K. G. 537.3 I.N. (12-18-34) Misc. M (Cof FA – C)

April 5, 1935

SUBJECT: War Department policies for mechanization.

TO: Commanding Generals of all Corps Areas and Departments, Commandants of all General and Special Service Schools, Superintendant, United States Military Academy, Chiefs of all Arms, Services and Bureaus, and the War Department General Staff.

1. The modern program for the development of mechanization was inaugurated in 1931 under the attached “General Principles to Govern in Extending Mechanization and Motorization throughout the Army.”
2. Mechanization has been and is still developing in the Army under the following broad policies:

“Every arm is authorized to conduct research and experiment with a view of increasing its own power to perform promptly the missions it has been especially organized and developed and to carry it out. “

“Every part of the Army will adopt mechanization and motorization as far as practicable and desirable.”

1. In letter AG 537.3 (5-13-3) Misc.C, subject: Disposition of Mechanized Force. Dated October 3,1931, to all concerned, the purpose of mechanizing cavalry and the functions thereof were announced to be as follows:
   1. “The mechanization of one regiment is the first step in determining the application of modern machines to cavalry missions in war and in developing the technique and basic tactical principles applicable to Cavalry in which the horse is replaced by machines.”
   2. “On favorable terrain, mechanized cavalry should extend the sphere of action of Cavalry to much greater distances and increase the speed of performance of its missions without, however, altering the accepted fundamental missions of that arm.”
   3. “When the development of one mechanized cavalry regiment reaches a satisfactory stage, other elements may be organized and supporting troops developed and attached for operations therewith.”
2. Under the policy announced in paragraph 3c above, the 1st Battalion, 68th Field Artillery, has been organized at Fort Knox, Kentucky, to provide the supporting artillery unit of the 7th Cavalry Brigade (Mecz.). This is the second step in the organization of mechanized forces. The 1st battalion, 68th Field Artillery (Mecz.) is attached to the 7th Cavalry Brigade (Mecz.).
3. The progressive objectives for this Mechanized Force are prescribed as follows:
   1. Unit Training.
      1. 7th Cavalry Brigade (Mecz.)

Ability to perform the missions enumerated in paragraph 7, a to c, inclusive, “General Principles to Govern in Extending Mechanization and Motorization throughout the Army.”

* + 1. 1st Battalion, 68th Field Artillery (Mecz.)
       - 1. To develop a field artillery unit capable of rendering adequate support to an aggressive Mechanized Force.
         2. To determine the role of field artillery in support of Mechanized Forces and to develop the technique and tactical principles applicable thereto.
         3. To conduct experiments with a view to determining the most efficient organization and types of equipment and armament for mechanized field artillery unit.
  1. Combined Training.
     1. To develop policies, principles, methods and organizations for operation, maintenance and supply in the execution of missions enumerated in paragraph 7f and g, “General Principles to Govern in Extending Mechanization and Motorization throughout the Army.”
  2. During the first phase of the modern program for the development of mechanization, no supporting units were organized with the 1st Cavalry (mecz.) as it was desired not to complicate the problem. The primary aim during this phase was to organize and develop a mechanized cavalry regiment proficient in the tactics and technique of its arm. The standard of efficiency reached by this regiment even with inadequate equipment and armament, during this phase, has been very satisfactory. As a result of this proficiency, the mechanized field artillery unit was recently organized at Fort Knox.
  3. Continuation of the same policy for the progressive development of mechanization indicates that first consideration should be given in the training of the field artillery unit to proficiency in the tactics and technique of its arm. Before combined maneuvers are prescribed, it must be relatively certain that the field artillery unit have the ability to maintain its mobility, maneuverability and communications in all kinds of terrain and weather, and to deliver accurate fire on targets and threats to the mechanized cavalry.

1. a. The Commanding General, Fifth Corps Area, under the direction of the War Department, is charged with carrying out the program announced above and with the department of the 7th Cavalry Brigade (mecz.), reinforced, in accordance with the above approved policies and principles.

b. The responsibilities of the Commander of this Mechanized Force and of the Chiefs of interested Arms and Services will be the same as that now obtaining in the 1st Cavalry Division and as prescribed in Regulations.

1. The above instructions are issued for the information and guidance of all concerned.

By order of the Secretary of War:

Signed (James F. McKinley.)

Major General,

The Adjutant General.