

Enemy Inside the Gates: Snipers in Support of Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain

**A Monograph
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Abstract

ENEMY INSIDE THE GATES: SNIPERS IN SUPPORT OF MILITARY OPERATIONS IN URBANIZED TERRAIN by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffery E. Dearolph, USMC, 48 pages.

As the world's urban areas continue to increase in size the possibility of U. S. forces conducting military operations in urbanized terrain also increases. However, the weapon systems the U. S. procures and employs obtain maximum effectiveness in open terrain. These weapons prove less capable in urban terrain since their standoff and precision advantages suffer degradation due to buildings and the fleeting nature of enemy personnel. U. S. weaponry also causes a large amount of collateral damage that may also result in civilian casualties, which proves politically unacceptable. Potential adversaries of the U. S. realize these limitations and present a target set that proves difficult to locate and engage. The target set the enemy uses in urban terrain consists of enemy combatants mixing with non-combatants, enemy snipers, and special purpose teams. The enemy's urban target set present significant problems for U. S. forces operating against it. U. S. weapons systems cannot effectively engage enemy combatants and ensure that non-combatant casualties do not occur.

Assets the U. S. possesses that can engage elements of the enemy's urban target set include U. S. Army and Marine Corps snipers. However, a determination on whether more snipers will effectively defeat the target set requires consideration. The argument proposes that the creation of a division-level sniper company meets the requirement for adequately providing coverage of large urban areas in order to defeat the urban target set without causing civilian casualties.

This monograph analyzes the contemporary operating environment to articulate the enemy's urban target set. Next, a review of current U. S. Army and Marine Corps sniping doctrine, organization and training establishes the foundation for presenting the sniper's capability to defeat the urban target set. In order to provide a balanced argument, other possible solutions to engaging and defeating the target set receive consideration. The recommended solution uses criteria to test the feasibility, acceptability, and suitability of the proposed sniper organization.

Research shows that the sniper company, organized at the division level, achieves the desired effect of increasing the density of sniper teams on the urban battlefield. The costs associated with the sniper company prove acceptable, as it requires minimal expenditure concerning personnel and equipment. The division sniper company will effectively counter the enemy's urban target set without causing non-combatant casualties.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Military scholars predict that U.S forces will continue for the foreseeable future to possess an unparalleled capability to detect, engage, and destroy enemy personnel with great lethality and at extended ranges.¹ Enemy conventional forces massed in open terrain will be particularly vulnerable. However, the enemy may mitigate U.S. technological advantages by operating in urban or complex terrain. This situation poses a dilemma for commanders and planners committing ground forces to combat. Recent conflicts in Northern Ireland, Somalia, Chechnya, Bosnia, and Kosovo among others reveal a disturbing trend where adversaries use urban and complex terrain to offset their opponent's technological advantages.

Fighting in urban and complex terrain results in greatly decreased weapons standoff range, degraded sensor capability, and increased population density. Weapons systems that can kill from kilometers away become more difficult to employ in an urban setting due to collateral damage. Highly sensitive sensors, optimized in open terrain, suffer degraded capability in cities or mountainous country. The increased number of non-combatants will make targeting combatants while avoiding civilian casualties in urban terrain problematic. U.S. and world public opinion will turn against U.S. efforts if a high number of non-combatant casualties happen no matter what precautions occur. U.S. forces cannot survive the political consequences using tactics similar to those the Russians used in attacking Chechen rebels in Grozny where indiscriminate fires enabled their ground forces to advance. These tactics caused a large number of civilian casualties; consequently, world opinion condemned Russian actions in Chechnya.²

¹ See Jonathan G. Clarke, "The United States and Future Bosnias," Cato Institute Foreign Policy Briefing no. 36, 8 August 1995; available from <http://www.cato.org/pubs/fpbriefs/fpb-036.html>; Internet; accessed 25 September 2001 and Harvey M. Sapolsky and Jeremy Shapiro, "Casualties, Technology, and America's Future Wars," *Parameters* (Summer 1996), 119-127.

² Steve Harrigan, "Leaving or Staying, Chechens Fear They're Doomed," *CNN*, 9 December 1999; available from <http://cnn.com/1999/WORLD/europe/12/09/russia.chechnya.01/>; Internet; accessed 29 March 2002.

The enemy employs numerous elements in an urban environment to include the illegal use of non-combatants, the extensive use of enemy snipers, and the increased use of small special purpose teams. Due to the difficulty of locating and engaging these elements, this challenge serves to frustrate commanders planning and executing combat operations in an urban environment. The “smartest” bomb or missile cannot guarantee that non-combatant casualties will not occur. Additionally, rules of engagement constrain U.S. forces from engaging hostile forces operating in urban environments due to the increased potential and negative consequences of incurring non-combatant casualties. An example of this occurred in 1999 during the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo. After accidentally bombing the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, NATO air forces contended with additional constraints regarding the selection of targets. LtGen Michael C. Short USAF, NATO’s Joint Force Air Component Commander for the campaign, said, “Toward the end of the air effort, we were restricted by enormous concern for collateral damage and unintended loss of civilian life. That was the litmus test that we used to pick a target.”³ In the future, soldiers and Marines issued state of the art equipment may effectively eliminate a sniper threat after the sniper engages, but they do not possess adequate protection against the initial shot, in all likelihood the fatal shot. High technology intelligence gathering platforms cannot provide assurance of detecting small groups of enemy combatants prior to carrying out their assigned tasks. These elements comprise a target set which pose a problem that advanced technology fails to address adequately. However, the U. S. military may already possess an asset equal to this challenge. U. S. Army and Marine Corps snipers may effectively engage this target set without causing non-combatant casualties and help impose U.S. forces’ will on the threat. Not only do snipers engage and eliminate targets, but the psychological effect on the enemy resulting from effective sniping also reduces his will to fight. The question this issue raises concerns whether the U. S. Army and Marine Corps should have the number they need, and

³ John A. Tirpak, “Short’s View of the Air Campaign,” *Washington Watch* Vol. 82, No. 9, September 1999; available from <http://www.afa.org/magazine/watch/0999watch.html>; Internet, accessed 29 March

whether they should increase the number of snipers they currently possess in order to counter the enemy's urban target set.

The only feasible way to detect and effectively engage an enemy sniper requires the employment of friendly snipers. The training and equipment a friendly sniper possesses combined with an effective employment plan provide the best opportunity to eliminate an enemy sniper threat before accruing friendly casualties in an urban environment.

An increase and refinement of sniping capability for U.S. ground forces manifested by training more snipers to staff a sniper company may help resolve the problem future ground commanders will face on the urban battlefield where the adversary operates in urban or complex terrain. An affirmative answer to the research question may contribute to the solution.

Criteria used to evaluate the recommended solution to the problem include feasibility, acceptability, and suitability. Feasibility, (Can the desired effect be achieved with the means proposed?) involves the density of forces and the physical possibility to see if the solution possesses a reasonable chance of success. If it increases the density of snipers operating against the enemy urban target increases, the recommended solution meets the criteria of feasibility. Acceptability (Are the costs of the proposed solution justified by the effect desired?) includes the costs and the risks involved with implementing the solution. If the personnel/manpower outlays and employment achieve a reasonable level of cost and risk, the recommended solution meets the criteria of acceptability. Reasonable manpower costs are less than 100 personnel for the recommended solution, and reasonable monetary costs are less than one-million dollars to purchase equipment to support the recommended solution. Suitability (Will achieving the desired effect counter the urban target set?) includes making a determination whether the proposed solution will effectively reduce or destroy the enemy's urban target set.

Contemporary Operating Environment Challenges to U.S. Forces

D+4. As the G-2 briefed him on the current enemy situation, the commanding general felt pleased with the performance of his division during this campaign. Having defeated every conventional formation the enemy placed against his division, the commanding general intended to destroy the remaining forces remaining in his area of operations. He pondered how easy the targeting and destroying of the enemy with the long range, precision fires his Objective Force division employed during various engagements and battles. He knew that the open terrain the enemy operated in made it easier for the division to defeat them. He thought that maybe the U. S. Army did get it right in developing the structure and capabilities of the Interim Division and subsequent Objective Force a few years back despite the serious misgivings from many officers, including him. The General listened as the G-2 briefed that the enemy was retreating into a large urban area near the coast in apparently a last ditch effort to regroup and slow down the tempo of the division. “Let him try” the General confidently thought to himself. However, he grew concerned as the G-2 briefed that the enemy would be harder to distinguish from non-combatants once they retreated into the city and mixed among the population. Indications were that the enemy would also use the city’s inhabitants as human shields. Quickly going over his unit’s weapons systems capabilities in his mind, the General pondered how his soldiers were going to deal with this new and complicated situation.

This fictional vignette by the author illustrates the dilemma commanders face when fighting an enemy in urbanized terrain.

