

**Remarks to the 32d Infantry Regiment Association**  
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We are met here tonight to remember personal experiences centered on the 32 Infantry Regimental Combat Team, United States Army, and to honor those soldiers of the 32d Infantry who in Iraq have written a new chapter in its battle history.

I bring you greetings from Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Mulbury, commanding officer of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32d Infantry, which has just concluded a year in combat in the vicinity of Fallujah, Iraq. He recently sent me an email in which he stated that he and his soldiers were proud of continuing the traditions of the 32d Infantry, and grateful for the strong support that they have received from you veterans of the Regiment's other wars and previous battles. If you could have seen his soldiers in action, he said, you would have been pleased at their evident competence and discipline, for, and here I quote Doug's exact words: "They have fought hard and accomplished all that was asked of them under some very demanding, complex conditions."

It is true that the 32d Infantry has long been accustomed to combat under "very demanding, complex conditions."

- So it was in World War II when the regiment was called upon to eject Japanese forces from their lodgment in the Aleutian Islands, or to conduct amphibious assaults in the Philippines and the Ryukus.
- So it was in Korea when the Regiment fought for Inchon and Seoul: for the 3d Battalion when it thrust 'K' Company forward to the Yalu; for 1st Battalion at the Chosin Reservoir, or for the Regiment later in the war at Hill 598, Porkchop, and Old Baldy.
- So it was during the long, tense years along the DMZ after the truce, when the Regiment faced a bellicose North Korea continually poised on the brink of war.

But Doug Mulbury and his men have been facing threats such as few of us here have confronted, and are fighting under conditions perhaps more demanding and more complex than any we have known.

To begin with, the enemy in Iraq can attack with lethal force virtually anywhere, anytime. Fanatical, suicidal, hiding within the populace, hiring children to hurl grenades, lining streets and roads with insidious improvised explosive devices, driving car bombs into police stations and market places, conducting hit-and-run attacks on command posts and bivouacs with mortars and rockets, the insurgents seek to frustrate progress toward peace and the rule of justice.

Then there is the fact that there was no 32d Regiment in Iraq, only its 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, which fought as a task force under command of a brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, of a brigade of the 82d Airborne Division, and of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. Moreover, TF 1-32 Inf fought as a motorized infantry battalion, with each of its rifle companies mounted on armored trucks armed with heavy machine guns or automatic grenade launchers, prepared

to operate either on vehicle, or on foot supported by fire from the trucks. When a brigade commander needed TF 1/32 Inf and its gun trucks, they were attached to him, and they executed his missions, often working out unit-to-unit interfaces and tactics, techniques, and procedures in the midst of combat. Such missions might have involved an attack, a raid, or a search for belligerents or arms caches, or it might have called for manning observation posts, check points, or ambushes.

Over the summer months daytime temperatures often exceeded 100 degrees Fahrenheit, yet the troops sweltered in state-of-the-art body armor and helmets. Many operations were conducted at night, but the troops wore advanced night vision goggles that made darkness like daylight. Individual weapons for close combat were equipped with lasers, bore-sighted so that where a soldier pointed his laser spot, he could surely hit. Crew served weapons were equipped with thermal sights effective at ranges beyond 100 meters, night or day.

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was deployed in September 2003. Hopefully, the entire unit has now returned to the U.S. to rejoin the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and its families at Fort Drum, near the Canadian border in upstate New York.

Let me pause for a moment to observe that this is the fourth meeting of veterans I have attended in the past four months, so I know that what I have just reported to you probably causes puzzlement, and perhaps consternation.

- What is going on within the Army that makes its methods and means for modern war so different from those we knew during our service?
- Where is the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, the Bayonet Division under which the 32nd Infantry fought for so long and so well?
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- Why is there only one battalion of the 32d Infantry Regiment on active service? What became of the other battalions?

