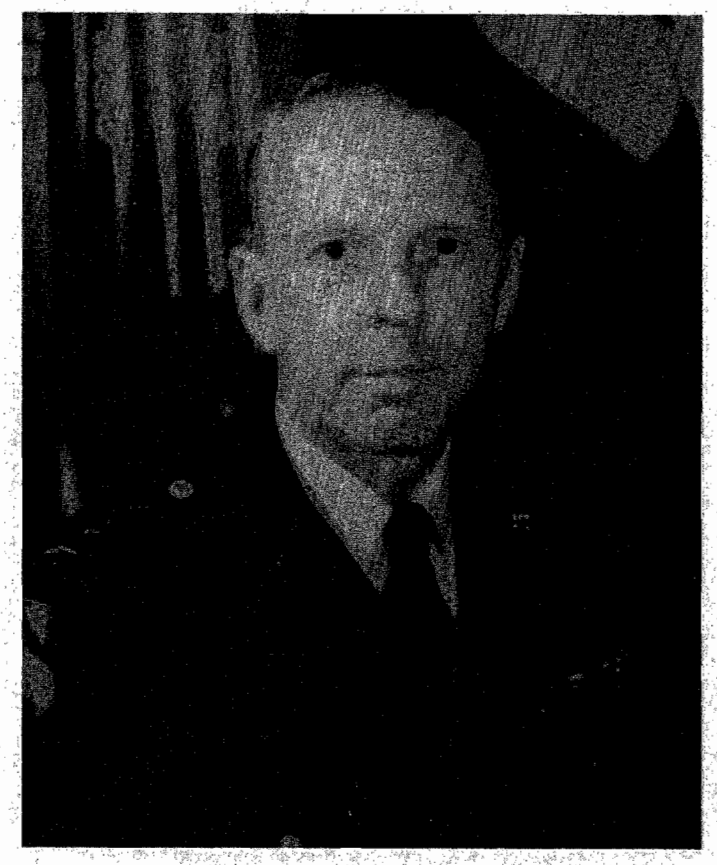


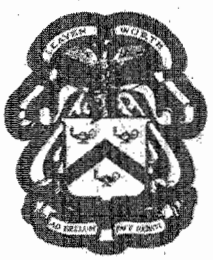
In Tribute to
General William E. DePuy

COMBAT STUDIES INSTITUTE

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In Tribute to
General William E. DePuy

Remarks by

General Maxwell R. Thurman
Lieutenant General Orwin C. Talbott
General Paul F. Gorman

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Introduction

General William E. DePuy changed the U.S. Army. As the first commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), he created the mechanisms to restore the Army's self-image as a conventional combat force trained and configured for continental warfare. He made it a doctrinal Army for the first time in its 200-year history. He laid the foundation for the training revolution that followed in the 1980s and for the development and fielding of the extraordinary combat systems that proved themselves in Operation Desert Storm. Personally, and as the leader of a major Army command, he took hold of a defeated and discouraged Army and put it on the road to victory.

After his retirement, General DePuy became something of a philosopher of war. He wrote frequently for *Army* magazine on topics of doctrinal interest and, even more important, remained a figure to reckon with internally in the Army high command as the institution followed through on the reforms and initiatives he had set in motion. General DePuy in later life became a teacher and mentor to the Army's rising leaders. Those young men who remember the general's visits to the Command and General Staff College, especially the School of Advanced Military Studies, will remember his great wit, his charm, his extraordinary intellect and understanding of war, and his compassion and interest in those who followed him into the profession of arms.

This pamphlet contains three eulogies presented by men who need no introduction to the Army—General Maxwell R. Thurman, Lieutenant General Orwin C. Talbott, and General Paul F. Gorman. The memorials were read at General DePuy's memorial service at Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., on 16 September 1992.

General William E. DePuy

Remarks by

General Maxwell R. Thurman, U.S. Army, Retired

Our friend, Bill DePuy, was a soldier—an infantry soldier. He was a leader and trainer of combat soldiers—an infantryman's leader.

