

# INFANTRY LETTERS



## TRAIN REALISTICALLY

I read your January-February 1983 issue with great interest. One article in particular caught my eye — the one by Major Timothy P. Maroney. While I think I understand what he is trying to say, I don't agree with the way "Train to be Miserable" (page 9) says it.

First, I think a better title, and a better approach, would have been "Train Realistically." I happen to be one of the small unit leaders he mentions who honestly believe that "you don't have to train to be miserable." But I am a firm believer in realistic training that is limited only by safety, cost, and initiative.

Our training objectives should be to develop our soldiers' proficiency, not their misery. No one can argue that misery is not part of a grunt's lot, but a "misery escalation planning schedule" is not necessary or even desirable. Running long range patrols in the rain because that is tactically sound makes more sense than running them because the unit needs to get out in the rain to increase its misery level!

Now let's look at it from the troops' point of view. While today's young Americans lead a more comfortable life, they are also better educated and more motivated. They really enjoy good hard training, but there is no reason to create artificial misery for its own sake and then justify it as improved training. Good hard training leads to proficiency; artificial misery leads to morale problems, because the leader cannot clearly explain to the troops what he is trying to accomplish.

In summary, well trained troops should face realistic training that is challenging but not impossible. Creating artificial misery will cause

morale problems more often than it will increase the soldiers' proficiency. So let's train to be proficient, not miserable.

D. BILINOVICH  
SSgt., USMC  
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## MORTAR FIRE CONTROL

We have read the article "Deflection Scale Board," by Major Mark S. Flusche, in the January-February 1983 issue of INFANTRY (page 38), and have a few comments. These comments are based on our 18 years of experience in mechanized, airborne, Ranger, and straight-leg mortar platoons and on our present jobs as mortar instructors in the Infantry School.

First, we agree that on an AirLand battlefield the observed firing chart will be used extensively in controlling fire using only a direction and a distance to the target, the technique known as hipshooting. In such a situation, mobility will be essential, as will speed in engaging targets.

The leader of a mortar squad must be capable of accurate land navigation in such an environment; the accuracy of the fires will depend on how accurately the mortar position is plotted in relation to the target. Along with mastering the M-2 compass, they will also have to be able to lay a mortar quickly and accurately for direction with the compass.

Major Flusche says that the M-16 plotting board is slow to use and hard for soldiers to understand, but we have found that the main problem lies not with the soldiers, but with the higher echelons — platoon leaders, platoon sergeants, section sergeants, squad leaders — who do not know

how to use the M-16 plotting board and therefore cannot teach their computers to use it effectively either. Land navigation skills are also lacking in the platoons, which compounds the problem of making an accurate plot from the guns to the target (determining the direction and the distance).

Another problem with the article is that the author takes for granted that the materials to construct the deflection scale board are easily obtainable. In canvassing platoon leaders and platoon sergeants of 4.2-inch mortar platoons who have come through the courses we teach — along with some former 4.2-inch mortar platoon leaders — we failed to find anyone who would have let one of his two authorized GFFs (graphic firing fans) go on "loan" for very long. Most said they would not let them go at all.

Although the deflection scale board can be made and used as described, its use is limited to observed chart missions and does not lend itself to firing as a modified observed chart or a surveyed chart. By contrast, in our experience, the M-16 plotting board is a more versatile system. Besides, the M-16 board is already in the inventory and it includes its own carrying case. After scrounging the materials and constructing a deflection scale board, it would carry the additional disadvantage of adding an extra and unnecessary piece of equipment to a mortar platoon's FDC.

We should not try to solve a problem with a system by putting it aside and trying a different system. Instead we should identify its problems and correct its deficiencies.

If we go to war tomorrow we will be using the M-16 plotting board, so we should train our men today to use it. At the same time, we must teach

them how to read a map and use an M-2 compass so that when we hit the AirLand battlefield our troops will know what to do to win.

SSG JOHN E. FOLEY  
SSG ARTHUR L. LACEWELL  
Fort Benning, Georgia

### ABILITY AND ATTITUDE

I hope you will publish more articles by Dandridge Malone, for he always seems to have something worthwhile to say. A case in point is his article "Able and Willing" (March-April 1983, page 9) — short, concise, and most practical.

