD, new challenges emerge and familiar challenges take on new forms. For example, in the hands of an agile, adaptive, and aware A2/AD adversary, time becomes a weapon when its short, sharp, rapid onset denies America time to mobilize its resolve, economy, Reserves, and National Guard completely by blunting the projection of military forces. Moreover, America's ability to operate from convenient regional sanctuaries to safely mass forces and effects, build combat power, stage logistics, and reinforce a campaign are the key U.S. activities an A2/AD adversary will seek to continuously preclude.

Before an A2/AD crisis becomes a full-blown conflict elsewhere, America's government, military, and private sector could suffer large-scale, wide-area, or focused cyberspace attacks whose purposes are to cripple America's ability to mobilize, generate, deploy, and fight. Harkening to total war, our adversaries may utilize cyber attacks to undermine U.S. and ally public support for military operations. Elsewhere, at relevant American forward bases, the A2/AD adversary's missile forces may compel a U.S. defensive posture before America can deploy adequate missile defense capacity.

To sketch some broad campaign strokes of what A2/AD looks and sounds like, here is a notional basket of hostile activities any A2/AD adversary or competitor could undertake today. In those portions of the operations area where the adversary's navy has sufficient freedom of action, it could mine littoral waters and cripple U.S. expeditionary naval forces and the maritime portion of the joint force logistics enterprise just as America is attempting to ramp up presence and build combat power. Missile raids against area U.S. Navy surface warfare groups may cause them to retire to mitigate risk of further attack. In space, using skills and access credentials stolen beforehand, the adversary could disrupt control of U.S. space assets and degrade orbital platform services with a three-way combination of offensive counterspace, offensive electromagnetic, and offensive counternetwork effects. To preclude a force buildup or to attack a massed force, key regional bases could suffer withering missile raids that damage facilities, delay reinforcement, and obstruct

Potential Land Force Targets

RECONNAISSANCE:

- Key terrain, A2/AD systems
- Potential routes, corridors, zones for follow-on joint force operations

RAIDS:

- Shore, coastal anti-ship missile batteries
- Integrated air defense sites, facilities
- Adversary C4ISR nodes
- Adversary telecom sites
- Key adversary logistics facilities

SEIZURES

- Missile trans-shipment, storage sites
- Missile staging, assembly, firing areas
- Maritime mine storage, staging sites
- Electromagnetic effects generation sites

Figure 3: Potential Land Force Targets

the buildup of combat power. Overall, adversary attacks in every domain using kinetic and nonkinetic force may rapidly cripple the U.S. logistics enterprise all the way back to the continental U.S. zip codes. Finally, because in war all sides have a story to tell, a war of counterinformation within the larger conflict will shift into hyperdrive as the adversary bombards media arenas with psychological shaping whose purpose is less to inform and more to undermine U.S. credibility and presence. That is certainly not an all-inclusive list of what A2/AD can do, but these points establish a foundation from which to tether the goals of A2/AD.⁵

As shown in figure 4, nations employing A2/AD have four goals; however, it is inaccurate to

conflate these “goals” with ends. Rather, these goals are considered a framework to explain the strategic and operational *so what* of A2/AD. From figure 4, it is easy to connect the dots between A2/AD effects and the consequences of weakened American deterrence and limitations imposed on America’s use of armed force options. Whichever of A2/AD’s four goals become an adversary’s strategic priority(s) and in whatever order, the effect on U.S. planning and execution is that it could be far more difficult for the joint force to get to, get into, and stay in an A2/AD fight. These three challenges illustrate some, but not all, of the dilemmas A2/AD adversaries seek to create.