Probably every veteran in this room at some time or another was an individual replacement, dispatched to a unit overseas through a system a lot less efficient than that used in shipping cattle to market. I was an individual replacement when I was an enlisted man in a Navy preparing for the invasion of Japan, and after I was commissioned, I was a replacement for the 7th Infantry Division in Korea, for the 4<sup>th</sup> Armored Division in Germany, for then for the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division and the 101<sup>st</sup> Air Assault Division in Vietnam. I am convinced that rotating individuals into and out of fighting units is a poor way to fight wars. In World War II soldiers served “for the duration,” and the individual replacement system served to replenish manpower lost because of casualties. But by and large, cadres of leaders were maintained for years, and good commanders saw to it that the cadre taught the replacements how to fight.

My experience also tells me that infantry units are different one from another mainly because of the quality of that cadre, and especially the quality of the senior commander over them.

When the war broke out in Korea in 1950, Army units in the Far East were under strength and poorly trained. In July 1950 the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was stripped of 1300 noncommissioned officers and senior technicians to bolster the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions and the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division; regiments of the 7<sup>th</sup> were then restored to 95% strength with individual replacements. Then a decision was taken to extend the individual replacement system to limit time in combat units to one year, a measure intended to provide for an equitable distribution of risks and stress. A similar notion of “equity” governed the assignment of senior officers: since command, particularly command in combat, was considered important for promotion, equity dictated that commands in combat be allocated among individuals who had not theretofore experienced command in war. The results of these policies inflicted more damage on the US Army, in my view, than the Japanese or Chinese armies ever did.

You veterans of the Chosin reservoir are no doubt aware that, of the six generals who were initially assigned to command Army divisions in Korea, four had not held command at any level during World War II. All were relieved before the end of the year 1950; General Barr of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division was one of those, an officer whose prior command experience was limited to command of a company in peacetime. Of eighteen colonels the Army initially assigned to command infantry regiments in Korea, 15 had never commanded at any level in combat. Seven of these colonels were relieved for cause by the end of 1950. One of these was the commander of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, who was replaced in October 1950 by Colonel Allen D. MacLean. MacLean’s sole experience in command was that of the 32d Infantry in 1949, when it was on peacetime occupation duty.

And you will recall that Lt. Col. Don Faith’s 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32d Infantry was attached to Colonel MacLean’s 31<sup>st</sup> Regimental Combat Team for the attack northward on the east side of the Chosin Reservoir. In 1949, Lt. Col. Faith took command of 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 12<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, a unit that was redesignated 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32d Infantry in 1950. When Colonel MacLean was killed in action on 29 November 1950, Lt. Colonel Faith assumed command of the entire 31<sup>st</sup> RCT, and directed its withdrawal until he too was killed.

Col. Faith’s personal bravery and determination are irreproachable: he truly deserved the Medal of Honor he won near Hagaru-ri. I agree thoroughly with judgments that attribute to his heroism the saving of the 31<sup>st</sup> RCT after it had been mal-positioned and mishandled by Colonel MacLean.

The worldwide web site of Arlington Cemetery has a photograph of Don Faith, and the full text of his citation for his Medal of Honor, as well as a picture of his memorial in the Cemetery. Let me read from that web site:

**Born on August 26, 1918, the son of a career Army officer, he was graduated from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. He was killed-in-action in**

**the Korean War and his body was never recovered. However, his father, Brigadier General Don Carlos Faith, arranged to have included on the rear of his own stone these words: "In memory of Don Carlos Faith, Jr., Lieutenant Colonel, United States Army, Medal of Honor, 1918-1950."**

**He was awarded the Medal of Honor for courage in five days of bloody fighting near Hagaru-ri in the Chosin Reservoir campaign of 1950. When the attack was launched against his battalion, he exposed himself to hostile fire while directing its actions. When the enemy penetrated their perimeter, he personally led a counterattack. His joined his forces with another nearby unit and, although exhausted by the bitter cold and continuous fighting, led yet another attack. He was mortally wounded during the final charge, but managed to hold on until the enemy was overrun, then he fell.**

