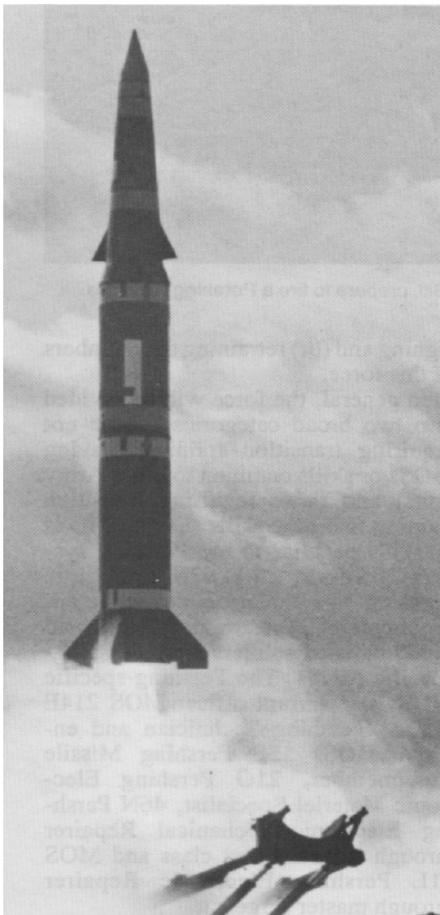




The End of the Pershing Era: The INF Treaty

by Major Daniel L. Breitenbach



The enemy satellite rotating through space routinely recorded the results of another Pershing II firing. Once again, American technology and NATO solidarity had changed the balance in the Cold War. The system's technical accuracy and the political success in fielding Pershing II have forced Russian political strategists to review their options. The strategic game has taken another turn.

The Army first fielded the Pershing system in 1961. The initial system was a track-mounted version with a range of 400 miles. In 1968, this system was updated with the Pershing IA (PIA), which was, in turn, replaced by the Pershing II (PII). These systems had ranges of about 400 miles and 1,000 miles, respectively.

The PII fielding was initiated in spite of internal political discord among the NATO allies. This discord was caused by two separate issues. First, the fielding was linked from the start with the United States' proposal that PII not be fielded if the Soviets would deactivate their own version of the intermediate-range missile, the SS-20. NATO conservatives on both sides of the Atlantic interpreted this proposal as weakening the strategy of nuclear deterrence. Second, the proposed fielding of additional nuclear-capable systems in NATO resulted in a fairly strong popular resentment manifested in both political protests and voting records.

Soviet political strategists declined the United States' fielding offer and concentrated their efforts on financing activities that would increase NATO

dissention. Despite their efforts, the NATO leadership stood firm and fielded PII amid much political turmoil and in the face of daily demonstrations at the fielding sites.

Just before Christmas in 1987, a remarkable event occurred in Washington, D.C. The two super powers, the United States and the USSR, signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The December Summit between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev produced the first agreement in the nuclear age eliminating a whole class of nuclear weapons systems. This political achievement far exceeds the strategic significance, in terms of the numbers of weapons eliminated, and sets the stage and standards for further nuclear weapons reductions.

In simple terms, the Treaty eliminates Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM) in a tradeoff for the Soviet intermediate-range systems. The Treaty provides for a phased reduction for a period of three years from the date of implementation. Signing this agreement completed the first step in a US-NATO strategy designed to bring the Soviets to the negotiating

table on terms acceptable to the US and its allies. The Treaty is the first step back from the nuclear mutually assured-destruction strategy followed for the last several decades.

In spite of the political battles and the continuing controversy at home and in Europe, an elite group of soldiers who man and support the Army's Pershing missile system have remained combat ready. These are the soldiers of the 56th Field Artillery Command (FACOM) and its continental United States support base.

