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CMC reports on a lean, tough, ready Corps suffering somewhat from budget cutting

by Gen Louis H. Wilson
Commandant of the Marine Corps

"We must always remember...that our team is made up of individual Marines.... Everything we do must be aimed in their direction, because they are truly what the Corps is all about."

While the missions, basic structure and essential characteristics of the Marine Corps reflect fundamental realities concerning this country's political, economic and geographic relationships with the rest of the world, I want to mention briefly our maritime role in national security.

To be responsive to our missions, which have not changed over the years, we stress readiness, versatility and flexibility, the latter through total integration of our capabilities into a combined air-ground team. By maintaining forces that stress those three fundamentals, the Marine Corps contributes to national strategy as part of the Navy-Marine team, which provides the only major U.S. capability for forcible entry into overseas areas at a place and time of our choosing. Marines can move rapidly to any area of interest and remain poised there without automatic commitment. Of significant tactical importance, moreover, is the fact that the enemy is compelled to dedicate large portions of his force to defend against that threat. For those reasons, and the fact that our naval forces have a global perspective rather than a regional one, the capability of projecting combat power ashore on short notice to protect the nation's interests lends a significant dimension to the options available to our national command authorities — a vital and mandatory option for a maritime, global power.

During my tenure as Commandant [which will end this coming summer], combat readiness has remained our top priority. All Fleet Marine Force (FMF) and Selected Reserve units are evaluated on a regular basis, with results forwarded directly to my headquarters. I am pleased to report that we are sustaining the same unusually high level of readiness that I reported a year ago. All major commands are substantially ready for combat. In other words, we are prepared to be the first to fight. And there will be no relaxation in our efforts to continue maintaining those high levels. Readiness, the watchword, remains our top priority.

Individual training

The Corps is committed to quality in training, with a goal to provide only that training required to maintain the Marine Corps as a force-in-readiness. In order to incorporate new training required by technological advances, we continually examine training programs and replace elements which are not absolutely necessary.

We are evaluating and refining our male recruit training program to ensure that it produces a well-prepared Marine. The program, consisting of 10 training weeks, including one week of mess and maintenance functions, was established following a review of the former 11-week program, which verified retention of essential learning objectives. Further, female recruit training has been closely examined for adequacy. I remain committed to my policy of assigning only well-qualified, motivated supervisory personnel to recruit training in order to underwrite quality training in an atmosphere of firmness, fairness and dignity.

Our greatest training challenge lies in specialized skill training, where we must continue to develop essential skills of our Marines, yet remain within allocated training resources. The benefits gained from reducing our formal training programs and using on-the-job training (OJT) are many times illusory. In order to economize, for example, we previously trained some of our infantrymen on the job. Upon examining that training, however, we found that it was competing with other operational demands. Frequently the infantryman was not sufficiently trained. I directed the Commanding General of the 2d Marine Division, therefore, to develop a formal four-week school to train all of our east coast regular and reserve infantrymen. That school began operation on 1 October 1978. During fiscal year 1980, the responsibility for such training will be transferred to Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune thus allowing the operational commands the opportunity to focus on unit and integrated air ground training.

The Marine Corps continues to monitor other

Services' developments in connection with training devices and simulation systems in order to take advantage of programs applicable to Marine Corps training requirements. A good example is the Army's Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES), which employs low power laser interplay between weapons and targets ranging from rifles to tank guns. Further, it provides instantaneous "hit" assessment with a high degree of realism for the individual soldier or Marine.

We have improved the professional training and development of our staff noncommissioned officers (SNCO's) by placing our three SNCO academies under centralized control, by standardizing programs of instruction and by providing top quality instructors. Attendance will remain restricted to those Marines who possess the best potential for increased responsibility.

Looking to the future, we intend to streamline our schools and better train our Marines for the challenges they are likely to face. The test for our trainers is to keep pace with changing technology in the field of weaponry and equipment while remaining within the constraints of limited resources.

Combined arms air-ground team training

As I have reported previously, our basis for sustaining a high state of readiness is realistic unit training, which molds combinations of ground and aviation units into integrated air-ground teams. Unit training, fundamental to air-ground teamwork, is first injected into small-unit exercises then progressively expanded to encompass division and wing-sized operations.

The Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) at Twentynine Palms, Calif. provides us with an ideal training site for mobile/mechanized units and combined arms exercises. We are able to bring all elements of the air-ground team together there and conduct fast-moving, fully integrated exercises under the most realistic, live fire conditions possible. Both regular and reserve units train at this unique desert facility. Nine Marine battalions are scheduled to conduct combined arms exercises at MCAGCC this year.

