

ductions, that already too-wide gap will become unbridgeable. As the defense dollar is reduced, the importance of putting absolute professionals in command of the Army's infantry companies becomes even more critical. In the future, fewer training and maintenance funds will be available, and the seasoned skipper will be better equipped to jump over this hurdle. His experience will allow him to train his command effectively and inexpensively in the local training areas, while continuing to make the training exciting and adventurous.

Additionally, it appears that, because of restricted funds, by the year 2000 the Active Army's strength will be much less than what it is today. This will create even more difficult challenges for the infantry company commander, because his future missions probably will be focused on medium and low intensity operations. The Army will need the sharpest leadership and the most seasoned and cunning infantry company commanders to successfully fight these multifaceted, highly complicated, decentralized campaigns.

The Army can ensure having that kind of leadership if it will put majors in command of infantry companies. Its soldiers deserve this, because their very lives depend on it.

Colonel David H. Hackworth is the co-author of the recent best seller *About Face* and the 1967 publication titled *The Vietnam Primer*. He spent 16 years at company level during which he commanded eight company-sized units. He has also commanded three infantry battalions. He is a military writer and lecturer who lives in Washington state and Australia.

Deep Operations

LIEUTENANT COLONEL FRANKLIN L. HAGENBECK
MAJOR CURTIS M. SCAPAROTTI

During the first week of REFORGER 90, the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) was given the following mission: Conduct a 60-kilometer infiltration through mobile enemy forces, execute disruption operations against enemy combat support and combat service support elements, and, on order, exfiltrate to friendly lines.

Clearly, this was a doctrinally correct mission for a light infantry task force, but was it realistic and could it succeed? And assuming that the light task force could achieve positional advantage deep in the enemy's rear area, would the payoff be worth the high risk of losing the friendly force?

Infiltration operations were nothing new to these light fighters. Like most light infantry battalions, the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry task force had participated in numerous staff exercises and divisional command post exercises with similar missions. Also, the battalion had had the good fortune to learn at the National Training Center (NTC) the previous summer that the successful execution of

infiltration, followed by attacks in the enemy's rear, is much more difficult to achieve on the ground than on a battleboard. These lessons bolstered the light leaders' confidence, however, and convinced them that deep operations could be even more successful in the strikingly different European environment for several reasons:

First, the foothills of the Bavarian Alps offer more cover and concealment and, unlike the California desert, allow soldiers to forage from the land, particularly for water. Squad movement, the norm in decentralized light operations, is not restricted to the night as it is in the desert. During the winter months in Europe, daylight movement can often be accomplished during the foggy conditions that exist almost every morning and every evening.

Second, when two opposing heavy corps square off, planners seldom pay much attention to the light forces or consider them in combat ratios; the odds in favor of their preservation therefore go up dramatically in the European environ-

ment. By contrast, at the NTC the opposing force (OPFOR) actively pursues light fighters during the reconnaissance and counter-reconnaissance battle and templates their moves during the main battle. The perceived tempo of the battle between the heavy forces in REFORGER 90 made it unlikely that the OPFOR would routinely wargame a light infantry threat in its rear areas.

The third point of promise concerned casualty evacuation, always a problem in deep operations. Light fighters know that their chances of surviving wounds in the desert are dismal if those wounds are sustained during daylight or at night in rugged terrain where evacuation helicopters cannot land. They believe that a clandestine recovery in Europe stands a much better chance of succeeding.

All of these precepts were validated during the first week of REFORGER 90: On the evening of 14 January, the task force began a truck movement to its area of operations in T1 (see map). It was to bury itself there while an armored cavalry squadron conducted covering force

operations the next day.

After the OPFOR's main elements had passed through the covering force area, the task force was to conduct disruption operations in AO EVEREST 1. The commander defined direct fire and indirect fire attacks by specifying day and night engagement criteria and target priority criteria.

In addition, the task force was given a contingency mission to conduct an infiltration across the Woernitz River (25 to 30 kilometers from T1) and to establish a disruption zone (DZ)—an area forward of the main battle area within which light infantry forces conduct direct fire and indirect fire attacks to disrupt enemy combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) forces.

Not surprisingly, while on its way to T1, the task force received a fragmentary order to conduct the contingency mission. It was diverted to AA EAGLE while the task force commander and his S-3 met with the brigade commander to receive his guidance.

