



**NEWSLETTER  
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Patton Battalion - USABOT is a chapter of the US Army Brotherhood of Tankers and is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit.

Patton Battalion - USABOT covers Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky & Tennessee.

The Blood and Guts Newsletter covers events and activities within our area and USABOT National.

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# PATTON BATTALION - USABOT ILLINOIS - INDIANA - KENTUCKY - TENNESSEE

Well, its June. Our Tank Destroyer mugs are moving very well. Our Black Treat'em Rough mugs are SOLD OUT! Looks like we have a company from 3-8 Cav down at Ft Bliss that has made these their company mug. They bought 20 we had on hand and I have ordered a whole new run! So we should be looking at mid July for resupply on those. We are getting close to needing a reorder on the lapel pins.

So I have been telling you I was going to review the book Adopting Mission Command: Developing Leaders for a Superior Command Culture by Donald E. Vandergriff. I really enjoyed the book and agree with much of the book but he does go into detail about how to build and structure training classes. So the author believes that Auftragstaktik is the best for training officers to operate in a mission focused style. He talks about this up until WWII and then jumps to the 1973 Yom Kippur war and how General Dupuy created the Land Air Battle doctrine. He never mentions General Starry.

The author claims that the US Army does not or did not ever adapt to a great style of teaching officers like the Auftragstaktik method did for the German Army. I really liked the first part of the book as he was describing the value in Auftragstaktik but when he makes the jump to 1973 he never talks about any of the US Army training of officers in between. He make the pint that training should be done in a small classroom with a terrain board. Now that's how my dad was trained at the Armor School in the 1960's and 70's. As a matter of fact that's how I was trained at NCOES for BNCO and ANCO!

The author then back tracks and talks about how MG John S Wood perfected the art of mission type orders. So the US Army never adapted a training style like Auftragsktik but you want to praise the leadership of Gen Wood? Many of those officers under Gen Wood took that style and used it all the branches that they served in. Armor, Field Artillery, Engineers, Infantry and so on. They used that style from WWII up until the end of Vietnam when most of those men retired.

I liked the book up until all of the classroom examples and scenarios. If that wasn't in there and had he used that portion to cover down on the gaps he created it would be a better book.

So I wanted to share some things on mission command and things that I saw in the later part of my service. The mission command story in this newsletter is my take on where we came from when I joined the Army and the path we have taken during the twenty two years that I served. I also share what I see as the keys to turning mission command in the 21st Century. I hope you enjoy my ramblings.

The July issue of the Patton Newsletter may be held off as I have some side work in writing that may take up my free time next month. Our family has finally received the paperwork and list of awards for my wife's great uncle who died as a POW during WWII. I am trying to put a biography together on him and his service with the Civilian Conservation Corps and service in the US Army on Corregidor. We also have vacation, staycation, coming up in July and plenty off items on the honey do list.

So as I am about to put this out there up pops an article that talks a little about what I talk about in the Mission Command story I have. You may want to check it out. "The Integrated Tactical Network Pivoting Back to Communications Superiority" by Maj. Matthew S. Blumberg, pages 104-115, Military Review, May-June 2020.

Be Safe and have a great Summer!!!

KP Morris  
Patton 6

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## MISSION COMMAND

One of the top things talked about in the Army today is **MISSION COMMAND**. So after much thought about it I thought that I would throw in my two pennies. Many of us were part of the LandAir Battle Doctrine. FM 100-5 from 1986. Which was created in part after the 1973 Yom Kippur War. I would like to share items from that document.

“The Army must be ready to fight enemies whose capabilities vary widely. In high-or mid-intensity conflicts, these may be modern tank, motorized, and airborne forces like the Warsaw Pact armies or other similarly organized forces including Soviet surrogates. Less mechanized but otherwise well-equipped regular and irregular forces and terrorist groups can be expected to operate against Army forces in most parts of the world. In low intensity conflicts, light forces, insurgents, and terrorists may be the only military threat present.

The nature of modern battle and the broad geographical range of US interests make it imperative that Army units fight as part of a joint team with units of the US Air Force, the US Navy, the US Marine Corps, and representatives of appropriate civilian agencies. It is also critical that commanders prepare themselves to fight in coalition warfare alongside the forces of our nation's allies. As it has been throughout the twentieth century, teamwork in joint and combined operations will be an essential ingredient in any battles Army forces fight.”

*Part One, The Army and How it Fights, Identifying the Challenges, Chapter 1, page 2.*

The US Army can meet these challenges. Superior performance in combat depends on three essential components. First and foremost, it depends on superb soldiers and leaders with character and determination who will win because they simply will not accept losing. Next, it depends on a sound, well-understood doctrine for fighting. Finally, it depends on weapons and supporting equipment sufficient for the task at hand. These three components must be unified harmoniously into effective fighting organizations. This is done through well-thought out organizational design and effective training programs.

### LEADERSHIP AND SOLDIERS

Wars are fought and won by men, not by machines. The human dimension of war will be decisive in the campaigns and battles of the future just as it has been in the past.

The fluid, compartmented nature of war will place a premium on sound leadership, competent and courageous soldiers, and cohesive, well-trained units. The conditions of combat on the next battlefield will be unforgiving of errors and will demand great skill, imagination, and flexibility of leaders. As in the wars of the past, however, American soldiers will fight resolutely when they know and respect their leaders and believe that they are part of a good unit.

*Chapter 1, page 5 & 6.*

Operational art thus involves fundamental decisions about when and where to fight and whether to accept or decline battle. Its essence is the identification of the enemy's operational center-of-gravity – his source of strength or balance-and the concentration of superior combat power against that point to achieve a decisive success.

