

The quality of the individual Marine is the key to the successful performance of the Corps' mission.



CMC reports to Congress: 'We are ready. Spirit is high.'

by Gen Louis H. Wilson,
Commandant of the Marine Corps

The Marine Corps has just completed its first year of a third century of service to the nation. We now look forward to continuing that service and maintaining the close relationships always enjoyed between the Corps and the Congress.

I am pleased to present the second of my annual reports on the posture, plans, and programs of the Marine Corps, highlighting matters of principal responsibility and concern in connection with the roles and missions as prescribed by the law. The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Navy have presented their reports. My statement complements and

fully supports their positions.

The primary mission of the Marine Corps is to provide air and ground forces of combined arms for service with the fleets. That mission and our ability to fulfill it give our naval forces the capability of projecting combat power on short notice to protect the nation's interests anywhere in the world. The Marine Corps thus fulfills fundamental requirements of the forward defense strategy of the United States.

That primary mission is the basis for all planning, programming, and budgeting for the structure of the Marine Corps. Geopolitical and strategic realities dictate that the Corps maintain a highly responsive capability to deploy rapidly to any part of the world where U.S. interests are threatened. To do that, the Marine Corps must structure its forces for strategic mobility and high intensity combat. Those ends are realized by closely integrating the capabilities of organic and aviation weapons with external air support and naval gunfire.

• To be responsive to the mission you have directed, we Marines emphasize certain fundamentals. *Operational readiness* is the key, and during the past year it has been my top priority. All major commands are now substantially ready for combat, and the Corps is prepared today to demonstrate that readiness whenever called.

• Versatility is another fundamental. The principle of task organization provides the versatility which allows a Marine air-ground task force to develop the necessary combat power to oppose and defeat well equipped enemy forces in any combat environment, as well as perform "such other duties as the President may direct." In addition, both our ground and aviation forces have a tactical nuclear capability. All of these capabilities are

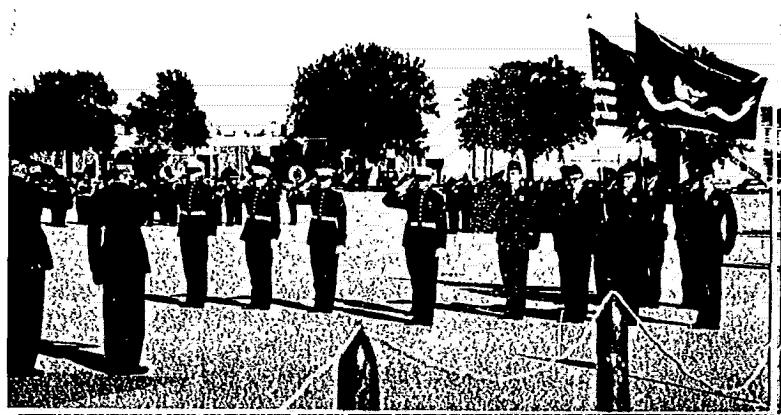
exercised frequently with the other three services and our allies in regularly scheduled joint and combined training operations.

• The third fundamental and most unique characteristic of the Marine Corps is the total integration of Marine capabilities into an air-ground team. Training as a team ensures combat coordination in applying air and ground weapons systems in support of the ground-gaining, fighting elements.

Marine forces make direct contributions to our national security requirements. The strategy of the United States is characterized as a forward defense strategy based upon a foreign policy which reflects our overseas interests. The current strategic concept requires general purpose forces that can deploy rapidly and fight in any environment against a wide range of possible foes. That strategy envisions two main centers of strength, Western Europe and Northeastern Asia, and requires forces flexible enough to join the defense of NATO Europe in a major war, and to deal simultaneously with the worldwide aspects of such a war together with a minor conflict elsewhere.

This strategic concept obviously requires naval forces for sea control and power projection. For those roles, Marine forces provide a major capability for forcible entry at a place and time of our choosing, and they can deploy rapidly to reinforce prepositioned U.S. or allied forces overseas. Marines can move rapidly to and remain poised in any area of interest without automatic commitment. Of significant tactical importance, moreover, the enemy is compelled to dedicate large portions of his forces to defend against this threat. That comprehensive capability, then, and our inherent versatility to conduct a wide variety of operations in humanitarian assistance (*Mayaguez* rescue), international reassurance (the

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recent AV-8 operation in Kenya), and evacuation of U.S. citizens living abroad, lend a significant dimension to the resources available to the national command authority, whatever the contingency situation.

The basic Marine Corps peacetime structure of three active and one reserve division-wing teams provides effective support for national security requirements. United States contingency requirements encompass the two major ocean areas and their littorals. The current disposition and deployment of Fleet Marine Forces reflect our maritime orientation and enhance our capability for rapid, effective response.

One of our three active division-wing teams is based on the East Coast, ready to respond quickly to contingencies in the Atlantic hemisphere. Another division-wing team is forward deployed in the Western Pacific, prepared for equally quick response in support of U.S. policy in the Pacific hemisphere and Indian Ocean area. A third division-wing team is based on the West Coast, where it can be deployed rapidly to meet contingencies anywhere, or reinforce forward deployed forces in any direction, including NATO.

