

# The NCO Journal

Spring 1991

A Quarterly Forum for Professional Development

Inaugural Issue

# The NCO Journal

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U.S. Army Photo

**Col. Fredrick Van Horn**  
Commandant, USASMA

**CSM George D. Mock**  
Command Sergeant Major

**MSG Gil High**  
Editor-in-Chief

**SFC John K. D'Amato**  
Editor

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The mission of **The NCO Journal** is to provide a forum for the open exchange of ideas and information, support the training, education and development of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps, and to foster a closer bond among its members.

Manuscripts and letters are invited. Address all letters and articles to Editor, **The NCO Journal**, the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Tx., 79918-1270. Material submitted for publication is subject to edit. Footnotes and bibliographies may be deleted due to limitation of space.

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Over the course of the past 18 months, the United States Army has been called upon twice to send its soldiers into combat in defense of freedom. Both times, the Army responded with valor and determination, reflecting the power of the nation and the strength of the American people. In these actions and in operations throughout the globe, the Army has justly earned its reputation as the most capable land force in the world today.

Standing at the bedrock of this Army are America's noncommissioned officers — sergeants who embody the finest qualities of professionalism: competence, responsibility, and commitment. Our sergeants are the finest in our history, and they have made the Army what it is today. This corps of leaders did not emerge overnight; it is the product of years of imaginative, thoughtful, and far-reaching leader development programs that, even today, continue to grow in scope and magnitude.

The Army's NCO leader development program rests on three fundamental elements — I call them pillars — that reinforce each of the qualities of professionalism and cover the entire range of leader development requirements.

The first of these pillars is institutional training — the Army's schools that provide the educational foundation and technical skills that are essential for the development of competence. Throughout the Army, there is now a deep sense of awareness of the importance of schools, and we have redoubled our efforts to ensure that all our noncommissioned officers receive the institutional training they require.

The second pillar is the operational assignments in which our sergeants put into practice the competence they have acquired and expand the application of their technical skills to the real-world challenges of leadership at the unit level. Operational assignments focus our sergeants on the importance of developing responsibility — responsibility for themselves, for their units, and for the soldiers they lead.

Finally, our leader development program depends heavily upon self-development — the willingness of our sergeants to devote the extra time and effort to expanding their horizons and improving their abilities to serve in America's Army. Self-development reinforces the professional quality of commitment — for it requires each sergeant to seize the initiative, devote the hours, and go beyond the immediate requirements of school or assignment.

The inauguration of the **NCO Journal** is a vital addition to each of the pillars of self-development and provides a forum that our sergeants will find invaluable. It is a journal for, by, and about noncommissioned officers and, as such, it relies heavily upon the input of its readers — our sergeants. In its pages, you will find articles, opinions and letters that will stimulate your own thinking and will provide you with new perspectives on the challenges that you confront.

I encourage you to read the **Journal**, to think about the articles and messages it contains, and to contribute your own experiences to its pages. For the real value of this journal lies in its ability to reflect the thinking and concerns of the noncommissioned officers of this Army, and the **Journal** will only be as good as you make it.

I am proud of this journal, and I am proud of the Army's corps of noncommissioned officers that it reflects. With this first edition, the **NCO Journal** now takes its place in the Army's library of publications as an invaluable asset to leaders at all levels.

Carl E. Vuono  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

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**Front Cover:** *Army Reservist SSG Louis T. Valverde, section sergeant for the 281st Transportation Company from Las Cruces, New Mexico, now serving in Saudi Arabia. Photo by Cleveland McKnight.*

**Back Cover:** *Courtesy of the U.S. Army Art Collection*

# Top NCO

Over the years, your Army has invested heavily in building a strong corps of noncommissioned officers. The publishing of this noncommissioned officer leader development journal is a sterling example of the strong, continued, dedicated commitment to this critical endeavor.

The primary purpose for this journal is leader development. It serves as a training vehicle by communicating leader development lessons learned, programs, policy and standards to our noncommissioned officers Army-wide.

We are expected to maximize the potential of this training opportunity by ensuring every noncommissioned officer has access to the journal, by using the provided information for leader development training sessions, and by providing constructive feedback that will increase the journal's effectiveness.

Additionally, we must energize ourselves to writing and submitting recommended topics for publication. Within our corps of noncommissioned officers, we have talented soldiers who can provide written information for the benefit of our total Army. Again, we must tap this talent by energizing ourselves and encouraging our fellow noncommissioned officers to put pen to paper.

As the first Noncommissioned Officer Journal edition rolls off the press, we should recognize and appreciate the untiring, selfless service of our Chief of Staff of the Army, the Training and Doctrine Command, our chain of command, the Sergeants Major Academy, and the journal editor and staff for making this leader development opportunity a reality.

The future, the effectiveness, and the success of our journal now rests with us. The ball is in our court. My fellow noncommissioned officers, it is time for us to run up the score.

Julius W. Gates  
Sergeant Major of the Army

## ■ Notes from the Field

### NCOES and Soldier Retention in a Smaller Army

As the United States Army becomes smaller, we can expect the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) to scale down in proportion to the needs of the force.

The Army trains for three reasons: New or modified technology (equipment); new or changed doctrine (knowledge); and to correct a deficiency within the force relative to the technology or doctrine (skills). TRADOC training developers use the Systems Approach to Training to analyze, design and develop instructional media.

Recently, the Army's senior leadership determined that Army trainers could reduce the length of resident training by converting some knowledge-based lessons to a distributive media.

TRADOC categorizes distributive media into five types: print, paper-based instruction (correspondence lessons); video tape; computer-based training; interactive video; and televideo, a worldwide teleconferencing network.

Under the guidance of the Futures Division, Training Development and Analysis Directorate, DCST-TRADOC, the U.S. Army Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Okla. is converting portions of the MOSC 13B ANCOC.

While still in the design and development stages, it appears that distributive training has the potential to reduce the length of this particular ANCOC course. While these initiatives can reduce the length of time required for the resident portions of professional development courses and still maintain standards, their success depends on greater emphasis at the unit level.

During a recent visit of NCOES training in Germany, trainers routinely told USASMA personnel they did not believe the "right" soldiers were getting to the NCO academies.

Let there be no doubt that the ultimate decision for course attendance is that of the commander. However, noncommissioned officers of all ranks must advise and encourage commanders not to defer NCOES training because a soldier is "mission essential." Professional development training is another aspect of soldier readiness rather than a degradation of combat preparedness.

The professional development training sword cuts in two directions. We must recruit and retain only the best qualified soldiers. Concurrently we should ensure that only those soldiers who qualify for retention because of demonstrated excellence attend NCOES training. Many jun-

ior soldiers dismiss career aspirations when they miss the opportunity for professional development training because of mission requirements. This is especially true when they see less qualified soldiers receive the training they were denied.

Leadership is a tough business that sometimes requires tough decisions. Sometimes we must think beyond the here and now — what options would you have if that "too important" soldier went on emergency leave the day before NTC rotation or gunnery? There is no "pat" answer here, only the suggestion to weigh alternatives.

Add to this the Army linking promotion to professional development and it becomes even more important to send the best qualified soldier to school if we are truly to retain a qualified force with a future potential for growth.

During a recent conference LTG Leonard P. Wishart, III, Commander, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, commented that, "Nobody does more with less, unless they do it less well." Let's commit ourselves to using the NCOES training base to provide a maximum return in leadership for the smaller force of the out years. ■

SGM Dan Murphy, USASMA, Training & Doctrine

### ACAP: More than Transition Assistance

The Army Career and Alumni Program has been developed to provide a comprehensive system to assist personnel leaving the Army.

While offering caring, disciplined and organized service at the local level, the broader objective of ACAP is to retain quality personnel. It's targeted to serve the entire Army family — soldiers, civilians and family members.

The need for this program became obvious as the Army examined the current transition system and discovered deficiencies including unsynchronized services, fragmented and uneven job

assistance counseling and services, and an impersonal delivery.

ACAP will synchronize the current transition services and add transition assistance offices (TAOs) and contracted job assistance centers (JACs) to selected installations. Seven sites within CONUS established pilot TAOs and JACs in 1990. By the spring of 1991 the Army will have approximately 67 TAOs and 57 JACs operating throughout the Army.

ACAP will serve as many as 220,000 soldiers, civilians and family members each year.

ACAP's goal is to promote better re-

cruiting and retention of quality personnel by demonstrating that the Army cares for its people. It is vital that noncommissioned officers understand and support this program so that they can counsel and assist their soldiers to make wise career decisions.

For more information see a local ACAP representative or contact the ACAP office at PERSCOM TAPC-PDC, 2461 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, Va. 22331-0479. Their Autovon phone number is 221-3590. ■

Herb Schwab, ACAP

## ■ From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of **The NCO Journal**, a quarterly publication dedicated to you, the professional non-commissioned officer.

The goals and objectives of this, your professional journal, were established by the 1989 NCO Professional Leader Development Task Force which identified the need for a forum for NCO leader issues developed by NCOs for NCOs. The forum envisioned by the task force called for an instrument to "further the professional growth of NCOs, now and in the future." After months of planning and discussion that instrument is ready for inspection.

Naturally, we hope you like what you see. But, more importantly, we hope you will view **The NCO Journal** as a place for open discussion of issues and ideas and as a valuable tool for your own professional development.

We also hope you'll look upon the journal as a work in progress. In this first issue you'll find a few feature articles and what we hope will become recurring columns to address the variety of issues that are a regular part of NCO business.

What is missing, so far, is a more important element: The wealth of experiences, ideas and opinions that you and your fellow readers have to contribute.

Although we are an official Department of the Army publication **The NCO Journal** should not be confused with an Army regulation or field manual. What is contained on these

pages, in most cases, does not represent doctrine or even the official Army or DoD position on issues.

**The NCO Journal** is different from other information publications in that, since it is a vehicle for professional growth, its authors are encouraged to express personal concerns and opinions.

In other words: While **The NCO Journal** fully supports command policies and will publish officially approved information important to NCO development, it is not a command information publication.

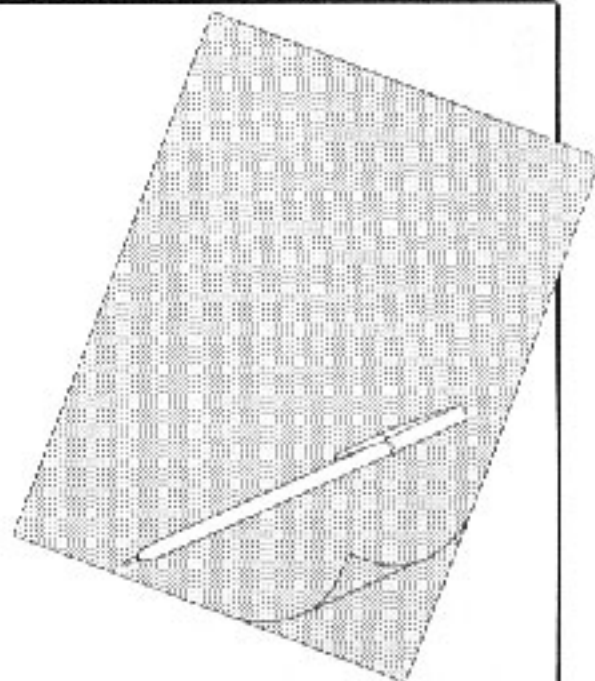
Rather, it is an open forum where you can raise questions, seek advice and offer solutions to problems common to a broad population of NCOs.

