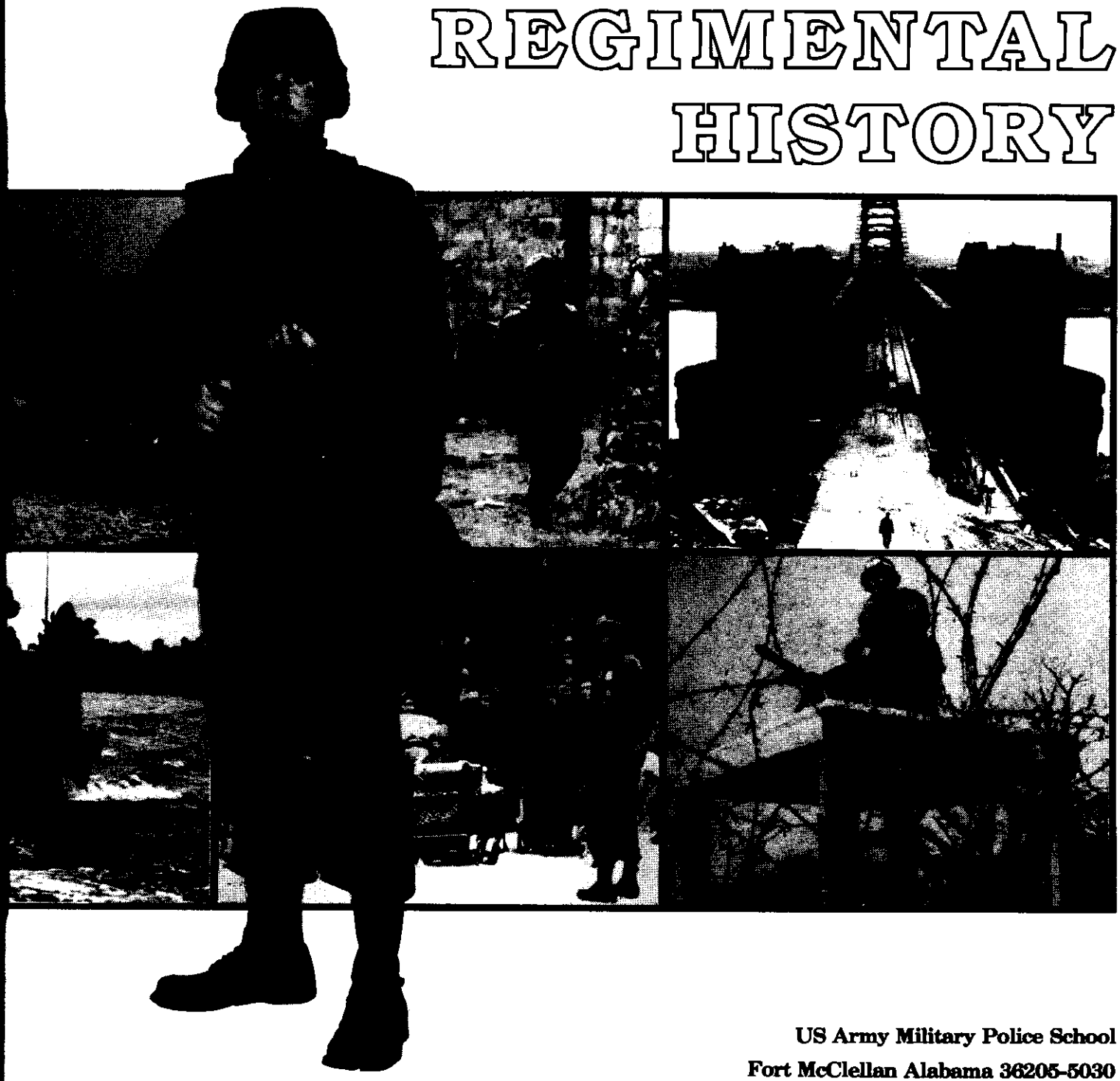
Military Police Corps REGIMENTAL HISTORY



US Army Military Police School
Fort McClellan Alabama 36205-5030

Military Police Corps Regimental History

Preface

This history of the Military Police Corps has been compiled and edited to provide source material for the officer advanced reading packet. *ST 19-154, A History of the Military Police Corps* provided the skeleton for this revision. Source documents, housed in the Military Police Corps Regimental Museum, have been used to provide more comprehensive details on military police history during the various periods and are listed in the bibliography. This history will be expanded and refined as additional source material becomes available through the historical program.

Bibliography

Department of the Army. 46th Military History Detachment. USARV History. "Summation of Combat Activities Involving Military Police During the Period 30 June to 6 February 68." Republic of Vietnam, 6 June 69.

Fitzpatrick, John C., ed. *The Writings of George Washington, Vols 14, 18, 19, & 27.* Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1931-1944.

Gibbs, LTC Allen and MAJ Allen Grammer. "Grenada, Chronology of 82nd MPs."*Military Police Journal 11* (Spring 1984): 34.

Healy, SP5 Jerry. "MPs Process Detainees." *Military Police Journal 11* (Spring 1984): 20.

Himes, Mary R. "Military Police Duties in the Federal Army." *Military Police Journal 11* (Summer 1984): 20.

Himes, Mary R. *USAMPS Historical Vignetttes.* No. 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, & 11. March 84-February 85.

Johnson, SSG Thomas L. and Mary R. Himes. "The Battle of the American Embassy." *Military Police Journal 11* (Summer 1984): 6.

Linn, J. S. and W. H. Dale, ed. *Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution, 1775-1783, Vol II.* Harrisburg, PA: Lane S. Hart State Printer, 1880.

Reynolds, SP5 Jessica R. "True Blue MPs." *Military Police Journal 11* (Spring 1984): 36.

Richens, CPT Brent L. and SP4 Russell B. Shor. "18th Military Police Brigade, Three Years in Vietnam." *Military Police Journal Vol XIX* (September 1969): 5.

Thomas, Holland. "The Provost Marshal and the Citizen," pp. 182-212 in *The Photographic History of the Civil War* by Francis Trevelyan Miller, ed., Vol. 7 & 8. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1957.

United States Army Military Police School. "History of the Military Police Corps," ST 19-154, draft, undated.

United States Army Military Police Board Report. "History of the Provost Marshal Section Far East Command, 1 Jan 1950 thru 31 Oct 1950." undated.

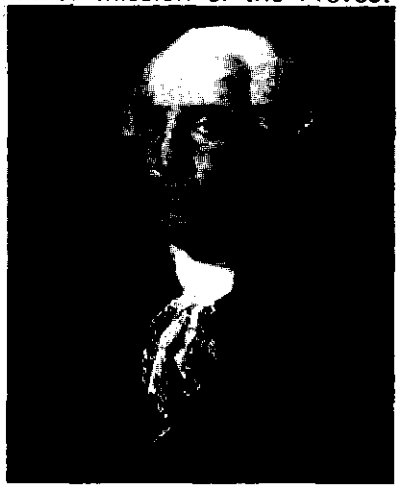
United States Army Military Police Board Report. "History of the Military Police Corps." Chapter 7 on Military Police Activities in Korea. Copy.

The American Revolution Through the Mexican War

Although soldiers have been delegated to perform police type duties in the military since the beginning of armies, the seed that germinated into the birth of the modern Military Police Corps in 1941 can be traced back to the American Revolutionary War. At the beginning of the American Revolution, the Continental Army adopted with little change the forms, titles, and administrative procedures of the British Army including those pertaining to military police. A resolution of Congress on 27 May 1778 established a "Provost" in the Continental Army to consist of the following: a captain, four lieutenants, one clerk, a quartermaster sergeant, two trumpeters, two sergeants, five corporals, forty-three provosts, and four executioners. This force was to be mounted and accoutered as light dragoons; its mission was to apprehend deserters, rioters, and stragglers. In battle, it would be posted in the rear to secure fugitives. The unit, soon styled the "troops of Marechaussee" after the French term for their provost troops, was organized on 1 June 1778 at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Of the original fifty-five men in the Marechausee Corps, one was a captain and two were lieutenants. Forty-three of these men had been recruited in Pennsylvania and they were mostly of German heritage.

During the Revolutionary War, the Marechaussee Corps was utilized in a variety of missions. In 1779, Captain Bartholomew Von Heer, Provost Marshal of the Marechaussee Corps, was instructed to organize a patrol to obtain intelligence of the enemy's movement on the south side of the Raritan toward Amboy, New Jersey. In November 1780, Washington directed the Corps to join Colonel Stephen Moylan and proceed to the Hackensack. They were to secure all its crossings to prevent persons from carrying intelligence to the enemy. During the Battle of Springfield, a shortage of cavalry led Washington to employ the Marechaussee Corps in a combat role in the vicinity of Springfield, New Jersey. At the Battle of Yorktown in 1781, the Marechaussee Corps provided security for Washington's headquarters which was near Dobbs Ferry, Virginia. In September 1782 the Provost Corps was temporarily attached to General Washington's Life Guard. The Corps was disbanded on 4 November 1783 at Rock Hill, New Jersey. A small detachment was retained as part of Washington's Life Guard to provide security at Army headquarters. It escorted the Commander back to his home at Mount Vernon.

The apprehension, detention, security, and movement of prisoners of war was another minor mission of the Provost Corps during the American Revolution. Prisoners were exchanged for Continental Army soldiers who had been captured by the British. The Commissary General of the Army was responsible for all prisoners and all prisoner exchanges. Due to the minimal resources of the Continental Army, many prisoners were returned to the British after promising never to resume fighting in the current conflict. Other prisoners, primarily the Hessians, German mercenaries employed by the British, were loaned to farmers, blacksmiths, and other businessmen in return for providing them with room and board. After the war, the Commissary General of the Army posted advertisements in local newspapers requesting the return of all prisoners of war so they could be transported to England. Still, many remained as the indentured servants of merchants in Pennsylvania and Virginia.



George Washington, Commander-in-chief of the Continental Army

While the Marechaussee Corps was the major military police-type unit during the American Revolution, other enforcement units also were organized. In 1777, the Continental Army created a specialized unit called the Corps of Invalids; and in 1779, another police-type unit was organized by the state of Virginia for prisoner of war duties.

During the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, 1845-1848, the lack of an organized Military Police Corps reflected the general ill-preparedness of the total Armed Forces of the United States to conduct military operations. Many politicians in Congress were wary of a strong military and did little to provide for an adequate peacetime Army or Navy. In war commanders had to marshal

citizen militia to maintain a sufficient force. Once a battle ended and the Army relocated, few of the milita troops remained with it. Facing serious shortages of troops and equipment, commanders focused their resources on infantry and artillery tactics instead of police matters. Article 58 of the Army's General Regulations issued in 1820 did outline the duties of military police and recommended that commanding officers select personnel of superior physical ability and intelligence to fulfill them. However, the article did not require that the men assigned to be military police receive any specific training, and in practice those commanders who established such a force normally assigned the duty on a temporary roster basis.

Nevertheless, in the Mexican War, the duties performed by modern military police were not totally ignored. When General Winfield Scott took his army into Central Mexico, he proclaimed a code of martial law in the occupied areas and appointed military governors to enforce it. In Mexico City he also organized four hundred picket soldiers as a police force to supplement the native establishment. Throughout the Mexican War, units were detailed to perform provost-type duties. For example, after American forces captured Santa Fe, New Mexico, the Second Missouri Mounted was detailed to keep the peace in that city. Likewise, in April 1846, General Zachary Taylor assigned the Second Dragoons to provide small patrols in and around Fort Brown, Texas, to prevent the infiltration of Mexican soldiers into the area. After Mexico City was captured, the central valley of Mexico was in complete discord. Dragoons were used to patrol the area, break up fighting, and impose military law. The Army also utilized a small section of its various units to collect stragglers on long marches, to patrol camps and towns, to enforce regulations, and to ensure that orders for discipline were enforced.

The Civil War Through the Spanish/American War

During the Civil War, national necessity paved the way for the organization of provost units and provost marshals within the Federal Army. The initial influx of northern soldiers into the city of Washington following the bombardment of Fort Sumter produced pandemonium. With local authorities lacking any effective means of maintaining discipline, chaos became the order of the day. As the northern troops moved out of Washington and into the South, so did the lawlessness. Northern soldiers considered southern property fair game for the taking. Concerned about this problem of disorderly plundering, General Irvin McDowell, the Union Army's first field commander, directed the commander of each regiment to select a commissioned officer as the regimental provost marshal. Each provost marshal, in turn, was assigned ten enlisted men, who would serve as a permanent police force with the sole duty of protecting civilian property from the marching soldiers. Thus began the gradual extention of the jurisdiction of the provost marshal system from responsibility for maintaining law and order within the military to also include protection for and control of the civilian population.

The Battle of Bull Run and the resulting retreat to Washington followed on the heels of the creation of this newly appointed police force. While the disorderly troops from the defeated Union army once again created pandemonium in the city, Major General George B. McClellan arrived to take command of the Army of the Potomac. Appointed to this post on 26 July 1861, McClellan was charged with the immediate safety of the capital and the government. To ensure that law and order were maintained within Washington, he assigned a squad of regular cavalry and a battery of regular artillery to serve as the provost guard for the city. On 30 July 1861, Colonel Andrew Porter, 16th United States Infantry, was appointed as temporary Provost Marshal of Washington with all regular troops in the area being delegated as provost guards. Using approximately 1,000 infantry, a battery of artillery, and a squadron of cavalry, Colonel Porter implemented a system of traffic control which required all officers and men to carry passes. Mounted and foot patrols were also used to enforce a 9 p.m. curfew on all soldiers. Witnessing the subsiding chaos, a British journalist noted, "the change which had taken place in the streets. . . .No drunken rabblement of armed men, no begging soldiers; instead of these were patrols in the streets, guards at the corners, and a rigid system of passes." As the riotous atmosphere of the city subsided, another problem surfaced. A burdensome flow of military personnel

Office of the Provost Marshal, Aquia Creek, Virginia

and civilians began moving into and out of the city, thereby rendering it difficult to control subversive elements within the area. To alleviate this problem, McClellan issued a new order which placed greater restrictions on the issuance of passes and extended restrictions to the civilian as well as the military population.

Having restored order to the city of Washington, Colonel Porter was appointed Provost Marshal General of the Army of the Potomac. The Second United States Cavalry and a battalion of the 8th and 17th United States Infantry became the provost guard under his command. After announcing Porter's appointment, General McClellan instructed his division commanders to organize a provost guard and to appoint an officer as the provost marshal for each division. Although Porter coordinated the operations of the divisional provost marshals, the authority delegated to them was determined by their division commander. The duties performed by the provost guards included the suppression of marauding and looting of private property, the preservation of order, the prevention of straggling, the suppression of gambling houses and other establishments disruptive to troop discipline, and the supervision of hotels, saloons, and places of amusement. The provost marshals were also responsible for the following: making searches, seizures, and arrests assuming charge of enemy deserters and prisoners of war; issuing passes to citizens; and hearing civilian complaints against the military. In the field, McClellan expanded his order for divisional provost marshals and guards to include corps and Army units as well. Although other Union armies also had provosts, they were organized on a more informal basis than those of the Army of the Potomac.

