

File

~~136~~

B60

DCST/IT Division
LTC Fiora/3031
6 August 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL GORMAN

SUBJECT: Extract of Presentation at SGM Academy, October 1974

Per MG Gorman's instructions, the portion of the presentation on training has been transcribed. (Incl 1)

1 Incl
as

CF:
BG Rhiddlehoover

for  WALDMAN

EXTRACT FROM MG GORMAN'S
PRESENTATION AT THE SGM ACADEMY
OCTOBER 1974

The first sort of proposition that you got in the discussion of trainees is that we're going to have to develop a cadre in the United States Army that's able to analyze problems and come to solutions to fit the realities of the situation in which we find ourselves. Now this is scarcely a startling or a novel kind of a proposition, but I think it's a good one to start on in the discussion of what's the role of the noncommissioned officer in training. We're all well aware as we approach any problem in training that there's a right way, a wrong way, and then there's probably an Army way. You know, the way they teach you at Fort Benning or Fort Sill or whatever, and it's certainly true that what we expect of the sergeant in charge of any undertaking -- mortar crew, tank commander, squad leader, fire team leader, whatever, what we expect of him is to see to it that everybody that's underneath him does it right. Now that's an important point, we want to do it right; and that leads to the assertion that maybe the way the Army is doing it isn't necessarily the right way. Back in World War II, right off the starting blocks, the British Army was confronted with a problem that its pre-war training and its planning had failed to anticipate. The British Army sent its regulars to France to fight on the left flank of the French, and, as you recall, a fellow named Rommel

and a few other gents on that team sort of figured out a way to whip them and within a very short period of time after the strike through the Ardennes in 1940 the British Army found itself, what was left of it, back in England with its equipment across the Channel in the hands of the Germans, including most of its modern artillery pieces. They were then confronted with the problem of defending the Coastline of England, but all of the artillery was over there. Well, some bright ordnance staffer in London remembered they had in depot stock somewhere buried in cosmoline a bunch of old field pieces that had been stuck back in there right after the Boar War. They had the field pieces, and they had the ammunition, so they hauled these old pieces out and they issued them to the artillery units of the British Army that had returned from France minus artillery pieces and said, "Here, hook those up to lorries and you be the mobile artillery for the defense of the English Coastline." Well, of course, that occasioned some modest problems in training because there wasn't a man in the force who'd ever seen that piece before. They found one old sergeant major who, by God, back before World War I had been in a battery that had that and he remembered the drill. So the old sergeant major was dusted off and put out there on the training ground and he trained that outfit how to service the piece. And they, by golly, they got a couple of battalions worth of these fellows trained to do that and they went down and they did their service practice firing. The British Army, in those days,

was quite concerned, as most of us were in World War II during the mobilization period, about efficiency in training, and they hired a group of civilians, sort of time in motion experts, you know, the fellows with the stop watches that watch training expertise -- experts in work -- with the idea that if they could improve on the training methodology they'd be able to train the subsequent battalions faster. The chief civilian expert watched the sergeant major's crews going through their service practice and came away shaking his head. The General, commanding, pulled him aside and he said, "What's the matter?" The efficiency expert says, "Well, you know, they're very good and they're doing it with a great deal of snap and precision, and there's a lot of evident good will, but there's a good bit I don't understand about what they're doing." He said, "I watched this very closely and you notice that, the four-man crew they all work on the gun getting it prepared for firing, properly layed, loaded, etc., and then just before they fire two of them bolt to the rear ten yards and come to attention until the gun is fired and then they run back, and, you know, I've timed all of this and that twenty-yard dash is consuming about thirty percent of the time that it takes between rounds. Why in the world are they doing that?" "Well," the General said, "hey, sergeant major, come over here. What's with those fellows running to the rear?" (I can't do my British accent this early in the morning.) "What's with these guys running to the rear, sergeant?" "Sir, I don't know, but that's the way it is in the manual, see right here, the numbers 3, 4 run to the rear

stand at attention, return to the gun upon completion of firing. That's the way I trained in it, that's the way it should be done." Well, you know what were 3 and 4 going running to the rear for? To hold the horses -- hold the horses. Goddamn horses had long since disappeared, but you know, that's the way it had always been done. Now that sounds funny, but that is still going on today in this man's Army. We are in the process of sending to the field some prepared training materials called the training extension course, and SGM Haggerty will recall we are testing some of those up at Fort Carson. One of the lessons has to do with artillery fire direction procedures. The Artillery School produced this lesson, you know, all the best brains down there at the Artillery School, they produced this lesson, they sent it up to Fort Carson, Colorado, and the sergeants up there said, "Help! We stopped doing this three years ago." So there's a long conclave between the School and the Division and it turned out, you know, that, by God, the School was wrong. They were teaching a procedure that was not only out of date by actual AR, but didn't make any bloody sense in the first place. They were branching around three steps or four steps in the registration procedures that were totally unnecessary, but that's the way it had been taught down through the years and nobody had ever stopped and said, hey what are we doing that for. Horses had long since disappeared. I don't know whether you recall that particular incident, but that cost me 14 thousand dollars to get the School turned around to