To enhance aviation training, we commissioned Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One at Yuma, Ariz. during June 1978. That squadron, which was consolidated from two existing training units, provides graduate level instruction in advanced aviation tactics and equipment to aircrews and aviation ground officers.

In order to take full advantage of the unique Marine air-ground team, I directed that a test of mobile assault capabilities be conducted to determine the effectiveness of current tactics, techniques and equipment in an armor-heavy situation. The first phase, a reinforced company level exercise, was conducted during April 1978. Phase II was a battalion level exercise conducted during June 1978. Phase III of the test was conducted during February and March of this year. The final phase, we are certain, will substantiate our belief that each Marine amphibious force (MAF) possesses sufficient assets and combat power to organize mechanized task forces through the regimental level and project that mechanized force ashore.

Lessons from Phases I and II were put to good use in Exercise BOLD GUARD 78, conducted in Denmark and Germany this past fall — the largest NATO exercise conducted in Northern Europe since World War II. Marine Corps participation consisted of a task organized Marine amphibious brigade (MAB), which proved very successful in combined operations with German, Dutch and British forces. The performance of that MAB against a well-trained, tank-heavy mechanized force validated the concept that task organized Marine Corps units of infantry, armor, artillery, air and the required combat service support can succeed in the NATO arena.

Manpower

Shortly after my appointment as Commandant, I stated that one of our major initiatives would be to improve the quality of personnel throughout the Marine Corps. That initiative was based upon two fundamental beliefs: first, the individual Marine is our single most important resource, and second, readiness is directly related to the quality of our Marines.

I have stated my willingness to sacrifice personnel strength, if required, in order to achieve our quality goals. The value of such a commitment for a quality force has now been borne out. The Marine Corps has been able to meet both its quality and strength objectives. Equally important, however, has been the dividend paid through investment in quality. Individual performance, professional competence and retention have risen, while attrition and discipline problems have declined dramatically. These trends, in turn, are reflected in improved unit readiness.

Quality in recruiting. An essential part of our quality initiative has been developing programs and policies to attract new recruits of high quali-

ty. Organizational and procedural improvements have been implemented within our recruiting service, wherein all personnel procurement assets (active and reserve, officer and enlisted) were combined. That effort and the reorganization of the recruiting service which I announced two years ago has eliminated duplication of effort and improved efficiency, productivity and quality control. Further, recruiting practices are being refined. Standard methods for management and production activities considered essential to effective recruiting are now fully implemented.

During fiscal year 1978, 77 per cent of all new enlistees were high school graduates, including 2 per cent who earned their diplomas through general education development equivalency tests. That level of high school graduates, which exceeded our quality goal by 2 per cent, is unprecedented in Marine Corps history. We intend to maintain the 75 per cent recruiting goal for high school graduates.

Although isolated incidents of recruiting malpractice were identified some time ago and appropriate corrective action taken, I believe the successful recruiting results last year are indicative of the dedication and superior performance of the Marine Corps recruiter. I am convinced, however, that the recruiter's ability to determine an applicant's moral qualifications for enlistment is limited by state and local laws which deny access to juvenile records. Similarly, recruiters often experience difficulty in obtaining lists of high school seniors because of local interpretation of the Privacy Act. Your support of legislative remedies for such matters would certainly enhance the recruiter's capability to help sustain the all-volunteer force.

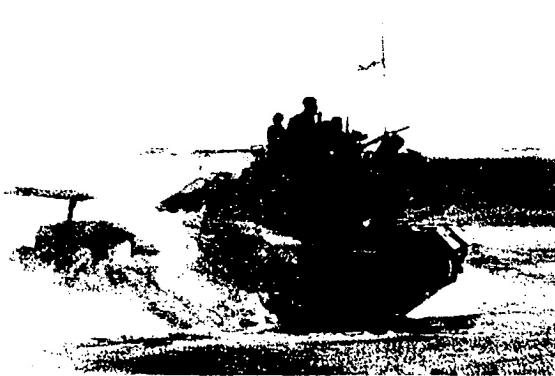
All-Volunteer force (AVF). A great deal has been said and written about the success or failure of the AVF. While in the main the Corps has been successful to this point in recruiting both the quality and quantity we have needed, such may not be possible in later years. Work should begin now to reestablish the selective service system to ensure that it is available if it is ever needed.

