

A FORWARD STEP IN ARTILLERY OFFICER EDUCATION

By Major General Willard W. Irvine

A SIGNIFICANT and progressive step in furtherance of Department of the Army policies has recently been taken by the Chief of Army Field Forces. It is certain to have both immediate and long-range effects on the education of artillery officers and, even more important, on the integration of the two types of artillery into a single powerful and versatile branch.

I refer to the decision to resume the integrated field-antiaircraft artillery officer advanced course for artillery officers of the Regular Army. This course, which had been interrupted by the extreme need of officers as a result of operations in Korea, is not only to go forward again, but is to be increased in duration from ten to eleven months in order to insure thoroughness and completeness of training. Moreover, it is to be begun without delay so that officers will be graduated from the first course next June.

Soundness of educational planning is also indicated by the recommendation that Regular Army officers who have completed a basic or advanced course in, let us say, antiaircraft artillery, but have had no schooling or experience in field artillery, attend an associate course in field artillery and, if practicable, follow this by a short tour with a field artillery unit. Once this program is under way at the battery officer level, and training in the two artilleries has been properly integrated from the start, it is anticipated that the field-antiaircraft artillery advanced course can be materially shortened without loss of train-

ing or lowering of standards.

As long ago as September 3, 1946, General Devers, then Commanding General of Army Field Forces, recommended to the Chief of Staff the creation of an artillery arm, to which officers commissioned in the Field Artillery and the Coast Artillery would be detailed, and the prescription of the cross cannon of the Field Artillery as the insignia of this unified and integrated arm. The Army Organization Act of 1950 legally established the Artillery as a single basic branch of the Army. But integration of two branches, each with a distinguished record and with years of individuality, is no easy matter. At times there has been doubt that the integration went far beyond the common name and insignia.

NOW, however, it appears that integration of the two artilleries is on the way toward accomplishment. Before it is completely achieved, there must be a much more extensive cross-assignment of officers at the various levels and in various duties—troop, staff, and school. A rotation system must be developed which will make cross-assignment a continuing process, to prevent the growing apart that will inevitably result when an officer remains too many years with one type of artillery. Integrated education must, in other words, be followed up by integrated experience. But it is with education that the process should naturally begin, and is beginning.

Despite the existing law and the posi-

tive steps that are now being taken to put it fully into effect, objections to integration of the two types of artillery will undoubtedly continue to be raised. It may be argued that an officer who attempts to become an inclusive artilleryman will fall short of the highest standards of completeness and thoroughness in a single speciality. It may also be pointed out that, in a time of urgent demand for trained leaders, we cannot afford the delay involved in any sort of double training.

On the first point, let it be said that there is no intention to lower the standards of artillery specialists. Rather, it is anticipated that officers will gain depth, as well as breadth, as they come to appreciate both the common features and the variations within their branch. If the infantryman can master more than one specialty, and become a more complete soldier in the process, so can the artilleryman. On the second point, the Army's educational system, though it may need to be adjusted during periods of emergency, rightly takes the long view. The present period of international tension may last ten to twenty years, and it would be disastrous to narrow the professional officer education of tomorrow because of the stringencies of today.

The educational plan envisaged and boldly begun will do much to make our officers at once well-trained specialists and versatile, knowledgeable artillerymen. It is a step in the right direction and one that keeps pace with modern military developments.

post. Here also, by means of antiaircraft artillery personnel at the air defense direction center (ADDC), the antiaircraft operations center (AAOC) is tied into the aircraft control and warning system. It is here, in the Air Division, that the firepower of antiaircraft artillery weapons is integrated into the air defense system and the members of the team really play the game together.

While teamwork of the Army and the Air Force, through the Army Antiaircraft Command and the Air Defense Command, is of first importance in air

defense of the U. S., there are other interrelationships in which the Army Antiaircraft Command is involved. Unless these, too, work smoothly, the mission cannot be performed with maximum effectiveness.