Since the United States remains the world’s sole superpower, it enjoys dominance in several areas of military capability. Force projection, command and control, precision-guided bombs and missiles, sensors, and armored vehicles comprise just a few of the strengths the U.S. possesses. However, despite the overwhelming military capability of the U. S., potential adversaries still seek ways to create conditions that reduce these advantages. Initially, competitors may attempt to conduct their operations at a level low enough that the U.S. will not militarily intervene. If the U.S. decides to intervene, enemy forces may employ anti-access measures in order to prevent U. S. forces from seizing ports and airfields to gain entry. Failing this, the enemy may try to raise

the threshold of casualties beyond which the American public will tolerate while attempting to minimize the effects of the U.S. military's greatest strength, precision standoff attack.⁴

In order to decrease the U.S. advantages in targeting, engaging and destroying conventional forces in open terrain, enemy forces may choose to operate in complex terrain such as cities, forests, mountains, or jungles. At present, approximately half of the world's populations live in urban areas. Current projections indicate that almost 60% of the world's population will inhabit urban areas in just twenty-five years.⁵ Civilians present a complicated situation for U. S. forces in an urban environment. LTC Lester W. Grau and Dr. Jacob Kipp of the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas stated, "The operational commander must prepare to deal immediately with the civilian population. If the water system breaks down or polluted, an epidemic will follow. If the commander surrounds the city, the populace will quickly run out of food. The news media will quickly photograph hungry or diseased children. The commander does not have the luxury of claiming that military necessity precludes consideration of civilians' survival."⁶ Additionally, the presence of civilians mixed with enemy combatants not wearing easily identifiable uniforms make determining friend from foe difficult. Present and programmed weapons systems such as precision-guided bombs, anti-tank guided missiles, etc. routinely developed and optimized for open terrain often do not work well in cities due to civilian presence.⁷

The services spent millions of dollars to enhance the capability to detect and engage the threat at ever-increasing ranges in order to destroy the enemy before they employed their systems

⁴ Department of the Army, FM 7-100 *Opposing Force Doctrine (Contemporary Operating Environment) (Draft)* [CD-ROM] (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 2002).

⁵ LtGen Paul K. Van Riper, USMC, "A Concept for Future Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain," *Marine Corps Gazette*, (October 1997), A-1.

⁶ LTC Lester W. Grau, U. S. Army, Retired and Dr. Jacob W. Kipp, PhD, "Urban Combat: Confronting the Specter," *Military Review* (July-August 1999), 13-14.

⁷ Daryl G. Press, "Urban Warfare: Options, Problems and the Future," Conference Summary, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Security Studies Program, 4, January 1999 [conference summary on-line]; available from <http://web.mit.edu/afs/athena.mit.edu/org/s/ssp/www/Publications/confseries/urbanwarfare/>; Internet; accessed 25 September 2001.

against U. S. forces. U. S. weapon systems are less useful when used in urban terrain. For example, the Tube, Optically Wired (TOW) II anti-tank guided missile possesses a maximum effective range of 3,750 meters. Effective when used in wide-open spaces against enemy armored vehicles, the system becomes less capable when employed in urban terrain due to vastly decreased firing ranges and firing windows of opportunity.⁸ Additionally, obstacles, such as buildings, prevent detection of enemy targets at longer ranges. The enemy also positions its soldiers inside buildings in order to avoid long-range engagements. Helicopters and armored vehicles also become more vulnerable to short-range weapons when restricted to the city's roads and streets. Clearly, U.S. weapons superiority suffers significant degradation in an urban environment.

Recent history provides numerous examples of enemy forces attempts to reduce U.S. forces' effectiveness in hopes of causing public opinion to turn against the efforts. Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan serve as examples where the enemy used measures such as operating in cities to their advantage. Additionally, a U. S. Army officer stated the dilemma U. S. commanders face. "It's real tough. And imagine how much tougher it is if there's a hostage handcuffed to the area where you're supposed to shoot."⁹ Collateral damage and non-combatant casualties inflicted by the U. S. military negatively reflects in the arena of world opinion and places constraints on U. S. efforts as in the case of two refugee convoys accidentally hit by aircraft in Kosovo.¹⁰ Conflict in Northern Ireland and Chechnya also exhibited guerilla tendencies to use urban areas to try to nullify efforts to fight against them.

U.S. and other United Nations (UN) forces operating in the city of Mogadishu, Somalia faced an unsophisticated, yet heavily armed threat. However, this did not prevent the Somalis from

⁸ Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication (MCWP) 3-35, Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain*, (Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, 1998) B-1, B-2.

⁹ Rick Atkinson, "Army Aims at Possible Bosnia Role," *The Washington Post* 5 June 1994, A-17.

¹⁰ Nick Childs, "NATO May Have Killed Refugees," *British Broadcasting Corporation* 19 April 1999; available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/world/europe/newsid_323000/323420.stm; Internet; accessed 29 March 2002.

using an element of the urban target set to mitigate U.S. strengths. Somali warlords used the city's population to screen Somali gunmen threatening UN troops on the ground. In order to protect themselves, U.S. units used armed helicopters, AC-130 gunships and small arms. Dozens of civilian casualties occurred because of this response to Somali gunmen firing on UN positions. On other occasions, UN forces did not fire at all in order to avoid causing non-combatant casualties.

As incidents in Bosnia and Kosovo prove, soldiers and Marines conducting Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) do not possess immunity against similar tactics when operating in an urban environment. An incident that transpired in Kosovoska Mitrovica, Yugoslavia in February of 2000 provides an example that saw the wounding of two French soldiers by Kosovar Albanian snipers despite the overt presence of numerous NATO tanks, armored personnel carriers and armed helicopters in the cities.¹¹ Another example involves Marines manning a roadblock in Kosovo in 1999. Serbian snipers fired on the Marines in the village of Zegra located just south of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit's headquarters in Gnjilane.¹²

Irish Republican Army (IRA) insurgents effectively use the city as a battlefield to prosecute acts of terrorism against non-combatants and security forces alike. Mixed in with the general population, these terrorists proved extremely difficult to differentiate from non-combatants. Probably the most innovative urban guerillas the world knows, the IRA continues to frustrate British security forces with their highly effective bombing, sniping and ambush tactics.¹³

¹¹ Jonathan Steele, "Snipers Shoot NATO Troops in Kosovo's Divided City," *The Guardian*, 14 February 2000 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Kosovo/Story/0,2763,193513,00.html>; Internet; accessed 24 September 2001.

¹² Jim Garamone, "Marines Challenged by Serb Snipers," *American Forces Information Service*, 24 June 1999; available from http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun1999/n06241999_9906243.html; Internet; accessed 24 September 2001.

¹³ "IRA Sniper Unit Killed 11 in Armaugh," extract from *Irish Times*; available from <http://military.future.easyspace.com/sniper/bad.html>; Internet; accessed 14 September 2001.

In Chechnya, the fighting between the Russian Army and Chechen guerrillas quickly migrated to within the city of Grozny, the capital. Unable to match Russian conventional forces and firepower in the open, the Chechen guerillas fought in the only place they could offset their opponent's advantage, the labyrinths of the city. Once inside the city's boundaries, Russian forces grew frustrated as their weapon systems and tactics proved less effective in the buildings and streets. Utterly defeated during their first attempt to crush the resistance, the Russians resorted to massive fires to make any progress into Grozny resulting in many innocent deaths.¹⁴ Taliban forces in the recent conflict in Afghanistan did not hesitate to position equipment and personnel inside sanctuaries such as mosques or in close proximity to non-combatants in order to frustrate U. S. targeting efforts. Additionally, the accounts of their ability to hide in the mountainous terrain of that country are legion. General Tommy Franks, the Commander-In-Chief of U. S. Central Command, during a 7 December 2001 press briefing stated that the difficulty of determining friend or foe in and around the last Taliban stronghold of Kandahar was problematic.

The first element involves enemy combatants mixing with non-combatants. The environment of the modern battlefield makes determining friend from foe a daunting task for U.S. forces. Highly visible military uniforms, easily recognizable formations, and simply distinguishable unit boundaries are outdated. One of the more important lessons learned from the Russian Army's attempts to take the city of Grozny requires the need to find some method of distinguishing combatants from non-combatants. Often, Russian soldiers resorted to physically searching people for weapons or using dogs to determine if a person recently used a weapon or explosives.¹⁵ Even though Russian authorities warned civilians to leave the city, 20,000 to 30,000 residents stayed with approximately 4,000 Chechen rebels mixed in amongst them. Since Russian

¹⁴ LTC Timothy L. Thomas, U. S. Army, "Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons Learned," *Military Review* (July-August 2000), 50-51.

¹⁵ "Russian Army Lessons Learned from the Battle of Grozny 1994 – 1996,"; available from <http://www.grenadier2.dreamwater.com/chechnya.html> ; Internet ; accessed 20 September 2001.

commanders resorted to employing heavy amounts of firepower, this caused a massive amount of collateral damage to include hundreds of civilian casualties.¹⁶

In Mogadishu, the Somali warlords used women and children as shields for cover to dissuade UN forces from firing on them while they themselves could fire. On 16 May 1993, Italian positions received Somali small arms fire emanating from a crowd of approximately 100 women and children. In order not to hit the non-combatants, the Italians did not return fire. On 5 June 1993, Somali gunmen hid amongst a crowd of women and children collecting their daily food ration from a humanitarian agency and ambushed a Pakistani unit. Another example occurred near the Digfer General Hospital in Mogadishu. Somali gunmen were firing behind a line of women and children. Soldiers did not return fire for fear of hitting these non-combatants.¹⁷

During Operation JUST CAUSE in 1989, U.S. Army soldiers experienced difficulty sorting out combatants from non-combatants. One scout platoon commander from the 82d Airborne Division who operated in the Panama Viejo Barracks area stated, "There were no uniforms. When we were down there, we didn't see a single Panamanian in uniform. Everyone was wearing civilian clothes." This same officer recounts another incident where Panamanian Defense Force soldiers, intermixed with approximately 50 to 100 civilians located at a street corner, fired intermittently at friendly observation posts. U.S. soldiers did not respond, as they did not want to shoot accidentally any non-combatants.¹⁸

Determining friend from foe in urban combat will continue to hinder U. S. ground forces. The nature of urban areas and the enemy's methods to offset U. S. strengths clearly give a commander something to ponder in how to adequately engage threat targets while avoiding

¹⁶ Daniel Williams, "Russians Fight, Inch by Inch, for Chechen Capital," *The Washington Post* [newspaper on-line], 31 December 1999, available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/feed/a53146-1999dec31.htm>; Internet; accessed 20 September 2001.

