


Conclusions

Army of Excellence represents a significant restructuring effort. The complex, global nature of the threat demands that the Army increase its capability for strategic flexibility and rapid deployment to any trouble-spot in the world. The design features incorporated into AOE organizations will achieve the following objectives:

- Provide streamlined, *balanced*, and optimized structures.
- Sacrifice some degree of robustness and redundancy in combat units but reduce high overhead costs.

- Eliminate the hollow Army syndrome.
- Prevent further erosion of general support forces.
- Facilitate the corps commander's ability to execute the AirLand Battle doctrine.

Field artillery organizations have been designed or restructured to meet these AOE objectives. With such tailored forces, the field artillery will be able to meet its worldwide challenges with the degree of combat power necessary. 

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Right by Piece

NOTES FROM UNITS

Fort Snelling and the Gopher Gunners

FORT SNELLING, MN—Nearly a dozen World War II veterans of the Minnesota Army National Guard's 151st Field Artillery were on hand at Fort Snelling, Minnesota for ceremonies commemorating the unit's 120th anniversary. Several of the men experienced their first taste of battle in the deserts of North Africa and had subsequently played a major role in hurling back German armored counterattacks on 9 September 1943 at the Salerno beachhead.

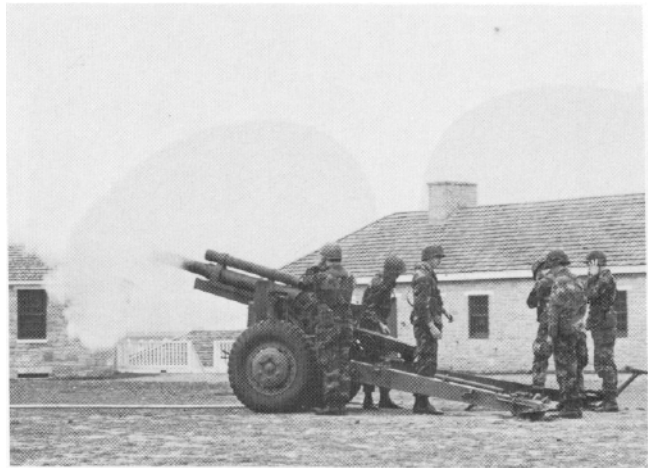


Guardsmen of the 151st Field Artillery march in commemoration ceremonies at Fort Snelling for the unit's 120th anniversary. Crews from both the 105-mm howitzer and Parrot gun teams come together to honor the heritage of Minnesota's 151st Field Artillery.



An answering salute is fired by a 105-mm howitzer crew followed by the firing of a vintage 30-pound Parrot gun identical to those used in the Civil War.

Picturesque Fort Snelling, site of both World War I and II mobilizations, holds a special place in the 151st's history. The fort was the federal government's most important Army outpost on the northwest frontier in 1864 when the 151st Field Artillery was organized from existing Minnesota militia units. The battalion, then known as the 1st Minnesota Heavy Artillery, marshalled at Fort Snelling and then headed south to take part in the Union Army's defense of Chattanooga, Tennessee.



A highlight of the observance was an "answering" salute fired by a 105-mm howitzer crew from the present day Battery B, 1st Battalion, 151st Field Artillery and a second well-drilled crew firing a vintage 30-pound Parrot gun identical to the weapons used by the 151st's parent unit during the Civil War.

Sponsors of the program included the Gopher Gunners, a recently organized local chapter of the United States Field Artillery Association.

How Good It Is!

SCHWAEBISCH GMUEND, GERMANY—Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery continue to sing the praises of the new Pershing II system. The most noticeable difference to those soldiers with the hardest jobs—the 15Es—is the reduction in cables as well as in air conditioning and high pressure air lines. Instead of the crew feverishly manhandling heavy, cumbersome cable and line bundles, they now breeze through emplacement with just a couple of cables that one man can handle.

Platoon leaders also think the system is great. No longer are firing positions determined by available east-west road nets. This system can be emplaced to fit into the most suitable tactical position. Now tactics drives the train and not geography. This has opened up new vistas for platoon leaders who have come up with innovative firing positions and unique platoon configurations. A change in target is now a simple matter of recounting the missile instead of shifting the launcher.

