THE INFANTRY SCHOOL
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LESSONS FROM KOREA

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LESSONS FROM KOREA

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The Infantry has learned many lessons from its military operations in Korea. These lessons were learned mainly through mistakes made on the battlefield. It is enlightening - and disheartening - to note that these errors were often the same as those described in World War II combat reports, which suggest that this article might be more aptly titled "Lessons Relearned in Korea".

SECTION II. TACTICS

1. General

World War II commanders, from army to platoon, agreed that our basic tactical doctrine was sound. It stood the severest tests posed by two hard-fighting enemies of dissimilar military qualities -- Germany and Japan. Our commanders in Korea reaffirmed the soundness of our doctrine, but admitted to many deficiencies in applying it. The faulty techniques in using the doctrine can be laid to an imperfect understanding of its intent.

This article describes the major deficiencies determined by our Korean experience, but makes no attempt to analyze them in detail. Instead, it emphasizes the corrective action that must be taken in our training to overcome them.

2. Inadequate Fire Support Planning

From observations made by the X Corps in late 1950 and early 1951, we found that our reputation for rapidly massing supporting fires had been earned and was being maintained almost solely by the artillery. The infantry's weapons had done little to merit a share of the honors. In many attacks, for example, the recoilless rifles were not placed in position, because too much effort was required to hand-carry the guns and ammunition up the mountains. Unit orders, particularly on company and platoon level, mentioned the attachment or support of crew-served weapons, but did not assign them targets or areas of fire. As a result, many weapons were not used to the best advantage in the attack. Too often, battalion crew-served weapons were attached to companies and platoons, sacrificing the advantage of flexibility that is gained by using them in general support.

To add effectiveness to our attacks and to reduce friendly casualties, we must make better use of our infantry support weapons. This will take detailed, timely planning and a dogged expenditure of physical effort.

Most of our deficiencies in fire support planning come from our tendency to confuse haste with speed. Many higher commanders do not follow proper troop leading procedure. They contend that this gives infantry battalion commanders more time to plan for fire support. Each time they practice this contention they prove themselves wrong.

Commanders must follow the steps in troop leading. They must make a preliminary plan; arrange for the movement of their unit, a reconnaissance, the issuance of the order, and coordination. Then they must make a reconnaissance, complete their plan, issue the order, and supervise its execution. It is not just a cliche that it is better to spend three or four hours in planning an attack that gains an objective in 30 minutes than to spend 30 minutes planning for an operation that takes hours to succeed -- if ever.

We must stop taking effective fire support for granted. Written regimental, battalion, and, where applicable, company orders should contain a detailed fire support annex to insure that all infantry supporting weapons are fully used by assigning each a specific mission. To make certain that all weapons are included,

use a checklist, itemizing all organic, attached, and supporting crew-served weapons. This list can include columns for noting position areas, target areas, assigned missions, and other data.

The Infantry School has greatly increased the emphasis on fire support planning. Battalion and regimental problems now include exercises in detailed planning for the use of all organic weapons. Department of the Army Training Circular No. 9 (1953), Coordination of Fire Support, emphasizes the importance of this subject and current revisions to Field Manuals 7-10, 7-20, and 7-40 deal with it thoroughly.

3. Improper Use of the Terrain

Our early operations in Korea show many examples of disaster stemming from our failure to study the terrain and use it to our advantage. This shortcoming was prevalent from platoon to regiment. For example, a platoon-sized patrol in the Yongwol area in January 1951 ignored the ridges on both sides of its path as it moved through a small valley. The results? A small enemy ambush unit killed or captured most of the patrol. Several battalions of the X Corps suffered extremely heavy casualties at Hoengsong in the same month because they did not clear the ridges adjacent to the road they were using, in spite of the fact that they were in close contact with the enemy. At the Chosin Reservoir in November 1950, most of one regimental combat team was lost because it moved on low ground with a dominating ridge paralleling its route of march.

The regularity of these deficiencies in terrain appreciation indicate weaknesses in our instructional methods. All tactical exercises, maneuvers, field problems, and map exercises should include a terrain analysis requirement before any maneuver or planning phase is conducted. In fact, some exercises should be devoted entirely to terrain study and tactical walks.

In addition to including terrain requirements in all problems, The Infantry School has evolved a technique in terrain appreciation. Because many problems must be conducted indoors as map exercises, the terrain has been brought to the student in the classroom. The student is shown movies and still pictures of the ground he would see if he were in an observation post in the problem area. Then he is shown pictures of the terrain he would cover in ground and aerial reconnaissance. In this way, he can solve the problem requirements under circumstances closely paralleling those encountered on the ground.

4. Maneuver and Maximum Fire Support

Some small-unit blunders in Korea can be attributed to widespread failure on the part of leaders to recognize the merits of maneuver combined with maximum fire support and the necessity for finding and striking enemy weak points.

5. Deficiency in Night Operations

Most of our reverses in Korea occurred at night. Because of our air and artillery superiority and the knowledge of the American soldier's distaste for night operations, the enemy initiated his major attacks and patrolled extensively at night. On the other hand, our units broke off successful daylight attacks in the late afternoon or early evening, exerting very little pressure on the enemy at night. The enemy, expert at digging-in rapidly and at maintaining contact, soon had a completely organized defense position. By morning we had to launch another costly penetration. We could have avoided this by keeping continuous pressure on the enemy throughout the night with vigorous combat patrolling.

