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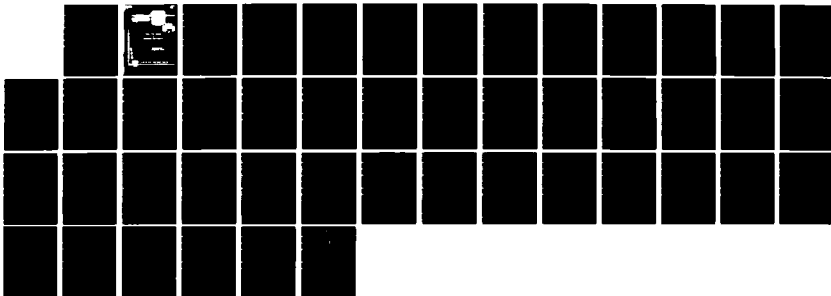
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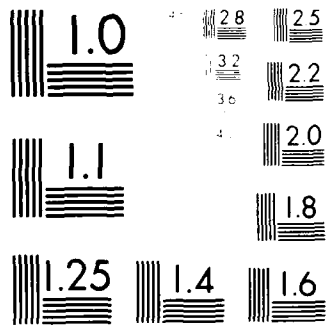
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STUDENT ESSAY

FORMATION OF THE LIGHT INFANTRY

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL GERALD R. HARKINS, IN

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21 MARCH 1986

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

FORMATION OF THE LIGHT INFANTRY

A INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
21 March 1986

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ABSTRACT

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This essay examines the formation of the light infantry. Initially, the requirements for strategic deployment and deterrence are examined. The background that led to the decision to form this type of division is discussed. The author reviews the historical precedence for light infantry force. Using the conversion of the Army's 7th Infantry Division as the focal point, the critical issues that effected that conversion are discussed. Personnel issues addressed consider the relationship of the light force to the Army's New Manning System, COHORT. Other personnel matters examined include the formation of new battalions and the downsizing of established battalions. The training policies that were used during the conversion of the division are also presented. The author uses his experience as an infantry battalion commander in the 7th Infantry Division to highlight the conversion to the light infantry organization. Exercise Team Spirit "85" is illustrated as an example of a successful light infantry operation. Several lessons learned from that exercise are documented. Finally the question of light infantry employment is reviewed. This review studies the light force in relation to the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war.

PREFACE

This Study Project was produced under the aegis of the US Army War College Military Studies Program. The scope and general methodology were outlined by the program. This essay is not designed to support a larger study effort. The author of the essay elected to participate based on his prior experience in the light infantry. An attempt was made to prepare this essay without being constrained by existing doctrine of any DOD agency or service.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	11
PREFACE	111
THE REQUIREMENT	1
HISTORICAL	6
PERSONNEL ISSUES	9
TRAINING	15
CONVERSION OF AN INFANTRY BATTALION.	17
The Scenario	17
Preparation.	19
Lessons Learned.	22
EMPLOYMENT OF THE IDL.	30
Strategic Level of War	30
Operational Level of War	30
Tactical Level of War.	32
CONCLUSION	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY	38

THE REQUIREMENT

In the late 1970's and the first half of the 1980's, the United States Army began a massive equipment modernization program. This program was designed to replace obsolete hardware with a new series of combat equipment that could match the perceived Soviet threat. This modernization of armored, mechanized, and supporting arms significantly enhanced the conventional war fighting capability in a European environment. When completed it will enable the United States to better meet its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) deterrent commitments.

While this modernization program was being implemented, there were many significant changes in the world situation. Both the Carter and Reagan administrations expanded the global requirements of the US Army. For example, during his 1980 State of the Union message, President Carter defined US interest in the Persian Gulf Region when he stated:

Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interest of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.¹

On 27 April 1983, President Reagan, during an address to a joint session of the US Congress, stated the US concerns in Central and South America: "We have vital interest, a moral duty and solemn responsibility."²

Even prior to the Army's modernization program, a significant shortfall in strategic lift capacity existed in both the Navy and Air Force. The modernization program in the Army, with its heavier

equipment, placed even greater demand on the limited lift assets. An analysis of the various types of current US Army divisions indicated that strategically the US Army cannot deploy rapidly. Listed below are the airlift sortie requirements for "type" divisions:

TYPE DIV.	C-141	C-5
Airborne	731	2
Air Assault	1037	35
Motorized	1173	0
Mechanized	1558	483
Armored	1646	541 ³

If the reason to have a strategic force is deterrence, speed of deployment must be a force structuring criteria. In fact, operations short of nuclear war, strategic deterrence may equal strategic deployability. If deterrence is equated to deployability, the United States Army is reducing its worldwide deterrent capability through the modernization program.

Even in the best of times, there are economic constraints on the Army. To the force planner, there are many types and levels of force structure. The difference in these force structure levels is a balance of capabilities versus risk options. A minimum risk force is too expensive and cannot be justified due to economical reasons. As the Reagan administration came into office, they provided the Army with the resources to modernize. The leadership of the Army chose to continue a policy of fixed end strength to ensure full implementation of the modernization program. This strategy was based on General Abrams' realization that the Army was being hurt in the yearly resource battle by adding manpower structure--which Congress cut. His idea was to fix the end strength of the Army, thus eliminating that yearly struggle. The Army could concentrate on improving the "tooth to tail ratio" and

modernization. The modernization program would progress with a constrained force structure of approximately 780,000 men.

As the modernization program began, the Army implemented an internal structural study entitled "Division 86." This study proposed expanding the size of the heavy divisions. To create sufficient manpower for this expansion, the end strength would have to be increased. This jeopardized the modernization program. While the Army's ability to counter the Warsaw Pact Nations in Europe increased, the worldwide capability diminished.