As an illustration of the differences in a counter-A2/AD campaign, in an attempt to circumvent one of the goals in figure 4, U.S. leaders may attempt to sidestep strategic preclusion and operational exclusion by hurriedly boosting forward military presence during a prewar crisis. Yet, such action could cause unforeseen consequences. In the case of an incomplete or inaccurate understanding of an A2/AD adversary’s escalation calculus, rapid regional buildups of U.S. forces could jeopardize regional balance America is attempting to stabilize. Large U.S. force movements intended to reassure allies could instead provoke uncontrollable escalation

that make massed U.S. forward forces irresistible targets for an adversary’s preemptive strikes. The existence of A2/AD is not oriented on a single actor, like China or Iran. As described in figure 4, the goals of A2/AD are common to denial capabilities employed by potential adversaries and competitors.

To summarize the description of the current A2/AD environment, here are 25,000-foot level takeaways so far: first, to hamper more powerful nation’s air and naval forces are at the heart of any nation’s denial strategy. In certain scenarios, a well-orchestrated A2/AD portfolio can hold stronger nations at bay long enough to increase the political and economic costs of conflict significantly. Second, A2/AD technologies will certainly continue to metastasize because they have an appealing military and economic effectiveness. Technology proliferation will allow A2/AD actors to deploy more disruptive technologies than ever before. Third, A2/AD strategy will gradually appear in more places throughout the range of military operations than just high-intensity warfare, to include space and cyberspace

Strategic Preclusion

- Adversary A2/AD ways and means may compel U.S. leaders to conclude adversary cannot be overcome
- Fractured U.S. alliances; alliances may become weakened
- May compel the U.S. in key domain(s) with demonstrations and/or use of force

Operational Exclusion

- May block joint force points of entry
- May compel high-risk concentration of U.S. forces
- Seeks to operate throughout U.S. strategic and operational depths to blunt joint force deployment, transit forward

Operational Degradation

- Seeks to induce chronic friction in joint force operations through multiple lines of effort
- Seeks to degrade and where appropriate, destroy U.S. bases, facilities to affect joint force mission generation
- Seeks to sever joint force C4/ISR connectivity

Strategic Exhaustion

- Seeks to neutralize forward forces; interdict joint force forward deployment
- May force logistical over-extension
- May compel U.S. and Allies to accept a disadvantaged settlement

Figure 4: A2/AD Goals

operations that will directly affect homeland defense. Fourth, offensive cyberspace, offensive counternetworks, and offensive counterspace have the potential to make any regional A2/AD fight global in nanoseconds. Importantly, warfare in those domains blurs distinctions of operational and strategic depth; they fuse to form a global battle space. Fifth, cyberspace and space warfare can easily disrupt America's ability to mount credible defenses and synchronized offenses. Anti-access/area denial adversaries do not need armed forces that mirror image America's force-on-force military; in contrast, asymmetric warfighting allows A2/AD adversaries to do without an intercontinental bomber force or massive blue water navy. All of these considerations point to the underlying changes in the characteristics of war in this era. Understanding these changes that act as a theoretical and strategic lasso around a group of diverse A2/AD adversaries improves American deterrence and its ability to win wars.

Challenge—Getting to the Fight

Lack of anticipation and respect for A2/AD could leave American combat power depleted, public support eroded, and ally confidence undermined well before traditional phase II (seize the initiative) operations. Anti-access/area denial adversary campaign actions may be serial, episodic, or simultaneous. The key point is that if an adversary can impede U.S. force flows and projection timelines, it has established control outside of the kinetic engagement ranges of all but a few of our nation's long-range weapons systems. Anti-access/area denial allows adversaries, to one degree or another, to shift confrontation to ever-farther distances from their sovereign territory. As a way of war, A2/AD means that the joint expeditionary force will be in contact with adversary effects at times and locations that do not fit with general joint force warfare experience and understanding. It is highly unlikely U.S. forces would survive the transit to local bases and ports unaffected and unscathed. Similarly, under these conditions, a disorganized and disrupted host nation may not be able to deliver vital initial support. In particular, as logistical workarounds may have to be utilized, unprepared joint force units may not receive timely support because "best fit" ports of debarkation are the most likely targets of

adversary A2/AD systems.⁶ Clearly, operating in A2/AD engagement envelopes will force leaders and policy makers to reconsider how U.S. forces are redeveloped and postured.