get it matched up with your Division up there. I could pull out of the air at least ten examples like the one that I just gave you, but since we have some Naval persons in our assemblage, do we not, let me take a Naval example, if I may. I don't know how many centuries the British Navy had had behind it in Naval gunnery in the late nineteenth century, around 1900, I don't know how long they've been at it, but certainly several hundreds of years, and if there was one sort of training activity in which the British Navy prided itself, it was its Naval gunnery. If they were good at nothing else, they were, by God, good at shooting those guns. They spent a lot of time working at it and a gunner in the British Navy was a very important person. As long as I'm on this kick, let me tell you how they managed that, from a training management point of view. They had a kind of an ATT. Just before we came in I had a call from Benning about an ATT that Fort Carson is screwing up in the DIVARTY up there; we're trying to get that squared on. They (the British) had sort of an ATT, an Army Training Test, and the captain of each ship in the British Navy was supposed to, once per annum, record the results of his firings at targets at specific ranges, and under specific conditions, and he put it in a dispatch box and he sent it off to the Admiralty. You know, it would take a year to get into the Admiralty and there was a little fellow in there with his sleeves rolled up, probably a quill pen and eyeshade, who recorded this all in a big ledger, and if the captain and the crew had done well a letter of

commendation would come back, and, if not, they'd send out another captain to take over the ship and get on with it. There was one particular ship, the story goes, who had sort of let the ATT slip until pretty late in the year. The captain one day called in the gunnery officer and said, "Hey, what are we going to do about the ATT?" or whatever they called the annual firing, and the guy said, "Oh, yeah, o.k., we'll get right at that boss." So they went down to get out the powder and so forth and they discovered there was a leak down there and all the powder that they'd been given to conduct this firing had been destroyed. So, after a hurried consultation between the captain and the gunnery officer, the gunnery officer took the records of the previous year's firing, dutifully recorded it on the appropriate forms, tore it up into small pieces, took most of the pieces and dropped them overboard; put the remainder of the pieces in the dispatch box with six dead cockroaches, sealed it up and sent it off to the Admiralty. The captain dutifully got back a letter saying, "Pity, your records were destroyed enroute by cockroaches, send us a copy." Well, of course by the time the copy got there, which also had cockroaches, the captain's tour was up, the gunnery officer had long since moved on, and the whole matter fell into oblivion. So much for training management and the British Navy. To get back to the gunnery business, it is a fact that right up until about 1895 the British Navy was firing guns exactly the same way they were firing them in 1625. The guns, you know those

big heavy iron or brass things on a wooden carriage with little wheels, sort of lashed down to the deck with ropes and pulleys peering out through a hole in the side of the ship would be aligned roughly with the target by the gunner and then he had to wait until the ship came onto the up-roll in order to raise the cannon enough to loft the projectile out the appropriate range. Now you can imagine, that took a hell of a lot of damn fine judgment on the part of that gunner. He had to figure just what the angle of elevation of the gun should be in order that when that was added to the roll of the ship it would pick that projectile up and get it out to the target. Moreover, he had to have an exquisite sense of timing because, you know, he had to pull the lanyard or touch the match just the right time so that the firing train would start soon enough so the gun would go off at the right instant. A gunner in the British Navy was therefore very, very difficult to train. Once you got one, you know, you had a rare bird and you hung on to him, if you were the captain, for dear life because there was your annual report to the Admiralty. Now, out in Asia, out in the China Fleet there was a crew under a captain by the name of Scott who went through their annual firing practice and somebody said, "Hey, captain, why in hell do we go through this business of waiting for the thing to sort of rise up so that we can get the sights trained on the target? Why don't we put a wheel on there with a screw and we'll just screw that son of a gun up and screw it down and we'll keep the gun trained on the target while the ship rolls."

The captain says, "Gee, Chief, that sounds like a pretty good idea, why don't we try that." The Chief Petty Officer, or whoever it was that the Brits had, Chief Gunner's Mate, I guess, he went down and made himself just a long screw with a wheel on it, tied that to the back-end of the gun and worked it so that he could run that wheel up and down and keep the gun trained on the target all the time. Now, the advantage to that is, of course, that you could fire at any point in the heave of the ship, which gave you an immediate advantage over the fellow that knew that you couldn't fire at him until, you know, you went on that side. And, it turned out to be a lot easier to train a guy to do that than to go through all the other gyrations and, moreover, with a breech loading cannon which were coming in at that time that meant you could fire a lot faster, you didn't have to wait, you see, until the ship got itself lined up for the shot. Now that one little innovation, that one change in procedure revolutionized Naval gunnery. CPT Scott's ship sent in a report on its firings after this had been applied to all his ships which indicated that he had increased his accuracy 3000 percent over what had been the accepted standard in the Asia Fleet. Now he got back a rocket from the little fellow in the Admiralty, sort of in effect, "Come off the juice, captain, what really happened in your firing out there?" You know, some very concerned fellows from the Admiralty came out to see what was going on and they discovered that, by golly, this guy had really found a different solution and a far better solution to the problem of Naval gunnery. Within ten years that innovation which came out of the

crews of that ship of Scott's was adopted not only by the British Navy but by the American Navy, and, subsequently, every Navy in the world, and it set a new standard in gun design. No one back in the research and development establishment of the British Navy had gone into that and there was no big fancy product improvement program supported by the Admiralty for that, just a bunch of seamen out there doing their job that had come on a better way to solve that particular problem. Now, whatever else I would leave with you on this issue I would make the point that we leaders of the Army must in our training management continually search for the right way, the better way, and see to it that we're not just doing it the Army way because that's the way we've always done it for any other bloody reason. Now we have a mechanism, unlike the British Navy in those days, we now have a mechanism in the United States Army, for figuring out how to do it better, for taking ideas from the field and incorporating them into the training of the United States Army, for assisting the training managers of the Army to do a better job. The mechanism bears the title of the Training and Doctrine Command.