Standards of conduct. Selective recruiting is only one aspect of our quality program. We are concerned also with actions that will improve individual performance and reduce attrition after an individual has reported for recruit training. We recognize that individual expectation and environmental factors influence the performance and behavior of Marines. We are, therefore, emphasizing performance-related programs. An assimilation training exercise to

facilitate adjustment during the initial stage of recruit training, for example, has been successful in reducing recruit attrition. At the same time, we continue to identify and discharge those Marines who fail to meet minimum performance and discipline standards.

Results of the quality initiatives. A comparison of selected quality indicators between fiscal year 1976, the first year of our quality improvement program, and fiscal year 1978 documents the effectiveness of those initiatives. The rates of unauthorized absence and desertion are down sharply. The 27 per cent reduction in the confined population indicates the continued downward trend in discipline rates and reflects the 42 per cent decrease in major command special court-martial convictions.

The emphasis on recruiting high school graduates, combined with the overall improvement

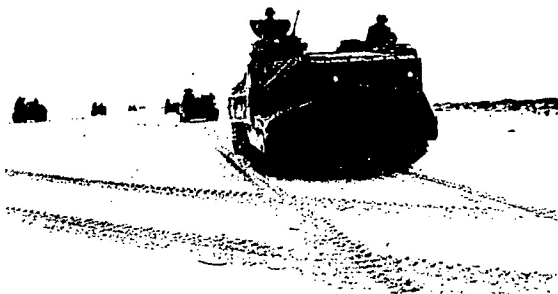


in discipline, has significantly reduced attrition before normal expiration of active service. Over the same period, our retention rate has increased from 12.6 per cent to 19.1 per cent. Taken together, those trends reduce accession requirements and associated recruiting and training costs, as well as increase the number of Marines available for duty.

Officer programs. We continue to meet our annual officer procurement goals. With the possible exception of naval aviators, officer retention is satisfactory. Since requests for augmentation or retention on active duty exceed requirements, we have been able to maintain high quality standards through an extremely selective retention process.

Personnel management. We continue to develop and implement management initiatives which will reinforce the benefits derived from the quality program, a number of which have been designed to reduce individual and organizational turbulence. Last year we began the initial phase of our unit deployment program, which permit Marines to serve stable, three-year

minimum tours in units based in the United States. The stabilized units are deployed from their CONUS bases for six months to meet a portion of our Western Pacific commitments. In turn, the requirement for 12-month, dependent-restricted tours is reduced. The second and third phases of the program will be implemented during calendar year 1979 and fiscal year 1980 respectively. Concurrently, we are improving and automating our assignment process in order to curtail permanent-change-of-station costs and deviations from tour length policies. All those actions together will provide greater personal and family stability, enhance morale and improve continuity of leadership and training within units.



Personnel. I am requesting a military personnel strength of 189,000 for fiscal year 1980, which is 1,000 less than the fiscal year 1979 authorization. Such a decrease in strength, which will still permit a programmed increase in Fleet Marine Force manning, reflects our awareness that the investment in manpower must be balanced with investments in materiel readiness, sustainability and modernization. The real benefit of our quality program is that it permits us to achieve that balance by reducing the requirement for accessions and associated training and transient overhead manpower. As a result, we are able to sustain the manning of the force, while reducing the total strength required.

Quality of life. A final objective of our manpower program is to provide for the well-being of Marines and their families. Our request for bachelor quarters (\$30.8 million) represents 52 per cent of our construction request. In addition, we are responsible for a variety of morale, welfare and recreational facilities and programs. I am concerned, however, that continuing reductions in funding and manpower will force either cutbacks or elimination of those important facilities and programs.

A related matter of concern to me is the pro-

vision of furnishings and other personnel support equipment to meet minimal standards of adequacy. Insufficient funding for such equipment in the past means that we must now ask for additional amounts over a period of years to improve the habitability of our bachelor quarters. Another problem is the real property Backlog of Maintenance and Repair (BMAR). I heartily endorse the Congressional policy on BMAR containment. The Marine Corps will take every possible action to reach the goal while staying within established priorities and funding availability.

The Marine Corps remains manpower intensive. Although more than two-thirds of our appropriations support manpower, we continue to be as economical as possible with manpower costs. As a result, our officer to enlisted ratio, average grades, enlisted top six percentage, and average manpower costs are the lowest of all the Services.

Marine Corps Reserve

In training for our Marine Corps Reserve, we emphasize preparation of individuals and units for rapid mobilization and effective performance with active forces. My objective has been to integrate regular and reserve training whenever and wherever possible.

