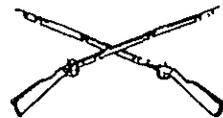




Commandant's NOTE



Major General John W. Foss

Chief of Infantry

I feel deeply honored at having been selected to be the 37th Commandant of the Infantry School and the third post-World War II Chief of Infantry. I am grateful that the Army is giving me this opportunity to work closely with every member of the Infantry community — from the newest to the most senior — to make today's Infantryman the finest and toughest combat soldier in the world.

There is, of course, an undeniable sense of personal pride at being considered worthy of the job, especially to one who started as an Infantry private 33 years ago. But far more compelling to me are the challenges that come with being the "Chief — the many tasks to be accomplished; the obligations to continue the work started by my distinguished predecessors; and the awareness that many of the decisions we at the Infantry School will make in the weeks and months ahead can influence dramatically not only the Infantry community but every Infantryman as well.

I am most fortunate to have arrived at Fort Benning fresh from commanding the Seventh Army Training Command. That experience served to give me a good grasp of what our Infantrymen in the field need and what we must do to fill some of those needs. It also served to illustrate that the U.S. Army loses much valuable training time through a lack of standardization. Standardization must focus on the tasks that make sense, and it needs to apply worldwide. Standardization and training to standards will pay great dividends to the Army when soldiers and cohorts can step into their new units and know what to do and how well they have to do it. The Infantry School will work on defining those tasks that must be standardized, on including them in our training, and on providing them to unit commanders.

In the recent Infantry Commanders Conference, a number of our senior Infantrymen, as well as Secretary of the Army John Marsh, addressed themselves to some major issues. They believe the key to the Army's success in battle is professionalism, and they challenge us to develop and train tough professional Infantrymen steeped in our own traditions and ethics. I fully agree with those sentiments and intend to see that the "Home of the Infantry" is professional in every respect.

In the two months I have been at Fort Benning, I have been impressed by the high degree of professionalism that members of the School's staff and faculty show as they go about their daily business. They not only carry a heavy instructional load, they also deal with dozens of challenges that face the Infantry and therefore the Infantry School and Center. The new Infantry Division (Light) is foremost. We are busy designing a new training strategy for that division and the courses needed to execute that strategy. Tactics and doctrine now being developed

for this elite force will place the greatest emphasis on individuals, squads, and platoons — where it has always been for the Infantry.

In other areas we are reexamining our rifle marksmanship program, developing an improved ARTEP for the Infantry, and attempting to include the lessons of the National Training Center in our classroom instruction. Of great importance is our requirement to provide our training products to the field and to meet the training needs of the field. In subsequent issues of *INFANTRY*, I intend to discuss each of these topics in more detail.

At the same time, we are taking a close look at the Infantry Association, which is dedicated to fostering professionalism in Infantrymen. Reestablished in early 1982, the Association has attracted a great deal of attention from Infantrymen around the world. It is time for us to look more closely at its organization and to decide what activities are appropriate to this association. On this matter, too, I will keep you informed.

We have a lot to do here at the School. But we always have had a lot to do. Defining the Infantry's role on the ever-changing battlefield of the future will take clear thinking, vigorous analysis, and realistic testing. We remain fully aware that technology advances, that tactics change, and that organizations and warfare become more demanding. Throughout this process we must keep our eyes on the important things and retain them — we must not let them become victims of change just for the sake of change.

We will work hard to make sure the Infantryman can fulfill his role to the fullest as a member of a combined arms team. But to do this, we need your help. Accordingly, I earnestly solicit your ideas and suggestions as to how you think we at the Infantry School can produce the best-trained and best-equipped Infantry soldiers, leaders, and units.

Finally, I call your attention to the cover of this issue and to the article on D-Day. In this small way we recall the events of that June day 40 years ago when United States Infantrymen broke into fortified Europe and began the momentous battles that led to victory in World War II. Above all else, this example demonstrates what well-trained and determined Infantrymen can do to overcome the most adverse conditions and ultimately to win.

Infantrymen fight in a combined arms team. The makeup of the combined arms team varies from one tactical setting to another. The one unchanging part of these teams is Infantry. No one ever has found, and no one ever will find, a substitute for the Infantry. That is our challenge — to be ready for any battlefield.

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