Bill was a wiry son of the northern wind-swept prairie, born and raised in North Dakota. He moved with his family to South Dakota where he joined the National Guard, became a squad leader, graduated from South Dakota State, and accepted his ROTC commission in the Infantry. He had applied to be a Marine—thank God for the Army there was no room for him in the Marine Corps because he was destined to lead Army soldiers in combat.

Bill DePuy joined the 20th Infantry regiment in 1941 at Fort Leonard Wood. As a platoon leader, he walked 500 miles to the Louisiana Maneuvers and back—Bill said he learned to "soldier" in that six months.

In 1942, he joined the 90th Division, the first of four divisions in which he would serve. He would train with, deploy with, and fight with this division for the next three years.

Bill landed on Utah Beach at noon on the 8th of June 1944, D+2. He was the S3 of the 1st Battalion, 357th Infantry. He fought through the hedgerows of Normandy, through the Falaise Gap, and on the Moselle River as both the battalion and regimental operations officer (on the 4th of December 1944).

After six months in combat, Bill DePuy was given command of an infantry battalion, the 1st Battalion of the 357th Infantry. In the next six months, he would lead his battalion in heavy

combat across the Moselle, through the Siegfried Line, and on to Czechoslovakia at war's end—earning the Distinguished Service Cross, three Silver Stars, and two Purple Hearts. You see, he was a leader of infantry soldiers in combat! A battalion commander, age twenty-five.

Bill came home from Europe in 1945 and went to Fort Leavenworth, and then he came to Washington for the first of five assignments. He was integrated into the Regular Army—he could have returned to his father's bank, but he loved the military. He then studied Russian language because he thought it would be important in the years ahead. He was posted to Hungary as an attaché, the first of several appointments in the intelligence arena. His Hungarian tour over, he joined the Central Intelligence Agency working in China operations. He met Marjory Walker of Salem, Virginia, and they were married in June 1951.

Bill Jr. was born in July 1952, and Joslin arrived in July 1953 on the eve of the family's departure for Germany. It was the third of four periods of service in Europe. After a year on the V Corps staff in Frankfurt where Daphne was born in 1954, Bill and Marjory became the command team of the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry, in the 4th Division. Bill was back with the troops, leading and training soldiers for combat in the cold war.

The DePuys returned to Washington for his third assignment. Bill was in the chief of staff's office—writing "learned papers" for three years, he said.

The family returned to Europe, this time to England to attend the Imperial Defence College. From there, on to Schweinfurt—Marne Division country—where Bill once again commanded his beloved infantry troops—the dog-faced soldiers of the 1st Battle Group, 30th Infantry, in the 3d Division. He trained them in battle drills. He was the combat leader responsible for the Meiningen Gap.

And then back to Washington in 1962 for two years on the Army staff. He served in the special operations business when that field was emerging as an important element of our Army.

May 1964—combat called in Vietnam. Bill went to the sounds of the guns, and for two years, he was the operations chief for MACV [Military Assistance Command, Vietnam]. And then the call came—Bill DePuy to command the 1st Division—the Big Red One! Again, combat leader of infantrymen. It was right that this great combat leader and that great combat division should rendezvous at a critical juncture in U.S. combat history. The two were made for each other—War Zone C, War Zone D, Ap Tao O, Minh Than, Golden Gate, Attleboro, Soui Da, Song Be, Helper, the Rung Sat—the legend of the Big Red One led by Bill DePuy—combat infantryman, combat leader!

Bill returned to Washington—now his fifth tour blending his skills in combat operations, intelligence, and special operations. He served on the joint staff as the special assistant for counterinsurgency. He then moved back to the Army staff and became the first assistant to the vice chief of staff. In this role, he became the counselor to secretaries of the Army, as well as the assistant to the chief of staff. He promoted the Big 5 weapon systems—the Apache, Abrams, Bradley, Patriot, and Blackhawk that we saw perform so magnificently in Operation Desert Storm.

