THE GENERAL BOARD

United States Forces, European Theater

REPORT

ON

STUDY OF THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP

MISSION: Prepare Report and Recommendations on the Field Artillery Group Organization as Compared with the Regimental Organization.

The General Board was established by General Orders 128, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, US Army, dated 17 June 1945, as amended by General Orders 182, dated 7 August 1945 and General Orders 312 dated 20 November 1945, Headquarters United States Forces, European Theater, to prepare a factual analysis of the strategy, tactics, and administration employed by the United States forces in the European Theater.

File: 320.2/62

Study Number 65

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
Part One: General.	1
Chapter 1: Adoption of Group Organization . .	1
Organization of the Triangular Division .	1
Change in Organization of Non-Divisional Artillery	1
Chapter 2: Original Functions of the Group. .	2
Principle of Organization	2
Chapter 3: Group Training in the United States	3
Training.	3
Administration.	4
Chapter 4: Movement of Groups to Combat Theaters	4
General Plan.	4
Shipping and Quartering Limitations . . .	4
Resultant Organization.	4
Bibliography.	5
Part Two: Initial Combat Experience of Groups. . .	6
Chapter 1: Commanders' Concept of Group Functions.	6
Chapter 2: Organization for Landing Operation	6
Artillery Requirement for Corps	7
Group Composition	7
Attachments to Divisions.	7
Chapter 3: Reorganization After Landing . . .	7
Initial Group Composition and Functions .	7
Reorganization.	8
Chapter 4: Development of Group Functions . .	8
Flexibility of Battalions	8
Group Flexibility	8
Increase in Administrative Responsibility	9
Bibliography.	10
Part Three: Change in Group Functions.	11
Chapter 1: Group Deficiencies	11
Administration.	11
Continuity of Command	12
Morale.	12

SUBJECT PAGE

Chapter 2: Change in War Department Policy. . 12

Revised Group Organization. 12

Chapter 3: Resultant Effects on Group Organization. 13

Personnel 13
Administration. 14
Continuity of Command 14
Bibliography. 15

Part Four: Artillery Conference at Conclusion of European War. 16

Chapter 1: General. 16

Army Artillery Conferences. 16
Theater General Board 16

Chapter 2: A Summary of Advantages of Group Organization 17

Tactical Flexibility. 17
Organizational Flexibility. 17

Chapter 3: A Summary of Deficiencies of Group Organization 17

Lack of Continuity of Command 17
Maintenance and Supply Problems 18
Technical Problems. 18
Faulty Administrative System. 18
Morale. 19
Bibliography. 20

Part Five: Conclusions and Recommendations 21

Chapter 1: Conclusions. 21

Flexibility of Units. 21
Deficiencies of Group Organization. . . . 21
Elimination of Deficiencies of Group Organization. 21
Assignment of Batt lions to Groups. . . . 22
Responsibilities of Groups. 22

Chapter 2: Recommendations. 22

Group and Battalion Organization. 22
Formation of Unit 22
Training Literature 22
Bibliography. 24

THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

STUDY OF THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP

Prepared by:

Brig Gen J. D. Balmer- - - Chief, Artillery Section
Col L. J. Compton- - - - - Executive, Artillery Section
Col B. Hamlett - - - - - - Artillery Section
Col H. H. Critz- - - - - - Artillery Section

Principal Consultants:

Brig Gen J. M. Lentz, 010343, Artillery Commander, XII Corps Artillery.
Brig Gen T. E. Lewis, 015020, Artillery Officer, Fifth Army.
Brig Gen J. F. Uncles, 014914, Commander, 32d Field Artillery Brigade.
Col J. A. Berry, Jr., 018473, XV Corps Artillery.
Col J. J. Binns, 015207, Commander, Field Artillery Group.
Col J. G. Watkins, 07249, Commander, Field Artillery Group.
Col W. C. Green, 07076, Commander, Field Artillery Group.
Col J. C. Strickler, 016445, Commander, Field Artillery Group.
Col C. A. Pyle, 012281, Commander, Field Artillery Group, and Artillery Commander, 90th Infantry Division.
Col J. C. Wyeth, 03675, Commander, Field Artillery Group.
Col F. W. Ellery, 018725, Commander, Field Artillery Group, and Assistant Corps Artillery Officer, XII Corps.
Col J. B. Horton, 015150, Commander, Field Artillery Group.
Col H. D. Storke, 016468, Artillery Officer, II Corps, and Assistant Corps Artillery Commander, II Corps.
Lt Col B. DeW. Jones, 019081, Commander, Field Artillery Battalion.
Lt Col G. Ruhlen, 019733, Commander, Field Artillery Battalion.

THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

STUDY OF THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP

PART ONE

GENERAL

CHAPTER 1

ADOPTION OF GROUP ORGANIZATION

1. Purpose. The purpose of this study is:

a. To analyze the Field Artillery Group Organization as employed in this theater.

b. To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the group organization in comparison to a regimental (or fixed-type) organization.

c. To make recommendations concerning the future organization and functions of the Field Artillery Group.

2. Organization of the Triangular Division.

a. The adoption of the triangular infantry division prior to World War II caused the elimination of the brigade and regimental organization from the division artillery, and reduced the number of battalions from six to four.

b. In the square division the artillery battalion was not an administrative unit but depended on the regimental headquarters for administration. The elimination of the regimental headquarters and the decision to make the new division artillery headquarters non-administrative necessitated a battalion organization which would be self-sufficient administratively. Making the battalion an administrative unit also followed the established policy of having every other headquarters in the chain of command administrative. Thus, in the new divisional organization, administration passed from battalion to division to army.

c. In the new organization the division artillery headquarters functioned in a manner similar to the old brigade headquarters, i.e., a command headquarters to supervise the administration, training, and tactical functions of the organic and attached artillery battalions.

3. Change in Organization of Non-Divisional Artillery.

a. With the elimination of the brigade and regimental organizations from the divisions, it became apparent that there were too many headquarters in non-divisional artillery. Further, it was apparent that the brigade and regiment were too stereotyped and fixed in

their organization to lend themselves to the flexibility necessary in the artillery organization.

b. The first principle to be satisfied in the reorganization of non-divisional artillery was that the battalions be self-sufficient as those of the division artillery of the infantry division. The organization of the battalions under this principle eliminated the need for the regimental headquarters as it was then organized. To replace the regimental headquarters and headquarters battery, the War Department adopted the group headquarters and headquarters battery. The group headquarters did not include administrative personnel and battalions were not assigned organically. The activation policy adopted was one group headquarters and headquarters battery for each four battalions. It is noted that the brigade was not eliminated.

CHAPTER 2

ORIGINAL FUNCTIONS OF THE GROUP[1]

4. General.

a. A reorganization of corps headquarters and organic troops was prescribed by War Department Circular No. 256, 16 October 1943. This circular prescribed that the field army continue to be a tactical and administrative unit relieving its assigned corps of administrative functions.

b. The circular further prescribed that the only artillery organic to the corps would be Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Corps Artillery, and a field artillery observation battalion. Other field artillery units would be attached to the corps in accordance with the combat or training mission. This other artillery would include group headquarters and separate battalions of field artillery.

5. Principle of Organization.

a. The basic principle adopted by the War Department in October 1943 is explained by the following extracts from War Department Circular No. 256 dated 16 October 1943:

* * * * * *

E X T R A C T

* * * * * *

"7. a. The principle followed in the revised organizations emphasizes pooling of units. General Headquarters pools are being established. These include battalions or the equivalent (which are self-administered) of field artillery, tank destroyers, reconnaissance, cavalry, antiaircraft artillery, engineers, and tanks. Group headquarters are provided for field artillery, tank destroyer, engineer, cavalry, antiaircraft artillery, and tank units. Brigade headquarters are provided in a limited number of cases. Required service units are provided.

"b. The group is a tactical unit composed of a headquarters and a varying number of separate battalions (squadrons). Group headquarters for the arms are provided, where required, on the basis of one to every three to four battalions. Similar control headquarters are provided for service units in a ratio of one to four to six small units. No battalions are assigned organically to a group. The group may consist of battalions or smaller units of one or more types and varying numbers subject to the tactical situation.

"c. The brigade is retained in certain cases for the command of a number of groups and continues as a tactical unit. The general ratio for providing brigade headquarters will be one to three or four groups. No groups will be assigned organically to a brigade.

"d. The flexibility of the new organization makes it readily possible to form task forces without reorganization of units or disruption of the old fixed regimental organization and at the same time permits a massing of means as required by the situation."