During fiscal year 1978, 16 major exercises were conducted in which Marines of the regular and reserve establishments trained together. Ten of these exercises included other U.S. Services. Three were NATO exercises. Two Marine Corps Reserve battalion landing teams conducted combined arms exercises identical to those conducted by regular units at Twentynine Palms. In coordination with regular Marine Corps aviation units, the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing conducted a complex, wing-sized exercise on the east coast of the United States. Approximately the same level of reserve training will be conducted during fiscal year 1979.

Our tests of mobilization readiness are designed to concentrate on preparations for the movement and deployment phase of a reserve unit. The Reserve Automated Mobilization Process (RAMP) was tested thoroughly during the recently concluded JCS mobilization exercise NIFTY NUGGET and was judged operationally satisfactory in all major aspects. Now we must improve the system, ensuring that requirements which fully exploit all features of RAMP are generated and kept current.

The number of personnel serving in units of the Selected Reserve grew significantly during fiscal year 1978 for a net gain of 1,744 Marines.

While that growth was possible because of excellent recruiting performance, early fiscal year 1979 projections indicate an increasingly difficult reserve recruiting environment. I feel, therefore, that we may encounter some difficulty in achieving future recruiting goals.

The introduction of new equipment into and modernization of older weapons systems within the reserves continues. During the past year, both tank battalions of the 4th Marine Division received TOW antitank weapon system units and also completed conversion from the M48 tank to the improved and more capable M60. In addition, two artillery batteries have commenced conversion from the 175mm guns to the improved eight-inch howitzers. Within the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, transition to the UH-1N twin engine helicopter was completed by two reserve squadrons.

Our management of reserve forces will focus on the training and equipment readiness of units and individuals to provide the means with which to mobilize rapidly and deploy when required, fully combat ready.

Research and development

The goal of our research and development is to ensure that we sustain our readiness to meet future challenges. The fiscal year 1980 budget for Marine Corps-managed research and development is only \$92.5 million. While this figure is more than a \$2 million decrease from appropriated fiscal year 1979 funds, it will still allow us to pursue priority needs.

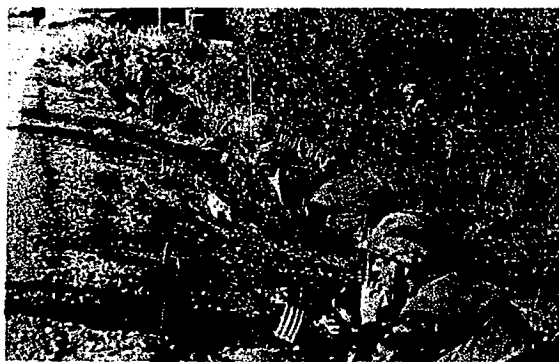
The relatively modest funding for Marine Corps R&D, however, does not indicate the magnitude of the effort. Except for landing force aspects of amphibious warfare, for which the Marine Corps is responsible in connection with development, our equipment needs can be satisfied largely by close coordination with the other Services. Marine aviation, for example, is an integral part of naval aviation. As such, aviation systems, except for Marine Corps-peculiar ground support equipment, are funded by the Navy. Another joint undertaking is our Mobile Protected Weapons System (MPWS) program. Along with the Army and the defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), we are pursuing an Armored Combat Vehicle Technology (ACVT) program. The Marine Corps' goal is to place in the field during 1985 a helicopter-transportable, antiarmor-capable assault support weapons system. This MPWS will be an agile vehicle weighing less than 16 tons, with armor protection and a medium caliber cannon. It will complement the combat power of our main

battle tanks and give us added punch on the mechanized battlefield. While the Marine Corps has a real and urgent need for such a versatile system, Army participation is necessary in order to complete the program.

Other modernization that has multi-Service use is being pursued. In the vital area of command, control and communications, the Position Location and Reporting System (PLRS) and the Joint Tactical Communications Office (TRITAC) programs are notable. PLRS, which is being developed with the Army, will provide accurate position information on friendly ground elements and aircraft. That information will permit greater control over our forces than has been possible before. Two important pieces of TRITAC equipment to control the flow of voice and data communications are being developed by the Marine Corps.

Another example of our continuing development efforts is the Marine Corps Digital Communications Terminal (DCT) program. That program has been developed to rapidly compose, edit, "burst" transmit, receive and display form messages, free text and graphics data in support of the automated command and control systems within the Landing Force Integrated Communications Systems. The Army, Air Force, and other DoD agencies have shown great interest in the DCT program, which we have briefed and demonstrated for them.

