

The NCO Journal

Summer 1991

A Quarterly Forum for Professional Development



Training Issue

The NCO Journal

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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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Top Officer

As the United States Army continues its redeployment from the historic Operation Desert Storm, much is already being written about a victory brought about by "high tech" weapons systems. And while it is true that many of our systems proved their worth under demanding conditions, we should never forget that the quality of the individual soldier is the determining factor in battle. In fact, General Schwarzkopf observed that if the Iraqis had our weapons systems, and we had theirs, we still would have defeated them because our soldiers were well trained, well led, and believed in what they were fighting for.

How did the United States produce these trained and ready soldiers who performed so well in combat? I believe the answer is our focus on small unit training. This focus is evident in the enormous investment we have made in the last decade, both in our Combat Training Centers and in developing our professional Noncommissioned Officer Corps. Our soldiers today are trained and led by the finest noncommissioned officers I have been privileged to see in over 40 years of service. Our institutional training — from the Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course through the Sergeants Major Course — coupled with a leader development program and operational assignments that require sergeants to practice daily the skills they have learned in the classroom, has produced an NCO Corps that is the envy of the world.

These skills are nowhere more evident than in the successful execution of small unit missions at our Combat Training Centers. These centers (the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.; the Combat Maneuver Training Center at Hohenfels, Germany; the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Chaffee, Ark.; and the Battle Command Training Program headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.) represent the culmination of our individual, leader and unit training. Many of our soldiers returning from Operation Desert Storm said the training at the Combat Training Centers was more demanding and challenging than actual combat.

Units perform well at the CTCs and in combat only when at the lowest echelons (fire teams through platoon) missions are executed by trained and ready soldiers. Successful execution at this level only occurs when sergeants are well trained in small unit fundamentals: conducting pre-combat inspections, providing security and counter-security, locating the enemy, controlling fire distribution and maneuver, and executing reconstitution. We should never forget that the platoon is the highest level in the entire force structure that executes; and that the foundation of our fire teams, crews, squads and platoons is a professional, competent and committed NCO corps.

I encourage you to read and discuss the articles on "The NCO and Training" at our CTCs and in Operation Desert Storm in this issue. I challenge you to contribute to this fine publication. You have an important contribution to make in sharing your experiences in training and leading our soldiers.

The primary lesson learned from Operation Desert Storm is that well-trained and led troops with superior equipment and doctrine can defeat a larger Army quickly and with few casualties. The NCO Corps should take great pride and satisfaction in their important and successful role in this vital mission. You are on the cutting edge of our Army. ■

John W. Foss
Commanding General
U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

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Front Cover: The New Sergeant Major of the Army
"Happy, proud, excited . . . a dream realized." That was the initial reaction of former 1 Corps and Fort Lewis CSM Richard A. Kidd when notified of his selection as Sergeant Major of the Army.

"I've seen many improvements in our Army during my career, the two biggest being our improved methods of training and better equipment. Soldiers have been given the skills to do their job and prepare them for their next leadership position," he said.

Kidd's advice to soldiers aspiring to be the Army's top NCO: "Attend courses in the NCO Education System. Seek leadership positions. Become all you can be. I can't say it any better than that."

- photo by SFC Bill Horner

Top NCO

There's an old Chinese proverb that goes something like this: "May you live in interesting times." I don't believe that there are any of us who would disagree that we are in fact living in some very interesting times.

During the past 18 months, our Total Army has participated in two very successful campaigns, Operation Just Cause and Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. The magnificent planning by our leaders played an integral part in these operations. However, the execution of these plans by our soldiers made our combat successes possible.

We have made great strides in developing battle focused training programs for our noncommissioned officers. I am convinced that these programs have had a significant impact on the professionalism of our corps. In addition, our tough, innovative and realistic training programs ensured victory and saved soldiers' lives.

History has taught us an important lesson that we must never forget. Poorly trained armies are susceptible to attack which generally results in needless casualties and ultimately defeat. We, the leaders of today's Army, must not lose sight of this valuable lesson and must remain focused on the strategic value of proactive leader development and training programs which are vital to maintaining and further improving the readiness of our units.

As we begin to position the NCO Corps for the future, we must not lose sight of where we have been or where we need to go. Our azimuth is clear.

The noncommissioned officer's role in the Army of the future becomes even more critical. We must ensure that our leader development and training programs remain focused and continue to develop and train NCOs, prepared to assume even greater responsibilities in the future. On this we must never waiver. Our soldiers expect and deserve no less.

G. Steven Blackwood
Command Sergeant Major
Army National Guard

■ News and Issues

Army Tightens Standards

The message coming out of Department of the Army is simple: If you're substandard, you're gone.

The Army announced in June that several personnel policies have been tightened to enhance force quality. The Army is making it easier for commanders to separate substandard soldiers earlier.

The policy changes are designed to maintain a quality force while meeting mandates to reduce the number of personnel serving on active duty.

"As we begin focusing on reshaping the Army, it is essential that we protect our quality soldiers by distinguishing them from those who do not meet established standards," said Lt. Gen. William Reno in a May 28 message to the field.

The policy changes address local bars to reenlistment, overweight, physical fitness, drug abuse and rehabilitation, and elimination from NCOES courses.

One example of how soldiers are affected: Previously commanders had the option of separating soldiers who "repeatedly failed" the Army Physical Fitness Test

and who "displayed no significant or continuing progress toward meeting standards."

Under the new policy, if soldiers fail two consecutive APFTs when no medical reason exists, they face a mandatory bar to reenlistment or will be separated from the Army.

Under the new policy commanders will be required to review a bar every three months, with separation required if the bar is still in place after the second three month review.

Mandatory bars to reenlistment or separation face soldiers who fail to make satisfactory progress in the weight control program after six months, if no medical reason exists. Soldiers face the same consequences if they fail to maintain body fat standards within a year after removal from the weight control program.

Soldiers who report to professional military schools (TDY or PCS) not meeting body fat standards will be denied enrollment. Also, a memorandum will be forwarded to the first general officer in the losing or sending chain of command. The memorandum will address the individual's

failure to maintain standards and the possible failure of the unit commander to identify and enroll that individual in the weight control program.

Under the old drug abuse policy sergeants and above identified as illegal drug abusers were processed for separation. All others twice-identified as illegal drug abusers also faced separation.

Policy regarding officers, NCOs and twice-identified drug abusers remains unchanged. Corporals and below identified as illegal drug abusers and having three or more years of service will be processed for separation. Soldiers designated as rehabilitative failures — alcohol or drugs — will be processed for separation.

If you are eliminated for cause from NCOES courses, you will face a mandatory bar to reenlistment or separation proceedings.

A separate message, soon to be released, will address some modifications to the reenlistment program, retention control, and selective early retirement boards.

MSG Larry Whittaker
DCSPER

Self-Development Test: Burden of Study on You

SDT affects you and your continued success in the Army if you are a sergeant, staff sergeant or sergeant first class. An acronym for "Self-Development Test," SDT is a two-hour, multiple-choice test for soldiers of both active and reserve Army components.

DA will begin testing active Army NCOs in October. Testing for the reserve components will begin in October 1992. By MOS, each sergeant, staff sergeant and sergeant first class will take an SDT to measure his or her abilities to know, comprehend and apply leadership and battle-focused doctrine. SDT will also measure NCOs ability to know, comprehend and apply published technical and tactical techniques and procedures to scenario-driven multiple choice questions.

The SDT stresses the "know yourself and seek self improvement" principle of leadership. It is your responsibility to train

yourself in the 500-plus pages of field manuals pertaining to leadership and training doctrine. There will be no duty time or classes devoted to SDT preparation. Nor will NCOES and NCO functional courses teach the SDT.

Senior NCOs cannot study for you or take duty time to train you for the SDT, but they can create and control the duty environment. DA directs all NCOs to train the MOSs, the basic skills and the attributes of a soldier. These are the same things that the SDT tests.

The SDT reinforces the need for NCOs to apply Army doctrine to "real world" situations. As an NCO, you must know doctrine if you are to transmit knowledge to those you lead.

SDT results for the active component will be provided to each NCO beginning in FY 92. However, DA plans will not link the results to the Enlisted Personnel Management System until FY 94.

To be successful on the SDT, soldiers must read, know and apply leadership and

battle-focused doctrine every day. To prepare for testing, you must commit personal time to study.

Commanders will request, receive and distribute Field Manuals 22-100/101/102 and 25-101 within their units in time for you to study them. They will also schedule test dates within TRADOC windows based on competing unit priorities. After the initial issue of SDT publications, each PLDC graduate will be issued copies.

To ensure that testing is fair, SDT proponents are soliciting help from the field. If you feel test questions miss the mark, submit concerns through your chain of command. Concerns on the technical and tactical portion will be forwarded to the proponent for that particular MOS. Concerns on the leadership portion will go to the Center for Army Leadership. Questions on battle-focused training will go to the Combined Arms Command.

SGM Joseph E. Whittenberger
USASMA



New Chief of Staff

GEN. Gordon R. Sullivan is the Army's 32nd Chief of Staff. As Vice Chief of Staff, and in his previous assignment as the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, Gen. Sullivan helped devise the new force structure for the future Army. Prior to those assignments he served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Support of NATO's Central Army Group in Europe, and as Deputy Commandant of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Sullivan's awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Combat Infantryman's Badge.

New Common Task Test to be Fielded in October

Army sergeants will have to prove they know more than just the basics when the new Common Task Test is fielded Oct. 1.

"Progressive and sequential" is how officials describe the revised test, which will evaluate sergeants, staff sergeants and sergeants first class on leadership skills and other tasks consistent with their skill levels. The current CTT consists solely of skill level 1 tasks.

"As it is now, there are no common leader tasks tested in the CTT, so you have a sergeant first class taking the same test as a private," said James Tripp, deputy director of the Individual Training Evaluation Directorate, U.S. Army Training Support Center at Fort Eustis, Va.

The change is part of an NCO leader

Development Action Plan approved by the Army chief of staff in October, 1989. The plan includes 18 recommendations — 10 of which have already been implemented — to "ensure the continued professional growth of the NCO Corps," according to SGM Ruby Withers of the Leader Development Office at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

Sergeants first class and below have been taking the annual Common Task Test since 1984. Beginning in fiscal 1992, NCOs will be tested on the same 12 skill level one tasks as junior enlisted soldiers, plus two additional tasks for each level of responsibility.

Trainers from the major Army commands and the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, select the CTT tasks based on skills that they deem most critical to their particular mission and to battlefield survival, and on weaknesses demonstrated

Senior NCOs Can Benefit from Ranger Training

Ranger School has long been accepted as the Army's premier leadership course, but, too often, senior NCOs shy away from what could be their most rewarding training experience.

For most of the last 40 years, the focus of Ranger School was the squad leader, platoon sergeant and platoon leader. That's too bad, because the course yields tremendous dividends to all highly motivated professional NCOs who attend and graduate. Besides the challenge and the opportunity for professional growth and development, more tangible benefits exist.

The FY 88 and 89 CMT 11 promotions to SGM/CSM totaled 164 promotions, 75 being Rangers. The FY 90 master sergeant selection board resulted in 43 11B promotions, 23 being Rangers. Clearly, the senior NCO with Ranger training has a promotion advantage over his contemporaries, and the skill level 3 soldier who hasn't attended Ranger School should consider doing so.

CSM Frederick Weekley
Ranger Training Bde.

during annual rotations through the NTC, said Tripp. Their selections are then compiled and released by the Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Monroe, Va.

As in the past, administration and evaluation of the CTT will be conducted either during collective training or at stations set up specifically for CTT testing. Whenever possible, leaders should incorporate CTT evaluations into field exercises, and for maximum effectiveness leader tasks also should be evaluated in a field training environment, Tripp said.