¹⁷ Timothy M. Knigge, "A Story of American Combat in Somalia," *Purple Heart Magazine* March-April 1997, [magazine on-line]; available from <http://www.purpleheart.org/m0397a1.htm>; Internet; accessed 9 September 2001.

¹⁸ 1stLT James H. Johnson III, interview by Dr. Robert K. Wright Jr., "Joint Task Force South in Operation JUST CAUSE Oral History Interview JCIT 081," (5 June 1990), 25.

non-combatant casualties.

The second element of the urban target set includes enemy snipers. Since the end of the Cold War, enemy forces increased their sniping capability; consequently, sophistication of sniper employment increased. Due to the recent proliferation of sniper rifles caused by increased small arms trafficking around the globe, primarily from the former Soviet Union, potential adversaries possess a capability that can seriously undermine U.S. efforts.¹⁹ Incidents during recent conflicts involving urban warfare indicate that the enemy considers sniping a useful tool in supporting their attempts to mitigate U.S. advantages.

An example of how relatively unsophisticated forces possess a high level of sniping effectiveness through the acquisition of sniper rifles and training occurred with the Chechens fighting in Grozny. Russian forces attempting to make progress towards the center of Grozny encountered extremely proficient snipers. Armed primarily with the 7.62 mm SVD Dragunov sniper rifle, procured from the former Soviet Union and unrestricted by dogmatic, conventional doctrine, Chechen snipers greatly contributed to slowing the progress of Russian forces attempting to take the city.²⁰ The Russian Army discovered that a sniper's value increases exponentially when operating in a city. Unable to effectively engage these snipers with their own small arms, Russian forces resorted to using tank main guns, artillery and other large weapons to destroy snipers and their positions. This resulted in massive collateral damage and, not infrequently, large numbers of civilian casualties. In some cases, the Chechens used women in civilian clothes as snipers. After firing, these women snipers blended quickly into the general population that significantly reduced the chance of detection.²¹ Not only did Chechen snipers

¹⁹ Tara Kartha, "Trans-National Crime and Light Weapons Proliferation: Security Implications for the State," *Strategic Analysis* [journal on-line], December 1999; available from <http://www.idsa.india.org/html;Internet>; accessed 13 October 2001.

²⁰ Yuri Bagrov, "Chechen Snipers Halt Russian Troops," Associated Press, 20 January 2000; available from http://www.amina.com/article/chechen_snipers.html; Internet; accessed 20 September 2001.

²¹ COL Oleg Namsharev, "Sweeping Built-up Areas," *Moscow Arne Skiys Sbovnik* no. 4, April 1995, translated in FBIS-3-@-5-37-139-S 20 July 1995, 22.

cause casualties, but the constant harassment by this effective sniping also accelerated the psychological impact on Russian forces operating in this urban battlefield.

In the early 1990s, the IRA created a sniper unit designed to engage and kill members of British security forces. Armed with Russian Dragunov SVD sniper rifles, the unit conducted fifteen sniping operations resulting in ten British soldiers and one Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police officer killed. Sophisticated and effective, the members of this sniping unit left no evidence at their positions for authorities to analyze. One sniping mission saw the sniper shoot from a “mobile platform”, a modified car making him virtually undetectable. This unit also tried to procure Barrett .50 caliber semi-automatic scoped rifles to add to their arsenal, but this attempt proved unsuccessful. Disbanded in 1994 due to the ceasefire, the IRA sniper unit reorganized in December of 2000 and killed one British soldier and one female RUC police officer in February of 2001. Of the sixteen documented sniping incidents, the targets included soldiers manning security checkpoints or conducting patrols. Recent news reports also indicate that subsequent sniper units are forming due to the success of this initial organization.²²

During October of 1999 on the Indonesian island of Ambon, the specter of trained snipers surfaced in the conflict there between Christians and Muslims. In one of the most underdeveloped regions of the world, a military force sent to contain the violence found evidence that snipers inflicted thirteen deaths. Major General Suaidy Marasabessy, head of the Indonesian Army task force said, “All the victims died of gunshot wounds to their head. Only trained shooters could do that.”²³ Villagers also stated that they observed personnel in camouflage uniforms fire at people at very long range. Certain factions in Indonesia, a major crossroads of the global small arms market, apparently enjoyed improvement in the quality of weapons and their use as evidenced by the recent clashes there.

²² “IRA Sniper Unit Killed 11 in Armaugh,” extract from *Irish Times* (newspaper on-line], available from <http://military.future.easyspace.com/sniper/bad.html>; Internet; accessed 14 September 2001.

²³ Craig Skehan, “Snipers in New Killing on Ambon,” *The Age*, 6 October 1999, available from <http://www.theage.com.au/news/19991006/A42033-1999Oct5.html>; Internet; accessed 9 September 2001.

Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) forces actively train and equip snipers for their on-going conflict against Israel. Recent PLO attacks against Israeli forces show more sophistication than those of the past. Instead of just throwing rocks at Israeli vehicles and soldiers, the Palestinians have better organized their attacks for increased effectiveness. The pattern used in the latest attacks begins with Palestinian snipers firing at military vehicles combined with children throwing rocks to fix the Israelis' attention so that other Palestinians armed with rocket-propelled grenades (RPG) can fire at stationary targets. The children serve a secondary purpose of masking the snipers and RPG teams from Israeli return fire. Despite possessing superior firepower, the Israelis suffered significant losses to this new method of attack the Palestinians use. Involved in a recent PLO ambush of his vehicle convoy, an Israeli platoon commander of thirteen years service stated, "These snipers are professionals. They know what they're doing. Forget the boys; these men are out to kill us".²⁴

Historically, high levels of sniping proficiency and expertise resided almost exclusively with state sponsored conventional armies. However, this is no longer the case. U. S. forces conducting ground combat in urban areas can expect to encounter threat forces that possess a developed sniping capability that can cause considerable problems to mission accomplishment.

The third element of the urban target set consists of SPTs. In Jean Larteguy's novel about the Algerian War called *The Centurions*, the author refers to the type of conflict the Algerian insurgents fought against the French in the late 1950s and early 1960s as "termite war".²⁵ Referring to the tedious and frustrating nature of fighting guerilla forces, termite war presents a style of warfare that most conventional militaries loathe. During the past few decades, insurgents possessed few sophisticated armaments. Their arsenals used to consist of just rifles, pistols,

²⁴ Jack Kelley, "Street Clashes Now Deliberate Warfare," *Dateline: Israel*, available from http://www.datelineisrael.com/street_clashes_now_deliberate_warfare.htm; Internet; accessed 29 December 2001.

²⁵ Eliot A. Cohen, "War: At Arms," *National Review*, available from http://www.findarticles.com/cf_natrvw/m1282/1_52/59329723/print.jhtml; Internet; accessed 25 September 2001.

mines, sub-machineguns and a few light machineguns. Due to the acquiring of some simple technologies, the potential for termite war increases. Highly potent explosives, automatic weapons, sniper rifles, and antitank and anti-aircraft missiles enhance the lethality of smaller groups of individuals, i.e. SPTs while reducing the need to mass risk an attack by U. S. precision weapons.

The U. S. withdrawal from Somalia illustrates the SPTs' effect on higher technology forces. On 3 October 1993, the shooting down of a U. S. Army helicopter by RPG fire precipitated an intensive battle in the streets of Mogadishu between soldiers and Somalis. Initially started by a small group of fighters prepared to ambush the U. S. forces, the battle ultimately escalated to include over 5,000-armed Somalis and approximately 200 U. S. soldiers. When the fighting ended, eighteen U. S. soldiers were dead.²⁶ The consequence of this battle led to the dissolving of the Clinton administration's political will causing the immediate withdrawal of all U. S. forces from Somalia.

Chechen guerillas effectively employed SPT tactics against the Russian Army in Grozny. Restricted in the city's streets and buildings, the Russian units operated against Chechen rebel groups of eight personnel. Kept small, these eight man groups maximize flexibility and increase their ability to stay close or "hug" Russian forces to minimize their ability to use indirect fire. Armed with RPGs, automatic weapons and mortars, the Chechens stymied Russian efforts to take the city by skillfully employing these small SPTs and snipers primarily in an ambush role. Frustrated by these effective tactics, the Russian Army resorted to tremendous amounts of indirect fire to dislodge the Chechen fighters.²⁷

U. S. ground forces will encounter unique and difficult challenges when operating in an urban area. Weapon systems will not be as effective in the cities as in open terrain. Additionally, the

²⁶ Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999) 329.

²⁷ Thomas, "Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons Learned," 50.

threat will actively take steps to increase the disadvantages U. S. forces face in fighting in the city. Methods to deal with these difficult situations are not entirely clear for U. S. commanders.

Current U. S. Army and U. S. Marine Corps Sniping Doctrine, Organization, and Training

Since the argument proposes that snipers may effectively counter the enemy's urban target set if the number of snipers increases, the status of current U. S. sniping doctrine, organization, and training merits consideration. Background information on snipers concerning current doctrine, organization, and training serves to provide a foundation for the remaining discussion of the argument.

U. S. military sniping doctrine consists primarily of two documents, the U. S. Army's Field Manual (FM) 23-10, *Sniper Training* and the U. S. Marine Corps' Fleet Marine Force Manual (FMFM), 1-3B, *Sniping*. Both documents cover sniping basics to include personnel selection, marksmanship training, fieldcraft techniques, and employment fundamentals.

