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TRAINING AND EDUCATING OFFICERS FOR SENIOR
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STUDENT ESSAY

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TRAINING AND EDUCATING OFFICERS FOR SENIOR RESPONSIBILITIES
DURING WARTIME

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN H. KELLY

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TRAINING AND EDUCATING OFFICERS FOR SENIOR RESPONSIBILITIES
DURING WARTIME

An Individual Essay

by

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US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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TRAINING AND EDUCATING OFFICERS FOR SENIOR DUTIES DURING WARTIME

INTRODUCTION

To be a successful soldier you must know history, read it objectively--dates and even minute details of tactics are useless...You must [also] read biography and especially autobiography. If you do, you will find war is simple.

General George S. Patton Jr.

Since the skills of leaders in the technical, doctrinal, decision-making and social aspects of their positions determine the effectiveness of military units, it is essential that the training and educating of officers to perform more senior duties receive continued emphasis and improvements.¹ We can take a serious lesson from the Prussians, who after Napoleon crushed their armies at Jena and Auerstadt in 1806, set in motion a comprehensive staff training system which had the goal to "institutionalize military excellence."² As Col. (Pet) Harry Ball in his discussion of the art of war and what it had become in the context of the Prussian general staff development stated "If warfare was now characterized by speed, mobility and complexity, then a premium had to be placed on comprehensive campaign planning and rapid command reaction."³ This statement explained the need for educating and training

officers in the eighteenth century, but it is even more applicable today.

There have never been enough funds or time to devote to an institutional system that would train and educate our personnel to the ideal level. In the Vietnam era and the few years following that conflict, many serious shortcomings in the educational system were allowed to persist. More seriously, the school system did not keep pace with the Army's needs. Even today, the Army is faced with budget reductions or hopefully only a zero growth situation. These, when coupled with an impending officer reduction, will place even higher demands on efficiency and innovation. Modernization, high technology and emerging doctrinal changes are placing tremendous demands on our officer corps. This means that more imaginative and cost effective ways to train our officers to perform at higher levels must be used. The purpose of this paper is to propose some minor changes to the current system which will enhance the professional development of today's officers. Clearly, we need a progressive training and educational system that will adequately prepare officers to operate effectively at the operational and strategic levels during wartime.

BACKGROUND

The 1978 study, A Review of Education and Training for Officers (RETO), made significant changes in the officer training structure. Of the many recommendations made by this study group, some of the major ones resulted in modifications to the military schooling structure. The key changes were implementation of military qualification standards, a restructured Officer's Basic Course (OBC), a modified Officer Advanced Course (OAC) which allowed for specialized training to meet the needs of the following assignment, the addition of the Combined Arms Staff School (CAS³), the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) and Battalion/Brigade Precommand Courses (PCC).⁴

A second major study, Professional Development of Officers Study (PDOS), was conducted in 1984 to reexamine the officer professional development system in light of the RETO changes and to project its applicability forward to year 2025.⁵ LTG Charles W. Bagnal, study director, in his transmittal letter to the Chief of Staff, Army, stated "Our most significant conclusion was that while the officer professional development system is not in need of major overhaul, it must be transitioned to an education and training

strategy which will more efficiently meet tomorrow's challenges."⁶ Two of the far-reaching recommendations of this study were for all majors and colonels to complete CGSC and the senior service college through either the resident course or a corresponding studies program.⁷ These actions will provide a broader base of education and training as officers progress to the senior levels.

THE FOUNDATION

The professional Army ethic is the foundation on which we build our profession. This set of values and ethical principles applies to all members of the Department of the Army and sets the moral context for the Army.⁸ In a recent report to the officer corps, military values are described as "...a common frame of reference for leaders which directly influence development."⁹ Major General Leonard P. Wishart aptly described the importance of values when he said "From my perspective you must start with the development of common values. Without this, everything else falls apart."¹⁰ A close friend, who graduated from AMSP in 1986, stated that among the most important benefits of this program were the shared values, increased communication skills and leadership study.¹¹ These shared values of loyalty, duty, selfless service, and integrity when coupled with individual values of

commitment, competence, candor and courage permit the bonding necessary to facilitate our communications and mutual respect needed in the educational and training processes.