Now I should note that even General MacArthur eventually became aware of the importance of combat seasoned commanders, and importuned the Chief of Staff of the Army for regimental commanders who had been well-experienced in World War II. Among the replacement officers Eighth Army received in response to his request was Colonel John Corley, who commanded 3d Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry from North Africa and Sicily through Czechoslovakia; at Normandy, Corley's battalion was the first landed over Omaha Beach to achieve its D-Day objective. Another was Colonel Gerald Kelleher, who commanded a battalion of the 26th in North Africa under the legendary Terry Allen, and a regiment of Terry Allen's 104<sup>th</sup> Division in its attacks into the Lowlands and across Germany.

But "equity" for individuals continued to drive the overall replacement system, and throughout the Korean War that policy assured that every three months in combat units, 25% of the personnel had either just arrived or were about to leave. The same policy governed during the post-truce period of the Cold War.

And it governed in Vietnam. Infantry units were a swirl of arrivals and departures. Commanders continued to selected more by whom they knew, or by a personnel manager determined to give them a chance at promotion, than what they knew about command of combined arms in combat. Like Iraq, Vietnam was not homogenous. So dissimilar were its provinces that there was truth in the saying among old hands that there were 40 or more different wars, and the Army's rotating individuals guaranteed that Americans were waging each of those wars a year at a time enlightened only by impressions from a few months, fighting against opponents with a lifetime of knowledge.

After Vietnam the Army began to pay more serious attention to selecting combat commanders, and to manning and training combat units. But not until the successes of Rangers in Grenada, the victory in Panama, and the triumph in DESERT STORM — when unit manning was frozen months before the attack — did it become evident to resource managers in the Army and in DoD that there were cogent reasons to support the equity of the combat unit — its readiness for combat — ahead of individual equity.

General Pete Schoomaker, Chief of Staff of the Army, has laid out a plan for the Army that will put all its combat units into a three year cycle: year one will be spent in forming the unit and training individuals, year two in developing teamwork to raise readiness for combat to a high level, so that during year three the unit can undertake one or more expeditionary missions overseas. The concept provides for units with coherent, stabilized leadership, among officers and noncommissioned officers alike, and keeping teams together during expeditionary missions. And you should note that the Army's new

combat uniform does not display branch insignia.

So what lies ahead for 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32d Infantry at Fort Drum? If the Army's plan governs, Doug Mulbury will turn over command to an officer selected by a Department of the Army Board as thoroughly fit for command, and that officer will form a cadre of leaders for a renewed battalion. Incentives will be provided to encourage successful junior leaders to remain with the unit. In year one of the three-year cycle, upcoming leaders will be schooled, and replacement soldiers will be trained in fundamentals. In year two, the unit will be exercised for combat competence, adaptability under stress, and teamwork across the spectrum of possible missions. In year three it could be deployed abroad. Some individual replacements will be needed to accommodate losses, but by and large, the renewed 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32d Infantry, will remain together for three years: a truly professional team of teams.

Recently the Infantry Branch Chief of what is now called the Army's Human Resources Command announced that the Chief of Staff wants him to minimize moves, both to increase leader proficiency and to assist family stability in a mostly married force. Hence, he said, most lieutenants will remain at their initial duty station for 6 to 8 years, over two unit life cycles; sergeants can opt to remain longer.

“Previously we made assignments based on time on station and professional development needs. Now we make assignments based on unit requirements. All other factors are secondary...assignments will generally be tied to unit life cycles...”

This past week a senior general told me that Army would find it cost effective to pay a Master Sergeant, or a Sergeant First Class, a lump sum of tens of thousands of dollars to remain with his unit rather than get out at twenty years of service.

In the meantime, the Army is acting to insure that its brigade commanders, and general officers with combat commands are selected from individuals thoroughly qualified by training and experience to exercise command in war.