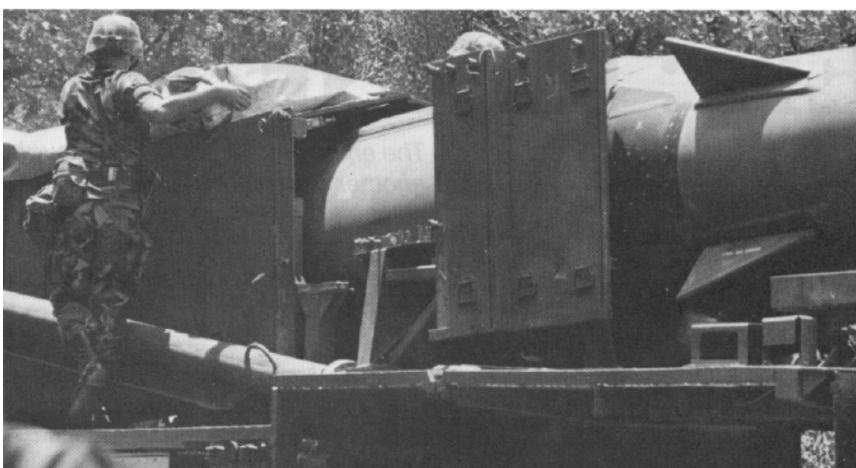
Like their Air Force counterparts who man the GLCM, these soldiers have played a major role in the INF strategy and have borne the brunt of implementing it. They have handled the demonstrations outside their front gates in Germany and fielded this system under adverse political conditions in a highly professional manner.

With the INF Treaty a reality, these soldiers now face a political contradiction. Having successfully fielded a highly technical, strategic system, they now must dismantle it—also in the name of strategy. Professionalism and patience have achieved our national strategic goal without combat, and throughout the ordeal, the Pershing force has exemplified the high standards of the Field Artillery.

The Pershing Force

The Pershing force has three forwardly deployed battalions and support units in the 56th FACOM, totaling approximately 6,000 men and women, as well as one battalion, school personnel and support troops at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. In addition, US Pershing soldiers serve with German Pershing units.

Because the Pershing missile system is being dismantled, more of the deterrence burden will shift to the conventional forces in NATO. A cooperative effort between the Army and US Army, Europe (USAREUR) staffs has resulted in a proposed "conventional force adjustment package." This package includes a Field Artillery brigade with a headquarters and headquarters battery, two 155-mm self-propelled howitzer battalions (3x8), four multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) battalions, conversion of the existing two 8-inch howitzer battalions to 3x8 and



Soldiers of the 3d Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, Fort Sill, prepare to fire a Pershing II missile.

appropriate combat service support units. The package also includes retention and conversion of the Pershing infantry battalion to a mechanized unit for use as an opposing force (OPFOR) at Hohenfelds Training Area and increases in tables of organization and equipment (TOEs) and tables of distribution and allowances (TDAs) for selected units in USAREUR to authorized levels.

The Pershing force is a highly specialized team with the Army's only strategic weapons system. Each member is critical to the team's success, whether the individual's military occupational specialty (MOS) is a primary missile skill or one of the many administrative, maintenance or logistical skills. While each skill is critical to combat readiness, phasing out the Pershing system will result in distinct personnel management actions in reassigning

and (or) retraining the members of this force.

In general, the force will be divided into two broad categories—those not requiring transition training (having MOSs or skills common to other Army units) and those requiring transition training into new skills (having MOSs or skills peculiar to the Pershing system). Some 220 officers have Pershing-specific specialties while approximately 94 warrant officers and 2,900 enlisted soldiers have Pershing-specific MOSs. The Pershing-specific MOSs are warrant officer MOS 214E (130A) Pershing Technician and enlisted MOSs 15E Pershing Missile Crewmember, 21G Pershing Electronic Materiel Specialist, 46N Pershing Electronic-Mechanical Repairer through sergeant first class and MOS 21L Pershing Electronic Repairer through master sergeant.

Field Artillery

Soviet INF Inspections

The INF Treaty eliminates US and Soviet nuclear-capable weapons having a range of more than 500 kilometers (300 miles), but no more than 5,500 kilometers (3,300 miles). The weapons systems affected are the US Pershing II, IA, IB and GLCM and the Soviet SS-20, SS-4, SS-5, SS-12, SS-23 and SSC-X-4.

