

INFANTRY LETTERS



TRAINING ANALYSIS

Major Andrew J. Bacevich, author of "The Way We Train: An Assessment" (INFANTRY, May-June 1984, page 25), is to be roundly cheered for his effort. He has, in my opinion, hit at the very core of training problems that have existed in the Army for many years, problems that Major General Foss, Chief of Infantry, alludes to in his Commandant's Note in the same issue, and which, hopefully, he can begin to correct.

Specifically, the remedies for these problems would include conducting efficient and effective individual training with emphasis on "hands-on" training; training or retraining NCOs to be trainers and leaders, not managers; and, most importantly, having platoon leaders, company commanders, and battalion commanders resume their traditional roles as trainers and leaders and, again, *not* managers. (This last item should be given the highest priority possible.)

Bacevich's observations on the difference between training and testing and between "doers" and managers are especially great. Here, he pinpoints problems that have plagued the Army ever since its inception, and clearly the *primary* problem since Korea — personnel turbulence.

His treatment of ITEP (Individual Training and Evaluation Program) should make *all* policymakers take note. There was once a person in the Army known as the professional private. Maybe we should resurrect this soldier, who had those qualities Bacevich describes as "enthusiasm, initiative, loyalty, a willingness to learn, a knack for operating the machines of war."

Finally, Major Bacevich's article ties in dramatically with the D-Day ar-

ticle in the same issue (page 2), which shows how excellent training pays off in combat. I quote from page 11:

But even as early and discouraging reports regarding the progress on Omaha Beach flowed back to General Bradley's command ship, the crisis was bit by bit dissolving. Among the groups of scared, tired riflemen huddled along the beach were a few bold leaders — officers, NCOs and privates — on whose individual backs the big responsibility at that moment lay.

They began by example and exhortation to prod the men to get up, leave such poor shelter as they had found, and walk or crawl across the beach flat and up the hills, where the Germans were dug in.

What else made this possible but leadership and training at its finest?

A copy of Major Bacevich's article should be made mandatory reading for training policymakers at all levels all the way up to the Pentagon.

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CONSTRUCTIVE

The article "The Way We Train: An Assessment," by Major Andrew Bacevich (INFANTRY, May-June 1984, page 25), was of great interest to me. It is constructive and well-presented. It merits serious consideration by senior commanders who determine training policy and develop training programs.

His recommendations will certainly be of benefit to battalion and company level leaders.

ROYAL REYNOLDS, JR.
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USMC LAND NAVIGATION

In "Land Navigation: A Common Task, Not Commonly Understood," (March-April 1984, page 25), Noel J. Hotchkiss, who apparently has not researched the approach the Marine Corps takes to teaching land navigation, does the USMC a disservice.

He incorrectly states that Marine Corps training commands favor the techniques of dead reckoning as the only accepted method of teaching navigation. The Marine Corps has recognized for several years that more than dead reckoning is involved in land navigation, and the program of instruction at The Basic School illustrates this.

The instruction currently given to all new officers in the Marine Corps has been proved effective, and it places considerable emphasis on terrain association to supplement the use of the lensatic compass. This emphasis is shown in prerequisite classroom instruction followed by practical application in the field. This application forces students to go into unfamiliar training areas to identify terrain features and correlate their maps with the actual terrain.

During navigation training, the students choose their own routes, attack points, limiting features, and steering marks on the basis of the location of their objective and the lay of the land. The training areas require the students to use terrain association and dead reckoning in close harmony, because for every objective there are distracters in nearby terrain. A student does not graduate from The Basic School until he has passed a comprehensive series of tests. (These methods are not unique to training officers; they are equally stressed with the enlisted ranks.)

For many years, Marines have recognized the need for proficient

navigators because this skill relates to most military occupational specialties, and the USMC has taken much care in developing a comprehensive and effective instructional program.

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TAKES EXCEPTION

I take exception to this statement in "Infantry Division (Light)" in *INFANTRY's* March-April 1984 issue, page 16: "The simplicity of the design of the rifle platoon is intended to match the experience level of the platoon leader."

This is a non-statement, and if in fact the platoon was developed to accommodate experience rather than ability to command and control in accordance with the mission capability of the unit, then we have missed the boat. An analogous statement, as ridiculous as it sounds, could be applied to the battalion commander. Frankly, the command, control, maneuver, and execution of a 34-member platoon isn't any easier than the problems associated with a 44- or 24-member unit.

