

INFANTRY LETTERS



TRADITIONS

I must commend you and your staff on your outstanding March-April 1985 issue. Two articles especially impressed me.

Major Dwight B. Dickson, Jr., offers a brilliant concept for preserving the history and tradition of our infantry regiments ("Our Infantry Heritage," p. 18). In fact, it is the most elegant solution I have seen to the emotionally wrenching question of which regiments will live and which will die.

Units are not merely numbers to attach to a TO&E: They are links that join our brothers in arms of the past and our descendants who may serve in those same units in the future. The 7th Cavalry, the 16th Infantry, and the 5th Artillery, for example, are not just abstractions or convenient designations (like the "Maintenance Department" at Sears). These names and designations speak of deeds and the men who performed them. They serve as reminders and help present members of the regiments to act accordingly so as not to tarnish those memories.

Tradition is inextricably tied to the armed forces; without tradition and ceremony we are little more than an armed mob. The lack of a past, or the loss of one, is a terrible burden for any person or organization. (As members of the 1st Battalion, 182d Infantry, Massachusetts Army National Guard, are proud to remind you, their regiment is the oldest English-speaking regiment in the world.)

In short, Major Dickson's proposal should be adopted forthwith by direct order of the Chief of Staff.

The other article that impressed me was Brigadier Richard E. Simpkin's "Command from the Bottom Up" (p. 34), which shows a way to eliminate excessive instructions and over-super-

vision. It allows our junior leaders (at whatever level) to develop their own styles of leadership and to make mistakes in peacetime instead of in combat. This gives them a flexibility with which to deal with alterations in plans. And the goal of making "every Infantryman a Ranger" expresses the philosophy very well.

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COMMENTS, PLEASE

I am an assistant operations sergeant for a Reserve medical battalion and would like to solicit a response from your readers to a problem I consider major.

My last annual training period included a battalion headquarters and three supporting companies, all medical. We arrived in our tactical area at 0800, installed a 292 to a radio mounted in one of the vehicles, and proceeded to run land lines.

There were only four people in our communications section — one manning the radio, one setting up the radio in the TOC, and two running land lines to supporting units and inside the headquarters area. These last two were also responsible for running a line through four miles of wooded mountainous terrain and across two roads to a MAG drop.

Meanwhile, our supporting companies were set up (including sleeping tents) and waiting for us to hook up to their land lines. Our headquarters area was also set up (including sleeping tents) with a permanent perimeter by 1600. Our communications section worked until midnight and had to get up at 0400 the next day because the

MAG drop was dead.

The after-action report on this training cited our communications section for inefficiency.

Looking back, I can see how this situation could have been avoided:

The battalion headquarters could have tasked subordinate units for help since the communications section was at less than half strength. The people who were setting up tents (except for the TOC) could have been pulled off those details and assigned to the communications section. In addition, the MAG drop should have been checked before soldiers were ordered to run four miles of wire to it.

I feel that communications are more important than a permanent perimeter in the first few days of set-up, because it is critical that units be able to coordinate their actions.

Besides, if we had met more than a squad of aggressors during this period, we would have suffered severe casualties and could not have pinpointed the breakthrough or called for help.

I would welcome any comments on what I feel should be a priority to communications above all else. I have a selfish motive behind requesting comments: I don't want to go through something like this again.

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BAYONET STILL NEEDED

The Befort Bayonet Replacement Debate has sparked a lot of sincere emotion on both sides. We may therefore be onto a timely subject whose merits ought to be played out as far as they go.

There are several points that I believe still should be made:

- When ammunition is gone and malfunctions occur, more weapons will be thrown away if the lack of a bayonet turns them into useless, dangerous deadweight.

- If both sides run out of ammunition in a firefight, the side that still has bayonets will effect the surrender of the other.

- Training has always taught that the very sight of bayonets on the weapons of advancing riflemen terrorizes the enemy. Justified or not, this means that any weapon that reduces the enemy's will to stand fast ought to be included in our inventory.

