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Training Tactical Level Leaders in the United States Marine Corps: Meeting the Challenges of the New World Order.

**A Monograph
by**

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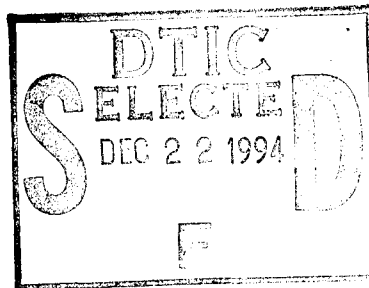
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ABSTRACT

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With the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States has entered into a time of global politics which has been called "The New World Order." The profound changes which this new order is causing within the U.S. government, and its military departments, has lead to the entire structure and doctrine by which the armed forces planned to deploy to be brought into question. The military is attempting to anticipate the requirements and likely scenarios which U.S. forces may meet in the future. The question which is considered in this study is whether or not the training programs which the Marine Corps has in place adequately train tactical leaders for the missions they are expected to face in the future.

To answer the question, the direction which Marine Corps doctrine and procedures are heading, and what impact potential and actual changes can have on tactical leaders is discussed. An analysis of the formal education, correspondence courses, and unit training which is being made available to the leader is done, and compared to the expected requirements. Where disparities exist between requirements and training, recommendations are offered to assist in correcting the shortfalls. The recommendations are aimed toward helping the tactical leader be best prepared to face the challenges which the Marine Corps believes he will face.

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ABSTRACT

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INTRODUCTION

It has been said that the task of military science in an age of peace is to prevent doctrines from being too badly wrong.¹ The same can be said regarding the peace time training of tactical level leaders. If the training is too badly wrong, the cost in human lives and failed military operations can be staggering.

The best strategic decisions, and force structure plans, will be of no value if the tactical leaders are unable to implement them due to poor or inadequate training. According to Ardant du Picq, "the instruments of battle are only valuable if one knows how to use them."² Sending Marines into battle without training their tactical leaders properly could well lead to disaster.

In Operation Desert Storm, the U.S. forces once again proved that they are well equipped and trained to fight a battle against a traditional foe. However, with the fall of the former Soviet Union, and the break-up of the Warsaw Pact, the strategic landscape has changed significantly. The probability that America will be required to fight a major war against a roughly equal superpower has been drastically reduced.

The United States is struggling with determining what role the country and its forces should play in crises which have erupted in places as diverse as Somalia, Haiti and the former Yugoslavia. Military leaders at the Pentagon and the

Department of Defense are also striving to determine what other potential threats the U.S. may have to face, and what force structure may be required to meet these threats.

The new threats which the U.S. may expect to face no longer fit just the classic definitions of total war.³ Military forces may now fight battles which fall into many categories ranging from total through limited war and operations other than war. Military doctrine is in the process of being revised in an attempt to ensure its usefulness for the future. Thus, new tactics and training must compete with the old in an attempt to ensure the continued viability of forces.

The Marine Corps is not untouched by the changes which the nation and the Defense Department face. Studies, such as the military bottom up review and internal Marine Corps working papers, have been done to determine what the roles and missions of the Marine Corps should be, and how the Marine Corps can expect to fight in the future. Budgetary constraints caused by the perceived reduced threat will leave a smaller Corps with less money available for operations and training. This reduced fiscal climate requires the Marine Corps to train its leaders in as cost effective a manner as is possible, while still ensuring they are equipped to face the types of challenges forecast by the national leadership.

The expansion of operations other than war will have a dramatic impact on tactical leaders. These operations

range from humanitarian relief efforts, to non-combatant evacuation operations, and on to peace keeping and peace making missions. Each of these military functions can place different requirements upon the tactical leader, and each must be taught. Though the Marine Corps has historically been involved with operations other than war it is not clear whether the current training program the tactical leadership receives equips them to operate efficiently in OOTW missions

Strategic decisions will also have an impact on knowledge the tactical leader must possess. Changing missions will require the leader to have a different understanding of the role and use of the Corps. As units consolidate, and their tactics and techniques change, the leader will be required to expand his knowledge of weapons and procedures. Smaller, more isolated units, will raise the decision threshold of the tactical leader and force him to take on responsibilities which he would not have had to face before. Where does the leader go to gain this knowledge, and is the available training sufficient to help ensure success?

The question must be, is enough being done to address the training which tactical leaders may need to fight and win in any conflict situation of the future? Great efforts are being expended to ensure the structure and doctrine of the Corps help to maintain its credibility into the future. Have the efforts to guarantee that the training given to

tactical leaders matches these new requirements been as dynamic? A failure to properly train tactical level leaders can have tragic consequences well beyond not making the best use of scarce training dollars.

The increase in the prominence of joint and coalition warfare will greatly impact upon how the tactical leaders of the Corps must plan and execute operations. It is also likely that the United States will become involved in regional conflicts where political constraints will prevent the military leader from utilizing all the combat power available to him.

Does the training which the tactical leaders receive prepare them to work with sister-service counterparts? Is the tactical leader prepared to work with current and potential allies, and does he understand how they will fight? How effective is the political training that the Marine Corps leader receives, and will it allow him to operate under conditions which will place restrictions on his ability to employ his forces?

Each of these questions must be answered before the Marine Corps faces a situation whereby a failure to properly train leads to disaster. To analyze the requirements needed, and the training which tactical leaders receive, it will be necessary to determine what changes in the planned use of Marine Corps forces mean for the tactical leader. It will also be necessary to discuss the training cycle for Marine Corps officers. This includes formal military

education, correspondence schools, and unit and individual training in the Fleet Marine Forces.

THE FUTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR TACTICAL MARINE CORPS LEADERS

To correctly focus the effort on the tactical level leadership of the Marine Corps, it is important to define what is meant by tactical level. Tactics are the art and science of winning engagements and battles. The tactical level of war focuses on the application of combat power to defeat an enemy in combat at a particular time and place.⁴ At what Marine Corps unit level can the application of combat power be considered to take place?