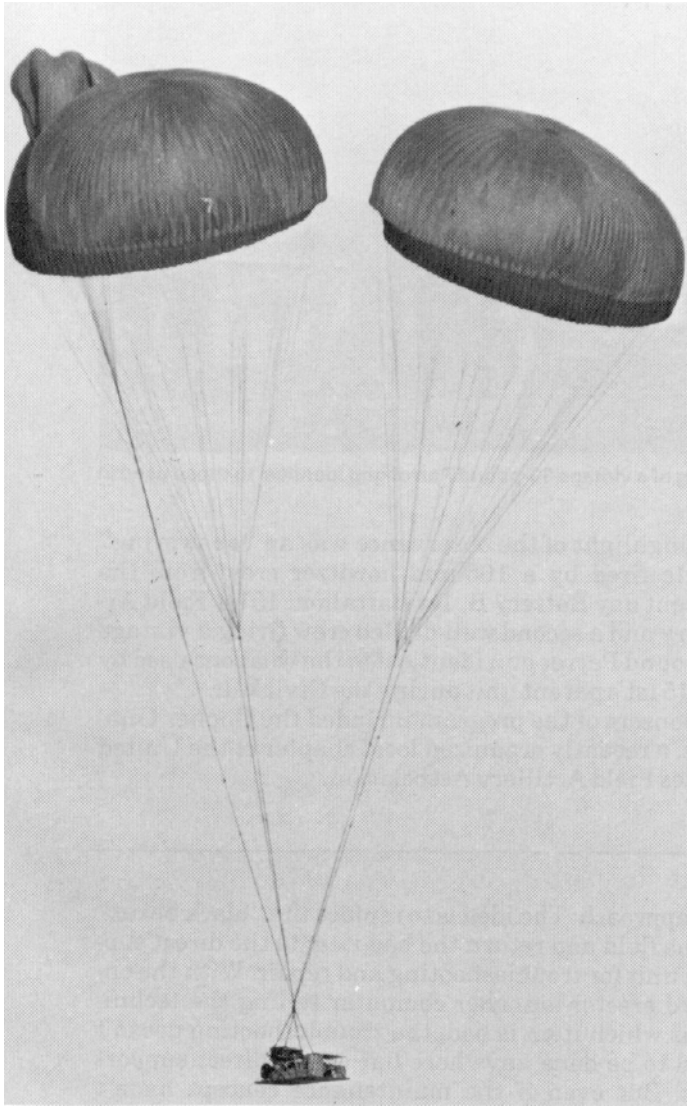
The biggest complainers about the system, other than those on the target end of the trajectory, are the warrant officers! "I don't have anything to do anymore," is a common lighthearted comment heard where warrants gather. The new system just doesn't break as often as the old one did. The maintenance concept for Pershing II is also different in that the approach is now a component replacement instead of a card and module or circuit schematic troubleshooting

approach. The idea is to replace the "black boxes" in the field and return the bad item to the direct support unit for troubleshooting and repair. With the onboard erector-launcher computer telling the technicians which item is bad, the troubleshooting doesn't need to be done anywhere but at the direct support unit. But even if the maintenance concept hadn't changed, the opportunity for fixing things still wouldn't be present as before. Unlike days gone by when crews hoped the red malfunction lamp wouldn't light, countdowns now finish. There is tremendous confidence in the system.

Command and control has made giant leaps forward as well. New and improved radios and a new platoon control central really let a platoon leader know what's happening. Moreover, his platoon control central even has nuclear, biological, and chemical protection for the crew.

The system hasn't been overlooked automotively either. Over and above the new brake system on the erector-launcher, there is a beautiful new 10-ton MAN tractor. The MAN tractor has the power and pull capability of two of the old M75s. So far, there hasn't been one instance where the MAN couldn't pull the Pershing II. The tractor also has an on-board winch for self-recovery, a 30-kw tactical generator, and a crane used to assemble and mate the missile.