He led the charge to streamline the continental Army which brought about the formation of TRADOC and FORSCOM [U.S. Army Forces Command].

Bill and Marjory moved to Fort Monroe as Bill took command of TRADOC in July 1973. This, too, was right for the Army! A combat-tested battle leader at the helm of the Army's training and doctrinal institutions. An opportunity to change an Army—and change it he did.

Bill and Marjorie made their final move to Highfield in 1977. Bill's work was not yet done. He toiled with his mind and his pen to enlighten us on future combat doctrine and thoughtful analysis of the wars he'd fought.

All the while, he was the tough, wiry Virginia farmer – a stroll from the Highfield house to the foothills of the Blue Ridge with Jefferson, Suzie, then Molly, barking at his heels, inquisitively discovering the scents and beauty of the fields. Cerebration and celebration.

Bill loved his family, his friends, his grandchildren – but most of all, he loved soldiers.

You see, he was a combat leader of soldiers.

General William E. DePuy

Remarks by

Lieutenant General Orwin C. Talbott, U.S. Army, Retired

Second Lieutenant William E. DePuy—yes, he was once a second lieutenant—was transferred in April 1942 from the 20th Infantry at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to the very recently formed 90th Infantry Division at Camp Barkeley, Abilene, Texas. He was assigned to the 357th Infantry regiment, while I was in another regiment of the 90th. By the time the division arrived in England before the Normandy invasion, Bill was a captain and, shortly thereafter, became the regimental S3.

The 90th stumbled badly, had many difficulties at first. Senior commanders were relieved, mostly with sufficient cause, this including one of Bill's regimental commanders. Another of his commanding officers was killed. Bill has described the first six weeks of the division's time in Normandy, saying, "the 90th lost 100 percent of its soldiers and 150 percent of its officers. In the rifle companies that translates to losses of between 200 and 400 percent. Those losses compare with the worst of World War I." Colonel George Bittman Barth, an artilleryman, succeeded to command of the 357th during those difficult days. He knew no one in the regiment, and Bill, as S3, became his very strong right hand. The two of them became a very effective team and ensured the 357th was "born again" as a competent, thoroughly credible combat unit, one which in time became comparable with the very best in the whole theater.

About the 1st of December 1944, shortly before the Battle of the Bulge, Bill was named the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion of the 357th, a position he held for the rest of the war. In the cold, miserable fighting in the snows of the Ardennes, Bill very quickly established that he was an unusually gifted combat commander, one with the gift of imagination and the nerve to carry his ideas through—all the way through.

During that period, he more than once in the middle of the night lined up one of his companies, or his whole battalion, in single file and sneaked them through the German lines. In doing this, they always stayed within range of supporting artillery, and the units just could not be dislodged from their newly gained territory.

There is a recent book out on the 90th Division, *War From the Ground Up*. In the book, there are several references to Bill's bravery and to his very special competence as a combat commander. His regiment's direct support artillery commander, for example, wrote during the war:

> Last night DePuy sent a patrol across the river with the mission of getting information about German preparations on the other side. Not more than a couple of hours later, the patrol returned to report they couldn't cross because they were being machine-gunned. DePuy about blew his top. He loaded them in a jeep and took them back to the river. He discovered the machine-gun fire they had heard was not directed at them but down the river. He ordered the patrol, "By god! Get across now!" Not surprisingly, they did. The patrol went as far as the main road, along the river, without being challenged and found the German trenches full of water and no mines or barbed wire.

In another place in the book, Bill is described as "small, tough, wiry physique, courageous, brainy, and innovative on the battlefield. Became a master . . . of the night infiltration attack . . . DePuy always looked for ways to do the job with minimum loss of life. . . . He was one of the Army's most advanced, innovative thinkers."

It was because of this exemplary leadership and demonstrated competence that, shortly after V-E Day, while the division was beginning to prepare itself for the Japanese invasion, Lieutenant Colonel DePuy was made the division G3 at the ripe old age of twenty-five!

