



WASHINGTON UPDATE



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ARMY FIGHTING FOR M1 TANK UPGRADE with the hope of converting nearly 400 older-model M1 Abrams main battle tanks to the M1A2 configuration in the mid-1990s. Army Secretary Michael Stone has asked Defense Secretary Dick Cheney for more than \$240 million in the FY 1992-97 program for this purpose. The upgrade would include a 120mm M256 smoothbore cannon, a commander's independent thermal viewer, an entirely new fire control system, and reactive armor for enhanced survivability.

Observers attribute Stone's decision to approach Cheney personally on behalf of the upgrade project to the need for heavy, survivable armored systems to face Soviet-made T-72 tanks. The Army also feels the need to protect its tank production base against the possibility that a planned massive arms sale to Saudi Arabia might not materialize.

TANK-KILLERS RATED TOP PRIORITY as the Army wrestled with its FY 1992 budget. Heading the Army's want-list are the Advanced Antitank Weapon System-Medium (AAWS-M) and the Line-of-Sight Antitank (LOSAT) weapons systems.

AAWS-M, a portable anti-armor missile, is billed by the Army and its developers (Texas Instruments' Defense Systems and Electronics Group, Lewisville, TX, and Martin Marietta Electronics and Missiles Group, Orlando, FL) as a tank-killer to be fired by one soldier. The Army plans to purchase approximately 43,000 AAWS-M missiles in the early 1990s (at an estimated cost of \$2 billion), with the first missile reaching the field in 1994.

The LOSAT system consists of a high-speed kinetic energy missile mounted on an infantry fighting vehicle chassis. The missile has exhibited flight-control problems during testing, but top Pentagon officials were impressed with a recent firing conducted at White Sands Missile Range, NM. The Army expects to spend \$10 billion on development and production of the kinetic energy missile (to be built in partnership by LTV Missiles and Electronics Group, Dallas, and Texas Instruments).

SENDING JSTARS TO THE GULF could give ground commanders an added advantage in detecting and attacking enemy targets well beyond the front lines. Reports attributed to Pentagon officials say the developmental Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System is being rushed to Operation Desert Shield at the request of Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of U.S. forces there. JSTARS is an Air Force E-8 (militarized Boeing 707), which carries radars to locate and track both moving and stationary ground targets as far as 100 miles into hostile territory. The data is linked to ground forces commanders, giving them a revolutionary battle management capability. In one recent NATO demonstration, JSTARS enabled the U.S. corps commander to eliminate an opposing armored force before the enemy could leave his tank park. Army personnel and equipment to operate the JSTARS ground station are reported to be en route to Saudi Arabia.

COMPLEX PROBLEMS PLAGUE DESERT SHIELD PLANNERS, but a partial solution to one of them may be provided by a plan announced Jan. 9. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said he would seek authority to extend the tours of reservists for as long as two years. Since August, almost 150,000 National Guard and Reserve troops have been activated under a presidential order allowing Cheney to mobilize up to 200,000 reservists for a maximum of 180 days. Congress later granted authority to extend reserve combat units to one year. That still leaves the problem of the many support and service people who perform critical services in the Gulf and elsewhere. Skilled reservists are needed to replace all the water purification, medical, logistical and other critical specialists when the first wave goes home after 180 days. So Cheney is taking steps to retain them as long as their skills are needed.

To combat the problem of keeping the supply lines moving between the United States and the Persian Gulf, President Bush, also on Jan. 9, issued an executive order empowering the government to demand priority over civilian requirements in acquiring supplies including food, fuel and transportation to support the military.

DESERT SHIELD PROMPTS A NEW LOOK at the shape and size of the future Army. One issue is Army strength. In the budget debate last year it was popular to call for a 25 percent or more reduction in active duty end strength. But that was before we sent almost 300,000 soldiers to the Persian Gulf.

Likewise, many proclaimed the virtue of transferring major missions from the active Army to the Guard and Reserve. The lessons of Desert Shield tell us we need to review this very carefully in terms of both response capabilities and the direct personal impact and hardship on large numbers of reserve personnel.

Those who favored eliminating the biggest share of the Army's tank and mechanized forces now realize that there are many contingency situations where such forces would be essential to accomplish the mission.

These and many other questions must be tackled as we address the 1992 defense budget. How they are resolved will impact the Army for many years to come.

CORRECTION: The statement on Page 2 of our December issue referring to a 1952 Army - Air Force agreement concerning fixed-wing aircraft weights was incorrect. The agreement was cancelled in 1971. We regret the error.