Our only criterion is that the articles we publish, whatever their viewpoints, address and make us think about leader development issues or offer suggestions on how we as noncommissioned officers may become more professional.

We solicit information from anyone whose experience can further the professional aims of the NCO Corps. But, for the most part, the articles should come from NCOs.

From the start, we want to be an outlet for creative thought and a means of connecting the different levels of NCO education and experience.

As **The NCO Journal** began to take shape those involved in the "birthing" process thought it was important that several things should be included. Some of those fall into categories which lead naturally to the creation of standing departments or recurring features which



will develop as time goes by. From the start, expect to see articles on self-development and the nuts and bolts issues of sergeant's business.

While it's too soon to commit to several standing departments, especially in the limited space of the first issues, two that the editors feel to be very important are a book review section and a "Letters" department. The "Letters" section will develop as response to the journal grows, and should eventually replace this page.

In addition to recurring columns, each issue of **The NCO Journal** will include articles based on a theme that is important to the Army as a whole or NCOs in particular. Given the events in the Middle East at the time when the first issue went to the printer, it seemed appropriate that our first theme should deal with desert warfare.

While the articles on the pages that follow are proof that our first contributors have done an excellent job, those same pieces reveal a limited view of the subject. A big part of that is because our writers were not the experts on the ground who were doing the supervising and training.

Readers who've "been there" may feel that a large part of the story has gone untold, or important issues were never raised. If you feel that's the case then write and tell us about it — either in a letter or in a several-page article. **The NCO Journal**, the NCO Corps, the Army — and you the writer — will be better due to your contribution. ■

G.R.H.

## ■ Leadership Competencies

# Team Building

By SFC John K. D'Amato

In the Tunisian desert near El Guettar stand the mountains and sheer cliffs that form the Djebel el Ank Pass.

American soldiers clung to precarious handholds on those wind-swept mountainsides. To keep the German 10th Panzer juggernaut, already poised behind Italian defensive positions, from punching through American lines they had to take and hold the Djebel el Ank Pass.

The job of outflanking the Italian positions on the hills around the pass fell to the men of the 1st Ranger Battalion, Darby's Rangers. They would strike from behind, while the 26th Infantry Regiment assaulted from the front.

The Italians held positions blasted from solid rock. Anti-tank guns, German 88's, heavy machine guns, a heavy minefield and rows of barbed wire faced the soldiers of the 26th. If the Rangers couldn't take the Djebel el Ank by surprise, the 26th would be cut to ribbons.

The Rangers had a chance, however. The Italian right flank was left unguarded. No man, the Italians were convinced, could negotiate the massive mountain slopes of Djebel el Ank, especially at night.

They were right — "no man could." But, the Rangers were a highly trained combat team. Their NCOs had trained them constantly in silent night movement, navigation in the darkness, and night fighting. Each sergeant was convinced that teamwork overcomes the greatest of obstacles.

Ranger foot patrols had found an almost impossible ten-mile route over a series of gorges, crevices, fissures and saddles that led to a plateau overlooking the Italian position.

Where one man might have failed, Rangers working as a team could succeed. NCOs with blackened faces and in full field packs lifted, pulled and pushed their men through a dead-black night across terrain most wouldn't attempt even

in daylight. When faced with sheer cliffs they formed human chains. Nothing would stop them.

Using color coded flashlights, the Rangers spread from their single-file formation into attack positions and awaited the dawn. NCOs scurried among their men, ensuring everyone knew what it was he had to do.

At 0600, March 21, 1942, the 1st Ranger Battalion swept down on the startled Italians. NCOs directed fire by teams with devastating effect. Under covering fire, a sergeant and his team would move forward and provide covering fire for the next team.

Soon, the Rangers were on top of the Italians. The soldiers quickly proved that the bayonet training their sergeants had given them had not been in vain. Under the cry of "Give 'em cold steel!" the Rangers hacked and slashed their way through a line of Italian foxholes.

In twenty minutes, the Rangers had broken enemy resistance at Djebel El Ank Pass. Official records credit the Rangers and the 26th Infantry with the capture of more than a thousand prisoners that morning. The Rangers had one man wounded.

Without the coordinated actions of squad leaders and their teams, and without the hundreds of hours each man had received in night fighting and bayonet drill, American losses certainly would have been higher.

Though there were many individual acts of heroism, success at Djebel el Ank was not due to each man acting alone. Victory came through teamwork — each soldier doing what he had been trained by his NCO to do, and all working together toward a common goal.

In 1989, an NCO Leader Development Task Force developed a list of nine leadership competencies, comprised of skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for every NCO to master at each skill level. Perhaps no competency is more critical to the success of the American Army on the battlefield than "Soldier-Team De-

velopment" at the Sergeant E-5 level.

According to FM 22-102, Soldier Team Development, success on tomorrow's AirLand battlefield "will depend largely on the development of cohesive combat-ready teams consisting of well-trained and highly motivated soldiers."

But, if team building is the most important competency for a sergeant who is a team leader, it is also one of the most difficult.

Unlike any of the eight remaining individual competencies, team building requires an NCO to be proficient in each of the other eight competencies if he or she is to have any hope of success.

Technical and Tactical Proficiency, Professional Ethics, Planning, Use of Available Systems, Decision Making, Communication, Teaching and Counseling, and Supervision (the remaining eight competencies) all play an important part in building a solid, effective and cohesive team.

Developing team cohesion is one of the primary skills listed under Soldier-Team Development, and the NCO will soon discover that it too involves mastery of a whole set of other skills. But, without the bonding formed through confidence, respect and trust between team members and between the members and their leader, there is no cohesion.

Building those bonds may seem like an overwhelming task at first, especially to a young sergeant taking over a new squad or team, but help is available. Since the young sergeant's team is part of the platoon, company, battalion and higher teams, it is in everyone's best interest that each part operate at peak efficiency.

Every NCO and commander leading higher level teams will be eager to help, since they realize that strengthening the sergeant's team means improving their own larger teams.

The source for information on team building and developing team cohesion is FM 22-102, Soldier Team Develop-



Photo by MSG (M) [M]

In combat, information is strength. When the sergeant says, "Here's the situation," every team member should know that the information is accurate and that the leader can be trusted not to embellish the facts or withhold details.

ment. The manual provides a simple, common sense, step-by-step approach to a complex process.

Here the sergeant learns that the status of any given team is constantly changing — effected by personnel moves, time together, individual and group training, and events happening inside and outside the unit.

A team is always in one of three stages of development: Formation, development or sustainment. But the performance level of any team is susceptible to change and the team can be in the sustainment stage one week and back to the development stage the next. Because the soldiers who make up the team have different needs and motivations depending on which stage of development the team is in, a good NCO is constantly assessing the team's performance levels.

What molds a group of individuals together is acceptance, open communication, reliance on one another and accep-

tance of shared standards and values. At the center of the team is the sergeant, who must create a bond with the team, set and enforce standards and set the example in the development of closer relationships.

That team bonding begins for new soldiers the moment they arrive. If a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, then a team is only as good as its most unskilled member. Chances are, since a new soldier has not trained with the team that soldier is the one who needs to learn the team values, standards and procedures in order to maintain the team's present performance level.

Even before new members are introduced to the team, the sergeant must start building trust and confidence. Soldiers must feel their concerns will be heard and their problems are important to their leaders.

According to FM 22-102, the sergeant does this by ensuring that, "soldiers' pay records are accurately processed; person-

nel, medical, and other records are in their proper place; soldiers have all their personal equipment; an adequate place to sleep; they know where key places such as the dining facility, hospital, chapel and recreational facilities are located; and that they are shown the kind of caring essential for developing loyalty to the team."

Selecting a conscientious sponsor, or buddy, who acts as a role model of what team members are expected to be, know and do is a critical step in the initial phase. In combat situations, rapid adaption to the team, cohesion and cooperation are even more critical, and the "buddy" selected should be an experienced combat soldier.

In both cases, the selection of the "buddy" sends a clear message to the new soldier that the sergeant cares, and gives the soldier an example to follow.

Once soldiers have finished in-processing and are introduced to the team, their natural instinct is to want to belong,

## ■ Leadership Competencies



Photo by SFC Phil Prater

Battlefield success depends on development of cohesive, combat-ready teams consisting of well-trained and highly motivated soldiers.

especially if the team is noted for its high standards of performance.

These new team members will watch the more established team members and their leaders to determine what they must do to gain acceptance. They want to know what the standards are and what actions are rewarded and what are punished. They want to know what the team's goals are — and where they fit into the overall scheme. It's up to the team leader to provide those answers.

If the team member has not already had an orientation briefing with the sergeant then there are several key areas that must be addressed, critical to building a cohesive team. The sergeant should discuss with the soldier,

- Unit/team values and standards.
- Unit/team mission and goals.
- Unit/team standing operating procedures.
- Unit heritage.

The values most important to the team are encompassed in the Professional Army Ethic, and the sergeant must set the example for the new soldier in word and in deed. Loyalty to the nation, the Army and the unit are critical to the es-

tablishment of a cohesive team.

The sergeant shows loyalty to the soldier through caring and genuine concern. In turn, a soldier follows orders and supports the chain of command.

The sergeant should also set an example of selfless service, ensuring the needs of team members are met before his or her own. The history of the United States Army is full of accounts of NCOs who have exemplified the ideal of selfless service, sometimes sacrificing their own lives to ensure the survival of their comrades. In combat or in training, all members of a team trust that those with whom they serve will "be there for them," committed to mission accomplishment rather than self-interest.

Nowhere is this issue of dependability more important than in the sergeant's daily example and insistence on personal integrity. Soldiers must know that what their sergeant says is what their sergeant does. Integrity is the basis for the trust that grows between sergeants and their team members.

It is this honesty in all matters that many call candor, or faithfulness to the truth, that helps bind a team together. In com-

bat, when the sergeant says, "this is the situation..." no team member should think they've heard a lie or only half the truth.

Sometimes telling the truth or facing a situation head-on takes a good deal of courage. But soldiers expect both physical and moral courage from their leaders, just as it is expected of them. Tough, realistic and often physical training builds physical courage. Strict adherence to ethical principles and doing what is right, rather than what is easy, builds moral courage.

Soldiers also expect their leaders to be competent. To a large degree, the sergeant's demonstrated technical and tactical proficiency is the basis for the team's confidence in him or her. The sergeant's job, in turn, is to train the team to a highest level of competency.

According to FM 22-102, "training is the heart of soldier team development, and all unit tasks and missions are training opportunities." Training also is one of the best ways a sergeant can show he or she cares about soldiers. Providing tough, challenging training sends a clear message that the sergeant is concerned about the soldier's safety and survival in combat.

Once all the soldiers on a team accept the previous values as their own — when they work late to accomplish the team's and unit's mission, or push themselves past personal convenience to build and hone their level of competency — then they are demonstrating the level of commitment a sergeant must demand and expect.

Cohesive teams are built through two-way, honest communication, a sense of caring, trust and confidence between all team members and the sergeant/team leader.

Team building is not an easy task. It is complicated, tedious, sometimes frustrating, and often must start all over again when a new soldier enters the team.

It is, however, what sergeants do.

Few things in a military career are more rewarding than building a strong combat-ready team of individuals who think and act as one.

And, compared to team building, nothing we do as sergeants is more important for our success on the modern battlefield.

