

LETTERS

USAF Museum

□ What is this business about an Air Force Memorial Museum taking over or encroaching on the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington?

The Air Force Memorial Foundation's choice of this site and the parent Service's apparent endorsement of it reflect not only self-centered indifference but a truly disturbing ignorance of, and disregard for, a monument that stands as one of the world's most identifiable and uplifting symbols of courage, commitment, and sacrifice for a higher cause—a monument that should not be overshadowed by a museum-like structure designed to attract crowds and sell souvenirs.

Such a thing does not belong on the acropolis adjacent to the Parthenon. Arlington is sacred ground. It has a purpose, a character, and an environment that ought to be preserved.

Col R.K. Morgan,
USMC(Ret)

□ Two thoughts occur to me concerning the site the Air Force wants for a memorial:

First, how incredibly wrong of the agencies responsible for such land use decisions. To exacerbate the congestion and gridlock already firmly established there again proves that stupidity is the defining characteristic of inside-the-Beltway decisionmaking.

Second, I guess it does reflect a certain cleverness on the Air Force's part. If you were the new guy on the squad, with little game experience and an intense craving for respect and legitimacy, wouldn't you try to get the locker closest to the team captain, and hope through osmosis or reflected attention that you'd be noticed? Some of us would prefer to establish our own place in the sun, not slip in under the shade of someone else's umbrella. The Air Force never has "got it."

Col Gordon D. Batcheller,
USMC(Ret)

Initiative

□ "Bravo Zulu" to Douglas A. Macgregor on "Initiative in Battle" in August's *Gazette*. His condemnation of excessive control from the top reminded me of an episode in East Germany during the days of the Warsaw Pact. As military correspondent for *The New York Times*, I managed to get myself "invited" to report on the Pact's 1988 autumn maneuvers along the Elbe River. While there was unhappiness at my presence on the part of the Soviet division commander whose unit I was observing in river crossing operations, he was nonetheless civil to me as my visit had been sanctioned from above.

Among the many questions I asked during my visit, was one addressed to unit leaders from platoon commander to a tank regimental commander: If during a combat action you saw an opportunity to score a singular success in pursuit of your mission, but it required that you depart from your orders, would you seize the opportunity? Alternately, if an action outside your orders would prevent the enemy from scoring a similar success would you take that action? In all instances and at every level, the answer was, no. Each explained that his job was to carry out his orders as issued—no exceptions. This and other related examples illustrated the rigidity of the Soviet military system.

Toward the end of the exercise, my host said to me, "I know why you ask such questions. You Americans are too much influenced by the Germans and their experience fighting us in the Great Patriotic War. They have told you that time after time, fighting outnumbered they won tactical

engagements through the initiative of their subordinate officers. While this may be true, I must remind you that we won the operational battles." He then went on to explain, "A commander conducting a major operation has many worries, one worry he does not need is whether his officers will do what he told them to do. Such a commander anticipates and can tolerate missed opportunities and absorb tactical setbacks, if the overall execution of his operational plan is carried out to the letter. That is what is expected of officers at all levels. Tactical successes do not win wars, operational ones do."

His was an interesting concept and one that worked for the Soviets with their devotion to the principle of mass. It is clearly outdated in an age of high technology and extended battlefields and one that probably would have led them to a costly defeat if a NATO-Warsaw Pact war had broken out after our system-of-systems way of war began to emerge in the eighties. Nonetheless, there is much truth in what he said, even today. There can be too much of a good thing, and while initiative should be a cornerstone of our officer training, it must never be unbridled. As Macgregor points out, the antidote is to make sure that all hands know the commander's intent and what his objective is. That which advances the operational goal is good, that which frustrates it for tactical advantage is bad. As for the operational commander, as pointed out in "Initiative in Battle," he is limited in what he can do at the tactical level once battle is joined. His job is to "read" the battlespace, provide his subordi-

nates with the information and intelligence *they need*, allocate resources like air and ground firepower, and most of all have the wits to exploit the opportunities generated by his tactical commanders' pursuit of *his* objective.

