

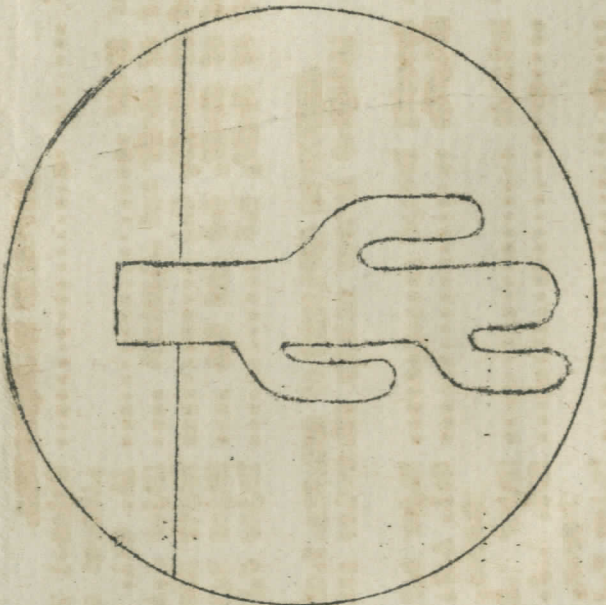
BULLETIN

103RD DIVISION, U.S. ARMY,
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CACTUS DIVISION BULLETIN.

NUMBER I.

OFFICERS OF THE REGULAR ARMY ON DUTY WITH 103RD DIVISION.

DIVISION HEADQUARTERS.

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(Absent sick Fitzsimons Hosp.)
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410th Infantry Major H. J. Costles, INF,
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329th Engineers (Combat) 1st Lt. W. E. Lorenzo, CE,
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103rd Division Air Service Captain G. A. Purvisy, AS.
328th Medical Regiment Capt. E. D. Quimball, MC.
103rd Division Train Lt. Col. J. E. Sholley, QMC.
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Absent sick 1st Lt. J. T. doCamp, CAC.
Absent sick Capt. M. D. Leonard, CAC.

BRITISH

INTRODUCTION.

Certain principles have been recognized since ancient times as underlying success in war. Our war department has contented itself with the mere enumeration of those principles, leaving the individuals the task of studying out the meaning and the manner of applying these principles. "The mere statement is extremely easy, the application is however supremely difficult". This brief paper will deal with their meaning and methods of application in the field.

The tabulation you will find on the blackboard. 1. Objective - mass - offensive - surprise - economy - security - simplicity - fire and movement - cooperation. When understood they form a basis for logical and efficient action under all circumstances for both large and small forces.

OBJECTIVE.

This has about the same meaning as mission. In large forces, the hostile main body is almost always the objective; exceptionally a great industrial region the hostile capital or the hostile lines of communication may be the objective. The French Army was the objective of the Germans at the beginning of the war, the cutting of the railroad near Sedan the objective of the Americans in the Meuse-Argonne. For divisions and smaller bodies in this fight, the objectives were successively the woods, hills, ridges, and fortified towns that held up the advance in the numerous minor battles that made up the whole. It is necessary to have definitely in mind your mission of objective, just what you are trying to do, as the basis for the simultaneous action of all your troops toward a common end. Clear thinking as a surety of definite action. Don't haggle. Make definite decisions, and strike your objective with the heaviest blow possible.

MASS.

This means superior force at the point of attack; superiority of numbers, fire power, and morale. God is always on the side of the heaviest battalions. "Get there fastest with the mostest men". A patrol of twelve men dispersed till the fire of only four can be brought against a hostile patrol of six loses the advantage of mass. The Germans had the advantage of mass near Paris in their advance, till Joffre by using the Army of Paris and reinforcing from Eastern France got superior numbers in that vicinity. When superior numbers are available swing strength against weakness. Remember that superior strength on the battlefield counterbalances all the disadvantages and mistakes that have been made. The moral of this, avoid dispersion, concentrate against vital points, maintain control of your troops and keep a reserve in hand to insure the advantage of mass at the vital points. Win or lose elsewhere, but remember that victory at the vital points carries all the minor parts with it. Mass is necessary to continue movement by use of reserves.

OFFENSIVE.

Aggressive spirit, good morale, and the firm determination to strike whenever a favorable opportunity offers, keeping the initiative in war and battle and forcing the enemy to follow your lead, and bend to your will. The elements of the offensive are energy, rapidity, and vigor. The elements of the defensive are perseverance and tenacity. It presupposes superior physical or moral superiority. The defence must win at all points, the attack in only one. Action must not be wild, it must be in conformity with the general plan, and must be guided by good sense and reasonable prudence, and to make the most of it, good officers, good soldiers, and thorough training is essential. The Germans and Americans were thoroughly imbued with this principle. Remember this, that those who dare to call on troops for extraordinary efforts are fewer than those who will respond to such demands when made. When necessary, demand the impossible. All that is humanly possible will then be attained. War is energy and action - the defensive is only adopted from necessity, and with the intention of resuming the offensive as soon as mass can be collected.

SURPRISE.

Is indispensable in some form. Rapidity of concentration, speed of movement, unexpected direction of attack, concealment of forces or fire power, by terrain or night, unexpected hour of attack, all illustrate surprise. No principle affords more scope. Gourard leaving his front trenches vacant. Custer attacking the Indians on the Washita in the dead of winter, the Sioux defeating Custer on the Little Big Horn by their unexpected numbers (mass, in other words), an attack just before sundown instead of at daylight, a concentration of all artillery against one part of the hostile front, the attack of the Germans after massing their armies secretly by night, in forests, concealed with crushing artillery support. History is full of surprises, and no battle, large or small, is complete or well planned unless surprise is worked in in some one or more of its numerous forms.

