

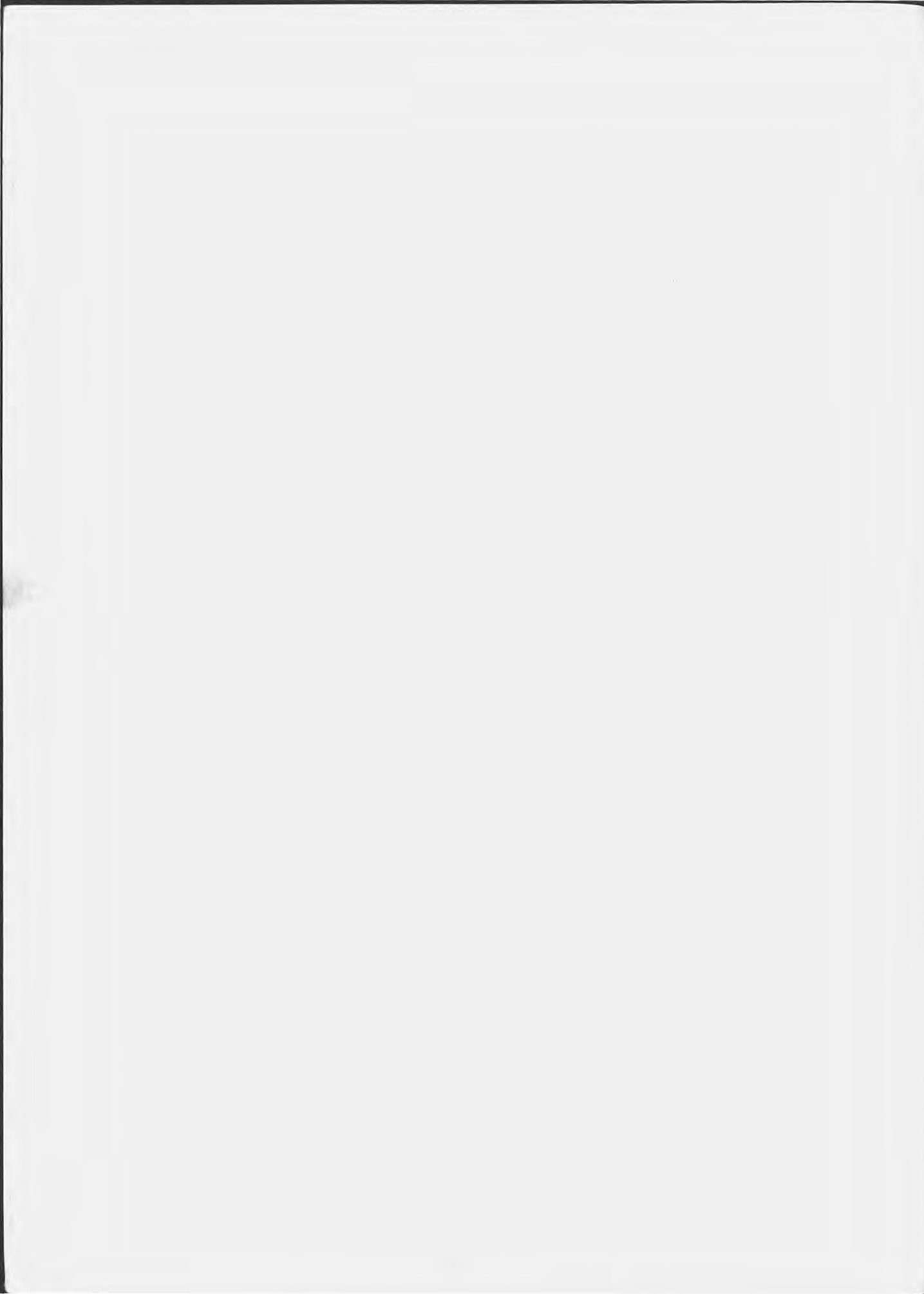
# BATTALION COMMANDERS SPEAK OUT

An Anthology on the  
Philosophy of Command



UNITED STATES ARMY WAR COLLEGE  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA

1977



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An Anthology on the  
Philosophy of Command

*Edited by*

*COL John H. Moellering*  
*Class of 1977*

United States Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania  
1977

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## FOREWORD

Although the battalion commander is one of the key individuals in the leadership and organizational structure of the Army, surprisingly little has been written about the philosophy of battalion-level command. This unique book presents the unvarnished, very personal views of a number of recent battalion commanders on ways of approaching the total challenge of command at that level. Additionally, and importantly, it also contains a chapter written by a member of that most special and admirable group, the Army wives.

Official Army doctrine is not the subject here; large numbers of field manuals and other official publications which describe and prescribe the authority and responsibilities of battalion commanders are available. Nor has this book been "staffed" in any traditional sense. Instead, these chapters are intended to be both broadly philosophical and thoroughly practical in presenting the views of commanders who have successfully led several types of battalions.

This work was conceived and completed as a part of the voluntary student research program at the Army War College during the Academic Year 1977. The College is indebted to the outstanding officers who have contributed to this volume, and especially to its editor, Colonel John H. Moellering.

This book is about troops and troop-related problems. That, of course, is what the Army is all about. You may not agree with some of the things which are discussed in this volume. But perhaps you may gain some new insights and perspectives. If they, then, become useful to you in addressing your own command, this effort will have been worthwhile.



DeWITT C. SMITH, JR.  
Major General, USA  
Commandant

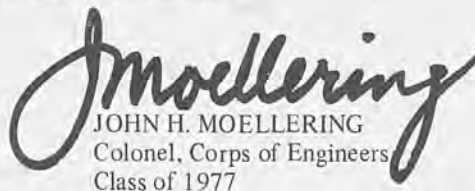
## PREFACE

In early 1975, prior to assuming command of a battalion in the 101st Airborne Division, I tried to find published material by former battalion commanders which would help focus my thoughts on how to approach some of the more difficult problems of command. I found that nothing was available other than "The Armed Forces Officer" and other general works not specifically focused on battalion command.

This volume is a first attempt to fill that void. It is a book written specifically for prospective battalion commanders. After careful deliberation, I selected a group of eight former commanders to insure a cross-section of experience—by branch, geographical location, function, and divisional affiliation. Coincidentally, their writings also represent a range of management styles. Since I am convinced that the battalion commander's wife also plays a key role in the process, I have asked my wife, Karla, to include some thoughts on how she approached her many responsibilities.

This volume does not reflect Army doctrine or even a consensus view on any of the issues discussed. Each chapter is very personal revelation, reflecting only the views and leadership style of the individual author. Hopefully, we have provided the prospective battalion commander with a variety of views on how to approach the problems of command. It is, in short, a "resource book."

The authors would like to acknowledge the invaluable assistance we received from many sources. Special thanks to Brigadier General Joseph Kastner, our study advisor; to Colonel Gustav Gillert and Dandridge Malone from the Department of Command and Management and to Colonel Pat Moore of the Directorate of Academic Affairs for their advice and assistance. We are most grateful for the outstanding administrative support of Mrs. Leah Bolt, Mrs. Dorothy Comerer, and Mrs. Susan McKeehan who typed the manuscript; and to the AWC Reproduction Division who supervised the printing and publication.

  
JOHN H. MOELLERING  
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
Class of 1977

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# CHAPTER 1

## COMMAND OF A DIVISIONAL AVIATION BATTALION IN KOREA

*by*

*COL Glenn A. Smith II*

### INTRODUCTION

The sole purpose of this paper is to make information available to future battalion commanders. I make no claims of omniscience in the command function. Although I held some of these views prior to assuming command, the preponderance of items mentioned in this paper became important to me during the command experience. Some of these items (such as my views on command responsibilities toward immorality) were developed through a general interaction with my battalion command environment, while others (such as some of the maintenance techniques) were impressed upon me by superiors in the chain of command. Nothing mentioned in this paper is motivated by "sour grapes." I have no "axes to grind." With few exceptions, my battalion command was a very pleasant and enjoyable learning experience (the main exception was the lengthy separation from my family).

This paper is a statement of perceptions and opinions rather than a scholarly researched collection of facts. It is important to understand that both the time and the place of my battalion command experience have a great bearing on my perceptions. I commanded the 2d Aviation Battalion, 2d Infantry Division from September 1974 to October 1975. Certainly, the current command environment of that battalion is different from the one I encountered for many reasons. Not the least of these reasons is the impact of subsequent commanders at battalion and higher levels.

The 2d Aviation Battalion is the major organic aviation element in the 2d Infantry Division. It is one of only three aviation battalions in Korea. During the time that I was in command, the 2d Aviation Battalion consisted of a Headquarters and Headquarters Company, an Airmobile Aviation Company, a General Support Aviation Company, and an attached Direct Support Aircraft Maintenance Company. This latter unit was attached for all purposes and will be mentioned later.

This chapter is divided into three main sections: Battalion Command in Korea, Aviation Battalion Command, and Battalion Command in General. Although many of the items in the paper are appropriate for inclusion in two or all three main sections, I included them in the sections which I thought were the most appropriate.

### BATTALION COMMAND IN KOREA

#### **Immorality.**

One of the unique challenges of command in Korea is the moral environment. It is quite different from the generally accepted standards of morality in civilian and military communities in America. Concerning commanders' responsibilities toward morality, it is frequently stated (particularly in Korea) that "morality cannot be legislated." Although that statement is not factually correct, even in a society which profoundly believes in the separation of church and state, the statement does carry a practical message. In my view, however, that does not mean that a commander can ignore the moral climate, if immorality causes problems for his command or significant problems for individuals in the command. However, in order to be effective in helping soldiers faced with a relatively immoral environment, a commander must be clear and specific on problem definitions. A commander who merely "rails against sin" will not be effective. I will describe two problems related to the moral environment surrounding soldiers in Korea. My descriptions should not be interpreted as condemnation of Korean culture. My concern, as a battalion commander, was not to change the customs of Korea but to try to protect my soldiers from untoward personal tragedies which could be inflicted by that environment.



Both of the problems were directly related to the high incidence of prostitution in the campside villages. Before describing the problems, I must describe the institution of prostitution in Korea, as seen by American soldiers. Numerous Korean prostitutes ply their trade openly in the campside villages. The competition for business is fierce. All American men walking through the "club" district of a campside village are openly accosted and propositioned. These prostitutes, or "business girls," are usually indebted to their "mamasans," or managers. This indebtedness frequently starts when the mamasan pays a bonus to a girl's father for the purchase of her services. The indebtedness increases (or, in some cases, begins) when the mamasan buys the girl some flashy clothes and charges her for room and board. The girl then has to pay off this "company store" debt from her portion of her earnings. It takes a great deal of time for a Korean prostitute to work off her servitude. This financial burden is frequently exacerbated by a serious drinking or narcotics habit (unlike the stereotype Vietnamese prostitute who never partook of anything stronger than "Saigon Tea"). Some of the Korean prostitutes never get out of debt to their mamasans. In such cases, the debts are usually written off and the women are abandoned when their attractiveness and success diminish to the point that they become more of a liability than an asset. On the other hand, the more successful "business girls" become the mamasans of the future.

The first group of susceptible soldiers to this strikingly foreign moral environment are young, single soldiers overseas for the first time. Many of these soldiers have not previously been social "winners," particularly with girls. Unwarned, such a soldier is very likely to mistake an outpouring of physical affection for "true love." At the urging of a Korean prostitute, many young American soldiers have been led into marriage. With some exceptions, the prostitutes have two reasons for wanting to marry an American soldier. First, she can get the soldier to pay off her revolving debt to the mamasan. Second, she attains American dependent status. Prior to the summer of 1975, the primary force behind this second motivation was the desire to obtain a Ration Control Plate (RCP). An RCP gave the Korean wife access to PX's, commissaries, etc. In mid-1975, all dependent RCP's were called in. New ones were issued to "American" dependents. The criteria for the issuance of a new RCP were that the dependent had to be either an American citizen or have lived outside of Korea with her sponsor for at least one year. The impact of this policy was traumatic on the numerous "wives" who had married primarily for dependent status (an RCP) and had not travelled to America at the time of their sponsors' PCS's. It also dampened, but did not eliminate, the unsavory motives for matrimony described above. By my description of this problem, I am not intending to be derogatory or speak disparagingly about the numerous successful marriages between American soldiers and Koreans, which are based on total love and are long-lasting.

Having described a specific problem relating to immorality, I'll describe a two-pronged solution put into effect by the 2d Aviation Battalion. The first aspect of the solution was thorough and frequent education of the target group of soldiers. This started with the initial orientations. The tone of the education was pragmatic rather than moralizing. The educational message was essentially a description of the prostitution situation described above. In addition, fraternization with the prostitutes was discouraged. The most important part of the message to the soldier was that if he availed himself of the services of one of the prostitutes, he should keep his emotional guard up at all times. We wanted to make sure that if one of the "business girls" told the soldier that she "loved him too much," he understood that she was probably after dependent status (an RCP) and much more of his money than that one visit with her called for. The second aspect of the solution was checking out, by inquiry and observation, any prostitute who drew one of the young soldiers into "going steady" or engagement for marriage. This function was performed best by the "street wise" junior NCO's. They would check with their buddies in other battalions to see if the same girl was "hustling" other soldiers at the same time that she was professing true love to one of our men. If so, that information was passed to the potential victim, usually through peer communications. Certainly, that message caused some temporary ego trauma, but no consequences equal to a ruined life, which had occurred to one of my soldiers before this system of protection was implemented. This system, essentially educational in nature, did not preclude soldiers from marrying Korean girls, even prostitutes. It did, however, provide relative assurance that any such marriage was the result of a two-party love relationship which would probably stand up under the pressure of time. The involvement of the battalion structure in solving this problem also had a salutary effect on a second problem dealing with morals, i.e., married soldiers becoming financially and emotionally involved with prostitutes.

The primary participants in this problem were married NCO's, although it sometimes spread to junior soldiers and officers too. The "club" district term for this sort of involvement was "Yoboing." I believe that the literal translation of "Yobo" is "Sweetheart." In the campside villages, however, "Yoboing" meant establishing a

semi-permanent relationship with a prostitute, or playing house. Usually, the prostitute would agree not to "hustle" other soldiers (sometimes with the exception of on payday). In return, she would receive a flat fee for being the surrogate wife. The NCO and the prostitute would reach some sort of agreement on groceries and rent, usually with the soldier paying. Aside from the moral issue, most of the problems caused by "Yoboing" resulted because the married soldiers diverted significant amounts of money and personal affection away from their families at home. These diversions led to charges of nonsupport (Congressional, letters to commanders, etc.) and acrimonious letters and phone calls between the soldier and his real wife at home. All of these manifestations are serious problems for a command. The 2d Aviation Battalion solution to this problem was mostly educational, again, with heavy emphasis on initial orientations. However, since the primary target audience for this problem was generally seasoned NCO's rather than young first-termers, the focus of the message was more on the potential for a ruined career than a ruined life. The orientations were backed up by a discrete, but effective, policing program. The 2d Aviation Battalion Command Sergeant Major was the primary force behind this program. He was a full-time soldier who knew where all of the NCO's were virtually at all times. He made it a point to follow up on those who started disappearing or "ghosting" at night. A very unfortunate complicating factor to the solution of this problem was that several other Command Sergeants Major in the 2d Infantry Division, including some who were senior to my Command Sergeant Major, were active participants in the "Yoboing" practice. Fortunately, the 2d Aviation Battalion Command Sergeant Major was a man of very high integrity who had no difficulty withstanding NCO admonitions to "go soft" on his policing and follow-up efforts.

The payoffs, for putting a lot of emphasis on solving the two problems described above, were both tangible and intangible. On the objective side, the 2d Aviation Battalion's statistics on incidents, blotter reports, etc., improved relative to the past performance of the battalion and relative to the performance of other battalions in the division. Of special note, the incidents of black-marketing by soldiers of the 2d Aviation Battalion dropped to almost zero. The participation by a soldier in black-marketing frequently starts with an emotional involvement with a Korean prostitute. On the subjective side, I believe that morale, discipline, and mission performance were significantly enhanced by the relatively better moral climate established after implementation of the programs mentioned above.

#### **Family Separation and the Short Tour.**

Although family separation is not a new problem in the Army, it is definitely one of the most significant problems which must be faced by commanders in Korea. Mid-tour leaves are one of the most important morale factors regarding the family separation problem. Although a round trip from Korea to CONUS and back is a very expensive endeavor, most married soldiers above the very junior grades avail themselves of the opportunity to return temporarily to the "States." In my opinion, there are two significant factors regarding mid-tour leaves, one negative and one positive. The negative factor is the traumatic morale problem caused if a mid-tour leave is either postponed (mine was postponed by direction) or cancelled (none in my battalion were cancelled by direction). The positive factor regarding mid-tour leaves is that they force commanders to concentrate on cross-training and replacement training. In other words, if a soldier (I apply the term to all grades and ranks) is so critically important to an operation that it almost collapses when he goes on mid-tour leave, it shows that appropriate cross-training has not been done.

The "short tour" portion of the problem impacts dramatically on efficiency and effectiveness. Half of the command has been in place less than seven months ("rookies"). The other half has less than six months to go ("getting short"). The individual and unit training burdens are tremendous because of this constant personnel turmoil. By the time that an aviator, aircraft mechanic, or repair parts specialist becomes comfortable and competent in his job and surroundings, it is already time to plan for his replacement. This problem extends to all types of battalions.

Training in the 2d Infantry Division is very demanding in order to meet all readiness requirements in the face of the personnel turmoil. To some extent, this helps ease the family separation problem. In other words, soldiers in that area can carry a very heavy workload, as long as it is relevant to the unit's mission. However, don't carry this philosophy to the point of "make work" projects. Soldiers can very quickly detect which projects are meaningful to readiness and which are not. The adverse morale impact of "make work" projects is devastating. On the other hand, I found that reasonable amounts of week-end flight training, and concomitant aircraft maintenance, had a beneficial impact on morale. This phenomena may be primarily applicable to aviation organizations.

## **Initial Orientations.**

Although initial orientations are extremely important in any command, they are even more important in Korea. Korea is a remote area, far distant from home. It is a very foreign and unusual experience, especially for new soldiers. The initial orientations are very helpful in dispelling apprehensions, answering questions, and setting the tone for service in the battalion.

I emphasize the use of the plural word "orientations," because they are important at all levels of command and supervision, particularly at battalion level and down. The soldier who knows what is expected of him, right from the start, will usually do the right things, right from the start. This is particularly important because you will only have him in the unit for 12 or 13 months.

I found the battalion level initial orientations to be especially useful in Korea because of the importance of getting people assigned to the right jobs. With officers and NCO's, I personally interviewed them and made their assignments to units as a part of the orientations. In an aviation battalion, centralized control of officer assignments is important because of the need to spread the flying experience throughout the organization and to put aviators with specific aircraft qualifications in the right units.

In the case of battalion-level orientations for junior soldiers, I waited until they had been in their units for two or three days before I talked to them. This gave me the opportunity to check their assignments. I asked each soldier to tell me his unit assignment and his MOS. In addition, I asked him to name his rater. This practice helped in several ways. First, I could ensure that a soldier was not assigned out of his MOS or to some low priority requirement. Secondly, I could ensure that the soldier knew who his boss was. It is surprising how easily these items can be "snafued" if there is not some system to ensure that they are handled properly. Of note, I found that considerable command emphasis was required to keep the enlisted rating scheme operating properly.

## **Correct Logistics Procedures.**

Sound logistics procedures are important in all commands, regardless of type of unit or location, but they are even more important in Korea because of the remoteness of the command. For example, the order and ship time for repair parts is probably longer for units in Korea than for any other units in the Army. Thus, if a part is not ordered on time, or worse, if it is ordered incorrectly, inordinate equipment "down time" will result. There are no "quick" solutions for poor logistics procedures when the CONUS logistics base is thousands of miles away.

One maintenance management system which was particularly successful in aircraft maintenance in the 2d Infantry Division was the "maintenance shoot-out." This system was initiated by the ADC(S) and the DISCOM Commander, initially, for ground equipment. It was also adopted for aircraft maintenance, with great success (and some occasional pain). Essentially, the shoot-out was a meeting, chaired by me, of all aviation unit commanders and their maintenance officers with the Direct Support Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Officers. The ADC(S) and the DISCOM Commander usually sat in also. All of the aviation participants brought detailed information on their aircraft maintenance and supply status. The format for the conference was that an aviation unit commander would address each of his aircraft which was not operational. When briefing on a specific aircraft, the unit commander briefed each item which was a deadline item, or which was expected to become a deadline item due to periodic inspections, etc. For example, if the deadline item was a required part, the date of the deadline, the date of the requisition, and the requisition number from the unit would be briefed by the commander. Then, the Direct Support Supply Officer would brief the status of the requisition since he received it. His briefing would include the date of receipt of the requisition, the date of the follow-on requisition outside of the division (if required), the status of any lateral search, the date of anticipated receipt from outside of the division (if applicable), the date of issue to the unit, etc. The important point of this exercise was not to tell everybody where all of the parts and requisitions were. The value of the conference was to identify problems in the system. For example, if the unit commander indicated that his part was requisitioned on a certain date, but the Direct Support Supply Officer said that he had not received the requisition within a reasonable amount of time (or at all), a systemic problem was identified. The identification and solution of these kinds of problems can drag on for weeks if the responsible people are not brought together face to face, with their supporting documents. In addition, the shoot-out identified maintenance problems which needed the attention of senior commanders. An appropriate, accurate telephone call or message by a senior commander can open up



"bottlenecks" which may otherwise frustrate maintenance officers for months. In addition to repair parts supply, these shoot-outs were a valuable catalyst for identifying other types of maintenance problems. For example, inadequate facilities, lack of tools, personnel shortages (particularly tech inspectors), missing publications, lack of coordination between units and between the operational and maintenance elements within units, poor forms management, cannibalization, computer snafus, and training deficiencies were the types of problems which were brought up and addressed at these conferences. If an aircraft was deadlined for several organizational maintenance and several direct support items simultaneously, the unit commander would talk to the period of time that the organizational maintenance was being performed. He would indicate which day the aircraft was work ordered to direct support maintenance. The Direct Support Maintenance Officer would talk to the period of time after he received the aircraft. If the times were inappropriate for the amount of maintenance being performed, we would probe to the cause(s) of the excess "down" time. Perhaps the unit owning the aircraft could have given the DS maintenance unit some advanced notice of the impending work order, but didn't. The advanced notice might have allowed the DS parts to be ordered several days earlier.

Another type of problem discovered during the shoot-outs was the criticality of personnel status in sophisticated maintenance skills, such as avionics repairmen, tech inspectors, etc. For example, if both of the senior sheet metal repairmen were absent from the DS maintenance shop on the same day (such as on guard duty), the four junior repairmen were usually nonproductive. Most of the awaiting jobs exceeded their capabilities to set up and repair without supervision. Thus, unwittingly, a first sergeant may have caused six man-days of nonproductive time by putting only two men on detail at the same time. That seems like a relatively easy problem to solve, and it is, if it is discovered. Too often, it is not discovered because a maintenance supervisor or platoon sergeant doesn't want to buck the first sergeant on his duty rosters. The shoot-outs were invaluable for discovering these types of problems and raising them immediately to a level where they could be solved. For this technique to succeed, all "weak" areas must be probed until the root cause(s) of a maintenance deficiency is discovered.

The shoot-outs were held every week or two, depending on the training and support requirements within the division. The format of tracking each deadlining item all the way through the system was a tremendous catalyst for identifying problems. In order for this type of exercise to be successful, it is mandatory that all of the principals have sufficient documentation with them to talk in specifics about requisitions and work orders. Discussions in general terms tend to gloss over many of the root problems which inhibit good maintenance. Although this discussion of maintenance management could have been included in the section on Aviation Battalion Command, I felt that it was more germane to Battalion Command in Korea. The main point I am trying to get across is that in Korea, no matter what type of battalion, good logistics procedures are vitally important. The time and space factors of being located in Korea are very unforgiving of sloppy maintenance and supply management.

### **The "Mile High" Club.**

A significant command challenge in the 2d Aviation Battalion was the Battalion Officers Club, the "Mile High." Although the potential for a serious problem, or even a "command disaster," was always great, I found that the Mile High was a tremendous asset for morale and effective command and control of the officers of the battalion. The Mile High was a branch of the overall 2d Infantry Division Club System. The officer strength in the 2d Aviation Battalion averaged around 90 (split almost evenly between Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers). By stateside standards, the Mile High was considered small and dumpy. By Camp Casey standards, however, it was a pleasant facility for socializing. It contained a mess hall, bar, and game room with a pool table, a ping pong table, a card table, and a soccer game (commonly referred to as "foose"). Mail call for officers was also held at the Mile High as soon as the mail was sorted and ready for distribution, usually around 2200 hours each evening. In a low-key way, I encouraged attendance at the Mile High for several reasons. First, and most importantly, if the officers felt that the Mile High was a pleasant place to be, and consequently spent the bulk of their "off duty" time there, they were not spending that time in the campside village. Therefore, to me as the battalion commander, it was important that the Mile High be a "fun" place for the officers. To that end, we had movies almost every night. In addition, we maintained a strong tradition of "bar games" and nonsense, but fun activities, including occasional roughhouse. The boisterous behavior was also extremely effective in keeping "business girls" out of our club. They preferred to ply their trade in quieter, more predictable settings. Usually, my superiors in the chain of command recognized that the boisterous atmosphere in the Mile High was harmless,

but effective in attracting officer attendance. In my estimation, a more formal, staid atmosphere in the Mile High would have caused many of the officers to spend the bulk of their off-duty time in the "club district" in the village (see previous section on "Yoboes"). It was not my goal to preclude officers from visiting the village. However, it was my goal, through the positive attraction of the Mile High, to preclude "Yoboing" by officers, particularly the married ones. Since the Mile High was quite popular with the battalion officers, it was relatively easy to identify those few, by their absence, who needed individual attention regarding the pitfalls of immorality.

On at least one occasion, one of my superiors interpreted (misinterpreted in my view) boisterous conduct in the Mile High as immoral and uncontrolled. That required me to make some adjustments, but it did not cause me to change my basic strategy of combating potentially tragic immorality, represented by "Yoboes" in the village, with the positive attractiveness of fun (sometimes quite loud) in the Mile High.

In addition to the very significant morale contributions of the Mile High, the club was also a very effective training center for aviators. A great deal can be learned about flying, and its pitfalls, during "hanger flying" sessions. Hanger flying was at its best in the Mile High. The sessions ranged from small group, formal ground school classes to identifying the "bonehead" maneuver of the week (or month, or day). The culprit who made a breach of good flying rules or proper techniques usually had to buy a round of drinks for the entire bar. I cannot overemphasize the positive contributions to flight training, safety, professionalism, and esprit made by this informal, but tremendously effective hanger flying practice. Flying errors can be very unforgiving, particularly when flying heavily loaded helicopters in the rugged terrain of Korea. The 2d Aviation Battalion aviators in the Mile High were also very unforgiving of flying errors in a jovial, positive, but effective way. I would rate the effectiveness of the hanger flying in the Mile High as good as the ground school conducted during a young aviator's undergraduate training days at Fort Rucker.

High officer attendance at the Mile High also made flight scheduling easier. It was usually after supper before all of the flight support and training requirements for the next day could be worked out and matched up with the available aircraft and aviators. Invariably, this procedure was complicated by late, "high priority" requirements. Flight schedules were posted in the Mile High as well as in Flight Operations at the airfield. The operations officers could make late changes fairly easily because they could usually contact the affected aviators in the Mile High.

Although everything that I have described about the Mile High has a decided aviation flavor, I think that my basic points are applicable to any type of unit in Korea, where most of the officers are separated from their families for a "short tour."

## AVIATION BATTALION COMMAND

### General.

Much of my discussion in the previous section focused on command in Korea. This section will deal with my views on aviation command regardless of the geographical location.

### Aviator Training.

Aviator training is a vitally important issue in any aviation command. Good training is the result of many factors. I think that two of the most important are "standardization" and "professionalism." Although the terms are not synonymous, they overlap considerably. As with any type of unit, good training in any aviation unit requires emphasis and attention by the chain of command. In an aviation battalion, there is another mechanism which is important to good training, the Standardization Board. The core of the Standardization Board consists of the Standardization Instructor Pilots (SIP's), the Instructor Pilots (IP's), and the Instrument Flight Examiners. Most of these aviators are very experienced warrant officers with highly developed flying skills. Another aviator who is vital to the Standardization Board is the safety officer. The commander can name additional members as he sees fit. Some of the other aviators I appointed to serve on the 2d Aviation Battalion Standardization Board were the DMZ IP's, a DS Maintenance Officer, and the Division Airfield Commander. In addition, I personally acted as a working member of the Standardization Board, partly because of my background as an IP. More importantly, I wanted to ensure that at the flight training level, the standards were high, appropriate, and

achieved. I charged the members of the Standardization Board, primarily the senior warrant officers, with ensuring professionalism in flight operations, as well as in flight training. They eagerly accepted that responsibility and dealt harshly with the few unprofessional incidents, such as "cowboying," which arose. One of the visible indicators of my support for the "quality standards" administered by my senior warrant officers was that I personally submitted to the same training and checkrides required of the rest of the aviators in the battalion. My participation ensured that no other aviator in the battalion, regardless of rank or position, could be excused from the program.

#### **Additional Duties.**

One of the major assets in an aviation battalion is the relatively large number of officers, more than any other battalion in the division. If this asset is not challenged properly, it can turn into a liability. I insisted that all of the junior officers, including the warrant officers, be assigned additional duties. Moreover, these additional duties were not "make-work" projects. They were tasks which had to be performed by someone. Whereas the junior officers in infantry and armor battalions are usually assigned numerous additional duties, the tasks can be spread out in an aviation battalion so that each task receives first class attention. The key to success in this area is that each additional duty recipient must be impressed with the importance of his additional duty. A very important side benefit to spreading out the additional duties is that it serves to better imbue aviators with the "mission spirit" of the organization. They better appreciate all of the things which must be done so that the primary mission of "aviation support" can be carried out in the best manner possible.

#### **Aviation Command Sergeant Major.**

As I mentioned earlier, I was blessed with a tremendous Command Sergeant Major. He maintained very fine relations with the junior aviators in the battalion, both commissioned officers and warrant officers. The 2d Infantry Division is a proud organization with very high standards of personal appearance. Although good grooming and neat uniforms are the responsibility of all members of the chain of command, the 2d Aviation Battalion Command Sergeant Major felt a special responsibility for the appearance of the Battalion. As with any battalion, the enlisted soldiers of the 2d Aviation Battalion responded quickly to the admonitions of the "Sergeant Major." However, the large number of junior officers in an aviation battalion present a unique challenge in this area. With one notable exception (which I won't describe here), all necessary corrections to junior officer appearance were made within the Battalion, frequently by the Command Sergeant Major. He was extremely tactful, correct, and successful with his admonitions to the junior officers. In every instance, the culprit understood his need for correction and did not feel resentment. I mention this item to highlight a potential problem for an aviation battalion commander. I don't necessarily recommend the solution which evolved in my Battalion because that solution requires a very unique Command Sergeant Major. I also do not intend for my remarks to disparage the chain of command's efforts in the important area of personal appearance. I'm saying that when the challenge is large and the standards are extremely high, there is plenty of responsibility to spread around, particularly in an aviation battalion.

#### **Maintenance.**

1. There are two distinct differences between vehicular and aircraft maintenance. First, everybody concerned with aircraft maintenance usually understands the critical importance of proper maintenance for flying machines. A small maintenance error or omission involving helicopters is more likely to turn into a catastrophe than the same omission with a tank or a jeep. The importance of stressing quality in all aspects of aircraft maintenance cannot be overemphasized.

The second main difference has to do with reporting equipment discrepancies and correcting them. Concerning the maintenance of a truck, the driver is frequently charged with both functions. He inspects the vehicle and (allegedly) reports all discrepancies on an inspection worksheet. He is then responsible for correcting most of the faults that he discovered on his inspection (if he really performed an inspection). It doesn't take truck drivers very long to figure out that the discrepancies, which they don't report, don't have to be fixed. At least, they don't have to be fixed until the truck breaks down or the discrepancies are discovered by some extraordinary inspection such as a roadside spot inspection, an IG inspection, etc. This basic maintenance fact of life is the reason extraordinary inspections of vehicles find so many more unreported discrepancies than do similar



inspections of aircraft. Although equipment discrepancies on aircraft can be found and "written up" by anybody associated with the aircraft, the bulk of the discrepancies are "written up" by the aviators who fly the aircraft. After a line aviator has entered a discrepancy on the appropriate logbook form, he is usually absolved of any responsibility for correcting the discrepancy. Thus, whereas the truck driver is motivated by his discrepancy reporting system to ignore discrepancies (particularly if the weather is bad or the urgency of the mission is high), the aviator is encouraged to err on the side of "over-reporting." This basic difference in vehicular and aircraft maintenance systems needs to be understood by an aviation battalion commander. Concerning aircraft maintenance, the role of the individual aviator in reporting discrepancies needs only to be mildly reinforced and encouraged. That, alone, is the beginning of a good maintenance quality control system. Regarding vehicular maintenance, it should be understood from the beginning of the command tour that numerous battalion and company level extraordinary inspections are required in order to properly document all of the discrepancies which need to be corrected by the maintenance system.