Knowing the precise location of Marine units



and exercising control over our own forces is a most important consideration. Bringing effective combat power to bear against the enemy, however, is equally important. In the Marine Corps we will be able to do both, in large measure, through the Marine Integrated Fire and Air Support System (MIFASS) and the Tactical Air Operations Central-1985 (TOAC-85). MIFASS will integrate the complex control and coordination of mortars, artillery, naval gunfire and close air support. TOAC-85 will help in defending the landing force from enemy air attack

and in projecting Marine air power against the enemy defenses by providing a means to monitor and control interceptor aircraft, attack aircraft and surface-to-air missiles. Further, TAOC-85 will give en route traffic control assistance to aircraft within the amphibious objective area. The Modular Universal Laser Equipment (MULE) will aid those command and control systems in bringing effective fire to bear on the enemy. MULE (a lightweight, man-portable laser rangefinder and designator system) will give precise target location and designate targets for terminally guided munitions.

The modern battlefield, characterized by high mobility, accurate firepower and advanced command and control technology, dictates that our combat capabilities be coordinated with unprecedented exactness. The Tactical Combat Operations (TCO) system, the operations system of the Marine Tactical Command and Control System, will be the focal point of operational information at all echelons down to and including the infantry battalion and aircraft squadron.

In order for our tactical command and control systems to operate with the appropriate systems of the other forces, we are an active participant in the program for Joint Interoperability of Tactical Command and Control Systems (JINTACCS).

The Marine Corps intends to maintain global effectiveness with responsive amphibious and general purpose forces. We have an approved Mission Element Need Statement (MENS) in support of our surface assault requirement. We are also pursuing three alternatives which will be reviewed during September of this year. Those alternatives are the Landing Vehicle Assault (LVA), the Landing Vehicle Tracked (X) (LVTX) and the Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV), the latter in combination with improved landing craft. We are making excellent progress in developing a rotary engine which could be used in either the LVA or LVTX.

Modernization

Our fiscal year 1980 procurement request represents a very austere modernization effort.

Ground. The principal ground weapons systems in our 1980 program are the M198 howitzer and the Service Life Extension Program of our assault amphibian vehicles.

In order to improve the armor capability of both active and reserve forces, the Marine Corps will procure 28 additional M60A1 tanks during fiscal year 1979. That will complete the last year

of a six-year program. Improvements in our M60A1's, already completed in two of our tank battalions, have enhanced significantly our night fighting capability. That capability will be increased further by improving the remaining tanks' night fighting capabilities, as planned during this fiscal year.

As a part of the artillery modernization program, the M198 155mm towed howitzer will replace the 105mm towed howitzer as the direct support weapon for the 1st and 2d Marine Divisions. In addition, the M198 will replace all other aging 155mm towed howitzers. We look forward to the additional range and ammunition variety the M198 provides over the current towed weapons.

We have also begun a program to extend until 1992 the service life of the LVT-7 assault amphibian vehicles. The primary new components will be a power train, automatic fire detection and suppression system and maintenance diagnostic instrumentation. The program, specifically designed to ensure our continuous capability for amphibious assault surface lift in the 1982-1990 period, is independent of the R&D effort to develop a follow-on vehicle.

Force requirements for M60 and XM-1 tanks have been examined by the Marine Corps Operations Analysis Group. That examination has indicated that those USMC tank battalions which could be used in a conflict involving NATO should be equipped during the mid-1980's with the XM-1; and the remainder of the tank force, including reserves, should be converted during the late 1980's.

The realities of the modern battlefield dictate that we consider the nuclear, biological and chemical defense of our forces. We are aware of certain shortfalls in our chemical defense posture, and we are working toward an improved posture regarding chemical warfare capability. Through increased training emphasis and new equipment procurements during the 1980's, our NBC defense preparations will show much improvement.

Aviation. The emphasis in our aviation programs has been to procure weapons systems which support tactics on the battlefield and improve our ability to operate in an extreme air defense environment. Our emphasis is on highly responsive close air support, fighter air defense, night and all-weather attack systems, helicopter survivability and single-pass-kill capability, with special attention to improving overall reliability and maintainability.

We feel that the AV-8B, a V/STOL capability and the only V/STOL development in this na-

tion, would provide effectively for the modernization of our light attack force. I am pleased to report that prototype development of the YAV-8B has been progressing smoothly. The first aircraft began flight testing in early November, six weeks ahead of schedule, and is demonstrating performance equal to or better than expected. Regrettably, funding constraints required that the R&D funds for continuing the AV-8B program be deleted from the fiscal year 1980 budget.

