

Leave Kuwait Training to the Units There

Dear Sir:

Having just read Kevin Benson's letter from the Jan-Feb 97 edition of *ARMOR* entitled "Kuwait Training Ain't Broke, So Let's Not Fix It," I couldn't agree more. He made reference to a "General Officer Good Idea" to NTC-ize the Intrinsic Action exercise and opined that it was NOT such a good idea. I agree.

I was the G3 of the 3d Infantry Division when USAREUR sent its first rotation to Intrinsic Action in 1993. Bill McAlpin took Task Force 2-37 Armor. I had the good fortune to visit him during his rotation and saw for the first time in many years how a TF commander, with a little help from his brigade commander, could do exactly what we pay him to do — train his outfit for war.

While we have the best O/C-led, OPFOR-provided, lane-trained prepped, AAR'd CTCs in the world, look anywhere in the Army today and you'll see fewer and fewer opportunities for armor and cavalry leaders to do their own training, without the structure, cost, and overhead of the CTC training paradigm. The argument that maneuver opportunities are constrained by time and dollars — so we need to get the biggest bang for our buck — is a valid one. But ask any platoon leader, company commander, or even battalion commander how many of the 800 or so OPTEMPO miles he gets completely FOR HIS OWN USE in a training year and I suspect you'll see they are few.

As I reflect back, some of my most valuable training opportunities were during my

time as S3 of 1-1 Cavalry in the mid-eighties. It was routine for MG Saint to have us spread all over Bavaria. I recall one week in particular when we had a troop in Schwabach supporting Boeselager training (we had the VII Corps team); another troop on 117 km of Czech border working for COL Bill Crouch's 2d ACR; and the third troop (with a squadron slice) at Hohenfels to support an Armor Center sponsored NBC-vehicle test comparing the M113 to the Fuchs. One cavalry troop had all of Hohenfels to themselves for 7 days — can you imagine that?

Our squadron commander (LTC Montgomery C. Meigs) split his time between Terry Wolff's C Troop on the border and home station. I was with Bill Moyer's B Troop at HTA. Leaders trusted leaders to do the right thing. Today, General Crouch commands USAREUR, MG Meigs commands the Big Red One in Bosnia, LTC Terry Wolf commands a squadron in the 3d ACR, and LTC Bill Moyer commands a tank battalion at Ft. Hood. Do you suppose they did "the right thing?"

I'm doing time on the joint staff and am not currently a muddy-boot soldier, but I've not forgotten my roots and the fact that I too was once a commander looking for training opportunities of my own.

So, while creating a SWA NTC has its merits, I would submit that "Kuwait training ain't broke, so let's not fix it." Our Intrinsic Action leaders will do the right thing.

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Via e-mail