* * * * * *

b. It is noted that the revised organization provided no parent organization for non-divisional field artillery not organic to the corps. It is also noted that there were sometimes three tactical headquarters imposed between the battalion and the next higher administrative headquarters, the army.

CHAPTER 3

GROUP TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES

6. General. In order to understand the evolution of the field artillery group as it developed in this theater it is necessary to review Army Ground Force policy concerning grouping and training in the Zone of Interior.

7. Organization. Battalions were attached to group headquarters for training. Groups usually consisted of from three to six battalions of the same caliber, although activation schedules and range facilities sometimes made this impracticable.

8. Training.

a. The early adoption of a standard unit training program (Unit Training Program, Field Artillery)[2] and a rigid but simple series of tests, assured that Field Artillery Battalions were, in general, uniformly trained. Activation schedules and range facilities made it impractable for all battalions in a group to complete training at the same time, but every effort was made to keep a battalion under the same group headquarters throughout the training period. This policy built up an understanding between the group and battalions and improved the efficiency of training.

b. The group organization had not been tested in combat, and service schools had not been able to instruct

commanders in a standard doctrine of employing it. This lack of knowledge of higher commanders as to a method of group employment led to each individual commander setting up his own doctrines. This resulted in a wide variation in the procedures and methods of operation during maneuvers and other combined training.

9. Administration. Although the group headquarters had no administrative functions, it became necessary, because of command responsibility, for the group headquarters to coordinate and supervise the administration of the battalions during the training period. Tables of organization did not provide the group headquarters with personnel to perform these administrative functions. This lack of personnel forced group commanders to use officers and enlisted men on administrative work when they should have been concerned with training activities.

CHAPTER 4

MOVEMENT OF GROUPS TO COMBAT THEATERS

10. General Plan. Recognizing the benefits to be derived from a continuity of command, Army Ground Forces planned to fill quotas of field artillery by shipping group headquarters with the battalions which they had attached during the training period. Frequently, changes in troop lists and shipping dates, as well as the staggered training program referred to in paragraph 7 above, caused this plan to fail. However, efforts were continued to ship "team mates" as near intact as possible.

11. Shipping and Quartering Limitations.

a. Lack of shipping facilities made it imperative to fit small self-administered units such as field artillery battalions into any available shipping space. As a result, artillery groups scheduled for shipment usually received their movement orders to the port of embarkation by battalion. This caused the arrival of a group in the theater to be echeloned over a period of time.

b. In most instances, the debarkation point for all parts of the group were not the same. Thus, the elements of the group became separated and transportation facilities did not permit their being moved to the same quartering area.

12. Resultant Organization.

a. As a result of the problems cited above, the battalions and group headquarters that had trained together became separated. The battalions were then assigned to new groups. In most instances group commanders were not acquainted with their new battalion commanders and a period of getting acquainted and orientation on common practices and procedures ensued.

b. Many senior commanders, familiar with the old regimental organization, and not too sure of the reasons behind the group organization found this period rather painful and expressed themselves as opposed to the group idea.

Bibliography

Part One

1. War Department Circular No. 256, 16 October 1943.
2. Unit Training Program, Field Artillery.

PART TWO

INITIAL COMBAT EXPERIENCE OF GROUPS

CHAPTER 1

COMMANDERS' CONCEPT OF GROUP FUNCTIONS

13. Background. The group as originally organized was designed to correct the deficiencies of the regimental organization.

14. Name.

a. The name "group", being introduced after the advent of war, caused apprehension among many commanders. "Group" was not an old army term as was "regiment", and a military definition and understanding was lacking. As a result the term "group" became unpopular because of misunderstanding and lack of knowledge as to its proper use.

b. The definition of "group" given in training literature did not assist in the clarification of the unit. The following definitions are examples:

(1) The group is a tactical unit and consists only of a headquarters and two or more battalions. (FM 100-5).

(2) A group consists of any combination of artillery units, usually from two to four battalions. A group headquarters is designated. It may be the headquarters of one of the units forming the group, or it may be a group headquarters. (T/O 6-12) (FM 6-20).

(3) The group consists of a group headquarters and such battalions as are attached, usually three or four. Attached battalions may be of the same or of different calibers and types. The composition of any group may be altered from time to time. (FM 6-100).

c. Further, two of the field manuals referred to above were not distributed until after the invasion of the continent on 6 June 1944.