*Chapter 2, page 10.*

Sound tactics win battles and engagements by moving forces on the battlefield to gain positional advantage over the enemy; by applying fire support to facilitate and exploit that advantage; and by assuring the sustainment of friendly forces before, during, and after engagement with the enemy. Sound tactics employ all available combat, combat support, and combat service support where they will make the greatest contribution to victory.

*Chapter 2, Page 11.*

### LEADERSHIP

The most essential element of combat power is competent and confident leadership. Leadership provides purpose, direction, and motivation in combat. It is the leader who will determine the degree to which maneuver, firepower, and protection are maximized; who will ensure these elements are effectively balanced; and who will decide how to bring them to bear against the enemy. There are no ready formulas to govern this process. Only excellence in the art and science of war will enable the commander to generate and apply combat power successfully. Thus no peacetime duty is more important for leaders than studying their profession and preparing for war. The regular study of military history and biography is invaluable in this regard.

Applied to individual soldiers and leaders, it requires a willingness and ability to act independently within the framework of the higher commander's intent. In both senses, initiative requires audacity which may involve risk-taking and an atmosphere that supports it.

In the chaos of battle, it is essential to decentralize decision authority to the lowest practical level because overcentralization slows action and leads to inertia. At the same time, decentralization risks some loss of precision in execution. The commander must constantly balance these competing risks, recognizing that loss of precision is usually preferable to inaction. Decentralization demands subordinates who are willing and able to take risks and superiors who nurture that willingness and ability in their subordinates. If subordinates are to exercise initiative without endangering the overall success of the force, they must thoroughly understand the assumptions on which it was based. In turn, the force commander must encourage subordinates to focus their operations on the overall mission, and give them the freedom and responsibility to develop opportunities which the force as a whole can exploit to accomplish the mission more effectively.

*Chapter 2, page 15.*

## MISSION COMMAND - cont.

In the end, agility is as much a mental as a physical quality. Our Army has traditionally taken pride in its soldiers' ability to "think on their feet" and to see a react rapidly to changing circumstances. Mental flexibility must be developed during the soldier's military education and maintained through individual and unit training.

*Chapter 2, page 16.*

Whenever possible, subordinate leaders should receive their orders face-to-face from their commanders on the ground chosen for the operation. Commanders should restrict the operations of their subordinates as little as necessary. Mission orders that specify what must be done without prescribing how it must be done should be used in most cases. Control measures should secure cooperation between forces without imposing unnecessary restrictions on the freedom of junior leaders. The larger force should remain alert to and be prepared for exploitation of advantages developed by subordinate units through the course of any operation.

*Chapter 2, page 21*

This need for flexibility in command and control is greater for the committed maneuver unit commander than for anyone else. He cannot depend on constant direction, but must fight independently even when he cannot communicate outside his own zone or sector. He must know the intention of the commander two levels above him, understand the concept of operation of his immediate commander, and know the responsibilities of the units on his flanks and in support of his operations. If he understands these things, the committed commander can conduct his operation confidently, anticipate events, and act freely and boldly to accomplish his mission without further orders.

*Chapter 2, Page 22.*

While initiative, agility, depth, and synchronization characterize successful AirLand Battle operations, the imperatives listed below prescribe key operating requirements. These provide more specific guidance than the principles of war and the AirLand Battle tenets, and apply to all operations. They are historically valid and fundamentally necessary for success on the modern battlefield. The ten imperatives of AirLand Battle are –

- Ensure unity of effort.
- Anticipate events on the battlefield.
- Concentrate combat power against enemy vulnerabilities.
- Designate, sustain, and shift the main effort.
- Press the fight.
- Move fast, strike hard, and finish rapidly.
- Use terrain, weather, deception, and OPSEC.
- Conserve strength for decisive action.
- Combine arms and sister services to complement and reinforce.
- Understand the effects of battle on soldiers, units, and leaders.

*Chapter 2, page 23.*

### FLEXIBILITY

The attack must be flexible. The commander must foresee developments as far ahead as possible. However, he must also expect uncertainties and be ready to exploit opportunities. To preserve synchronization on a fluid battlefield, initial planning must be detailed. Subordinates must understand the higher commander's aims so well that they can properly exploit battlefield opportunities even when communications fail. The corps or division must coordinate and support all arms and control operations that may cover 50 to 80 kilometers daily and change direction frequently. Brigades and battalions must sustain themselves in such an environment and maintain the ability to change direction quickly without losing their concentration or synchronization.

*Chapter 6, page 98.*

### SIMPLICITY

***Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and clear, concise orders to ensure thorough understanding.***

In the strategic, operational, and tactical dimensions, guidance, plans, and orders should be as simple and direct as the attainment of the objective will allow. The strategic importance of the principle of simplicity goes well beyond its more traditional military application. It is an important element in the development and enhancement of public support. If the American people are to commit their lives and resources to a military operation, they must understand the purpose which is to be achieved. Political and military objectives and operations must therefore be presented in clear, concise, understandable terms: simple and direct plans and orders cannot compensate for ambiguous and cloudy objectives. In its military application, this principle promotes strategic flexibility by encouraging broad strategic guidance rather than detailed and involved instruction.

At the operational and tactical levels, simplicity of plans and instructions contributes to successful operations. Direct, simple plans, and clear, concise orders are essential to reduce the chances for misunderstanding and confusion. Other factors being equal, a simple plan executed promptly is to be preferred over a complex plan executed later.