The U. S. military sniper plays a unique role in supporting ground combat operations. The Marine Corps' FMFM 1-3B, *Sniping* defines scout-sniper as "a Marine highly skilled in fieldcraft and marksmanship who delivers long range, precision fire at selected targets from concealed positions."²⁸ U.S. Army FM 23-10 does not define the term, sniper, but states that the primary mission of a sniper in combat is to support combat operations by delivering precise long-range fire on selected targets.²⁹ Marine and Army doctrine go one-step further by recognizing a secondary mission for the sniper; a sniper gathers information for intelligence purposes during the duration of his primary mission. A U. S. Army or Marine Corps sniper trained in advanced marksmanship and fieldcraft techniques and armed with an accurate, scoped rifle serves as a force multiplier for the infantry battalion commander. He provides accurate fire

²⁸ Headquarters, United States Marine Corps *Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-3B, Sniping*, (Washington, D. C.: United States Marine Corps, 1981), 1-1.

²⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army *Field Manual 23-10, Sniper Training*, (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 1-3.

to eliminate important targets to include threat officers and non-commissioned officers, crew-served weapons personnel, communicators, etc. However, the number of casualties he exacts cannot solely measure the sniper's effect on the enemy. Effective sniping produces fear among enemy combatants out of proportion to the numbers of snipers employed and casualties inflicted.³⁰ Furthermore, a sniper complements and enhances his unit's firepower and serves as the infantry battalion's only means of engaging point targets beyond the maximum effective range of the M16A2 service rifle. As the U. S. Army's FM 23-10 states, "This becomes more significant when the target is entrenched or positioned among civilians, or during riot control missions."³¹ Additionally, fire from machineguns and other area fire weapons can result in hitting non-combatants during urban operations.

Current doctrine on sniping, especially in support of urban operations, fails to keep with the tactics, techniques, and procedures conducted by the services' operating forces. Not revised since 1981, the Marine Corps FMFM 1-3B, *Sniping* manual is older than most of the snipers who utilize its information. Incredibly, such subjects as the .50 caliber scoped rifle, urban sniping, and counter-sniping do not receive consideration in the manuals even though the operating forces have employed this weapon and utilized these techniques in urban environments for over a decade. The .50 caliber scoped rifle, procured by the military as a result of Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM in 1991, sees service today in both services. Since the intervention in Mogadishu, Somalia in 1993 and recent Russian experiences in Chechnya, urban warfare receives increasing attention by the military services. Counter-sniping issues suffer sparse recognition in doctrine despite the steady development of anti-sniper devices in recent years brought about by the rise of a significant sniper threat during the past decade. Interestingly,

³⁰ Peter Brookesmith, *Sniper: Training, Techniques, and Weapons*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 46.

³¹ Department of the Army Field Manual 23-10, *Sniper Training*, (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1994), 1-3.

the U. S. Army and Marine Corps continue to fail revising sniping doctrine to meet these challenging and important requirements.

Sniping doctrine fails to keep pace over at least the last decade with the recent lessons learned, the new equipment developed, the required tactics, techniques and procedures, and the contemporary operating environment. Consequently, sniping doctrine in both services fails to provide effective guidance for the employment of snipers in support of potential ground combat operations, especially in an urban environment.

The argument proposes that a requirement for more snipers exists. Current U. S. military sniper organization necessitates addressing to provide background information prior to considering the proposal. The U. S. Army and Marine Corps operate and employ snipers in two-man teams. During a mission, one team member fills the role of the sniper and comes equipped with an accurized, scoped-rifle, while the other team member serves as the observer. The observer's role entails locating the target for engagement by the sniper, estimating the distance and wind for the sniper, and giving other guidance as necessary to the sniper in order for him to engage the target with the highest probability of a first round kill. Ideally, both sniper team members graduate from an approved service sniper school in order to facilitate a smooth transition between the two duties, sniper and observer, during the execution of an operation.³²

Sniper teams operate independently of each other, meaning that they do not conduct their sniping missions in close proximity to other teams, similar to the way infantry fire teams, squads or platoons conduct their missions. Sniper teams may be employed in general support of the battalion, or in direct support of or attached to subordinate units of the battalion; however, more than one sniper team may support the same unit.³³

Snipers in the U. S. Marine Corps and U. S. Army officially fill billets only at the infantry battalion-level. Unlike the services' reconnaissance organizations, sniper units do not exist at

³² Ibid., 1-3 to 1-5.

³³ Ibid., 1-4.

other higher organizations i.e. the regiment, brigade, division, Army corps or Marine expeditionary force levels. Scout-sniper platoons in the Marine consist exclusively of snipers; the U. S. Army's scout platoons in the infantry battalions consist of two sections, a scout section and a sniper section. At first, one would assume that the requirement for sniper organizations at levels above the infantry battalion; however, doubt exists whether this assumption remains valid due to the unique requirements of the urban battlefield and the enemy's urban target set.

Another issue impacting sniper organization concerns the Marine Corps scout-sniper platoon. This platoon serves as the infantry battalion's only unit with a proficient and adequately equipped information gathering, or reconnaissance, capability. Consequently, the scout-sniper platoon primarily executes reconnaissance and surveillance missions exclusive of its sniping mission. Some in the Marine Corps recommend removing the scout-snipers from the infantry battalions to form a sniper formation at the division level in order to ensure that the sniping capability is preserved. While this may effectively maintain sniping proficiency and capability, this removal of scout-sniper platoons from the infantry battalions leaves these organizations without the vital component of a trained reconnaissance element. A recent editorial written by a serving infantry battalion commander in response to transferring scout-sniper platoons to the division level states that:

While I appreciate sincerely the value of the human weapons system offered by the sniper team, my foremost concern is not to be blind on the field of battle. It is much more important to me that the battalion has an organic information gathering capability internal to the battalion is, in my judgment, more important than the lethality of the sniper. Frankly, if you took away my scout/snipers, then I would have to create my own scouts out of hide.³⁴

Clearly, the answer is not to simply create a division level sniper organization by taking sniper teams away from the infantry battalions. The solution lies in forming a new organization for the division to provide sniping support.

³⁴ LtCol Jerome M. Lynes, USMC, Letter to the Editor, *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2001, 14.

In February of 1991, during Operation DESERT STORM, the First Marine Division headquarters came close to removing the infantry battalions' scout-snipers for consolidation at the division-level. Two reasons brought this issue up for consideration. First, the Division's G-3 Officer did not believe that the infantry battalions properly employed their snipers. Second, he recognized a requirement for the division to possess a sniper organization to operate in general support of the division for Operation DESERT STORM. Timely and positive changes in sniper employment by the infantry battalion commanders played a role in the division deciding not to make the change; however, the division-level need for snipers remained valid.

If the requirement exists for the formation of a sniper unit for employment by a higher-level organization like the division, the snipers must not come from the dissolution of the infantry battalions' sniper platoons and sections. Taking sniper teams from the battalions would severely degrade their effectiveness and combat capability. Approving the creation of additional sniper teams requires the services' respective headquarters to resource the proposed sniper company.

Training directly contributes to the accomplishment of the sniper's mission. Current training for U. S. snipers focuses on engaging enemy soldiers in a relatively certain environment, where the enemy wears a distinctive uniform and does not mix in with non-combatants. However, due to the accuracy of their ammunition and rifle combined with advanced marksmanship training, snipers can successfully engage in less conventional situations such as combatants intermixed with civilians. A sniper rifle possesses the accuracy to place shots within a three-inch-by-three-inch circle at 300 yards.³⁵ In comparison, the M16A2 service rifle is acceptable and subsequently procured by the U. S. government if it places shots in a circle up to as large as 13.5 inches by 13.5 inches, a significant dispersion of shots. This standard of accuracy does not meet the requirement to engage successfully combatants in close proximity to non-combatants. However, if a sniper team positively identifies the enemy, and is within range, there exists an extremely low

³⁵ Headquarters, United States Marine Corps *Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-3B, Sniping*, (Washington, D. C.: United States Marine Corps, 1981), 3-15.

probability of hitting a non-combatant no matter how close to the target. In fact, with some additional training, snipers can engage enemy combatants mixed with non-combatants located behind glass windows, in low-light conditions and under time pressure. The U. S. Army's Special Operations Target Interdiction Course teaches these very techniques. Also, a two-week training course taught by the Marine Corps' Special Operations Training Groups provides instruction to infantry battalion snipers in in-extremis hostage rescue sniping in order to be qualified to support Marine Expeditionary Unit Special Operations Capable (MEUSOC) units. Additionally, the Marine Corps' Scout Sniper Instructor School at Quantico, Virginia provides the initial sniping instruction to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) elite Hostage Rescue Team (HRT) snipers by offering that organization quotas to the school's Basic Scout/Sniper Course. The FBI's elite HRT represents the highest standard in hostage rescue.

Although doctrine lags behind what the snipers in the operating force execute, sniper organization and training methods in the U. S. Army and Marine Corps serve as the standard to which all other sniper programs aspire to achieve. U. S. snipers, though few in number, possess an unparalleled ability to place precision fire at long-range against selected enemy targets.

Capability of Snipers to Defeat the Urban Target Set

U. S. forces operating in urban terrain will face an enemy target set consisting of three elements: combatants mixed with non-combatants, enemy snipers, and small special purpose teams. This target set serves to frustrate commanders as many of the current and envisioned technological advantages the U. S. possesses decrease when fighting in cities. One asset the U. S. possesses that may successfully engage the enemy urban terrain target set consists of the U. S. Army and Marine Corps sniper.