SECURITY.

Means reasonable protection against surprise attack. It does not mean absolute security which is never attainable. He who seeks to be absolutely safe seldom attains his objective. Time to deploy and bring your full strength into

action, with liberty of action to you instead of the enemy - this is security. Advance - rear and flank guards - outposts - spies and scouts - the use of obstacles - sufficient force at hand to ensure mass - security against observation by concealment, and against fire by cover of the terrain, or by open formations in open ground. The commander of any force on its own, is responsible for security. When in doubt, always provide for your own security, your own local advance guard, your own interior and exterior guards, and your own protective formations. Guard yourself except when you know you are being guarded by higher authority. Future warfare will see increased importance in security from airplanes observation by concealment, and security from fire effect by open and staggered formations. This will make communication and control more difficult but it will be a requirement of reasonable security. Security demands a certain degree of foresight. The most important element is the hostile action and reaction against your attack. These must be figured in advance to avoid ~~unpleasant~~ ~~hesitating~~ action. It greatly increases security to have action figured in advance for various contingencies.

SIMPLICITY.

Nothing succeeds in war that is not simple. Unity of command, simple, clear orders, simple plans, direct action, bringing into play full force and full fire effect. Figure out the simplest way to obtain your object and go to it boldly. Clear orders must govern, but methods and details which cannot be foreseen belong to the local commander on the spot. No principle is more often violated than this.

FIRE AND MOVEMENT.

The best protection against fire is a well directed fire on the Enemy. A squad, platoon, or company moving forward under fire on open ground is entitled to move under cover of the fire of its automatic rifles, rifles and hand grenades. Retirees cover themselves with the fire of machine-guns, automatics, 75 mm guns, trench mortars, and rifles; larger bodies are protected by the fire of artillery in addition to the above weapons. The point to be stressed is that all exposed movement within effective range of the enemy should be covered by fire, especially from the auxiliary weapons. Remember also that it is very rarely, if ever, that an Enemy can be straddled by fire alone, it takes the combination of fire and movement, the thrust and intonation of closing with the bayonet, to drive him out. It is the visible determination carrying the assault forward (the spirit of the offensive) which the defense cannot stop, that gradually brings to the defenders the conviction that such a resolute advance will not stop short of the bayonet. Rare mistakes only have occurred where the defenders actually waited to cross bayonets. Fire and movement are inseparable, the St. Lawrence Twins of tactics. Napoleon said "fire is everything", but he always combined the most energetic movement with it.

CO-OPERATION.

Natural and active assistance to adjoining units. As the offensive spirit was the chief American attribute, so cooperation was their weakest point. The Belgians attacked the Germans without hope of success except delay to the advantage of the French and British.

Our divisions stuck to their own jobs and in general took little or no action to assist their neighbors.

The Germans in 1870 won the war against France largely by the use of cooperation. Every unit could rely on its neighbor to come promptly to its assistance. It was conducive to initiative and energy, and led to success, even in attacks by inferior forces, which were promptly swelled by reinforcements. There will be little trouble about cooperation if it be understood that boundaries are not rigid, that fire action is often possible across the boundary to assist the advance of neighboring units, and that in general the simultaneous advance of adjoining units is necessary to prevent the exposure of flanks. The late war was full of cowardly troops on our right and left, but seldom was a real effort made to assist them forward.

RESUME.

In general, it is necessary to be imbued with the offensive spirit, the will to fight and win, to determine clearly your objective, your mission, your point of attack. To concentrate against the point of attack all available troops, complying with the principles of mass and economy, and with due regard for security, that is, the prevention of surprise attack by the enemy. Work in, some of its numerous forms, the element of surprise, insure speed, energy, and activity of movement, and cover all exposed movement by fire. Keep touch with, and assist all adjoining units, and in the absence of orders, act in conformity with the general plan. To comply with simplicity rely on common sense, simple plans, clear, definite orders. Come to definite decisions, dismiss all doubts, don't haggle or hesitate or pass the buck, but pass on to resolute action. These are the universal principles of war. The poorest plan carried out with energy is often better than the best plan accompanied by doubt and hesitation.

BATTLE PRINCIPLES.

War consists of labor and hardships - battle is exceptional but certain. To large bodies, the nature of the terrain is not so important as the network of roads, and the movements of the enemy, which must be met, countered, and shattered. In local combats, the terrain is important, with reference to shelter, critical points, field of fire, etc. Points affording observation have increased in importance. Aeroplane observation and fire will be vastly more important, and must be met by concealment of troops or by open formations on open ground. Remember that battle fronts quickly take the form of salients and re-entrants under artillery fire and infantry attack. In principle, use support troops to infiltrate into the re-entrants, and instead of straight on reinforcement of troops held up, rather maneuver against the flanks of the salients. Seek favorable positions from which to cover attacking troops with fire from all auxiliary weapons. Remember that once engaged, the most difficult points to any commander are control, communication and supply, and each must be maintained.

In any sudden war, you will be relied on to apply the principles of war and battle, each in his own grade. The difficulties are great, but long experience leads to the opinion that the real underlying necessities of war and battle can be reduced to two words - Knowledge and action. Reflection and study are indispensable to knowledge - knowledge leads to prompt and reasonable decisions and definite orders, and these in turn lead to good morale and to resolute and timely action.

Finally, and in closing, remember that the commander himself provides the resolution, the morale and the energy that pervades his whole command. It requires mental and physical strength, endurance, and activity.