Among other things, the brigade commander confirmed movement and assembly times, delineated fire coordination measures, and reconfirmed the attack criteria. His intent remained the same—to conduct indirect fire attacks against the enemy until the night of 16 January,

when direct fire attacks would be authorized.

The task force was to focus on enemy communications, command, control, and intelligence (C³I) facilities and CSS (primarily fuel tankers and Class V vehicles) elements. Since the enemy was on the attack, however, the task force's priority was to attack enemy CSS elements, because the disruption of Class III and V supplies would definitely hinder the timing of the enemy's follow-on attacks. C³I losses would hurt him, too, of course, but probably less than if he were in the defense trying to react to an attacking force.

Following the receipt of this guidance, the task force commander issued a fragmentary order with updated graphics to his subordinate commanders, and saw to it that troop leading procedures were conducted in AA EAGLE.

The corps commander authorized the light infantry to infiltrate into the buffer zone not earlier than 0300 on 15 January and to cross the international border at 0600.

At 0700 the OPFOR attacked across the border and the covering force battle began. By 1530 the lead elements of the task force were at the corps fire support coordination line (FSCL)—the Woernitz River—and were prepared to infiltrate to DZ SUMMIT at nightfall. Although the

enemy forces turned the north flank of the covering force, the armored cavalry squadron managed to maintain combat forces within the center and southern portions of AO EVEREST 1.

By 0600, 16 January, 21 of the 27 squads from the task force had reached AO JUDY and AO CINDY (a dispersal area short of DZ SUMMIT); the last six squads closed by nightfall. At 1030 the armored cavalry element withdrew to the south, ending the covering force fight in AO EVEREST 1.

The light infantry task force began its disruption operations the afternoon of 16 January with indirect attacks and intelligence reporting. Direct fire attacks were authorized and they began at 1830, while disruption operations continued for almost two more days, until 1530, 18 January.

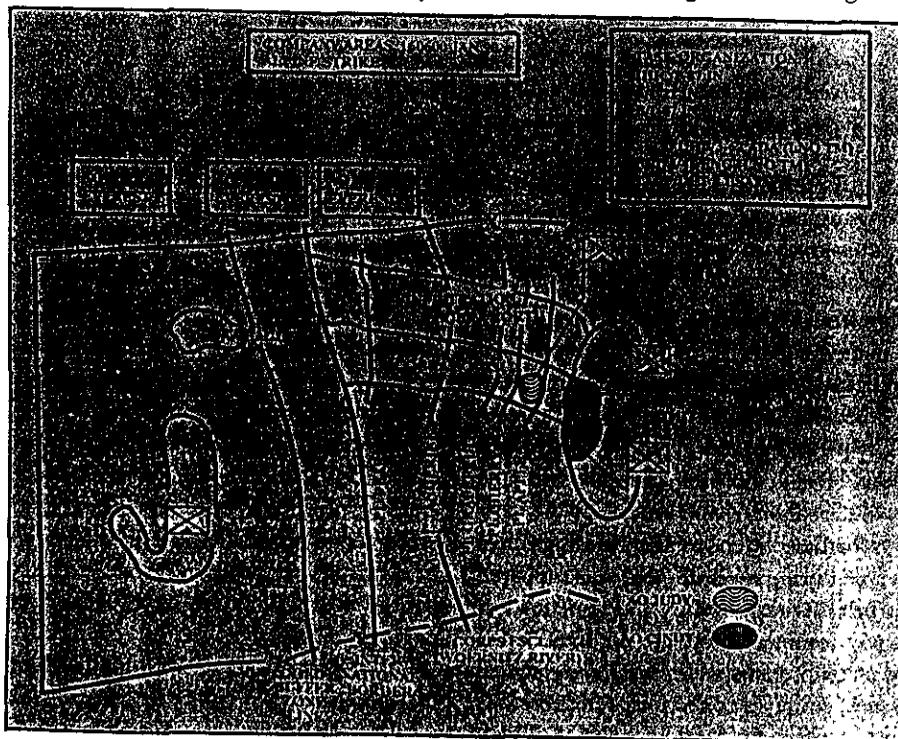
The task force began its exfiltration at 1700, 18 January, to link up with corps counterattack forces not later than 1000, 19 January. The task force soldiers linked up with trucks in AO EVEREST 1 and were extracted behind friendly lines.