During the latter part of 1951, our units began to use searchlights extensively, beaming the light in front of our defense positions. We immediately noted a great decrease in the number of enemy night probes and patrols. On the other hand, we failed for a long time to recognize the value of searchlights in night attacks and raids. It was not until October 1952, that the 9th ROKA Division in the White Horse Mountain Operation, demonstrated so effectively this use of searchlights. The searchlights were used so that the tanks and crew-served weapons could provide close and continuous fire support throughout this attack with the result that the operation was a huge success.

Obviously, our training before 1950 was not keyed to night operations. Troops were reluctant to take part in night attacks and commanders and staff officers seldom planned an operation that required offensive unit action after twilight. As a result, the enemy, operating at night with very little fire support, outmaneuvered and outfought us.

Later, we began to stress night training throughout the Army. We must continue to do so. We must give our men experience in operating under illumination and in using all types of illuminating devices. We must train them thoroughly for reconnaissance and aggressive combat patrolling at night. In this way, the momentum we build up during a daylight attack can be continued into the night.

6. Attacking Prepared Positions.

The enemy in Korea was unusually proficient at digging and camouflaging his positions. Almost overnight he could prepare positions that, in effect, created a fortified area that was not easily pregnable. In 1950 and early 1951 we consistently underrated the strength of these quickly prepared, bunker-type defenses. We assaulted them in the same manner that we attacked positions without bunkers and communication trenches. We paid for our error in the excessive number of casualties we suffered and the time we wasted in seizing the positions.

Future enemies may be just as expert and as diligent in preparing this type of defensive position as the enemy in Korea. We must learn to recognize it at once and attack it only after detailed planning for fire support and the best use of all weapons. Platoons should make full use of their rifle grenades, rocket launchers, and recoilless rifles. Squads and platoons should be augmented with flame throwers and demolitions. To partially fulfill the augmentation requirement, moves are being made to add flame throwers to the infantry's T/O&E.

7. Conduct of the Assault

Although our units moved with relative steadiness from the line of departure to the assault line while under cover of artillery and mortar fire, they frequently did not keep moving between the assault line and the objective after artillery fires had lifted or shifted. The chief reason for this was the failure to use all available supporting weapons that could have continued to fire until the troops were within a few yards of the objective. This weakness was particularly dangerous in the mountains, where considerable time elapsed after artillery fire lifted and before the troops could climb or crawl to the objective.

Two corrective measures are needed: First, we must teach our troops to "lean into" the friendly artillery and mortar fire, which should not be lifted or shifted until our assault has started. Second, all available organic weapons must be used to place a heavy volume of fire on the objective after the artillery and mortars shift and while the troops are assaulting. Rifles, machine guns,

recoilless rifles, flame throwers, and tanks can be used to fire a few yards in front of our troops. In many situations, smoke can be placed effectively to screen our assault.

In training, safety regulations preclude firing crew-served weapons close-in during the assault; but all instructors, commanders, and staff officers must emphasize that, in combat, these restrictions are eliminated.

8. Organization on the Objective

Throughout the action in Korea our attack plans and orders frequently did not include specific instructions for reorganizing on the objective. The plans for maneuver and supporting fires carried us only up to the time of arrival on the objective. Consequently, our reorganization was often disastrously sluggish and confused.

Our field orders, particularly at company, platoon, and squad level must contain instructions for the reorganization phase of the attack in as much detail as for any other phase. Every crew-served weapon and squad must have a position area and a sector of fire assigned to it on the objective before the attack commences. This can be done, even when landmarks and areas on the objectives are not visible from the OP or LD, by using the "clock system" of reorganization.

9. Organization of Defensive Positions and Retrograde Movements.

Initially, organizing defensive positions on an extended front and retrograde movements were among the poorest operations performed by our units in Korea. Many of our officers who fought in World War II had never participated in a sustained defense or a retrograde movement and were inadequately trained in the tactics involved. Our defense sectors were three or more times wider than those previously considered normal, and our units tried to spread out in a thin line that physically covered the entire area. As a result, we lacked control and depth. We were not located to give maximum fire support, and our individual positions were only small holes in the ground. The men were careless about placing overhead cover on their firing positions. Usually, tactical wire ran parallel to a unit's entire front and was so close to the positions that enemy patrols could approach within hand-grenade range. Commanders paid little attention to the proper use and recording of mine fields, causing us many casualties when our forces resumed the offensive.

The early history of the Korean war is filled with examples of disasters because of attempts by small units to withdraw when enemy units got behind them. Many of these withdrawals were mob movements rather than military movements, and the men were cut to pieces. Such mistakes can be prevented by completely indoctrinating troops with the fact that no unit withdraws unless it is ordered to by the headquarters that assigned the original mission, and that higher headquarters will provide encircled troops with assistance in the form of other attacking units. By comparing casualty figures and accomplishments of the units that stood firm and fought, as opposed to those that broke and ran, we can show trainees the advantages of staying in position until ordered to withdraw. After 1950, our technique in conducting a perimeter defense greatly improved. The heroic stand at Chipyong-ni where one encircled regiment held its ground and killed thousands of the enemy is a classic example.