2. Two additional facets of an aircraft maintenance quality control system are important. First, the proper use of tech inspectors is vital to a good aircraft maintenance quality control system. For starters, you should check that you have all of your authorized tech inspectors. If not, take aggressive command action to correct the deficiency. Next, check the assignment of the tech inspectors in your aviation battalion, and throughout the division if you also happen to be a Division Aviation Officer. The aircraft qualifications of tech inspectors should line up with the type(s) of aircraft which they are assigned to inspect. If this is not possible, training is in order. Tech inspectors should work for a commander, in my opinion, rather than for a maintenance supervisor or maintenance officer. In addition, commanders should meet with their tech inspectors on a periodic, scheduled basis to discuss quality control trends and problems. A tech inspector's responsibilities should definitely not be mixed up with responsibilities of a maintenance supervisor or platoon sergeant. In other words, you should set your tech inspectors up so that they are, in fact, a separate quality control screen after maintenance has been performed and certified by the appropriate maintenance personnel. Many units assign responsibility for aircraft records management to tech inspectors. This is appropriate if that workload does not cut into the inspection workload. If the records management workload is crimping the available time of the tech inspectors to perform inspections, you should consider giving additional personnel to the tech inspectors to assist with the records, or placing the function on the line maintenance personnel.

Another quality control feature in aircraft maintenance is the structuring of the echelons. Responsibility for maintenance at each level should be clearly fixed on a manager at that echelon. For example, some units which have their own Integrated Direct Support Maintenance (IDS), group the IDS, the organizational maintenance, and the supervision of the crew chiefs all together under the unit maintenance officer. I strongly recommend against this sort of vertical integration. In my opinion, that is too much maintenance and too wide a span of control for one maintenance officer to handle effectively. In addition, it wastes the supervisory potential of other managers. More importantly, if kept separate, each echelon will carefully monitor the quality of work performed by the other echelons. If the crew chiefs, for example, are not doing all of their work properly, the maintenance platoon will be quick to tell them and the unit commander about it. The reverse is also true. Without this sort of safeguard in the quality control system, a problem might remain obscure until it causes a big problem, such as an accident. The distinct echeloning of maintenance does not preclude one echelon from performing the work of another, but it presents that decision to a commander before it is done. In essence, maintenance is a function of command and must be organized so the commander genuinely controls what happens.

3. The DA guides for operational readiness rates by type of aircraft for your theater are a management fact of life. Your performance will be compared against those guides by every level between you and Headquarters, Department of the Army. The pressure will almost always be to turn out higher availability rates. One note of caution is in order. Always know what is behind your availability rates. Know the "why." If you merely smile and nod approvingly at satisfactory or high availability rates without knowing what is behind them, you may be encouraging the people below you to fake the statistics or, even worse, fake the maintenance. Valid maintenance requirements which are rushed, without regard for quality, will rise up and bite you in the form of accidents, incidents, or heavier maintenance workloads when something breaks which would not have failed if it had been maintained properly. Be very suspicious of availability rates which are considerably higher than the DA guides. They may be an indicator that valid maintenance requirements are being "papered over."

4. One key to a good maintenance program *and* good availability is a smooth flow of aircraft into maintenance. This allows your maintenance personnel to be fully employed with only a modest number of aircraft down at any one time. The alternative is "peaking," which may be inadvertent or on purpose. Either way, the result is slack maintenance capacity for a few days or weeks followed by a maintenance overload which leads to command pressure, excessively long maintenance hours, and probably low quality maintenance. Purposeful peaking must be resisted by the aviation chain of command. There will be numerous requests to peak in order to support this or that "important" training requirement. Invariably, the requirements for aviation support will still be high after the peak requirement is over, but an inordinately high number of birds will be in maintenance. The inadvertent peaking can usually be avoided by good aircraft scheduling. This requires very close coordination between the unit operations officer and the maintenance officer. The operations officer has to know when to hold back or push ahead on certain types of flying (such as instrument training) in order to speed birds into maintenance or hold them out, as required by the workload already in maintenance. A technique which I found that worked very well was for the operations officer to make out the daily flight schedule, including the probable flight hours for each mission, but omitting the aircraft tail numbers. He gave it to the maintenance officer to designate which individual aircraft would be used on each mission. That allowed the maintenance officer to smooth out the flow of aircraft into intermediate inspections, periodic inspections, and other scheduled maintenance. Of course, the close communications between the operations officer and the maintenance officer must also include special equipment requirements which may not be available on all aircraft, such as cargo hooks, hoists, specific radios, etc. One factor which also aggravates a smooth maintenance flow is the dedication of individual aircraft to specific missions, such as a "commander's aircraft." Dedicated birds should be held to an absolute minimum.

One minor technique concerning a smooth flow of aircraft into maintenance which can be used (but must be watched closely in order to prevent abuse) is to hold the flying time down on a specific bird on a Friday in order to carry it in an "up" status for the weekend. This practice assumes that routine maintenance will not be performed on the weekend and also that the flying requirements for that specific bird can be easily scheduled on another aircraft. For example, if an aircraft is due to go "down" for a 100-hour periodic inspection late on a Friday afternoon or early on a Monday morning, leave an hour of available flying time on the bird as of the close of business on Friday and schedule it for an early mission on Monday. That will carry the bird in an "up" status for the weekend. This technique can be used successfully, but it must be watched closely for two reasons. First, this technique should not be allowed to dictate the flow of maintenance or the overall scheduling of missions. Second, if there is an inordinate use of such techniques for the purpose of enhancing "availability," it can lead to unethical practices, such as carrying a bird in an "up" status when it is really not available to fly or perform missions.

5. My final point on aircraft maintenance is that there is always a reason(s) behind poor maintenance and/or poor availability. Sometimes, it takes extreme perseverance to dig until the cause(s) is determined. A good starting point when digging into a maintenance problem is the Commander's Estimate of the Maintenance Situation. Any one of the factors covered in the "Estimate," from the availability of publications or tools to the quality or standardization of aviators, may be contributing to your maintenance problems. Be very honest and objective. You might even find that you and your policies are the primary problem.

#### **Administrative Flying Hours.**

Every blade hour flown on "admin" missions, which can just as easily be satisfied by surface transportation, is a blade hour which is not available for the tactical training of the supported organization or the readiness training of the aviators. This thorny problem requires a mature solution. It is not sufficient to put a "chip on your shoulder" and assert that all non tactical missions will be refused. One of the primary reasons that Army aviation is in the Army, instead of centralized in the Air Force, is that it is extremely flexible and responsive to the needs of the supported units. Ultimately, those "needs" are determined by the supported units. However, the aviation establishment has a large responsibility to advise and coordinate with the supported units on how their aviation resources are expended. I'll mention two techniques used in the 2d Aviation Battalion to hold down admin blade hours. First, rather than schedule and launch a separate helicopter for each justified and authorized non tactical mission, we scheduled a daily courier flight which routinely landed at the most frequented destinations. Other stops were added on an "as requested" basis. We held firmly to the schedule unless weather precluded the

mission. This technique sharply reduced our number of flying hours for these types of missions. The success of this technique was largely due to innovative, firm, and friendly resistance with which my aviation Operations Officers handled these kinds of requests.

The second technique which helped to hold down the blade hours consumed by admin missions was an agreement by the Division Chief of Staff to serve as the clearing authority for all high-priority, rapid-reaction, nontactical missions, many of which were vitally important. We kept a bird on rapid reaction standby for these types of missions. By referring all customers with rapid reaction missions to the Chief of Staff, we found that the "importance" of many of the missions diminished sharply. Although there were a few occasions when I felt that he was too liberal in the use of the standby bird, the overall savings achieved by his involvement were tremendous. The Assistant Division Aviation Officer and I helped strengthen his resistance against marginally necessary, rapid reaction missions by briefing him monthly on the number of hours which had been flown by the standby helicopter and for what purposes.

#### **Aviator Personal Use of Helicopters.**

Helicopters are an extremely fluid and flexible asset. New requirements for helicopters are discovered almost daily. One significant group of people who clearly understand the flexibility of helicopters is the aviators who fly them. An aviation battalion commander must watch carefully to ensure that his birds are not being used for the convenience, comfort, or pleasure of his aviators. Helicopter flying hours are a resource very susceptible to misappropriation. "Training" flights which are scheduled to resorts or good RON spots should be closely checked. If the real, primary purpose of the flight is a legitimate service or training mission, it is not wrong for the flight to satisfy more than the original purpose as it proceeds along the way. The exact "intent" of a training flight is sometimes extremely difficult to determine. I found one way of checking the true intent of a training mission which looked a little doubtful. I would insist that the flight be rescheduled to a different destination(s) which could still satisfy the training requirement. If that training flight had been set up primarily as a boondoggle, it would usually be cancelled. Another technique was to prohibit flights to certain areas or beyond certain limits unless I expressly approved the specific mission.

The issue of ethics in the use of helicopters is a troublesome one for an aviation battalion commander. For example, some aviators have difficulty understanding that a helicopter should not be scheduled for a "maintenance" flight from the field to garrison if the real motivation for the mission is to take a shower in garrison. The message must be gotten across to aviators that they must not abuse "training," "maintenance," or "service" missions for personal reasons. First, it is unethical. Second, from a practical standpoint, if aviators abuse their positions, the supported units will ultimately insist on the same favoritism. This will severely inhibit aviators in scheduling missions for realistic, worthwhile requirements, such as training.

#### **Wearing "Two Hats."**

Most divisional aviation battalion commanders will also be Division Aviation Officers. The two jobs are distinctly separate and different. Like the Division Field Artillery Officer, the Division Air Defense Artillery Officer, and the Division Engineer, the Division Aviation Officer has an element which works full time in the Division Headquarters. The principal officer in this element is the Assistant Division Aviation Officer (ADAO). He handles most of the routine aviation matters in the Headquarters, particularly in dealing with the G3. In fact, he works so closely with the DTOC, that he works, to a degree, for the G3. This leads to a violation of unity of command for the ADAO which must be recognized and handled carefully. In the 2d Infantry Division, the rating scheme assured that the ADAO was responsive to both the G3 and the Division Aviation Officer. He was rated by one and indorsed by the other, depending on seniority. Since most of the daily work of the ADAO was done in Division Headquarters and carried out on my behalf, I was very careful about who I assigned to that critical job. First of all, the officer had to be sharp. Second, I appointed only an officer who had served extensively in my battalion. Not only did I want him to be familiar with all of the operating procedures of the battalion, I wanted to be sure that he had a strong allegiance to the battalion. Third, I insisted that, except for field duty, the ADAO live in the aviation battalion area with the other members of my staff. This close professional and social relationship with the aviation battalion assured that the ADAO properly understood and represented the aviation battalion's interests when he was on the job in the Division Headquarters. Of course, the ADAO's job pertained to all of the Army aviation units in the division, not only to the aviation battalion.



The Division Aviation Officer's responsibilities differ from those of the other "two-hatted" officers mentioned above in one unique aspect. There are important aviation units permanently assigned in the division which do not fall under the command of the aviation battalion commander, for example the air cavalry and the artillery aviation elements. When dealing with these elements, the Division Aviation Officer must remember that he is acting as a division staff officer and not a commander. Those elements have their own chains of command. As the 2d Infantry Division Aviation Officer, I was given very liberal authority to allocate numerous resources, such as aviators, aviation EM, and flying hours to all of the aviation elements in the division. I was also held responsible for the quality control of all aviation training and standardization.

In addition, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Divisional Direct Support Aircraft Maintenance Company was attached to my battalion for all purposes. That gave me a "third hat" as the Division Aircraft Maintenance Officer. In that capacity, I had to ensure that direct support maintenance and supply were provided to all aviation elements in the division. In wearing these second and third hats, I was forced to make many decisions on priorities and assignments which were not directly favorable to my battalion. In order to retain the very liberal freedom of authority granted to me in dealing with all of the aviation elements, I felt that it was essential that there be no allegations of favoritism toward my own battalion. Therefore, in the allocation of aviation resources and DS maintenance support, I insisted that the smaller aviation elements in the division be supported better than my own battalion. That also assured that the major aviation organization in the division (the only one with a battalion staff) worked on the problems which arose because of shortages.

#### **Assignment of Commissioned Officer Aviators.**

One of my most important responsibilities as the Division Aviation Officer was the assignment of aviators to the aviation units throughout the division. As I mentioned earlier, I favor centralized assignment of aviators because of the need to match flying experience and aircraft qualifications with unit requirements. This is particularly true for the warrant officer aviators because they possess most of the advanced technical qualifications. I also feel that it is important in the assignment of commissioned officer aviators because their branches must be taken into consideration. For example, with few exceptions, I assigned armor officers to the Air Cavalry Troop and Field Artillery officers to the Division Artillery Aviation Section. The main exceptions were that Transportation Corps officers were assigned to the maintenance officer slots, regardless of unit. With only an occasional exception, I assigned infantry officers to the Brigade Aviation Sections. As I mentioned earlier, the functioning of Army aviation as an Army, instead of an Air Force, institution is philosophically based on our closely interwoven participation in the missions of ground units. Strong branch association, experience, and understanding are vital to the success of Army aviation.

### **BATTALION COMMAND IN GENERAL**

#### **General.**

In my opinion, much of what I said in the previous two sections is applicable in other theaters and in other types of units. This section consists of items which I feel are applicable to any battalion anywhere in the Army.

#### **Battalion Staffs Should Be Worked Very Hard.**

In general, the 2d Aviation Battalion staff officers were eager and aggressive. Duty hours were determined by work requirements rather than restricted by convention or a clock. In my experience, both as a staff officer and a battalion commander, I have found that work which can be done by a staff officer, but which is not done by that staff officer, will either be done by subordinate commanders, be done by the higher commander, or not be done at all. All of the alternatives are unacceptable. Staff officers are relatively free to focus fantastic amounts of time and energy on specific problems. They are not strapped with the more pervasive, encompassing, and grinding responsibilities of command. Consequently, any nonoperational work which can be shifted from the "not done" category, or from commanders, to staff officers should be shifted. If the staff is to be worked efficiently, the commander must be very accessible to the members of his staff. It is inefficient, unfair, and demoralizing for a staff officer to be assigned a formidable staff project and then be cut off from guidance as the project develops. Conversely, although a battalion commander should be very accessible to his staff, he should not do their work for them. Whenever a staff officer walks out of the commander's office, he should carry the action with him. If

the battalion commander allows an action to lay on his desk while he "reviews," "researches," or "studies" it, the staff officer has successfully transferred the staff action back to his commander. That results in a battalion commander doing staff work. Instead, he should be devoting his time to command activities.

A technique which I used, in order to give my staff officers greater freedom to use their initiative and act independently on my behalf, was to assign the more senior officers to command companies while assigning junior officers (not brand new) to my staff. This condition is structured into most of the higher levels of the Army. It is somewhat discretionary within a brigade and completely discretionary within a battalion. Several benefits accrue from this policy. First, the more experienced officers are placed in the chain of command. Second, although junior officers are usually shorter on experience, they tend to make up for it with energy and enthusiasm. These are great qualities for handling staff projects. Third, and most importantly, this assignment policy allowed me to give my staff officers greater freedom in dealing with subordinate elements. Such freedom enhances communications between the organizational levels. I built a safeguard into the structure by directing my company commanders to balk at any staff directive which they considered unpalatable, and to let me know. Thus, through management by exception, I could be conservative and selfish with my time. Whenever the opposite seniority situation exists (battalion staff officers senior to company commanders), the battalion commander must involve himself much more in the mundane and routine communications which flow to the companies. This is because relatively junior company commanders are far less likely to balk at staff directives issued by more senior battalion staff officers. Therefore, the battalion commander is compelled to involve himself in those directives to ensure that a bonehead message does not become policy. That sort of detailed involvement in routine directives may be desirable to some battalion commanders, but I found that it cut too deeply into the time that I needed to spend on higher priority activities. In order for a battalion commander to get the most out of his resources, as much responsibility as possible must be delegated to his staff. I found my staff very eager to accept responsibility. And they could produce.

### **Command Handling of Poor Quality People.**

Poor quality people should be graded as such and, when necessary, culled. All commanders have a responsibility to upgrade the quality of their commands. We owe it to high quality soldiers to grade low quality people with low scores. The "up or out" policy (which is very appropriate policy because the alternative is an exodus of high quality people when faced with promotion stagnation and a lack of opportunities), can work properly only if low quality people are graded accordingly. The "up or out" policy should be helped by eliminating recalcitrants, misfits, and nonproducers. The current tools for elimination are quite adequate for the task. However, I found that my company commanders had to be programed to use the tools. My company commanders fit primarily into two stereotypes. The first stereotype was the "soul saver." This type of company commander recognized that a recalcitrant had been "screwing up," but he wanted to hang on to him because he saw some redeeming value buried deeply in the trouble-maker. This stereotype company commander believed that one or two more counselling sessions would straighten out the problem soldier. The other stereotype company commander was the "pound of flesh" commander. He wanted to hang on to recalcitrants until they hung themselves and could be given a court martial. I had to encourage both of these types of company commanders to not waste undue time and energy on recalcitrants. That time and energy were better spent commanding good soldiers who were willing to accomplish the mission. I found that discipline and morale were very well served by making full and speedy use of all of the administrative culling tools which have been placed in the hands of commanders, especially the Expeditious Discharge and the Bar to Reenlistment. Although the latter is effective with all enlisted soldiers, it is extremely effective with NCO's who don't respond to normal counselling on such matters as letters of indebtedness, support of dependents, physical conditioning, etc.

### **Communicate with the Troops.**

1. Be physically available. During a significant part of the time, move through the troop work, play, and service (mess hall, etc.) areas. See what is going on and let the troops see you see what is going on.

2. Be accessible, be approachable. If a soldier has something that he wants to say to you, he should feel like he can say it. Make sure that subordinate commanders understand that their soldiers are also your soldiers and that you do not need to have the entire subordinate chain of command accompany you as you move through the various areas of your command.



3. Hold scheduled discussions with small groups of soldiers. Let subordinate commanders pick the soldiers for scheduled get-togethers. You can be assured that they will pick top quality soldiers with good attitudes. You can pick the troops for discussions during your informal "moving through the troops" sessions. Talk to the soldiers and ask them questions until they open up and start talking about their perceptions and problems. Then listen! These are very informative sessions.

4. More, formal communication with the troops is extremely important. The chain of command and individual soldiers want to know how you feel on all matters. Communications take many forms all the way from initial orientations and addresses at unit formations, through participation in unit athletics, tactical exercises, and social functions, to awards ceremonies, promotion and reenlistment ceremonies, and punishment hearings. Never pass up an opportunity to communicate with members of your battalion. Also remember, communications are two-way.

### **The Command Sergeant Major.**

One of the potentially greatest assets in your battalion is the Command Sergeant Major. I enjoyed the fullest realization of that potential because my Command Sergeant Major was an outstanding soldier and an outstanding citizen. He performed three major functions.

1. Advisor. My Battalion Command Sergeant Major knew what was happening throughout the battalion. He travelled through the battalion garrison and training areas daily. He knew all of the NCO's very well. They had complete trust in him and were quick to tell him when a problem was developing. Whenever we flew to a training site or an area where some other element of the division was being supported by a part of my battalion, we purposely did not stay close together during the visit. We covered twice as much of what was happening by splitting up.

Although most of his advice to me was oral, he also wrote brief memos to me, particularly when we didn't overlap in the office because of meetings, flight schedules, etc. One of his most effective methods for advising me was to schedule items on my calendar. If he found a weak area in the battalion that needed my attention, he advised me, through my calendar, on when and where to visit that unit or section. Invariably, he was correct in focusing me into that area.

I discussed officer and NCO performance and morale problems with the Command Sergeant Major. His advice to me on these matters was always wise and appropriate. He was a discrete gentleman who correctly handled sensitive personal matters for members of the command.

2. Counsellor. My Command Sergeant Major was an extremely effective counsellor for all grades. I use the word "counsellor" in its broadest sense, from stiff and direct admonitions to soft, fatherly advice on career or marital problems. As might be expected of any outstanding Command Sergeant Major, he was always ready to counsel NCO's and junior soldiers whenever they desired, or whenever he felt it was warranted. As I described earlier in the section on Aviation Battalion Command, he was also an outstanding counsellor for the junior officers.

3. Link in the NCO Support Chain. My Command Sergeant Major not only used the NCO support chain as an effective management system and a valuable supplement to the chain of command, he also used it as a technique to enhance professionalism and pride in the NCO Corps. He kept me well informed on matters passing through the NCO support chain. He also knew how to say "NO," when it was necessary, to requirements and policies coming down through the NCO support chain. In each of those instances, he told the higher level Command Sergeants Major that they would have to send those items down through the chain of command, rather than the NCO support chain. In each instance, he also informed me immediately of the situation so that I was prepared to hear about it from my higher commander. Never, on any of those occasions, did one of those items come down through the chain of command. To me, that was proof of his effectiveness, and my trust in him, as a member of the NCO support chain.

## **The Chain of Command.**

A strong chain of command depends on trust, good communications, shared responsibilities, sound guidance, and personal commitments. Although I have mentioned many techniques, methods, and organizations which were not an immediate part of the chain of command, do not misinterpret those remarks as a slight to the chain of command. All of those items were supplementary to the chain of command.

Through experience, I learned that if I had two alternatives for accomplishing a task, I was always better off to use the chain of command, if that was one of the alternatives. For example, I disfavor the formation of a task group under a staff officer, with representatives from each of the companies, to handle some large requirement. In addition, all of the manifold additional duties for junior officers, which were described earlier, were handled through the chain of command. For example, I placed the battalion requirement for inventory of the ammunition basic load on A Company. I let the A Company Commander appoint the additional duty officer and manage the function. If I needed to make a correction or adjustment to that function, I contacted the A Company Commander instead of the additional duty officer. The numerous other battalion additional duties were allocated to specific companies in the same manner. I repeat, a strong chain of command is essential to success as a battalion commander.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the introduction, I indicated that I was writing this paper for the use of future battalion commanders. Hopefully, some of the items I have written will provoke constructive thought. I also hope that your battalion command experience will be as challenging and rewarding as mine was. Good luck!



Colonel Glenn Smith has served in troop assignments as a Border Pilot with the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, as company commander and battalion staff officer, and as the Commanding General's Pilot with the 4th Armored Division in Germany. He was a gunship platoon leader with the 197th Aviation Company in Vietnam. And in 1974-75, he commanded the 2d Aviation Battalion of the 2d Infantry Division in Korea. He has served as Flight Commander and Flight Instructor at the Aviation School. In the Pentagon, he has served as Personnel Staff Officer in ODCSPER and Assistant Division Chief in the Office of the Asst Secy of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Most recently, he was the Inspector General for Fort Belvoir. A graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Colonel Smith received a BS degree in Agricultural Economics in 1959. He also holds a master's degree in Systems Management from the University of Southern California. He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College, as well as the Army War College. A qualified Parachutist, Ranger, and Master Army Aviator, COL Smith's decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters and the Air Medal with 23 Oak Leaf Clusters. He is married to the former Barbara Sowers. They have two sons and a daughter.



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## CHAPTER 2

### COMMAND OF A DIVISIONAL MECHANIZED INFANTRY BATTALION IN GERMANY

by

*LTC Louis V. Hightower III*

#### INTRODUCTION

I commanded a mechanized infantry battalion in US Army Europe (USAREUR) during the period 1975-76. This paper is directed at providing you with some aspects of my approach to that duty in Europe. Panacea it is not, but rather assorted techniques that one can utilize in selected areas of concern that will probably be encountered. I will not regurgitate accepted leadership principles or readiness requirements and standards adequately expressed in current doctrinal publications.

#### COMMAND ORIENTATION

Prior to departure for Europe, you will attend various pertinent courses at CONUS installations to bring you up to speed on the myriad responsibilities and programs that the Army expects its commanders to deal with successfully. You will receive literally stacks of paper, all of which represent the right way to conduct business of the Army, ranging from the mechanics of the Race Relations/Equal Opportunity Programs to the somewhat bewildering intricacies of materiel and readiness reporting. Additionally, after arrival in Europe, you will attend before, or soon after assuming command, a USAREUR Commanders' Course which will provide specific guidance on how USAREUR conducts its business. The key point here is that you need not feel apprehensive about not having adequate knowledge prior to assuming command. Rest assured, these courses are well organized, and will suffice. Do assure yourself that you fully exploit the time spent at each course, particularly with regard to "hands-on" equipment capability and maintenance training. Equipment is constantly changing and, as a battalion commander, you must possess the knowledge and confidence to "deal" in equipment with your subordinates. Don't get bogged down in the details of programs being presented. Understand the principal thrusts thereof and be alert for program redundancy or ambiguities. If so perceived by you, they will probably be so perceived by those in your battalion.

#### USE OF OBJECTIVES

In most divisions in USAREUR, command objectives are common. These objectives normally evolve from major areas of concern as seen by senior commanders. There are four such areas that will probably remain in the forefront for the foreseeable future.

- Readiness
- Care of soldiers and their dependents
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Human relations

Prior to assuming command, you will probably find, as I did, that the division commander has developed and published specific command goals or objectives based on these four areas. Be that the case or not, it will serve you well to develop your own based on those already dictated or on other command guidance you will have received. Regardless, draft out your objectives as you see them, and, soon after assuming command, share them with commanders, Command Sergeant Major, and staff. Remember, they also want to be part of building or improving a great outfit, and their participation in this action will facilitate their communication with you and result in clear unified direction for the battalion. You, in turn, should then seek concurrence from your brigade commander so



he knows how you see your battalion and where you will direct your actions. Consider having your company commanders go through the same process, and then backbrief you to obtain your concurrence. Throughout your command tenure, conduct dedicated periodic (quarterly, for example) reviews to assure yourself and your key personnel that your objectives are being reached or being reconsidered, as necessary. Call it management by objectives or what you will—the immediate benefits I realized were invaluable.

I will not dwell on specific battalion objectives I developed; suffice to say, they gave the battalion direction. The absolute key for me, however, was realization that one ingredient had to be instilled throughout the battalion to achieve any objectives in those areas of concern. I, as the commander, had to generate that positively—intense battalion spirit, loyalty, and professional pride. With that, all other endeavor would be facilitated. One axiom to which I absolutely adhered, however, was that such a battalion reputation would not be built at the *expense of my troops*. With that as background, I'll discuss some of the techniques I found to be effective in addressing those four areas of concern.

## READINESS

The state of combat readiness of the battalion was my primary area of concern. All efforts to improve combat readiness were directed through:

- a decentralized, performance-oriented, realistic training program.
- better personnel assignment and utilization.
- better logistic readiness.

One advantage command in USAREUR offers is proximity of the enemy coupled with presence of the terrain on which you plan to engage him. These two key factors must be exploited aggressively, not only to assure a realistic training program, but also to assure as well that your soldiers know and constantly recognize why they are in Europe. I found that when my unit commanders kept that in focus, the troops were receptive to realistic training and felt a sense of urgency in improving performance. I continually sought, and badgered the S-2 to obtain, information about the enemy in my assigned sector along the Inter-German Border (IGB). The problem of what I believed to be overclassification was my pet peeve, and only through sheer obstinacy was information obtained. Your troops must know everything possible about their enemy, even if you approach compromising classification *for them*. The point is—challenge your S-2 to be innovative and then assure the troops get the word. Now some techniques on training.

### Decentralization.

I learned that the only thing one can decentralize is the conduct of training. Let your S-3 *manage the resources* to support the training that *you dictate* will be *executed* by your company commanders. My battalion faced numerous "other" requirements imposed by higher headquarters so when time was available for *my* training, I had to assure such time was exploited. Temper your control with the caliber of your company commanders.

### Realism.

I was fortunate if my battalion spent as much as two months per year in a major training area (MTA). That is where most of your live fire and combined arms exercises are conducted. Press for realism in these activities, based in knowledge of the *threat* and the *terrain* in your wartime sector. You will encounter myriad ambiguous safety regulations. Only through command channels can these be overcome. I did not advocate overly dangerous action, but rather responsible, realistic training. In all training, your company commanders will probably be more aggressive in this respect than you. Back them up to the fullest extent possible by devoting all your staff assets to safety assistance, not requirements for the companies. One other point; when your battalion goes to an MTA, *bivouac* in the *field*; don't live in the cantonment area. You'll eliminate one hell of a lot of annoying problems and provide valuable field training for your headquarters company.

## Use of Sector.

My battalion was garrisoned about seven hours road march from its wartime sector. That sector was near the IGB and contained numerous small villages and farm lands. I fought continually for maneuver rights in the area, but track movement was always restricted to roads and trails. My route to the sector ran through many congested areas linked by roads passing through defiles and crossing unfordable streams and rivers. Just to assure my battalion could get to its sector and begin to fight posed a significant training challenge. I sought alternate routes and charged my staff and Scout platoon leader to develop sound alternatives to overcome the obvious contingencies that were sure to happen along that route in the event of hostilities.

Back to the sector itself. That is the terrain on which the battalion will fight. When we were not at MTA's, each company commander was charged to train in his portion of the sector at least once per quarter. If maneuver rights precluded effective use of tracked vehicles, I had them move by airmobile assets. This requires planning well in advance, but is valuable training when incorporated into a good scenario. I cannot overstress sector familiarization for a wartime combat battalion. It is a mortal sin for any commander to not take advantage of training on the terrain where he expects to fight. Positions for all tracks and weapons, covered routes of movement to alternate positions, cover and concealment requirements, avenues of enemy approach, fields of fire, barrier locations, positions for supporting weapons—all these and other vital tactical considerations must be addressed. I never had enough time to satisfy myself that we had covered them all adequately.

While a company is in sector, have the staff arrange for up-to-date border briefings. We followed these by arranging for the company to walk or ride the actual fence line within their sector along the IGB. Allegedly not supposed to be done—but justify it on the obvious benefits for the troops. Make it happen.

Assure your sector training goes on in the winter also. Soldiers must learn to handle the extremes of the weather in their application of tactics. As an adjunct, arrange through some of the local village inhabitants to allow your troops to spend several nights in their barns or other shelter as a break. The Germans are always willing and will surprise you with their kindness with food and beverage on occasion. These are not the same people your troops are used to in the larger cities. These good folk can become genuine friends for individual soldiers and your battalion, and very good sources of intelligence. In addition, they can tell you where local tools can be obtained to assist you in field fortifications, clearing field of fire, and obtaining POL. Further, they can continually update your knowledge of trafficable trail networks and obstacles not included on military maps.

We had to be patient in developing such relationships with these folk, and the troops had to understand that the eventual payoff would only come as a result of their professional conduct. My company commanders and I pushed this aspect and the troops fully understood. The benefits derived in terms of lasting friendships among soldiers and German civilians and the resulting impact on unit esprit, morale, and readiness were immeasurable.

Let's move now to some aspects of personnel assignment and utilization.

## Assignments and Utilization.

Get involved in enlisted assignments within the battalion, if only to assure yourself that MOS mismatch is being avoided. I charged my S-1 and CSM with enlisted assignments and reserved the authority to assign or subsequently utilize an individual out of his primary MOS. I had my S-1 maintain small charts for me which reflected my percentage fill of MOS by authorized category and assured myself that these facts were always current. This is vitally important, particularly with regard to MOS's critical to your battalion. Inevitably, TOW, maintenance, radar, mess, and supply-oriented MOS's were critical. My battalion was part of a larger community, the garrison of which in many cases had to be manned by personnel on special duty. In addition, I had several facilities on my kaserne which had to be manned similarly. I tried to confine any utilization out of primary MOS to those special duty requirements. The essential point here—don't let yourself get divorced from the realities of personnel assignment and utilization. *Your* interest in each soldier doing the job for which he was trained will pay great dividends. Conversely, don't be immune to reclassification of special cases. Reserve the approval authority to forward such actions. This will force you to become acquainted with each individual case, and possibly

uncover a problem that your own bureaucracy didn't identify. In coordination with the CSM and S-1, I handled NCO and officer assignments. Don't leave your CSM out of officer assignments. He has valuable information on officer personalities and unique subordinate unit needs.

I also found it beneficial to explain periodically to all my 2LT's as a group what their utilization would be during their tour in USAREUR. This included explanation of what they could aspire to—following one year as rifle platoon leaders, be it prestigious separate platoon leader jobs, company XO positions, or staff slots at battalion or brigade. I followed a similar path with NCO's. I strived to adhere to a battalion policy that battalion staff jobs would be filled as much as possible from the line companies. Those incoming NCO's designated for staff positions would replace those moving up to staff. This caused some havoc with my S-1, but he was able to overcome it. My concern was that platoon sergeants, for example, who continually labored in those positions, were not getting the training they needed in the operations and intelligence fields. If they had earned the chance by sound performance in leadership positions, I gave them the opportunity to gain staff experience. This required them going off to selected USAREUR schools initially, but their professional development was enhanced. Research this technique well before you adopt it as your own policy, however.

### **Schools.**

My CSM convinced me early that maximum utilization of the various leadership and NCOES courses would pay great dividends. My commanders would argue often that the additional quotas I had scrounged were taking too many of their good young soldiers away. That's true, but the payoff after their attendance was worth it. I took the time to talk to all school candidates and explain not only the value of the school to them personally, but that they were to be "marked" men in the battalion. Marked for responsibility, rank, and corresponding privileges. It was paramount that they understand the new opportunities that would be open for them as a result of doing well at these courses. I insisted that the entire chain of command follow up on each individual after graduation. In reality, these individual soldiers received more attention than others. Many of them were first termers, and this personal interest in them—what they were just beginning to realize could actually be their profession—was responsible for their reenlistment. The influence they then had on their fire teams and sections was highly significant. Leaving you hanging with that, I'll move on to the last readiness area—logistic readiness.

