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Change of caliber in the United States army.

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The U.S. Swaps the Sword for the Spear

The U.S. Army surprised the world when it decided to exchange its M4 carbine, its M249 light machine guns (FN Minimi), as well as the caliber they used, the 5.56x45mm, not for another intermediate caliber, as had long been speculated, but for a high-powered caliber, even larger than the 7.62x51mm used in the M240 medium machine guns (FN MAG) and sniper rifles designated as the M110A1 (G28/HK417).

The caliber chosen in the program was the 6.8x51mm with a much higher chamber pressure than the 7.62x51mm, making the ammunition have a much greater range and accuracy, in addition to being able to penetrate level IV body ballistic protection, something that the 7.62x51mm and the 5.56x45mm cannot do even with special AP ammunition (M993 and M995). The new weapons are the M250 light machine gun and the M7 carbine, which is the SIG SPEAR (spear) rifle.

But what was the reason for this?

First is the multiplication of level IV ballistic plates, and the more widespread use of body ballistic protection in general, as can be seen in the war in Ukraine, where soldiers wear ballistic protection on their legs, shoulders, pelvis, and even buttocks in addition to the traditional vest and helmet. Anyone who understands combat at all knows that suppressive fire is what most often causes injuries to the enemy troop in conventional combat, instead of accurate individual shots as most people often imagine, in addition to the fact that in close combat the center of the target's mass is always the point where the infantry will aim to increase the probability of hitting and incapacitating a moving target in dynamic combat. So, with the enemy covered with ballistic body protection, the ideal is to have a weapon capable of penetrating such protection in different circumstances, both in suppression at medium and long distances, as well as in close combat.

The second point is the evolution of sighting systems, where we're seeing 6x and 8x point sights being widely used by infantry successfully since Afghanistan and now also in Ukraine, and they're image magnification sights that make a target 600 or 800 meters away look like they're 100 meters away. as well as allowing a quick shift to engage a target at close range in dynamic combat if necessary. But these sights are no longer the most modern, as "smart" sights, with the integration of sensors such as laser telemetry, ballistics calculator and artificial intelligence to lock on and guide the precise firing of targets dynamically at different distances, are already being used, such as Israel's SMASH 2000 sight, which is initially being used to protect bases against small drones by several countries. as the U.S. itself. The US is developing its own smart sight for the weapon, the XM157,

but this sight goes further, as it must have an open source to be integrated by wireless link in the future to the new augmented reality vision system of the American army (IVAS), which consists of glasses for projecting images in augmented reality of connected systems, such as night vision, thermal vision, and the crosshair of the sight itself on the lens, accurately directing the shooter to the target, without even having to aim directly with the engaged rifle, taking the dynamics of combat at multiple distances and sensor fusion to a level that until today only pilots of the most advanced fighters had experienced.

The new caliber makes this possible, as it is capable of penetrating level IV ballistic protection, and also has a much greater range and accuracy, and is even considered more accurate than the darling of snipers, the 6.5 creedmoor. While the gun itself, the M7, has been treated like the ugly duckling, with complaints mostly about its weight, but an M7 with a 13-inch barrel has 3.8kg of empty weight, while a 416-inch HK5.56 M5.56 with a 16-inch barrel from the USMC weighs 3.6kg empty, while the new 10-inch version of the M7 (named XM8) has 3.3kg of empty weight, and both are shorter than the M27. Another complaint is related to the amount of ammunition, due to being a larger caliber and with more weight, the soldier will carry less ammunition, but the American army states that the dynamics of the new combat systems will give a level of precision far above the current one, and added to the increase in the range of engagement, It will compensate for the smaller amount of ammunition, which will be equivalent to what armies that still use 7.62x51mm carry, but with 15% less weight, due to the new ammunition having a hybrid steel case, lighter.

The scenarios of eventual wars that the Americans aim at are also a fundamental point to observe the choices of infantry weapons, with Russia, with the main probable battlefields being the steppes of Eastern Europe and the Arctic, while in China there are the vast deserts and mountains of the west, and the mountainous region of Manchuria, The main points that the Americans could use to ally countries to launch direct attacks against those countries. We can also mention as probable Iran, which is a large desert with a relevant chain of mountains and valleys. And these scenarios show a lot of what has been seen in Iraq, and Afghanistan and now also in Ukraine, where there is close fighting, but most are at greater distances and that would favor the new "Spear". Taiwan and the Pacific islands are a possibility of war more in a jungle environment, but in these scenarios the combat would fall mainly on the USMC (marines), as in World War II, and they will at first continue to be equipped with their M27 5.56x45mm rifles. Will the "Spear" become the main weapon of the infantry again, as it once was in many eras of the past, such as in the legendary phalanxes of Alexander the Great, or in the Roman legions?

Cesar Sapo Objetiva

This new armament proved to be heavy, with a much greater recoil, the new sight has problems after 72 hours of combat, the 6.8 ammunition releases toxic gases and in closed places art in the sight of the shooter and makes breathing difficult etc....