Officials say while there is no direct link between CTT and promotion or retention, commanders often consider a soldier's performance on the CTT test when preparing NCO Evaluation Reports.

SFC Eroy Garcia
ARNEWS

News & Issues

Reserve Component NCOES Now Linked with Promotion

The Reserve Component Noncommissioned Officer Education System (RC-NCOES) is undergoing significant changes. Some implementing documentation has been released, some has just finished the staffing process and will be released soon.

RC-NCOES has been linked with promotion from SSG through SGM since 1987 (the ARNG has required PLDC for SSG since 1985). Because BNCOC and ANCOOC phase II (MOS-specific) was developed and fielded over time, it was dropped as a prerequisite, and only phase I (common leader training) of each course has been required for promotion to SFC and MSG, respectively. Since TRADOC now has the majority of phase II developed and available for use in Reserve Component Training Institutions, it will once again become a requirement for promotion consideration on 1 October 1991.

In response to a recommendation in the NCO Leader Development Action Plan, beginning with FY 92, RC-NCOES student rank will be realigned with the goal that:

- CPLs/SPCs attend PLDC in preparation for duty as leaders in the rank of SGT;
- SGTs attend BNCOC in preparation for duty as leaders in the rank of SSG
- SSGs attend ANCOOC in preparation for duty as leaders in the rank of SFC; and,
- MSGs/ISGs attend the SGM Course in preparation for duty as leaders in the ranks of SGM and CSM.

Effective FY 93, RC-NCOES linkage with promotion also will be realigned. PLDC will be required for promotion to SGT, BNCOC for SSG and ANCOOC for SFC. The ARNG will require the SGM Course for promotion to SGM and CSM beginning with FY 93, and the USAR will implement that requirement one year later.

The realignment allows for a waiver of one year for soldiers whose military education was interrupted (e.g., Operation Desert Shield/Storm). The waiver would allow the soldier to be considered by a promotion board without having the required education. However, the soldier would have to complete the mandatory training before actually being promoted.

Reserve Training Directorate

DAVIS Helps Trainers Locate Hard-to-Find Films

A computer program called the Defense Audiovisual Information System can help you meet your training needs. The system contains every audiovisual program within the Defense Department. Located at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, DAVIS is accessible from computer terminals throughout the world.

Your post or technical librarian, director of information management or local training aids office should be able to help you gain access to DAVIS. Once in the system it is very easy to use. Information in the program includes audiovisual production identification numbers, release numbers, when produced, when released, running times and a synopsis of each production.

There are thousands of programs in DAVIS — thousands of opportunities for trainers to get help in their ongoing effort to become better trainers.

CSM Joe D. Morrow
Alabama Army National Guard

Availability Opens Doors to NG Professional Development

National Guard soldiers: your ace in the hole when it comes to professional development training lies in your ability and willingness to report for training on short notice.

To increase your odds of being selected for formal schooling, notify your state and National Guard Bureau that you are willing and immediately available for training. Call attention to that fact in the remarks block of the school application. Underline, highlight, write it in large letters, but get your quota manager to notice.

In addition, help your state schools manager by giving him your phone number and checking frequently to see if school openings are coming available.

MSG Frank Yoakum
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

If you would like to receive future issues of *The NCO Journal*, use the procedures in DA Pam 25-33 and DA Form 12-05-E, Block 0041.

NCOES Conference Surfaces Issues

When the Army recently announced that it would be toughening retention standards, the points emphasized in this column last issue gained new significance and bear repeating.

Physical fitness and communications skills were major topics of discussion at this year's world-wide NCOES conference. When soldiers report to NCOES courses unable to pass the APFT the negative result affects both soldiers and the system. Soldiers dismissed from the course receive negative academic reports that go into their personnel records, scarce travel funds are needlessly depleted and more qualified soldiers are denied the chance to attend courses.

Physical fitness is the responsibility of individual soldiers and their units. Physical fitness training in the NCOES is "train-the-trainer" oriented, designed to enhance a noncommissioned officer's ability to train, improve and sustain subordinates, not to sustain individual fitness.

Attendees had similar complaints about soldiers who do not meet weight standards when they report for schooling. The new HQDA policy change denies enrollment in professional development courses to overweight soldiers in a PCS status. The soldier will be reassigned to the installation or be reassigned by PERSCOM to meet the needs of the Army.

Another issue was soldiers who report for schooling without taking the Test of Adult Basic Education. Training developers use TABE results to tailor lesson plans and reference material to student reading levels. Trainers use TABE results to identify and assist students who may have poor reading and comprehension skills.

Evaluation by TABE provides a valuable tool for the Army and the individual by helping soldiers spot their weaknesses and develop plans to improve communication skills. The earlier in their careers that soldiers begin improving their communication skills, the more successful they will be as they advance in schooling and rank.

It is equally important for senior noncommissioned officers to set the example for subordinates by continuing to improve their own communication skills.

SGM Dan Murphy
USASMA, Training and Doctrine

Battle Focused Training is the Key to Readiness

By COL Edward Soriano
and CPT Timothy A. Vuono

In November 1988, the Army formalized the evolution of its modern training doctrine with the publication of FM 25-100, "Training the Force." Reflecting more than three years of review and refinement, this capstone manual provides the key principles that must guide all training. It solidifies the importance of, and requirement for, tough, realistic, multi-echelon, combined arms training as the primary means to develop and challenge soldiers.

While it is applicable to every leader, FM 25-100 focuses primarily on the responsibilities of senior active and Reserve commanders, command sergeants major, and staffs at levels above battalion. Early in the development of the new doctrine, it became clear there was a need for additional guidance to better apply the concepts of FM 25-100 in battalions and companies. The procedures these units were using to document and implement training programs were often varied and sometimes ineffective.

Accordingly, FM 25-101, "Battle Focused Training," fills the void and serves as a "how to" manual for units in the field. FM 25-101 complements and supplements FM 25-100, and supersedes previous manuals governing unit level training. Its primary intent: Provide the best methods for units to plan, execute, assess and manage training.

Both active and reserve component leaders were involved in developing and publishing FM 25-101. Everyone from the Chief of Staff and Sergeant Major of the Army to captains and sergeants from every branch and component of the force provided comments and suggestions, constantly refining the FM.

In addition, each TRADOC school, division commanders and the Senior Leader Training Conference all reviewed the manual.

"The proper execution of training to standard is a difficult but rewarding process. It places a significant burden on the trainer in terms of preparation and assessment of performance. The pay-off for properly executed training is a unit trained to standard on its wartime mission."

- FM 25-101

FM 25-101 is organized to be an easy reference and guide for day-to-day operations in units across the spectrum of the Army. Training documents from a notional division form the bases for developing several different battalion training management programs. The manual provides practical tips, techniques and procedures on making training work in any unit.

Chapters are titled and organized to mirror those in FM 25-100. FM 25-101 first provides an overview of Army training doctrine.

Next, there is a discussion of mission essential task list development. Several chapters then describe how to plan, execute and assess training. Finally, a series of appendices applies these guidelines to notional units using concrete, real-world examples and explores other important training issues in more depth.

The manual emphasizes the roles of battalion commander and staff, company level commanders, and every other officer and NCO leader within the battalion. The following sections highlight some of the major areas covered by FM 25-101.

Training Overview

The manual provides an overview of the training systems and helps clarify the essential responsibilities of junior officers and NCOs.

Chapter 1 stresses that to ensure collective events are always linked to individual soldier and leader tasks, commanders must be personally involved in every

aspect of training. Collective training is the responsibility of unit officers; NCOs are responsible for training individual soldiers, squads, sections and crews.

These responsibilities, plus the critical linkage between soldier and collective tasks, are the foundation for a common-sense training approach enabling a unit to achieve sustainable, overall proficiency.

Then, when such a unit maintains a relatively constant level of readiness over a period of time, it is described as being within a "band of excellence." Within this band, training is repeated only at the frequency necessary to sustain proficiency.

Scarce resources can then be allocated where they are most needed, thus ensuring that critical deficiencies receive the most emphasis. These areas are identified through a review of the unit's METL.

METL Development

In chapter 2, FM 25-101 moves to a discussion of the METL. Whenever possible, every training opportunity should have a "battle focus." This is a concept used to derive peacetime training requirements from wartime missions. These requirements become the focal point for a commander's training plan and are articulated as the unit's METL.

Every training event — collective and soldier — should be driven by the METL. Newly assigned commanders, or those with new wartime missions, must develop or adjust their METLs to ensure there is a practical link between collective tasks and

Battle Focused Training

individual battle tasks.

An excellent example of this process occurred when a mechanized infantry battalion deployed from Fort Polk to Panama in early 1989, several months before Operation Just Cause. Immediately upon receiving orders, the battalion commander reviewed and revised his METL since his new responsibilities were a radical departure from his previous Europe-oriented wartime mission.

Subsequently, another mechanized infantry battalion rotated to Panama and used the METL with minor alterations. The METL's effectiveness was validated when this battalion went into combat. The tasks previously noted proved to be essential to wartime operations.

FM 25-101 describes how to make METL revisions and provides a model showing how critical collective tasks defined by a division commander flow through subordinate headquarters and become specific tasks for the soldier.

While these tasks are determined by collective tasks from above, they must always support and complement the overall training plan, incorporating the actual needs of each echelon.

Possibly the most valuable tool available to the Army for preparing units for combat operations is the Combat Training Center program. It is comprised of the National Training Center, Ft. Irwin, Calif.; The Combat Maneuver Training Center, Germany; the Joint Readiness Training Center, Ft. Chaffee, Ark.; and the Battle Command Training Program.

Each of these training assets allows active and Reserve component forces to experience "hands-on" training in a stressful, near-combat environment built to exercise all or portions of the unit's METL.

Planning

In Chapter 3, the manual outlines principles of planning based on the commander's vision of the best means to prepare units for war. To better develop an appropriate training vision, a commander should use several different sources to assess proficiency on METL tasks.

These actions occur before beginning the planning phase. The commander uses his own experience and input from his CSM and staff, as well as his commanders and their first sergeants, to rate each collective task as either "T" (trained), "P" (needs practice), or "U" (untrained).

The ratings then provide the basis for the quarterly training brief used by active duty commanders and the yearly training brief used by Reserve commanders.

These forums result in training "agreements" between senior and subordinate commanders. Each briefing explains and solidifies training plans proposed by individual units. The FM provides useful samples of briefing slides and formats.

After the appropriate strategy is finalized, commander and staff plan and prepare for each training event. One of the most important sections of the FM addresses the importance of "well-structured, well-organized and repetitive" battalion- and company-level training meetings. Several tips are given to help make these meetings more focused and productive. Suggested participants and agendas are also outlined.

A key element of every meeting agenda should be a discussion of pre-execution checks to guarantee their inclusion on

"Senior NCOs are responsible for getting soldiers, subordinate leaders and units to the training site. They ensure that soldiers are at the right location, in the right uniform, with the right equipment, at the right time . . ."

- FM 25-101

training schedules and in training plans.

Checks provide the attention to detail needed to use resources efficiently and ensure training is conducted as planned.

Pre-execution checks help leaders focus on requirements for preparation and coordination by the trainers and the individuals to be trained. Without pre-execution checks, successful execution is a matter of luck.

Execution

Chapter 4 reinforces the importance of quality execution, stating that "assessment, METL development and planning are important but ineffective if we don't ensure that scheduled training is executed vigorously to standard and on time."

In the final analysis, well presented, repetitiously practiced and properly

performed training provides the only certainty that soldiers will be ready for combat. The key is personal involvement by the entire chain of command.