I trust we are providing the necessary training at Fort Benning to provide the skills and the resultant experience to platoon leaders and that any design recommendations receive the best of our thinking.

PHILIP F. KEARNS
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MORTARS TOO HEAVY, TOO FEW

I noted with interest and surprise that the only type of mortar to be included in the new light infantry battalion is the 107mm (*INFANTRY*, March-April 1984, page 14). But the 107mm is certainly unsatisfactory in terms of the "man-portability" criteria General Wickham stated in his recent white paper (published in the 7

May 1984 issue of *Army Times*) and would thus appear to be out of place in any truly "light" infantry unit. Certainly, the 81mm would be a better choice. (Interestingly enough, the *Army Times* editors chose to illustrate General Wickham's letter with a photo of 82d Airborne Division troopers firing an 81mm mortar during a 1981 exercise at Fort Bragg.)

Of further interest is the fact that there will be only four mortars of any type in the entire light infantry battalion. Because the division's elements will be required "to operate on a decentralized basis on close terrain against other light infantry forces," it would appear desirable to equip the rifle companies with at least two 60mm mortars. These would give the company commander a limited but highly responsive capability to mark targets with white phosphorus, to illuminate, and to reach beyond the 1,000-meter range of his direct fire weapons to attack the enemy with high-explosive rounds.

I would like to see a short article detailing the thinking behind the decision to equip the light battalion with only four mortars, and 107mm mortars at that. I'm sure the many mortar men in your readership would also find it interesting.

JAMES A. HALES
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HEAVY MORTAR

Reference Captain Arthur A. Durante's article "A Heavy Mortar for a Light Division" [January-February 1984, p. 11], I applaud his analysis and only wish he had talked about replacing *all* 4.2-inch mortars with the 120mm.

The current 4.2s are worn out, parts are difficult to get, and any product improvement program would take years. Some additional points in favor of the 120mm: It is a smooth-bore weapon, which makes the most of training transfer to other mortars; it offers adequate expansion capabili-

ty for future developments; and it offers fast set-up with a high degree of accuracy.

I should also point out, however, that I believe a light infantry battalion needs a weapon system more like the Soviet 122mm rocket or the U.S. prototype "slammer" concept. Such a system offers the dispersion, flexibility, range, volume, lethality, and mobility that the future European scenario will require. One salvo from even a 2.75-inch slammer system can reach out 14,000 meters and disperse several hundred submunitions to attack an entire armored unit, while the gunner displaces to a fresh site before counterbattery fire can engage him.

Given the wide range of possible warheads (smoke, chaff, HEAT, HE, mines, thermal seeking), fusing options, and direct fire capability, the slammer makes for an interesting comparison with any one-round-at-a-time mortar system.

JAMES E. LARSEN
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MACHINEGUNNERY NEGLECTED

My sincerest compliments to Major Harlie R. Treat on his article "Machinegunners," in your November-December 1983 issue (page 38). Formerly, as an Infantry battalion executive officer and commander, and now as a National Guard advisor, I have fought and am fighting my own battle against an Armywide trend toward neglecting the firepower of the machinegun, or subverting its effectiveness through ignorance.

Some of our major problems are:

- FM 23-67, Machinegun, 7.62mm, M60, will be 20 years old this year. It's about due for retirement — not because it's old (many chapters in it are still applicable) but because it is not an up-to-date source of information on the various mechanical problems, checks, and fixes that have been instituted primarily through *PS Magazine*. These include safety wires, leaf spring change, new bolt plug,

check for gas piston facing proper direction, and emphasis on changing barrels during firing and properly identifying barrels with specific guns.

- Task 071-312-3007, Prepare a Range Card for an M60 Machinegun, is now a common task. If wishing could make it so, we would soon have every clerk and medic in the Army up to speed on range cards, but it's not going to happen. For one thing, the task bears no relation to what really goes on in a light machinegun position — an assistant gunner is not even mentioned under "conditions," although "someone" is supposed to walk the final protective line. At least the current task is better than the creative drawing task (with a 15-minute standard) that it replaced. If you find any non-infantry unit rigorously testing this task, promote the first sergeant immediately!

