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Leadership for American Army Leaders

U.S. Marine Corps

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FOREWORD

1. PURPOSE

Fleet Marine Force Reference Publication (FMFRP) 12-17, *Leadership for American Army Leaders*, is published to ensure the retention and dissemination of useful information which is not intended to become doctrine or to be published in Fleet Marine Force manuals. FMFRP's in the 12 Series are a special category of publications: reprints of historical works which were published commercially and are no longer in print.

2. SCOPE

This reference publication was written by a seasoned leader for the purpose of providing a leadership primer for the thousands of newly commissioned officers of the expanding U.S. Army at the beginning of World War II. Although written almost a half century ago, the aspects of leadership discussed and insights presented in this publication are timeless. This publication remains a solid source of imformation for the young company grade officer facing initial assignment to a leadership position.

3. CERTIFICATION

Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

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DISTRIBUTION: TBA

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FOREWORD

The need for a brief, understandable, common sense handbook on leadership became urgent with the initiation of our present armament program. Before that there was time for junior officers and young noncommissioned officers to learn how to handle men by the trial-and-error method. Mistakes made resulted in no great harm since experienced senior officers and long-service noncoms were on hand to correct them promptly and put the young shavetail or corporal on the right track. By the time the gold bars turned to silver and the two stripes to three, the wearers had usually learned enough of the essentials to make a favorable showing as leaders.

We cannot afford to train our junior leaders in such leisurely fashion today. Fortunately Colonel Munson has provided a timely and powerful aid to speeding up the process. He has given us just what the doctor ordered in this monograph on leadership—the most practical, sanely balanced and usable treatise on the subject that is available for those whose business it is to know, train and lead soldiers.

Colonel Munson's book is primarily for junior leaders but it is more than that. Commanders of all grades —even the highest, if their minds have not taken on a permanent set—will find it useful as a check against time-honored practices that may be outmoded or which may never have been sound.

In view of the imperative need to train and train quickly a great army of subordinate leaders and the usefulness of this book to that end, it is not too much to say that *Leadership for American Army Leaders* is the most important literary contribution to National Defense that has come off the press since America began to arm. It should be read, re-read and pondered by every soldier in authority over others.

E. F. HARDING,
Major General, U. S. Army.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The principles discussed in the following pages are directed to leaders in general, with appropriate emphasis on the officer-leader where that emphasis seems applicable. These principles, even though backed with specific facts, are nevertheless expressed in the fewest possible words consistent with the objective of the book. For that reason it is felt that this is not a book that can be raced through and then shoved into a bookcase and forgotten—that is, it cannot if anything of real value is to be learned from it. It is the sort of book to be turned back to from time to time as a reference for handling problems—practical problems of leadership—that come again and again to every leader. It is the sort of book that it is hoped will supply a mirror for those frequent moments of self-analysis and introspection that are characteristic of every progressive and successful leader.

In its pages there has been an effort to keep a reasonable balance between what to do and what not to do. Since most of the material is focused on the problem of smoothing out the rough spots that arise in personal relationships, the superficial reader may jump to the conclusion that application of the principles given would produce a far too gentle and even an emasculated kind of leadership. Nothing is farther from the truth.

It is hoped that as each reader goes through the following pages he will keep one thought constantly in mind: A leader can be consistently hardboiled or con-

sistently considerate and turn out a passing job of handling his outfit. But if he shifts his pattern, mixes his shots—if he is so inconsistent that his men feel insecure in their relationships with him—he is inevitably doomed to failure.

To Brigadier General Edward L. Munson, pioneer in the field of scientific leadership, is rendered appreciative acknowledgment for the inspiration behind the compilation of this book. His monumental work, *The Management of Men*, has supplied much of the framework upon which it has been built. Indeed, there are not only thoughts but paragraphs herein which, with his coöperation, have been taken bodily from that book. To the staff of *The Infantry Journal* is expressed sincere appreciation for its invaluable editorial assistance and for the many ideas which have sprung from its keen perception of the problems of troop-leading.

This book has been submitted, as Army Regulations require of certain writings by active officers, to the War Department, which declared it "unobjectionable" without suggesting alterations or omissions. The views it contains are purely those of its writer and have no official inspiration or sanction.

E. L. M., Jr.

CHAPTER 1
LEADERSHIP CAN BE LEARNED

Successful handling of men implies the application of the qualities of intelligent leadership. The goal of leadership is the instant, cheerful, and willing obedience and coöperation of subordinates. Thus, true discipline is concerned with the desires, the mental states, of individuals and groups. "Mental state" falls naturally under the label *morale.*

Leadership and morale are not synonymous; yet they are as inseparable as the component parts of an electrical circuit. Morale is like the current—the powerful electromotive force—and leadership is like the conductor that guides and transmits that force to the motor. Hence the state or quality of morale produced is directly proportional to the quality of the conductor or leader. Thus the theory that leaders are born and not made is the saw of the defeatist, for acquaintance with the things that produce morale is one of the vital elements of leadership that any reasonably intelligent and forceful man can acquire, no matter how inexperienced he may be or how little he may know to begin with about the practical problems of leading men.

Since morale is a mental state, a psychological state, practical knowledge of the laws that govern human behavior is essential to its successful development and maintenance. Study of the theoretical, nebulous, and

abstract side of psychology is unnecessary, though any training in psychology that a leader may possess through education or reading is to his advantage. But if a leader knows the basic principles that control human behavior, if he grasps the realization that most men react in fixed and definite channels under a given stimulus or influence, if he can apply that knowledge intelligently to individual problems, he will possess the basic tool for managing men.

Some leaders have an instinctive or intuitive knowledge of human nature. These are the natural leaders. To the others but two roads to leadership are available: experience and study. The trial-and-error, hit-or-miss method—learning by experience—is costly in time and may well be costly in terms of the lives of men. This method has left a long trail of broken morale, faulty training, and inept performance behind it. Those who are its successful products rarely attain the maximum leadership of which they are actually capable. For since their knowledge is experimental rather than scientific the frequency of their mistakes under shifting situations is high.

In time of peace the costs of learning by experience are usually not self-evident. For example, if inspection discloses a low standard of training in his unit, the unit commander may receive a verbal lacing, and perhaps even some damning with faint praise upon an efficiency report he is not likely to see for years. But he will un-

doubtedly stay right where he is, waiting for further experiences to indicate further additions to his store of practical leadership—and the training of every man in his unit will mark time behind such a leader. For another example, a leader trying to learn the management of men through the trial-and-error method may for years produce a high rate of AWOL's among his subordinates before he consciously or unconsciously corrects the irritating flaws within himself that have driven so many soldiers over the hill.

Easier to see are the results of learning leadership through experience in battle itself. Back in 1914 the young lieutenants of the First Hundred Thousand led their men into action by walking straight ahead of them toward their enemies, swinging their swagger sticks as they went thus to their deaths. Here was leadership in the best tradition, in its way completely admirable—but in its way a hit-or-miss method, because it killed men by thousands and young leaders themselves at even a faster rate. It established a great tradition, yet it nearly wrecked the British Army. For morale just cannot continue to exist if you kill off the bulk of your men. More recent was the experience of the Spanish Loyalists, who had to learn their leadership right in combat itself and under the added handicap of political interference. They did, it is true, develop splendid leaders in their lower echelons—but the cost in men and in potential leaders was tremendous. No, the method of learning to

lead by experience alone, the trial-and-error method, is costly in time and in lives.

With a very few notable exceptions, the available writings on military leadership are based almost solely upon the individual experiences of the authors. Illustrating how successful leaders have handled certain situations, containing the author's personal list of "dos and don'ts" for young officers, these books are of definite value. But they deal with the results rather than scientific fact; and they fail to recognize that what is one man's meat is another man's poison—that two situations of war may be almost exactly similar, but that the varying personalities of the individuals involved may make the required courses of action very dissimilar.

The elements of leadership discussed in the following chapters are based upon sound psychological premise. That they exist is enough for our purpose; from whence they spring and why they exist is relatively immaterial. They will be studied from the viewpoint of their results rather than that of their origins, lest their analysis become obscured or entirely hidden in theoretical abstractions.

Successful leaders of troops all possess, to greater or less degree, certain definite qualities of leadership. Many of these qualities are likewise possessed by the men they lead. Furthermore, military leadership goes beyond merely personal qualities into the realm of

what things to do and how to do them. Thus it is impossible to draw a clear-cut line between the internal qualities of leadership and the external expression of those qualities through action. The elements of leadership now to be discussed are too closely interrelated, too interlocking, to permit of complete isolation.

CHAPTER 2

THE MANNER OF THE LEADER

Manner, usually an accurate clue to the state of mind of any man, but particularly to that of a leader, has an important influence on the reactions of others. An act itself is often less important than the manner in which it is done. For the manner may indicate the intent--and the intent thus shown may cause a strong reaction in the recipients of the act. This is particularly true of an act of speech, for manner is so closely a part of speech as to be inseparable (a fact that will be particularly emphasized in the following chapter). An injury that is obviously unintended is excused; a calculated slight, even if trivial, is resented. As the hero of *The Virginian* says, "When you call me that, *smile!*"

What is going on in the minds of men can often be understood without a word being spoken. Look, gestures, and tone—and even physical attitude or tension—give away the thoughts men are thinking. Thus the cultivation by leaders, and particularly officer-leaders, of a calm, controlled manner is essential. The leader needs mastery over facial expression, control over voice and gesture. If, for instance, an officer's words come from an apprehensive mind he will not otherwise readily conceal that fact. A degree of self-control is necessary to keep an unguarded expression or an unexpected change in voice from disclosing that

anxiety at a time when it should be kept hidden. Likewise, a reward conferred in a patronizing manner may lose much of its effect because of the resentment and opposition aroused by the manner of giving it. Similarly, severeness, austerity, strictness of manner balk sympathy and confidence. Frequent irritation, petulance, uncontrolled shows of temper, and bursts of anger indicate that a leader does not have even himself in hand. Moreover, such lack of control lowers a leader's prestige and may even make him laughable. Donald Duck is funny, and so may any man be who commonly bursts into tantrums. In sum, the manner of the leader toward his men makes for or against coöperation.

All human beings are imitative, and soldiers of all grades and ranks especially tend to copy and react to the outward expressions of their leaders. Thus not only the thing to be done but the manner of doing it may be conveyed by suggestion. All drillmasters realize that their precision and bearing, and the snap and vigor of their commands, is directly reflected in the drill of their units. The same comparison holds between the giving of any order and the way it is carried out.

This holds good even more broadly of an appearance of calmness on the leader's part, particularly when everything seems to be going wrong. Few things can keep up the morale of troops better than the realization that their leader, with full knowledge of the difficulties of a situation, neither looks nor acts as worried as per-

haps he has a right to be. Many think that Papa Joffre's refusal to get excited when the French armies of 1914 were retreating day after day toward Paris was by far the most important element in the eventual stemming of that earlier German tide. Again, we know from George Washington's confidential letters to Congress how nearly desperate he often was over the situation in his army. But so far as we can tell from the descriptions of his manner, written by those who were with him in those times of stress, he seldom betrayed even to the members of his staff or to his aides in the course of daily association any degree of the worry and general disturbance of mind apparent in his confidential letters. Instead, his almost lofty calmness held his troops together, as we know, through the most desperate situations.

At the same time, it is possible to carry an outward appearance of calmness and disregard too far. A completely phlegmatic manner in times of great stress may help others to stay calm, but it will not inspire them to a maximum effort. Thus the manner of a leader in a tight situation may well be touched with contagious excitement so long as it is an excitement not of apprehension but of effort.

CHAPTER 3

THE LANGUAGE OF THE LEADER

Language, a component of manner, is another of the outward marks by which a leader can be judged. What he says and the forms of expression he uses give much information of his mental state or the attitude behind it.