Among our forward deployed forces, we keep two-thirds of a division-wing team in Okinawa and Japan. This high-readiness force consists of about 23,000 Marines on twelve month tours without their families. Portions of this force are continuously deployed afloat in amphibious shipping. The remaining third of this team is in Hawaii, and will provide an amphibious unit to the forward forces later this year on a rotating basis.

East Coast Marines also maintain forward afloat deployments with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean on a continuous basis, and in the Atlantic and Caribbean on an intermittent basis.

In view of the increasing concern about a possible European conflict, it is appropriate to mention our possible involvement in that area. As you know, the concept of Marine Corps participation in NATO is not new. There has been no change in our fundamental role. Our commitment of two Marine amphibious forces as the strategic reserve for the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, goes back many years. Along with the other services, however, we have been paying more attention to our European commitments the past several years for two main reasons.

Termination of the conflict in Southeast Asia dictated a redistribution of forces toward



Radioman at 29 Palms gets a surprise call from the Commandant.

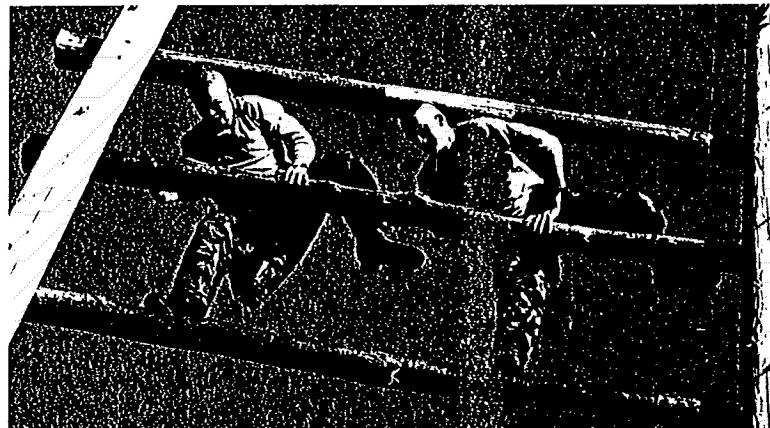
a more balanced global posture. Second, Soviet and Warsaw Pact capabilities in Europe have been steadily increasing. While our responsibilities continue to be worldwide, we have recently improved our capability to respond to European crisis by conducting training exercises with our NATO partners in Northern Europe and in the Mediterranean. Our focus, understandably, is on the vulnerable flanks of NATO. We also see our Pacific-Indian Ocean forces as being highly relevant and important to the defense of NATO.

The basic peacetime Marine force structure of three active and one reserve division-wing teams is revalidated each year in the rigorous process of the Joint Strategic Planning System and the Defense Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System. These processes have verified repeatedly that this structure is the minimum required to support the national military strategy at a prudent level of risk.

All of these considerations, beginning with our primary mission, have had a bearing on the development of the Marine Corps' programs for FY 1978 and beyond. These programs properly consider fiscal realities and are designed to support three fundamental policies:

- Marine Corps combat forces will be maintained at the highest state of readiness attainable within available resources.
- These forces will consist of balanced air and ground combat, combat support, and combat service support units, all capable of

"Our recruits will be treated firmly, fairly, and with dignity."



rapid deployment and operation in an expeditionary environment.

► The base and logistic structure will be the minimum required to provide sustained support for the combat units consistent with possible mobilization needs.

COMBINED ARMS AIR-GROUND TEAM TRAINING

To be successful, a fighting force must be able to bring its full combat power to bear against the enemy. The Marine Corps' unit training goal is to maintain combat effectiveness of Marine units at the highest possible level.

During FY 1977, Fleet Marine Forces will participate in over forty major exercises in the most varied of climatic conditions and geographic locations. In addition to exercises in Europe and the Western Pacific, numerous joint exercises have already been conducted with other services here in the United States. The Marine Corps also participates in training involving strategic movement by air, which is done with the Military Airlift Command. In accord with two Congressional initiatives, we are also conducting studies to improve our strategic mobility. The first is a sealift study in conjunction with the Navy to analyze the feasibility of using merchant ships to augment Navy amphibious assets. The second is an air assault study with the Air Force to analyze the development of Air Force and Marine Corps equipment, procedures, and capabilities for the capture of land facilities in support of naval campaigns. Both studies are to be reported to the Congress on 1 March 1977.

Unilateral Marine Corps unit training is conducted in many different environments, such as jungle training in Panama, desert training in California, and, in connection with our

NATO responsibility, cold weather and mountain training at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport, California, and other cold weather training areas. This latter training has been significantly increased recently.

Marine Reserve forces play an important role in the Marine Corps' overall readiness posture. Marine Reserve units participate in a wide variety of exercises, frequently in conjunction with regular Marine forces. During FY 1976 reserve units participated in eight major exercises with regular force units, some of which were joint and combined. Last fall in Germany, one reserve infantry company gave a fine account of itself with our regular units.