Even after more than a year of working with the Pershing II system, missilemen maintain an undiminished enthusiasm about this exciting new system. (LTC Doug Middleton)



With five huge cargo chutes above, this M198 howitzer eases its way to the soft, sandy surface of Sicily drop-zone at Fort Bragg. This is the first operational heavy-drop of the Army's towed 155-mm cannon. (US Army photo by CPT Pete Eschbach)

First Training Drop

FORT BRAGG, NC—The 18th Airborne Corps Artillery recently conducted the first operational drop of an M198 howitzer. The event marked a major advance in the corps' ability to deliver long-range artillery to a future battlefield.

790th Field Artillery Reunion

WASHINGTON, DC—The 790th Field Artillery Battalion will hold its annual reunion 4-6 October in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact either Mr. C.C. Carraturo, No. 1 Hydraulion Avenue, Bristol, Rhode Island 02809, phone: (401)253-8722 or Mr. James C. Brady, 11136 Riaza, No. 4, Saint Louis, Missouri 63138, phone: (314)355-1519.



Members of Battery B, 1-39th Field Artillery, Fort Bragg, scramble to release this M198 from the ties that bind. (US Army photo by SP4 Stephen B. Pollock)

While the concept of parachuting the large 155-mm howitzer had been evaluated under test conditions before, this drop was the first time the cannon had been dropped in regular training. The total time required for the live fire operation was 22 minutes—the time from the gun's exit out of the back of a C130 aircraft to the time the last of three rounds sailed downrange into a Fort Bragg impact area.



Battery D, 7th Training Battalion, USAFATC crosses the finish line with CPT Charlotte Watson, battery commander, setting the pace.

A Redleg Memorial Day Run

FORT SILL, OK—The US Army Field Artillery Training Center (USAFATC) Chapter of the Field Artillery Association recently sponsored the first of what is to be an annual Memorial Day Run at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Over 3,000 individuals participated in the run, many of them as a member of one of 46 units that entered. Units from the Field Artillery Training Center, III Corps Artillery, and the Field Artillery School met the challenges of the 1 mile, 5 kilometer, and 10 kilometer routes. (CPT Mary B. McCullough)



A Cobra attack helicopter fires a tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided missile during joint air attack team training.



PFC Joe Guay (left) and SSG James Winston from the 1st Battalion, 31st Field Artillery use the laser designator during exercises with the Air Force.

Training Thunderbolt Drivers

FORT CAMPBELL, KY—Detachment 5, 507th Tactical Air Control Wing (TACW), at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, recently helped to train students from the A-10 Fighter Weapons School, 57th Fighter Weapons Wing, Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. Post units rendering support in the training were the 2d Battalion, 31st Field Artillery; 1st Battalion, 321st Field Artillery; 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry; 229th Attack Helicopter Battalion; and 63d Chemical Company.

The 61 students, consisting of 21 A-10 Thunderbolt pilots and 40 maintenance support personnel, were at Fort Campbell to qualify five of the pilots as joint air attack team (JAAT) instructors.

The first week was spent training in low-threat scenarios in which the A-10 pilots worked with helicopters and moving targets. The Tactical Radar Threat Generator (TRTG) from Fort Hood, Texas, added realism by creating situations that tested the A-10 pilots' reactions to battle problems. The TRTG imitates four types of Soviet radar guided air defense systems that are displayed on special screens mounted on the control panels of the aircraft. A pilot's reactions to the threat are printed on videotape which can be played back later for evaluation. The videotapes help the pilots improve their actions against simulated threat air defense systems.

During the second week of training, the threat was increased—"Smokey Sam" ground-to-air missile simulators were fired during some of the missions. The A-10 pilots also had to conduct a search-and-rescue mission during which they had to find a downed helicopter or aircraft and lead rescue personnel to the location. Both inert and live rounds were used by the pilots in training. (Story and photos by SP4 John McGarrah)

112th Field Artillery Association Reunion

LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ—The 112th Field Artillery Association, Headquarters 112th, 695th and 696th Field Artillery Battalions with service in World War II, Korea, and the Berlin Crisis, is having its Annual Regimental Reunion from 8-11 November. The reunion will take place at the Trenton Artillery Armory, Eggerts Crossing Road, Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Former members and others interested should contact LTC(Ret) Nick Chiacchio, at Cdr, P.O. Box 5088, Trenton, New Jersey 08638 or phone: (609)292-3852 or (609)883-3871.