The words the leader uses to his men should largely be chosen for the thought or purpose he wants to express. Particularly when he wants to put something over emphatically should his words be short, clear in their meaning, and understandable to the man he is addressing. High-flung, ten-dollar words or technical language are meaningless to the mind of a man who may never have heard the words. This does not mean, however, that a leader must speak in words of one syllable. In the army of today he will seldom find uncultivated minds so lacking in ordinary comprehension that he will be justified in using the language he would use, in effect, to children. All he needs to do is to speak plainly and simply, and if he must use terms which he thinks the man he is talking to may not clearly understand, then he should make sure the meaning of these terms is understood, even if the terms demand a full and patiently given explanation.

An officer should never make the mistake of stooping to the vulgar or the illiterate, even if such speech is the normal talk of the particular men he is directing. But

this does not mean that he must make any effort to "talk like a book," or that he should avoid good, plain, colloquial speech. In fact, this kind of speech will usually put his meaning over much better than stiffer and more formal speech. It is astonishing how men of even considerable intelligence have difficulty in understanding speech not put in ordinary terms. There is, at the same time, no need to be ungrammatical or to make much use of slang except where a word of slang may convey the meaning more concisely and vividly than any other term. This is particularly true if within the leader's unit some slang term or nickname is in constant use. What particular good does it do to speak of "weapons-carriers" if they are known to every man as "jeeps"? And what term puts over the idea better to troops than the word "chow"? Indeed, for some terms of slang in constant use there are no adequate substitutes.

Sentences should be short, uninvolved, and incisive. They should be positive and direct, not uncertain, inconclusive, or negative. To say, for example, "I'm sure you can do it," "You're just the man to do it," "There must be a way—I know you can find it," produces confidence, self-reliance, and determination. But such language as, "Maybe you can do it," "See if you can't do it," "I doubt if you can do it—but go ahead and try," brings doubt and wavering.

Cursing and profanity have always been common in armies. Whether this is caused by excess energy pent up

by military restrictions, by the absence of the tempering influence of women, or by the mistaken idea that it is the sign of a he-man is immaterial. Ignoring purely ethical reasons, immoderate language habitually used toward subordinates almost always produces unfavorable results both in the individual and the unit.

One of George Washington's first general orders was an effort to curb loose language. Such language should certainly be kept governed, at least to the extent of not allowing it in the presence of officers. For if a leader lets his men run wild in this respect—if he permits the use of any language, however obscene—a lack of general control is apt to become taken for granted.

Yet, here too judgment is required. A leader can overdo the thing and thus detract from his leadership if he harps continually on the subject and draws the line of niceness in language too closely. There are many situations in such an uncertain activity of man as warfare that bear strongly upon the emotions. A leader may well overlook the blowing-off of steam whenever the occasion seems to warrant it. And it often may seem to in actual war. After all, a soldier is first of all things a man who fights, and if there is a traditional language of war he can be expected to use it at times. George Washington did, despite his first general order.

To curse any man himself is usually to affront him through his realization of the intent to insult. Sometimes such intent is modified or shown to be absent by

manner. Then, too, there are men whose use of profanity is so habitual that it is recognized as entirely impersonal. But these are the exceptions. To permit loose language by subordinate leaders is to risk friction, resentment, quarreling—even insubordination.

Swearing at men by their superiors is bitterly resented. They are not only affronted, they are humiliated; for their self-respect has been impaired unless they retaliate. Since in the military service retaliation is impossible, they feel, and rightly so, that the superior has taken an unfair advantage of his authority. They may brood over the insult, alone or with friends. If hot-tempered, they may commit the serious offenses of disobedience or assault. At the least, the superior produces sullenness and animosity among his subordinates. And often he also produces a state of mind in which the only escape from a seemingly intolerable situation appears to be absence without leave or desertion.

The same thing applies to any immoderate language. It does not necessarily have to be actual cursing at men to arouse their antagonism and lose in great measure their esteem and admiration for their leader. An actual case in point is that of a company commander who, dissatisfied with the appearance of his company at Saturday inspection, drew them up in front of barracks and proceeded to inform them in no uncertain terms, without, however, using actual profanity, that the whole company was "lousy" in appearance. To add

emphasis, this commander went on to say in his harangue, "And any man who won't properly clean up for Saturday inspection is a yellow-bellied Bolshevik."

Even though the company had often heard similar language from this particular commander, the words he used this time were taken as a direct insult by practically every man in the company, although they were not actually meant as such but were simply spoken in haste and ill-temper. The result was that certain responsible noncommissioned officers of the company were so disturbed over the state of affairs that they went to the regimental commander and reported the matter, and it naturally took all the tact in the world on the part of the regimental commander to straighten the situation out—a thing he managed to succeed in doing without particular injury to what was left of the leadership of the company commander.

This example brings out another important point about language used toward subordinates. It is not likely that there will ever be a unit in our army or any other which will deserve a wholesale reprimand. In the company referred to above, only some fifteen or sixteen men out of sixty-odd were picked up at the inspection as not having properly prepared for it. Yet the whole unit was subjected to the ranting of its commander. There were plenty of fine men in that unit, none of whom deserved criticism or blame. There is nothing better calculated to reduce the state of morale than just

such wholesale criticism and wholesale punishments following it. Nothing creates resentment so readily.

Likewise, the "bawling out" of a man or men is resented as being a personal attack. It is in fact more often an expression of anger that a correction. The more or less impersonal point at issue is lost, and the matter becomes a mental clash between individuals.

Again, to reprimand a subordinate leader before his men lowers his prestige and correspondingly increases his resentment. It is hard to imagine any circumstances, excepting in combat when lives are at stake, when such treatment is justifiable.

Indeed, if violent language ever has any basis for use that use should be reserved for extreme emergency —the emergency of extreme danger, of the battlefield. A tongue-lashing may then have a stimulating and steadying effect which is lost if such speech is habitual.

Sarcasm or irony does not necessarily convey an insult, for the manner in which it is spoken shows the intent. Its wittiness sometimes lacks the sting of reproof, yet drives home the lesson. It is useful with some types of men; but it must be employed with care, it must not become habitual, and it must never have the apparent purpose of causing humiliation.

There are many men to whom sarcasm or irony are not readily apparent as such, and with these men it tends sooner or later to create a kind of bewildered resentment. Such a man is never quite sure what his

leader means. Again, heavy sarcasm habitually used soon creates a general resentment because men feel that their leader is taking advantage of his position to be sarcastic. Even a bantering tone should not be used habitually. And when a leader makes a joke of something a subordinate does, as he occasionally may do to lighten a serious or tiring situation or otherwise cheer the spirits of his men, he should always try not to do so in a way that will hurt the feelings of the man himself.

Too much wise-cracking on the part of the leader will also inevitably result in wise-crack replies from his troops. The American soldier is too used to that kind of talk to resist coming back with it if he thinks he can get away with it. He will have reason to think he can get away with it if he is habitually on the receiving end of such remarks. At the same time, any wise leader will know that in certain circumstances a certain amount of joking and wise-cracking is what the situation calls for. It is good when there is discouragement in the air. A flash of humor helps at a time when exhausted troops must be called upon for another effort. It tends to give confidence in any time of stress. Indeed, it is often the American way of implying sympathy and understanding and even coöperation in the midst of difficulty.

CHAPTER 4

TACTFULNESS CAN BE ACQUIRED

Few assets are more valuable to an officer than tact. Tact is the ability to deal with men without generating friction, without giving them offense. It is the common sense appreciation of when and how to do things.

Like many other qualities of leadership, tact may be to a certain extent a natural endowment, but it can be acquired and developed. Intelligent analysis of personal acts that have caused antagonism will demonstrate either that the time selected was not a good time, or that the language, the approach to the act, or the manner of the act was unfortunate. And, too, tact undergoes an unconscious and natural development as a by-product of experience in handling men.

Lack of tact is always resented, even though the subordinate may realize that there was no intent to hurt. The tactless superior, sensing friction and opposition but feeling that his act was based upon his own best judgment, himself develops resentment, with resulting damage to coöperation and efficiency. Every officer, no matter how scant his experience, can recall times when his tactlessness has brought him results the opposite of those he desired; or where, conversely, the exercise of tact—the diplomatic choosing of his time and manner of approach—has eased situations that might have proven disastrous.

Tact is particularly called for in those dealings with subordinates in which a personal element is involved. For example, it may be necessary to tell a hard-working, driving subordinate leader that he is asking a little more of those under him than they can reasonably be expected to produce. The criticism has to be made in such a way that it will be apparent, yet neither cause discouragement nor detract from the drive and energy of the subordinate leader. Here perhaps it is usually wise to open up with a compliment on good work done—and then to say that there are certain aspects of the subordinate's work that he can improve.

One commander in our Army today, in calling to the attention of junior officers their faults and errors, successfully uses the method of telling them that he wants very much to give them outstanding efficiency reports but that there are certain improvements he thinks they need to make in themselves before he can give them the kind of report he knows they have the stuff in them to deserve. Other leaders in seeking improvement in enlisted men—where criticism, rather than blame or punishment for something done, is involved—always speak of the good points along with the bad. To do so is to use genuine tact. Tact is, of course, very close to courtesy and even to cheerfulness, both of which will be covered in later chapters.

Subordinates usually are more tactful to leaders than leaders are toward subordinates; the junior recognizes

that antagonizing his superior will bring results probably immediate and painful, and certainly disadvantageous to himself. No such brake exists over the leader—the results of his tactlessness are more remote and certainly less easy to recognize. Nevertheless, they are there—and they are doubly dangerous, for they are cumulative. Briefly, tact, like courtesy, works from the top down as well as from the bottom up.

CHAPTER 5

CHEERFULNESS SPREADS; SO DOES GLOOM

Since the countless factors that promote cheerfulness are among the elements that develop morale, this whole book is actually devoted to methods and measures for its maintenance. But in considering cheerfulness as a necessary trait for a leader, it must be repeated to begin with that subordinates are imitative and that the leader's example will be copied by those he leads.

Close to cheerfulness is optimism—the ability to see and to emphasize the brighter side of things. The optimistic leader is not a man who sees this world as the best of all possible worlds—a man who foolishly insists, whether sincerely or not, that everything that happens is for the best. For men readily detect sham and artificiality, and quite as readily detect foolish optimism. The truly optimistic leader is one who sees and points out every possibility, however slight, that will make for eventual success.

On the other hand, the pessimist who dwells continually on the dark side of every situation spreads apprehension, doubt, gloom, and even despair when combat has its tight, doubtful, or discouraging aspects. A long face is seldom if ever the face for a leader. It may be useful at rare times to tone down too high a degree of optimism. But it often earns the nickname "Sourpuss" among subordinates—a name that inevi-

tably carries with it a certain implication that the troops find something a little wanting in their leader.

At the same time, it must be remembered that there are certain men whose facial muscles are so inflexible that they are not able to smile or even look cheerful without actual muscular effort, and that for like reason some men cannot smile freely at all. A leader who has this handicap can readily offset it through the cheerfulness of the words he uses, and even by the expression of his eyes as he speaks.

The following incident illustrates the influence of a typical gloom-sower. A company commander, in a regiment that had suddenly been ordered on an expedition which in all probability was going to involve some fighting, assembled his company to give them a last talk before they boarded the transport. For more than half an hour he gave them a long-faced, serious, and rambling speech about the extraordinary duties they would probably have to perform, the extraordinary difficulties with which they might be faced when they came to fighting the probable enemy, and the practical certainty that a number of them would not survive the expedition. In a feeble attempt to speak lightly of a serious matter he brought out this last point by saying several times, "Don't forget it! Some of you are going to be pushing up daisies when this thing is over!" There was not one word of cheer in his whole harangue. It cast a definite gloom over the whole company.

Only the excitement of the expedition and the hard and interesting work of doing such special training as could be done on the transport helped to dispel the general gloom created by this leader. As a matter of fact, these very things eventually brought this leader himself out of his pessimism.