Integrated active and reserve exercises are essential to total readiness, and the readiness gained is well worth the cost. Such exercises are the best possible means of improving and testing reserve responsiveness and the ability of regular and reserve units to merge into an effective and efficient fighting force.

The continuing search for ways to improve our combined arms training resulted in the establishment of a standardized unit training program at Twentynine Palms, California, during late 1975. Both regular and reserve units now go to Twentynine Palms to exercise and evaluate the combined arms capability of all elements of the air-ground team. The harshness and expansiveness of the Mojave Desert provide the environmental challenge and the maneuver area to permit full use of combined arms. The ability to use live ordnance during the exercise adds a dimension of realism not possible at other facilities. We are very much encouraged after the first year's operation of the program, and will take full advantage of the potential this unique training area holds.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

Individual Marine training has received particular emphasis this year. As you know, we have given our recruit training a searching review. We included in a separate report to the Congress the results of that review and the steps we have taken to ensure that, while our training remains tough and demanding, our recruits will be treated firmly, fairly, and with dignity. At the Congress' direction, we have established a reporting system that will ensure our recruit training system receives continued close monitoring, and also, that the product of that training meets the standards the nation expects and deserves: *motivated, disciplined, and dedicated* Marines.

We continually strive to obtain maximum efficiency in the training of Marines at our formal schools. At the same time, the Marine Corps continues to use interservice training opportunities that result in manpower, facilities, or other cost savings without impairing the operational skill requirements of our Fleet Marine Forces.

As an example of internal efforts, we are currently in the process of consolidating the two existing Marine aviation weapons training units into a single unit. Consolidation of the two units will result in a manpower savings while ensuring standardization of instruction. The new unit will be responsible for providing graduate level weapons and tactics training for qualified air crewmen. Following successful completion of training, these air crewmen, pilots, and flight officers will be designated Weapons and Tactics Instructors and will instruct others in all facets of their weapons system for operations in a total threat environment.

Considerable training efficiencies at our formal schools have been realized through the

expanded use of computer-based instruction and simulation equipment. Simulation equipment has also been made available to our Fleet Marine Force units to enable them to maintain a high degree of proficiency. Training devices such as flight simulators and trainers for portable emergency procedures are already in wide use within aviation units. Modernization and improvement of these systems continue. Before we can make any significant reductions in actual weapon systems training operations, however, we must improve even further all simulation capabilities related thereto. We are also working closely with the Army and Navy in the development and procurement of combat engagement simulation systems and subcaliber devices, which will improve effectiveness and reduce costs.

We do indeed share the concern of the Congress with respect to training costs and are alert to achieve economies wherever possible, particularly since training loads increase each year. Although some expansion of our school staffing to support training load increase may occur, such expansion will not be proportionate to the increase. The net result will be better student/instructor and student/staff ratios.

MANPOWER

The individual Marine is the essential element of our Marine Corps. It is clear that the quality of that Marine is the key to the successful performance of our mission. For that reason, we are dedicated to continuing the process we accelerated about nineteen months ago to improve manpower quality. This we undertook with your approval and encouragement.

Quality improvement. Improvement in the quality of our Marines is certain to enhance professional competence and readiness for



"... total integration of Marine capabilities into an air-ground team."

combat, as well as make the Marine Corps more attractive for young Americans and, accordingly, enhance our recruiting effort.

My objective is to get maximum quality among our new recruits. High school graduates are the best source of manpower quality in terms of retention, trainability, and amenability to discipline. We have, therefore, re-oriented our recruiting effort primarily on the high school graduate. We achieved 69.3 per cent high school graduates among new accessions in FY 1976 and we are planning 75 per cent in FY 1977. The remainder of new recruits must have completed the tenth grade.

The recruiting service has been reorganized according to the plan I described in my statement last year. Since June 1976, commanders of the recruit depots at Parris Island and San Diego have exercised full authority over recruiting as well as recruit training. That fact, combined with the clear criteria for quality accessions and an improved management information system, gives us a better basis for monitoring and evaluating the performance of our recruiters. All of those measures enhance quality control in recruiting, which was one of the major concerns of the House Armed Services Committee Report on Marine Corps Recruit Training and Recruiting Programs. We

have considered the recommendations of that report and have taken appropriate action. Full details on our progress in that regard are included in a special report to the Congress.

We are continuing our program to identify and discharge poor performers and those not amenable to discipline. To help ensure peak performance by quality Marines who remain, we are emphasizing leadership training in our professional schools, and are providing annual refresher training for Marines in the field.

The results to date in this quality improvement program are encouraging. Comparing the six-month period from 1 July-31 December 1976 with the same period in 1975, our unauthorized absence rate is down by 24 per cent; and desertion rate by 23 per cent; and the confined population by 46 per cent. This decrease in the number confined has allowed us to close or consolidate several of our correctional facilities with an accompanying savings in staff personnel that has been reinvested in the readiness of our Fleet Marine Forces.

The overall improvement in discipline has in part led to a 14 per cent decrease in attrition before expiration of enlistment, which confirms that high school graduates are half as likely as nongraduates to leave before their enlistment expires.