The first element of the enemy urban terrain target set involves enemy combatants mixing with non-combatants. In Somalia, U. S. forces encountered numerous situations where combatants mixed with civilians, usually in the form of large crowds opposite friendly defensive positions to include the U. S. embassy. Early in the operation, U. S. commanders faced the problem of how to kill enemy combatants without harming innocent civilians. Faced with crowds of Somalis interspersed with combatants, Marine units found the only way to engage Somali gunmen without creating civilian casualties involved employing their snipers to engage threatening targets. Marine snipers of the Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Teams assigned to protect the U. S. embassy at Mogadishu confronted mobs interspersed with gunmen on several occasions. After several successful engagements, the Marine snipers proved effective at controlling the level of hostile action fronting friendly positions. No other weapons system in the Marines' arsenal could engage the gunmen without risking non-combatant casualties.³⁶

Another example occurred during the U. S. invasion of Panama in 1989. A lone Panamanian Defense Force gunman, located in a high-rise building, harassed soldiers belonging to the 82nd Airborne Division with rifle fire. Once positioned, a U. S. Army sniper team on the fifteenth

³⁶ Russ Glenn, ed. *Capital Preservation: Preparing for Urban Operations in the Twenty-First Century*, (New York: Rand Publications, 2000), Appendix N.

floor of the Marriott Hotel located and killed the gunman. A journalist provides an eyewitness account of what occurred after the gunman died:

‘He’s down. I saw him fall,’ says the spotter, eyes still glued to his binos. Lucas sees a woman open the door to the room he fired into. She walks around the apartment and finally out onto the balcony. Her hands fly to cover her mouth and she leaves quickly. Lucas says: ‘Judging by her reaction, I’m pretty sure we either killed him or hit him hard.’³⁷

This example from Panama illustrates the proximity of non-combatants to combatants and how effectively the sniper deals with that situation compared to how a machine gunner might engage the same target. U. S. snipers serve as an effective means of engaging combatants without harming innocent civilians located nearby.

The second element of the urban target set consists of enemy snipers. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, potential adversaries of the U. S. acquired a large number of sniper weapons. The international small arms trade continues to equip and provide numerous factions with sniper rifles and sniper training.³⁸ U. S. forces will encounter enemy snipers in numbers and expertise not experienced by soldiers and Marines since facing the German and Japanese armies during World War II. U. S. snipers conduct counter-sniping operations in order to eliminate enemy sniping capability. Counter-sniping involves all passive and active measures taken by friendly force in order to defeat the efforts of enemy snipers. Most counter-sniping tactics, techniques, and procedures address measures which individual soldiers and small units employ *once an enemy sniper fires, not before*; consequently, small unit battle drills designed to respond to sniper fire involve reactive vice proactive methods. A recent example that occurred near Jerusalem on 3 March of 2002 illustrates the point. A Palestinian sniper positioned on a hilltop engaged soldiers and civilians located at a checkpoint near Silwad, a Palestinian suburb. The Israeli soldiers reacted to the sniper fire by executing a battle drill designed to eliminate the sniper. After

³⁷ Adrian Gilbert, *Sniper: The World of Combat Sniping*, (New York: St. Martin;s Press, 1994), 213-214.

³⁸ Abdel Fatau Musah and Robert Castle, “Eastern Europe’s Arsenal on the Loose: Managing Light Weapons Flows to Conflict Zones,” 26: May 1998; available from <http://www.basicint.org/bpaper26.htm>; Internet; accessed 27 October 2001.

reaching the top of the steep hill, the soldiers discovered the Palestinian sniper gone. However, he managed to kill seven Israeli soldiers sent after him.³⁹ Unfortunately, this scenario occurs frequently when units attempt to engage and eliminate a well-trained and concealed enemy sniper. Engaging likely enemy sniper positions with small arms, tank main guns, anti-tank missiles, mortars, and artillery produces very few successes against trained snipers and usually results in a massive amount of collateral damage. Snipers rarely fire more than one to two shots from any one position before withdrawing or displacing to an alternate or supplementary position. Due to the training enemy snipers receive, soldiers and Marines rarely detect enemy snipers prior to receiving fire from the sniper.

Snipers in support of friendly forces can serve as an effective means of detecting enemy snipers before they engage friendly personnel. Having received similar training, especially in detailed observation techniques, U.S. snipers employed to conduct surveillance of specific areas in a city forward of or overwatching friendly positions can look for indicators of enemy sniper activity and firing positions. Once located, enemy snipers face effective engagement by friendly snipers with little visible or audio signature produced compared to other weapons systems.

From World War I to the present, numerous examples exist of friendly snipers called on to eliminate enemy snipers. Unfortunately, the friendly snipers, always too few in numbers, came to the aid of a unit only after many casualties occurred from enemy snipers. Static warfare on the Western Front during the First World War created an opportunity for enemy snipers to engage successfully unsuspecting and careless soldiers. The German Army took first advantage of this situation and caused numerous casualties to British and French soldiers early in the war. As one British officer from the war noted, "Only those who have been in a trench opposite Hun snipers that had the mastery know what a hell life can be made under these circumstances".⁴⁰ The

³⁹ Greg Myre, "Sniper Kills 10 More Israelis," Associated Press, 3 March 2002; available from <http://www.kansascity.com/mld/kansascity/27803507.htm> Internet; accessed 15 March 2002.

⁴⁰ Peter R. Senich, *The German Sniper: 1914-1945*, (Boulder, Colorado: Paladin Press, 1982), 3.

Allies quickly developed their own sniping programs to counter the German sniping threat. A similar situation existed during World War II. Only after hundreds of soldiers died from Russian sniper fire in the streets of Stalingrad did the German Sixth Army call on German snipers to reduce this demoralizing and lethal threat.⁴¹ During the Vietnam War, U.S. Army and Marine Corps snipers often found themselves supporting units in order to eliminate North Vietnamese Army snipers harassing and killing American personnel manning fire bases and logistics sites. Marine forces operating in Beirut, Lebanon in the early 1980s relied heavily on snipers to engage enemy snipers who had killed many Marines, including a few officers.⁴² These examples show how combat arms soldiers not adequately equipped or trained to successfully deal with enemy snipers often requested their own snipers to counter the threat. The employment of friendly snipers to detect, engage and eliminate enemy snipers finally brought relief to units frustrated with opposing an unseen, yet potent threat. It appears this trend will continue for the next couple of decades.

The third element of the enemy urban terrain target set consists of SPTs. Enemy forces in an urban area will operate against U. S. forces in a dispersed manner characterized by saturating an area with SPTs in order to offset U. S. advantages in engaging massed forces. This method effectively compounds the problem U.S. formations already face employing weapon systems optimized for open terrain instead of urban. Used in a supporting role, snipers can assist commanders fighting an enemy that employs SPTs in a city. In the next ten to fifteen years, greater dispersion will exist on the battlefield due to the technological advances made in sensors, communications, and weapons.⁴³ However, since fighting in cities consumes manpower and time, friendly units will occupy smaller frontages and areas for longer periods than in open

⁴¹ Brookesmith, *Sniper: Training, Techniques, and Weapons*, 180.

⁴² Adrian Gilbert, *Stalk and Kill: The Sniper Experience*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 209-216.

⁴³ U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *The Interim Brigade Combat Team*, Organizational and Operational Concept Paper, version 6, 30 June 2000, 33.

terrain.⁴⁴ Reconnaissance and surveillance assets will also face diminished sectors of observation due to the restricted areas of sight caused by buildings and other structures. In cities, dismounted avenues of approach through streets, buildings, and underground sewer systems used by SPTs offer numerous routes and may require coverage by some type of friendly asset or the potential for enemy infiltration and unhindered movement will exist. A problem arises when the number of enemy SPTs overwhelms the assets available to friendly forces.

In order to maximize the potential of their limited numbers of snipers, the Russian Army in Chechnya transferred their battalion and company-level snipers and created a company-size sniper organization to better assist the fighting in Grozny. After failing to take the city in their first attempt, the Russians made several changes in tactics and organization in an attempt to improve the army's performance. One of these adjustments, the creation of a sixty-strong sniper company, met with some success. Used at the beginning of the battle to collect information from positions on the outskirts of Grozny, the sniper company subsequently engaged front-line targets in order to facilitate the attack of Russian units. After ground units gained a foothold in the city, the sniper company engaged Chechen SPTs moving to gain advantageous positions from which to engage Russian armor and infantry attempting to take the city's center. While an improvement in dealing with Chechen SPTs, the creation of the sniper company through transfer from lower echelons left the Russian battalions and companies without any snipers to support their operations.⁴⁵

U.S. Army and Marine Corps snipers currently possess the equipment and training to engage effectively combatants located amongst non-combatants in situations similar to those found in Somalia, Chechnya, and Bosnia with little fear of hitting non-combatants. Concerning the second element of the enemy's urban target set the U. S. Army's FM 23-10 states, "The best protection

⁴⁴ Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-35, Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain*, (Washington, D.C.: United States Marine Corps, 1998), 1-12 to 1-18.

⁴⁵ Thomas, "Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons, Learned," 51.

against enemy snipers is a trained sniper.”⁴⁶ U. S. snipers can effectively engage and defeat SPTs in an urban area and can enhance their effectiveness by increasing the number of snipers available to the commander.

Snipers possess the capability to defeat the enemy’s urban target set, but to develop fully the argument other possible solutions, such as using small arms, supporting arms, and non-lethal weapons, require exploration.

⁴⁶ Department of the Army Field Manual 23-10, *Sniper Training*, (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1994), 1-2.