### **Logistic Readiness.**

The key to success, in my opinion, is to learn the system that prevails in your division early on, and then take the time to get to know the people who provide logistic support to your battalion. All too often, an irate battalion commander will voice a complaint about logistic support without knowledge of the system and what it can supply. The resultant embarrassment to him is bad enough, but the inexcusable aspect is that his soldiers have probably been deprived of what they need. I discovered that once I knew the system and had visited the actual facilities, even the Self-Service Supply Center (don't forget that one), I then had to direct my commanders and supply personnel to do the same. For some reason, supply sergeants and S-4 personnel are reluctant to leave their offices and get face to face with counterparts in supporting units. I guarantee that once your personnel have accomplished that one act, your logistic support improves significantly. In addition, on a monthly basis, I conducted seminar-type meetings between all supporting units and my personnel, be they supply sergeants, mess sergeants, motor sergeants, communication chiefs, or whatever. I (or my executive officer) always attended. The interchange between my supply and service personnel and their supporting counterparts was invaluable. We were able to resolve conflicts and arrive at improved operating procedures unique to our location and situation. I *strongly* advocate such meetings.

All this may sound awfully simple as a key to success. It is, but few commanders take the *time* to assure that *effective* logistic relationships are established. Plan for it, and then do it. You won't be sorry, and your operating personnel will be able to devote more time to improving their support of your troops instead of wasting hours and hours "fighting the problem" with supporting outfits.

### **Property Accountability.**

I was amazed to find in my battalion that all property had not been hand-receipted to the lowest responsible level. Some of my commanders interpreted this to be no lower than the platoon leader. This will not suffice. A



tracked vehicle, for example, is the responsibility of the squad leader, and he must be held accountable for that property. Additional sub-hand receipts to the driver for tools and the like can be utilized, but that personnel carrier belongs to that NCO. Pursue this throughout your TOE regarding equipment. Items such as generators and pump units will not be maintained if the individual responsible for their operation is not accountable for them. I never fully achieved this standard of property accountability, but I continually strived for it. The benefits derived are well worth the effort. Instances of misplaced equipment decrease significantly and improved operational status results. This leads to recognition through awards for operators and pride in ownership. There is nothing more gratifying than to see a welder who owns his machine (and has the capability to *secure* it) develop intense pride in his skill and his deficiency-free equipment on a maintenance inspection. Believe me, such a situation is contagious and goes toward building genuine professional pride throughout the battalion. Further, when equipment is abused or lost, it will be patently clear to your unit commanders when they should use a report of survey, inventory adjustment report, or statement of charges.

### Organizational Maintenance.

In a mechanized outfit, maintenance *is* training. It is a *command responsibility* that cannot be left solely to motor sergeants or maintenance warrants. There are myriad approaches to how units conduct maintenance. Rest assured, your company commanders and individual operators will each have different innovative ideas which will yield results. Don't discourage that innovation. I found that at least two afternoons a week the business of the entire battalion had to be maintenance. I called this "command maintenance," and it required each commander and staff officer to plan in detail organizational maintenance activity for those periods. The requirements of each commander were different, but each one's approach and scope of activity had to be detailed and approved by me (as with the remainder of the training schedules). Command maintenance periods did not replace unit-scheduled maintenance or unit-directed motor stables. I used my executive officer extensively during these periods and, between the two of us and the CSM, we covered all activities and strived to assure their *effectiveness*. If there is one absolute principle that every battalion commander must follow, however, it is to get intimately involved. I obviously centralized much of the maintenance activity within my battalion. This was necessary to establish an effective program. In addition, we determined that:

- All drivers' training and testing be conducted by battalion.
- Driver refresher training be conducted for each company every six months.
- Battalion maintenance conduct periodic 100 percent technical inspection (TI) of all vehicles in the battalion.
- A historical file be established for every vehicle in the battalion. This file included a *completed-action* copy of every DA Form 2404 prepared by the driver and reflected all actions taken by the company motor sergeant and his TAMMS and PLL clerks. These files were maintained in battalion maintenance.
- A large status board be kept in battalion maintenance that reflected the operational status of every vehicle in the battalion. This included bumper number, names of primary and alternate operators, date of battalion 100 percent TI, last and next scheduled service, date action required from TI had to be completed and 2404 submitted to battalion.

Overly controlled? Possibly, but that status board was of extreme interest to all unit commanders and they were quick to insure that it stayed correct. I might add that the division commander advocated an even more detailed system later in writing. Our initial experience with this centralized system led to much "give and take" between my subordinate commanders and myself. However, along with my executive officer who organized the system, we slowly worked the bugs out. The point is—we had a system. My staff and commanders were not only cognizant of maintenance requirements, but their planning for other training as well was organized with maintenance well in mind. Scheduled services for tracked vehicles became critical items when considering other activities. They were reflected by bumper number on all training schedules. From there, the numerous other aspects of the system fell into place.

I cannot overstress the importance of effective driver selection and training. You have to be sure that companies don't get behind in drivers' training. I required company-level training between battalion sessions. You can never have too many trained and licensed drivers. No squad leader should ever allow his squad to end up without a trained and licensed primary and alternate driver. If everyone in the battalion recognizes and gets involved in this aspect alone of mechanized infantry, maintenance—effective maintenance—becomes a way of life and source of pride.

## CARE OF SOLDIERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

That a commander takes care of his people, goes without saying. What is vital, however, is the soldier's perception of that care which must be based on the battalion taking care of its own. There are numerous "people" programs in USAREUR that are highly visible, and you will find, as I did, that they are being implemented in your command. When logically applied to the needs and opportunities unique to your battalion, they do augment your capability to take care of your people. They are not a substitute, though, for building that intense spirit and pride for which I continually strived. Your soldiers will not be happy about being in Europe. Many are separated from families, and the battalion will have to fill that void. I drove myself and my chain of command relentlessly to assure that every soldier and dependent recognized that their welfare was the basis for excellence in the battalion. There are numerous means I used to manifest this. Some of them follow.

### Reception of New Personnel.

With the pinpoint assignment system, your headquarters should know reasonably well in advance of new arrivals. Regardless of grade, insure that all are assigned a sponsor—a good soldier. A new troop may have had an irritating reassignment coupled with the travails of military travel. A good sponsor and effective initial billeting for new arrivals will do much to erase any bad experiences. I found that my commanders generally established good procedures for this, but I continually checked them out. I made an effort during off-duty hours to seek out a new arrival, his first night in the battalion, and let him know that I knew he was there, and that he was part of the best unit in the Army.

I officially greeted new soldiers once a week without fail. The size of the group varied from six to twenty. If you do this less often, the group gets too big for effective communication. These "welcomes" were dignified and well-organized, and each soldier knew several days in advance that he was to be there. During these sessions, I explained the "why" of being in Europe and what they could expect from their battalion and their tour. I then explained what I expected from them. I also related the reputation of the battalion and the heritage on which the reputation hinged. I queried each man on his reception and duty assignment, resolving any difficulties immediately. I shook hands with each individual and conveyed my appreciation for the essential duty he was about to perform. My CSM followed this up after I left, with some elaboration. The key point here is that every new man got close to both his battalion commander and sergeant major soon after his arrival. The process never took longer than 30 minutes.

### Dependents.

My battalion was part of a larger military community which had established sound programs for dependent care. The reception of the dependents and their perception of care was best manifested, nonetheless, by the battalion. I insisted that reception procedures be instituted at company level for dependents. These procedures were detailed and included all consideration that you or I expected from a sponsor. I was particularly concerned with the families of lower grade enlisted men who were always up against the financial wall. They were not able to obtain government quarters, and faced rental rates they could not afford. Effective wives efforts at company level to assist in transportation to government facilities and provide other assistance did wonders for the morale of that young family. I found it imperative for the unit to know as much as practicable about each family's personal situation, and to get the chain of command involved when necessary to alleviate any problems. There was an initial reluctance on the part of the young soldier to allow his wife to be part of the "organization." It is essential, therefore, that all efforts be reflected in effective assistance, rather than "required" briefings and orientations. Once the family recognizes that the company and the battalion sincerely care, you will feel morale surge. Remember, there is no dependent problem that should go unanswered without your involvement.

I adopted other techniques to complement care of dependents. Several which proved very beneficial were baby letters, MTA newsletters, and wives talks.

- We established a system whereby a birth in the battalion was always known and followed up with a personal letter from me to the child, couched cleverly yet dignified enough that parents invariably thanked me and framed the letter for proud display in their home.
- Prior to departure for an MTA, I had the staff prepare a short newsletter for every dependent wife that advised her of our schedule, what we would be doing, assured her of her husband's safety, and provided names and numbers of who would be in charge and could provide assistance while the battalion was gone. It further advised her of planned wives activities during her husband's absence. My wife and the CSM's wife were responsible to assure that appropriate activities were planned.
- I spoke at least once every six months at regularly scheduled wives meetings or functions. For lower-grade enlisted wives, the companies had informal activities at which I spoke periodically. At all functions, my purpose was to let them know what was going on, answer any questions, and let us get to know each other. My listening to them was a significant part of the gathering.

In retrospect, the key to our effective care of dependents was exhaustive effort to enable information about dependent situations willingly to reach the chain of command. Once that happens, the battalion is able genuinely to take care of its own.

### ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

In this always critical area of concern, you will be confronted by numerous USAREUR programs which have been further amplified in writing by all levels of command. The mechanics of the programs are complex and will necessitate expertise, not only on your part but also on that of your subordinates as well. Your success, however, will derive from how well your soldiers perceive your attitude toward the conditions as opposed to the mechanics of the programs. In other words, set simple standards in the prevention of abuse and provide alternatives to abuse. I was unable to articulate effectively any moral posture on these social ills, and devoted my efforts to aggressive pursuit of simple, clearly understood standards and the provision of alternatives.

Drugs and inexpensive alcoholic products were available for my troops in all forms and they will remain available. I won't discuss the intricate military investigative procedures in which you will participate. Suffice to say that you'll be well assisted in isolating any criminal element in the battalion. Your primary efforts must be directed at preventing abuse by your other troops. Some techniques follow:

- I told the battalion often that drugs in any form would not be tolerated on the kaserne, much less in the barracks. Action under UCMJ was swift and severe. The use of inspections and other legal activities was encouraged, but the type and frequency were generally best left to unit commanders. Each company had different conditions. I required visible presence of the chain of command in barracks after duty hours, but the presence was not exhibited by inspections, but rather by talking with troops informally about everything and anything.
- Sponsors of new soldiers were carefully selected with the purpose of getting them on the right track initially. I required the buddy system be utilized off the kaserne, and dealt severely with the chain of command if a soldier involved in any incident had not been accompanied by another member of the unit.
- My CSM and I daily screened the kaserne sign-in sheets that were utilized at the gate after 2400. This helped to identify the habitual and potential problem people who stayed out late prior to a duty day. If an NCO appeared on the sheet, I personally talked to him of my "concern" for his ability to properly perform with inadequate sleep.



- The battalion had a strong athletic and PT program which also aided in identifying abusers. Remedial PT the same day discouraged abuse the next time.

These were several of many techniques which served as adjuncts to the overall prevention of drug and alcohol abuse. Equally important were alternatives that were provided to the soldier. The bulk of these emanate from the previously mentioned extensive USAREUR "people" programs. These crucial programs dealt with travel, R&R within Europe and utilization of the great facilities at Garmisch and Berchtesgaden, among other things. In addition to taking fullest advantage of these, I developed an adopted village relationship with a small German town 40 kilometers away in which the ratio of German nationals to my soldiers was about 4:1. This relationship took about six months to develop with the goal of every soldier in the battalion having the opportunity to spend a weekend with a German *family*. He was then encouraged to further lasting friendships during off-duty time. The effort was implemented through a formal ceremony between the town council and the battalion. In exchange for the townspeople's courtesy to my troops, the battalion reciprocated with assistance during harvest, medical and other logistic support to town projects, and assistance during floods or other contingencies. I always officially included the town's leaders at battalion functions, be they dining-ins or other ceremonies and activities. Athletic events were popular, and many of my troops were able to pursue fishing and hunting hobbies as guests of the town's clubs. The soldier appreciation of the German people and language again was enhanced and their understanding of why they were in Europe was further solidified. You may already have a town identified for such a relationship when you assume command. If it turns out to be a large city, consider finding a small town. In all such efforts, however, the key is insuring the troops know of the opportunity and *innovative* implementation by the chain of command.

## HUMAN RELATIONS

There are numerous aspects to human relations which any commander must continually keep in mind. In the forefront of that consideration is his own Affirmative Actions Plan. The absolute dedication and aggressive implementation of that plan is essential to any outfit. I made it clear that racial discrimination of and unequal opportunity for any soldier would not be tolerated. The plan and the statement are not sufficient, however. You and your entire battalion must live that way—not just conduct business that way, but *LIVE* that way. Believe me, I found that difficult to enforce for every man in my battalion. But if you achieve a positive *effort* by all and establish free communications, you should be able to correct violations immediately, and preclude rumors within the battalion. I said "free communications." If I had to identify the one major factor that most assisted my battalion, it was the flow, both up and down, of communications within the battalion. This not only impacted favorably on precluding racial tension, but alleviated almost all potential obstacles to instilling intense spirit and professional pride in the outfit. A key issue was where to establish this communication. That, I insisted, must be the chain of command. Yes, I had an open door policy and a RR/EO NCO on my staff, but once the troops and the chain of command understood what I meant by "involved and concerned leadership," my open door guests became very few. What follows are some techniques I employed to establish those communications.

### Command Formations.

Every Monday, or first duty day of the week, I held a battalion reveille formation which was immediately followed by a battalion run. At the conclusion of the run, I passed on information I considered very important to the entire battalion. On Friday, or the last duty day of the week, I held a battalion retreat formation, during which awards, decorations, and other recognition occurred. At the conclusion of that formation, I passed on pertinent information to the troops regarding the battalion performance that week and reminded them of what to expect the next week. At both formations, my remarks were informal and always preceded by commanders "breaking down" their formations. I never wanted to appear as talking over the chain of command to the troops. I insisted, however, that the formations be reconstituted after my remarks, when the commanders again took charge of their units. The latter is a small point, but it reinforced the chain of command. What these two formations amounted to was that the troops knew how I felt, and that the battalion started and ended the week together. Incidentally, at the Monday formation, absences were reported aloud by name regardless of rank. Needless to say, late hard-core revelry the night before became voluntarily curtailed.

## Command Guidance.

I insured that my CSM, staff and subordinate commanders knew exactly how I felt, and that they understood my overall objective of intense spirit and professional pride. This was further specified in my welcomes for new troops and individual welcome for officers and NCO's. In the latter cases, I added that I expected them to strive for perfection in the basic principles exemplified by the "Duties of a Squad Leader,"<sup>1</sup> and that I wanted to hear bad news as fast or faster than good news. I also told them that I would not tolerate deficiency in what I considered to be the criteria that governed their performance: absolute integrity within the chain of command, common sense, and concerned leadership.

## Use of RR/EO and Re-up NCO's.

I used these two individuals as special staff members. They must be respected members of the battalion and have some leadership experience. I made them privy to my feelings and assured they were included in all command and staff activities. They were free to contact me at any time of the day or night. Their roles were made clear to all commanders and first sergeants and were evident to the troops. I found that they provided me and my CSM with additional information about adverse trends or possible areas which could be misperceived by the troops. Their maturity and sound judgment enabled them to work closely with all leaders and contribute substantively to the chain of command at all levels. The information they each acquired was mutually essential. It was gratifying to observe these two fine NCO's working together to erase an irritating problem or misperception of a soldier, followed by his reenlistment. I'd encourage similar use at company level.

## Recognition of Program Specialists.

Within all companies, selected personnel are tabbed with the additional duties of career counselor, drug and alcohol specialist, etc. I hosted periodic lunches or other meetings with these individual groups to hear what problems they were having. This simple act added credibility to their jobs and provided me with useful information. I found out that many of these young soldiers had damn fine ideas that resulted in many improvements in the battalion. Make sure your commanders get this information afterward. In addition, assure that you make every effort to attend the various council meetings within the battalion. If not you, the executive officer or CSM, as a minimum. Take immediate action on problems surfaced, and then tell the troops about it.

I've mentioned several techniques I used in assuring the flow of communications within the battalion. These are not designed to replace the chain of command, but to assist it. You and your commanders will find them useful if they are utilized properly. Remember that their purpose is to surface information. If the chain of command does not act on that information, and subsequently inform the troops of the action, nothing has been accomplished. If they do, you will have communications and a handle on effective human relations.

## CONCLUSION

I have touched on several techniques that I found successful in dealing with areas of concern that you will probably encounter in USAREUR. I have omitted many other subjects within those areas. Interoperability, partnership with allied military units, and responsibilities in the financial management of the battalion are but several. Most of those not mentioned are well specified and probably will be well underway in your battalion. They will, however, require no less attention. I (as you will be) was extremely challenged by the management of time, a most valuable personal asset. You will not have sufficient time to *force* successful activity in the battalion. I found, however, that *effective* communications resulted in enthusiastic support of my desire to instill intense battalion spirit, loyalty, and professional pride. Further, such communications not only eliminated wasted time, but enabled innovative ideas and techniques to surface from within the battalion, many of which have been enumerated in this paper.

Your upcoming command will be demanding and, at times, frustrating. The privilege of such duty, however, will probably only come your way once, and its every minute of association with soldiers for whom you are responsible will be those minutes you will cherish above all others. You are a professional, fully qualified for the duty, and your experience and judgment will hold you in good stead. You have every right to be confident as you firmly grasp those battalion colors.

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<sup>1</sup>DA Pamphlet 350-12.



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## CHAPTER 3

### COMMAND OF A DIVISIONAL ENGINEER BATTALION IN CONUS

by

*COL John H. Moellering*

Winning isn't something you do, it's a habit you develop.

—Vince Lombardi

Cole Field, Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Payday. The entire 326th Engineer Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division is formed, companies in line, guidons flying. The Battalion Commander steps forward from the assembled Battalion Staff to address the troops for the first time:

I'm extremely happy to be here. The Change of Command ceremony yesterday was superb. I intend to hold a Pay Call formation similar to this one every Payday from now on. Once a month, I intend to let you know what we've done well as a battalion during the past month, what we've done poorly, and where we're going during the next month. I've been at Division HQ the past 6 months, and I've had an opportunity to observe you, as well as all of the other battalions in this Division. My conviction is that there is very little difference between the very best and the very worst battalions. And that a little extra effort pays tremendous dividends. The best battalions know their missions and perform them very well. The best battalions stand out because of the outstanding appearance of their soldiers. Their vehicles and company areas look better. And they are always "selling" their unit to people outside the battalion.

We're going to be the best battalion in this Division. It won't be any rose garden—but I *guarantee* it will be worth it. In return, I pledge to you that if you are a member of the 326th team, we'll take care of you. We have so much to do, that I promise you we won't waste your time. The challenge for each of you is to make your own individual area of responsibility so good, that you *want* someone to come and take a look at it. When we've got that, we've really got something.

As far as I am concerned, we have *one major goal*, one sole priority between now and June: that is to get the highest rating ever achieved on the Battalion ORTT. Naturally, that is not the only thing we'll be involved in, but *that is our number one priority*. If, because of a lack of time, you have to decide whether to do something related to the ORTT or something else, then do the thing related to the ORTT. Always remember that we never enter any competition in this Battalion unless we intend to win. I'll be out looking at you and look forward to talking with as many of you as possible.

With those words began the most exciting and rewarding year and a half of my life. The 326th—the Army's only Air Assault Engineer Battalion—did not indeed enjoy the best of reputations. My impression as an outsider had been that they had an extremely good bunch of junior officers, but were subpar in morale, discipline, drug abuse, field operations, and IG inspections (worst in the Division). Division generally viewed them as a battalion which constantly "fought the problem" unnecessarily. There was the familiar battle between the Division G3 and the Engineer Battalion Commander over whether building projects for the Division was more important than



combat engineer training. And finally, there appeared to be a communication problem inside the Battalion. In this chapter I will address some of the more important things we did to forge a winning team and turn the 326th into one of the most highly regarded units in the Division.

## ATMOSPHERE

The environment of any unit is vital to its success or failure. People like to work in an environment where they (a) are needed, (b) are convinced they are doing something useful and constructive, and (c) can make their views known and thereby impact on what happens in the unit. In addition, they *want to be in a top-flight unit!*

The personality of the commander and his key subordinates will determine the atmosphere. Each commander must find the style which best suits his inclinations. I preferred the informal approach. Long, tedious, written directives are mostly counterproductive at battalion level. Most business should be conducted telephonically or through informal written notes. I personally signed very few written directives to subordinate units, reserving my signature for those really key items on which I wanted to focus attention. Meetings, too, should be short, to the point, and called only when absolutely necessary. Don't waste your subordinates' time—they have too much to do.

I refused to attend meetings which I considered peripheral to my battalion mission—PX Council, Utilities Conservation Board, Central Post Welfare Fund, to name a few. I always sent a member of the Battalion staff to represent me. My time was better spent with my troops.

Positive reinforcement induces excellence, if properly done. You must be extremely judicious in selecting those things which you consider "standard-setters." Praise them vocally, frequently, and publicly. Insure that the platoon, squad or individual who actually did the work gets your personal praise. Those performances which fail to measure up to your standard should be discussed privately through the chain of command with the responsible individuals. Passing out a colorful, professional Battalion Certificate of Achievement at a Payday or company formation is another good way of formalizing the recognition. Eventually, a professional atmosphere will pervade the unit in which the standards are well-known, well-enforced, and simply expected of all. The more successes your unit has, the more it will be relied upon for key tasks. Soon, your soldiers won't tolerate those who don't measure up to *their* standard! And that is another description of a unit which has PRIDE. It is a winner every time.

Forward planning and anticipation are extremely important. As a separate battalion, we had no buffer between us and the Division staff. I insisted that my key staff officers develop and maintain close, personal and continuing contact with their counterparts at Division. I attempted to do the same whenever possible. Knowing what outside requirements are going to be superimposed on your battalion is the first step in planning your own program. You simply can't wait for the formal word to be sent out in Division directives. Informal contacts are absolutely essential if you are to know in advance what kinds of field exercises, tests, ceremonies, official visits, construction projects, and the host of other activities are coming, when they are coming, and what kind of involvement will be required of you. Using that as a framework, you should always have a firm plan for where you as a battalion are going in the next six months. Company commanders can then plan a three-month program. Using this technique, we never failed to anticipate what the rest of the Division was going to do and, more importantly, were always ready to take on any mission. This sensing of what is important in the Division and where the Division is headed is vitally important to success in command.

## FOCUS

In any combat unit, and particularly in the 101st Airborne Division, there are an incredible number of areas receiving "command emphasis" at any given time. They are constantly changing. Virtually all are said to be accorded the "number one priority" by someone in the higher chain of command. Every time the "Division Hot Line" phone rang in the battalion commander's office, many a commander responded by calling a meeting of the company commanders and battalion staff to repeat the item of current concern, and to add his own emphasis. Such a commander, in my opinion, could almost be replaced by a high-class Xerox machine. One of the key functions of any commander is to act as a BUFFER. He must absorb the many blows from higher headquarters,



sort out the ones which are really important, and insure the responsible people are aware of them. He must, above all, keep the battalion on a deliberate, steady course toward the readily important goals he has established. It is literally impossible to accomplish all the things which demand attention. The battalion commander's main role, then, is to establish clear priorities.

These priorities must be simple and completely understandable by the troops. They must be repeated frequently and personally by the battalion commander to the troops, the officers, the NCO's and the wives. For example, for the first five months of my command, our number one priority was preparation for the Battalion ORTT in June. At the Payday formation after the highly successful ORTT, I personally informed the troops that our new number one priority would be construction projects. We would do virtually no tactical training except that which could be realized from the construction projects. Later, our focus shifted to preparation for the IG, and then to ARTEP (Army Training and Evaluation Program) testing. By insuring that everyone knew what we really wanted to do, we achieved an incredible unity of effort and teamwork which yielded tremendously gratifying results.

Since the divisional engineer battalion provides support to various elements of the division, there is frequently a great dispersion of effort. Line companies are habitually in support of their respective infantry brigades. I perceived one of my key tasks to be that of bringing the battalion together as a unit. Several techniques proved successful. I have already mentioned the monthly battalion payday formation where I personally passed out key promotions, medals, and Battalion Certificates of Achievement. I would then personally address the troops. This was "my" formation, complete with Battalion Colors and company guidons, done in accordance with *FM 22-5*. I took pains to insure that it was correct in every respect.

Another key technique was a weekly Officers' Call in the Battalion Classroom at which the Battalion staff updated me on all their respective areas. Attendance by every officer in the Battalion was mandatory. I always took this opportunity to discuss important issues. These meetings rarely lasted more than an hour, and were followed by a beer call (which included liberal amounts of soft drinks: many junior officers don't drink).

The day before each officer's call, I would always sit down with my company commanders and battalion CSM to discuss the key issues facing the Battalion. No one from the staff—not even the battalion XO—was allowed to attend these meetings. I did not make a single major policy decision without first consulting this group. By doing so, I always gained valuable insights which aided in making the best possible decision. This was in no way a "voting process." Often, the decision I made was not what the majority wanted. But they always understood why we were doing the things we did. After these meetings, I was always careful to inform the XO of the decisions which we had made, so he could keep the staff synchronized. We never held joint command and staff meetings except for specific major missions, such as the Battalion ARTEP, the IG Inspection, and major projects involving the entire Battalion.

Social activities were another key factor in bringing the battalion together. I turned the planning and organization of these monthly battalion events for the officers and wives over to my wife, Karla. She discusses them in detail in Chapter 9. These activities were instrumental in developing the great sense of fraternity which pervaded all we did as a unit.

## COMPETITION AND PHYSICAL FITNESS

Competition among units is the great engine which drives the 101st Airborne Division, and in many respects is responsible for its fine reputation. We decided very early that we would not compete with the other engineer battalion on post, but rather would compete with the most highly competitive units in the Division—the infantry battalions. Because of this approach, together with careful organization, singleness of purpose, and personal exhortations to the troops, the 326th became known as one of the best competitors in the Division. For example, in the "Week of the Eagles" competition (which is like a week-long organization day) the 326th nearly single-handedly won the sports trophy for the separate battalions—a trophy which had always been won by one of the infantry brigades. In a rugged test of endurance, stamina, and skill, the 326th later won the Division Combat Basketball tournament. In fact, in virtually every sports competition, the four Division finalist teams would include a representative of each of the three infantry brigades and the 326th Engineer Battalion.

When the 101st Airborne Division went off Airborne status, the Division established a tough, demanding "Air Assault School" to replace it. Graduates are awarded the Air Assault Badge for wear on fatigues and headgear. Emphasis is on rappelling from helicopters and other rigorous activities which demand not only the utmost in stamina but also a high degree of physical courage. Applicants must pass the Ranger-Special Forces PT Test which has been modified to include a 2-mile run. Fewer than 10 percent of the soldiers of the Division had been able to complete this taxing school. I decided that the school would be beneficial to my individual troops as well as the Battalion as a whole. I therefore placed tremendous emphasis on the school, challenging all my men to attend. I stated that it was a basic requirement that all lieutenants and all lieutenant colonels in the Battalion be AAS graduates. I was one of only three battalion commanders in the Division to wear the badge. Eventually, 75 percent of our battalion officers completed the course, and we became the sixth-leading battalion in the Division in number of graduates, surpassing several infantry battalions. These graduates became a "hard core" of dependable, mission-oriented men who invariably formed the nucleus of leadership at the lowest levels of the Battalion.

Daily PT was a "given." No one was exempt. It would always include a 2- to 4-mile run. Some companies would return to the company area for combat athletics or other competitions for variation. Each Friday, we formed up as a Battalion on the Parade Field, companies in line with the command and staff element in front of the Battalion. Assistant instructors were mounted in the back end of dump trucks. After a few repetitions of the Army Dozen for warming up, we would do our morning run through the troop area as a Battalion—commander and staff leading, with companies in line with guidons. Since we were the only battalion running as an entire unit, we attracted lots of attention. This formation was a great booster of esprit, and reinforced the unity of the battalion.

### STANDARDS AND DISCIPLINE

Two months after assuming command, I relieved one of my company commanders. Obviously, this was a decision which was carefully considered, and was preceded by extensive counselling. During the course of my command tour, six lieutenants, two first sergeants, several staff officers and the Battalion CSM were asked to leave under similar circumstances. In every case, these were men who either couldn't or wouldn't perform. In almost every case, the officer was placed in a new position, usually on the Installation staff, to which his talents and inclinations were better suited. Many of these officers (particularly in the case of the lieutenants) simply did not want to be involved with troops and their problems, or lacked the requisite leadership to deal with them. By removing them after a fair trial period, both the Battalion and the Installation benefitted. Happily, most of the people for whom these men subsequently worked were pleased with their performance in the new positions. I am convinced that it is unfair to those leaders who *are* performing well, it is unfair to the *officer* himself, and most importantly, it is grossly unfair to the *troops*, to leave these individuals in command or other key positions.

Making these kinds of "people" decisions is one of the most difficult and critical aspects of command. I always discussed all key personnel changes with the other field grade officers in the Battalion—the Battalion XO and the S-3—before making any changes. About every six months, I would ask them to give me an informal, personal ranking of all the officers in the Battalion. If there were major variations in the lists we independently developed, I would discuss the variations, invariably gaining valuable insights. During the week, I would spend maximum possible time visiting unit activities and talking with the troops. In addition to the obvious benefits of troop exposure, these visits also provided multiple opportunities for observation and evaluation of junior officers and NCO's. I felt it important to keep the command channel clear for Officer Efficiency Report purposes: I rated all company commanders and indorsed all platoon leaders in the Battalion. Since the Assistant Division Commander was indorsing officer for each of my company commanders, I insured that he visited each of the companies frequently.

The CSM is a key man in any battalion. After it became obvious that my CSM—who was an absolutely outstanding technical engineer—had grown weary of dealing with NCO's and troops and their problems (this was the eighth battalion for which he had been CSM, having but two years service remaining to a thirty-year retirement) I reluctantly decided to ask him to remove himself from the command program. This was the toughest decision I made during my entire command, for we had developed a very close personal friendship. Discussions with the Division AG and CSM revealed that there were nearly fifteen Sergeants Major in one job or another who would be available as replacements. Although several command-qualified SGM's were available

(including one who had just signed in to the Division and was unassigned) I selected an outstanding man who was *not* command qualified and who had been promoted to CSM only two months previously. SGM Garcia had served with cavalry troops his entire career. He professed to know nothing about engineering (he didn't), and was not a polished speaker, but he was a LEADER. He signed in two weeks before the supreme test—the Battalion ARTEP Evaluation, and functioned as though he had been in the unit for months. In subsequent months, it was amazing to see the tremendous load of NCO and troop problems which SGM Garcia took off my shoulders. On his own initiative, he counselled NCO's and troops who were not performing up to *his* (and my) standard. He breathed new life into everything he chose to get involved in. And he always chose to get involved in the toughest troop and leadership problems.

Shortly after assuming command, I requested that the Division Chaplain find me a new Battalion Chaplain. I consider this man to be extremely key in the functioning of any Battalion. The man I received must have been sent from Heaven. Family counseling, troop counseling, and "just being available" were his main functions. In addition, he ran a series of "PET" (Personal Effectiveness Training) seminars for leaders at all echelons of the Battalion. PET is a program designed to increase leaders' awareness of the impact that various kinds of approaches have on the people being led. I was skeptical of its value until I personally attended a session with eight other battalion commanders. It works. Chaplain Anderson also was a true leader. Although he was the oldest commissioned officer in the Battalion, he was a graduate of the Air Assault School. I was proud to be the guest speaker at his class' graduation. About once a week, he and I would sit down privately to just "shoot the breeze" about the Battalion and where we were headed. I always came away enriched.

### TRAINING, PROJECTS, AND MAINTENANCE

Realism in training has long been a goal of tactical commanders. Because of safety restrictions and other administrative requirements, Engineer obstacles and other features are usually simulated on combined arms maneuvers. We sought to change that.

Because of stringent limitations on available airlift for strategic deployment of a brigade task force or possibly the entire Division, only mission-essential equipment can be taken. Class IV construction materials will necessarily be obtained in the overseas deployment area. Recognizing this, we placed maximum emphasis in our training on construction of hasty structures—bridges, towers, bunkers, culverts, etc.—of natural timber. The Division Commander strongly backed this practice. At the same time, the Fort Campbell Facilities Engineer maintained a vigorous reforestation program to insure that trees would be available in the future.

Achievement of true realism in training requires paying a price. Certainly, we must do our best to limit maneuver damage; certainly we must repair the damage we do. But "doing damage" to fixed facilities is a prime combat mission of the combat engineers. And unless they are afforded the opportunity to "do their own thing" in a combined arms maneuver setting, the other elements of the combined arms team will never gain a true appreciation for the kinds of capabilities and assistance afforded by combat engineers.

After lengthy discussions, I was able to convince the Division Commander to let my people use live demolitions on actual troop maneuvers up to brigade size to crater any non paved road on the Fort Campbell reservation. Many of these craters were blown at night. The effect on enemy armor and mechanized forces was graphic and devastating. More importantly, these "live fire" tactical exercises helped fix in the mind of the infantryman and tanker new ways to enhance an already considerable capability. To achieve this requires a philosophical attitude on the part of the installation commander that the military reservation is his to "consume" much as one consumes ammunition from a CTA in training infantry. After the tactical maneuvers, I devoted the full resources of my battalion to repairing the craters and maintaining the roads.