For those who doubt . . .

"In the Tunisian desert near El Guettar, stand the mountains and sheer cliffs that form the Djebel el Ank Pass . . ." ■

*SFC John K. D'Amato, a former tank commander and platoon sergeant, is NCOIC of USASMA public affairs.*



# Operation Desert Storm

**As Allied Forces continued to bombard Iraqi fortifications, the soldiers of Operation Desert Storm prepared for offensive ground actions. Noncommissioned officers were there to ensure the troops were ready.**

War moves with remarkable speed when viewed through the limited eye of a quarterly publication. As the last of the copy for this issue was being prepared for shipment to the printer in January, allied forces had completed the first week of intensive bombing deep within Iraq, the first Americans had died during border skirmishes, and Saudi Arabian soldiers had retaken the coastal border town of Khafji from the invading Iraqis.

Judging from news reports and the comments of military leaders, a lot more will happen before this issue is in readers' hands in April. The allied air campaign will shift its focus to destroying Iraqi command lines and supply routes. Iraqi forces will remain entrenched while continuing their border attacks in an attempt to draw the allies into a premature ground offensive. And, as in any war, there will be some surprises from both sides.



What seems clear is that however long it takes to drive Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's military forces from Kuwait, it will be some time before conditions in the Persian Gulf have stabilized enough that the first American soldiers can come home.

So it's appropriate that our first issue is dedicated to the soldiers of Operation Desert Storm. But while the articles on the following pages follow a desert warfare theme, their focus is on the broader

issues of NCO leadership that are important to all of us. Issues such as knowing your enemy and environment, learning from history and the experiences of others, and applying leadership skills to maintain morale and discipline. We hope you find something in these articles that you can use or that will encourage you to learn more and share what you've learned with others. ■

MSG Gil High

# Assessing Hussein's Army

By SSG Elroy N. Garcia

In April 1988 Iraq launched a major offensive against Iran that included five major battles and numerous smaller engagements waged over the whole 730-mile Iran-Iraq frontier. Iraq won each battle — decisively — and by the time the blitzkrieg ended in August, Iran's army was virtually destroyed.

The offensive brought a sudden end to the eight-year Iran-Iraq war. It also ended any thoughts in the United States that Iraq was an "inconsequential, militarily weak power," an assumption held by many government officials prior to the war, according to members of the Strategic Studies Institute at the Army War College.

Iraq's army today is much the same as the one that whipped Iran on the battlefield and forced the Ayatollah Khomeini to accept a truce.

As of January 16, Saddam Hussein was known to have the fifth largest army in the world — only the United States, Soviet Union, China and India have larger armies. Among Middle Eastern nations, Iraq is a virtual military superpower, having more than triple the number of troops in the Egyptian army, the region's second largest military force.

Equipment used by Iraq is primarily Soviet made and, according to the Strategic Studies Institute, includes "large numbers of T-72 tanks" and sophisticated long-range artillery systems. A book released by the Institute last year, entitled *Iraq Power and U.S. Security in the Middle East*, lists Iraq as having 5,500 tanks, 3,700 field artillery pieces and 160 helicopters.

While the number of artillery pieces and their potential for destruction are impressive, Iraq lacks the advanced targeting systems required to use them effectively, according to an Army Times report.

Army intelligence experts at the Pentagon describe Iraq's officer corps as

"very professional and patriotic." But, they add, once on the battlefield the officers often become wary of making moves that might anger government officials in Baghdad.

"Iraq's officers are allowed to show less initiative than U.S. officers. They know the price of failure can result in liquidation, so they're less willing to take chances on their own," said Dr. Norman Cigar, Middle East desk officer with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence.

Among the enlisted corps, pay problems are rampant and the opportunity to advance to leadership positions is virtually nonexistent.

"Traditionally the pay has been very low and very irregular," said Maj. Wallace Terrill Jr., a foreign area officer for

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## Once drafted, the Iraqi soldier must adjust to austere conditions, particularly in terms of food and shelter.

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the Middle East. "Many of the soldiers in the Iraqi army were mobilized for the war with Iran and were never sent home — they're still in. You have men who have been in the army for 10 years and are still privates. They're brought in to be riflemen and they stay riflemen."

The typical Iraqi soldier is a male — women serve primarily as nurses and comprise less than one percent of the force — with "considerable combat experience, but uneven training," said Terrill. "There's not a lot of concern with bringing soldiers up through the ranks and cultivating leadership."

According to Cigar, basic training for infantrymen is sporadic, particularly during emergencies. During its war with Iran, some Iraqi conscripts received as little as one week of basic training before being sent into combat — others

went straight from the streets of Baghdad to the front lines with no training at all.

With the exception of the elite Republican Guard, whose members originally served as bodyguards for the president and have since grown into a corps of about 150,000 troops, all Iraqi enlisted soldiers are draftees. And while Cigar said officers are subject to "liquidation" for certain transgressions, enlisted soldiers may suffer severe beatings for their mistakes.

"It's a hard, hard army," he said. "Once a soldier is drafted he has to adjust to very austere conditions, particularly in terms of food and shelter."

Cigar sees the Republican Guard as the backbone of the Iraqi army and described its soldiers as the most loyal and motivated in the country. "The Republican Guard is the cream of Iraqi society," he said. "They're the best educated, best trained and best equipped soldiers they have."

As the hardened core of the army, the Republican Guard will be well entrenched and held in reserve for the critical stages of Hussein's war effort. The first troops to be used against allied forces likely will be poorly trained and driven more by fear of punishment than by political conviction. Military analysts have suggested that early victories against such an enemy could lead allied leaders to underestimate Iraqi capabilities.

When allied forces encounter more experienced Iraqi troops, they will be facing a tenacious enemy, according to the Army War College study. While air superiority may weaken the Republican Guards, in the end it will take a determined ground force to drive the Iraqis from Kuwait. ■

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*SSG Elroy N. Garcia is NCOIC of the Army News Service, Command Information Division, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs.*

# School of Sand: Desert Lessons

By SFC John K. D'Amato

Military experts call it a "target-rich environment." Battles fought across its barren, trackless terrain have been characterized by their speed and lethality. It has no friend, no conqueror, no equal. It is unforgiving and allows for no mistakes. It recognizes no middle ground — only complete victory or complete defeat.

It is "The Desert," and if the American Army is to be successful in the deserts of the Persian Gulf, its leaders must learn the lessons of the desert and learn them well.

Fortunately for NCOs in the Gulf region and for those awaiting deployment, there are thousands of desert war lessons learned — from the time of the battle of Carrhae in 54 B.C. to those from Desert Storm.

Hundreds of simulated battles at the National Training Center and other desert training areas point clearly to areas where NCOs need to place training emphasis.

Lack of vegetation and prominent terrain features in the desert make pinpointing one's position extremely difficult, even during daylight hours. NCOs must train their soldiers to use their compasses, to accurately measure distances traveled, and to navigate in a land nearly void of man-made and natural terrain features.

Experience gained at the NTC has



An M60/A1 kicks up a swirl of sand as it closes on its target. Dust clouds can obliterate a target or reveal its location. The sand is also an enemy to movement — clogging filters and stopping engines.

shown that, although their map reading skills are adequate for the training areas near their home bases, soldiers in the desert may either become disoriented or be forced to hug the roads and dry streambeds for fear of getting lost.

Many units now have more sophisticated land navigation or location determination equipment than the standard compass and map can provide.

Unfortunately, the soldiers of such units sometimes become too reliant on these means and allow their map reading skills to slip. Satellite links, electronic or other equipment can be lost in battle or unavailable, and overdependence on any one method of land navigation or location identification system can lead to disaster. The best-led soldiers are those who can use available systems, such as the Position Azimuth Determining System (PADS), yet fall back on sound map reading skills when necessary.

If land navigation in daylight is difficult, it's worse at night. There are dozens of stories out of the NTC of units stumbling through the night, missing rallying points or objectives, and finding themselves with tired, demoralized, and lost soldiers at daylight.

Night is when most units move. NCOs, therefore, must know that their soldiers can operate in near or total darkness.

Newcomers to the desert often say it seems that they can "see forever." More

experienced soldiers might describe it as seeing the world through a full goldfish bowl. Objects seem closer than they are, shapes distort, and important terrain features disappear entirely.

The shimmer of heat on sand creates mirages of water or hills in the distance. There are accounts from World War II of lost soldiers walking for days toward mountains that did not exist.

Dust also impacts on observation. It can, at the same time, obscure movements and give them away.

Crew-served weapons, especially field artillery and tank main guns, tend to kick up huge clouds of dust, blinding the crews and equipment trying to put follow-on rounds on target.

Taking a page from the German Afrika Korps or the British Desert Rats in World War II, some NCOs operating in Desert Storm have their troops limit the dust clouds by laying down wet mats or oil in the sand in front of their big guns.

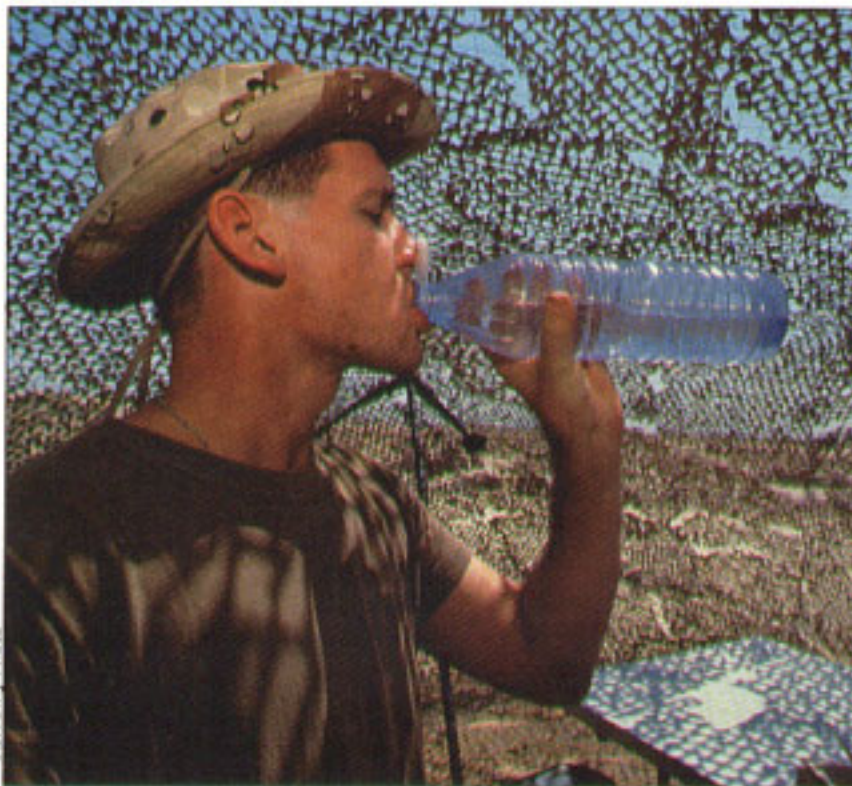
Another way crews are overcoming the siting problem is to have one vehicle fire and another sense where rounds are impacting.

The Kuwaiti and Saudi sands effect far more than siting, however. With sand temperatures reaching 165 degrees, rubber weakens, wood shrinks, and metal softens and bends. To those units slow to adapt to their new environment, the desert soon becomes a maintenance nightmare.

