

LETTERS

Reserves Not All As Rosy As Author Found in His Unit

Dear Sir:

It was interesting to see the three pieces on the Reserve Component in the July-August issue of *ARMOR*. It is obvious that the AC/RC program and emphasis from the top are making more Active Component soldiers take notice of the RC. I was pleased to read 1LT Sosnicky's article and learn of the strengths of his current tank company. It sounds like D/1-101 CAV is doing a lot of things right.

But I also want to ensure that the readers of *ARMOR* don't think this is the norm across the RC. Having served as an AC/RC embedded trainer in an armored battalion in an Enhanced Separate Brigade in the Southeast United States for nine months (including one AT), it is important that leaders understand just how far we still have to go.

I cannot speak for the entire National Guard, but I do know that two ESBs are struggling to accomplish the tasks assigned by their active duty division headquarters. These brigades are challenged by upcoming SFOR rotations and long term preparation for NTC rotations. Units comfortable training to platoon level are being asked to conduct an NTC rotation as a BCT. The learning curve is steep and sometimes painful.

The price being paid for this stretch in capabilities is a weakening in the Guard's traditional strengths, the same strengths discussed in LT Sosnicky's article. To form "volunteer" companies to send to Bosnia guts each parent battalion (much like active duty battalions). Crew and platoon stabilization is destroyed. Time once spent at AT focusing on gunnery and platoon battle drills is now spent on company, battalion, and brigade maneuver and sustainment.

These challenges are probably isolated to ESBs, but it is important that Armor leaders understand that not everything is perfect in the National Guard and there is still lots of work to be done to develop a working system for AC/RC cooperation.

CPT J. BRYAN MULLINS
1-312th Regiment, 4th Bde, 78th Div (TS)
Fayetteville, N.C.

Reader Comments on Recent Issue Re: Leadership, Army Climate

Dear Sir:

September-October 2000 is a first-rate issue that I have thoroughly enjoyed, especially the articles by Dr. Hofmann on tanks in the Korean War, COL Mahler's piece on perspectives of the Army and society for the 21st century, MAJ Vandergriff's article on MG Wood and the 4th Armored Division in WWII, and CPT Ailsieger's on Cambrai.

I have long been an admirer of MG Wood and his methods, and agree with him that the thrust (backwards) into the Brittany peninsula was stupid beyond words. His subsequent relief was an outrage. What an extraordinary man!

The article on Cambrai illustrates once again that if you launch an innovative and daring operation, you'd better have all hands in full accord beforehand. I am an admirer of J.F.C. Fuller. General Harper should have been sent on a special mission to the Sudan before the operation commenced, with the troops under the command of someone truly dedicated to this novel approach.

Dr. Hofmann amply pointed out what happens to employment of the military when politicians and associated bureaucrats are put in charge of changing situations they don't comprehend, but proceed to blindly issue orders that cannot be carried out effectively or efficiently. How many times have we seen this sorry circumstance?

I found COL Mahler's article especially interesting and absorbing as he brought out many of the problems and attitudes that apply today, particularly when he mentions that "reliance on technology and politically easy solutions may earn you stock options, but it may not make you successful on some future battlefield." Amen to that. Some of these factors reminds me of a long-ago Groucho Marx spoof (was it "Duck Soup"?) when he decided that if you raised the height of trenches that soldiers wouldn't need any trousers, and then in this vein, if you raise the height even higher you won't need any soldiers. If I haven't got this right, perhaps one of your readers will set me right.

On the concern about warriors leaving the service — and they seem to be in increasing numbers — the colonel mentions several of the underlying reasons, but he left out a crucial one: the continued feminization of the Army. As LTG Kennedy asserted, we now have "Mommy's Army." To the extent that this is true, it should not surprise anyone as to why warriors decide there is no place for them any longer. I believe it is quite true. I believe also that when high-ranking officers continue to lie about the consequences of wiped-out standards and blatant favoritism produced by this feminization program, that the crucial element of trust is gone. It doesn't take long for an organization to fall to pieces under these conditions....

