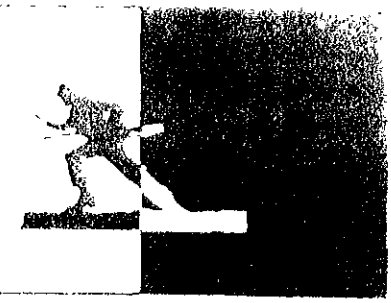
INFANTRY LETTERS



STOWAGE ON THE ITV

The article "Israeli M113's," by Captain Edwin Kennedy (INFANTRY, July-August 1984, page 6), brings up a possible solution to a problem the lack of space on the M901 ITV.

Present load plans put the required baggage of the ITV crew on the trim vane and in the fighting compartment of the vehicle. Thus, the crew with the required load of ammunition (TOWS and M-60) and personal equipment must be gymnasts to load the launcher with a missile.

The best solution to this problem would be a cargo rack such as the one on the modified Israeli M113 on both sides of the ITV to accommodate the personal equipment of the crew. Such a rack would be a bolt-on device with a lid that would fit flush to the upper deck of the vehicle to prevent damage from the launcher's backblast.

The cargo rack could be fabricated by any battalion welding shop and could be removed in the motor pool when space between vehicles became a factor.

W.E. BARBOUR, JR.
Captain, Infantry
APO New York

BATTLE DRILL TRAINING

Sergeant Robert A. Linthicum, in his letter to the editor (September-October 1984, page 49), is right about the need to conduct more battle drill training. For the past few years, the Army Research Institute (ARI) has conducted research into squad and platoon level training in response to requests from the Army Training Board (ATB) and the 7th Infantry Division.

On the basis of identified needs for detailed training and evaluation guidance, ARI worked with the ATB, the 7th Infantry Division, and the U.S. Army Infantry School to develop a prototype drill trainers' package for infantry squads. The package features a handy easy-to-read, pocket-sized training and evaluation booklet. The drills have since been adopted within the 7th Infantry Division and implemented by elements of the 82d Division, as well as by scattered infantry units throughout the Army.

The Infantry School is also working to incorporate more drill concepts and materials into its new training literature for use by infantry units Army-wide.

Again, Sergeant Linthicum's remarks are accurate and thoughtful. Certainly, drills provide a powerful tool for efficiently conducting standardized training and producing combat-ready infantry squads and platoons.

ELDRA JACKSON, JR.
SFC
U.S. Army Research Institute
Presidio of Monterey, California

OBSERVATIONS ON MORTARS

As a former heavy mortar commander in a light infantry unit, I would like to offer some observations on the current dialogue concerning infantry mortar requirements.

The infantry needs the "hedge" of a light, organic weapon to accompany its maneuver elements and provide indirect fire support. There may be far too many occasions when tactical air, naval gunfire, attack helicopters, or direct support artillery either will not be available early enough (in an airhead, amphibious beachhead, or mountains, for example), or will be diverted to higher priority missions (such as a deep strike of armored targets).

I'm not convinced, however, that today's perception of a mortar system fits the infantry's needs. Traditionally, mortars have been manpower-intensive systems, with bulky man-pack components, short engagement ranges, long set-up times, and slow rates of fire.

The trade-off to resupply mortars with higher sustained rates of fire (the XM252 81mm mortar, for example, with its advertised rate of fire of 15 rounds per minute) in units with limited transport could mean that riflemen will become load-carrying porters on a scale not seen since the Attu Campaign of 1943.

The improved rate of fire and the trailer-mounting of a 120mm mortar system do not provide any noticeable breakthrough in overall force productivity.

Given today's force, which is fixed at about 780,000, and tommorow's force, which is faced with a declining manpower pool of eligible personnel, productivity considerations should influence weapon system developments. The infantry should try to reduce its allocation of manpower per unit of expended firepower. And the exploration of any linear, peripheral system improvements should be expanded to consider alternate weapon systems.

Among your recent contributors, for example, James Larsen (November-December 1984 issue, page 49) has suggested the tactical utility of the 2.75-inch (70mm) rocket as an infantry mortar substitute, or complement. I concur with this suggestion and believe that the 9th Infantry Division is now evaluating a "Hydra-70" 70mm rocket configuration for the HMWWV in a close combat role.

