

# INFANTRY LETTERS



## MC1-1 PARACHUTE

Dear Sir,

I read "The MC-1 Parachute," by Lieutenant Charles T. Payne, in your November-December 1981 issue (page 9) and take exception to the assertion that 82d Airborne Division troopers are being subjected to an "unnecessary danger" by jumping the MC-1 (which should read "MC1-1") parachute. I would like to clarify some misconceptions created by the article.

First of all, the article leaves the impression that the 82d Airborne Division is eliminating all of its T-10s and replacing them with MC1-1s. This is not the case. The Division, which recognizes the advantages and disadvantages of each type of parachute, presently maintains a mix of sixty-five percent MC1-1s and thirty-five percent T-10s.

Second, Lieutenant Payne failed to explain that the Division uses the two types of parachutes for different operations. Since my return to the Division in January 1981, the policy has been that T-10s are used for mass tactical exercises using the mass exit techniques (jumpers exiting both jump doors) while MC1-1s are restricted to use for airborne training with single door exit procedures (SDEP). It is true that if mass exit techniques are used by troopers jumping the MC1-1 the risk of high altitude entanglement is higher than with the T-10.

This problem has been eliminated in training by the XVIII Airborne Corps' adoption of SDEP. With the termination of the "traffic cop" or Controlled Alternating Parachute Exit System (CAPES), SDEP allows for complete simulation of combat during training while still providing jumpers with a way to control their

flight and landing. Its only drawback is that by restricting jumpers to exiting only one door at a time, it usually requires a second pass over the drop zone to exit all jumpers, thereby delaying tactical assembly.

As for parachute landing fall (PLF) injuries, the T-10 is far from the proven best choice. In fact, a three-year Division historical analysis has revealed that the injury rate for jumping the T-10 is three times as high as that for the MC1-1. While the jumper has trouble changing his facing or direction of drift with the T-10, the MC1-1 allows him to select a landing area and choose the type of PLF he will execute. Since the MC1-1 provides eight knots of forward thrust, and since the average daily wind speed is about five knots, the resulting landing is usually forward or to the side, a landing much preferred over the random PLFs that result from jumping the T-10. In higher than normal winds (9-13 knots) the PLF injury rate is more than five times as high for T-10s as for MC1-1s. Since the vast majority of injuries that do occur result from PLFs, the small increase in entanglement injuries with the MC1-1 is easily offset by a substantial reduction in PLF injuries.

Of course, there is the occasional careless jumper and the uncertain new trooper, both of whom are prone to make mistakes. The former can be corrected by proper leadership, the latter by training and, as with any new job or piece of equipment, experience. In fact, the basic airborne school at Fort Benning, Georgia, presently conducts three of the five jumps needed to qualify parachutists with the MC1-1.

There is a funny thing about the few guys I have met who express concern about the MC1-1. Their personal

preference for a parachute to jump themselves is almost always the MC1-1.

Perhaps Lieutenant Payne's several misconceptions result from his absence from the Division since the many changes, but in any case a correction is appropriate to set the record straight.

CLYDE M. LEAVELLE  
CPT, Air Defense  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

## DESERT OPERATIONS

Dear Sir,

We read the last two articles in your desert operations series with great interest. (See INFANTRY, July-August, September-October, and November-December 1981.) From our experiences and travels while attending the Israeli Defense Forces Armored Corps Advanced Course, the information is good. There are, however, some additional hints and techniques that might help those who work in a desert environment.

The second article of the series contains a pertinent discussion of trafficability in the desert. It might, however, restrict the commander's imagination in planning should he use the description of the restrictions in conjunction with a hasty terrain analysis. Our experience has shown us that trafficability maps, used with standard topographical maps, provide an excellent means by which to plan maneuver. The trafficability maps, which are based upon a medium tank's characteristics, give a quick and usually accurate description of the terrain to be traversed in an easily read color code.

The applicability of proper terrain

analysis in the desert can be illustrated by the successful German maneuver around the British flank in Cyrenaica in 1941 and by the Israeli maneuver against the Egyptians in the Sinai in 1973. In each of these cases the defender considered the terrain on one or both flanks untrafficable. No detailed reconnaissance was conducted to validate the assumption. The attacker, through proper terrain analysis and reconnaissance, found routes through or around the defender, forcing a collapse in the continuity of the defense.