The U.S. Army considers the division to be the largest fixed organization that trains and fights as a tactical team.⁵ The Marine Corps, however, does not normally fight as a division, but rather as a task organized Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). A MAGTF will be composed of a ground combat element (GCE), an air combat element (ACE), an combat service support element (CSSE), and a headquarters element. There are currently three doctrinal types of MAGTF's, the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), the Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), and the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

A MEU is normally commanded by a Colonel, and he is responsible for applying the combat power at his disposal to defeat an enemy. This is, by definition, tactics. At the

MEB level, the commander is normally a Brigadier or Major General, while the subordinate elements are normally commanded by a Colonel. The MEB headquarters will normally function more closely to the operational level of war, while the Regimental Landing Team and Composite Air Group will fight the tactical battle.⁶ Finally, the MEF commander is a Lieutenant General. He is often also designated as the Marine Component Commander in a joint task force. He, like the MEB commander is usually concerned with the operational level of war.

Thus, the commanders who most often fight the tactical battle are the MEU commander, the Regimental Landing Team commander, and the Composite Air Group commander. Each of these commanders will normally be of the rank of Colonel. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the requirements placed on Marine Corps leaders and commanders at the rank of Colonel and below will be considered. Further, these requirements must be considered in light of potential threats to the nation.

Future threats to the security of the United States may come in many forms. Threats may come from nation states or from non-nation states, such as drug cartels and global religious strife.⁷ American military strategy now calls for strategic deterrence and defense, forward presence, crisis response, and reconstitution.⁸ The Marine Corps and naval forces are well suited to face two of these missions, forward presence and crisis response.

Forward presence, as used in the national military strategy, encompasses several different types of deployment, which can have differing impacts on the tactical leader. It can include forward stationing which is the actual stationing of U.S. military forces at installations around the globe. It may also mean the forward deployment of U.S. forces, such as the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), overseas aboard Navy ships for limited durations. It may also include ship visits, security assistance exercises, and other ways in which the U.S. military might work with other nations.⁹

The Marine Corps is in the process of reorganizing itself in an attempt to face these many challenges, while still meeting a shrinking budget. The decisions being made will have a great impact upon the training which the tactical level leaders will need. The Corps must now be prepared to show a forward presence toward both nation state and non-nation state threats across the entire spectrum of war and operations other than war. How this is accomplished will have a tremendous impact upon the requirements of the tactical level leader, and the training he will find necessary. To succeed in meeting its differing forward presence posture requirements, the Marine Corps is causing the Corps to reconsider its current force structure.

One of the key changes the Marine Corps is in the process of making is the dissolution of all standing Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) Headquarters. This decision has

been made primarily based upon the requirement to reduce personnel which is carried in new budget proposals. The expertise which the MEB staff had has been incorporated into the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Headquarters. The current plans call for the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) to be initially deployed and to be reinforced as the need arises. If the conflict is considered large enough, a portion of the MEF staff will be deployed as a "MEF Forward" element.

The effect this may have on the tactical leader is tremendous. The MEU commander and his staff must now be prepared to make critical decisions and implement policy at a level which previously was not within his decision threshold. He may find himself in diplomatic situations which require keen negotiating skills. He may be required to draft and implement rules of engagement at the onset of a mission. Mistakes in these areas could easily lead to escalation of conflict and magnify the difficulties in problem resolution.

This situation is further exacerbated by the creation of Marine Air Ground Task Forces below the Marine Expeditionary Unit level. These new units will be called Special Marine Air Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTF).¹⁰ The purpose of these units is to employ for specific missions of a limited duration. An SPMAGTF may be commanded by a Colonel, or a Lieutenant Colonel, and he could well be called upon to make the same decisions which commanders of

larger MAGTF's have traditionally made. As the United States moves towards becoming more of a force projection nation the role of the MEU and SPMAGTF may increase.

With fewer U.S. forces in a forward stationing posture, it is becoming more likely that regional strife can break out in areas where America does not have forces stationed nearby. This will require a forward deployment of U.S. forces postured in such a manner as to present a credible presence while not presenting an overtly threatening attitude. Time and again this has been the job of the MEU.

In 1990 and 1991, a MEU was called upon to perform this mission off the coast of Liberia and currently one is doing the job in the waters off Haiti. It was hoped in each case that the Marines would not be required to go ashore. However, in Liberia civil strife deteriorated conditions to a point where the National Command Authority determined a U.S. military presence on the ground was necessary to protect the U.S. embassy and U.S. nationals in country, and the escalation of violence in Haiti is making it more likely that the Marines will land.

These landings may or may not involve shooting, but the tactical leader must be prepared for any situation which may arise. He may be called upon to plan for extricating U.S. citizens from harms way, or to protect the U.S. embassy. The leader may have strict orders not to use deadly force unless his forces are deliberately fired upon, or he may be

required to plan and lead a forced landing against a hostile enemy.

In these situations, the MAGTF commander (and his staff officers) must be well versed in non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO), and defensive warfare. He must always be prepared to plan and execute an amphibious operation. However, what is becoming increasingly prevalent is the requirement for the commander to prevent his Marines from firing against blatantly hostile and threatening targets when operating under very restrictive rules of engagement (ROE).

Another role which the MEU or SPMAGTF may be called upon to fill in the forward presence and crises response arena, is that of containment. In these cases the Marines may be called upon to prevent the "little fights" from escalating into major contingencies, or "big fights".¹¹ In this instance, the tactical level leader may be required to be warfighter, arbitrator, diplomat, and negotiator.

