
Regimental Command Sergeant Major

The Chemical Corps: Combating Terrorism Today to Ensure Freedom Tomorrow is a relevant statement used to describe the Dragon Soldiers who continue to meet the transformational challenges of the Corps and the needs of the Army. This Nation is built and structured on the foundations of liberty, peace, and the American dream. Dragon Soldiers are just as critical to the Nation and our victory in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) as they are to the joint warfighting campaign.

As a Corps, we must ensure that our Nation is well equipped with the means to detect, mitigate, and decontaminate all forms of agents (standard and nonstandard). In trying to simplify the divergent views on the phenomenon of terrorism, a simple definition emerges: “violence or threatened violence intended to produce fear or change.” That fear or change may be prompted by the political or social factors behind individual terrorist acts. In the GWOT campaign, I must emphasize that it is not the job of the Chemical Corps to determine why this evil is present in society today—our job is to focus on defeating terrorist activities as they relate to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats.

The terrorists of today could attack our Nation with nonstandard chemical agents. These agents could evolve from something as small as household cleaning material or as large as an agent in pure form. Brigadier General Lillie’s vision of transforming Chemical Soldiers from conventional Soldiers to “warrior scientists” is helping the Corps get on board with the ever-increasing wave of the Objective Force Warrior concept, designed to enhance warfighter lethality and survivability and prepare forces for defense operations of the future.



**Command Sergeant Major
Patrick Z. Alston**

In trying to simplify the divergent views on the phenomenon of terrorism, a simple definition emerges: “violence or threatened violence intended to produce fear or change.”

Let’s take a moment to reflect on what the Corps has been called to do in the past. In the early 80s, the Department of the Army concluded that it was necessary to have a Corps that could respond to nuclear, biological, and chemical agents and was compelled to reestablish the Chemical Corps Regiment. However, during that time, the Corps remained underutilized. During the 90s, the Chemical Corps was called upon during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and the relevance of the Corps was soon realized. After the threat of chemical and biological agents emerged, the Corps prepared to deal with the threat of conventional agents.

Our mind-set quickly changed when preparation efforts shifted due to the train incident in which a terrorist group launched a coordinated attack using sarin (GB) nerve gas against commuters on a Tokyo subway system. The highly publicized attack killed 12 people and injured more than 5,000. At that time, the leaders of the Chemical Corps understood that they could be called upon to engage terrorist acts with weapons of mass destruction. The Corps needed to transform from a force dealing with conventional warfare to a force supporting homeland security and defense operations. This new focus became more relevant after the events of 11 September 2001. Although agents were not used in the attack, the question remains: What if they had been used? As Chemical units remain relevant regarding traditional and nontraditional threats, we must ensure that this focus remains intact during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. The “smoking gun” remains to remind us of the need for a transformation from Soldier to warrior scientist.

To “ensure freedom tomorrow,” all Dragon Soldiers must take the opportunity to prepare and educate themselves by remaining focused on learning about the new equipment being fielded and the doctrine being developed. Dragon Soldiers must remain competent, equipped, organized, and trained to combat new threats today to ensure freedom tomorrow.