* * * * * * *

Bill's other great combat command was as commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division—the Big Red One—in Vietnam. He assembled—his words were, "the division was a magnet for"—a group of leaders and staff officers of unusual, even spectacular, capability, some seven of whom became four-star officers and thirty more became general officers. Several of these distinguished officers are present today.

Bill found the division tended to be too plodding, too prone to do the expected rather than the unexpected. Using the aviation assets of MACV, he quickly taught the division, and its individual brigades, to be flexible, to move around, to mass quickly and surprise the enemy with overwhelming firepower, most especially at times when the enemy was trying to ambush American units. In the oral history of his Vietnam experience, he gives great weight to this aspect of his command. Division members, with some pride, called their outfit the 1st Infantry Division, Heavy (Airmobile)! In 1967, I met an Air Force major, just returned to the states, who had been a "sidewinder" with the division—that is, he had been attached by the Air Force to the division and flew light planes close to the ground while directing Air Force strikes in support of the lst. Even as an Air Force officer, he was immensely proud of being from the 1st Infantry Division, Heavy (Airmobile), and he wore the 1st Division patch on his Air Force uniform to prove it. I don't know how long the Air Force let him continue doing that!

* * * * * * *

I had the very great privilege of also commanding the 1st Division in Vietnam. There was nothing I was prouder of then and nothing I am prouder of now than the division's great military professionalism while I was with it. General George Forsythe, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, told me that he had fought his division beside every division in the theater, Marines included. He went on to volunteer that "without a doubt," I repeat, "without a doubt the most professional division in Vietnam was the 1st Division." Now

that is quite a statement from the commander of another proud division. Where, where did this professionalism come from? Why was it so great in the 1st?

Well, General John Hay, who succeeded Bill as the division commanding general, speaking on the twentieth anniversary of his command, told a large group of 1st Division veterans the answer. He stated the professionalism of the division he inherited was superb, that it was specifically due to General DePuy. And it continued through General Hay's successor, General Keith Ware, and was certainly there when I assumed command on Keith's death and, hopefully, was still there when I left the division. I think all of Bill's successors would agree this professionalism, which was inherited from Bill and for which he deserved the fullest credit, was unsurpassed. It set the standards of performance in every activity, from close combat to combat support to combat service support to administration.

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But as justly proud as he was of his command record, nothing, nothing was closer to Bill's heart than the 1st Division's scholarship program. It had an interesting origin. Sergeant Nunez had been a member of the division's long-range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP) and had been killed. His widow wrote the commanding general—to Bill—saying how proud Sergeant Nunez had been to be in the 1st Division and she hoped his two sons would grow up to be as fine men as their father. Bill was so moved that he had the letter published in the division newspaper along with a comment the division ought to do something for the sons. The very next day, an envelope appeared on Bill's bunk with several hundreds of dollars in it. From that grew the idea of scholarships for the Nunez sons; then it became a scholarship for the eldest son of every battlefield fatality. Now, it includes all children of soldiers of the division who die in its service, not only from Vietnam and from Desert Storm but to include any current training

accidents, and scholarships are also available for soldiers currently in the division and their families.

There are also scholarships for children and grandchildren of veterans, etc. Today, over $1 million has been given out in some 549 scholarships. General DePuy served as head of the society of the 1st Division's scholarship program from the day it started until his hospitalization. He gave a great amount of time to this program, which was so very close to his heart. And he very carefully ensured it was organized to continue without a misstep on his passing from the scene. This program brought great satisfaction to a truly great American, William E. DePuy.

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I want especially to thank you, Mrs. DePuy—Marge—and Bill, Joslin, and Daphne—for the opportunity and very real privilege of participating in this memorial service for my very great friend of half a century. He was not only a true friend of mine but was unquestionably the finest professional soldier with whom I served in my thirty-five years in uniform. Bill, I salute you.

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General William E. DePuy

Remarks by
General Paul F. Gorman, U.S. Army, Retired

A husband, a father, is dead.