The 326th was the first engineer battalion to undergo the new ARTEP training and testing cycle. My S-3 laid out such a sound program that the Division G-3 used it as a model for all other battalions in the Division to follow. Essentially, because of time constraints, we compressed the evaluation cycle into three months. We trained squads in January and February, testing all squads in the battalion at the end of February. I also added my own scoring system to the ARTEP evaluation to make the testing competitive. After the testing we ranked the squads from one through thirty-six. We, like everyone else, were drastically short E-6 Squad Leaders, having only about one-fourth of what we were authorized. Interestingly, the top three squads (who were awarded trophies) were commanded by E-5 squad leaders who were first-termers.



We conducted the platoon testing similarly in March, with the major battalion effort—the Company and Battalion-level ARTEP Evaluation at the end of April. Major Battalion efforts such as the ARTEP should be approached much as a professional football coach readies his team for the Super Bowl. In addition to training, troops need to “peak” psychologically for the test. Direct Battalion Commander discussions with the troops (carefully orchestrated) are essential. Because of the diagnostic nature of the ARTEP, I felt much more confident going into our major tactical evaluation that year than I had the previous year under the old Operational Readiness Training Test (ORTT) concept. The ARTEP is one of the best training improvements I’ve seen since joining the Army.

Since the Engineer Battalion had more rolling stock than any other battalion in the Division, maintenance was a major consideration. Much of the standard guidance appears mundane, and is ignored. Don’t fall into that trap. Start by fighting to get the best possible maintenance people. Beyond that, there is no substitute for constant checking to insure people are doing what they are supposed to be doing. It’s amazing how quickly first echelon maintenance improves when the Battalion Commander sends a list of trucks he personally found in the Motor Pool last night with flat spare tires, low oil or water levels, or loose lug nuts, to the company commanders concerned.

We established a program for a period of weeks where the Battalion Maintenance Warrant would bring up a common piece of rolling stock—say, a dump truck—to the Battalion Officers’ Call. He would pass out Technical Inspection sheets to all officers and show them how to inspect. It rarely took more than ten minutes per Officers’ Call. This technique generated a great deal of interest and understanding.

Another technique we used to excellent effect was the field Technical Inspection (TI). We stressed maintenance during field training. I established a policy that when any Battalion FTX was complete, each company commander would request a Battalion TI team. These teams would travel to the company areas and conduct a 100 percent TI of first echelon maintenance of all vehicles and equipment. Before S-3 would grant the company a convoy clearance to return to garrison, the Battalion Maintenance Officer had to certify that all first echelon deficiencies had been corrected. This did two things. First, it insured that first echelon maintenance was being pulled in the field. And secondly, it got the troops in the proper frame of mind for the intensive maintenance period which would invariably follow the frequent battalion FTXs. During my entire tour, not a single company of the 326th ever failed a Division or higher-level maintenance inspection.

We also established a policy that the Battalion XO would conduct a motor pool inspection every Friday afternoon, an hour and a half prior to quitting time. This inspection included cleanliness of vehicles, police of the motor pool area, first echelon maintenance, and securing of all vehicles. Those companies who were organized always left on time. Those who weren’t, invariably stayed until the appropriate standard was achieved.

Earlier in this chapter, I alluded to construction projects, one of the things which makes the engineer battalion unique. In previous battalions in which I’ve served, there has always been a conflict between trying to conduct tactical training and accomplish the construction projects required by the Division Commander and others. I am convinced that it is not possible to do both simultaneously and well. The solution I proposed and sold to the Division G-3, was to conduct tactical training exclusively during the period leading up to the Battalion ARTEP Evaluation. Then, to abandon tactical training for the construction season—summer and fall at Fort Campbell—and do nothing but projects. Naturally we sought projects which had maximum carryover to our combat engineer mission. We were careful to reap maximum publicity for successful projects—particularly civic action projects—through the Division newspaper. Soon company commanders were approaching the S-3 actively seeking additional projects. Through this system we were able to complete many times the number of projects that had been constructed the previous year. We were always careful to insure that the construction standard was such that we would be proud to affix a sign proclaiming that the 326th had built each project as it was completed. Our projects covered an incredible spectrum from moving a Bicentennial log cabin to an interstate highway, log-by-log; to construction of a complete tank firing range; to building a combat-in-cities course; to building of a “slide for life” and leaders’ reaction course for the Division NCO Academy.

One of the unique features of my Battalion was the two earthmoving platoons found in the headquarters company. They gave me a tremendous horizontal construction capability. Previously, these men had been kept mainly in the motor pool to maintain their considerable array of construction equipment. Morale problems were



rampant. My philosophy was that these assets should be used to their maximum capability during the construction season, not only for the training of the men but also for the good of the Division. We immediately sought as much work for these men as possible—and there was more than enough to be done. They accomplished exactly what I had hoped they would, improved their individual proficiency tremendously, and enhanced the Division's reputation through a raft of substantial civic action projects. In fact, they were so busy that we received permission to give them their ARTEP evaluation at a civic action construction site sixty miles from Fort Campbell. They passed with flying colors.

## CONCLUSION

In the final analysis, what is it that makes a battalion successful? It is a feeling within that unit that it is an exciting, challenging place to be. That it is a place where the leaders know where they are going, and that where they are going makes sense. That it is a place where people don't play favorites—where equity and fairness are the norm. That it is a place where the leaders genuinely *listen* and *hear*. That it is a place where things which make absolutely no sense simply aren't done. That it is a place where gimmicks are scorned because reputations are made on solid accomplishments. That it is a place where people won't waste anyone's time. That it is a place where the commander will go to the Secretary of the Army to fight for one of his men, if necessary, if convinced his cause is just. That it is a place, above all, which is populated with people of integrity.

Such a unit will develop a bond of fraternity among its members which will transcend all the difficulties, all the disappointments, and if need be, the ultimate tests of combat. Some people talk of the danger of becoming *too* close to your officers and men. I don't think that's possible. A battalion where the officers know how to laugh as well as admonish—and know how to laugh at themselves occasionally—will indeed be a sought-after unit. A battalion commander who doesn't take himself too seriously in developing all these things will likewise be successful.

A very fine American, John Gardner, once said, "The role of a leader is to keep hope alive." Battalion command is the last rung of the command ladder where a commander has actual physical contact with troops. It is therefore the most influential command position in the Army. For, the battalion commander has the opportunity to influence, to inspire, to demand performance on a larger scale than anyone else in the chain of command. It is an awesome responsibility. It demands the very best in enlightened leadership.

Colonel John Moellering has commanded engineer units with the 1st Cavalry Division in Korea and the 24th Infantry Division in Germany. He was Operations Officer for the 937th Engineer Group (Combat) in the Vietnamese Central Highlands. He later commanded the divisional Engineer Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Colonel Moellering's key staff assignments have included service as aide to LTG John P. Daley, Commanding General of the Army Combat Developments Command; as Deputy Operations Officer, 101st Airborne Division; and as Operations Officer in the Office of the Army Chief of Staff, Washington, D.C. In 1973, he was selected as one of the 17 White House Fellows, serving on the White House Staff. A 1959 graduate of West Point, Colonel Moellering holds a master's degree in civil engineering from the University of California (Berkeley) and has taught civil engineering on the West Point faculty. He has also done graduate work in political science at the University of Kansas and taught history as Assistant Professor at West Point. He is also a graduate of the Command and General Staff College and the US Army War College. Colonel Moellering entered the service from Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is married to the former Karla Fritzsche of West Point, New York. They have two sons and a daughter.



## CHAPTER 4

### COMMAND OF A DIVISIONAL SUPPORT BATTALION IN GERMANY

by

*LTC(P) Howard Boone*

#### INTRODUCTION

When I was an instructor at the Ordnance Center and School, I taught what I thought was a pretty nifty two-hour introduction class on command and management. And why shouldn't I? I had been a successful company commander; I had commanded the 63d Maintenance Battalion in Vietnam (which fortunately for me and the US Army "stood down" within four months); I had a graduate degree in Industrial Management; I, by this stage of my career, had served under a wide variety of commanders who, one way or another, impressed me, so I knew pretty much (I thought) what it took to be a good battalion commander. I really believed in the theoretical and practical aspects of command that I espoused.

So when the call to command came again, I was pretty confident that I could handle it. It might be well to note at this point that for some reason all my previous command assignments were "rush jobs" and I didn't have time to prepare by attending a commander's course, a preventive maintenance course, or by visiting a Service School (maybe that fact has something to do with my opinion of the minimal value of "charm schools" that prepare one for command).

There is no school solution to successful command! There is no magic formula to assure a full tour as a commander. Each command is a unique situation calling for a degree of knowledge, judgment, adaptability, flexibility, and *luck* which allow the commander to exercise his leadership of the people in the unit toward specific goals.

I will try to describe some of my experiences as battalion commander and some of the techniques I employed to get the job done. It was very surprising to me to find that a lot of previous knowledge and experience was irrelevant. I found myself doing things that ran counter to my preconceived notions as to the "right" way to do them. If there is one thought that, in retrospect, was most important, it would be: there are no universal laws that govern what you do in a given situation. Success depends on your ability to take the situation as given and make decisions that recognize all the variables and get what you want done. Caution: What worked for me is not necessarily right for anyone else. And, if I ever get another command they may not work for me again. There are some basics, but those will be evident as I tell my tale.

#### BACKGROUND/SITUATION

A phone call from MILPERCEN in late November alerting me for reassignment in early December drew the normal protests until the ultimate question ("Are you refusing Command?") brought me to my senses. My instructions were to be at Ft Hood, Texas NLT 10 December; don't move your dependents as you'll only be there three months; you are to command the Support Battalion of a brigade that will deploy to USAREUR in early 1975.

The basic concept of "Brigade 75" was to restation a mechanized infantry brigade (2 mech inf bn, 1 tank bn, 1 155mm SP arty bn, 1 armored cav troop, 1 engr company, a bde HQs company, and a support bn) from CONUS to USAREUR. The 3d Brigade, 2d Armored Division was designated to execute Brigade 75 and deploy to Germany on a combined PCS (Bde HQs and Support Bn) and TCS (all other units) basis. The brigade base was to be stationed at Grafenwoehr, while other elements would be located at Hohenfels and Wildflecken until a permanent home base could be established.

Prior to 10 January 1975, there was no 498th Support Bn on the US Army rolls. The 498th was activated as a provisional unit on 6 December 1974. The concept for formation of the battalion envisioned taking already

existing units from the Division Support Command and other divisional units. However, significant TOE changes, deployability criteria, and other factors precluded this from happening. The companies of the battalion were essentially completely new organizations. Personnel were reassigned from all over Ft Hood to fill the units. I could see problems developing!

This was further aggravated by the two-grade substitution rule. E-7's who had little or no previous 1st Sergeant experience were sent to fill 1st Sergeant positions. Further, all primary staff positions were filled with lieutenants who had recently transferred to combat service support branches, or with "over-the-hill" captains. Two of the three companies were commanded by lieutenants also. The battalion was to draw all TOE equipment in USAREUR. All equipment used at Ft Hood was borrowed. The time-phasing included organizing the battalion (quarters, officers, equipment, etc.); preparing for overseas movement (to include pre- and actual Bde-level ORTT); training for European environment; packing equipment; and settling dependents and participating in the farewell parade. All of this was to be accomplished in less than 90 days. Other constraints were the division policy of no weekend duty, no night work, and adherence to ½-day holiday schedule. In addition, every soldier was to have a 30-day leave (if desired) prior to deployment. Needless to say, I recognized the challenge!

This is the general situation I found upon my arrival at Ft Hood on 9 December 1974. What follows is how I attacked the problem. Hopefully, some things here will be of value.

### **SIZING UP THE SITUATION**

Being completely new to Ft Hood and the 2d Armored Division, my first task was to get the lay-of-the-land. After reporting to my headquarters in the back of a closed-down mess hall, my executive officer got me in the correct headgear (you don't wear the service cap in 2d AD). After an update by the XO, and briefings on what was to be accomplished by the DISCOM commander and the division staff, it became obvious to me that I would have to resolve a serious conflict. The DISCOM (the sponsoring unit) and the division staff weren't in agreement as to what the priorities were. If this conflict was not resolved quickly, I'd be defeated before I got started. My conviction was that, given the constraints, I should not have operational support responsibility during this 90-day period but rather should concentrate purely on organizing, training, and preparing to move to Europe. Since the majority of my resources were to come from the DISCOM, I had difficulty in selling that approach. The DISCOM commander told me that I couldn't "march and chew bubble gum at the same time." However, I persisted and after I explained to the Division Chief of Staff, he agreed that my approach was logical. This was the first important victory that broke the dam and buoyed my spirit. I needed that! Wisely, the Provisional Battalion was assigned to the 3d Bde, and I had a new O-6 to help fight my battles.

At that point, my assessment of the task was, first, to mold the unwilling castoffs into a cohesive battalion. Second, to keep the unit intact in spite of its diverse mission (see organization chart, Annex A to this chapter) to develop a highly motivated team dedicated to supporting our brigade. I saw the accomplishment of the technical mission of lesser importance during this phase. My philosophy of "soldiers first, technicians second" permeated all my actions as battalion commander. Good-looking, physically fit, proud soldiers will automatically get the job done as long as the leadership is responsive to their needs. I decided to set high standards, insure compliance, and use the difficulty of the tasks to develop pride in individual and unit accomplishments. Case in point—the Brigade-level ORTT. After only 30 days as a unit, the Battalion, using borrowed equipment, went to the field to support the Brigade during the pre-ORTT and did reasonably well. In the week before the real test, a change in deployability criteria resulted in an almost 60 percent change in personnel. The battalion performed admirably, both tactically, and technically. Praise from the Division Commander (see Annex B) boosted morale tremendously. It was one thing for me to give praise but it was certainly reinforcing to have two stars back me up. As an outgrowth of this, I was able to capitalize on that success and develop a "winner's attitude" within the unit.

### **ESTABLISHING RAPPORT**

This aspect of command I consider key to success. It must be done quickly, for only when it is accomplished can you know how and when to implement your programs. Rapport must be established with superiors, with your commanders and staff, and with the troops themselves. This rapport sets the parameters for your actions.



*Superiors.* At Ft Hood, three persons comprised this category: the Bde Cdr, the Asst Div Cdr, and the Division Commanding General. As soon as the battalion was assigned to the 3d Bde, I went to talk to the commander. I initiated the meeting. My purpose was to outline my concept for the employment of the support battalion; my role, as I saw it, in relation to his staff (particularly his S-4); and to explain what he could expect from me. I was lucky to have the brigade commander I had. He was completely sympathetic and understanding of the criticality of the support battalion to the overall effectiveness of the brigade. He supported me in just about all of the things I wanted the Battalion to be. His confidence in me and the Battalion went far toward establishing "ground rules" by which to play.

The ADC, who was responsible for making sure that I got all the personnel that I was authorized (and who made me feel important through his daily visits), did not have, I felt, the same degree of confidence in me as my Brigade Commander. I reciprocated that feeling.

The Division Commanding General, I found, was very helpful in all respects. I could talk to him openly, and he shared my commitment to making Brigade 75 work. His twice-daily visits were most reassuring, as his parting question was always, "What help do you need from me?" That attention certainly helped in my dealings with the staff. So much for rapport with superiors at Ft Hood. To summarize, the Commanding General was FAIR with me (no pun intended).

Upon arrival in Europe and attachment to the 1st Armored Division, the rapport was much more difficult to attain, but no less important. Rapport with the new ADC and Division Commander had to be earned through performance. Simply put, any success depends on what your superiors allow you to do.

*Commanders and Staff.* This is one of the areas that defied all the theoretical notions of the "right" way to do it. Lieutenants filled all of my principal staff jobs and two of the three companies. Organizing, training, equipping, deploying to FRG, and setting up operations in less than 120 days is taxing enough for a well-seasoned, experienced staff. I recognized the need for training, but operational requirements in the early phases could not allow the luxury of mistakes. Consequently, I oversupervised the staff. I rarely used them as advisors because, frankly, they were busy learning their jobs. I charged the XO with training the staff. After eight or nine months, I was able to reduce oversupervision and allow them more latitude and they grew professionally. It was rewarding to see them function after a year.

The commanders were allowed, as much as the situation warranted, to run their own show. Although I held veto power, I seldom used it. More often than not, my guidance and direction filled in voids caused by inexperience. As commander, I felt an all-encompassing responsibility to train the junior officers of the battalion. At every opportunity, I took great pains to explain decisions to commanders, not only to gain support but to train them. This also opened the channels of communication and helped avoid problems. To my surprise, I discovered a lot of information was not getting down to all elements of the command. The bottleneck was that commanders were not talking to their units. So, in addition to requiring that they debrief 1SG's, platoon leaders, and platoon sgts within 72 hours of battalion command and staff meetings, I invited 1SG's to attend weekly meetings. It helped a lot. Major policy decisions were put out in battalion policy letters. These steps were crucial in the early days of operating in Germany. The acclimatization from CONUS environment was more difficult than anticipated. As a result, the HQ's company commander (a lieutenant) succumbed to the pressures of transition and wound up being relieved. He really was potentially a good officer, but the pressures were too great. This tragedy convinced me of the wisdom of USAREUR policy, at that time, which only allowed captains to command.

*Sergeant Major.* I suppose I'd probably be challenged by other battalion commanders when I say that I had the best Sergeant Major in the US Army. He was certainly the best I had ever seen. He was the fourth nominee from Ft Hood for the job. The three previous elected to retire rather than take on this challenge. SGM Burkett joined the 498th 30 days prior to deployment. He came from Ft Bragg, N.C. He was infantry, all the way, with no technical or support-oriented talent, but loaded down with talent for leadership and soldiering. His first statement to me was that he came to help me make the 498th the best battalion in the Army. He epitomized the philosophy that soldiers come first.

How did I use him? He was my principal advisor on all enlisted matters. He trained the NCO's of the Battalion; he set up promotion boards; he just plain did it all, better than any NCO I know. I pretty much gave him free rein to do things that he thought needed to be done. He always got my concurrence before implementing major changes. When travelling to outlying locations, we travelled together but split up to conduct business, then compared notes on the way back. At base camp in Grafenwoehr, we'd meet in the dining facility at breakfast and he'd outline what he had planned that day. His ability to counsel, guide and castigate with equal finesse made him an almost indispensable asset. I think a lot of junior officers who sought his advice learned a lot about what today's Army is all about. The ultimate tribute I can pay is that when I needed his advice, I was glad that I had asked for it and when I didn't, I wished I had!

*Troops.* I saved the best for last! For, any success achieved, any satisfaction felt, any measure of pride in accomplishment is directly related to the rapport between the commander and his troops. The methods I used to gain and maintain rapport may at times appear contradictory, but it is exactly that paradox that created the atmosphere of distance while at the same time conveying the feeling that I could be approached easily. First, there is no substitute for setting the example. From doing PT to physical appearance and bearing, I tried to set high standards for myself and those around me. For example, for my driver I selected the best soldier in the Battalion. He had won Ft Hood "Soldier of the Year" honors. (After he became eligible for E-5, however, I released him back to his MOS.) My office was a little more "liveable" than most commanders' offices at Camp Aachen, Grafenwoehr. At the same time I made myself visible to all my soldiers. I ate 85 percent of my meals in the dining facility (including weekends; remember, this was an unaccompanied tour for me); I watched the serving lines; I talked with the cooks and KP's; I mingled with the soldiers and learned a lot about what was going on. I occasionally visited the EM and NCO clubs on post, as well as all the places frequented by my troops downtown. I would never refuse to have one drink with them once in a while. I went to the battalion area on off-duty time and joined in sports activities with them. I was in and out of their work areas constantly. I was not just being visible, but also looking for ways to make their quality of life a little better in the situation in which we found ourselves. I may be wrong, but I think this dual-pronged approach helped. If you recall earlier I mentioned the development of a winning attitude. This was enhanced by the battalion motto, "We Can Handle It," which was chosen in a contest within the battalion. The motto caught its share of sarcasm whenever we fell down in any area, but it sure was good to see a soldier salute and say, "We Can Handle It, Sir!" Or to have a lieutenant say, "I can handle it," when you gave him a challenging task. The "Handlers" were proud of their unit.

Communication cannot be ignored in creating rapport with troops. I took advantage of every opportunity to talk to my soldiers, singly or in groups. Back in the early days at Ft Hood, I assembled the Battalion in the theater to talk to them. I had each staff member explain his job and tell how his role was going to help make Brigade 75 work. After the success of the ORTT, I had my first battalion formation and I liked it so much I institutionalized it. Every pay day I had a formation! I made promotions, presented awards, and passed out good news and bad news. (The Brigade Chaplain used to attend and thought they were great; but his efforts to have the whole Brigade do it didn't get anywhere.) Additionally, I made a standing offer to visit any company, platoon, or section to talk about anything at the request of the company commander.

As an aside, I might say that the overseas environment, with the attendant problems of racial tensions, alcohol and drug abuse, traffic conditions, dependents, boredom, crime and German-American relations magnifies the importance of having good rapport with soldiers.

Another element that struck me as important was to do things that provided incentives for soldiers to *want* to be good soldiers. Too often we spend so much of our time dealing with problem soldiers that we don't do enough for the good ones. I tried hard to make a clear distinction. Good soldiers: got promoted, went on R&R, got first crack at leave, participated in G-A activities, and got time-off. Bad soldiers: got Article 15's, Court Martialed, Chapter 13's, EDP's, and generally were not given all the privileges that are connected with being a good soldier. There is a credibility problem that must be attacked also. When problems (real or perceived) are presented, some solution (real or perceived) must be given. The troops must believe you are doing all you can to make their life better, that you are there to help them when problems arise. I think the highest accolade in this regard was when one of my "bad" soldiers was being dragged from a bar to the MP station, he was heard to say, "I'm not worried, Colonel Boone will take care of me." I didn't. But it would have been great if all my soldiers had that kind of confidence in their battalion commander.

## POT POURRI

In unwinding this year, I have leaned toward discussing those things that I thought were essential to get the job done in what I considered a unique situation. Obviously, there is a great deal left unsaid. So I thought I would wrap up with a few random ideas on some other significant areas that were critical to mission accomplishment in the USAREUR environment.

*Discipline and Military Justice.* Somewhere along the line, I learned about the "hot stove" approach to discipline and adopted it as a standard to attain. The theory is that discipline should have the same basic characteristics as touching a hot stove: (1) You get immediate action. The time between the offense and your action should be ASAP; (2) Advance warning—you know the stove is hot—soldiers have to be made aware what the rules are and the penalties for infractions; (3) Consistency—the stove burns equally all who touch it—so must your application of discipline; and (4) Impersonalness—the stove burns you because you touched and for no other reason—discipline is meted out based on the act alone. I might add at this point that I distinctly let it be known that the more senior the "disciplinee," the more severe the penalty. Does it work? I think it did. But, again it was an ideal which was not always attained. In administering military justice, I was very sensitive to the rights of the accused and made damn sure the charges, etc., were the right ones before passing judgment. I noted for a period of time that I was receiving what I considered an unusually high number of appeals from company grade Article 15's. On hearing the appeals, I was surprised at what I heard about the various procedures used in handling their individual cases. So I called in each company commander separately and had him explain, step-by-step, how he administered Article 15's in his unit. Amazing! No wonder I had so many appeals. Quick fix—a class conducted by myself and the JAG. I found it necessary to handle certain offenses exclusively at battalion level (such as DWI and guard infractions). Driving while intoxicated was a big thing in Europe and I had more than my share. Automatic field grade Article 15 didn't help the situation much. Even after that edict, I had a lieutenant wreck his POV and injure himself driving while intoxicated (he got an Article 15 from the Div CG). Sometimes only time cures the problem.

*Safety.* In an active theater under peacetime conditions, coupled with the international aspects of operating on foreign soil, the need for a conscientiously applied safety program is highlighted. Motor vehicle accidents caused the major difficulties. Mission requirements, distance from supported units, and location of supporting activities made the battalion's exposure very high. The logical way to reduce accidents was to reduce exposure. A technique I employed was to make it extremely difficult to get transportation from the battalion motor pool. Supervisors had to get involved in dispatch operations. This forced consolidation of trips and assured that only mission-essential vehicles were dispatched. Results: no fatalities, no disabling injuries, and less than 10 military motor vehicle accidents in over a quarter million road miles. Similar stringent controls on security of individual weapons is another battalion-commander-in-Europe lifesaver.

*Dependents.* A very important adjunct to keeping happy troops is to keep happy wives and children. This was difficult to achieve in the Brigade 75 permanent party contingent. Our temporary location at Grafenwoehr gradually became a permanent location. When it became evident that this was to be the case, sponsors in my battalion were authorized to bring their dependents from CONUS to Munich. Therein lay the problem. Every Friday, buses were provided to deliver sponsors to Munich and return with them Sunday night. Nightmares! The Community Commander at Munich had the dependent problems while I had the sponsors most of the week in Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, and Katterbach. I will not attempt to chronicle the range of problems this created. Suffice it to say I considered those dependents an integral part of the battalion and felt some responsibility to them. On two occasions I went to Munich and invited them all to a rap session in the Post Theater. Such blood letting you wouldn't believe! I don't know how I got the nerve to do it a second time. On the positive side, it showed an interest; some problems were solved (others couldn't be), questions were answered, and a rapport established.

The battalion organized a wives club (officer and enlisted). We published a newsletter and encouraged tours and visits for dependents at Grafenwoehr. All in all, we couldn't make them all happy but we tried. That was the important thing. One lesson learned from this aspect that has general applications is: There are some policies, no matter how much sense they make, that can't be enforced. For example, I established a policy that all E-6's and below would ride the Brigade bus to and from Munich on weekends. I think this caused more unrest than any other single policy. It couldn't be policed.



*Female Soldiers.* I started with 36 women. Two wound up Chapter 13 cases; the rest were pretty good soldiers. The basic rule is to try to treat them just like your male soldiers. That's pretty hard to do at times. Trying to administer Article 15 during a deluge of tears doesn't help much. Married couples (I had five) present their unique problems. You've got to be sensitive to their situation without showing preferential treatment. Very hard to do! If at all possible, billet them in the units to which they are assigned. Ninety percent of my problems disappeared when I made arrangements to have the women assigned to my battalion billeted with their assigned units as opposed to separate consolidated female quarters. Women soldiers are here to stay and we have to learn to stop calling them by their first names!

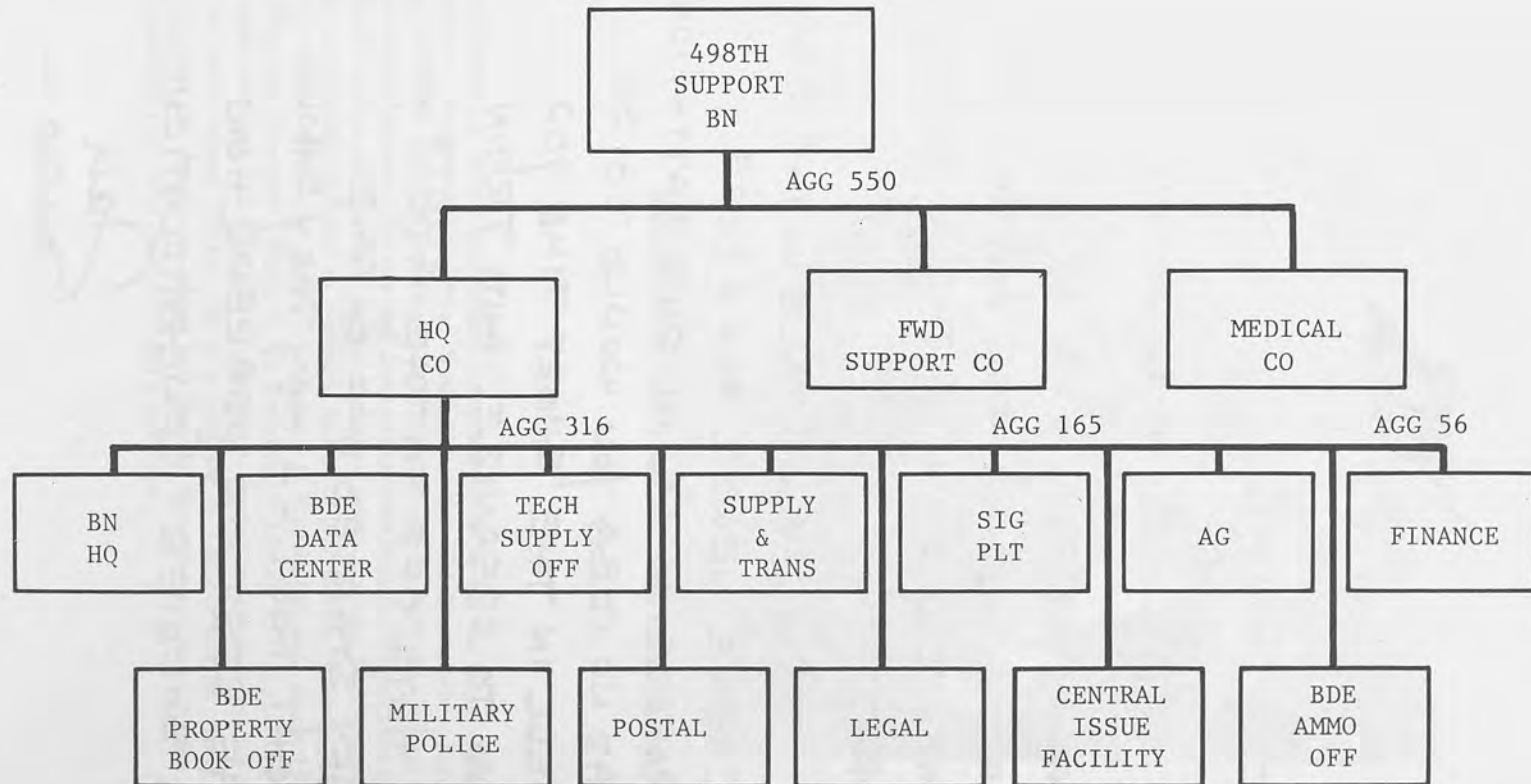
## CONCLUSIONS

The reader may note in all that has gone before there is little mention of the technical mission of the 498th. That follows my overall approach of "soldiers first, technicians second." Mechanics will fix trucks as long as you can give them repair parts; medics fix bodies and souls as long as they have medicine and a place to work; military policemen direct traffic and give out tickets pretty well; communicators communicate; and truck drivers will drive trucks! The job of leadership in the support unit is to create an environment that allows those things to be done unencumbered by personal problems and hardship. Thus, the battalion commander's primary thrust is in those areas I have addressed. Don't for a minute think I have ignored mission responsibilities; I wouldn't have survived if that were the case. But mission gets accomplished through motivation which is dependent on the types of things I have talked about. And in the overseas environment that is what takes 75-80 percent of the commander's time.

How successful was this whole adventure? Well, I could tick off something like performance on major field exercises (Reforger 75, Grosser Baer 76); outstanding rating on the very first AGI (July 76); safety records; outstanding Partnership Program, and on, and on; but to me the true test was the way the troops looked and marched at the change of command ceremony. They exhibited the pride and esprit that mark good units. When I handed over the colors of the "handlers" to my successor, I knew he was getting a good battalion. That's the bottom line.



ANNEX A  
ORGANIZATION CHART





4 FEB 1975

C.O., 498<sup>TH</sup> SUPPORT BATTALION —

I WISH TO CONGRATULATE  
EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF YOUR  
BATTALION FOR THE SUPERB JOB  
THEY DID DURING THEIR RECENT  
ORTT.

IN MY FEW YEARS IN THE ARMY..  
I HAVE NEVER SEEN MORE  
PROFESSIONALS IN ONE BATTALION.  
HAD NO IDEA YOU WOULD DO SO  
WELL IN THE SHORT TIME YOU  
HAD TO ORGANIZE AND TRAIN.

HATS OFF TO THE 498<sup>TH</sup> --  
THEY STARTED OFF ON THE  
RIGHT FOOT -- MAY THEY SHOW  
THE REST OF USAREUR HOW  
TO SOLDIER! CONGRATULATIONS --

Jack  
DINCPR —



LTC Howard Boone has served in Ordnance troop assignments with the 881st Ordnance Company in Germany, the 9th Infantry Division at Ft Lewis, Washington, the 63d Maintenance Battalion in Vietnam, and has commanded the 498th Support Battalion, assigned first to the 2d Armored Division at Ft Hood, and then the 1st Armored Division in Germany. His key staff assignments have included assignments as both instructor and Project Officer for new materiel development, to include major Army systems, at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. He has been an Ordnance Advisor in Vietnam, and later was Service Director, Long Binh Depot. He has also served on the staff of the Army Materiel Command in Washington, D.C. From 1966-68, he served as Military Assistance Plans and Programs Officer in the Republic of Liberia. LTC Boone is a 1957 graduate of Hampton Institute, having received a B.S. degree in Industrial Education. He also holds a master's degree in business administration from Babson College. He is a graduate of C&GSC and the Army War College. LTC Boone's decorations include the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star. He is married to the former Margaret Brooks of Baltimore, Maryland. They have three sons and a daughter.



IT is a well-known fact that the history of the United States is a history of the struggle for the right of self-government. The people of this country have always been proud of their freedom, and they have always been ready to defend it. In the early days of the Republic, the people were often oppressed by the government, and they were often forced to fight for their rights. But in the end, they always won. They won because they were right. They won because they were brave. They won because they were free. And they won because they were the people of the United States.

