

no date; by context, autumn 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Maj Wyrough [ADC to CG, Seventh Army]
 Maj Nye [OSGS, USAREUR]

SUBJECT: Command Action in Favor of More Training
FROM: Maj Gorman [OSGS Seventh Army]

You asked what, if anything, can be done about the conditions which I deplore in my recent reply to an IG inquiry. First of all, I think we agree that were Seventh Army to be conducting a tough, true, realistic training program, the problem would be solved. Training, or the lack of it, is the core of our current difficulty. Therefore, the central issue **is:** How to we get more and better training. Your inclination is, apparently, to draw USAREUR into the picture, and have USAREUR, in a series of training conferences and training directives, establish command priority for training. Presumably the new USAREUR commander will be disposed to push personally any program of emphasis, by all available means.

My conviction is that this move would be disastrous, and would in fact produce precisely the opposite effect from what you hope. I must reiterate my conviction that commanders are now nose deep in directives from higher headquarters, exhausted from spending 14-16 hours daily trying to keep their heads up, and would react to more pressurized programs only by pleading don't-make-waves. More emphasis on training, without a concomitant reduction in the multitude of other emphasized programs, can only proliferate the dishonesty to which commanders and their subordinates, in self-defense more than malignancy, have resorted, and further destroy confidence in the command.

I firmly believe that any command program aimed at ameliorating Seventh Army training must begin by removing the existing obstacles to training. I believe that commanders want to train, and that the reason they don't is simply because they have other assigned missions which force them to forego training. To get more and better training, I believe, we need only release the commanders.

There are five major obstacles to training, command action against any of which cannot fail to improve the confidence of the command, and to free commanders to train, to soldier, as they wish they could.

1. Marksmanship. De-emphasize unit competition in this activity, and stress the attainment of thorough annual qualification with assigned weapons. Require use of the complete qualification courses, honestly scored. Drastically curtail the period of preparation for major competitions. Accept reduced performance in competition. Refuse to authorize additional competitions at any level. Eliminate the "host unit" concept for big matches, and transfer the money now expended on eye-wash and folderol -- I'm referring to the blue paint and calypso bands which disfigured last year's LeClerc matches-to the units for use in support of their own marksmanship programs. Recognize that marksmanship, like any other unit activity, must be phased with unit's training program; no man should be permitted to leave his platoon to participate in competitive firing until he has completed at least platoon level ATTs or training. This last recommendation requires command recognition of the fact that, most units over here are not in post-cycle training; to the contrary, many of them are confronted with the task of completing advanced individual training, much less being prepared for basic unit training.

2. Funds. You never get "something for nothing". To meet the monthly payday crises created by command emphasized fund drives, commanders right now trade training time and personal prestige for fiscal cooperation. Junior leaders and ordinary soldiers of Seventh Army are buying training time in two ways: purchasing training holidays or excuse from reveille from their commanders, and purchasing training time for the Army by hiring German KPs. Command action now could at the least stop the raising of the ante, the emphasis to exceed the per-capita quota for last year, or the "average" quota, or the "fair-share" quota. At best higher commanders could simply stop comparing the performance of subordinates in fund drives, savings programs, and other related enterprises which require the company commander to put a dollar sign on his leadership.

3. Athletics. In my experience, the "big time" athletics of USAREUR, aside from draining a platoon per battalion per season, are a waste of time. Their influence on small units is negative: soldiers and commanders see little of them. Unit identification usually takes the form of resentment against the jock-strap empire, and the care and feeding athletes is a continual thorn in the side of leaders trying to push forward more serious programs. In the context of a 14-16 hour day, and

frustration in trying to accomplish combat-readiness training, is it any wonder that company commanders are less than enthusiastic about march-ons, booster clubs, rallies, and all the other collegiate trapping with which higher commanders have endowed their "big-time" teams? My prescription is simple: athletic competition would take place only among units who follow a common training schedule. I recognize that this means that there would be almost no competition in USAREUR higher than among companies, since by and large, battalions write training programs. But until the commanders who are responsible for training programs can use athletics for their ends, and not to serve the raison d'etre of sportswriters, or vague objectives about the support of the Olympics, the American way, etc., training will suffer directly proportional to the desire of commanders to win the big-time, and the number of big-time teams they must support.

4. Gasoline. The shortage of gasoline may be merely an informational problem. Conceivably there is a clear reason for austerity, but the simple facts are that leaders at the operational level haven't got the word why their training suffers from lack of gas.

5. ATTs. Late in 1958, Maj. Gen. O'Meara wrote a paper which advocated a drastic revision of armor and infantry ATTs which would have gone far to eliminate the phony system we now use. The 3d Armored Division in 1959 experimented with surprise company tests. In 1960 the 3d Infantry Division presented a proposal for revision of the battle group ATT which would inject a real test atmosphere. None of these programs has received much support from Seventh Army, whose present position is that its ATT program is sound, and if perversions exist, that the units are responsible. Whoever is responsible --and that's a moot point-- the line unit ATT program is sick, and has been sick in the ken of fairly senior officers for some time. This being the case, only action by the Seventh Army Commander can redefine the goals of the program to bring ATT activity into consonance with combat readiness training. In my opinion this redefinition must:

- a. Make the ATT a test by precluding rehearsal on the ground, or foreknowledge of the tactical evolutions.
- b. Make mission of the test coincide with the emergency mission of the unit as closely as possible.

- c. Require the unit to exercise itself during the test over frontages and logistic distances similar to that it could expect in execution of its emergency mission.
- d. Eliminate altogether comparative ratings among units, since it is impossible to give the same test validly to even two units, let alone all units of the same type.
- e. Make the rating of the unit "Combat-ready" or "Not combat-ready," and rest this evaluation largely on the observations and expressed opinion of a competent senior officer.

I am fully aware of the problems this creates in terms of use of major training areas, but I can advance several sound, if radical, proposals for solving them. Suffice to say, I know of no reason why I couldn't devise and run such a test within existing training areas, money, and CONARC directives. Without honest ATTs, honest training is impractical for a commander, and even unnecessary. The marginal training value of present "tests" hardly justifies perpetuating the moral flaw inherent, or the continued expenditure of gasoline, TDY funds, and other scarce training commodities. Honest ATTs can be relatively cheap, and vastly more remunerative from the standpoint of combat readiness.

I say these are all problems which the Commanding General, Seventh Army, can deal with himself. If nothing else, by being aware of them, he might preclude further mistaken policy of the same sort. For example, he seriously complicated the training problem by raising the ante on soccer. Having been in a battalion with a championship soccer team, I have first hand experience with foreign legion jockstrappers, and I read his decisions in their favor with genuine sympathy for the Scout Platoons and S2-3 sections that will be denuded as a result. Seventh Army, as you know, gets worse every year in each of these five fields. The very least we can hope is that the CG might arrest "progress".