As the size of the heavy force was increased, the actual strength of the soldiers in the foxholes decreased. Foxhole strength reflects the number of soldiers that occupy fighting positions and directly engage the enemy. That is, infantry platoons, company antiarmor and mortar sections, battalion antiarmor and scout platoons, but does not include the drivers and gunners of vehicles. Foxhole strength of today's forces are:⁴

TYPE	NO.	% OF TOTAL DIVISION
ABN.	4167	32.6%
Air. ASLT.	4167	27.1%
Motor.	792	5.8%
Mech.	1390	8.0%
Arm.	1132	6.7% ⁵

Direct combat strength is the sum of the dismounted and mounted strengths. Dismounted strength equals the foxhole strength minus the battalion level antiarmor and mounted scout platoons. The mounted strength reflects the number of soldiers conducting close combat from fighting vehicles. Using these three categories, one can begin to see

the number of soldiers that would be available to actually engage an enemy. Statistically the types of divisions compare as follows:⁶

ABN.	Strength		12799
	Mounted	890	7.0%
	Dismounted	3321	25.9%
	Dir. Cmbt.	4211	32.9%
AAS.	Strength		15389
	Mounted	985	6.4%
	Dismounted	3321	21.6%
	Dir. Cmbt.	4306	28.0%
MOT.	Strength		13651
	Mounted	3694	27.1%
	Dismounted	729	5.3%
	Dir. Cmbt.	4423	32.4%
MEC.	Strength		17297
	Mounted	2940	17.0%
	Dismounted	1170	6.8%
	Dir. Cmbt.	4110	23.8%
ARM	Strength		16868
	Mounted	2962	17.6%
	Dismounted	936	5.5%
	Dir. Cmbt.	3898	23.1% ⁷

The final aspect to examine in a comparative way is the tooth to tail ratio. This ratio represents the percentage of the strength that is involved in support as opposed to direct combat.⁸

Type	Tail	Tooth	%
ABN.	6246	6553	51.2%
AAS.	8572	6817	44.3%
MOT.	8518	5133	37.6%
MEC.	10101	7196	41.6%
ARM.	10028	6940	40.9% ⁹

When one examines the conflicts that have occurred since the end of the Second World War, there is a proven need for more infantry. Most of the world's battlefield terrain does not lend itself to armored or heavy force operations. Even in the most advantageous terrain, the Middle East, the lethality of antitank systems has shown that the ground soldier must clear the way for the mechanized force. To do otherwise spells high losses. Combined arms, or the lack of, was the reason for

high Israeli losses in the first 8-10 days of the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

Egyptian infantry had learned to face tanks at close range. . . . The Israelis later admitted that many of their tank casualties were caused by single Arab soldiers lying behind cover and waiting until a tank came sufficiently close for a certain hit.¹⁰

An examination of the world situation and the terrain of countries outside of Europe indicates that the next conflict will probably be fought in restrictive terrain. Even in Europe, many areas will not support large mechanized forces. Urban expansion requires a foot infantry force to slow enemy forces while freeing the mechanized forces to conduct mobile operations in more open terrain.

In October 1983, General John C. Wickham, Army Chief of Staff published a "White Paper" that called for the formation of a new light infantry division. This paper and follow-on literature for the Army of Excellence outlined a plan to solve the deficiencies that were noted in the modernization program and the "Division 86 Study." The Infantry Division Light (IDL) would be restricted to approximately 10,000 soldiers. There would be an absolute requirement to deploy using a maximum of 500 C-141 (strategic airlift) sorties. The force was designed for use in restrictive terrain. The IDL's organic mobility make it especially valuable in difficult terrain. However, the IDL must have utility across the entire spectrum of warfare and in all contingency operations. The force would have an austere support base (tail-5020 and tooth 5513 or 52.3%). The design of the force increased the foxhole strength and the combat ratio:¹¹

Foxhole	3554/33.3%
Mounted	450/4.3%
Dismounted	3429/32.5%
Dir. Cmbt.	3879/36.8% ¹²

HISTORICAL

Historically, the invention of each new item of equipment sounded the end of the light infantry. The machinegun, the tank and the nuclear bomb all were thought to be the ultimate weapon. However, each new invention only served to reemphasize the critical importance of the foot soldier. The historical examples of light infantry successfully engaging superior mechanized forces are numerous.

German forces of World War II mounted many successful light infantry operations. On 9 April 1940, the 139th Gebirgsjaeger (mountain) Regiment of the 3rd Gebirgs (mountain) Division was given the mission to occupy the town of Narvik, Norway. This objective was critical because of the iron ore railway line which ran to Sweden. Shortly after the regiment landed, the Royal Navy attacked and sank the German support ships. The regiment was isolated. The 1750 man force was numerically inferior to the British, French, Polish, and Norwegian forces. The conditions were horrible. Late winter storms made operations difficult for the ill-equipped German force. Author James Lucas illustrated the severe conditions:

During the whole of the period from mid-April to the end of May the men of the Jager battalions had only three hot meals. Their normal daily ration consisted of five slices of bread washed down with melted snow water. They lived in small tents, covered by a single blanket and were without fires or heating of any sort . . .¹³

Slowly the Germans were forced to withdraw along the railway line. For eight weeks the mountain soldiers fought against a force of 15,000. Bitter struggles for small bits of terrain were the norm. After 10 May, with the German invasion of the Low Countries and France, the Germans

were able to begin an operational relief of the mountain troops. The British, French, and Poles were forced to withdraw from Norway. Vastly outnumbered, the light infantry soldiers had held the "northern flank" while outnumbered almost ten to one.¹⁴

Many other cases of gallant fighting by light forces are documented in the history of World War II. An examination of the Eastern Front highlights many such battles. Light infantry forces in both the Soviet and the German Armies braved extreme hardship. Initially, it was the Russian infantry forces that delayed and attrited the German forces. As the battle began to swing in the favor of the Russians, it was the German light infantry that fought the delaying battle from Russia to Germany. A significant battle that spelled the beginning of the end for Hitler's forces was the battle of Kursk. This engagement began 5 July 1943 with a massive Nazi armored attack against the Kursk salient. The battle raged for 50 days. Even in this classic armored battle, light infantry on both sides played a significant role. The Russians discovered the Tiger tanks and the Ferdinands self-propelled gun had no secondary armament.

The Ferdinands continued ahead, invincible, devastating, until they were in the midst of the Russian infantry concealed within slit trenches and underground bunkers. Russian infantry, hardened, fanatic, hateful, who saw the Ferdinands separate from the lighter tanks and now without any protection against men on the ground, moving in from the sides and rear.