Sand mixed with lubricating oil forms

U.S. Army Photo

## School of sand



U.S. Army Photo

Soldiers who drink only when thirsty are setting themselves up for dehydration and heat stroke. Careful supervision can prevent combat losses due to heat injury.

a thick, gritty paste that fouls weapons. A little sand inside radio cable connectors causes operators to force and break them. Filters clog and engines stop. Tires weaken and puncture easily in rough terrain.

Proper maintenance of equipment is an NCO's responsibility, and breakdowns of vehicles, weapons, radios and other electronic equipment in the desert are often more a function of inadequate soldier training than poor equipment.

Whether it's in the Saudi desert or in the rugged terrain of the NTC, smart NCOs devote a good portion of each day training and supervising maintenance. And the wisest of leaders are calling in the experts — the armorer, motor maintenance and communications NCOs, etc. — to doubly ensure that training and maintenance are by the book.

Breakdowns will occur, however, so there have been times when soldiers have become stranded. To minimize problems NCOs have learned to expand the buddy system so there are extra safety checks before and during movements. And to limit injuries soldiers are receiving reinforcement training in survival and rescue techniques.

Heat is the most obvious and immediate physical danger in a desert environment. During World War II, air temperatures in the Sahara Desert often reached 136 degrees Fahrenheit. Inside

their tanks crews recorded temperatures of 160 degrees.

Soldiers in all desert wars have gone without hats and shirts in the mid-day sun, thus losing valuable cooling perspiration and becoming heat stroke victims. Others have fallen victim to dehydration when they didn't force themselves to drink at regular intervals. Both are problems that can be attributed to lack of NCO supervision.

Another problem identified by the study of past desert wars is the effect of poor hygiene and sanitation. Diarrhea from fungus infections and debilitating rashes have severely limited the capabilities of numerous desert armies. Yet, both are easily controllable through leader supervision and awareness. For example, even when water is unavailable soldiers can diminish the chances of infections by wiping away perspiration and dirt with clean dry cloths.

The war in the desert is often described as a "war of water," with victory going to the side that conserves and uses its available water wisely. The British Desert Rats of World War II became masters of water conservation. As standard practice, water used to heat rations was then used to wash clothes and finally poured into vehicle cooling systems or used for vehicle decontamination.

Lack of water threatens the life of every living thing in the desert, but the dangers there are not all physical.

"An oppressive feeling of immense loneliness overcomes everyone more or less frequently in the desert, a feeling that one is cut off from everything one holds dear," wrote World War II veteran, German Generalmajor Alfred Toppe. Leaders, according to Toppe, "must recognize such moods and depressions and offer sincere encourage-

ment so that pressure will disappear."

Experience has shown that NCOs who keep their soldiers informed about what is happening or what is about to happen, and show genuine concern, have far fewer soldier morale problems and can keep their troops motivated.

Training, always important, can serve the double purpose of filling empty hours while honing soldier skills.

The greatest fear of any soldier is the fear of the unknown. NCOs can help soldiers face and overcome those fears through training and counseling.

The "encouragement" Toppe mentions is especially important. The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) recognized this early in its deployment to the Gulf and instructed leaders to "continue to counsel soldiers. Everybody is somewhat new to this (desert warfare). Let them know how well they are doing, what they could improve, etc."

American soldiers historically fight longer and harder when they know why they're fighting and what is happening around them. The more battle information they have, the more informed choices they make and the more initiative they take. In the desert "keeping soldiers informed" ranks as one of the most critical principles of NCO leadership.

Long before hostilities erupted in the Gulf, Army NCOs were finding that they had more than the Iraqi Armed Forces to contend with. They learned that the desert, with its temperature extremes, barren wastes and desolate loneliness is a formidable adversary, as well.

The Nafud, Ad Dahna and Rub Al Khali deserts of Saudi Arabia will continue to teach that preparedness is the key to survival. NCOs new to the desert environment must become adept students, learning from the experiences of others to avoid making fatal mistakes.

But those NCOs who've become graduates of the "desert school of hard knocks," either through prior training or during the Desert Shield phase of Operation Desert Storm have an advantage they must share — by evaluating their experiences then training and informing others of the lessons learned. ■

*Information for this article comes from the Center for Army Lessons Learned, the NTC and from historical sources.*

# Preparing for the Storm

## Enlisted Leadership in Action

Story by  
SSG William H. McMichael

The platoon's dusty M-60A3 tanks had clanked into position in the middle of the night. Shutting down, they stood side by side, the silence of the desert broken only by the sound of the wind. Out on the deck of the hulls, the desert-weary crew tried to rest as only tankers can. As the sun's first muted rays lit the horizon, SFC Herbert McGhee's men awoke to face their 41st day in Saudi Arabia.

The day would be a busy one — yet at the same time, a welcome change. After spending more than a month as one of the American units closest to the borders of Kuwait and Iraq, the 2nd Squadron, 4th Cavalry had been relieved by the newly-arrived 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. Along with the rest of the squadron, Troop D, McGhee's unit, was going to take a break.

Prior to the onset of Operation Desert Storm Army NCOs tackled what was possibly the most difficult continuous training challenge in history. Certainly, American soldiers have faced arduous training in the past. One example would be the cold, wet months of repetitious amphibious training in the British Isles preparing for the World War II invasion of Normandy. And in terms of simple endurance, the Army's long winter at Valley Forge probably has no equal.

No one starved to death in Saudi Arabia, as they did at Valley Forge. But Operation Desert Shield presented its own difficulties. For one, the sense of purpose may have been less focused. Operation Desert Storm's onset, of course, has sharpened that sense. But back in August, "Liberate Kuwait," or "Stop Saddam Hussein," may have seemed rather abstract to the troops.

In addition, leaders had to cope with

the intense environment and its effect on soldiers, tactics and equipment; the near-total isolation; and the sense, after the initial rush of adrenaline, that there was no end in sight.

"We all thought we were going to get off the plane and go straight into battle," said SFC Roberto Soto, Troop A's 1st Platoon Sergeant, interviewed in October. Obviously, that didn't happen. "One thing we're having to go through right now is boredom," he said.

Any long deployment requires a lot of day-to-day contact with the troops. But the absolute physical and cultural isolation of the Saudi Arabian desert made Desert Shield all the tougher.

"In the States, we come in to work, we do our job, and we go home to our families or to whatever we do," said SSG Ben Johnson, a Bradley master gunner with Troop A. "Here, we're together 24 hours a day, for however many days we've been here."

"Being with these guys so long . . . that's where our leadership is put to the

test," said SFC Walter Bell, Troop A's 3rd Platoon Sergeant. "Compared with being back in the States, it's a totally different thing."

Baron von Steuben's Revolutionary War NCOs, while well-drilled, were a far cry from sergeants like Johnson, Bell and McGhee. Today's sergeant is a new breed — a post-Vietnam, volunteer product of the Army's Noncommissioned Officer Education System. With 15 years in service, McGhee's climbed the ladder from PLDC, the Primary Leadership Development Course, through BNCOC, the Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course, to ANCOC, the advanced course.

NCOES courses, he said, made his job in the desert easier in a couple of ways. "They give you specific input, and teach you the way you should 'train up' your subordinates," he said. And which way is that? "You should train them the way they're going to fight," he said. He credited ANCOC with helping him the most with the specifics.



A noncommissioned officer instructs a team member in mine emplacement. Leaders overcame the monotony of waiting by adding new elements to training and emphasizing the importance of their mission.

Photo by MSG GI High

## Preparing for the storm

McGhee also places a lot of emphasis on cross-training his men. He voiced a lot of confidence in the ability of his gunner, Sgt Brodwick Moore, to step in and command their tank. Moore, a confident sort, is a PLDC graduate. There's something to be said for being schooled in the same system.

"Leadership goes right down the line," McGhee said. "What we normally do is give the workout to the next junior man, which teaches him leadership. And we've been giving classes on different things we learn in school — tactics, road marches, setting up hasty offenses, different things like that."

The first order of business for McGhee's men, after personal hygiene and the luxury of a hot breakfast, was to set up sand-colored camouflage netting under which the tanks could be parked and serviced. The extremely fine sand of the Saudi Arabian desert filled every nook and cranny on the tank. Track pads needed replacing, air filters had to be cleaned. At the same time, the unit's position demanded a healthy degree of tactical readiness.

The platoon, though, was in good spirits. Taking a break was certainly part of it, but morale seemed to be strong nonetheless. As work progressed, few orders had to be given. Without specifically defining his leadership style, McGhee said the platoon seemed to be reacting to his direction "in a positive manner."

"We work hand-in-hand every day," McGhee said. "You know how it gets out here in the field . . . but we pull it all together."

Desert Shield NCOs pulled it together every day, many for more than five months. Even the best leaders with the most motivated troops ran into difficulties.

"We've been out here for awhile, so everybody gets kind of grouchy," said A Troop's SSG James Blake, a mortar squad leader. "Somebody'll say something, just trying to be funny, and you might go off the handle at them," he said. "And then you have to back up and say, 'Hey, this guy said this to bring himself up, and me, too. And here I just shot him all to pieces.' What the heck am I going to go back there and say to get it straight? That's one of the rough-

est things over here."

He agreed that years ago he probably would have just thought, "the hell with him." But Blake and his fellow NCOs seem to realize that today's soldiers are a smarter group of troops. A soldier with two years of college isn't likely to respond to a constant barrage of authority.

"I think it depends on who I'm dealing with and the situation I'm in. It changes," said Johnson. "I've got a group of guys that I've been with for awhile, and I don't really have to be a hardnose to get done what needs to be done."

Soto is also a believer in flexibility and growth. He says he began his career in the "old Army," but has always used a persuasive, rather than an authoritarian, leadership style.

"You have to improve your leadership, and adjust according to the education of the people you supervise," he said. "But through the education system that we have, you're able to pick up some things, and you can adjust — phasing out the old into the new."

Blake says he fluctuates between authoritarian and democratic leadership styles. "It depends on the situation," he said. "If one of the young kids has an idea that's worth a darn, by all means, I say, 'let's go with it.' Nowadays in the Army, we've got a heck of a lot of smart kids."

There was less emphasis on leadership techniques at PLDC's predecessor, the Primary Noncommissioned Officers Course, or PNCOC. When Blake attended, in 1978, he wasn't impressed.

"At PNCOC, you were kind of treated like a private for about six weeks, no matter what your rank," he recalled. "They more or less taught you what they taught you back in basic training: You will do as you're told, exactly as you're told, and when you're told to do it."

That philosophy began to change in the early '80s. Army recruiting standards stiffened, and the experience of leaders in the field led to more flexibility in the Army's formal leadership training philosophy.

Of course, schooling isn't everything. Individual character and "learning the ropes" probably has more to do with leadership style than any schooling one can take. Most NCOs can point to one or

two prominent role models who have guided and influenced them for a portion of their careers. And the first few weeks in Saudi Arabia provided ample opportunities for learning those ropes.

"I think the first week was about the hardest," said Johnson. "After that, we learned the little tricks of the trade, and were better able to deal with it."

After those first days, he said, it was a matter of "maintaining" in the face of the situation. Squeezing down-time into the daily schedule was important to the soldiers. Writing letters, getting mail from the States, and playing football to break the monotony were some of the daily means of maintaining sanity. But the "open-ended" mission was a killer.

