
Defense Report

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The Army's Bradley Fighting Vehicle—Loved by the Troops; Praised by Congress

In the halls of Congress, budget time is always open season on anything military, but the attacks on the Army's Bradley Fighting Vehicle during the budget hearings this year—especially in the House—were particularly fallacious. Many arguments proffered by self-professed military "reformers" ignored the known and published facts concerning one of the keystones of the Army's modernization effort.

Thus it was heartening to the Army to find an effective rebuttal to this Bradley-bashing hyperbole printed in the Senate Armed Services Committee's report on the FY 1987 Defense Authorization Bill. That report states:

"During the past year the Bradley has been criticized as unsafe for use in combat, and the Army has been criticized for failing to test adequately the vulnerabilities of the vehicle. The Committee believes these charges are misplaced and that viewed in proper context, the Bradley is survivable and makes an essential contribution to our maneuver forces.

"In response to the Bradley's critics, the committee notes that no battlefield system (not even a tank) is invulnerable. Battlefield survivability is not solely a function of armor, munitions storage and spall liners, but also is heavily influenced by speed, agility, firepower and tactics. In each of these areas the Bradley is far superior to its predecessor, the M-113."

The Senate report was followed shortly by the House Armed Services Committee report on the same bill which added: "The Bradley provides superior firepower, mobility, night-fighting capability and survivability as compared to its predecessor, the M-113 armored personnel carrier.

"The committee strongly supports the procurement of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle to meet the Army's requirement for the mechanized infantry forces. After an extensive series of hearings and considerable debate, the committee found that no reasonable alternatives exist that will provide equivalent battlefield capabilities at comparable costs."

The Bradley Fighting Vehicle is performing at or exceeding design specifications and deserves the continued support and confidence of both Armed Services Committees.