

advisor on all aspects of gunnery training, ranging from individual weapon proficiency to the platoon live-fire exercise of Table XII. Like the master gunners in tank and Bradley units, infantry master gunners are found at company,

battalion, and brigade levels.

The infantry gunnery tables provide the cohesive and progressive training program that is needed to sustain the proficiency of infantry units and ensure their combat readiness.

Staff Sergeant Philip R. Albert is an assistant operations sergeant in the 5th Battalion, 502d Infantry, Berlin Brigade. He has served as an infantry squad leader, a Bradley platoon sergeant, and a scout squad leader and platoon sergeant. He is now attending the University of Maryland.

Using Deception Techniques

CAPTAIN EDWARD R. WARD

The 82d Airborne Division recently completed an exercise in the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), in which commanders successfully used deception to gain a significant advantage over the opposing force (OPFOR). Although this was a computer exercise for corps, division, and brigade staffs, the lessons learned from it can also be applied to any size unit and to real-world tactical situations.

During the BCTP Warfighters simulation, a commander meets an opposing force (OPFOR) that is as dangerous an opponent as he would face at any of the maneuver training centers. Like the OPFOR at the National Training Center or the Joint Readiness Training Center, this OPFOR intimately knows the terrain and the best way to fight on it. Since the BCTP OPFOR is a free-play, thinking enemy, however, he can be deceived. Deception can paralyze his command and control functions and cause him to misplace his assets.

Along with the 82d Division staff elements, other participants in this exercise were the staffs of the XVIII Airborne Corps and the 82d Division's three brigades plus the 194th Armored Brigade (Separate). The 101st Airborne Division was played notionally.

The XVIII Corps deception plan was to make it appear that the 82d Airborne Division was the main corps effort in the attack. To accomplish this, the 101st

Division launched the main attack 24 hours after the 82d Division. During that 24-hour period, the 82d had priority of corps assets.

The 82d Division's deception plan not only supported the corps plan but went beyond it by implementing a division-level plan to deceive the OPFOR as to the planned location of the division's main attack. The 82d Division wanted the OPFOR to believe the main attack would be in the 2d Brigade sector in the west, when the actual main attack was in the 3d Brigade sector in the east.

The 82d built its deception plan by stacking the 194th Brigade behind the 2d Brigade. The division weighted the artillery in the 2d Brigade sector and gave the 2d Brigade priority of fires during the reconnaissance and counterreconnaissance fight. The 194th Brigade had units under the operational control of the division's 2d Brigade. The division positioned bridging assets in the west for a river crossing operation in support of the 194th Brigade. The division used most of the assets it received from corps in support of the 2d Brigade, especially during those first 24 hours. The division deception cell constructed a fake artillery battery and a fake tank company in the 2d Brigade sector. The 82d Division also attempted to conceal the location of its 3d Brigade by having the brigade's soldiers wear 101st Airborne Division patches and paint 101st Airborne Divi-

sion bumper numbers on their vehicles.

As the division began the main attack, the 194th Brigade moved east behind the 3d Brigade at H-plus-4 and assumed the main attack at H-plus-8. Additionally, the division deception plan called for a deceptive battalion-sized air drop at H-plus-3 to delay the commitment of mechanized reserves.

The division's plan to show the main attack in the 2d Brigade sector in the west was very successful; that is where the OPFOR templated the attack. The terrain in the west best supported the movement of a heavy armored force, chiefly because the only large main supply route (MSR) in the division sector was to the west. The OPFOR was looking for the positions of the 194th Armored Brigade and of the artillery as indicators of where the main attack would occur.

The first 48 hours of the fight was the reconnaissance and counterreconnaissance battle. The OPFOR located the 194th Brigade through communications intelligence interception and direction finding and a small number of human intelligence contacts. The OPFOR came into contact with the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, at the line of contact and saw the rest of the 194th Brigade behind the battalion. The OPFOR also saw the vast majority of the artillery positioned to support the 2d Brigade in the west, which helped convince the OPFOR commander that the division's main attack would

be in the west. The OPFOR reconnaissance did not find any engineering assets forward, which confused the OPFOR commander, who was expecting to see engineer breaching teams stationed forward. The OPFOR did find engineer assets farther north, however.

The OPFOR commander conducted an area defense. Completely convinced that the main attack would occur in the west, he heavily weighted his defense in that direction. He committed most of his units and his assets in the west, and made the conscious decision to accept the risk in the east. The only OPFOR defenses in the east were minefields, FASCAM minefields, and the counterattack force. The OPFOR commander intentionally positioned the counterattack force in the east in case the division broke through the minefields.