*Appendix A, Page 177.*

**MISSION COMMAND - cont.**

In the research I did it looks like there was a revision to FM 100-5 in 1993. By the time I made it through BNCOC Phase II was 1999. In 2000 we conducted tank gunnery. So in 2001 myself and another E6 were attached to another unit and part of a Task Force for AT to conduct an FTX against the 278th ACR. It was during this period that I began to see a trend. While at AT that year about halfway through we were attached to a tank platoon for the big battalion exercise. So we did not know very many people in the unit at all and now we were part of a platoon for a FTX.

We had been operating next to this platoon for a several days as I was the TC for the TF commander track and my fellow E6 was the gunner. Things I had seen with this platoon during that period was something I want to talk about here. We saw a platoon leader who would yell for the platoon sergeant and no matter what he was doing he would stop and take off running for the LT. We saw the platoon sergeant run off the back deck of the tank into a briar patch and he was tore all to pieces by the time he got to the LT. Now I am all about respect for the new LT but this just did not resemble anything I had ever seen before.

As we were called over for the OPORD brief we were gathered around the front slope of the platoon leaders tank. At this time I had applied the advice I got from Gen Irzyk and when being briefed I listened to the brief and did not focus on trying to write things down. I had my map in hand and was following with the map. The LT started the brief, saw me not writing and stopped briefing, "SSG Morris don't you think you should be writing this down?" I replied that I was following along and would ask questions if need be. The LT did not look like he thought I knew what I was doing. I also had my fellow E6 there and he was writing things down.

The LT began to tell us about how we were going to move out of the AA and move to a large field before entering the engagement area and there we would coil up by platoon as the TF/Battalion assembled before the attack. By looking at the map this area he designated was a wooded area. Then we would move in a wedge formation along the woodline on the far left flank. I began to ask a question when I stopped by the LT and told "don't ask questions while I am talking. Save your questions until I am done." Ok, so I whispered into my fellow E6s ear my question. The LT said again "don't be talking while I am talking SSG." Roger that sir!

So when he was done I made sure I could ask questions. My first was question was how are we going to do this coil in this wooded area? The LT said we would do it like we always do. I said well yes sir but I am not from this platoon, how do you do things? SSG you just roll with it. So my next question was is a wedge formation the best formation to use to move along that woodline? When are we going to do our leaders recon or what did you see on your leaders recon? "SSG I didn't not do a leaders recon. These formations were given to use in the battalion OPORD." The OC who had been taking notes got closer to us as I asked why we were not doing a leaders recon and why was battalion telling us what formations we were to use. Well neither the LT or the platoon sergeant liked my questions and stopped me and had the rest of the TCs leave.

It was here that I began to ask why is battalion telling us HOW to maneuver? The LT didn't see a problem with it and neither did the platoon sergeant. I asked the LT, "didn't you go to Armor Officer Basic Course? Didn't they teach you how to fight a tank platoon?" The OC was again there taking notes. We talked some more and I said that if the BC had to tell me HOW to fight my tank he didn't need me there. They were convinced that I was wrong and that I did not know what I was talking about.

The following morning we moved out. We moved along the route and moved into the area we were going to coil up in. When we got there this was now a cleared field. There were no trees around. We, the entire TF/Battalion, were moving into small coils in the wide open area. When I started looking around I noticed that there were Apaches flying along the tree tops with some Kiowas. I was telling my crew that we were assembled in the open within view of enemy air which was watching our every move. As this was unfolding we moved out in our wedge formation toward the tree line on the left flank. It wasn't long as the way we were going pushed us into the tree line. There were two routes or dirt trails going into the wood line. The LT took one trail and I took the other.

As we started into the woodline the two trails crossed paths but kept us in the woodline. So there was myself and another tank behind me with the LT and his wingman on the other trail. We moved through the woodline stopping a few times. Finally we reached an end of the trails. We were stopped at the end of the woodline and there was some barrier on our left. To our right was open terrain going up a small rise. We had moved to lower ground and could no longer see the battle area. As we were sitting on the edge of the woodline I asked my gunner what he thought we were going to do now. No sooner had I expressed that thought that the LT took off.

I was the lone tank that had remained back in the woodline. I said "Holy crap they just took off! Do you think they will stop at the crest and look over?" Nope, they did not. Over the hill they disappeared. I told my gunner that we were going to go see what is happening. When we popped over the crest here is what lay before us. To my left was the LT who had gone through the triple strand of concertina wire and was deep into the next part of the wire obstacle. This obstacle was running from left to my right as far as I could see. It was placed on the backside of the hill. On the other side of the middle wire set up was a tank ditch. The LT popped over the hill and was bound up in the wire. Behind him was another tank with his light going off. I pulled in behind him for cover. As I gazed to my right the entire TF/Battalion was fighting for their lives. Our platoon sergeant was a good 200 meters away pulled up beside another tank. From my gunner I heard "I see tanks and Bradley's everywhere!"

From my experience with my last time as a TC I used the tank before me as shelter. I told the loader to just keep loading. We would back out from behind the tank and fire, pull forward and fire, alternating between which way we either go forward or back. After a few engagements I noticed the whoopee light blinking. So I assumed we were dead. So I had the loader and gunner step out to get some air. It was then that the OC said to keep fighting! I looked and the light was out. When reading the MILES screen we had

## MISSION COMMAND - cont.

our commo knocked out. That was it. "GET BACK IN THERE WE STILL ALIVE!" So we got back on it and squeezed off more blanks before we were finally knocked out for sure. Once we were taken out the OC came up asked what happened. We talked for a few and shortly there after the battle was over. We rounded up the platoon and headed out to do an AAR.