Of a similar nature to cheerfulness and optimism is enthusiasm—doing things with vigor because of willingness and gratification in accomplishment, rather than doing them halfheartedly merely because it is duty. But enthusiasm cannot be allowed to run so wild that it produces distortion of values or blinds to fatal miscalculations. To Davy Crockett's "Be sure you're right; then go ahead" we can well add, "And while you are going ahead be sure that you continue to be right."

CHAPTER 6

COURTESY HAS NO LIMITS

Courtesy is politeness, a civility in which a superior cannot afford to be outdone by a subordinate. It is the lubricant of human relations—a thing that has no limits as to rank or status. To demand it from a subordinate and to fail to return it in full measure is to indicate either an arrogance or a lack of interest that has no place in leadership. The inexperienced often feel that politeness in a military leader implies softness; or worse, that from a subordinate it indicates bootlicking. Nothing is farther from the truth. Real courtesy is simply common everyday civility.

Someone once compared politeness to an air-cushion. He said that there was nothing in it, but that it eased the joints of human contact wonderfully. There may be nothing in it that can be grasped physically or converted into dollars and cents. The dividends it pays are found in the contentment, good will, mutual appreciation, and smooth functioning of the unit toward which it is used.

Courtesy, naturally, is a matter of words and actions both. One leader may habitually bark out his orders, impersonally but abruptly. Another leader may habitually give his orders in a tone tinged with a courtesy that implies the expectancy of obedience. Both of these leaders will get obedience. But the second of the two will get the more willing obedience and coöperation.

In times of emergency, of course, abrupt rapid-fire orders become desirable because they save time and there is no need to imply expected obedience, no need to do anything but make oneself perfectly plain and clear and forceful. There are times, too, when force can well replace a courteous tone, but even then there is never any reason for pure discourtesy. At most other times a leader will find that a somewhat mild, courteous, though firm mode of address will bring response.

Thus courtesy is closely tied in with manner and language. It can also be added that habitual courtesy is an example often imitated by subordinate leaders.

CHAPTER 7

THE LEADER'S DECISION OF MIND

The leader who never seems to be able to make up his mind, who is always conferring and consulting with others, lacks decision of character—the ability to reach his own conclusions. Such a leader seldom gains the confidence of his men, for troops are quick to notice his lack of force.

The man who dawdles, who keeps his men waiting in idleness, who repeatedly changes without sound reason the courses and methods he has once adopted, irritates his subordinates. A spirit of grumbling is never caused in a unit by work alone. As a matter of fact, no good troops mind work once they are at it and have an idea of its purpose. But waiting around for a leader to make up his mind is a potent source of griping. Perhaps only one other thing is worse, and that is when work once started is interrupted over and over again because of the leader's inability to form a plan and follow it through.

There has been an emphasis, in some past military instruction, on the thought that if a leader makes a poor plan of action, and then comes to a fast decision on it and carries it out vigorously, he will be more successful than if he does nothing at all. This, of course, is too general a principle to go on as a rule because there are often situations in which the best possible decision is

to do nothing whatever for the time being. Hence an "action at all costs" attitude leads to ill-considered and hasty action, with costly results.

Timidity due to lack of experience is the chief cause of this lack of decision, especially in younger officers. Haste is no remedy for such timidity. A decision must be thought out. A habit of rushing ahead blindly merely to be doing something is stupid—and stupidity in battle almost always leads into needless danger and loss. Only by observation, and plenty of practice and effort, and by some intelligent self-analysis, can a leader develop the self-confidence he needs.

No leader should neglect the opinions and suggestions of others. An officer who will listen to nobody is a self-opinionated fool. But once he has heard the ideas of others, the leader himself must make the decision. In other words, he must possess self-confidence, and the ability to weigh the opinions of others, rather than conceit. At the same time, the value of the opinions of others must never be held so high that the leader turns to his assistants for advice on every minor matter. In general, the time should be taken to do this only when the suggestions of others will actually be of value in arriving at decisions. A man who builds up his own self-confidence—the courage of his convictions, and faith in his ability to carry out what he thinks needs doing—is rarely possessed of doubt.

Self-confidence is much more a matter of practice

and experience than may seem to be true at first thought. With a little reflection, it should be plain to any leader that his mind is inclined to waver. A leader who finds this tendency in himself can usually, by mere practice, build up his decisive powers. Indecisiveness largely results from apprehension. Many apprehensions will, on examination and reflection, be discovered to be unfounded. Other apprehensions similarly examined will be found to be exaggerated. Thus the practice of coming to decisions speedily, once the available facts are known and briefly weighed, is desirable to all leaders. It can be cultivated deliberately, with respect to one minor decision after another, by any leader who finds his uncertainty habitual.

Nor should an occasional wrong decision deter a leader from making up his mind with reasonable speed or lead him further into dawdling or excessive caution. If he finds that many of his decisions are wrong ones, then it is his judgment that is at fault and not his power of decision. The only remedy for bad judgment is a closer study of one's profession.

Of indecision it should also be said that, probably more often than we like to think, it is actually due to lack of knowledge. The leader who does not have the fullest grasp of his own duties, the duties of those under him, the technique of the means of warfare his troops employ, and a thorough grasp as well of the duties and responsibilities of at least the next higher commander

above him, is liable to find himself lacking in the knowledge he needs to carry out new duties upon promotion. It is true that promotion, especially in periods of emergency, sometimes comes suddenly. If the leader is not fully prepared for it in every sense, then it is up to him to dig in and acquire as rapidly as he possibly can the new knowledge he must have if his new responsibilities are to be met. If he feels indecision, if indecision tends in the slightest to become habitual, then he must force himself to reach decisions—must, in so many words, *practice* decisiveness.

It is also sometimes true that a commander will find that one of his staff is so able and expert that his advice almost always offers a suitable basis for decision. To some commanders this may be an irritating state of affairs—to have as an assistant a staff officer or noncom who is always right. Other commanders, the true leaders, thank God that they are lucky enough to have such assistance. There need be nothing at all embarrassing in such a situation. An able leader will in fact learn, and learn gladly, from an expert subordinate. Actually, of course, the decision itself is always his, and even if there are few major differences of opinion on his part there will always be occasional minor ones on which the commander's decision will be his own.

This is to a large extent the situation that faces a newly commissioned officer when he first takes charge of a platoon. He may find in his platoon sergeant a man

so conversant with the leadership of a platoon that he will have much to learn from him. Nothing is ever to be gained and much is lost, in such a situation, by making arbitrary and incorrect decisions merely to bring out and emphasize the power of decision. For this power is vested in the leader and seldom needs emphasis. It forms the working basis of leadership in the United States Army.

CHAPTER 8

INITIATIVE, TOO, CAN BE DEVELOPED

It has been said, commonly and falsely, that will-power is born and not made. Self-confidence usually accompanies strong will; and as confidence develops, will increases the more.

Initiative and willingness to assume responsibility are direct products of self-confidence and will-power. To do well just what he is told to do but never to initiate anything himself—to drag along with his interest solely on his pay check and on keeping out of possible trouble—these are the traits of military deadwood, the symbols of timidity, laziness, and mediocrity.

Initiative does not belong exclusively to the leader. It is essential in all ranks and grades. The commander must foster initiative among his subordinates by giving them duties commensurate with their rank and then *letting them work out the details and finish the job unaided.* He is a supervisor, an executive. A company commander who is a busybody and who will not trust his subordinates, who handles all details of the orderly room, the kitchen, the supply room, who is the corporal of every squad in training and battle, not only narrows his own vision and ability, forming the hindering habit of attention to petty detail, but kills the pride, the spirit and ambition, the initiative, of every man in his unit.

This does not mean, however, that the leader can

deal out the tasks and then do nothing else. He must know, of course, how to handle the jobs himself, certainly well enough to check their performance—and he must make such checks. Furthermore, he must retain for himself those functions that are exclusively the commander's. He must not decentralize to the extent that he weakens the primitive relationship between chief and follower. *There should never be permitted the slightest doubt as to who is the boss.*

But the leader who smothers initiative within his unit, through distrust of the abilities of his subordinates or through a well-meaning but nevertheless vicious desire to see that everything is done exactly right—the leader who does these things in time of peace and during training at any time—is denying to those under him what is perhaps the chief tradition of American troops in battle, the tradition of estimating the situation with speed and acting accordingly whether or not there are orders from higher authorities to cover the situation. It has been initiative that has marked our most successful units in our wars of the past. It has been a lack of initiative (often, it is true, due to briefness of training) that has brought about most of the mistakes American commanders have made in past wars. But as a whole, the American soldier, both officer and enlisted man, has taken pride in his ability to act and to act successfully in the face of any circumstances, no matter how confused, that war might bring.

Thus it is an utterly vital matter for every leader to develop initiative among his subordinates. There is nothing that heightens the morale of troops more than the feeling that every one of their leaders from the lowest acting-corporal to the highest commander has been trained to take care of his troops in unexpected circumstances and will be able to act and act fast when the need for action arises. Nor should training in the use of initiative be limited strictly to leaders. Every promising private should be given every possible chance to use and develop his initiative.

Initiative, like most of the other qualities a true leader needs to have, can be developed only through much practice. In training this means that the leader must work up hundreds of situations covering as many contingencies, and must use such instruction almost daily in his training. For this type of instruction he should not wait until his unit has completed its basic tactical training. He should work such situations into the daily training of his troops from its beginning. This is not hard to do, because for the most part it means taking one situation and varying it in many different ways. For example, it is possible to take a small map problem or terrain exercise and give it at least twenty twists, every one of which will teach a different lesson.

It is also obvious that there is a distinction between genuine initiative and undue license. Authority given to a subordinate should never be made by him the basis

for exercising an authority never meant to be delegated. "Discipline," said Colonel Applin, "is instant and willing obedience to all orders, *and in the absence of orders, to what you believe the order would have been.*" Here is the essence of true initiative.

In final analysis, leaders and the troops they lead must above all things have constant practice in the development of initiative so that when the unexpected happens, as it is always doing in war, they will be used to the idea of having to sum things up and having to act with the utmost speed.

CHAPTER 9

LOYALTY TO—AND OF—THE LEADER

One of the fundamental elements of discipline is loyalty—willing and voluntary compliance to the plans and will of the superior, unfailing devotion to a cause. Loyalty is in no way merely a blind and servile service to the letter of the regulations. It is an active, intelligent, and willing effort to carry out the intent of the commander to the best of his ability.

There is within all men a strong desire to do things their own way and to express that desire in words. It is fortunate, then, that commanders who fail to listen to the suggestions of their subordinates are few. Thus there is normally open to subordinates a channel for the expression of ideas. But once the commander has made his decision, compliance must be wholehearted, regardless of personal views. When the final decision has been made the subordinate must give complete, energetic support. If he is a man who can be depended upon to carry out with zeal only those ideas which he himself approves he is unreliable and worthless in any unit.

The constitutional right to freedom of speech and the average man's liking for his own thoughts and the sound of his own voice combine, sometimes, to produce loose criticism. Sometimes, indeed, upon receipt of an order there is an off-the-record attempt to tear it to pieces and to show how another plan would have been

better. Such criticism may satisfy the ego of the individual concerned—but it shatters loyalty straight down through the organization. In a unit given to knocking, growling, and griping, the source of infection may often be found at the top. An officer who sets the example of loose criticism, especially in the presence of enlisted men, cannot be surprised if he gets from his men only a similar lack of loyalty.

At the same time, it is something of an American privilege to blow off steam; by no means is all griping an indication of disloyalty. It takes no great common sense on the part of a leader to realize for himself that an occasional expression of impatience, even strongly worded, is only an American habit of which few individuals are free. In the ordinary course of events these things mean nothing, and are followed by fully as willing a coöperation and obedience as if the cause of impatience had been met with a smile. In war the average American soldier will take out his griping on the enemy, but at no time can he be expected to lose his habit of expressing an occasional complaint.