The Army is reorganizing its divisions, separate brigades and armored cavalry regiments into new modular Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs): powerful, densely packaged units, supported by high impact technologies, somewhat smaller than today's divisional brigade, but fully as effective, more versatile, and better able to interact with other elements of a joint task force. The BCT will replace the division as the fundamental formation for contingency planning and deployment overseas.

As for divisions, each of these will be converted in turn into a standing headquarters presently referred to as a Unit of Employment “X”, or UEx, The concept is to provide a variable and flexible framework of command above the BCTs. The most rapid way to deploy a force of several BCTs is to use more than one home station as a strategic launching pad. Thus BCTs from several Army posts will likely deploy and serve under a UEx from another post.

Which brings to the question of what has become of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division, and what is portended for its future. BAYONET was converted into a light infantry division in the early 1980s, and served with distinction in Panama. In August 1993 part of the division was reassigned to Fort Lewis, WA, and subsequently deactivated in June 1994 at Fort Ord. The 7th Infantry Division was reactivated on June 4, 1999, at Fort Carson, Colorado, as the first Active Component / Reserve Component division. The Reserve units that make up the 7th Infantry Division are as follows:

39th Enhanced Separate Brigade of the Arkansas National Guard  
41st Enhanced Separate Brigade of the Oregon National Guard  
45th Enhanced Separate Brigade of the Oklahoma National Guard

While the Army has not announced its decision, my guess is that BAYONET will be converted into a UEx, and will become eligible to command any of the modular BCTs on expeditionary missions overseas. It is possible, therefore, that the 32d Infantry will someday again fight under BAYONET, the Hourglass Division.

And finally, why is it that the 32d Infantry Regiment has been reduced to one battalion?

Decades ago the Army adopted the Combat Arms Regimental System under which selected infantry regiments would become parents to battalions serving in the active or reserve components. The list of regiments so selected was not long, and inclusion on the list was decided by a point system adjudicated by the Chief of Military History that weighted years of service, numbers of campaigns, and high battle honors, such as a Presidential Unit Citation. The 32d made the short list of parent infantry regiments for the Active Army. Numbers of battalions of each parent regiment within the structure authorized by Congress is determined by the same point system. So it has happened that some illustrious regiments are simply below the cut-off line. For example, the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the Black Lions of Cantigny —that served with distinction in both World Wars and in Vietnam— currently has no battalions assigned.

Hence, the answer to the question of why was 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 32d Infantry, in Iraq is this: they were there because of you veterans. It was your campaigns in World War II and Korea, and the four presidential Unit Citations that you earned therein, that led to a 32d Infantry battalion on active duty. You were responsible for Doug Mulbury and his troops being in Iraq rather than a battalion of some other regiment: 1/32 Inf was there to honor you.

With honor there comes responsibility. When the division was the principal organization within the Army, the division could take care of its own, including families at its home station or stations. The 1st Infantry Division for example, has a robust Divisional Society and strong regimental associations, and thus far has been able to assist its own with emergency funds for families, visitation to hospitals, representation at funerals, and scholarships for dependent children of deceased soldiers. You may know that the 1<sup>st</sup> Division Society maintains the large monument adjacent to the White House on which are engraved the name of every soldier killed in action in the wars of the past century. Right now the Society is pondering whether to inscribe on its monument the names of two soldiers of Company A, 32d Infantry, killed the past year outside Fallujah while attached to 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> infantry Division.

From now on any BCT is likely to serve overseas under a division flag different from the one at its home station, and the onus for looking after families of soldiers in the regiment, of visiting the regiment's wounded, and burying the regiment's dead, will fall on a much smaller, less capable support structure that will need increasing help from associations of that regiment's veterans, like this one. Step up to the opportunity. Continue to be generous with your time, and with your funds.

I, for one, am convinced that the Army of the future will be even greater than the Army in which we once served. And it will need our support more than ever.