The RETO study reported that professional ethics was the least developed of 12 professional military educational fields and referenced a 1977 survey in which nearly 75 percent of all officers surveyed called for an increased emphasis on instruction in ethics.¹² The report went on to state "The importance of ethics to any profession cannot be overstated. They are the moral glue which binds members of a profession together."¹³ Therefore, it is important that the ethics and values be taught early in an officer's career and further inculcated by all commanders and mentors.¹⁴

Professional values and ethics have always existed, if not explicitly written, as a desired part of an officer's basic attributes. Our commissioning oath of office includes some of these principles which are further reaffirmed in every set of promotion orders. Additionally, officer efficiency reports contain a performance evaluation part where raters comment on eight attributes of professional ethics. Perhaps, the Army has progressed to the point where a standard set of professional ethics should be published. The RETO and PDCS reports clearly define the roles and needs of ethics and values in our profession. A significant conclusion of both studies is

the relationship of these principles to an officer's commitment.¹⁵

In the RETO report, there was a recommendation to select a theme of philosophical writings for the officer corps. This theme was as follows:

The ultimate principle towards efforts of the profession and its members are to be directed, the values to be employed in pursuit of the ultimate principle, and the ethical system within which the values to be employed to make value choices and decisions.¹⁶

This statement essentially lists the ends, ways and means of what our professional ethical strategy should be. The Army must firmly establish its organizational goals and values and hold to them firmly since they are the bedrock from which commitment is nurtured.¹⁷ The responsibility to teach these principles does not rest only with chaplains, it belongs with commanders who control the climate and officer development. This is linked to the extent he is willing to invest in the Army's future and teach, coach and guide junior officers.¹⁸ Our officers must, in the BE context of BE-KNOW-DO, be committed to the professional Army ethic. To achieve this, a progressive study of our profession of arms needs to be coordinated at all levels, and it should incorporate a consistent strategy with attainable goals and objectives.

This study should be initiated during pre-commissioning education and integrated into every military school curriculum.

It is interesting to note that this topic is covered at the Army War College in Course 1 and in at least three advanced courses, but it is not included in any detail in the CAS³ curriculum which was designed to train the Army's staff officers. The CAS³ staff leader is supposed to stress ethical principles during his interaction with the student captains throughout the course. Obviously, this concept has no standardization nor does it cover theory relating to the subject of ethics and values.

Values and ethics are also subjects which should be incorporated into unit training programs. There are some excellent publications which would aid commanders with this training. Several have been produced by The Center for Army Leadership at Fort Leavenworth. Two examples are FC 22-1, Values, and FC 22-6, Ethics. Another series of field circulars, FC 22-9-1, -2, and -3, Leader Development: Military Professionalism, provides lesson outlines in a cookbook format that is focused respectively at platoon squad, company battery and battalion instruction. Once this foundation is firmly established, the next task is to enlarge the battlefield perspective of our officer corps. An excellent method to use is the study of military history.

The Study of Military History

Why study military history? The value of history in military training and education has always been recognized in the United States Army.¹⁹ FM 100-5, Operations, the Army's keystone fighting manual which has had a profound impact on the study of military history includes the following charge:

The most essential element of combat power is competent and confident leadership... Only excellence in the art and science of war will enable the commander to generate and apply combat power successfully. Thus no peacetime duty is more important for leaders than studying their profession and preparing for war. The regular study of military history and biography is invaluable in this regard.²⁰