FM 25-101 delineates roles and responsibilities in the execution of training for each task trained. Well-defined and strictly enforced standards are the foundation of an effective and disciplined Army. In the years ahead, the Army must reemphasize its standards if it is to meet its strategic responsibilities.

Assessment

While assessment, discussed in Chapter 5, is the last phase of battle focused training, it is not necessarily the end of a training event. Once a unit determines its level of proficiency on certain tasks, it must then adjust its plans to accommodate additional training and focus resources on tasks not performed to standard.

A consistent and recurring assessment will prevent units from "peaking" for major training events. Sustainment training is the critical element in keeping units within the band of excellence. Formal and informal, internal and external evaluations provide an overall "snapshot" of the unit's readiness and its procedures.

An after action review is critical to any training event. It helps participants increase knowledge and proficiency, allowing them to teach themselves "what happened, why it happened, and how it can be done better." In this way, lessons are reinforced and effectively learned.

FM 25-101 is one of the most important and useful publications the Army has produced. Personal involvement by Army senior leadership and input of officers and NCOs at all levels will ensure its continued value and applicability Army-wide.

Tomorrow's smaller Army must continue to be a quality force, always trained and ready. The nation will continue to demand the utmost professionalism and readiness from its soldiers.

Training must continue to be thoroughly planned, well-executed and fully assessed by units across the Total Army.

FM 25-101 will help get us there. It's up to every leader to understand and apply its principles and techniques. ■

COL Edward Soriano is assigned to the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

CPT Timothy A. Vuono is the S4, 3rd Bn., 1st Flt. Arty., 1st Armd. Div., Germany.

CMTC: Training for Combat



PHOTO BY NORTON WILES

by CSM James C. McKinney with
CSM Lyle C. Daniels and MSG
Michael Lawson

In the heat of the attack, and after three grueling days of "combat," the NCOs in the Blue armored cavalry squadron found it hard to even think about digging in their tanks. Getting kills. That seemed to be the thing to do as opposing force vehicles roared down on them through covering smoke. But the Blue forces fought on, killing at least 15 enemy tanks before being taken out.

Were mistakes made? Yes. Were the NCOs who made themselves vulnerable to attack losers? Not on your life, for this is simulated combat training like no place else in Europe. Simulated, yes. But there is no lack of intensity, as any NCO who has gone through a three-week rotation at the Combat Maneuver Training Center can attest. The training area at Hohenfels, Germany, provides soldiers the opportunity to maneuver at battalion level under conditions they would face in a European conflict. All who train here, all who learn here, leave as winners.

One of the missions of a combat training center is to test the ability of noncommissioned officers to lead soldiers in battle under simulated, but realistic and challenging conditions.

Whether in the desert sands of Ft. Irwin, Calif. or through the mud and mire at Hohenfels, NCOs must be able to train

squads, platoons and units and lead them through each situation to perform their wartime mission. That isn't always easy.

It takes a combined arms team effort and starts well before the tank crew, artillery battery, or infantry squad hits the training area. It begins with unit training; with NCOs conducting individual counseling and individual training to prepare their soldiers to stand up to the most stressful situations.

By conducting this training, the NCO builds a cohesive element that is able to work together and accomplish the mission. That cohesiveness must be in place when the unit arrives at the training center. NCOs in charge of a combat, combat support or combat service support element must understand the importance of tough, realistic and Mission Essential Task List based training if they are to motivate their soldiers to work as a team and successfully meet the standards set by the center.

CMTC's standards are high because the purpose of the training is to preserve lives. When the stress and fatigue of the battle set in, pulling together as a team becomes critical.

NCOs also need to know what is expected of their soldiers from the observer/controllers at the training site. Soldiers need to know what the requirements state. That only comes from NCOs who take the initiative to find out what the requirements are.

Observer controllers, doctrinal experts who assess decision-making and player's actions in the field, provide feedback throughout the rotation, pausing after every battle to discuss what went right and what went wrong.

OCs use doctrine. They do not work with checklists. They are trainers rather than evaluators — trainers who help soldiers apply doctrine to their operations. During unit rotations, OCs aid soldiers by building on strengths and eliminating errors as units practice maneuvers.

NCOs at all levels are being trained at the CMTC. Tank commanders and crews aren't the only ones being observed. From the corporal leading a rifle squad, to the command sergeant major of a battalion, every NCO must lead and motivate soldiers to perform their mission efficiently and effectively. Whether it be a supporting or leadership role, it is important that all NCOs know their responsibilities prior to arriving at the training center and be prepared to perform those roles.

For the young NCO, success in training comes from studying and mastering tasks, passing these skills on to their subordinates and training their soldiers to perform as a team. Using knowledge gained in school, past experience and unit guidelines, sergeants should schedule rehearsals so squad members know their jobs and can do them on demand.

The young squad leader must also be the most inquisitive soldier of the squad,

Training for Combat

always asking questions about situations, tactics and strategy that may not be covered in operations orders. Squad leaders must know the tactical situations. The only way they can properly prepare their squads is to ask the question not covered in the briefings. If leaders don't have the answers, then they should find and pass the information on so that the squad is fully informed and able to respond to what could be the unknown.

The squad leader must be willing to learn from the experience at the training center. Squads and crews are going to be thoroughly stressed, and results from evaluations may not always be to the leader's liking. The leader may be placed in a situation where resources are limited. That is when leaders must be able to perform by making the most of what is available. This is where the young NCO becomes a true leader. Noncommissioned officers must set high personal standards, and thereby instill the same standards in subordinates. The more positive the leadership, the more the squad will learn and benefit from the center experience.

The same can be said for senior NCOs leading platoons and companies. They have more responsibilities and must motivate more soldiers, but the basic requirements of knowing the job, training soldiers to do the job and providing the support they need to complete the mission are the same.

The demands of leadership are the same for staff NCOs. Too many combat arms NCOs treat staff jobs as temporary positions to be tolerated until they can get reassigned to a line unit.

Yet staff roles are important. Seasoned noncommissioned officers who have seen operations go wrong when a staff's planning and logistics are tested in "the real world" have a special insight that may be missed by other team members who haven't had the same experience. In addition, each member contributes specific skills and knowledge to the team. NCOs can play a vital role in making training realistic and in helping to develop plans for future exercises.

If staffs fail to restock ammo, for example, or fail to take the time needed for vehicle maintenance, their commanders must fight with less ammunition and fewer vehicles. If casualties aren't treated

within the prescribed time, they're declared "killed," resulting in manpower shortages.

Often, NCOs aren't used in establishing plans and training, so they must assert themselves in staff functions to forcefully sell their "product". Experienced non-commissioned officers must make it known that they are not the "coffee makers" for the staff directorate, but an important part of the plans and policy process.

At the same time, the staff NCO cannot afford to be discouraged if advice is not accepted. Often, soldiers will go into a shell because what they considered important input to a plan was not accepted by the staff. They may become reluctant to provide information. This must not occur. It's up to the staff NCO to provide knowledge acquired through years of experience in the field and keep submitting that knowledge and experience into the planning stages.

One other thing that is important to the success of an NCO at a CTC: Family support. Many spouses are independent and don't appreciate overbearing assistance. Yet all spouses need some support when their soldier spouses are away training. The best leaders are those who ensure their own families know where to go to get help, and encourage their spouses to become part of the family chain of support.

Spouses of senior NCOs are experienced in dealing with family separations and know how to handle situations when they arise. If they volunteer it, their experience can help alleviate many of the difficulties faced by younger families.

The points in this article will help any NCO while training at any combat training center. Problems arise when one is not prepared. Training soldiers before deployment, knowing what to do once they get to the training center, contributing to the process while there and ensuring that families at home are supported will help any NCO accomplish the main objective of the CTC mission: Training for combat. ■

CSM James C. McKinney is Command Sergeant Major of Seventh Army Training Command. CSM Lyle C. Daniels and MSG Michael Lawson are with the combined maneuver training center in Hohenfels.

A Look at Europe's Most Sophisticated Training Site

The Combat Maneuver Training Center, a 44,000-acre site in Hohenfels, Germany, hosts some 50,000 soldiers each year and offers three-week training rotations in maneuvers at battalion level.

In concept, the CMTC models itself after the National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, Calif.

In terrain and in environment, the contrast is stark. CMTC's training environment of rolling hills, thick woods and tank-stopping mud offers conditions that soldiers would face in a European conflict.

NTC, of course, provides scorching temperatures, sand, and mountainous desert terrain. However, like NTC, CMTC offers tankers and mechanized infantrymen a chance to learn from their mistakes under simulated, but very realistic combat conditions.

Although current political conditions reduce the likelihood of a European conflict, the training soldiers at CMTC receive provides a stressful, realistic experience that directly relates to the intensity of armored combat on any front.

A permanently based OPFOR will continue to use basic tactics, operating according to threat doctrine — attacking only when they outnumber the Blue force by 3-to-1, moving their vehicles in simple line formations until contact, and advancing under cover of smoke.

In the past, rotational OPFOR units could not always take advantage of Blue mistakes. Now that there is a permanent OPFOR on board, not only are mistakes identified, they can be more easily exploited.

As a result, the units who rotated through the CMTC before going into Desert Storm benefited enormously from the tough, realistic, battle focused training. The CMTC gave them a winning edge which made victory easier to achieve and helped keep casualties low.

JRTC and Combat Success

By CSM Atrail Cobb

The lessons noncommissioned officers learn at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Chaffee, Ark., reinforce battlefield tasks and leadership principles applicable to all NCOs Army wide. Thousands of NCOs count themselves among the light infantry soldiers the JRTC has trained in combat operations. They have returned to their home stations more experienced and better able to develop their own unit training packages.

Soldiers from four groups — special operations forces, conventional Army units, Air Force military airlift command units and Air Force Tactical Air Command units — learn a lot about the Combat Critical Tasks lessons learned that are essential to success on the battlefield.

The first of these CCT lessons learned is the decentralized leadership concept. Junior leaders, given a larger role in managing their soldiers' time, tap a gold mine of innovative and creative abilities in more efficiently accomplishing their missions.

In low-intensity combat, senior leaders must be able to designate duties and responsibilities to the lowest man in the unit — in other words, have confidence that their soldiers have been trained to make and carry out decisions under stress.

At JRTC, we stress to the senior NCO leadership that platoons and squads must operate with a minimum of guidance, reacting independently to each situation, fully understanding and implementing the commander's intent.

Independence also applies to another CCT: leader's business. With the fluid nature of the JRTC battlefield, soldiers at all levels must realize that "NCO business" must become "leader's business." This involves all soldiers in the player units. In the absence of senior leadership, NCOs must be prepared to take charge and make decisions.

This concept demands that all leaders participate in planning missions, which means giving squad leaders the opportunity to work with their soldiers to plan, prepare and execute operations and then receive timely feedback from observer/controllers. The O/Cs travel with all elements of the player unit.

Hand-picked O/Cs — sergeants first class and senior staff sergeants with squad and platoon leadership experience — guide, direct and critique their counterparts in timely, informal, field-based after-action reviews.

Contact drills, fire and movement, and weapons marksmanship are more CCTs. These basic skills require NCOs to train their soldiers well prior to engaging opposing forces.

All player unit NCOs realize that the OPFOR knows how to shoot and move, skills drilled and honed by months of repetitive training.

For player units, such skills must be continually rehearsed and improved at the

unit's home station. By the time these skills are used at the JRTC they must be second nature to every platoon member. Even so, platoon sergeants and squad leaders should practice and rehearse contact drills prior to each mission.

Soldiers also must practice fire and movement for each contact drill. This means hitting the ground, returning fire and learning how to maneuver as a team under all conditions. Extensive home station training using the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System will help player unit soldiers and NCOs master the "one shot-one kill" technique, conserving ammunition and controlling random fire.