Our hearts go out to the family of General DePuy. We, his friends and professional colleagues, share their bereavement in the limited ways that outsiders can.

A distinguished officer of the United States Army has passed away. Here, the Army, in its ancient ways, expresses mourning.

Mourn, we all should, for a man whose brilliant mind and fervent spirit touched each of us and who has passed from our midst.

It is also fitting, however, that we here, all of us, rejoice in his full life of unmatched accomplishment, now inscribed in the annals of the Army and recorded in the history of this republic.

My friends, we have come together to commemorate General William Eugene DePuy, who uniquely embodied the American warrior ethos during the past seven decades: tumultuous, conflict-torn years, encompassing a procession of great events that have profoundly affected the attitudes and aspirations of every citizen of this country. General DePuy was one professional soldier who, in his time, made a difference in his chosen life's work. He was, all his life, a force for the improvement of the Army, both in war and in peace. He transformed the institution that he served so well.

DePuy had a fire within him, a consuming passion to foster progress in any responsibility that accrued to him. Mission by mission, from the plodding marches of the Louisiana Maneuvers to the triumphant drive across Central Europe during World War II, from the menial tasks of a subaltern in a

mobilizing Army in 1941 to his apotheosis as commander of the 1st Infantry Division in Vietnam, from his origins in mid-America to the highest councils of leadership in this land, he brought to his duty cogency, competence, and deep caring. And he succeeded! Whenever and wherever he put his mind and heart to a task, he did what he set out to do!

Some of his achievements loom above the others, but do not allow my recounting to obscure the centrality of the intensity that he brought to all matters, great or small, within his purview. He was a committed man. With all his considerable intellectual energies, his physical stamina, and his emotions as well, he pursued betterment. I have often thought that his way with any problem mirrored the tactics of celerity, suppression, and indirect approach that he learned during World War II. If his attack promised to stiffen bureaucratic resistance, he suppressed objections and moved to flank, or he quietly penetrated the opposition to seize moral high ground beyond. He aimed in all matters at what he sought in battle: progress at least cost.

Fortunately for the United States, and for its Army, General DePuy eventually rose to the top of his profession and was able thence to influence broadly its future.

Here was no scholastic, no principle-bound intellectual. DePuy was a pragmatist, generalizing broadly and advantageously from what he himself had experienced, observed, or sensed or from what he understood of reliable reports. To convince him, one had to show him how the matter at issue worked in combat, or a reasonable approximation of combat. He believed that what counted in battle was not what the Army's schools taught, or what weapons were in issue, but how American soldiers, sergeants, and officers behaved under stress.

In this respect, I compare him to General George C. Marshall, for like Marshall, DePuy distrusted officers who

yearned for or, worse, depended upon sets of academically propounded rules, formulaic solutions for the vagaries of combat circumstance. Both taught officers to expect the unanticipated and schooled them to cope with surprise as a normal concomitant of conflict. Both prized innovators and innovations. Both understood that the Army's principal responsibility, and its main occupation in peace or in war, was to train for future battle in a place and at a time no man could foresee. Both exhibited a personal commitment to ways and means of fashioning American youth into combat-competent infantry soldiers.

In the months before he fell ill, I spent hours with General DePuy, talking about the past and its portent as he perceived it. Once I asked him if, looking back, he would have done anything different. He replied that he would have spent more time teaching, especially in the years since retiring from the Army. I was astonished: this from a general whom I had often watched lecturing from down in a foxhole to a gathered ring of company leaders on how and why properly to dig or gesticulating before the map to show his division staff how to think about the campaign they were about to prosecute and to motivate them to reach for decisive results or using deft graphics on butcher-paper charts to lead colonels and generals to understand how to modernize the Army. I told him that I thought he had done his share of teaching on active duty, but he would not be dissuaded.

General DePuy was, as far as I know, the first commander of an Army major command to make extensive use of television for training, and I believe that when he retired in 1977 he had taught more subordinates through that medium than any other general before him. He was the same sort of teacher as General Marshall, whom one National Guardsman praised by saying that "he makes us understand." A teacher General DePuy was, and a teacher he remained until the end of his life.