COL GEORGE G. EDDY
Austin, Texas

Reader Has a "Real Problem" With Non-doctrinal "Red Zone"

Dear Sir:

I think the article "Victory in the Red Zone" (Sep-Oct 2000) is well written, researched, and provides some very worthwhile points. I

would, however, like to make some observations.

The term "Red Zone" is a real problem. I happened to be at NTC as an observer a few years ago when I first heard the term and was unclear as to what it meant. CPT Panastasiou provides a definition from a CTC quarterly publication which explains it. The term was first used by a COG at NTC who, I am sure, felt it somehow provided clarification to the training units. It is, of course, originally a football term that is commonly understood to mean the area from the 20 yard line to the goal line, where a team must score when it gets to that area. The CTC publication defines it as the area from the Line of Contact (LC)(LD?) to the unit's Limit of Advance (LOA). This can be tens of kilometers and includes the enemy security zone and Main Line of Defense. The author explains it is a non-doctrinal term but does not explain why it is necessary to use it. When a new COG uses a term like "Green or Blue" zone, should that be the next non-doctrinal term to be in fashion?

The author also confuses the terms movement and maneuver. Movement is one component of maneuver. The other is Fires. In the segment labeled "Maneuvering in the Enemy's Direct Fire Battle Space," the author has a good explanation of maneuver, but it is at odds with his earlier use of the term.

I am disappointed that the author does not include more emphasis on the use of indirect fire. The fire support systems are the quickest and most efficient method of focusing combat power. Especially at the company level, they should be one of the first things a commander goes to.

The reason that the use of correct doctrinal terms is so important is so that we all understand what the terms mean. The invention of new "popular" terms is problematic as it creates the impression we can generate new words any time we want with no concern as to whether or not the entire community will understand them.

JACK E. MUNDSTOCK
LTC, IN
28th Field Training Group

Clarke's Rank, Assignment Were Wrong in 4th AD Article

Dear Sir:

Though I enjoyed MAJ Donald Vandergriff's article on the 4th Armored Division (Sep-Oct 2000), there are two nits that need picking.

I doubt that Bruce Clarke (USMA 1925) was a lieutenant when Creighton Abrams (USMA 1936) was a major, and General Clarke was definitely not "later NATO commander," despite the footnoted source. As a lieutenant in the 1/37th Armor, 4th AD, in the early 1960s, I know very well that General Clarke was the CINCUSAREUR and com-

mander of CENTAG when the wall went up in Berlin.

MICHAEL D. MAHLER
COL, U.S. Army (Ret.)

CG's Reasoning on Armor Badge Brings a Reader's Rebuttal

Dear Sir:

As a Vietnam-era tanker (served as 11 Echo & Delta), I must respond to the Armor Center CG's article in the September-October issue. The concept of a CIB, Combat Medic, or other badge is not to divide soldiers into "have and have-nots." It is to recognize the holder of such an "award" for having faced combat with the enemy, having faced the terrible violence of war and paid the price of its life-altering consequences. No man is ever the same after combat.

When an infantryman in his fire team, squad, or platoon finds the enemy and closes in combat to kill them, he might kill another human being; he might lose a friend and comrade. He may not survive himself, but will do his duty regardless of the outcome.

The Combat Medic responding to a call for help, unarmed and vulnerable, will react and come to the aid of the fallen comrade. He will do his duty, often at great cost to himself.

A tank crew must act as a single lethal fighting machine. The Thunderbolt you spoke of is not an exercise on a range, a computer simulation, or evaluation of skill by a superior, other than God.

"Fighting the Tank" can produce an environment as close to hell inside the tank and equal to the force brought to bear against the enemy.

We will not always have the advantage of an Abrams against a T-72. Crewmates will die; whole tank crews will die, but they will fulfill their duty.