If the MEU or SPMAGTF should find itself required to do a forced entry operation, the tactical leader must have had the necessary political-diplomatic training to do all he can to avoid escalation. However, should he fail, it is believed that a combined Marine Corps and Navy task force can provide the United States with its best hope for a forcible entry capability that can easily transform itself immediately from a standing start to intense combat.¹²

If the little fight does become a big fight, then the MEU or SPMAGTF will be tasked to "hold the line" until joint contingency forces can arrive from either CONUS or some other forward basing area. The MAGTF will then be required to assist the arriving units in integrating into the defense which has been established, and enable United States Forces to transition from light to medium or even to heavy forces as the need requires.¹³ This "layering" of forces will require the tactical leader to perform all of the tasks required to fight the little fight, as well as be proficient in understanding and performing passages of lines, integration of higher and adjacent headquarters, and phasing operations from single unit to multi-unit/service contingency operations.

Another major change which the strategic leadership of the Marine Corps is considering is in the area of the Marine Corps Security Force (MCSF) Battalions. In 1987, these battalions were originally formed to incorporate all of the Marine Barracks forces, Marine Detachments afloat, and two Fleet antiterrorism security team (FAST) companies. This was done to comply with the Secretary of the Navy's message in ALNAV 11/87. The requirement was for the "total reorganization of all Navy security forces to meet the growing threat of terrorism and strengthen its ability to detect and defeat attacks targeted at Service members and their families."¹⁴

The main function of the over 7,000 Marines assigned to the MCSF Battalions is to make up the main force for Navy Security Forces. They guard naval bases outside CONUS, provide shipboard security, and provide antiterrorism security. Further, they provide Mobile Training Teams (MTT) to help teach sailors, marines and their families stationed overseas how to combat and prevent terrorism attacks. The companies stationed ashore, and the detachments stationed afloat, are under the operational control of the Commanding Officer of the installation or vessel upon which they are assigned.¹⁵

An important side effect of the formation of the MCSF Battalions was the change in focus from performing primarily honors and ceremonies while providing basic security, to that of being a well trained combat capable force. Then, in December of 1989, the MCSF units stationed in Panama were given missions outside of providing security for the naval station and were used in combat roles.¹⁶ The success of the MCSF and FAST team forces has led to the call by some that these forces be considered as an integral part of any future MAGTF operations.¹⁷

If these forces are to be routinely considered part of future MAGTF operations, it will have a major impact upon the requirements of the tactical leaders, both commanders and staff officers which are assigned. It may even change the command relationships between the MCSF commander, the Naval Commander and the and the MAGTF Commander.¹⁸ The

MCSF forces should have superior knowledge of the political, social, military and economic issues in the country in which the operation is taking place. Further, they will be expected to be able to provide the MAGTF headquarters element with facilities and personnel upon which they can begin to phase their forces into country. Finally, they must be adept at all types of combat operations, with particular expertise regarding Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT).

The mission which the MCSF forces will be given will require the officers to have a greatly expanded knowledge base from that which they previously had. They will be required to understand intelligence gathering techniques and have a thorough base of understanding of the region in which they are assigned. They will be required to be fully trained in the communications requirements and logistical support requirements of MAGTF headquarters elements. Most importantly, they will be expected to have a full and complete understanding of the proper methods of employing Marines in MOUT operations. All of this must come without degrading their mission of providing security for the naval vessels, personnel, or their families which might be stationed in the area.

The conflicts, or little wars, which the MEU and the MCSF forces may find themselves fighting will most likely be regional in scope. It is becoming less likely that a major world wide confrontation between the United States and

another superpower will occur.¹⁹ In fact, over the last forty years, all military conflicts in which the United States has been involved have occurred in the "Third World".²⁰

To succeed in any war it is as important to know the enemy as well as you know yourself.²¹ Therefore, it is vital for the tactical leader to have a working knowledge of the goals and desires of his enemy. It would be very difficult indeed to train all the tactical leaders on the national interests of the more than 200 nation states currently in existence. However, it is possible to narrow the list.

It is currently believed that only twenty nations and states are potential threats to the vital interests of the United States. Of these, only twelve nations are considered likely threats into the near future.²² Commanders can further refine these threats into a smaller list which is most likely for his unit to face. It is then imperative that tactical leaders are given a thorough grounding in the tactics and techniques each of these potential enemies may use. Further, he must understand the goals and interests of these potential enemies to enable him to plan and properly execute military actions which may become necessary, and to avoid mistakes which could lead to escalation.

Regardless of the type of organization which the Marine Corps may eventually wind up adopting, or in what region of the world they may fight, the traditional battlefield roles

the Corps has faced in the past have displayed certain characteristics for the tactical leader. Battlefield operations, and amphibious operations in particular, are extremely violent and difficult to control. The tactical leader must understand: the nature of the landing force, the allocation of command responsibilities, ship-to-shore movements, survival on the beachhead, fitting naval gunfire support to the need of the landing force, the coordination of close air support, logistics, the combat-loading of transports, and the use of landing craft.²³

Since the Corps fights in task organized combined arms teams, the tactical leader must be familiar with the employment of, and methods for command and control of, all types of weapons systems in the task force. This familiarity must include both air and ground systems. He must be prepared to fight a determined and well prepared enemy.²⁴ The tactical leader must understand the psychological dynamics of the battlefield and what makes men fight in order to bring the most firepower to bear upon the enemy.²⁵

All of the knowledge discussed so far is required for the tactical leader on the battlefield. What if the leader is called upon to enter a conflict which does not fit the traditional battlefield model? Increasingly the U.S. military is being called upon to enter conflicts which do not require a warrior's skills, at least initially. Unlike combat operations, these operations may not be characterized

by violence and destruction. Field Manual 100-5 calls these missions operations other than war (OOTW).

Operations other than war are defined as: "military activities during peacetime and conflict that do not necessarily involve armed clashes between two organized forces.²⁶ Missions which can fall under this category include, support to domestic civil authorities, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peace keeping and peace enforcement operations.²⁷ Each of these missions is distinct, and carries with it certain requirements of which the tactical leader must be cognizant.

In April of 1992, President Bush called upon a SPMAGTF of 1500 Marines to help quell rioting that had broken out in Los Angeles. This marked the first time in over twenty years that federal troops had been called out to assist in riot control.²⁸ When working with domestic law enforcement agencies, military units are strictly forbidden from certain activities. The primary law which governs the use of U.S. forces in domestic roles is the Posse Comitatus Act (18 USC 1385).