1877



## CHAPTER 5

### COMMAND OF A DIVISIONAL INFANTRY BATTALION IN CONUS

*by*

*LTC(P) Stanley G. Bonta*

#### INTRODUCTION

Command is something that there is much too little of in an Army career. Therefore, on change of command day, you must be fully prepared, enthusiastic, and ready to "move out" on a very challenging and fulfilling assignment—Infantry Battalion Command. The purpose of this narrative is to set forth a philosophy of command highlighting those techniques and areas of interest that were key to the overall success of the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry (Air Assault).

#### **Leadership by Example.**

We all talk about this leadership tenet but seldom follow it to the letter. I believe that leading by example is the quickest and surest way to gain respect and support of your soldiers.

First, be yourself. No one is fooled by a phony, trying to be someone or something that you are not. This is a sure way of losing respect. Being yourself is much easier than trying to emulate the personality of another.

Never ask your soldiers to do anything that you won't or can't do, no matter how tough or dangerous. This old Army adage is very appropriate for today's contemporary soldier. To accomplish this you must keep yourself physically fit and tough. Take physical training with your units daily. This does not suggest that you lead the formation. That's your unit commander's job. But be present in the formation and be seen by your soldiers. In training an Infantry Battalion for combat, there will be many instances where you, as the commander, can "lead the way" in performing physically demanding and dangerous tasks. Your soldiers will look to you for that leadership and inspiration and respect you for it.

Be honest, enthusiastic, aggressive, and always display a "can do" attitude. Be consistent and continually demand high standards in all endeavors. Set the example in your military appearance, dress, courtesy, and conduct.

To illustrate this tenet, Major General Sidney Berry led by example when he established the Air Assault School within the 101st Airborne Division. With keen foresight, he anticipated the Department of the Army's removal of the remaining elements of the Division from airborne status and the resultant adverse impact on troop morale. He established the new school, with a rigorous PT test requirement and encouraged brigade and battalion commanders to attend, along with their soldiers. He was an early graduate, along with this writer. His leadership provided an inspiration to many soldiers who were otherwise reluctant to attend the school because of airborne pride. My attendance aided in my objective to get a lot of my soldiers trained in air assault tactics as soon as possible, and therefore, made my unit more effective.

Very closely related to leadership by example is motivation. I have concluded that there are many techniques and methods of motivating people that apply to all individuals in an organization, but the most important is simply communicating with people. First, get to know your people by personally presenting a welcoming brief upon their arrival in the unit. The content and format of the briefing can be tailored to your own style, but should include as a minimum, a pitch on unit history and unit accomplishments; do's and don'ts of the unit; local pass policy; and your ground rules on military discipline. The mess hall provides a good setting with cake and coffee provided. Take this opportunity to introduce your CSM and Chaplain and have them present at the briefing.

Keep your soldiers informed by continually passing out the "poop," both good and bad. Payday formation, for example, provides an excellent forum for awards, recognition of outstanding performances on FTX's, school graduations, etc. Don't ever miss an opportunity to recognize formally one of your soldiers in front of his peers and the unit as a whole. This builds pride and unit esprit beyond belief. Adopt some type of battalion award for recognition, and use it frequently, but wisely. Also, use the Army awards system, which is very responsive. Take steps to get the division CG, ADC, and your brigade commander to attend and make presentations when their schedules permit. Choose a location which is not conducive to troop relaxation, such as the theater, for your troop information ceremonies. Don't forget to include dependents in your troop information programs when the situation requires it.

Closely akin to a good troop information program is the need to take care of your people and look out for their welfare. Although this seems rather basic and simple in nature, many commanders give it only lip service. First, have a fair and just promotion system for all grades. Make your promotion policies known to all, and monitor the system to insure close attention to detail regarding promotions by your unit commanders.

Soldiers need their money on time. Too many times finance records are incorrect, resulting in late or insufficient pay. You and your chain of command can alleviate this problem by caring about your people and their problems.

Never miss an opportunity to give your soldiers time off for a job well done, and always insure they get the time off when they've earned it. Provide your soldiers with good food. As the battalion commander, you are obligated to make your mess hall the "best," and you should take whatever steps necessary to achieve that end.

Finally, insure that your soldiers have the best living conditions available. Inspect the troop billets frequently with your chain of command to insure cleanliness, neatness, and proper maintenance.

A well-motivated organization should never pass up an opportunity to "sell itself." By that I mean as the commander you should ask for and seek high-priority, tough missions from higher headquarters. These tough missions, along with visits by high-ranking dignitaries, will come automatically once your unit has gained stature. Always insist that the high-ranking visitors talk with your soldiers.

All the motivational aspects of leadership discussed have a "snow-balling" effect on the individual soldier's pride and esprit. Suddenly, your unit becomes known, you attract outstanding people, and your job becomes easier to perform.

In my view a successful battalion commander leads by example; is physically fit and tough; identifies with and communicates with his soldiers; displays an aggressive "can do" attitude; displays common-sense; seeks out and thrives on hard work and difficult problems; and never does anything half-way. The following are important leadership traits of a good infantry troop leader: be decisive, dynamic, forceful, energetic, enthusiastic, and self-confident.

### **Discipline.**

To me, discipline is the very foundation upon which the Army rests. Without it, your unit cannot and will not accomplish its mission. Discipline makes a unit or an individual react in the absence of leaders and orders. It causes adherence to unpopular decisions. Tough, demanding tasks become easier to accomplish. Without discipline, the soldier is helpless in the confusion, stress, dangers, and hardships of the battlefield.

You, as the commander, must set the tone for discipline throughout your unit. Demand high standards of conduct and be prepared to deal with violators in a "hard but fair manner." The Army Chief of Staff, General Rogers, expressed the importance of discipline in today's Army when he said, "Standards in every area—discipline, training, performance, appearance, and all others—must and will be high standards. If any volunteer, once he or she meets the enlistment or commissioning standards, which also will remain high, cannot measure up after appropriate counseling and assistance, then the commander must utilize the tools available to remove that soldier from our ranks."

You must continually articulate the ground rules regarding discipline and conduct to your soldiers, through the human relations council, race relations conferences, payday talks, or whatever forum is available. Your standards must be clear, not "weasel-worded," and known to all.

The chain of command, especially company commanders, require guidance on disciplinary matters involving military justice. As commander, you should provide this guidance, being careful to avoid command influence. Additionally, the JAG can provide classes on Article 15, summary and special courts, search and seizure techniques or any legal subject deemed appropriate.

I believe, as a general rule, an individual with two or three Article 15's at company level should receive a battalion commander's Article 15. One of the most effective forms of punishment available at Fort Campbell is the Correctional Custody Facility or CCF. It takes away the soldier's freedom, causes him to "earn his pay" in a closely supervised work effort at an on-post facility, and provides him extra training in school of the soldier. CCF is viewed by the troops as more severe than forfeiture of pay. Pretrial confinement should be used for more serious offenses such as long AWOL's, drug offenses and assault. For the battalion commander's hearing, the entire chain of command of the accused should be present, for a clear and honest presentation of the facts surrounding the case. Each case must be tried, based on its own merit, and punishment should be consistent and progressive for repeat offenders.

Expeditious discharge and bars to reenlistment are good management tools available to the commander, but careful monitoring is required while in the administrative process. Remember the expeditious discharge is not intended to replace sound leadership practices.

While discussing discipline, it is important to mention military appearance and courtesy. Many commanders take this for granted, say a few words about it at commander's meeting, then forget it. Don't fall into this trap. Oftentimes, opinions of your unit are formed by first impressions of how your soldiers look and act. Demand high standards of appearance and courtesy. Require your leaders to make corrections and punish those personnel who are deficient in these important responsibilities. Extra training in school for the soldier on weekends or after duty hours is a recommended course of action.

### **Training.**

Simply stated, training must be interesting, exciting, and planned with imagination. Most importantly, don't waste the soldiers' time with stereotyped subjects that have no purpose other than to fill in the training schedule. The watchwords for training are planning, coordination, and supervision.

To add interest and excitement in tactical training, integrate such things as rappelling, stream crossing, helicopter ladder climb, ambush techniques and patrolling. High-intensity, short-duration operations that are performance-oriented provide an excellent means to evaluate a unit's overall tactical proficiency. For tactical problems, a reconnaissance or terrain walk by the officer-in-charge of training precludes wasted time on the part of the troops.

Periodically plan and execute something imaginative and extraordinary. For example, try a 25-mile road march requiring 90 percent or better of assigned personnel to complete the march in under seven hours. This type of exercise takes detailed planning and execution, places the soldier under physical and mental stress as in combat, and requires the chain of command to "do their thing." Most importantly though, if done well, it gives the soldier a sense of accomplishment and something to remember his unit by.

Consider adventure training and orienteering as diversions from the normal day-to-day activities. These provide valuable training, the troops like them, and they provide rest and recreation.

Individual weapons training and proficiency cannot be overemphasized for a combat battalion. A good technique is to centralize the training by assigning responsibility for training and range firing of a particular weapon to a specific unit, e.g., give A company the M-60 Machine Gun. This carries over into other type training



such as Expert Infantryman's Badge. Range scheduling and ammunition forecasts must be very carefully planned, and programmed well in advance. Remember to include all type weapons in your training program and fire them frequently to maintain proficiency. Inject competition between units/gunners when possible to stimulate interest. Don't forget to reward the winners.

A tough and rigorous daily physical training program is an absolute necessity for a combat battalion. As a minimum, each day should include a variation of the Army's daily dozen, followed by at least a 2-mile run, not to be confused with the "Airborne Shuffle." This program can be varied from time to time with grass drills, log exercises, obstacle and confidence course, and athletic competition between units. In my view, the daily run is key and is a spinoff of discipline, closely related to combat readiness. Tough physical hardships become easier to cope with for a physically fit individual. General Rogers put it this way, "We will have an Army which is in tough physical condition, with a high level of stamina; an Army which has eliminated the excess fat hanging over belts of some of our soldiers, both officer and enlisted." As an Army troop leader, I would hate to have on my conscience deaths on the battlefield from fatigue and lack of endurance.

### **Tactical Field Proficiency.**

Remember that a visitor to your field location sees how your soldiers look and makes that same first and lasting impression of your unit as in garrison. To be prepared for this, but more importantly to prepare your battalion for combat, you must set and demand high standards in the "basics" of field soldiering. Because of the big picture, we as tactical commanders oftentimes lose sight of the importance of the "basics" to the training of our soldiers. The following is a list of the more important "basics" as I see them, with a few words about selected ones:

1. Soldiers wear helmets and combat equipment always. Develop a winter and summer SOP listing contents/arrangement for pistol belts, combat pack and bedroll. Don't allow make-shift uniforms. Only issued items should be worn. Units should be uniform with only slight variation, to meet individual commanders' desires.

2. Soldier has his weapon on his person always. Do not, I repeat, do not deviate from this. Action should be taken against violators. Being firm on this will solve any lost weapons problems. Consider tying weapons to the person in certain situations, such as when riding on helicopters. While in the field, weapons must be cleaned daily and more often, if required.

3. Soldiers should be thoroughly camouflaged always. Place it over the entire body and change it frequently.

4. Noise and light discipline. I recommend no smoking after EENT. Punish violators. Train to move quietly both day and night. No yelling; use hand-arm signals and whistles when appropriate.

5. Dig in and make maximum use of cover.

6. Check all individual and crew-served weapons positions for proper placement and fields of fire. "Get down" behind the weapon. Don't forget range cards.

7. Security always. On the move, front, rear, and flanks. Daytime, OP's—night time, LP's. Teach proper challenging techniques. I recommend 50 percent alert at night in the defense, 100 percent at BMNT for stand-to! Stern disciplinary action must be taken against anyone found sleeping who should not be.

8. Good communications. Nets should be crisp, policed, and free of extraneous traffic. Proper radio-telephone procedure used always. Antenna farms should be a good "standoff" distance from your CP.

9. Proper combat formations. Requires much training. Adapt to terrain and enemy situation. Practice terrain navigation day and night.

10. Practice good field sanitation. Carry plastic bags for garbage. SOP to police upon leaving a position, or as situation permits. Check on this frequently.



11. Personal hygiene. Insure that soldiers take care of themselves, particularly their feet in damp weather and exposed skin in winter. Require that soldiers shave daily.

12. Battalion command post. Keep austere, one small tent required. Always have security. I recommend a platoon from one of the companies. Completely camouflaged. Move frequently. Set same high standards for the battalion trains area.

This is by no means an all-inclusive list. Obviously, most of the items listed are responsibilities of the squad leaders but require constant check by leaders at all levels. Classes are recommended for junior leaders prior to all field training exercises. Develop a simple but realistic tactical SOP which incorporates your ideas, then stick to it. Develop a "check list" approach among your chain of command.

Keep firm in your mind the importance of your Battalion Reconnaissance Platoon, a unit which is often overlooked. The "eyes and ears" for the battalion, this unit should have the best people available to serve in it. The platoon is organized to accomplish a variety of missions and should be manned, trained, and capable of performing sustained independent operations. This further substantiates the need for top-notch people. As the vanguard for the battalion, this is your unit to employ tactically. You should personally hand-pick the personnel to serve in this elite organization.

Next, for your consideration, I have some random thoughts on areas of lesser importance than previously discussed that worked for me as a battalion commander.

Use your people by allowing everyone to do his job. When a subordinate is free to do his job, he perceives this trust and confidence from his superiors and takes more pride in his job, himself, and the organization's goals and objectives. Delegation of sufficient authority and proper use of subordinates helps develop future leaders. This is a moral responsibility of every commander.

Take steps to enhance the role of the noncommissioned officer within your organization. Have frequent NCO calls to get their suggestions, discuss plans, policies, and other pertinent topics to make them feel an important part of the battalion. The NCO can be relied upon to perform the myriad tasks for which they are responsible. General William DePuy has suggested recently that we turn over the bulk of individual training to the NCO. General Rogers reinforced this by directing that with increased responsibilities must, and will, come increased authority for the noncommissioned officer. Don't become discouraged when you don't have a full complement of NCO's. Look for those young men with extraordinary leadership abilities who are ready to step out front and lead. Make them Acting Jacks, entrust them with your confidence and be assured that they will get the job done. Give them the same command backing provided the hard stripe, more experienced NCO's.

Your CSM can be an aggressive and effective adviser when used wisely. He should have a free reign to roam the area, "check the pulse" of the unit and provide his appraisal of the important indicators, discipline, morale, and esprit de corps. Your chaplain should be located in the troop area with the troops and should be encouraged to spend maximum time with them, both in garrison and the field. He is a valuable source of information regarding the men and their welfare, and can sense and provide a keen insight into leadership or disciplinary problems within a subordinate unit.

Remember, the "buck stops" on the company commander's desk. He's the man who ultimately puts everything together and makes it work. Understand his occasional frustration and empathize with him by remembering that you were there once yourself. The most important thing you can do for him is to frequently establish mission priorities, from your viewpoint, and thereby clearly define where his efforts should be directed. Be understanding, and expect that your unit commanders will make a mistake or two.

In the area of supply and maintenance, my advice is fourfold. First, establish proper rapport and a relationship with each of your support units by exchanging visits by key personnel in an effort directed at mutual understanding of each other's jobs and problems. Visit and become acquainted with the logistical facilities that provide a service to your unit, particularly the self-service supply center and the central issue facility. Second, become technically proficient in logistics and know how the system works. With this new-found knowledge, you will be better prepared to assist and advise your commanders and staff in logistical matters, and the entire system

will be more responsive to the needs of your unit. Emphasize supply economy continually at commander's calls and troop orientations. People who negligently lose or abuse their equipment should pay for it, and disciplinary action should be taken. Finally, the key to good maintenance is to get your unit commanders and the entire chain of command personally involved during all scheduled maintenance periods. This is not the time for unit commanders to catch up on paperwork or handle disciplinary matters. Add a little variety by having a "command motor stables" once in a while. By that I mean, have everyone there, set up a PA set and perform maintenance "by the numbers."

To prepare for IG's and other inspections, the onus should be on your staff to advise and assist the units in their respective areas of responsibility. Detailed guidance should be passed out early. Then, by personal inspection and frequent conferences, check the progress that is being made. Close attention to detail and intense supervision are keys to success. Again, develop a "check list" approach to this important aspect of your command tour.

Reenlistment is an area of vital concern to you as a commander. Reenlistment is the end-product of all the things discussed up to this point, and will be easier in a well-disciplined, fully motivated, and combat-ready outfit. However, as commander, there are certain steps you can take to insure retention of the good soldiers in whom the Army has invested. Meet with the battalion re-up NCO at least twice weekly to be briefed and brought "up to speed" on the entire reenlistment picture in your unit. Then you will be able to exert pressure when and where necessary to by-pass administrative roadblocks. Require your company commanders to know in detail the reenlistment situation in their units. Talk to them daily about it. When appropriate, personally talk to those people who are having trouble making up their minds about an Army career.

Social activities play an important role and should be included in your busy schedule. In addition to the monthly parties and Hail and Farewells, I recommend frequent Happy Hours on Friday after work with your officers and their wives. Attendance need not be mandatory. You will find this to be an excellent way of developing a genuine camaraderie among your officers and their ladies. This also provides an excellent forum for junior officer calls, on occasion, to explain your policies, hear their grievances, and get their recommendations for improvement of the battalion. Have the ladies join you later.

Develop an effective way to manage your time. The concept of "selective neglect" is fraught with danger and is not a recommended course of action. Being able to communicate in a succinct and concise manner, being well organized with the ability to get at the heart of the problem immediately, is the best way I've found to save valuable time. By all means, avoid long, drawn-out meetings.

In this paper the focus has been on those areas which are oftentimes overlooked or taken for granted by many commanders. Though basic they may seem, in my view they make the difference between outstanding units and mediocre ones. To summarize, I've talked about leadership by example and its importance as a leadership technique for gaining and maintaining the respect and admiration of your soldiers. I know of no better way. Never ask your soldiers to do anything that you won't or can't do yourself, no matter how tough or demanding. Discipline is the very foundation upon which the Army rests. Without it, your unit will fail. You gain and maintain discipline by demanding high standards in everything your unit does. Then you and your unit commanders "come down hard" on people who do not measure up to your standards. Clearly define your ground rules for discipline to the troops. In training, use imagination; make the training interesting, exciting; and don't bore the troops or waste their time. The "basics" are often taken for granted in field tactical operations. Don't fall into this trap. Remember, these are the things which save lives in combat.

The hallmark of a good infantry battalion is one that can "do it all." To me that means a unit that can perform equally well in the field as in garrison. A unit with soldiers who look like soldiers, act like soldiers, and train like soldiers will fight like soldiers.



LTC Stanley G. Bonta, Infantry, was commissioned through ROTC from Eastern Kentucky State College, in 1957. He served in command and staff assignments in the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 501st Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, until June 1960. He was reassigned to Germany, where he served as S-3 Air and Rifle Company Commander in the 1st Battle Group, 19th Infantry, 24th Infantry Division until June 1963. In 1964-65, he served as an Advisor in Vietnam. Upon return to CONUS, he was assigned as Assistant Professor of Military Science at Tennessee Technological University until 1968. He then was reassigned to Vietnam to the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) where he served as Brigade S-3 and Brigade Executive Officer, 198th Infantry Brigade. He was reassigned to Hawaii in August 1970 where he served as Joint Plans Officer with US Army, Pacific. LTC Bonta was reassigned to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in April 1973 where he served as Executive Officer, 3d Brigade (Airborne), and Commander, 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry through October 1975. He was reassigned to the US Army Concepts Analysis Agency through June 1976. LTC Bonta is a graduate of the Naval Command and Staff College and the US Army War College. His decorations include the Legion of Merit; the Bronze Star Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters; the Air Medal with "V" Device and 11 awards; the Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device and one Oak Leaf Cluster; the Combat Infantryman's Badge; Senior Parachutist Badge; the Ranger tab; the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Silver Star; the Vietnamese Honor Medal; and the Vietnamese Staff Service Medal. He is married and has three sons.



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## CHAPTER 6

### COMMAND OF A NON-DIVISIONAL ADA BATTALION IN KOREA

*by*

*LTC Norman E. Jarock*

#### INTRODUCTION

My opportunity to command a battalion came unexpectedly in early 1974. I had been serving a "short tour" in Korea with the 38th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, the Army's air defense component of Eighth United States Army since July 1973, specifically assigned as executive officer of the Brigade's one Nike Hercules battalion. Although I was a promotable major, and was designated by Air Defense Branch for command assignment (use of command selection lists was not begun until 1975), immediate command seemed to be a remote possibility.

Events on the evening of 27 December 1973 in the 1st Battalion (HAWK), 2d Air Defense Artillery transformed that remoteness to imminence. A group of black soldiers had, that night, caused significant damage to military property and injury to several white soldiers in Headquarters Battery of that battalion in a brief outburst of violence. A preliminary investigation showed that the incident of 27 December was only a symptom of serious, deep-seated problems within the battalion. A lengthy, comprehensive investigation was initiated, with subsequent relief of the Battalion Commander. I assumed command of the 1st Battalion, 2d Air Defense Artillery (1/2 ADA) on 22 February 1974.

My intent is to express what I felt was the best way to carry out my responsibilities as Commander, 1/2 ADA. I will not formulate a list of principles. Instead, I will relate my approach in the first months of command; some peculiarities of Korean command; and special considerations related to commanding a nondivisional ADA battalion assigned a 24-hour a day mission. To the extent possible, I will assess the successes and failures of my efforts.

So, this writing deals with the subject of command from a limited and personal point of view. Hopefully, from that, the expectant battalion commander can glean something useful.

#### ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND

Of all duty assignments in which an Army officer serves, I feel that troop command is the most rewarding, professionally and personally. It offers the chance to lead soldiers in accomplishment of a military mission. But equally important, command provides the opportunity to minister to the needs, personal and social, of those same soldiers, to assist them in their time of trouble, and to share in their comradeship.

And so, when the command was offered to me, there was no hesitation in acceptance. It meant an extension of my tour in Korea, to remain in command for at least one year, but that was not an issue since I had brought my family to Korea at my personal expense. And my wife and I had agreed that command would be the one (and only) reason a tour extension would be sought.

Yet, no small feeling of apprehension had to be suppressed as I assumed the command. Surmounting all my concerns was whether there would be any recalcitrant tensions still existent from the disturbance of 27 December. That incident, together with the turbulence caused by the subsequent investigation and relief of the Battalion Commander, would necessarily have impacted seriously on the Battalion's morale and esprit. Also concerning me was the fact that I was yet a major, not to be promoted for over three months. The executive officer was my senior in rank, but not yet promotable. That would necessarily exacerbate the normal hesitancy in any unit to yield full acceptance of a new commander, at least until he demonstrated competence.

All that lay on the positive side of the ledger was confidence engendered by earlier troop duty, especially HAWK battery command in Okinawa and Vietnam in the mid-1960's, and the confidence expressed by the 38th Brigade's Commanding General in selecting me for the position.

My immediate tasks were clear. The most pressing problem was to attack the root causes of the incident that led to my predecessor's relief and to move to reestablish morale and esprit. I had to evaluate Battalion readiness and to take whatever immediate steps were necessary to upgrade that readiness. But to do those tasks, I would need the support of key staff and battery personnel. They would be relied on heavily in the first months.

#### **First Meetings with Staff and Commanders.**

The first two weeks were spent in comprehensive visits to staff sections and battery areas, and in meetings with key staff and battery personnel. My purpose was to ask for their individual and collective support, solicit their thoughts on urgent problem areas or issues, and relate those of my policies which I felt had to be established at this point.

— My first meeting was a private one with the Executive Officer, hopefully to ameliorate any strain existent in our special relationship vis-a-vis rank. I simply asked for his support. He had been Acting Commander for a month during the investigation, and had chosen to remain as executive officer although offered reassignment by the Brigade Commander who recognized the problem of relative rank. To my gratitude, he gave me dedicated and loyal support during the remaining four or five months he remained in Korea.

— I also met with the Battalion Command Sergeant Major (CSM) to get his assessment of the situation in the Battalion. My relationship with him in the next 11 months until he departed Korea was to be guided by experience gained in my first battery command. (That First Sergeant respectfully, but often, reminded me that he had more stripes than I had bars and years of service combined, and I would do well to use his counsel at times.) The CSM would be my consultant in all matters, and my link with the enlisted men of the battalion. He would travel with me everywhere, on all command visits to the batteries, to staff conferences in the Battalion and at Brigade. It must be made clear that the CSM was not my enlisted aide. He was an experienced, combat-hardened soldier who frankly would not have accepted such a role.

— The first meeting with key Battalion staff members was as substantive as I could make it. The one policy which I stressed most emphatically was that the staff had only one reason for existence—to serve the batteries, assisting them in mission accomplishment. "Activity traps"—self-perpetuating activities—would be eliminated. Staff responsibilities and relationships would not be changed until I could evaluate them. I did emphasize that the Executive Officer would be the staff coordinator and day-to-day manager of the headquarters. This would be a critical responsibility because of the geographic remoteness of the batteries and the need for me to be away from the headquarters such a great part of the time.

— The CSM accompanied me on initial visits to Headquarters Battery and the firing batteries. My motive was to gain visibility, to demonstrate to Battalion soldiers that the command element had been reestablished, and to gauge morale and readiness. I met as many people and tried to observe as many things as possible. Commanders were asked to identify Battalion or Brigade support that was inadequate and, thereby, impacting on readiness or people. To avoid impugning my predecessor, I did not directly elicit their thoughts about factors which provoked the 27 December incident. Besides, I did not enjoy their confidence at this point, so my efforts would probably not have met with much success. Two policies were stressed to the Battery Commanders. First, I wanted to be kept informed; that I could not react to their needs if I had no knowledge of those needs. Second, I intended to let them run their batteries as long as I felt they were effectively doing so.

#### **First Actions.**

The perceptions I formed in the first weeks were that operational readiness was ostensibly at an acceptable state, but people had been neglected. There seemed to be inadequate emphasis on living conditions, consistent discipline, and so on. In my judgment, inattention to people problems over some period had fomented in many of the soldiers distrust of their leadership and had been instrumental in creating the tensions which were manifested outwardly on 27 December.

— The Executive Officer, as Acting Commander, had taken many positive steps to reduce tensions. Yet, I felt it was necessary to take wide-ranging measures to restore troop confidence in their chain of command, to demonstrate command concern for troop welfare. The action I decided on was to formalize and enforce a set of people-oriented policies. Some were formed on the advice of the Brigade Commander, some with the counsel of the CSM and other staff members. They were promulgated, together with accompanying rationale, either in writing or orally, at conferences with battery commanders and staff members. It must be clarified that the need for the corrective actions intended by these policies did not exist in equal magnitude in each of the five batteries. Some commanders were performing some of the actions to some degree already.

It will be evident that few of the policies are innovative. They are merely common sense. Many were already established Brigade Commander's policies. Notwithstanding, they needed to be established in 1/2 ADA when I assumed command.

- *Assignment of Personnel.* Many personnel were not serving in their military occupational specialty. Besides causing inefficiency, this negatively affected morale by precluding promotions in some cases, and by forcing men to serve in duties for which they were untrained. Commanders were, thereafter, required to justify periodically all malassignments. To the extent possible, reassignment between batteries was instituted to correct the problem. It was also necessary to work closely with Brigade to insure MOS imbalances were corrected.

- *Living Conditions.* Because the Korean tour is, in most cases, served unaccompanied by dependents, troop living conditions are critical to morale. Yet, this aspect of troop welfare had been largely neglected in the Battalion. Battery commanders were directed to develop and implement an upgrade program of dining facilities, recreational facilities, manning crew quarters in the tactical area and troop barracks. The problem I experienced in barracks upgrade deserves special mention. Perhaps one-half was nearly uninhabitable. The partitions between billets were partially or completely damaged by fist or foot, "FTA" was prominently proclaimed, psychedelic paint dominated the decorating scheme, door screens and locks were damaged, and the list could go on. To relate a more extreme example, I entered a quonset hut barracks at about 0900 hours one day in my first or second week of command on a routine inspection tour with the battery commander. A space heater (our source of heat in nearly all barracks) had been somehow knocked over, its pipes, soot, and fuel scattered about. Almost every partition of the approximately 12-man barracks was damaged or destroyed. Broken glass (from liquor bottles) was everywhere. The building was deserted. Later investigation failed to produce any evidence; all occupants had been out of the barracks at the time, or sleeping. At least, so the story went. The policy I instituted was harsh, but precluded further wholesale barracks damage. Perpetrators of even minor intentional damage were subjects of disciplinary action and pecuniary liability. When "no witnesses" existed, a 24-hour barracks guard was mounted with barracks occupants on their off-duty time. The guard continued until the guilty individual was identified or the damage was repaired by the occupants at their expense. Only removable personal decorations were allowed in billets and violations were cause for a repainting by the perpetrator or barracks occupants. The chain of command was directed to tour barracks frequently, especially during evening hours. As mentioned above, the above method worked effectively to curb large-scale barracks damage. Minor damage occurred occasionally thereafter, in most cases the effort of an intoxicated or frustrated individual soldier. Two desirable results are attributable to the above policy. First, barracks occupants established a system of self-police, preferring to use their free time and money for more constructive activities than barracks renovation. Second, and more importantly, a positive effect on morale resulted among that large majority of troops who occupied the barracks, had not caused the damage, but had tolerated the situation, for whatever reasons.

- *Discipline.* It was recognizable, in early weeks, that there were a large number of punitive actions, judicial, nonjudicial, and administrative, which had not been pursued toward termination. The effect was a large number of troops with indefinite futures and the spectre of punishment constantly in their mind. They were resultantly ineffective as soldiers, and a destabilizing factor relative to morale. My initial policy required commanders to review all disciplinary cases, dismiss or complete them, or forward them for necessary action to higher levels. (As my time in command progressed, I took measures to make the Battalion disciplinary standards consistent. That subject will be treated later.)

- *Equal Opportunity/Treatment Team.* The Brigade Commander had directed establishment of "EOT Teams" in each battalion. His policy was that all officer and enlisted personnel would attend at least one 18-hour session relating to EOT matters during their tour. As an extension, the EOT Team was an agent to gauge racial



climate, morale, and attitude, and acted as a "fire brigade" when any racial tensions developed. My policy was simply to enforce the Brigade policy, basically overlooked previously in 1/2 ADA. In my estimate, the favorable racial climate that ultimately existed in the Battalion can be greatly attributed to the efforts of the EOT Team.

- *Open Door.* My policy directed each battery commander to observe an "open door" policy, both formally and informally. Formally, a specified period would be established for troop access to the commander. Informally, I encouraged that commanders be available at any hour to listen to the soldiers' complaints or problems, and make a genuine effort to assist, counsel, and console. My own application of this policy reaped untold benefits in sensing the pulse of Battalion morale and esprit, gaining information not forthcoming through more established channels, quelling disciplinary and personal problems before they became unmanageable, and generally looking out for the troops.

- *Acting Inspector General.* The Battalion Acting IG was the Battalion Executive Officer. My policy was that he would visit all batteries periodically and be accessible in the headquarters at any time. Actually, this policy was only marginally successful but not because of a lack of desire or capability on the part of the Executive Officer. Unfortunately, the duties of the Executive Officer are so overwhelming that he cannot devote the time necessary to Acting IG work. The troops do not experience positive results and eventually stop employing this channel for assistance or complaints. In my opinion, a special staff officer, preferably a captain with company-level command experience possessing empathy for troop problems, should be allocated each battalion for full-time employment as an Acting IG. It is a necessary, vital function but not effective as currently established.

— Once initial assessment visits to batteries and staff sections had been completed and, concurrent with the effort to address the people problems as discussed above, I gave greater attention to the question of Battalion mission readiness. As mentioned earlier, my initial impression was that readiness was adequate. But I wanted to undertake a more comprehensive appraisal.

- The 1/2 ADA is organized with four firing batteries, a headquarters and headquarters battery, and a direct support (HAWK system peculiar maintenance and supply) unit. The Battalion mission is 24-hour daily air defense of the Seoul-Inchon-Suwon-Osan complex. Two of the firing batteries are on a high state of alert and two are in a training or deep maintenance status, at any given time.

- Having served extensively in command and staff positions with HAWK units, I was quite knowledgeable of the operations and technicalities of the HAWK system. My technique to assess operational readiness, therefore, was to arrive unannounced, at any hour, at a firing battery on high state of alert and conduct a Combat Readiness Evaluation. The CRE objective is to test the battery's ability to simulate launch of a missile within the state of alert time designation; for example, a battery on 15-minute alert had to simulate launch in less than 15 minutes. The CRE requires that crew and equipment performance meet prescribed standards and is an excellent tool for measuring training and equipment readiness.

- In addition to the use of CRE's to evaluate operational readiness, I personally conducted random checks of other key battery equipment: trucks and trailers, since Battalion was organized in a mobile configuration; generators, since in the tactical areas they used generator power only. The vehicle I used for these spot checks was the Equipment Serviceability Criteria check, either partially or completely conducted.

- Through the use of these techniques, I was able to get a reasonably in-depth idea of the state of Battalion readiness. I confirmed my initial impression, that operational readiness was adequate; the mission was being accomplished. But, there were many areas where improvement was needed, and my effort in the next 11 months was directed toward that improvement.