The Israelis place great emphasis on terrain analysis. In their doctrine no terrain is considered totally untrafficable. For this reason they always allocate forces to isolate the cross compartments formed by difficult desert terrain.

At times, given the difficulty of movement caused by cross compartments and poor trafficability, the terms *front*, *flank*, and *rear* have little meaning in a major battle. The proper analysis of desert terrain and the use of all available aids such as trafficability maps and air photo analysis will help an outnumbered force to succeed.

Camouflage, as a passive measure against air attack, is indispensable. Evasive action, coupled with the ability to conduct camouflage drills quickly, can provide a successful defense against attack by high performance aircraft.

Navigation in the desert, as anywhere else, requires practice. Desert navigation in the Mid Eastern/North African areas is aided by native wells, which should be marked on 1:50,000 maps or located on aerial photos. The wells, dug into the desert floor, are easily recognizable at a distance by a discoloration around their openings. The different sand, soil, and rock composition beneath the surface provides a clue to the existence of such a hole.

Aerial photos and stereoscopes are also useful in determining routes recently travelled. Wadi crossing sites are generally recognizable by their well-worn entrance and exit sites. The

use of stereoscopes on air photo strips are also helpful in determining the relative depth of wadis that must be crossed and the suitability of established crossing sites.

WAYNE J. SABO  
CPT, Infantry  
EDWIN L. KENNEDY  
CPT, Infantry  
Fort Benning, Georgia

### AIMING STAKES

Dear Sir,

Training the modern infantryman is a continuing process, and quite often we pick up little techniques that enable us to do our job that much better. I would like to share one of those techniques with INFANTRY's readers.

While conducting a live fire defense at night, I found that my company had some problems with rounds being fired high and even out of sector. Why hadn't we checked our positions to make sure each man knew his sector of fire? Believe me, we had. Not only was each position checked, but I made sure that each man had aiming stakes. When the problems appeared, I realized that the aiming stakes were the cause. I should say it was the way they were being used that was the cause.

Eventually, we thought of a way to keep our soldiers firing in sector and maintaining low grazing fire. We came up with a low level firing device that we consider quite effective.

As with regular aiming stakes, we found that one stick for the left limit and one stick for the right limit was not enough. It was still too easy to traverse left or right out of sector. So we decided to use two sticks for the right limit and another two for the left limit to insure that our soldiers kept their fire in their sector.

We placed one stick near the barrel and the second back by the stock. When the rifleman had his weapon against both sticks he was on his left or right limit.

With sturdy sticks this system

worked quite well for staying in sector, but a soldier with little or no illumination at night still tended to raise the muzzle of his weapon and fire high.

To solve the problem, we took a piece of WD1 communications wire (twine or rope will also work) and tied it around the left front aiming stake. Then a rifleman had his partner walk forward of their position to determine any dead space and to find a waist high aiming point where he could get effective grazing fire. The wire was then stretched tightly to touch the top of the barrel and tied securely to the right front aiming stake. (The line must be tight!)

Now when it gets dark, our soldiers can fire within their sectors and if they start to elevate their rifle barrels they will feel resistance and this will let them put out good effective grazing fire. At any time, the firers can still pull their weapons out and move to their alternate or supplementary positions.

This method worked for us and I hope it works for others as well.

WILLIAM J. MARTINEZ  
CPT, Infantry  
Co C, 2d Bn, 504th Infantry  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

### LEADERSHIP, NOT MACHINERY

Dear Sir,

The article "ITV and IFV Transition," by Captain Robert L. Maginnis in the November-December 1981 issue of INFANTRY (page 18) provides significant information that should be of concern to the professional infantryman. The author's thoughts on cross-training, maintenance, logistics, and leader training are commendable. However, I find great dissatisfaction with his statement that "the introduction of the IFV should give the infantryman that same esprit de corps that long has been associated with armor and cavalry units."

Leadership is the key to esprit

corps, not machinery. His statement tends to make one think the infantry has no esprit de corps.

His position that the IFV crewman will at last fight from his vehicle raises a common fear among armor and infantry leaders. We should never forget that our primary mission is to close with and destroy the enemy. We cannot perform this mission while moving rapidly across a battlefield buttoned up. History has proved that armor can be defeated by dismounted infantry unless other dismounted infantry is available to properly clear the area. We need not relearn this lesson by seeing IFVs burning next to M-1 tanks.