If these missions are to grow in importance and occurrence, it may be vital that any tactical leader who is called upon by the President to assist domestic civil authorities be very familiar with the Posse Comitatus Act, and other regulations which govern his actions. Further, he must be able to interact with federal agencies, such as the

FBI, and develop an ability to integrate his activities with theirs.

In 1991, Marines were called upon to deploy to Bangladesh to assist that nation with disaster relief, and to provide humanitarian assistance, after flooding destroyed a large part of the country.²⁹ This operation showed that the tactical leader must be prepared to help rebuild national infrastructure, provide security to civilians, and establish communications links and medical stations to help with the initial recovery after a disaster. He must be able to establish feeding stations and logistical pipelines to ensure that food and other supplies are provided to those who are in need. Further, the tactical leader must be prepared to interact with the host nation government to provide services as needed, within legal limits.

Though disaster relief missions are important, perhaps the most difficult and dangerous missions which fall in the OOTW category are peace keeping and peace enforcement. Peacekeeping operations are conducted with the consent of the belligerent parties, designed to maintain a negotiated truce and help promote conditions that support the diplomatic efforts to establish a long-term peace in the areas of conflict.³⁰ Peace enforcement is a military operation in support of diplomatic efforts to restore peace between belligerents who may not be consenting to intervention, and may be engaged in combat activities.³¹

In Lebanon during the early 1980's, the U.S. Marines were involved in a peacekeeping operation. During the initial phases of the operation, the Marines were able to maintain the appearance of neutrality. However, as time went on, one side began to feel as if the Marines were there on the side of their opponents, despite the best efforts of the Marines to maintain their aura of neutrality. The Marines began to take some sniper fire and receive mortar fires upon their positions. The rules of engagement kept the Marines in a confined area without assuming any defensive posture that could be considered threatening to either side. The situation continued to deteriorate until October 23, 1983, when a suicide bomber drove a truck loaded with explosives into the barracks which housed the Marines. The result was the largest single day loss of life Marines have suffered since World War II, 281 dead.³² This disaster led to the conclusion that the Marines were not properly trained to deal effectively with the mission assigned, and that the tactical leaders should be held accountable for the debacle.³³

Thus it can be seen that peacekeeping operations can be a very tricky proposition for the tactical leader. He must maintain vigilance without provoking enmity. He must remain neutral, or at least maintain the appearance of neutrality, in order to maintain his effectiveness. The tactical leader must be able to establish and enforce rules of engagement which protect his forces without threatening either one of

the belligerents. He must be able to negotiate with leaders from both sides, in good faith, and be able to make decisions based upon the U.S. national strategy. This must be done without causing either side to feel that their only recourse to difficulties is to resume violence. Areas in which the tactical level leader must be trained include: negotiating, mine and booby trap clearing procedures, checkpoint operations, information collection, and media interrelations.³⁴

Peace enforcement operations, although perhaps initially more dangerous than peacekeeping operations, have more in common with traditional military skills and thus require less specific training. If it is accepted that at least one belligerent does not want the U.S. forces there, it is accepted that combat operations will ensue. The tactical leader must be prepared to project his force to achieve objectives, and aggressively patrol his area to protect his position and his base of operations. However, it is quite likely that the Marines will be required to fight under restrictive ROE. It is vital, just as it is in peacekeeping missions, that the commander have a clear understanding of what the rules of engagement are. For as it has been said, "In the murky business of fighting war as peacekeepers, understanding the rules is half the battle."³⁵

Whether acting as peacekeepers, providing humanitarian assistance, or fighting a combat operation, none of the operations in which the Marines have recently been involved,

nor those which they can expect to be involved with in the future, will be single service operations. Marines must be prepared to fight jointly with other U.S. services.

Certainly the concept of joint operations is not new to the American military experience. World War I, World War II, and Korea are full of instances where marines and soldiers fought side by side. On initial inspection, it would appear that it should not matter whether the unit fighting on your left or right is of the same service as you. However, at the tactical level there can arise some serious differences in doctrine and procedure which the tactical leader must be able to address.

Tactical Marine Corps leaders may find themselves attached to other service commands, particularly Army commands, without a senior Marine officer present. In this case, it is imperative that the Marine leader be familiar with all the aspects of the MAGTF. This knowledge is essential so that he can accurately advise and communicate with the Army commander regarding the proper utilization of Marine units assigned. Likewise, tactical leaders of the Marine Corps may have Army units attached to them, and the Marine leadership must know how to employ these units. In either case, any tactical leader assigned with Army units must be completely familiar with Army doctrine.

He must understand the concept of battlespace, and battlefield framework as his Army counterpart sees it.³⁶ He must be cognizant of the battlefield operating systems and

how the Army uses each.³⁷ He must also be familiar with the Army's method of employment of the particular weapon system organic to his Marine Corps unit. This will ensure that when he is given an order by his Army commander, or conversely when the Marine commander gives an order to the army unit attached to him, there will be no confusion regarding what is expected. Issues of joint doctrine are important, but equally important at the tactical level is the understanding of sister service employment doctrine.

Not only is it very likely that tactical level leaders of Marines may find themselves working for or with sister services in a joint environment, it is also likely that Marines will be fighting in a coalition environment with U.S. allies.³⁸ The number of potential allies with which the United States may fight is large indeed. It is not a prudent use of valuable training time to attempt to teach the doctrine of each nation to tactical leaders. However, it would be very helpful for the tactical leaders to have a solid understanding of regional requirements and socio-economic structures of the major regions of the world. This will enable the tactical leader quickly prepare himself to operate with allies.

CURRENT TRAINING PROGRAMS

The tactical leader of the Marine Corps can expect to receive his training in four separate ways. He will attend military schools, receive individual and unit training with

his organization, do professional study on his own time, and complete correspondence courses from the Marine Corps institute. A Marine officer may also attend other service or allied schools, or he may attend a civilian university.