It was the Russian soldier in the thick of battle who sealed the doom of the mighty Ferdinands. The tank-destroying squads emerged from their trenches and ran wildly to the huge self-propelled guns. Russian infantrymen shouted their cries of attack and clambered aboard the Ferdinands as they thundered over the ground. There the Russians secured footholds and brought the nozzles of

flamethrowers to the ventilation slits of the German monsters.¹⁵

As the reliance on armored forces grew, there was a tendency to develop all tank forces. When the British attempted to break out of the Normandy beachhead in 1944, they began the operation with insufficient infantry. This operation became known as Operation Goodwood.

In 72 hours, Eighth Corps incurred 300 tank casualties. Strongpoint defense in depth had again proven to be more than a match for the armored. In this instance, Rommel had arranged the defense in five zones based on fortified villages and well dug in gun positions. The third and by far most critical zone was essentially a 'cushion' of 12 small villages, each garrisoned by an infantry company and three or four antitank guns. The fifth and last zone was also organized around defended villages. Despite an aerial 'carpet' bombardment of unprecedented ferocity (2000 bombers in two hours), the British could not clear the enemy infantry and antitank guns from such strongholds . . .¹⁶

Reliance on the all tank force continued into the 1973 Yom Kippur War in the Middle East. During this war, the Israelis,

. . . hardly fought at night, with the result that armored forces were often called on to solve tactical problems that would have been better left, for reasons of economy of force, to other means. A classic example was the unsuccessful and casualty intensive attempt of the Israeli Seventh Brigade to take Tel Shams in Syria by frontal armored assault; the same position was taken the next night by a parachute battalion with four wounded.¹⁷

Many other examples are available; however, these serve to illustrate the versatility of this force. Highly trained light infantry soldiers have acquitted themselves quite well in these battles.

PERSONNEL ISSUES

The concept of strategic mobility dictated that the new force would be formed within the United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM). Since the end of World War II, the continental (CONUS) forces have always served as the replacement base for the forward deployed forces. Today's force structure has a large percentage of the force deployed overseas. Within FORSCOM, it was not unusual for units to experience a 100 percent turnover every 12 or 15 months. If the IDL was to have the tactical and technical expertise needed, it must have personnel stability. In the initial white paper, General Wickham stated:

Austerity in the light infantry design demands that these divisions be fully structured and manned at 100 percent of authorized levels. The Cohesion Operational Readiness and Training system or COHORT, which stabilizes soldiers and leaders in companies and battalions, will allow horizontal and vertical bonding from initial entry training through deployment to combat. Within this more stable unit environment, cohesion, the powerful, intangible combat multiplier, will help produce tight knot, self-confident, competent units capable of withstanding the most demanding stresses of war.¹⁸

In every war the need for the feeling of unity has been paramount.

SLA Marshall summed it best when he said:

On the field of fire, it is the touch of human nature which gives men courage and enables them to make proper use of their weapons. . . . He must have at least some feeling of spiritual unity with (other soldiers) if he is to do an efficient job of moving and fighting.¹⁹

As the battlefield became more technical and lethal, the need for cohesion also grew. The importance of this aspect of personnel management must not be overlooked.

In 1979, the 7th Infantry Division was selected to test the COHORT program. When the Division was selected to form the first IDL, COHORT was designed to be an integral part of the process. Personnel stability of the COHORT system would provide the opportunity to train a force that could master all the infantry skills needed by this new force.

The Chief of Staff declared in his "white paper" that:

Quality officers and noncommissioned officers will be selected for light infantry units. They must meet stringent selection and retention criteria-- compete to get in and compete to stay.²⁰

The 7th Infantry Division had been reactivated in 1974, as a two brigade division. With its selection as the initial IDL, there was a requirement to expand from two to three brigades and continue the COHORT process. The decision was made to move one infantry battalion from each existing brigade to form the new brigade. Each brigade would then activate a "new" battalion. The "old" units would continue with an accelerated COHORT conversion schedule. These units would fill a company at a time. The chain of command would come from within these existing units. Excess personnel would either be redistributed to other units on post or retained within the unit until their separation from service. Those soldiers retained in their unit would have a maximum of four months remaining in the Army. The chain of command would be trained at Fort Ord. While new soldiers were training at Fort Benning, selected members of the chain of command would visit and brief the company. The first unit training would occur after the soldiers had arrived at Fort Ord.

The three "new" battalions were formed differently. The majority of the chain of command was selected from personnel that were newly assigned to the post. After a slow beginning, the personnel system was

able to respond and provide quality leaders. After initial leaders' training they would go to Fort Benning to join the troops for the last two weeks of training. Thus the bonding process was carried to the training base.

Specific personnel issues addressed during the COHORT and IDL transition were:

A. The fill of leaders in a COHORT company had to meet specific rank and time in grade requirements. Strict measures were taken to provide room for upward mobility as the unit matured. Ideally, the Noncommissioned Officers (NCO) could be promoted within the unit, or not eligible for promotion until the life cycle of the unit. Also the "bravo" team leader slots were left vacant. This leader was selected from new soldiers. The reality was, most units did not have the proper number of senior grade enlisted soldiers to satisfy readiness reporting requirements. All commanders were extremely satisfied with the quality leadership of the NCO's; however, the numbers painted a different picture.

B. The transition to the IDL organization was a fast paced exercise. When the decision was made, several of the COHORT companies were already in the training base. As changes were made in the organization, they rippled through Fort Benning, causing confusion. One of these issues was the combat support company (CSC) There was no CSC in the IDL organization. A CSC was organized with less personnel than a rifle company. Even though companies had been redesignated and trained as a rifle company, they had to be augmented with additional personnel upon arrival at Fort Ord. Similar problems existed as other organizational decisions changed (i.e., 4.2 vs 81mm vs 60mm mortars).

However, after the organizational and equipping difficulties were eliminated, the process was very smooth.