"Probably the hardest thing, leadership-wise, is not having a lot of news or information," said Johnson. "We're waiting for them to do something. It's hard to keep motivated to stand vigilant when the front is basically idle."

Bell said that after nearly two months, the days were starting to run together. "Everybody in the platoon wants to know: 'Sarge, when are we going home?' And the only thing I can tell them is basically what's being told to me: We'll go when our host nation tells us it's time to leave, or when the mission is done."

To deal with such an open-ended deployment, Bell said he spent a lot of one-on-one time with his troops. "I try to keep a type of open relationship with my people," he said. "We sit down and talk. Not only about our mission, but what goes on back home."

"I ask them, 'Are the kids OK? Are you having any financial difficulties or personal problems? If there's something I can do for you, let me know.'" He emphasized, though, that soldiers have to care enough about their problems to speak up. "Just don't sit back and complain and moan like a lot of soldiers do until it's too late, and there's nothing I can do about it."

"That's where our leadership is really tested," he said. "Can we actually sit down and talk to the people? Actually keep the morale up, yet still instill some sort of discipline?"

"We've got a million problem finders," Johnson said. "We need more problem solvers. I think that NCO

schooling helps along those lines. It helps to make you look for the solutions. And I think that applies everywhere."

One time-honored solution for fighting boredom is staying busy. After decades of practicing to fight in "green" environments, units were having to radically re-orient their training in terms of the flat, featureless desert. Creative NCOs like Soto made the most of what they had.

"Let's say we take our people out and move into a defensive position," he said. "You tell them to do a range card, set up the machine guns, dig foxholes, and start people scanning. You've got to add something to that."

What he added was an opposing force, an OPFOR. "I might tell SSG Blake, 'I've got my people over here, and this is what we're going to do. I want you and your men to come in and try to infiltrate our position. I want you to probe, to see if my people are awake. See if my people are doing what they're supposed to be doing.'

"That makes it interesting and challenging," he said. "You have to keep them ready, in case it happens."

Assertive, solution-oriented attitudes were the key to successfully tackling Operation Desert Shield. Over such a length of time, there was no place for a weak leader to hide.

"You need to be on top," said Johnson, "setting the example around the clock." ■

*SSG William H. McMichael, a former tanker, is a journalist assigned to SOLDIERS magazine.*

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## Patriot's Pride

By SPC Jeanine Dubnicka

The value of Air Defense Artillery became apparent to the world during the first days of Desert Storm, when on Jan. 17, Patriot missiles decisively stopped Iraqi Scud missile attacks. The first Patriot was launched by soldiers of the 2nd Battalion (Patriot), 7th Air Defense Artillery, 11th ADA Brigade of Fort Bliss, Texas. For days after the unit's initial successes, the Patriot system was suddenly at the center of public attention.

But for one senior noncommissioned officer, the success of the Patriot came as no surprise. A 30-year veteran who has been a part of the growth of ADA since the branch was created in 1968, CSM Robert W. Harman heard of the Patriots' performance just days after returning from a visit with ADA soldiers serving in Saudi Arabia.

"Personally I had no fear that the Patriot system would not do what it was designed to do," Harman said. "The majority of Patriot personnel are seasoned veterans who were well trained and ready long before the deployment."

Although saving lives and equipment is the Patriot's primary mission, another more personal one developed after its initial success against the Scud attacks.

"It was a confidence builder for all our troops, because they got to see what the Patriot can do," Harman said. "The Air Force was overjoyed to have our Patriots stationed around their bases because of the Scud threat."

While in Saudi Arabia Harman traveled over 2,200 miles in a period of 10 days, visiting more than 30 units, talking with noncommissioned officers and their troops. In the days before the Jan. 15 deadline, Harman said, NCO leadership was critically important. "Some of the soldiers were stricken with boredom, so NCOs had to overcome that. They did it by looking at safety and living conditions. I guess the whole thing boiled down to the first sergeants and their NCOs going out and scrounging supplies then putting the troops to work improving their own environment." Finding television sets and VCRs may have addressed the immediate need to relieve boredom, but the more imaginative supervisors went beyond that to fashion make-shift weight rooms and organize athletic tournaments and other activities.

But more important was maintaining a fighting edge through training.

"The NCOs were deeply involved with the day-to-day operations of the site — maintaining alertness and discipline, training for all aspects of the threat, and training their junior officers to rely on their NCOs' judgment and abilities."

So as Desert Shield moved into Desert Storm NCO roles were well established.

"NCOs are supposed to train soldiers in day-to-day tasks, and most of these tasks are in preparation to go to war. Whether it be making a range card or just entry control to a unit . . . I don't see the role change from training at all," Harman said.

The key to success, among the Patriot batteries and the other units deployed in Desert Storm, is team building, Harman said. "You can see the young soldiers and NCOs over there are working together hand-in-hand. The smart NCO also knows that the young soldier has to be able to take care of his leaders.

"Teamwork is the name of the game. They have to work together as a team to look after one another. And by doing that, no one gets set up for possible failure."

While Harman characterized the Iraqi army as a determined enemy, he has confidence in all of the units he visited. "If the soldiers continue doing everything day to day by the standards they've been trained to, and if they don't deviate from those standards, things will go well for them," he said. "I'm very proud of the soldiers I visited in Saudi Arabia, and I felt very confident leaving, knowing the soldiers will do well." ■

*SPC Jeanine Dubnicka toured the units in Saudi Arabia with CSM Harman.*

# Soldiers & the Press



U.S. Army Photo

A camera crew moves in to interview soldiers deployed in operation Desert Shield. Leaders cannot forget the impact the news media can have on their soldiers.

## By MSG Ron Hatcher

*"... impress upon the mind of every man the importance of the cause and what they are contending for."*

— George Washington

*"With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed."*

— Abraham Lincoln

Washington and Lincoln made those remarks when it took days and weeks for news to cross oceans. Neither our first commander-in-chief nor our Civil War president could have anticipated modern communication technology, and how it would affect public opinion and soldier morale. We are still learning ourselves.

During Operation Just Cause in Panama, one battalion commander likened soldiers watching CNN to a football player returning a punt for a touchdown — then standing on the sideline to watch himself on the big-screen replay.

The point, of course, is that instant global communication is now the norm, but we are still not certain how it affects combat operations.

One thing is certain: Soldiers, long distrustful of reporters, can no longer afford to ignore them or the effects of their reports, either in theater or at home.

Gen. Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, drove the point home shortly after soldiers began deploying to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield. As the operation got under way, he dispatched a message saying, "... military actions in Grenada and Panama demonstrated that otherwise successful operations are not total successes unless the media aspects are properly handled."

Naturally, combat leaders have many other things to worry about while conducting tactical operations, but they cannot forget the impact the news media can have on the lives and effectiveness of their soldiers.

**Instant global communication is now the norm but we are still not certain how it affects combat operations.**

To meet the information needs of a unit deployed to a tactical environment, commanders and NCOs must focus on two areas: command information and public information.

Command Information is internal communication, between the commander, his soldiers, family members and civilian employees. A good command information program makes good soldiers better soldiers. It reinforces training, while helping soldiers understand the mission and the commander's goals and expectations. It also provides two-way communications that gives the commander a feel for the attitudes and concerns within the unit.

Soldiers' information needs are seldom greater than when there is a change in routine operations. If expected to perform well in a deployment, soldiers need a lot of answers: Where they are going, why, for how long, and what they will face there. Soldiers also need to understand something about the culture, the language, the environment and the political climate of the region in which they will be operating. Most of all, they want to know that their families will be all right while they are away. Only when these information needs are satisfied do soldiers reach peak morale and performance.

The waiting spouse has dozens of concerns, from child care to continuing stability of the family finances. The assumption that the soldier has kept the spouse informed is often wrong. Families, too, have a need to know (within the limits of OPSEC) where the unit is going, why, and for how long.





U.S. Army Photo

Technology has made the media more autonomous, allowing them to operate in any corner of the globe and show up in any sector of the battlefield. They have the ability to transmit their stories and images in the clear and near-real time.

Commanders and first sergeants deployed for Operation Just Cause said command information in theater and at home station had a tremendous impact on morale. During Operation Desert Shield one soldier told a television reporter that even out-of-date newspapers were "like gold," being passed from soldier to soldier.

To enhance their effectiveness and credibility, unit leaders should conduct their command information efforts so that those who need to know are informed as quickly and with as much information as possible. NCOs often call this rumor control. Soldiers and families see it as openness and concern for their needs. Credibility requires balanced handling of the "good" and "bad" news that affect the military community. Leaders who withhold bad news damage their own credibility with soldiers, who then turn to other sources for information that may be inaccurate.

In those instances where the news is bad, the need for a quick and frank

response is even greater. This limits the length of time bad news is in the spotlight and squelches rumor.

Public information is external communications aimed at American citizens as well as international audiences. While NCOs tend to view public information as something outside their area of responsibilities and expertise, they, nevertheless, have an important role to play. Don't forget that many of the faces seen on television are young soldiers — and that their appearance and the message they convey will impact on millions of viewers.

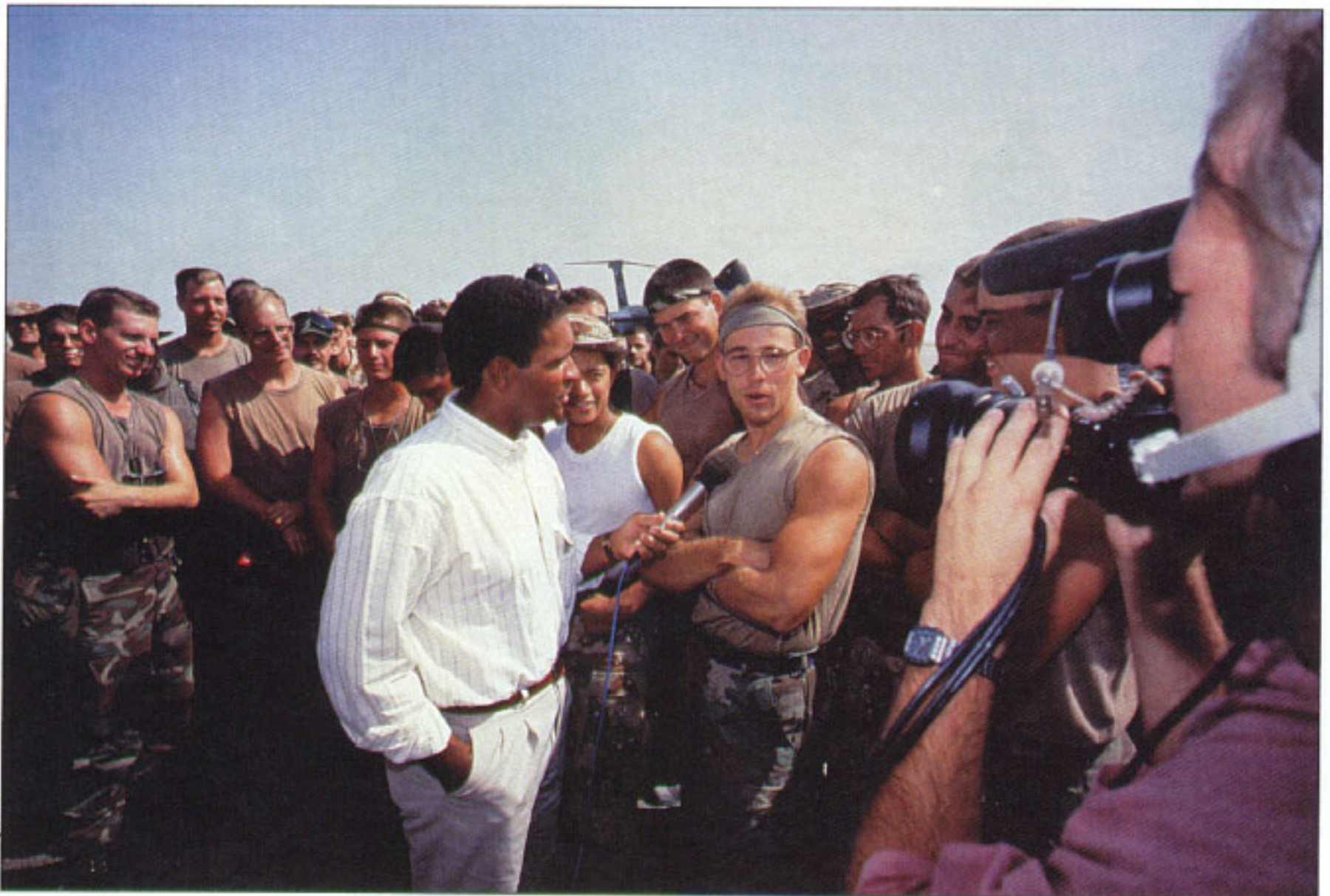
One of the lessons learned after Operation Just Cause is that modern technology has blurred the line that used to separate public information from command information. The soldier who knows the facts before reading or hearing about them from outside news sources is better prepared to evaluate that information. And the soldier who knows his job and how it impacts on the mission is better prepared to respond

should news reporters show on the battlefield.