For the purposes of analyzing the military education given to tactical leaders, four Marine Corps schools will be studied. They are: The Basic School (TBS), The Amphibious Warfare School (AWS), The Command and Staff College (C&SC), and the School of Advanced Warfighting Studies (SAWS). All of these schools are located at Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia, and are part of the Marine Corps University.³⁹

Further, the courses of study for Marine Corps officers which are made available from the Marine Corps Institute in Washington, D.C. will be covered. To complete the analysis of the training the tactical leader receives, the training plans from various units in the Marine Corps will be discussed, and the Professional Reading Requirement for officers will be analyzed.

Upon receiving a commission as a second lieutenant, all Marine Corps officers attend the course of study at The Basic School.⁴⁰ The purpose of The Basic School is to educate newly commissioned or appointed Marine Officers in the high standard of professional knowledge, esprit de corps and leadership traditional in the Marine Corps. To prepare them for duty as company grade officers in the Fleet Marine Forces, with particular emphasis on the duties, responsibilities and warfighting skills of a rifle platoon

commander.⁴¹ The school is a six-month primary-level course which lays the foundation of officerhood prior to initial MOS training and assignment to the FMF.

The officers who attend The Basic School have finished officer candidate training, and have already been commissioned as second lieutenants, but they have not yet been trained in any military occupational specialty. Significantly, all Marine Corps officers regardless of their follow on MOS attend TBS. This common base of training is unique at TBS, and distinguishes it from all other U.S. military schools.

Students at TBS receive a total of 1646.50 hours of instruction which is divided between 26 courses. The courses cover areas as diverse as land navigation, physical training, leadership, drill, military law, and amphibious operations. The largest block of instruction is in tactics (339 hours), and the smallest is intelligence (1 hour).⁴² The courses in Leadership, Military Law, Amphibious Operations, Tactics, Supporting Arms, Aviation and Low Intensity Conflicts should contain the training required to prepare the tactical for the challenges he can expect to face in the future.

The Leadership training which the students at TBS receive is a package of 24 sub-courses which total 35 training hours. Since the officers are all second lieutenants (with the exception of lawyers who, due to the extra training they receive at civilian universities, arrive

at TBS as first lieutenants) the majority of the leadership training they receive is very basic in nature.

The students are given equal opportunity/sexual harassment training, substance abuse training, and counseling skills development training. Students receive a two hour block of instruction on philosophy of leadership, and another two hours is devoted to a course entitled, "core values: professionalism and ethics". There is one hour of leadership in combat training, and a two hour lecture regarding the views of a combat leader. This three hour block of instruction is the only combat or battlefield leadership training which the students receive in the entire TBS course of study.⁴³

The Military Law portion of the curriculum is 11 hours long, three of which is the military law exam. The students receive two hours of instruction on the Law of War, and one hour on the Code of Conduct. The course does not address the requirements for tactical leaders regarding the regarding the use of the United States military in domestic disturbances, nor are they taught international law and the use of force.

The Amphibious Operations course at TBS is designed to give a cursory overview of amphibious operations to the students. The course is 82 hours in length, but 67.5 hours of this training is devoted to the Basic Course Landing Exercise (BASCOLEX). The BASCOLEX offers the students the opportunity to participate in the conduct of an amphibious

operation launched from Navy ships. It is designed as a capstone type exercise and is considered a training highlight. An additional three hours of training time is devoted to the course exam, leaving 11.5 hours of actual amphibious operations training.⁴⁴

In this 11 hours the student is exposed to the principles of amphibious operations, a case study, amphibious ships and the Organization of the Navy. One hour of training is devoted to the role of the platoon commander in amphibious operations. No training is offered on the moral domain of fighting such a strenuous and destructive type of exercise, and there is only a very superficial look at the command and control requirements for an amphibious operation.

The tactics instruction is the most in-depth instruction which students receive. It involves lectures, seminars, sandtable exercises and field exercises. Instruction includes: defensive operations, urban patrolling, rear area security, night attack, offensive planning, military operations on urban terrain, platoon night attack and squad tactics. There is also instruction on the theory of war, tactical planning and Marine Air Ground Task Force concepts.⁴⁵

This instruction gives the newly commissioned officers a good initial background into the battlefield requirements for the tactical level leader. It does not address many of the issues needed in operations other than war, with the

exception of military operations in urban terrain. The students are taught how to do patrolling in urban areas, but are not required to plan for rear area security. They are given general instructions regarding the use of deadly force, but they are not instructed on recognizing potential problems with rules of engagement. However, it does teach the officers the requirements for employing the ground combat element of the MAGTF, with particular application at the platoon level. This training will be valuable when small separate units are required to face conflicts throughout the spectrum of operations.

The aviation package of instruction is little more than an introduction. The course is only seven and one half hours in length, and covers close air support (CAS) procedures and helicopter operations.⁴⁶ The low intensity conflict portion of the curriculum is only four hours long, and discusses terrorism and counterintelligence awareness. Neither of these courses gives the student much of a background in either area, other than to familiarize them with the topics.

The course of study at TBS is, as its name implies, basic. The course is designed to give new lieutenants an overview of all aspects of being a Marine Corps officer, and in that the curriculum succeeds. Lieutenants are not expected to plan and integrate the entire spectrum of MAGTF operations, so it is not imperative that they learn all the command and control requirements needed to employ the force.

There is no instruction given regarding joint or combined operations. Although this instruction would be useful, it is not vital at this level. Lieutenants will not likely be attached to joint or combined forces without some other more senior Marine officer present.

A shortfall which needs to be addressed is the total absence of any instruction in the area of peacekeeping operations. In these operations it is likely that a lieutenant will find himself as the senior officer in an area when a crisis occurs. If he is not able to negotiate with belligerents, or follow correct diplomatic and legal procedures, the results may be catastrophic. It is recommended that room be made in the curriculum for students to be trained, or at least familiarized, with the requirements of small unit tactical leaders in peace keeping operations. This could be done by expanding the low intensity conflicts portion of the curriculum. It is understood that other courses would have to be shortened or removed, but it is vital to officers at the entry level to have an appreciation for the types of missions which they may very well encounter.