By the spring of 1951, we had perfected our defensive tactics to such a degree that operations produced astoundingly large numbers of enemy casualties.

Our proficiency in retrograde movements improved to the point where we could execute consecutive orderly withdrawals for several days with excellent control, and then take the offensive in a successful counterattack.

At The Infantry School, we have greatly expanded our instruction in defense and retrograde techniques. The doctrine and techniques are the same as before the Korean War, but more intensive training is needed if we are to avoid the same mistakes in the future.

10. Attachment of UN Units

In the early days of Korea, United Nations units were under division control and attached temporarily to American regiments for specific operations. They were transferred from unit to unit, with the result that they never had a "home" and never received the care and interest given organic units.

Later, UN Battalions remained permanently with certain United States regiments, operating as organic fourth battalions. Morale and efficiency were greatly improved. After training with our units in rear areas, these UN units felt they were part of the team. Their personnel proudly wore the United States regimental crests and the division shoulder patch of the American unit to which they were assigned. Where language difficulties existed, these UN units were provided with American radio operators who could speak their language.

11. Patrol Bases

The patrol base was used in Italy during World War II, but it did not become a standard technique until the Korean War. Actually, it was an adaptation of our general and combat outpost system designed to fit Korean terrain.

It was found that a battalion-sized patrol base could do the job of a general outpost by establishing a perimeter defense on commanding terrain that dominated logical avenues of approach. The patrol base was less vulnerable to night attacks and, in mountainous terrain, patrols could be sent from this base more easily than from the main line of resistance.

The size of the patrol base depended upon its distance from the MLR. For distances of less than 3,000 yards in front of the MLR, a reinforced company was usually strong enough. Further away, a battalion or regiment was needed.

12. Use of Helicopters

Korea gave new life to the program of developing and employing the army helicopter. We are familiar with the role of the helicopter in evacuating wounded -- it saved many lives during the war. In addition, the Marines used helicopters to relieve troops on outposts and on mountainous defensive positions.

The possible ways in which helicopters can be used are endless. In future campaigns, we may use them in crossing rivers, in supplying outposts, in transporting reserves to a point of penetration, and in transporting reserves in a rapid move to an enemy flank or weak point for a surprise attack.

In order to perfect such operations, The Infantry School is studying the techniques involved and is developing a tactical doctrine for using helicopters. A helicopter company is assigned to The Infantry Center, making experiments possible.

13. Patrolling

Korea proved again the importance of continuous and aggressive patrolling, and exposed our patrolling defects. Quite often the men selected to lead patrols did not know how to plan for the job because they never received instruction and training. This led to unnecessary casualties and mission failures.

Higher headquarters almost invariably took too much time to review and approve proposed patrol plans. In addition, they often changed the plan. The final outcome was that a small unit leader - say a company commander - would not even recognize his plan when it was returned to him, late, for execution. He rarely had enough time to rehearse his unit and to coordinate his fire support.

To digress a little, it was not only in patrolling that too much planning was done by higher headquarters for subordinate units instead of letting the units work out their own plans. This caused small unit leaders to lose their initiative.

Planning is essential, but it can be overdone. In 1952, planning was in such detail that many bad habits were picked up by commanders and staff officers. Some needed so much time in planning for an operation that if they got into a moving situation where time was limited, they could not write a proper order. Some of the orders issued during these periods were as long as 12 pages with paragraph 3x comprising as much as 22 paragraphs. Standing operating procedures should have taken care of most of the material that was written in orders.

A high percentage of our patrols failed to accomplish assigned missions because of poor use of the terrain and poor technique in moving to the objective. This is an old story from World War II, but the patrols were not solely to blame. The headquarters ordering such patrols did not, in many cases, limit such operations to one simple mission, and did not allow enough time for planning, thorough briefing, and rehearsal.

Small patrols dispatched by front-line companies did not always have an artillery observer, as there is normally only one per company. Often these patrols would have no one capable of efficiently adjusting artillery or mortar fire on a target. This is another deficiency carried over from World War II. In training, our NCO's and officers should learn to adjust fire through actual experience and not through theory.

Infantry soldiers have not been impressed with the importance of wearing all field equipment. This is essential for most patrolling as well as for other active operations. In particular, the men who would not wear suspenders suffered extreme fatigue because their loaded ammunition belts rode too low on their hips. When a soldier discards essential equipment in order to lighten his load, he faces battle without the ammunition and equipment necessary to hold the position he wins. All units have an SOP stating what is to be worn and carried. Commanders should take positive action to see that these SOP's are carried out.

One unit found that using a security group in conjunction with all patrols improved morale, helped to accomplish the mission, and saved lives. The security group composed of several riflemen, a heavy machine gun, and a 57-mm recoilless rifle, would follow an ambush, raid, or reconnaissance patrol within visual distance (if possible, two to three hundred yards). This group moved by bounds and gave heavy supporting fires to the lead element of the patrol if it ran into enemy fire or ambush.

