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Training of Military Faculty Officers

by

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(A reply to an article published in No. 30 of the Collection)

Articles on the command training (komandirskaya podgotovka) of officers from military faculties are seldom published in our press. Therefore, we, officers of the department of higher educational institutions (otdel vuzov--vuz--vyssheye uchebnoye zavedeniye), were particularly interested in the article by Colonel V. Fedorov.

It is true that the author has stated the primary problems somewhat sketchily, and moreover, we cannot agree with some of his opinions. First of all, he is wrong in his assertion that the officers and generals from military faculties of higher educational institutions are isolated from army life and are badly provided with military literature. During the last two years, in the Carpathian Military District, more than half the officers and generals from military faculties have been replaced by young officers with higher military education who have come directly from the troops. They are coping successfully with the great tasks given them and are skilfully imparting military knowledge to their students, the future reserve officers..

Of course, the young instructors on military faculties need assistance in mastering teaching methods. It is just to this that the heads of faculties and the departments of higher educational institutions in military districts should pay the most attention when planning command and methods training, especially in the case of seven-to ten-day refresher courses (sbor).

As far as literature is concerned, the officers and generals employed at military faculties suffer from no lack of it. Through the directorates of the Ministry of Defense and military district headquarters they, just as all other army units, are provided with a sufficient quantity of regulations, manuals, courses in marksmanship,

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textbooks, and visual aids. Each military faculty subscribes to the necessary military, technical, and special journals.

Officers at the faculties systematically attend command exercises, visit units during refresher training courses, and while the students do their training, participate in command staff and tactical exercises. For example, in February 1960 seven-day district refresher courses were held for all officers employed on military faculties. All military faculties held four-or five-day refresher courses at the end of the spring semester and before the start of the new academic year. During the year more than a third of the officers participated in command staff exercises and exercises with troops and a considerable number attended special refresher courses conducted by central and district directorates.

The military faculties at higher educational institutions are fully provided with the necessary training weapons and combat and transport equipment. This allows all exercises with students on tactics, special tactics, fire and drill training and other subjects to be conducted under conditions in the field approximating those in combat. Officers of military faculties are becoming less and less cut off from the soldier's life every year.

Colonel V. Fedorov considers that the most suitable time for district refresher courses for officers and generals employed at military faculties is when the students are on winter vacation. In our opinion, the winter vacation is not only a suitable but the only possible time for holding district refresher courses because for the whole of the remaining time the officers and the generals are busy teaching, and during the summer vacation they are, together with students, in camp for practical training and special practice with the troops.

It should be borne in mind, however, that the winter vacation does not fall at the same time in all the higher educational institutions. Therefore, we inquire beforehand at the higher educational institutions when their vacation begins and arrange the dates for the district refresher courses to ensure a 100 percent attendance of officers and generals.

The author of the article under discussion has shown too sketchily the organization and conduct of district refresher courses for officers and generals from military faculties. He deals in a particularly weak manner with such an important question as the training of the instructors in teaching methods.

In this connection we should like to discuss in some detail the experiences with refresher courses for officers and generals from military faculties which were conducted by the Carpathian Military District in February 1960.

The refresher courses were planned for the first week in February and by the 15th of December, the commander of the troops for the military district had already confirmed the following allocation of hours and subjects for the refresher courses.

Allocation of Hours			
Arrangements made	Total Hours	Lectures	Practical Exercises
Marxist-Leninist Training	6	6	-
Training in Tactics and Special Tactics	23	10	13
Methods Training	10	-	10
Drill Instruction	2	-	2
Report on the Results of Students' Training for the First Semester, Statements by Refresher Course Students, Instructions from the Commander	5	5	-
TOTALS	46	21	25

Subjects for the Refresher Courses

MARXIST-LENINIST TRAINING

International Position of the Soviet Union (lecture) - 2 hrs

The Results of the Work of the December Plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Union (lecture) - 2 hrs

The Influence of Scientific and Technical Progress on the Development of Combat Equipment and Methods of Armed Combat (lecture) - 2 hrs

TRAINING IN TACTICS AND SPECIAL TACTICS  
(for all participants in the refresher course)

Seminar on the New Combat and Field Manual - 3 hrs

A Precipitate Attack on a Prepared Enemy Defense Position by a Motorized Rifle Division (lecture) - 2 hrs

The Use of Atomic Weapons and Artillery during a Precipitate Attack on a Prepared Enemy Defense Position by a Motorized Rifle Division (lecture) - 2 hrs

Engineer Support during an Attack by a Motorized Rifle Division (lecture) - 1 hr

Supply of Technical Equipment for an Attack by a Motorized Rifle Division (lecture) - 2 hrs

Group map exercise on the Subject of "A Precipitate Attack on a Prepared Enemy Defense Position by a Motorized Rifle Division" (for all participants in the course except officers of the medical service) -13 hrs

Group map exercise on the subject "Medical Support in a Precipitate Attack on a Prepared Enemy Defense Position by a Motorized Rifle Division" (practical exercise for officers of the medical service) -13 hrs

DRILL INSTRUCTION  
(for all participants in the refresher course)

Practical exercise on the subject "Drill Manual and Marching with Arms" - 2 hrs

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METHODS TRAINING

For lecturers on combined-arms subjects: an open exercise (otkrytoye zanyatiye) on the subject of "Control of a Rifle Platoon during an Attack"