After completing TBS, the lieutenants are sent to their military occupational specialty training, and then to their first assignments. After five to seven years, they are competitive for selection to attend the Amphibious Warfare School. Officers assigned to AWS will normally be junior captains. However, it is possible for first lieutenants who

have been selected for promotion to captain to also be selected to attend the school.⁴⁷

AWS is a nine month, career level school, which has a class of fewer than 200 Marine Corps officers each year. This number means that only 20 per-cent of any particular year group is offered the opportunity to attend the school.⁴⁸ The course is designed to, "provide the skills and knowledge needed to operate effectively on a MAGTF staff or in a command billet as a captain or major."⁴⁹ The course is also tasked with providing Captains with an extended look at joint service operations. The school emphasizes combined arms operations, warfighting skills, tactical decision making, and MAGTF expeditionary operations. There are three main phases to the curriculum.⁵⁰

During Phase I, students study the fundamentals of warfighting. These include command and staff planning, MAGTF organization concepts, and employment capabilities and limitations. Courses are taught regarding the theory and nature of war. The levels of war, i.e. strategic, operational, and tactical, are introduced and the students are instructed as to the role of the Marine Corps in each.

Students are required to become very familiar with Fleet Marine Force Manual 1 (FMFM-1), so that they may fully understand the Marine Corps philosophy of war. After mastering this requirement, the development of combat power is presented. This instruction focuses on each of the elements of the MAGTF.⁵¹ An important part of Phase I

instruction is the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) process. This instruction covers the steps in preparing the IPB and the templates that are to be produced. The instruction is not tailored to any specific situation, but can be applied, with minor situational changes, throughout the spectrum of conflict.

The curriculum also focuses on various collection means to include: organic, SRI Group, and national assets. This training culminates with specific information being presented on North Korean, Iranian and other threat forces.⁵²

During Phase II training, the employment of the MAGTF in both the offense and the defense is presented. Students are exposed to forms of maneuver and the logistic requirements for sustaining the force. Through wargames and simulations, the students are required to fight combined arms operations, making sure they integrate fires in support of maneuver. Each major instructional unit includes professional reading and historical studies to ensure the students become aware of the requirements for fully synchronizing their assets in battle.⁵³

In Phase III, the students learn how MAGTF expeditionary forces operate as part of a Naval Expeditionary Force. It is during this phase that the students become familiar with joint doctrine and naval doctrine. They study how to deploy the MAGTF, and receive in depth training on amphibious operations. Phase III

contains the leadership package which the Captains receive during their time at AWS. The leadership curriculum is intensive and emphasizes moral and ethical leadership, and the personnel, administrative, logistical, legal, and organizational concerns of the commander.⁵⁴ After completing the leadership instruction, the students undergo specialized instruction in their MOS. Ground combat arms and aviation students work heavily in the area of fire support planning.

Finally, the students receive a detailed package on revolutionary warfare and MAGTF operations in regional contingencies. This course stresses the relationship of military action to the other instruments of national power. Students study the concepts of national interests and objectives, cross-cultural awareness and civic action programs.

AWS is an in-depth study which presents the students with an excellent background in order to enable them to perform on the staff of a MAGTF or in command billets. The instruction given attempts to at least introduce all of the requirements for the employment and sustainment of the MAGTF, in both battlefield operations and the types of operations other than war which the tactical leader may meet. It also begins to introduce specific requirements in potential trouble regions, such as North Korea and Iran.

The joint operations which the students are taught introduces them to joint doctrine, and gives them a two hour

block of instruction on the Air Land Battle.⁵⁵ This instruction does not give the students enough information on how the Army and the Air Force fight. As Captains, these officers can expect to be on planning staffs in a joint environment which have Army units attached, or which are attached to Army units, and in which the Air Force will provide support. In order to do these functions as smoothly as possible, it is imperative that the officers receive instruction on different service doctrine, not just on emerging joint doctrine.

The next school which Marine Corps officers have the opportunity to attend is the Marine Corps Command and Staff College. The opportunity to attend this school is open to those officers who have reached the rank of Major, or who have been selected to that rank.⁵⁶ The mission of the Command and Staff College is to provide intermediate and advanced intermediate professional military education to field grade officers of the Marine Corps to prepare them for command and staff duties with Marine Corps Air Ground Task Forces, and for assignment with joint, combined, and high-level organizations.⁵⁷ The course of instruction is 10 months long, and stresses the planning and conduct of MAGTF operations from low to high intensity situations.⁵⁸ The school averages 175 Marine Corps students per year, and also has approximately 17 international and sister service students.

The curriculum at C&SC is made up of seven core courses, each of which is linked to both the course which precedes it and the one which comes after it. The final event is a Capstone exercise which requires the employment of a joint and combined force at both the tactical and operational level of war.⁵⁹ Four of the courses offered should contain the training which tactical level leaders need. They are: Introduction to MAGTF Operations, MAGTF in the Defense, MAGTF in Amphibious and Offensive Operations, and Low Intensity Conflict.

The Introduction to MAGTF Operations course is considered a foundation course. It introduces the student to the deliberate planning process, and the employment and deployment of the MAGTF. The course focus is upon the MEF in a joint/combined operation throughout the spectrum of war. To successfully complete this course, the students must show an understanding of the composition, capabilities and limitations of each element of the MAGTF. They must also display an ability to plan for the use of the ground combat element, air combat element and the combat service support element.⁶⁰ The focal point of the course is the operational level of warfare, and the planning of operations. It does not focus instruction on the tactical requirements of the Marine Corps leader in MAGTF operations.