The study of historical examples occurs in every school curriculum; however, prior to 1978, the study of military history was diminishing. The PDOS stated that our professional development had "a system weakness in that no single individual is in charge."²¹ Another weakness was the lack of coherence where many players were taking unilateral actions which were not necessarily in line with Department of the Army (DA) goals.²² The result of this was suboptimization of the DA goals. There were many actions which were not coherent, coordinated, and they were breaking down any systemic approach.²³ There existed a real need to do better both in

schools and in the field.²⁴

Both the RETO and PDOS reports stress the value of historical study in an officer's education and training. This study is an essential part in forming the knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of an officer in the context of the BE-KNOW-DO model.²⁵ A group of officers in the PDOS study group stated that "A lifestyle of life-long education is a must, not an option. An officer must be expected to study not just allowed to."²⁶ PDOS recommended a reading program in every development period²⁷ of a officer's career from pre-commissioning to senior general officer with military history being included during the pre-commissioning, lieutenant and captain development periods.²⁸ The concept is to study the historical perspective of war in both the common core curricula in TRADOC schools and professional development in units. A major goal of this study is to broaden the officer's frame of reference²⁹ and to progressively study the art and science of war starting with the basics at the tactical level, progressing through the operational level of war and ultimately including the strategical considerations. Comparing the levels of war, the levels of command and the development periods as depicted at figure 1, it is clear to see the interrelationship of the study needs at each and every development period.

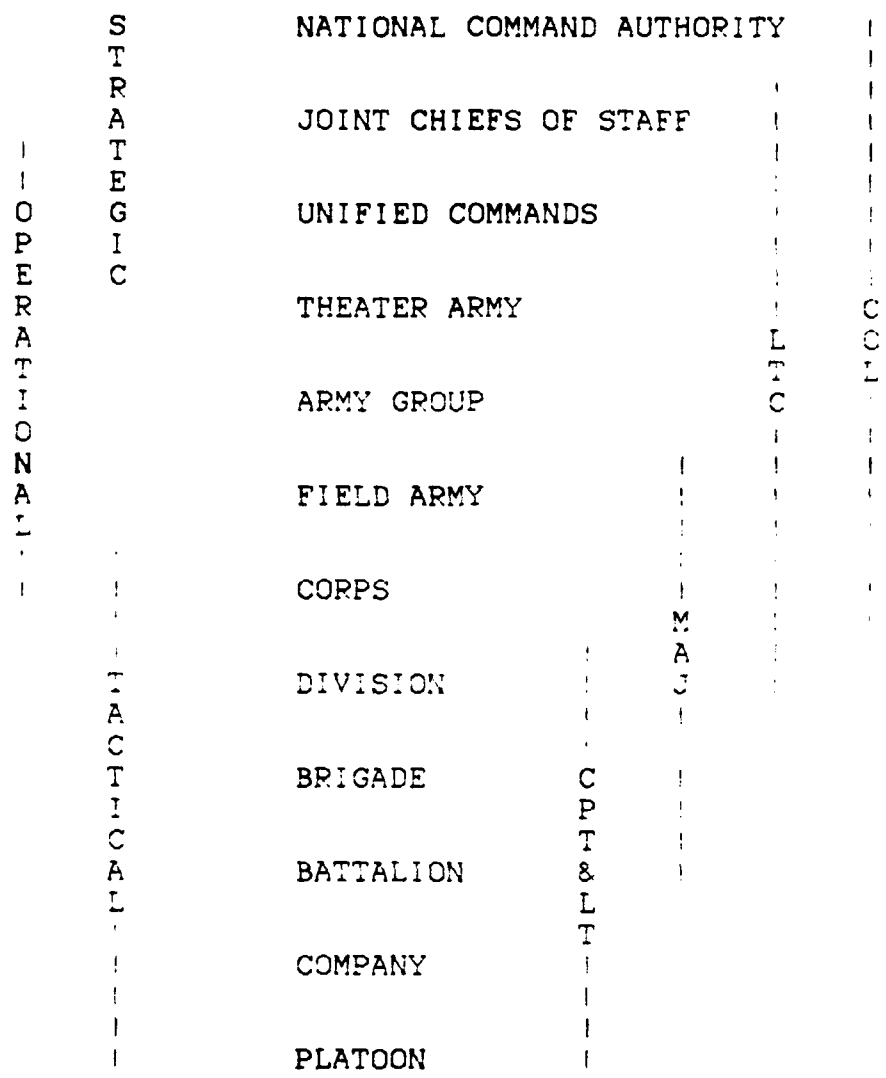


Figure 1. Levels of War, Levels of Command, and Professional Development Stages.