The success of our quality program rests squarely on the availability of recruiting resources. To enhance our efforts this year, we have temporarily reassigned 250 former recruiters to recruiting billets. In conjunction therewith, we have submitted a reprogramming request for funds to support our recruiting goals. I urge the Congress to approve this request. Our FY 1978 recruiting resource requirements have been determined after a comprehensive review of the entire program. This request represents the optimum investment in manpower and funds that the Marine Corps can afford to expend to achieve our goals. I believe that ever increasing investment in this area would be unwise. It would have diminishing returns and would divert funds from other equally vital programs. Should these management actions, however, fail to produce the results needed, it may be necessary to look to Congress to seek alternate means for acquiring manpower.

Of major importance to our quality program is the ability to screen out unsuitable applicants before they enlist, thus avoiding cumbersome administrative or disciplinary burdens. We feel our efforts are hampered by cur-



"...to enhance professional competence...."

rent laws in many states which deny our recruiters access to juvenile records of applicants. Such background information is vital to a proper enlistment decision. I support the proposed DoD legislation which would make the records accessible to recruiters.

With regard to the procurement of officers, we need to make permanent the current temporary Public Law 92-172 that provides a stipend for qualified members of the Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) and Women Officers Candidate Class (WOCC) programs. PLC and WOCC longevity, as provided for in Section 600, Title 10, USC, should not be a *quid pro quo* for a permanent stipend. Both features, the stipend and longevity, are essential if the program is to continue being a vital contribution to Marine Corps officer accessions.

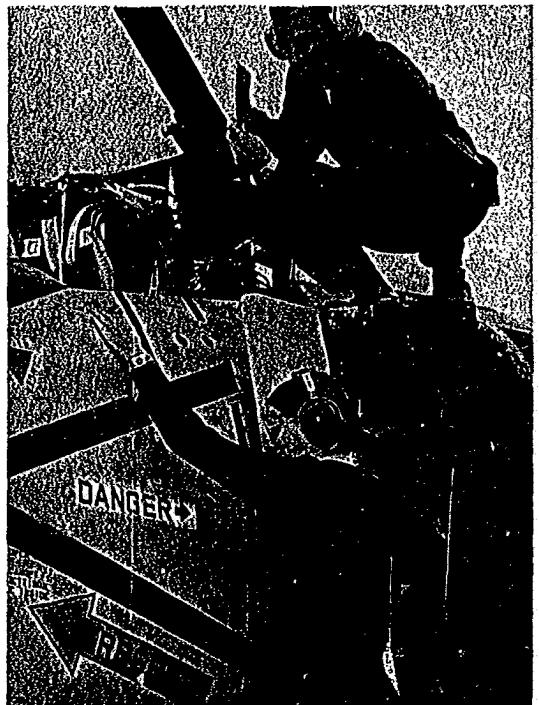
Reducing turbulence. Marine Corps personnel assignment policy is directed towards reducing the rate at which Marines move into and out of the Corps, as well as the rate at which Marines are moved about on reassignment. Travel costs, morale, manpower retention, and readiness are all positively affected by a reduction in turbulence. With that in mind we are pursuing initiatives within the framework of our mission and geographic deployments that will reduce turbulence. We are currently developing a centralized assignment system that will ensure equal allocation of manpower among like units. This will facilitate in particular the manning of units deploying overseas. We are also moving ahead rapidly with plans to test in FY 1978, a unit deployment system for certain overseas ground units in the Western Pacific, supplanting the current individual replacement system. We expect that keeping Marines together longer in the same units will provide better continuity in leadership and training, and that the effect on morale, attrition and discipline rates, training skill levels, and overall combat readiness will be beneficial.

Compensation and benefits. There is a widely held belief on the part of career military personnel that their benefits, which are considered part of their compensation, are being curtailed. This belief causes individuals to have apprehensions about their economic security. This feeling of uncertainty contributes to our problem of retaining the high quality men and women we must keep to meet our standards. Over the years, the Congress has been highly attuned to the needs of service personnel and most responsive in providing to them a very generous combination of pay and

benefits. I am confident the Congress will continue this course so that our young men and women can be confident that their profession is recognized by their fellow citizens as an important contribution to the nation.

End strength. I am requesting an end strength of 192,000 for FY 1978, which is the same end strength for FY 1977. We expect to be able to reach a quality manpower strength level of 194,600 in FY 1979 without increasing total accessions, because our higher quality manpower results in fewer losses for disciplinary and other reasons. I intend to make such a report next year. Within the total accession plan, we are also increasing both the enlistment and occupational opportunities for women Marines.

Manpower mix. The Marine Corps is manpower intensive. More than 71 per cent of Marine Corps appropriations can be traced to manpower. The manpower mix, however, is exceptionally lean. Our combat to support ratio remains better than 60:40, indicating a strong operational orientation. The average grades of our officers and enlisted personnel are the lowest of all the Services, as is the proportion of enlisted Marines in the top six pay grades. Our ratio of officers to enlisted is 1:9.35, the lowest among the Services. In addition, we have a relatively small civilian



"The Marine Corps is manpower intensive."



