



# Commandant's NOTE

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## COMBAT DEVELOPMENTS—LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

In my last two Commandant's Notes, I have discussed Infantry Force XXI and the Warrior Focus Advanced Warfighting Experiment, which will enable us to design and field the force we need to meet our national commitments out to and beyond the year 2000. In this note, I want to provide an update on five of the systems that, along with the Land Warrior and 21st Century Land Warrior integrated soldier warfighting systems, will give that force the punch to remain a credible deterrent, and—if necessary—to swiftly maneuver and place accurate, devastating fires against an aggressor.

Infantrymen have long relied upon the mortar for its ability to deliver responsive, high-angle fires in support of ground forces, and the 120mm mortar now being fielded represents a significant improvement over the 4.2 inch (107mm) mortar we have used up to now, in terms of range, lethality, smoke obscuration, and illumination. The system will be fielded in both towed and carrier-mounted configurations. An operational requirements document (ORD) has been approved for a mortar fire control system (MFCS), which will reduce the time needed to process calls for fire, while increasing the lethality, maneuverability, and survivability of the mortar and its crew. The MFCS will also employ a computer interface to link the mortar digitally with the advanced field artillery tactical data system, allowing better dispersion and integration of all fire support assets on the future battlefield.

The Javelin advanced antitank weapon system—medium (AAWS-M) will replace the Dragon missile system beginning in the third quarter of Fiscal Year 1996 in infantry and combat engineer battalions, and in mounted scout platoons. The Infantry School considers

Javelin the number one procurement priority for both light and mechanized forces because of its advantages over the Dragon in lethality, range, and survivability. With its true fire-and-forget technology, all-weather target acquisition, top or direct attack capability, and the ability to be fired from enclosures, Javelin will enable the infantryman to engage and defeat any armored target at ranges out to 2,000 meters.

To train soldiers in the employment of the Javelin, three training devices are in parallel development with the missile itself. These three—the basic skills trainer (BST), the field tactical trainer (FTT), and the missile simulation round (MSR)—will be fielded concurrently with the Javelin.

Another weapon that supports the urgent need for a man-portable system—to replace the M72 LAW, the AT4, and the bunker defeat munition (BDM)—is the multipurpose individual munition/short range assault weapon (MPIM/SRAW). Experience in Panama, Operation DESERT STORM, and Somalia identified the requirements for such a weapon, and this joint Army and Marine Corps program is the result. The system will increase soldier lethality through the use of a multipurpose warhead that is effective against both structures and armor. It will also enhance soldier survivability by its soft launch, which allows for firing from the prone position and from enclosures such as buildings and bunkers. The MPIM/SRAW can be employed from 17 to 200 meters, and the munition will defeat earth and timber bunkers, reinforced masonry walls, and light armored vehicles, killing or incapacitating the enemy through the effects of a penetrating grenade.

In the March-April 1995 issue of *INFANTRY*, I

stressed the need to enhance the lethality and survivability of the light infantry, and the Improved Target Acquisition System (ITAS) is a step in the right direction. ITAS, the number two antitank procurement priority, following Javelin, will go a long way toward improving the light force's TOW HMMWV capability. It will replace that weapon's current target acquisition/fire control system and is a pre-planned product improvement that also reflects the requirements for a heavy antitank weapon to execute light infantry missions in the year 2000 and beyond.

Requirements for ITAS include an integrated night sight with second-generation forward looking infrared (FLIR) and a day sight with direct view optics, an aided target tracker that can track two targets simultaneously, and a biocular display. Other improvements are an eyesafe laser rangefinder, an automatic boresight, a built-in test and test equipment that afford a self-diagnostic capability, and embedded training to develop and sustain soldier proficiency on the weapon system.

The final system I want to talk about is the future infantry fighting vehicle (FIFV). Fielding of the M2A3/M3A3 Bradley is scheduled for completion in Fiscal Year 2010, with these models expected to remain in service and beyond the year 2020. By that time some of the approximately 1,900 earliest models, the A0s, will have been in service for as long as 28 years. In the meantime, potential adversaries will have continued to develop armor and weapon systems that may challenge the lethality and survivability of those existing Bradleys. We therefore need to think ahead if we are to remain competitive and offer a credible deterrent to aggression. We will need to implement a developmental program to field an FIFV that can meet the most advanced threat into the first two decades of the next century. Once Force Package 1 units get these vehicles, their A3 Bradleys and those that have been modified to meet requirements identified during Operation DESERT STORM (ODS) can be reissued so that the A0 Bradleys can be phased out of service.

What will the new FIFV look like, and what will we expect it to do? First, it will perform essentially the same

mission as the current Bradley fighting vehicle, but with the enhanced lethality and survivability to deal effectively with the targets and weapons it will encounter on the future battlefield. This will require an upgraded gun and missile system, with armor protection afforded by new lightweight materials that will reduce the vehicle's weight, or at least hold it to a minimum commensurate with maneuverability and survivability requirements.

To further insure crew survivability and reduce vehicle combat losses, the FIFV will also incorporate the latest technology in vehicle defense systems. We anticipate that the FIFV will carry more dismounts than the present configuration allows, probably on the order of a nine-man squad. When you add state-of-the-art digital communications, fire control systems, and FLIR, the FIFV will have increased range and lethality that will ensure a standoff advantage over threat weapon systems. U.S. and coalition forces had such an advantage in DESERT STORM, and it is an edge we cannot afford to lose.

Finally, recognizing the imperative for combined arms operations, the FIFV must draw upon the latest automotive technology to ensure that its mobility is equal to or greater than that of the main battle tank that will support the infantry force.

Given the number of potential adversaries that have taken advantage of the flood of high-tech materiel available since the collapse of the Soviet Union, few would argue against the need for continued military readiness by the United States and her allies. Our global mission may well require commitment of U.S. forces in scenarios that range from operations other than war to armed intervention. Whatever form that involvement may take, our commitments will probably continue to rely heavily upon infantry forces, and we must be ready when called upon.

These five systems represent key elements of the U.S. Army's effort to upgrade its indirect fire, antiarmor, and maneuver capabilities to meet the demands of the next century. Their fielding will ensure that a deployed U.S. force will still be able to meet the best the enemy has to offer, fight the close, tough fight, and emerge victorious.