Many patrols had the mission of destroying bunkers or installations as well as the enemy in them. But the average infantryman in Korea knew little about using

pole charges, satchel charges, and other demolitions. Frequently, the destruction of the enemy was the only part of the mission accomplished. The installations remained standing to be used again by the enemy.

Patrols and raiding parties need to be strong in automatic weapons, especially at night when targets are rarely visible and a large volume of fire is important to morale and confidence.

Other major weaknesses in patrolling were --

a. Inadequate patrol briefing and debriefing procedures that produced poor and, quite often, erroneous information. Commanders must be impressed with the importance of properly briefing patrols as to the enemy situation and the specific mission that they are to perform.

b. Patrol requirements from division and higher headquarters so demanding in scope, size, and mission that neither time nor men were available for necessary regimental and battalion patrolling.

c. Incomplete use of maps.

d. Poorly chosen patrol routes.

e. Poor patrol coordination with artillery and adjacent units.

SECTION III. WEAPONS

15. Rifle Marksmanship

A report by a Korean observer states:

> During World War II and the postwar period, there was a tendency in the Army to substitute volume of fire for marksmanship. However, the Korean conflict has sharply brought back the need for accuracy -- the old 'shoot to kill' tradition. The rugged Korean terrain often makes it a war of man versus man and has earned the conflict the reputation of being a 'rifleman's war'. The rifleman is the key to an army's ground operations. Equipped with a weapon he can operate alone and with ammunition he can carry himself, he is a complete combat unit. Operating with other similar units in battle for a common objective, the rifleman is the backbone of a nation's army.

We must again stress the importance of the well-aimed shot as contrasted to the hastily-fired shot, for it is the round that hits its target that counts. Marksmanship training in all phases is more important now than it was when our nation was known as a "nation of riflemen," because we are no longer the game hunters we were at one time. With this in mind, the Army is restudying its rifle marksmanship program with the aim of making it more effective for all soldiers.

16. 200-Yard Battle Sight

Because of the type terrain in Korea and the unusually close fighting, we had to use a 200-yard battle sight instead of our then standard 300-yard battle sight. However, we are continuing to use the longer ranges and the 300-yard battle sight in our training. This is still the more normal battlefield range, and rifles can be rezeroed easily when peculiar circumstances require it.

17. Individual Fire Participation

ORO Reports from Korea state:

> The infantry soldier so commonly met with in World War II who made the stock answer: 'I saw the enemy; I didn't fire; I don't know why,' is strangely missing from the Korean scene. Reasons given in Korea are such as: 'Grenades were coming in at such a rate I couldn't get my head up,' or 'I was helping the sergeant get the machine gun back into operation.' There is a strong implication that the idea has become ingrained in the infantry line that fire participation is an obligation of honor and the obligation is felt by the average soldier.

In the average infantry company that fought in Korea, between 12 and 20 percent of the total number of men engaged in a fight not only participated actively in the firing, but also exercised varying degrees of initiative in "on the spot leading." In addition to these, 25 to 35 percent of the men took some part in the fire action, with varying degrees of consistency, but without otherwise giving marked impulse to the course of events.

This is a marked increase over World War II fire participation. At that time, usually only 15 percent of the riflemen in a unit took an active (firing) part in an attack or a defense. The statistics from Korea, while encouraging, can be improved. Our training program should sell the rifle to the trainee. This can be done only by a vigorous and thorough indoctrination in his weapons and the principles of marksmanship.

18. Build-Up in Volume of Rifle Fire

Consider this report from Korea:

> In a daylight attack, the advance is on an extremely narrow front making it impossible for all men to use their weapons freely. However, the night engagement on defense provides the most favorable opportunity for Ml fire. Whether the fire can be developed quickly in considerable volume depends primarily on the distance at which recognition takes place. If the enemy gets in close before firing begins, the initial phase is usually a heavy exchange of grenades. Steady rifle action will usually await the dying-away of the grenade exchange, although in short-range action, combining grenade and bullet fire is still more effective than either alone. When the enemy in the attack is intercepted at such range that the automatic weapons can first engage him, their fire is highly stimulating to the rifle line, and general use of the Ml and carbine is likely to persist until the action is concluded. In connection with the rifle fire volume, it should be noted that there is direct relationship between the rate of build-up and the mobile response to tactical changes in the situation. As with shouting and cheering along the firing line, there is something about steady fire production, and participation therein by the individual, which enlivens his senses and makes him move about more in an endeavor to see where his fire would be most useful.

Our training should stress the responsibility of junior officers and NCO's building up and maintaining a steady volume of fire, and all men should be convinced of the value of "talking it up" during a fire fight. Any friendly noise, such as firing or cheering, has a positive effect on both a rifleman's confidence and his aggressiveness.

We can use the spirit of competition to increase the volume of fire. For example, in our tactical training we should encourage riflemen to be the first in a unit to open fire on an enemy. Competitions of this sort will cause nearly all of our riflemen to contribute the fire of their weapons to the unit's volume of fire. This is one method of showing the soldier that a large volume of fire can be "built up". This training exercise will eventually develop "esprit" among infantrymen and help a commander to overcome the inertia of a line of nonfiring riflemen.