The MAGTF in the Defense course centers upon conducting defensive operations during sustained operations ashore in the Pacific Command theater of operations. The course is

designed around the requirement for a MEF to reinforce either U.S., allied, or coalition forces in a hostile area. The course assumes a benign port of entry, and thus allow the students the opportunity to work with the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) squadron concept. The scenario which the students work emphasizes the use of the MEF as a part of a joint or combined task force. This allows the students to learn joint force requirements and the joint planning cycle.

The course also includes an examination of the diplomatic, economic and political factors in Asia, with particular emphasis on the PACOM theater.⁶¹ Though not specifically tied to peacekeeping operations, or changes brought about due to the new world order, this instruction does give a basic understanding of the area to the students. This training enables the students to be brought up to date on the area should the need arise.

The MAGTF in Amphibious and Offensive Operations course uses as its base a MEF Forward in a mid-intensity level conflict. Students use a campaign plan to examine joint amphibious and landing force doctrine. The scenario uses the European Command as its focal area. The officers plan and conduct, through simulations, an amphibious operation in a joint/combined situation, and continues the operation using subsequent offensive plans ashore.⁶²

The final course is low intensity conflict. This course is designed to introduce the students to the entire

spectrum of operations other than war. The course covers insurgency and counterinsurgency operations, counterterrorism, peacekeeping and peacetime contingency operations. These operations are studied as to how they impact on MAGTF planning. The curriculum includes instruction on the roles and capabilities of the Marine Expeditionary Unit, Special Operations Capable (MEUSOC) in operations other than war. The students receive instruction on threats in the Southern Command theater of operations, as well as threats in Eastern Europe and Africa. These studies include an examination of national and international strategies for humanitarian assistance, counternarcotics, and guerilla warfare.⁶³

Throughout the entire curriculum, there are several recurring themes which the students are required to analyze. Students must comprehend the geo-strategic importance of the area of operations in which they are working, and its impact on the international environment. The school is a Joint Phase I portion of the two-phased Joint Specialty Officer program, so throughout the entire training syllabus joint warfare is stressed. This includes campaign planning, staff planning cycle considerations and their interrelationship throughout the levels of war.⁶⁴

The Marine Corps considers the Command and Staff College to be a school which begins to focus officers on the operational level of war.⁶⁵ This decision severely limits the amount of training which the officers in attendance

receive on tactical level matters. The instruction given regarding operations other than war and regional requirements will be very useful to tactical leaders. However, since the majority of training revolves around planning, there is little training on the battlefield and combat decisions which the tactical leader will have to make.

The joint training focuses on joint planning, and not on how other services fight. Furthermore, there is no instruction given regarding methods of employment which potential allies in combined operations will use. This shortfall can create hardships for tactical leaders and planners when called upon to fight side by side with other services and allies.

The final school which tactical leaders in the Marine Corps have the opportunity to attend is the School of Advanced Warfighting (SAWS). Students who are attending the Command and Staff College may apply for acceptance into SAWS. Each year about 15 students are chosen to attend this second year study program. The course is 11 months long and is designed to amplify the C&SC curriculum.⁶⁶ The mission of SAWS is: to provide the Corps with officers who are specially educated in the capabilities, limitations, and requirements of U.S. military institutions and can apply that knowledge to improve the warfighting capabilities of the nation."⁶⁷ The school focuses on campaigns and the operational art. It also considers how to prepare for war.

The school maintains four curriculum educational objectives. To understand national values, strategy and policies. This includes the dynamics of politics and the use of force in situations other than war. To understand the relationship between preparation for war and warfighting in particular. To be able to actively contribute to the development of doctrine, and to be able to prepare for and execute military and naval campaigns.⁶⁸

The course of study is divided into three major topics: Foundations of Warfighting, Contemporary Institutions and the Preparation for War, and Future Warfighting. Recurring themes are used to ensure a linkage between the courses. Some of these themes are: Operational Art, Civil-Military Relations, Innovation, Amphibious Operations and People's War.⁶⁹

The Foundations of Warfighting course is a study of military history. Emphasis is placed on the American military and the problems which leaders have faced. Case studies are used to provide examples of similar problems in differing environments, and to learn aspects of the American way of approaching war.⁷⁰

The Contemporary Institutions and The Preparation for War course deals with current military and political institutions in the United States. Its goal is to teach students how to discern what needs to be done, and how to get it done in the bureaucratic and governmental system which is currently in place. Case studies are used to help

students learn how to deal with any government institution which they may have to work with, and how to gain institutional cooperation.⁷¹

Students studying the Future Warfighting course trace the immediate, midterm (5 years), and long term (30 years) implications of a major change to a key assumption in current military thought or structure. Most of the course is taken up by an individual research and writing requirement. This requirement is a 35-50 page essay which studies the impact on current military strategy is a key assumption upon which it is based changes or is incorrect. The goals of this course include to train the students to think into the future, and to explain how history can be used to illuminate the future.⁷²

The school is designed to further the study of operational art in the Marine Corps. Similar to the Command and Staff College, its curriculum does not stress the requirements of the tactical leader. However, in training officers to look to the future and attempt to improve the nation's warfighting capabilities, the graduates of this course are well suited to look for training requirements and help build training plans to meet the needs of the tactical leaders.

With the exception of The Basic School, only a limited number of Marine Corps officers are awarded the opportunity to attend formal schools. This shortfall is addressed by the Marine Corps Institute (MCI) and the correspondence

courses which it provides. All Marine Corps officers who are not selected to attend the resident program of instruction for their grade are required to complete the appropriate level correspondence studies.⁷³ MCI has developed the Amphibious Warfare School Nonresident Program (AWSNP), and the Command and Staff College Nonresident Program (CSCNP) to meet this requirement.