Interestingly, strategic leaps of U.S. land warfare forces, a recent stimulating idea, may yield untenable projection options because of the havoc caused by disrupted, jumbled force flows and absence of logistics sanctuaries close to the primary fight arena(s). Given global distances, especially across the Pacific, if land warfare forces move in the early hours and days of a U.S. campaign, they cannot leave their equipment behind on America's shores with the assumption it will get to the fight in time for those forces to accomplish their counter-A2/AD missions. At least part of the solution for land warfare forces is to move with their lighter equipment and to enhance their agility, but that means their support must be proactively and responsibly executed in new ways by the joint force team. To ensure such support, air and naval forces must employ their respective counter-A2/AD TTPs (Air-Sea Battle) in concert with land warfare forces TTPs—all within over-arching joint force concept of operations where each service plays defined roles. Some commentators may claim these ideas have been tried before or that we already do them, but while A2/AD may have a historically familiar ring, it would render strategic reasoning tone deaf to not recognize that A2/AD can now be effectively utilized by a range of regimes to do far more than mitigate our stealth aircraft. One new development is that A2/AD opposes the projection that gets the joint force within fighting distance.

The vision of land warfare forces countering A2/AD neither challenge the laws of physics nor requires exquisite capabilities manufactured from *unobtainium*. However, getting land warfare forces into a counter-A2/AD fight begins today with an emphasis on better future TTPs and associated concept of operations to maximize U.S. technologies in innovative combinations that gain and maintain the upper hand. Additionally, planners must assume that the U.S. logistics enterprise will remain constrained in its ability to provide full capability and capacity in an A2/AD environment. Reliable and timely joint force movement and resupply will be crucial efforts that likely will be U.S. operations centers of gravity.⁷ Additionally, A2/AD's diplomatic, economic,

and military successes in steady state could cause a lack of nearby or defendable regional logistical safe areas in conflict. Independent of political guidance, A2/AD—at least at the near-peer level—suggests a shift in joint force campaign style: gaining control rather than seeking outright supremacy or annihilation of opposing forces.

Challenge—Getting Into the Fight

In an A2/AD environment, getting land warfare forces into position from which to enter the fight will make entering the fight a battle unto itself. Perhaps the most demanding scenario for U.S. expeditionary forces is to build U.S. combat power under fire, overcome chronic friction, and then break out from a strategic defense to a sustained strategic offense. Given likely political constraints and because of its aggressive style of peace and war, America may find itself in an initial defensive condition, particularly if America does not preemptively use force. Even if none of that were binding, we risk unwarranted optimism of U.S. warfighting success if U.S. strategic assumptions expect an adversary to passively observe a months-long American buildup of regional combat power that culminates in a Desert Storm or Operation Iraqi Freedom-like U.S. offensive—again. Winning the transit to the primary fight arena(s) and successfully building combat power on America's terms are foundational to the successful conduct of any counter-A2/AD campaign.

Challenge—Staying in the Fight

Anti-access/area denial tends to impose another challenge, an inability to stay in a fight. In the initial phase of A2/AD mitigation, land warfare forces are not the “knockout punch” for the joint force in overcoming A2/AD. Conversely, the rest of the joint force's initial campaign premise against an A2/AD adversary is not to conduct a holding operation until greater land warfare force arrives. As the conflict opens, U.S. forces both forward and elsewhere must immediately reduce and reshape the essential adversary A2/AD systems that pose the greatest risks to the joint force. This approach is not “rollback”; rather, this is about gaining control to create *mission operations zones* of specified presence, persistence, and associated approach/exit

avenues secured by Air-Sea Battle TTPs to ensure sufficient temporal freedom of action. The dilemma for the joint force is that as it attempts to close its range to the adversary, it cannot build large massed formations at operationally advantageous distances without being attrited by long-range A2/AD fires. Further compounding the difficulty is that U.S. and ally missile defense capacity alone will likely be inadequate to protect large force formations and cover all of its other defense priorities. To counterweigh some of these impacts, land warfare forces must integrate with other optimized counter-A2/AD forces to create openings and opportunities for the eventual introduction of other joint force elements. Indeed, integrating land warfare forces allows other U.S./ally capabilities in other domains to more efficiently and effectively deliver effects to joint force benefit. Thematically, this benefit becomes a cross-domain advantage.⁸

