



WASHINGTON UPDATE



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Congress receives Army's list of priorities for more funds. When Gen. Dennis J. Reimer appeared before both the House National Security Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee in late March, the Chief of Staff was asked what service programs could use more money, if more funds were available.

An 11-page list was furnished to Capitol Hill in which the Army ranked its priorities.

Modifications to Bradley fighting vehicles would have a very high priority.

This would help the modification program of the Bradley and keep pace with the modification program of the Abrams main battle tank.

Additional spending on Bradley and Javelin was also expected because of the cancellation of the Armored Gun System program.

Here is a sampling of how the service would spend additional funds in the first \$3 billion.

(Modernization would account for \$2.1 billion of the spending; the rest would be plowed into near-term readiness and infrastructure revitalization.)

Modernization:

Buy outs of existing programs (Bradley, Javelin, FAASV and Air Defense Tactical Operations Centers) — \$262 million.

Critical modernization shortfalls (Bradley, Javelin, Apache Longbow) — \$473 million.

Night vision programs — \$263 million.

Force XXI (digitization and appliques) — \$148 million.

Combat Support/Combat Service Support (Base Operations, CH-47 modifications, etc.) — \$303 million.

Efficiencies through long-term procurement (Javelin, Stinger, HMMWV, ATACM/BAT) — \$357 million.

Privatizing plan unveiled. The Department of Defense unveiled its plan to save perhaps \$15 billion annually by shifting more weapons and equipment maintenance to private contractors.

In announcing the plan, Deputy Defense Secretary John White said the administration expected support in Congress to change the law requiring the 60-40 split between the public and private sectors for the military's main weapon maintenance.

White said for the Army that would mean a shift from 68 percent of its maintenance work being done in government facilities to 57 percent.

DoD estimates it spends \$93 billion annually for this work.

The department had no estimate immediately available on what this change would mean for the 89,000 civilians and 11,000 military personnel working at DoD's 30 largest depots nationwide.

Joulwan sounds upbeat note about Bosnia. Gen. George A. Joulwan, NATO's supreme commander, told members of Congress and reporters recently that the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia is avoiding "mission creep."

He stressed that international civilian and military resources must be better coordinated to achieve more "freedom of movement" in Bosnia. Speaking to reporters and repeating his message on Capitol Hill, Joulwan said, "If this doesn't happen right, then it's going to be very difficult to carry out an election (planned for late summer) if people can't travel along the roads."

Lt. Gen. Patrick Hughes, Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, told the Senate Intelligence Committee recently that improving living conditions to bolster the Bosnian economy was critical to the success of the NATO mission.

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction termed pre-eminent threat to security. Defense Secretary William Perry said, "The proliferation of these horrific weapons (of mass destruction) pose a grave and urgent risk to the United States and our citizens, allies and troops abroad."

Perry was speaking at a mid-April news conference following the release of a new DoD publication analyzing the threats posed by these weapons, as well as cruise and ballistic missiles.

During his news conference, the secretary singled out Libya for building a chemical weapons facility at Tarhuna as a matter of immediate concern. Libya was also cited as a nation pursuing a biological weapons program.

In the report, other nations cited as proliferation threats for weapons of mass destruction were: Russia and China for biological weapons and Iran and North Korea for chemical, biological and nuclear weapons' programs.

New defenses against these weapons, the report states, include: a lighter weight protective suit, a new device for detecting chemical and biological weapons to be fielded soon and advanced theater missile defenses scheduled for deployment in 1999.

10 divisions are 'bedrock.' Gen. George Joulwan, NATO's supreme commander, warned the Senate Armed Services Committee about dangers in cutting the Army by an additional 20,000 soldiers in the near future and at the same time cutting the number of divisions from the present 10 in the active force.

"To do so would subject the United States to unacceptable risks," he said in recent testimony.

National Security Panel to hold hearing on extremist groups. The House National Security Committee will hold hearings in May on what the armed forces are doing to restrict membership in extremist groups.

Rep. Floyd Spence, R-S.C. and chairman of the House committee, said, "I am committed to ensuring that this type of activity is not tolerated in any of the military services."

Land Warrior program consolidated. The Land Warrior and Generation II programs have been consolidated to achieve efficiency in projects that "became closer than originally envisioned."

Land Warrior was going to integrate existing technology into a single system that would be fielded in 2000. Generation II was to bring new technologies to the Land Warrior program.

Funding for the two programs was \$40.1 million. In the consolidation, that will drop to \$30 million.

The timetable to equip a battalion-sized unit with the Land Warrior system is still 2000.

A squad's supply of Land Warrior prototypes will arrive in November at Fort Benning, Ga., for a field test.

Among the Land Warrior's components are:

1. A shatterproof, lightweight backpack, that allows a full range of motions, containing a personal computer and radio.
2. Headgear with night vision capability that fits over one eye and allows the soldier to see maps, graphics, video images and messages.
3. A modified M16 or M4 with a thermal weapons sight, infrared laser-aiming light and range finder/compass.

The system weighs 75 pounds and costs \$35,000 per soldier.

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Tilelli to replace Luck in volatile Korea. Gen. John H. Tilelli Jr., Commander of U.S. Army Forces Command, has been nominated to command United States and South Korean troops in Korea. The Senate must approve the nomination.

Gen. Gary E. Luck, the current commander in Korea, is retiring after 36 years of active service.

R&R approved for Bosnia deployment. The Department of Defense announced its 15-day rest and recuperation plan for troops deployed on an assignment of 180 days or more to Bosnia, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Croatia and Hungary. Two of the 15 days will be considered travel days, while the others will be considered annual leave.