It certainly is true that a combination of ability and attitude determines performance. And, of course, the most difficult of these to deal with is attitude, for it decides whether ability is to be applied. There are two critical questions involved: Can he do it? (ability) and Will he do it? (attitude).

Consequently, the most challenging task for the leader is to positively influence attitude; a unit made up of the truly willing is a joy to lead. We've all had our fill, I believe, of the competent but contentious, the able but cantankerous — in short, the troublemakers.

I don't know the Program of Instruction at the Infantry School, but if it isn't concentrating on identifying, interpreting, and influencing attitude, the School is overlooking the critical ingredient in the leadership process.

GEORGE EDDY  
Austin, Texas

### PATHETICALLY VULNERABLE

I want to commend Captain William B. Crews ("Mortars in Cities," March-April 1983, page 13) for his practical insights into one of the key problems faced by those fighting in cities. His emphasis on the need for indirect fire in MOUT and his identification of the technical problems involved in the use of mor-

tars in urban terrain are right on target.

There is another problem, however, with indirect fire in MOUT: Those who will have to defend themselves *behind* the main battle area don't have any mortars! With the unlikely exception of a dedicated rear area combat force or transient maneuver units, forces fighting the threats to the rear area have nothing heavier than M203s. The same is true in the area of antiarmor weapons.

Until we equip and train our Military Police and support troops to deal with Soviet BMDs in urban combat, our forces in the main battle area will be pathetically vulnerable to the cutting of their lines of communication.

EDWARD M. McCLURE  
CPT, MI  
Apex, North Carolina

### LET'S KEEP LAWS LIGHT

I have been reading in the various military journals about the current controversy over light antiarmor weapons (LAWS), and I am concerned. LAWS are critical to the survival of infantrymen on the battlefield (both Army infantrymen and Marines), and I believe I may have a solution.

The argument is that because the Viper cannot pierce the frontal armor of a Soviet main battle tank, we should scrap it and buy a European LAW. But none of the European LAWS are truly light antitank weapons; they are *heavy*. With that much weight, each infantryman might as well carry a Dragon. And even after he carries all that weight he still may not be able to hit the target with it. He may waste dozens of rockets trying to knock out one tank with volley shots and eventually run out of weapons and get overrun anyway.

Besides, penetration is not the real problem. The problem is accuracy without the weight and expense of a guided rocket such as the Dragon or the TOW. And LAWS are, of course,

unguided rockets — one chance, one shot. If he is off just a little the soldier misses entirely, unless he fires at point blank range, which is what we are all trying to avoid.

But we must not give up on a true LAW; this would leave our unsupported troops naked to tanks. What I propose is to keep the Viper and make it 100 percent accurate by combining it with an M16A1 rifle in a system I call the rifle tracer antitank rocket sighting system (or RATS, for short). The idea is for the gunner to use his rifle to fire tracers to verify his aim before firing the rocket. This way, even a Viper could knock out a Soviet tank, because hits that in the past have been considered merely "lucky," such as in the tank treads, would be the usual result.

The RATS would be superior even to the British LAW 80, which has a spotting rifle built in for the same purpose, because it would be lighter and would not be limited to five rounds to achieve sighting. At the same time, the gunner would have self-protection from his M16 while aiming the Viper.

The Viper would be strapped directly to the carrying handle of the M16 and secured by a nut and bolt at the point where the issue scope is usually attached. (The total weight would be about 11 pounds.) The Viper would rest on top of the gunner's right shoulder, and the M16 would be held under his armpit supported by the assault sling. The gunner would aim through the Viper's sights as he fired his M16 tracer bullets. When satisfied that he was on target, he would fire the Viper with either hand using a rubber-covered trigger button. (Conceivably, an electronic switch could be used to fire the Viper from the M16's pistol grip, but this would increase the system's cost and complexity and would call for a redesign.) Once he had fired the Viper, the gunner would disconnect it from the M16 and throw it away, either reloading another Viper or continuing with other missions.

It might be argued that the tracers from the M16 would be hard to see in

bad weather, but if a gunner couldn't see a tracer, he couldn't see the tank either, so nothing would be lost by spotting with the M16. And the Viper could still be fired conventionally, of course.