While serving in the field, General McClellan employed the provost marshals and guards to restore order among a mutinous regiment. With *Special Order #27,* McClellan directed that the 79th Regiment of New York Volunteers return to duty. Furthermore, he directed that the mutiny's ring

BG Marsena Randolph Patrick, Provost Marshal, the Army of the Potomac

leaders be punished and that the regimental colors be removed. Instructed to fire on the troops if necessary, Colonel Porter employed a battery of artillery, two companies of cavalry, and several infantry companies to squelch this uprising. He placed its ring leaders in irons and had the remainder of the unit marched to the front in Virginia.

After the Battle of Antietam, General Porter was relieved of his duties due to sickness. Brigadier General Marsena Randolph Patrick then assumed the post of Provost Marshal of the Army of the Potomac. In addition to his military police duties, he also became the chief of a newly created bureau of military information. The provost marshals in the field henceforth procured, processed, and disseminated intelligence information throughout the army. The bureau was responsible for providing the Army of the Potomac with the size, disposition, and composition of Confederate forces.

Along with his military police and intelligence duties, General Patrick also was involved in procurement for the Army of the Potomac. During the war hundreds of merchants followed the Army from camp to camp trying to sell tobacco, food, clothes, and trinkets to the soldiers. The Army also made large scale purchases of vegetables, meats, and horses from local suppliers. It was Patrick's job to review all purchases and merchants to ensure that top quality products were obtained for the lowest prices. If a merchant was discovered cheating the troops, his seller's pass was withdrawn. Thus, employing an intricate system of passes which changed with each new commander and new area, undesirable merchants, camp followers, and certain newspaper reporters were denied access to the main troop area.

The need for a well-trained and adequate military police force was evident in December, 1862, during the maneuvering around Fredricksburg, Virginia. While Confederate troops dug into defensive positions south of the town, the Union troops encamped north of it. The local citizens were allotted forty-eight hours to relocate before the start of the battle. After the town was evacuated, the Union forces occupied it and waited for three days before advancing because their supplies and ammunition had been stolen from a depot outside of Washington. The northern commanders could not control their men during this delay. Union troops poured into the town, pilfering goods and burning public buildings. To maintain order, General Patrick had only two cavalry units and four infantry companies. Although many were arrested, the town was still plundered by thousands of men before the Union forces began to march against the Southern defensive lines. Taking advantage of the Union delay, Confederate troops further fortified their position and successfully repelled the Northern advance. During the Union retreat, Patrick finally cleared Fredricksburg of Union troops, but the looting left a permanent stain on his military career.

On June 28, 1863, General George G. Meade assumed command of the Army of the Potomac and immediately issued orders which began the Gettysburg campaign. Failing to follow normal march procedures, General Meade did not provide Patrick with the necessary cavalry squadrons to control stragglers during the advance. This oversight resulted in troops being spread throughout the towns along the route with many components of the Union Army never reaching Pennsylvania. General Patrick had to commandeer a force and backtrack among chaos and confusion to corral all the drunks and stragglers who had abandoned the march. From this ordeal, Meade learned a valuable and time-consuming lesson in the use of designated provost troops. During the three days of fighting at Gettysburg, the Southern forces delivered the heaviest artillery barrage of the entire war. As Union veterans began breaking rank during it, General Patrick organized two provost lines to contain all the deserters and stragglers. Some of the stragglers, unable to reunite with their units, were used to escort two thousand Confederate prisoners to rear-area prison camps.

At the Battle of Gettysburg, General Patrick developed

detailed plans for movement of prisoners of war. He secured rail transportation from the battlefield to hospitals and prison camps in nearby towns. After the three days struggle ended, Patrick contracted local citizens to bury the dead and secure their personal belongings for the next of kin. Attempts also were made by Patrick's men to check the swarm of citizens and soldiers plundering the battlefield, but the vast numbers of dead strewn across it overwhelmed his small force.

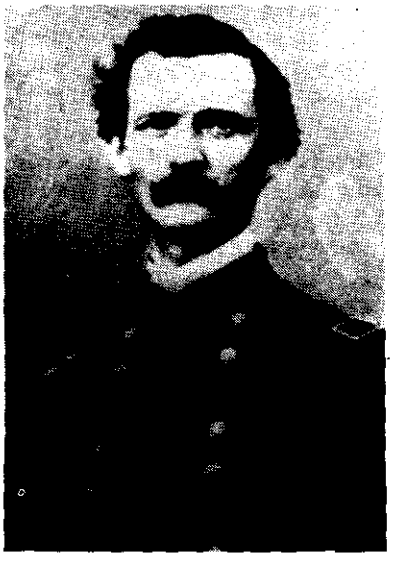
Towards the end of the war, Union troops captured thousands of Confederate prisoners and marched them to rear areas under light guard provided by the capturing unit. The Army's permanent prison facilities at Fort Monroe and Alexandria lacked adequate food and shelter to house them. Therefore, General Patrick immediately exchanged or released prisoners after major conflicts. The only alternative to that policy was to allow them to face starvation and deprivation while awaiting uncertain transportation to northern prison camps. Since no standards for processing prisoners were developed during the war, they had to rely solely on the logic, compassion, and humanitarianism of the capturing commander or local provost marshal for their welfare. In the North and South, prisoner of war camps suffered from inadequate planning, untrained personnel, and insufficient resources.

The Andersonville Prisoner of War Camp

Confederate prisoners at Belle Plain, Virginia

As the Union Armies advanced into Southern territory, Confederate civil government began to crumble. In an attempt to improvise a system of government in these areas, the Army expanded the functions of the provost marshals from policing the military to policing the occupied districts; in effect governing them. The provost marshals decided which Southern civilians should be taken into custody and which should remain free to pursue their daily tasks. They were also responsible for distributing food, clothing, and other goods during periods of scarcity. This system was used everywhere except in Sherman's military division which demonstrated more tolerance for local officials after the cessation of hostilities. The provost marshals developed a system of loyalty oaths as a means of determining the allegiance of

Southerners and the degree of freedom which would be allowed to them. In occupied territory there was a provost marshal commanding each district with an assistant provost in command of each sub-district. They were also responsible for the apprehension of deserters and the prevention of blockade running along the seacoast and inland waterways. On 13 March 1865, General Patrick was appointed provost marshal of all armies operating against Richmond. When the city fell, Patrick took over the functions of its government. All newcomers in the area were required to take the oath of allegiance. A provost tax of one percent was imposed on all imports and exports in the district, and all citizens over eighteen were required to register at the provost headquarters. For a time after the war ended, military provost marshals governed Confederate states, but they were soon challenged by groups demanding the appointment of local officials. In 1865, General Ulysses S. Grant authorized the transfer of most of the functions of government from the provost marshals to the Freedmen's Bureau.



While a colonel, BG James B. Fry served as Provost Marshal General of the United States

Along with providing discipline and order among the troops in the field and governing occupied areas of the South, the provost marshal system was also responsible for the procurement of manpower through the draft. On 3 March 1863, Congress established the Office of Provost Marshal General of the United States with the rank of colonel. A provost marshal also was assigned to each congressional district with the rank of captain. In compliance with *General Order #67,* Colonel James B. Fry was appointed Provost Marshal General of the United States and held this position for the duration of the conflict. Fry was charged with overseeing the administration and enforcement of military recruitment and conscription. His responsibilities encompassed combatting desertion, setting state quotas, distributing bounties, and dealing with other problems associated with conscription. He also helped quell draft riots such as those which occurred in Boston and New York. With the appointment of Colonel Fry, responsibility for the draft, which had been largely a state function, passed to the Federal government. As Provost Marshal General, Fry was confronted with the monumental task of recruiting 400,000 men just to bring existing regiments up to necessary strength.

Desertion was equally challenging for the Provost Marshal General, as many men chose to cross the Missouri River and face the Indians rather than fight their Southern cousins. From 1 October 1863 to 1 October 1864, the provost marshals arrested 39,392 deserters and stragglers. During the war, aproximately 200,000 men deserted from the Federal Army. The Provost Marshal's Bureau arrested and returned about 76,526 of those men between March 1863 and the end of the war.

The National Conscription Act contained many loopholes which promoted dishonesty and corruption. Often an individual would join a unit in one state, collect his bounty, desert as soon as practical, and rejoin the Army in a different state to collect another bounty. Since the states organized their own regiments, these bounty jumpers were hard to detect and apprehend. This problem led to the creation of a squad of Federal detectives organized by Colonel LaFayette C. Baker of the War Department. These detectives, who became the nucleus of the United States Secret Service, curbed bounty jumpers, service brokers, and deserters. In some cases, they also worked effectively with local provost marshals to halt theft of government supplies and equipment.

As a result of disparity in the impact of the conscription program upon men of opposite socioeconomic status, many working-class citizens, especially in large Northern cities, revolted and caused massive destruction during anti-draft riots. While the war raged at Gettysburg, tempers flared in New York City. The city's poor, who could not buy or bribe their way out of the draft, took to the streets in revolt. What began as a few hundred protestors speaking out against the war, ended with a mob of thousands burning every government building in the city. The 8th Indiana Regiment had to be brought from Gettysburg by Colonel Fry to quell the riot. This was the worst but not the only anti-war riot during the Civil War. It is interesting to note that no unit of provost marshals or troops serving as field military police were ever detailed to stop any anti-draft demonstrations during this period.

Colonel Fry had two authorized sources of manpower to perform military police functions: details supplied by the commanders of military departments and the Invalid Corps. Created on 28 April 1863 by *General Order #105,* the latter was composed of officers and enlisted men who were no longer fit for frontline service but had enlisted for further duty or been transferred from field units. This corps consisted of 24 regiments and 106 separate companies. In each of the full regiments, a first battalion of six companies was utilized for guard duty and as an emergency reserve. Armed with smoothbore muskets instead of rifles, they served as provost guards in large cities and towns, escorts for prisoners of war, security guards for railroads, and performed all types of garrison duty. The second battalion, consisting of four companies, contained men who were more restricted by reason of health. In emergency situations, the Invalid Corps was called upon to assist in the field. In 1864, for example, the 9th Regiment was detailed to field duty during Early's Raid near Washington. On July 2, 1864, Major General Jubal Early invaded Maryland and struct toward Washington, brushing aside General Lew Wallace's forces on the Monocacy River. Until the arrival of the Union Army's VI and XIX Corps from Richmond, the defense of the Capital was left in the hands of the home guards. During its existence, about sixty thousand men served in this Corps. The Invalid Corps changed its name to the Veterans Reserve Corps in 1864, and remained an organization of the United States Army until the end of the war.

In the Federal Army the duties of military police were performed by Army provost marshals and their guards consisting of men detailed from the line units until the Provost Marshal Department was created in March 1863. Originating to meet the need for control of undisciplined troops in the cities and the field, the role of the military police gradually expanded to include the Conscription Program and control of government in the occupied Southern states. The very nature of the war placed the provost marshal system in the unique position of serving as a bridge of stability during the transition from war to peace in the defeated South. By 1866, the Veterans Reserve Corps had been disbanded, the Office of the Provost Marshal General abolished, and military police work once again was viewed as a temporary duty.

With the expansion of the Army due to the Spanish-American War in 1898, the military police command function became greater than at any time during the preceding thirty years. A major development was the appointment of Brigadier General Arthur MacArthur as Military Governor and Provost Marshal General of the walled city of Manila in the Phillipines. He was ordered to relieve the civil governor and "to take possession of the office, clerks, and machinery of that office." Subsequently, a Provost Guard Brigade composed of troops drawn from the Cavalry, Infantry, and Artillery units was established to maintain martial law in the city of Manila. Brigadier General Harry H. Bandholtz became chief of this Police Brigade. The reports of General MacArthur from Manila to the War Department referred to the men performing police and patrol duties as **military police.** At the same time, the report from the Chief of Police enumerated the number of arrests made for various offenses by "military and native police." For the first time, men performing police duties in the military were referred to specifically as **military police.**

MG Arthur MacArthur served as Provost Marshal General of Manila

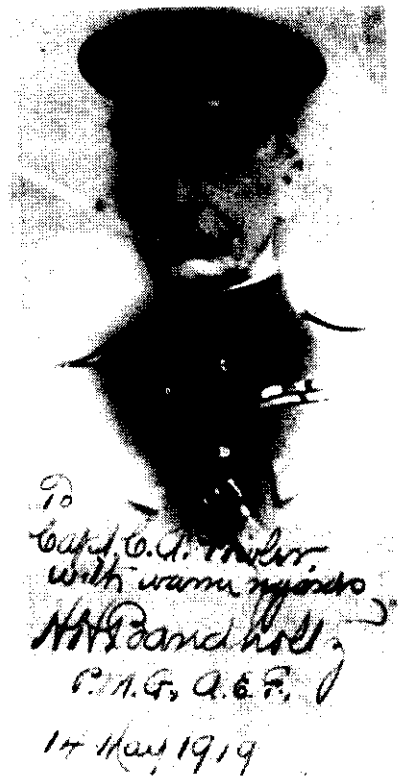
World War I

Following the entry of the United States into World War I, Major General Enoch H. Crowder was appointed Provost Marshal General of the Army. His mission was to develop and enforce a Selective Service Act. General Crowder, also the Staff Judge Advocate General, studied Fry's experience during the Civil War in order to avoid making the same mistakes. In 1917 the nation's first successful Selective Service System was established, based on medical classification and a lottery system which satisfied America's sense of fair play. It involved prominent citizens picking at random a section of the population to report for military duty. The fairness of the system inhibited the development of major opposition to the draft, and the United States did not see a repetition of the anti-draft riots it had experienced during the Civil War.

MG Enoch H. Crowder, Provost Marshal General of the Army, World War I

As troops of the American Expeditionary Forces began to arrive in France, the necessity for military police supervision and control became apparent. A provost marshal was appointed to General Pershing's staff as advisor on provost marshal and military police matters. On 20 September 1918, Brigadier General Harry Hill Bandholtz became Provost Marshal General of the American Expeditionary Force. After much study and many recommendations, the establishment of a Military Police Corps, for the duration of the emergency, was finally approved by the War Department one month before the signing of the Armistice. During the intervening time, military police duties had been performed by all types of units, hastily activated without any special supervision or technical training. Personnel performing these duties were selected on a basis of availability and physical fitness with little regard for mental qualifications or general suitability. Upon establishment of the Military Police Corps, measures were taken immediately to remedy the serious defects: unsuitability of personnel, lack of training, and absence of approved doctrine.

Drawing on his previous experience with the Provost Brigade in Manila, General Bandholtz organized the military police into a professional corps. *Government Orders #180, #200,* and *#217* fixed the duties and responsibilities so that the Provost Marshal became the true commander of the new Corps. The military police developed their own chain of command, leaving the Service of Supply troops responsible for their own depots. The Military Police Service School, the first step in developing a professional corps, started classes at the Caserne Changarnier in Autun, France. Finding a suitable staff and faculty proved difficult. Since this was the first



BG Harry H. Bandholtz, Provost Marshal General of the American Expeditionary Force

school of its kind in the United States Army, the British sent one of their officers to serve as its chief instructor. Service of Supply and Divisional Military Police Companies were screened for school candidates and possible faculty members. Twenty-one enlisted men were selected for the first class. After their graduation, they became the first faculty members of the school. The school graduated a class of officers and enlisted men every two weeks. During its brief history, 3,557 enlisted students and 465 officers graduated. Although another 210 soldiers attended the school, they were transferred to other branches as unsuitable police candidates.