- Our current doctrinal machinegun position is poorly conceived, self-contradictory, and impractical. The inverted "T" is the worst, possible choice for a machinegun position. It requires useless work, has a potentially unstable firing table, and does not provide adequate protection. It encourages the concept of "dig first and we'll figure the FPL later," and it cavalierly neglects the unalterable fact that, because of its left-side load feature, light machinegun positions cannot be symmetrical.

- There is a remarkable trend toward leaving the tripod and the traversing and elevating mechanism behind. Most gunners do not know how to read elevation, and few know how to mount the T&E for full elevation/depression or how to adjust the traversing knob. Almost none think to use white paint or typewriter "whiteout" to make the elevating screw and the traversing bar easier to read.

(The M16 rifle can easily kill targets out to 250 meters in the hands of a minimally skilled rifleman. After plodding through waist-deep snow for two days checking targets during my battalion's forced march/live fire exercise, I was amazed at the lack of large, 7.62mm holes in the targets.

Luckily, though, the 5.56mm had done the job. I found that, although carrying the tripod and T&E was required, most units used their bipods for firing. My dictum after that was, "A machinegun without a tripod and T&E is just another automatic rifle!" Although experts may question this, I found that the maximum effective range for the bipod-mounted gun was 200 meters!

Now, if anyone out there really cares about the state of machinegunnery in this man's Army, I have a handy checklist for platoon leaders and sergeants on how to inspect a machinegun position; a quick study on the evolution of the LMG position from the old horseshoe into the "T" and a very good, simple suggestion called the "Lazy L" with all necessary explanations; a fun live-fire game that challenges a bipod to match a tripod firing against a simple target made from a salvage wheel, four engineer stakes, and some chain; and a variation on Task 071-312-3001, Load, Reduce a Stoppage, and Clear an M60 Machinegun.

JULIAN M. OLEJNICZAK
LTC, Infantry
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REQUIRED READING

Kudos to Platoon Sergeant Mark S. Wafler for his great article on the Advanced NCO Course at Fort Benning (March-April 1984, p. 6). It was very well written and perceptive, and it could easily be required reading for the NCOs who will attend the course in the future.

To accentuate a couple of Wafler's points: First, given a positive attitude, a soldier can be trained to the highest achievements imaginable; and second, a *critique* must be specific and must cover both criticisms and plaudits.

PETER E. BOGDAN
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MISUSED ACRONYMS

In my assignment as Deputy Director of Deployment at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, I have observed that there is a worldwide misuse of three related but distinctly different acronyms associated with the management of deployments. Perhaps this letter will help to clarify them.

The JDC (Joint Deployment Community) consists of the headquarters, commands, and agencies that are involved in the planning, execution, and sustainment of deployments of U.S. forces and materiel to a theater of operations or objective area.

In plain English, the JDC consists of the players — ranging from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to the airlift and sealift commands and the Joint Deployment Agency (JDA) — required to deploy forces and materiel in support of military plans.

The JDS (Joint Deployment System) is a command and control information management system that supports the worldwide deployment of U.S. military forces with their equipment and supplies. JDS provides deployment planning and execution support to all unified commanders and joint task force commanders within the Worldwide Military Command and Control System (WWMCCS).

Simply stated, the JDS is a command and control information system that is used by all the players in the JDC. Although it is an operating system today, the JDS is still under development and will achieve full operating capability in Fiscal Year 1985.

The JDA (Joint Deployment Agency) is a field operation agency of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with the mission to coordinate deployment activities among the services and commands, and to develop, maintain, and operate the JDS.

The JDA, which is located with the U.S. Readiness Command at MacDill AFB, Tampa, Florida, is a separate and distinct organization and serves the U.S. Readiness Command (like all the other CINCs) as a member of the JDC.

The JDA acts as a focal point for deployment-associated transportation management and decision-making information; for providing data on deployment estimates and on the implications and alternative courses of action to the supported commander and the JCS; and for formulating recommendations to the National Command Authorities. While an extension of the JCS, the JDA provides assistance to the Joint Deployment Community worldwide.

JOE J. BREEDLOVE
BG, USA

HONORS ARMED FORCES

I am a member of the Infantry Association and the editor of my Lions Club's bulletin. In that bulletin we have saluted several Infantry groups: the Infantry School, the 1st and 3d Infantry Divisions, and the 27th Infantry (Wolfhounds), as well as other military branches.