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATION FOR LANDING OPERATION

15. General. The initial combat test of the group in this theater was the landing operation on the French coast. The employment of the group headquarters and its battalions in this operation varied with commanders. Also,

the composition of the groups as to numbers and calibers of battalions varied and in many cases groups were not composed of the same battalions which had been under the group headquarters prior to the organization for combat.

16. Artillery Requirement for Corps.[1] The First U.S. Army set up the following artillery for each corps participating in the landing operation:

1 Field Artillery Observation Battalion
3 Field Artillery Group Headquarters
2 105mm M2 Battalions
1 4.5-inch Gun Battalion
5 155mm M1 Howitzer Battalions
2 155mm M1 Gun Battalions
2 8-inch Howitzer Battalions

17. Group Composition. The groups organized for the landing were of mixed type and caliber, and included that artillery listed in paragraph 16 above. Since some of the corps artillery was attached to divisions, some groups were composed of three battalions and others of four.[2, 3, 4]

18. Attachments to Divisions.

a. In addition to the artillery mentioned in paragraph 16 above, the following artillery was made available to each armored division of the army:

1 105mm M7 Howitzer Battalion
1 155mm M12 Gun Battalion

b. With this amount and type of artillery available, each corps was able to supplement the divisional general support artillery with one 155mm M1 howitzer battalion per infantry division, and one 155mm M12 gun battalion per armored division. Also available for attachment to divisions were the 105mm light and armored battalions M2 and M7.

c. Some group headquarters were attached to divisions upon landing. This procedure gave the division artillery an additional headquarters to assist in the control of artillery battalions which were to be attached to the divisions upon arrival. Further, when the corps artillery was prepared to take over control, group headquarters were available for assisting in the organization and controlling of the corps battalions in combat.[2,3,4,5]

CHAPTER 3

REORGANIZATION AFTER LANDING

19. Initial Group Composition and Functions.

a. The landing of groups was spread over a period of several days. Group headquarters were landed without their battalions and were immediately attached to divisions.[5]

b. The initial functions of the group headquarters after landing consisted of assisting the divisions, to which they were attached, in supervision and fire direction of the available artillery. The amount of supervision and fire

direction performed by the group headquarters varied with the divisions. Some groups performed counter-battery functions for the division, others acted as an additional division artillery fire direction center, and still others performed administrative duties on the beach.

20. Reorganization.

a. The group composition as set up prior to the landing could not be adhered to due to losses in combat and delays in arrival of units.

b. As soon as the corps artillery headquarters was ready to take control of its artillery, the groups were organized from the artillery available on shore. Again, this artillery was of mixed type and caliber, and included some battalions which had not served with the group or corps prior to the landing.[2, 3, 4]

c. This was the beginning of the constant shifting of groups and battalions that continued for some units throughout the war.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENT OF GROUP FUNCTIONS

21. Flexibility of Battalions. From the start of the European campaign the non-divisional field artillery battalions were transferred from one higher headquarters to another in order to place the weight of the artillery in the proper place in the constantly changing situation. Very few technical difficulties were encountered when battalions changed commands but it was apparent from the beginning that administration would have presented a tremendous problem had battalions not been organized and trained to administer themselves.

22. Group Flexibility.

a. The groups, as well as battalions, were shifted from army to army, corps to corps, and division to division. The group headquarters not only made frequent shifts from one higher headquarters to another, but also had the battalions attached to them shifted continuously.

b. As the campaign developed the missions assigned to groups varied with the higher commanders and the tactical situation. Some group headquarters functioned as a second corps artillery fire direction center, some functioned with its battalions in direct support of a division, and others functioned as division artillery in support of armored columns in rapid pursuit.

c. The various higher commanders developed their own doctrines on the functions and use of the field artillery groups. Some commanders attempted to retain groups and battalions together while others shifted battalions continuously from one group to another without regard to continuity of command. Regardless of the various individual ideas on proper organization for combat, the flexibility of the field artillery group organization gave commanders the necessary weapon to meet rapid moving and highly mobile warfare.