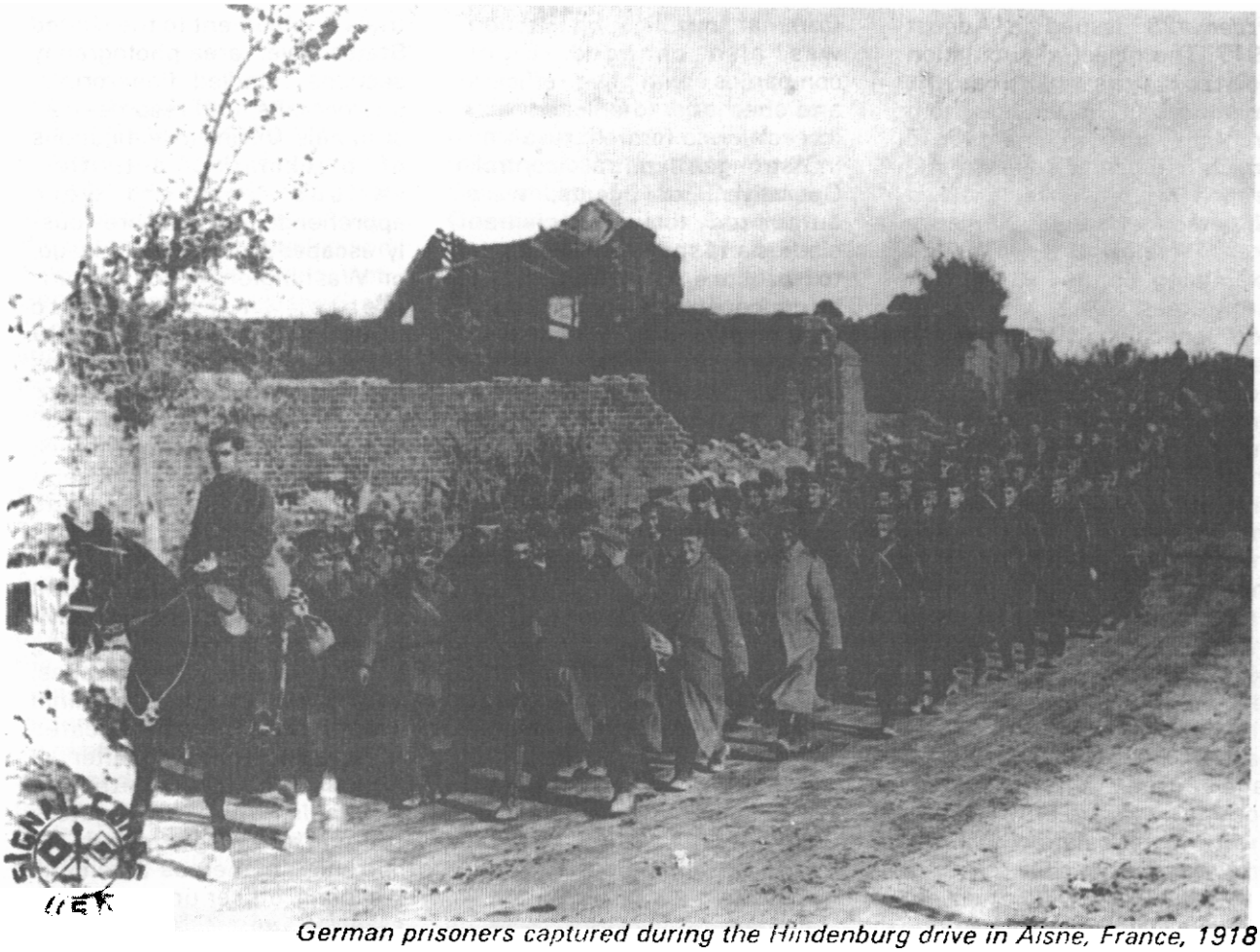
Circulation control was the first mission assigned to the military police by *Government*

Order #23, issued in August 1917. The object of circulation control was to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering the zones of operations which had been devised by the French. Military police checked all personnel traveling in leave areas, major cities, and at examining points in the rear Army areas. *Government Order #63* specified the types of passes, authority for issue, control procedures, and enforcement techniques. In July 1918 it became apparent that the existing detachments of one officer and one enlisted man could not check and maintain circulation control in major cities. Two sections were organized to handle the increasing workload: a permit section and an absent without leave apprehension section. The permit section issued passes, maintained all circulation papers, informed the commander on all orders involving circulation control, and was responsible for area and zone maps. The absent without leave section had one officer and five clerks to maintain records for all absentees and deserters as well as lost or stolen property of high value.

Organizing a Criminal Investigation Division proved difficult due to a lack of experienced personnel. Its mission, defined in May 1918, was to establish a detective squad similar to that found in any city police department. Using people with civilian experience as detectives, inspectors, special agents, lawyers, or newspaper reporters, area provost marshals selected and trained all investigative personnel. Initially, due to the vast geographical location of operatives, it was impossible to train or supervise their investigative efforts. During the reorganization of the Military Police Corps in 1918, the Criminal Investigation Section was also changed. Eight companies with five officers and one hundred enlisted men in each were formed, resulting in stronger central control. Operatives, or agents, were authorized to wear civilian clothes and spend public money to procure information or evidence. They were furnished special passes which allowed them access to any area or activity. From 12 December 1918 to 12 April 1919, the Criminal Investigation Division handled 4,500 cases, of which only 500 were forwarded to the Rents, Requisition, and Claims Service for resolution. Prior to trials or shipment to the United States seven area photography sections handled fingerprints, photographs, and records of all criminals. During investigations of blackmarket activities, various mobsters were apprehended that had previously escaped New York, Chicago, or Washington Police Departments. In addition to blackmarket activities, the CID investigated fraudulent passes sold in troop areas, worthless check cashing operations in all major foreign cities, mail thefts, and the theft or retail sales of government supplies and equipment. Probably the CID's most spectacular arrest occurred in January 1919. Nine soldiers, absent without leave in Paris, were terrorizing citizens with robberies, rapes, and assaults. Army criminal investigators finally located their headquarters. After a furious shootout with the criminals, the investigators recovered large sums of currency, numerous automatic weapons, officer uniforms from several armies, army equipment, and a Red Cross ambulance filled with items recently stolen from a railroad baggage room. The gang members subsequently confessed to thirty-two felonious crimes. As a result of these incidents, the investigations division gained the respect and trust of allied police organizations.

A military policeman, World War I

During World War I, massive numbers of prisoners of war presented a new problem for the United States Army. In previous wars, prisoners had been kept for exchange purposes only, and little attention had been paid to temporary field confinement. In January 1918, a study of French and English confinement methods was initiated. Little was accomplished until June 1918, when the first United States troops in combat



German prisoners captured during the Hindenburg drive in Aisne, France, 1918

captured 255 Germans at Cantigny. By prior agreement with the French Army, the Americans would process and confine all prisoners captured by United States forces. Expedient field measures were immediately adopted. The first compounds were barbed wire enclosures with tents which included limited kitchen facilities, poor sanitation facilities, and first aid stations manned by captured German medics. Prisoners also faced inadequate clothing, bedding, and food supplies. Seven prisoner of war compounds were organized, mainly using old stockades and French castles. During the ten month period in which American troops processed prisoners of war, Escort Guard Companie handled 48,280 prisoners.

Government Order #31, dated 30 May 1918, stated that the G-1 was responsible for disposition of all prisoners of war, while the Provost Marshal General was responsible for their charge and custody. To complete this awesome task, the establishment of Escort Guard Companies was necessary. These companies were responsible for transporting all prisoners from the division cages to the central prisoner of war enclosure at Saint Pierre de Corps. Officers and guards for the division cages were provided by the division commander as required. Personnel for the Escort Guard Companies were Class C soldiers, unfit for combat due to physical or emotional disabilities. The officers were detailed from the Service of Supply Companies for temporary duty in prisoner compounds. Without trained men or an organized plan, the success of the entire system depended on the initiative and logic of the assigned personnel. Fortunately, the Germans were well disciplined soldiers, easily controlled by their own non-commissioned officers, and willing to accept American living and working conditions. The total operation relied on luck and the ingenuity of the American soldiers. Escort Guard Companies normally consisted of three officers and one hundred enlisted men. However, many enlisted personnel were traveling between division cages and area stockades, leaving few men actually guarding the prisoners. To facilitate order

and discipline the prisoners were organized into prisoner of war labor companies consisting of four hundred laborers and a fifty-man overhead contingent (clerks, cooks, hospital orderlies, supply sergeants, tailors, shoemakers, and interpreters). Every effort was made to collect the same type of laborers in each company. Each prisoner worked nine hours a day, six days a week.

Evaluation and documentation of military police functions in the theater of operations were imperative to the future survival of the corps. To accomplish this task, General Banholtz ordered all division commanders to submit a report concerning military police activities in their area, giving the strengths and weaknesses of their assigned military police company. Despite the obvious weakness resulting from a lack of formal training and a shortage of military police personnel, most commanders were unanimous in their praise of the military police. Especially noteworthy were the repeated comments on their determination, devotion to duty, and ingenuity in accomplishing their mission. Acts of individual heroism abounded among them, and numerous citations were awarded to military policemen.

The 1st Division Military Police operated in the Argonne Woods controlling access to the front. During the German advance in that area in 1918 many crossroads and towns were heavily bombarded by their artillery, but the military police swiftly directed three divisions into the battle area with no casualties. Often the enemy artillery was fired at regular intervals, allowing military police to move the majority of truck traffic through towns during periods of calm and to halt traffic before heavy shelling resumed.

Prior to the Aisne-Marne offensive in July, 1918, units speeding to the front created a huge traffic snarl. The situation worsened as heavy rains halted trucks in mud and mire. The traffic problem was intensified

Escort Guard Companies escorted prisoners from division to a central prisoner of war enclosure

by the failure to provide the 2d Division Military Police Company with an early warning of the advance, a lack of reconnaissance, and the absence of a specific order of march. Upon the arrival of the 2d Division Military Police, alternate routes were explored. Military vehicles and artillery pieces which could not be moved were overturned to allow continuous traffic flow to the front. Empty trucks returning were halted and parked in safe areas away from the main road. Infantry troops were commandeered by the military police to aid in road repairs. It took several hours of strenuous work just to clear the main road. At crossroad traffic points military police went several days without sleep while keeping traffic moving swiftly along proper routes.

During the German offensive in July, 1918, the 3d Division Military Police were busy controlling stragglers from the rapidly moving division. The subsequent counter-offensive of the 3d Division encountered heavy enemy artillery fire and gas attacks, causing many soldiers to stop advancing or to bolt towards the rear. The military police held the line despite their own losses, twelve killed and thirteen wounded. Other duties included processing and guarding prisoners of war, controlling traffic in order to speed supplies to the front and wounded to the rear, and assisting aid stations by escorting stragglers to the front lines.

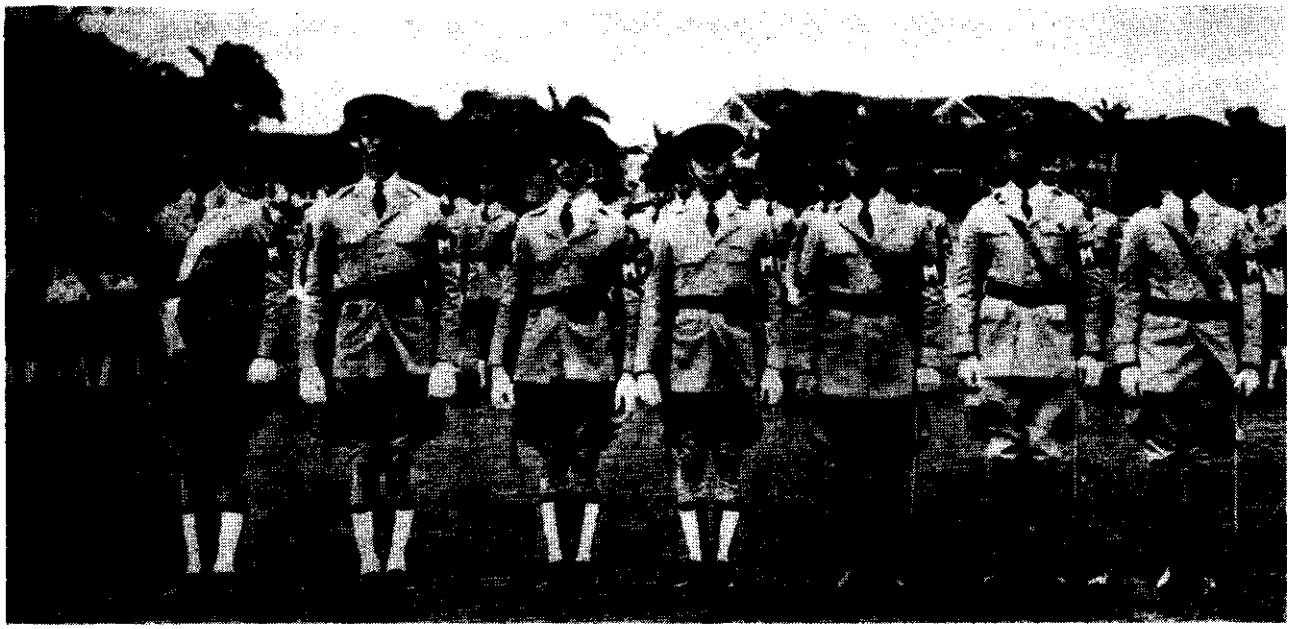
After action testimonials from twelve divisional commanders complimented the military police for their professionalism in controlling traffic, controlling stragglers (an increasingly difficult task during chemical attacks), handling prisoners, speeding wounded from front aid stations to the rear, and enforcing laws and regulations which prohibited American troops from looting and plundering captured cities. The 4th Division Commander was amazed that his military police company did not have any absentees even though its men went without sleep and proper food for days, due to personnel shortages and transportation problems. Thus, the military police had successfully solved a myriad of unusual problems which had demanded quick thinking, stern control, and positive action.

As open conflict ended, the military police were utilized in dispersing prisoners of war and maintaining martial law in conquered Germany. At the beginning of World War I, the provost marshal had been assigned eleven men for research and development. As the duties of the Provost Marshal General expanded, manpower allocations were increased. One thousand, one hundred and sixty-one officers and 30,466 enlisted men were serving as military policemen at the height of the war. These men were assigned throughout Europe in 146 different military police companies (8 criminal investigation, 50 divisional, and 88 general support sections in cities and towns).