- Again, the action I did take early was to establish policy. Battery commanders were directed to conduct frequent readiness evaluations, both CRE's and ESC's, to become more aware of their battery's readiness. The S-3 and S-4 staff elements, the Director Support Unit, and the Battalion Motor Maintenance Section were directed to become more active in conducting their own evaluations and establish a program to assist the batteries in a readiness upgrade program. The objective of my early policy, therefore, was to make commanders and staff elements personally aware of readiness deficiencies and establish a corrective program based on headquarters support of firing batteries.



## COMMAND PHILOSOPHY IN GENERAL

In the preceding section, I related my approach in the first two months after assuming command. My intent in this section is to discuss more generalized thoughts about battalion command, and some techniques and methods I employed over the course of my command.

— *Command Visibility.* In my opinion, a commander should be visible, evaluating people and mission readiness by personal contact, not by reports. I spent at least a half day at each battery weekly, varying my schedule on succeeding visits to observe activities at all times of the day. The agenda included at least one meal, a barracks tour, and a visit to all work areas.

- A special effort was made to spend time talking to the troops. It is amazing what response sometimes come to a simple "How's it going?" In answer, a soldier will surface discontent, personal problems, his attitude. Individual and eventually collective morale is enhanced.

- On the cautionary side, it is easy to serve in a de facto role as battery commander. Or, the battery commander can become too reliant on your presence and become too reticent to act independently. Both situations are undesirable. On the other hand, frequent contact with subordinate commanders allows you to assist them where inexperience exists; it gives them access to your more informal thoughts (your real policies), and therefrom they learn.

— *Administration.* Because I spent much of my time away from the headquarters, my policy was to let the staff handle administration. The Executive Officer was day-to-day headquarters manager as I mentioned earlier. Those administrative matters I had to attend to were handled evenings and on weekends. The S-1 officer gathered all documents for my review, decision, or signature in a folder and placed it in my quarters at the end of each day for my action. Later, I met with the Executive Officer to discuss any questions and discuss next day's activities.

— *Use of the Command Sergeant Major.* Earlier, I discussed my relationship with the CSM, but I will be more specific here. In visits to the batteries, he joined the First Sergeants to tour the unit and confer. He dealt with matters of discipline, morale, support; in short, any matter which impacted on the soldier was the concern of the CSM. We would subsequently discuss each other's observations on the lengthy trips back to the Battalion headquarters, or in sessions long into the night with other staff members. At staff conferences, the CSM provided advice, opinion, and information as necessary. My purpose in employing the CSM in the manner described above was threefold. First, he became an informed consultant to me, the staff, and battery personnel. Second, he gained visibility with the troops and became a legitimate, credible representative to the Battalion command element. And third, his experience, rank, and professional ability dictated that he be so employed. It is not my intent to detract from the importance of other staff or battery personnel, but I feel the CSM has the second most important role in the battalion, after the commander, if such prioritizing has merit or meaning.

— *Discipline.* Earlier, I discussed my first action related to discipline, undertaken primarily to purge the system of incompleting cases. Other policies relative to discipline were implemented later.

- Traditional indicators of discipline, appearance, and military courtesy were stressed. But I refrained from demanding obsessive adherence to standards and thereby causing these indicators to become an end in themselves. Instead, reasonable standards of appearance and military courtesy were enforced, and officers and noncommissioned officers were expected to set the examples.

- My punitive discipline policy strove for fairness through reasonable consistency. To the extent possible, two individuals culpably committing the same offense received the same degree of punishment. The corrective value of punitive discipline was emphasized, especially for first-time offenses. But punishment was justly harsh for repeated offenses by the same person, or for serious offenses.

- Certain offenses, because of their flagrancy, pervasiveness, or seriousness, were cause for punishment under Field Grade Article 15 or Special Courts Martial. Use of narcotics, especially marijuana, violation of ration control regulations, and simple assault were automatically handled by me using the Field Grade Article 15. Aggravated assault was submitted for trial by Special Courts Martial.

- A soldier receiving judicial or nonjudicial punishment was counselled that further offenses could be grounds for initiating administrative discharge action. Such counselling is an effective deterrent for the individual concerned about future employment.

- A pattern of adverse disciplinary actions was cause for initiating administrative discharge proceedings. I feel the Army should quickly eliminate those persons from its ranks who demonstrate unsuitability or unfitness for service.

- A cautionary comment is necessary. I feel that, in the spirit of consistency, punitive discipline became somewhat centralized at Battalion level. Resultantly, battery commanders lost some measure of latitude, and had little discretion regarding some offenses; for example, use of marijuana. It comes to a value judgment between full latitude for subordinates and consistent standards of discipline. I chose the latter for more serious, flagrant, pervasive offenses.

- Maximum advantage was taken by myself and the battery commanders of the services of the Judge Advocate General officer assigned to Brigade headquarters. We sought his advice often to preclude making legal errors, and, more importantly, to preclude injustice to the individual soldier.

— *Noncommissioned Officer Responsibility.* A fundamental change which I perceived in the Battalion in 1974 when compared with my battery-level experience of the mid-1960's was the apparent abdication by middle rank NCO's of their responsibilities for training, supervising, counselling, and care of their subordinates. At the end of the duty day, NCO's not performing mission alert status retreated to their quarters or off-post dwellings, not to be seen again until the next day. The camaraderie between NCO and private that enhances troop welfare, morale, and esprit and prevents disciplinary problems, was not evident with some exceptions. On the job, inefficient or unacceptable performance by low-ranking soldiers was greatly attributable to lack of training and supervision by NCO's. I reiterate that the problem was principally with middle rank NCO's, E-5's, E-6's, and some E-7's.

- The result was that the officers assumed NCO responsibilities, an undesirable situation because of capability, time, and experience constraints. Admittedly, my first impression was that the officers had abrogated NCO responsibilities. This impression changed over time, however.

- I decided not to confront the NCO's directly but appealed instead through the CSM/First Sergeant chain with some success. Commanders were told to demand that their NCO's meet responsibilities, and counsel those falling short of expectations. The enlisted efficiency report was used to reflect unacceptable fulfillment of responsibility, and in extreme cases, letters were placed in their official records reflecting their performance, and sometimes relief from duty positions occurred.

- These efforts were marginally successful at least in training and supervision. But for some reason, the middle grade NCO was reluctant to become involved in the counselling and care of his subordinates. In my opinion, some of the problem stemmed from the "shake and bake" promotion system of the late 1960's and early 1970's resulting in inexperienced and incompetent NCO's in the mid-1970's. Also, many of the NCO's spent their off-duty hours in the local villages and were unavailable for access by troops at those times.

— *Race Relations.* In retrospect, I am convinced that the incident of 27 December 1973 in Headquarters Battery was not a manifestation of endemic racial tensions. No question, that had been a confrontation between black and white soldiers, and there were others of a very minor nature during my year in command. But, I believe the incident was a manifestation of general troop discontent.

- I can say with candor that the troop-oriented policies implemented within my first two months of command were effective in eliminating most of the discontent. Troops perceived concern for their welfare from the chain of command. The policy explained above relative to discipline also had a positive effect on morale. The troops knew they would be dealt with if they committed a punishable offense, but that they would be fairly treated. Policy regarding promotions gave hope for advancement.

- So, in my opinion, equal opportunity and treatment were the measures that restored Battalion morale and esprit in the long run. And they served to generate a favorable racial climate. However, there were other measures that I took which unquestionably helped matters.

- The Equal Opportunity/Treatment Team was employed as mentioned earlier.

- When an incident occurred which had racial overtones, I personally became involved to the degree necessary, principally dependent upon whether I judged the battery commander was being effective. On one occasion, I spent an entire weekend at a battery in an effort to defuse tensions resulting from a beating of three whites by six blacks. Through a series of meetings with each side in the conflict, and in an all-afternoon meeting of all battery personnel, the tensions subsided. All parties in the conflict aired their grievances, and the grievances existed on both sides. An atmosphere of mutual understanding resulted, with eventual restoration of a favorable racial climate.

- If it became evident that an individual or group was purposely creating racial disharmony, I caused transfer within or outside of the Battalion. In one case, a soldier who was stirring the racial pot was transferred twice within about three months. He finally left Korea on change of station, not able to establish an effective following in either of the two new batteries.

### KOREAN COMMAND

There are peculiarities which characterize command in Korea that are worth relating briefly. Some of the peculiarities exacerbate problems of command, others offer opportunity.

— *Unaccompanied Tour.* Most military personnel serve the Korean tour unaccompanied by dependents. Some assignments are "command-sponsored," and accompanied, but these are mainly at Eighth Army level. And some personnel bring their dependents to Korea at personal expense, which I chose to do to avoid family separation. 38th ADA Brigade had no command-sponsored assignments. Given the fulltime air defense mission, this was advantageous. Most troops had no family to go home to, and could devote their attention to duty. But special problems did exist.

- A large number of young soldiers married Korean women during their tour. Some of the marriages were successful, others failed for various reasons: There were obvious cultural differences; and most relationships began in the ubiquitous bars surrounding each battery site, where the women worked as hostesses or prostitutes. These latter cases caused command problems. Fights between partners were common, and aggravated assaults occurred on several occasions. Punitive action was necessary, but often involved Korean police. The entire problem of discipline, therefore, was exacerbated by these marriages. Since battalion commanders were approving authorities for these marriages, I attempted to influence the matter by counselling prospective husbands about the difficulties that could face them. But I was seldom successful. In fact, early in my command, I disapproved several marriages quite summarily and was later overruled at Eighth Army level.

- Many personnel chose to engage in full-time association with a Korean girlfriend, or "yobo," during their tours, rather than marriage. Disciplinary problems resulted in some cases as related above. But my most serious problem involved more senior personnel, mostly NCO's, who were already married but kept a yobo. There were first the moral implications which concerned me. I did not want to enforce directly my moral standards on others. But there were leadership implications which did directly impinge on my responsibilities. In my judgment, an officer or NCO who compromised his integrity and loyalty in this manner was less effective as a leader. And, as mentioned earlier, he did not devote any off-duty time to the troops. I established a policy, therefore, for married battalion officers: job or yobo. Violation would result in removal from assignment. The career implication acted as a successful deterrent and I know of only one officer who chose yobo. Bachelor officers were counselled to "get away from the flag pole" if they wished to date Korean girls. I did not establish a similar policy with NCO's, feeling that enforcement would be nearly impossible. Instead, the CSM through the First Sergeants tried to discourage these relationships, with little success. In a few instances, NCO efficiency reports reflected neglect of responsibility, but unless job performance was clearly degraded, more serious action was not taken. Generally, attempts to ameliorate the yobo syndrome vis-a-vis married NCO's were unsuccessful.



— *Relations with Koreans*. Korea is rich in culture, and the people are warm and friendly. I retain fond memories of visits to ancient temples and other cultural centers, the excellent Korean food, and personal friendships.

- I had the pleasure and privilege of co-chairing a Korean-American Friendship Council; my counterpart was mayor of one of the major geographical districts of Seoul. The council's function was to foster favorable relationships and mutual cooperation between Koreans and US troops. The Korean membership included representatives of government and industry, and their friendly disposition toward the Battalion was beneficial on numerous occasions. For example, tours of local industries (including a brewery) were arranged monthly for the troops. And my appeal to the district's Chief of Police, a KAFC member, was instrumental in settling a great many incidents between Koreans and 1/2 ADA troops.

- But there were problems associated with the close contact with Koreans, also.

- Occasional fights occurred between Battalion troops and Koreans, especially in local village bars, often involving a woman, but sometimes caused by cultural and racial differences. Bad road conditions exacerbated by outrageous Korean driving habits and a general lack of appreciation by Korean pedestrians for the danger posed by any motor vehicle were the cause of numerous accidents involving 1/2 ADA vehicles. And each incident involving a Korean was cause for a Serious Incident Report to Eighth Army, with resulting command pressure.

- I resorted to relatively stringent measures to minimize these problems. An assault, even simple assault if circumstances warranted, was cause for special courts martial action. Conviction oftentimes resulted in confinement (in CONUS, since there was no US detention facility in Korea). Regarding motor vehicle accidents, I merely implemented 38th Brigade policy. Vehicle dispatches were limited to those absolutely necessary, and an NCO in grade of E-5 (actual) or above rode "shotgun."

- Another major problem caused by close contact and relations with Koreans, and no humor is intended here because of the seriousness of the matter, was venereal disease. VD was prevalent; the rate at which troops in Korea contracted VD was well over 100 percent in any period of time. (This interesting statistic is caused by frequently repeated contractions by the same soldiers.) The impact on the Battalion was a significant loss of presence for duty. Frankly, I was never really successful in solving this problem. Some success in limiting VD incidence in the Battalion was achieved through a preventive program of troop information and prophylaxes, and Eighth Army policy required prostitutes to carry special medical identification cards to be shown to customers on request. The Battalion Surgeon maintained liaison with local Korean officials and "madames" in an attempt to control disease in the prostitute population. Notwithstanding these preventive measures, the aid station was inundated by VD cases on a continual basis.

— *Black Market and Rationing*. The black marketing of commodities from US post exchanges, commissaries, and Class VI stores was a flourishing business in Korea. In an attempt at controlling the magnitude of the problem, each military member was authorized to spend limited amounts of currency in those activities, and many high-demand items were rationed. Each purchase was registered using individual ration control cards, and accounting of purchases was performed using computers. Many soldiers in Korea engaged in two punishable offenses: ration control violations (RCV), namely, overspending or overpurchasing of controlled items, and black market activity.

- The problem in 1/2 ADA was compounded by proximity to Seoul, the most active black market area in Korea. It was not unusual in early months of my command to get 20-30 RCV reports each month, with the concomitant command pressure to reduce that number.

- Initially, RCV reports were sent to the battery commanders for action. Because they did not appreciate the magnitude of the Eighth Army problem, and had limited punishment capability, their actions were largely ineffective in controlling the problem. Therefore, after a few months, I took these offenses under my jurisdiction for action under Field Grade Article 15. Each violation, unless very minor, was punished to some extent. Flagrant, serious violations were dealt with harshly. For example, a large overpurchase of controlled items that were in high demand on the black market (liquor, small appliances, certain grocery items like coffee, cocoa) was cause for a fine as high as \$200-\$250.



- This method of punishment was harsh, admittedly, but effective. First, within only two or three months, RCV reports dwindled to a trickle. Second, barracks scuttlebutt held that black market activities were not profitable in 1/2 ADA.

– *Physical Security.* In addition to Commissary, PX, and Class VI items, other commodities were valued on the black market, and available on US installations. Such items as small tools, vehicle repair parts, fuel, and antifreeze were in high demand on the market and resultantly always disappearing from installations.

- Tool security was effected to some degree by individual accountability. Specifically, the maximum number of tools were issued to individuals (rather than issuance to a section, for example), together with security devices such as locked tool boxes or cabinets. Frequent inventory was conducted, and shortages were the pecuniary liability of the individual.

- All personnel and vehicles were searched as they departed battery compounds. This practice was possible since all areas were fenced.

- Even with these precautionary measures, total loss was never eliminated. The fence lines were too long to prevent passage of all goods through them. The large number of Korean laborers could not be watched constantly. And the high profit on the black market was just too tempting to some US personnel.

– *Personnel Awareness.* A portion of every battery commander conference, of nearly every address I made to battery personnel, and of my welcoming conference for every newly assigned Battalion soldier was related to peculiarities of the Korean tour. The problems, pitfalls, implications, penalties were explained. Subordinate commanders conducted the same type command information campaign. I feel this had a positive effect in the long run. And, as my tour entered the latter months, a general decline in all the problems discussed above was quite evident, attributable to a combination of troop awareness, precautionary measures, and firm, consistent discipline.

## NON-DIVISIONAL AIR DEFENSE BATTALION COMMAND

The mission of a nondivisional air defense battalion poses challenges to its commander not encountered in peacetime by most other battalion commanders. Those challenges and my approach at meeting them is the subject of this section.

– *24-Hour Mission.* The mission of 1/2 ADA was mentioned above. The implication is evident—the Battalion and Battery command elements were on duty 24 hours every day.

- I usually was able to spend weekend nights and Sundays with my family, but even those times were frequently interrupted to respond to some incident. And telephone calls seemed to be incessant.

- The firing batteries, direct support unit, and Battalion operation center were TOE-organized for full-time operations. Each of those units had a manning crew at all times; crew rotation was usually on alert for 24 hours, on normal training and maintenance duty for 24 hours, and off-duty for 24 hours. When personnel shortages existed, and this was a common problem, crew members would be on alert 24 hours and off-duty for 24 hours. Those latter rotations were not conducive to high morale, and maintenance and training suffered.

- The burden of a 24-hour mission is significant on the troops. They were aware that soldiers from most other non-ADA units could plan on free evenings whereas they were on duty at least once every third evening and weekend, or more often. The burden on the officers was as great. Commanders and key staff officers were really on duty all the time, while other battery officers rotated duties.

- And so, a special mind set is necessary to perform such duty. Satisfaction comes from mission performance, and commanders must instill in their subordinates a sense of esprit based on that performance of mission. All possible efforts must be made to minister to troop welfare and enhance morale. That is essentially why I emphasized the significance of the Battalion morale in the first section of this paper, why my first actions were aimed at troop-oriented programs.

— *Battery Dispersion.* HAWK system capabilities allow Battalion deployment over a relatively large geographical area. In fact, my travel time in a 1/4-ton truck from my headquarters to the firing batteries varied from 30-60 minutes each. And I had no access to helicopter support for command travel.

- Support was difficult. Batteries made daily vehicular runs to headquarters and other support agencies. Direct Support Unit maintenance and supply teams were on the road continually. Helicopter support was provided through 38th Brigade for transfer of repair parts to a nonoperational firing battery.

- Isolation had a negative effect on morale. Access to Seoul's recreational facilities was difficult. And the isolation enhanced the attractiveness of the local village recreational activities.

- A special burden fell on the battery commanders. They operated with near autonomy most of the time in performance of a 24-hour mission. Simultaneously, they had to cope with people-problems, minister to troop welfare. Their responsibility in peacetime is as great as rests on any company grade officer.

- The geographic dispersion exacerbated my command problems. I had to be away from the headquarters most of the time. I already addressed how Battalion administration was handled, and my general schedule. But the impact was greater than on my schedule. Emphasis had to be placed on on-site facilities, including recreational. Advice to battery commanders at critical times was by telephone, since I could not get to any battery quickly. And care had to be exercised in selecting battery commanders. Their responsibility was great.

— *Operational Readiness.* Mission requirements dictated that the battalion remain at a continuously high state of operational readiness. First, training readiness was critical. Second, the equipment intensive nature of the HAWK system required that maintenance readiness be optimal.

- The S-3 officer had staff responsibility for both facets of operational readiness. He employed a Combat Readiness Evaluation team to evaluate the state of training and maintenance. Armed with these evaluations, and real-time reports from the Battalion Operation Center on battery operational status which included equipment outages, the S-3 officer reacted 24 hours a day to keep batteries operational.

- Training readiness was basically the responsibility of battery commanders. Alert procedures were prescribed, and crews were drilled informally to learn these procedures. Then, Battery-level and Battalion-level CRE's were conducted frequently both to train and evaluate training on these procedures.

- Equipment readiness was also the battery's responsibility. Organization provided for mechanics to repair nonoperational equipment. Assistance was provided by the Battalion Direct Support Unit. When I assumed command, the DSU was organized under the staff control of the S-4 officer. Because of DSU responsibility for HAWK-peculiar maintenance and supply, I found it advantageous to give the S-3 officer operational control over DSU activities. Based on his real-time knowledge of firing batteries' operational status, the S-3 officer could control the DSU more effectively.

- The Battalion CRE Team functions deserve attention. Earlier, I mentioned that a firing battery rotates through states of alert. Specifically, a battery would maintain a high state of alert one week, low state of training the next week, high state the third, and low state for maintenance the fourth. The CRE team would conduct a CRE on a battery prior to its assumption of a high state of alert and at least once during the week the battery was on alert. The team also assisted in battery maintenance and training during the other two weeks of low state of alert. Given four batteries all holding one of the alert statuses, it's evident the CRE team was very busy. Its contribution to readiness was critically important.

- In the concern with training and HAWK equipment readiness, three ancillary activities are sometimes overlooked. But their readiness contributes vitally to mission performance. First, tactical generators are the full-time source of power for all HAWK equipment. Second, tactical communications link the firing battery to higher echelons exercising operational control. Finally, motor vehicles are the carriers of support, and would contribute directly to moving the battery, given that necessity during hostilities. I quickly realized that as much

attention to readiness of these activities was necessary as to HAWK-peculiar readiness. Organizationally, the S-3 officer was responsible for the generator operations, and closely coordinated with the Communications Officer and S-4 officer in their activities with communications and motor vehicles.

- A last comment on readiness regards the commander's direct involvement—not responsibility, but involvement. I mentioned earlier my practice of the first few months in evaluating readiness—unannounced CRE's and Equipment Serviceability Criteria checks. I continued that practice throughout my command tour. And eventually, all battery commanders adopted that technique. Most importantly, these personal checks provided awareness of readiness. A bonus effect results when troops perceive their commander is professionally competent, and is concerned about how well they do their work. Troops take more care in job performance, and pride in accomplishment. Readiness is thereby enhanced.



LTC Norm Jarock has held command and staff assignments in the 30th ADA Brigade in Okinawa and the 97th ADA Group in Vietnam. He was XO of an ADA Battalion and later commanded the 1st Battalion, 2d ADA, in the 38th ADA Brigade in Korea. He has served as instructor at the Air Defense School, Ft Bliss, and spent three years on the Mathematics Department Faculty at West Point. He has also served as an action officer in the Requirements Directorate of ODCSOPS in the Pentagon. LTC Jarock is a 1958 graduate of St. Norbert College in Wisconsin where he received a B.S. degree in mathematics. In 1957, he was the leading rusher in the Nation with an average of over 18 yards per carry. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers, and in 1976, was inducted into the NAIA Hall of Fame. He also holds a master's degree in mathematics from Rensselaer Polytech Institute, Troy, New York. He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College and the US Army War College. LTC Jarock is married to the former Boots Krawczyk. They have four sons and a daughter.



## CHAPTER 7

### COMMAND OF A NON-DIVISIONAL TRANSPORTATION BATTALION IN CONUS

*by*

*COL Fred E. Elam*

A piece of spaghetti or a military unit can only be led from the front end.

General George S. Patton, Jr., 1942

Battalion-level command is certainly one of the most professionally challenging and satisfying assignments of an Army career. Most of us who approach this superb opportunity are filled with a mixture of pride and trepidation; pride at having been selected for command and trepidation in wondering whether or not we will measure up. A great deal of preparation and thought are essential prior to assuming command. To that end, what follows is a brief summarization of what worked (or did not work) for me.

My emphasis herein is on philosophy of command highlighting those elements which were key to successful command. My comments relate specifically to the command of a nondivisional motor transport battalion in CONUS stationed at a division post. The period of my command saw the transformation to an all-volunteer unit with the departure of the last draftee in November 1974 as well as the assignment of increasing numbers of women in a wide range of military occupational specialties.

#### RULES OF THE ROAD

At this point in your career you have served under a large number of commanders, each of whom employed a wide range of leadership techniques as he went about his duties as a commander. You undoubtedly, having observed these commanders, have developed your own leadership techniques (style) as you have progressed in your career. Irrespective of your own leadership style, there are some basic precepts that when added to the basic principles of leadership (know your men and look out for their welfare, etc.) can stand you in good stead as a battalion commander. I call these precepts the "Rules of the Road." While you may wish to add your own, seven rules are (in my opinion) basic to successful battalion command. I will enlarge on them later in this chapter. They are:

#### RULES OF THE ROAD

- + Be yourself.
- + Time is a resource.
- + You are not the only member of your battalion who wants to see it succeed!
- + Just because you order it done doesn't necessarily mean that it will be accomplished.
- + Beware of self-fulfilling prophecies.
- + Your contemporary battalion commanders are important to your own success as a commander.
- + "Sell" your unit.

In my opinion the single most-important key to successful command is to *be yourself*. Your very selection for command is indicative of the fact that your *own* unique qualifications have been judged by an impartial board of officers as constituting those qualities that contribute to success in command. Thus, when you assume command continue with the philosophy of leadership that has successfully brought you this far. Do not attempt to be someone you are not. Keep in mind the following:

ANYBODY  
who tries to be something  
to everybody  
is nobody to anybody

In continuing the theme of being yourself as a commander, the attitude you bring with you to your new command is vitally important. If you are confident in your own abilities (while recognizing the need to learn from each new leadership experience), that attitude will permeate your entire command. If, on the other hand, you refuse to make a decision until you are absolutely certain of the signals emanating from "on high," your attitude will be reflected in a conservative outlook by your staff and worst of all by a lack of initiative on the part of your subordinate commanders. In short, your attitude toward your command can be a very positive (or conversely a negative) factor in the motivation and initiative of your subordinates.

As a commander, you will be given a combination of resources in terms of men, money, materiel and time to accomplish your assigned mission. While my previous training had prepared me to manage the first three (men, money and materiel), it had not taught me to be a very good manager of time. While the first three resources are renewable, time is not. *Time*—both yours as a commander and that allocated to your troops for the attainment of the objectives you have established for them—*must be managed as carefully as the resources of men, money and materiel*. For now I want to concentrate on the commander's time. I found that efficient and effective utilization of my time was absolutely essential if I were to be able to do anything other than attend meetings and "put out fires." You should set aside a period of time daily to get out of the office and discover for yourself what is going on in your command. In addition, set aside a period of time each week (perhaps on the weekend) to reflect on what has gone well, as well as what has gone poorly. During many such sessions, I invited selected officers and noncommissioned officers to participate in an attempt to gain a wide variety of opinions and inputs for future planning. I (we) reassessed policies and objectives that had been established for the battalion by me or higher headquarters. Through this "feet-on-the-desk technique," I was able to assess trends, measure progress toward objectives and formulate broad planning guidance for future battalion activities.

At your change of command, the battalion colors will be passed to you and the green tabs pinned on—both of which will complete the process of passing the command to you. From now on, what the battalion does (or fails to do) is your responsibility—and you wouldn't have it otherwise! As you assume your command (and throughout your tenure as a commander) always keep foremost in your thoughts that *you are not the only member of your battalion who wants to see it succeed*! Good soldiers from private on up in your unit want to belong to a unit that consistently accomplishes its mission. They want to be part of a successful organization and will do their best to contribute toward that end. Your job is to direct (focus) their energies toward common goals and to eliminate those few soldiers in your organization who are a detriment to the successful accomplishment of your mission. By expecting that the members of your battalion want to succeed, you will find that the majority of your soldiers will try to come up to your expectations. Your confidence in them will be contagious. If, on the other hand, you expect that your soldiers are *not* interested in succeeding, they are very likely to meet your expectations.

Someone once said that leadership was 10 percent planning and directing and 90 percent implementation and follow-up. I found this to be true and this brings me to the next rule: *Just because you order it done doesn't necessarily mean that it will be accomplished*. This is not to say that your subordinates will deliberately sabotage your efforts. It does say that there is a great distance between you, the battalion commander, and the private first class who must ultimately carry out your orders. As one communications theorist said, "Meanings are in people—not in words." Well-meaning officers and NCO's in the unit will interpret your orders in terms of their own capabilities, limitations and experience. You must therefore try to strike a balance between overly specific orders (which take away all initiative on the part of subordinates) and overly general mission-type orders which could result in the failure of the battalion to achieve its objective. I found that fairly general mission-type orders with a good feedback system worked best for me.

In a previous paragraph, I emphasized the idea that you as the battalion commander are not the only member of the battalion who wants to see it succeed and that your expectations are a vital ingredient in your unit's success in that area. This leads me to my next point—that of *self-fulfilling prophecies*. With respect to Combat Service Support units, I will repeat a few familiar self-fulfilling prophecies in order to illustrate my point:

Mess stewards are always overweight.  
Airborne units have more esprit-de-corps than nonairborne units.  
Individuals assigned to Combat Service Support units are never in good physical condition.  
Truck drivers can't march.  
Female soldiers can't live in the field.  
Etc., etc., etc.

From the examples that I've cited (and I'm sure you can add your own) you can see that some self-fulfilling prophecies would have a positive impact on a unit (esprit-de-corps in Airborne units) while others (truck drivers can't march) would tend to have a negative impact on a unit. Beware of the self-fulfilling prophecies that would have a negative impact on your unit. If you command a Combat Service Support unit, remember that your E-2's and E-3's were no different from their infantry, armor or artillery counterparts when they enlisted in the Army. They can, and should, be required to maintain the same standards of appearance and physical conditioning as their Combat Arms counterparts. This they will do unless you fall victim to one or more of the negative self-fulfilling prophecies that seem to permeate the thinking of many officers and senior noncommissioned officers.

A battalion cannot operate in a vacuum. Even though you may command a Combat Service Support unit, you will require a large amount of external support in order to succeed as a unit. While I won't bore you with a discourse on the importance of your boss (rater) in this equation—don't overlook your contemporaries. *Your contemporary battalion commanders are important to your own success as a commander!* In words of one syllable—"they can make you or break you." On an almost daily basis, they will be in a position to assist you and you will be in a position to reciprocate. Such assistance can range from loan of personnel to assistance in training to exchange of ideas on how best to deal with alcohol abuse in the battalion. In short, you need them and they need you. Such cooperation does *not* exclude competition between units. In fact, it creates a healthier type of competition than would otherwise be possible if the commanders concerned were not cooperating with each other in a positive manner.

As a commander you must continually *sell your unit*. Most of us do sell our units without even thinking about it. We welcome newly assigned officer and enlisted personnel to the "best" unit in the area and we brag about the accomplishments of our unit to anyone who will listen. Selling your unit can extend to volunteering it for tests, experiments, etc., that contribute to personnel training. Your unit is viewed as a can-do outfit by superiors and peers and *more importantly* by the soldiers assigned to your unit. However, at this point I must insert a note of caution. You must consider the perceptions of your subordinates with respect to your "selling" the unit. Unless you are careful to include your company commanders and staff in the decision process, you run the risk of giving the appearance that you are trying to sell yourself *at the expense* of the unit. Soliciting the views of your commanders and staff is an effective method of gaining support for voluntary missions and will lead to a more thorough consideration of the impact of the voluntary mission on the battalion's other operations. On one occasion when I did not solicit the views of my unit commanders prior to volunteering the battalion for a mission that promised high training dividends, the mission was met with resistance and as a consequence much of the potential training value was lost.

### NEITHER PEACE NOR WAR

Only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain that they will never be employed.

John F. Kennedy  
Inaugural Address  
20 January 1961



Our former Chief of Staff, General Weyand, placed great emphasis on obtaining and maintaining a readiness posture that would enable the Army to win the first battle. Since our Nation's elected civilian leadership has repeatedly stated that the United States would never initiate an armed conflict, the time, place and circumstance of the first battle are left entirely to the discretion of our potential enemies.

What does this all mean to you as a battalion commander? As the paragraph heading suggests, you are confronted with an environment radically different from that perceived by the average enlisted volunteer soldier. While the recruiting sergeant may have led him to believe that he was joining a "peacetime" Army (whatever that means!), the fact of the matter is that he is joining an Army that (with the exception of a few units such as the 82d and 101st) has never existed before (in terms of readiness) in peacetime. I used the chart shown below for briefings for all newly assigned personnel to make this point:

<u>THE RHETORIC.....</u>
+ 40 hours per week
+ Air-conditioned barracks; semi-private rooms
<u>THE REALITY.....</u>
+ 60 plus hours per week
+ W.W. II temporary barracks; no air-conditioning; no semi-private rooms

In terms of winning the first battle, integrity in personnel, training and equipment readiness is a *must*. Winning the first battle implies no time to prepare for battle—it means, at least to me, that tomorrow is too late to start getting ready. At the battalion level, it means that a routine 40-hour week simply does not permit the achievement of the state of readiness required, given the constant rotation of personnel and the numerous nonmission-related requirements that take away from the time you have to train personnel and maintain equipment. Finally—and most importantly—you must continually operate under the assumption that you will be leading your unit into combat with the personnel and equipment that you have on hand.

The attainment of an extremely high state of readiness at battalion level must be accomplished during a period of significantly diminished financial resources. I found that I had to be a financial manager in order to ensure that mission requirements were balanced against funds available and shortfalls identified. Essentially, I was required to budget for and manage mission funds for all areas over which I could exercise control. In my case this meant expendable supplies, MOGAS, diesel, packaged POL products, medical supplies, repair parts, self-service stores items and TDA equipment such as tentage. Financial management at battalion level is fairly new to the Army, so do not expect to find supply sergeants or S-4's who are knowledgeable financial managers. I found that the battalion S-3 was an essential member of the battalion's financial management team in that the manner in which he scheduled training significantly affected the operating costs of the battalion. For example, by scheduling range firing and/or gas chamber exercises as an integral part of field training exercises (thus eliminating the need for a separate trip to ranges, etc.), significant savings in fuel and spare parts could be realized.

I found that all I had read and been taught relating to management by objectives, goal-setting, etc., paid great dividends in commanding a battalion. Shortly after assuming command of the battalion I established a number of battalion goals which were both broad and specific in content as well as short and long term in nature. Many of these goals were suggested by the company commanders, the staff and the Command Sergeant Major. In all cases, these goals were published so that all members of the chain-of-command would know where we were going and thus could aid in the achievement of these goals. Additionally, these goals were constantly revised and updated as individual goals were achieved and new goals were identified. The environment (situation) within which policies and goals are set is constantly changing. Policies must be constantly reassessed, since there is a likelihood that policies that once made good sense are no longer valid due to a changed operating environment.