19. Failure to Use the Sling When Firing

The sling was not used in Korea to increase accuracy for several reasons. Most combat took place at night in short, brisk patrol actions. The usual firing amounted to pointing the weapon in the general direction of enemy activity and squeezing the trigger rapidly. In probing actions on our MLR, the enemy was seldom seen until he was closely engaged in the trenches or silhouetted in front of the positions by napalm or flares. At that time, the men fired over the parapet or through apertures, with the rifle supported on the structure or on sandbags and, without slings, they were better able to throw grenades or fight hand-to-hand.

The benefit derived from the use of the sling, when the situation permits, is not in question. The sling helps a soldier fire his rifle accurately and builds confidence in his ability to use his weapon effectively. We feel that the hasty sling can be used in most cases without hindering the rifleman. However, experiments are being conducted to obtain a sling with a quick release attachment so the soldier can have the benefit of firing with it and still be able to remove it quickly when he needs his hands and arms free.

20. Care and Cleaning of Weapons in the Field

Too often, our training on care and cleaning of the rifle is for garrison duty and Saturday morning inspections only. Yet, the same trainee who passes the inspection cannot keep his weapon functioning in the field because he has not been taught how to lubricate it properly or how to use field expedients in caring for it. Soldiers need more extensive training in cleaning their weapon during or after damaging weather, particularly winter, and under field conditions. Field expedient methods of cleaning the rifle should be developed, including the improvisation of cleaning materials.

The caliber .50 machine gun also suffered from neglect. We found that few soldiers had an adequate knowledge of the care, cleaning, and operation of this weapon.

21. Field Target Firing

The men and officers who fought in Korea advise us to concentrate more on training soldiers to fire from varied and awkward positions at unknown-range field targets, and suggest that we find some way to correct the tendency to fire widely and too high in night action.

In transition and field firing exercises, day or night, instructors should stress accuracy and guard against the hasty firing of groups of wild shots. We are currently experimenting to evolve training methods that will improve the accuracy of night firing with the M1.

22. Discarding the Automatic Rifle Bipod

A Korean report has this to say about using the automatic rifle:

> During early operations in Korea, there were many examples of the improper employment of the automatic rifle. The automatic rifleman failed to realize that his weapon was more important because machine guns were limited by the rugged terrain.
>
> When the automatic rifleman began climbing the mountains, his primary consideration was to keep his weight load as light as possible. He discarded anything that did not lend itself to his immediate survival. Unfortunately, many of the more poorly trained automatic riflemen decided that the bipod of the automatic rifle fell into this category. These AR men did not realize that by throwing away the bipod they were decreasing their effectiveness considerably. Without the bipod on the weapon, it is almost impossible to deliver accurate automatic fire from the prone position. Changing magazines in the prone position becomes a complex and difficult operation. During offensive operations, it was possible to fire the AR from the crouch or hip firing position without using the bipod. However, once the objective was seized and reorganization was being completed, the AR men again found themselves handicapped without a bipod.

We should concentrate more on the field firing phase of automatic rifle training and give the automatic rifleman an opportunity to compare the effectiveness of his weapon when it is fired with and without the bipod. When he realizes how the bipod increases his weapon's accuracy and effectiveness, he will be less willing to discard it as "excess baggage".

23. Mine Warfare Training

Our mine warfare program disclosed a major weakness because we did not train nonengineer personnel in mine warfare techniques. Mine fields were not sited for proper coverage by small-arms fire. They were not properly recorded and marked. When the laying unit left the area, it did not clear its mine fields or transfer its mine field information and reports.

The number of casualties caused among our own troops by friendly mine fields has forcefully pointed out the need for additional training of all personnel in mine warfare, including laying, recording, marking, and breaching mine fields. Mine warfare training should also include instruction on allied and enemy equipment techniques.

The Infantry School is accentuating mine warfare training. The doctrines and techniques are the same, but we are infusing the subject with new importance to avoid mistakes we made in Korea.

24. Improper Use of Machine Guns

At the beginning of operations in Korea, which were characterized by rapid movement over long distances, the caliber .30 machine guns were consistently employed improperly. They were seldom employed in pairs and they were not normally fired at ranges greater than 300 yards. Care and cleaning were neglected as well as training in the reduction of stoppages.

During the last phase of operations, which was characterized by relatively stable positions, the technique of employing machine guns gradually returned to the methods prescribed in our manuals and taught at The Infantry School. However,

the machine guns were still not used in pairs and they were not employed properly on the final protective line.

At first, most units preferred the light machine gun because of its mobility, although from a firepower standpoint they were much less effective than the heavy machine guns. The units that relegated their heavies to the carriers soon found that they were so badly cannibalized or in such bad condition from lack of care that they had to be discarded. The units that did use the heavy guns found their effectiveness so superior to the lighter guns that they kept them in operation regardless of the difficulty of terrain.

The type machine gun used still seems to depend on the likes and dislikes of individual units. Some used the light machine gun exclusively because the heavy machine gun used too much ammunition; others used the heavy machine gun exclusively because of its more stable mount and superior performance. Some units, however, formed a like or dislike for one weapon or the other simply because of its success or failure in one particular operation. This should be guarded against.

Training must emphasize the use of each particular weapon in the role and situation for which it was designed. Field firing problems must be set up to illustrate the particular value of each weapon. These problems should also pointedly illustrate the value of machine guns firing at long as well as at close ranges.