The JRTC's live-fire complex, composed of an ambush site, a fortified position, and a movement to contact lane, also improves the scope of fire and maneuver training available. Selected platoons from the player unit can go through each of the three sections.

Another common element of the CCT is the soldier's combat load. Observer/



Combat skills used at JRTC must be second nature to every platoon member.

JRTC and Combat Success



controllers weigh combat loads to determine if they are too heavy. Research shows that a soldier can carry no more than 30 percent of his body weight and still retain the agility and stamina to fight. Making pre-combat checks is one way to ensure that only equipment essential for the current mission is carried.

Class-V replication is one way the JRTC drives this point home. Many types of ammunition have been weighed and sized to duplicate the load soldiers would carry into combat. This has proven to be an eye-opener to NCOs, who learn to spread the load out evenly among all soldiers in the platoon or squad.

The most important tool for battlefield realism used at the JRTC is the MILES. With MILES all contact is as honest as possible. Nowhere is this more true than in casualty evacuation.

Through the use of the casualty card, all soldiers know from the minute they have become a casualty just how seriously they have been wounded. This stresses the casualty evacuation system, because it forces the player unit to plan for and carry out evacuations while combat missions are continuing.

Unit medics, to include air and ground ambulance personnel, must also perform their roles properly. Medical soldiers may



have to eliminate snipers or secure a landing zone for the evacuation helicopter. This process is a true test of individual and unit soldiering skills. Yet, these combat-critical tasks can seldom be played out at a unit's home station.

NCOs must first account for all dead or wounded, call for medical evacuation, organize extraction operations and always provide security. Then, unlike home station training, all dead or wounded are tactically removed from the battlefield. They will be brought back to life by the O/Cs later in the exercise when the proper accountability and replacement requisitioning procedures are accomplished.

No soldier can operate effectively without good, current, friendly and enemy information. At the JRTC, keeping subordinates informed is critical. This is especially true if the senior leadership is killed, wounded or captured. The mission must



Far Left: Thousands of NCOs count themselves among the 80,000 soldiers the JRTC has trained in combat operations.

Left: At the JRTC, conventional Army units, special operation forces and units from other military services are trained in joint operations. Junior leaders are given a larger role in planning and carrying out their missions.

NCOs at squad and platoon level can help commanders determine the best use of close air support, naval bombardment, and aerial resupply.

NCOs keep in close contact with Air Force enlisted terminal attack controllers. These airmen travel with Army units and assist unit commanders with close air support. These personnel are critical for the accomplishment of each close air support mission. NCOs must learn to use these experts when planning and implementing combat missions.

Resupply efforts are crucial to success in battle. Therefore, units at the JRTC must function as if they were on an island. The island concept forces unit commanders along with NCOs to plan ahead for all supplies while deployed. Because soldiers in this scenario must carry with them only enough food and ammunition for the first few days of combat, this supply pipeline becomes critical.

The NCO in today's Army faces many challenges. For those fortunate enough to come through the JRTC, the lessons learned are staggering. Many comment favorably about the training and consider it as the most valuable they have received at any time in their careers.

Tough training is the benchmark for a combat-ready and deployable force. At the JRTC, there is great pride in providing light forces with the most challenging and realistic training in the world. ■

CSM Aurtail Cobb is the Command Sergeant Major at the Joint Readiness Training Center.

continue. This requires that NCOs fully brief soldiers about all aspects of each mission in case they have to operate alone or in teams.

The OPFOR is especially skilled in this area. Soldiers at all levels are heavily involved in all aspects of each mission. This improves the overall results of operations, particularly those involving three- and four-man cells which conduct operations far removed from senior command and control.

Another aspect of JRTC training involves the stress of continuous operations. From the time the player unit arrives at the JRTC, it experiences what amounts to its first ten days of combat, although free from real bullets or the fear of death. This climate forces NCOs to develop sleep and work plans that keep the unit functioning for the entire ten-day period.

The JRTC also tests Army Special

Operations Forces personnel. SOF units arrive at the JRTC several days in advance of conventional forces to provide needed intelligence. They might also serve as teachers and coaches for soldiers or play roles such as host-nation military support or civilians occupying a village located in the middle of the maneuver area. These SOF units must provide valuable feedback about civilian aspects of the exercise to the player unit, while enhancing their own combat operation skills at the same time.

To survive on the modern, integrated battlefield, NCOs must also learn to work with NCOs from the other military services. NCOs must know the duties and responsibilities of personnel from their sister services. The JRTC experience serves as a good starting point, with the Air Force as a major partner in this joint training environment. Sister service

The NTC Challenge

Battlefield success demands NCO involvement at every level

By CSM Jerry T. Alley Jr.

Noncommissioned officers know they are ultimately responsible for training their soldiers. At Fort Irwin's National Training Center, located in the Mojave Desert, the reality of this critical responsibility manifests itself during every mock battle fought here.

Short of actual combat, the NTC gives soldiers the most realistic combat experience available anywhere. No other training center provides leaders the ability to train the total combined arms.

Although the NTC has trained an estimated 114,000 noncommissioned officers, of equal importance to the Army is the training passed on to younger soldiers. To achieve this we need a system of certification to first ensure NCOs are prepared to train. This testing for certification needs to be done within the NCOs' normal support chain. Every unit should schedule some type of weekly training specifically for NCOs.

Before Operation Desert Storm CSM Robert Windham, command sergeant major of the NTC's Operations Center, and I spent a few days observing training in Saudi Arabia. In the short time we spent with the 1st Cavalry and the 24th Infantry Division soldiers, we observed NCOs conducting training at all levels.

Right: The painted rocks at the National Training Center display the insignia of many of the units that fought in Desert Storm.

Far Right: The unforgiving desert environment at the NTC challenges every small unit leader to enforce the highest standards to accomplish any mission.

After years of seeing training placed on schedules only to satisfy a requirement and to fill time, I must admit it made me feel good to see these NCOs planning and executing training tasks. However, I couldn't help but feel a sense of dismay that some soldiers had to be put into a combat environment to get the quality of training that NCOs are clearly capable of conducting in peacetime.

During mock battles in the NTC's Mojave Desert, quality training results in senior NCOs taking charge in the absence of orders. Often it's the NCOs' initiative that determines the outcome of the battle. For the most part, senior NCOs are ready and able to execute without specific instructions. Unfortunately, commanders too often fail to get the mission down to them. It has been my experience that junior NCOs are ready to take charge when superiors neglect to issue orders.

At the NTC, the good NCOs automatically ensure that soldiers complete range

and sector sketch cards, and that they assume good hasty fighting positions. Too often, soldiers have to move out of these positions when their NCOs are told to take up new locations. I suggest that if the NCOs were in on the planning process, these moves might not be necessary.

The Army continues to emphasize that soldiers should train as they would fight. The training conducted by the senior NCOs in Saudi Arabia before hostilities began was the way they fought the war. And it was clear to me that the NCOs who rotated through the NTC had trained their soldiers the same way we witnessed in Saudi Arabia.

After more than 100 NTC rotations and hundreds of company- and platoon-level after action reviews, we continue to get the same feedback from the NCO Corps — when NCOs are left out of mission planning, the mission is affected negatively.

The AARs also reveal two other recurring messages: Operations orders often



lack sufficient details to allow for mission planning, and leaders do not have enough time after receipt of orders to rehearse the mission.

In the area of combat service support, the exclusion of NCOs from the operations order planning process equally affects the mission. SGM Glenn E. Shaw, senior logistics trainer at the NTC, says, "Most CSS NCOs have difficulty executing the required troop leading procedures to support the CSS plan. Routinely, they're given neither warning nor fragmentary orders. When they are, seldom is there enough time to properly execute the required troop leading procedures."

Some less experienced CSS NCOs, Shaw suggests, have never seen an operations order and don't know the steps in the troop leading process. Others, he adds, fail to use initiative to seek out the operations order because they feel they are technicians and not responsible for tactical CSS operations.

The ability to analyze an operations order and to know the battlefield operating systems are critical NCO skills. Leaders must be able to properly interpret military graphics and overlays and to brief their soldiers on the operations orders. Absence of these skills, Shaw says, results in soldiers not knowing main supply routes and the tactical situation on the battlefield. Soldiers are equally unaware of the enemy threat and ongoing tactical operation.

"These deficiencies cause problems in the CSS plan because the necessary troop

leading procedures such as pre-combat checks and rehearsal are not conducted by the NCOs," Shaw points out. "This accounts for such things as the essential supplies not being loaded or delivered. Until CSS NCOs become involved in the operation order process and assume responsibility for troop leading procedures," the logistician charges, "there will continue to be problems in executing the CSS plan."

The ability to analyze an operations order and to know the battlefield operating systems are critical NCO skills.

Successful CSS operations at NTC require NCO involvement in the planning and execution of the CSS plan. These NCOs know and understand the tactical missions and CSS plan. Knowledge of critical information and the ability to execute the required troop leading procedures to support the mission lead to success.

CSS operations dictate what does and doesn't happen on the battlefield. CSS sergeants who lead successful operations know what is expected of their soldiers, execute the plan and contribute to the outcome of the battle.

The unforgiving desert environment at the NTC challenges every small unit leader to enforce the highest standards to accomplish any mission. Without the su-

perision from NCOs, equipment and weapons soon become inoperative.

Highly disciplined and qualified soldiers are even more important. The First sergeant serves as the ramrod for the company, ensuring that soldiers are trained and cared for, and that logistical matters are handled quickly and smoothly.

Rehearsals are a key to success in both combat service support and tactical operations, notes MSG Terry E. Hildebran, NTC senior mechanized trainer.

"Rehearsals help identify deficiencies prior to combat. Units that have conducted detailed CSS rehearsals have significantly increased casualty and vehicle evacuation, a critical NCO responsibility too often overlooked," Hildebran says. The first sergeant monitors CSS rehearsals and ensures all key players are present to allow the unit to work the system more effectively.

"One of the most unusual challenges for an NCO is working in the tactical operations center," notes NTC Senior Brigade NCO Trainer SGM Richard L. Foxworthy. The TOC is comprised of different elements from different parent organizations, including fire support, engineer, signal, Army Air, Air Force, electronic warfare and others.

"The conflicting priorities of these organizations," says Foxworthy, "make it difficult to coordinate and schedule time for training this team. The vital role the TOC plays in planning, synchronizing, and executing the command and control of the unit emphasizes the critical need for



The NTC Challenge



Photo by SFC Frank Cox

The training experience of NCOs at the National Training Center is reflected in unit's improved performance. Sergeants who lead successful operations know what is expected of their soldiers, execute the plan and contribute to the outcome of the battle.

training this element as a team.

Training the TOC team should involve all players on a regular basis. The training program must have clearly defined objectives and cover procedures for establishing, displacing, moving, securing, defending and operating the TOC as a team. Training that team means training the supporting elements as well.

"Developing an effective TOC operation means taking every available opportunity for team training," Foxworthy says. "Computer assisted exercises, map exercises, command post exercises and order drills offer opportunities to exercise the entire team, not just key personnel."

Planning, synchronizing and command and control are the TOC's primary missions. But if the TOC can't effectively move, secure, and defend itself, it will not survive to perform its vital mission. "This is why every member must be a part of training. That includes those whose primary duty may not be fighting from a foxhole, but whose lives may depend on that ability," Foxworthy says.

Of all the questions generated by leaders coming to the National Training Center, one is recurring: "How are CSMs to be used at the NTC?" According to CSM Windham, battalion and brigade CSMs coming to the NTC often are not used at a level consistent with their battlefield knowledge, experience or capability.

"Consequently, their units don't

achieve maximum effectiveness during task force and brigade level operations," Windham observed.