## THE TROOPS

It is not gold, but good soldiers, that insure success in war.

Niccolo Machiavelli  
The Art of War, 1520

I found that the quality of both enlisted and officer personnel assigned to the battalion improved during my tenure as the commander. This was due primarily to (1) the use of the expeditious discharge in basic and advanced individual training, and (2) commissioned ROTC lieutenants were more career motivated than most of their draft-motivated predecessors.

One word about discipline—the majority of the young enlisted men and women assigned to my unit were products of very permissive elementary and high school environments. What they wanted or needed more than anything else was a clear, consistent set of guidelines for acceptable behavior. They also wanted to belong to a unit where incompetents and malcontents were removed from the unit rather than being allowed to remain or reenlist to cause their squad/platoon unnecessary grief. To that end the best personnel management tools that are made available to the battalion commander are the expeditious discharge and the bar to reenlistment. In my opinion, the ability to “fire” a soldier who can’t measure up is cost effective in terms of unit effectiveness, pride and morale.

In terms of the application of military justice within the battalion, I found that my biggest problem was the lack of military justice experience on the part of the company commanders. Due to reforms in the UCMJ system during the 1960’s, company grade officers are no longer afforded the opportunity to gain experience as trial and defense counsels in Special Court martials. As a result, I found that it was necessary to schedule special classes given by JAG officers to ensure that unit commanders preferred charges only when the elements of proof for the offense were present. As an aside, I was fortunate to have the use of a Correctional Custody Facility (CCF) as an alternate means of punishment under the provisions of a Field Grade Article 15. I found that denial of liberty through the use of the CCF was viewed by the troops as a more severe punishment than a forfeiture of pay or confinement in the Area Confinement Facility.

A system of rewards is a “must” in any unit. These can range from a simple “thank-you” to more formal means of recognizing performance through letters of commendation, formal citations and award of commendation and meritorious service medals. I had been in command several months before I discovered that many deserving junior noncommissioned officers and lower ranking enlisted men were departing the battalion without being formally recognized for their contribution to the battalion’s successful accomplishment of its mission. Although some improvements were made in this area, I still consider the failure to establish a foolproof comprehensive system of awards in the battalion a major shortcoming of my leadership.

The proper use of the battalion Command Sergeant Major could fill a volume in and of itself. I was very fortunate to have a Command Sergeant Major (a graduate of the Sergeants Major Academy) who was aggressive, an innovator and an effective advisor. My own observation is that a Command Sergeant Major who gripes about being under-utilized is probably not aggressive and is content to do the minimum required to “get by.” A good laundry listing of duties for a Command Sergeant Major is available through the Commander’s Course at Fort Knox.

A good professional in-briefing for newly assigned personnel is a must. I did not inherit such a briefing from my predecessor and thus made the creation of such a briefing a very high priority. The briefing (on 35mm color slides) showed the organization, mission, history and equipment of the battalion along with slides showing the battalion engaged in various operational activities. It proved to be an effective orientation for all newly assigned personnel as well as visitors to the battalion. This briefing was also used to acquaint wives with the battalion. Their understanding of the battalion’s mission and organization paid huge dividends in terms of their morale and its positive effect on their husbands.

Special councils, etc., still held sway when I assumed command of the battalion. They were, in my opinion, band-aids to shore up an inexperienced chain of command due to rapidly rotating NCO’s and officers during the

Vietnam era. One of my first actions was to make myself the battalion Race Relations Equal Opportunity Officer and to put all actions formerly handled by special councils back in the hands of the appropriate officers and noncommissioned officers. Its greatest effect was to put the NCO's back in the chain of command. To that end I was assisted by a slowdown in PCS moves of NCO's and officers, although I still found it necessary to replace company commanders on an average of once each twelve months. As an aside, I found that the company commanders were subjected to significantly more administrative requirements than I was as a company commander and as a consequence were pretty well "burned out" after a year in command.

Enlisted women (I was not fortunate enough to have a female officer assigned) grew in numbers assigned to the battalion from four when I assumed command to 58 when I relinquished command of the battalion. In addition, the dissolution of the local WAC Detachment required that I billet all assigned female enlisted personnel in the battalion area for the first time. I was not prepared by dint of training, experience or study to accept wholeheartedly and integrate females in a Combat Service Support TOE unit. It was a learning process for all concerned, and the first females assigned to the battalion in such traditional male MOS's as mechanic, truck driver and unit armorer were true pioneers in the sense that they had to prove themselves even more than did their male counterparts. And prove themselves they did! They participated in daily PT (to include a two-mile run) with the entire battalion and more than held their own. During field exercises they proved that they could handle their duties in a competent and highly professional manner. Did we solve all the problems? No—certainly not! However, we learned a lot and consequently established policies and procedures to ensure that our successors would not have to make the same mistakes that we had made.

### REALISTIC TRAINING

The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war.

Chinese Proverb

I established two basic objectives for training. One was easy to accomplish and the other the most demanding any commander can set for himself. These two objectives were (1) to train the battalion executive officer and staff so that the battalion could operate effectively *without* the battalion commander, and (2) to train all assigned personnel so well that the battalion would experience *no* combat casualties due to a lack of training. There are enough casualties in combat due to the very nature of war without adding to them combat losses due to inadequate, sloppy or unrealistic training.

Realistic combat-oriented training is easy to accomplish in the case of a Combat Service Support unit such as the one that I commanded. The soldiers assigned to the battalion were engaged daily in carrying out the functions of their MOS in support of other units at the installation. Field training was made very realistic since the unit was supporting combat units in much the same manner as it would in time of war. However, a note of caution. I found that it was necessary to continually educate supported commanders concerning the combat mission of the battalion in order that their S-3's could integrate combat service support into field exercises in a realistic fashion.

Commanders of supported units are not interested in your problems—they have enough of their own! It is incumbent on you to demonstrate how your unit can assist them in the accomplishment of their mission while at the same time providing an opportunity for realistic training for your unit. This is one more example of an opportunity to *sell your unit*.

Emphasis on "basics" has been articulated by many before me. In a Combat Service Support unit it is vitally important that your training emphasize basic soldiering. I made it an objective to ensure that all personnel were qualified with their assigned weapon, physically fit and qualified in CBR along with their MOS—be it driver, mechanic or cook. To that end, I am in disagreement with a recently announced policy to require different standards of physical fitness dependent on the MOS of the individual concerned. *All* soldiers should be required to achieve and maintain the same standards of physical fitness. Department of the Army planners have overlooked the morale benefits that accrue to a transportation truck company of 18-year-olds who daily perform the same PT as their infantry counterparts! Additionally, I believe it is very likely that future combat situations with their fluid battlefields will see the necessity for Combat Service Support units to engage routinely in firefights.

Although inspections can be (and often are) the bane of a commander's existence, they served a useful purpose for me in that they provided a superb vehicle for training. For example, I had numerous junior noncommissioned officers promoted to their ranks during the Vietnam era who did not know how to set up properly or inspect a full field layout of equipment. This was not their fault, but one that had to be rapidly corrected. Inspections and the preparation for them provided the training vehicle needed to fill that gap in their training. Numerous other examples could be cited (camouflage of equipment and field installations, for example) that lent themselves to training through the use of announced inspections in garrison and in field locations.

### DON'T BE AFRAID OF LOGISTICS!

I don't know what the hell this 'logistics' is that Marshall is always talking about, but I want some.

Admiral E. J. King  
To a staff officer, 1942

Logistics—ugh! Get thee away from me! Your attitude? If so, get rid of it! In today's readiness environment coupled with reduced financial resources, logistics can make or break you as a battalion commander regardless of the type battalion that you command. We no longer have an unconstrained situation where "you" request and "they" supply. In today's environment, you must carefully evaluate your needs and request only those items which you can afford. All other requirements become "nice-to-have" and are then deferred or abandoned as too expensive. In view of the constrained financial situation within which you will find yourself, pay as much attention to the selection of your S-4 as you do your S-3. Demand that the S-3 coordinate all training requirements with your S-4 so that you can be assured that you can afford the training recommended. Your S-3 in coordination with your S-4 must strive to ensure that the training to be accomplished *can* be accomplished in the most economical manner possible consistent with realistic training.

Logistical readiness is no longer something that must get your attention around the 20th of the month! If your unit is to be ready to win that first battle, then your equipment must be as ready to go on the 1st of the month as it is on the 20th of the month. To that end, visit your supporting DS maintenance battalion, review their backlog of work orders for your battalion to ascertain if it remains fairly consistent throughout the month. If not, you may find that (a) your battalion is "crashing" on maintenance just prior to readiness reporting time, or (b) that the supporting DS maintenance battalion itself is "crashing" just prior to readiness reporting time. I found that while the current Unit Readiness Reporting System has its faults (particularly in criteria relating to personnel MOS readiness), the system (as a whole) is the best I have worked with during my time as a commissioned officer. Honest reporting and "telling it like it is" is the essential element for any system. Any reporting system designed can be abused if we permit it. To that end, I recommend that you place a premium on honest reporting on the part of your subordinate commanders rather than the attainment of an assigned readiness objective. If you know the logistics situation in your battalion, you can easily ascertain if the resources available will permit the attainment of the assigned readiness objective. As an aside, let me caution you that at battalion level there is almost no correlation between the assigned readiness objective and the financial resources allocated to attain it. Our resource allocation system is simply not sophisticated enough to recognize such variables as age of assigned equipment, weather and the training status of assigned personnel.

### LETTING GO!

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways. . . ."

Plato

One final note—inevitably your tour as a commander will come to an end and your replacement will be on board to take the reins. You have enjoyed your command more than any other assignment in your career. Your list of projects is still lengthy and the unit is faced with major challenges in the upcoming months. You want to hand over a unit in the best possible readiness condition. Take heart! If you have done your job, the unit will operate effectively without you. It will continue the momentum you have established long enough for the new commander to assess the situation and place his own personal imprint on the battalion. In giving up the battalion make at least one resolution and stick to it. That resolution should be: "It's his (her) unit now . . . my stewardship is over! The only thing I take from this battalion is fond memories."



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## CHAPTER 8

### COMMAND OF A NON-DIVISIONAL CAVALRY SQUADRON IN EUROPE

*by*

*LTC(P) Nicholas S. H. Krawciw*

"Command is an art to be mastered, a craft that required specialized knowledge, a well developed intuition, high intelligence, and the ability to reason."<sup>1</sup>

Martin Blumenson, 1975

"Insights become effectiveness only through hard systematic work."<sup>2</sup>

Peter F. Drucker

This chapter recounts some thoughts and actions in preparation for and during my command of the First Squadron, Second Armored Cavalry Regiment, stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany. What I write here and the way I do it are matters of personal perspective and style. As such, they may or may not agree with the background and philosophy of the reader interested in command. In these most fundamental sources of values in our profession, we who enjoy command often stand very much alone; in a sense, we are prisoners of our inescapable individuality. Yet, at the same time, we crave for support and encouragement for our points of view and for our methods. But this reinforcement happens only if the chemistry between us along many parallel lines of thought is right. Then we are able to accept some of the "specialized knowledge" and "insights" offered. I present the following account, based on personal experiences from the Middle East and Europe during 1972-1976, with that awareness.

#### I

It was July 1973 and a bright, but somewhat hot and humid, day along the Mediterranean coast of Israel. I was driving north to Lebanon in order to resolve some operational difficulties which we in the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) encountered as a result of some clashes between the Lebanese Army and the Palestinians. The day stands out in my memory as if it were yesterday. On my way from Jerusalem, I stopped at the APO Tel-Aviv to pick up a letter from Colonel John Seigle, the Commander of the Second Armored Cavalry Regiment. With the concurrence of Armor Branch, he asked me to accept the command of one of his squadrons the following spring or summer. He wrote: "... here is your chance of a lifetime. . ." I was elated and could hardly wait until I could stop somewhere for the dispatch of an immediate reply. Meanwhile, my thoughts were racing back and forth in an attempt to review helpful past experiences to plan additional preparation for this fabulous assignment.

Sometime during that drive I also recall pondering briefly how I would measure up as a squadron commander. Similar short hesitations may have occurred later; however, in each case, I quietly told myself that, after all, command of a combat unit was the essence of my life as a professional soldier and that if, with all the diversified experiences and extensive schooling accorded me by our Army, I were not able to do it, then who could? I guess it was sort of an ego boosting exercise which really does not add very much to an individual's self-esteem, but it does emphasize that self-confidence is an essential prerequisite for successful command. There is nothing worse in our profession than a neurotic commander. His doubts, instability, and resulting indecisions will quickly ruin a good outfit. But, self-confidence cannot really be strengthened by simply saying "I am the greatest." That will help only if personal professional strength and conviction have been developed previously by wisdom gained through experience and by knowledge acquired and modified in continuous analysis of pertinent events, trends, and concepts.

Thus, throughout the rest of my Middle Eastern tour, I concentrated on gaining additional professional knowledge. Before the October War, there was time to read and think. However, by September of 1973, time for study diminished and finally it evaporated completely. Events familiar to the reader enmeshed UNTSO into the whirlwind turbulence of the region. Fortune supplanted my time for rather leisurely study with opportunities to observe and experience the impacts of a modern conventional war. Out of that period, and as a result of subsequent study, I gained some insights which shape my views concerning future trends in land warfare. A number of these may be relevant to command.

## II

"... we are at the opening of a new age in warfare when it appears certain that all operations will be accelerated greatly, that all ground formations must have greater dispersion for their own protection, and that therefore thought must be transmitted more swiftly and surely than ever. These things being true, it is an anachronism to place the emphasis in training and command primarily on weapons and ground rather than on the nature of man."

S. L. A. Marshall, 1947

"On the field of fire it is the touch of human nature which gives men courage and enables them to make proper use of their weapons."<sup>3</sup>

S. L. A. Marshall, 1947

For Israel and its Arab neighbors, the war which began on 6 October 1973 changed the course of history so profoundly that even today its implications on the politico-military balance of that region cannot be fully fathomed because they are still evolving. As for military history and lessons learned from that conflict, I am certain the reader is familiar with them, and, in any case, such astute observers of events of that period as Mohamed Heikal on the Arab side and Cheim Herzog in Israel have already reported the more salient features of the war.<sup>4</sup> What has not been described is closely related to the central theme of S.L.A. Marshall's *Men Against Fire* highlighted by the above quotes. Certainly, the excellent leadership and training techniques which emphasized the central role of the individual soldier produced the spectacular military surprises which Arab forces achieved on both fronts in the beginning of the war. But even more significant for me, as a neutral observer and as an officer preparing for command in our own Army, was the underlying reason for Israel's ability to rebound and recover lost initiative on the field of battle. It was the love for, the dedication to, and the identification with every Israeli soldier displayed by his comrades, his superiors, and every man, woman, and child in Israel throughout that fateful struggle. As I watched thousands of Jews in mixed uniforms streaming to their mobilization areas, teen-agers rushing to hospitals to give blood and help out as attendants or nurses, it was impossible not to be deeply impressed with the anguish, sorrow, and concern for every soldier killed, wounded or missing in battle. These feelings were abundantly evident on the part of the Israeli government, all citizens, and, of course, the soldiers. The strength derived from that kind of empathy between a people and their army, and between the officers and men in the units, is what saved for Israel the situation on the Golan Heights, where the most critical breakthrough occurred. What is interesting is that the Israelis are a normally garrulous and quarrelsome people, and this tremendous bond of genuine care for each other in time of crisis is not so evident at other times. Indeed, Herzog, who vividly described the war from all other aspects did not analyze that moral support. For men, it seemed crucial in what they were able to accomplish. The Israelis, on the other hand, may have taken it for granted during that national emergency.

Another related factor instrumental to the ultimate Israeli success on the battlefield was superior communicating down to the lowest levels. Many of the initial Arab successes occurred because their actions of the first few days did not exceed their capabilities to exercise effective visual and technical control. Once Israeli counterpressures disrupted that cohesion with fire, smoke, and confusion, Egyptian and Syrian units tended to resist only as isolated pockets, but with a lot more tenacity than in 1967. Conversely, a few Israeli units which were cut off and surrounded for a number of days, in some instances, survived and continued armed resistance until liberated. The constant chatter on their radios assured them that all was not lost, that other units although battered were fighting well, and that counter-attacks would be forthcoming.<sup>5</sup> History is replete with examples of

what inter-personal and intra-unit communications can do to sustain fighting elements in combat. Similarly, instances of failures in this area are recorded, with their inherent tragic impact, by many authors and military historians.<sup>6</sup> Needless to say, that personal care and the ability to stay in touch, as functions of the overall command and control picture in military operations, should be carefully enhanced by every concerned commander.

### III

"Essentially, . . . the art of war is the art of using the given means in combat; there is not better term for it than the *conduct of war*."<sup>7</sup>

Carl von Clausewitz, 1830

In addition to manpower and all the human considerations that go with it, the "given means" in warfare today include all the available firepower-generating items of our burgeoning technology. For the unit commander, they introduce frequent changes of equipment and complicate his training. There is considerable inertia and even opposition to such change in most armies of the world. It is simply human nature to resist constant innovation. And, so it was in the Middle East. At one time or another, in the many wars fought there, both the Arabs and the Israelis neglected due consideration for new materiel and advanced employment techniques. In the 1973 conflict, the Israelis were surprised by Egyptian and Syrian use of missiles, artillery, and night observation devices.<sup>8</sup> The Arabs, on the other hand, were again shocked by the Israeli mobility, effectiveness of air strikes and air combat, superb tank gunnery, and improved command and control capabilities—all of which had been enhanced by technological advances since 1967.

The simple, yet profound, lesson of that war, with its casualties, devastation, and destruction, was that, at all levels of our Army, we had better adapt and learn how to use the new "tools" that are available; and that we also must know as much as possible about what any potential enemy may do to us with his improved munitions and other sophisticated items. That skill and knowledge, of course, is essential for any battalion or squadron commander going into battle. Without it, there is no way to achieve and maintain the initiative, both in the defensive and in the offense. Furthermore, without it, it will be the enemy who will gain surprise (initiative) with his ability to use many new tricks of our trade. All that may sound very obvious, yet how many of us know the effects (ranges, CEP's, guidance requirements, countermeasures, etc.) of such weapons as the Improved Conventional Munitions (ICM), various types of "smart" bombs, the new high energy tactical nuclear devices, and other destructive items? How many of us have thought through how to use different types of sensors, laser designators, improved night vision devices, and the various new command, control, and communications capabilities soon to be available in our units? Thorough knowledge in these and other areas may make the difference between success and failure on some battlefield of the future. In today's warfare, a field grade commander simply must know the capabilities and limitations of all the weapons systems and acquisition or control instruments available to him. In the confusion, ferocity, lethality, and tempo of modern combat, there will be no time to ponder over such data. Think about it.

What we are talking about is the kind of combat readiness that is difficult to measure. Part of it is also a commander's ability to make intelligent plans and contingency forecasts involving not only fire and maneuver, but also logistics. The problem, at battalion level, is usually our inability to visualize, with any confidence, the rates of expected expenditures of ammunition, fuel, spare parts, rations, and other classes of supply. This is compounded by lack of realistic data in staff manuals which thus contributes to serious miscalculations of basic loads, close-in back-up distribution, transportation requirements, and the like. Although solutions to this problem are on the horizon in the form of information gained through computer-assisted wargaming, the unit commander still has the responsibility to verify such data and, if necessary, based on his logical determination, initiate changes to basic loads and expected expenditure rates of critical items. Alternative logistical support should also be analyzed by any commander with an operational mission. His thinking and his plans should include considerations of how to utilize host nation support, local civilian resources, etc. One could go on and on talking about the innate ingenuity of an American leader—that is what is really required. Unfortunately, we do not use it enough for the right things until war comes. Commanders and other leaders are too preoccupied with daily administrative burdens to give more than cursory consideration to their probable wartime functions. Combat



readiness of our battalions and squadrons, at home and abroad, will not be what our normal reports and inspections show until commanders of these units force themselves and their subordinates to take the time necessary to learn how to visualize, plan, and rehearse their assigned roles in combat. From what I could see in 1973, the Egyptians, Syrians, and Israelis did a lot of that prior to the war. The best prepared units, like the Israeli battalions on the northern part of the Golan Heights and the Egyptian assault battalions which crossed the Suez Canal, must have prepared and practiced their plans and actions with considerable determination and effort. Their rewards were successes in battle. For us, before whom a potential conflict a hundred times the intensity of that in 1973 looms in the future, the urgency to *think war* should be obvious.

Ingenuity, independent thought, and "...that authority which Jefferson regarded as supreme in human affairs: the authority of human reason"<sup>8</sup> are the requirements of command in operational situations. A knowledge of doctrine and capabilities of one's own and the enemy's elements of force are essential as a point of departure, but an inquisitive mind, strengthened with integrity of purpose, will provide the new commander with immeasurable dividends adding to his success and satisfaction.

#### IV

As military operations in the area subsided, my thoughts and preparation for command turned toward the investigation of methods for structuring of the overall environment in a unit such as the armored cavalry squadron. I was aided in this by the functions in which UNTSO was involved at that time. As G3 of the organization I was responsible for many activities of military nature along the new cease fire lines. Marking of forward military positions of Arab and Israeli forces, reporting the continuing cease fire violations, searching for the dead of both sides, assisting in the organization and establishment of the newly created United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), and training the additional observers deployed to UNTSO by the United States and, for the first time by the Soviet Union, were tasks which provided ample opportunity to learn practically and apply various organizational and training skills. But, more specific guidance for what was required in the Second Cavalry came in January of 1974 from Colonel Seigle. His letter, which with his permission is reproduced as an annex, served from that time on as a concept formulation checklist. In it, he challenged me to be prepared to develop a balanced environment which would overcome the apathy of soliders and which, through reinforcement of meaningful human aspirations, would create an atmosphere conducive to professional and individual growth within the First Squadron, my future unit.

Again, one could research and write volumes on how to create a positive climate within an organization and, again, I am sure that most readers interested in command are more than superficially aware of the leadership techniques which may be useful, but it is more than awareness that is required. A future commander must develop a strength in his approach to people buttressed by conviction in proven methods which help enhance individual human beings, organizations, and society in general. As in other endeavors, experience is essential, but progressively deeper study reinforces valid convictions and helps modify erroneous observations. B. F. Skinner said,

"No one knows the best way of raising children, paying workers, maintaining law and order, teaching, or making people creative, but it is possible to propose better ways than we now have and to support them by predicting and eventually demonstrating more reinforcing results. This has been done in the past with the help of personal experience and folk wisdom, but a scientific analysis of human behavior is obviously relevant. It helps in two ways: it defines what is to be done and suggests ways of doing it."<sup>9</sup>

Works like the one by Skinner helped me later, when during my period in command hundreds of distractions obscured that fundamental approach to all activities, to always look deeper behind all behavior and to focus on the conditions which either reinforce or detract from positive actions by people.

There was one other aid which I found particularly helpful in keeping my focus on matters which were really important. It is a ranking of tasks of battalion commanders as compiled from approximately 40% of officers at that level of responsibility worldwide, including Vietnam, between 1968 and 1970 (questionnaires were sent to



over 80%), by the Human Resources Research Organization in its Technical Report 72-20, published in July 1972. Note that those tasks which most officers ranked in the top third in importance are asterisked. I used this as a checklist in my thought processes while developing ideas on environment structuring during my preparation for command, and later, when on the job, as a reminder toward personal involvement in responsibilities which I may have slighted. It is reproduced, in applicable parts, in the second annex to this chapter.

## V

Once on the ground in my new unit, with the commanders' course and the change of command ceremony behind me, the immediate task facing me was the need to gauge the disciplinary climate within the organization. From that kind of an estimate, I could then proceed more clearly with measures needed to maintain or enhance the Squadron's operational effectiveness.

As Colonel Seigle had mentioned in his letter, my predecessor, Cal Hosmer, had brought the unit a long way during his two years in command. There were many indicators to substantiate that. The outward appearance of the whole post, of the combat vehicles, and of the troopers was impressive; administrative preparedness for an oncoming annual general inspection (AGI) was high; and the Squadron's primary peacetime mission—its border surveillance operation—was running smoothly. Overall conditions reminded me very much of the time in the early and mid sixties when, in my estimation, our Army was at a professional peak. At the same time, I seemed to sense an air of tension, a certain amount of fatigue, and a prevailing desire for change in activities. These were probably caused by the pressures of increased emphasis on properly structured training and the inescapable routines of preparing for the AGI. Also, the Squadron had not been in the field as a unit for any kind of mission-related training since before its previous tank gunnery period, many months earlier. So, as I estimated it, the discipline was high, but if I wanted to maintain it, I would have to undertake a number of measures designed to provide the people of my unit with a change of pace, with an increased awareness of requirements related to wartime missions, with some time for many individuals to take care of their neglected personal affairs, and, last but not least, with opportunities for all to take their leaves and to participate in planned recreation. These are important because they build motivation which creates self-discipline and that, in turn, is the foundation of all other discipline.

As a foundation of discipline, motivation is also the basis for operational effectiveness. The problem for me was to develop a leadership climate which would enhance motivation, strengthen discipline, and assure mission accomplishment. That I could not do alone. I would have to rely heavily on teamwork of my capable officers and noncommissioned officers whose experience, advice, and initiative to do what is right would be of utmost importance. The great thing about command in our Army is that there is plenty of able help. Out of the fifty officers and some two hundred noncommissioned officers in the Squadron, I knew only three or four upon my arrival. Yet, within days most of them became close working associates and, in many instances, co-leaders of the Unit. This was particularly true of my Executive Officer, Bill Crouch, and my Sergeant Major, Paul Curran. They and the company, troop, and battery commanders who are the key leaders of the Army, as well as other staff officers and staff noncommissioned officers, had many good ideas of what needed to be done and how to do it. Together we slowly increased our Squadron's awareness of our real mission; of its importance, and of the supreme value of each and every individual as a human being with feelings, aspirations, and rights guaranteed by our Constitution.

It was not a matter of romanticizing our role in society; it simply meant that we concentrated on what had to be done in such a way as would also enrich the individual experience of all of us as participants in all the activities of the Squadron and the little American community that we were far away from home. It meant maintaining balance and perspective in everything that we were doing. And that was not always easily done. There is a tendency in the Army to overconcentrate on programs, inspections, statistics, bureaucratic reports, and many other projects whose contribution to our purpose is dubious at best. Thus, it has to be the battalion commander, more than anyone else, who must constantly watch for unwarranted digressions ordered by higher headquarters. Somehow he and his staff must inform the commanders and program proponents at higher levels of any redundancy in requirements, reports, or programs ordered from above. Sometimes they will be successful. And so were we in the First Squadron, yet it was a constant effort for which we had no unique solutions. It would be great if commanders at higher levels, including some of us who command squadrons or battalions, would get out of the business of running companies, platoons, or even squads with "bigger and better programs." Would it not

be better to give subordinate commanders their missions, performance objectives, and some standards as well as priorities, and then let them, especially those at the company level, accomplish their tasks using their own experience and ingenuity to the maximum? It seems to me that, facing future conflicts of greater lethality, increased depth of the battle area, and the necessary accompanying unit dispersion, we will need to rely more on the individualism, maturity, and know-how of our younger officers and men. In our Squadron, because of our border mission and because of a somewhat separate training schedule of our Howitzer Battery, we were often dispersed to sometimes three or four widely separated locations in Northern Bavaria. That forced me to let my captains run their units. I was lucky if I could see each one of them twice during a week. Yet the performance of their units in various field exercises, including REFORGER-74 and -75, was a pleasure for me to watch. These and other achievements in mission-related tasks or training produced for us valuable spin-offs in improved morale, better care of equipment, and motivation—including eager anticipation—of future activities.

The whole point that I wanted to make here is that environment structuring and maintenance of perspective or balance in order to achieve operational effectiveness, although the main responsibilities of the battalion commander, should be a cooperative function of all good people in a unit. Yet the commander remains the pilot who often has to steer his ship through troubled waters.

## VI

"Organizational effectiveness is measured, in the final analysis, by performance—whether it be said of an individual or a unit."<sup>10</sup>

Raymond L. Cook, 1976

That brings us to training—the foundation of excellence in performance. The tremendous strides made by our Training and Doctrine Command to develop an educational structure and technology, and to provide us with doctrinal guidance and performance standards, are now a matter of history. A commander today has all the references and materials to design and conduct meaningful training. He may even find himself inundated by the abundance of detailed printed matter descending on him. The thing to remember here is that programs such as the Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) were designed to provide our trainers with certain key tasks and uniformly high standards for mission-related training. They were not designed to stifle individual ingenuity or to dictate specific unit requirements. Because of our Regimental missions, we in the Second Cavalry frequently developed our own training situations emphasizing junior leader tactical creativity and realistic squad and platoon level performance. We believed that, if we were to preserve cohesion amidst the chaos, devastation, and dispersion of future battlefields, we had to foster that traditional American flexibility in action by our young officers and noncommissioned officers. We used various checklists as thought-provoking general guides towards Army-wide standards, but never as rigid constraints or limits to resourcefulness or as a damper on "thinking initiative," as S. L. A. Marshall calls it.<sup>11</sup>

To develop our own training situations, we had to consider the total environment of the area in which we would have had to fight in case of war. That meant a lot more than the old factors of METT—mission, enemy, terrain, and troops. We had to think and visualize; we had to plan and train for situations not covered by any ARTEP. Among these were: *coordination* with German Territorial units concerning barrier emplacement and control, use and security of heavy vehicles, earth-moving equipment and commercial fuels, control of traffic, etc.; *contingencies* for action against airmobile or airborne assaults, for extrication of units caught in large-scale destruction of villages, towns, or forests, and for mass casualty situations in one or more units; and *liaison* for an adequate flow of information between us and our allies. There were many other activities with which we experimented and which, in addition to improving our ability to accomplish various missions, added to the interest and enthusiasm of our men. We further developed our ability to work with attack helicopters, and we trained to conduct what our new Regimental Commander, Colonel John Hudachek, called "Aggressive Delay." In many instances he, with his extensive experiences in command of cavalry (including two squadron commands), was our teacher. As an efficient fundamentalist, he was less concerned with outward appearances of our activities and more with substance in method and results. It was as if he were telling us, "rather be than seem!"<sup>12</sup> So, as 1975 progressed and the time for me to turn over my command approached, we learned how to do many things better, including how to take good care of our expensive equipment. We did so because, from the Regimental Commander down, we listened to each other, we helped each other, and we developed an appreciation for both formal and incidental teaching. All these factors are involved in good training.

## VII

Any discussion of command in Europe would be incomplete without some reference to community responsibilities. These exist in two spheres. The first, involving the host country, demands cooperation and social relations with local officials and citizens. The second requires care and management of our own installations and dependent activities. Planned, carefully executed support of these responsibilities is essential and contributes to solidarity with our allies and to enhanced morale and motivation of our troops. In my own case, due to previous experiences with people of other nationalities, I was better prepared for the duties involving the German community than for the mayor-like tasks of our post, for which certain skills of urban administration were needed. Despite this lack, together with my officers and noncommissioned officers, we were able to satisfy most community requirements—but not without a price. Because our responsibilities in community matters were more precisely defined under USAREUR reorganization of the previous year, we had to devote more time to these affairs. The company commanders and I spent approximately a quarter of our time on community activities. Some like my new executive officer, Skip Holcomb, and our Adjutant, Cliff Marr, both able administrators, frequently contributed much more than that. Quite helpful in these responsibilities were our wives. They took care of assistance to new families, of running the nursery, of helping each other when we were in training areas, on exercises, or on the border, and the like. They were true Army wives. Their contribution was substantial.

## VIII

"In the dynamic organizational world of today, there is considerable movement toward the systems philosophy with the contingency view that the internal functioning of an organization should be consistent with: (1) the external environment, (2) its task, (3) its structure, (4) its technology, and (5) its people."<sup>13</sup>

Raymond L. Cook, 1976

In one way or another, I tried to depict such a systems-couched-in-environment approach to command. I mentioned my preparation and observations in the Middle East, the initial actions in the Squadron to develop a concern for people and a balanced approach to all activities, the team-work in training, the coalition and community requirements, and interspersed throughout the chapter, the need for inter-personal communications. There are many other issues which I could have included, but which are better described by others. There are some thoughts and actions which, although important, did not occupy as much of my time as the concerns I described, hence I omitted them. If, however, the attitude and experiences presented here stimulated even a few sympathetic responses in the reader's mind, then the effort was worthwhile. Be as it may, it would not have been possible without the help of many people—many more than I have mentioned—all of whom were part of this experience. I thank them for their contribution to our cause and to the quality of our life together at the "Rock" in Bindlach near Bayreuth.

To the reader interested in command I say, "good luck and be 'Toujours Pret!'"<sup>14</sup>

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11. S. L. A. Marshall, op. cit., p. 135.
12. The motto of Bordentown Military Institute, a now extinct high school in New Jersey, which the author attended in the 1950's.
13. Raymond L. Cook, op. cit., p. 176.
14. The motto of the Second Cavalry meaning "always ready."





HEADQUARTERS  
SECOND ARMORED CAVALRY  
OFFICE OF THE REGIMENTAL COMMANDER

4 January 1974

Dear Nick:

I have delayed writing to you for obvious reasons. You have doubtless had your hands full since our last correspondence; it simply did not seem appropriate to attempt to intrude on your thoughts in the middle of all that has been going on in your present part of the world.