- More prisoners will be shot if they have to be guarded with either rifle fire or *nothing*.

- It is impossible to guard prisoners of war silently without the bayonet; and it might be unacceptable to try to stop a runaway with rifle fire in the midst of a crowd.

It is important that these points be made, because several inaccurate and unfortunate statements have been made about this crude-but-never-obsolete weapon. (INFANTRY's letters are influential beyond anyone's imagination, and since these advocates of the extinction of the bayonet have had their say, all other points should be covered, too.)

Incidentally, let's hope for Befort's sake that George S. Patton, Jr., is not on CQ at the Pearly Gates when he tries to turn in his pass to that Great Barracks in the Sky.

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CALFEX RESOURCES

I read the article "CALFEX: Tactical Training with a Purpose," by Captains E.J. Nusbaum and John T. Robinson (INFANTRY, March-April 1985, p. 42) with great interest, because I am S-3 of a division artillery (3d Armored Division) preparing for our own CALFEX support at Grafenwoehr, Germany.

I've supported this kind of live fire

exercise before, and I agree with the authors that the maneuver soldier derives from such exercises a great appreciation for the effects of each of the complimentary weapon systems, and also that maneuver leaders do gain experience planning and controlling them.

What the article fails to mention, though — and something I think is just as important — is the sense of timing the maneuver commander gains in synchronizing his maneuver elements with artillery, mortars, attack helicopters, and tactical air support. The CALFEX is the only kind of exercise I know of in which that kind of leadership and team training can be employed effectively in a live fire mode. Until MILES technology is dramatically improved to include those indirect fire systems, the CALFEX will remain the best way to conduct such training.

I have just a couple of words of advice for anyone who is planning to conduct such an exercise for the first time. Artillery training ammunition is very constrained now in comparison to 1982 when the men of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry conducted their exercise. The 414 rounds of artillery HE that was fired in that exercise represents about 10 percent of an artillery battalion's present annual allocation. If a CALFEX exercise were conducted for every battalion in the division, it would consume the entire annual allocation of HE for one 155mm battalion.

At Grafenwoehr, safety constraints also require the artillery men to use "canned data" when shooting at a single target location from the same firing point using the same deflection, time and quadrant setting for all rounds fired.

There are also other constraints, one being that, in order for the ground troops to see impact of the rounds, a 200-meter height of burst must be achieved on the upward trajectory of the projectile. This means that all of those CALFEX rounds must be fired with time fuzes, which are in even shorter supply than HE. From the point of view of the battery com-

mander, whose mission it is to train his cannoneers to proficiency, the training value of a CALFEX diminishes in about the same proportion that ammunition expenditures increase.

For that reason, I think it is unfortunate that the Army's new STRAC (Standards in Training Commission) allocations do not include training ammunition for CALFEXs. Until that omission is remedied, however, it is imperative that CALFEX requirements be identified at the beginning of each fiscal year so that a reasonable amount of artillery ammunition can be programmed for all maneuver companies or troops in the division.

Right now, the annual STRAC allocation of artillery HE is about 4,200 rounds per battalion. I believe a total of 34 rounds of HE can reasonably be devoted for each maneuver team without seriously degrading the training of cannoneers — 8 rounds for high-burst registration; 2 rounds for subsequent meteorological check; 12 rounds for two-battery volleys in the attack phase by day; and 12 rounds for two-battery volleys in the defense at night.

Assuming 12 company teams in a brigade, an annual CALFEX for the entire brigade would require 408 HE rounds — just under 10 percent of the 155mm battalion's annual STRAC allocation. Each artillery battalion commander would have to determine what trade-offs he had to make in his own training to provide that much ammunition. (Incidentally, if platoon volleys are fired instead of battery volleys, more flexibility is provided for additional artillery engagements, shifting of fires, or refires.)

Finally, the article does not mention the usefulness of a CALFEX for training FISTs and FSOs. They need to develop the same sense of timing and synchronization that the maneuver commander learns, because the maneuver commander in the heat of battle will sometimes have to delegate the integration of indirect fires to these Redlegs anyway.