23. Increase in Administrative Responsibility.[6]

a. Theoretically group commanders still had no administrative responsibility over attached battalions. In spite of this doctrine group commanders were forced to supervise certain administrative details as a command responsibility. This was caused by the fact that army, which controlled battalion administration was too far removed to maintain close administrative supervision.

b. The group headquarters was not organized with administrative personnel, thereby requiring administrative functions to be performed by operational personnel. Further, as groups shifted from one higher command to another, the administrative requirements and supervision of these higher headquarters varied, thus adding an additional administrative burden.

Bibliography

Part Two

1. After Action Report, First U. S. Army.

2. After Action Report, V Corps.

3. After Action Report, VII Corps.

4. After Action Report, XIX Corps.

5. After Action Reports, 1st, 2d, 4th, 9th, 29th, 90th, Infantry Divisions.

6. XII Corps Artillery in Combat, September 1945, file 370.2, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

PART THREE

CHANGE IN GROUP FUNCTIONS

CHAPTER 1

GROUP DEFICIENCIES

24. Administration.

a. (1) As stated before, the group headquarters as originally organized was purely tactical with no administrative responsibilities over attached battalions. Training experience showed that this original concept could not be adhered to in that the commander, with no administrative functions, was not able to properly supervise and command his battalions.

(2) In order to increase the efficiency of command during training, groups were charged with certain administrative functions. These administrative functions were not too heavy during this period because the battalions attached to the group were not often transferred. However, the group commander still did not have personnel assigned for administration and was forced to use operational personnel or rob attached battalions.

b. (1) With the increase of artillery in Normandy, and the commitment of more and more field artillery to combat, administrative responsibilities in increasing proportions were forced upon group commanders. Because of the constant shifting of battalions, it became imperative that the group headquarters assist the battalions with their maintenance and supply problems. This assistance was of necessity lacking in continuity as battalions were often moved to another group before some knotty administrative problem could be solved. Many instances of poor mail deliveries; loss of promotion recommendations, slow action on requests for replacements, unequal distribution of decorations and awards as well as passes and furloughs to rest centers may be attributed to this lack of continuity of supervision.

(2) Corps artillery commanders were cognizant of the deficiencies in administration, and various remedies were tried. In some

corps an attempt was made to balance groups of mixed calibers and shift groups rather than battalions. This worked well until army decided to move battalions or group headquarters out of the corps. In these fixed groups the commanders were able to successfully supervise administration. In other corps the corps artillery commanders organized an administrative section in the corps artillery headquarters and processed all administrative matters pertaining to the corps artillery. This method was successful but the personnel required had to be secured from group headquarters and battalions who could ill afford the loss.

25. Continuity of Command. There is no evidence that technical efficiency of field artillery deteriorated because of lack of continuity of command. There is evidence that battalions reporting to a new group were at times required to adopt new Standing Operating Procedures and conform to the individual ideas of group commanders. This cannot be attributed to faulty organization but rather to lack of uniform training because of reasons stated in paragraph 8 of this report. One definite deficiency caused by frequent changes in command was the fact that group commanders were often not cognizant of the capabilities and limitations of their battalion commanders and subordinate units. In many instances this deficiency was responsible for the retention in command of unsatisfactory officers or a failure to consider deserving non-divisional artillery battalion commanders for promotion to higher grade.

26. Morale. There is no evidence that the morale of separate battalions as a whole was any better or worse than battalions organic to divisions. However, deficiencies enumerated in paragraphs 24 and 25 above caused many personal grievances which certainly did not contribute to raising the morale of a unit. There was a definite feeling among many non-divisional battalions that they were without a home and that superior commanders felt no responsibility for their well being.[1]

CHAPTER 2

CHANGE IN WAR DEPARTMENT POLICY

27. General. Training and early combat experience brought out those inherent weaknesses in the group organization listed in paragraphs 24, 25, 26 above. The War Department accordingly revised the group organization in an effort to eliminate its deficiencies.

28. Revised Group Organization.[2] The revision of the group organization was prescribed by War Department Circular Number 439 dated 14 November 1944, pertinent extracts of which follow:

"I.--FLEXIBILITY OF ORGANIZATION.--Paragraph 7, Circular No. 256, War Department, 1943, is rescinded and the following substituted therefor:

"7. a. The principle followed in the revised group organization emphasizes tactical flexibility of units while retaining continuity of command where practicable. Separate battalions (administratively self-sufficient) may be included under a general headquarters pool or assigned or attached to a group.