LtGen Bernard E. Trainor,
USMC(Ret)

OMFTS

□ In "OMFTS: A Perspective" (*MCG*, Aug97), Capts Douglas E. Mason and Jason F. Phillips entered the process of "proposal, debate and experimentation" called for by the concept paper *Operational Maneuver From the Sea*. It is exactly this type of discussion that will help the Marine Corps move from concepts to operational capabilities. To continue this process a few comments are in order:

• Their assertion that OMFTS is not ultimately focused on sustained operations ashore (SOA) and other expeditionary operations (OEO) implies too narrow an approach. The tenets contained in the concept and philosophy that underlies it apply to all types of military operations.

• The authors further confuse the issue by distinguishing between "pure" and "enabling" OMFTS operations. The point is that we achieve an operational level objective (whether unhinging an enemy force or alleviating famine) by applying maneuver warfare with forces that use the sea as maneuver space. We can make this as hard as we'd like, but I prefer to keep things simple. If it looks like OMFTS, smells like OMFTS. . . .

• Regarding SOA, Marine forces could easily be reconstituted at sea after seizing an objective and assigned a subsequent deep operational maneuver mission as part of a joint coalition force in a "sustained operation." In fact, this very idea represents one of the key elements of the *MPF 2010*

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and Beyond concept.

• The “unending search for littoral penetration points” does not imply a downplay of forcible entry. Forcible entry means taking the fight to the enemy’s territory, period. It shouldn’t be confused with assault of a fortified beach.

Marines will always be capable of the former, and hopefully smart enough to avoid the latter. *FMFM 1-2* defines forcible entry as a means for seizing the strategic initiative; nowhere does it imply the need to fight at the high water mark. It even goes so far as to state that landing forces operate from a “mobile seabase . . . to avoid enemy land defenses.”

• Let’s not be too hasty in saying, “Marines must get past sea-basing.” There’s a huge difference between a commander coming ashore to influence the action and having his entire headquarters element come along with him. Every non-trigger-puller we put ashore consumes rations, water, and gas better husbanded for the forces striking at operational objectives. I don’t know anyone who thinks sea-based logistics is a bad idea. Stockpiling supplies ashore is not only an invitation to attack but also a consumer of logistics and a rear area security headache for the landing force commander. Sea-based logistics is where we want to go—modified only by common sense.

I’ll close with a comment on the statement that “the Marine Corps and OMFTS run the risk of being overwhelmed by technologists.” Only if we let it happen, Marines. OMFTS is not about technology. It’s about ideas and what Marines have done so well for two centuries—adapt. The dialog is important.

Col Vincent J. Goulding, Jr.

Toys for Tots Program

□ This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Marine Reserve Toys for Tots Program. This is a yearly opportunity for the United States to see and meet with the Marines who provide the security for our

great democracy. During this time of year hundreds of thousands of toys are collected and provided to those who would otherwise have none. There is plenty of room for everyone to help:

• Officers and senior enlistees should openly promote the program to the troops (both Active and Reserve) and participate (lead by example).

• For the retired and former Marines, this is an opportunity to get back to our roots of “Team Work and Marines Taking Care of Our Own.” The inspector-instructor staffs are overwhelmed during December and would appreciate any help, for they ultimately have the responsibility of making the program succeed.

• For the Marine associations and Marine Corps League, this is an opportunity to help develop your community relations and increase your membership in your own backyard. The help you can provide is when toy collection points need to be picked up and distributed to the needy families. Join the local Marine Reserve Toys for Tots Committee to help improve local programs.

• Marine recruiters, have your poolees participate in sorting and distributing toys to develop the “esprit de corps,” leadership, and teamwork. This is a great program that high schools can participate in helping the community.