"Continuing emphasis . . . on mobility. . . ."

work force of approximately 19,900 that is stable, professional, highly productive, and a vital part of the Marine Corps' manpower program. We will continue to ensure that our manpower mix provides the most economic combat ready Marine Corps possible.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES

Last year I reported to you that we were undertaking a major realignment and reorganization of the logistic support elements within the Fleet Marine Forces. This streamlining will enhance readiness by providing more effective and efficient logistic support for our operating forces. I am pleased to report that we have made substantial progress in this effort.

Other initiatives will also lead to further economies. On 1 November of last year, for instance, we established a single office with management responsibility and authority over Marine Corps automated data processing, telecommunications, and command and control resources. That integration is expected to improve overall management in this complex area and conserve expensive assets. Further, it is in accord with current Congressional initiatives.

Another organizational improvement has been establishment of the Operations and Training Department within Headquarters, Marine Corps. The functions of this new department include centralized management of all training activities, closely monitoring readiness throughout the Marine Corps, and of particular benefit, development of an improved readiness evaluation system. This new evaluation system will, through the use

of Marine Corps-wide performance standards, provide a more timely and accurate evaluation of the readiness of the Fleet Marine Force, including reserve units, to accomplish assigned missions.

A second initiative has been to take steps to increase readiness and reduce personnel turnover in our overseas deployed units. To accomplish this, I have implemented a unit deployment system for all aviation fixed wing squadrons. This means that instead of individually replacing personnel in units currently stationed overseas, units will be trained at a home base in the United States and then deploy as an entity to replace a like unit which will return to its home base. Upon completion of an overseas tour, the replacing unit will return to its permanent base. In addition to increasing combat readiness through team training and unit integrity, we hope to decrease family moves, and conditions permitting, afford families the opportunity to remain in government housing at a permanent base while the Marine is deployed with his unit.

MARINE CORPS RESERVE

The increased role of reserve forces in the performance of the Marine Corps' missions under the total force policy requires a higher degree of reserve readiness than ever before. To fulfill its total force requirements, the reserves, organized as the 4th Division-Wing Team, are maintained as effective complements of their active counterparts, and are thus considered as an integral part of all Marine Corps contingency planning associated with mobilization.

As in the active force, the determination to achieve maximum readiness based on quality not quantity of personnel applies to the reserve. To this end we are screening our Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) and the selected reserve to insure that each individual represents a real mobilization asset. This screening, based upon estimated value at the time of mobilization in relation to past performance, has resulted so far in the discharge of 4,500 enlisted from the IRR and dropping 113 officers from the Ready to the Standby Reserve.

Based upon a realistic appraisal of what we can do as opposed to what we would like to be able to do, we have established the following priorities for use of our reserve:

- Filling out active forces with individuals and units;
- Providing replacements for units in combat;

- Expanding the supporting establishment as required to maintain units in combat; and
- Expanding the combat structure of the Marine Corps to four full divisions and four wings in amphibious brigade increments.

Fleet Marine Force commanders have identified units and personnel they will need first for sustained combat. These aviation, artillery, tank, antitank, missile, and supporting units will receive additional joint training with regular units and special logistic priority to insure rapid availability.

Our concept requires early availability of units on the battalion and squadron level. As a goal for our flying squadrons, we have established a capability for combat in one week and within thirty days for designated ground units. Although our reserve aviation units can now meet the required response time, low personnel strength will prevent some of our ground units from meeting a thirty day capability. All of our Reserve units are or will be equipped with modern combat effective weapons, including F-4 fighters, the improved HAWK antiaircraft missiles, M-60 tanks, and TOW antitank missiles.

I am reviewing our reserve organizations and plan to deactivate units if they cannot be maintained at a cost effective strength. Over twenty-five such units are now being considered. We will continue to insist on quality, not numbers, and a creditable response capability for all units.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

In satisfying Marine Corps' needs for research and development, our budget request for FY 1978 amounts to \$61.0 million, about 1.4 per cent of the Department of the Navy R&D budget. This does not include Basic Research and Exploratory Development funds expended by the Navy in support of Marine Corps' objectives, nor funds for Marine Corps aviation systems developed with monies appropriated to the Navy.

I intend to use the limited funds available to the Marine Corps primarily for programs in support of our statutory development responsibility, i.e. landing force requirements for amphibious operations. We will also give added emphasis to joint R&D efforts. As a matter of policy, the Marine Corps pursues unilateral development only when planned developments of other Services will not meet Marine Corps' requirements.

Full details of the Marine Corps' R&D pro-



"True readiness rests upon . . . motivation."

gram and budget are included in the Navy's Research, Development, Test and Evaluation program request.

MODERNIZATION

Force modernization programs concentrate on improved operational capabilities that are essential to continued combat readiness and effectiveness. As in the past, Marine Corps' programs addressed in this year's request are modest in cost and contain no frills. These programs increase selectively the capabilities necessary to operate effectively in potential high threat environments, while retaining fundamental characteristics consistent with our service mission. Continuing emphasis is placed on readiness, responsiveness, and mobility to insure prompt reaction to the full range of contingency requirements. Accordingly, our plan is to maintain fast-moving, hard-hitting, expeditionary forces, each consisting of a single integrated system of modern ground delivered firepower, air-delivered firepower, tactical mobility, and countermeasures.