It can be argued, too, that with proper training and more live firing our troops could overcome the accuracy problem with the Viper. But the fact is that we are never going to be able to give our troops enough LAW firings; we simply do not have the time or the money to turn millions of soldiers into Annie Oakleys.

If a European weapon is purchased (except for the LAW 80), our troops are going to be carrying around heavier weapons that are just as inaccurate as the Viper, and they will be so expensive that training may have to be curtailed even further to make up the difference. If all we're going to do is fire volley shots anyway, I'd rather have three light shots than one heavy one; I think I'd have a better chance of doing some damage.

In short, the Viper program does not have to be scrapped. With a system such as RATS, it can give the infantryman the tank-killing ability he needs without a lot of added weight.

But if the final decision is to scrap the Viper and get a heavy antitank

rocket, we had better be sure to get something out of all that weight by also getting a spotting rifle, at least. I believe the choices are clear.

#### MIKE SPARKS

Lance Corporal, USMCR  
Madison, Wisconsin

#### GENERAL WALTER KRUEGER

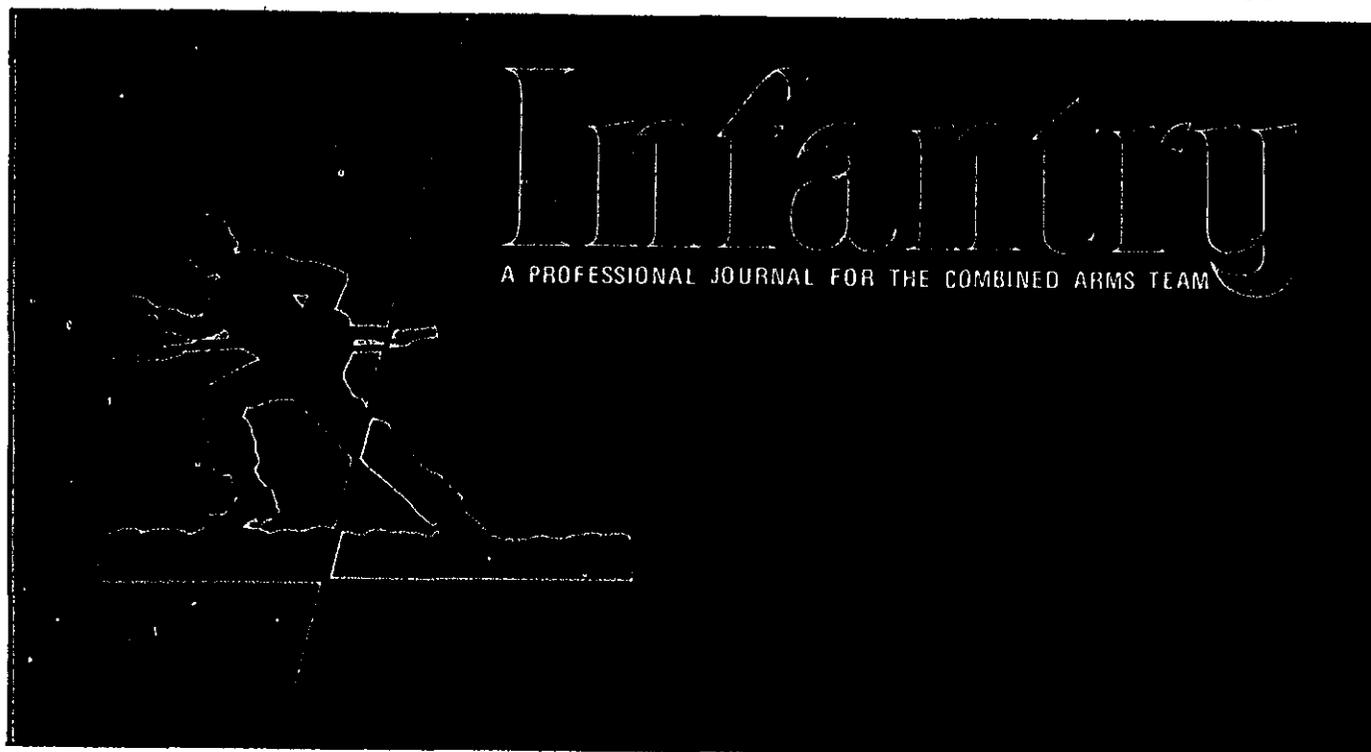
I was glad to see INFANTRY publish General Arthur Collins' article on General Walter Krueger (January-February 1983, page 14). It not only paid tribute to a distinguished infantryman but recalled memories of my own service in his headquarters. In his conclusion General Collins states that "Walter Krueger had a selfless sense of dedication to duty." I believe all who seek to excel as leaders want to possess that same trait, but only in a select few does the desire for it burn with the same intensity as it did in this stalwart soldier from his first day of service until his last.