**GySgt Michael Ruffner,
USMC(Ret)**

Defending Norway

□ While the cost of maintaining the Norway Air-Landed Marine Expeditionary Brigade (NALMEB) equipment in Norway is low (*MCG*, Aug97), the overall cost of the NALMEB program is much higher. The shipping costs to rotate the equipment and supplies through Blount Island every 3 years must be included, not to mention the support burden on MCLB Albany. More importantly, the Marine Corps will not have an extra billion dollars in the coming years to replace the aging equipment

in Norway.

The Cold war is over, and Scandinavia is the most stable region on earth. Russia is threatened by a growing China and has territorial disputes with Japan, the world’s second largest economic power, which defeated Russia in a major war less than a hundred years ago. Russia also worries about the potential for a “fourth Reich” in Germany, which is the world’s third largest economic power and fields the most powerful army in Europe. Finally, Russia is threatened by Muslim unrest to the south which may be supported by two major regional powers, Iran and Turkey.

Russia views the United States and Norway as potential allies, just as we were during World War II. Marines can still train in Norway without NALMEB equipment. Finally, our NATO allies have ample soldiers in Central Europe and do not need help from U.S. Marines.

Carlton W. Meyer

Dereliction of Duty

□ I am writing to add some comments to LtGen Victor H. Krulak’s review of Maj McMaster’s *Dereliction of Duty*. While I feel the book’s author made a solid scholarly attempt at discerning the root problems that led to the debacle in Vietnam, both his effort and the review overshoot a few targets.

Gen Krulak’s review accurately captured the emphasis placed by McMaster on the lies and distortions of President Johnson and his irrepressibly arrogant, technophile Secretary of Defense, Robert Strange McNamara. Military literature, however, is replete with the opprobrium heaped on Mr. McNamara for his many sins. This scorn has only been reinforced by McNamara’s pathetic apology, *In Retrospect*.

What is unique and courageous about McMaster’s effort is his indictment of the military leadership of this era as well. Ultimately, their performance or lack thereof contributed to the debacle as well.

Thus, some share of the blame has to be appropriated to them as well. As McMaster argues—convincingly in my view—it was their inability to confront the civilian leadership to force a decision on a clear set of objectives, priorities, and military strategy that led to the long drawn out commitment with little real hope for success. In this they failed the President, they failed the Congress, and eventually they failed in their professional responsibility to the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen who served in Vietnam. This abdication of responsibility to the American people contributed to the long list of names on the black wall in Washington, DC, as well.

Only Marine Commandant Greene comes off well in this book. Gen Wheeler, serving as JCS Chairman, is depicted as a complete sycophant who willfully withheld information from his fellow members to support the President’s agenda. The author prefers to paint with a wide brush and indicts the whole sitting Joint Chiefs of Staff. In his final chapter, appropriately entitled “Five Silent Men,” he does not shy away from blaming Service rivalries and parochialism of the Service Chiefs for this failure of the Joint Chiefs:

Although differing perspectives were understandable given the Chiefs’ long experience in their own services and their need to protect the interests of their services, the president’s principal military advisers were obligated by law to render their best advice. The Chief’s failure to do so, and their willingness to present single-service remedies to a complex military problem, prevented them from developing a comprehensive estimate of the situation or from thinking effectively about strategy.

It is in this final indictment that the author oversteps his brief and his evidence. For as he previously covered in earlier sections, Gen Greene had argued strenuously, even with LBJ personally, against Westmoreland’s “search and destroy” tactics and attrition strategy. While he offered the

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Marine Corps' preferred enclave strategy and pacification programs, he also argued for additional strategic bombing targets and the mining of Haiphong. None of these can be judiciously labeled as "single-service remedies."

Gen Krulak's review was superb, but it does not address the unique element of what has to be considered a major breakthrough in writing about the Vietnam war—namely, the U.S. military cannot continue to hide behind LBJ and his collection of intellectually dishonest aides.