Ground programs. The principal ground combat weapons systems in our modernization program for FY 1978 are the DRAGON and TOW antitank weapons, the M60A1 tank, and improved artillery weapons.

The TOW and DRAGON antitank system can defeat any existing armor at ranges much greater, and with significantly better hit probabilities at all ranges, than is possible with the antitank weapons they are replacing. We began a five year procurement program of TOW with the FY 1974 supplemental budget. Also we have put one 72-TOW antitank company

into the 2d Marine Division during 1976. We will continue to equip both our active and reserve forces with this system in 1977 and 1978. A procurement program for DRAGON began in FY 1975 and will be completed in FY 1980. Initial fielding of DRAGON will take place in 1977 in the 2d Marine Division. Both active and reserve forces will receive the DRAGON system during the 1977-1980 time period.

To improve our armored capability, 406 M60A1's were procured through FY 1976, and an additional forty-one will be procured in FY 1977. Based on a careful review of our requirements, we are requesting authority to procure an additional 129 M60A1 tanks during FY 1978-1979. These additional tanks will improve the capability of both our active and reserve forces in meeting contingencies involving armor-heavy adversaries.

The Marine Corps is benefitting from the Army's artillery modernization program. Our aging 105mm and 155mm towed howitzers are scheduled for replacement with new and greatly improved weapons. Replacement will take place during a four-year procurement period beginning in FY 1980. By the end of FY 1978, we will also complete a program to upgrade our eight-inch howitzers.

In addition to improving our tank, antitank, and artillery capabilities, we will be entering into a program in the early 1980's that will extend the service life of the LVT7 family of assault amphibious vehicles until 1992. Design life for these vehicles ends in 1982. Simplicity, long, trouble-free life, ease of maintenance, and economy of operation are being stressed. The primary new components will be a power train, passive night driving and firing devices, Position Location Reporting Sys-

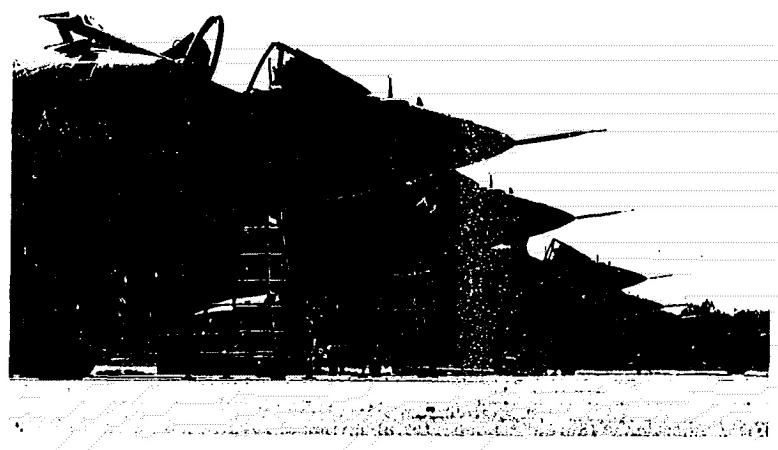
tem (PLRS), automatic fire detection and suppression, and secure voice capability. The initial operational capability for this improved system is scheduled during the first quarter, calendar year 1983. Those efforts are currently in the research and development stage.

As part of enhancing our ability to operate in cold climates, we are also taking steps to improve our materiel readiness by increasing the quantities of cold weather clothing and equipment we have on hand. In this regard, we are also exploring the possibility of developing improved items of cold weather clothing for the future.

Aviation programs. In our aviation modernization and procurement programs, we intend to improve the mission capabilities necessary to successfully survive and fight in the increasingly sophisticated air environment. At the same time we are seeking to enhance reliability and maintainability by avoiding unnecessary complexity. We believe we can achieve these goals through careful application of lessons learned from our past and present weapons systems and from cautious but positive steps into new technology. Our procurement and modernization efforts to this end are balanced throughout the various functional areas of Marine Aviation.

Offensive air support. In 1971, with the introduction of the AV-8A, we took a significant step toward freeing our light attack forces from the less flexible and expensive logistics encumbrances of catapults, arresting gear, and large airfields. Our experience in operating the off-the-shelf VSTOL AV-8A has convinced us that the operational flexibility offered by VSTOL warrants further exploitation. The AV-8A is complemented in our present light attack force by the A-4M. Both the

"In 1983 the aging AV-8A force will begin to be replaced. . . ."



AV-8A and A-4M programs contain provisions for service life capabilities which ensure their viability until the early 1980's.

In 1983 the aging A-4M and AV-8A force will begin to be replaced by the V/STOL AV-8B as our next step toward an all-VSTOL light attack force. The AV-8B is designed on experience gained with the AV-8A and will provide better range and payload than either the AV-8A or A-4M. Currently in the prototype development phase, full scale YAV-8B wind tunnel tests have been completed and have exceeded all performance testing goals.