Loyalty works both ways. Loyalty to one's own organization and men is just as vital as loyalty to superiors. If a leader is proud of his men, if he has in them the faith that real loyalty demands, they will return his support and backing a hundredfold.

To give this a practical turn, the leader who never hesitates when occasion comes, as it usually does, to

present the case for his unit to his own superiors (when, for instance, his unit is discriminated against through inadvertent administrative error) is known to his men as a leader who watches out for them. But this, of course, can be overdone. It can even become the habit of playing to the grandstand. It can breed real discontent among his own troops if he ever makes a habit of showing that he feels that higher authority may "have it in for him" or his outfit. The solution is simply a matter of standing up within reason for one's unit. When it comes to actual campaign and battle, the stand should never take the form of protest. And at any time, the best way to handle the situation is to make certain that the higher commander is aware of what may be a mistake on his part or on the part of his staff.

CHAPTER 10

MILITARY DUTY—THE LEADER MUST GIVE HIS BEST

A military duty is an obligation to be performed, a task to be carried out. Thus a high sense of duty results in a high standard of performance, a constant and continuous effort to give the best a leader has in him to the completion of the task at hand.

Duty is also the subordination of personal interests to the job to be done. It is alertness rather than woolgathering on sentinel duty; it is the careful feeding and watering of animals before resting after a march; it is the thorough inspection of a weapons-carrier rather than a haphazard glance; it is looking to the comfort of his men, no matter how tired the leader himself may be. Duty is *service*—a privilege and not a compulsion. Duty well done brings to every soldier, whether officer or enlisted man, a glow of achievement and satisfaction.

"Duties" in the common military sense offer a varying degree of opportunity to demonstrate ability. Some are pleasant; others by their very nature are disagreeable. For these reasons many duties should be rotated as far as possible, in order to avoid the least suspicion of partiality or favoritism. Since any duty is an obligation, no duty should ever be perverted and degraded by making it into a punishment.

Sprouting from the thought that coddling ruins sol-

diers, there exists a traditional and mistaken idea that duty should be hard and uncompromising, even when this is unnecessary. Every leader must realize that the American soldier is intelligent enough both to realize and to resent needless discomfort, whether the discomfort he undergoes is due to ignorance, neglect, or faulty (if sincere) leadership. This same quality of intelligent discernment, of knowing which end is up, also makes the American soldier cheerfully and even willingly undergo equal or worse discomforts when he realizes that the hardships are unavoidable.

There is no reason, either, why the acceptance of obligations should be so overworked as eventually to make everything obnoxious that comes within the broadest conception of duty. To claim that all things unpleasant and laborious must be done just because obligation requires it makes duty a taskmaster rather than a standard to be achieved. Any leader who persistently follows such a plan may cause his troops eventually to detest the very mention of the word. If a task is laborious or unpleasant it is better to give a man a real incentive for doing it than to drive him to it under a perverted sense of duty.

The spirit that a leader must try to develop and keep going within his units is well expressed in the words of a noncommissioned officer, used in describing an American regiment which had an important station in China, duty at which involved many unexpected and

sometimes unpleasant tasks: "This is a good outfit. Whenever this regiment has a job to do everybody in it tackles it, and no matter how hard it is, the whole outfit tries to see how well and how soon they can get it over and done with."

CHAPTER 11

THE LEADER MUST KNOW HIS MEN

The matter of personal contact between commissioned officers and their men enters into leadership in so many different ways that it is hardly possible to condense it into a single brief discussion.

When Alexander Pope wrote that "The proper study of mankind is man," he coined a fine motto for the art of personal leadership. For the crux of personal leadership is the leader's knowledge of his men—and knowledge of men has as its cornerstone an intelligent understanding of human nature.

An officer must therefore know his men, individually as well as collectively. To be able to lead their minds he must know what they really think—and he cannot possess this knowledge without first having entered a certain extent into their lives, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows. If he does this with common sense it is no more subversive of discipline than the kindness of a father is destructive of his son's obedience.

A company officer should know every man in his organization by name. To hail an individual as "you man" or "hey, you!" is belittling. The enlisted man feels that he is just another man in ranks with a serial number—an unimportant cog in which his superior has no personal interest. To use his name without his title in speaking to a noncommissioned officer produces much

the same effect. "Corporal Jones," "Sergeant Kelly," is the right way; every human being responds to the recognition of his personality and his ability and achievement or experience as indicated by his rank.

Much can be learned about individual men by studying their service records and qualification cards. Visits to regimental headquarters to study Soldiers' Qualification Cards (WD AGO Form 20) could well be made mandatory, for through them a company officer can get a comprehensive picture of the make-up of his unit. But these things are not enough by themselves. The man himself must be studied. The company officer should know his regional and temperamental characteristics, his weaknesses and strengths, his hopes and apprehensions. He should know something of the lives of his men before they enlisted, their families, their educational and vocational backgrounds. He should constantly endeavor to know their states of mind, their attitudes toward their service, and all the minor things which tend to raise or lower their morale.

The leader should weigh and consider every individual in his unit—his physical, mental, and moral qualities; his appearance; his manner and performance of duty. This kind of sizing up is a task that is never completed. It is an unending job, both because first impressions may be erroneous and because every enlisted man will inevitably become better or worse. If an officer thus reviews his first impressions in the light of later

daily contact and observation, he will improve and perfect his ability to analyze character.

Much of this necessary knowledge can only be secured from the men themselves. If an enlisted man is formally questioned he will often have only a minimum to say. He will do the same thing if he lacks confidence in his officer. The ability of an officer to talk to an enlisted man in a way that shows an understanding of him as a man is a certain way to his confidence. And when it seems best, the official military relationship can be temporarily set aside—and a man put at ease and told to sit down to talk things over.

Personal information that an officer learns about other men of a unit from his noncommissioned officer-leaders and other sources should be carefully weighed by him. Sometimes such information is heavily colored. Too, it is destructive of morale for the men of a unit to feel that their leader may have snoopers or "white rats" in the unit, which is sometimes true in the unit of a leader who has the wrong ideas of leadership.

A few officers seem to possess an almost instinctive ability to find out the strengths and weaknesses of their men; but most of them must approach the task consciously and deliberately. For a company officer to ignore this constant study of the human beings that make up his unit is for him to run the risk of disaster in battle itself, this through lack of a vital knowledge.

As a leader gains knowledge of his men he will al-

ways find out things about certain ones, in the course of normal observation and without any prying on his part, that will in no way seem to him admirable—in fact, things that will often seem the opposite. These will, of course, be the ordinary weaknesses of humankind which any leader must freely acknowledge to exist, must look upon with reasonable tolerance, and must never permit himself to judge narrowly and harshly. If he does misjudge such traits he will find himself building up prejudices against individual subordinates who may well have the stuff within them it takes to carry out their missions when it comes to combat itself.

Every leader must indeed constantly remember that his own ideals of conduct may not be those under which a particular member of his command has been brought up or accustomed to observe. This, of course, applies to many of the things already discussed—language, manner, and the like. For example, a big-talking, loud-mouthed, bragging individual is not necessarily nine-tenths made up of wind. He may simply be good and know it, though he possesses the weakness of not being able to keep the news to himself. On the other hand, the mild-mannered, soft-spoken man who seems uncertain of himself and is never in the forefront, often creating in the leader's mind even an unpleasant appearance of ineffectuality, may simply be a man who shrinks from the limelight or who shrinks from added

responsibilities because he thinks they will give him extra work.

Impatience with human foibles is to be found in greatest degree in young officer-leaders whose ideals and desire for perfection may sometimes be higher than the present state of humankind will warrant. Such leaders especially must be careful to weigh their men in terms of battle results—and not in terms of the more or less rigid standards of conduct which they themselves have learned to follow and to think of as admirable.

Knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of his men is one element of leadership that a leader can hardly possess too fully, for its results are always positive and never negative. The ability of an officer to predict a man's reaction under various conditions must be based almost entirely upon the officer's first-hand knowledge of the man concerned. And from close observation of his unit he can often predict with accuracy how the entire organization will react. He can thus not only forecast but even create reaction and conduct.

CHAPTER 12

COMPLAINT AND CRITICISM

Complaint is the verbal expression of resentment or pain; criticism implies censure or an unfavorable opinion. Both are usually expressions of discontent or disapproval.

Criticism of constituted authority or of its policies and orders is discussed elsewhere in this book in its application to loyalty. Criticism in its broader sense is an agency for pointing out and correcting faults. In this respect it serves a necessary and important service. However, if it is unwisely used it lowers morale in a marked degree. Used freely or unjustly, or in a nagging, fault-finding manner, it tends to break the spirit of individual men, to stimulate ill feeling, and to produce uncertainty and discord within any unit.

The tendency of a critical leader is to direct his criticisms more toward the persons whom he holds responsible than toward the conditions he thinks need correcting. Thus criticism is apt to become so personal that any proper perspective is lost. Furthermore, a true criticism must be more than a mere showing up of faults. It must carry with it the direction or suggestion of how to make improvement.

Ordinarily, only constructive criticism (which offers a better alternative) is good. If given with courtesy and impartiality it is welcomed rather than resented,

for the manner in which it is given demonstrates its intent. However, in emergencies unfair criticism, like violent language, may be used to provoke strong resentment, usually rousing men to activity in their effort to show its injustice.

Here it should be said that under stress few leaders will not at one time or another jump on a subordinate unjustly. Realization of such a mistake usually follows quickly. Just as quickly then should follow an acknowledgment on the part of the leader that he was wrong. There should never be the slightest hesitancy in his so doing. If he has spoken sharply in the presence of others to one of his men, then he should speak as openly and plainly in acknowledging his own haste. Such words as, "I was quite wrong; you were right," are human words and readily taken as such, and they promptly restore morale. There is no need of overdoing, of laboring the point abjectly, and once the apology is made the leader may well go on directly with other details of the matter as he now sees them.

General Wavell forcefully emphasizes and reëmphasizes in his *Life of Allenby* how this successful and able leader, despite the fact that he was often explosive and irritable, seldom actually "cut off the heads" of those who worked under him, of his staff members or the commanders of the units in his army. His habitual loss of temper was a definite weakness for any leader. But unlike most leaders who have this fault, Allenby had

other qualities that more than offset it. He appeared to believe, and certainly worked on the principle, that it was wisest in war to make the most of and to encourage the man of mediocre abilities, the man who might possess weaknesses that were not too grave. As a consequence, morale in his army was always high because his subordinate leaders knew that if they did their very best, even though they sometimes made mistakes, they need not expect summary relief. In other words, Allenby preferred to make the most of those assigned to his command, and in this and other ways—except for his temper—to build up a high spirit of coöperation, and thus morale, rather than to create the atmosphere of demanding perfection (with the consequent lowering of morale which always exists when subordinate commanders have to hold their breaths from day to day in the knowledge that if they make mistakes they can expect a transfer).

Now a high commander, an army commander like General Allenby, was in a position to exercise the power of constant selection and replacement in the search for perfection or near-perfection among his staff and command. Yet he built up a thoroughly efficient fighting army without exercising this power in any great degree. The leader of a small unit, say a company commander, does not have that power of selection to any such extent. If he is dissatisfied with half his noncoms and platoon commanders he cannot, except in ex-

treme cases where something may be dead wrong throughout a unit, as very rarely happens, expect any assistance from higher authorities in accomplishing a wholesale breaking and making. Far more likely than not, higher authorities will look upon it as a weakness of leadership if a company commander cannot create a sound fighting outfit without first largely demoralizing his company through a wholesale replacement of subordinate leaders. In sum, topnotch leaders are rare; leaders of moderate ability are plentiful; and leaders of moderate ability can be made into leaders of greater and greater ability—of sufficient ability for all battle purposes—through constructive criticism and leadership and not through destructive.