GAO SAYS FY91 U.S. COST OF DESERT SHIELD IS OVER \$130 BILLION, but that includes baseline costs that would be paid no matter where the troops were stationed. Comptroller General Charles Bowsher broke it down this way for a January House Budget Committee hearing: baseline costs of approximately \$100 billion (already accounted for in the FY91 budget) to pay, equip and maintain U.S. forces committed to Desert Shield; and \$30 billion for the incremental cost of deploying the troops, calling up the reserves and providing required additional support. In addition, there will be about \$7 billion for related expenses such as debt relief to Egypt and for humanitarian assistance. Bowsher recommended that Congress provide periodic appropriations for Desert Shield throughout the fiscal year rather than one lump sum supplemental appropriation, given the uncertainties that exist regarding contributions from allied nations, possible rotation of troops and what actually constitutes a Desert Shield expense. These estimates are exclusive of a shooting war. DoD has not yet released its final estimates of the cost of Desert Shield.

ARMY RECRUITING GOALS BEING MET, according to Kim Wincup, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Refuting a news story which implied recruiting difficulties for the Army, Wincup stated that the Army "continues to attract the required numbers of quality soldiers each year." He pointed out that during FY90 (which included the first two months of Operation Desert Shield), 89,617 new soldiers entered on active duty, exceeding the goal of 87,000. Two months into FY91, the Army had contracted 51 percent of its annual requirement. As to the quality of the recruits, Wincup said it is "the highest since the beginning of the volunteer Army ... 98 percent high school graduates."

Addressing concerns that Operation Desert Shield may impact on service recruiting, Wincup said that elements such as international situations, the economy and national demographics "always influence recruiting" and that the Army has been "very successful" in adjusting for these factors.

NEXT BASE CLOSING LIST is pending the president's nominations to the eight-member commission mandated by Congress. The original Jan. 3 target date came and went with no indication as to who will decide the fate of military installations across the country.

Rumored frontrunner to head the commission is former Rep. Jim Courter (R-NJ), whose term in Congress ended this month. Courter is no stranger to defense issues, having served as ranking minority member of the procurement and military nuclear systems subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee; as a member of the military installations and facilities subcommittee, which oversees base closures; as a member of the defense policy panel; and as a congressional observer at the Geneva arms talks.

The FY91 Defense Authorization Act requires Defense Secretary Dick Cheney to submit his list of proposed base closings to Congress by April 15.

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DESERT SHIELD TROOPS CAN WEAR U.S. FLAGS on their uniforms after all! On Dec. 13, LTG John J. Yeosock, Commander, U.S. Army Central Command, sent a message to his field commanders authorizing "any U.S. soldier under my command to wear the appropriate U.S. flag replica on his/her uniform while assigned to the Central Command theater of operations."

Gen. Yeosock's guidance came in response to apparent misinterpretation by some field commanders of a little-known policy which prohibits flying the American flag over any "encampment" on the sovereign territory of Saudi Arabia. A Florida TV crew witnessed the confusion -- troops cutting off their flag patches -- when the policy was implemented in one location and reported back to the homefront that the Saudis were offended by the presence of the American flag. U.S. military spokesmen hastened to assure all that the decision to furl the flag was strictly an American one, and that it has since been changed.

NATO SHIFTING WEAPONS IN EUROPE to preserve its newest equipment as the Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) treaty is implemented. By relocating 2,500 tanks, 1,000 armored combat vehicles and 175 artillery pieces from Central Europe to other countries, NATO can ensure that only the oldest Western arms are destroyed under the CFE treaty. Most of the arms to be moved belong to Germany and the United States (no U.S. M1-series tanks or Bradley Fighting Vehicles will be involved in this transfer); Greece and Turkey will get the lion's share, with Denmark, Norway, Portugal and Spain also receiving some of the transferred items.

The NATO plan calls for receiving nations to destroy excess equipment at their own expense. Other associated costs of the transfers, such as training and spare parts, must be arranged between the donor and recipient nations. The use of NATO infrastructure funds for the actual transportation costs is possible but has not yet been approved. The timetable for the operation will be announced at a later date.

NEW PEO STRUCTURE FOR ARMY AVIATION was approved in December by Army Secretary Michael Stone. The restructuring is expected to eliminate several PEOs (program executive officers): avionics and aircraft survivability; Army Helicopter Improvement Program; CH-47 Chinook cargo helicopter; and aircraft life support equipment. New program managers will be established for: utility helicopters; the Longbow Apache AH-64C attack helicopter; air-to-air missiles (PEO air defense); and air-to-ground missiles (PEO fire support).

THE FY 1992 BUDGET is scheduled to go to Congress on Feb. 10. Expect a DoD budget total for FY 1992 at about \$275 billion or almost five percent below the FY 1991 appropriated amount when adjusted for inflation. The comparable FY 1992 Army figure will be about \$70 billion. It should be noted, however, that these figures do not include the additional costs of Desert Shield.

Shortly after the FY 1992 budget becomes public, OSD is expected to submit the anxiously awaited FY 1991 supplemental request for Desert Shield. Because of inherent uncertainties, this may be submitted in increments.

ARMY WEAPONS PRODUCTION SPEEDED to assure U.S. technological edge in the event of war in the Persian Gulf. Included in the surge production order are the Patriot air defense weapon for protection against Iraqi missiles; the newest infantry machine gun, the Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW); and the new long-range conventional ballistic missile called the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS), which was deployed for the first time after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Ammunition production has been stepped up for the M1A1 Abrams tank (120mm) and the M-2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle (25mm), while still other weapons are being modified for desert warfare.