Therefore, all of us who make up the combined arms team have a stake

in CALFEX training. So let's beef up the STRAC to provide resources for these valuable exercises.

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BATTLE INCIDENTS

I am looking for information on battle incidents (personal or official accounts) in which the carefully aimed fire of one or two riflemen played a crucial role in the outcome. I also seek accounts of military encounters in which the pistol played an important part.

I ask readers who respond to include the date of the incident, unit identification data, their comments on the marksmanship training they received (including any before entering military service) and their views on the comparative value of area fire and aimed fire, and of full automatic spray fire and controlled fire (one, two, or three shots).

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F.L. GREAVES

LONG RANGE SURVEILLANCE UNITS

In the letters section of the January-February 1985 issue of *INFANTRY* (page 5), Captain John Provost stressed the need for LRRPs (long-range reconnaissance patrols) and disagreed with the decision to place the LRRP detachments under the control of the cavalry squadrons in the light and heavy divisions.

First, the term LRRP is now outdated. The current title in the AOE structure is "long-range surveillance units" (LRSU). The corps has a 186-man long-range surveillance company (LRSC) and the division, a 41-man long-range surveillance detachment (LRSD).

I totally disagreed with the logic and arguments Captain Provost presents

in his letter. He says that the LRSD would receive better logistical and communications support from corps, that unit training would be improved, that the quality of soldiers would be better controlled, and that the detachments would have access to more international training exercises.

Within our divisions, the experts on reporting human intelligence (HUMINT) on the enemy have been the cavalry/reconnaissance squadrons. Assigning these dynamic detachments of highly trained, long-range, foot-mobile, reconnaissance experts to the squadrons will improve their ability to accomplish their missions in the divisions' area of interest. In regard to passing battlefield information, the link between the G-2 and the cavalry/reconnaissance squadron has always been direct. Under the AOE structures, it will continue to be direct.

Under the cavalry/reconnaissance squadron the combined arms and integrated training of the LRSD should be better. The squadron's main missions are reconnaissance and security, and the LRSD's mission is to report intelligence. The units are unquestionably linked. As part of the combat aviation brigade, the reconnaissance squadron and the LRSD have the full-time support of that headquarters. It has not only superb logistical and communications support, but also an organic means of rapid insertion and extraction.

High-quality personnel are now joining the LRSD in the 7th Infantry Division (Light) and have already established their importance and demonstrated their capabilities during recent large-scale CPXs. The current TOE/MTOE best serves the "unit of command" principle of war by placing the LRSDs under the squadron commander's control. There he can incorporate them into his BTMS program and develop the employment and

We welcome letters from our readers and print as many of them as we can. Sometimes it takes a while before we find room for them. But keep writing on topics of interest to our readers, and we'll do our best to get your letters in, sooner or later.

"how to fight" tactics for the entire squadron.

LRSUs are now projected to attend a long range surveillance course that is being developed by the Infantry School (with the input of the other concerned schools and branches). This course will teach the foundation of LRSU tactics and techniques. The skills and knowledge the LRSDs bring back from this course will become an integral part of the squadron's reconnaissance training program.

Certainly the G-2 and G-3 will continue to plan and coordinate all of the division's intelligence and electronic warfare assets and their missions, but the reconnaissance squadron's personnel need to be under one commander. Corps long-range surveillance companies are important, but leave our long-range surveillance detachment where it belongs — in the cavalry/reconnaissance squadron.

I am proud of the combined arms mix in the squadron, and the LRSD is one of the best assets we have. It is where it can do its job best. Captain Provost can rest assured that in the 7th Infantry Division (Light), the long-range surveillance detachment will never die on the vine!

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FALL OF ITALY 1943

I am completing research for a book and am trying to reach people for interviews and information concerning the fall and occupation of Italy in and after 1943.

I would appreciate hearing from all former soldiers who were involved in occupying towns and cities in Italy after 1943. I am most interested in conducting interviews, but letters, diaries, or other accounts would also be helpful.

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