Each of these salutes contains a detailed history of the group from its beginnings to the present, one or more Medal of Honor stories, the group's song, and some photographs, when they are available.

I am looking for more Infantry

stories, especially on active or inactive divisions and regiments. If you can help me honor our armed forces, please write to me at P.O. Box 12353, Dallas, Texas 75225.

RALPH W. WIDENER, JR.

BATTALION S-4

Captain Harold Raugh, in "The Battalion S-4: Lessons Learned" (INFANTRY, May-June 1984, page 22), presents an overview of the responsibilities of the battalion supply officer but ignores several issues that should be addressed.

Traditionally, field manual writers have described the administrative, tactical, organizational, and technical responsibilities of the battalion supply officer without explaining the effect of the personal relationships between the key leaders of the battalion.

Raugh incorrectly asserts that the battalion supply officer works for "six bosses: each company commander and the battalion commander." The battalion supply officer works for *one* boss, the battalion commander, who, through the battalion executive officer, establishes priorities and provides guidance. The S-4's relationship with the company commanders should be

that of a technical expert who provides the resources and information they need to accomplish their missions. A relationship in which the supply officer worked *for* the company commander would be an organizational nightmare that could lead to disaster.

Another problem that is inadequately discussed in current field manuals is the supply officer's relationship with the battalion operations officer and the headquarters company commander; these relationships often complicate the S-4's job. The operations officer's constant requests for information and logistical support, for example, can be a source of frustration and confusion, particularly when operational demands exceed logistical capabilities.

The headquarters company commander's responsibility for the health, welfare, discipline, training, and maintenance of the various headquarters sections can overlap with the responsibilities of the battalion supply officer. To prevent confusion and animosity, these two officers must establish a close relationship and must clearly delineate their responsibilities.

Although Raugh correctly interprets the current literature in describing the relationship between the battalion supply officer and the battalion motor officer, he fails to stress the

complexities of the motor officer's job in the Division 86 organizations, particularly in the mechanized infantry battalions. With the increase in personnel, tools, and vehicles, the motor officer has become a separate staff officer. Perpetuating the older system, with the supply officer responsible for the motor officer, might work in a light infantry or an airborne infantry unit, but it is ineffective in a mechanized unit.

Raugh does not discuss the supply officer's responsibilities with regard to the dining facility and Class I support in a tactical environment. Although the battalion supply officer is normally responsible for this operation, some units use the headquarters company commander, who is responsible for personnel and supply accountability, to fill this role. Through his executive officer (if he has one), the headquarters company commander can ensure that the dining facility meets high standards in garrison and that it properly supports the units in the field. This also permits the supply officer and the support platoon leader to concentrate on logistical planning and other areas of tactical resupply.

This technique illustrates using available personnel in an imaginative manner to accomplish battalion logis-

tical requirements. Besides those normally associated with logistical operations in the battalion, others that can be used include the headquarters company commander, the executive officer, the first sergeant, and the members of the headquarters section. These additional people can expand the foundation for the battalion's logistical operation.

Throughout his discussion; Raugh stresses that the battalion supply officer position lacks prestige and is "one of the least desired." Yet the problems he articulates are often caused by unimaginative, nonassertive officers who may occupy this critical position and never quite measure up to the job.

All infantry officers must recognize that operational requirements create logistical demands and that an officer's inability or failure to meet those demands can result in the unit's failure to accomplish its assigned missions.

R.J. KOLTON
CPT, Infantry
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VOLAR CADENCES

I am preparing an official history of the Army's transition to the all-volunteer force. I recall that while I was a student at IOAC in 1971-72,

Fort Benning was a VOLAR post, and there were some VOLAR and MVA cadences making the rounds. Perhaps if someone there remembers any of them I could incorporate one or two into my chapter on the VOLAR experiments.

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BASIC INFANTRY MANUAL

One point brought out during the Commanders Conference at Fort Benning last spring was the need to reduce the number of manuals available to the infantryman. While my infantry experience is rather dated and limited, I have felt for some time the need to have one Infantry manual.

After that basic manual, more specialized manuals could be made available to the soldier, depending on need. Everyone in the Active Army and the Reserve Components would then have available to them a basic and common reference point for ground combat.

RICHARD VAN HORNE
Tucson, Arizona

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