One of these interrelationships is with the several continental armies. Within the areas of five of the six armies are units which the Army Antiaircraft Command has under its command for the performance of its mission. Some of these units are assigned specifically to air defense; others are earmarked for shipment

overseas, but are to be used in air defense of the U. S. until their departure. The total number of such units—brigades, groups, battalions, batteries, and operations detachments—is now substantial. While the Army Antiaircraft Command has control over these troops, the continental armies provide administrative and logistical support, and thus perform an important function.

Still another interrelationship in which the Army Antiaircraft Command is involved is with the Navy. For the Navy, with its communication system and the

antiaircraft firepower of its ships in port, is also a part of the air defense team. In all operations the Army Antiaircraft Command is concerned with this dovetailing of Navy and Army antiaircraft potentialities.

LOOKING to the future, the Army Antiaircraft Command is watching closely the Army's development of new antiaircraft weapons, tactics, and techniques,

and planning with the Air Defense Command, the continental armies, and appropriate echelons of the Navy the employment of these means in a coordinated air defense. The Army Antiaircraft Command depends upon the Office of Chief of Army Field Forces, the Antiaircraft Artillery and Guided Missiles Branch of The Artillery School, and Army Field Forces Board No. 4 to keep abreast of the latest thought in this significant field.

A recent exercise, involving all elements, gave the air defense team a workout of national scope. The Air Force, Army, Navy, as well as civilian volunteers manning portions of the warning system, functioned together to ward off a simulated air attack by an enemy power. Other such exercises will continue. In these exercises, as in the real thing if it should come upon us, the Army's component will play its part in the integrated air defense team.



AAA FIRING DEMONSTRATION FOR GENERAL CLARK

The effectiveness of AAA was well established by troops of the 31st AAA Brigade in a demonstration for General Mark W. Clark, Chief of the Army Field Forces, at the Yakima Firing Center in the State of Washington during a recent training inspection.

The day of August 2, 1951, was more than a day of routine training at the sprawling firing center. The brigade troops were demonstrating that imagination and ingenuity, coupled with hard work, could turn a dry, hot, dusty wasteland into a modern antiaircraft artillery range; that the Army Antiaircraft Command is a going concern.

Lieut. Colonel Karl W. Dittrich, 770th AAA Gun Battalion, commanded the troops presenting the firing demonstration. Battery B, 770th AAA Gun Battalion of the 250th AAA Group,

commanded by 1st Lt. Noel C. Skube, and Battery C, 518th AAA Gun Battalion of the 5th AAA Group, Captain Stanley Foster commanding, staged the firing. The two batteries alternated in firing on the first four courses and fired simultaneously on the fifth course. All commands and reports within each firing battery were broadcast to the spectators so that they were always aware of the progress of events.

The 41st Tow Target Squadron at Lawton Air Force Base furnished two planes, each towing a target for the demonstration. As the first plane left the field of fire, the second plane entered the field of fire, thus eliminating delays between courses. The target sleeves towed on the third and fifth courses were shot down in good ack-ack fashion.

Following the demonstration, General

Clark inspected various displays of antiaircraft artillery equipment and the mess halls and barracks of the 770th AAA Gun Battalion, and the 719th AAA Gun Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Warren W. Morse.

When the demonstrations were completed General Clark promptly complimented all concerned: "I have nothing but praise for what I've seen. The 31st AAA Brigade is doing a magnificent job in the supervision of training." His favorable impressions were later confirmed in a personal letter to Col. Aaron M. Lazar, commanding the 250th AAA Group.

Lt. Col. Dittrich and the two commanders of the firing batteries drew special praise from Major General Willard W. Irvine, commander of the Army AA Command.



General Mark W. Clark inspects the honor guard of the 770th AAA Gun Bn. with Lt. Col. Dittrich.



General Clark observes AAA firing. *Left to right:* Major Gen. Willard W. Irvine, Mayor Gilbert W. Burns of Yakima, General Clark, Brig. Gen. Hobart Hewitt and Col. Aaron M. Lazar.