The AWSNP consists of five areas of study: Command and Staff Planning, Offensive Operations, Defensive Operations, Amphibious Operations, and Advanced Tactics. There are four to seven subcourses and an examination associated with each area of study.⁷⁴ The courses offered mirror those available at the resident program in Quantico, Va. The study gives the officers a solid overview of all the major areas listed, however, it is not able to give them the in-depth knowledge in each area that attendance at the school does. There is no training in joint warfare, with the exception of the role of the Navy in amphibious operations. Also lacking is any training in combined operations. The instruction given on potential threats focus on North Korea and Soviet style adversaries. No attention is given to those threats which are most likely to occur, these involving operations other than war.⁷⁵ Since this is the only course of study which eighty per-cent of the Captains in the Marine Corps receive, it is vital that these shortcomings be addressed.

The Command and Staff College Nonresident Program is designed to study the art of war. It serves to link the

student's experience at the technical and tactical levels with the study of strategy and policy. It consists of seven major courses, none of which focus on the tactical level of war.⁷⁶ The course in low intensity conflict does address some of the types of operations other than war which the Corps may face, and as such will have value to the tactical leader. This lack of tactical focus in the course of study which the majority of majors in the Marine Corps receive is a critical error. Certainly field grade officers must be conversant on the operational level of warfare, but the majority of them will still serve in tactical level billets. The CSCNP should be focused on the tactical leader and the decisions and plans which he will be required to make. The resident program, combined with SAWS, should train more than sufficient numbers of majors to fill the operational level jobs which the Marine Corps must fill.

Regardless of whether the officer attends the resident programs or takes the correspondence studies, the majority of his training time will be spent in tactical units. It is not the purpose of this paper to critique any individual unit's training plan, but it is important to look at some to see what type of training the tactical level officers are receiving in the "Fleet".

Most units divide their training into two main areas, individual skills and collective unit training. Collective training may then be broken into squad, platoon, company and battalion level tasks.⁷⁷ Without exception, the collective

training tasks assigned to the tactical level officers is unit specific. Therefore, it must be left to the individual training periods to prepare the tactical leader for the decisions he will be called upon to make that are outside the "normal" unit specific battlefield tasks.

The individual training which the tactical leaders receive is diverse. Courses range from casualty assistance and financial management, to military ethics and USMC Philosophy of leadership.⁷⁸ Most often the students attending the classes are lieutenants and captains, while field grade officers are tasked to teach the courses.

None of the training plans studied provided courses on joint or combined operations, nor on operations other than war. In fact, though each plan met the Marine Corps standards for training, none had training targeted towards the field grade officers and the wide array of decisions which they may be called upon to make in the future.

The final area where the tactical leadership can look to receive needed training is the Commandant's Professional Reading Program. The stated purposes of the program include providing all Marines an increased knowledge of the world's governments, culture, and geography. The program also hopes to achieve a greater understanding of the profession of arms, and a better understanding of what it means to be a leader of Marines.⁷⁹

Each year the Commandant of the Marine Corps releases a list of books, divided by grade, from which he expects

commissioned officers to read at least three. Additionally, one book is selected as the Commandant's choice and all commissioned officers are expected to read it. The methods used for implementing the program are left up to the discretion of individual commanders, but all Marines are responsible for this part of their education themselves.⁸⁰

Although the program has lofty goals, and is an excellent idea, it is not uniformly followed. In fact, none of the training plans which were submitted for this study had any time set aside for reading or presenting ideas about any of the books on the list. It is left up to individuals whether or not they follow the program. Experience has shown that most Marine Corps officers have good intentions of following the program, and even reading more than the required three books. However, other training and operational requirements often overtake the reading program and it is pushed aside. The only way that the program can be a success is for commanders to actively take part in the reading program of their subordinates. Requiring officers to give a class to other officers in the unit covering the main ideas or lessons from books on the reading list is an excellent way of ensuring books are read by some, and that the information in the book is provided to all.

CONCLUSIONS

The various training programs offered to tactical level leaders does not adequately focus on preparing them to meet the tactical challenges of the new world order. With the exception of The Basic School, the formal schools and non-resident programs provided are heavily focused on the operational level of war. Joint training focuses almost exclusively on the joint planning process and not on how sister services fight at the tactical level. This at a time in their careers when most officers are going to face their most difficult tactical leadership challenges. Training in units tends to be unit task specific and lower rank oriented. Much of the learning for the future which the tactical leader may need is left up to his own volition.

Non-resident courses should be designed which cover regional geo-political and social issues, and which discuss major threat nation's tactical norms. Other courses should be presented which teach the basic doctrinal and tactical employment of sister services and major prospective allies. These courses should then become mandatory for officers of appropriate grades.

Further, units at the regimental level and above should have training sessions for field grade officers which cover topics such as humanitarian assistance, media relations, legal aspects of military involvement in civil disturbances, and other problems associated with operations other than

war. These officers should also receive training from officers in other military occupational specialties in order that they can be fluent on all areas of MAGTF operations.

It is not possible to accurately predict the future with absolute certainty. However, "In no other profession are the penalties for employing untrained personnel so appalling or so irrevocable as in the military."⁸¹ Failure to implement the changes recommended throughout this study may leave the tactical leader in a crisis position which he is totally unprepared to face. This lack of preparedness may be devastating to the Marine Corps and the nation as a whole. The Corps cannot wait until after a catastrophe to become prepared.

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⁷³MCO P1553.4. 1-20.

⁷⁴MCI Semi-Annual Course Listing, (Washington: Marine Corps Institute, Spring 1993) 33.

⁷⁵Ibid. 34-36.

⁷⁶Ibid. 37-38.

⁷⁷Second LAI Battalion Training Plan 1-93, (Camp LeJeune, NC: 2d Light Armored Infantry Battalion, 15 Dec 92) 5,6.

⁷⁸2d AAB, 18 Month Training Plan, (Camp LeJeune, NC: 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion, 10 Jun 93) Enclosure (4) pages 1 and 2.

⁷⁹MCO P1553.4: 1-16.

⁸⁰Ibid. 1-17.

⁸¹Douglas McArthur: "Annual Report, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 1933, quoted in Robert Heinl, Dictionary of Military Quotations, p329.

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