The Marine Corps' all-weather medium attack force will continue to consist of A-6E aircraft. The A-6E will gradually be updated with the Target Recognition and Attack Multi-sensor (TRAM) modification which will include infrared sensors and laser ranging and designating capabilities to further improve our abilities to provide close support to the Marine rifleman under conditions of reduced visibility, darkness, and inclement weather.

We are also working toward arming our attack and fighter/attack aircraft with precision guided munitions. To this end our authorization request includes funding for the laser MAVERICK missile currently being developed by the Air Force.

Antiair warfare. In conjunction with Army procurement of the hand-held Stinger Missile System, we plan to modernize our ground-to-air defense systems, and will continue with improvements to our HAWK missile system. The aging F-4J fighter/attack aircraft are programmed for reliability, maintainability, and performance improvements, which will be done through the F-4J conversion in lieu of Procurement Program (CILOP). Among the F-4 improvements are an updated radar, smokeless engines, and maneuvering slats. These aircraft will be replaced by the F-18 in the mid 1980's.

Assault support. The range and lift capabilities of our assault support helicopter force will have an added dimension with the planned introduction of the CH-53E Heavy Lift Helicopter. The CH-53E will have the capability of lifting sixteen tons as compared to eight tons with the CH-53D, thus enabling us to transport by helicopter about 93 per cent of the total combat essential equipment used by a division. Further, ongoing CILOP updates for our CH-46 and CH-53 transport helicopters and KC-130 aerial refuelers will ensure useful combat lives to the 1980's of these assault aircraft. The transport helicopters will

be escorted by AH-1T attack helicopters, some of which will be equipped with the TOW missile and night vision improvement devices.

Air reconnaissance and tactical electronics warfare. Department of the Navy appropriation and authorization requests will permit the Marine Corps to complete current programs for service life extensions and a systems update for our multisensor reconnaissance aircraft, the RF-4B, as well as provide it with a real-time data link capability. These programs will support commonality between Air Force and Marine RF-4 systems. Further, these requests will permit us to complete the Night Observation System (NOS) modification to one half of our OV-10 observation aircraft. As an extension of another active program, the Marine Corps tactical electronic warfare force will, during the period FY 1977-1980, move from the aging EA-6A to the more capable EA-6B aircraft.

Control of aircraft and missiles. The rapid response times demanded in contemporary warfare have necessitated automating, where appropriate and feasible, our air command and control system as well as modernizing our aviation radar systems. A portion of the Marine Corps' procurement funding request is devoted to modernizing this equipment.

NAVY PROGRAMS OF MAJOR INTEREST TO THE MARINE CORPS

Since the Navy and Marine Corps share the amphibious mission, it is appropriate for me to express my strong support for programs involving Navy amphibious force structure.

In a broader sense, however, the Navy-Marine Corps amphibious team is an integral part of a yet larger entity—the total naval force. Amphibious forces are vital factors in both the sea control and power projection roles. For an amphibious assault to be successful, we must have firm and positive command of the sea—including surface, subsurface, and air—in the amphibious objective area and in the sea approaches thereto. Obviously, that requires strength in many types of naval forces. Accordingly, I share the desire of the Secretary of the Navy and Chief of Naval Operations for a balanced fleet and increased Navy force levels.

The acquisition of amphibious assault shipping is a program of vital interest to the Marine Corps. To meet the requirements of our national military strategy at a prudent level of risk, amphibious shipping sufficient to trans-

	(\$ In Millions)	
	FY 1977	FY 1978
Military Personnel, Marine Corps (MPMC)	\$1,909.5	\$1,923.0
Reserve Personnel, Marine Corps (RPMC)	78.2	78.7
Operation & Maintenance, Marine Corps (O&MMC)	605.4	636.2
Operation & Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve (O&MMCR)	15.1	16.9
Marine Corps Stock Fund (MCSF)	6.2	1.9
Procurement, Marine Corps (PMC)	319.8	460.0
Totals	\$2,934.2	\$3,116.7

Figure 1

port the assault echelon (AE) of two Marine amphibious forces (MAF) is required. The current capability, slightly more than a one MAF lift, is inadequate. The Marine Corps looks forward to a steady step-by-step attainment of increased amphibious lift capability within the context of an overall balanced fleet structure. A key step along the way must be the completion by 1980 of all five LHA's (General Purpose Amphibious Assault Ships). Another step must be the timely replacement of eight aging LSD-28 class ships, which reach the end of their service life in the mid-1980's. To avoid a critical shortfall in amphibious lift, the new LSD-41 class of ship must be procured beginning in 1979 to replace the retiring LSD-28's. Attainment of a one and two-thirds MAF(AE) lift capability by 1990 is a realistic and desirable objective leading to the goal of a two MAF(AE) lift.

I strongly support all Navy programs designed to provide increased firepower to support landing forces during and following the assault phase of amphibious operations. One such program involves the timely procurement and installation, on suitable sites, of the eight-inch Major Caliber Lightweight Gun along with successful development of the eight-inch Laser-Guided Projectile. Naval gunfire support, available to the landing force until its organic artillery is established ashore, continues in a downward trend from its present inadequate level, and is a serious concern.