After he retired to his Virginia farm, Highfield, he spent long hours writing for publication, sitting at the kitchen table, scrawling his prose across yellow lined pads. His themes ranged from apologia for minor tactics and grand strategy in Vietnam to expositions on sound doctrine for future wars. Usually, he wrote for *Army* magazine, because therein, he said, young officers would be more likely to read what he wrote, picking up that widely distributed periodical when they had time, perhaps as a staff duty officer or relaxing at night after duty.

It is entirely characteristic of the man that one of his last compositions was a letter to General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, offering suggestions for joint doctrine and training. The chairman, then working on the draft of JCS Pub 1, *Joint Warfare for the US Armed Forces*, found his ideas thoughtful and timely.

Of the many commanders I have observed in combat in two wars, General DePuy is the only one I would unhesitatingly describe as an authentic tactical genius. He possessed that tactical acumen the Germans celebrate, an instinctive, uncanny sensing for the location and intent of the enemy and for the ebb and flow of a battle. Moreover, his grasp of combat kinetics extended to guiding subordinates charged with combat support and combat service support: he would make a broad gesture on the map, saying, for instance, "we will need, within 36 hours, a capability to operate here, for at least a week." Those subordinates planned and executed well aware, however, that the general would unerringly detect the slightest inconsistency or delay in any of the numerous organizational networks that undergird a division in combat. He himself personally disciplined his divisional voice command communications in Vietnam and set new standards for austere transmissions amid stress. He visited his troops often and spoke with individuals or groups in a patient, inspirational, tutorial fashion. The soldiers under his command knew that their general fought hard, fought smart, and fought to win.

General DePuy was slight of frame but impressive of intellect. Original of thought, with an unconventional bias, he was inquisitive, perceptive, and pungently humorous. He was, in all respects, admirably equipped for the prominent role he was called upon to play in American intelligence and special operations during the cold war. I have known no other general officer so quick as he to absorb complex information, to form judgments, and to deliver crisp, cogent decisions in matters small or great.

In 1973, as assistant vice chief of staff of the Army, his purview included the major restructuring of the Army of that year. He assigned two of his staff officers to spend a month studying the problem of how to configure the Army in the aftermath of Vietnam. Then, based on their staff study, within one week, he decided what to do, persuaded the chief of staff to accept his solution, and obtained the approval of both the secretary of the Army and the secretary of defense—possibly a standing Pentagon record for lightning-like staff action. Out of that organizational stroke emerged the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), a conceptual breakthrough that modernized the Army. TRADOC was peculiarly his creation, for he was the general staff principal at its birth and its first commander: more than any other individual, he established its tone and set the azimuth upon which it marches to this day.

He picked that name: Training and Doctrine Command.

"Command," it surely was, for to the degree that any general can shape and guide a major command of the Army, DePuy commanded. We, all of us who served in TRADOC, from the junior drill sergeant at Fort Jackson through the commander of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, felt daily his drive and enthusiasm, his restless pursuit of perfection. He simply ignored any among us who were unprepared to advance with him, but for each of us he deemed able and willing, he

devised a particular formula to elicit our energetic pursuit of his goals. He communicated to us a deep faith in the American fighting man. His experience had been that any soldier who understood what was expected of him would unfailingly do his job, even amid the most terrifying and confused of battle circumstances. He taught us to ensure that soldiers knew what to do, how, and when. Working for him was always a challenge, for we were all hard-pressed to keep up with his ever-active mind, but I can attest that I enjoyed under his command more freedom of action and more assured support than under any other commander for whom I ever served, in peace or at war. General DePuy was a resolute, concerned, bold, adaptive, and innovative leader, and like all great leaders, he brought out the best in all of us.