In April 1919, Brigadier General Bandholtz submitted a report to the War Department which enumerated the shortcomings of the Military Police Corps and the Provost Marshal General's Department. The remedy for the existing situation was, in his words, the:

> Maintenance of a specially organized Military Police Corps, in our peacetime military establishment, with units that may be actively engaged in military police duties, particularly during maneuvers and field training, whose personnel shall be carefully selected and highly trained, having such Esprit de Corps and intelligent appreciation of their functions as will enable the individual military police to perform his often delicate duties with assurance and certainty, yet without offense or embarrassment. Then in case of war we will have the nucleus to supply instructors for the needed expansion, and trained units to be the first troops to report at any training area.

Although General Bandholtz's proposed permanent Military Police Corps was rejected by Congress, progress was achieved through the National Defense Act of 1920. This act provided for the organization of Army Reserve Military Police units and resulted in the first reserve military police officers being commissioned in 1921. A directive outlining the organization and function of the Military Police Corps in the event of mobilization was issued in July 1924. Each division was ordered to appoint an acting provost marshal in case of activation. However, these positions were either figureheads or additional duties for an officer already on the division's staff. The next significant event in the evolution of a permanent Military Police Corps occurred in 1937. At that time, the War Department published *Basic Field Manual IX, Military Police,* providing for the organization of a Provost Marshal General Department. The outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 brought about change in existing regulations, and a Military Police Corps was again projected in the event of a future national emergency.



Military police in Hawaii, 1935

World War II

The rapid buildup of the United States Army during World War II highlighted the need for an organized Military Police Corps. Major General Allen W. Gullion, the Adjutant General of the Army, was appointed acting Provost Marshal of the Army on 31 July 1941. He collected data concerning members of the Army currently to serve as military police. Corps and divisions had assigned personnel from existing branches serving as military police, and the Department of the Army did not know the exact number of men habitually used in law enforcement duties. Aside from the initial manpower organizational efforts, General Gullion also planned for the primary mission of military police: control of enemy aliens and internment of foreigners residing in the United States. A central operating authority higher than Corps level was necessary to meet that mission. The Secretary of War responded with the establishment of a permanent Military Police Corps on 26 September 1941. This date is the official birthday of the Military Police Corps. It marks the turning point in the corps' history from a transitory branch of the Army to a permanent combat service support element operating during war and peace. The initial members of the Corps were chosen as a result of their current assignment as military police at Army installations.

Three battalions and four separate companies of military police were formed immediately from existing assets. These units consisted of approximately 2,000 persons. During the course of the conflict the Military Police Corps grew to a strength of over 200,000 enlisted and 9,250 officers. Five different tables of organization, developed by the Infantry, were initially used by military police battalions. After the addition of the Military Police Board in January 1942, nine new organizational tables were created along with major revisions to the other five. By February 1942, seventeen battalions had been activated under these tables. The types of companies available for service by the end of the year were grouped according to major functions: Zone of Interior Guards, Escort Guard, Post-Camp and Station, Prisoner of War and Processing, Aviation Military Police Organizations, and Criminal Investigation Detachments.

As a result of the massive influx of personnel, a Military Police Service School was established at the Arlington Cantonment in Virginia. The school relocated several times prior to the end of the decade. It was the beginning of the creation of a highly professional Military Police Corps. Many of

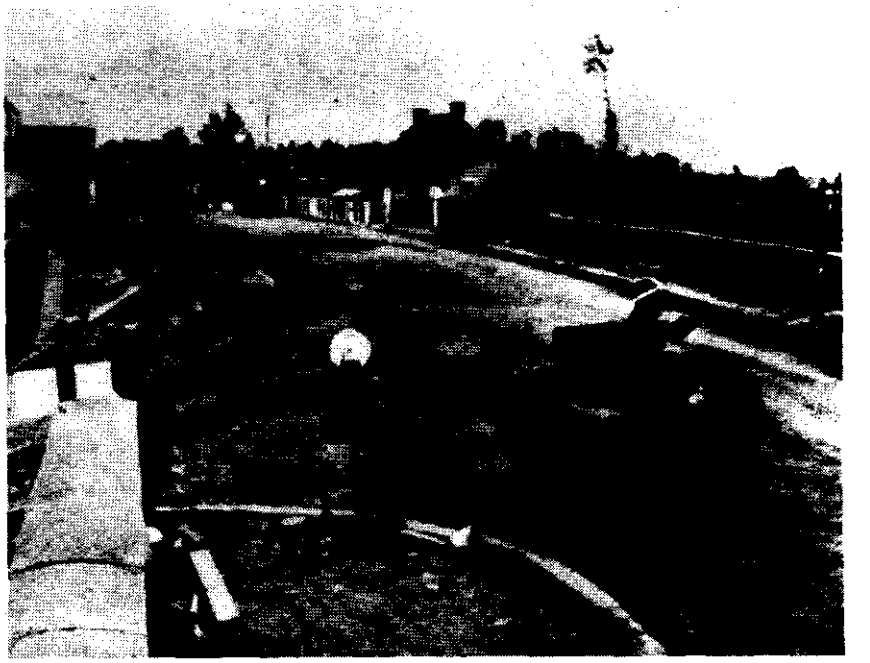
the subjects taught at the school were similar to those which had been taught at the World War I service school at Autun, France. However, the initial emphasis of the World War II Corps was on internal security and intelligence functions, altering the focus of the school. As in the previous war, the Military Police Corps expanded rapidly. By the end of 1945, about 150 battalions and 900 other military police units had been activated.

The United States fought the war on two widely separated fronts. One product of the divergence between them was that the operation of the military police in the two Theater Armies differed dramatically. In the Pacific, each military police unit was assigned a specific function, resulting in an overlapping geographic area of operation among several units. This created confusion among the military police, as well as the troops they served. For example, when a soldier approached a military policeman about a traffic incident, the military policeman might respond that he only handled stragglers. As a result, many soldiers thought the military police were attempting to shirk their responsibilities by diverting complaints to other units. Another problem in the Pacific Theater was the use of military police assets as individual reinforcements for infantry units. This practice resulted in band members, transportation personnel, and communication personnel being utilized for the security of ports, depots, railroads, and other vital rear area installations. Since General Douglas A. MacArthur and his staff approved of this practice, there was little that local provost marshals could accomplish against it. Often huge supply losses resulted from a lack of security at ports, but no attempt was made to correct the situation. Conversely, military police units in the European Theater of Operations had an excellent rapport with the troops they served, were tightly controlled, and well-organized. Units were assigned total military police responsibilities within a specific geographic area. Although military policemen had to obtain a wide variety of knowledge to perform their mission, this system reinforced the soldier's concept of each military policeman being capable of performing all law enforcement functions.

The primary missions of the Provost Marshal General's Department during the first years of the war were as follows: protection of war production in the United States, internment of prisoners of war, and establishment of an active civil defense plan. Industrialists demanded that the Federal government provide security against theft, sabotage, and destruction of military equipment that they were producing. To remedy the situation, an "Auxiliary Military Police" was created, combining active duty military police with civilian guard services at all key industrial complexes. The active duty units involved were commonly known as Zone of Interior Guard Companies. In addition to guarding factories, the military police serving in the United States had to process and secure prisoners of war. Following the North African campaign, numerous German soldiers were captured and shipped to the United States for confinement. Persons later captured in Europe were also sent to the United States. By 1945 approximately 750,000 German prisoners were detained in the United States in over six hundred compounds located throughout the country. The prisoners were employed in meatpacking plants, lumber mills, mines, on southern farms, in public works projects, and in transportation services. The Provost Marshal General was responsible for their care, security, and safety. After the war ended, this responsibility expanded to include reorientation and repatriation programs.

Guard tower at prisoner of war enclosure near the frontlines, World War II

In European Theater Army operations, military police duties were similar to those performed in World War I. Additional authority granted to the military police provided for greater control of refugees, civilians, absentees, stragglers, and all activities within the rear area. Staff Provost Marshals recommended changes in the rear boundaries of corps and became the chief consultants in security planning for rear areas. Their excellent knowledge of rear area operations led to the appointment of a Provost Marshal/Rear Area Commander on 21 November 1944. Once assigned specific terrain, the provost marshal designated defensive measures against small-scale enemy attacks from air or ground guerrilla forces. The rear area defensive mission also included holding larger attacking elements in check until the arrival of tactical troops. Military police likewise were used to halt bulges or breakthrough attacks by enemy frontline troops. Other missions included: traffic control; collection, custody, and evacuation of prisoners of war; criminal investigations; enforcement of regulations and special orders of the commander; apprehension of deserters; reassignment or relocation of stragglers; cooperation with local civilian police on curfews, blackouts, police protection, anti-sabotage, and patrolling captured towns; control of civilians and civilian employees; supervision of installations for refugees and the feeding of non-combatants until G5 could assume that duty; security of all Army headquarters; control of the light line and straggler line; enforcement of all "off limits" areas in leave cities; informing G2 and G4 on the status of roads, bridges, and enemy activity; and establishing alternate road network



A traffic control point

subsections to speed divisions laterally across the frontlines.

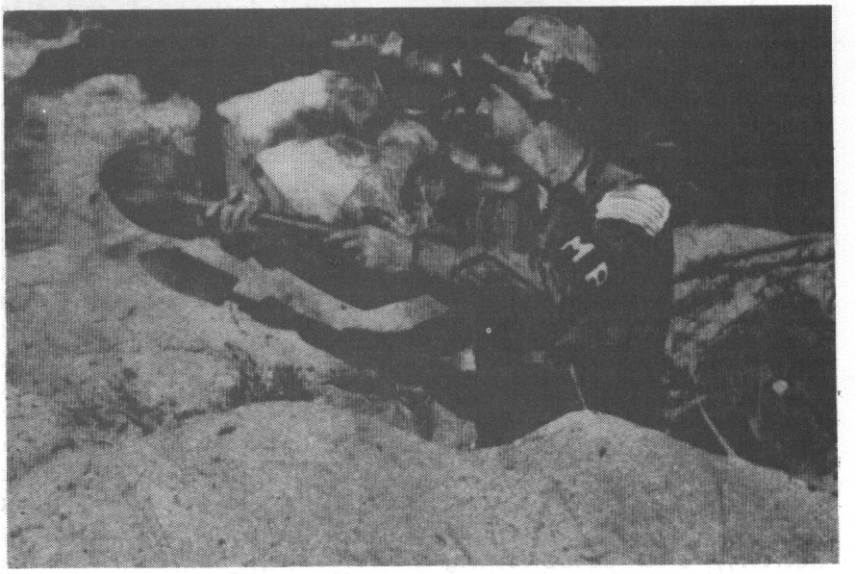
During beachhead operations, military police came in fighting with the airborne and infantry divisions. When the First, Fourth, and Twenty-ninth Divisions hit the Omaha and Utah beaches on June 6, 1944, detachments from the 783d Military Police Battalion joined them in starting the beginning of the decline of the Nazi fortress in Europe. During the confusion and disorder of the first chaotic hours after landing, these combat policemen took over control of the huge volume of traffic debarking from the invasion fleet. In the thick of battle, they established direction points and performed beach security patrol. On June 10, 1944, Company D, 783d Military Police Battalion, landed on the beaches of Normandy to relieve the 101st, 82d, and 4th Divisions' military policemen. Their primary concern was to create order out of the hectic traffic flow in order to allow the forces to move from the beachheads to their assigned areas. Later, during the Battle of the Bulge, the 783d MPs were called upon again to shed their traditional role and become front line riflemen while maintaining vital road blocks and bridges.

Following the beach landings at Normandy and the breakout at St. Lo, the 783d Military Police Battalion was assigned a more traditional but vitally significant role in supporting the Allied forces. As the Allies advanced through France, the lack of needed supplies, which lay in depots near the Normandy beaches, greatly hindered the forward movement of the combat divisions. The initial plan for the advance had called for utilizing the excellent French railways to move supplies forward, but it had been ruined by the destruction of the French rail system. A solution to this problem was the creation of the Red Ball Highway consisting of two parallel routes, each running one way, through Normandy, France, and Belgium. This network represented one of the greatest

Landing on the beachheads

supply enterprises in military annals. Implementing the Military Police phase of the Red Ball Highway, the 783d Military Police Battalion began patrolling operational areas along the route, which constantly changed as the advance continued. Working at times under enemy ground and air attack, this battalion patrolled the Red Ball Highway day and night without blackout precautions. Making round trips of up to three hundred miles, supply trucks delivered 412,193 tons of supplies along the route during the eighty-one days the Red Ball Highway operated.

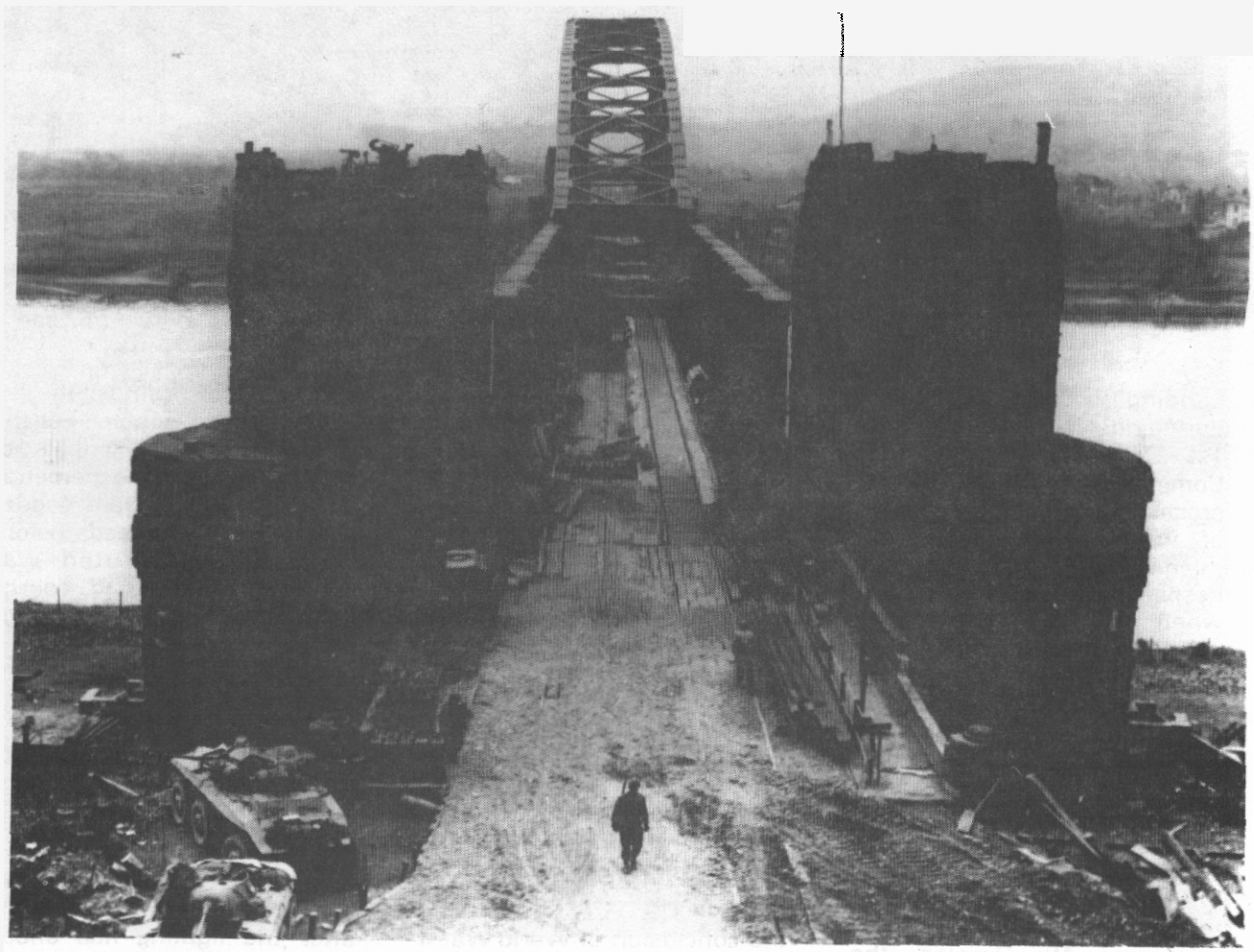
No incident exemplifies the courage, tenacity, and determination of combat military police better than the security and movement of allied troops across the Ludendorf Bridge at Remagen, Germany. Left standing by the hastily retreating German Army, the bridge was given great priority for capture and protection by Supreme Allied Headquarters. Major General Louis Craig, 9th Infantry Division Commander, ordered his Provost Marshal, Major Clair Hull Thurston, to move his military police ahead of the division to reconnoiter the best route and provide security to the bridge until the division