In the AAR the OC had us start from the beginning as to the events of the day. The LT started with our movement into the woodline. The OC stopped him and said before that what happened? So we started talking about the movement into the coil in the open. The OC asked why the LT did this. The LT responded with "well it was in the OPORD." The OC said "what did your leaders recon tell you about this area?" The LT looked dead at me and said "we did not do a leaders recon." After some long conversation about that he moved onto the movement into the woodline. LT what was the formation you were going to use here? A wedge formation? Did that happen? The LT told him his plan and then said we could use that. So the OC asked "Who called the formation that you used going into the woodline? That was awesome!"

The LT said that he did not give any command for any type of formation going into the woodline. The OC said "Yes, I know, there was very little communication going on with your platoon net." So he asked again who made that call. So I raised my hand and explained why I did what I did. I said I just used the terrain to keep us apart and stayed on their heels. The platoon received high marks for that move.

Next we talked about the movement out of the woodline. The OC asked the LT what happened. When he started talking the OC cut him off and turned to me. SSG Morris what happened. So I told what I saw and how the platoon bolted over the ridge without stopping. The OC asked what we could have done on the crest of the hill. I said stop and look over. So the OC started asking the LT and other TCs if what they did was sound tactical move. Once the OC had made his point he asked me why I wasn't sharing my knowledge with the rest of the platoon. So I had to tell him that I was not from this unit and I was an attachment. He was floored.

So I got up and told the LT and platoon sergeant about what I saw during the event. As an outsider looking in. The platoon operated fine. There was an issue with a driver who was bored that pumped up the turret seal and kept one of the tanks from using the turret and they couldn't figure it out. But I explained that had we done the leaders recon we would have changed many things. Hitting home the value of the recon. But also that they as the platoon leadership fight the platoon not battalion. You have been trained how to fight the platoon now use that. I rattled off some other things I saw and the OC jumped in at the end and said that everything I mentioned was in his notebook. The OC ended with this "Sir, take these lessons with you and don't let it be a downer on your performance. Use it to make you and your platoon better the next time. We must train to get better."

Later that AT I sat next to the platoon sergeant as we were riding on a bus from the motor pool. He had a distant look on his face so I asked him what he was thinking about. He said that he was upset that his platoon had failed so bad in the FTX. I told him to remember that the next time we have to do this. I asked him if he felt that he trained as hard as he should have before coming to AT. No, he didn't think that they had trained as hard as they should. So next time you are going to put more into the training to ensure success right? That platoon sergeant would eventually become the ISG for that unit and he did an awesome job. We remained friends from that point on.

So why is this story relevant to Mission Command? From 1998 to 2001 there was trend developing in the operations process. HOW. Many operations were including a How to the orders. Not move to and engage but move from here in this fashion and then do this and then do this and so on. Freedom of maneuver was fading away.

So after 2001 we go through many changes, 9/11, deployment to Germany, Bosnia and SFOR, and then another deployment for some 22 months. While the unit is deployed on the mission for 22 months it comes down that we are going to be MP's then Engineers. So in 2008 I go to the battalion headquarters as an intelligence NCO. It is here that I start to see another trend. Officers telling people what to do and how to do it.

In 2008 the Army redrafts FM 3-0. In the new FM 3-0 there is now a shift from Detailed Command to Mission Command. There is a great article in Military Review, March-April 2008, by Gen William S. Wallace, then TRADOC commander on the changes to FM 3-0. Chapter 4 is where we see the introduction to Mission Command.

### MISSION COMMAND

The mission command warfighting function develops and integrates those activities enabling a commander to balance the art of command and the science of control. Formerly described as the command and control warfighting function, this function adapts and captures what the Army has learned in a decade of war. These lessons include—

- The changing roles and responsibilities of leaders in distributed and increasingly decentralized operations.
- The requirement for leaders at every echelon to co-create the context for operations.
- The importance of teaming and collaborating with joint, international, interagency, and multinational partners.
- The need for leaders to anticipate and manage transitions during the course of a campaign.

The Army changed from command and control (C2) to mission command and eliminated the term battle command. This philosophical shift emphasizes the commanders rather than the systems that they employ. Army C2 and battle command did not adequately address the increasing need for commanders to frame and reframe an environment of ill-structured problems. Framing these problems enables commanders to gain the context of operations by continuously challenging assumptions both before and during execution.

## MISSION COMMAND - cont.

This is a change from *Detailed Command*. Described as -

*Detailed command* centralizes information and decision making authority. Orders and plans are detailed and explicit. Successful execution depends on strict compliance to the plan with minimal decision making and initiative by subordinates. Detailed command emphasizes vertical, linear information flow; information flows up the chain of command and orders flow down. It stems from the belief that imposing order and certainty on the battlefield brings successful results. In detailed command, commanders command by personal direction or detailed directive.

In detailed command, commanders impose discipline and coordination from above to ensure compliance with all aspects of the plan. Detailed orders may achieve a high degree of coordination in planning, however, after the operation has commenced, it leaves little room for adjustment by subordinates without reference to higher headquarters. Detailed command is not suited for taking advantage of a rapidly changing situation. It does not work well when the chain of command and information flow is disrupted. Detailed command is less effective in fluid military operations requiring judgment, creativity, and initiative. Because of these disadvantages, mission command is the Army's approved technique.

