



Commandant's NOTE

MAJOR GENERAL JOHN W. HENDRIX Chief of Infantry

SUSTAINING THE PACE

The Commandant's Note in the November-December 1994 issue of *INFANTRY* was my first as Chief of Infantry, and during the 18 months since its publication we have seen considerable progress—in the development and fielding of materiel, doctrinal, and training improvements—and identified new challenges in terms of the actions that will still be necessary as we continue to transition to Force XXI. We have come a long way toward improving the lethality, survivability, and sustainability of the Infantry, and in this note, I want to describe some of those improvements, and then outline what remains to be done to sustain the pace of modernization.

The basic mission of the Infantry—to close with and destroy the enemy—will remain, even in the face of the changing conditions that will confront the soldier of tomorrow; this aspect of combat has always been the most demanding, and will remain a decisive factor even during this time of sweeping technological advances.

The dedication of the Dismounted Battlespace Battle Laboratory's Night Fighting Training Facility at Fort Benning has further consolidated our position as a leader in own-the-night technologies. Under an ongoing program to meet current and future night operational requirements by providing newer, lighter, and better technologies for the combined arms force, we have under development—or are already fielding—night vision goggles; infrared munitions, markers, and lights; and thermal weapons sights that have made it possible—for the first time in history—to see farther than we can shoot at night.

Additionally, such cutting edge developments as the Dismounted Soldier Combat Identification System, the Shortstop Electronics Protection System that can jam and detonate incoming proximity-fuzed shells, enhancements in target acquisition capability, and dramatic improvements in lethal and rapidly deployable tank-killing systems will reduce the effectiveness of the enemy's weapons and tactics, while increasing the survivability and lethality of our own forces.

These improvements to the way we will fight apply to the

entire Infantry force, light and heavy alike. The Land Warrior strategy—for example—employs an evolutionary approach to the soldier modernization effort, and is a program that will link the soldier to the digitized battalion, and will empower him to do his job as never before. The U.S. soldier of the next century will stride onto the battlefield with advantages in weapons and survivability that would astonish his predecessors.

The materiel upgrades to the Bradley force are receiving high priority, with the fielding of Operation *Desert Storm* (ODS) upgrades planned for this year. Improvements in land navigation capability such as the Global Positioning System (GPS) and associated items of equipment will both reduce the likelihood of fratricide and enable commanders to accurately target an enemy and maneuver against him.

But the Bradley upgrade doesn't stop there. The scheduled Bradley A3 modernization will represent a quantum improvement over even the ODS upgrades. The A3 will afford its commander and crew enhanced situational awareness through displays for the vehicle commander, gunner, squad leader, and driver; greater lethality by means of significantly improved target acquisition and digital fire control; and greater survivability through enhanced combat identification and overhead protection. To meet the requirement for the Future Infantry Vehicle (FIV) an eventual successor to the Bradley, an Integrated Concept Team (ICT) has been established at Fort Benning. The ICT has already begun meeting to examine the mission need and alternatives for the FIV, and will develop a viable milestone schedule for the FIV program.

Firepower has received its share of attention as well: the accuracy and increased lethality of the M121 tracked and M120 towed 120mm mortars will be complemented by enhanced precision guided munitions, the mortar fire control system, and an improved mortar ballistic computer. Battalion and company commanders will now be able to call upon organic and supporting indirect fire support that is more responsive, more accurate, and more deadly than ever before.

The individual soldier will also see improvements in his own

combat effectiveness, including the weapons he carries. Small arms are the essence of individual firepower, and the U.S. Army Infantry Center small arms strategy envisions a family of weapons that will nearly double the effective range of the soldier's individual weapons, with commensurate increases in lethality. This will be accomplished through a combination of fire control innovations and bursting munitions, providing the decisive, violent target engagement that is often needed to disrupt the enemy and seize the initiative.