In his discussions with CSMs, Windham learned that commanders often don't review with CSMs their duties as outlined in the regulations.

"In some instances, the commander didn't further define those duties with regard to his command philosophy, type of unit and command standards," Windham said.

"On two separate occasions, the duties of a battalion and brigade CSM were clearly defined to optimize the NCO leadership throughout the command. This had significant impact on the overall success of those units during the rotation," he continued.

Their success was based on the CSMs, prior to their initial counseling session with their respective commanders, providing them two excerpts: AR611-201, paragraph 1-20 b., "CSM Duties", and AR 600-20, paragraph 3-2, "NCO Support Channel."

At the counseling, the commanders and CSMs discussed the regulations in detail. What resulted was a clear understanding of duties, responsibilities, authority and the commander's mandate for using the NCO support channel throughout the command.

One commander used the excerpts to create a memorandum to his staff and

subordinate commanders. The memo defined the CSM's duties, responsibilities and authority with definitive guidance on how to go about them.

In his guidance, the commander highlighted several points pivotal during training as well as in combat. Consequently, staff and subordinate commanders aggressively sought advice and assistance from the CSM throughout their rotation.

The training experience of NCOs at the NTC is reflected in units' improved performance. Every unit that has trained at the National Training Center has left better trained than when it arrived.

One major contributing factor to the NCO Corps' success at the NTC is the NCO Education System (NCOES).

With future cutbacks, we can expect a smaller force that will require the best NCO leadership possible. Through NCOES, the Army provides young leaders with the tools to maintain the best fighting force in the world.

Therefore, it is paramount that we as noncommissioned officers remember that care of our soldiers rests solidly on our shoulders.

Along with that responsibility comes the assurance that soldiers are trained and can survive in combat. ■

CSM Jerry T. Alley, Jr., is Command Sergeant Major of the National Training Center.

Interview with Desert Storm NCOs Moving Beyond Victory



Photo by SFC Karen Murrell

In Saudi Arabia, operators had a vested interest in keeping their vehicles running. They knew when something was wrong because they lived on, slept on, and knew the history of their equipment. (MSG Earl Shelley)

By Jim Collins

Combat in Southwest Asia showed the soldiers of the 24th Infantry Division just how important tough, realistic training can be. But then MSG Earl Shelley and SFC Larry Ingram of 1st Bn., 41st Field Artillery already knew that. They had trained their soldiers in the deserts of the National Training Center before shipping out to Saudi Arabia where they continued to train and eventually led their soldiers into battle against Iraq.

After returning to Fort Stewart, Ga., after seeing to the welfare of their soldiers, and reestablishing the routine they knew before Desert Storm, they took time to talk

about their combat experience and how training helped them achieve victory. Here are their comments.

Making the Most of Training

INGRAM

The key is to make training realistic. Basically, this started for us in our last rotation to the NTC before going to Saudi. It was the first rotation where we had live fire. We had 50-caliber and M-16 ammunition and guys walking around waiting for targets to pop up.

We weren't all that enthused about lots of guys walking around with live ammo, even in peacetime. There are too many

instances where accidents can happen. But that training helped. It gave us confidence. It was not like Desert Storm because we knew we were going to be there for three weeks and go home. We didn't worry so much about the logistics of it, we just went there and got good training.

In Saudi, you had to plan a lot more carefully. We had to make a lot more adjustments. A lot of soldiers went over there as kids. They came back as men, and I'm proud to have played a part in that.

Before Desert Storm, I asked myself, "Do I want to go to war with these guys?" We did have plenty of time to train, though, and when the war did kick off I was very confident. If you asked me how I felt about going to war with my guys after the training, there was no question. We were ready.

Soldiers have to know the training they're receiving can save their lives, can save their buddies' lives. On my last NTC rotation we took our MOPP seriously and practiced it over and over.

There were no shortcuts. If you take shortcuts, the troops become lax. They think it's not important. We concentrated a lot on NBC training. Luckily we weren't tested in combat, we were prepared.

SHELLEY

Today's soldiers are smart. They want that challenge when they go to the field for three days. They want to fill their days with training. So, you train to standards. If you do that you can't go wrong.

NCO Interviews

In garrison, certain training is bypassed or ignored. NBC, for instance, is an easy subject to learn but a difficult subject to train. It often wasn't realistic in garrison.

You'd have a guy say, "You're in a chemical environment, put on your mask," and you'd walk through an area and in five minutes it was all clear. We learned it takes a lot longer than that to actually clear an area and it's important that soldiers learn to function for extended periods in chemical protection.

We trained properly before going to Saudi, starting with individual tasks and working up to collective tasks. But the bottom line is, NTC can't compare with the training we did in Saudi because we knew our lives were on the line. There, every day was survival training.

Adapting to the Chemical Threat INGRAM

You adjust. You remove other clothing. Sounds hard to believe, but sometimes I'd forget I had it on . . . except for the smell. Most soldiers had few questions about wearing the gear. There were no double standards.

SHELLEY

Starting Jan. 16th, the MOPP suit was our uniform in the division. We didn't remove it until we left Iraq almost two months later.

We learned all we needed to stay relatively comfortable underneath was a tee shirt, underwear, socks and boots. In earlier training we would have our DCUs on. In the field we learned that by adapting we could operate 24 hours a day and still be protected.

That was a leadership thing. Everyone did this. In the field, we didn't worry about what had to be done. We concentrated on how we were going to get the job done.

Maintenance and Training

SHELLEY

One recommendation on training. We did something which made us much better. We had gunnery tests where we tested all corporals through staff sergeants. When they completed the test, they formed a section and we sent them out as a crew to see how they operated.



Photo by SFC Karen Muirbook

Soldiers have to know the training they're receiving can save their lives and their buddies' lives. (SFC Larry Ingram)

Once they finished, they were sent out on platoon ARTEPs and they put everything together.

Without command emphasis on maintenance we never could have done what we did. We would road march once a week. The vehicle operators had a vested interest in keeping them operating. They knew when something was going wrong because they lived on, slept on their equipment and knew the history.

If you tell soldiers their lives depend on how well their equipment runs, they pay a little more attention. They baby that equipment.

INGRAM

Maintenance is critical to combat success. There's a temptation to brush off maintenance when it's "only for training." When it's "only for training," if you break down maintenance comes by and you sit there until it gets fixed. In Saudi Arabia, you break down, you're left behind because the majority of the force is gonna keep on moving. We finished the battle with 23 of our 24 artillery pieces, which is a pretty good record.

We exercised the guns and we knew when things weren't right. When I was chief I could put on my CVC helmet and if that howitzer sounded different I could tell by the sound alone.

I may not have known what was wrong,

but I knew we had to start looking. Maintenance has to become just as important in training as it is when we're preparing for combat.

The Problems of Desert Warfare SHELLEY

Sandstorms were a major problem. The effect sand has on the human body and on crews is often unbearable.

Luckily we learned from our experience at NTC that we needed plenty of goggles. I know one time I had on just my eyeglasses and I thought they were enough. They weren't. Without goggles, your eyes get destroyed.

The sand meant we had to pay extra attention to detail. When you look over your equipment, everything may seem okay. But underneath, if you didn't clean that breather screen every day, you were in big trouble.

You learn to listen under combat conditions, too. Listen to your soldiers and understand what their concerns are. Even if it was something like he didn't care for his MRE that day.

You know, it's a fishbowl environment out there. You spend 24 hours a day with your soldiers. You can't B.S. your way and be a good leader. If you're not honest with them, they're so close they can see it.

When they need you to do something

and you say you'll do it, and you blow it off, they'll see that too. You're forced to become a good leader or you get pushed out of the way to make way for someone else to fill the gap and take on the responsibility. I've seen that happen. When it gets intense, there's no time to mess around. You can't fake it in combat.

Combat builds a bond between you and the soldiers who work for you and between you and those you work for. That bond, that trust, can't be duplicated anywhere else.

INGRAM

The heat and the wind made it awfully difficult to maneuver. Equipment had to be cleaned and maintained every day, every day.

For example, you had to clean your M-16 many times during the day. If you didn't clean it, rounds wouldn't feed from the magazine. You had to clean your magazine as well.

We had soldiers with family problems back home. But there's no way they could go home. Leaders have to find time to listen and talk to soldiers and explain why.

Back in the states, that's less of a problem. You have to know your soldiers — you have to know when they need time alone, and when they're spending too much time alone.

It's always difficult for artillery to keep up with M-1 tanks and Bradleys. NTC provided us the best training we could get anywhere on moving in the diamond or the wedge formations.

We used those in Iraq and they worked great. You don't have to wait any time to get in position. All you have to do is stop and when you stop, you're in position, ready to fire. I loved it.

Planning and Executing Victory

SHELLEY

Before we went to war we already had forward support, forward supply areas in Iraq, waiting for us. When we drove past, fuel was there. Our recon teams had already told us there was no enemy there.

Our folks were out there by themselves for weeks guarding their supply areas; knowing that 50 or 60 miles in either direction there were Iraqis out there. The plan was to set up these areas where no one knew. And we did it.

INGRAM

Right after the air war began CNN television began showing scenarios on how we were going to attack. How the 24th was going to go straight in.

We had already been gone for two weeks from the area CNN was talking about; 26,000 troops had moved and no one knew except us.

We loved it. If the 24th hadn't been able to pull off that great flanking movement, it would have been a real bloody war. There would have been a lot more casualties and a lot of Hussein's soldiers would have escaped.

Keeping the Edge

SHELLEY

We trained to fight for five months. We didn't have to fight as hard as we trained. And thank goodness for that.

But we do face a problem. As CSM (James D.) Randolph said, we've honed our soldiers to a fine edge. Now, we've all got to work to hold that edge.

We've got to do our level best to pick up on all this knowledge that 18,000 troops have brought back with them and try to package it and use it at NTC and anywhere else we can.

A lot of senior NCOs are facing cutbacks. If we don't pass along our experience to our corporals and sergeants, we're going to lose it. But we're bringing back a lot of four- and six-year enlistees who are

going to be able to pass on a lot of what we've learned. That's good.

INGRAM

A lot of soldiers are gonna say that going to NTC now is a joke. Why go now. They've already been to war.

That's an attitude we have to overcome. We've got to get our soldiers back in the right frame of mind. We've got to convince our soldiers the next war could be worse. We might face someone who will actually fight. Yeah. We went to war. It wasn't what we expected it to be. But, we were lucky.

The question now is, who's gonna be the next enemy. How will we practice for the next war? We're gonna have to train our soldiers that to meet the variety of threats that are there, we have to be more mobile, flexible and lethal. We can't rest on our successes or be lulled into thinking the world is safe.

The Military Profession

SHELLEY

I have no regrets. I'd do it all over again.

INGRAM

I've been lucky. All my senior NCOs helped me in my career. Gave me guidance and counsel at the right times. I hope to be able to do the same thing for my people. ■

Jim Collins is managing editor of The NCO Journal.

24th ID Commander's Guidance to his CSMs:

- Go to sound of the guns
- Make sure soldiers are being taken care of
- Make sure the dead and wounded are being moved expeditiously and with respect
- Keep the soldier in the big picture
- Be a cheerleader
- Talk to your commander daily

- Maj. Gen. Barry McCaffrey

Building the Force: “Skill, will and teamwork”

By CSM George D. Moek and
SFC John K. D'Amato

The superb performance of our soldiers who served in Desert Shield and Desert Storm was no accident. Months and years of training in garrisons and field exercises have honed cohesive, well-trained, highly motivated teams from divisions on down.

That training was conducted, for the most part, by junior NCOs, who realized that every NCO is like the foreman of a construction crew.

Each sergeant is responsible for building a strong structure, capable of withstanding whatever adversity might come along. Instead of a house or a skyscraper, NCOs build units.