Under the terms of the Treaty, the Soviets can inspect facilities in the US and five allied countries to determine compliance with the Treaty. The inspections continue for 13 years, starting 30 to 90 days after 1 June 1988 (the date the Treaty went into force). Initial inspections verify Treaty items at various facilities, including missiles, launchers and support equipment.

The continental US has five sites subject to Soviet inspections. Soviets can inspect Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, which have training facilities; Pueblo Army Depot, Colorado, which repairs and stores the missiles; and Martin Marietta, Maryland, and Hercules Aerospace, Utah, which manufacture the missiles.



The Soviets SS-20, one of the longer-range missiles in the intermediate-range nuclear force, will be eliminated during the next three years under the INF Treaty. It has a range of 5,000 kilometers.

The four Pershing II battalions in the US Army are the 1st, 2d and 4th Battalions of the 9th Field Artillery, 56th Field Artillery Command, West Germany, and the 3d Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 214th Field Artillery Brigade, Fort Sill.

Pershing Personnel Management

The most difficult part of the Treaty, from a personnel management perspective, is sustaining personnel readiness during the implementation period. This will require the Department of the Army (DA) to assign new soldiers to units at the same time many others are leaving. Career progression and overseas tour lengths are the primary reasons for this seemingly contradictory procedure.

All non-Pershing-specific officers, warrant officers, noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and soldiers will be eliminated from Pershing, based on the implementation time line, through normal reassignment, reenlistment and expiration of term of service (ETS). Personnel remaining on active duty can expect to use current skills in their new assignments, unless they reenlist for other options.

Because deactivation schedules may vary by unit and location, some soldiers may be eligible for early release,

curtailment of overseas tours or early reenlistment. Still others may be reassigned into new jobs at their current location or reassigned within their current theater of operation. In addition, personnel managers will attempt to fill units with soldiers whose dates of estimated return from overseas (DEROS) are compatible with the unit deactivation plan to minimize turbulence for the individual. Since these soldiers will perform similar duties, regardless of the unit they're assigned to, there's no impact on their career development as a result of the implementation of the INF Treaty.

Officers

Field Artillery officers assigned to Pershing are trained as Heavy Missile Officers (AOC 13C). But Pershing duty is just one of many assignments for a Field Artillery officer and is appropriate career development in troop or staff positions, branch qualifying the officer at the level of assignment. On reassignment, these officers will follow normal career development patterns,

based on the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) II and branch guidance. While no specific retraining or redesignation is required as a result of the elimination of the Pershing structure, Field Artillery officers may receive training and (or) skill designators necessary to assume their new duties.

Warrant Officers

Warrant officers holding MOS 214E (130A) will be trained in a new warrant officer skill and assigned to a unit in that MOS. Some warrant officers may be retained in the Pershing MOS to eliminate the equipment and help verify compliance with the Treaty. In addition, some warrant officers approaching retirement may elect to forego reclassification by submitting their retirement papers early. But they may not retire earlier than the required 20 years.

NCOs and Enlisted Soldiers

NCOs and soldiers in a Pershing-specific MOS will be trained in new skills with individual career potential. Again, the normal reassignment process will trigger retraining consideration. NCOs and soldiers also will have reenlistment and retention options. Like their counterparts in other MOSs, they'll have some early-out and consecutive-overseas-tour options. However, Pershing soldiers are different because the INF Treaty requirements have significant career development implications. Each one ultimately will have to be retrained into a new primary MOS (PMOS).

To ease the soldiers' career transitions, the retraining will be approached in a number of innovative ways. Accession of new soldiers will maximize the number of skill-level soldiers eligible for reenlistment at the time of unit deactivations. This will let the individual soldier select a new skill from all available training at the time of reenlistment. Mid-term and career soldiers are being interviewed individually by DA personnel managers to identify new career fields that offer advancement opportunities and maximize the individual's potential.

Some of these soldiers already have entered training, even though they'll serve another tour in Pershing. This pre-training is an example of personnel management actions to provide the

maximum career opportunities to soldiers and to ease their transition. Some NCOs approaching retirement may elect to forego reclassification by submitting their retirement papers early. But they may not retire earlier than the required 20 years.

