

Looking at Tactics

—the small group leader

By SSG Gene Weinreis

The battlefield: Southeast Asia. Vietnam. Dense vegetation everywhere.

The battlefield: Southwest Asia. Iraq/Kuwait. Hot. Open fields for miles around. Water becomes more important than food.

A future battlefield? Honduras, Columbia.

The fighting tactics for the above geographical areas differ greatly.

It's paramount that we stay abreast in all theaters of possible combat. We have found we can't rely on just urban tactics. We must look at all possible areas of future warfare.

Wars will be won with the combined forces exercising all tactics available to ensure success on the Air-Land Battlefield. This was demonstrated throughout Operation Desert Storm. We found that victory hinges on the infantry. The infantryman will still be valuable regardless of all the high-tech equipment used. An integral part of the infantryman is the chemical soldier.

We must always be prepared for the use of chemical weapons in future conflicts. The chemical soldier helps to ensure the success on the modern battlefield.

This is where the small group leaders at the U.S. Army Chemical School come into prominence. We take our knowledge of tactics doctrine and expand it with the wealth of knowledge reflected by the NCOs in

the classes. NCOs attending BNCOC and ANCOC gain valuable knowledge to take back with them to their units. Above all, it's important to the armed forces that the soldiers use this knowledge to aid the Army in future preparedness for winning on the Air-Land Battlefield.

In small group sessions, the small group leader helps monitor and encourage discussions within the group. This is where a wealth of knowledge is placed on the table for all to see and scrutinize.

We look at training conducted at the Chemical School and compare it with training received in units by the

various students. Fifth Corps Europe will have different requirements than Camp Casey in Korea. Training in Fort Hood, Texas, must meet different requirements than the same training conducted in Fort Carson, Colorado. Each NCO in the group discovers many varied and informative approaches to accomplishing his unit's mission.

This is the advantage of small group discussions. We look at the multi-echelon of training and come up with the most efficient method of training a diverse number of mission-essential tasks within a limited amount of training time.



Student takes sample from water suspected to contain biological contamination. Sample will be sent to a laboratory for analysis.



Above, student monitors M17 LDS during decontamination operation. Below, students drink water from canteens while in MOPP3.



When BNCOC or ANCOC students leave the Chemical School, they are better prepared to carry out training within their own units. The small group leader has both mentally and physically challenged the NCOs to help build confidence and competence in both common and technical tasks.

This is our basic goal at the Chemical School – to provide challenging and realistic training that will help each graduating NCO reach a level of excellence coupled with initiative, en-

thusiasm, and an eagerness to learn.

Throughout the course, the small group leader has helped to guide, mentor, coach, and, yes, even befriend each NCO. During the weeks the sergeants train here at the school, they are assured that whatever is asked of them, a small group leader is there at their sides, doing the task right along with them.

The photos accompanying this article were taken by a small group leader. The small group leader assesses the various tasks being conducted

during the different training exercises. From conducting a reconnaissance of a suspected contaminated area to pulling security of the area, students are constantly encouraged to practice doctrine and learn from their experiences.

BNCOC and ANCOC students are consistently put to the test throughout the reconnaissance/decon smoke field training exercise. They are constantly conducting MOS-related tasks (such as operating the M17 lightweight decontaminating system) as well as common tasks (drinking water while in MOPP3). Operation of the M157 smoke system is stressed throughout the smoke field training exercise to help each NCO become proficient in both the operation and tactical deployment of smoke on the battlefield.

General Carl E. Vuono stated, "Every soldier, leader, and unit training program must be carefully planned, aggressively executed, and thoroughly assessed." Here at the Chemical School, we stress as much as possible to "Train as you intend to fight." We take the chemical BNCOC and ANCOC courses a few steps further to help build competent leaders. We equip the trainer with the tools to conduct effective and realistic training in peacetime so that we'll be prepared to reestablish peace through victory in combat – wherever and whenever America's interests are challenged.

At the time this article was written, SSG Gene Weinreis was assigned to the NCO Academy at Fort McClellan, Alabama, as a small group leader. SSG Weinreis' previous assignments include Technical Training Department, Department of Training, USACMLS; HHC, 197th Ordnance Battalion; 59th Ordnance Brigade, West Germany; and Company C, 34th Support Battalion, 6th Air Cavalry Combat Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas. SSG Weinreis has an associate degree in law enforcement. He is a graduate of both the chemical non-commissioned officer basic and advanced courses.