In addition to education and training in the military schools, there are great professional development opportunities to train in the units. An examination of the professional development opportunities that exist between military and civilian schooling reveals that during field and staff assignments there are long periods of up to five years where self study or unit professional development programs can contribute to the ultimate goal.³⁰

The implementation of military qualifications standards (MQS) will institutionalize somewhat the professional reading program which includes historical readings. MQS I, which was published in September 1986, initiated an introduction to the study of military history during pre-commissioning. MQS II will be published in final form during 3rd QTR FY 87 and will contain a MQS-directed reading program with the following objectives:

The objectivesare to encourage officers to develop and enjoy the habit of reading; to acquaint lieutenants with the standard works in their profession; to foster an exchange of ideas with fellow officers on issues that affect the military; and to expand their understanding of world affairs and the role of the military.³¹

MQS-directed readings in the basic publication will encompass three areas. These are military classics, military ethics, and contemporary military subjects.³² The MQS II

branch manuals will contain a fourth reading list of books covering topics relating to branch proficiency. The requirement is for lieutenants to read two books from each of the four categories prior to promotion to captain. Officers may select the books or the books may be assigned by their commanders who will also validate requirement completion.

While this is an improvement, an approach that would have provided more focus towards in-depth study of military history in MOS II and MOS III plus a linkage to institutional education would have been the inclusion of a series of three or more case studies of campaigns or major battles which could be studied at ever increasing detail and depth throughout the officer's career. For example, OPERATION OVERLORD could be studied in both the institutional schools and in units and organizations at the tactical level by lieutenants and captains; majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels could study it from the operational level of war; and lieutenant colonels through generals could study the strategic level aspects. To prevent this program of study from being overcome by events, it should be scheduled into the unit or organizational long range training schedule and supported with resources (reading material, time and funds). The most critical resource, time, could be devoted not only to classes and seminar discussions but also to visiting the invasion site (for officers assigned

to USAREUR). Likewise, other battlefield sites in CONUS or Korea could be visited and studied. With the mobility of our officer corps, it is likely that every officer would have an opportunity to visit multiple sites prior to attendance at the command and staff school and senior service college level. Since operations like OVERLORD and INCHON are studied at military schools, an officer would be much better prepared to participate in more detailed study, and he would have a much more comprehensive background from which to contribute to his seminar group study. More importantly, he would continue to broaden and deepen his knowledge of his profession.

The lifetime of study needed to become an expert would become closer to a reality. This depth of knowledge would permit the commander and other more senior officers to conduct more meaningful tours of battlefields without having to rely solely on a historian to provide all of the information and lessons learned. The senior officers would be placed into the mentor role rather than as a student who may be seeing the battlefield for the first time.

THE VALUE OF A STAFF RIDE

LTC John Turlington's article, "Truly Learning the Operational Art", very accurately states the needs and gives some excellent methods of training and educating officers at

the operational level. He recommends several proven methods such as self-study, visits to historical battlefields, and simulations/wargames.³³ During my time in CGSC, a "blue goose" provided the tasking to lead the work group in a discussion of the Battle of Schmidt. After extensive study of books and pouring over maps in preparation for the class, there was still a feeling that some teaching points had escaped my research. Years later, the opportunity arose to visit the site of this battle. After more study and discussions with the VII Corps' historian, we toured the battlefield by bus and foot. After walking the trail from the village of Vossensach across the Kahl Gorge and then on to the villages of Kommerscheidt and Schmidt, the problems faced by CPT Bruce M. Hostrup as he tried to move his tanks over this precipitously narrow trail to reinforce the 112th Infantry Battalion in Schmidt became more vivid.³⁴ This experience provided understandings that could never be gained by reading a book. The value of these actual visits to battlefield sites is essential to completing an in-depth study.