The Combat Badge is recognition of completing that duty, regardless of the cost, and, like the Good Conduct Medal, should be awarded to enlisted soldiers only.

JOHN MEOAK
Okemos, Mich.

Badge Decision Was Right... But for Different Reasons

Dear Sir:

I'm writing in response to MG B. B. Bell's "Commander's Hatch" article regarding the Combat Armor Badge concept.

General, thank you for answering publicly the (NCO's) question (to the Chief of Staff regarding the Armor Badge proposal).

In my opinion, however, you got the right answer but for the least important — if not

wrong — reasons. Marks of distinction and honor for true combat soldiers (Armor, Infantry, and Artillery only) are a good thing. We are special, and I do not think it is wrong, not only for us to think that way, but for any of the rest of the Armed Forces and civilian government officials not to forget! When used properly, we kill people and break things. The right reasons are:

- We already have a EAB (Excellence in Armor Badge). It is called TCQC (Tank Crew Qualification Course – Table XIII). It is just a matter of ensuring that standards are maintained and some appropriate symbol is developed for the class A uniform. I know that all the members of my platoon were AOC/MOS qualified, met or passed weight standards, APFT, individual weapon qualification, GPE, and "qualified" their tank in their assigned crew position. No one, I mean no one, ever asked, much less told me or a member of my platoon, to remove our qualification patches from our fatigues — regardless of duty station.

- Since we already have the EAB, it would only be a logical extension to provide combat experienced tankers a CAB (Combat Armor Badge). It could be much the same as the class A EAB symbol but with a wreath to distinguish between the two — much like the EIB/CIB. In fact, the requirements could be much the same as the CIB, only to earn either Armor badge you would have to be assigned to a TANK!!! No exceptions.

The only problem that I see is that the Chief of Infantry modified, i.e., lowered, the standards for the CIB. This resulted in the ability of individuals to earn it while not meeting the core requirements which have been in place for 50-plus years, thereby making the value of the Desert Storm CIB questionable — at best. This is especially problematic since it is used as a promotion discriminator — officially or not. However, it is the Chief of Infantry who has to live with the decision, not to mention sleep with it.

I am supremely confident that our Chief would not allow this to happen — ever. One hundred hours of movement to contact, sporadic long range direct fire engagements, and the enemy surrendering en masse to helicopter drivers, in the desert, does not qualify you for a CAB. Perhaps the Order of Saint George (and then only if you submit and justify it per the guidelines outlined by MAJ Daigle's "Saddle Up" editorial) for all the crap put up with for the six months of "in country" training, inspections, and VIP visits, but not a Combat Armor Badge. Get real.

In closing, as the Submariner and Ranger are "special" and are so designated by distinctive symbols, no less are we. Remember:

*"We sleep safely in our beds,
because rough men stand ready
in the night to visit violence
on those who would do us harm."*

— George Orwell

That is what we do. We are special. We certainly deserve and have earned no less!

JOSEPH C. KOPACZ
COL, Armor (Ret.)
Louisville, Ky.

Uniform Discipline Truly Is An Indicator of Unit Morale

Dear Sir:

Command Sergeant Major Preston ("Uniform Discipline: A Good Indicator of a Unit's Discipline," Jul-Aug 2000) brings us back to one of the most important fundamentals of the business of war. Discipline starts with the little things. His comments of uniform discipline are true today as they were true 33 years ago in the jungles of Vietnam. Uniform discipline is as important for the leader as it is for the led. If we cannot motivate a soldier to follow the proper uniform discipline, how do we expect to motivate him to risk his life in combat? I recommend CSM Preston's paper to all who want to lead.

LARRY L. MENGEL
COL, U.S. Army (Ret.)