Because of that funding deletion, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering has deferred \$108 million of the \$123 million authorized and appropriated by Congress in fiscal year 1979 for AV-8B engineering development, preserving only primary elements of the program. That action will cause the program to slip at least another year and could force eventual termination of the program.

Procurement of a light attack aircraft is necessary to maintain force levels beyond the mid 1980's, but other actions are also required to prevent inventory shortages during fiscal years 1983 through 1985. The AV-8A to AV-8C Conversion In Lieu of Procurement (CILOP), which will provide needed continuity and improved combat capability during that period, is progressing satisfactorily.

In preparing for the fiscal year 1980 budget, we were required because of financial constraints to review our aviation structure for offsetting reductions. Although very reluctant, we were forced, nevertheless, to reduce our A-6E force structure in excess of one full squadron's number of aircraft, for a total reduction of 13 aircraft. That reduction is not only the loss of an entire squadron, but it represents a 16.7 per cent reduction in our all-weather attack capability. This loss concerns me deeply, because the A-6E is the only aircraft that can provide close air support in periods of darkness and inclement weather to young Marines on the ground. As a related matter, the A-6E aircraft are presently scheduled for modification to the Target Recognition an Attack Multisensor (TRAM) configuration, which provides an all-weather target identification and laser designation capability.

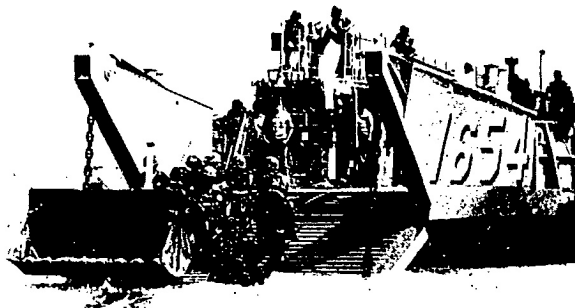
Conversion of the F-4J to the F-4S aircraft is progressing. The first Marine F-4S squadron became operational during December 1978. Introduction of the first three F-18 squadrons will commence during fiscal year 1983. We will complete our fighter-attack aircraft modernization during fiscal year 1989. Procurement of the Army-developed, hand-held Stinger missile

systems will improve our surface launched anti-air capability.

The tactical range and life capabilities of our assault helicopter force will increase with the introduction of the CH-53E during 1980. We consider this heavy lift helo with its 16-ton capability truly vital to Marine Corps plans for the introduction of future weapon systems, such as the M-198 (155mm howitzer) and the Mobile Protected Weapon System. We look to the CH-53E to replace the CH-53D in the upper end of our helicopter lift capabilities.

We had hoped to procure during later years a third CH-53E squadron which would have enabled us to cover a growing shortage in our heavy lift and replace aging CH-53A aircraft. It appears, however, that budgetary constraints will preclude the third squadron.

Programs are underway to enhance the sur-



vivability, maintainability and performance in our existing helicopter force. We have initiated a Helicopter Night Vision System program to give our transport and attack helicopters the ability to operate and fight at night as well as under conditions of reduced visibility. The CH-46E modification program in conjunction with the fiberglass blade program will assure a combat capable primary assault helicopter until the late 80's.

The KC-130 Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) extends the useful combat life of the Marine Corps' tactical aerial refueling fleet into the 1980's. Last year's budget continued the SLEP and sensor improvement program for our tactical reconnaissance aircraft, the RF-4B, thereby improving significantly the system supportability and the night and all-weather sensor capability. Adding a Data Link System (UPD-4) in the RF-4B remains a valid but unfulfilled requirement to give nearly instantaneous intelligence data to the force commander and also provide compatibility with other DoD systems.

Transition to the EA-6B will continue for a total of 15 aircraft. It will be completed during fiscal year 1981. A study has shown that the EA-6A could be incorporated into the reserve structure. Executing that option, however, will require funding which is not now available.

Procurement and development in the area of aviation command and control is concentrated on replacing our worn-out equipment while furthering our efforts to improve our standardization and compatibility with our NATO allies. The AN/TPS-59 radar, replacement for our over-age AN/TPS-22, and the AN/TPS-32 improvement program will provide the Marine Corps with a modern air surveillance radar capability that meets current, approved NATO standards. Funding is requested to complete the procurement of the NATO air command and control system connection capability. The Marine Corps developed, tested and demonstrated that capability, and it has received favorable NATO endorsement.