Another illustrative example of the value of actually seeing the terrain, is in David Schoenbruch's article where he writes that during a state visit to the United States, President Charles de Gaulle asked to visit the Gettysburg battlefield.³⁵ President de Gaulle, an avid student of

military history, had read everything about the Gettysburg battle and held strong views about the tactics and strategy used there.³⁶ Time did not permit an extensive tour so the site of Pickett's charge was selected. After walking the Union's position and sighting the field of fire of two of the cannons, de Gaulle said to President Eisenhower, "Those gallant, crazy Southerners. How could they have charged that wall of fire?"³⁷ What he saw there on the battlefield confirmed his study analysis that Pickett should have never been given the order to charge the strong center of the Union line which obviously commanded the most favorable terrain. The catastrophic losses by the Southerners could never be replaced and had a dramatic impact on the rest of the war.³⁸

More commanders are using the historical case study method for their professional development programs and are supplementing the study with visits to historical battlefields.

When General John P. Galvin commanded the VII Corps, he used his tried and proven "chain training" concept. One part of the "chain training" was classes designed to qualify an officer to perform his duties and responsibilities. In another aspect of this program, he would issue a book to his commanders at every monthly conference and then discuss the book at the subsequent meeting.

One of the books was Charles B. MacDonald's The Battle of

the Huertgen Forest. Later General Galvin took his commanders on a tour of this battlefield. Mr. MacDonald accompanied the group to provide his learned perspective of a historian who had not only studied and written about the battle but also had served in that area during the war. Many other commands and organizations are using these learning tools such as the I Corps' battlefield analysis program. The farsighted effects of these commanders is predictable. As a result of Gen. Galvin's actions, numerous major subordinate commanders subsequently took their officers through similar studies and visits. While one commander, who has an understanding of the value of historical study, uses this method, the continuity may be broken when he is transferred and the next commander who has different goals and priorities does not continue these programs. This makes it imperative to have a corporate training and educational strategy with stated goals and objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ensure that our senior officers are prepared to serve at the higher levels of command during wartime, the Army must have a training and educational system coupled with professional development programs that educate and train officers. There must be formed a solid foundation based on

professional ethics and values in concert with tactical and technical professional expertise in the Airland Battle tenets. The ultimate goal is for senior officers to be skilled in the operational art of war and adept in strategic considerations up to and including the national command level. Senior officers must not only understand how the Army runs and fights, but also they must understand the interrelationships of social, economic, political and military considerations in the execution of national goals and objectives as they relate to policy execution and warfighting.

The current education and training system is effective and has been improved greatly over the recent years. Listed below are some recommended changes to the current system:

1. That study of the military ethics be included in the TRADOC common core curriculum starting with the pre-commissioning development period and be included as a subject for unit training programs.

2. That publications continue to be produced and provided through the publications system to support unit level instruction in the topics of ethics and values.

3. That the case study method of examining historical battles be included in and coordinated between the circles in institutional schools, MGS-directed self study programs, and unit and organizational programs. Battles or major operations

selected for study should be selected for their teaching value and applicable lessons learned at each level of war. These case studies should be of battles where the battlefield sites could be visited as a part of an individual or group study project. Good examples are: INCHON, the Normandy landing beaches for OPERATION OVERLORD, the Battle of the Huertgen Forest and selected Civil War battle sites.

4. Staff rides or visits to battlefield sites should be encouraged if not officially directed as a key part of the study of military history.

5. That the Center for Military History and The Adjutant General support the case study in the field by preparing case study packets containing an annotated bibliography, study guide information to focus on the tactical level, the operations level or strategic level, and maps or charts for orientation. These should also be available through normal publication procedures. The intent is to provide an aid to units and officers starting a study project and to save time identifying and acquiring study materials. The packets should focus the study, but they should not be the sole reference source.