Digging in on Red Beach

arrived. On the morning of 6 March the 47th Infantry began a crossing operation which attracted a barrage of enemy artillery and sniper fire that which lasted for ten days. The bridge traffic was limited to foot traffic for the first two days; but by 9 March 1945, trucks and tanks began to cross the span. Military police were stationed at intervals along both sides of the bridge, and other MPs manned sniper positions on the river banks to prevent German frogmen from blowing up the bridge. From 9 March to 17 March the military police stood at their posts on the bridge. Unable to take cover, they maintained a steady flow of supplies, evacuees, and troop movement across it. Since numerous vehicles were hit, the military police had to clear the wreckage and to serve as replacements for injured or frightened drivers. Aid stations and prisoner of war cages at both ends of the bridge were also manned by military police temporarily rotated from their bridge positions. In addition, wire communications across the bridge were installed and maintained by the military police. After five days, the 9th Military Police Company was augmented by seventy-five infantry-men. By March 17, three divisions had crossed the bridge at Remagen and the 9th Military Police Company was ordered to return to its division which was rapidly advancing into Germany. The bridge collapsed just minutes after this company had left its positions. The military police displayed magnificient courage, control, and discipline throughout the ordeal. They showed little concern for their own personal safety in the face of almost certain death. Instead, they managed to speed traffic across the bridge, limiting casualties and aiding in the rapid advance of allied troops. Their efforts were honored by the receipt of a Presidential Unit Citation for Gallantry in Action.

While the 9th Military Police Company was highly commemorated and decorated, there were other divisional military police companies which performed equally well under combat conditions.



The Ludendorf Bridge, Remagen

Keeping traffic moving on the Ludendorf Bridge

Landing on Omaha Beach during the D-Day attacks, the 1st Division Military Police Company cleared the beaches, processed almost 785 prisoners of war and established six inland traffic control points, despite the loss of its vehicles when its supply ship sank offshore. By the end of D-Day, four members of the First Military Police Platoon had earned the Silver Star: Captain R.R. Regan, Lieutenant F.J. Zaniewski, Lieutenant Charles M. Conover, and Lieutenant William L. Bradford. Casualties sustained by the platoon totaled one killed in action and twenty-two wounded. In the rapidly advancing 4th Division, the military police had problems processing prisoners of war. At one time, there were as many as five processing points with from 300 to 2,000 prisoners at each. The total captured in a week amounted to about 11,200 prisoners, producing a ratio of one guard for every 300 prisoners of war. Eleven military police from this company received the Purple Heart because of their frontline combat duty. The necessity for rapid advance by military police squads to establish prisoner of war processing points sent this company into continuous frontline action.

While the world celebrated the conclusion of World War II in 1945, the military police were engaged in disposing of the evil residue of that conflict. For the first time in the annals of military history, the perpetrators of war crimes were made to answer for their deeds before specially constituted war crimes tribunals and courts. Throughout those proceedings the military police guarded the accused, provided courtroom security during their trials, and supervised the fulfillment of the sentences, either execution or imprisonment, of those convicted.

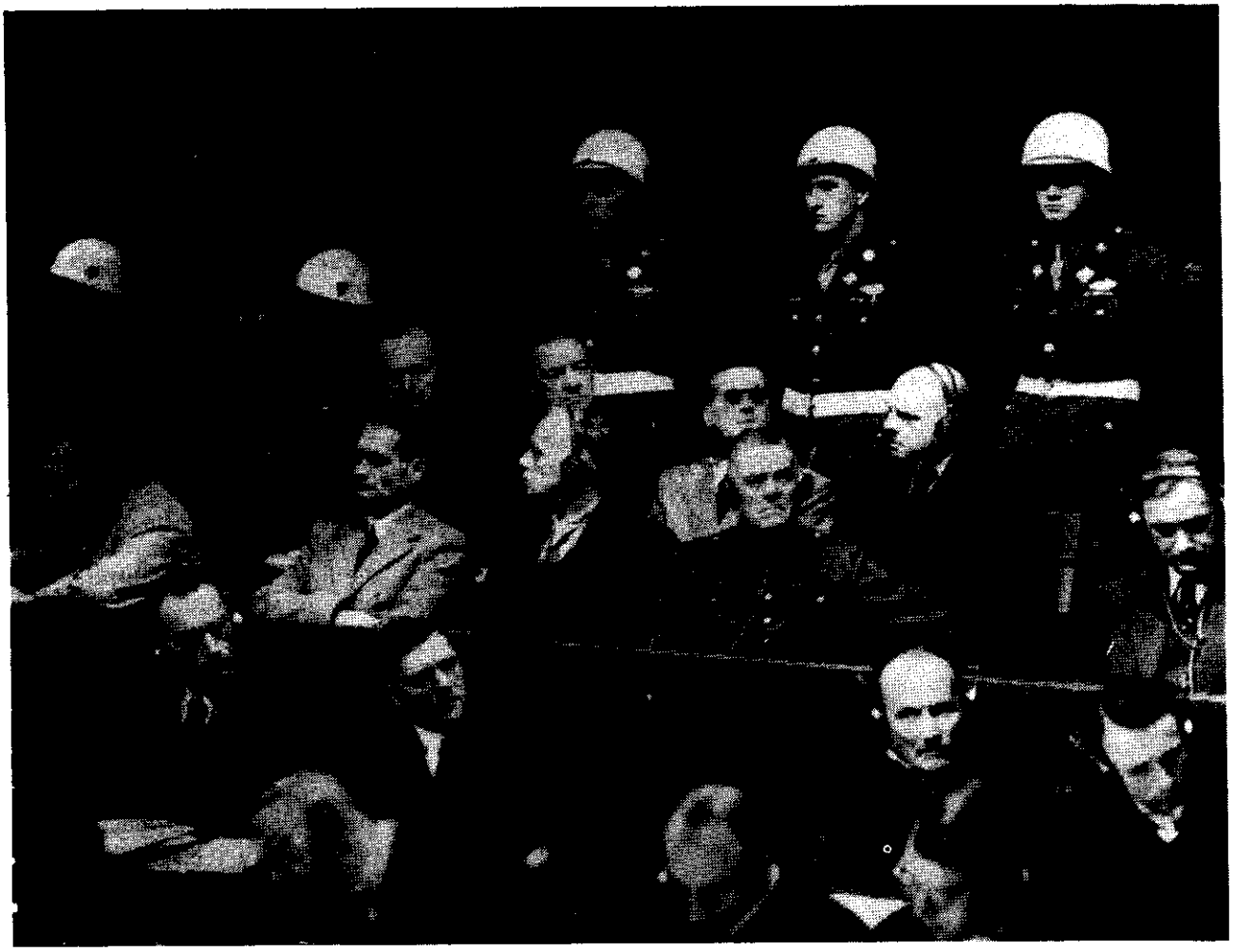
The process for dealing with accused war criminals commenced in Europe shortly after the fighting had ended there. A number of top German

military and Nazi party leaders initially were gathered together at Mondorf-les-Bains in Luxembourg. There they were housed in the Palace Hotel, stripped of its peacetime finery and equipped with bars on its room windows. Colonel Burton C. Andrus, a career cavalry officer who had previously served as prison officer for an Army stockade at Fort Oglethorpe, was their warden. In August 1945, he transferred his charges, including Herman Goering, Hitler's chief deputy, to Nuremberg, Germany, the location selected by the Allied Powers for the accused war criminals' trial before an international tribunal composed of jurists from the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.

Nuremberg was an ironic choice for the trial. Formerly it had served as the site for Nazi party congresses and rallies. It also had been the namesake for the infamous Nuremberg Laws which the party had issued in 1935 stripping German Jews of their citizenship, prohibiting them from participating in such professions as law and medicine, and starting Germany down the road to the horrors of the holocaust. The Allies chose Nuremberg for the trial because its Palace of Justice with its adjoining jail was the most compact and intact facility available within Germany for such a proceeding.

The military police who served as guards at Nuremberg came from the First Infantry Division. Initially, Colonel Andrus had to make do with one understrength company. By the time that the trial commenced in November 1945, another company had been added to the guard force. Finally, in April 1946, the 793d MP Battalion arrived in Nuremberg and absorbed the two resident companies, the 802d and 821st MP Companies, into its ranks.

The trial of twenty-one leading German war criminals lasted until September 1946. During it the MPs escorted the accused to and from the courtroom and provided security within the courtroom



Accused Nazi war criminals guarded by the military police, Nuremberg

itself. During the daily proceedings, ten MPs in white helmets, white belts, and equipped with white billy clubs fashioned from mop handles remained positioned behind and to the side of the dock. Colonel Andrus and the officer in charge of the military police detail carried side arms.

The military police kept the prisoners under constant surveillance when they were not in court. Colonel Andrus instituted around-the-clock watches on them after one of the accused had hanged himself in his cell prior to the start of the trial. In three-hour shifts, the MPs observed the prisoners through small window ports in their cell doors.

The international tribunal found eighteen of the twenty-one defendants guilty and acquitted the remaining three. It sentenced eleven of the convicted men to death, and allotted prison terms ranging in length from ten years to life to the other seven. In the early morning hours of October 16, 1946, the military police escorted ten of the condemned men one-by-one from their cells to the prison gymnasium where they were hanged from hastily erected gallows. The eleventh condemned man, Herman Goering, cheated the hangman that night by swallowing cyanide poison from a glass vial which he had managed to keep with him despite numerous searches of his person and cell. Following the executions, military police from the 508th Military Police Battalion and the Constabulary moved the bodies in two trucks to the Dachau concentration camp where they were cremated in the same ovens formerly employed to dispose of the remains of those men's victims. The MPs then scattered their ashes in a brook near Munich, the birthplace of the Nazi movement.

Security around the Palace of Justice was extra tight that night due to concern that diehard Nazis might attempt to storm the prison in order to rescue their former leaders. The recent rifling of two American arms rooms gave credence to such a possibility. Thus, as a precaution, armed patrols cordoned off a nine square block area surrounding the Palace of Justice, and MPs armed with Thompson submachine guns manned a fence in front of the building. Fortunately, the executions progressed without any attack materializing.

The seven remaining convicted criminals were transferred to Spandau Prison in Berlin to serve out their sentences under Allied supervision. The Allies equally have shared the responsibility for guarding them by rotating control of the prison on a monthly cycle. Today, only one man, Rudolf Hess, remains behind the prison walls, and every four months a contingent of American military police assumes the task of guarding him.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the globe similar proceedings against war criminals in the Pacific Theater were underway. With the occupation of Japan, Headquarters Far East Command and the Eighth Army faced the task of providing adequate facilities for the confinement of hundreds of war criminal suspects. As the Provost Marshal of the Eighth Army, Colonel Carol V. Cadwell assumed the responsibility for solving this problem. Initially, Omori and Yokohama Prisons, which had been used by the Japanese to confine allied prisoners-of-war, were used to house war criminal suspects. Since neither facility was considered adequate for the task ahead, Colonel Cadwell acquired control of Sugamo Prison as a replacement facility. Having suffered only minor bomb damage during the war, Sugamo was a modern brick penal institution capable of housing 1,800 prisoners.

During the trials in Japan, a select group of military police from the 720th Military Police Battalion provided security for an International Military Tribunal consisting of leading judges from ten nations. Under the command of Lt. Col. Aubrey S. Kenworthy, the military police detachment also was responsibile for transporting war criminals to and from Sugamo for the duration of the trials. From October 1946 until April 1948, they continued to extend their tours in order to complete the assignment. After the trials were completed, approximatly fifty members of the 720th MP Battalion were detailed to Sugamo to provide security until the Tribunal sentences could be executed. The prison personnel at Sugamo consisted of those condemned, those sentenced to long term imprisonment, and those undergoing trial. Of the 1,700 Japanese war criminals confined by the US Army, four were women, one of whom was the famed "Tokyo Rose." She was confined at Sugamo until her release late in 1946.

Victory and the resulting demobilization brought a decline in the number of persons and units assigned to the Military Police Corps. However, its responsibilities continued to expand wherever United States military forces were stationed. Combat commanders around the world recognized the contributions made by military police. As a result, for the first time in our nation's history, the Military Police Corps became a component in the Army's peacetime force structure. In many instances, military police were the first forces to move

into occupied areas, where they fostered trust and respect for United States forces. They combated the problems of lawlessness, plundering, and blackmarketing while assuming the role of local government which had been prostrated by years of fighting. Although the Military Police Corps had been reduced to 2,078 officers and 19,630 enlisted men by 1947, many of these soldiers were destined to serve in a new kind of conflict—a "police action."

Korean War

On 25 June 1950 the North Koreans, in an effort to unify the Korean peninsula under communism, struck south of the 38th parallel. This action was followed by the immediate intervention of United Nations troops to defend South Korea. Since American troops were stationed in Japan, even though they were occupation troops and not trained combat units, they were the first to see actual service in Korea. Following the outbreak of hostilities, the first military police company to arrive in Korea was the 622d Military Police Company, landing on 5 July 1950. During the conflict, this company received ten battle participation credits as well as a Meritorious Unit Citation and a Korean Presidential Unit Citation for service. In the demilitarized zone, the principal duty of this company was to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the area. Men from the company also supervised the Korean Security Guard Company, which patrolled thirty-five miles of gasoline pipeline passing through the I Corps area.

In Korea, the military police faced many problems which had become routine and familiar during their past service. At the same time, in common with the rest of American forces, they faced circumstances and conditions which were entirely new to the Corps. For the first time, the Army was confronted with an organized oriental, Communist army which brought with it a new ideology, new concepts of warfare, and new methods of treating prisoners of war. The years of the Korean War taught many lessons to the American soldier and produced many problems which were unusual or unfamiliar.