"Doctrine" was one of the main purposes of TRADOC, and command at Fort Monroe empowered General DePuy to pursue the preoccupation of his lifetime: those ideas that, lodged between the ears of soldiers of all ranks, led to concerted action under fire. TRADOC, as he conceived it, was to serve not just the forces in the continental United States, as had its predecessors, but was to serve all the units of the entire Army—wherever they might be located, whatever their mission—by developing the concepts and the materiel they needed for combat and by training soldiers and leaders to fill their ranks. With General Robert J. Dixon of the Tactical Air Command, he opened a new era of Army-Air Force collaboration on how to fight on the modern battlefield, and together they sponsored a new genre of doctrinal publications addressing joint warfare. DePuy perceived doctrine as an operational term, that consensus that enabled tactical, operational, and strategic coherence within the force afield, and underwrote requirements for new equipment. He sought to shape both, to modernize the Army mind as well as Army materiel. He enjoined TRADOC to ready the Army to win the first battle of the next war and to develop equipment and training techniques so that it could do so fighting outnumbered

against a well-armed enemy. Victory in that first battle, he held, would stem from superior doctrine as well as superior weapon systems. For him, the rudimentary combat element, the rifle squad, was above all else an idea shared by its members, no matter what their numbers, no matter what their equipment. For him, a foxhole was an embodiment of crafty ways to foil a foe's attack and to accomplish a squad's mission with minimum loss. He knew that no weapon system, however endowed by advanced technology, could function effectively without combat-proficient operators, maintainers, and replenishers, and he understood that a maladroit tactician could compromise the best of these. He perceived battalions as instruments for controlling ground with surveillance, fire, and movement. He described brigades, divisions, and corps as systems of systems requiring of a commander, above all else, synchronization. Thus, he bade TRADOC: develop, write, and teach.

So began the evolution of contemporary doctrine. General DePuy put the doctrinal pot to boil. In fact, in telling us in TRADOC how we should work on producing doctrine, he used the metaphor of the pot-au-feu on the stove in a French farmhouse, the ever-ready stew to which various partakers of the family's meals were expected to contribute vegetables now, a piece of meat then. He was certain that TRADOC's doctrinal recipe would not be right with our first efforts. Convinced of likely imperfection, he directed that the 1976 version of Field Manual 100–5 be published in a loose-leaf, ring-bound notebook, the easier to change the manual once better ideas were presented. That adaptable edition of FM 100–5 soon gave way to fresh-written successors, but the antecedents of contemporary doctrine—that of the Army, and now joint doctrine as well—can be traced to DePuy's black pot on the TRADOC stove top.

"Training" was TRADOC's other principal objective. I doubt if the Army has had in this century a general officer who

devoted more time and effort to small-unit tactics. TRADOC itself came to reflect General DePuy's determination to improve the ability of our Army to succeed in close combat. He ruled that his subordinates would evaluate TRADOC's schools and training centers by the performance of soldier-graduates in the force, especially by their demonstrated combat-related skill and knowledge.

One year ago at his farm, talking about training and its importance to the future of the Army, he told me that it was easy enough to find a general who understood how to draw the arrows across his operation map to the discomfiture of an enemy, but that there were only a few senior officers who understood what truly happened at the point of those arrows, and even fewer who knew how to train soldiers to advance the point. General DePuy considered all military training a simulation of war, and at TRADOC, he vigorously pursued more evocative, more instructive simulations of close combat. He inaugurated the Army Training Evaluation Program and the training technique known as Tactical Engagement Simulation. He launched the progenitors of the equipment and facilities now associated with these—the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) and the National Training Center. The present-day Joint Readiness Training Center, the Combat Maneuver Training Center, the Battle Command Training Program, and the Army's latest forms of simulation, such as SIMNET and the Close Combat Tactical Trainer, are all lineal descendants of his prototypes. Again, his instincts proved to be both reliable and fortuitous.