*Mission Command* is described as -

*Mission command* is the conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based on mission orders for effective mission accomplishment. Successful mission command results from subordinate leaders at all echelons exercising disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to accomplish missions. It requires an environment of trust and mutual understanding (FM 6-0). Mission command is the preferred C2 concept for planning. It emphasizes timely decision making, subordinates understanding of the commander's intent, and the clear responsibility of subordinates to exercise initiative within that intent.

Mission command accepts the uncertainty of operations by reducing the amount of certainty needed to act. In such a philosophy, commanders hold a "loose rein," allowing subordinates freedom of action and requiring initiative on their part. Commanders make fewer decisions, allowing them to focus decision making on the most important ones. Mission command tends to be decentralized, informal, and flexible. Orders and plans are as brief and simple as possible. Commanders rely on subordinates' coordination ability and the human capacity to understand with minimum verbal information exchange. The elements of mission command are—

- The commander's intent.
- Subordinates' initiative.
- Mission orders.
- Resource allocation.

When the ICE Storm of 2009 I saw the battalion staff in action. I am on the night shift filing reports to brigade. It is during the night shaft that I strike up a conversation with a Captain who is working the TOC with me. He said he didn't understand the shift to Mission Command. I explained that Detailed Command is like WWI. OPODs in WWI were very long, very detailed with tight time restrictions. The leader was in the rear, he never saw what was happening at the front. There was little to no freedom to exploit the advance or counter the attack. Those men who fought in WWI did not want to see that happen again in WWII.

I shall use Gen Dager's article in Military Review from March 1940.

*"The typical scheme of maneuver provided for a combination of fire and movement. It was a good scheme; it still is, and it probably always will be. Why did it all fail in the last World War? Simply because, in application, fire failed to keep up with maneuver."*

*"Infantry was tied down to a time-schedule of fires without which it lacked the power to advance. On the objective infantry halted, reorganized, marked time, and was finally ejected by hostile reserves who promptly took advantage of the lull in the attacker's protecting fires to do so. Maneuver, in its proper sense, was almost unknown. A true envelopment occurred only when a section, squad, or individual soldier became thoroughly disgusted with the constant failure and casualties incident to frontal attacks and "stalked" a machine-gun nest. Such action drew well deserved commendation. But it failed to indicate to the high command that a few infantrymen with simple weapons plus maneuver space and leadership, could accomplish what the impressive mass could not do."*

I explained to him that the men who were captains and majors in WWI were now the Colonels and Generals for WWII. And they had been evolving since WWI and they did not want to wage war like we did in WWI. They had been witness to the Blitzkrieg in the late 1930s. So this again I use the article by Gen Dager in 1940.

*"Many of us can remember the days during the World War when we wrote a several page order for a battalion attack. And we find battalion commanders today whose pencils are the important item of their equipment. We must now discard one of two things – either the pencil, or the commander. This new battalion is also built for speed – speed of entry into battle and velocity during battle."*

*"Battalion leadership must change. This commander may have a command post and a telephone, but, if found during action in physical contact with either of them for over three minutes at a time, he should be "canned" and the telephone orderly or battalion runner whose job he has usurped, put in his place. The idea we set forth here is, that now, more than ever before, will these new mobile units require the actual presence of active directing minds with them, not behind them; to provide control, advice, support, assistance, and that virile direction which is the only thing that works beyond the line of departure."*

*"The terms "preconceived maneuver" and "advance planning" have long been but pretty theoretical catch-phrases. They will*

## MISSION COMMAND - cont.

*now find actual and complete application. Office procedure, written estimate, order annex, and march-table are fast becoming obsolete. Commanders and staff must now think, move and produce action in terms that smell strongly of gasoline and its resultant speeds. It means that having a fixed process of moving into battle, we must have permanency of combat-teams to enter battle. It means that an astounding amount of decentralization of control must exist while at the same time the high command has its hand resting constantly, though lightly, on the bridle-reins of its "combat teams" – ready at all times to apply the directing aides to coordinated action."*

We were in a transition from WWI to WWII at that time. Or actually we were trying to go from WWI to Desert Storm! In 2005 the FM 5-0 gets updated. And then many other manuals are updated. But there was still a long process to get soldiers into the mind set. The National Training Center and others were trying to push this forward. When I retired in 2013 we were still struggling to get Mission Command to be understood and applied. Mission Command was later redefined. From FM 3-0 October 2017.

### MISSION COMMAND

*Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity. General George S. Patton, Jr.*

Mission command is the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower subordinates in the conduct of unified land operations. Mission command is a principle of unified land operations that enables commanders to blend the art of command and the science of control while integrating the warfighting functions during operations.

Mission command requires an environment of mutual trust and shared understanding among commanders, staffs, and subordinates. It requires a command climate in which commanders encourage subordinates to accept prudent risk and exercise disciplined initiative to seize opportunities and counter threats within the commander's intent. Using mission orders, commanders focus their orders on the purpose of an operation rather than on the details of how to perform assigned tasks. Doing this minimizes detailed control and allows subordinates the greatest possible freedom of action. Finally, when delegating authority to subordinates, commanders set conditions for success by allocating adequate resources to subordinates based on assigned tasks.