Although increased naval aviation funding has been requested as part of the aircraft readiness improvement effort to reduce component backlogs at the aircraft rework facilities, the backlog of aircraft in the depot level maintenance cycle remains of concern. A principal request is for continued procurement of the UC-12B base and command support aircraft, which will replace the 30-year-old C-117.

We have a requirement for a standoff precision guided weapon that we can use for close air support. The laser guided version of the Maverick missile is the only standoff weapon which will permit ground forces to provide pinpoint guidance information for air launched weapons delivery from high performance aircraft. This weapon is unique and vital for the support of ground forces in an area of high enemy threat, such as that found in the recent Middle East Wars. We are working now to ensure that it completes its development cycle so

that procurement can be programmed as early as possible.

Logistics. As I indicated last year, the Marine Corps has developed a family of logistic support equipment to provide enhanced support to our combat forces. Simultaneously, that equipment will go a long way toward improving our combat-to-support ratio, dimensional standardization, repair parts commonality, maximum use of commercial "off the shelf" equipment and the ability to use available commercial shipping for contingency operations. The first elements, including improved motor transport items and portions of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Shelter System, have been approved for procurement this year with an anticipated introduction into the FMF during 1979-1980. Full deployment of this equipment is anticipated during 1985 through 1988.

Navy programs of Marine Corps interest

The need to strengthen our Navy-Marine Corps amphibious team is even more crucial than I expressed in my statement last year.

The current Five Year Defense Program shows a reduced amphibious lift capability that declines during fiscal year 1984 to a total capability for lifting the assault echelon of 1.15 MAF's.

Action must be taken now to build enough ships to retain that amphibious capability so essential to our national defense. Should we begin during fiscal year 1981, we will have to build about three ships a year merely to retain a 1.15 MAF lift. If we wait until fiscal year 1985, we will have to build 3.7 ships a year. In other words, the longer we wait to replace our aging amphibious fleet, the more expensive and difficult that replacement will become.

Our amphibious lift capability has shrunk dramatically during the past 15 years or so. The amphibious ship force level has decreased from 133 ships in 1962 to a total of 66 active ships today. Unless these aging ships are replaced, that number would dwindle to only six by the year 2002. In fact, 53 ships will retire in the 12 years between 1990 and 2002. The LSD 41 program, which would partially replace the retiring amphibious ships inventory, has been deleted from the Five Year Defense Program. While future amphibious lift capacity could still be provided, this is an area about which I necessarily have deep concern.

Further, I view the lack of adequate naval gunfire support with increasing concern. Naval gunfire provides essential, all-weather, hard-target fire support to landing forces during the

Appropriation	(\$ in millions)	
	FY 1979	FY 1980
Military Personnel, Marine Corps	2,124.5	2,135.0
Reserve Personnel, Marine Corps	87.7	87.0
Operation & Maintenance, Marine Corps	735.8	735.8
Operation & Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve	19.9	21.0
Procurement, Marine Corps	356.0	284.2
Total	\$3,323.9	\$3,263.0

Figure 1

critical initial assault phases of an amphibious operation. Moreover, it reinforces the firepower of Marine forces during subsequent operations ashore. In regard to firepower, I support continuing efforts to improve current intermediate caliber guns.

As the mobility and effectiveness of coastal defense weaponry and mine warfare improves, concepts and equipment used in the amphibious assault must also improve. Slow, displacement landing craft of World War II vintage are no longer capable of meeting the full range of requirements today. In that regard, Navy programs to improve landing craft are strongly supported. It is interesting to note here that the new Soviet amphibious ship, the *Ivan Rogov*, carries — in addition to helicopters — about three air cushion vehicles which can travel faster than 45 knots.

The Marine Corps looks forward with great enthusiasm to the early evaluation of the Navy's two prototype Amphibious Assault Landing Crafts. The Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC), expected to evolve from that evaluation, will add flexibility and a new dimension to amphibious warfare. The 50-knot speed of the LCAC will greatly reduce troop exposure time during ship-to-shore movement, providing a capability to launch the landing force from farther seaward and achieve a more rapid force buildup ashore.

The continuing prospect for limited numbers of amphibious ships requires that we rely more and more on Military Sealift Command and commercial shipping assets to lift our follow-on forces and for logistic support. Progress must continue in programs involving Logistics-Over-The-Shore, the Container-Offload and Transfer System and the Amphibious Logistics System.

One final area which I must emphasize is the over-all shortage of medical support facilities in a potentially hostile area. The current Alternative to Dedicated Hospital Ships (ADHOS) Study is examining viable alternatives to

hospital ships. It appears that the most likely long-range solution will be some configuration of rapid response medical modules in a roll-on/roll-off form to go aboard container ships.