In concluding his review Gen Krulak was properly critical of McMaster's interpretation of the dissonant views held by the Chiefs. Such views, properly managed, should be considered a source of strength, had LBJ been able to see them as such. However, he was afraid that their opinions would clash with his own political programs and domestic policies, and he chose instead to isolate and ignore them. This mischaracterization, repeated by McMaster, has led to fundamental misunderstandings about how the Joint Chiefs of Staff should operate and contributed to the passing of Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. Maj McMaster's evidence strongly suggests that a sitting JCS chairman who supported the President blindly contributed greatly to the deficient decisionmaking about Vietnam, and that such action, now clearly facilitated by Goldwater-Nichols, can produce greater sins than the sort engendered by Service rivalries. This strong evidence undercuts the rationale presented by defense reformers for Goldwater-Nichols.

However, Gen Krulak goes on to suggest that LBJ never sat the JCS down and told them to "bring me a single comprehensive proposal representing your corporate view" without splits or qualifications on how to achieve U.S. political aims in Vietnam. This appears to contradict the reviewer's own well-substantiated requirement for a JCS that can offer diverse views and alterna-

tive strategies. Furthermore, one can argue as to whether the requirement to put together a single corporate view had to be levied explicitly by the President. Such a requirement would appear to have been a moral imperative since 1962, and only supports McMaster's fundamental thesis that the dereliction of duty that occurred during the Johnson Administration went well beyond the White House itself.

**LtCol F.G. Hoffman,
USMCR**

Urban Snipers

□ Capt Andrew L. Crabbs' solution to sniper fire when patrolling in an urban area is to provide the sniper with more targets, i.e., with exactly what the sniper wants. (*MCG*, Aug97, p. 31) The fewer targets in the kill zone, the fewer casualties.

The correct response is that the contact force, and only the contact force, handle the problem. Time is on the patrol's side. It should advise higher headquarters and then take actions that are appropriate to the overall urban security environment.

Remember, the fewer targets, the better! Let the enemy die for his country!

John H. Stevenson

A Second Korean War?

□ LtGen Bernard E. Trainor's presentation of a framework for a second Korean War was very well done. I propose an alternate framework however.

With North Korea in the midst of a famine of "African" proportions, their citizens may eventually self-evacuate to get food. The starved citizens will have three options—move to the cities, move north, or move south.

Moving south presents an interesting possibility. Hordes of self-evacuating famine stricken people would descend on South Korea and present a particularly difficult dilemma for the South Korean soldiers on the frontier. In the face of tens of thousands of North Koreans forcing a crossing of the

Demilitarized Zone, it is inevitable that a South Korean will shoot a refugee. Opening fire on these desolate civilians will cause a worldwide reaction; North Korea will poise to retaliate and the rest of the world will react with disgust.

As the alert posture of the North Koreans increases, more starved citizens will flee south and increase the anxiety on the border as well as inhibit traffic on limited roads. In the face of increased public scrutiny, the refugees will eventually be allowed to pass after only trivial inspections and facilitate infiltration by North Korean forces.

The stage has now been set to facilitate a North Korean attack—large scale North Korean infiltrations, North Koreans poised to retaliate or attack, clogged South Korean lines of communication, and border outposts overwhelmed with refugees.

This concept of a famine induced exodus serving as a front for a North Korean attack is presented only for consideration. Certainly, there are plans to deal with such an eventuality and this type attack would not meet with any degree of success. Regardless of plans and counterplans, we must always consider nonstandard positions and the advantages they present our potential adversaries.

LtCol Erik N. Doyle

Change in the Pacific

□ Although you may be "hated" for it, I salute the *Gazette* for publishing both sides of the Okinawa issue. (See Robert V. Hamilton's Aug97 article.) Winds of change are blowing in the Pacific. If our military does not make major concessions, we could get kicked of the entire island, just like the Philippines.

I also noted that LtGen Bernard E. Trainor's analysis of a potential Korean conflict correctly ignored what value four Marine infantry battalions from Okinawa would play in a war between millions of Koreans.