Late on a February afternoon in 1991 amid a blowing sandstorm in Iraq, the 2d Squadron, 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, was moving in the van of the covering force of VII Corps with the mission of finding Iraqi Guard units. Find them the squadron did, a brigade equipped with late-model, Soviet-made tanks and other armored fighting vehicles dug in around the Iraqi Guard's own armor training center. In five

hours of combat, heavily outnumbered, the American cavalrymen demolished that brigade. This year, General Larry Welch, former chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, and General Carl Vuono, former chief of staff of the Army, had an opportunity to examine that battle in detail with troop commanders, platoon leaders, and platoon sergeants who had fought the action. General Welch noted that none present had previous combat experience, and observing that the performance of the American Army in the first battle of previous wars had been mediocre at best, he asked them how they explained the squadron's smashing success. Here is the recorded reply of one troop commander:

> Sir, this was *not* our first battle. This was our tenth battle! We fought three wars at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California; we fought four wars at the Combat Maneuver Training Center, Hohenfels, Germany; and a lot of other simulations like SIMNET, the Unit Conduct of Fire Trainer, and the Battle Command Training Program. Yes sir, we *had* been "shot at" before. Many times. This war was just like our training.

General DePuy would have asked for no better response.

In our talks, he told me that he sensed that the Army was making progress. He attributed much of the gain to the Army's decision to employ centralized selection from the most highly qualified officers for battalion and brigade command positions. However, he also credited doctrine and training—the contribution of TRADOC—for raising the Army's readiness for battle from about the 20 percent level to at least the 60 percent level; moreover, he believed that the Army had learned how to add to that percentage. He was quite optimistic that, despite the structural pruning, the budgetary uncertainties, and the strategic amorphism now confronting the Army's leaders, the force would become more proficient, more effective, year by year.

Three decades ago, in a letter to the editor of West Point's alumni magazine, William E. DePuy posed a poignant question

about Army leadership, and about life and death. He had visited his regimental commander from the Battle of France, George Bittman Barth, on the occasion of that old soldier's retirement. He penned for West Pointers a description of Colonel Barth's taking command after the regiment had been badly mauled during its first battle amid the hedgerows of Normandy. It was an infantry unit, he wrote, composed of

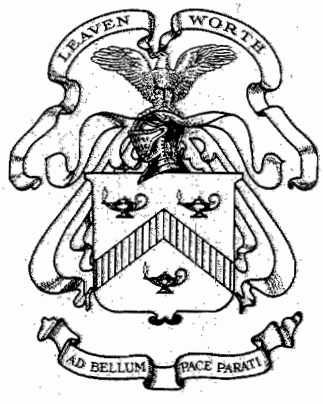
> . . . plain, ordinary, bewildered Americans. Hounded by misfortune, utterly devoid of leadership, this regiment had lost its soul. . . . By the strange chemistry of leadership (Col. Barth's) inner strength, supreme confidence, and bull dog determination flowed into the hearts and minds of that regiment and rekindled the flame that burned so low . . . his was the magic that turned bad into good, which lifted the crushing weight of failure from thousands of battered spirits and inspired to devoted sacrifice a motley of common men. . . .
>
> As I walked down the steps of Wainwright Hall into the gathering December night I couldn't help but think that the old breed is moving on, and I couldn't help but wonder where will we find the men to fill their shoes?

William E. DePuy, by his life and work, answered his own question. The answer is that our Army found in him a breed of leader ready to meet the strains of the Army's severe contraction in the aftermath of Vietnam, prepared to provide a sense of direction and of purpose to Americans bewildered by the meandering of politics, and battered by the ostracism of the American public. The Army found in General DePuy a breed of leader who could inspire the entire institution to pull itself up by the bootstraps. The Army found in him a breed of man prepared to fill the shoes of his predecessors. Indeed, the Army found him capable of teaching leaders of future generations to take his place when their turn came.

General DePuy, rest in peace. There will never be another exactly like you, but you have armed your Army for the future. Your impress is on the Army of today and the Army of

tomorrow. When rifles bark again and cannons roar once more, American soldiers will fight advantaged by your crystalline mind. Rest in peace.

★ U.S GPO: 1993 0 756-626



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