First sergeants, company commanders and other leaders are the architects. They know what they want and give sergeants their plans. They want a strong, mobile, versatile, deployable and lethal force. Call this their blueprints.

PLDC, BNCOC and ANCOO and all of the other service schools NCOs attend give sergeants the tools. In many cases they are leadership tools: ways to communicate with soldiers, how to take care of them, how to counsel them and how to train them.

Once a sergeant has the tools, it's time to build the unit.

As with a builder, a sergeant starts with a strong foundation; and the foundation of any combat-ready unit is discipline.

The importance of discipline is best described in the book "Small Unit Leader-

ship," in which the author, retired Col. Dandridge M. Malone, gives a description of combat on the modern battlefield:

"The battlefield is a tough place. Danger everywhere. A measure of fear is in every man. The noise of explosions and yells and shouts as men move and fire, adjusting and adapting to a deadly and constantly changing situation. The stress on men and units and equipment is at its peak. The name of the game is 'survival of the fittest.'

"Battle is a personal experience. At your level (Sgt), it's a hell of a lot more

**“ . . . the foundation of
any unit is discipline,
and discipline begins
with the sergeant . . . ”**

than it is for the leaders who are making the big decisions — like deciding which hill to take or where to cross a river. Battle is soldiers, one against the other — rifle to rifle, bayonet to bayonet, tank to tank. Battle is the story of how soldiers fight.”

According to Col. Malone, there is a combination of three things that win on the battlefield — “skill, will and teamwork.” Without them you cannot win.

Even if you have developed the necessary skills in your people and the ability to work as a team, they can't win if they don't have the will to win. Sergeants create that will to win through discipline.

Soldiers can be the best marksmen in

the world, but their weapons won't fire unless some sergeant has instilled in them the discipline to clean their weapons — in the dark, the rain and the freezing cold.

They can have superior firepower over the enemy, but if they haven't the discipline to get up and fire their weapons — putting rounds down range on the enemy, then that firepower means nothing.

They might be the “tightest” team in the division, but if some sergeant hasn't instilled in them the discipline to keep themselves at the peak of their physical conditioning, the stress and fatigue of constant combat will cripple the unit's combat effectiveness and render the team useless.

The name of the game is “survival of the fittest,” and it's a sergeant's job to make sure his or her people are the “fittest” — physically, mentally and emotionally.

A sergeant does that by first setting the example in daily displays of courage, candor, competence and commitment.

An NCO must be honest and upright, avoiding deception and living the values suggested to subordinates. Once a sergeant compromises that integrity, he or she breaks the bond between NCO and soldier.

A sergeant can't say on the one hand, “self-improvement is essential,” then on the other hand put off Army schooling or other self-development programs.

A sergeant can't say, “physical training is really important,” then skip two PT sessions a week.

— A sergeant will only have to perform poorly, or marginally, one time on an

Army Physical Fitness Test for soldiers to realize that that sergeant has two standards — one for the sergeant and one for the soldier.

Let your boots go unshined, appear with your uniform wrinkled or your hair ungroomed, and you have sent a negative message to every subordinate.

Don't clean your weapon or excuse yourself from training because you're too busy, and some young soldier will learn those things are not important to you. Complain, fall out, or get discouraged when the training gets tough, and you'll have established all the wrong standards.

No! Discipline doesn't begin with the soldier, it begins with the sergeant.

If the sergeant sets clear and achievable standards, strives for and displays them everyday, rewards those who meet the standards and punishes those who don't, then soon those standards will become the soldier's standards — and that's the goal.

What the NCO works toward is not a group of soldiers who achieve and maintain standards because the sergeant is there standing over them. What the NCO wants is a group who knows that those standards are right for that team, and embraces those standards as its own.

In the previous examples, the soldier doesn't clean his or her weapon to avoid a chewing out. The weapon gets cleaned because that's the right thing to do. The soldier doesn't make a decision out of fear of reprimand, but because his or her values, attitudes and beliefs confirm that it's the right decision to make.

That's self discipline and it's the only kind of discipline that will stand up to the stress, chaos and uncertainty of battle.

If discipline is the foundation, then technical and tactical proficiency are the bricks with which you build.

Since the beginnings of our Army, the NCO has been a trainer. Teaching your people how to be proficient remains one of your most important jobs.

Tough, realistic training in the way you plan to go to war brings your soldiers together as a team and builds their confidence. That confidence, in turn, gives your soldiers the deep seated belief that the unit can and will accomplish the mission, no matter how unfavorable the odds. They know they can withstand adversity far better than other units.

Soldiers develop confidence only through realistic training and real or simulated combat experiences that make them

optimistic about themselves, their equipment and their leaders.

Training is at the heart of Soldier-Team development, and all unit tasks and missions are training opportunities. A good sergeant capitalizes on every event — from the most exciting to the most boring, both in combat and peacetime environments — to train soldiers as a unit, give them pride of accomplishment, and teach them how to evaluate the team's performance and their own.

“Training is at the heart of soldier-team development, and all unit tasks and missions are training opportunities.”

The best NCOs look for ways to make training as realistic as possible. They know the more challenging and worthwhile the training is, the more it will reflect and create cohesion among their soldiers. They put their soldiers through significant emotional experiences in which they do things they didn't believe they could do as individuals or as a unit.

The more stress soldiers overcome in training, the less stress they will experience in combat. Training tasks that require moral and physical courage teach soldiers to deal with fear and anxiety. Tough training teaches them to overcome those fears through their proficiency at a task, and through trust in the competency of others in the team.

The end result is a team whose members are confident in themselves and each other — each overcoming adversity, building team pride and creating a higher state of morale.

Good morale is nothing more than shared positive bonds. Its strength depends upon respect, trust, confidence, and the degree of open, candid communication that produces understanding.

Morale, the mental, emotional and spiritual state of an individual and a team, is the “mortar” which keeps the building blocks of the unit together.

Once you have that morale, and have built an effective, combat-ready team, you'll find that your soldiers will take the responsibility for sustaining the team's level of proficiency. You may have created the team and guided it through its development, but at some point it will

become their team and their standards.

You've seen such units, yourself. They are the squads, platoons and companies that emanate a feeling that they can take on any challenge and prevail.

We saw examples of such units recently during Desert Storm, where the conventional wisdom was that it takes a minimum of 3-to-1 odds to attack an enemy in fortified defensive positions. Given the size of the Iraqi Army, we should have had four times the number of troops we used.

But, we were ready. And we were fighting for something we believed in strongly. The Iraqis were neither. More importantly, their leaders didn't care, about their cause or their soldiers.

Desert Storm wasn't decided by who had the best tanks or airplanes. It was decided in the hearts and minds of the soldiers fighting there. Desert Storm proved once again that a team, outnumbered and with less firepower, can overcome a larger enemy if the team has the spirit to win.

Clausewitz, who wrote about the “Principles of War” 200 years ago, linked discipline, training and morale to esprit (“winning spirit”).

“A unit,” he wrote, “that maintains its cohesion under the most murderous fire; that cannot be shaken by the imaginary fears and resists well-founded ones with all its might; that, proud of its victories will not lose the strength to obey orders and its respect and trust for its officers even in defeat; whose physical power, like the muscles of an athlete, has been steered by training in privation and effort; . . . that is mindful of all these duties and qualities by virtue of the single powerful idea of the honor of its arms — such a unit is imbued with the true military spirit.”

Take a look around you and you will see teams, sections, squads and platoons just like those Clausewitz described. You'll find them anywhere there is an NCO who cares enough to correctly train and lead his or her soldiers.

They are the units built on a foundation of discipline, solid in their tactical and technical expertise, and held together with a high sense of morale and esprit. ■

CSM George D. Mock is the Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. SFC John K. D'Amato, a former tank commander and platoon sergeant, is NCOIC of USASMA public affairs.

Tricks of the Trade

By MSG Michael D. Bates

I remember sniveling to my first sergeant many years ago after sustaining an abundance of bark slivers in my backside while answering the call of nature.

I explained that I wasn't having any luck at fulfilling one of my basic needs. I

mean, in the past I had stumbled back into the fruits of my labor; soiled the suspenders of my rain suit; and ended up with a foreign substance on my boot.

As a last resort I had tried the old sit-on-the-log trick. That's how I had received the bark slivers.

It was then that 1SG Felix shook his

head and explained to me how to use the old entrenching tool to tackle my mission.

"Use your entrenching tool as a seat," he said. "Lock the tool into an 'L,' place the point of the handle on the ground and sit across the flat portion of the blade."

Problem solved and mission accomplished. No, it wasn't something that ensured my survival on the battlefield, but 1SG Felix's advice made living in a field environment more tolerable and taught me something important about noncommissioned officers.

The truth is, NCOs have a vast store of tricks of the trade, or "lessons learned" that can't be found in any field manual. Some save time, others save equipment or energies. Others enhance training or make face-to-face communications more exact. All have improved the way we do our jobs and are characteristic of the many ways good noncommissioned officers contribute to the welfare of soldiers and the accomplishment of their missions.

One example of a time-saving trick I picked up from an NCO came while I was the fire direction center chief for a heavy mortar platoon.

I was having trouble getting the landline communication from each gun wired into the switch board each time we pulled into position. The task took five minutes. We had two minutes to get a round down range. Something had to be done.

SSG San Miguel, who also worked in the FDC, had a solution. Back in the motor pool, he quickly went to work.

He took a piece of plywood that was just large enough to hold six outdoor electrical outlets. Next, he wired the outlets into the switchboard and attached the board to the outside of each vehicle, just below the left taillight. Then he had each of the gun squads attach an electrical plug to the end of their roll of commo wire.



PHOTO BY S. C. KAHN NUWOOD

The "tricks of the trade" that noncommissioned officers have learned and share with others can save time and money. Others can save soldiers' energies and improve the way they do their jobs.

It was simple and fast. When we pulled into position, the squads tied their wires to the taillight guard, plugged in their own wires, ran back to their guns and attached the other end to their phones. Thirty seconds! I used that system for a long time.

Just as important are the tricks we use to save equipment and money. I ran into a way to save both while acting as a mortar platoon sergeant.

Laying a mortar on target from inside a M-106 mortar carrier means moving the entire vehicle when sighting.

Whenever we laid in the guns, one of the drivers invariably forgot to raise the ramp off the ground and would tear the ramp off the vehicle when we moved. That produced an 800-pound, embarrassing lump of metal that wasn't much good to anybody. It also produced a vehicle that was deemed unserviceable and a bill for somebody to pay.

On the other hand, if drivers didn't lower their ramps all the way, they still wound up with a lump of metal on the ground because gunners would jump on the ramps, breaking the cable. It was "damned if you do, damned if you don't."

I was working on a solution to the problem when 1SG Troche, the old platoon sergeant, said he had a fix. Taking about six feet of link chain, he attached one end to the inside of the hull near the ramp hook latch. The other end he attached to the top of the ramp where the latch hooks to the ramp.

When he was finished, the drivers could only lower the ramp to within one foot of the ground. No ramps, therefore, ever touched the ground, so they couldn't be torn off. The chain also took the stress off the ramp cable and that meant no more broken cables. In four years, that platoon never lost a ramp or broke a ramp cable.

Time and equipment tricks are one thing, but noncommissioned officers also must guard the welfare of their soldiers. The tricks we develop to save their energies and make life a little easier often are an NCO's most important contribution to a unit's mission.

During field training at Fort Lewis, I told my platoon to dig in mortars and to sandbag the emplacement. Later, I was checking the area and found everyone breaking their backs to fill sand bags. Everyone, that is, except the troops in SGT Mike Messer's squad.

While all the other squads were only about half done, Mike's squad was fin-

ished. I couldn't believe it. His squad had the fewest members.