Complaints on the part of troops will necessarily exist and will often be reported to higher authority. A superior has a natural tendency to resent such criticism, especially if it is undeserved. But such complaints have a genuine psychological value. They not only enable faults to be traced to their sources; they give the men a chance to blow off steam, to ventilate real or imaginary grievances. Men in a depressed or critical state of mind usually try to express their troubles to somebody. Obviously it is better to have them talk to those qualified to correct the fault and explain the error, or to give the personal sympathy often unconsciously sought, than for them to seek relief by complaining to the ignorant, misinformed, or irresponsible.

An officer should never wall himself off from his men. He should assure himself that subordinate leaders are not denying his men access to him. He should be receptive and sympathetic, whether the difficulties concerned are general or personal, real or imaginary. The habitual complainer can soon be spotted; his case can be handled as the conditions warrant. As a matter of fact, the average subordinate stops making complaints, except for strong reasons, the moment he sees that his complaints are given careful consideration. He does not wish to be found in error, and he acquires confidence in the alertness of his leader to determine and correct defects.

Indeed, if every complaint is carefully investigated, unsound complaints will practically cease, and most of those received will reveal faults that do require remedy. Acting on complaints is one of the best methods of building up morale. What the complainant often wants is personal interest and a decision. Even if the decision goes against him he is satisfied if he can be made to see the justice of it.

If a leader receives a complaint in a grudging or irritable way, the man who makes it senses that there is a lack of real interest in his problem and that there is small chance that justice will be done. The leader should listen patiently, whether or not there is a real basis for action. The fact is that any man who complains to his leader *thinks* he has suffered an injustice.

If he has, the fault should be remedied; if he has not, his faulty impression should be corrected. An imaginary ill has the same effect on an enlisted man as the actual existence of the condition he is complaining about.

Sometimes chronic grumblers and growlers will be found. Each of these represents a separate and individual problem; each case has some reason back of it. Whether the cause behind the attitude is real or fancied, such men always have a negative effect on the unit. That effect will vary according to the amount of influence a ringleader in discontent possesses.

Such men are not easy to handle. Usually avoiding breaches of regulations, they may even subtly sap *esprit de corps* and morale through passive resistance to authority—resistance doubly dangerous and hard to counteract. Sometimes they have certain qualities of leadership and strength of character. If that leadership can be turned into constructive channels, those men can be made valuable to the organization, sometimes even as leaders themselves. No two such men can be treated alike. Some need praise, others punishment; some need responsibility, others change of duty. But any man of this type will need careful analysis of his personality, interests, and preferences before any measures are applied.

With the rapid development of "psychological warfare" within the past few years, it is not unreasonable to assume that attempts at subversive activities may be

found within the services. Such efforts may be carried on by men above average in personality and intelligence, men therefore difficult to detect and to ferret out. A wave of defeatism, an abnormal spirit of "what's the use?", a general lowering of morale for which a cause seems lacking, may well indicate subversion within a unit. In such instances, a leader *who knows his men* is invaluable to higher authority.

As a matter of fact, the United States Army has always been remarkably free from grumblers and growlers of a type truly destructive to morale. This discussion has been carried on in full appreciation of that fact--but in complete realization that where such influences exist they must be handled before, intentionally or unintentionally, they sap the morale of their units.

CHAPTER 13

RELATIONS OF OFFICER-LEADERS AND THEIR MEN

Often persons who do not know of armies and how they are trained and led cannot understand why there should be any difference in status between officers and enlisted men. A newly-appointed officer, lacking in practical leadership experience, usually has no great difficulty in learning to give commands and combat orders to his subordinates. But often he does find it hard, because of awkwardness or uncertainty, to reach a sensible and natural attitude in dealing with those whom he leads (when they are not in formations for drill or other training).

That general managers and day-laborers, sea captains and able seamen, surgeons and hospital attendants do not usually find each other mutually congenial is natural and unquestioned. Wide divergence in education and in other qualities creates differences in interests and outlook. Those who sometimes question the military system may recognize this relatively minor point, but do not, however, consider the fact that discipline is the real basis for these distinctions, whether such distinctions are found in civilian or in military life. It is inescapable that a generally intimate association between leaders and those they lead tends to destroy prestige. And there lies the reason why relations

are official rather than social, why, as a practical matter of leadership, there is a necessity for a definite line of familiarity beyond which, as a general rule, neither leader nor subordinate should pass in military life.

Contact between banker and clerk, judge and court attendant, coach and athlete is brief in duration and single in purpose. But consider the extent and complexity of the relation of the company officer to his men. He is responsible for them day and night. He sees that they are physically cared for, that they are clothed, housed, fed, kept free from disease. He has direct or implied responsibility for, and power over, their morals and conduct. He supervises not only their work but much of their play. Their relations with each other and with the surrounding community are a part of his concern. He not only touches every one of their official problems but many that are personal. In short, he is the directing force that exerts pressure—pressure toward the ultimate end of success in battle—on his troops for twenty-four hours a day. Therefore the officer, more than any other leader, must understand the workable, successful relationship which establishes a general line of demarcation between superior and subordinate.

It is very true that a high, intimate, personal type of leadership is possible with rare men and in rare circumstances. It is, however, only possible in units no larger than those in which the leader has intimate daily contact with all of his men. This type of leadership, more-

over, is only possible in its fullest sense for those who have remarkable powers of leadership. It is not attainable by the average leader, not only because the average able leader of men does not in the nature of things possess a highly inspirational character but also because it is a leadership that can only be based on intimate understanding between leader and led over a considerable period of time.

Here is an example of such leadership on the part of a company commander. This commander was a man who came into the Army early in the World War after an unusually successful career in handling the general athletic training of the entire membership of a small progressive college. He was a man wise in his understanding of human nature and a man who possessed in high degree every natural and attainable quality of leadership. This man handled those he led in the same way he had been accustomed at his college to control and develop those under his charge. He would not be many months in command of a company until every man in it looked upon him as his leader, his defender, and his adviser. An athletic type, he usually led his company in all its athletic endeavors; and owing in no small part to his abilities of this kind the teams of his company led in most regimental matches. In talking and dealing with his men, however, this leader never gave the slightest indication of superiority in rank. His attitude was that of a father toward his sons. Nearly

every man in his company called him by his first name, and he in turn addressed by their first names all those who had been under him for any length of time. His company was at all times a splendid, cohesive unit.

This leader made no attempt to get other company commanders to use his ideas. He simply ran his company in his own way. From his previous experience he felt it was the one way he *knew* would work, and it actually did work—for him. For the great majority of leaders it would not have worked. Any such close personal relationship would have resulted for most in the lessening of influence rather than in an increase—in a loss of prestige, in the creation of internal jealousies within the unit—and with all these things, a complete collapse of morale.

For when we get down to the practical workings of the established differences between officer and enlisted man, perhaps the most important fact of all is that such a system more efficiently than any other that has ever been tried enables a designated leader, who may not himself possess a truly high degree of ability in leadership, nevertheless to lead and to lead successfully his troops in battle. After all, that is the primary end of any army of democracy, and unless that end can be obtained this nation cannot live.

There is one other point worth making about that special type of leadership, that peculiarly intimate type of leadership described above. When it comes time for

another commander to take over command of the company in which a highly personalized form of leadership has been used, the adjustment is difficult indeed. For it is an adjustment due not merely to the fact that the new commander has quite probably never had experience in highly personalized leadership. It is due still more to the fact that, even though he may be capable and able, he is nevertheless likely to lack the strong personality, the unusual magnetism, the inspirational characteristics possessed by his predecessor.

The wise officer will set a middle course, a commonsense course. At one extreme, unfortunately, is the unreasonable martinet, imbued with exaggerated ideas of rank and authority, using his conferred status to impress subordinates with his military and social superiority, assuming a caste which has no place in American institutions. At the other extreme is the officer who neglects or ignores the distinction that prevails in all armies between officers and men, the officer who permits familiarities that, unless he is an extraordinary leader indeed, will destroy his prestige. Enlisted men understand and appreciate the reasons and the necessities which generally prevent undue familiarity, and, except in the most unusual cases, have little but contempt for the officer who, forgetting his own place, deliberately crosses the dividing line into *their* terrain.

The officer's duty, then, is to bring himself as close to the enlisted man as he can without impairing his

own status and weakening his authority. He should be on conversational terms with his men, so that they can talk to him freely and frankly without embarrassment or fear. This relationship should be personal, frank, and candid—mutual and not one-sided. Military and social status should have nothing to do with it, for it is essentially the controlling relation between the head of a family and its members. No back-slapping familiarity is needed on either side. Relations should in general be close and cordial, but they must be *sympathetic rather than familiarly social.*

This, of course, is merely a general guide. Common sense, for example, should tell any officer-leader that a present difference in military status should not be permitted to affect in the slightest a friendship of long existence at all times when relations need not be official. Nor should it operate to prevent the occasional close association of an officer and enlisted man owing to a close community of intellectual interests or military work. Much nonsense has been written about our present Army—and all our past armies—in this regard by writers ignorant, seemingly, of American armies and their discipline. One rule, however, must be remembered: In the presence of other enlisted men, the relationship between friends who happen to be officer and enlisted man must be purely military, whether to them it seems artificial or not. It is always best for the general discipline for this to be done.

Occasionally a young soldier, swept by admiration or liking for his officer, will by act or speech impulsively and unconsciously assume a greater intimacy than is warranted. Usually that impulse is promptly followed by realization and embarrassment. At all events, the officer must be tactful; for nothing is to be gained by adding humiliation to a confusion and embarrassment already present.

Even more often this assumption of intimacy is done through sheer ignorance of customary military relations. It is easy enough to say, then and there, in a tone of explanation and not of admonition, something to the following effect: "The way you have just been talking to me isn't the right way to speak to your officers. Officers are no different from anybody else, and it isn't necessary to use any special language in speaking to them. All you have to do is remember to speak in a businesslike, Army way, just as you might talk to your employer if you had a job in a big company. Naturally you wouldn't go up and slap your chief on the back and say, 'Hey, what about this?' or 'What about that?' First you would probably go up and say, 'Mr. So-and-so (or Chief, or Boss), can I speak to you for a few minutes?' Then you would go ahead and say what you wanted to say, making it as clear as you knew how. You wouldn't be very long about it, either, because you wouldn't want to take up too much of your employer's time, knowing how many things he has to attend to in the

course of his own day's work. Well, in speaking to an officer it's very much the same. You use the officer's title—Lieutenant, or Captain, or Major, or whatever it happens to be. It has long been the custom in the Army, too, to use the word 'sir' in talking to officers, just as you might use it in talking to your father or to your employer. It isn't ever necessary to overdo the thing and say 'sir' every other word. There isn't any particular rule about it. You simply use it in a natural manner."

An enlisted man of the smart-aleck or wise-guy type may deliberately presume upon his officer-leader, especially if the officer is new to the unit, in an effort to see just how much he can get away with. Given an inch, he will usually take the rest of the mile. Forcefully bringing to his attention the fact that his presumption is recognized will usually be enough to show him his mistaken attitude and prevent repetition.

Especially in the presence of enlisted men, officers should be soldierly and courteous in their dealings with other officers. The force of example is a vital thing. As in almost every other phase of military life, laxity in military customs and courtesies is traceable just as frequently to the top as to the bottom.

But these suggestions should not be taken at all as meaning that officers must never relax in front of their men. After all, they are not a group of super-punctilious Kentucky colonels with long beards and sabers, bowing and scraping at every turn. A bit of horsing and

kidding among themselves never hurts their prestige; rather, it indicates that they are human. And a natural demonstration of the fact they are human beings heightens the personal side of their leadership.

CHAPTER 14

DISCIPLINE—BUT NOT THROUGH FEAR

Since our Government is founded on the fostering of individualism, "discipline" in the sense of strict rule and summary punishment is a word repellent to the American ear. In no other country have the citizens received less hammering from the top. Therefore, if discipline is conceived of as a cowed, fearful, and blind submission to the will of the superior, the men of our nation should be less amenable to discipline than the soldiers of almost any other nation on earth.

