



THE INFANTRY MIND

The Infantry mind is a mind that thinks men are the essence of fighting power—that the tougher and harder and keener and abler the soldier, the better the Army. It thinks that it is men who win wars, and that those who think armies can get along mainly on brains and mechanical ability are already defeated. It thinks that the iron fighting will of men in the mass is the heart of an army, whether they do their fighting in planes or in tanks, or gain their ground by the yard by the use of the ground. It thinks that “men in the mass” means every fighting man and every man who helps him fight.

The Infantry mind is a mind that wants every weapon and gadget sought for and adopted that will add strength and power and speed and sureness to the whole fighting force. It is a mind that thinks an army must have such weapons in the numbers it appears to require and a few more still. For it wants to be sure there are enough. And it wants no time to be wasted on argument about what shall be done with new weapons. It wants them to get into the hands of any partner in the fighting team in the shortest possible time so that new power can add to the strength of the team.

The Infantry mind is a mind that thinks only in terms of a strong, ready, all-out support. If it's Infantry doing the supporting, then the Infantry mind is constantly ready to add to the fight every ounce it has of drive, speed, and technical ability expressed in firepower and maneuver, to help the troops it is supporting. If it's Infantry that is getting the support, then the Infantry mind looks for this same kind of help—for cooperation without thought of collar ornaments—from every supporting man and his weapon of ground or air.

The Infantry mind doesn't care how it gets to the battle so long as it gets there in time. In time to surprise and in strength to match and outfight the enemy. It is eager to use the plane, the truck, and the jeep to cover the ground and get its men and their weapons wherever their attack can hit hardest and go farthest. It thinks that the fighter in the tank and the plane must have this same unalterable thought of striking where their powerful blows will do the most good.

The Infantry mind is a crafty mind, not merely a charging, fighting, assaulting mind. For it knows that a stroke that strikes weakness is a stroke that tells heavily, and that every particle of driving power must then be applied. But if it knows that the enemy's weaknesses must be sought, it likewise knows that the enemy's strength must often be overcome first to create a weakness. And it knows that when there is a job like this, it takes more than ever the fighting heart of the soldier himself, of the single man and of men in the mass—of men on the ground, in planes, and in tanks.

For the Infantry mind is a mind that thinks men are the essence of fighting, that the heart and the guts and the blood of soldiers win wars, and that bombers and tanks and jeeps; howitzers, guns and mortars; grenades and pursuit planes and rifles—are tools in the hands of men, of fighting men, and can never win wars by themselves.

The Infantry mind, so the Infantryman thinks, must be the same mind as the Air Force mind, the Armored Force mind, the Quartermaster mind, the Field Artillery mind, the Ordnance mind, the Coast Artillery mind, the Finance mind, the Cavalry mind, the Chemical Warfare mind, the Signal Corps mind, the Engineer mind, the Medical Corps mind, the Morale Branch mind, and the minds of Chaplains and Inspectors and Adjutants General. One mind there must be—one single mind, with one single hard-driving aim—the defeat, the crushing defeat, of the enemy.