A final argument: If we allow entire infantry squads to be referred to as "crews," we will ultimately have just that — IFV crews of eight soldiers instead of squads of eleven. There will be one driver, one gunner, and six port firers.

This may seem ludicrous, but when the pendulum swings away from the military, the budget choppers can dream up many ludicrous ways to save money.

GARY H. CAVENDER  
CPT, Infantry

### ARNG MOS TRAINING

Dear Sir,

I am concerned that, with the MOS qualification structure it has now, the Army National Guard would not be ready to fight in a "come as you are" war, especially in regard to its prior service personnel.

Under the Guard's present policy, enlisted personnel with active Federal service of 12 weeks or more are exempt from Initial Active Duty Training (IADT). This includes about 100,000 of the Guard's 316,000 enlisted personnel.

Even for those who do attend IADT, few MOS-producing schools qualify them in all the tasks they must perform to be MOS qualified. This training then becomes the responsibility of their unit commanders, and it is possible, therefore, that 32 percent of all ARNG enlisted men would have to be declared not MOS qualified.

Presently the method of qualification prescribed by ARNG regulations for qualification at unit level is on-the-job experience (OJE). This OJE is obtained through various combinations of unit training assemblies and annual training. The unit commander can use OJE as a means of determin-

ing MOS or a time factor (completion of AT) or both.

But the problem is that OJE is defined as an unstructured and unsupervised routine performance of duty (experience) that will give the soldier enough experience to enable him to perform the duties of an MOS satisfactorily and, subsequently, to be awarded the MOS. The individual soldier is held responsible for satisfying the requirement of OJE during his monthly training periods. This means that a soldier has to be assertive if he is going to develop and attain his MOS that way. As a commander of four companies, I have found that assertive people are a small minority. Besides, a National Guard unit has only 39 training days in which to perform the subjects required by regulation and by higher headquarters, and this does not give the individual Guardman much time to train on his own for an MOS.

The unstructured OJE is also a contravention of the concept outlined in the Army's Battalion Training Management System (BTMS). BTMS uses tasks, conditions, and standards to measure the soldier's ability to perform in his MOS in a structured program using Job Books and Soldier's Manuals to guide the development of

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each soldier in his MOS.

A structured on-the-job training program would be more in line with this BTMS concept, and the Guard could develop such a program for its prior service personnel using the Trainer's Guide for a list of Soldier's Manual skill level tasks for an MOS; the training objectives from FM 21-1, Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks; and the appropriate Soldier's Manuals for specific MOSs. The Job Book tasks could then be annotated for each MOS, taking into consideration the unit's mission and equipment.

This on-the-job MOS training program would be defined as structured and supervised training in the routine performance of a soldier's duty, which would provide him with enough task experience for the award of an MOS.

The service schools could then be tasked either to designate the Trainer's Guides as MOS qualification task lists, or to develop them separately. This development would have to take into consideration unit mission and equipment, as Guard units do not have the same equipment that an Active Army unit has. This

would lift from each unit commander the administrative burden of having to develop a qualification program for each MOS in his unit. Too, the task list would standardize the MOS qualification program throughout the U.S. Army.

I believe that with such a program, and through the attention and guidance that would go along with it, the Army's National Guard soldier would be a more productive part of the Total Force.

CLIFFORD D. BAKER  
MAJ, Infantry  
Tacoma, Washington

### M16 RIFLE ARGUMENT

Dear Sir,

In Art Osborne's article on the M16 rifle (INFANTRY, September-October 1981), we are again bombarded with a great deal of verbiage praising that rifle when, in fact, what the author is really saying is that the 5.56mm is a good military cartridge. The fact remains that the M16 rifle — even after numerous improvements — is a very poor military rifle. It

breaks easily and jams readily.

If one accepts the argument for the 5.56mm cartridge, I submit that there are rifles in that caliber that are superior, the AR-180 or the Ruger Mini-M14, for example.

THOMAS G. EMBRY  
St. Johns, Missouri

### BOOKS WANTED

Dear Sir,

I am doing research on the military operations of the Vietnam war, particularly at the tactical level, and would like to obtain copies of your publications *Infantry in Vietnam* and its successor, *A Distant Challenge*.

I understand that both of these books are out of print, but am hoping that among your readers there is someone who has one or both and would be willing to sell them to me. If so, I would greatly appreciate it.

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