The military police had to expend a great deal of effort to combat blackmarket activities in that war-torn peninsula. Since the original troops sent there were combat-hardened veterans, the situation did not become serious until replacements were received from the States. As in other theaters, these replacements were young and inexperienced men who lacked the judgment to see that operations in the blackmarket were detrimental to their own country. Suddenly, with the outbreak of the war in 1950, a situation was created which increased blackmarket operations manyfold. A great mass of people were forced from their normal routines and away from their homes. A lack of material possessions became common throughout the entire peninsula. Practically anything possessed by an American soldier was the object of an offer for purchase by a Korean.

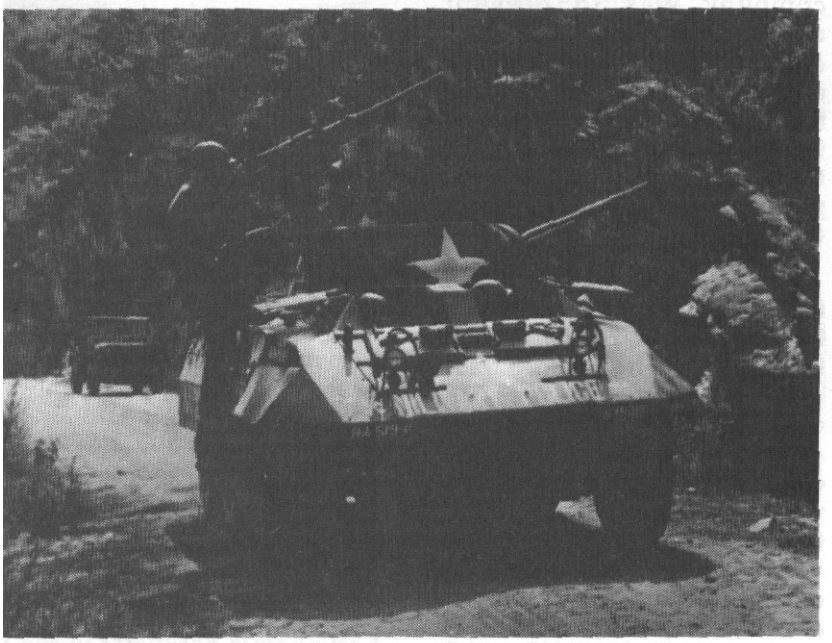
From the initial phases of the war onward, the military police were involved in combat. The 2d Military Police Company, 2d Infantry Division, was called upon several times to supplement the perimeter defense of the division command post by protecting the avenues of approach. This necessitated setting up machine gun positions and outposts to give timely warning of the approach of the enemy.

Setting up a perimeter in the demilitarized zone

Reconnoitering to determine guerrilla strength

Another duty of the 2d Military Police Company was to combat guerrillas. Depending on the tactical situation, a large percentage of the military police were utilized to combat these irregular forces. The military police had as part of their mission control of traffic over defiles and through mountain passes. This was performed without regular tactical forces providing additional security units to protect the military police. A provisional security force, distinct from the division's military police company, and consisting of American officers with Republic of Korea soldiers and military police under them was also established. Its mission was to ferret out small groups of guerrillas and determine the strength of the guerrilla bands operating within the zone between regimental and divisional command posts. The Military Police assigned to the 24th Division operated in the same manner as those assigned to the 2d Division. A traffic control post and system were established at Taejon. Two days after establishing the traffic control post, the military police were in the front line with the 21st Infantry Regiment. After engaging the enemy for almost a week, they returned to their primary duty of traffic control. As United Nations forces were pressed back, employing delaying defensive tactics, these military policemen became combat troops in rear guard units. One military police platoon of the 24th Military Police Company, with other rear guard elements, remained in Taejon thirty-six hours after the main force had withdrawn. There they actively engaged in combat with communist tanks up to the last minute. Then they cut their way through enemy roadblocks and escorted the last convoy from the city.

During the advance to the Chosen Reservoir in North Korea the X Corps' military police company was responsible for traffic control along the main supply route. The military situation at the Chosen Reservoir deteriorated rapidly once Chinese forces came into the conflict. By 12 December 1950, an estimated 8,000 refugees were infiltrating into the port area per day, adding to the congestion and confusion of the UN retirement from North Korea. As troops were returning from the reservoir, open roads became an absolute necessity. The military police rapidly learned the importance and method of controlling refugees during this crisis. Loudspeakers, operated by Korean



ngaging the enemy

interpreters, were used to direct the flow of refugees and to warn them of the danger of traveling at night and of congesting the roads. From 19 to 24 December 1950, the military police at Wonson collected, escorted, and loaded into ships more than 100,000 refugees, in addition to thousands of United Nations personnel and prisoners of war. During the planned withdrawal of the remainder of UN forces southward, the problem of refugees became enormous. Hundreds of thousands of these homeless people blocked the roads to the south. It therefore became necessary to halt all southward movements of refugees. This was accomplished by setting up roadblocks at critical points along the roads. Both United States and Republic of Korea forces were used for this purpose. The 519th Military Police Battalion, the 728th Military Police Battalion, the 772d Military Police Battalion, the 55th Military Police Company, and the 558th Military Police Company were all utilized in this task. During January the communist assault crossed the 38th parallel. With the enemy's objective being the western zone of South Korea, the evacuation of Seoul became necessary. The 8th Army Provost Marshal and three staff officers from the Provost Marshal Section flew to the area and remained there until the evacuation was completed and all bridges had been destroyed.

Straggler control, particularly during the early operations in Korea, was one of the main problems of the military police. Whole units and large parts of others were separated from their parent organizations during the fighting. The situation required a vast amount of work by division and Army military police. Stragglers were apprehended by motor

Moving convoy towards the front

and foot patrols, by mess checks, by roadblocks, and by checks of such installations as dispensaries, cabarets, and restaurants. All stragglers apprehended within a division area were returned directly to their organization under military police escort.

Since the military police were shuttling back and forth over the fighting area, they proved invaluable in mapping roads and reporting on road conditions. With the information furnished by them, road nets and main supply routes were charted; traffic control points were established at defiles, bottlenecks, and intersections; roving patrols were organized to prevent traffic snarls and to observe and report changes in road conditions; and guides were able to escort convoys through difficult crossroads. One of the many units performing this type of duty was Company B of the 519th Military Police Battalion.

The use of helicopters by military police under combat conditions occured in Korea in order to assist them in the accomplishment of certain of their missions such as road reconnaissance, emergency rerouting of traffic, and supervision of traffic control. These machines were used by the Provost Marshals of Army, Corps, and Divisions as well as by separate military police battalions and companies. Masses of refugees, fleeing in front of the advancing Communist armies, threatened to interfere with traffic on the main supply route and became an acute military police problem. Helicopters equipped with loudspeakers were utilized to direct them to assembly areas on and off the road. Such emergency operations as ambulance service, reconnaissance of burning areas, and the detection of escapes also were conducted by helicopters.

As a result of brilliant UN combat actions in 1950, including the Inchon landing and the subsequent cutting of the communist escape route to the north, the United Nations

Sweeping the hillside

found themselves with almost 175,000 prisoners of war and civilian internees. This population had to be fed, sheltered, and given medical treatment without causing hardship to the captured individuals. Generally, the prisoners were evacuated to the southern end of the Korean penisula and transported to the island of Koje-do, lying a few hours southwest of Pusan. At Koje-do the prisoners built their own camps, constructing fences, buildings, and sewage systems. At its peak, Koje-do housed approximately 160,000 prisoners of war and civilian internees. Military Police, serving under the United Nations Command, contended with a shortage of personnel and continuous political agitation among the prisoners at the camp. Clever communist leaders, recognizing these factors, began a campaign of terror against their fellow prisoners which was designed to accomplish two objectives: to embarrass the United Nations Command and force the diversion of front line troops to Koje-do; and to convert noncommunist prisoners of war to communism by fear and actual violence. In September 1951, disorder among the prisoners was intensified with an increase in the beating and murder of prisoners by other prisoners. This open rebellion by the communist prisoners made it necessary to establish who was in control of the prisoner of war camps. Brigadier General Hayden Boatner was ordered to restore a semblance of order to the compounds. In a matter of days, the entire Koje-do camp was reconstructed. New enclosures, subdivided into four to eight compounds designed to accommodate five hundred prisoners each, were constructed. Segregating the prisoners into smaller groups, General Boatner shattered the communist prisoners' influence over the other prisoners and restored order in the camp.

On 27 July 1953 a truce in Korea was officially established. As a formal branch of the Army, Military Police remain on duty in Korea patrolling the demilitarized zone. During the Korean conflict, the Military Police Corps sustained casualties of 151 wounded and 54 killed. A breakdown of military police casualties revealed that thirty-nine had been killed in action, ten later

Koje-do, a prisoner of war camp in Korea, under the United Nations Command

died from wounds, four had been reported missing and presumed dead, and one died in captivity. While the Military Police Corps was first in many things in Korea, it also claimed credit for being last in some things. This was true when the 701st Military Police Battalion was the last American unit to leave the Chinese mainland before the Communist advance. This was also true of the military police who were the last American troops to leave North Korea after the advance to the Yalu River.

Preparing to patrol the demilitarized zone

Vietnam War

The nation's next major military involvement occurred in Southeast Asia in the 1960's. As security deteriorated in South Vietnam and the threat to it from the Communist Bloc increased, United States involvement in the Vietnam War escalated. With the increased deployment of United States Forces there, the need for more military police correspondingly grew. In 1965, battalion-sized units were deployed in Vietnam under the command and control of the 89th Military Police Group. These units provided area military police support throughout the country. Their major tasks were to enforce United States military laws and provide security for American military installations, working areas, and quarters. The continued buildup subsequently led to the deployment of the 18th Military Police Brigade, the first unit of its kind to be employed in combat.

The 18th Military Police Brigade became operational on 26 September 1966. Initially, this Brigade was to assume command and control of all non-divisional military police units in Vietnam. Until then, those units were under the control of commanders in their respective areas, primarily performing security missions in addition to maintaining law and order. The Vietnam Command desired more active involvement by the military police in direct support of combat operations. While at first the 18th MP Brigade performed many unusual and unfamiliar tasks, as time progressed these unfamiliar tasks became commonplace MP missions. Military police performed the usual law and order, physical security, traffic control and confinement missions. In combat operations, they could be found in their camouflaged fatigues patrolling the jungles and villages near Long Binh and in other areas throughout Vietnam.

Their first large-scale, combat support operations were "Operation Deckhouse IV" and "Operation Attleboro," conducted in November 1966. During these operations, MPs provided convoy security and traffic control. In "Operation Cedar Falls," the 18th Military Police Brigade supported the 173d Airborne Brigade. This operation was a full-scale strike on an area known as the Iron Triangle, a heavily jungled region near Cu Chi. Living and working in the field, the 720th Military Police Battalion began earning the Brigade's reputation as "the only combat tested MP Brigade." One platoon of men spent twenty days in the field with the infantry. In February 1967 the Brigade was involved in "Operation Junction City" with the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions and "Operation Thayer II" with the 1st Cavalry Division (Air Mobile). In the latter operation, elements of C Company, 504th Military Police Battalion, joined the 1st Cavalry Division. In addition to detainee escort and route security, the MPs also performed as "tunnel rats," locating and destroying many enemy tunnels, as well as aiding in the capture of many

The 720th Military Police Battalion on convoy escort duty

Escorting detainees

In defense of Saigon

suspected enemy soldiers. During April of that year, the brigade supported "Task Force Oregon" (later reinforced and redesignated the 23d Infantry or "Americal Division") in southern Quang Ngai Province. In addition to many other missions, the brigade supplied security and route reconnaissance as well as convoy escorts. The Summer of 1967 found the brigade continuing to provide support for large-scale combat operations such as "Billings," "Paddington," and "Euporia." Throughout the period the military police constantly contended with ambushes, mines, and snipers in the most vital and dangerous type of mission.

In July 1967, V-100 Commando armored cars became a welcome addition to the 720th and 504th Military Police Battalions. Prior to their arrival, the 18th Military Police Brigade depended on gun-jeeps. The V-100 was tested and evaluated by the military police in Vietnam, resulting in an authorization for the procurement of seventy-two.

V-100 Commando armored cars

They provided a big morale boost for the MPs and were a great augmentation for the gun-jeeps. Due to added military police commitments and the fact that the battalion's V-100s were positioned in Saigon to assist the 716th MP Battalion, the 720th MP Battalion acquired twelve armored personnel carriers armed with .50-caliber machine guns. The importance of putting the carriers into action as soon as possible did not leave time for the MPs to receive formal instruction on the operation of this vehicle. The MPs instead took the initiative and learned on their own.

In 1967, a cordon and search operation, "Operation Corral," occurred. It was designed to locate and destroy any enemy close-in strike capability directed against the Long Binh Post complex. The operation began at precisely 1800 hours on 11 September 1967, as the thundering sound of helicopters, tanks, and armored personnel carriers brought the 9th Infantry Division's MP contingent into the staging area. Within the next five minutes over 250 men from the 720th Military Police Battalion converged on the area, equipped with gun jeeps, V-100 Commando cars, searchlights, loudspeakers and barbed wire barricades. As the infantry sealed and secured the area and supporting helicopter gunships prowled the sky, the men of the 720th combed through huts, muddy undergrowth and rice paddies. Their objective was to flush out Viet Cong, VC sympathizers, enemy supplies and contraband. When the failing rays of sunset turned day into night, huge artillery flares and searchlights enabled the 720th to continue its aggressive and intensive search around the clock.

Following this action, the brigade was assigned the responsibility for the security of a twenty-two square mile area south of Long Binh, thus becoming the first military police unit in history to man a tactical area of responsibility in a combat zone. This area contained hundreds of small streams and rivers where the military police set up night ambushes to stop the Viet Cong who were using these waterways as infiltration routes. Other military police activities included sweeps, reconnaissance patrols, and cordon as well as search operations. Becoming more involved in infantry activities, military police exchanged their shiny helmets and brassards for bush hats and flak vests. They continued to conduct small unit operations in South Vietnam until 31 January 1968 when the TET Offensive began.

During the TET Offensive, the 716th Military Police Battalion became involved in the Battle of Saigon: the fiercest battle in which a military police unit has ever been engaged. At approximately 0300 hours, 31 January 1968, Viet Cong elements launched attacks within the Saigon area on such key targets as the United States Embassy, BOQ #3, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) Annex Area, the Embassy Hotel, and in the vicinity of the race track on Plantation Road. Viet Cong units roamed the streets dressed in black uniforms or in civilian clothes with arm bands designating unit identification. Many also wore yellow handkerchiefs around their necks.

Shortly after 0300 hours, the MP guards at the Embassy were attacked and two MPs were shot in the back. Patrols from the 716th quickly surrounded the area. The Viet Cong also set up a machine gun in a building across the street from the Embassy. When a two-man MP patrol stopped in front of the Embassy, both men were killed by automatic weapons and small arms fire. During the hours of darkness, choppers attempted to land a 101st Airborne element on the Embassy roof but were constantly repelled. At 0630 hours, the enemy machine gun was silenced and the MPs crashed the main gate and stormed into the Embassy grounds. At no time had the Viet Cong gained entry into the Embassy building, but they were on the surrounding grounds. As the MPs battled the Viet Cong inside the grounds, the 101st Airborne landed on the Embassy roof. The paratroopers then proceeded down the stairs at the same time as the MPs were coming inside the compound. The enemy was armed with AK 47s, machine pistols, and some rocket launchers. This engagement resulted in four MPs and nineteen Viet Cong being killed in action.

