

INFANTRY LETTERS



THE MEANS HAVE BECOME THE END

The July-August 1995 issue of *INFANTRY* contains a well-written article titled "Eight Steps to Creating Quality Presentation Slides," by Sergeant First Class Mark Kauder (pages 18-19). It is an interesting comment on our times that an article on such a subject is of as much interest to infantrymen as the issue's other articles on combat marksmanship, cordon and search operations, platoon attacks, and the like.

I think it might be appropriate for the Army as a whole to take a hard look at the extremely large role slides now play in our day-to-day operations. It is my humble but fixed opinion that slides have become a distraction and that their production too often consumes energy that could better be used elsewhere.

As a case in point, let me relate a scene I witnessed in which two field-grade officers—both members of the combat arms nonetheless—were engaged in a passionate debate over the advisability of placing two earth-tone colors side by side on a briefing slide. There was no discussion of the content of the slide, the veracity of the data, or the logic of the message. The issue was purely a matter of esthetics.

In a similar incident, a group of operational plans officers threw together a course-of-action brief in a matter of minutes without consulting any other staff section. The result was a visually appealing slide but completely devoid of any analysis, supporting data, or staffing. The slide was received with great raves from higher headquarters, but those involved knew that, like the proverbial emperor, the slide too was naked. Unfortunately, such is the sad state in which we live.

As Sergeant Kauder points out, slides have become a major means of communication in the Army. I say *means* of

communication instead of *aid* to communication, which was their original intent and, I would argue, the limit of their usefulness. Slides simply cannot stand alone any more than a sandtable, a butcher paper chart, or an execution matrix. They are tools the briefer uses to transfer information to his audience. When separated from their briefing, they lose their effect.

Too often, however, this principle is violated, and the slides take on a life of their own. What is supposed to happen is that after the briefing, the briefer writes a memorandum for record that captures the minutes of the briefing and any decisions made or issues raised. That memorandum is then used, along with the slides as backup, to prepare whatever the final product may be. In some cases, the memorandum itself may be all that is required.

Instead, what usually happens is that the slides themselves, most often without any accompanying script, go into the file cabinet or the shared drive from which they can be interpreted in a vacuum, exported out of context, or otherwise misused. These same slides are cut and pasted to construct future briefings without any updating, substantive refinement, or tailoring to the new audience. The result is a superficial, generic, usually unstaffed, and perhaps even inaccurate product.

What makes this situation even more dangerous is not just what slides have become but what they have replaced, which is the written narrative. Slides can only capture highlights. They don't do a good job with details. Details are captured in operation orders, memos, letters, and other media that don't seem to sat-

isfy our visually stimulated society. We just don't seem to have time for these other media anymore.

For what it's worth, I think we are headed in the wrong direction. We have taken a means and made it an end. In the process we have elevated form-over-substance to new heights. It is time to return slides to their proper place and redirect some of that energy toward plain old writing. Until then, I would say we have met the enemy, and he is us.

KEVIN J. DOUGHERTY
MAJ, Infantry
Fort Benning, Georgia

MACHINEGUNS

I was most happy to see the articles by Major James R. Baldwin and Captain Matthew M. Canfield on machineguns and machinegun training in your November-December 1995 issue. Both were informative and timely. (See "Machineguns in the Infantry," pages 7-8, and "Thoughts on the Medium Machinegun for the Light Infantry Company," pages 9-12.)

I also suggest that *INFANTRY* readers read the Commandant's Note by Major General David E. Grange, Jr., in *INFANTRY*'s January-February 1981 issue. In that note, titled "Machinegun Use—A Lost Art," General Grange offered a number of excellent ideas on how the Infantry can go about improving its machinegun training and its approach to stressing the value of this most important weapon.

ALBERT N. GARLAND
LTC, Infantry
U.S. Army Retired
Columbus, Georgia

The 1995 index to *INFANTRY* is now available. Please send your requests to Editor, *INFANTRY*, P.O. Box 52005, Fort Benning, GA 31995-2005.

MOUNTING A PAQ-4C ON THE M203

The ingenuity of NCOs never ceases to amaze me. I knew that my company would have some extra time on its hands to develop new SOPs and enhance exciting new ones, but I never expected to see 2d Platoon consistently hitting targets at 150 to 250 meters with an M203 grenade launcher at night using the PAQ-4C laser device to direct the rounds.

Sergeant First Class Brent Brodie thought of this innovation as his soldiers were zeroing AN/PVS-4s and PAQ-4Cs on the 25-meter range. I was surprised at how accurate these soldiers were on the M203 range and was convinced it worked after I hit targets myself.

The concept is actually fairly simple. Sergeant Brodie took the adapter normally used for mounting the PAQ-4C to an M60 machinegun and used it to mount the PAQ-4C to the AN/PVS-4 mount on the M203. The adapter comes with every PAQ-4C. He then attached the remote firing device to the back side of the PAQ-4C so the M203 gunner could fire the laser beam from a comfortable position using his left hand. The PAQ-4C was zeroed to the M16 on a standard 25-meter range. Zeroing the M16 brought the laser beam of the PAQ-4C on line with the M203 as well. When the weapon was fired on the M203 range, soldiers hit targets with great accuracy.

We have noted a potential problem with this technique. The PAQ-4C is



mounted on the left side of the weapon, so when the target is acquired, the barrel is actually slightly to the right of the beam. This causes the round to drift farther right as range increases. The AN/PVS-4 night sight has an adjusted aiming point scale in the reticle to make up for this discrepancy, since it has "tested" zeroing techniques for all weapon systems. This problem can be offset using the point of aim (PAQ-4C) and the point of impact (round) method. Using this procedure, figure out the physical distance between the PAQ-4C and the iron sight, and then zero or boresight the weapon at 25 meters (for the M203/M16A2). Another, more accurate method is to "field zero" the PAQ-4C to the M203

at the standard zero range (M203—200 meters). At extended ranges, the point of impact and point of aim will be the same.