Through mission command, commanders integrate and synchronize operations. Commanders understand that they do not operate independently but as part of a larger force united by a common operational purpose. They integrate and synchronize their actions with the rest of the force to achieve the overall objective of the operation. Commanders create and sustain situational understanding through collaborative dialogue within their organization and with unified action partners to facilitate unity of effort. They provide a clear commander's intent and use mission orders to assign tasks, allocate resources, and issue broad guidance.  
(note changes from previous page)

From the company and below level I never really saw issues other than some units were just way behind in training to seek improvement. Most of the issues were battalion level and up. By saying this I mean to say that these upper levels were not incapable of action its that there were issues with trust and the problem of telling people HOW to do things. And here is where I want to shift to staff work. There lies the problem from what I saw in my time at that level.

So, can you name a staff officer from WWII? Vietnam? Desert Storm? Who is your most famous staff officer? And my next question is WHY? I actually have a small list of folks I can mention. The first one to come to mind is COL Oscar Koch, G2 for Third Army. Probably the most famous staff officer I can think of. The man who drove future planning for Third Army and yet when in the Intell section at battalion all we were ever asked about was security clearances and the weather. My next mention is for COL John Evans, G3 for 8th Corps in WWII. Both of these men spent the majority of their time in a staff position, never moving up. I am sure that there are books or papers written by soldiers on staffs but why are these not more front line news or research? I believe that there lies the problem. The podcasts or Facebook live videos of the commander of Combined Arms Center and General Donohue show us that life as a Major or staff life is grueling and rough. And there is an effort in the works to make Majors less aggressive towards each other. Here is what I think could be the answer to pushing Mission Command.

Do all members of the staff have Mission Command focus? I tend to always go back to the 4th Armored Division. In WWII those Colonels that ran staff sections and functions were deeply in tune with the process in which Gen Wood wanted the division to run. But you cannot name these men who made sure that beans, bullets and fuel was there when it need be. That artillery was always ready and on stand by. That the trains of an armored division were functioning and flowing in an orderly fashion. In Gen Irzyk's book he talked about toward the end of the war that when an armored division passed by it would take 24 hours for the whole division to roll by you. Think about that! The staff must be focused on the mission. And mission command cannot be executed by one staff section only if you want the whole command to use it.

At the battalion level, or what I saw at the battalion I was in, was the S-1, S-2, S-3 and S-4 were all in the same TOC but we never sat at the same table. There was not a whole battalion staff table. So were we really fighting the fight as a whole effort? No. and there are those who will say would you want the whole staff at one table? We had an XO at the battalion during the Ice Storm of 2009 and that is exactly what he pointed out. He sat in the TOC and looked around and asked where the staff folks were. I told him that until the commander update brief they were not in here. He replied that each staff section should have one person 24 hours a day sitting in here. By working in their own separate office they are not functioning together.

**MISSION COMMAND - cont.**

He called for a meeting and very few of the sections showed up. He ripped on all the staff officers and when he left they left. He was correct, we were not focused on the task at hand and working together for the main effort of the battalion. The right hand was not talking to or listening to the left hand. That was the first time I had heard it mentioned and I will always remember that.

How do you make a staff focus on mission command? I have seen some articles and mentions in some podcasts that everyone must be utilizing mission command all the time. From the rear to the front. From garrison to field. But we must also be focused from sections of the staff. When I was in the battalion TOC I never saw the BC pick up a hand mike on a radio and talk to anyone. When I made the comment to the S-3 that the BC should be able to pick up the hand mike, contact a company commander, give him an order and that commander should be able to execute it. The S-3 said to me "The BC should never have to talk on the radio." I was floored.

Were we executing mission command? No, we were not. Or should I say not in my opinion. I think its hard to get non combat arms soldiers to understand mission command when they may not understand the concept of combat operations. So the S3 and his section are always going in a different direction than S-1 and S-4. S2 is suppose to be driving the information on the enemy, weather and events that effect the mission. S6 should be ensuring we are talking and not giving ourselves away. So how do these functions follow the flow of the mission if a representative from each section is not sitting together to ensure common knowledge?

I asked my dad how he used his staff when he was the brigade commander. He and the S3 along with the S2 fought the battles, the XO and CSM all ran the other assets. He said that he never focused on anything other than the fight. The XO handled all the other staff and operations of the rear. I feel that this is exactly what happened in a WWII armored division staff. In the letters from Gen Wood and Gen Dager there was mention of monitoring the front line units. Gen Irzyk said that he rarely ever got a message to change his fight when engaged. So the HQs was monitoring the radio net and following the battle. The staff was listening and planning based on the fight before them.

So what would a staff do today if a commander got on the radio and issued a command to a commander on the ground. How would they react if told to support that decision? Gen Patton issued Third Army orders on one page. The mission on the front and an overlay on the back. Could a Army commander do that today? Could a division take that order and run? What would happen if that was done?

One of the things I think people forget about WWII is that these units had trained for nearly two years before reaching France. In the case of the 4th Armored Division they had been training and experimenting from 1942 until 1944. They had been through four or more maneuver exercises. Their staff was well in tune of what the division commander wanted and expected. In the opening throws of combat Gen Wood and Gen Dager had to show the men that they could fight they way they were wanting. With Gen Wood and Gen Dager both awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for heroic leadership.

The other thing we tend to forget when looking at operations during WWII is that these men were running off SOPs. These men knew who to talk to to get what was needed. It did not have to go into an order unless something had changed. Orders were issued over the radio and then the units got to work planning for the following day. So why are we not talking more about SOPs in the current environment.

One of the things that I think Gen Irzyk mentored me on was that mission type command is a mindset. It is the way you must look at all operations. It is always on your mind when looking at the task at hand. Trust in your subordinates to understand your intent and focused on the mission the same as you. Understanding that they have a roll in the accomplishment of the mission and that they have tasks that must be accomplished to ensure success.