As a second suggestion, I'd like to offer a mortar system with multiple barrels on the same mountings. I'm not an engineer, but it seems to me that the mounting of three 81mm or 107mm tubes on a single gun carriage would result in significant savings of crew personnel. When one considers the desired "sheaf-on-target" requirement, one can visualize a rigid mounting of tubes on the same carriage, such as to produce an "open" sheaf at prescribed ranges. Further, with manual gears, a closed or converged sheaf could also be obtained.

The 120mm mortar with trailer chassis, for instance, could be expanded into a three-barrel system, manned by essentially the same crew. The feasibility of this concept would need further study, of course, but the effect would be to replace a 15-man mortar platoon of three tubes with a 5- or 6-man crew and a multi-barrel mortar system.

In addition to manpower productivity considerations, the infantry has not yet come to grips with its self-defeating concept of allocating firepower to a reserve status. Unlike other fire support systems, infantry mortars are habitually assigned to a reserve status whenever their parent unit is placed in reserve. This luxury should not be tolerated, however, in the firepower-scarce light infantry division. Hopefully, a new doctrine and tactical employment concept is already being developed at the Infantry School to overcome this long-term tactical firepower deficiency.

Too, the development of an antiarmor capability for infantry mortars may result in idle tube time for mortar units. Artillery analyses of the effect of Copperhead missions on the total idle time of a firing battery should be studied before adopting this capability for the infantry mortar.

The infantry should also rethink its traditional countermortar mission. A serious gap in engaged mortars could develop between the assigned mortars of two attacking motorized rifle divisions and those assigned to a defending U.S. light infantry division — a ratio of 3.3:1. Although artillery will complement mortars in executing a countermortar fire plan, the long-term sustainment of artillery fire priority to this mission cannot be assumed.

The response time for countermortar missions could be reduced by creating mortar "hunter-killer" teams in forward brigade areas. A typical team would include an AN/TPQ-36 countermortar radar element, which has a direct communications link to an infantry mortar/indirect fire support element. Target information on enemy mortars would be transmitted from the AN/TPQ-36 element to the infantry fire support element first, before being passed on to the FDC of the direct support artillery battalion. Currently, no such direct link is prescribed by doctrine.

A final thought. Another way to reduce response time is through the tactical application of the "squad-leader adjust" method of fire. While the mortar crew remains in defilade, the squad leader serves as his own observer, occupies an observation post within 100 meters of the mortar position, establishes a wire line from himself to the mortar position, and controls the mission directly. Under this method, the squad leader provides burst corrections in range (charge) and deflection (mils) directly to the gunner. The use of wire permits an effective ECM response to active enemy radio jamming and emission-locating measures.

RICHARD K. FICKETT
COL (Retired), Infantry
Annandale, Virginia

THOUGHT-PROVOKING

I found your November-December 1984 issue most thought-provoking, especially the letter by Lieutenant Colonel Julian M. Olejniczak (page 49) and the article by Captain Samuel K. Rock, Jr. (page 35).

In regard to the article, "Training New Lieutenants," it is part of our job as NCOs to train new lieutenants; we accept the fact that they are just that — new — and need help.

Captain James A. Hales's comm in his letter on mortars (page reminded me of Vietnam. I remem being greatly relieved when stopped carrying our 4.2-inch mor out in the field and started carr our 81s. Then I saw two Vietnam soldiers strolling down the road. had a complete 60mm mortar on shoulder; the other had a pole with rounds lashed to each end. Two m a mortar, and 20 rounds. An couldn't help wondering how m men it would take to match that w an 81. It seems to me that Capt Hales is right on the money — we n a *lot* more *small,* light mortars in infantry.

Finally, I found "A Forgot War," by Captain Michael A. Phil (page 38), an extremely interesting ticle and am trying to obtain the l pamphlets listed in it.

DEAN A. SIAS
SSG
Region V NCO Academy
Riverton, Utah

EDITOR'S NOTE: We have ha several inquiries about the pamphle known as the German Report Serie We understand that many of them ar available through the Army's public tions channels. Some are als available from the Government Print ing Office, Superintendent of Docu ments, Washington, DC 20401. We d not know the cost from GPO, but pay ment can be made by VISA or Master Card number (expiration date should also be included). In addition, the pamphlets can be found in the Na tional Archives and should be availa ble in any library that has a Govern ment documents section.

HEAT INJURY

Reference "Preventing Heat Injuries," by Captain Charles D. Henry (July-August 1984, page 32), there are several things a soldier can do to avoid heat injury. Among them are to

have hit low-flying MIG aircraft with the 7.62mm balls.