Technological advances have made the media more and more autonomous, allowing them to operate in any corner of the globe and show up in any sector of the battlefield. Satellite and computer technology gives them the independent ability to transmit their stories and images in the clear and in near-real time, either through the air or over telephone lines. These factors increase the chances for OPSEC violations or for other useful information to fall into the hands of the enemy. We must not forget that just as our soldiers and family members are tuned into satellite broadcasts, so are our enemies. It is well-known that Manuel Noriega and Saddam Hussein routinely monitored CNN and other networks, as did their staff officers and many of their soldiers and citizens.

An example of how a soldier's off-hand comments to the media could undermine the mission occurred during the Grenada operation. Talking to an

## Soldiers and the Press



U.S. Army Photo

Knowing the enemy is watching can be turned to a commander's advantage. When the enemy sees well-trained, well-equipped soldiers who are confident, it goes a long way toward countering propaganda.

unescorted TV crew, the soldier complained about the lack of military maps and of the unit's low morale. Fortunately, the opposing force in Grenada was not able to take advantage of the comment, but such information could be of great value to a more formidable enemy in a longer-duration conflict.

Similarly, days before the Jan. 15, 1991 deadline the United Nations gave Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, a soldier deployed to Operation Desert Shield said, "From the newspapers we receive, compiled by the military, the views and morale of the troops are given the rosy treatment. But any visit we've had from the press has been preceded by an order from our superiors. They tell us, 'If asked a question, refer them to the public affairs officer . . .' Is that the Ministry of Disinformation? The truth is our morale is not as high as they would have you think. We don't know why we are here."

The soldier's comments couldn't help but weaken American support at home and provide grist for the Iraqi propaganda mill because they were published worldwide by syndicated columnist Mike Royko.

Obviously, a little education and training might have stopped both of the above soldiers from speaking so freely. Neither soldier probably gave any thought to how his comments might fall into enemy hands within minutes or hours of being spoken because it's only been in the past few years that battlefields have been swarmed by media, toting the high-tech gear they have now.

Knowing the enemy is watching and listening can be turned to a commander's advantage. When the enemy sees American soldiers playing football in the sands of Saudi Arabia, sees how well equipped and trained the soldiers are, sees that the American public is behind the operation and hears the soldiers talking about how

confident they are, it goes a long way toward countering propaganda.

Operations in Grenada, Panama and the Persian Gulf have proven the need for effective public affairs. It is clear that soldiers must be kept informed, and that, if called upon, be able to respond to media inquiries in a professional manner within the bounds of propriety and operational security.

To do so, NCOs must better understand the value of an informed public and be able to train their soldiers accordingly. ■

*MSG Ron Hatcher is NCOIC of the Training Development Branch at the Public Affairs Proponent Agency, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. He spent six months following Operation Just Cause preparing a report on the media in combat operations for the Center for Army Lessons Learned, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.*

# When Soldiers Meet the Press

Accommodating the media during contingency operations can be painless. It can, in fact, be a morale booster and enhance the mission.

Sergeants should train their soldiers so they know how to respond to questions without detracting from the mission or violating OPSEC.

Advances in communications technology and the nature of low- and mid-intensity conflict make it such that any soldier can be approached by members of the news media during combat. Sergeants should train their soldiers so they know how to respond to questions without detracting from the mission or violating OPSEC.

NCOs can use the "Five Knows" system to train their soldiers:

**KNOW the role and purpose of the American press.** They do a job vital to Democracy by keeping the public, your loved ones and other soldiers informed. For the most part, American reporters are on your side and want you to do well. Understand that their questions do not constitute harassment. Only when they persist after you decline an interview or to answer a particular question does it become harassment.

**KNOW who you are talking to.** Verify that media members in your AO are escorted by a Public Affairs Office representative or are registered by the Corps/Division Public Affairs Office. If registered, the media member should be wearing a press badge identifying the issuing command. If the media member is not registered or escorted, do not detain him, but refer him to the PAO and report him to your supervisor as soon as possible. Remember, not all reporters will be Americans. Some may even be from countries friendly with the enemy. Also remember that posing as journalists could be perfect cover for terrorists or spies.

**KNOW who will hear you.** Whatever you say could be in the hands of your enemy within minutes because of modern technology, which is not secure. Don't divulge any information that might violate OPSEC, to include your unit's strength, losses, destination, supply levels or equipment status. Even though you might be the lowest-ranking member of your unit or section, you have information useful to opposing forces. For instance, if you grumble about conditions or about being away from home, the enemy will find propaganda value in your comments. If, on the other hand, you express confidence, the enemy, your allies and the public will see your readiness and resolve. This is one reason you should take the time to talk to the media when you can.

**KNOW your rights.** It is your choice whether to speak to reporters, and you may do so without fear of repercussion or punishment. That is, of course, unless your leaders have decided doing so at the time would interfere with the mission. If you speak to reporters, be both professional and courteous in your responses. Remember that you can refuse to answer any question you feel is inappropriate, and you can request the camera or tape recorder be turned off at any time.

**KNOW your limits.** Don't attempt to talk about anything above your level. Don't try to answer questions about division, brigade, battalion or company matters. Keep your responses to subjects within your own area of responsibility and personal knowledge. Don't speculate, don't repeat rumors, and don't discuss casualty information. If you don't have the answer to a question, say so.

Finally, the media know and have assumed the risks of covering combat operations. You should not put your life in jeopardy trying to accommodate or protect them. It is not your job, for example, to carry a reporter's cameras or batteries. You have your own gear to carry. If the media is interfering with your mission, politely ask them to stay out of the way. If their lights hinder your vision, insist they be turned off. You are in charge of your own operation and safety. Also, refrain from taking chances you wouldn't normally take just because the cameras are "rolling."

With a little training, accommodating the media during contingency operations can be painless. It can, in fact, be a morale booster and actually enhance the mission. ■

MSG Ron Hatcher



# Back to the Future

By Patricia Rhodes

*"Read and meditate upon the wars of the greatest captains. This is the only means of rightly learning the science of war."*

— Napoleon

Many of the great generals, from Caesar to the present, have been life-long students of military history. They viewed the pursuit of such knowledge as an important part of their professional self-development.

War, many believe, is both an art and a science, and to become a true military professional means becoming technically and tactically proficient. That proficiency can come in part through the study of the mistakes and successes of those who have gone before — military history.

Today, the principles of war are used, taught and discussed in nearly every Army academic setting, ranging from the National War College to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy.

But even those who concede the value of the principles and the study of military history may be skeptical of their usefulness to the NCOs of today's modern Army. NCOs don't plan campaigns, don't lead armies, and aren't involved in any kind of strategic planning.

But, while campaigns may be fought by armies, those armies are made up of much smaller units led by NCOs. Whether with Caesar at Alesia, Napoleon at Waterloo, or Rommel at Tobruk, individual soldiers and small unit leaders won or lost the battle and turned a campaign into a victory or a defeat.

If history has taught us anything, it is

that leaders are leaders, regardless of rank.

U.S. Army historian Maurice Matloff wrote: "The citizen and the soldier cannot know what path to follow unless they are aware of the breadth of alternatives that have been accepted or rejected in the past. Santayana's dictum that those who ignore the past are condemned to repeat its mistakes, is nowhere more apt than in military history."

Some will argue that the face of war has changed, and the past has little relevance to the present. They believe that in an age of laser-guided weapons, nuclear artillery, satellite communications and stealth fighters, even the study of recent military actions is useless to the modern soldier.

"There are others," wrote historian David Chandler, "who hold diametrically opposite views, and avow that although weaponry and methods of communication have changed and continue to change with fearful rapidity, and increase in potential . . . the essentials of the art of war remain immutable from age to age, however great the scientific developments."

"History," according to writer Bryan Perrett, "confirms that mobility holds the key to success and survival in the desert, whether it is exercised by cavalry, camel troops, or fully mechanized formations."

Perrett, tracing desert warfare from the Battle of Carrhae in 54 B.C. through the Arab-Israeli wars of the 1960s and '70s, found that all battles in the desert are "subject to rules which are harsh and inescapable."

Just as the rules of desert warfare



remain constant, historian David Chandler discovered that "the essentials of generalship and man-management have not changed very dramatically over the years, and as much can be learned from the study of selected examples from the past as from recent experience."

There are dozens of examples, where those who might have used the past to predict the future did not, and the soldiers serving under them paid a terrible price.

German military analyst Generalmajor Alfred Toppe asserts that before World War II, "not a soul in the German armed forces imagined land warfare outside of Europe. . . . Prior to the outbreak of war in 1939, no preparations of any sort had been made in the German army for any desert warfare that might possibly become necessary in the future."

But for every example of a warrior who paid for ignoring the lessons of history, there is another example of one who succeeded by heeding its lessons. Again, Bryan Perrett notes that during the nineteenth century there were many desert conflicts: The British in Egypt and the Sudan, the French in Algeria and Morocco, the Italians in Eritrea and Abyssinia, the Russians in Central Asia.

Their combined experience was digested by Charles Callwell in his book *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, which was a particular favorite of Field Marshal Montgomery.

Historians often are surprised at the similarities between leaders, battles, and campaigns even across centuries.

"Judas Maccabaeus, the famed Jewish warrior of antiquity," wrote Lewis Gann in *Guerrillas in History*, "would have had little to learn from Mao Tse-Tung concerning the art of mounting guerrilla actions and expanding them into a national war." The guerrilla methods used by Judas were unknowingly duplicated by the Chinese ruler 2,000 years later.

Gann also reports that, "when Clausewitz, the greatest military theoretician of the nineteenth century, analyzed the conditions required for successful guer-

rilla warfare, he came to conclusions that were similar... to those reached by Giraldus Cambrenis in the very early Middle Ages."