"b. The group is an administrative and tactical unit composed of a headquarters and a varying number of separate battalions (squadrons) and companies. Normally, three or four battalions and/or companies with total equivalent strength of a battalion will be assigned to a group. Additional battalions may be attached to a group where required by the situation or where required by the limited number of available group headquarters. The total number of battalions assigned and attached to a group should not exceed six.

"c. Assignment and reassignment of battalions to groups may be directed by theater commanders and Headquarters, Army Ground Forces and Army Service Forces, for units under their control or by the War Department. Assignment and reassignment of battalions and companies to groups will be reported to the War Department through appropriate channels.

"d. Administration within the group is the responsibility of the group headquarters. Administrative personnel from battalions assigned to a group may be utilized to augment organic administrative elements of group headquarters, as required. Further, instructions on administration within groups will be included in changes or revisions of pertinent publications in the near future.

"e. The brigade is provided in certain cases as an administrative and tactical unit for command of three to four groups. Groups will not be assigned organically to brigades.

"f. The flexibility of this organization makes it readily possible to form task forces by reassignment of units without any reorganization, thus permitting a massing of means as required by the situation. Wherever practicable, continuity of command, by retention of assignment of battalions to groups, will be encouraged.

"g. Present policies regarding operational control of a number of battalions by a group headquarters are not changed by this circular."

CHAPTER 3

RESULTANT EFFECTS ON GROUP ORGANIZATION

29. Personnel. As a result of the change in group functions outlined in paragraph 28 above, the group was reorganized to allow the group headquarters additional personnel to take care of the added administrative responsibilities. In reality, this personnel was used to handle the administrative functions already being performed by the group organization.[3]

30. Administration. The change to Circular 256 came too late in the war to have any effect on the administrative policies of armies and corps. All commands had, through trial and error, established policies which were believed to be a workable solution. There was little uniformity among commands, but in effect the change to the circular did not clarify group administrative functions sufficiently to permit establishment of uniform practices.

31. Continuity of Command. The change to Circular 256 should have effected a change in the policy of shifting battalions about without returning them to a parent group. There is no evidence that any changes resulted. Commanders had been working too long under their adopted organizational and operational procedures to conform with the change directed by the circular.

Bibliography

Part Three

1. Artillery Commander's Conference on Group Organization, file 322, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

2. War Department Circular No. 439, 14 November 1944.

3. T/O and E 6-12.

THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

PART FOUR

ARTILLERY CONFERENCES AT CONCLUSION OF EUROPEAN WAR

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL

32. Army Artillery Conferences.

a. Upon the termination of hostilities in Europe, high commanders foresaw the need for commanders of units and arms of the service to put in writing the lessons learned and procedures used in combat in this theater. These lessons and procedures were to be made available to the War Department for possible inclusion in training literature and in instruction at the various service schools.

b. As a result, the two armies remaining in this theater (the Third and Seventh) held artillery conferences. Artillery Commanders of corps and divisions were represented at these conferences.

c. Recommended changes in T/O and E were not discussed in detail at these conferences. However, as a result of the general discussions on desired changes in artillery organization, artillery commanders of all echelons were given questionnaires on desired changes as pertained to their own level of command.

d. A resume of these conferences were published and distributed.[1, 2] The recommended changes in T/O and E resulted in the compilation of letters to the War Department which made certain recommendations regarding the artillery organization.[3, 4]

33. Theater General Board.

a. A Theater General Board was formed to make an overall study of operations in the European Theater. This board was given authority to contact commanders of all echelons and arms to get their opinions and experiences on desired subjects.

b. The artillery section of this board conferred with artillery commanders from army to battalion on the subject of the group organization. These conferences duplicated to some extent the army artillery questionnaires, but obtained a more detailed and comprehensive report on the subject.

c. A careful study of all available data on the group organization revealed that this organization had certain outstanding advantages which must be retained, but also had certain deficiencies which should be eliminated.[3,4,5]

CHAPTER 2

A SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES OF GROUP ORGANIZATION[4, 5]

34. Tactical Flexibility.

a. Tactical flexibility is the basic principle under which the group is organized. This flexibility of organization makes it readily possible to form task forces of artillery by reassignment of units without any reorganization, thereby permitting the rapid movement of artillery as required by the situation.

b. Combat experience has shown that the flexibility provided by the present organization of non-divisional field artillery was highly successful and should be retained. Flexibility should be the criterion throughout the entire structure of the artillery with an army -- not only flexibility of fires, but flexibility of organization for combat. The ability to shift the weight of artillery from one corps to another in the army and from one part of a corps zone to another as the situation and organization of the corps changed, has proven not only successful but conservative in the amount of artillery required.

