



POST SOLANT AMITY

And the Members of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment



Volume 3, Issue 2

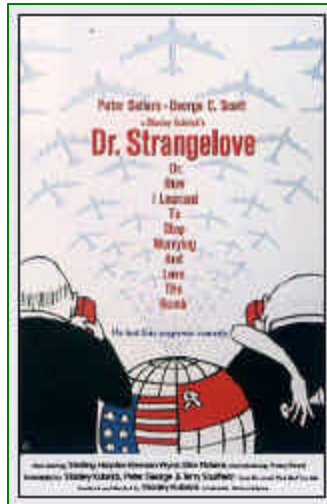
June 2005

Technology, Methods and Mindset Have Made a Difference *by Ed Shea*

While giggling over the liberal media's efforts to tippy-toe its way through the minefield between being both critical and respectful of the military, it struck me just how much about the military has changed in the past one hundred years...and why.

In large part and recent decades, members of "arts" and media industries remain possessed of the idea that military intellect is a non-existent commodity. These same elitists believe that those donning a uniform are little more than sycophantic automatons. That officers and NCOs are insensitive morons, preoccupied with "winning" medals, whatever the costs to the environment, civilization, indeed, even their own personnel.

As long-time adults, we've heard and read their invectives on the radio, on TV, in newspaper stories, editorials and cartoons. The list of anti-war/anti-military film epics, for example, include Lewis Milestone's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930), Stanley Kubrick's *Paths of Glory* (1957), *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), *Full*



Metal Jacket (1987), and Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979). All provided "snapshot" images of the military service as blind (youthful, middle-aged or elderly) exuberance for violence without purpose and direction.

It must drive the cool-aiders nuts to see latter day efforts such as Mel Gibson's *Braveheart* (1995), Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and the incredible

Spielberg and Tom Hanks production of *Band of Brothers* (2001).

However, whether disparaging or flattering of the men or their efforts, whether sincere or politically motivated, these presentations remain only "snapshots" of the human condition during specific and quite limited times of peril. They do not address the implications of changing technology, tactical and strategic methodology, or the social and political forces that have changed the plight of, and benefits to, the American infantryman of today over those of roughly a century ago, during WWI.

The infantryman's "enemies" are many. The obvious ones include and are certainly not limited to: weaponry, being wounded, disease and infection, psychological impacts of warfare, the environment, lack of training and poor leadership.

During WWI, the common foot soldier was poorly educated, was even more poorly trained, possessed a bolt action rifle, a gas mask and the simplest of clothing. He suffered the great likelihood of

limb loss and gross infection, psychological trauma, neurological and lung damage from gas attacks, frostbite, trench foot, and dysentery as a result of poor hygiene practices and inadequate medical attention. Officers and NCOs, generally lacked sufficient tactical experience, even training, to prepare them for what they were to encounter in Europe.

Bravado alone assures neither success nor survival.

Artillery, machine guns, nerve and lung dissolving Phosgene gases, and disease were the predominate killers.

Naval and air support were but emerging concepts. "Fire and maneuver" tactics were impossible, as the conflict deteriorated into virtually immovable trench warfare. The only major...and proven catastrophic...effort at an amphibious landing was at Gallipoli, which produced 131,000 dead and 181,000 wounded Australian, New Zealand, British, French and *enemy* Turkish troops over a period of roughly seven months. No one, on either side, fared well.

By WWII, America's infantrymen were a bit more educated. They were an (Continued page 3, column 1)



Grant the wish of a child with a life-threatening medical conditions. Donate to your local chapter of the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

"Nama-A-Rama" - Apocalyptic meeting of Yossarian & Strangelove

Written by Phillip Jennings and published by Tom Doherty Associates, LLC, New York in 2005, *Nama-A-Rama* is a first novel by Jennings, a Marine helicopter pilot in Vietnam and an Air America pilot in Laos.

Touted as bringing together elements of *Catch-22*, *Apocalypse Now* and *Dr. Strangelove*, Jennings "looks at the absurdity of war in which the damned and the innocent share the same hooch, the same Commander-in-Chief, and sometimes even the same body bag."

Boldly satirical, it requires a

reader that recognizes exaggeration as an extraordinary means to communicate ones personal observations of *reality* in a way that effectively transcends bland and obvious "black and white" descriptions.