Students of military history remember Clausewitz as the man who developed the principles of war. Though a hundred years old, they are the same principles upon which the United States Army of the 1990s bases its modern AirLand Battle doctrine. The principles remain just as valid today as they did a century before, though Clausewitz had never seen a tank, a missile or a computer.

"Fools," said Prince Otto von Bismark, "say they learn by experience. I prefer to profit by other people's experience."

The drawbacks of learning only from our own experiences are that one person's experiences may be quite limited, and failures can often be extremely costly. Study, however, places at one's fingertips the collective experience of the ages.

They make the mistakes, we learn. They succeed, we learn.

We can learn about bearing, courage, competence, training, about strategy, tactics, and operations from the finest military minds of all time, and we

should do so.

A complete list of military history books valuable to today's NCO would consist of many hundreds of titles. A few especially pertinent and timely ones are Bryan Perrett's *Desert Warfare*, Alfred Toppe's *Desert Warfare: the German Experience in World War II*, Richard Collier's *The War in the Desert*, Anthony H. Cordesman's *The Lessons of Modern War, Vol. II: The Iran-Iraq War*, or any of the numerous biographies of Patton, Rommel, and Montgomery.

LTC William O. Darby did not overlook the study of military history, when he handed out "Roger's Rules" (see box), to his First United States Ranger Battalion — Darby's Rangers — in World War II.

Later "Roger's Rules" were distributed to soldiers arriving in Vietnam. They also appear in the *Ranger Handbook*, and have been called "A Ranger's Bible."

Written by Maj. Robert Rogers, they detail what every Ranger should know and do. They are as pertinent today as when Rogers wrote them in 1750. ■

*Patricia Rhodes is Curator of the NCO Museum, Fort Bliss, Texas.*

## ROGERS' RULES

- ◆ Don't forget nothing.
- ◆ Have your musket clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured, 60 rounds powder and ball, and be ready to march at a minute's warning.
- ◆ When you're on the march, act the way you would if you was sneaking up on a deer. See the enemy first.
- ◆ Tell the truth about what you see and what you do. There is an army depending on us for correct information. You can lie all you please when you tell other folks about the Rangers, but don't never lie to a Ranger or officer.
- ◆ Don't never take a chance you don't have to.
- ◆ When we're on the march, we march single file, far enough apart so one shot can't go through two men.
- ◆ If we strike swamps, or soft ground, spread out abreast, so it's hard to track us.
- ◆ When we march, we keep moving till dark, so as to give the enemy the least possible chance at us.
- ◆ When we camp, half the party stays awake while the other half sleeps.
- ◆ If we take prisoners, we keep 'em separate till we have had time to examine them.
- ◆ Don't ever march home the same way. Take a different route so you won't be ambushed.
- ◆ No matter whether we travel in big parties or little ones, each party has to keep a secure 20 yards ahead, 20 yards in the rear, so the main body can't be surprised and wiped out.
- ◆ Every night you'll be told where to meet if surrounded by a superior force.
- ◆ Don't sit down to eat without posting sentries. Don't sleep beyond dawn. Dawn's when the French and Indians attack.
- ◆ Don't cross a river by a regular ford.
- ◆ If somebody's trailing you, make a circle, come back into your own tracks, and ambush the folks that aim to ambush you.
- ◆ Don't stand up when the enemy's coming against you. Kneel down, lie down, hide behind a tree.
- ◆ Let the enemy come till he's almost close enough to touch. Then let him have it and jump out and finish him up with your hatchet. ■

# The American Revolution and the NCO Tradition

By Dr. Robert H. Bouilly

The American noncommissioned officer tradition began with creation of the Continental Army in 1775 at the beginning of the American Revolution. Before 1775 there was no permanent standing Army which could be called American. The colonies had developed militias in the face of military emergencies. However, their effectiveness was so limited that Great Britain had to import British regular troops to fight the French from 1754 to 1763 in what has often been called the French and Indian War.

The militias provided rudimentary military training for the colonists. No match for trained European regular troops, the militias fared better in providing a defense against Indians on the frontier. They depended heavily on non-commissioned officers, as did contemporary European standing armies, but the role of a militia noncommissioned officer in the colonies was broader than in Europe.

The huge social distance between the aristocratic officer corps and the NCOs strictly limited the lives and prerogatives of a European NCO. The NCO's primary responsibility was to maintain the linear fighting lines of the day in the face of appalling casualties.

In the colonies, an entire town formed a militia company. The company broke down into squads — each headed by an NCO. Many NCOs were elected to their posts. Because of the fluid nature of

Indian fighting, colonial militia NCOs had more opportunity to exercise initiative than did their European counterparts. So, the distinctive American dependence on small unit leadership by NCOs had its roots in these colonial militia.

Throughout the Revolutionary War, short enlistment periods saddled the Continental Army with a tenuous existence. The strength of George Washington's army rose and fell in wide fluctuations, virtually by the season. Washington had little faith that his army could directly confront British regular troops alone and sought instead to maintain his army intact through an avoidance of battles with major elements of the British forces. His victories at Princeton and Trenton, for example, came against only portions of the British Force. Even at the decisive campaign at Yorktown, he successfully confronted the main British Force only when he had substantial French help.

Washington firmly knew that his army lacked the military skill and toughness of his British regular army opponent. He understood that a major weakness of the Continental Army was its leadership — both commissioned and noncommissioned. An exception to this rather dour assessment was the appearance of Baron Frederick William von Steuben at Valley Forge in the winter of 1778. Steuben was a Prussian volunteer of shadowy background. His claim to the title Baron and to the aristocratic "von" in his name cannot be substantiated. He possibly

made it up. Despite these pretensions, he possessed considerable military skill gained through service in Frederick the Great's premier European Army during the Seven Years War. Steuben became General Washington's best disciplinarian and trainer of troops.

Washington badly needed more officers like Steuben but had to settle for less talented leadership in most cases.

Baron von Steuben's legacy is twofold. He had a direct impact on the fighting efficiency of Washington's army during the American Revolutionary War. Steuben was sensitive to the problem of adjusting European discipline and training to American conditions. When he began to train the Continental Army, he did not translate Prussian discipline and tactics literally. He attempted to incorporate American tactical experience into his system. The Baron himself often worked as a drill sergeant as he introduced his system of minor tactics to a model company of officers. Then he dispatched the company to transmit his lessons through widening circles of the Army. It was Steuben who developed standardized training battalions separate from the regiments and it was the training battalions which allowed the Continental Army to maneuver with calculable results. Steuben also increased the army's ability to deploy by changing the practice of marching single file to marching in columns of four.

Baron von Steuben's influence also extended beyond the war through his

**Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States**, published in 1779. General Washington directed that the book be adopted as the basic training guide for his Army. This little **Blue Book** standardized NCO duties and responsibilities and became the primary regulation for the Army for 33 years. The **Blue Book** set down the duties and responsibilities for corporals, sergeants, first sergeants, quartermaster sergeants, and sergeants major which were the NCO ranks at that time. It emphasized the need to select quality soldiers for NCO positions.

The **Blue Book** aided the NCO's growth as an instructor of soldiers. It covered all aspects of infantry service and stressed NCO responsibilities for the care, discipline and training of the men in garrison and in the field. Steuben stressed these responsibilities because he considered their general absence in the Continental Army to be weakness. The **Blue Book** also directed the company's senior, or first sergeant to keep a company descriptive book. The descriptive book listed the name, age, height, place of birth, and prior occupation of every enlisted man in the unit. Such books, in one form or another, were used into the early 1900s.

The duties of other NCOs were also established. Sergeants and corporals were expected to inspect recruits in all matters of military training, including neatness and sanitation. A listing of the sick was to be forwarded to the first sergeant and those responsible for disturbances were to be punished.

The duty of the quartermaster sergeant was to assist the regimental quartermaster and to assume his duties when the regimental quartermaster was gone. The quartermaster sergeant also supervised the proper loading and transport of regimental baggage when in march. The sergeant major served as the assistant to the regimental adjutant. He formed details, kept rosters, and handled matters concerning the "interior management and discipline of the regiment."

In battle, NCOs were responsible for



More accurate weapons made NCOs responsible for aimed volley fire.

closing the gaps in the battle lines caused by casualties. They were to "encourage men to silence and to fire rapidly and true." This emphasis on accurate fire may seem common today, but in the Revolutionary War, it marked a new emphasis on the noncommissioned officer's battlefield role.

Consequently, American NCOs became responsible for aimed volley fire, while the British volleys remained untargeted. This emphasis on aiming by the whole force, rather than merely pointing the musket in the general direction of the enemy, made Americans unique among the infantrymen of the day. To help Americans engage British soldiers, Steuben also emphasized bayonet training. Under his tutelage, the Continental Army learned precision, high-speed maneuvering and flexibility on the battlefield.

NCOs also were trained as leaders. On the battlefield, the sergeant became the "covering sergeant" who stood in the second rank immediately behind the company officer and was responsible for protecting him. He did not fire in volleys but reserved his fire to defend his captain or lieutenant.

A corporal assumed a similar guard function to protect the ensign who carried the colors. In time, the color sergeant assumed that position with an

expanded guard of corporals. Each of these covering NCOs could take over for line officers in combat if the need arose.

The **Blue Book** established the principle that the noncommissioned officer was selected by, and responsible to, the company commander upon approval of the battalion or regimental commander. This provision locked a noncommissioned officer into one regiment for his entire career. Transfer in grade from one regiment to another was virtually impossible. The stripes remained with the regiment at the expense of NCO professional development.

Despite its warts, the Continental Army, with the help of the French, prevailed over the British at Yorktown and the colonies gained their independence. Without an enemy to fight, the Continental Army began to rapidly dissolve. By 1784, the Army consisted of just 70 men. Even so, a distinctive American tradition of NCO leadership had been established. Begun in the colonial militia, developed during the Revolutionary War, and codified in Baron von Steuben's **Blue Book**, the distinctive NCO tradition was in place for the Army of a new nation. ■

*Dr. Bouilly is the NCO Historian for the Sergeants Major Academy.*

# Wanted: Writers

## No Experience Necessary

By MSG Gil High

The *NCO Journal* is for and about a group of professionals who generally don't think of themselves as writers. But that doesn't mean that noncommissioned officers can't or don't write. As our Army has become more selective, the force has become better educated.

The same can be said for the experience levels at all grades. As the qualifications have become stiffer, NCOs have had to work longer and harder for promotions. They've sharpened their technical and tactical skills through a whole range of testing and evaluation programs, and they've proved to their officers and soldiers that they're the subject matter experts in their respective fields.

Today, the NCO Corps is both the muscle and sinew of the Army and its institutional memory. It has a great repository of knowledge to share within itself, and to pass on to the next generation of soldiers — enlisted and officers alike.

Every sergeant who has earned his or her stripes has acquired a valuable cache of tricks, tools and guidelines that have proven their success. Most noncommissioned officers readily share that knowledge and experience through the easy, verbal communication we call "foot locker counseling," but few take time to analyze their experiences and put them down in any logical form that goes beyond a few bullets on a piece of scratch paper. That's a shame because the only permanent record or idea that can be shared and analyzed by a wider audience is the written one.

I think the problem is too many leaders wrongly think they don't have the talent or time to write while others think the effort of writing for a professional journal will reap no more reward than a rejection slip.

