

### NEW INFANTRY WEAPONS

In a memorandum which accompanied the Army Estimates for 1953/54 and presented to Parliament on 24th February, 1953, reference was made to progress in the re-armament of the Infantry.

It was stated that much progress had been made, especially in the field of anti-tank weapons. A complete family of new weapons has been evolved and is being manufactured and issued to Infantry units. The smallest member of this family is the anti-tank grenade which is projected from a standard service rifle. It has great destructive capacity and is equal to that of the most powerful Infantry anti-tank guns used in the last war, although the grenade itself is very light.

In the Infantry Battalion the 3.5-inch Rocket Launcher has been adopted for issue to platoons. It is of American design but is now in full production in the UK, complete with its ammunition. It is a very light weapon and extremely powerful. At Battalion level a new anti-tank gun has been designed to replace the existing one. This gun is a recoilless weapon and is probably the most powerful used by any Infantry in the world today. Full production is already under way and the re-equipment of the Regular Army will start this year. Although no figures can be given of penetration, range, velocity of shell and so on, these weapons are, without doubt, a match for any tank that the Infantry are likely to meet.

We have here today the rifle anti-tank grenade and 3.5-inch Rocket Launcher but are unable to show the Battalion anti-tank weapon as it is not taught at this School.

In the small arms field the Patchett machine carbine has been designed and is at present undergoing wide scale troop trials. This is intended as a replacement for the Sten and has so far passed all its trials extremely well and is not liable to the stoppages normally found with weapons of this type. Such a weapon is necessary for various reasons, even if a self-loading rifle is introduced in due course.