He explained that he had taken several of his camouflage poles and laid them on top of some already filled sandbags so they looked like parallel bars. He then took four highway cones and placed them upside down between the poles.

At that point, he had one soldier hold the sandbags under the cones while the rest of

Noncommissioned Officers have a vast store of knowledge that can't be found in field manuals but contributes greatly to their soldiers' welfare and the accomplishment of their missions.

the squad went to work using the cones as funnels.

Of course not all tricks we stumble across are field-oriented. Many simply are ways to enhance those things we already do well. Sometimes, it's a matter of ensuring that we "put our best foot forward."

A friend of mine, CSM Jerry Paris, told me of a time when some of his NCOs brought their DA photos to him. They were looking for advice as to whether they should send them in or not.

In the photographs, the reflection of the white paper the soldiers were standing on made the soles of their shoes look white. It gave the viewer the impression that the soldiers had neglected to apply any edge dressing to their shoes — an indication to board members that they hadn't paid attention to detail.

Paris' suggestion to his soldiers was that they put edge dressing on the bottom of their left shoes. This cut down on the glare from the paper.

... the body of our NCO knowledge comes from our experience and abilities to build on the good ideas of others.

Paris thinks the suggestion made a difference because all of his people were selected for promotion.

That doesn't mean that if you paint the bottoms of your shoes that promotion is automatic, but if doing so will improve the quality of a photograph or increase soldiers' confidence in their appearance then it's served its purpose.

The greatest number of tricks that

NCOs possess are those that deal with training. Almost every NCO has some sort of memory aid or a visual device that makes learning easier.

When training soldiers to do complex tasks such as emplacing Claymore mines, procedures and sequence often are as important as end results, especially during common task training or expert infantry badge testing.

Memory aids such as "SALUTE" and "SPORTS" have worked so well over the years that they have become part of our formal military training. But many of us have developed our own memory aids to help remember complicated processes.

In the claymore mine example, SFC John D'Amato uses the initial letters of a short saying to teach soldiers the intricacies of mine emplacement.

The initial letters in the saying, "In Combat People Always React Really Fast" equate to: I=Inventory, C=Check circuit, P=Place the mine, A=Arm the mine, R=Recheck aim, R=Retest circuits and F=Fire. According to D'Amato, the saying is easy to remember and soldiers remember each of the steps more easily and longer.

I'm constantly amazed and pleased by the inventiveness of NCOs working around me. It has taught me that the body of our NCO knowledge comes from our experience and abilities to build on the good ideas of others.

Perhaps none of the tricks I've discussed will be of any help to you. But I hope they will encourage you to refine and share the many ways of doing things that have made you the kind of professional who gets the mission accomplished quickly and expertly.

By sharing those tricks with others we provide an invaluable resource to today's Army and lay the foundation for the NCOs of tomorrow. ■

MSG Michael D. Bates has served in numerous leadership positions, including first sergeant of a basic training company at Fort Dix, N.J. He just received a master's degree in education from Seton Hall University.

■ Book Reviews

In Love and War

By
James Bond
Stockdale and Sybil
B. Stockdale

Harper & Row,
NY, 1984

This book re-
counts the lives
of both a prisoner
of war in Viet-
nam and the fam-
ily he left behind.

The authors
alternate writing
chapters, each giving a different perspec-
tive. Commander Stockdale, seriously
injured during ejection after a raid on
North Vietnam, fell captive on Sept. 9,
1965. During the ensuing seven and one-
half years, he endured torture, pain from
his injuries and the constant threat of
death. Sybil, meanwhile, worked to force
the State Department to declare that pris-
oners were being tortured.

Stockdale emerges a hero (four Silver
Stars and the Medal of Honor), though
bitter about apparent governmental
abandonment of prisoners. Sybil re-
ceives the U.S. Navy's Distinguished
Public Service Award. No other wife of
an active duty officer had ever received
this award.

The authors offer many ideas that
could prove useful in preparing soldiers
and their families for similar situations.

From the prisoner's point of view —
preparation and training have no substi-
tute. Commander Stockdale and many of
the early prisoners never received the
training required to make their captivity
more bearable. He also points out the
need for an unwavering faith, in one's
God, country, and fellow soldiers.

From the family standpoint — Sybil
found support in family and friends, but
found none in the public or governmental
sectors. Even her support from military
channels waned after the first year.

There are several important messages
leaders can gain from this book. One is
that our soldiers can survive internment,
but only if we train them for that possi-
bility, just as we train them to fight and avoid
capture. Another lesson is that much of
their survival depends on knowing that
their military leaders will care for and
support the military families in the
soldier's absence.

MSG Jeffrey J. Mellinger

The Rape of Kuwait

By
Jean Sasson

Knightsbridge Pub-
lishing Co., 1991.

Author Sasson pre-
sents two theses,
one apparent, the
other inferred. The
first thesis covers
the main point of the
book — ensuring
that the world
knows of Kuwait's plight. She develops and
supports her point by showing the barbaric
actions used by the Iraqis, presenting several
true stories of refugees who escaped from
Kuwait after the invasion.

Each story rallies support for the Kuwaiti
cause. Her concern lies with the people of
Kuwait who must endure more than simple
aggression and war. They must deal with the
loss of family, friends, homes, and more
importantly, their homeland.

Another message, however, is quite oppo-
site the book's main point. Though Sasson is
sympathetic to the Kuwaitis, she raises is-
sues that question Kuwait's approach to
foreign policy and its nonmilitary attitude.

These facts include a statement about

The Threat Inside the Soviet Military Machine

By
Andrew Cockburn

Random House, NY,
1983.

Mr. Cockburn,
who has written a
number of books
about Soviet society,
focuses on the mili-
tary competition be-
tween the Soviets
and the United

States. He compares the two country's de-
fense budgets versus future economic
needs. The book traces the superpower ri-
valry from its beginnings through the early
1980s.

America's military build-up in Europe
became necessary immediately following
the end of World War II and continued
through the following decades, eventually
reaching a maximum level in the late 1970s.

The Soviets, on the other hand, began
shaping their military establishment in re-
sponse to the Nazi threat in the 1930s and
continued building along their borders into
the early 1980s. As the Cold War pro-
gressed, the Soviet Union extended its mili-
tary presence into Eastern Europe, Cuba,
South America and the Middle-East.

Although the two countries' activities
appear similar, significant differences be-
come apparent with a closer look. Although

history repeating itself. Forces from
Baghdad occupied Kuwait during the late
1700s. Many of the tragic stories occurring
then were to be repeated some 200 years
later. Additionally, Kuwait failed to de-
velop any sort of protection with its
newfound wealth.

While Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia used
much of their oil money to build military
forces, Kuwait built an unprotected soci-
ety, dependent upon diplomacy, the Arab
ethic of brotherhood, and "contributions"
to the other Arab states.

Ironically, their money returned to them
in the form of tanks, bullets and armed
troops when Iraq invaded the tiny king-
dom. It appears Kuwait blindly contributed
to its own downfall.

At least a couple of lessons may be
gleaned from this book. Though many
people think of the military as an offensive
weapon, defense is its primary tenet. A
strong military is a deterrent to war. The
Kuwaiti monarchy failed to learn that les-
son after 217 years.

MSG David A Perschbacher

the United States strengthened its military
at a steady pace, it never spent as much on
a per capita basis or as a percentage of the
total budget as did the Soviet Union.

As a result of these expenditures, the
economies of both countries suffered to the
point that each country began experiencing
domestic problems. The U.S. budget defi-
cit increased tremendously while the So-
viet economy closed in on chaos.

As soldiers, we too should be concerned
with how the Defense budget affects our
lives. At the personal level, we benefit from
military pay but are affected by high prices
resulting from a weakened economy. Like-
wise, rising military costs cause voters to
question the need for a strong military.

The author argues that by manipulating
threat intelligence the defense establish-
ments of both countries can "inflate the
military threat posed by the other" to the
detriment of their own societies.

Whether or not these arguments are true,
readers owe it to themselves to study and
evaluate Cockburn's economic argu-
ments.

The author feels, and I agree, that in the
future we will have to carefully consider
the long-term impact of defense spending
on the total economy.

MSG Alex J. Skinner

Backbone of the Army

By Dr. Robert H. Bouilly

No doubt about it. The 1939 movie, "Gunga Din" is an entertainment classic — the "Raiders of the Lost Ark" of its time. Starring Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., and Victor McLaglin as three British sergeants serving Queen and Country in India, the movie is loosely based on a poem written by Rudyard Kipling, a man who wrote a lot about men of action — especially sergeants.

You may remember other Kipling stories that later became movie favorites, titles such as "The Man Who Would Be King" and "Captains Courageous."

But chances are you didn't know that Kipling is the man who coined one phrase familiar to every soldier: "The NCO is the backbone of the Army."

Kipling first said it in 1895, in a poem called "The 'Eathen." The poem, written in a Cockney accent, contains 19 stanzas. The famous phrase about NCOs comes at the end of stanza 18:

*The 'eathen in 'is blindness bows down to wood an' stone;
'E don't obey no orders unless they is 'is own.
The 'eathen in 'is blindness must end where 'e began,
But the backbone of the Army is the Non-commissioned Man!*

In the decades after the poem first appeared in 1896, Americans quoted the phrase frequently because by then, as a world renowned writer, Kipling had married an American woman and was living in the United States. First, the expression found a niche in the American vocabulary, then it began to evolve into the form we know today.

The poem is really a ballad, or story, which emphasizes that discipline and leadership are the keys to military success. The story starts with a description of the hassle endured by trainees.

As the trainees see it:

"The cruel-tyrant-sergeants they watch 'im 'arf a year,"

But then the tale turns to discuss how sergeants care for their men:

*An' when it comes to marchin' he 'll see their socks are right,
An' when it comes to action 'e shows 'em how to fight.
'E knows their ways of thinkin' and just what's in their mind;
'E knows when they are takin' on an' when they've fell be 'ind.*

Speaking of the bravery of all soldiers:

*An' now the ugly bullets come peckin' through the dust,
An' no one wants to face 'em, but every beggar must;
So, like a man in trons, which isn't glad to go,
They moves 'em off by companies uncommon stiff un' slow.
Of all 'is five years' schoolin' they don't remember much
Excep' the not retreatin', the step un' keepin' touch.
It looks like teachin' wasted when they duck un' spread an' 'op.
But if 'e 'adn't learned 'em they'd be all about the shop.*

About leaders:

*'E's just as sick as they are, 'is 'eart is like to split,
But 'e works 'em, works 'em, works 'em till he feels 'em take the
bit;
The rest is 'oldin' steady till the watchful bugles play,
An' 'e lifts 'em, lifts 'em, lifts 'em through the charge that wins the
day!*

The poem ends in a refrain which admonishes:

*Keep away from dirtiness — keep away from mess,
Don't get into doin' things rather-more-or-less!
Let's hu' done with aby-nay, kul, and hazor-ho; [Don't put things
out]
Mind you keep your rifle an' yourself jus' so!*

One reason Kipling was such a popular writer, and the reason his stories have become motion picture hits, is that he was a great story teller. But beyond that, his stories focused on people who lived by values he thought were important: values such as courage, candor and commitment to duty.

The next time you hear yourself referred to as "the backbone of the Army," give a thought to the British author with an American bride. Maybe even pick up a Kipling book, such as "Barrack Room Ballads," or "Soldiers Three." The next time you go to the video store look for films of his stories about soldiers in India and enjoy a bit of Kipling. ■

Dr. Robert H. Bouilly is the NCO Historian for the Sergeants Major Academy.

■ Letters to the Editor

What's in a Name?