Carlton W. Meyer

Once More, the FAC Issue

□ Maj John D. Folsom's article in the Aug97 issue recommends changing the ANGLICO table of organization to assign a 7207 aviator designated as a forward air controller (FAC) to every firepower control team (FCT) in the company. While his proposal would certainly alleviate any perceived FAC shortage, it is an unrealistic solution as it would require the addition of 8-12 aviators to each ANGLICO. Witness the current paucity of company grade aviators in our wings today, and I think you'll agree that sending a tasker to the MAW G-I requiring an extra dozen aircrew for FAC tows isn't the answer.

Maj Folsom further espouses that "the universal spotter approach . . . is not the best solution to the problem" and that the concept "is not seriously discussed throughout the Corps." Interestingly enough, he need look no farther than the same page where his own article appears to find a rebuttal to his logic—from a major, a captain, and a lance corporal. While these three writers do not specifically use the term "universal spotter," their intent is perfectly clear and demonstrates the great concern for the issue throughout our ranks.

Finally, Maj Folsom suggests that all aviators are somehow more capable of controlling CAS missions than their ground counterparts. This argument is not new—it's a recurring fabrication which, intentional or not, is thoroughly misleading. The truth is, the only aviators who possess a genuinely fundamental knowledge of CAS are those who fly CAS aircraft—specifically Huey, Cobra, Harrier, and Hornet pilots and their weapons sensor officers. Does this mean that these are the only individuals capable of being trained as FACs? Of course not! The Expeditionary Warfare Training Groups continuously produce scores of capable FACs from all aviation MOSs. This reality demon-

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strates why the implication that only aviators can control CAS—to the exclusion of the equivalently trained ground pounder (officer or enlisted)—is specious.

The answer is not sending more FACs to ANGLICO. Rather, the solution lies in changing the way the Marine Corps designates FACs and ultimately in allowing nonaviators to earn the 7207 MOS.

Maj Nicholas Ferencz III

□ In 1960 as a newly promoted major, I was assigned from a fighter wing to HQ US VII Corps as the Corps air liaison officer (ALO) with company grade Air Force officers, both fighter pilots, at each of the divisions in the Corps also as ALOs. It soon became apparent to me that if the balloon was going to go up, and all ALO slots for the U.S. Army in Europe were filled, it would require the equivalent number of fighter pilots assigned to a wing! Knowing that squadrons were having trouble meeting nuclear alert requirements, it seemed there was a better solution. Noting that for years the Air Force had relied upon enlisted personnel to guide pilots through ground control approach in bad weather landings, it seemed reasonable that members of the Army air control teams who worked with the ALOs could be trained to direct fighter strikes and be awarded an MOS for that duty. Being members of corps units, they were far more knowledgeable about communications within the unit and contact with forward observers, etc. Following a field training exercise I forwarded my comments in an after-action report through channels to higher headquarters. It made it to 17th Air Force. The response was that Air Force policy was (and is) to have “Blue Suiters” direct air strikes. To ameliorate the squadron problem, “behind the lines” pilots were given training to perform as ALOs.

**Col Pete Boyes,
USAF(Ret)**

EDP #5

□ This concerns Ethical Decision Problem (EDP) #5 (*MCG*, May 97, pp. 62 & 80) and the letters regarding it (*MCG*, Aug97, pp. 10-11).

There is no place in the Corps for an officer who has lost his sense of propriety and decency, displays negative leadership, and appears mentally unbalanced with his fetish for indecent exposure and propensity for crude display of publicly scratching the wrong area. When the XO brought his behavior to his attention, he was “unreceptive” and “almost hostile”—danger signals that all is not well.

Alternative A is remiss by excusing the bad (sick) behavior by saying: “I don’t believe there was an ethical issue here initially. The battalion commander was doing what he had probably always done . . .” Both Alternative A and B erroneously led one to think this is only an issue about “how women are treated in the military.” It is not, going far beyond that to our basic philosophy of leadership, conduct, and decorum. It is about whether an officer is conducting himself with appropriate dignity and respect.