A significant improvement for our amphibious forces—the Amphibious Assault Landing Craft (AALC)—is now in the late stages of development. Two prototypes are under construction. This high-speed craft will provide a capability to launch landing force elements by surface assault from less vulnerable positions further seaward. Shorelines not traversable by present landing craft can be thus assaulted and crossed, and a more rapid force buildup

ashore can be attained. The speed of the AALC will greatly reduce exposure time of troops in the ship-to-shore movement. Technologically, it shows promise of being the greatest advance in amphibious assault capabilities since the advent of the helicopter.

Additionally, the continuing prospect for limited numbers of amphibious assault ships requires that we rely on the Military Sealift Command and commercial shipping assets to lift our follow-on forces and for resupply. The ability of the Military Sealift Command to achieve a modern and adequate ship force is vital to the Navy-Marine Corps capability to project power ashore at the force level required in certain major contingencies. Also vital is the near-term development of ways to fully utilize commercial ships in the absence of fully modernized port unloading facilities.

Two other areas in which we are deeply interested are medical support and mine countermeasure capability. There is a lack of adequate medical support available for amphibious operations and there is a current deficiency in our mine countermeasure capability. The Chief of Naval Operations has expressed his concern in those areas, and I am in full accord with his position.

On the aviation side, the Navy appropriations and authorization requests include increased emphasis on Department of the Navy aircraft maintenance and spare parts funding. I strongly support these efforts to increase the operational readiness of our combat aircraft.

FUNDING BY CATEGORIES

The Marine Corps FY 1977 Budget and the FY 1978 request now before the Congress are displayed by appropriations in Figure 1 for comparison purposes:

The FY 1978 Military Personnel, Marine Corps request provides primarily for salary, allowance, clothing, subsistence, permanent

	FY 1978	FY 1979
Active Duty End Strength	192,000	194,600
Selective Reserve End Strength	33,082	34,430
Civilian Personnel End Strength (Marine Corps Portion of DoN Request)	19,910 ¹	19,968
Average Military Training Student Load, Active	24,020	24,701
Average Military Training Student Load, Reserve	3,449	3,221
Procurement Requiring Authorization	\$187.8 Million	\$128.2 Million

¹Includes 18,515 O&MMC, 75 O&MMCR, and 1,320 MCIF.

Figure 2

change of station travel, and related personnel support expenses for 192,000 active duty personnel. With the exception of permanent change of station travel, the Reserve Personnel, Marine Corps request provides for the same expenses cited for active personnel and it supports 33,082 Marine Corps Reserve personnel. The FY 1978 Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps request provides for Fleet Marine Force operational support requirements including supply, maintenance, training, and administrative operations. It also provides 18,016 civilian personnel man-years and an associated end strength of 18,515. Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve, funds are again requested to support training of reserve personnel, for operation and maintenance of facilities supporting reserve personnel, and for seventy-five civilian personnel man-years with an attendant end strength of seventy-five. The FY 1978 Procurement, Marine Corps, request provides for the acquisition of combat material such as ammunition, weapons, and tracked vehicles, guided missiles and ancillary support equipment, engineering, and other support equipment.

These appropriation requests represent the minimum essential resources to provide a well balanced and combat ready Marine Corps. Barring unforeseen price increases due to an excessively high inflation rate, I feel confident that this funding request will continue to provide our country with essential combat strength at the least possible cost.

1979 AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

In accordance with the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Marine Corps FY 1979 authorization request is highlighted in Figure 2. The FY 1978 authorization request is shown for comparison.

In summary, the total effort of the Marine

Corps is directed towards structuring, organizing, training, and deploying our Fleet Marine Forces in order to make the greatest possible contribution to the national strategy. For example, the Congress made available to the Marine Corps for FY 1977 approximately 3 1/2 per cent of the DoD budget. From these resources, the Marine Corps provided approximately 15 per cent of the nation's land forces, 12 per cent of the tactical air, 12 per cent of the general purpose forces, and 9 per cent of the uniformed personnel. These forces, then, provide a capability essential to the security of our nation's vital overseas interests.

Within the Corps, readiness is the watchword at all levels, beginning with the individual Marine. True readiness ultimately rests upon the quality and motivation of our people. I am pleased to report that the morale and esprit of the Marines are at their traditional best. Perhaps the greatest problem facing us today is the accession and retention of personnel of the highest possible caliber in the numbers needed to man our units. The challenge is formidable, but we shall continue our intense efforts.

Materiel readiness is also important. The ability of the Fleet Marine Forces to operate in a high intensity environment is being enhanced by the accelerated acquisition of tank and antitank assets. An area of continuing concern is the materiel readiness of our aircraft, which has been degraded somewhat as a result of funding deficiencies with respect to aviation spare parts and depot level repairs.

Finally, the Marines remain lean. There are no frills in our structure or our budget. *We are ready. Spirit is high.* In accord with the will of the American people and the determination of their representatives in the Congress, the Marine Corps stands ready, as the American people expect and deserve, to carry out its assigned tasks.

USMC