

squad must depend heavily on exploiting the full effects of its machineguns, Dragons, and M203s, a squad leader must make sure his men are trained to use the various weapon systems.

The team leader is usually a corporal or a sergeant. If his vehicle has one, the team leader must be capable of firing the Dragon system from the vehicular Dragon mount (VDM). He carries an M203 grenade launcher when dismounted. He and his driver are also responsible for operating the vehicle's caliber .50 machinegun and for maintaining the vehicle.

The driver carries an M16 rifle, assists with the caliber .50 machinegun, and mans that weapon in stationary or defensive positions when the team leader is away from the vehicle. When dismounted, he carries a Dragon missile and assists another squad member in operating an M60 machinegun.

The Dragon gunner carries the Dragon system and is the primary M203 gunner for the squad. He must

also be able to fire the Dragon from the VDM, and, when dismounted, he must know how to fire the Dragon from the M60 machinegun tripod.

The M60 machinegunner must be prepared to operate in most situations without an assistant gunner. He also serves as the vehicle's rear security and air guard.

The automatic rifleman rounds out a six-man squad. He carries an M16 rifle and serves as an assistant Dragon or M60 gunner as the situation requires.

In a dismounted situation, the team leader should be on the ground, and the driver should man the caliber .50 machinegun. If additional automatic fire is needed, the automatic rifleman can be given the platoon's fifth M60 machinegun, which is usually carried on the command track.

The small squad does have other definite limitations: The Dragon gunners and the team leaders cannot fire their primary weapons and their M203s at the same time; the amount of ammunition the squad can carry is

reduced because of its small size, particularly the number of Dragon missiles, 40mm rounds, and machinegun belts; and the platoon leader and squad leaders with their radios are not as mobile and tend to tire more easily than if they had someone else to carry those sets.

Understrength mechanized infantry platoons can perform many missions ranging from dismounted patrols and ambushes to mounted attacks. But the platoon leaders must know how to adapt their small units to the changing situations in which they will find themselves. By properly tailoring their platoons and deploying their most potent assets, they can use the inherent flexibility of the mechanized platoon to its fullest advantage.

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Modernized Line

CAPTAIN HARRY F. NOYES III

It is a pity the Maginot Line has given fixed linear fortifications such a bad name, because new technology now makes it possible for such fortifications to contribute immeasurably — perhaps decisively — to the defense of western Europe against Soviet attack.

Needless to say, I do not envision a literal reconstruction of the pre-World War II French system of concrete caverns and heavy guns.

What I am proposing is that ultra-modern technology — in the form of a semi-automated complex of anti-tank guided missiles and antipersonnel mines — be combined with such ultra-traditional shelters as holes in the ground to create a thicket of depth that any Soviet invasion force would have to penetrate.

This proposed new line, which for want of a better term we can call the "Modernized Line," would differ

from the Maginot Line in two respects:

- It would require relatively few troops and small amounts of equipment and money. Thus, it would supplement, not compete with, the conventional mobile forces upon which our defenses would primarily and quite properly depend.

- It would not generate a defensive mentality. Because it would never be intended as the primary means of

defending western Europe, its very nature would discourage any such notion. It would be a low-cost, attritional barrier that would deprive the Soviet invaders of their most important offensive advantages — the fast start and early momentum — and thus expose them to early counter-attack by armored and mechanized infantry forces.

The Modernized Line would consist of a belt of concealed, unmanned antitank guided missile (ATGM) positions several kilometers deep and running all along NATO's eastern border, with its heaviest concentrations facing the most likely invasion routes. The widest possible variety of concealment modes would be used — building basements, phony structures, parked vehicles, haystacks, tree-top nests, and camouflaged or pop-up ground sites.

Each ATGM would be controlled from a distance by soldiers sheltered in bunkers hundreds of meters from the actual emplacements. Coaxial television cameras would survey the defended terrain and provide the gunner with aiming information, while a redundant system of wire and secure radio links would carry the proper firing commands.

Fire-and-forget technology would improve the system's effectiveness, but there is no reason why the soldiers could not control wire-guided missiles through their TV monitors, if necessary. The effectiveness of the gunners should be very high, because suppressive fire would have virtually no psychological effect on their remotely situated and well-protected shelter. Only a direct hit on a TV camera or a weapon, or rapid and effective smoke dispersal, would save the target. Ground laser designators could also be used to make the system even better.

The ATGM emplacements could be protected from dismounted infantry assault by thickets of command-detonated antipersonnel mines on all sides, which could also be controlled from the bunkers. In any case, even a successful infantry assault would represent a victory for the system,

since any dismounted attack would diminish the enemy's momentum in the crucial early hours of an invasion.

In favored locations, the bunkers might also control command-detonated antitank mines emplaced in the roads, and the use of remote-controlled antiarmor guns and rotary cannon should not be ruled out.

If well-designed, such a line could start knocking off enemy vehicles as soon as they crossed the border and could continue doing so for many kilometers into the interior. In fact, once the fact of an invasion was clearly established, there would be no reason why emplacement close to the border could not reach well across it to destroy follow-up vehicles. Moreover, remote-controlled strongpoints could be constructed at key locations far behind the border, using the same technology to inflict additional

This proposed new line would supplement, not compete with, conventional mobile forces.

punishment on the foe as he penetrated deeper into friendly countryside.

In addition, it would be technically feasible to use a slightly modified version of the same concept to create a new kind of maneuver force. For example, prefabricated strongpoints using the same technology could be taken to threatened areas by truck and swiftly dug in, using normal engineering resources, as the enemy approached.

One of the advantages of the proposed system would be its requirement for relatively small numbers of soldiers. One soldier could control a large number of ATGMs, for example, especially if fire-and-forget technology was employed. Too, each soldier might be made responsible for several geographically separated concentrations that would be unlikely to acquire targets simultaneously.

Such soldiers would not need to be highly trained, if we can trust the

claims we hear that anyone can learn to use modern ATGMs in a few hours. Certainly a soldier who can fire from the safety of a remote bunker does not need the same kind of "steeling" he would require to face suppressive fire. In fact, this might be an ideal way to use inexperienced draftees or individual ready reservists who had not been given much recent training. It would also be a good way to use established light infantry units whose training and discipline were not in question but whose equipment might not suit them for an effective role in a NATO contingency.

The demands of such a system would not require a lot of money. For the most part, it would call for off-the-shelf technology and off-the-shelf hardware. It would require thousands of ATGMs, a lot of electronics, and a substantial quantity of shovels and concrete. Nevertheless, the requirements would be small compared to most modern defense programs, and the potential return on the investment would be high — the destruction of large numbers of invading vehicles at slight cost in friendly lives, while quite possibly crippling the enemy's timetable and exposing him to decisive counterblows. The deterrent potential alone probably would be worth the cost.

Given the imbalance NATO defensive forces face in Europe, such a remote-controlled defensive line seems to be an option that is at least worthy of serious study. While it should never be regarded as the prime ingredient in NATO defenses, it could provide a major economy-of-force means to redress some of the imbalances. At a low cost in men and materiel, it could slow down an invading force and made it pay a heavy price, and thus reduce the pressure on the main battle forces.

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