The two August letters are also off target. One suggests the lieutenant “. . . ignore his display by not peeking through the door,” thus blaming the lieutenant for the CO’s indiscretion; and reveals a callousness or lack of understanding of the power of command by stating: “No sense in involving the responsible XO—.” The other fails to understand that the issue is about an unbalanced person who is pathetic and should see a doctor. Additionally, respect is not “instilled” as the letter argues; respect is earned. Furthermore, authority (administered) that is unethical, immoral, or illegal is not infallible—it is wrong.

When no one comes close, as in this case, to getting at an acceptable solution, I believe the editorial staff should be prepared to give a reasonable “school solution” so that negative examples will not be the only leadership “food for

thought.” Such misdirection could adversely influence a lot of people towards negative displays of leadership to the detriment of the Marine Corps.

**Col Herbert L. Seay,
USMC(Ret)**

EDP #8

□ EDP #8 (*MCG*, Aug97, pp. 55 & 78) involved an officer who left the scene of a minor traffic accident before police arrived because he feared being accused of driving under the influence. In order to make a valid evaluation, it is necessary to know the specific location of the accident. Was it on base, off base, what state, what city, etc.?

Some states do not require police response to a noninjury minor traffic accident when both parties provide identification and proof of applicable insurance. No-fault coverage may also be a factor. Likewise, some cities, particularly metropolitan high-crime areas, do not respond to noninjury minor accidents. . . .

Alternative A is totally unacceptable. There is no evidence of DUI: there is a noninjury minor accident that may or may not be reportable; and there is no hit-and-run, fleeing the scene, or failure to stop and render assistance, or any other felonious actions. In fact, if nonreportable, there was no crime. The judge was “understanding” in that the probable charges had no substance.

There is also no failure to assume full responsibility. The incident was immediately reported to the chain of command. Poor judgment is a matter of opinion. If official notice is taken for every true act of poor judgment and for every fender bender, there would indeed be lots of empty “boat spaces.”

Alternative B is right on target; obviously written by a troop commander who has “been there and done that.” If “zero defects” means one strike and you are out, it is chilling to consider the long-term effects based either on rational human behavior or historical evidence.

**Col Paul A. Noel,
USMC(Ret)**

Book Is Available

□ Your kind review of our book on the Chauchat machine rifle (*MCG*, Aug97, p. 75) was mistaken in labeling it “Out of Print.” It is, in fact, available and priced at \$39.95.

R. Blake Stevens

>Member price is \$35.95.

Marine Riflemen

□ In reply to “Is Every Marine Really a Rifleman?” (*MCG*, Aug97), Capt Robert R. Gibbs III makes the point that annual requalification does not, and will not, make a Marine a proficient rifleman. Perhaps it’s time we recognize the real truth—there is absolutely no time to train noninfantry Marines to become proficient riflemen. In our aircraft wings, Marines are critically short-handed in their work sections, to the extent that it was addressed in the Commandant’s Planning Guidance that Gen Krulak published when he assumed the Commandancy.

The priority in the wing is to keep the aircraft flying—period. Everything else is a distant second. SNCOs are already so overburdened training their Marines in their primary MOS skills and ensuring that the mission gets accomplished that there is not time left for “green side” training. Working longer hours and through weekends is not the answer, as indicated when CG, 2d MAW restricted squadron personnel from working more than a 10-hour day. Wing Marines cannot add this training to their schedules when they are already in the field, because we rarely go to the field, in the ground sense of the word. The only deployments where we take our weapons with us are CAXs at Twentynine Palms—where we still don’t actually fire them.

It makes good press to continue to state that “Every Marine is a Rifleman,” but in reality, it is far from the truth.

GySgt Michael I. Mendez

The deadline is 31 December. Be Bold and Daring. Enter. See p. 48.