The autocratic discipline of force and fear has been an effective whip for those peoples who have known the lash for many generations. It has come to be, perhaps, the only language some peoples understand. But it is far from the ideal concept, and it will not work in the United States of America. The individualism, the independence, the aggressive spirit of the American soldier—those very qualities which make the discipline of force repugnant to him—make him peculiarly adaptable to the highest type of discipline.

Just as our civil government rests upon the consent of the governed, so does this same general principle apply to the military service. Since democratic government stands upon the approval of what is handed down from above rather than on its enforcement through painful experience, the peak of discipline is the enforce-

ment by public opinion of the policies formed and directed by the superior. The army officer is backed by military law—no discipline can survive if force is lacking when it becomes needed. But *the more he leads rather than drives,* the less the application of any force whatever becomes necessary.

Military discipline may not be particularly pleasant. No discipline is actually pleasant, for human beings seldom welcome control. Yet any dissatisfaction a soldier, whether officer or enlisted man, may have toward the service is not due so much to discipline as it is to the manner in which the requirements of discipline are sometimes enforced. There is no special objection to discipline itself, for its necessity is recognized. But restrictions that appear unnecessary, that seem to have been imposed under the assumption that they might be aids to discipline, have usually the opposite effect and may arouse resentment and indiscipline through the thought that such requirements represent an arbitrary and harsh exercise of power. The martinet antagonizes those on whose support he must rely.

Discipline is founded upon two things—training and morale. Training represents the knowledge and ability to fight; morale, the will to fight. Training affects the machinery; morale is the power that makes the machinery function. Both are indispensable. Discipline, then, is also a state that can be brought about and developed by general principles. However, in their meth-

ods no two successful disciplinarians are exactly alike; even with similar general methods, each will have a different approach to the individual problem.

Military discipline is popularly misunderstood to be a state created and maintained by force. A discipline of force, which tries to compel adjustment rather than to prevent maladjustment, arouses reaction and opposition. An officer or noncom who constantly endeavors to maintain discipline through punishment and the *Manual for Courts-Martial*, rather than by arousing a willing coöperation, usually develops deceit and evasion in his subordinates, and a contest of wits between offenders and himself. Such a disciplinarian is not a leader; he is merely a minor autocrat who, unless his superior can show him the harm he is doing and can cause him to change his methods, should not be permitted to command.

True discipline, accordingly, is the result of volition and is gained through building willingness, enthusiasm, and coöperation—never through fear of punishment. It exists not only while men are under the eyes of their superiors but while they are off duty, because they *want* to do the things a soldier should do. This discipline is voluntary; it is based on knowledge, reason, sense of duty, and idealism.

If a leader has built up such a state of mind in his troops that they give him their utmost in trust and support, the force of public opinion has almost entirely

supplanted official compulsion. He rules them not through unlimited and arbitrary power but through having developed in his men a cheerful and willing obedience that wants to respond—that *wants* to carry his orders out—a spirit of mutual helpfulness and confidence in which all ranks, moreover, desire to take much of the burden from their superiors. The unit becomes regarded by its members as a coöperative and mutual military business in the success of which every man is personally interested as a shareholder.

Although discipline means submission, it does not mean submission to the leader so much as to the system which he applies. If a leader wears his authority as a personal attribute it will be resented. The impersonal attitude that denotes impartiality is lost in a contest of wills. Outward conformity to discipline may be given, but sullenness and passive resistance are almost always bound to result.

CHAPTER 15

THE SPIRIT OF A MILITARY UNIT

The expression *esprit de corps* covers so much ground that its meaning can no more be catalogued in a compact little definition than can that of *morale*. Because they are so closely related, these two terms are often loosely used synonymously. But they do not mean quite the same thing. *Morale* is all-inclusive; it embraces such elements as hope, doggedness, tenacity—elements not necessarily a part of *esprit*.

Esprit de corps is the one quality above all others that distinguishes a military unit from a mere aggregation of the same number of men. It is the pride in group effort and group standards and group achievements which, even more than the coördinated action of training and fighting as a unit, makes for singleness of purpose and drive, and for the highest standards of military accomplishment in training and in battle.

Esprit, of course, means spirit—vivacity, ardor, enthusiasm—and pertains alike to the individual and the group. *Esprit de corps* applies to a unit as a whole. It is a mental state that represents the sum total of all forces that make for cohesion, for sticking together, for organized willing endeavor. It is enthusiastic support, by and of the group, along with a jealous regard for the integrity and performance of the group. It is the sense of strength and pride that comes from feeling one's self

a part of a distinguished and efficient organization of splendid traditions.

Esprit de corps may be of spontaneous growth, of development without external direction. This sometimes occurs within units of long service; more often it comes from the intensive welding of combat experience. *But it can be developed by a commander and transmitted through subordinates, until by its very contagion it pervades his unit as a whole.*

The promotion of comradeship is one of the first interests of superiors, for its bonds are strong in holding men together for the common purposes of battle. When the group is kept together as a unit, either at duty or at play, the close relationship between individuals—buddies, partners—extends beyond the limits of direct acquaintance. An alert leader can in many ways promote mutual knowledge and relations between the individual men he leads.

For example, a company commander can do his utmost to preserve the physical integrity of the lower units—the squad, the section, the platoon. It is true that doing this is emphasized in manuals for training, but it is not specifically required by regulations. Thus it often happens, particularly in periods of expansion, that the importance of the integrity of units is arbitrarily passed over or neglected. For mere administrative convenience there follows much shuffling of men among the squads and sections, and each time this is

done whatever *esprit* these units had already acquired is to a large degree lost and has to be rebuilt in each group newly formed. To keep units intact is one way in which *esprit de corps* can be built up and fostered.

The salute, which is the expression of military courtesy and recognition between officers and enlisted men, is not only an indication of *esprit* but an agency for its development and expression. It has, of course, often been mistakenly looked upon, especially by those who have never studied its meaning or effect, as a compulsory manifestation of inferiority—almost as an act of servility. It is actually as much a greeting as "Good Morning." It goes beyond the individual; it is given to the uniform he wears, and through that to the Government itself. It is at the same time the distinctive recognition of a brother-in-arms and an expression of pride in being a member of the Army of the United States. A soldier who belongs to a unit of high *esprit* expresses that spirit in giving (or if he is an officer, in returning) the salute. And in the very act of thus saluting—correctly, smoothly, and according to custom—he fosters and even adds to his personal sense of *esprit* and hence to that of his unit.

There is no distinction of grade or rank in saluting. It belongs alike to the private and the general, and the salute is identical for both. When soldiers of any rank become fighting men their saluting is always a matter of genuine pride and never in the slightest an

automatic gesture of subservience. Hence the salute, through explanation of its full meaning and through training in its proper and prideful use by the members of any unit, is a means for its leader to develop and maintain *esprit*. The leader himself must always remember that a man or a unit sluggish in the rendering of military courtesies will respond more readily to example than harangue. A leader who often beats his subordinates to the salute will thus go far toward making his unit into an outfit with alertness, teamwork, pride—in short, with *esprit*.

Traditions are strong in creating *esprit de corps*. Representing the crystallized experiences, ideas, and sentiments of the past, they are powerful in their effect on the group. The splendid history and tradition of his Army should be brought home to every soldier. His Army has shown its superior fighting ability and endurance, and the will of the Nation itself to continue the way of American life, in many a past campaign and battle. The story of what his Army has done will stimulate the imagination and the confidence of every man new to ranks, and will make him proud to be a member of his unit and proud to be an American soldier.

Many of our units at the moment are new. Some have few historical links with the past. But every new unit begins at once to establish its own traditions. The leader can help in the beginning to establish a basis for tradition, especially by dramatizing the special qual-

ities and duties of his particular units and by emphasizing the traditions of similar units.

At the same time, every new unit is formed from a cadre of men from old units. Hence there is at least a thin historical thread of tradition binding the new units to the old. This, also, can be emphasized by the basic cadre at least until the new unit itself begins to build up its own tradition—a thing that every unit will do even within a few months. At first this tradition will consist of minor incidents and happenings in the development of the unit—periods of maneuvers, unusually difficult days of training owing perhaps to bad weather, events that were worthy of newspaper mention. Indeed, from its very first day, every new group begins to form its traditions. Those of historical type may not come until the unit has seen an actual campaign. But there is many a fine unit with high *esprit* that has not seen battle for forty years—and some have never seen battle at all.

The leader must constantly remember the value of even small personal mention in the press in fostering the *esprit* of his unit. There is no need here to go into the methods of doing this. At the very least, he must be certain that the doings of his troops receive their full share of mention in the camp and local newspapers, whether in time of peace or war. These things give to a unit and to the men within it a sense of importance and deserved recognition that fulfills a normal

American desire and impels both the group and those who make it up to improve and achieve.

The record of past and present accomplishments of a unit's history can be framed and placed in its recreation room or other appropriate place. Past commendations and photographs of activities should be similarly displayed. Trophies won by military or athletic skill should be openly displayed where all can see them. They should not, for example, be put in the unit orderly room. Commendations received either by individuals or by the unit should immediately be placed on the bulletin board and at the next suitable formation read to the assembled unit.

The company commander should seize upon every opportunity to promote group spirit and comradeship, whether such chances come through teamwork in working, training, maneuvering, and fighting, or in the recreational field of special dinners, trips, dances, and participation in and support of athletic teams.

In final analysis, the task of the leader in promoting *esprit de corps* is to develop within each man the desire not only to do what is best for him but what is best for those who fight with him in combat against the enemy. It is *esprit de corps* that is the basis of unity of effort and accomplishment in battle.

CHAPTER 16

DISCONTENT—THE LEADER MUST WATCH FOR THE FIRST SIGN

Discontent is caused by the blocking of the outlet, or by the denial of the complete expression or satisfaction, of one or more of a man's normal traits or instincts. Since armies by their very nature must impose restrictions, discontent is an inevitable problem. However, causes of discontent are more limited in an army than in civil life, for the flow of energy is more often diverted than blocked; and thus the causes of discontent in an army can usually be traced to their sources.

Discontent goes through two distinct phases of development—dissatisfaction and disaffection—and often it never reaches any final stage of delinquent act. These phases and their rapidity of growth are dependent both on the character of the individual affected and on the intensity or continuation of the aggravation. Remedies can be applied at either of these first stages; and obviously, the earlier the application, the simpler the remedy usually needed.

Dissatisfaction, personal in nature and striking at the individual, may spring from disappointment, mortification, annoyance, regret, pain, uneasiness, disapproval, displeasure, opposition. Disaffection is stronger and more open in its manifestations. Through the contagion of sympathy, it may pass on to the

group. It takes form in dissension, noncompliance, contradiction, denial, protest and repudiation. It can result in hostility, bitterness, rancor, disloyalty, ill-will, disgust, estrangement, animosity, malevolence. The remedy for this amplified dissatisfaction is infinitely harder to apply, for not only must the original cause be found and removed but a well-established state of mind must be squarely and convincingly dealt with and a new and favorable one built up.

Discontent is carried, and can be directly and instantaneously read, in a man's face and in the hesitations and changes of manner that indicate his reaction toward unpleasant things. As it becomes magnified it takes articulate form in complaint and criticism. Since these are the signs of impending trouble, and thus the warnings that may precede some overt act of delinquency, the importance to any leader of heeding them is apparent.

Delinquency is the ultimate expression of discontent when it breaks out openly in acts of dereliction, disorder, misbehavior, offense, and misconduct. Though it is true that causes of discontent are sometimes beyond the control of the leader, discontent should never be allowed by him to develop to the stage of delinquency if the leader is alert to signs of trouble, as a good leader is. Remedial action after delinquency occurs becomes a complex matter. It usually has to include disciplinary action, as well as everything done

for the first two stages—namely, the removal of the original aggravation, destroying the existing bad mental state, and building up a new and desirable one.