C. As was previously discussed, organizational changes caused havoc in the personnel system. Likewise, the level of personnel fill caused problems. Initially, all units were to be filled at 110 percent. However, as the process unfolded, that was lowered to 105 percent. For the first units, the existence of extra soldiers from the old organization and shortages in the new organization were difficult to articulate or resolve. If a COHORT unit had losses that drew it down to 100 percent strength or below, often the excess soldiers were not eligible to fill the vacant spaces because of length of service contract or ETS mismatches. IDL COHORT units were to be filled to 105 percent to allow for attrition over the three year life cycle. Experiences at Fort Ord indicated that the individual replacement pipeline must continue to provide a very small number of soldiers to offset losses.

D. There was a large pool of soldiers who did not fit into the COHORT process. These were from ETS mismatches and the down sizing of the units. It was common for a battalion to downsize from 800 plus to 600. The personnel challenge was to make the best use of the assets and not cause undue hardships on the soldiers. The soldiers that had sufficient time remaining were either moved to other units or they were transferred from post. Those that were within four months of separation were to be held by their battalion. In the "old" units they were usually moved to headquarters company. This freed needed facilities within the rifle companies. Management of the excess was a full-time job for all leaders during battalion conversion. It was also noted that while the rifle companies were stable, the headquarters companies of the

"old" battalions were not. All the turbulence, in those battalions, was in one unit. This had significant impact on low density Military Occupational Specialities (MOS). Battalions had a strength that was in excess of the authorization and yet were still short critical MOS's. The relatively smooth implementation of the conversion was a credit to the leadership of the various units in the division.

E. In the "old" units, the chain of command was initially selected from leaders within the battalions. When this process began, many personnel issues were created. First, many of the NCO's at Fort Ord were there because they had little desire to be in a "fast moving" unit. The selection of the COHORT chain of command and the prospect of long difficult training caused many to opt for reenlistment bars rather than join a COHORT unit. Another factor, was the number of NCO's that could not meet the physical fitness requirements. Physical profiles that had been hidden came to the foreground. These NCO's added to the personnel excess problem. A unit could have vacancies in the chain of command, and also have excess NCO's who could not be applied towards the shortfall. As previously mentioned, the personnel system attempted to react to the conversion efforts of the division. However, many of the first NCO's that were sent to Fort Ord had made a career of being away from infantry soldiers and units. They were not in proper physical condition and their knowledge was deficient in light infantry tactics.

While the "new" units were being filled, the chain of command was very slow in formation. This caused great hardship on NCO's arriving at Fort Ord with their families. Cases of NCO's arriving at

Fort Ord one day and leaving for Fort Benning the next were not uncommon. This slow formation also impacted on the effectiveness of the initial chain of command training.

F. The greatest impact on the personnel system at Fort Ord was the arrival of the new soldiers and their families. When the new soldiers arrived at Fort Ord, a very high cost of living area (Monterey, California), they found themselves in an intensive training environment. Units tried to help the newly arriving soldiers. Time was provided to settle the families. However, there was insufficient post housing to meet the need. Most units encouraged the soldier to come to California without his family until a suitable off-post apartment could be found. The cost of these apartments was usually between \$600 to \$1000 per month. Each unit met family challenges in different ways; however, a common thread was the Family Support Group (FSG). The trauma of moving across the country, facing the high cost of living, and the extended field training time all called for special attention. The Family Support Group became the conduit for information and support. Families were included in everything possible. Briefings prior to all deployments, classes on financial management, educational benefits, and other unique aspects of military life helped these families through the transition. Each time units deployed to Fort Hunter Liggett, (FHL), for a week or two, families were brought to the field to spend a day. This greatly assisted the understanding of the families. During extended overseas deployments, the Family Support Groups were irreplaceable. They provided information, assistance, and friendship for those remaining at home. The distaff volunteer leadership of these support groups provided a most valuable service.

G. The linking of the transition of the IDL to the COHORT system was a critical decision. It is not possible for a unit to meet the IDL standards without COHORT. While the effects are not certain, it appears that the young soldier's enthusiasm for the Army continues to grow in COHORT units. The concept of unit replacement has merit. The Army must evaluate COHORT and other concepts to bring stability to the remainder of the Army.

TRAINING

Rommel the famous WW II armor genius, gained his fame and experience as a light infantryman in WW I. He and others believed that training had to be difficult and challenging.

In his famous book, "Attacks," Field Marshal Erwin Rommel states:

War makes extremely heavy demands on the soldier's strength and nerves. For this reason make heavy demands on your men in peacetime exercises.²¹

General Wickham's formation of the IDL was a call for the formation of the "worlds finest light infantry."²² What "was good enough" before was not satisfactory now. The new IDL:

. . . will be able to seek out and destroy the enemy on his terrain using initiative, stealth and surprise. Attacks by infiltration, air assault, ambush and raid will be the norm. Light infantry divisions will be 'terrain-using' forces, experts in camouflage, skilled in counter-mobility techniques, and quick to seize advantages afforded by their tough and spirited soldiers. The divisions' forte will be operating at night or under conditions of limited visibility.²³

With this guidance, the 7th IDL established its training strategy. The division would train a minimum of 180 days each year. There was to be no reason for not training. Research in the formation of elite units

indicated that all had completed a common training experience that set them apart from other units, (i.e., Ranger School, Airborne School, etc.). The problem was how to construct a program that would benefit all units in the division. The decision was made to have one training event that would be common to all, but tailored to the unit needs. Other events would be MOS specific. There also would be leaders' training.

The common training series would be the Rites of Passage Course. This one week course combined division esprit de corps and tradition classes, weapons and marksmanship training, land navigation, and competitive physical events. Each battalion was required to bivouac in the field for the week of training in order that all personnel could complete this course. The next bonding exercise, the Light Fighter's Course, was oriented to the type of unit that was to be trained. Infantry units spent three weeks at Fort Hunter Liggett, California, where the chain of command would teach specific mission requirements. In maneuver units the emphasis was on live fire exercises. For the infantry battalions, there was also a 28 day training exercise for the chain of command conducted by the Ranger Department at Fort Benning, Georgia. Seventy-eight members of the chain of command spent the month learning their jobs. This proved to be the most significant exercise for most units. It did the most to bond the unit together and increase its tactical expertise. Leaders learned tactical procedures they could teach their soldiers.