Allow NCOs to Set Standards And Enforce Them

Dear Sir:

CSM Ken Preston's article in the July-August 2000 issue ("Uniform Discipline: A Good Indicator Of A Unit's Deeper Problems?") reminded me again of the tremendous responsibility that officers have to hold their noncommissioned officers accountable, as CSM Preston eloquently argues, and also to support those noncommissioned officers as they try to do the right thing at the right time. I encourage officers at all levels to pay attention to CSM Preston's article, and to allow their NCOs to set and enforce high uniform standards, and then to work together to establish standards for the harder things, such as tactical and administrative SOPs that cover every aspect of unit operations.

It is especially critical for our overworked and undermanned Army, as it deploys worldwide to perform both combat and more confusing non-traditional missions, to charge its NCOs with setting and enforcing high standards in everything we do. Whether you like it or not, uniform standards are a basis of discipline in units. Disciplined units perform better in peace or in war, and officers must "lead by example." That means that good units set and enforce uniform standards in the training area, the motor pool, and at social occasions that apply to everyone in the unit, including the officers.

I had the privilege to have CSM Preston as my brigade CSM for 18 months while I

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served as brigade XO, and on a daily basis learned something new from him. Many of those lessons, and especially those about the role of NCOs in setting and enforcing standards in units, I had learned earlier in my career from other outstanding NCOs, but somehow over time had forgotten their importance. I also had to relearn the lesson of the importance of officers conforming to all those same standards.

On a personal level, I am grateful that CSM Ken Preston reminded me (sometimes a bit abruptly) that it was important for me, as the brigade XO, to set the example in the motor pool, the NTC Dust Bowl, or on the simulated battlefield. In units, discipline is the key to success and survival, whether the task is performing PMCS to standard in the unit motor pool, conducting a night passage of lines at the NTC, or performing checkpoint operations in a PKO environment. It is critical to the survival of our Army for the officer corps to develop and support our NCO corps, which — much more than money or technology — is what separates the U.S. Army from the rest of the world's militaries.

BOB NEWMAN
LTC, IN
Defense and Army Attaché
U.S. Embassy Sanaa, Yemen

Reader Offers Caption Correction On Photo in 4th AD Article

Dear Sir:

I was pleased to see MAJ Donald Vandergriff's interesting article on the 4th Armored Division in the September-October 2000 issue. In spite of the division's record of accomplishment, it is not often covered in print, and there is still no thorough history of this distinguished unit. On a minor note, the photo on page 23 does not show a column from 4th Armored Division. The tank is a M4A1 (76) from 66th Armored Regiment, 2d Armored Division on 2 September 1944 in Aubencheul-au-Bac. This town is north of Cambrai near the Belgian border where First Army was deployed, not in Lorraine where Patton's Third Army was deployed. Last year, I went through the Signal Corps photo files at National Archives, the Patton Museum, and the Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks looking for photos of the 4th Armored Division in combat in Lorraine. There aren't very many, but most appear in my book on the Lorraine fighting that was published in September 2000 in the Osprey Campaign series (*Lorraine 1944: Patton vs. Manteuffel*).

STEVE ZALOGA
Stamford, Conn.

Mail Mix-Up in Last Issue Delayed Delivery of *ARMOR*

NOTICE TO READERS: There was a malfunction in the machine that printed subscriber addresses on the back cover of many copies of the September-October issue of *ARMOR*. As a result, one or more lines of the subscriber's address were not printed on thousands of copies and these were not delivered by the Post Office.

It took some time for this problem to be discovered and rectified with an additional printing and mailing. We are sorry for any delay you may have experienced in receiving your copy. If you did not receive your personal copy of this issue, please contact the U.S. Armor Association at 502-942-8624. If your unit did not receive its official copy, contact Mary Hager at *ARMOR* (DSN 464-2249 or commercial 502-624-2249).

Reunion

The 11th Armored Cavalry (Active Duty and veterans) will celebrate its 100th Anniversary, February 1-4, 2001 at the Riviera Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas. For more information contact Gene Johnson, 4054 Venita Court, Las Vegas, NV 89120-1442; (702) 456-3218; or gene677@aol.com.