If you're of a mindset, like this shanty Irishman, that appreciates seeing the wind taken from the sails of those in *high places* with few ideals, lofty ideas, and possessing even greater heights of hubris, you're going to enjoy this book.

No one of presumed influence is left unscathed: pentagon official-

dumb, LBJ, Ho Chi Minh and none other than the recently resurrected Hanoi Jane Fondle-this.

However, if you still *not* ready to read about the Vietnam War or are *not* the sort to enjoy reading satire; perhaps you should wait a year or so, as this has the smell of *movie* about it that is undeniable.

Liberal Hollywood can't possibly ignore the opportunity. 🍌

Trivia Question 1: What actor portrayed Capt. John Yossarian in the 1961 film version of Joseph Heller's anti-war epic, *Catch-22*. (See Answer 1, page 4)



Delray Beach, Florida — A retirement community camera caught this nut job emerging from the local fauna. When apprehended by local security personnel, he had little to say except that he "must have taken a wrong turn after losing his compass, during an overnight recon patrol of the Everglades."

After a few clubhouse "cool ones," security drove him home...three blocks away.

Immediate Standby — Do and Learn the Hard Way by George Bitsoli

We all can recall our participation in Immediate Standby Duty status.

Most of what we owned was packed in seabags or footlockers, which was then stored at Company Supply. As for the rest, exclusive of the utilities we were wearing, such as our 782 gear and our weapons were pre-loaded on waiting trucks staged outside our company's barracks. Wall lockers were cleaned out except for a few extra items we might need, such as a towel and shaving kit.

After participating several times in the process, without incident, "familiarity" took hold and, growing lax, we commenced to cut corners.

I recall one instance that proved to be not too pleasant. Call it learning the hard way to do things the right way.

One of those corner's cut was in the preparation of our combat packs before placing them aboard the waiting trucks. Many of us got the brilliant idea for quick prep instead. We simply cheated and put pillows in the packs...instead of the items needed and called for by the manual...to make them look full and neatly square. Then, like the Army's famously inane cartoon character, Sad Sack, the lot of us concluded "Gee, let me see. Yep, those pillows make those packs really look 'squared,'" while not truly Marine Corps *squared away*.

As usual, we stayed in the barracks, crapped-out in and around our bunks"...feet off the mattress maggot"...in keeping with the long standing tradition of "hurry up and wait," then wait some more.

We cleaned our weapons, played cards, sat through a relentless barrage of how-to lectures and training films. Time and boredom were our enemies.

Then there were the drills, those anytime-of-the-day-or-night roustings. Again and again, we practiced assembling. We had but two minutes or so to get from wherever while doing WHATEVER to a bench seat on a six-by-truck parked curbside, perhaps one-hundred yards from the barracks, ready to roll to only God and some general knew where.

Then, as life in the Corps would

have it, there came what we believed to be one more of those middle-of-the-night, shrill whistle and barking sergeant alerts that proved to be something more than scramble and mayhem to no end.

Okay, so there we were at 0-dark-30, sitting on the trucks thinking "who could be so rude to call a drill at this hour?" and hoping our rapid response had left them sated when the engines started. Still, we weren't concerned. Hell, we were Marines.

Yawn. Now where is our coffee?

Then, to the chagrin of all hands, as though the engine start-up wasn't enough, the trucks started oh-my-God *rolling*. "Hey! What's up? What about the rest of my night's sleep? And that coffee?"

Not unexpectedly, my rantings went unanswered and the convoy just kept "rollin,' rollin,' rollin'" until before too long we arrived at an air base and pulled up not far from some troop transport planes.

Bewildered, we'd certainly gone beyond anything that might be thought of as a normal Standby experience and had no idea when or where the "adventure" would end.

My mind raced though the list of who, what, when, where and WHY? Must be that damned Cuban maniac Castro again, I thought. We'd often been alerted because of his antics in the past and then prepared to *mount-out* to the Caribbean.

And the nightmare was not yet at an end. We boarded the planes. The engines were started, then revved. Soon we were airborne. Whoa! Apprehensions rising. Destination unknown. Mission unknown and came the personal revelation, most of us oh-so-smart -Alecs lacked regulation combat packs and needed gear. Oooops!