Other Possible Solutions to Engaging the Enemy Urban Target Set

The argument proposes that more U. S. snipers may solve the problem presented by the enemy's urban target set consisting of combatants mixed with non-combatants, enemy snipers, and SPTs. However, other weapon systems and devices may also provide solutions to countering this threat. These include small arms, rockets, anti-tank guided missiles, supporting arms, riot control agents (RCA), non-lethal weapons, and anti-sniper devices. In order to develop the argument, these weapons require consideration to determine the effectiveness of each in engaging and defeating each urban target set element without causing non-combatant casualties.

U. S. military small arms lack the accuracy required to engage enemy soldiers mixed with civilians and still prevent innocent casualties. The 5.56mm rifle ammunition the U. S. procures coupled with the average accuracy characteristics of the M16A2 service rifle do not make it realistic to engage enemy combatants mixed amongst civilians. Service rifles designed to engage enemy soldiers under conventional conditions, where one side appears easily distinguishable from the other, become less effective on the urban battlefield considering the fleeting nature of targets and the presence of non-combatants. Machine guns, such as the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and the M240G machine gun, serve as area fire weapons, not weapons of precision. Clearly, U. S. forces cannot afford to fire machine guns in a situation where non-combatants share the same location as enemy soldiers due to the high probability of incurring civilian casualties. In Somalia and Panama, U. S. soldiers did not return fire at enemy soldiers in many situations for fear of hitting civilians. Man-portable rockets, such as the AT-4, require the soldier or Marine to move within close proximity of the enemy under suppressive fire in order to engage. Designed to engage armored vehicles, bunkers and fortifications, these rockets detonate on impact creating fragments that can endanger non-combatants in the area. This characteristic does not make these

weapon systems appropriate for engaging targets located near civilians in an urban environment. Anti-tank missiles like the TOW II and Javelin systems suffer limitations in an urban environment due to the presence of buildings, electrical wires, poles and other structures. Developed to destroy armor, anti-tank missiles, reduce bunkers and other urban fighting positions, yet they produce the same fragmentation effects rockets do. Supporting arms like mortars, artillery and aircraft also suffer limitations in the urban environment. Tall buildings can negatively affect shell and bomb trajectories. Lasers required for PGM employment experience difficulty in designating targets because of buildings.⁴⁷ Additionally, bombs and shells create a large blast and fragmentation effect, which makes the prevention of civilian casualties problematic. Riot control agents (RCA), such as tear gas, used to try to separate combatants from non-combatants, cause both to disperse from friendly forces that prevent engagement. The enemy may also acquire gas masks to limit the effects of RCA. Current non-lethal weapons focus on breaking up crowds in a manner that does not cause permanent harm to either combatants or non-combatants. Services currently possess crowd dispersal munitions, non-rigid (sticky) foam and other types of crowd control devices. Concepts under development include area denial to personnel, facility clearing, and crowd dispersal devices. Technologies under exploration include non-lethal mortar ammunition, airborne lasers, odorous substances, Taser Landmines, and non-lethal guided projectiles for use from a variety of platforms and weapons systems. Current and envisioned non-lethal weapons' effectiveness appears greatest when used against enemy soldiers using non-combatants as shields out in streets and other open areas crowds use in a city. However, non-lethal weapons used against combatants operating from inside buildings occupied

⁴⁷ Daryl G. Press, "Urban Problems: Options, Problems, and the Future," Conference Summary, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Security Studies Program, 4 January 1999; available from <http://web.mit.edu/org/afs/athena.mit.edu/org/s/spp/www/Publications/confseries/urbanwarfare/>; Internet; accessed 25 September 2001.

by civilians possess degraded capabilities in engaging enemy personnel.⁴⁸

Small arms, shoulder-fired rockets, anti-tank weapons, PGMs, RCAs, and non-lethal weapons do not provide the U. S. commander the capability required to engage successfully combatants who combine themselves with non-combatants in an urban setting. Because of this deficiency, enemy commanders will seek to present this difficult situation to U. S. forces at every opportunity. The enemy realizes that U. S. forces face difficulty in maintaining popular support for an operation that inflicts too many civilian casualties during combat operations.

The second element of the enemy urban target set consists of snipers. Historically, soldiers armed with small arms used against trained, enemy snipers proved ineffective. In World War I, sniping tactics, techniques, and procedures saw development by the Allies due to the ineffectiveness of small arms against German snipers.⁴⁹ In World War II, and the Korean War, German, Japanese, North Korean, and Chinese snipers gained an early advantage as their snipers already existed prior to the U. S. entering these conflicts. Forced to create *ad hoc* sniper organizations and schools, the U. S. took time to gain parity and subsequent advantage over their enemy counterparts. After each conflict, the U. S. military disbanded their sniper programs to include units, schools, and equipment. In Vietnam, the U. S. found itself again having to train snipers to meet the precision fire requirements of the U. S. Army and Marine Corps. For example, the 1st and 3rd Marine Division commanding generals tasked two officers, Capt E. J. Land and Capt R. A. Russell respectively, with developing sniper training programs for their divisions in Vietnam, as no other schools existed.⁵⁰ Not until the late 1970s did the U. S., military create and maintain sniping programs in peacetime in order to be ready for the next conflict and

⁴⁸ Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program, "Acquisition, Concept Development, and Concept Exploration Programs," available from <http://www.jnlwd.usmc.mil/Programs/acquisition.htm>, Internet; accessed 11 March 2002.

⁴⁹ Senich, *The German Sniper; 1914-1945*, 3.

⁵⁰ Peter R. Senich, *The One-Round War*(Boulder, Colorado: PaladinPress, 1996), 1-64.

not have to “reinvent the wheel”. In military operations since, the U. S. Army and Marine Corps employed snipers to conduct counter-sniping missions from the earliest days of the conflict.⁵¹

Soldiers and Marines equipped with small arms react once an enemy sniper fires. Based on the fieldcraft training enemy snipers use in an urban environment, it appears highly unlikely that discovery of their firing positions will occur prior to shooting at friendly forces. Compounding of the problem occurs when a well-trained, enemy sniper fires just one or two shots before withdrawing on a pre-planned route in order to deny engagement by U. S. troops. Additionally, determining where a single shot emanates from, proves difficult in urban areas due to the effect of buildings on the bullet’s shock wave. If the enemy sniper’s urban position meets with discovery, U. S. personnel may respond with a variety of means. Small arms, anti-tank rockets and missiles, and attack helicopters will eventually prove effective if the enemy sniper remains in his position and fails to withdraw. However, the friendly unit may suffer more casualties before eliminating the enemy sniper. Non-lethal weapons of the facility denial-type may prove effective in countering enemy snipers, but probably not until after they fire.

Anti-sniper devices consisting of thermal sights, ground surveillance radars (GSR), and other counter-sniper systems offer an alternative to friendly personnel attempting to physically search for and locate an enemy sniper. The first device consists of thermal sights. These hold the potential of detecting U. S. snipers before they occupy a position to carry out their sniping missions. Designed to detect heat radiating from vehicles and personnel, thermal devices positioned within unit positions effectively detect individuals attempting to get within small arms range. In Kosovo, the U. S. Army routinely uses thermal sights to detect infiltrators transiting the Ground Safety Zone (GSZ), a five-kilometer strip of land located on the Kosovo-Serbian border. These thermal sights, integral parts of TOW anti-tank and Avenger anti-air systems, successfully

⁵¹ Peter R. Senich, *Complete Book of U. S. Sniping* (Boulder, Colorado: Paladin Press, 1988), 1-275.

detect groups of individuals attempting to infiltrate the GSZ.⁵² Thermal sights easily detect personnel who move in open terrain and make little attempt to camouflage themselves. However, snipers operate differently by routinely using camouflage and moving extremely slow during their missions to remain undetected visually. Although they operate in different types of environments, snipers use their camouflage to match and blend in with their particular surroundings and disguise the characteristic outline of their body. Tests conducted at the Marine Corps Scout-Sniper Instructor School at Quantico, Virginia in 1992 showed that the various camouflage techniques used by snipers significantly reduce the probability of thermal sights detecting them. A thermal sight positioned twenty-five meters from a ghillie suit clad sniper failed to detect any body heat coming from the sniper. Though effective against unprotected personnel, thermal sights do not serve as a panacea to detecting enemy snipers.

The second device consists of ground surveillance radars (GSR) which may detect enemy snipers moving on the battlefield. Designed to detect moving personnel and vehicles forward of defensive positions, GSRs work well in open terrain with maximum line-of-sight. During the progress of their missions, enemy snipers move very slowly in order to avoid detection. They select routes to avoid detection not just by visual contact, but by aerial and electronic means, as well. In open terrain, the enemy sniper team will begin to low crawl up to 1,000 meters away from their intended target and frequently halt to observe their surroundings for any enemy activity. A low probability exists that GSRs will detect an enemy sniper team moving into position opposite defensive or security-type locations. In urban areas, the likelihood of GSRs detecting snipers proves even less due to the masking effect created by buildings, structures, etc.