Look at D-Day, June 6, 1944, there is no finer example of mission command. Each stick knew their mission, the mission on the unit to the left and right, they knew the regiment mission, the knew the mission for the division. They knew the mission of the other divisions. Mutual understanding across the board.

In WWII the radio was the tool that helped master mission command. Today, with all of the battlefield technology, how do you use technology to revolutionize your mission command? How do you use communications to change the way you fight? When someone masters the communication puzzle for modern mission command that's when it is going to be successful. Maximizing communication and with the minimum amount is going to create the style of mission command required to win the next war. Communication beyond the LD.

My dad told me that they were using grease pencils and overlays to fight with in the late 80's and early 90's. Look at what is in the field today. From Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below (FBCB2) to communications that are vastly different than what I saw seven years ago. There is a lot of data to be processed. So, how do you manage the flow of data and who needs it? Here we are talking about standard operating procedures again. I remember back to when I joined the engineer battalion and the first time I asked the S3 what he wanted to the TOC to look like. "I want a GP Medium, tables, a TV so we can live predator feeds, radios, map boards, white boards," and on and on. My first response was "how are we going to move when we have all that crap set up?" S3 "Move? Were not going to be moving!"

My first thought was that we should be moving every four hours so that we are not blasted. Next I was already trying to figure out what we needed to keep the TOC functional when moving and for short halts. I wanted to get the M1056 or old 577's, out and start training with them. If you suppose to drop the generator on the M1056 then we have to know how to do it and everyone in the section needs to know how to do it. So lets get training!



## MISSION COMMAND cont.

Those M1056s were never drawn until after I left battalion. When I went to my next unit as the first sergeant I was thinking of how to do my job on the move and what I would need to maintain a maneuver stance. We never got that far in the short two years I did that job. That didn't stop me from forcing the mission command mindset on the unit though.

So to wrap this up in order to foster Mission Command we must create a mindset of mission command. A mindset that runs through the whole organization. No section or element is exempt. There must be SOPs that go deep beyond the line of departure and maintain the speed and flow of battle. We need to master the communication and data flow in order to maintain a battle focused stream of information and communication.

I want to share some TOC photos that I have saved over the years. One story I will share quickly. Back in 2010 or so there was a unit from the 82nd Airborne going to JRTC. They were going to jump into JRTC. The first unit to land in the drop zone got their comms up and then realized that the higher HQs was in the air on their way to the drop zone. So there was no one to report to. An officer on the ground set up a make shift TOC and started performing the role of the higher HQ. Once they landed he handed them the information and took off to catch his unit. As the HQs was on the DZ they had none of their high speed data up and they were using maps and overlays to track the situation. Many of the HQs soldiers did not know how to use maps and make overlays were struggling. It was an eye opening event.

*(In October 2010, the 5th Squadron, 73d Cavalry (Airborne-Reconnaissance) deployed to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) as part of 3d Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82d Airborne Division, to participate in a full-spectrum operations (FSO) rotation, which served as a key milestone in the BCT's trainup to assume the global response force (GRF) mission. This was the first FSO rotation in several years at JRTC; it was also the first time an infantry brigade combat team (IBCT) reconnaissance squadron participated in a rotation in the reconnaissance and security role envisioned in U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-20.96, Reconnaissance Squadron, rather than as a landowner in a counterinsurgency (COIN) rotation.) Armor Magazine, March-April 2010. IBCT's Reconnaissance Squadron in Full-Spectrum Operations by Lieutenant Colonel Brian Flood, Major James Hayes, and Major Forrest Cook, page 26.*

Another good article is MAP BOARDS TO CPOF: AN AIRBORNE INFANTRY BATTALION AT JRTC AND THE CHALLENGES TO PROVIDING SA DURING AN FSO ROTATION, by LTC Curtis A. Buzzard, which appeared in April-May issue of Infantry Journal in 2011. *(Hard to believe that these articles are this old now!)*



### New Tank Corps Monument Item

#### NEW ITEM!!!!!!

They have finally arrived! These are the Tank Destroyer Mugs to go with the TD Stickers we have now. I ordered these back in January. Of course, as soon as they were to hit production the COVID-19 strikes. At first when other orders were put aside do to production costs I was notified that our order was being pushed to the front. Soon after there was the Stay at Home orders issued and the plant had to close.

These are the same 11oz Diner mug. Cost will be the same as the Treat'em Rough mug, \$25.

I originally ordered the minimum of these as we were not sure of how well these will go over. So I had 47 of these to start with but I am down to 41 as of this time.

So I have **30** of these mugs on hand and ready to ship.

I will be boxing these up while masked, wearing gloves and do all that I can do to be safe for me and you.



Patton Battalion has a new item for the

Patton US Tank Corps Monument Project.

Its an 11oz Diner Mug made here in the USA by Deneen Pottery. These are available for \$25 each and shipping if needed is between \$8 and \$10 depending on quantity and distance.



We now have Gloss/White (16) and Black (0) on hand. So they are going quick. Contact me or look for them on the 19Series Website.



### Patton Monument Report for 2020

As of June 21, 2020, the Monument fund has \$15,496.00. After paying for the second run of mugs and moving funds over to cover shipping costs.

Total in Monument Account: \$15,496.00.