While we have not worked all the bugs out of this system, I believe it is worth sharing and experimenting with. I think you will agree when you hear the metallic "clang" of metal on metal as the TPT rounds hit 55-gallon drums shot after shot. I did.

TIMOTHY C. HEINZE
CPT, Infantry
Company A, 3d Battalion,
187th Infantry
101st Airborne Division
Fort Campbell, Kentucky

CONTINGENCY METL AND PRE-DEPLOYMENT TRAINING

Under no circumstances should units change their wartime METLs and train specifically for contingency missions. Operations other than war (OOTW) tasks are inherent to the training we already conduct, and only minor adjustments are needed. Many of the OOTW missions units will face are like those they would face in wartime. Leaders will adapt and overcome the differences in dealing with an enemy, foreign nationals, political parties, or the news media.

Having commanded a company in

Haiti, I can say that the following are the most important missions that needed special emphasis on training prior to our deployment:

- Defending a critical site.
- Civil disturbance operations, crowd (news media) control.
- Conduct patrols in MOUT (day/night, mounted/dismounted).
- Conduct cordon and search (snatch).
- Establish checkpoints and road-blocks.
- Establish an IRP/IRC (immediate reaction platoon/company) readiness status.

All the unit training must focus first

on the squad and then the platoon. Company teams can expect to have numerous attachments during missions: Military Police detainee team and dog team, psychological operations, civil affairs, counterintelligence, engineer squad, linguists, battalion tactical command post, scout weapons team (OH-58, AH-1), Bradley platoon, casualty evacuation vehicles, and external truck drivers. Mounted movement may consist of approximately 22 vehicles, which is pretty large for a light infantry company. All of these need to be part of the planning process to ensure communication and the success of the mission. Company com-

manders, executive officers, and first sergeants will have to coordinate the movement of all these pieces and know how to sequence them into the operation to suit the constraints of city streets.

Other tasks to train on when planning for any mission are field sanitation, rules of engagement, background of the culture, and useful key phrases of the language. Additionally units need to be prepared to conduct show-of-force operations, arms control and collection, raids, rescue and recovery operations, and limited humanitarian assistance (Field Manual 7-98, *Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict*).

Because of the situation and threat in Haiti, battalion level operations were not conducted, but a company was always on standby to react to the company on a mission. Negotiations at all levels of command (platoon leader to battalion commander) were required during each mission. The soldiers had to deal with reporters, cameramen, and Haitian nationals approaching the wire barrier. Lieutenants, company commanders, and battalion commanders had to work with linguists, U.S. Embassy staff, State Department officials, and local Haitian officials.

Communication is difficult in a MOUT environment. We used AN/PRC-119 (SINCGARS) and AN/PRC-126 squad radios, and the commander sometimes used an AN/PRC-127. One platoon had purchased voice-activated radios for team leaders and certain members of the squad; these worked extremely well in crowd-control and perimeter security when crowds numbered approximately 5,000 to 7,000. In buildings or other structures, and with overhead wires, the PRC-126 sometimes became useless.

During downtime in base camps, the

training of battle tasks, battle drills, and company METL tasks is essential. These skills keep a unit focused and ready for any mission. For us, rehearsals were always required, with special emphasis on pre-combat inspections and the soldier's load.

All the operations we conducted were part of *peacekeeping*: "operations conducted with the consent of the belligerent parties, designed to maintain a negotiated truce, and help promote conditions which support diplomatic efforts to establish a long-term peace in area of conflict" (Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*). We operated as a peacekeeping force under peace enforcement conditions, thus under the United Nations auspices of Chapter VII.

Viewed from the company commander's perspective, the success of this unit was the establishment of a safe, secure environment in which the Parliament could convene, security patrols, and security for the numerous Ministry buildings. The keys to success for this mission were the high-quality, well-trained soldiers and leaders. We have a warfighting doctrine that adapts to these operations and works at the company level. Finally, the restraint and discipline leaders and soldiers displayed in difficult conditions, while maintaining their composure through adversity, was commendable to this profession of arms.

Operations other than war will be a part of the future of the Army, but the realistic combat training we do now also prepares us well for contingency type missions.

KIRK T. ALLEN
CPT, Infantry
Fort Drum, New York

FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION REUNION

The Society of the First Infantry Division—which is composed of soldiers who served in World War I, World War II, Vietnam, Operation DESERT STORM, and in peacetime—will hold its 78th Annual Reunion, 10-14 July 1996 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

For information, please contact me at 5 Montgomery Avenue, Erdenheim, PA 19038; telephone (215) 836-4841.

ARTHUR L. CHAITT
Executive Director

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE REUNION

The paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) will hold their annual reunion in Anaheim, California, 10-14 July 1996.

The brigade was the first U.S. Army ground combat unit to serve in the Republic of Vietnam in May 1965 and the only U.S. Army unit to conduct a combat parachute jump in Vietnam. The brigade's 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry, was also the first U.S. Army ground combat unit to fight in the I Corps area of Vietnam when it went in to assist the U.S. Marine Corps in the Da Nang area in the fall of 1966.

For additional information on the 1996 reunion, please write to Reunion Headquarters, P.O. Box 5482, El Monte, CA 91784, or contact Mr. Ramiro Lopez at (818) 969-4321.

RAYMOND C. RAMIREZ
Chairman, Southern California
Chapter XIV