Another system, designed specifically to locate snipers, concerns the Viper Countersniper System. Its manufacturers purports that it detects an enemy sniper once he fires. Envisioned for use by a counter-sniper team, this device consists of a camera, power supply, computer processor,

⁵² Tammy Arbuckle, "Leaky Border Tests NATO Interdiction," *Jane's International Defense Weekly* vol. 34 (July 2001), 58-59

rifle attachment, control display and electronic binoculars. The system detects the location of the muzzle blast and places that information on the display, so that the counter-sniper team can engage the enemy sniper.⁵³ Two concerns surface with this type of system. One involves the sniper remaining undetected until after he fires his weapon. Assuming that the enemy sniper hits his target, a casualty results before the Viper device locates him. The second concern with this anti-sniper system entails what position characteristics the enemy sniper fires from in an urban environment. An enemy sniper usually fires from a hide position in an urban environment located back from the aperture he fires through to the target. For example, a sniper firing from a room positions himself back from the window, not out of it. This helps him avoid detection including the optical sensor used by the Viper Counter-sniper System. This device will probably prove most useful against enemy troops that lack the fieldcraft skills a sniper possesses. A fourth type of anti-sniper system possesses sensors to detect the acoustics produced by a bullet's sound. As with other devices, acoustical systems only detect an enemy sniper after he fires.⁵⁴ An effective measure snipers take to defeat an acoustical anti-sniper system entails using a suppressor on the sniper rifle. This muffling of the sniper rifle signature complicates the system's ability to determine accurately where the shot originated. In an urban area, noise and echoes bouncing off buildings also serve to confuse the acoustical detector. Like the optical sensor, acoustical anti-sniper systems will prove more effective against less skilled shooters. Another device involves detecting the heat produced by the bullet after firing. One characteristic the enemy sniper cannot easily disguise involves the bullet trajectory. The aerodynamic drag of the bullet produces intense heat that releases infrared radiation along its flight. An infrared detector named LifeGuard/Deadeye exists in prototype form at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. A passive system, LifeGuard/Deadeye does not appear disturbed by the background clutter found

⁵³ Dr. M. C. Ertem, "The Viper Countersniper System," Maryland Advanced Development Laboratory; available from <http://www.urf.com/madl/eo/viper/css.html>; Internet; accessed 24 September 2001.

⁵⁴ Heike Hasenauer, "Sniper Stoppers," *Soldiers*, July 1996; available from <http://www.dtic.mil/soldiers/july96/test/snipertext.html>; Internet; accessed 24 September 2001.

in cities, but it does require at least two sensors in order to triangulate the bullet's trajectory. As with other systems, the Lifeguard/Deadeye proves most effective when friendly forces share the same locality in order to engage once the sniper fires his weapon. If not, the sniper will leave his hide position before anyone can respond. Employment of this type of system proves optimal in areas where sniper attacks occur frequently such as a "Sniper Alley" scenario similar to downtown Sarajevo, Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. However, massive emplacement of these systems in a large urban area does not seem practical due to the vast areas involved. Lastly, laser systems hold the only possibility of detecting an enemy sniper before firing. Designed to detect optics, like the sniper rifle's scope, laser systems record the reflection produced by the laser illuminating the objective lens of the optic.⁵⁵ However, a filter placed on the end of the scope defeats the effectiveness of a laser system.

Anti-sniping technologies and other weapon systems will make the execution of missions more difficult for enemy sniper teams. However, it does not appear that these systems prevent or seriously hinder the accomplishment of the enemy's sniping objectives. The environment and makeup of an urban area create serious difficulties in implementing these weapons systems and devices effectively. Used in combination as part of a larger anti-sniping system of systems, the potential for locating and defeating enemy snipers increases.

The only feasible way to detect and effectively engage an enemy sniper requires the employment of friendly snipers. Sniper training and equipment, combined with an effective employment plan, provide the best opportunity to eliminate an enemy sniper threat before accruing friendly casualties in an urban environment.

The last element of the enemy's urban target set includes the use of SPTs. The enemy uses multiple SPTs to add greater depth to the battlefield. In the urban environment, the SPTs' role consists of destroying critical systems, creating numerous casualties, and harassing and

⁵⁵ John Birkler, C. Richard Neu, and Glenn Kent, *Gaining New Military Capability: An Experiment in Concept Development*, (New York: RAND Publications, 1998), 44, 215.

maintaining constant contact with friendly units to mitigate the effects of supporting arms. SPTs use raid, ambush and stay-behind tactics to strike at friendly forces. These teams rely on their small size and stealth coupled with lethal firepower to close with friendly forces and quickly engage them. Chechen use of these small teams posed countless problems for less agile Russian Army forces fighting in Grozny due to their elusiveness and effectiveness.⁵⁶

Small arms will prove effective against SPTs if soldiers and Marines can locate them for engagement. Since SPTs rely on movement during periods of limited visibility, and covered and concealed routes, friendly forces will not easily locate these enemy units. If SPTs execute their attacks from locations consisting of non-combatants, friendly units employing small arms will face the problem of minimizing innocent casualties. The same difficulties friendly forces face in dealing with combatants mixed with non-combatants and enemy snipers will occur when fighting enemy SPTs. Weapons and munitions used against SPTs that create fragmentation may also cause civilian casualties. As recent events in Afghanistan demonstrate, the media continues to thoroughly and aggressively seek answers to why collateral damage and non-combatant casualties occur despite the dominance of U. S. military technology. Future non-lethal weapons technology may not prove useful due to the dispersed and transitory nature of SPT operations.

Recent events in Afghanistan and Israel indicate that the various weapon systems employed against the urban target set cannot effectively engage the enemy without preventing non-combatant casualties. When combatants conduct operations within pockets of civilians, U. S. small arms do not possess the accuracy required to keep from hitting those who are civilians. Fragmentation munitions will harm both the enemy and the innocent when employed. Due to the elusiveness of enemy snipers and SPTs, detecting these portions of the urban target set for engagement proves difficult enough without adding the problem of engaging them without causing non-combatant casualties. Non-lethal weapons, primarily designed for use against hostile

⁵⁶ Thomas, "Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons Learned," 55.

crowds, display potential if the target set seeks the same open areas of a city crowds tend to use to mass.

Proposed Future Sniper Organization and Employment

Research indicates that U. S. snipers possess the skills and equipment necessary to help solve the dilemma the commander faces when confronted with the urban target set while preventing non-combatant casualties. Additionally, the number of snipers required to maintain effectively the advantage over the enemy does not exist. The creation of a sniper company to operate in direct support of the division may solve the dilemma. The criteria of feasibility, acceptability, and suitability applied to the proposed sniper company will determine whether more snipers will solve the problem.

Feasibility examines if the recommended solution increases the density of U. S. snipers on the urban battlefield and the physical possibility of their achieving success against the enemy's urban target set. Sniper rifle accuracy combined with the sniper's training provide the commander a discriminating means of engaging the enemy without harming innocent civilians in an urban environment. However, in order to maximize the potential that sniping operations provide to the commander an increase in sniper personnel is required. For example, only eight sniper teams exist per Marine Corps infantry battalion and none at higher-level formations.⁵⁷ The U.S. Army's new Interim Brigade Combat Team consists of eighteen sniper teams, only six teams per battalion.⁵⁸ Given the need to rotate sniper teams, attrition, etc., there simply are not enough snipers to influence the urban target set in a large, urban area.

Research indicates that the number of sniper teams in the infantry battalions do not meet the requirements the commander encounters in urban combat. Recent conflicts involving U. S. snipers proved short in duration or involved the ability to focus the utilization of snipers

⁵⁷ MSgt Neil K. Morris, "Scout/Sniper Company," *Marine Corps Gazette* July 2001, 45.

⁵⁸ U. S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, *Interim Brigade Combat Team*, Organizational and Operational Concept version 6, 30 June 2000, 18.

defensively at a small installation such as the American Embassy in Liberia in 1996 during Operation ASSURED RESPONSE.⁵⁹ Small numbers of snipers in these organizations prove insufficient in providing adequate support for in the future for larger areas of operation and for longer periods. These situations occur frequently in Military Operations Other Than War(MOOTW). Only supposed to last a year, the operation in Bosnia continues. A U. S. Army Captain serving as a combat maneuver analyst with experience in Somalia stated, “Snipers are a big combat multiplier and are employed extensively within Mogadishu. *A company of snipers could control the city* (italics mine).”⁶⁰ Given the scarcity of U. S. Army sniping assets, it appears that a requirement for more sniper teams to support ground combat operations existed in the city of Mogadishu, Somalia.

The senior Russian commanders fighting in Grozny also realized a need for more snipers to assist their urban operations against the Chechen rebels. Stripping away their subordinate units’ snipers, the senior Russian Army commanders formed four sniper companies consisting of approximately sixty snipers each to assist their next attack into Grozny. Tasked to initially provide intelligence in the days prior to the attack, the Russian sniper teams engaged enemy snipers, observers, and SPTs. Their efforts resulted in Russian Army units successfully gaining a foothold in the city in order to prepare for further attacks to take the city’s center. The Russian Army commanders saw a need to employ large number of snipers under their control to support the attack into the city. Of course, this adaptation resulted in the subordinate units not having sniper teams of their own to support operations.

A company-size force of snipers at the division-level would greatly enhance the capability commanders require to engage the urban target set. However, the creation of this unit must not

⁵⁹ Linda D. Kozaryn, “Liberia Evacuation Ends, Security Guard Remains,” *Armed Forces Press Service*, April 1996 [news service on-line]; available from http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Apr1996/n0425'996_9604252.html; Internet; accessed 27 March 2002.

⁶⁰ CPT Phillip Parker, “The Need for Snipers in MOUT,” *News from the Front!*, Center for Army Lessons Learned, December 1993; available from <http://call.army.mil/products/nftf/nftf1293/dec93.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 March 2002.

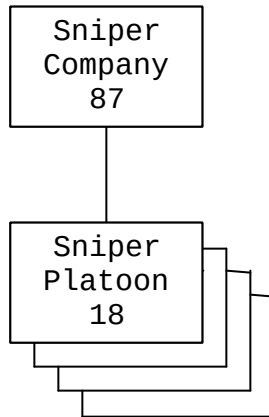
occur at the expense of the infantry battalion's current sniper structure by taking sniper platoons and teams to form the division's company. The scout/sniper platoons in the Marine Corps primarily serve as the infantry battalion's only trained scouting or reconnaissance organization. Creation of a division-level sniper company complements the sniping capability already resident in the U. S. Army's and Marine Corps' infantry battalions, not replaces it.