Even though those packs looked "squared-away," for sure we were going to need, at the very least, an occasional change of socks and underwear, and mess kits if we wanted to eat. Shaving gear and soap for personal hygiene. We had cooked our own goose, regardless of where we were headed.

Eventually, we learned that there had been an approaching hurricane headed for North Carolina. Understandably, it was decided to move the planes...and we chosen few...



Diorama on display at the Naval Academy of then Lieutenant and now Colonel John W. Ripley (USMC Ret.), the subject of our last issue's lead story and the hero of John Miller's "The Bridge at Dong Ha." (Photo by Ed Shea)

to a safer location, should a military emergency arise.

We landed at a base in hot, muggy, sticky, sweaty Key West, Florida and were set up in temporary quarters for the duration without benefit of the needed items. Boy, can folks get "ripe" under those conditions. Real ripe. As in, "Whew! Puleez, go stand upwind, over there, and don't get too close to me, okay?"

Fortunately, there exists a God, and He is truly merciful. The next day we were allowed to make an emergency PX run. Can there be ANY doubt as to what items we spent our limited available cash on???

Lessons learned. For sure, every time thereafter we prepared our combat packs, especially for Immediate Standby, besides tossing in a few extras just in case, we made an effort to do them "according to regulations."

Trivia Question 2: A class of grenade capable of producing a temperature of 4300°F and burn through a motor was called what? (See Answer 2 on page 4)

My "Living Will"

by Charlie LaMarr

I Charlie LaMarr, being of sound mind and body, do not wish to be kept alive indefinitely by artificial means.

Under no circumstances should my fate be put in the hands of peckewood ethically challenged politicians who couldn't pass ninth-grade biology if their lives depended on it.

If a reasonable amount of time passes and I fail to sit up and ask for a cold beer, it should be presumed that I won't ever get better. When such a determination is reached, I hereby instruct my spouse, children and attending physicians to pull the plug, reel in the tubes and call it a day.

Under no circumstances shall the hypocritical members of the Legislature (State or Federal) enact a special law to keep me on life-support machinery. It is my wish that these boneheads mind their own damn business, and pay attention instead to the health, education and future of the millions of Americans who aren't in a permanent coma.

Under no circumstances shall any politicians butt into this case. I don't care how many fundamentalist votes they're trying to scrounge for their run for the presidency, it is my wish that they play politics with someone else's life and leave me alone to die in peace.

I couldn't care less if a hundred religious zealots send e-mails to legislators in which they pretend to care about me. I don't know these people, and I certainly haven't authorized them to preach and crusade on my behalf. They should mind their own business, too.

If any of my family goes against my wishes and turns my case into a political cause, I hereby promise to come back from the grave and make his or her existence a living hell.

Signed, Dated and Witness

Trivia Question 3: What were the water purification tablets, 4 Mg tablet in bottles of 500, called? (See Answer 3 on page 4)

Tech, Tactics & Mindset (Con't)

emotionally tougher lot in general, having endured the affects of the Depression. Though draftees, they fought in retribution for Pearl Harbor, or a personal distain for Hitler and/or fascism. Both purposes being one giant step higher than the WWI doe-boys' search for excitement.

Technologies, in their infancies during WWI, had advanced dramatically. Aircraft carriers, tanks, electronics [sonar, radar and extensive use of radio], aircraft [fighters, transports, bombers], munitions [high explosive C3, white phosphorus, various grenade types, napalm], naval and close-air support for infantry, expanded development and use of both semi-automatic and automatic weapons at the fire team level, self-contained breathing apparatus and parachutes.

Strategy included day/nighttime carpet and fire bombings of populated cities as well as strategic production and oil supply depots; submarine attacks of commercial and military shipping targets; parachuting vertical envelopment forces; and Pacific island hopping.

Tactical changes included long range reconnaissance by land, sea and air; increased development of close air-to-ground support; greater reliance upon lateral envelopment via fire and maneuvering practices aided by the support of naval, air and artillery forces.

Medical support was enhanced. Facilities and personnel became ever more closer to the battle, dramatically increasing the survival rate of the wounded and, in doing so, valuable experience and wisdom were accumulated that would help in future military encounters.

In short, the troops were less likely to be thought of as being "expendable." At least not entirely.