The Division also established a small unit leaders tactical course. The School of the Bayonet (SOTB) served as an excellent developmental

course for the young COHORT leaders. SOTB also prepared leaders for RANGER SCHOOL. The emphasis of the division's training program was to build the best small unit leaders possible. The requirements for field skills and leadership led to a heavy emphasis on Ranger School attendance.

As the training strategy emerged, emphasis was placed on deployability techniques. Innovative training and use of live fire exercises were to be commonplace. Stress was placed on physical conditioning. The division must have the best conditioned soldiers. The training program was difficult and challenging as it transformed young men into "the world's finest light infantry."

CONVERSION OF AN INFANTRY BATTALION

The 3rd Battalion 32nd Infantry "Bulldogs," were converted to the COHORT system, transitioned to the IDL organization and participated in a major training exercise within 1 year. This portion of the study examines the training procedures, exercise Team Spirit 85, and various lessons learned.

THE SCENARIO

The major Army participants in Team Spirit 85 were the 2nd Infantry Division and Infantry Brigade from the 7th Infantry Division (Light) as the Blue force. Orange forces consisted of elements of the 25th Infantry Division from Hawaii. There were also numerous participants from the Republic of Korean Army, and representatives from the sister services of each country (US and Korea).

The inclusion of the light infantry brigade gave exercise planners the opportunity to deploy a task force, Task Force Bayonet, directly from Travis Air Force Base, California to Osan Air Base, South Korea. This strategic airlift was made by C-5 and C-141 aircraft. At Osan, the soldiers and some of the combat vehicles were crossloaded into C-130 aircraft and flown into the exercise area. All other equipment was convoyed into the exercise area. Within a short time the entire Brigade was on the ground and training for the exercise.

The Blue force plan for the exercise envisioned 2ID units occupying the security zone and the Forward Edge of the Battle Area (FEBA). Based on light infantry doctrine, Task Force Bayonet occupied a portion of the battle area where the terrain was restrictive. When the Orange forces crossed the border, the 2ID forces would fight a delay to the Hann River. The 2nd Battalion 32nd Infantry, of Task Force Bayonet, would be extracted by air before they could be decisively engaged. The 3rd Battalion 32nd Infantry was initially to occupy defensive positions then as the battle unfolded, to move into predesignated hide positions. The "Bulldogs" were to remain in position for 24 hours and permit the Orange forces to pass. The battalion would then conduct stay behind operations against the Orange forces. These operations were to continue until the Blue forces were able to halt the offensive. The stay behind force would be used to secure various landing zones for the counterattack.

The 3rd Battalion, was to be visible during the initial days of the "war," then melt away. To accomplish this, each company devoted one half of its preparation time and effort to the construction of positions that could be easily seen from the air. With the remainder of the force and Korean Service Troops, each company cached supplies in places not

visible from the air and off the normal lines of drift for the movement of units. As the covering force battle developed, all vehicles were withdrawn from the battalion's defensive position. This created the impression the battalion had withdrawn. As dawn broke, no "Bulldog" soldiers were visible. One half of the battalion occupied concealed ambush positions to protect the remainder of the Task Force's withdrawal. The others established the initial hide positions. With the aerial withdrawal of the 2nd Battalion 32nd Infantry, all "Bulldogs" moved to their hide positions. For the next 24 hours the battalion remained hidden and silent. Each company monitored its radios. Units were not to transmit unless they were compromised. Prior to the start of the exercise, each company was given an operational sector. The priority of targets were command posts, signal units, aviation sites, artillery units and supply convoys. All units were instructed to avoid contact with combat units. For the next 6 days the battalion operated 30 kilometers behind Orange lines. During this period, the battalion was not challenged or in danger of being compromised. The "Bulldogs" initiated over 125 contacts with the Orange forces. This mission was ideal for the light infantry soldier.

PREPARATION

The preexercise training of the 3rd Battalion was directly related to conversion to the new IDL organization. The old CSC was eliminated and the remaining systems incorporated into the headquarters company. The rifle companies were downsized in personal, TOW antitank weapons, and 81mm mortars. All three rifle companies were converted to the

COHORT system. The battalion's complement of vehicles shrank from 117 to 42.

The "Bulldog" COHORT companies arrived in March, May, and July of 1984. The battalion commander was given maximum flexibility to develop a training program. The question was constantly debated as to how long it takes to train a new unit for combat. Commanders always wanted more time to train. Very seldom was there a firm feeling of satisfaction that the unit was fully trained for combat. The old concept of training; individual, squad, followed by sequential training at the platoon, company and finally battalion was challenged as not the best approach. To the rifleman, there was little difference between squad in the defense and the battalion in the defense. The difference was only in the coordination for the leaders and positioning or movement of reserves. Because training expertise and standards of excellence rested in the company commanders and first sergeants, the units trained together as companies. The leaders of the battalion identified the mission essential task list. The leaders also reviewed the individual training program of instruction that the soldiers had experienced at Fort Benning and selected subjects that needed more emphasis.

The unit training program was 12 weeks long. The first 2 weeks were administrative, (i.e., orientations, the issue of equipment, and basic weapons qualification). Spare time was spent on the known distance (marksmanship) ranges to stress the need for accurate rifle fire. This was followed by training in tactical movement. Company commanders spent 1 week establishing and practicing the unit standard operating procedures (SOP's) for movement. The next week was dedicated to the attack, followed by defense and retrograde operations. Then

there was a 2 week Ranger program, which covered small unit patrols, rappelling, mountain climbing, survival, and crossing water obstacles. The training program ended with squad, platoon, and company ARTEPS. These ARTEPS assessed the training status of the units. If units were unable to perform specific tasks to standards, they retrained and did it again. At the conclusion of this program all units were capable of accomplishing basic company operations. Everyone had a common base and advanced training began. The time spent on various subjects was flexible within the companies. The intent was to build companies that could work together, not separate squads or platoons.

Next was a program designed to convince the young soldiers of the 3rd battalion that they could do anything. Deployments to Canada and Panama greatly assisted in this development. For the Panama deployment, the Battalion Task Force arrived at Howard AFB, put on the ever-present rucksack and walked across the Isthmus of Panama. When the unit arrived at Ft. Sherman on the Atlantic side, they were tired and had sore feet; however, they had reached a significant milestone in unit cohesion and esprit. The "Bulldogs" then attacked the excellent Jungle Warfare Course with previously unseen enthusiasm.