25. Lack of Training in Employment of Recoilless Rifles

Maximum effective fire was not often obtained from recoilless rifles, mostly because of inadequate training and poor technique in the use of present doctrine. In many cases, crew members did not recognize common stoppages and fire support was lost, often at critical times.

The delay action fuze available with 75-mm and 105-mm high explosive and white phosphorous ammunition was not used as frequently as it could have been. This was probably due to a lack of knowledge on the part of crew members as to suitable targets for HE and WP ammunition with this fuze setting.

Many instances occurred where recoilless rifles were used to fire at unprofitable targets, such as snipers and individual enemy soldiers. Recoilless rifles were also employed improperly for area fire. These uses waste ammunition and unnecessarily reveal the gun position.

The 57-mm recoilless rifle gunners in one unit relied exclusively on the auxiliary metal sights because of inadequate training in the use of the telescopic sight.

Several units were reluctant to use the recoilless rifles extensively because of an erroneous belief that their fire would draw immediate and violent counterfire. Although the back-blast does tend to disclose the gun position to a certain extent, this possibility is not nearly so great as was at first believed.

Training must emphasize that the primary mission of the 57-mm and 75-mm recoilless rifles is direct fire at profitable, definitely located point targets. Crew members must also be thoroughly familiar with the various types of ammunition and must know the probable effectiveness of each type against a specific target. Field problems should stress the careful selection and frequent change of firing positions.

26. Use of Infantry Mortars

The Korean terrain demanded a high-angle fire weapon to reach down into ravines, draws, and reverse slopes of hills. The various types of infantry mortars were ideal for the job. Our troops in Korea depended more on accurate mortar fire than in any other war we have ever fought.

27. Forward Observation in Heavy Mortar Units

The T/O&E of a heavy mortar company calls for one forward observer for each of its platoons. Experience in Korea, however, proved that one forward observer was not able to handle the job of directing fire for a mortar platoon in that terrain. Two or three observers were required with each front-line battalion.

T/O&E 7-14 will probably be revised to provide three forward observers for each heavy mortar platoon. This will allow a heavy mortar observer for each rifle company in the regiment.

28. Firing 81-mm Mortars from Map Data

Much of the firing data for 81-mm mortars in Korea had to be taken from maps. Mortarmen did not know how to obtain this data. Students at The Infantry School are now being taught to take certain data from maps and place it on the M10 plotting board so that firing can be conducted in cases where only map data is available.

SECTION IV. STAFF FUNCTIONS

29. Personnel Management

a. Unit journal. -- The unit journal cannot fulfill its purpose unless it is complete. But in many instances, the unit journals maintained by subordinate units in Korea were not complete. Mainly, this was because staff officers failed to maintain a record of telephone conversations and because entries did not always reach the unit journal when the command post was divided.

b. Reports. -- All headquarters should carefully examine the need for reports from subordinate units. Unnecessary and duplicating reports place a burden on the preparing headquarters and consume valuable time that could be more profitably spent on other tasks.

c. Replacements. -- Korea has again proved that replacements will last longer and fight better if they are integrated into the organization while the unit is in reserve. The new man should have a chance to get oriented, to know the other members of his squad and his leaders before he goes into combat.

d. Division Administrative Center. -- The division administrative center should be as far forward as possible, consistent with the tactical situation. In Korea, this installation was often so far to the rear that the unit administrator had to waste a great deal of time traveling.

e. Leadership. -- A basic weakness of junior officers and NCO's was their failure to apply fully the leadership principle, "Know your men and look after their welfare." Many man-days lost as a result of dysentery and other diseases could have been prevented if the responsible leader had performed his duties.

Delegation of responsibility to junior leaders and adherence to command channels during training will aid in teaching them to react in a positive manner and to render prompt decisions under combat conditions. For example, one unit in Korea had not even entrusted the granting of three-day passes to its company commanders. It was noted that aggressiveness, combat decisiveness, and positive reactions to situations that arose were lacking in that unit.

30. Intelligence

a. General. -- Weaknesses in the field of intelligence were due to these factors:

(1) The commander was not aware of the staff responsibility of his intelligence officer and failed to utilize him properly.

(2) Intelligence officers had little knowledge of their duties.

(3) Subordinate commanders had little interest in the intelligence effort.

(4) Counterintelligence measures were neither understood nor enforced.

While most of the intelligence deficiencies were the exception rather than the rule, they were numerous enough to be dangerous.

b. Planning. -- Intelligence officers depended too much on the SOP for collecting and reporting information with no concentrated effort to improve the program. Many commanders did not require that a continuous estimate be maintained, and did not call on their intelligence officers for an estimate or terrain evaluation before making a tactical decision.

Intelligence officers of subordinate units had a tendency to make their estimates by conjecture rather than by logical deductions based upon facts.

c. Counterintelligence.-- Communication security, with few exceptions, was especially poor at company and battalion level. This important item has not received proper emphasis in training nor has it been given proper command support by company and battalion commanders.

d. Intelligence Training. -- Many junior officers and NCO's could not relate the contour lines of a map with the ground. This deficiency can only be corrected through training.