The efficiency of American combat rifles can be affirmed, therefore, by their history, but high hopes and bravado should not supersede their real limitations.

JOHN J. SKIFFINGTON
SFC, U.S. Army Reserve
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

ONLY THE ROCKS . . .

I would like to offer some thoughts on ideals for the professional military leader in terms of values and attitudes — thoughts that may be useful as a simple guide.

There is an old Georgia Creek Indian saying that only the rocks live forever. I have selected three rocks for the leader — to provide him strength and to be bulwarks against the temptations and ordeals of life.

The first rock comes from military history. Most historians differ on the great leaders of the past, but my own selections are Hannibal of Carthage, Napoleon Bonaparte, Robert E. Lee, and George S. Patton. In attempting to find a common thread linking these four, I have selected an excerpt from Douglas S. Freeman's last volume on Lee:

And if one, only one, of the myriad incidents of his stirring life had to be selected to typify his message, as a man, to the young Americans who stood in hushed awe that rainy October morning as their parents wept at the passing of the Southern Arthur, who would hesitate in selecting that incident? It occurred in Northern Virginia on his last visit there. A young mother brought her baby to him . . . and (he) looked long at it and then at her and slowly said — 'teach him he must deny himself.' That is all. There is no mystery in the coffin at Lexington . . ."

The second rock comes from fiction — from the novel *Once An Eagle*, by Anton Myrer, about two professional soldiers, Courtney Massengale and Sam Damon. The former is a political officer, a careerist, a ticket-puncher, and a self-seeker. The latter is a real soldier of great integrity, loyalty, courage, dedication, knowledge, patriotism, and selflessness — with selflessness foremost. It is a simple comparison of extremes. Sam Damon is the ideal.

The third rock comes from sports — from the late great Paul "Bear" Bryant and his guiding principle for his players on the field and for life. Ask any former Alabama, Texas A and M, Kentucky, or Maryland athlete who played under this magnificent leader, and each will relay the same message from him, "Always show your class." There is also no secret under the hickory tree in Birmingham where Bryan is buried.

The three rocks, then, are Deny yourself, Emulate the ideal, and Always show your class. May they live forever and guide all of us as military leaders.

ROBERT LEE POWELL
LTC, Infantry
Fort McPherson, Georgia

NEEDS HELP WITH BOOK

A military author and historian, Jack Britton, needs anything used or worn by a G.I. to photograph for a new book, tentatively titled *The American G.I. 1900 to 1955*. It will be an in-depth photo study of the gear, clothing, insignia, and weapons of the American G.I. during that period.

The book will also contain a section on war souvenirs such as flags, swords and daggers, headgear, medals, and insignia (including German, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese).

Anyone who would like to donate items will have his name appear in the book and will receive a free copy of it. Items should be sent directly to Jack Britton, P.O. Box 702073, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74170.

JACKIE HISOR
Editorial Director
Military Collectors' News Press
Tulsa, Oklahoma

FREE MAP OF SAIPAN

A unique historic and geograpl map of Saipan has been designed f distribution by the Northern Marian Visitor Bureau.

Interesting factual information c this famous World War II ba tleground is provided, along with i triguing pictorial sketches such as profile of the Pagan Volcano, a cro section of the lagoon, the 1944 U.S invasion route across the island as we as the Japanese defense sectors, an an underwater oceanic view of Saipa

This colorful map is a compendiu of a wide variety of information abo the Northern Marianas. Among th little-known facts shown are th names of the Japanese vessels lost i the area during the war, the names an locations of invasion beaches, and in teresting facts on and drawings of se life and oceanography.

Free copies of the map are availabl while they last from the Mariana Visitor Bureau, P.O. Box 861, Saipan C.M. 96950.

ECONOMIC SERVICE COUNSEL INC.
Saipan, C.M.

RESEARCH ON NDE

I am engaged in a continuing research study concerning the "near-death experience" (NDE) as it occurs in military combat situations. I would therefore like to hear from combat veterans who have had unusual psychological experiences while wounded in combat or during a close brush with death.

The identity of anyone who responds will be kept confidential Combat veterans or others with questions or comments are invited to write to me at P.O. Box 540, Willow Grove, Pennsylvania 19090, or to call (215) 659-3900.

ROBERT M. SULLIVAN
CPT, USAR (Retired)