The MLRS and 13B Cannon Crewmember specialties are the MOSs Pershing soldiers' skills most easily transfer to within the Field Artillery. The MLRS MOSs are 13M Crewmember, 13P Fire Direction Specialist and 27M Repairer. However, personnel managers will consider the soldiers' preferences and the needs of the MOS before reclassifying them into one of those MOSs.

The eventual elimination of Pershing MOSs reduces the number of Field Artillery specialties available to women soldiers. The MLRS and 13B MOSs are in direct-combat units; therefore, women soldiers are barred from those MOSs. They also are barred from working in units with fire support equipment that could be in close combat. At this time, the only Field Artillery MOSs available for women soldiers' reclassification are 13N Lance Missile Crewmember and 93F Meteorological Crewmember.

The reclassification program won't harm soldiers' chances for promotion. Eligible Pershing soldiers will be integrated into the promotion lists of their new MOSs for consideration.

Career transition is a significant event, and all soldiers in a Pershing-specific

MOS have individual counseling available through their career branches at DA, as well as from their unit personnel officers. The appropriate career branches at DA are maintaining individual counseling sheets on mid-term and career soldiers.

These counseling sheets were completed during DA visits to Pershing units conducted for the past eight months. Visits will continue throughout the implementation period of the INF Treaty, but soldiers may complete an interview sheet through their unit personnel officers or by telephoning their respective career branches. The interview format identifies the soldier's desires, individual qualifications and career performance trends, matching all against other Army skills for maximum performance and individual success.

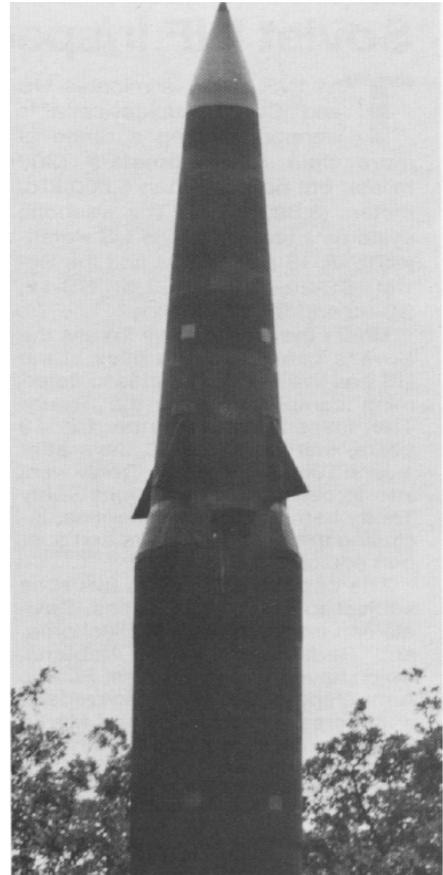
Details of the transition are spelled out in the *Total Army Personnel Agency's (TAPA's) Pershing Career Development, Retraining and Reclassification, and Sustainment Plan* that guides commanders and managers. Soldiers can get more information about the Plan through their post Adjutant General's office or their installation commander.

Conclusion

The INF Treaty follows a very specific, lengthy time line that allows both the United States and the Soviets to eliminate the missiles and to verify that each has done so. Consequently, the national interest dictates we adhere to the time line but sustain combat readiness in those units not yet deactivated.

Combat readiness in these units becomes the hedge against Treaty infractions and assures the Soviets stay on schedule. To sustain personnel readiness during this period, some Pershing soldiers will not be retrained for several years. Career development and progression opportunities based on individual performance and potential will be maintained for these soldiers throughout the implementation period.

INF is the end of an era for soldiers in Pershing II-specific skills, and they can be proud of the contributions they and their predecessors have made to NATO strategy. Anxiously looking forward to their next Army challenge, they'll continue to serve as outstanding representatives of our nation's finest throughout the INF Treaty



Signing the INF Treaty was the first step in a US-NATO strategy designed to bring the Soviets to the negotiating table on acceptable terms.

implementation and will go on to serve as leaders in other Army career skills. 

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PFC Jeffrey W. Whitaker of 3-9 Field Artillery (Pershing) will have to change his MOS during his career and could become an MLRS or Cannon Crewmember.