Why do we treat each other as a numerical wheel in a giant machine? We don't describe an infantry officer, an artillery officer, or a doctor by a numerical code. Then why should NCOs be called 11Bs, 13Cs or 91Bs?

The NCO Corps should get away from the "MOS Syndrome." NCOs are light fighters, tank drivers, medics, engineers, and so on. We should refer to ourselves and request others to refer to us in such terms. NCOs must show pride in our profession and not wait for officers to make this change in our way of doing business.

The Chief of Staff ended the reference to NCOs by "E" grade. With the end of the "E" grade title in conversation, soldiers received the recognition they deserved as sergeants or staff sergeants, etc.

The place to start is within the Noncommissioned Officers Education System. Each level of NCOES should end the use of MOS codes in conversation. Senior NCOs should begin the process through Noncommissioned Officer Development Programs (NCOPD) and on the spot correction in their daily activities.

Pride in our branches, our tasks and our contribution to the total mission enhances professionalism. NCOs deserve the recognition from our peers, subordinates and the officer corps for the tasks we perform. The Noncommissioned Officer Corps is not a collection of social security numbers or alpha numeric codes. It is a proud group of professionals who should be referred to as the leaders they are.

MSG William C. Lawrence
Fort Lewis, Wash.

In Praise of the FSC

Just finished reading the first issue of the "NCO Journal" and I must say I was impressed. NCOs now have a forum that allows us to exchange ideas and to learn from each others' experiences.

Being a recent first sergeant course graduate, I read SGM Dan Murphy's article entitled "NCOES and Soldier Retention in a smaller Army" with great interest.

Yes, I understand the FSC is not an NCOES course but it does deserve comment. The course covered a multitude of topics that not only first sergeants need to know, but senior NCOs in general. The FSC was structured to allow open discussions between class members. The knowledge gained here was tremendous. Our class

ranged from infantry leaders to food service first sergeants, and we all learned from each other.

Open exchanges between leaders is an important learning aspect of our NCO courses. Even though the MOSs are the same in BNCOC and ANCO, the various unit experiences NCOs can share with each other are important.

If the Army's senior leaders must reduce the length of resident training, I hope they consider the worth of NCO interaction and the fact that this is something you can't package as "distributive media."

I urge my fellow NCOs to contribute their experiences to our publication — it is for the professional NCO (is there any other?). I'm already looking forward to the next issue.

1SG J. Holzapfel
Louisville, MEPS

NCOES Selection Process

SGM Murphy's article, "NCOES and Soldier Retention in a Smaller Army," in the Spring 1991 issue of *The NCO Journal* hit a home run when he said trainers routinely told USASMA personnel they did not believe the right soldiers were getting to NCO Academies. While I agree with everything that SGM Murphy said in this issue, I feel he left a lot unsaid about NCOES and the selection process.

Yes, the ultimate decision as to who attends NCOES is up to the Commanders, but we, as senior noncommissioned officers, need to get deeply involved in this process to ensure that the soldiers we select for attendance to PLDC and BNCOC are successes and not failures.

First, let's ensure the two very basic criteria are met. One, do our soldiers meet the weight requirements, and can they pass a PT test?

Are we successful with this? Yes, if we settle for only 95 percent successful when the standard is 100 percent.

The next item we should be looking for in leaders is the current level of their training at the unit. Are they really trained up to standards in all those common skill tasks we claim they can perform? Yes, if you consider a present four percent attrition rate in map reading and land navigation to be a success when our standards should be zero percentage attrition.

Now, we need to look at the soldier and determine two more very important things that seem to be overlooked in a lot of cases. One, are these soldiers really motivated to be

noncommissioned officers, and do they really want to be in PLDC. Only first sergeants and platoon sergeants can make this cut because they are the ones who should know. Yet, there is a constant one to two percent attrition rate at our academies. Second, do the soldiers have self discipline and those other attributes required to be noncommissioned officers?

If we as first line leaders, platoon sergeants and first sergeants really screened our soldiers, then there wouldn't be a two to three percent attrition rate for punitive measures. So now, where are we? Well, if you add up all these percentages, you come up with a whopping ten to fourteen percent attrition rate every time we conduct a PLDC or BNCOC class.

These percentages vary throughout the academies. But, my point is, why do we lose even one soldier during these professional development courses? Because, in some cases, we as leaders and officers don't take the time and really get involved and care about our noncommissioned officer selection process for our NCOES and development of our future leaders.

The bottom line is we collectively need to get on the ball and get involved with the selection process for NCOES and ensure we are sending the right people to school. Get out there and make it happen. Want to!

CSM Richard D. Kidd
Fort Lewis, Wash.

Reservations about Journal

After reading the first issue of the journal, I have some reservations about the publication. My first concern is that it will basically be used by students of the Sergeants Major Academy. USASMA is the only NCOES school which places emphasis on writing. The average NCO in the field has only limited experience with writing in the form of letters to home, counseling statements and NCOERS.

The other concern that I have is the type of articles which might appear in this publication. More articles should be geared towards what the NCO faces daily, i.e.; training hints and methods, leadership styles, and soldiering in general. Of all the articles in this publication, only two caught my attention: "Back to the Future," which shows us that problems we face now are the same as 200 years ago, and "Writers Wanted," which gives helpful hints to a not-so-polished writer.

SFC Terry L. Logsdon
Seneca Army Depot

A Soldier's Request

Treat me with respect, Sergeant.
For no heart in all the world is more loyal than the heart
of an American soldier.

Do not break my spirit with your words, Sergeant.
For tho I will do what you demand, your guidance, patience,
and understanding will more quickly teach me to "Be, Know, and Do."

Speak with me often, Sergeant. For the praise and counseling you give is expected.
I am an American Soldier, expecting to be trained. Discipline must be a part of my life.

Train me for the elements, Sergeant.
For I must learn to fight and win in the heat, the cold, the wet, and the desert.
Those who would be our enemies will use these elements. I must be prepared.

I ask no greater glory, Sergeant, than to defend our country and our way of life, against all
enemies, both foreign and domestic. Allow me that privilege, Sergeant . . . train me.

Provide me the necessities of food and drink, Sergeant.
Train me to be self sufficient, that I may lead the way, and stand ready, willing,
and able to protect you, with my life if necessary, should your life be in danger.

Train me, Sergeant, that one day I too can be called Sergeant, trainer of soldiers,
the backbone of the Army. Train me to accept those responsibilities that are yours.
Train me to train my soldiers to be the greatest defenders of freedom in the world.

Sergeant, train me to be a Sergeant.
I shall leave this Army knowing, with my last step and my last breath,
that my fate was always safest in your hands.

Sergeant, train me.
That I too can earn the title "Sergeant."

Frank M. McMahon
Sergeant Major

Introducing The NCO Journal

A Quarterly Forum for Professional Development

The NCO Journal is dedicated to the noncommissioned officer. Our goal is to further the professional growth of NCOs by providing an open forum where you can raise questions, seek advice and offer solutions to shared problems.

We offer:

- ◆ **A Wealth of Experience** — the collective knowledge and wisdom of "an army" of NCOs.
- ◆ **Guidance** — advice formulated by those who've "been there" and seen what does and doesn't work.
- ◆ **Ideas** — thoughts and principles open to the examination of a demanding readership.
- ◆ **Opinion** — an outlet for creative, constructive thought, meant to connect all levels of NCO education and experience.

The NCO Corps has a great repository of information to share within itself. The NCO Journal provides the means to make that happen.

But how well we do our job depends a lot on how you use and support the Journal.

First, if we have challenged you or provided a useful tool, be sure to pass it on.

Where you have experienced a success, share it with others by writing us a letter or article telling us how you did it. And when we're wrong, be quick to tell us.

The Journal, the NCO Corps, the Army — and you the writer — will be better because of your contribution.

Self Development

Back to the Future

By Patricia Rucker

"Read and meditate upon the words 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 the 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 mentally prepared. That preparation 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 taught and discussed in nearly every Army academy setting, ranging from the National War College to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy.

But how does education translate into the value of the principles and the study of military history may be interpreted in their own way by the NCOs of today's modern Army. NCOs don't play zero-sum games, don't need armies, and aren't rewarded in any kind of strategic plan.

Yet, while emphasizing the thought by names, these armies are made up of such warlike units led by NCOs. Whether with Caesar or Adrian, Napoleon or Waterloo, or Rommel or Guderian, individual soldiers and small unit leaders were on the battle and faced a campaign into a victory or a defeat. History has taught us anything, it is



Preparing for the Storm

Enlisted Leadership in Action

Story by SSG William B. McWhorter

The platoon's duty M-16A2 rifles had climbed into position in the middle of the night. Shaking down, they stood side by side, the silhouettes of the desert hikers only by the sound of the wind. Out on the back of the hills, the desert was a vast field of sand and rocky outcrops. As the sun's first rays came over the horizon, SFC Richard McOwen's men were to face their first Air Assault battle.

The day would have been one — just at the same time, a welcome change. After spending more than a month in one of the American units bound to the borders of Kuwait and Iraq, the 2nd Special Air Assault Team (2nd SAAAT) had been relieved by the newly arrived 1st Assault Cavalry Regiment. Along with the rest of the regiment, Troop C, McOwen's unit was going to take a break.

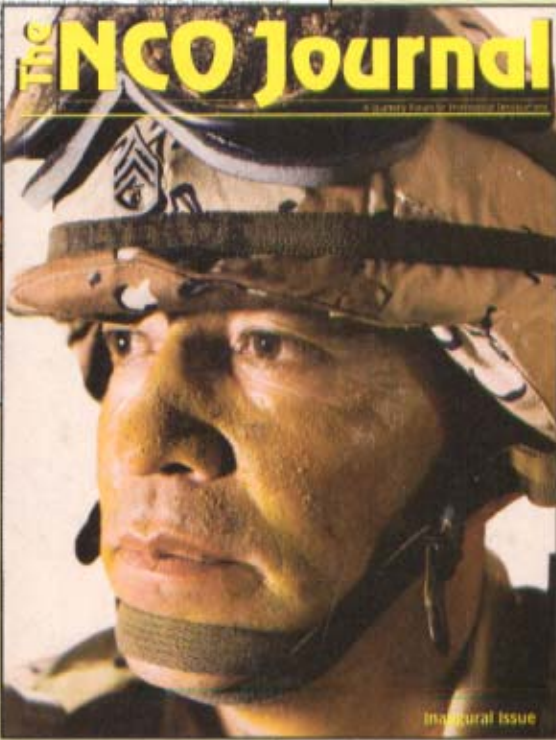
But in the course of Operation Desert Storm, Army NCOs tackled what was possibly the most difficult continuous training challenge in history. Certainly, American soldiers have faced extreme training in the past. One example would be the unit, well aware of Japanese capabilities leading to the British Isles preparing for the World War II invasion of Normandy. And in terms of simple endurance, the Army's long history of Valley Forge probably has no equal.

The unit started its drills in Saudi Arabia, and then did Valley Forge. The Operation Desert Storm personnel by sea difficulties. For one, the sense of purpose may have been low. Instead, Operation Desert Storm's next, of course, has disrupted that sense. The lack of support, "Liberty Kuwait," or "Stop Saddam's Humors," may have seemed rather distant in the troops.

In addition, leaders had to cope with the desert environment and the physical soldiers, tactics and equipment. The near total isolation, and the sense, after the initial rush of admission, that there was no one to rely on.

"We all thought we were going to get off the island and go back to our barracks," said SFC Richard Stone, Troop A's 1st Platoon Sergeant, now assigned to Co. Fox, 1st Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry. "The thing we're having to go through right now is loneliness," he said.

Any long deployment requires a lot of sleep to stay contact with the troops. But the absence of sleep is a major problem. The lack of sleep is a major problem. The lack of sleep is a major problem.



Inaugural Issue