At 0400 hours on the same morning, the 716th received a report that the Viet Cong had surrounded BOQ #3. A reaction force was dispatched to assist there. As the force approached the BOQ in four 1/4-ton vehicles and one 2 1/2-ton truck, they were hit by claymore mines and recoilless rifle fire. Initially, approximately thirteen MPs were killed and thirteen others wounded in this action. An additonal reaction force then was dispatched to help recover the dead and wounded. Heavy fighting continued for thirteen to fourteen hours while the MPs, with infantry and armored support, cleared the area and retrieved bodies.

At 0530 hours, across from the Korean Embassy, a jeep with an officer and enlisted man in it from the 716th was hit by recoilless rifle fire, wounding both men. Soon after, a machine gun jeep from the

During the TET Offensive, 1968

716th was hit by small arms fire. The two MPs in it were killed and their machine gun was captured. The Viet Cong then took the machine gun to the Embassy Hotel roof and fired on MP patrols, Korean troops, and Vietnamese National Policemen who were in the area. The 716th responded by sending a 3.5 Rocket Launcher team to the area. At 1630 hours the area was cleared and the machine gun recovered.

At 0630 hours, an alert force from the 716th was pinned down in the vicinity of the race track and another alert force from the 716th was dispatched to its aid. As the vehicles proceeded down Plantation Road toward the race track, they came under .50-caliber fire. Lt. Braddock, C/52d Inf, 716th was killed by the automatic fire. The vehicle he was in then was hit by a sachel charge and burned. Another officer and two NCO's were wounded in a gallant but futile attempt to retrieve Lt. Braddock from the vehicle. Despite these loses the two alert forces linked up and engaged the enemy. Heavy fighting continued throughout the day. Additional assistance was requested and a mechanized infantry platoon was dispatched to the area. Fighting continued at the race track for an additional ten days.

Many other areas in Saigon were under attack during this period with BOQ's, BEQ's and National Police Headquarters being primary targets. At 0330, 31 January 1968, a black civilian car came down the street toward the Presidental Palace. The vehicle failed to heed a warning to stop by the MP and was engaged and destroyed by two machine gun jeeps. Around 0800 hours, Viet Cong elements penetrated Tan Son Nhut Airbase and attempted to attack the MACV Complex located there. A reaction force from the 716th engaged the enemy in the vicinity of the MACV Annex. Joined by a back-up force from the 92d Military Police Battalion, MPs cleared the area at 1500 hours.

On the 1st of February, 1968, United States and ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) tactical units moved into Saigon and assumed control of operations against the enemy. MP patrols then were set up at strategic points in the city and the MPs also assisted in traffic control and maintaining security at US facilities and installations. Sporadic firing continued for several days. During the period from 31 January to 6 February 1968, the 716th Military Police Battalion suffered twenty-seven killed and forty-five wounded in action while serving in the Saigon area.

Another target of the TET Offensive of 1968 was Dalat. It was probably the scene of the heaviest fighting outside the Saigon area. Early in the morning on 31 January 1968 large size enemy forces began to attack Dalat. The Viet Cong soon controlled all the roads into the town. The MP villa was demolished by mortar and rocket fire. Two MPs were wounded and communications were lost within the city. A military reaction force extracted the MPs from their villa. As heavy mortar fire continued in the city, MPs who had relocated in a medical villa came under ground attack. On 3 February 1968, the MP personnel who had been driven from the villa returned to retrieve items of

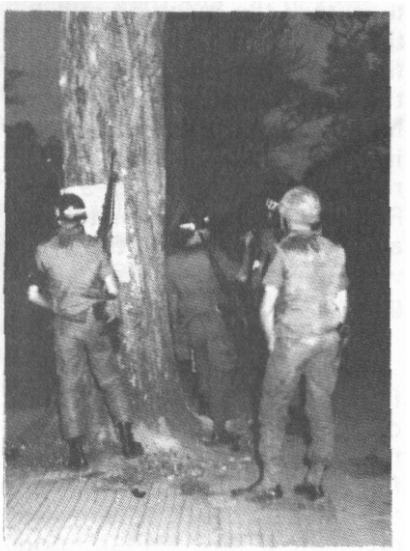
Defending the American Embassy, the 716th Military Police Battalion, during TET, 1968

equipment. They were able to recover vehicles, radios, and records which they had abandoned during the initial attack. Again, they received a small arms attack but sustained no additional casualties. As the remaining activity in the area began to center on the Dalat airfield, the MPs in the area responded to the crisis by providing reinforcements to friendly forces at that location. As fierce fighting continued on 3 February, the city of Dalat became the only critical area in the II Corps tactical zone. With the airfield under Viet Cong control, the local defending elements, particularly the MPs, began to run low on ammunition. Ammunition resupply was completed by air. With an enemy battalion believed still to be in the city on 5 February 1968, additional MP replacements were flown into Dalat. Viet Cong elements continued to hold two strong points in the city until 9 February when they finally were forced to withdraw.

The Viet Cong also launched mortar and rocket attacks against the city of Kontum during the early morning hours of 31 January 1968. An estimated two-battalion-sized enemy force continued bombarding the city as the day progressed. MP elements from B Company, 504th Military Police Battalion, provided early warning of enemy infiltrators and returned sniper fire throughout the city. Sporadic action continued there during the following week, marked by small unit contacts and exchanges of small arms fire. Activity finally subsided after one week and the MPs resumed normal activities.

The city of Pleiku likewise began receiving mortar attacks during the morning of 30 January 1968. A battalion-sized enemy force launched a ground attack against the city immediately following the mortar barrages. MPs from B Company, 504th Military Police Battalion, succeeded in transferring the provost marshal's office from Pleiku to Camp Schmidt during the initial stages of the encounter. Throughout the following week numerous incidents of sniping were reported and small pockets of enemy resistance reduced. Street fighting and enemy contact ceased completely on 7 February 1968, and normal MP operations resumed.

At approximately 0300 hours on 31 January 1968, the Qui Nhon Ammunition Supply Depot at Valley F received recoilless rifle fire. This area was secured by guards from the 93d Military Police Battalion. There were no personnel casualties, but two pads of ammunition were destroyed. During the same period enemy forces attacked the city of Qui Nhon and temporarily occupied the radio and railroad stations there. The enemy was routed that same day. On the morning of 1 February 1968, the 93d Military Police Battalion cantonment area received a mortar attack. Street fighting and resistance by enemy forces continued in Qui Nhon until approximately 7 February 1968. On 3 February 1968, Lt. Banks from the 127th Military Police Company was fatally wounded as he attempted to flush a sniper from a building in the city. At the time, Lt. Banks was participating in Combined Police patrol activities with the Vietnamese National Police. The 93d Military Police Battalion was able to reinforce



Military Police in combat during TET, 1968

the defenses at the Valley F Supply Depot on 3 February 1968 with the addition of a 105mm Howitzer Battery. By 8 February 1968, conditions were stable in the city and refugees who had fled from there began to return. The MP carefully screened them in order to prevent infiltration by the Viet Cong.

Enemy activity at the Ban Me Thout during TET consisted of major rocket and mortar attacks in and around the city including the local airfield. These attacks began on the morning of 31 January and continued until the 7th of February 1968. On the morning of 2 February, three MP sentry dog handlers were wounded by an explosion of unknown origin while working in the kennel area of the 9B1st Military Police Company.

Cam Rahn Bay experienced very little overt enemy activity during the 1968 TET period. On the morning of 31 January, a North Vietnamese Army frogman trained in demolitions and assigned the mission of sabotaging friendly vessels was captured in the harbor. The mayor of Cam Rahn Bay immediately placed the civilian population under strict curfew and limited water traffic by Vietnamese nationals in the harbor area. During the next week, there were numerous sightings of frogman activity in the Cam Rahn Bay area. Elements of the 97th Military Police Battalion, particularly those from the 981st Military Police Company (SD) assisted in the search for infiltrators in the bay.

On the morning of 30 January 1968, the city of Nha Trang and surrounding installations began receiving mortar attacks. A ground attack followed and large numbers of enemy troops entered the city. Street fighting was heavy, and resistance continued for the next two or three days. Several unsuccessful attempts were made by the enemy to seize the local railroad station. The element that invaded the city was estimated to be a two-battalion-sized force. One prong of the attack was directed at the 272d Military Police Company compound. By 3 February 1968, the civilian population began moving from the area. For several days, resistance was strong within the city, but it subsided gradually until approximately 7 February 1968, when operations returned to normal. The rapid reaction of the MPs during this engagement succeeded in delaying the enemy forces and diverting the direction of their ground attack.

Security patrol, Long Binh

At approximately 0300 hours, 31 January, coordinated attacks were launched on the Bien Hoa Airbase, II Field Force Vietnam Headquarters, the Long Binh Ammunition Supply Depot, and various other friendly installations in the local area. Following a mortar and rocket attack, the perimeter of the Bien Hoa Airbase was penetrated. The city of Bien Hoa, patrolled by elements of the 720th Military Police Battalion, also was infiltrated by large numbers of Viet Cong. All roads into and out of the city were controlled by the enemy. After the attackers had succeeded in destroying one building and two jet aircraft, friendly forces killed 101 enemy and reestablished the perimeter of the airbase. The Long Binh Ammunition Supply Depot was penetrated by a company sized unit employing sapper techniques. Bangalore torpedos and satchel charges were planted on several pads of ammunition in the area. Two security personnel, one from the 95th Military Police Battalion and one from the 212th Military Police (Sentry Dog) Company, were killed. One pad of ammunition was blown, producing secondary explosions by two additional pads. Ammunition loss was set at $1,677,000.00. The enemy capability for large scale attacks was quickly reduced by friendly forces using rapid ground counterattacks and supporting artillery and air fire. However, for several days, harrassing incidents including light mortar and rocket attacks continued.

By 1 February 1968, refugees were leaving the area in large numbers. It was felt that many

Enroute to the objective

enemy soldiers would attempt to leave the area along with the refugees. Therefore, checkpoint operations were intensified by the local MPs. Local barge and shipping sites began to receive isolated attacks. Retreating enemy soldiers were believed to be responsible for the burning of many homes in their path. In conjunction with an attack on the Cogido Barge site, secured by the 95th Military Police Battalion, enemy forces burned the village to the ground. Friendly forces from the battalion, who were responding to the activity in the area, were ambushed. While firefights and resistance continued in the area, sweep and search operations were initiated by friendly tactical units.

On 2 February 1968, the village of Thu Duo received an enemy ground attack. When the Thu Duo highway patrol station was threatened, the 720th Military Police Battalion, equipped with M113 vehicles, reinforced the station and established critical checkpoints in the area. By 3 February 1968, enemy activity in Long Binh/Bien Hoa had been reduced to small pockets of resistance. Attempts then were made by the 720th Military Police Battalion to resume its normal operation of escorting replacements and rotatees to and from the Bien Hoa Airbase. However, the operation was postponed due to the still existing enemy threat. Facing a tremendous backlog at local docks, mail, and fuel sites, and other activities that had suspended actions during the hostilities, the 720th Military Police Battalion then began to restore convoy operations. Shortages in fuel and ammunition made it imperative that resupply convoys return to normal operations at once. The combined police patrol, utilizing part of the 720th Military Police Battalion, the national police, and the Vietnamese military police, resumed patrol activities on highway 1A from Long Binh to Saigon. By 5 February 1968, normal operations had been reestablished in the Long Binh/Bien Hoa areas.

On 31 January 1968, Vinh Long was attacked by an estimated force of two enemy battalions. The assault began with mortar attacks followed by ground attacks. One MP from the 148th Military Police Platoon was wounded. On 1 February 1968, Vinh Long received additional heavy mortar and small arms attacks directed at the city and its airfield. The MP Villa was evacuated due to attacks on the site, and the personnel from it moved to the airfield. Several

items of equipment had to be abandoned when they evacuated the area. Enemy forces then proceeded to occupy the military police billets. On 2 February 1968, attempts were made to reoccupy the villa, but the first ones were unsuccessful. The men of the 148th Military Police Platoon remained with personnel from the 212th MP Company (SD) at the airfield until they were able to return to their villa later that day. By 3 February 1968, the MP elements in Vinh Long were able to resume regular operations, although sporadic resistance was still in evidence within the city.

Can Tho City and airfield received mortar and ground attacks on the morning of 31 January. The airbase was penetrated but the attack was repulsed, resulting in six Viet Cong being killed in action. In addition, an estimated fifty to seventy-five Viet Cong were killed in the city as a result of street fighting. The MP Villa in Can Tho also received numerous small arms attacks. US civilians from the area were moved into the military police compound for security reasons. On 1 February, fighting in the city continued, and the MP station received small arms fire. By 3 February, MP operations were almost back to normal in Can Tho with the exception of highway patrols. They could not be resumed because Highway Four was closed to traffic. It was blocked by several blown bridges and other obstacles.

Soc Trang began to receive mortar and ground attacks on the morning of 31 January. While they were generally unsuccessful, enemy troops dug in around the airfield and offered substantial resistance for a time. Street fighting and sporadic resistance continued for the next two or three days, but by 3 February, operations were almost back to normal.