35. Organizational Flexibility.

a. The group staff is organized to provide only sufficient personnel for group headquarters administration, limited supervision of battalion administration, and for operational requirements in training and combat.

b. The separate artillery battalions have been organized so that they are administratively self-sufficient, thus permitting tactical shifting without changing the administrative organization.

CHAPTER 3

A SUMMARY OF DEFICIENCIES OF GROUP ORGANIZATION[3, 4, 5]

36. Lack of Continuity of Command.

a. There were few instances of battalions being permanently attached or assigned to groups or any other unit. As a result, battalions passed rapidly from group to group, division to division, corps to corps, and army to army. Groups were also frequently shifted, and could not expect to keep the same battalions for any length of time. As a result of this shifting, commanders were not cognizant of the capabilities and limitations of their subordinate units. Further, time was required for subordinate units to adjust themselves to the varying procedures of higher headquarters.

b. The constant shifting of battalions made it difficult for group commanders to influence their subordinate commands. Thus, non-divisional battalion commanders were inclined to feel that they had no immediate commander

who was personally interested in the efficiency of their units. Further, an inefficient commander could be retained in command of a unit for a considerable period because of frequent shifts in command. For the same reason, superior commanders in the grade of major failed to get promotions.

c. It is the opinion of some commanders that the constant shifting of battalions could have been reduced by a more closely knit artillery organization. A comparison of the number of shifts in command made by various battalions of the same caliber shows a wide variation. Some battalions remained in the same group throughout combat, others remained in the same corps, whereas others were attached to as many as twenty (20) corps, divisions and groups.[3,5,6,7,8]

37. Maintenance and Supply Problems.[3, 5]

a. The frequent moves and changes of command of groups and separate battalions required changing of supporting supply services. This shifting of units caused delays in repairs and filling of requisitions for various supplies.

b. When units moved from one major command to another all pending requisitions for Class II and IV supplies had to be resubmitted. This procedure slowed the procurement and issue to troops of needed clothing and other supplies. Small units often received the odds and ends of rations because of their frequent and sudden moves.

38. Technical Problems.[3, 5]

a. The technical procedure involved in the control and maneuver of artillery fire requires that a high degree of standardization be obtained by all artillery units. This includes standard methods of requesting and delivering artillery fire and the complete communication system necessary to transmit orders.

b. In order to obtain the maximum advantage from the power of artillery, units working together for a long period of time will obtain the best results by building up standard procedures of technique and communication. Thus, the constant shifting of groups and battalions slowed the building up of artillery teams capable of delivering fire to the maximum efficiency.

39. Faulty Administrative System.[3, 5]

a. Although most administrative forms and procedures were prescribed by the Theater Headquarters, divisions and corps had minor variations which necessitated frequent changing and resubmitting of forms for battalions moving from control of one major headquarters to another. This caused a great deal of delay in processing promotions, requests for emergency furloughs, leaves and other matters having a direct bearing on the morale of units.

b. The frequent shifting of non-divisional artillery battalions from one command to another prevented higher commanders from knowing non-divisional battalion commanders well enough to rate them. Forms 66-1 for such

officers were not properly maintained in many cases, and it was difficult to secure a fair, adequate efficiency report. As a result of the above, many capable non-divisional battalion commanders were not considered for advancement. Further, the officers and personnel were "stuck" within their own organizations due to the lack of knowledge of higher commanders as to the capabilities and efficiency of these personnel.

c. The requirements for decorations and awards varied between higher headquarters. In these matters, although the non-divisional battalions were theoretically directly under army for administration, groups and corps, and sometimes divisions, if units were attached, required that recommendations be forwarded through their headquarters, thereby slowing down action, or blocking it completely.

d. The allocation of the time and numbers of personnel to go on leave or furlough to rest camps varied between higher headquarters. As a result, units shifting from one headquarters to another usually suffered a loss of allocation or received a reduced allocation.