As the division main attack began, the OPFOR commander lost track of the 194th Armored Brigade and did not see it move to the east. The 82d Airborne Division G-2 had done a great job of templating where the OPFOR reconnaissance would be located: The 82d killed all of the OPFOR reconnaissance elements that were supposed to watch the river and destroy the bridges. The OPFOR commander failed to take into account how quickly mechanized forces could be shifted. He did not realize that the 194th Armored Brigade was in the east until the brigade assumed the main attack.

For the first 24 hours, the OPFOR commander was also confused as to the location of the 82d Division's 3d Brigade. He received numerous reports of the 101st Division in the east and could not figure out why it was in the area where he expected to see the 82d Division's 3d Brigade. At first the OPFOR commander thought there had been a boundary change of which he was unaware. He finally detected the 3d Brigade units, however, when he found their Sheridan tanks and decided that the attempt to conceal the 3d Brigade was the division's deception plan. (I believe, however, that his discovery had unintentional benefits for the 82d Airborne Division: Having "detected" the division deception, he did not look for the larger deception.)

The deception air drop to cause the

commitment of the OPFOR's mechanized reserves occurred precisely where the OPFOR commander had templated it. So that he could react to any air drop, the OPFOR commander stationed an anti-air assault force (two battalions of truck-mounted infantry and an artillery battalion) in that area. The OPFOR commander received information from his deep reconnaissance that transports were being readied and loaded. He also received reports from his aerial watchers that propeller aircraft were coming in from the east. Believing this was the air drop he had been waiting for, he dispatched his anti-air assault force to the drop zone where they found dummies with parachutes attached. (Neither the division plan nor the corps plan had called for dummies to be attached to the chutes. The plan was for the empty chutes to be on the ground as if a drop had occurred and the force had already moved off the drop zone toward its objective. Someone in the scripting cell had "read" the dummies into the plan.) After finding the dummies, the OPFOR commander still worried that a real air drop had occurred and that his forces had been lured away from it by the deception. This caused him about four hours of confusion before he decided that this was a deception operation.

The OPFOR commander later said that the deception air drop would have been more effective if it had been used along with the real air drop. As it was, the OPFOR commander was able to concentrate all of his artillery and all of his assets against the one drop site instead of having to split them between two sites.

We learned several lessons from our experience using deception during the BCTP Warfighter exercise:

Deception works. Every deception the division attempted was believed, at least for a time, by the OPFOR commander. Even the deception air drop, which had been opposed as too risky by some members of the corps staff, was at least partially successful.

It is easier to show the enemy what he already believes. Any well-trained enemy can figure out our best course of action. The 82d Airborne Division planners did a first-rate job of wargaming and

understanding what the OPFOR would be expecting. The division deception plan simply showed the OPFOR commander what he expected to see. The division did not use the most likely course of action as its actual course of action. Rather, the 82d used what the OPFOR expected to be the division course of action as its deception and chose another course for its battle plan.

Deception does not work miracles. The 82d Airborne Division correctly figured out where the OPFOR commander had templated an air drop and wanted to use a deception air drop to cause the OPFOR commander to delay committing his counterattack forces. The OPFOR commander had already decided what forces he would use against the air drop threat, and his mechanized reserves were not affected by the deception. The 82d had expected too much from the air drop deception.

Deception requires real assets. The OPFOR commander said that the deception as to the main attack worked chiefly because he did not often see deception used on such a large scale or with real assets. The OPFOR was used to seeing smaller, localized deceptions of limited duration, such as having the 3d Brigade wear 101st Airborne Division patches or the deception air drop.

Deception can give a commander an important advantage against the OPFOR in a BCTP Warfighter exercise. To be successful, however, it must be properly planned, resourced, and executed. In addition, the deception must be integrated into the operational plan; if it is treated as an add-on, it will yield no significant advantage.

In the future, our ability to execute successful deceptions will become crucial. With the shrinking force structure, future commanders may have to use deception to gain a decisive advantage over the enemy.

Captain Edward R. Ward, a Military Intelligence officer, was deception operations officer, XVIII Airborne Corps, during the exercise, and had previously led an infantry platoon and a support platoon in the 7th Battalion, 6th Infantry, 1st Armored Division. He is a 1986 graduate of Virginia Military Institute.