CONCLUSIONS

Time is important. MQS II is finally being implemented during this fiscal year although all of the supporting branch

manuals have not been published to date. MCS III is projected to be implemented in 1990. The time required to see the influence of any change in the direct or tactical organizational level of training and education is relatively short. However, in order to see these benefits at the indirect organizational (operational level) and executive level (strategic level), a longer period of time is required to systematically expand the frame of reference throughout the entire officer corps. This expanded frame of reference is the basis for decision making by senior officers who must often deal with contingencies of 2-10 years and beyond 10 years in indirect organizational and indirect executive positions respectively.³⁹

The Army has an effective structure to train and educate our officers. But, the system must continue to be developed and executed in a coherent manner with linkage between military schools and duty in the field through each development period of officer progression. The training and educational system must be kept current with the most recent doctrine and taught using modern educational procedures in order to have a professional officer corps that is skilled and capable of sustaining an Army that can deter aggression or fight and win.

ENDNOTES

1. Meredith P. Crawford, Research In Military Training. Washington: George Washington University, Human Resources Research Office, 1974.

2. Treavor N. Dupuy, Col, USA, Ret, A Genius for War, pp. 20-24.

3. Harry P. Ball, Col, USA, Ret, Of Responsible Command, pp. 3-4.

4. US Department of the Army, A Review of Education and Training for Officers (RETO), Vol. 1, pp. A-3-1 thru A-3-64.

5. US Department of the Army, Professional Development of Officers Study (PDOS), Vol. I, February 1985, p. iii.

6. Ibid. p. iii.

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8. US Department of the Army, FM 100-1: The Army. Washington: GPO, 29 August 1986, p. 22.

9. US Department of the Army, Report to the Officer Corps: Results of the Professional Development of Officers Study, April 1985, p. 6.

10. PDOS, p. 39.

11. Extracted from a personal letter in which the writer, a 1986 AMSP graduate, answered several of my questions about the program from the perspective of having been in the field for one year since graduation. Used with the writer's permission.

12. RETO, Vol. 4, p. P-1-12.

13. Ibid. p. M-1-28.

14. PDOS. Vol. III, p. V-1-5, Comments provided by General Thompson, Commander AMC, upon receiving the PDOS briefing.

15. RETC, Vol. 4, p. M-1-49.
16. Ibid. p. M-2.
17. PDOS, Vol. I, p. 75.
18. Ibid. p. 75.
19. US Department of the Army, DA Pamphlet No. 20-200: The Writing of American Military History, June 1956, p. 1.
20. US Department of the Army, FM 100-5: Operations, pp. 13-14.
21. PDOS, Vol. 1, p. 97.
22. Ibid. p. 97.
23. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 97.
24. Ibid. Vol. III, p. L-2.
25. Ibid. Vol. III, pp. C-1 & C-2.
26. Ibid. p. P-1.
27. Ibid. pp. K-1-H-1 thro K-1-H-4.
28. Ibid. p. L-3. Development period is a phase in an officer's career, bounded usually by promotion, during which he acquires a given set of cognitive skills. The development period represents an envelope of assignments during which we can identify general and branch or functional area specific attributes, skills and performance standards for officers to attain based on the range of positions they are likely to hold.
29. Ibid. p. C-4. Frame of reference is the officer's breadth of perspective, a measure of his capacity to understand things and assert control over them. The frame of reference is the sum total of an officer's understanding of himself, his role, his organization, his subordinates, and the cause and effect in the flow of events around him, all of which determine his capacity for proactive control of his environment, his ability to deal with uncertainty and complexity and his perspective in terms of time.
30. Department of the Army, DA PAM 600-3: Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Utilization, p. 101.

31. Department of the Army, STP-II-MQS: Military Qualification Standards II (Draft), p. 3-1.

32. Ibid. p. 3-1.

33. LTC John E. Turlington, "Truly Learning the Operational Art", Parameters, Spring 1987 pp 51-55.

34. Charles B. MacDonald, The Battle of the Huertgen Forest, pp. 101-105.

35. David Schoenbrun, "The Battle of Gettysburg: The Day Ike and De Gaulle Debated", Parade Magazine, 2 February 1986, p. 8.

36. Ibid. p. 8.

37. Ibid. p. 8.

38. Ibid. p. 9.

39. US Army Research Institute, DAPAM ~~XXX-XXX~~: Executive Leadership (Draft II.5), pp. 48-49.

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