Inadequate training in the use of the challenge and password was evident in many units.

Most replacements were unable to report accurately what they saw and heard. This can be partially corrected by giving replacements a brief course in the checkpoint system of terrain orientation.

Personnel should be given more training in the use and maintenance of the sniperscope. This instrument proved effective for night observation in Korea, but maintenance was a very difficult problem.

Intelligence collecting and reporting were not always integrated into unit training programs.

31. Operations and Training

a. Operation Orders.--When issuing written operation orders, some units found it helpful and profitable for the S3 to contact the subordinate units' S3's or commanders and go over the order in detail. By following this procedure, the issuing commander's concept was fully explained, misinterpretations were prevented, and advice and recommendations could be presented to, and received from, the subordinate units. Also, the higher headquarters could, at this time, receive the subordinates' general plans of operation.

Units attached to other than their parent organizations often had difficulty in establishing communications with the unit to which they were attached because of an incomplete paragraph 5 or the omission of a signal annex to the operation order.

b. Liaison Officers. -- It was found advisable to have battalion liaison officers at the regimental command post. They were especially valuable when communication difficulties were increased by fluid tactical situations and adverse weather conditions.

c. Close Air Support. -- We were not efficient, early in the war, in planning close air support missions because --

(1) Commanders had little or no knowledge of the air-ground operation system.

(2) Ground commanders did not comprehend fully air force capabilities and the techniques employed by aircraft.

(3) Air force personnel, particularly TACP's, were unfamiliar with ground combat operations.

(4) There was a rapid turnover of TACP's.

(5) Too much time was consumed by aircraft making dry runs and circling over targets to insure troop safety.

(6) Ground combat units failed to follow up air strikes quickly.

(7) Artillery fires, which had been lifted during the air strike, were not placed back on the target immediately afterwards.

d. Troop Movements. Many deficiencies in troop movement were evident in Korea. These were primarily attributed to laxness induced by the inactivity of enemy aircraft. The most common errors were--

(1) Failure to conduct route reconnaissances.

(2) Failure to maintain the prescribed distance.

(3) Poor vehicle commander and driver discipline.

(4) Inadequate movement control.

The problems connected with troop movements were greatly increased because remely rugged terrain and weather conditions. Such situations require lanning and carefully worked out control procedures.

e. Counterattack Plans. -- The soundness of preparing and rehearsing counterattack plans before actually conducting them was exemplified in Korea. A plan once prepared and rehearsed can be put into execution with a minimum of delay simply by sending a prearranged code name by radio.

f. Training. -- All personnel should be trained to assemble and disassemble their individual weapons and crew-served weapons in darkness. Our men, especially the operators of automatic weapons, were not nearly proficient enough in this.

The war emphasized the fact that physical conditioning of the individual soldier must receive additional stress during training. Physical fitness must be maintained by more energetic measures in staging areas, replacement installations, and aboard ship.

A lot of our men were killed in Korea because, for one reason or another, they entered hand-to-hand combat without their weapons. Combat patrols often could not bring back prisoners because they did not know how to stun an enemy without seriously injuring or killing him. All personnel who may have occasion to participate in an assault or defense of a position should be trained in hand-to-hand combat. Instruction should emphasize how to kill or disable an enemy with any weapon available; for example, bare hands, rocks, or clubs. These techniques are stressed in the revision of FM 21-150, Hand -to-Hand Combat.

32. Logistics

a. Control of Unit Kitchens. -- The nature of the terrain and the action in Korea normally permitted kitchens to be under company control. The kitchens were placed well forward at the base of a hill, often in bunkers, and it was fairly easy to feed hot meals regularly.

b. Issue of Winter Clothing. -- Seasonal changes in clothing should be planned for well in advance. In one division, the G4 and quartermaster planned for their units to begin receiving winter clothing early in September. The sweatshirt was issued first, then as the weather became colder, long underwear and finally, the pile liners, parkas, and winter footgear.

c. Ammunition Resupply. Ammunition resupply was a major problem because of the nature of the terrain and the lack of roads. Attacking troops should carry as much ammunition as possible to the objective, and they should be cautioned against expending it needlessly. If possible, each man should carry one round for a crew-served weapon, such as a 57-mm recoilless rifle or a 3.5-inch rocket launcher. This round should be dropped at a predesignated location where it can be obtained by the gun crew.

d. Hospitalization and Evacuation. -- Korea proved again that our basic concept of evacuation of the wounded is sound. The medical company, infantry regiment, has confirmed its worth. Our mobile army surgical hospitals, the use of helicopters for evacuation, and the flexibility in all evacuation procedures have been instrumental in reducing the mortality rate among the wounded.

e. Use of Indigenous Labor. -- Commanders should know how to use indigenous labor. In Korea, prompt supply and resupply by normal means was impossible. At first, we merely hired a group of civilians from some community to carry the supplies. Some of the carriers disappeared with the food and others vanished as soon as they approached areas hit by enemy mortar or artillery fire.

