

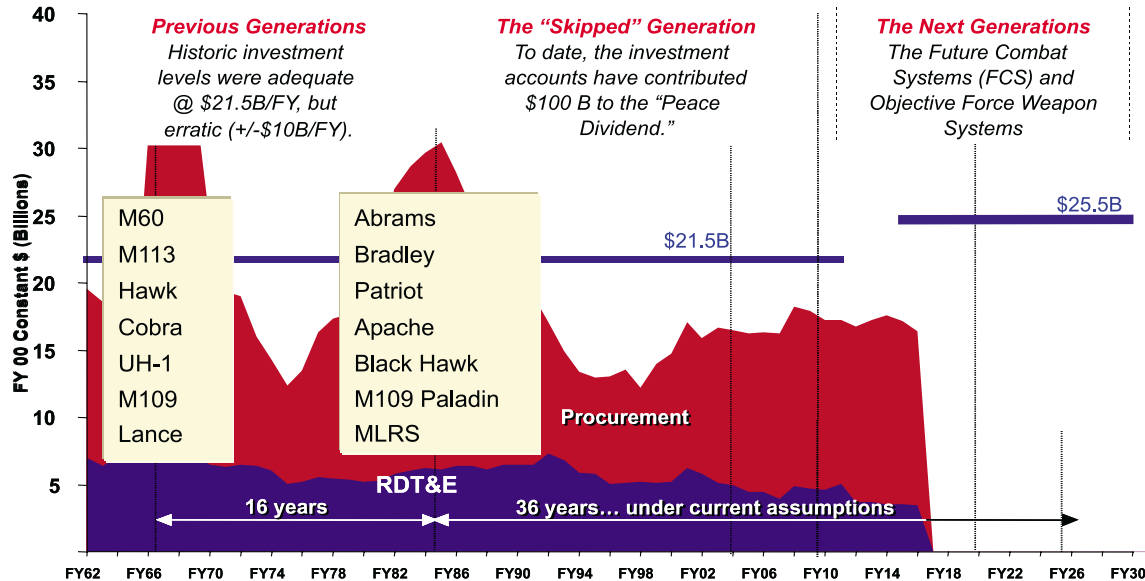


Skipping a Generation of Weapons — A Bad Idea

The Army Has **Already** Skipped a Generation of Weapons

During the 1990s, the Army's modernization consisted of only upgrades and technology insertion, not new platforms!

- M1 Abrams → M1A2
- M2/3 Bradley → M2A2
- AH-64A Apache → AH-64D
- UH-60A Black Hawk → UH-60L
- Patriot Missile → PAC-2



Current systems—Abrams, Apache, Bradley, Black Hawk, Patriot—are upgrades of older platforms designed in the 1970s and 1980s.

The upgraded M109 Paladin tube artillery system was originally designed in the 1950s!

We Can't Risk Skipping **Another** Generation of Weapons —Don't Run Before You Can Walk!

"Skipping a Generation of Weapons" — *what does this proposal really mean?*

- The proposal assumes our current equipment and forces are sufficient to handle any threat in the near- to mid-term (10-15 years).
- Therefore, we should scrap many new weapon programs and pour those funds into developing the "next" generation of weapons to arm our forces beyond 2015.
- For the Army, this cancels or severely cuts the Crusader Artillery System, Comanche helicopter and vital digitization programs.



As the Army transforms, many new weapons and technologies are bridges to the fully transformed Objective Force; they will teach us how to organize, equip and operate a Network-Centric Force.

- We must learn to "walk" before we try to "run" with complex next-generation technology.
- Comanche, Crusader, and upgrades to the M1 and M2/3 are essential technology bridges to Objective Force weapons and command, control, information and intelligence systems.

more . . .

This is the second of a series of discussion papers on key strategic issues relevant to the U.S. Army's transformation to the Objective Force.

ISSUE 2: Risks of Skipping Another Generation of Weapons



Skipping a Generation of Weapons (continued)

Bridging the Gap to the Objective Force

New weapons and technology are essential to maintaining combat overmatch until the Objective Force is a reality.

- Crusader—A quantum leap in indirect fire capability
- Comanche—The eyes and ears of the Legacy and Objective Forces
- M1 and M2/3 upgrades—Maintaining our edge over all potential adversaries



While current U.S. weapons were vastly superior to most threats in 1991, other nations have upgraded and will continue to upgrade their weapons. To blindly assume that the superiority of 1991 will continue through 2015 is dangerous. The Army must continue to upgrade current weapons until the Objective Force is a reality. Failure to do so will needlessly place American soldiers at risk.



By 2010 many potential adversaries will have combat systems that will overmatch U.S. equipment if these new systems and upgrades are not fielded.

The Costs of Skipping Another Generation

Advocates of skipping a generation assume our current weapons are “good enough” to get the job done while we divert billions into the follow-on generation of weapons, but there are important costs to consider.

The Cost in Lives:

“Good enough” thinking costs lives — The Sherman tank in World War II was known to be inferior to enemy tanks but was thought to be “good enough” to win. As a result, thousands of crewmen lost their lives fighting in an inferior vehicle. This should never happen again. Our soldiers deserve the best equipment we can field.

The Cost in Effort:

Older equipment is much harder to maintain, requiring more manhours — We are already overworking our maintenance force, and this will only get worse.

The Cost in Funding:

Older equipment is more expensive to maintain and operate — Older equipment requires more work to keep it ready, breaks down more often, and takes more money to fix when it fails.

The Army has already skipped one generation of weapons. Skipping another generation of modernization also skips a generation of technology maturation. This, in turn, will greatly increase both risk and cost until the Objective Force is a reality.