Thus, to the newly emerging and enlarged general officers' corps, personnel were acquiring a value beyond that of cannon-fodder. If not yet thought of humanely, they had become a commodity worthy of keeping alive. Things were, indeed, looking up.

And, all of these changes required troops, their NCOs and officers be more intelligent, aware, and better trained than their predecessors.

At wars end, there came the atomic bomb with all of its ramifications, not the least of which was that landings such as commonly accomplished in the Pacific theater and the beaches at Normandy had become no longer practical against an enemy having nuclear weaponry. All those ships and personnel sitting off-shore in a tight formation made too good of a target: "One bomb, one entire flotilla. Sayonara, Marine."

The Korean War enhanced the concepts of vertical envelopment via helicopters, close air support, and expanded use of MASH units. Furthermore, it helped refine the technologies and tactics used a decade later in Southeast Asia.

And, the Vietnam Era? Well, that military debacle brought about changes of enormous social, political and military consequences. All of which ultimately enhanced, though too late for more than 59,000 men and women, the quality and life expectancy of our infantry. Then, the nation's effete elite and defeated military hierarchy set themselves the task of learning why "America," not they, had failed.

The draft was eliminated and an all volunteer service became the wave of the future. This removed the prospect of an army more appropriately labeled as malcontent than "warrior-like." Stricter standards for entry and subsequent behavior were established and enforced. Recruitment was directed toward the high school graduate, with proven academic ability and a record of personnel discipline and achievement. These were and remain qualities necessary in an ever more technically oriented military, including the often maligned infantry. With advanced weaponry now in use at even the squad level and a need for understanding such things as the uses and operation of global positioning equipment, the days of a "Gomer Pyle" and a military providing employment for the otherwise unemployable have long gone.

Indeed, it has come to pass that the average reading achievement level of military personnel today is greater than that of the nation's general population.

After an extensive study, Pentagon officials concluded that, more than

officers, there is NO substitute for an outstanding corps of non-commissioned officers. It is they who provide the substance of continuity and tradition within a given branch of service. Thus was born the concept of extended and extensive classroom training of NCOs, and not just the standard on-the-job training experience of yesteryear.

The generals, unforgiving of political intrusion and the micro-management of military activity during the Vietnam War, insisted that, henceforth, political involvement in military activity end with the mission statement: "Simply and clearly, define what it is you want us to do, then get the hell out of the way."

Such was the case in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraqi Wars.

Also observed in the conflicts of the last fifteen years:

1. The proficiency of small unit leaders, both commissioned and non-commissioned.
2. The level of training being provided. They practiced, in country, over-and-over again, common maneuvers for building searches, gas mask and haz-mat suit donnings, live fire while advancing on line and more. Training increases survivability.
3. Field uniforms and personal protective equipment is both superb and worn. Hydration practices are adhered to. These things happen because leaders insist they be done.
4. Adequate and excellent medical aide is readily available. Doctors, surgeons and operating tables are often minutes away. Corpsman have skills comparable to civilian paramedics. In a fire fight, that means lives saved. Under other circumstances: wounds, disease, infected insect bites receive fast attention without days of waiting. And, after trauma has been addressed, the wounded are rapidly transferred even thousands of miles for necessary psychological or medical follow up.

So, things have changed a lot. American military personnel today are better prepared, with fewer men, to handle the myriad of differing operations demanded of them on an all too regular basis.

A big "Oorah" to all responsible.

Iraq on 21 March 2003

Perhaps you remember the following photograph. During the invasion of Iraq, a Marine had taken down the Iraqi flag and raised the flag of the United States as well as Marine Corps colors.



Then, for political reasons, came the order directing the flags be removed and the Iraqi flag raised.

Take a look at page 4 to see why this should never have occurred.

Toot, toot, Tootsie Rolls

Here's a little something about the "frozen Chosin" you might not have been aware of: the importance of pogeey bait in saving both life and equipment.

There are conflicting stories about how Tootsie Rolls found their way into the hands of the Chosin Marines. Some insist they were airlifted in. Others say they were found among existing supplies.

However, put inside ones clothing next to the skin, they defrosted enough to be eaten and are credited with saving many who might have otherwise starved to death.

In addition, as their trucks and jeeps were being shot up by the Chinese surrounding them, the Marines would repair the holes by placing a chewed up Tootsie Roll into the hole where it would immediately freeze and create a weld.