Colonel Red White served as a junior officer under Krueger, then a colonel, at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and later commanded with distinction a regiment of the 37th Division under Krueger on Luzon. During a conversation with Lieu-

tenant White, Colonel Krueger told how one evening early in his career he was preparing for bed after inspecting the post guard. One shoe was off and he was about to drop the other when he realized that he had failed to inspect one post. He never dropped that shoe but went out again on a cold blustery night so that he could fully complete an assigned duty.

Years later in Japan he demonstrated that same sense of commitment. Shortly after our arrival there, I was detailed by the G-3, General Eddleman, to accompany General Krueger on his private train from Kyoto to Nagoya to inspect the Sixth Army Replacement Depot, which had just been established to process the thousands who were being demobilized. The tour was to start with the Special Services facilities, but General Krueger quickly vetoed that. "All that is OK," he said, "but it doesn't mean a thing if the soldiers don't have a warm place to sleep, good food and good shower and toilet facilities plus adequate medical care." He then proceeded on a gruelling tour of every building in the place, which, as I recall, at that time held about 11,000 men.

The replacement battalion was a veteran outfit redeployed from Europe, but it was having problems.



Its assigned engineer support changed daily as personnel who were qualified for shipment home departed, and many of the needed supplies, such as stoves, were bottom loaded on ships which had been scheduled for the later phases of the invasion of Kyushu, originally planned for 1 November 1945. At the end of the inspection General Krueger asked the depot commander if he had all the help he needed. The commander started to explain that everyone was doing his best under the circumstances, but General Krueger cut him short: "Colonel, I didn't ask you that. I asked if you had enough help. Do you?" The commander admitted that he could use more.

Following another lengthy inspection of the supporting hospital facilities, General Krueger dispatched his aide back to Kyoto with a long list of actions the staff was to take, leaving me in the unfamiliar and uncomfortable role of temporary aide and sole confidant. The two of us ate dinner alone on the train that evening without a word being spoken until the meal was finished. Then he said, "Gray, I am shocked by what I saw today, really shocked." This surprised me; I thought the operation was going fairly well, considering the

short time it had been in existence. But it didn't satisfy General Krueger. In the next few days section chiefs came and went, ships were found and unloaded, more engineer troops were assigned, and General Krueger stayed right there until he was satisfied that the depot met his standards.

His career was almost over then. He could have delegated the task, but, as General Collins so clearly indicates, General Krueger felt a deep and abiding responsibility toward the troops who had fought so well under his command. During the next few hectic months when demobilization was in full swing there were letters almost daily in the *Stars and Stripes* complaining about the other two depots located in Japan, but there was not a single letter complaining about the Sixth Army Depot.

MG DAVID W. GRAY  
Golden Beach, Florida

**CANADIANS IN VIETNAM**

I am researching a book describing Canadian participation and perspectives of the Vietnam war, which is to be based on oral recollections and on written and pictorial memorabilia.

I have established a contact list of

more than 200 persons who toiled "in country" in the U.S. and Australian armed forces with Canadian contingents in the series of international control commissions, medical personnel, correspondents, mission workers, and diplomatic missions.

The early response has been encouraging and I am now expanding my interview zone and hope for some help from your readers. Anyone who has information or advice to offer may write to me at 7 Douglas Cres., Fergus, Ontario, CANADA, N1M 1C1, or call (519) 843-4019.

DOUG CLARK

**OCS HALL OF FAME**

I am preparing a history of the Infantry OCS Hall of Fame and would like to hear from anyone who has any information concerning its founding in 1957-58. I am particularly interested in documents, photographs, letters, and the like.

Anyone who has such information may write to me at 5221 Yorkshire, Detroit, Michigan 48224, or call 313/885-6896.

WALDRON J. WINTER  
Colonel, USA (Retired)

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