Upon return to Fort Ord, the battalion immediately moved to FHL. Three more weeks of unit training in the mountains of the Los Padre Forest, were followed by a 90 mile foot march back to Fort Ord. In early October the battalion walked into garrison, with 600 combat ready soldiers who were convinced they could do anything.

For the next month, the leaders attended the Light Leaders Course at Fort Benning. The soldiers continued to hone individual skills. Many outsiders expressed concern that time would be wasted because of

the absence of the chain of command for a month. However, with the cooperation of the Reserve Components (RC) Directorate, excellent RC officers and NCO's were brought on active duty for the month to fill this void. These leaders gave a lot and gained a lot. The "Total Army" worked for the "Bulldogs."

After Christmas, the battalion went back to the field. First was the Rites of Passage Course. This was followed with four more weeks at FHL for the Light Fighter's Course. The leaders taught their newly learned skills and the companies incorporated more speciality training such as foreign weapons, demolitions, mountain climbing, air assault and helicopter resupply. As with all previous training, heavy emphasis was placed on live fire training. This field training exercise was concluded with a test of the plan that would be executed in Korea. Emphasis was also placed on hardening the soldiers to withstand the cold temperatures expected in Korea, insuring that the battalion could hide, testing the command and control systems, and physical conditioning.

LESSONS LEARNED

A. COMMANDER'S INTENT. Much has been said about the intent of the commander. The importance of this aspect of command and control became very evident during light infantry combat operations. For a period of 6 days, the 3rd Battalion conducted operations over a wide area without meetings or face to face contact between most leaders. The battalion commander did not have face to face contact with his company commanders, and many company commanders did not see their platoon leaders for days at a time. Of equal importance was the fact that every operation was conducted during hours of reduced visibility by very young

squad and team leaders. To successfully conduct stay behind operations, units must be well rehearsed. Leaders at all levels must understand their role and be able to function without guidance. Problems with radio communications and the possibility of intercept (EW, ECM), required that everyone know the targets, the priorities and the plans for future operations. If the command group was compromised, the mission could still be successfully executed. In summary, there was no substitute for full and complete understanding of the senior commander's intent.

After the initial mission was received, the battalion went through many hours of brief backs. Terrain models were constructed and everyone was required to brief his plans. When a briefing was given, the members of that unit were there to insure that every soldier was thoroughly familiar with the plan.

B. FIRE SUPPORT. In order to insure that light infantry doctrine is understood, there must be agreement on terms and responsibilities for fire support. The light infantry battalion will carry its organic 60mm and 81mm mortars wherever it operates. The only restriction on their use will be range and ammunition supply. During many light infantry operations, the battalion will operate outside the range of the division's organic direct support field artillery. Special provisions must be made to ensure availability of general support tube and rocket artillery. Even these weapons may not be usable because of the inability to communicate. Therefore, the use of USAF aircraft to support light infantry operations is imperative. Because of the large area over which the battalion is capable of operating during stay behind missions, there is a need to place a restricted fire area (RFA) around

the unit. This means that no one can fire into this area without clearance from the ground commander. This becomes very critical when the battalion is on radio silence. A greater problem exists when a battalion operating deep in the enemy's rear area requests close air support (CAS). Is a mission 30 to 50 kilometers behind enemy lines in support of ground forces CAS or battlefield air interdiction (BAI)? The Air Force and Army must come to an agreement on how this unit will be supported. The 3rd Battalion was able to stack up convoys of 200 vehicles; however, they were unable to obtain CAS to destroy the target. Conversely, it must be understood that the Air Force will not be permitted to do BAI without clearance from the stay behind commander.

The USAF personnel that are detailed to be with the ground units must be prepared to operate on the ground without their vehicles and other heavy equipment. Currently they cannot accomplish this mission.

C. COMMUNICATIONS. Portable tactical radios have changed little in the last 20 years. The AN/PRC 77 radio is still the basic means of communication in the light infantry. This radio has limited transmission range. Every light infantry unit will be able to extend the range with field expedient antennas. However, this is not the solution. During the exercise, the 3rd Battalion used the Tactical Satellite Communications System, TACSAT. This system enabled the battalion to receive guidance and intelligence from the Division and Task Force Headquarters. This system must also have the burst transmitter capability to reduce transmission time, and also the possibility of electronic detection. The 3rd Battalion developed its own operational schedules (OPSKEDS), or codes. These codes helped

reduce the transmission time. Units could broadcast the results of operations in a few short groupings of numbers and letters.

All units of the battalion were required to remain on radio silence. At specific times the Battalion would transmit instructions. The battalion always monitored its radios. To fully implement this program required practice and discipline. All radios were "secure" down to the platoon level. With the use of the transmission schedule, OPSKEDS, cipher devices and trained operators, the battalion was always able to maintain command and control.

D. HIDE POSITIONS. To anyone who had been to Korea, the thought of hiding 500 plus soldiers in those barren mountains seemed impossible. This was particularly true during the winter or spring. The first step was to conduct a reconnaissance of the operational area to determine the most probable areas for the enemy to locate his combat support and combat service support units. The hide positions that were selected afforded limited cover and concealment and were off the normal lines of drift for movement. Another major consideration was the availability of a water source for friendly use.

Individual camouflage nets that were issued to each soldier proved to be invaluable in the hide positions and during operations in general. The battalion made their own nets from salvage camouflage nets. During the daylight hours when most of the unit was sleeping, the soldiers were covered with these nets to conceal their positions. When the unit was operational, all equipment that was not carried was covered. These nets need to be standard issue for all infantry soldiers. (There does not need to be an extensive research and development effort. There are sufficient salvage nets to satisfy the

need. They must be sewn around the outside to prevent fraying, and perhaps velcro could be added to easily join them.)