- 5 hrs

A demonstration (pokaznoye zanyatiye) of "Fire Control in a Rifle Platoon in Defense"

- 5 hrs

For artillery officers: a demonstration "A Command Platoon of an Artillery Battery in an Attack"

- 4 hrs

Tactical exercise of an artillery division with combat firing by day and by night on the subject of "Ways and Methods of Work to Ensure a Saving of Time and an Increase in Accuracy of Fire"

- 6 hrs

For officers of the medical service the following lectures:

"Modern Problems of Organization and Tactics in Medical Support for the Troops"

- 2 hrs

"Organization and Extent of Surgical Aid at the Stages of Medical Evacuation"

- 2 hrs

"The Sorting of Casualties at the Stages of Medical Evacuation"

- 2 hrs

"Current Information on Enemy Preparation for Bacteriological Warfare and the Organization of Antibacteriological Protection of Troops and the Local Population"

- 2 hrs

"Provision of Medical and Evacuation Services for Troops in an Area Hit by a Chemical Weapon"

- 2 hrs

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The responsibility for preparing and conducting all exercises was given to the appropriate commanding officers of arms of troops and commanding officers of departments and directorates of the district. Control over the preparation of teaching materials, open exercises, and demonstrations was exercised by the assistant commander of troops for higher educational institutions in the district.

The organizational instructions for support of the courses provided for the allocation of vehicles, motor transportation potential and ammunition, and also of financial means (taking into account the printing of the training and introductory problems, and of the starting situation on topographical maps), location of the course, the number of study groups, mass information measures, and feeding arrangements.

All training materials were prepared 7 to 10 days before the beginning of the courses. The leaders of tactical training groups rehearsed 4 or 5 days before the courses.

The responsibility for organizing and conducting the course was placed on the assistant commander of troops for higher educational institutions in the district.

From the allocation of hours and the selection of subjects, as shown above, it will be seen that more than half of the training time was allotted to practical exercises. Out of the 25 to 30 hours of practical exercises, 10 hours were devoted to training the instructors in methods.

I should like to say a few words about open exercises and demonstrations. In the 1958 courses, exercises on the subject of "A Rifle Platoon in the Attack" were conducted with the participation of a platoon of cadets of the Military Academy. The exercises were well prepared and conducted, but it was not typical of exercises with students of higher educational institutions. We recognized this defect and since 1959 have been conducting open exercises and demonstrations with the participation of groups of such students. Judging by the reaction of the majority of generals and officers from military faculties, these exercises render them considerable assistance with training methods.

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To judge from Colonel V. Fedorov's article, a considerable defect in the course at the Voronezh Military District is that not all the generals and officers from military faculties are included in the drill instruction. It should be borne in mind that drill training of students should not be taught by combined-arms officers alone. Artillery, signal, and engineer officers, as well as officers of the rear and medical services, should be able to conduct drill instruction.

Each instructor from a military faculty is assigned several study groups at different levels which he must instruct during the whole period in one principal subject and two or three related to it. The transfer of subjects and study groups from one instructor to another is not allowed, as a rule. Therefore, courses for all the officers from military faculties should include demonstrations and open exercises in fire and drill training. In exercises for arms of troops and services, it is desirable to study with officers only special, more difficult problems on certain subjects in the program.

Colonel V. Fedorov writes that at Voronezh, a group composed of officers from the military faculty is studying Marxist-Leninist training at the Officers' Club. In other garrisons the officers hear lectures at regional military commissariats (oblvoenkomat) and political departments of special units of the garrisons, but seminars are held in the military faculties under the guidance of the heads of faculties. In our opinion, this is not the only acceptable form of Marxist-Leninist training for officers from military faculties. Is it possible that all the officers from military faculties in the garrison are studying only one branch of Marxist-Leninist science, say, the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, political economy, or philosophy? Besides, how can the head of the faculty conduct a seminar when the officers are studying different branches of Marxist-Leninist science?

With us, Marxist-Leninist training in each faculty is done in accordance with its own plan which is connected with the study plan of the higher educational institution. As is well known, political economy, history of the CPSU, and philosophy are studied by all the instructors at civilian higher educational institutions. That is why we recommended that officers from military faculties should study directly at the higher educational institutions. We think that this is a quite acceptable form of Marxist-Leninist training for officers from military faculties and one, moreover, which is more reliable from the viewpoint of control.

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It is another matter when the officers are studying problems of military science in the classic works of Marxism-Leninism. In such cases it is more desirable that studies and seminars be held in district officers' clubs, regional military commissariats, political departments of special units of garrisons, and at the military faculties of higher educational institutions.

In order that officers from military faculties may keep abreast of the developments in tactics, weapons, and combat equipment, all faculties in the Carpathian Military District are attached to military units and military training institutions. Here the officers get acquainted with the latest types of armament, attend lectures which are part of commanders' training, and are present at critiques on various tactical and command staff exercises.

At the same time the officers from military faculties take an active part in the work of local branches of the Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge and in military science societies, and they recount their experiences in training and educating students on the pages of the military press. A number of officers from the faculties have produced scholarly works which have been published by the Military Publishing House.

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