According to its degree, discontent affects physical efficiency just as do physical depression, fatigue, and exhaustion. Undesirable mental and physical states act similarly in reducing snap and effort, in lessening initiative and persistence. As interest and desire wane, there develop wavering attention, sensitiveness, impatience, and resentment—with the acts of slovenliness and indifference that express them.

Since discontent is due to an infinite number of causes, there is no general remedy for it. Each case has to be considered as to nature, cause, and seriousness. Thus the finding of a solution, in final analysis, is usually the problem of the leader, and of all leaders the company commander most often has such problems to solve.

Discontent of one kind can be, of course, a helpful stimulus to improvement. It can bring efforts to improve surroundings and conditions, and it can even give rise to the effort of an individual to lift himself into a more desirable status. The discontent at the basis of hope and ambition is a constructive force, for complete satisfaction with a condition means stagnation. Thus the problem of leaders in general, and particularly the company commander, is to discover and check the undesirable influences that tend toward pessimism

and inefficiency and to stimulate the discontent that expresses itself in ambition and higher efficiency.

Because troops live in extremely close contact, group discontent—which may be a direct result of the original irritant or may merely be sympathetic reaction to the complaints of the original sufferer—can spread much more rapidly than in civil life. Major causes of discontent are seldom found in our Army. But even a minor grievance or fault, if real, serves as a nucleus about which a number of imaginary difficulties tend to crystallize. These petty difficulties can be appreciated and solved only by considering them *from the viewpoint of the enlisted man himself*. It is his state of mind, not the commander's, that needs improvement.

Thus the officer who regards the comfort of his men as something that does not greatly concern him, who does not watch the life of his unit daily for unnecessary irritations and unpleasant conditions to the end of correcting or improving them when he finds them, is paving the way for loss of efficiency, individual delinquency, and perhaps even group disorder—things that he deplores when they occur but which he has not taken measures to prevent.

CHAPTER 17

TRAINING FOR COMBAT—THE AIM OF LEADERSHIP

The value of learning lies in its application to future action; the true purpose of training, then, is to prepare for a rapid and efficient adjustment to any new situation of war. The discipline, citizenship, and vocational training to be gained in military service are unquestionably of high value to the soldier and to the nation—but these things must either be inherent in military training or else by-products of it. For the one ultimate goal of military training is to increase the proportion of the known to the unknown in preparing for the situations that will be encountered in battle. Military training itself is an effort to secure desired responses when future military conditions are presented.

In battle the leader can seldom exert an immediate personal influence over the individual member of his command. During the fight each fighter becomes an independent unit, mechanically carrying out the movements—whether of fighting teamwork or individual combat—in which he has been rehearsed until they have become the fighting habits of a soldier. The bullets, shell fire, and bombs of the enemy, and the absolute need for a high degree of concealment in battle, added to the sheer rapidity of combat action and the area of dispersion covered by any unit, inevitably sepa-

rate a leader from most of his men. The purpose of preliminary training is to enable the soldier to act methodically and efficiently, and even with a degree of calmness, both in situations strange to him and under conditions whose result on a group of untrained men might be their domination by the urge for self-preservation—by panic and flight.

Training thus confers an ability to be more or less mechanical in the execution of acts. It makes the horrors and hardships of war much less noticeable as a result of mental concentration on a fixed purpose. It gives confidence, in that the soldier vaguely recognizes that if his mind becomes confused in combat he has nevertheless so habituated himself to a large variety of experiences that his trained muscles and trained nervous system will still permit him to carry on the task and thus enable his aggressive and defensive powers to continue. Mass training also gives a sense of solidarity, of reliance on the group. A trained soldier does not readily yield to an individual emotional state if the group of which he is a part is unaffected, yet he reacts rapidly to suggestion from without—especially from the leaders over him. Thorough training gives him also the desire to live up to his group—to do as well as the others, or better.

Granting that training programs and schedules are made up by higher echelons, the actual imparting of instruction to the individual enlisted man is almost the

exclusive task of the leaders within the company or its equivalent. In their hands, and particularly in the hands of the company officer, within the limits prescribed by higher command, rests final responsibility for the education and training of the men of the unit. Thus ability to teach and to instruct ranks high among the important qualifications of leadership.

The art of teaching is largely based on the science of psychology. This does not mean that company officers and drill sergeants must be psychologists. It does mean, however, that besides a knowledge of their subject they must have an aptitude for understanding and handling the men whom they must teach.

Training manuals and other War Department publications present the technique of instructing in military subjects. Their step-by-step discussions of equipment necessary, of the order in which each different phase of training is to be approached, are based upon practical experience. They are thorough books—and give the official military doctrine and technique.

But how much each individual man assimilates from a course of training depends entirely upon the timing, method, manner, and personality of the instructor himself. In brief, the requirements of a good instructor are sound knowledge, confidence and method in approach, an understanding of the difficulties of those being instructed, an ability to judge individual differences in ability to learn, and a sympathetic attitude.

He must know the way the normal human being reacts to outside influences, and he must have some understanding of the way the average brain absorbs and retains information.

First of all, an instructor must *know his subject himself,* thoroughly and completely. If he is poorly prepared or partially informed he will fool nobody; he will lose prestige in the eyes of his men—and their attention will unquestionably wander from the subject under discussion to the unpreparedness and lack of knowledge of the instructor himself. Worse, this lack of knowledge will deeply affect his own enthusiasm, and his manner will become self-conscious and diffident rather than interested, alive, and vital, as his manner must be if he hopes to put his training over.

It is perfectly true that in our expanding Army there are thousands of leaders who will realize, as they read the paragraph just preceding, that they have not yet had the time or the training to gain a full knowledge of the many things they must know. Before giving instruction, it is up to such leaders to do everything in their power to acquire all the knowledge they can. This naturally means that they must squeeze in every possible extra hour at night and over week-ends, with the official manuals and other aids, to keep at least one jump ahead of the troops they are instructing. As a matter of fact, most leaders who have not yet had the opportunity to perfect themselves in all subjects of

training will already have at least a fair knowledge of each subject. But a fair knowledge is not enough. Every leader without exception must have as thorough a knowledge as he can gain.

It will often happen—it has already often happened in every unit in our expanding Army—that a leader will find himself at a loss during instruction. When this occurs, he will not be able to fool anybody about it. No attempt to cover his lack of knowledge, no bluff, will succeed. The right thing to do, of course, is for the leader then to acknowledge in plain words his lack of complete familiarity with the instruction in hand, and to say that at the next opportunity—the next drill period or the next day, if possible—he will have cleared up the point of instruction that has stumped him and will take it up again. Where leaders must to some extent learn with those they are leading, a frank attitude always works best.

The officer-leader should not be embarrassed if at times he finds that one of his noncoms or experienced privates knows more about a phase of training than he does. He will lose no measure of the esteem of his men if he shows his willingness to learn from those under him who have had more experience. But he should strain every effort not to make this necessary, through using every moment of his time before a period of instruction to perfect himself in the work. And as his unit progresses in its training he should insist to

himself on becoming the leader of his group in every sense of the word, the leader in military knowledge as well as the leader by appointment.

The matter of enthusiasm deserves further discussion. Through the contagion of force of example the instructor's interest and enthusiasm have direct reflection in that shown by his men. All officers at one time or another experience boredom with the task of instructing; they may know their subject thoroughly, but the very monotony of having covered the ground so many times before may invite indifference and lack of interest. If they make a conscious effort to feign enthusiasm, if they project themselves into their work as an actor gets into his part, that enthusiasm will become real. For in the human being the emotion follows the act just as readily as the act follows the emotion.

The one main secret of creating and keeping up interest in instruction is to show constantly the application of the instruction to war and to the defeat of an enemy. There is absolutely no phase of military instruction in which this cannot be done. At the same time, the neglect to do so often makes a subject seem rather remote from its serious and practical application. Especially in tactical instruction can the leader make every phase of almost fascinating interest to his men. Actually, every "situation" is a story of war. In training, these stories, these plays, must be imaginary. But that does not prevent the imagination of the leader

from lending much realism to them. If he will prepare himself to do this, if he will put in every situation of training at least some sharp touch of realism, then the one purpose toward which every particle of training aims—the eventual defeat and destruction of the enemy —will be continually impressed upon his men, and he himself will learn habitually to think in terms of combat action during all his instruction.

There is no other end to military training than efficient battle operation to the defeat of the enemies of our country. Only by getting this thought day after day into periods of training can the work of the soldier be made to seem real, be made to seem purposeful.

Perhaps because *Basic Field Manuals* are so specific, compact, and logical (and therefore somewhat dull, viewed purely as reading matter), perhaps because at first glance many of the phases of military training seem cut-and-dried, instructors are inclined to ignore completely the important art of asking questions. This tendency is most prevalent among old-timers, who have been over the material so often that it seems simplicity itself. As a result, troops are often exposed to a training subject in a most perfunctory manner. They are told to do a thing without being told its reason or purpose, and they are seldom questioned on the fundamentals or the methods of carrying them out. If men learn blindly and unintelligently, results are slow in development—and the newly-acquired knowledge is

mechanical and temporary, not intelligent and permanent. Accordingly, questions should be constantly used to arouse and increase interest, stimulate thought, emphasize facts, and test knowledge. They should be asked in novel form, and both questions and answers should be heard and understood by all. They should be directed to the bright and the dull without regular order. A man should never be asked by name, "Jones, why shouldn't you clean your rifle with brass polish?" The question should be asked first, then the entire group given time to consider the problem, and finally a man called upon by name to discuss the question.

A continuation of this discussion of methods of instruction without first considering the process by which man acquires and retains knowledge would be to follow the course of the Old Sergeant who rattles off the rules but not the whys. Certainly a catechism form of instruction, besides being thoroughly dull, often brings an instructor to the point of absurdity. For example, there is an old question based on a passage in *Field Service Regulations* which used to be a part of every soldier's instruction, "What should be done whenever possible?" The answer was, of course, the passage from the regulations, "Troops should be fed fresh beef whenever possible." In his talks to future officers, a British writer on leadership, Lieutenant Colonel Portway, gives a similar example: "What must the rifle be cleaned with?" This, he says, in the old British Army

had one and only one answer, "Great care." Similarly, the answer to the question, "What must be kept on the range?" was, "Perfect silence."

A man may be an *Information, Please* expert on military matters, but it does not follow that he is an expert soldier. The storehouse of his memory may be jammed with facts, but they may be *unrelated facts*—and not necessarily the facts that readily add together to produce the answer to a previously inexperienced military problem.

The official *Basic Field Manuals* and *Technical Manuals* do contain the fundamental military information for all soldiers of every arm. But none of these manuals contain cut-and-dried answers to unlimited combinations of combat problems. Thus their contents are not to be learned blindly by heart. They must be learned with some understanding, for facts from them must often be dug from the memory later and added together to produce a previously unrehearsed solution.

The modern conception of the old law of association of ideas is that two ideas do not become associated unless they have been experienced together. That is to say, for instance, that a man's name and his face become associated in mind only if they have been experienced at the same time. The troop leader knows enough when he recognizes that association is a method used in searching out facts from a well-filled filing case

of memory. If association is used in filing those facts, they will be easier to find when searched for.

Association is strengthened *by explanation,* which gives logical learning. Explanation should be bolstered by analogies and comparisons; these create a number of associated lines of thought leading to the original —and the more the trails leading to a given fact in the recesses of the memory, the easier it will be to find it when it is needed. Furthermore, clear and forceful explanation always excites interest in any subject. And the greater the interest, the greater the desire for knowledge—and the better its retention.

Putting material into that memory so that it may be found more readily when wanted demands that instruction be *correlated* (systematically connected) or that its facts possess *contiguity* (contact or proximity). Thus if instruction has been interrupted, a review is essential at the start of the next session so that the flow of material into the student's mind is a logical continuation of the previous instruction.