So let's set the record straight: Like most other activities, good writing comes from setting reasonable goals and exercising the right muscle groups. And as for rejection slips, *The NCO Journal* is hungry for good material and eager to work with you to develop your ideas into usable journal articles.

The remainder of this article will touch on tricks an experienced writer might use to get an article published. But for those who are looking for more direct assistance, it's available through your local public affairs office where there are people to help you develop, refine and clear your manuscripts before mailing them for publication.

For those already eager to get started, here's an easy-to-follow guide to getting your first article published.

Any journal article, should begin as a good idea that is supported by a statement of purpose. This gives you a base from which to start and a visible goal to keep you on track. A purpose statement also helps you narrow the subject, to keep it within workable limits and to test whether the subject has value to its intended audience.

Because this first step is so critical, feel free to call the journal for help. While we won't commit to using your work until we see the final product, we may make suggestions to improve your focus, or even recommend additional articles to support your main story.

The next step is to begin researching the subject. This may mean calling upon your experiences, interviewing experts, or studying manuals. But another part of research is knowing the publication and audience you're writing for. If that happens to be *The NCO Journal*, take time to read the entire publication, including the disclaimer on the inside front cover. Look for literary style, subject matter and length of published articles. To translate journal length into manuscript pages,

think of three manuscript pages as one and a half journal columns. It also helps to call a staff member to discuss length, focus, deadlines and what visual support your article may need.

Once your research is complete, make an outline. Only a few writers still use the formal outlines most of us learned in college and high school. But nearly every writer returns to his purpose statement and makes it the foundation for a logical structure. Once the framework is in place, the first draft will take shape more easily.

The best articles are those that go through a rigorous rewrite process which consists of distance and objectivity. By setting the manuscript aside for several days before rewriting, the author achieves a little of both. By turning the manuscript over to a colleague for comments and suggestions, the author may improve the manuscript even more.

This is also the time to pass the manuscript through the chain of command — not for their approval but to keep them informed and allow other experts to check it for doctrine and OPSEC.

Before mailing the manuscript, take time to properly package it — especially if you have photos or charts which can be damaged. Include a title page, a phone number, a very short biography and a list of your sources. Write captions for any photographs or other graphic material.

Most importantly, continue to communicate with the journal. Often a manuscript will need additional work or verification of the facts before it's ready to go to press. While the journal staff will try to close the loop on every story it receives, two-way communication eliminates misunderstandings and clears the barriers to speedier publication. ■

*MSG Gil High, has been training and supervising Army writers for the past 12 years.*



# The short course

A well-written story will communicate your experiences and ideas, but only if someone reads it. Photographs, charts or graphs are as important as the words you write because they attract the reader's attention to the story. They also reinforce the information contained in your story and may provide new information.

Your ability to provide good visual support for your story is as important as your talent as a writer. Please note, however, that I didn't say anything about your ability to take pictures. What's most important is being able to imagine what visual elements will support your story and to know how to get them.

When you think of visual support, please think in color. That way, we can save you the effort of converting slides to black and white prints. And, by the way, we prefer original color slides to color prints.

When thinking of visual support for your story, remember the following rules.

## Think Action

The boss handing a check to a local mayor or presenting an award to a top-notch soldier is not action. If a photograph is going to get a reader's attention it must tell a story.

## Think Vertically

While you should include horizontal shots, remember that vertical photographs provide variety and often are more forceful. They're also more likely to be used on the cover.

## Think Variety

Select photos that indicate movement. Select photos that show the subject from the left and right, at high and low angles, in close-ups and at a distance.

## Think Other than Photos

Many articles are better illustrated with charts and diagrams or line drawings.

## The Rule of Thirds

The exact center of a photograph normally is the least effective position for a subject. Picture impact is greater if the subject clearly is a dominant part of the photograph and is connected to its environment. In short, stay close to your subject but give it "room to move" in the frame.

## Leading Lines

These are the lines of force that direct the viewer to the subject. Leading lines also communicate a mood. Horizontal lines are peaceful. Vertical lines indicate strength. Diagonal lines create a feeling of movement. Curved lines create depth.

## Shadows

Because military subjects wear headgear during most of their outdoor activities, too often their eyes or other features are lost in shadows. Select photographs that make the subject easily recognizable.

## Distracters

Examine photographs for often-missed details: Soda cans near the subject, leading lines which carry the viewer away from the subject, distracting elements in the background such as antennas that seem to grow from a person's head.

## Uniform Violations

The photos you release are a reflection on your unit. We will try to avoid using photographs with obvious uniform violations, but if a good photograph illustrates a point, we may miss uniform violations in our enthusiasm to catch the reader's eye.

Too often beginning writers think they must sound formal to be taken seriously. As a result, their ideas get buried under mounds of lifeless adjectives, inactive verbs and jargon.

Successful writers are the ones who can take complex ideas and make them easily understood. Here's how:

- ⇒ **Begin with a main idea.** Jot down the important information, analyze your facts then develop a logical sequence to carry the reader quickly and easily to your recommendations or conclusion.
- ⇒ **Use the active voice.** In active voice the *subject acts*. In passive voice the subject *is acted upon*. But be careful — when the subject *does the acting*, he does the job but takes longer to do it.
- ⇒ **Use short sentences.** Ten to 20 words each is a good average, but use variety. The best rule of thumb is to limit each sentence to one idea.
- ⇒ **Use short words when possible,** but never sacrifice accuracy for length. "She sat in the chair" expresses your thought in a few short words. "She slumped in the chair" may be more accurate and carries more punch.
- ⇒ **Keep paragraphs short.** Again, you want to develop a logical sequence that carries the reader from where you were to where you're going.
- ⇒ **Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.** Remember that how accurately you use language reflects on the accuracy of your ideas.
- ⇒ **Personalize your writing.** The use of "I" "we" and "you" shortens your writing, makes it more natural and involves the reader.

Once you've finished writing, edit your manuscript once yourself, then hand it to someone else to edit. Next you might find someone to read your manuscript aloud. If the reader stumbles over words or catches his breath in mid-sentence, some shortening is in order. If your mind begins to wander as you hear his voice droning on, it's time to reorganize and try again. ■

MSG Gil High

## ■ Book Reviews

### The Defense of Hill 781

By LTC James R. McDonough

Reviewed by Col. Fredrick Van Horn

This book gives us an excellent opportunity to study the role of the command sergeant major in

combat and the proper relationship between commander and CSM.

In *The Defense of Hill 781*, LTC James R. McDonough gives us an entertaining opportunity to reflect on important lessons learned at the National Training Center. Inspired by Ernest Swinton's classic study in tactics, *The Defense of Duffer's Drift*, McDonough carries us through the battles of the NTC in the company of a battalion task force commander named LTC A. Tack Always and the task force command sergeant major, CSM Hope.

Getting to the National Training Center is easy for most commanders. Not so for Always. This hard-charging, airborne ranger, light infantryman dies from an overdose of MREs and ends up in Purgatory (the National Training Center) because of his lack of respect for "legs," staff "pukes," and other "heavy" members of the combined arms team. Always must successfully make his way through all NTC required battles as the commander of a heavy task force before he can earn his way out of Purgatory/NTC.

The first person Always meets is his task force command sergeant major, CSM Hope. Hope is "heaven sent" to guide Always through his NTC trials. In their all-important first meeting, Hope establishes himself as experienced, competent, dependable and straightforward. He wastes no time giving Always his assessment of the mission and the state of the battalion. He also establishes himself as an effective champion of the soldiers of the task force. The senior officer and noncommissioned officer of the battalion enter the battle with a good feeling about each other and full understanding of each others' strengths and weaknesses, thanks to Hope's professional handling of the first meeting.

During the battle, Hope provides timely advice, keeps Always abreast of the state of the task force, enforces standards, serves as trouble shooter in the commander's absence, and moves through the battalion raising morale wherever he goes. The author does a good job describing Hope's performance of these duties and in doing so demonstrates a clear understanding of why we have and need the command sergeant major: "A commander is human, and as a

human, he is limited. He cannot shoulder the entire burden by himself. He needs others to help him, to pick up where his energies run out, when he cannot be there . . . He can command — but he needs others to make his command effective."

This book should be in every noncommissioned officer's library. Having read it once, it is the kind of book you go back to over and over again to study the role, duties, and responsibilities of the non-commissioned officer in combat. ■

### No Name on the Bullet: A Biography of Audie Murphy

By Don Graham.

Reviewed by Marijean Murray

In this well-researched look at an American hero, Graham also introduces us to a very human figure.

Graham uses interviews with Murphy's friends and family and quotes from the soldiers and war correspondents who knew him to find the man behind the headlines. He also draws upon Murphy's memoir, *To Hell and Back*, and from magazines and news reports to explore the more public figure that Murphy became.

Murphy's life has all the ingredients of a classic American success story. Born into a Texas sharecropper's family, Audie was put to work in the cotton fields by the time he was five years old.

He completed only five years of school, but those who knew him say he had a fierce drive to better himself. His family's poverty and the loss he felt when his father deserted them seemed only to increase his need to achieve.

When the United States declared war in 1941, Murphy wanted to enlist immediately, but he had to wait until his 18th birthday in 1942. After basic training he was assigned to the 15th Infantry Regiment, Third Infantry Division and saw his first combat in Sicily in July 1943.

He quickly proved to be a valuable infantryman. From the start, he aggressively took and held ground, and returned fire with a vengeance. Murphy's ability to read natural terrain, perfected when he had hunted as a child, frequently saved

his life and those of his fellow soldiers.

At Cisterna, the battle lasted more than three days. Fewer than 30 men in his unit survived, and Murphy was the only noncommissioned officer left. As a result of these losses, and because of his demonstrated leadership, Murphy took over as platoon leader.

Combat didn't get easier when the division landed in southern France, although by then Murphy's exploits were well publicized. He amassed medals for bravery at a fast rate, but at the Colmar Pocket in January 1945 he was credited with single-handedly saving his company.

Graham quotes three eyewitnesses who describe Murphy's desperate stand atop a burning tank destroyer, exposed to enemy fire, firing the tank's machine gun at the advancing Germans. For this one act of heroism he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

As the war's most decorated soldier, Murphy became a celebrity, appearing on the cover of *Life Magazine* and receiving offers from Hollywood.

Graham's portrayal of Murphy's life in Hollywood — looking at both his successes and his personal and professional problems — is drawn from extensive interviews and public records.

Murphy died in a plane crash in 1971, and is perhaps best remembered for his first-hand account of the war, *To Hell and Back*, written with the help of reporter David McClure. Describing that book, Murphy once said, "I do not believe in heroics. The great man of the war to me was the little fellow who did what was asked of him and paid whatever price that action cost." ■

# THE NCO CREED

No one is more professional than I.  
I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of soldiers.  
As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that  
I am a member of a time honored corps, which is  
known as "The Backbone of the Army."

I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will  
at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps,  
the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation  
in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to  
attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watch-word. My two basic responsibilities  
will always be uppermost in my mind — accomplishment of my  
mission and the welfare of my soldiers. I will strive to remain  
tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as  
a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities  
inherent in that role. All soldiers are entitled to outstanding  
leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers  
and I will always place their needs above my own.

I will communicate consistently with my soldiers  
and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial  
when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish  
their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn  
their respect and confidence as well as that of my soldiers. I  
will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers and  
subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking  
appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not  
compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not  
forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are  
professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!