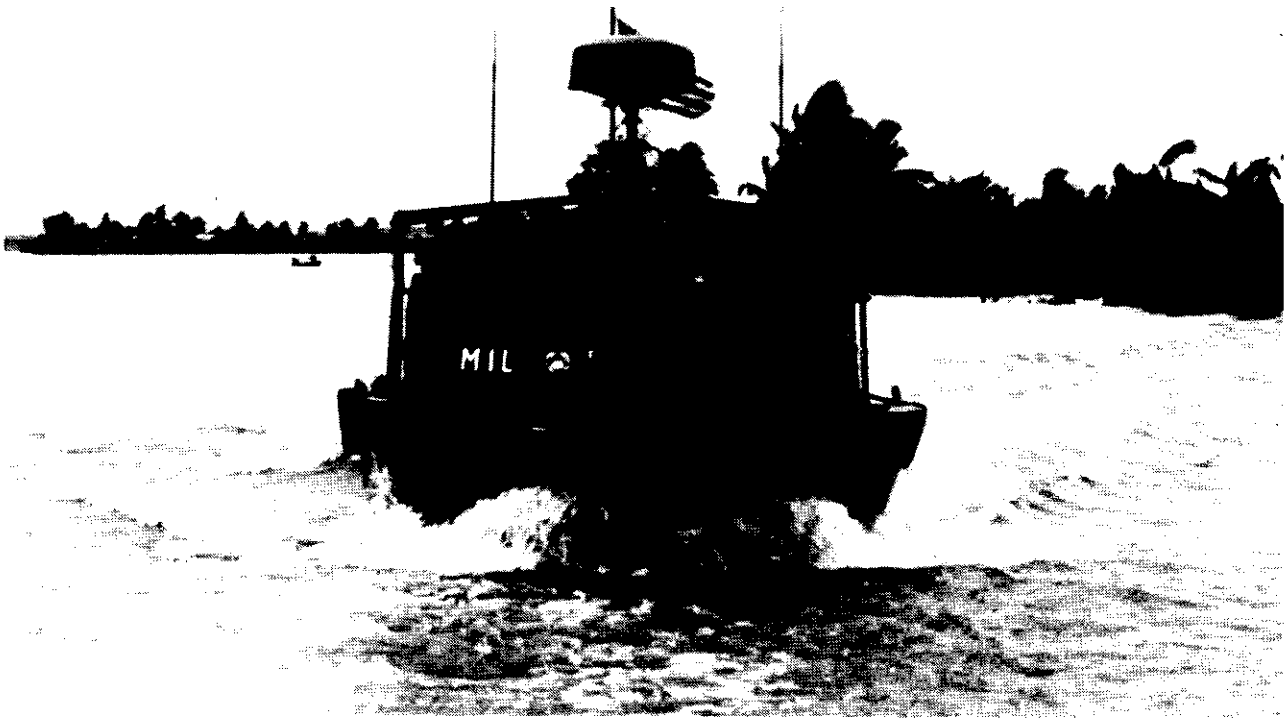
The employment of MP firepower, mobility, and communications during the TET Offensive in the Republic of Vietnam provided a first line of defense against enemy combat forces. On many occasions during that crisis, MPs were the first to become aware of enemy threats and to become engaged in open combat in major cities

Security for civilian internees

and other built-up areas. During this general offensive the MPs responded rapidly and prevented or delayed Viet Cong as well as North Vietnamese Army attempts to infiltrate major cities throughout the Republic. The ability of the MPs to remain in direct contact with the enemy and to block their advance, pending the arrival of tactical units, attests to their close affinity to a combat arm. Even after the arrival of tactical units, the MPs remained on the scene and performed a variety of direct support missions including escorting convoys carrying critical supplies and equipment, evacuating prisoners, and providing security at vital installations.

Controlling traffic and patrolling the highway

The 18th Military Police Brigade also performed "sea duty" during the Vietnam War by providing port and river security. An example of this type of operation was conducted at the tiny port of Vung Tau Bay. This port was a vital area because it was the disembarkation point for many supplies. The 218th Military Police Company, assumed responsibility for the security of this 6 1/2 square mile bay using river patrol boats equipped with .50-caliber machine guns. This operation was supplemented by using a Boston Whaler for patrolling the shoreline to intercept would-be Viet Cong swimmers before they entered the water.



Securing the waterways

Convoy escorts were also routine missions for the MPs. One such mission, considered by many to be the most dangerous, was a convoy from Qui Nhon to Plei Djereng in support of Cambodian operations. The 150-plus-miles trip was through treacherous terrain that invited Viet Cong ambushes. The road through it degenerated from pock-marked pavement to dirt road until finally becoming a jungle trail.

On the morning of 30 March 1973, the 18th Military Police Brigade was inactivated at the US Army Personnel Center, Oakland, California. It was the last major color-bearing unit to leave Vietnam. The largest and only combat tested military police brigade in the history of the Military Police Corps had distinguished itself in its six plus years of activation and duty in Vietnam. For outstanding service, seven Brigade units, in addition to the 716th Military Police Battalion, received Presidential Unit Citations; three units received Valorous Unit Awards; fifty-six received Meritorious Unit Citations; seventeen units received Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citations; and eight units received Republic of Vietnam Civil Actions Unit Citations. In Vietnam the 18th Military Police Brigade assisted the combat commander in maintaining discipline by enforcing law and order; securing lines of communications; destroying Viet Cong roadblocks and ambushes; collecting, holding, and evacuating refugees as well as prisoners of war; establishing ambush sites and running patrols; and actively participating in tactical operations. The outstanding service performed by MPs in tactical operations during the Vietnam War culminated in the Military Police Corps being redesignated as an arm and a service with the primary mission of combat support.

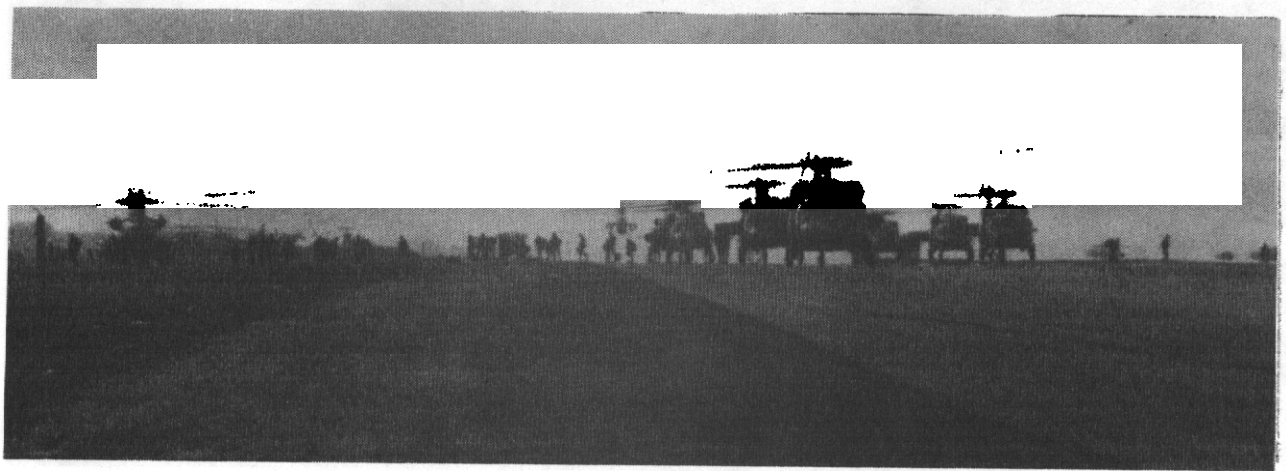
Military police on ambush patrol

Grenada

On October 25, 1983, the 82d Airborne Division, America's Guard of Honor, was called into combat to free American students and liberate the oppressed people of the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada. One of the key elements contributing to the overall success of that operation was the performance of the men of the 82d MP Company. In Operation "Urgent Fury" the 82d's MPs were tasked with a multitude of missions, ranging from combat action to garrison duty, under tough conditions. Upon notification of the operation, the Division's Provost Marshal Office and the MP company supported the division's deployment. MPs provided numerous escorts, as well as traffic control points, to ensure the expeditious movement of personnel and equipment to staging areas. Due to the nature of the operation, the general support platoon significantly increased security at division headquarters. As the deployment schedule for the MP company became clear, provision was made with the XVIII Airborne Corps Provost Marshal Office for the latter to assume the division's MP garrison law enforcement mission, as well as to provide required deployment support. Coordination and implementation of the move went smoothly and were effected on 29 October.

On October 25, three squads of the 2d MP Platoon deployed with the 2d Battalion (Abn), 325th Infantry. Upon arrival in Grenada, the 2d Squad of the platoon was immediately assigned the duty of enemy prisoner of war collection, as well as holding and processing them for the task force. The 1st and 3d MP Squads handled detainee and refugee control at the Point Salines airfield along with clearing manmade structures from it. The 4th MP Squad arrived later that day and took over security for the battalion tactical operations center. On October 26, the 1st and 3d MP Squads were moved to the True Blue Medical College, which served as a refugee center. Given the mission of providing security for and evacuation of US and foreign civilians, these squads remained there until October 28, when they were relieved by the 118th Military Police Company. The 2d MP Squad was assigned duties assisting the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force at the enemy prisoner of war camp and remained there until relieved by the 118th Military Police Company (Abn) on October 28. After being attached to the Combat Support Company, 3d Battalion (Abn), 325th Infantry, the 4th MP Squad performed area reconnaissance and cleared buildings until assuming responsibility for security at the brigade tactical operations center. On October 29, three squads of the 2d MP Platoon were pulled by division and assigned law enforcement duties working with the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force in St. George's. They were joined there by the remaining squad after its release from Division Tactical Operations Center security duties by the GS Platoon on October 30. Responsibilities of the 2d MP Platoon in St. George's included joint patrols with the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force, checking out suspected Cuban hideouts and weapon caches, prison security, and VIP security. These missions continued until the 2d MP Platoon was relieved by a platoon of the 21st Military Police Company, 503d Military Police Battalion.

Late in the evening of the 26th, the 82d Division's 3d

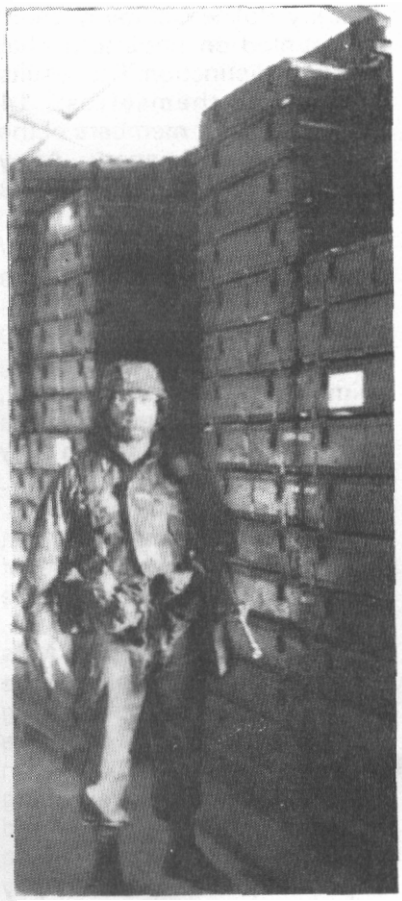


Operation Urgent Fury, Grenada

Brigade began to deploy across the island. The 3d Military Police Platoon moved out by squad with their parent battalions and remained under the operational control of those battalions throughout the operation. Missions performed included: enemy prisoner of war escort from battalion/brigade to the prison camp; clearing operations; investigating with the S-2 reported Cuban hideouts and weapons caches; providing tactical operations center security; and escorting dignitaries. The 3d MP Platoon remained with the 3d Brigade Task Force after all other units returned to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The majority of their time was spent performing brigade and battalion tactical operations center security, conducting hasty route reconnaissance, manning civilian control points, performing reaction force duties, responding to snipers, and guarding the Cuban Embassy. Just prior to redeployment, three squads were detached to the 503d Military Police Battalion to assist the 21st Military Police Company in manning checkpoints in and around St. George's. On December 12, the 3d MP Platoon returned home with the last elements of the 82d Airborne Division.

A three-person advance Provost Marshal cell, headed by the PM operations officer, was deployed October 26. The cell's primary missions were to coordinate MP activities, identify requirements, and keep the task force commander and staff informed of MP activities. Primary problem areas were eliminating equipment and supply shortages, rectifying overcrowding at the enemy prisoner of war camp, managing the evacuation of US and foreign nationals, and handling refugee problems at the True Blue Refugee Center.

Because of the magnitude of the enemy prisoner of war operations, as well as the MP requirements for evacuating US and foreign nationals, the 118th MP Company was attached to the 82d Airborne Division and placed under operational control of the Provost Marshal. They assumed duties at the enemy prisoner of war camp and True Blue evacuation site from the 2d MP Platoon on October 28. Shortly after the 118th's arrival at the enemy prisoner of war camp, all the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force's personnel withdrew, leaving responsibility for the operation of the camp in MP hands. With the arrival of the Provost Marshal on 30 October, a thorough analysis of the prisoner situation was completed. Arrangements were made with G5 and the State Department to evacuate neutral personnel. Due to the overcrowded conditions on the initial site, construction of a new 1,000 man compound closer to the ocean was begun on November 1. The 118th Military Police Company selected seven non-commissioned officers, who spoke Spanish fluently, to direct the construction of the camp. Construction was achieved by utilizing captured Cuban labor and captured supplies obtained from the Infantry and Engineers. Stipulations of the Geneva Convention relating to the sheltering of prisoners were met by distributing confiscated Cuban foam mattresses and Cuban G. P. medium tents. Showers and latrines were built by Cuban plumbers while others laid the concertina wire needed for security. Approximately 115 Cubans, under the direction of the non-commissioned officers, were utilized in building the camp. Food supplies were trucked in by confiscated Cuban vehicles while the water supply was provided by a fire truck.



An MP guarding a cache of weapons

Provisions for the removal of solid waste and entomology services were coordinated with the Army contractor and local Grenadians. Under the guidance of the 307th Engineers and the 118th Military Police Company, the facility was completed. Thirty hours after construction began, over seven hundred captured Cubans had been moved to the new camp. Prisoner of war evacuation began November 3, with approximately one hundred Cubans being flown out. Fifty more left on November 4, and this procedure continued until all prisoners had been repatriated.

Operation "Urgent Fury" demonstrated that the military police have a vital role to play in division combat operations and that the troopers of the 82d

Military Police Company could be counted on to perform that role with distinction. The results speak for themselves: 14 Cubans and 47 members of the Peoples Revolutionary Army captured and 109 rifles, 18 pistols, 2 machine guns, and more than 3,000 rounds of ammunition recovered. Some 700 prisoners of war were processed and more than 1,500 refugees assisted. Operating primarily at the squad level, MPs were confronted with a myriad of missions which they met with decisiveness, ingenuity, and resourcefulness. They also demonstrated that they were equally capable of performing purely combat-type missions, such as ambushes. Missions performed by MPs ranged from assisting the infantry in carrying out clearing operations to peacetime missions such as working with the Caribbean Peacekeeping Forces in restoring law and order to St. George's. More importantly, these MPs adeptly made the rapid transition from combat support to peacetime missions.

The 82d Military Police Company also was assigned responsibility for performing customs inspections on all departing personnel. This short-fused mission required the dedication of forty percent of available military police assets to fulfill it and was performed concurrently with supporting combat missions. Such a task is normally assigned to a Corps' military police unit. Maximum flexibility was demonstrated by customs inspectors who successfully responded to battalion commanders' requests to inspect their massed battalions at locations away from established customs stations. This was accomplished while continuing to maintain normal customs operations for other departing personnel. The operation validated the concept of attaching a Corps' military police company to the division Provost Marshal for use in performing enemy prisoner of war and refugee control operations. While most operational plans call for this to occur, there had been some skepticism as to its implementation. The plan indeed worked well. Operation "Urgent Fury" for the 82d Military Police Company and the 82d Airborne Division was an outstanding success.

A clearing operation, Grenada

The need for military police has been evident to American military commanders since the struggle for our national independence. Whenever the United States engaged in warfare, some form of police element emerged to assist its leaders in maintaining various aspects of discipline. Surfacing when necessity dictated, the Military Police Corps evolved through several phases, each meeting the needs of a particular period in American history. Assuming increased responsibilities, military police established their place as combat soldiers who have the professional knowledge and flexibility needed to perform a variety of missions in war and peace.

The most recent landmark development in the evolution of the Military Police Corps occurred on 26 September 1986. On that date, the 45th Anniversary of the founding of the Corps, the Department of the Army activated the Military Police Corps Regiment and designated Fort McClellan, Alabama, as its home.