HONORARIA BAN RAISES HACKLES among thousands of military officers who earn additional income by speaking or writing on subjects not related to their jobs. The 1989 Ethics Reform Act, which took effect Jan. 1, prohibits officers and federal employees from accepting payment for off-duty articles, appearances and speeches, "regardless of the subject matter or the circumstances." The penalty for a violation is \$10,000 or forfeiture of the payment, whichever is greater. As it applies to military officers (enlisted personnel are excepted) and federal employees, the law has been denounced as unconstitutional — a violation of the right of free speech — by the National Treasury Employees' Union (NTEU), which has filed suit to block its enforcement, and by the American Civil Liberties Union, representing ten employees who have filed suit to overturn the ban. At the request of NTEU and the American Federation of Government Employees Union, the Circuit Court of Appeals has agreed to hear oral arguments on Jan. 29.

On the military side, the Military Coalition (of which AUSA is a member) is addressing the issue, and AUSA has contacted several members of Congress about possible modification of the ban. The Retired Officers Association is also considering action to lift the honoraria restrictions.

CHAMPUS COSTS ARE SOARING, even as the Pentagon seeks alternatives to the \$3.2 billion program. Just as it seemed that the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services might recover from last year's \$700 million shortfall, the bottom dropped out. More than 20,000 military doctors, nurses and other medical personnel have deployed to the Persian Gulf, leaving some medical facilities seriously understaffed and causing a dramatic increase in the number of military personnel and their dependents using CHAMPUS. Now the shortfall for the current fiscal year is estimated between \$750 million and \$1 billion.

In an effort to bring CHAMPUS costs back into line, Congress has ordered the tripling of CHAMPUS deductibles (the patients' out-of-pocket share of medical costs), on Apr. 1, 1991. An additional increase in deductibles and co-payments was proposed for Oct. 1, 1991, but Defense Secretary Dick Cheney ordered that plan (and several others that would have increased the amount paid by military personnel and their families) removed from the DoD 1992 budget. Even so, interested observers have noted that the Pentagon seems more interested in cost-cutting measures to shore up the ailing CHAMPUS system than in new programs to improve both service and cost-effectiveness — once again placing the burden squarely on the shoulders of the military members, the retirees, and their families.

ALL-RESERVE COMMISSIONING POLICY REJECTED by the Pentagon as "unnecessary, detrimental to career-minded officer candidates and of little value to the military drawdown."

Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, included in the 1991 Defense Authorization Bill a proposal that all new officers receive reserve commissions, regardless of commissioning source. Suggesting that the services may be commissioning too many regular officers, Nunn's proposal directed DoD to study reserve commissioning at the service academies.

Under current policy, military academy and distinguished ROTC graduates enter active service with regular commissions, protecting them from involuntary separation after five years. Officer candidate school graduates and non-scholarship ROTC graduates start with reserve commissions; they may be forced out at any time until they have served 18 years.

Had the Pentagon agreed to end regular commissioning, a longstanding military request to reduce the service academy obligation from six years to five would have been implemented with the commissioning policy change.

COMMISSARY ADDED TO "GRAY AREA" BENEFITS, in addition to post exchange and recreation privileges announced in the November 1990 UPDATE. Now, retired reservists in a non-pay status (more than 20 years' service but below age 60) are entitled to unlimited use of exchanges and MWR facilities, and to 12 visits a year to commissaries.

To use exchange and MWR facilities, retired reservists must have their ID cards annotated with "RET" in the grade block. Eligible family members must present a valid ID card annotated with "RET" in the service member's grade block.

Commissary access requires an additional document, the U.S. Armed Forces Commissary Privilege Card (DD Form 2529), to be issued by ARPERCEN to all gray area retired Army Reserve personnel by March 1991 and annually thereafter. Any gray area retiree who does not receive a card by March 1, 1991 should call ARPERCEN's Retired Activities Division. The toll-free number is (800) 325-8311.

FY90 ARMY'S SAFEST YEAR since it began collecting safety statistics. Those safety statistics — in categories ranging from aircraft accidents to private motor vehicle accidents — are compiled every year and averaged for a three-year period. The good news for FY90:

- o 13 percent reduction in total Army accidents;
- o 23 percent reduction in three-year average accident rate;
- o military fatalities lowest since 1975;
- o tactical training accidents lowest in nearly ten years (reduced 18 percent over FY89);
- o safest year ever for Army aviation, including lowest Class A accident rate ever;
- o 45 percent reduction from FY89 in combat vehicle accidents, despite large number of armored and mechanized unit rotations to National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, CA;
- o 13 percent reduction in privately owned vehicle (POV) accidents (single biggest killer of soldiers), with three-year average for POV accidents reduced by 26 percent and POV fatalities down seven percent.