40. Morale.[1, 3, 5]

a. The essence of high morale is the feeling on the part of an individual that his unit is the best unit of its type; that if he does well he will be recognized for outstanding services and considered for advancement; and that his superiors see to it that his unit will be justly treated in such matters as recreation, publicity, food, shelter, clothing and general welfare.

b. The shifting of units from command to command did not insure all of the above. Further, the lack of an organic higher headquarters to whom commanders could turn for assistance with their many problems was a further detriment to morale.

Bibliography

Part Four

1. Third US Army Artillery Conference, file 337, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

2. Seventh Army Artillery Officer's Conference, file 337, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

3. Letter, Headquarters Seventh Army, subject: "Reorganization of the Corps Artillery", file 320.2, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

4. Letter, Headquarters Third US Army, subject: "Reorganization of Corps Artillery", file 320.2, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

5. "Artillery with an American Army in Europe", by Brig. Gen. C. E. Hart, Military Review, September 1945.

6. Artillery Commanders Conference on Group Organization, file 322, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

7. After Action Report, Third US Army.

8. After Action Report, First US Army.

9. After Action Report, Ninth US Army.

PART FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 1

CONCLUSIONS

41. General. That, although field artillery regiments were not employed in this theater, conclusions concerning the relative general efficiency of the regiment and group may be made based on this study. These conclusions are based on a comparison of the group organization with the permanent division artillery organization and other organizations which maintained close supervision of administrative matters.

42. Flexibility of Units.

a. That the field artillery group and battalion organization employed in this theater allowed rapid shifting of non-divisional field artillery units from group to group, division to division, corps to corps, and army to army to meet the rapidly changing situations of infantry and armored combat.

b. That the ability to shift battalions from one command to another was dependent on the ability of the battalion to administer and supply itself.

c. That an organization of more than one battalion with the administrative and supply functions centralized as in the old artillery regimental organization, would not be as flexible as an organization in which the battalions are capable of administrative and supply functions.

43. Deficiencies of Group Organization. That the deficiencies of the group organization are:

a. Lack of continuity of command.

b. Lack of a parent unit capable of maintaining a continuity of administrative and supply functions.

c. Frequent lowering of morale because of inadequate administrative and supply supervision.

44. Elimination of Deficiencies of Group Organization. That the deficiencies of the group organization can be eliminated by:

a. Providing an intermediate administrative headquarters between the group and army to which group headquarters and battalions will be permanently assigned.

b. Making no change in the battalion administrative and supply functions.

c. Maintaining sufficient administrative personnel in group headquarters to supervise battalion administration.

45. Assignment of Battalions to Groups.

a. That during combat, groups were constantly made up of battalions of different calibers, and the assigning or attaching of different caliber battalions to groups would obviate the necessity for excessive detachments of battalions from groups.

b. That for training, the formation of mixed caliber groups would acquaint group commanders and staff officers with the capabilities of different caliber weapons.

c. That a ratio of one group headquarters to four battalions is a sound basis for activating units.

46. Responsibilities of Groups. That War Department Literature is not clear reference the organization and functions of the field artillery group.

CHAPTER 2

RECOMMENDATIONS

47. Group and Battalion Organization.

a. That the term "Group" be changed to "Regiment" and retain the functions of the "Group" as outlined in this report.

b. That the organization of group (regimental) headquarters and headquarters battery and separate battalions be retained basically in their present form.

c. That the basis for activating field artillery units in the zone of interior provide one group (regimental) headquarters for every four battalions.

48. Formation of Unit.

a. That an artillery unit be organized at corps level for tactical and administrative control of organically assigned group (regimental) headquarters and battalions, and all other attached artillery.

b. That this unit be called the CORPS ARTILLERY DIVISION, and contain organically the service and other units necessary to sustain itself administratively in the same manner as any other division.

c. For a more detailed discussion of this proposed organization, see General Board report "Table of Organization and Equipment for Field Artillery."[1, 2]

49. Training Literature.

a. That War Department publications dealing with Field Artillery doctrine contain the principle that battalions

of different calibers be assigned or attached to group (regimental) headquarters.

b. That War Department publications be revised to clarify the organization and functions of the field artillery group (regiment).

Bibliography

Part Five

1. Letter, Headquarters Seventh Army, subject: "Reorganization of Corps Artillery", file 320.2, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.

2. Letter, Headquarters Third US Army, subject: "Reorganization of Corps Artillery", file 320.2, Artillery Section, The Theater General Board.