The military will fly members, at no expense to them, to Rhein Main Air Base in Germany and where they may either remain in Germany or fly to a designated base in the Continental United States.

Landmine policy in Bosnia. United States forces in Bosnia are following the moratorium on certain kinds and placement of landmines, and those forces are only using a non-restricted landmine, the Claymore, that is command detonated.

The Army said in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee that it believes that command-detonated landmines now balance the operational needs of our deployed forces at the least risk to noncombatants. In addition, the Army said it is continuing research, development and eventual procurement of non-lethal types of landmines, ones that stun but do not maim or kill.

China's overseas military sales draw increasing concern. Senior defense officials have been warning the State Department for the past four months that China's transfer of cruise missiles to Iran and the transfer of advanced nuclear technology to Pakistan are destabilizing in Southwest Asia.

The cruise missiles were identified as C-802s and are similar to French anti-ship Exocets, that caused extensive damage and loss of life aboard Frigate Stark in 1987. The Iranians test fired the missile earlier this year.

Math change means slightly smaller COLA raises. In June, the Bureau of Labor Statistics will be using a new formula that likely will shave about 1/10th of a percentage point off the cost-of-living adjustment in military retirees', widows', veterans' and Social Security recipients' checks.

At the same time, because the Consumer Price Index is also used in setting bracket limits for income tax, the brackets will not rise as much as under the old formula.

How soldiers leave the force. The Defense Manpower Data Center reported 256,000 people left active service in Fiscal Year 1995.

While 70,250 left after their commitment ended and 52,800 retired with full benefits and another 32,900 were given an early release, 26,000 were medically discharged. Another 26,000 were discharged for family hardships, pregnancy and death.

About 49,000 were discharged for performance or behavior reasons.

Personnel chiefs want more money for recruiting. The personnel chiefs of all the services told Congress recently that the \$31 million extra that it provided last year helped the armed forces meet recruiting goals and also contributed to a turnaround in youth attitudes to serving in the military.

The Army has the biggest need for new recruits. It took in 62,900 recruits in Fiscal Year 1995, but needs 68,000 in FY 1996 and 90,700 in FY 1997.

The personnel chiefs did not want Congress to reduce standards in requiring high scores on the Armed Forces Qualification Test or high school diplomas.

Health survey finds service members' dramatically changed behavior over 15 years. The 1995 Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Military Personnel shows dramatic drops in drug, alcohol and tobacco use by service members in the past 15 years.

For example, 6.5 percent of the 16,200 participants said they used drugs in the previous six months. In 1980, 36.7 percent in a similar survey said they had.

Prime is preferred option in TRICARE. More than 400,000 family members, retirees and their families have already enrolled in TRICARE's Prime option, the military's equivalent of a health maintenance organization. Dr. Stephen Joseph, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, both in his prepared testimony and in response to questions from the Personnel Subcommittee of the House National Security Committee, said, "The trend is that anticipated numbers of enrollees have been far exceeded very early, leading to slow downs in the enrollment process and even backlogs."

Task Force endorses federal health plan option for older military retirees. A special health task force that includes the Association of the United States Army offered a key congressional panel possible solutions to the continuing problems that Medicare-eligible patients have in receiving treatment in military hospitals and clinics.

John Molino, AUSA's Assistant Director of Government and Public Affairs, summed up The Military Coalition's Health Alternatives Reform Task Force's (CHART) position by strongly endorsing a bill recently introduced by Rep. Jim Moran, D-Va.

Molino said this bill will open the door to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) for Medicare-eligible retirees and their spouses "because of its wide choice of plans and because it goes a long way in fulfilling the commitment to provide lifetime health care to those who served their country, often in difficult and stressful times."

In its presentation to Congress, the task force estimated the cost to the government at \$1.2 billion annually and termed this option FEHBP-65.

Most of the plans in FEHBP offer dental and pharmaceutical coverage as well.

Other attractions of the FEHBP are that it does not bar coverage for pre-existing conditions and is portable from one part of the U.S. to another and even in foreign countries.

FEHBP-65 would be voluntary to join.

GAO concerned over military missions. GAO was critical of the Defense Department and its management of the shrinking military force. Units in heavy demand for trouble spots around the world are in danger of being overtaxed. Special forces, electronic warfare and military police elements are used in nearly every contingency. The available inventory is insufficient to meet the increasing demand.

Navy ship named in honor of Army Medal of Honor recipient. Sgt. 1st Class Randall David Shughart, who received the Medal of Honor posthumously in 1994 for his gallantry in action in Mogadishu, Somalia, will be honored as the first of the Navy's Large Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off ships is renamed the USS Shughart during a ceremony at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Co. in San Diego.

Shughart, while on a mission with Task Force Ranger in Somalia, died assisting a downed pilot, CWO 2 Michael Durant, after his helicopter was hit.

Stephanie A. Shughart, his widow, will break the ceremonial bottle of champagne over the Navy ship.

AUSA headquarters moves — temporarily. The Association of the U.S. Army moved its national headquarters operation to a temporary location on April 1.

AUSA officials said the move to a temporary location for about 14 months will permit the rebuilding of the current national headquarters building. The staff will return to the same building location in June 1997.

The Association moved to 2110 Washington Blvd., Suite 210, Arlington, VA 22204-5711, and will conduct its day-to-day business from there until the new national headquarters building is completed.

Mail sent to the Wilson Blvd. address or to the AUSA post office box (P.O. Box 1560, Arlington, VA 22210-0860) will be forwarded to the new temporary address without delay.

The temporary address should also be used for FedEx, UPS and other deliveries.

The Association telephone numbers, 1-(800) 336-4570 and (703) 841-4300, did not change.