To insure security in the hide positions, lessons learned in Vietnam are of great value. A quick summary of important factors are as follows:

1. Hide positions must be separated from the cache sites; they should be offset by several hundred meters.
2. Employ trail watchers to give early warning.
3. Evacuation routes and new linkup sites must be reconnoitered.
4. Move the hide position frequently.
5. Cook in the early morning or late evening. The cooler atmosphere will hold the smoke down.
6. In the event of detection, insure that the unit has rehearsed breaking contact and reassembly at rally points.

E. CACHE. No light infantry unit can carry all the supplies it will need for sustained operations. Two basic systems of resupply are available. The first and the preferred method is the use of caches. This requires the units or other friendly force to have access to the area before the outbreak of hostilities. Multiple sites must be selected. As with hide positions, they must be off the lines of drift. Some items for inclusion are rations, ammunition, medical supplies, batteries, fuel, heat tablets, replacement equipment, clothing and rice. It is vital that all soldiers learn to "live off the land" and use the enemy's food and weapons. The second method of resupply is by aerial means. All units must practice receipt of aerial delivered supplies.

F. MEDICAL. As light infantry operations grow in scope, there must be a rethinking of the medical support that now exists. The stay behind exercise conducted by the 3rd Battalion 32nd Infantry will be typical in future exercises and wars. Each small unit must be almost self-sufficient. The concept of having a platoon or company medic will not be adequate if many of the operations are to be accomplished by independent squad actions. To insure that the soldiers have the best medical support possible, all soldiers must be trained to the level of today's platoon medic. Ideally, each squad would have one soldier who is trained in emergency medical treatment. The question of evacuation of casualties also needs to be addressed. Soldiers must be mentally prepared for that situation. With the command post moving on the ground, and the light infantry units not having access to their support bases for extended periods of time, the concept of an aid station is outmoded. The entire concept of medical coverage and evacuation must be restudied.

G. COMMAND POST. When the US Army withdrew from Vietnam, many of the ideas and operationally tested procedures that were used in that war were lost. Very seldom does a battalion command group dismount and fight the war in the field. Whatever the dismounted commander needs to command and control the battalion must be carried on the backs of the soldiers. Backup equipment is limited. The Army must develop a small man-portable tactical operations center (TOC) tent. The idea of planning extended operations under a poncho is macho, but not workable.

It was a challenge to task organize the headquarters into a command and control element that was capable of independent movement and provided for its own defense. During Team Spirit the 3rd Battalion

command group consisted of 32 personnel. The headquarters company executive officer became the movement and security officer. He and the Battalion Command Sergeant Major were responsible for the security of the group, as well as, the preparation for and conduct of all movement. This took the burden off the operations officer and provided someone who could concentrate on all the details of a "patrol leader." Another interesting lesson relearned from Vietnam was that when the companies were moving, or engaged in operations, the battalion command post had to be stationary. It was impossible to move securely and control the battalion's operations simultaneously.

The "Bulldog" battalion also developed small battery powered florescent lights. These lights operated from used BA4386 batteries. They were essential for use in the small TOC tent that was fabricated for use in the exercise.

It is critical that the command group have the opportunity to work together prior to the exercise. For example, the fire support officer must develop his method of operation without all the heavy or vehicular equipment. This is true for all other members of the command group.

H. INDIVIDUAL EQUIPMENT. Any soldier who has to put the infantrymen's rucksack on his back could write volumes on what must be done to lessen the load. Before starting to throw things from the ruck, some common sense must be used. The use of the cache system will help reduce the load. However, the weight of the individual soldier's load will be dictated by the amount of ammunition and rations that he must carry to fight and survive. There must never be a situation where daily resupply is attempted. The ability of the light infantry soldier to

stay alive is directly related to his ability to hide. You cannot hide and be resupplied each day. The light infantry soldier will carry a heavy load; however, it must be remembered that he does not fight with that load. It must be standard practice to drop rucks when engaged. The First Sergeant or platoon sergeant will consolidate the rucks and prepare to assist with casualties.

When operating from a hide position, only take what is needed to accomplish the mission. This requires the commander to make decisions and take calculated risks concerning the types of equipment the unit will carry. Company commanders should organize their units into two or three man groups. Equipment can be evenly distributed. Rather than everyone carrying an entrenching tool, a machete or a rope, one per three soldiers may be the answer. The same concept can be applied to the sleeping gear. There is no time during an operation when everyone will sleep. This helps to make the unit operationally light; however, it does not solve the basic problem of obtaining new, light, durable equipment. Compare commercial camping equipment and sleeping bags to Army issue for weight and comfort. There is no comparison. Lightweight sleep and rain gear is a must. The Vietnam era jungle boot should be standard issue for every soldier who walks through creeks and climbs on rocks. No boot that we have is comparable to that time tested boot. This is true regardless of the temperature. In cold weather, canvas boots with the rubber overshoes are as warm as the wet leather boots.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE IDL

The final aspect of the formation of the IDL to be examined is its employment. This force is different from existing organizations. The employment of the IDL must meet doctrinal requirements. This paper will examine three levels of employment, strategic, operational, and tactical. Each presents unique challenges for the light force.

STRATEGIC LEVEL OF WAR

The strategic level of war concerns itself with the employment of armed forces, ". . . to secure the objectives of national policy."²⁴ This level of war has global implications. The concept is to move military forces to deter or slow a crisis. In all aspects of strategic deployment, the emphasis must be on rapid response. If, in fact, the reason to have a conventional strategic force is deterrence, speed of deployment must be a structuring criteria. Use of the IDL in a strategic deployment leaves the use of the other types of divisions as a reserve to "follow on" if the crisis dictates. The IDL can deploy faster, with more combat soldiers to influence a crisis. If the IDL must be strengthened in its combat power, the augmentation forces from the Corps can be attached to increase the combat power.

OPERATIONAL LEVEL OF WAR

The operational level of war is the use of the force, ". . . to attain strategic goals within a theater of war."²⁵ The IDL's relationship with the operational level raises two questions, augmentation and sustainment.