Trivia Question 4: What was the last person or element in a column called? (See Answer 4 on page 4)

Solant Amity — G-2 6 Association
19 Orchard Avenue
Saint James, New York 11780
631-766-2500

See the whole story at:
SolantAmity.com

The First Marines to land in Monrovia



Sitting upon a clearly indicated "MARINE" terminal, the flags should have remained

And, what have our members been doing since last we published:

Trevor & Ruth Davies are well. Trevor, ever a stand-up kind of guy, was seen on 15Apr05 with *Rufus the Rat* and fellow members



of Boston's Local #17 of the Sheet Metal workers in front of a contractor's facility.

"We were picketing a real *Rat*, who bids union work and then subs the work out to non-union trades," he said.

"Hey, *Rat* on, Trev !!!"

John & Helen Lemongelli, both well, explained that they're computer has "died," so contact them

Trivia Question 5: What was the effect of over tightening the hoop in a barracks cover, causing the sides to curve downward, called? (See Answer 5,

by mail or phone. John provided a big "Semper fi, to all hands."

Delwin "Bill" Baily is well after a few recent medical bouts. So well, in fact, he's working on his yard's 7th tree trunk removal for the year.

Charlie Wilson went to Parris Island, in May, with a group from the Marine Corps League in Florida. They took 35 children to P.I., as part of a Marine Corps sponsored program called *New Beginnings*.

"There's no second shot at this. If they blow the *New Beginnings* deal, they are out of school for good, with no chance to return.

"They are from the 4th to 8th grades, with some thinking they were tough guys and girls until we turned them over to their drill instructors.

"What a change: IMMEDIATE!

"It was amazing. Some of the league members stayed in the

G/2/6 Home from Iraq

Marines and sailors of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment greet friends and family upon their return to MCB Camp Lejeune, 15Mar05.



The unit deployed as part of a 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (Anti-Terrorism) task force in September of 2004. The company's



mission in Baghdad, Iraq included providing security to U.S. government buildings in the international zone, including portions of the U.S. Embassy.

The building in the photo's background is of a type that replaced the older "H" shaped affairs of our day. Now-a-days, the troops live in motel-like accommodations I first observed when visiting Camp Lejeune in 1995.

BOQ, but myself and a few of the guys stayed in the 2nd Battalion barracks, just across the street from the drill field and the Iwo monument. I took several pictures while there, and when Peg shows me how to forward them to you I'll send them up.

"It's quite a sight to see 4th graders on the repelling tower, and not one chickened out, girl or guy.

"Semper fi to all."

Answers to Trivia Questions: 1) Alan Arkin; 2) AN-M14, Thermite [TH3]; 3) Halozone; 4) Tail End Charlie; 5) Sea Dip.

I would hope that you and yours have a safe and fun filled summer. That those of you with family and friends serving in the middle-east see them return soon, in as fine a condition as when they left.

Tarawa on Film

Hundreds of feet of film were shot by combat photographers on Betio, making the battle for Tarawa one of the most photographed in WWII. In addition to black and white a significant amount of color film was also used.

The first film produced on the battle was titled "With the Marines at Tarawa" which included much of the color footage. In 1944 this film won an Academy Award for the "Best Short Subject."

The only footage in WWII of attacking Japanese can be seen in the film. In just a few viewable seconds, the Japanese burst out from their bunker and, while running past the cameraman's position, are cut down by anxious Marines.



The Marine Corps learned after WWI that public and Congressional support was a direct by-product of good public relations. And, it was thought, there could be no better medium available at the time than that provided by Hollywood's motion picture industry. Well...not entirely.

Though winning an Academy Award in the year following the Battle for Tarawa; because of the horrific detail portrayed, Marine Corps recruitment DROPPED precipitously following the movie's release.

I've provided a hot link on the left side of our website's first page where, with a click of your *mouse*, you can view a black and white version of the movie AND Marines Return to Guam in there entirety, during July and August 2005.

Don't try unless you have a high-speed internet connection. **And**, you'll need a Real Player plug-in available at <http://www.real.com>.

Mailed as a black on white copy, a colorized version can be found at our website.
I hope you've enjoyed this issue. Send in your stories by eor-smail mail to make for an even better one, next time. Ed Shea