Early in 1951 an effective system was developed. Civilian carriers were organized along military lines into platoons, companies, battalions and so on, under control of their own leaders. These carriers were attached to American units, which had to furnish only the guides. The supply system improved tremendously.

f. Services. -- During the first 18 months of the war, far too many 2½-ton cargo trucks were deadlined. Adequate time must be allocated to perform scheduled truck maintenance. We also learned that vehicle parts wore out much faster than in World War II. Long truck hauls over poor roads, made necessary by inadequate rail facilities, greatly increased the need for vehicle spare parts.

Increased allowances of spare parts were also required for bath units, field ranges, refrigerators, laundry units, Coleman lanterns, etc. This increase was attributed to the fact that parts did not last as long in Korea because of extreme weather conditions and untrained technicians.

Spare parts for division aircraft were always short. For this reason, some aircraft stayed deadlined for months. Seldom were more than two of the division's five helicopters in operational condition.

g. Miscellaneous. Proper construction of bunkers should be stressed. During heavy rainstorms, many bunkers collapsed, causing needless death and injury.

To support an attack in Korea, one regiment used M-39 armored full-track vehicles to augment the Korean Service Corps battalion in transporting supplies to newly-acquired positions. This plan proved most successful, since quite frequently KSC support was limited by intense enemy fire.

One battalion reported that additional supply personnel were required because of the terrain and excessive time consumed in travel. In this battalion, the supply sergeant, armorer, and a supply understudy operated in the battalion trains area under the supervision of the unit administrator and battalion S4. One supply man operated on the unit's position and handled the distribution of ammunition, food, charcoal, and clothing. This battalion stressed the necessity for supply understudies because of the rotation program.

SECTION V. COMMUNICATION

33. General

a. Failure to Accept Responsibility. -- Commanders in all infantry units and staff officers on battalion and regimental levels often failed to accept fully their respective responsibilities in the field of communication. This was in part attributable to their lack of professional knowledge of communication.

b. Failure to Observe Communication Security. -- Commanders and staff officers often violated communication security by transmitting radio messages in the clear that could have been sent by other means or should have been encoded.

34. Radio

a. Knowledge of Equipment. -- Many units failed to install and use the remote control equipment available to the radio section because of ignorance of the equipment's capability.

b. Decrease in Efficiency. -- Some units did not make maximum use of the radio facilities available because, in the stabilized situation, wire construction was so elaborate that radios were not needed. This resulted in reduced efficiency in radio maintenance and the improper use of radio-telephone procedure.

Some units took positive steps to counter this laxness. The most effective step was the establishment of periods of "telephone silence" which forced the units to use the radio.

35. Wire

a. Repair of Wire Lines. -- Because of the extreme length of wire lines and the distances between command posts, an excessive amount of time was needed to find and repair breaks. Many regiments installed a switching central between itself and its battalions with an adequate number of lines from the regiment to the switching central and a minimum number of lines from the switching central to a battalion. With this procedure, a maintenance team at the switching central could quickly service the lines forward to the battalions.

SECTION VI. AUTOMOTIVE

36. General

Infantry units in Korea, as elsewhere, have pointed up the fact that doctrines and techniques as taught at The Infantry School are sound and correct. But, during the early days of the war, preventive and regularly scheduled maintenance services approached the zero mark. Local conditions, such as weather extremes, rugged terrain, and the primitive Korean roads caused minor vehicular deficiencies to snowball into major breakdowns. The traffic accident rate reached high proportions. There were not enough trained men to perform maintenance. An alarming number of vehicles became inoperative and many more had passed the point where ZI motor officers would have hung the "deadline" sign on them. Some units had reached the critical state in maintaining their mobility. Corrective measures were put into force and took almost immediate effect.

37. Maintenance.

First echelon maintenance was emphasized. Scheduled maintenance programs were based on the need for vehicles in a tactical situation. When in reserve or during a lull or static periods, the strongest effort was made to follow a scheduled maintenance program. During active periods, vehicles were given bumper-to-bumper checks by a team of mechanics when they were in a motor pool for any length of time. Contact teams often went forward from regiment to assist the battalions. Units kept records and the contact teams performed more extensive maintenance on those vehicles driven the most since the last check. This vigorous program paid off in most units.

The low percentage of qualified maintenance personnel authorized for a unit was augmented by on-the-job training of selected drivers, by returnees from ordnance schools in the division and in Japan and, to a small extent, by indigenous personnel trained as mechanics. This augmentation provided regimental motor transport officers with qualified personnel to send forward as contact teams while providing sufficient maintenance functions at regiment.

In addition to driver and mechanic training, some units instituted a school for motor officers. We found that most officers assigned as motor officers in battalions and companies had no technical training for the job-- they didn't know how to supervise drivers, mechanics, or convoys. We did not attempt to make mechanics out of these officers, but we tried to teach them how to supervise and what to look for.

Added to the measures already mentioned, units solved their own maintenance problems by --

a. Stressing at-the-halt maintenance.

b. Establishing a definite period each day for motor stables.

38. Driver Training

To offset the local conditions as well as the loss of vehicles in traffic accidents, some units instituted driver training programs, some intensified the supervision of drivers, while other units used a combination of the two. To a large degree, proper driving procedures (traveling in the correct gear for cross-country movement, driving in a lower gear with a loaded truck, observing rules of the road and safety practices), vigorous supervision, and driver maintenance lowered the vehicle deadline rate.

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