The Fleet Hospital Program, which does offer a short-range solution for shore-based hospital facilities in support of Marine assault elements, will provide health care through the use of self-contained, modular hospital units and support elements which can be relocated. Twelve Fleet Hospitals or ADHOS equivalents are needed to support approved war plans.

Funding by major category

For comparison, our fiscal year 1979 budget and the fiscal year 1980 request are displayed by appropriation in Figure 1.

The Military Personnel, Marine Corps appropriation provides for pay and allowances, subsistence, clothing and permanent change of station travel in support of the 189,000 active duty Marines. The Reserve Personnel, Marine Corps appropriation provides the same support for 33,600 reserves. The Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps appropriation provides for operational support requirements including supply, maintenance and training and administrative operations for the active forces. It also provides funds for 16,676 civilian personnel man years with an associated personnel strength of 18,184. In comparison to fiscal year 1979, the Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps appropriation has a negative program growth of \$29 million, equating to a real program decrease of approximately 4 per cent.

The Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps Reserve appropriation provides the same level of support for the reserves as was provided during fiscal year 1979. The increase of \$1.1 million in fiscal year 1980 over fiscal year 1979 is primarily to accommodate inflationary increases. The Procurement, Marine Corps appropriation provides funding for acquiring ammunition, weapons, tracked combat vehicles,

Category	FY 1980	FY 1981
Active Duty End Strength	189,000	189,000
Selective Reserve Average Strength	33,600	33,600
Civilian Personnel End Strength (Marine Corps Portion of DoN Request)	19,639*	19,476
Average Military Training Student Load, Active	22,618	22,174
Average Military Training Student Load, Reserve	3,156	3,159
Procurement Requiring Authorization	52.2	99.0
*Included 18,184 O&MMC, 135 O&MMCR and 1,320 MCIF		

Figure 2

guided missiles, artillery support equipment, engineering and other support equipment for both active and reserve forces.

Those appropriations represent an extremely austere program which allows only the essential resources necessary for short-term combat readiness. In formulating this budget we have stressed — at the expense of the support establishment — readiness of our combat forces at the least possible cost.

1980/1981 authorization request

The Marine Corps' fiscal years 1980 and 1981 authorization requests are highlighted in Figure 2.

In concluding this statement, I emphasize that the entire effort of the Marine Corps has been and remains oriented toward meeting the needs of national security. With readiness — the true measure — at the forefront, we undertook the additional initiatives of quality, training and standards. In three words, the net effect of those efforts is simply this: We are ready!

While the programs I have discussed today reflect a readiness emphasis, I must be certain that one aspect is understood. Continued negative growth in the Operation and Maintenance, Marine Corps appropriation will in time severely and gravely affect combat readiness as well as the supporting base structure. Further, a procurement authorization that does not provide for necessary modernization or ignores technological advances will present serious problems during future years. I am concerned that we take care to afford modernization in those future years, for such directly affects our individual Marines about whom I shall make a brief and final comment.

Our nation's history — our very way of life as Americans — is inextricably tied to maritime freedom. The Marine Corps remains a vital ele-

ment of the naval forces necessary to maintain that freedom. Operating with the fleets, Marine forces — uniquely and totally integrated into combined, powerful, effective air-ground teams — form a Corps with a capability unmatched by any other naval force in the world.

But we must always remember the elementary fact that our team is made up of individual Marines, the young Pfc's who must work on jet engines or carry rifles and be prepared to take a hill whenever the call should come. We must never forget that those Marines represent our real ability to respond. They remain the underlying strength of today's ready Corps. Nothing must be left undone in providing for them. Everything we do must be aimed in their direction, because they are truly what the Corps is all about.

Perhaps more than ever before in my nearly 38 years of service, I am convinced that our Marines are, indeed, extremely proud to form the nation's amphibious force-in-readiness. And I am equally convinced that they, according to the will of the American people and the determination of the Congress, will continue to form a spirited Corps, always ready and willing to be the first to fight.

Finally I express my sincere, personal appreciation for the support the Congress has given the Marine Corps during my stewardship as Commandant. Its interest and encouragement in our effort to sustain the highest caliber of fighting force that can be attained for our nation has carried the Corps well into the first decade of our third century of service and has made my job deeply meaningful and most enjoyable. With the Congress' continued support and concern, the Corps will continue to make its contribution during the decades ahead, lending a significant dimension to the security of the land we love so well.

USMC