Land Warfare Forces in the Fight

From the perspective of land warfare forces, the relevant competencies in figure 1 are the game-changers that allow the joint force to prevail. Of the land warfare competencies listed in figure 1, the three previously mentioned merit amplification: cyberspace, air/missile defense, and intelligence/reconnaissance.

First, land warfare cyberspace capabilities can certainly contribute to the strategic cyberspace fight, but where Army cyber capabilities generate huge investment returns is in their ability to deliver relevant offensive cyber fires and preserve networks at the BCT counter-A2/AD mission level. Army cyber must collaborate with joint and ally cyber forces to set conditions for kinetic operations or to amplify land warfare forces gains.

Second, air/missile defense is a joint capability for which the threat's scope will often exceed defensive capacity. Rather than an unreasonable, zero penetration defense, where no adversary missiles ever strike friendly targets, the focus of Army and joint air/missile defenses must be to create a bubble of appropriate defensive capability that the supported counter-A2/AD land warfare unit commander needs to execute reconnaissance, raid, or seizure missions. An inability to defend against incoming adversary airpower—regardless if it is manned or unmanned, aircraft or missile, may risk

over-complicating or endangering counter-A2/AD land warfare force survival.

Third, Army intelligence must be tightly woven into the fabric of joint force intelligence functions to obtain and push vital real-time intelligence data needed by the executing counter-A2/AD land warfare force; intelligence needed to cue organic defensive and offensive kinetic/non-kinetic fires. The vitality of the land warfare intelligence/joint intelligence relationship is critical in A2/AD environments where networks may become temporarily unstable or information exchange rates may be slow. This increase in information friction and corresponding decrease in information flow may produce nearly immediate disruptions to logistics and operations initiative.

A Glimpse of Prevailing in the Fight—A Vignette

Through the lens of land warfare forces employed to conduct reconnaissance, raids, and seizures in a counter-A2/AD campaign, figure 2 outlines countering A2/AD in each of those three mission bins. These scenarios derive from three operational priorities in any counter-A2/AD campaign: first, keep U.S. forces alive; second, ensure the U.S. logistics enterprise functions as well as possible; and third, as able and appropriate carry the fight to targets that best unhinge the most essential elements of the adversary's denial framework. The targets of figure 3 are not rigidly categorized nor does figure 3 imply that all potential counter-A2/AD scenarios appear here. Indeed, the main benefit of this outline is to provide a deliberative framework to inform experimentation and, ultimately force redevelopment. What predominates the scenarios in figure 3 are not so much an action but rather a rationale to first mitigate certain systems that directly preclude or exclude joint force access, freedom of action, and operational latitude.

To provide readers with what well-honed counter-A2/AD execution looks like, the vignette of figure 5 is a notional joint force mission to mitigate a shore-based anti-ship missile system, an example

A Conceptual Vignette

Three batteries of a shore based anti-ship missile system threaten the approach of surface vessels out to a range of 250 miles from sovereign coastline. The U.S. campaign requires that with regard to follow-on joint forces, these missile batteries be mitigated to establish a narrow lane of approach to the coastline. Small units of light land warfare assault forces, teaming with SOF already ashore, will link up to deliver kinetic and nonkinetic effects that mitigate the missile batteries. SOF will enter the objective area to provide recon, observation. U.S. counter-network, space offense, and SOF efforts will enable assault force approach in all-weather aircraft for nighttime insertion. The operation is planned for several hours during which assault forces receive C4ISR support via joint/coalition space assets. On-order kinetic/nonkinetic suppression assistance is provided with nearby low observable craft orchestrated through resilient U.S. networks. After several hours, the batteries and ancillary equipment are mitigated. U.S. Air Forces return to extract the assault and reinforce, resupply SOF as needed. Other U.S. forces provide cover for egressing forces.