A. AUGMENTATION. No division deploys by itself. In all contingency plans, the IDL will either be part of a Joint Task Force (JTF) or a Corps. As one examines the history of US Army force structure, the use of the Corps as an augmentation element appears to be the next logical evolutionary step. Since WW II, the Army has moved from the regiments/battle groups to the ROAD Division, Division 86, and now Army of Excellence. The evolution in design has been to make the maneuver units more mobile. The problem is that many of the needed forces are not currently in the active force structure. These forces must be brought "on line" rapidly; and continuous training with the IDL must be the goal. Most foes of the IDL talk of the use of additional forces as a very bad feature. The characteristic of corps "plugs" can be a great benefit in a era of scarce resources.

B. SUSTAINMENT. Most critics of the IDL believe that the division cannot sustain itself. The design criteria calls for the IDL to deploy with 48 hours of supplies. Other divisions deploy with 4-5 days of supplies. At the end of the 4-5 days, these forces cannot sustain themselves and must be resupplied. Therefore, no matter what type of force, it will require continuous resupply. Based on tonnage support requirements for the various types of divisions, one can estimate that it is easier to sustain the IDL than any other type of force. This is true regardless of the presence or lack of facilities in the operational area.

The IDL is trained to participate in the Airland Battle Doctrine. Using terrain and stealth while operating in reduced visibility, the light division can infiltrate the enemy and conduct successful operations in his rear. This action disrupts the movement

of the second echelon to the front. When the enemy's reserves arrive at the front, they will not be "fresh." If properly employed, the IDL can play a significant role in the Airland Battle.

TACTICAL LEVEL OF WAR

The tactical level of war involves ". . . the movement and positioning of forces on the battlefield . . ."26 It is the fighting of the units. Unfortunately, there is a general lack of professional knowledge on the actual employment of the light force. The biggest concern of a light force commander is that his force will not be properly employed.

In many officer's minds, the light concept means only the loss of weapons systems. The essence of the IDL is summed up in the term "SOLDIER POWER." The IDL, has the potential of nine Ranger type battalions. In the IDL, the best possible training environment has been created. The soldiers are motivated. They are bonded together through COHORT. The 3rd Battalion 32nd Infantry had 59 rangers. Of these 37 were enlisted soldiers. The light infantry units are able to send soldiers to schools or for additional training with the knowledge that these soldiers would remain in the unit for 2 or 3 years. The Light Leaders Course provides the opportunity to train the chain of command. Because of trained unit leaders and stability, light infantry units are able to incorporate items such as known distance, marksmanship, sniper training, rappelling, mountain climbing, demolitions training, swimming, and foreign weapons training into their program and not have it perish because of personnel turbulence.

The IDL's employment is terrain dependent. It must be placed into restrictive areas for its operations. In cities, mountains, jungles, and dense forest, the trained light fighter possesses mobility that is equal to or greater than any other force. These highly disciplined and well trained soldiers can fight during day or night. The light fighter prepares to undergo hardship. This only comes from difficult, realistic training.

An examination of the world's hot spots shows that there is no area that would prohibit the employment of light forces. Critics suggest that a shortcoming of the IDL is that it has no "forced entry" capability. In every situation that requires the use of soldiers, the preferred method of entry is by air-landing, as opposed to parachute or air assault. In that regard, the IDL has a forced entry capability equal to others. Additionally, the light forces continue to train at the Naval Amphibious School in Coronado, California. The IDL has the capability to enter by foot, air assault, over the beach, or airland in C-130/C-141 aircraft. This gives the force the required forced entry capability. If a parachute entry is the only solution, the Rangers can conduct the assault and secure an airfield for the IDL.

With the exception of the 82nd and perhaps the 101st no other Division is conducting more deployment training than the 7th IDL. The deployment expertise is being developed and will be ready in a crisis. (Deployability equals deterrence.)

The question of the force's ability to fight in a mid/high intensity environment is always under review. There are many examples in history of a light force fighting a heavy force and doing quite well. However, two major problems must be overcome:

A. TANK KILLING CAPABILITY. A man portable fire and forget antiarmor weapon must be developed. It must be light and inexpensive to permit the soldiers to carry several rounds when on operations and also permit live fire training throughout the year. (There is also a critical need for a weapon that will be a "bunker buster or building buster").

B. THE AMERICAN MIND SET. When the 3rd Battalion deployed for Team Spirit 85, they were called "the dead battalion," because they were to be the stay behind battalion. The way leaders have previously viewed the employment of forces, it is very difficult to think of employing forces to penetrate the enemy lines and operate in his rear for extended periods. Terms like baited attack and stalking attack are commonplace to the light fighter. It is a requirement for all others to study how best to employ the light force. The light infantry is prepared to fight in the rear or on the flanks of the enemy. The light force must be employed as a unit and not used as a filler force. The light infantry unit has trained to operate as a unit. Additionally the logistical support design ties the battalion tightly to the brigade. Therefore the IDL units should not be split out any lower than brigade size task forces.

CONCLUSION

As outlined in this paper, the concept of the Infantry Division Light is sound and vital to the deterrent capability of the United States. This force gives the Army greater flexibility. However, there are specific issues that must be resolved.

A. There must always be a link with COHORT.

B. Chain of command training must always be incorporated into training. This training should be separate from that of the soldiers.

C. Tactical air support.

D. Medical training.

E. Communications.

F. Method of resupply.

G. Individual clothing and equipment.

The formation of the Infantry Division Light is the rebirth of the professional infantry. The linking of the force with COHORT gives stability, cohesion and bonding. The light infantry units are conducting challenging and difficult training that will make them "the world's finest light infantry." New tactics and techniques are being developed. There is a resurgence of time tested tactics. The light force gives the national command authorities flexibility in solving world crises.

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4. Thomas N. Moe, COL, et al., Employment of the Infantry Division (Light) in an Immature Theater, p. App. IV.
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9. Combined Arms Center Briefing, p. Encl. 4.
10. John A. English, A Perspective On Infantry, p. 244.
11. Combined Arms Center Briefing, p. Encl. 4.
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13. James Lucas, Alpine Elite, p. 34.
14. Ibid.
15. Martin Caidin, The Tigers Are Burning, p. 188.
16. English, p. 180.
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18. General John A. Wickham, Chief of Staff, White Paper Light Infantry Division, p. 5.
19. S. L. A. Marshall, Men Against Fire, p. 41.
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21. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, Attacks, p. 8.
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