CHAPTER 18

COMPETITION—THE PRINCIPAL GAME IS WAR

Competition has been defined as "contention of two or more for the same object or for superiority; rivalry." And then, again, "Competition *may be* friendly; rivalry *is commonly hostile.*" (The italics are the author's.) Thus, within the very definition of competition lies a warning against its unthinking, arbitrary employment. Used well within reason, competition has value. But used without careful consideration of its probable results it can easily become a potent morale-destroyer. Whether competition is between individuals or between groups, it falls naturally into two general divisions—athletics and training.

All forms of athletics are essentially competitive. They produce physical fitness, mental alertness, self-confidence, coöperation among the players. They build a group spirit, a feeling of solidarity, of *esprit* and unit pride among the supporters. Yet, two important elements must also be considered. A leader must never allow athletic rivalry to become so intense that there develops proselyting among organizations (involving, for example, promises of grades or ratings to athletes of other organizations as an inducement to transfer), nor must he let it develop to such a pitch that it interferes with training because of concessions to coaches

whose desire to build winning teams tends to make them lose sight of the real military objective. War is always the main game of an army.

Competition in the field of training merits careful thought. On the credit side lie several factors. Rivalry is instinctive among men. Especially strong among those of early military age, it is expressed by the desire to equal or to surpass any higher standards set by others. Thus it is a constant spur to progress. In the individual it is the more-or-less conscious effort to reach an ideal or a goal—plus a desire to receive personal attention. That ideal or goal should deliberately be placed before the individual. The commander thus makes it a *cause* for training. In setting up standards to be achieved, he is supplying to the individual a goal perhaps not previously considered—a goal which the traits of pugnacity and rivalry in that individual will urge him to surpass.

In group competition men act for the common end rather than for their own personal benefit. Thus teamwork is stimulated; the individual learns coöperation. The leader should inform his group of the accomplishments of others and should stimulate his own men to exceed them. The method of arousing competition varies with the circumstances; yet a workable solution can be found for almost any situation.

Further, competition concentrates interest and purpose on the result rather than on the immediate per-

formance. Thus it takes the mind off the painful, wearisome, or unpleasant details incident to the task.

However, any competition—especially in the field of training—needs careful planning, direction, and control. Rivalry without sportsmanship breeds envy and jealousy. *The only competition of value is that which produces the best results for coöperation of an entire unit.* A competition between squads that results in improvement in the squads but disrupts the platoon is worse than valueless.

Competition in marksmanship, for instance, where the men can see the scores and can understand why they lost, is never harmful. But competitions involving such intangibles as the opinions of judges on matters of precision, neatness, records, and similar elements, usually breed resentment. A leader must realize here that only one unit can win, and that the others, which have worked equally hard, will inevitably feel a distinct sense of let-down. Thus he must avoid contests that designate "the best squad," "the best platoon"; for the jealousy, the friction, the drop in morale caused in the majority will usually offset any gains.

Thus competition in training should usually be designed so that organizations will be brought into a state of unconscious comparison of their own standards with those of their rivals; rarely, if ever, should competing units be listed in a numerical order of achievement.

Weakness is searched for, not in criticism but for correction. *The reward of competition should not be a silver cup, or a numerical rating, or a streamer for the guidon; the reward should be the satisfaction resulting from the achievement of a high state of training.*

CHAPTER 19

LEADERSHIP IN THOUGHT AS IN ACTION

In the other chapters of this book we have discussed the things a leader of any rank in the Army of the United States can do—and keep from doing—to develop and foster among those he leads contentment, loyalty, *esprit*, willingness, discipline—all the elements, in fact, that together contribute to the almost indefinable quality called morale.

But in the Army of a democracy such as ours these elements of leadership, daily common sense guides for the conduct of a leader toward his men, are still not enough, no matter how high the degree of personal leadership they develop. There is still one other side of the leader's work and duty, one other aspect of leadership, without which all else the leader does toward perfecting individual and group spirit within his unit can hardly be fully effective.

There still must be developed by every leader an understanding among his men of the utterly necessary place of an adequate, efficient, modern army in American life. Not only must the leader make clear the immediate needs of the total war effort but also the dangers of wishful thinking, the false military ideas, the military penny-squeezing of the past that have resulted so often for us in the costs of life and national wealth that might have been avoided, and must be avoided in

the future of our nation. And with this understanding of the place an army must fill in a great democracy, there must also be developed by the leader a willingness—a genuine eagerness—among those he leads, to train and perfect themselves as fighting men, and then, if necessary, to fight, not alone as members of a hardened skillful fighting team behind the leaders that have made them such but above all as soldiers of the United States of America.

Once the shooting starts, willingness and enthusiasm for army and nation become almost spontaneous in growth, for by then there is a clear, unmistakable aim in view. It makes no difference whether it takes some idealistic form, such as saving the world for democracy, or the form of a practical hard-headed realization that the fight ahead is an aggressive battle for survival. But during a period of military expansion, preparation, and training, before war in earnest does begin, and even during actual hostilities, the mind of the American citizen in uniform is often as muddled in thought as the mind of the citizen who is not bearing arms. The soldier's mind, at such times, may have no sufficient background of national military thought to help him see clearly. It then becomes a primary duty of his leaders to provide such a background for him.

Such leadership in thought is utterly essential for one main reason. A great strength of our democracy is

its freedom of speech, of the press, of the air. For freedom of speech permits every man to make up his own mind—to reach a decision that is based upon a full general knowledge of the facts—a method of decision therefore impossible in a dictator country where the facts are kept hidden. But in this very strength as we actually have it there can also be a weakness. For freedom of speech, press, and air, unless there is immediately available to hearers and readers some clear statement of the aims and purposes of all speakers and writers, can embrace and even foster a tremendous flow of subversive propaganda. This can reach into the Army as into the rest of the nation. To the sum of such propaganda must be added the flood of loose talking and thinking by impractical theorists, political opportunists, and amateur military commentators, and the frequent overemphasis and distortion of fact expressed in headlines and in sensation-seeking news stories in papers and magazines. There is also the deluge of words and ideas emitted by pressure groups whose motives may be of the highest but whose divergent methods and sometimes erratic ideas for defense can but add to bewilderment. All these have their impact; and to whom should a man in uniform turn for guidance from confusion of mind if not to his leaders?

An Army leader, more than a leader anywhere else, must be a leader in every sense. And for such a leader to help his men in everything but in their thinking is

for him to avoid one of his chief responsibilities and to neglect one of the chief methods in which he can serve his men, his Army, and his country. By his education, his training, his very position, it is his *duty* to assist his subordinates in clarifying their thinking and in reaching an understanding of the purpose of their Army and its constantly vital place in the year-by-year existence and development of their Nation.

It is true, though it should not be, that American military leaders as a whole, while they enter into the lives of their men in almost every other way—straightening out their personal problems, praising them and punishing them and taking care of them and training them—nevertheless seldom go into such basic questions, for example, as "Why am I receiving this military training?" or "What is this war all about?"

There are probably several causes for this attitude of avoiding leadership in thought. One leader may have the idea, "Keep them busy with hard training, and see that they are well cared for and given reasonable recreational facilities, and they won't have time for much thinking." A second may feel, "Let them make up their own minds; that's their own business, not mine. I'm only here to make good soldiers of them." A third may think it the duty of only the high command to influence the thinking of troops, or may feel that he must have orders covering the matter. And a fourth may be uncertain as to just what he thinks him-

self. And probably many a leader steers away from the thought of helping his men to think clearly because of the possible political and social questions that may arise if he attempts to guide the thinking of his men.

They are all wrong. A man is never too tired to think unless he is completely exhausted. It is the business of a military leader to *see* that his troops know why they are training and "why we are fighting this war." No military leader can fence himself off from the rest of his country. He works for his country, he receives the men whom he trains from his country, and he is responsible first of all to his country for the results of that training. It is certainly, also, the duty of high commanders to assist in guiding the thought of their troops; but even more so is it the duty of a leader in daily contact with the men he leads—and no such leader need wait for orders. As for the leader who is uncertain himself, his first duty is to endeavor at the earliest moment to clarify and establish in his own mind the general purposes of an efficient Army of the United States, purposes not merely of the present period of war, but of all times as far into the future as we can peer at all.

The leader who fears that broad political and social questions may arise if he attempts to help his men think more clearly should remember several things. To begin with, the form of government which he has sworn to uphold is established by the majority of the

voters. The full allegiance of every military man is due under his oath to any duly elected commander-in-chief from any political party whatsoever. A soldier, whether commissioned or enlisted, is free to think about politics and to express himself in private discussion. But politics has no place in official discussion or instruction, and that is all that need be said if political matters do come up when a leader endeavors to help his men clarify their thinking. It may be well, too, for all wearers of the uniform to remember that no matter what political party may come duly into power—Democratic, Republican, Socialist, Farmer-Labor, or any other—it will be the duty of the Army to strive its utmost, within the means allotted to it, to continue to perfect the nation's defenses right on.

Broad social questions are of fundamental military concern for the reason that they deeply concern the people from whom the Army comes. The higher military commanders must be fully aware of their implications and must study their effects on measures of national policy. They must also be prepared to present their opinions to the proper governmental authorities, or to assist these authorities in meeting such problems, when called upon to do so. The lower military leaders must also keep fully aware of social developments and adjustments, but for different reasons. Such leaders meet these problems daily in the affairs of their men. Such matters as requests of influential parents for special

privileges for their sons in training, problems of poverty that worry men from poor families, and the problem involving the morals of the neighboring community—these are all practical social matters with which the small-unit leaders must constantly deal.

Thus every leader of whatever grade or rank needs to recognize fully all social problems that exist and to recognize also that most of them directly affect the *esprit* of their troops. He needs to remember constantly, too, that the leaders and the led of the American Army have come, since our Army began, from the people themselves—from the people of every section of our American national life.

It would accordingly be absurd for any leader to fear that an attempt on his part to guide, direct, and clarify the thought of his men would give rise to unwelcome discussion of social questions, for he must face them daily, anyway, in the practice of his profession. The very existence of an army in a democracy makes it certain that the impact of such matters on the Army will be constant. It is the part of all military leaders to be well aware of them. The leaders of lower units, such as company officers, should in general be guided by instructional material provided officially in any general discussions they may make touching upon social questions. In general, there should be no thought of bringing up such matters in frequent harangues to troops. Instead the leader should usually confine his discus-

sion of them to such suitable times as the periodic readings of the Articles of War and the giving of any general instructional matter on better citizenship and similarly broad subjects as directed by higher authority. The main thing is for the leader to make his subordinates feel both that he is willing to be their leader in thought, whenever they need him as such, and that they can be individually sure of his help in such matters. Otherwise the leader should make it plain that the Army's one big job is to fight the war, and that while social problems do always affect the Army and the war effort in general, their solutions usually go far beyond the Army to the people themselves and their Government.

Because of his educational advantages, his training, his very status, the officer-leader especially is looked to for guidance and advice *in all things*. If he stops to consider that his men's minds are continuously being subjected to the impact of truths, half-truths, and downright lies, he must realize that despite the American common sense that aids many a man to see what is sound and what is unsound, many another will nevertheless need his guidance and help. Such help is not propaganda in the vicious sense that has clung to the word since World War I. Such help is merely the attempt to outweigh by common sense the distortions and lies that throw men's thinking out of balance. It is simply the lending of a needed hand to men who are

confused and disturbed by the mass of material that comes to them through rumor and gossip, through the press, through the radio, and sometimes even through the privileged mails.

In final analysis, then, a leader's job is not alone one of housekeeping, of training, of example, of command; it enters just as completely into his men's thinking as into their physical existence. He is their guide, their director, their chief—their chief in everything from military discipline to, if need be, the final exhortation to the extreme activity, effort, and sacrifice of battle.

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