The research indicated that the proposed sniper company was feasible as it presented a reasonable chance of success against the enemy's urban target set. Presently, the number of snipers in the U. S. Army and Marine Corps does not match the number required to operate effectively in an urban environment to counter the enemy's urban target set. By increasing the number of snipers in the division by sixty-four, the density of sniper teams on the urban battlefield rises to a level that meets the requirement. Since training and weapons already exist in both services, the increase in the number of snipers poses no major obstacles concerning the staffing and equipping of the proposed sniper organization, which makes it a physical possibility to implement.

In order to judge the acceptability of the sniper company, the details of a proposed organization need consideration. The proposed division sniper company would consist of four sniper platoons and a headquarters platoon (see figure 1). Each sniper platoon's organization would have eight, two-man sniper teams with a platoon commander and platoon sergeant in the platoon's headquarters for a total of eighteen personnel.⁶¹ The sniper company's headquarters platoon would include the appropriate number of personnel and rank structure to manage the administrative and logistics tasks normally associated with a separate company, and the command and control of sniper operations in support of the division. In order to accomplish these tasks, the headquarters platoon requires fifteen personnel. With four sniper platoons and a headquarters platoon, the division sniper company would total eighty-seven soldiers or Marines. Four sniper

⁶¹ Morris, "Scout/Sniper Company," 45.

platoons flexibly allows each maneuver regiment/brigade to receive a platoon attached or in direct support while still maintaining a sniper platoon for division employment, if required.⁶²



Division Sniper Company
Figure 1

Employment of the sniper company includes supporting the division's offensive, defensive and MOOTW operations in urban terrain. Ideally, the sniper company operates in general support of the division, but retains the flexibility to provide sniper platoons in direct support of or attached to a Marine Corps infantry regiment or U. S. Army brigade, if required.

According to Marine Corps Warfighting Pamphlet 3-35.3, *Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain*, a deliberate attack into an urban area consists of four phases: reconnoitering the objective, isolating the objective, securing a foothold, and seizing the objective.⁶³ The sniper company supporting the division's deliberate attack into an urban area conducts sniping missions

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ MWCP 3-35, *Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain*, (Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, 1998), 2-8 to 2-9.

in all four phases. Similar to the sniper companies the Russians formed to support the attack into Grozny, the division sniper company supports friendly units by providing detailed intelligence on enemy units defending the city and precision fire in order to defeat the enemy's urban target set while minimizing casualties to civilians. A U. S. Army or Marine Corps sniper company would saturate the area of operations causing enemy casualties as well as demoralizing surviving enemy personnel.

In defensive operations conducted in an urban environment, the division's options consist of defending outside of the city, defending inside of the city, defending a key sector, and defending using entrapment and ambush according to MCWP 3-35.3.⁶⁴ Since defending outside of the city does not come under the purview of the argument, only the last three options merit discussion.

The division commander usually chooses defending inside of a city if the enemy possesses greater numbers or has greater capability in long-range fires assets. Friendly security forces, placed outside of the city's structures, serve to provide early warning, inflict maximum casualties, and deceive the enemy as to the location of friendly unit positions. The division's sniper company operates in the division's security area located outside of the city in a counter-reconnaissance role. If friendly security forces withdraw into the city, friendly snipers move to take positions within the city to prevent the urban target set elements from infiltrating friendly defenses.

If defending a key sector, the division faces the situation where it cannot defend an entire city due to insufficient strength. The division sniper company supports defending units by eliminating enemy snipers, defeating SPTs, and engaging enemy personnel mixed in with civilians. The enemy will attempt to surround the friendly sector for observation purposes, to harass friendly personnel, and to attempt infiltration through friendly positions. Division sniper teams engage these enemy personnel so that they do not gain any advantage over friendly units.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 3-10, 3-11.

The division using the entrapment and ambush option maximizes depth within a city to prevent the enemy from seizing key positions. Due to the dispersed nature of friendly forces, the division sniper company provides overwatch of friendly ambush sites and early warning of enemy movements. The sniper company can also deploy in the security area to prevent infiltration of enemy SPTs/enemy snipers and to discourage enemy observation of friendly positions.

The division sniper company supporting defensive operations plays a key role in the division's counter-reconnaissance battle. Significantly reducing enemy reconnaissance assets outside of the city and urban target set that infiltrates into the city will allow friendly units to conduct their operation unhindered as envisioned by the U. S. Army Captain in Mogadishu.

MOOTW operations present an unparalleled opportunity for sniper company employment. Joint doctrine defines MOOTW as "operations that encompass the use of military capabilities across the range of military operations short of war. These military actions can be applied to complement any combination of the other instruments of national power and occur before, during, and after war".⁶⁵ Referred to as Stability and Support Operations in the U. S. Army, MOOTW represents a difficult challenge for commanders, especially in an urban setting.

Anti-terrorism, counter-drug, humanitarian assistance, military support to civil authorities, counter-insurgency, non-combatant evacuations, peace, recovery, show of force, and strikes/raids operations all come under the MOOTW classification. The presence of indigenous populations, the terrain, the political environment, and the elusiveness of the enemy make MOOTW problematic for U. S. forces. The enemy's urban target set further exacerbates this complicated situation.

The division sniper company provides the division commander with the ability to saturate his area of operations with sniper teams while the infantry battalion's sniper teams provide support to

⁶⁵ The Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, [CD-ROM] (Washington, D.C: U. S. Government Printing Office, February 2000)

their own units. In MOOTW, division areas of operation (AO) encompass larger areas than those assigned for offensive or defensive operations. The IBCT expects assignment of AOs up to 50 kilometers by 50 kilometers.⁶⁶ Sensors and other reconnaissance and surveillance assets cover many of the areas not physically occupied by friendly personnel, often called “white space”. Although these assets help maintain situational awareness and assist in target acquisition, some situations require personnel to address problems. For example, individual Serb snipers killed farmers working in their fields in Bosnia. If friendly personnel are not present or in a position close by to intervene, sensors do not provide much usefulness in preventing this type of enemy action. However, friendly snipers dispersed throughout the AO engaging these types of targets will discourage enemy soldiers participating in these types of action.

In an urban environment, the division’s sniper teams support by overwatching friendly units manning checkpoints, conducting mounted and dismounted patrolling, and defending critical sites. The division sniper company’s teams also gather information for intelligence purposes. Used effectively, this organization will give the enemy the impression that “friendly assets are everywhere at once” due to the number of U. S. sniper teams employed.

Research indicates that the proposed solution meets the criteria of acceptability. The costs involved in establishing the division sniper company include an increase of less than a hundred personnel per division and reasonable costs to equip the organizations.⁶⁷ Snipers schools currently in place in both services would see a minor increase in the number of students attending the sniper courses. The benefits of establishing this new sniper organization significantly outweigh the minor costs incurred. Research also confirms that no major risks arise in

⁶⁶ U. S. Army Training and Development Command, *Interim Brigade Combat Team*, Organizational and Operational Concept version 6, 30 June 2000, 33.

⁶⁷ Major end items for the sniper company include:
Each M40A1 sniper rifle (USMC) costs \$2,105 times 32 sniper teams per company equals \$ 67,360.
Each M82A1 .50 Caliber Special Application Scoped Rifle costs \$ 6,000 times 10 = \$ 60,000.
Each SINGARS Radio costs \$ 6,500 times 32 sniper teams per company equals \$ 208,000.
Source: Headquarters, United States Marine Corps

implementing and employing the organization other than that normally experienced in employing existing sniper teams.

The research shows that this option is suitable in achieving the desired outcome of effectively countering the enemy's urban target set while avoiding non-combatant casualties. Due to the accurized rifle, advanced training, and employment methods, snipers serve as an effective solution in locating and engaging enemy combatants mixed with civilians, enemy snipers, and enemy SPTs. Research indicates that other U. S. weapon systems do not meet this requirement as well as snipers do.

Conclusion

The proposed solution involves creating a division-level sniper company to engage effectively the enemy's urban target set. Research shows that potential adversaries will seek to offset U. S. strengths by operating in urbanized terrain. Primarily designed to achieve maximum effectiveness in open terrain, U. S. weapons suffer from degraded effectiveness in urban areas. The presence of civilians further complicates fighting in cities due to constraints designed to limit collateral damage and non-combatant casualties. The enemy operates in a dispersed pattern versus concentrated pattern in order to avoid U. S. firepower. This dispersed pattern manifests itself in an urban target set consisting of enemy combatants mixing with non-combatants, enemy snipers, and enemy SPTs. Given the limitations of U. S. weapon systems in attempting to minimize collateral damage, this urban target set presents a dilemma for commanders fighting in cities. However, research indicates that U. S. Army and Marine Corps snipers can effectively engage the elements of the enemy's urban target set without incurring civilian casualties. Although U. S. snipers possess the weapons, equipment and training required to engage the urban target set, they do not possess the number of snipers to cover effectively the large urban areas where the enemy operates. Located only at the infantry battalion-level, U.S. snipers, provide support only to those organizations. In order to provide the coverage necessary in urbanized terrain, the creation of a division-level sniper company must occur. Consisting of thirty-two more sniper teams for the division, the sniper company provides the division with the capability to engage the enemy's urban target set in large cities. The requirement exists and research shows that the proposed division sniper company satisfies the feasibility, acceptability, and suitability criteria. Therefore, the U. S. Army and Marine Corps can create sniper companies in order to engage effectively the enemy's urban target set.

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