Figure 5: Conceptual Vignette

of an important proliferated A2/AD capability rapidly becoming more abundant in the world's littorals. The vignette is not a detailed explanation of all the details of how redeveloped joint force packages would mitigate a shore-based missile system; it is only a description of a notional joint force concept of operations and its centerpiece in this discussion—land warfare force TTPs to execute such a complex mission. The mission in figure 5 requires redeveloped forces using honed choreography with appropriate degrees of local customization—a kind of competence impossible to attain in a warfighting pick-up game. The scale and sophistication of A2/AD adversaries suggest

that the “we’ll work it out when we get there,” approach to warfare will yield undertrained, poorly equipped, and ineffectually organized forces.

Counter-A2/AD Land Warfare Forces—A Way Ahead

The descriptions in figures 2 and 3 are a place to start but they tee up important force structure questions. A balanced land warfare force structure allows the United States to better protect its vital interests. The argument for a balanced portfolio of land warfare capabilities is rooted in more than historical common sense and warfighting pragmatism; rather, it is grounded in a need to overcome A2/AD adversaries from early assault to larger entry operations. Getting the right balance of land warfare forces equipment, training, and organization will take time; however, potential changes to the current force structure ensures an Army with a balanced range of competencies throughout the future spectrum of war.

As land warfare forces’ access and freedom of action improves in initial operations, entry operations demand inclusion of other land warfare forces. Crafting the initial concept of operations and TTPs land warfare forces will need to successfully counter-A2/AD adversaries is a first step. These restructuring efforts will demand America’s largest training and experimentation venues where air, space, cyberspace, electromagnetic, and naval capabilities can be tested and honed until a robust family of concept of operations and TTPs emerge. While this redevelopment effort is too broad to call it “Air (+ Maritime, Cyber, Space, Special Opera-

tions Forces)—Land Battle II,” it is appropriate to call it what it is: The New *Integrated Joint: Cross-Domain Operations* . . . with land warfare forces in the fight.

What Do We Now Know?

We know that getting to the fight will be a fight. We also know that getting into the fight will be a fight. Staying in the fight will depend on the degree to which the joint force is prepared in steady state to operate and thrive amidst the attempted chronic friction and chaos of A2/AD. Anti-Access/Area Denial is not new; it weaves itself into the historic fabric of warfare, but that platitude entirely misses what a modern A2/AD capability implies for projection of an expeditionary force.

More broadly, the reach, immediacy, and lethality of newer tactical systems are not just better versions of what they replaced; instead, they will fundamentally change the way we project force and fight in future A2/AD conflicts. To effectively mitigate A2/AD, U.S. land warfare forces must be prepared to execute multiple missions. It is in the role of reconnaissance, raids, and seizures that land warfare forces will be of early benefit to overcome A2/AD and help carve out U.S. access, freedom of action, and operational latitude.⁹ America’s previous warfighting brilliance cannot blind today’s decision makers to the truth that military strength is redefined and built anew in each era based on the problems as they exist. In each era, forces for freedom must endeavor to remain strongest, most vigilant, most prepared, and most ready. **MR**

NOTES

1. Gen. Raymond Odierno, speech to students at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 10 April 2013.

2. Ibid.

3. U.S. Department of Defense Joint Staff J7, *Joint Operational Access Concept*, 13. Note: within the JOAC text, “integrated” is explained as it is used in the multi-service Air-Sea Battle concept to counter-A2/AD threats. However, elsewhere in JOAC, “integrated” is used as both a characterization of adversary threat systems and the needed U.S. Department of Defense response to military operations.

4. U.S. Secretary of Defense, *U.S. Defense Strategic Guidance*, 4-5.

5. U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Operational Access Concept*, U.S. Department of Defense, 22 November 2011, 8-13.

6. Ibid., 23-24.

7. Ibid., 13.

8. Ibid., 38.

9. Ibid., 22.