The infantryman's ability to deal effectively with an armored threat will be substantially enhanced as a result of the Antiarmor Master Plan. A follow-on replacement for the TOW missile system will have greater range and lethality, and crews will be able to fire it from current TOW platforms, using an applique kit. This missile will be able to defeat advanced tank threats and countermeasures. The Antiarmor Master Plan will incorporate developing technologies, and includes the Enhanced Fiber Optic Guided Munition (EFOG-M) and the Line of Sight Antitank (LOSAT) systems.

The Infantry has long relied upon the machinegun to provide suppressive fire and sustained coverage of critical terrain to disrupt the enemy's formations and break his will to fight. These missions will not change, but we will be performing them with even better machineguns than we had in the past. In the near term, the M240B, a ground version of the Bradley's 7.62mm coaxial machinegun, will be the Infantry's medium machinegun until the advanced medium machinegun is fielded. The venerable .50 caliber machinegun and the MK 19 grenade machinegun will be kept in service until they are replaced by the objective crew-served weapon.

These materiel initiatives are not the only improvements you can expect, however; the draft Task Force XXI manuals for scouts, antiarmor sections, the light and heavy platoon, and the light company and battalion have been sent to the field for comment before the final draft is published. Additionally, the drafts of Field Manual (FM) 7-30, *The Infantry Brigade*, and FM 90-10-1, *The Infantryman's Guide to Combat in Built-Up Areas*, have been distributed. Other manuals on the battalion task force, air assault operations, and stability and support operations are currently being drafted or revised and will likewise be fielded for comment this summer.

These are only some of the improvements that have been achieved thus far. We have also made considerable progress in that we have defined a number of challenges we must meet as we prepare the infantry force for the next century. Close to the top of the list is the requirement to accurately locate, identify, and destroy enemy forces in built-up areas. New MOUT (military operations on urban terrain) training facilities, such as the one at Fort Benning, must be designed to allow the greatest possible realism commensurate with safety requirements. In

training to meet these and other mission requirements of the year 2010 with new technologies, we must strive to bridge the gap between our training media and the go-to-war equipment the soldier actually carries. Any artificiality in training can reinforce bad habits, a weakness that can be deadly in combat.

Sustainment of the Force XXI divisions is another issue that deserves our attention. We will continue to downsize while maintaining a combat-ready force that can execute a diverse array of missions, and sustainment of the force is an imperative that cannot be ignored. As we strive to increase both the number of dismounted Bradley infantrymen and the size of non-mechanized machinegun teams to assure the decisive edge in firepower, we may have to accept—and figure out ways to offset—a corresponding reduction in the number of combat service support troops. Force structure offers challenges that will require our best effort if we are to field and sustain a force that will dominate the battlefield. The Iraqi army learned many bitter lessons in the Gulf War; one of those was the folly of conducting mobile combined arms warfare against an opponent whose logistical doctrine and materiel were both carefully planned and well maintained.

Today, threats to our Nation's interests can take many forms, and we must train to meet all of them. As a result of domestic economic realities and the collapse of the threat we faced a decade ago, we now have fewer forward deployed forces to respond to those threats, and because of that, one of our pre-eminent missions is force projection. If we are to accomplish this successfully, we must achieve—and maintain—an over-matching capability in lethality, survivability, and the sustainability of our deploying forces and their command and control assets. And to do this, we must train even at a time when we are challenged to do more with less.

This, therefore, is the state of the U.S. Infantry as we approach the end of the 20th Century. The United States Army and the fighting spirit of the American infantryman have sustained our great Nation for more than 220 years, as her defender in time of war and an instrument of her foreign policy in time of peace, even in those times when no external threat was readily apparent. As I mentioned earlier, force projection will remain one of our major missions; today the U.S. infantryman stands as the centerpiece of our force projection Army. We owe it to him to ensure that he is the best trained, best equipped, and best supported fighter on the battlefield. We have done this in the past, and we must continue to do it in the future, even in times as austere as these. We have seen lean years before, and we shall see them again, but we must sustain the pace of modernization and readiness if we are to perform the missions entrusted to us. The stakes are far too high for us to do otherwise.