The Bourg Tee Shirts we have on hand. **(UPDATED)**

**Large:** Yellow - 3, **2XL:** Yellow - 3, Tan - 3, OD - 4, **3XL:** Yellow - 2, Tan - 2, OD - 1, **4XL:** Yellow - 1.

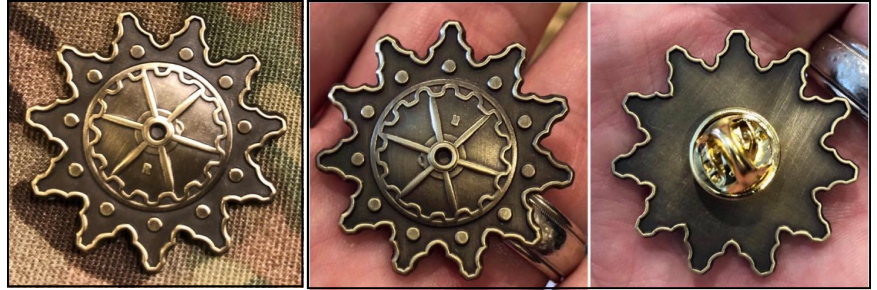
M4 Tee Shirt

**Large:** Tan - 1, OD -1.

**2XL:** Tan - 1

#### Lapel Pins

We are looking at \$12 each for these.



I have over 40 of the Treat'em Rough stickers again! We are asking \$5 each, which includes shipping. If you want some please contact me!

#### Patton Battalion Funds / Memberships / Dues

The Patton Battalion, as of June 25, has 451 members on our battalion Facebook page. Out of those 451 members we are currently at 93 paid members. The Patton Battalion has \$0.51 in funds in the PayPal account. We have \$630.72 in the Patton Operating account. Battalions funds are \$630.72. There are no Monument funds in the Battalion account as of this time.

In order to be a paid member of the battalion you must be a paid member of USABOT National. Again, a paid first year membership of \$15.00 which gets you a free battalion patch. Since we now have the battalion patch in the larger size both in color and subdued you have a choice as to which one you want free with your paid membership.

Both patches are also available for \$5 EA.

Your annual membership renewal will be \$10.00 every year after that. ***Annual dues for the battalion are now due in June of each year!***

You can pay for your battalion membership through Paypal at:  
**pattonbattalion@outlook.com** or  
**patton.battalion@usabot.org**.

If you don't have a Paypal account you can send a check or Money Order to:

**Patton Battalion - USABOT**  
**1432 Flood Road**  
**Shelbyville, KY 40065**



#### ATTENTION

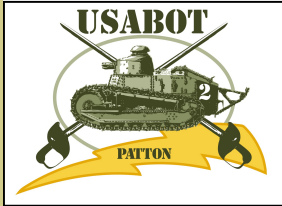
**USABOT Memberships can be renewed and purchased By mail at**

**USABOT**  
**68 West Marion ST**  
**Doylestown, OH 44230**

**Make checks payable to USABOT**  
**If at all possible try to go the USABOT Store Online and register there so that the G4 can track.**

**WWW.USABOT.ORG**





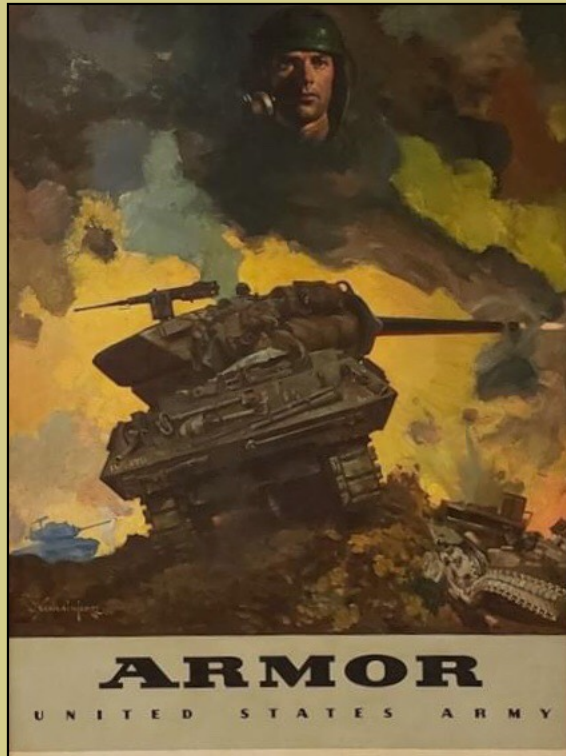
Patton Battalion - USABOT

Board of Directors

- Matthias Martinez
- Karlen P Morris
- Nathan Snyder
- William Starks
- Dion Walker, Sr.
- Phillip Wilburn



Be sure to check us out on Twitter @pattonbattalion



Coming up in the July Issue -

Upcoming Events

**US Cavalry & Armor Association Chapter Fort Knox** - Stable Call monthly meeting, 3rd Thursday of every month, Location TBD - Fort Knox, KY.

**Sullivan Cup - Best Tank Crew Competition** - Fort Benning, GA, . (POSTPONED)

**22 Challenge 10K Ruck March** - Jeffersonville, IN, (PENDING)

**Ninth Annual Tanker Homecoming** - Fort Carson, CO - September 23-26, 2020. (PENDING)

**World War II Event** - Indiana Military Museum, Vincennes, IN, 2020.

**Patton and the US Tank Corps Monument** - Fort Knox - TBD

From the US Army Armor School

Are you ready for Sullivan Cup 2020!?

The events will be held 4-8 May 2020 here at Fort Benning!

Official invites and further details to follow, but let's start getting excited about seeing who the best tank crew of 2020 will be!!!

**THE EVENT HAS BEEN POSTPONED DUE TO THE COVID-19**