The operations and the resulting battle damage assessment (BDA) during this mission validated the light fighters' belief that deep operations could be conducted successfully in a European environment.

The task force destroyed 16 command posts, 58 Class III vehicles or gasoline pods, 4 MLRSs (multiple launch rocket systems) and 11 other artillery systems, and one forward area refuel/resupply point. It lost one company during the mission.

Recognizing that a REFORGER exercise, like each of those at the NTC or elsewhere, is unique and has its own restraints and constraints, we must be careful in drawing conclusions. Acknowledging that risk, though, we offer the following points for consideration:

A simple plan, plus the leaders' understanding of the commander's intent, plus patience, equals success. Decentralized operations (squad level) are easy in concept, difficult in execution. Commanders at task force-level and higher must guard against trying to micromanage these operations. They must accept that there are some events they cannot control and may not even



know about until much later in the operation—perhaps not until the mission has been completed. Company commanders and platoon leaders cannot accomplish a mission with a snap of the fingers; they must give their squad leaders time to develop the situation.

The mobility of light fighters is a function of combat load, as well as terrain and climate. Nothing new here. Experienced NCOs can usually make the right call on what their soldiers should carry. Commanders should let them be a part of the decision-making process and then conduct pre-combat checks to see that they are complying.

Templating the enemy before the fight is a prerequisite to success in deep operations. Squad leaders need this framework, because they probably will not get any intelligence updates from higher levels.

Graphic control measures are critical. To improve command and control—and to reduce the possibility of friendly

casualties from small arms all the way up to BAI (battlefield air interdiction)—the graphics must be easily understood by everyone.

Combat service support is more manageable in Europe than in the desert. Logistical packages can be infiltrated by vehicle and air; water is available in both streams and villages; Classes III and V can be foraged, as can transportation (some soldiers were moved by local farmers inside hay wagons). On REFORGER 90 our squad leaders were given small amounts of local currency to simulate foraging or to use as a backup in the event of resupply shortages. This seemingly small step reduced the initial soldier's load (Class I) and allowed the squad leaders to cross the line of departure knowing they had an alternative way to take care of their soldiers.

During this exercise, the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry task force, as well as several other battalions from the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) proved that

deep infiltration is a realistic mission for light infantry. They generated intelligence, accurately adjusted indirect fires, and conducted limited direct attacks at night—each of which affected the enemy's morale and impeded his tempo of operations. In this way, the light forces complemented the friendly heavy forces, survived, and were available to fight in subsequent operations.

Lieutenant Colonel Franklin L. Hagenbeck commands the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry. He served as a company commander in the 25th Infantry Division, a battalion S-3 in the 82d Airborne Division, and a tactics instructor in the Australian Infantry Center. A 1971 graduate of the United States Military Academy, he also holds master's degrees from Florida State University and Long Island University.

Major Curtis M. Scaparrotti is S-3 of the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry. He commanded a company in the 82d Airborne Division and served as a tactical officer at the United States Military Academy. A 1978 graduate of the Academy, he holds a master's degree from the University of South Carolina.

The NTC

A Reserve Component View

MAJOR HOWARD L. HORTON

In July 1989 I had the rare opportunity to observe the performance of a large number of units operating in the Army's most realistic combat training environment, the National Training Center (NTC). As a National Guard officer participating in individual KPUP (Key Personnel Upgrade Program) training, I was assigned to the exercise management control center for the Operations Group during the rotation of two battalion task forces, their brigade headquarters, and a slice of combat and combat service support personnel of the First Cavalry Divi-

sion from Fort Hood, Texas. In addition, I helped supervise opposing force (OPFOR) activities in support of the rotation.

I became familiar with the duties of the shift positions and acted in those positions. I also became familiar with the operational plans and orders for the various battles, attended the briefings presented during my shift, and was prepared to brief as required by the shift leader.

My comments here are not intended to be a comprehensive discussion of tactical issues, simply a collection of impressions and opinions for future reference. These

comments relate primarily to DTOC operations, because that was the level of my primary focus at the NTC during my 18-day assignment.

My specific mission was to assist the operations section and to ensure that the training objectives of the rotational units were accomplished safely, in a tactically realistic environment, and in accordance with the published rules of engagement.

On one occasion, I rode with the chief of operations and plans to observe the performance of the Blue Force in a day-