On the off chance that you may now have at least a little more opportunity to think about your forthcoming assignment, I am sending you, under separate cover, our "commander's packet". It will not prepare you for command - - I trust that fifteen years experience has done that - - but it will give you a head start on some of the Europe - peculiar programs you will administer.

As you know from your experience in the 14th ACR, border duty in the Cav is an exercise in attempting to do the impossible - - with, however, better resources than are available to other units. That is even more true today than it was formerly, for two reasons. First, our equipment is more complicated. The "3 for 5" exchange program, in which each armored cavalry platoon turned in five M114s and drew three M551 Sheridans - - resulting in a six Sheridan platoon - - has left us with a very sophisticated and difficult weapons system. Since each platoon still has its infantry and support squads, training is actually more difficult than was formerly the case.

Second, very many of our troopers today are more difficult to motivate and lead than was the case a few years ago. (Fortunately, this is not true of our officers and senior NCOs; I am convinced that they are at least as good as they ever were, probably better.) A substantial number of first term troopers are "turned off" and "tuned out". This is the deeper problem of which drug and alcohol abuse are manifestations. The real challenge is to change apathy (and even hostility) to active involvement.

Please recognize that this is the environment in which USAREUR's highly prescriptive Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Program (part of the packet) takes place. It will be necessary for you to administer

a program that is procedurally correct in minute detail, if only to form a foundation for administrative eliminations. But the formal program only treats symptoms; you are also going to have to come to grips with the causes: apathy and alienation.

The result of more complicated equipment and less highly motivated troopers, in my judgment, is to place upon our shoulders an even larger responsibility. We have simply got to deal successfully with the total range of experience which confronts a trooper. If we cannot do this we cannot succeed.

If, for instance, we were to focus exclusively on unit competence (border operations, gunnery, etc.) and vehicular maintenance - - which is essentially what the border regiments have done for almost thirty years - - we would find ourselves driving a very reluctant horse, indeed. Conversely, if we were to concentrate only on satisfying the legitimate support expectations of our men (good food, barracks, supplies, etc.) and in meeting their perceived psychological needs for self-improvement (on-duty education is the prime example), we would not be true to our obvious military responsibilities.

Early in the VOLAR days some CONUS units tried this latter course. They really didn't succeed in having good units, but they learned a simple truth: soldiers expect to be challenged and to demonstrate their competence as soldiers. The "brown shoe" approach, on the other hand, gives inadequate weight to the wide - spread attitudinal changes I have tried to summarize above. Put as simply as possible, the challenge of service in Germany today is to develop momentum and balanced progress in all of these areas.

Since you spent much of your youth in Bindlach - - an unexpected bonus I had not even been aware of until you told me - - you already know the set-up you will inherit. You should also know that the 1st Squadron has made very substantial progress under its present commander, Cal Hosmer. It is in the nature of things that much remains to be done. - - In fact, I fully expect my successor, with whom you will spend the majority of your command tour, to make the very early observation that we need to get this Regiment moving! You are free to have the same sentiment, so long as it does not denigrate or undercut some very substantial efforts which have resulted in marked improvement in the Squadron.

I know that you want to check out of Jerusalem at the end of March and assume command as soon as you can fly here. I fully appreciate your eagerness and the commitment it represents, but it may not work out just that way. I don't want you to enter this demanding job already frazzled

from chasing Arabs and Israelis around whatever kilometer marker is in vogue at that time. You may be well-advised to take some time to refresh your ability to recognize snow (we should still have some in the Alps) and to reintroduce yourself to your family. You are heading into a very, very demanding eighteen months. Let's start it off so that you can keep burning the entire route.

On a ~~more~~ mundane level, USAREUR is about to launch a fairly extensive commander's orientation course, which you will be required to attend and which I fully support. You should really get this under your belt before you assume command. You will agree, I know, that it would be most frustrating to be absent for ten days (the formal course length) just when you most need to learn about the bear whose tail you have grabbed.

Drop me a line when you have a chance. In return for a full briefing on the Yom Kippur War I will break a leg to keep you off the inevitable circuit, doing ~~most~~ <sup>more</sup> of the same.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN W. SEIGLE  
57TH COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

LTC Nicholas S.H. Krawciw  
USMOG, UNTSO  
APO New York 09672

## ANNEX B

Table 7

### Battalion Commander Leadership— Ranking of Objects: Worldwide

NOTE: The following definition of Leadership was used in this research:

"Leadership is the process of influencing the actions of individuals and organizations in order to obtain desired results." (Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-15)

Rank <sup>a</sup>	Object	Average Percent "Part-of-the-Position"			Percent of Subjects Responding
		Cumulative Sum by All Subjects	On Item, by All Subjects	On Item, by Subjects Responding	
*1	Setting and maintaining standards	1.7	1.7	1.7	98.8
*2	Setting the example	3.4	1.7	1.7	98.8
*3	Enlisted men's safety and welfare	5.0	1.6	1.6	98.8
*4	Organizing	6.6	1.6	1.6	97.6
*5	Setting goals/levels of achievement or effort	8.2	1.6	1.6	98.8

(Continued)



Table 7 (Continued)

**Battalion Commander Leadership—  
Ranking of Objects: Worldwide**

Rank <sup>a</sup>	Object	Average Percent "Part-of-the-Position"			Percent of Subjects Responding
		Cumulative Sum by All Subjects	On Item, by All Subjects	On Item, by Subjects Responding	
*6	Giving clear, positive, and timely orders	9.8	1.6	1.6	98.8
*7	Establishing and maintaining <i>esprit de corps</i>	11.4	1.6	1.6	98.8
*8	Rewarding/praising subordinates	12.9	1.5	1.5	98.8
9	Initiating actions	14.4	1.5	1.5	98.8
10	Motivating	15.9	1.5	1.5	98.8
11	Inspecting	17.4	1.5	1.5	98.8
12	Planning	18.9	1.5	1.5	98.8
13	Directing	20.4	1.5	1.5	98.8
*14	Keeping subordinates informed	21.9	1.5	1.5	98.8
*15	Fostering individual and unit confidence	23.4	1.5	1.5	95.2
*16	Personal visits	24.9	1.5	1.6	98.8
*17	Consistency in disciplinary matters	26.4	1.5	1.6	96.4
18	Accessibility to officers	27.8	1.4	1.4	97.6
19	Accessibility to enlisted men	29.2	1.4	1.4	97.6
20	Acts expressing approval	30.6	1.4	1.4	97.6
*21	Controlling	32.0	1.4	1.4	97.6
22	Evaluating	33.4	1.4	1.4	98.8
23	Making policy	34.8	1.4	1.5	98.8
24	Allowing subordinates to develop procedures and techniques to implement policies	36.2	1.4	1.4	98.8
25	Creating an atmosphere which fosters mutual confidence and respect	37.6	1.4	1.5	98.8
26	Fostering the expression of new ideas, frank appraisals, and honest convictions through personal encouragement	39.0	1.4	1.4	98.8
27	Giving staff every opportunity to participate in the development of plans, policies, and procedures	40.4	1.4	1.4	98.8
28	Disseminating information on plans and operations as completely as security requirements permit	41.8	1.4	1.4	98.8
29	Finding out and attempting to eliminate the basic conditions creating uncertainty and frustrations before they accumulate	43.2	1.4	1.4	97.6
30	Assuring men know what is expected of them	44.6	1.4	1.5	97.6
31	Expressing confidence in the unit's combat ability	46.0	1.4	1.5	95.2
32	Providing a sense of accomplishment	47.4	1.4	1.5	97.6
33	High energy	48.8	1.4	1.5	95.2
34	Mission type orders	50.2	1.4	1.5	94.0
35	Informal relationship with officers	51.5	1.3	1.3	98.8
36	Courage	52.8	1.3	1.3	97.6

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)

**Battalion Commander Leadership—  
Ranking of Objects: Worldwide**

Rank <sup>a</sup>	Object	Average Percent "Part-of-the-Position"			Percent of Subjects Responding
		Cumulative Sum by All Subjects	On Item, by All Subjects	On Item, by Subjects Responding	
37	Serving as spokesman for the unit	54.1	1.3	1.3	97.6
38	Performing as counselor	55.4	1.3	1.3	97.6
39	Teaching	56.7	1.3	1.3	98.8
40	Delegating authority	58.0	1.3	1.4	98.8
41	Enforcing policies/regulations	59.3	1.3	1.3	97.6
42	Considering staff recommendations fully and objectively before making final decision	60.6	1.3	1.4	97.6
43	Developing confidence in individuals toward their leaders	61.9	1.3	1.3	98.8
44	Aesthetic and moral commitment to work	63.2	1.3	1.4	94.0
45	Originating new ideas or practices	64.5	1.3	1.3	98.8
46	Formal relationship with officers	65.7	1.2	1.2	98.8
47	Formal relationship with enlisted men	66.9	1.2	1.2	97.6
48	Officer's safety and welfare	68.1	1.2	1.2	98.8
49	Enlisted men's personal matters	69.3	1.2	1.2	97.6
50	Soliciting opinions of subordinates	70.5	1.2	1.2	98.8
51	Giving opinions to subordinates	71.7	1.2	1.3	98.8
52	Suggesting ways to accomplish tasks	72.9	1.2	1.2	98.8
53	Explaining the WHY of orders, etc.	74.1	1.2	1.2	97.6
54	Warning/reprimanding subordinates	75.3	1.2	1.2	98.8
55	Sense of humor	76.5	1.2	1.2	98.8
56	Praising members for effort or achievement	77.7	1.2	1.2	97.6
57	Coordinating	78.9	1.2	1.2	98.8
58	Informing men what means they have at their disposal to assist them in accom- plishing the mission	80.1	1.2	1.3	95.2
59	Instilling in the men an aggressive attitude and desire to destroy the enemy	81.3	1.2	1.4	86.9
60	Great work output	82.5	1.2	1.3	92.9
61	Persuading	83.6	1.1	1.1	97.6
62	Welcoming	84.7	1.1	1.1	98.8
63	Interviewing	85.8	1.1	1.1	98.8
64	Keeping informed of current rumors in the unit	86.9	1.1	1.1	95.2
65	Strength	88.0	1.1	1.2	88.1
66	Informal relationship with enlisted men	89.0	1.0	1.0	98.8
67	Encouraging pleasant group atmosphere	90.0	1.0	1.0	96.4
68	Briefing	91.0	1.0	1.0	98.8
69	Determining when/how work will be evaluated	92.0	1.0	1.0	94.0
70	Knowing enemy's capabilities	93.0	1.0	1.3	81.0

(Continued)

Table 7 (Continued)

**Battalion Commander Leadership—  
Ranking of Objects: Worldwide**

Rank <sup>a</sup>	Object	Average Percent "Part-of-the-Position"			Percent of Subjects Responding
		Cumulative Sum by All Subjects	On Item, by All Subjects	On Item, by Subjects Responding	
71	Officer's personal matters	93.9	.9	.9	98.8
72	Acts expressing disapproval	94.8	.9	1.0	95.2
73	Esteem by others	95.7	.9	1.0	91.7
74	Handling of attached/supporting units	96.6	.9	1.0	91.7
75	Reducing conflicts between members	97.5	.9	1.0	96.4
76	Serving as mediator	98.3	.8	.8	98.8
77	Determining differences of opinion between subcommanders and staff	99.1	.8	.9	98.8

<sup>a</sup>Asterisks denote objects that appear in the upper one-third of the ranking worldwide and Vietnam categories.



LTC Nick Krawciw was born in the Ukraine. He fled from Russia to Bavaria with his parents (his father was captured by the Nazis) during World War II. He came to the U.S. in 1949 and became a U.S. Citizen just in time to enter West Point in 1955. He was commissioned in Armor from USMA in 1959. He has served two tours in Armored Cavalry in Vietnam and two tours with Cavalry in Germany. His staff assignments include service on the Army Staff, on the Staff of the UN Truce Supervision Organization, and on the USAREUR staff. He is a graduate of the School of Naval Command and Staff and holds an MS degree in International Affairs from the George Washington University. He served as an Army Research Associate at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford, California during his US Army War College student year. LTC Krawciw was G3 of the UN Peacekeeping forces in Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War.



## CHAPTER 9

### BATTALION COMMANDER'S WIFE

*by*

*Karla F. Moellering*

The big moment! Your husband has just accepted the battalion colors. God speed and good luck have been bid the departing battalion commander and his wife. The drummer has sounded his last beat at the end of the parade field. And you find yourself, the new battalion commander's wife, shaking hands with an endless line of unfamiliar faces, heart sinking, wondering, "What do I do now?" No one has offered to send you to a two-week, or even two-hour, course on what your responsibilities entail. And it would be inappropriate for an Army field manual, regulation or SOP to be devoted to the subject. As far as can be determined, no one has ever written anything at length about it. So, like hundreds before you, you're on your own!

Right away let me say that you have ahead of you one of your most thrilling experiences. I doubt if ever before or ever again will there be another opportunity to share so intimately or completely with your husband in such an endeavor, and particularly one which by consensus will be the most exciting of his career. Except in a hardship tour situation, it would be difficult for it to be anything but a joint effort, and while the Department of Army has not made the role of battalion commander's wife an official one, I think DA would concede that without a happy and congenial distaff side of battalion life, the military side would certainly suffer. It's that distaff side for which you are ultimately responsible, and to which I shall refer in my chapter; and unless otherwise noted, it will be the officers' wives and families with which I will deal, for it is toward this group that most of your efforts will be directed.

It might be interesting to note, briefly, that when my husband asked me to contribute a wife's philosophy to his anthology, I immediately thought of the gold mine I had at my fingertips here at the Army War College, for certainly no fewer than 25 of the student wives had come from that very experience within the last two years. My initial thought was to interview as many as possible, and compile the thoughts and ideas that were held most successful in so many different kinds of battalions in as many different places. But to my surprise, I found that few shared with me the impression that the experience of being a battalion commander's wife was the gratifying, exciting, and memorable one that I had enjoyed. The reasons for these contrary feelings were too varied and complicated to note, but basically the idea of being the unsolicited leader of a large group of women was for some individuals uncomfortable. If you share this feeling, rest secure in the knowledge that your 10 or more years of experience counts for a whole lot when you're guiding young wives, many of whom are brand-new not only to the Army but to married life itself. They will be eager to learn from you and will look to you often for guidance and advice. You, in turn, will find that sharing with them will be a very gratifying experience.

Even though there exists no ready handbook on the role of battalion commander's wife, there are a number of helpful things that can be done in preparation for the change of command. I was fortunate to have six months on post prior to my husband's assuming command, so by that time I had a good feel for the organization of the Division, and had learned a great deal about the function and operation of a battalion—those things that must have passed me by completely as the bride of a company commander years before. Studying division and battalion organization charts was helpful as was learning about the various post activities and organizations, how they were staffed, and wherein the battalion's responsibility lay for providing volunteer support. I also had the benefit of friends and neighbors who were at the time or had just recently been battalion commanders' wives, and from them I gleaned as many good ideas as I could. These associations had another outcome for I slowly developed an idea of the kind of battalion commander's wife I did *not* want to be. Another wife in that position told me she found her group boring, had nothing in common with the young wives, and found attending the battalion functions to be agony. How could associations with young people be anything but exhilarating and rejuvenating? By comparing attitudes of the various battalion commander's wives with the cohesiveness and activity of their respective wives' groups, I established firmly in my mind the kind of leader I hoped to be. My ultimate goal was to be their good friend, and I hoped they would look upon me not as a mother image (as I had looked upon the battalion commander's wife as a bride), and maybe not even as a big sister, but rather as head of

a social group who had been elected by popular vote. To help achieve this status of good friend, I asked everyone to use my first name, recalling in earlier years when tradition dictated more formality and it was never thought to call the commander's wife anything other than Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_. Even the XO's wife never asked me to use her first name, even though I was but a few years her junior, and I recalled that particular bit of formality did not endear her to me. We could never have been good friends on that basis. So, with a little more time to prepare than the new command system allows most wives today, I launched into my role with a feeling of deep commitment to these girls I did not yet know, hoping that when the 18 months were over they would love the Army as much as I did and share in the pride of being a member of what I knew would be the best battalion.

*What is today's young Army officer's wife like?* Perhaps the most notable difference between modern wives and those of 10-15 years ago is their attitude. Because their husbands are all serving on their own free will, their attitudes are more supportive and less complaintive about the Army in general. With few exceptions, they are very happy to be where they are. They are also aware and actively interested in problems affecting the status of the military, and are vitally concerned with the Army's image.

Another notable difference is that these wives are very ambitious and discerning in what they do with their time. Many have jobs or work toward a degree if located near a college or university. Because of jobs and school, there are fewer babies in the group.

I also found as friendships grew and strengthened during the 18 months, there was little tendency for the group to divide into cliques. There will always be the group of "doers" who spend a lot of time together but I found this kind of "good" clique putting its efforts toward bettering the group and bringing it closer together. We were extremely lucky in not having one individual in our group who could qualify as the "bad apple" that many commanders' wives speak so despairingly about, for this one individual can apparently do a lot of damage. Not having been faced with that situation, I can only guess what I might have done and that would probably have been to try to make her my best friend. Sometimes this "bad apple" develops out of resentment for some action the commander has taken against the husband, but in that regard I think it goes without saying that no commander's wife should become involved in any way with the military side of the battalion. The best policy is to say nothing, even when you are knowledgeable about an existing military problem. Be the last to know, and be void of comment.

I also noted that the wives assume a great deal of unit pride and can be highly supportive in this respect. They strive to be number one in their own areas of competition, i.e., when organizing or participating in post- or unit-wide functions. I think this competitive spirit is a good thing to nurture, for it helps to instill enthusiasm and pride in the group.

Look forward to your associations and friendships with these young people. You'll find your genuine interest and enjoyment in being with these kinds—and that is what most of them are—will be contagious and they in turn will enjoy being with the group. They will know if you are only pretending to like the experience.

*Exactly what are your responsibilities?* Here are just a few for I'm sure there were more that never occurred to me. That is why I hope it doesn't appear as though I'm patting myself on the back for a job well done for nothing could be further from my intent. In fact, on reflection I despair at the things I should or could have done to make the experience more successful, but then hindsight . . . I might mention here that it was at least halfway through the 18 months before I felt in any way confident in what I was doing and in what we were doing as a group.

It goes without saying your first responsibility is to your husband and children, and it is my opinion that these responsibilities, coupled with those of battalion commander's wife, preclude taking a full-time job, either salaried or as time-consuming as that of OWC President, or Thrift Shop Manager. It's awfully hard to divide yourself so many ways and this is one time when this "new family" deserves a lot of time and attention. I feel strongly that you need to be very attuned to the needs and problems of this group if it's to be a totally successful effort, and being attuned requires being available.

Officially, I feel the responsibilities will be obvious. With your husband you are expected to represent the battalion at all changes of command that occur within the major unit—in our case, the Division. Special reviews, awards, and promotion ceremonies also demand your attendance except, in my opinion, for genuine reasons of

illness or the like. At some time during the month you will probably meet with the major unit commander's wife, or perhaps all the battalion commanders' wives will meet with the division and assistant division commanders' wives, at which time information such as OWC board news, etc., will be passed on to you who in turn will pass it on to your battalion wives' group. (I feel a periodic gathering of battalion commanders' wives for the purpose of sharing ideas and problems would be most beneficial and perhaps is a custom already existing in your unit.) To transmit this information with enthusiasm and endorsement is critical for too often a commander's wife who disagrees with a policy, proposal or requirement transfers this negative feeling to her group. It follows, naturally, that the group will respond negatively. Consider directives from the top as a *fait accompli* and get on with it. Be as loyal and supportive to those above you as you expect the wives in your group to be of you. Along with the above-mentioned information, I found the group delighted with any battalion information I could give them regarding forecasted dates for field exercises, IG inspections, ARTEP Evaluations, etc. It's interesting how few husbands discuss these things with their wives. Consequently, they were glad to be getting the news well in advance for planning purposes, as well as being made to feel important members of the battalion. With regard to IG inspections and ARTEP Evaluations, the two most important testing periods for the battalion, I felt it was just as important to get the wives "up" for these periods as it was for the men. Long in advance we discussed the dates and how demanding time-wise these periods would be. Sharing some of the humorous, and not-so-humorous, aspects of the ordeal as they occurred helped to convey a "we're-in-this-together" type feeling. I honestly feel some of this instilled a keener interest on the part of the wives in their husband's jobs, and resulted in an overall closer feeling within the battalion as a whole.

As for battalion ceremonies, it is equally important to attend the company changes in command. This had not been done prior to our joining the group but by the time we left, a company change of command was an all-important occasion warranting a cake and refreshments and enthusiastic attendance by the company officers' wives and an ever increasing number of NCO and enlisted wives. And that is certainly how it should be for assumption of company command is one of the high points in a company grade officer's career. Additionally, attendance at battalion awards and promotion ceremonies is also important. As to which ones you should consider attending and the surrounding details, there is no better person to tell you than the S1 (Adjutant). In fact, he will be your best friend on the battalion staff and one you will have the most contact with for it is he who has the information on newcomers, etc. And that brings me to the responsibility for welcoming new members to your battalion, which is something that should be done as soon after arrival as possible. The Welcome Chairman from our group and I greeted each new wife with a plant, and usually followed this visit up within a day or two with a tour of the area, a shopping trip, an afternoon at the pool, or some other diversion for what was almost always a long wait for quarters in temporary or guest house accommodations. The other wives picked up on this idea very quickly and were wonderful about befriending and entertaining the newcomers. It's customary for the battalion commander and his wife to entertain new couples in their home shortly after arrival, and I feel this too is critical for not only is this gesture an introduction into the battalion but for most of them into the Army. How many times I've heard young wives say their general impression of the Army rested on those first few weeks of military life and how cordial or unfriendly the initial welcome had been!

I viewed the whole 18 months as a learning experience for all of us. I learned a lot from these young wives and I hoped they, in turn, learned from me, although I feel to start out with the idea that you're going to "teach them" is wrong and will almost assuredly turn them off. Perhaps "sharing" would be a better term. A battalion commander's wife once told me she did nothing with her group as far as planning social activities, giving volunteer support, etc., because she felt those wives would not learn if she helped or worked with them. My philosophy is there is no better way to learn than to have someone experienced right there to guide and help you. So, for any major project, I first found a volunteer chairman and volunteered myself to be a member of the planning or working committee. And then, unless specifically asked for guidance, strived very hard to be just a working member. Along this same line, whenever a request came down from post activities for volunteer support, I felt it was just as important for me to volunteer too—once again, promoting the "we're-in-this-together" idea.

Requests for volunteers are frequent and numerous for all kinds of things from cookie baking to thrift shop help. By praising highly, in front of the whole group, those individuals who responded to the request for help, I think I made the others realize the importance of contributing to the community in some way. This positive reinforcement worked wonders in other areas as well, such as attendance at specific OWC events, etc. There is no faster way to turn these wives off than by making them feel pressured into doing something.



Another area that falls under your responsibility, and is probably the most difficult to manage, is that of organizing the NCO/EM wives. I hope for you that your predecessor has already accomplished this task and you find this group well-organized and running smoothly. It might be, as was true in my case, that no pressure has been brought to bear from higher up to attempt to organize this element. However, I was determined to give it an honest try for I feel there is a real need in this area. Based on my experience and only partial success, let me mention that I feel the key individual in this endeavor is the Command Sergeant Major's wife. If she is not enthusiastic or willing, or if she does not have the time because of employment or family commitments, then it will be a struggle. However, I would encourage you to give it a try anyway, searching for some senior NCO's wife who might be qualified to fill the CSM's wife's role. If the attempt were to organize only the NCO wives, the problem would be relatively easy, for most of these wives are older and more responsive, although a majority of them work. But usually the effort is to bring together the NCO and EM wives (and possibly Officer's wives) in some monthly, bimonthly or quarterly function such as a coffee. Communication is one of the biggest problems, and you'll find by merely printing invitations and sending them out through company distribution that possibly 85% of the wives will never see the information. Probably the best approach is to send communications pertaining to these functions down through the normal distribution system, and ask your husband to mention the event verbally at a weekly officers' call. Additional problems are solvable, but take some logistical support from your husband, i.e., where to hostess the function. The wives seem to respond more if the activity is held in the battalion area, so utilization of the mess hall or day rooms is probably the most convenient. Planning a function without including the children is hardly worthwhile as most of the EM wives can afford neither a sitter nor the post nursery facility. Therefore, a children's area with an adult or teenager in attendance should be provided either in a corner of the same room where the coffee is taking place or close by. Here, a box of collected cast-off toys and books is most helpful. Another problem that will affect the attendance at these functions is that of transportation. If, in fact, the enlisted couple owns a car, it has transported the husband to work early that morning, leaving the wife without a way to get there. Some battalion commanders let those husbands driving their wives to the function delay reporting for duty that day until just prior to the function, and then allow them to return their wives home during the lunch hour. Car pools organized on a company level can also be arranged.

As to those types of functions that were most successful, the ones that offered some form of entertainment, such as a fashion show (sponsored by an NCO's wife selling from a catalog company) or a bingo party proved to be best sellers. Several donated door prizes always made a big hit and the money made from selling chances on these went into a fund used for purchasing baby spoons for new arrivals among the NCO/EM ranks. I think it would be wise to devote at least one of these gatherings per year to familiarize these dependents with the existing on-post facilities and privileges. To accomplish this, representatives from the hospital, ACS, JAG (to discuss wills, powers of attorney, etc.), chaplain and other appropriate offices are more than willing to present a briefing on their areas of concern, and you would be very surprised how unknowledgeable so many enlisted wives are regarding their privileges and what is available to them on post. In fact, I would go so far as to say if this were the only attempt you made at getting the enlisted wives into the battalion area, it would be by far the most important and worthwhile effort. At the time I joined the group, there was one company commander's wife who had successfully organized all the wives in her husband's company. Once a month they met at night for a coffee at the home of one of the NCO or EM wives. This group was so active they even had their own newsletter that dispensed company news and gossip, i.e., new babies. However, there was one disadvantage to organizing down this far and that was by virtue of the small size of the group it was a more intimate arrangement, and at times the EM wives took advantage of their close friendship with the company commander's wife. On occasion, this created a touchy situation. If your attempt to organize something on a battalion-wide level does not succeed, I would recommend waiting six months or so and trying again. Perhaps a turnover in people will affect the outcome.

*"A battalion that plays together, stays together!"* That couldn't be more trite, but it couldn't be more true, either. The successful social side of battalion life has a tremendous effect on the overall personality and character of the group, and it can be some of the best fun you've ever had. As in all battalions, our wives' group met monthly for something—coffee, brunch, lunch in a local restaurant, pot-lucks when the men were in the field, etc. Two girls shared the hostessing and the expense, and as there were so many working wives, we alternated between day and night-time functions. (We did not opt for night-time affairs only, for many felt justifiably that the long working hours offered precious little time with husbands as it was.) To further communication with the working wives, we published a newsletter each month reiterating all the news and business transacted during the monthly get-together. Baby showers, which were always a surprise, were not given in conjunction with the battalion



coffees but were hosted separately by friends in the battalion so that good friends or neighbors of the expectant mother outside the group could be included. Additionally, the battalion wives who wanted to attend the monthly OWC functions did so as a group. I didn't stress attendance at these affairs, although I think it's very important to support this activity for I felt if a wife had limited time due to children or other commitments, I would much rather she participate at the battalion level first.

One word about your wives' group treasury which is usually used to fund farewell gifts, etc. There does exist a regulation which states that any treasury that has in excess of \$1 per number of participating individuals is subject to audit by the IG. I am unable to cite the number of this regulation, but it might be wise to remember that it exists. I personally think it unwise to let your treasury build up unnecessarily and, in fact, to have some casual document governing the expenditure and collection of these funds. Our group did not have such a document but when I recently heard from another former commander's wife of an instance where the issue of misappropriation of these funds was raised, I thought what a good idea it would be to at least have some guidelines governing these monies, small as they are.

Every battalion seems to have its own method of planning and executing "battalion parties"—the officers' and wives' get-togethers. I felt, for many reasons, that we had a particularly good system that allowed the wives to plan and organize these parties at our monthly coffees. First of all, the wives had much more time and energy than the husbands to devote to this kind of thing, and it had been proven in the past when the responsibility had been passed from the officers of one company to those of another, that thought would not be given the subject until the very last minute. Consequently, the results were rather haphazard. Also, the wives seemed to have an abundance of original ideas and a better feel for what the group would respond to best. And too, there was the extra bonus of bringing the group together during the planning and organizing of the party. Believe it or not, the function that got the four stars was a fall family camp-out that was so successful it was repeated again in the spring. We were fortunate that our recreational services office had tents and other types of trailers for rent. On the first camp-out, everyone took his own meat to grill and a salad and dessert to share. The camp-fire went well into the wee small hours and was restocked the next morning for an awe-inspiring, lake-side, family worship service led by our Battalion Chaplain. The families who attended raved so long and loud that seven months later an even bigger group set out, this time for a two-night excursion. Of all the times the battalion spent together, it was on these two occasions the group most felt an incredibly close bond of friendship. Not only these camp-outs but all family affairs were favorites. Picnics with lots of games for young and old always drew a big crowd, including the bachelors toward whom great consideration was always shown. Other memorable parties included a Halloween costume affair and a 50's sock hop, complete with pie-eating and goldfish-swallowing contests. We found a very easy way to handle the food aspect of an evening was through a pot-luck hors d'oeuvres arrangement. Generally speaking, the parties were innovative, imaginative, involved lots of games and contests, and were fun. While other battalions had great success with happy hours at the club at regular intervals, for some reason this was not a favorite with our group. Rather, parties with a theme, theater evenings followed by a pot-luck dessert, parties in private homes, and all out-of-doors affairs were considered winners.

You may have heard the term "super supper" which is an idea that was catching on in several battalions. This is supper sponsored by the battalion mess hall where, for a fixed price, all military and families can enjoy socializing together over dinner, after the troops have eaten. One battalion in the Division used to have an endless buffet menu of favorites for children and adults alike. Our Mess Sergeant preferred to offer steak and/or pizza, with 95% of the children opting for the latter. With proper advanced notice and lots of publicity, this can be a wonderful twice-a-year (or more frequent) battalion affair.

*Formality vs Army tradition?* I maintain that with the implementation of the All-Volunteer Force, some of the Army's more formal traditions gave way to a more casual way of doing things, but then this has been a trend throughout American society for a long time. And I happen to think it is not such a bad thing. Having been born and brought up in the Army, there are many wonderful traditions I hope will never be compromised and will continue to be passed along to the new members of the military. But too much formality can create an uncomfortable atmosphere. A friend recently told me that, while in command of his battalion, he and his wife entertained formally with all their crystal, silver, etc., to "show the kids how its done right." Well and good if the kids can turn around and reciprocate. I felt it was of little value for me to show them how to use my things but rather to show them clever ways to use their own things. I do not advocate using paper plates and napkins

necessarily but rather trying things like pyramids of red apples or a bowl of large polished vegetables in lieu of an expensive bouquet of flowers in a silver bowl. I also don't advocate being casual all the time but at least enough so that a relaxed atmosphere prevails. As for dress, you'll find when you say "casual," that's interpreted to mean not just blue jeans, but the oldest and most faded pair. Informal is only one step up from that, and if there's some question in their minds, the younger generation will always opt for the more casual. So, if there is an occasion where appropriate dress is of importance, it might be wise to pass along your idea of what you consider to be the proper thing to wear.

As for calling cards, I believe I am somewhat alone in the idea that for junior officers they are totally unnecessary. Promotions occur too frequently and the occasions for using them are few, and usually only once a year—New Years Day.

*Is your husband to assume command of a battalion in a remote area and you are about to undergo a year of hardship?* This might be a big disappointment, had you been looking forward to being a part of that experience. A friend of mine was clever enough to get into the act anyway. She asked her husband to feed her information regarding the activities and accomplishments of his battalion in Korea and transcribed this information into a newsletter that she mailed to all the officers' wives. This initiated correspondence between them which, in turn, made this commander's wife feel she had shared in a small way after all. Naturally, the other wives were extremely grateful for all the news that their husbands either hadn't had the time to write or had neglected to mention.

In summary, I can only say that if there is a secret to being a successful battalion commander's wife, it must be that in addition to enthusiastically and happily sharing this experience with your husband, having a genuine interest and concern for these young people is very key. These feelings and this spirit are contagious and in no time will bind the group into a real "battalion family."

All too soon, the big moment again. Your husband has reluctantly given up the battalion colors, that endless line of so familiar faces is now seen through misty eyes, and your sinking feeling this time is that the new battalion commander and his wife won't love these very special friends and the experience as much as you did.



Karla Moellering was born at West Point, New York. As the daughter and granddaughter of Army officers, she spend her youth moving and traveling. In 1946, she was among the first boatload of dependents to travel to Europe after World War II. A 1959 graduate of the University of Colorado, she majored in Political Science. Upon graduation, she was employed as a Statistical Analyst by the Human Resources and Research Organization, Presidio of Monterey, California. In 1961, as a Department of the Army civilian, she became a Management Analyst for Southern Area Command, Munich, Germany. She returned to the U.S. in 1963, and, until her marriage that same year, held a position as Systems Engineer/Computer Programmer with Department of the Army. The Moellerings have two sons, ages 12 and 11, and a daughter, eight. Throughout their fourteen years of marriage, Karla has been active as a Cub Scout Leader, Red Cross Volunteer, ACS Volunteer, Sunday School teacher, and Thrift Shop Chairman.

