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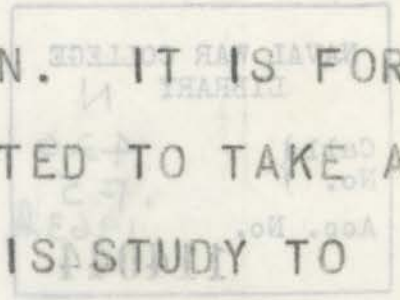
"Command Leadership"

1963
8 May

Staff

GOOD MORNING, GENTLEMEN--THIS MORNING

WE ATTACK A SUBJECT WHICH YOU PROBABLY FEEL HAS BEEN WORN OUT BY REPETITION. IT IS FOR THIS PRECISE REASON THAT I WANTED TO TAKE A FEW MINUTES AT THE START OF THIS STUDY TO PUT "COMMAND LEADERSHIP" IN ITS PROPER PERSPECTIVE.



AS THIS STUDY PROGRESSES YOU WILL HEAR MANY FAMILIAR PHRASES--KNOW YOUR MEN--KEEP THEM INFORMED--GROUP IDENTIFICATION--ETC. ALL OF THE BASIC TECHNIQUES OF LEADERSHIP ARE PART OF COMMAND LEADERSHIP, BUT AS WE PROCEED LET US FOCUS OUR ATTENTION PARTICULARLY ON THOSE UNIQUE PROBLEMS OF COMMANDERS AND COMMANDING OFFICERS, AND ON THOSE UNIQUE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE TO COMMANDERS AND COMMANDING OFFICERS ONLY. NAVY REGS MAKE IT CLEAR THAT A C.O. IS NOT JUST A

TRUE

SENIOR LEADER.

(SLIDE #1)

"THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
COMMANDING OFFICER IS ABSOLUTE....
THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMANDING
OFFICER IS COMMENSURATE WITH HIS
RESPONSIBILITY." (ART. 0701)

FROM THIS IT IS OBVIOUS THAT NEITHER A
JUNIOR NOR A SENIOR CAN ASSUME THE RESPONSIB-
ILITY OF A SKIPPER. HE HOLDS THE SACK,
OR, AS ONE C.O.'S DESK PLACARD SAID, "THIS
IS WHERE THE BUCK STOPS." ^(SLIDE OFF) I PRESUME THAT
ANY OFFICER ORDERED TO COMMAND FEELS SOME
TREPIDATION. THE JOB LOOKS TOO BIG FOR
ANY ONE MAN TO FILL. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY
CASES THAT AN OFFICER REFUSED A COMMAND
FROM A FEELING OF INADEQUACY. I HAVE IN

MIND TWO CAPTAINS WHO RETIRED RATHER THAN ASSUME COMMAND OF A SHIP.

IT IS VAIN TO HOPE THAT COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY CAN BE AVOIDED BY AN INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TONS OF DIRECTIVES SHOWERED DOWN BY HIGHER AUTHORITY--THAT BY PUNCHING THE RIGHT OP ORDER, INSTRUCTION OR NOTICE A PREFABRICATED DECISION WILL APPEAR. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS NOTHING TO DECIDE FOR YOU HOW TO AVOID THE PARTICULAR HURRICANE THAT IS LOOKING DOWN YOUR THROAT RIGHT NOW. THERE IS NOTHING TO DECIDE FOR YOU WHICH PILOTS ARE CAPABLE OF A MISSION ON A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT.

THE POINT OF THIS DISCUSSION OF COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY IS TO ESTABLISH THE FACT THAT IT IS UNIQUE. TO FULFILL THIS

RESPONSIBILITY REQUIRES A UNIQUE TYPE OF LEADERSHIP--COMMAND LEADERSHIP.

MY PURPOSE IN SPEAKING TO YOU IS NOT TO GIVE YOU THE SEVEN KEYS TO SUCCESS IN COMMAND LEADERSHIP. I MERELY WANT TO HIGHLIGHT THE AREAS UPON WHICH YOU SHOULD CONCENTRATE DURING THIS STUDY.

CERTAINLY THE PRIMARY REQUIREMENT OF A LEADER IS TO KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING.

IT DOESN'T MAKE MUCH SENSE TO HAVE THE TROOPS WELL ORGANIZED AND ALL MARCHING IN STEP IF THE LEADER IS VAGUE AS TO HIS DESTINATION. WHEN I WAS A STUDENT HERE A FEW YEARS AGO, THE PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE, ADMIRAL ROBBINS, SELDOM, IF EVER, SPOKE TO US WITHOUT GETTING TO THE PHASE, "KNOW YOUR MISSION." NOW THIS ISN'T AS SIMPLE AS IT

SOUNDS. IN THE SEVERAL COMMANDS I HAVE HELD I HAVE NEVER HAD ISSUED A CLEAR MISSION. THIS WAS NO FAULT OF MY SUPERIORS. THEIRS WAS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY COMMAND. IT IS THE SKIPPER'S JOB TO ESTABLISH THE MISSION OF THE COMMAND. IN BROAD TERMS THERE ARE TWO MISSIONS, IN PEACE OR WAR. ONE IS THE OPERATIONAL MISSION--THE BRINGING OF MILITARY POWER TO BEAR AGAINST OUR OPPONENTS. THE OTHER IS THE TRAINING MISSION --TEACHING YOUR PEOPLE TO GET THE MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS FROM THEIR EQUIPMENT. YOU CAN SEE THAT THESE TWO MISSIONS ARE NOT NECESSARILY COMPATIBLE. AS A SQUADRON COMMANDER, SHOULD YOU SEND YOUR MECHS OFF TO SCHOOL OR HOLD THEM IN THE SQUADRON TO REPAIR AIRCRAFT? YOU HAVE TO DECIDE BETWEEN YOUR

TWO BASIC MISSIONS. I WILL ONLY MENTION IN PASSING THAT WE HAVE ALL KNOWN SOME C.O.'S WHO HAVE ESTABLISHED ANOTHER MISSION--MAKE THE COMMAND LOOK GOOD. THEY GET APOPLECTIC OVER A RUST STREAK ON THE SIDES, BUT HAVE NO IDEA AS TO WHETHER THE MAIN BATTERY IS ALIGNED *or whether their gun crews can hit.* THEY KEEP THEIR DEPARTMENT HEADS SO BUSY WRITING TRAINING BILLS THAT NO TIME IS AVAILABLE FOR ACTUALLY TRAINING THE TROOPS. THE FIRST STEP OF COMMAND LEADERSHIP IS TO ESTABLISH YOUR MISSIONS. ANSWER THE QUESTION "WHAT ARE THE JOBS TO BE DONE?"

I WISH YOU COULD BE HANDED NICE, CONCISE STATEMENTS OF YOUR MISSIONS, BUT THEY USUALLY DON'T EXIST. OH, YOU WILL FIND BROAD GUIDELINES IN OP ORDERS AND INSTRUCTIONS OF ONE SORT AND ANOTHER, BUT

NOBODY EXCEPT THE COMMANDER HIMSELF IS QUALIFIED TO JUDGE WHAT HIS ACTUAL MISSIONS ARE, AND WHAT WEIGHT TO APPLY TOWARD EACH. I CAN THINK OF SEVERAL "HORRIBLE EXAMPLE" FR INSTANCES. ONE WAS THE SHIP THAT PULLED INTO HONG KONG FOR THE ROUTINE WEEK'S VISIT. THE SKIPPER WENT TO GREAT PAINS TO ENTERTAIN FOREIGN OFFICERS IN PORT. HE PUT A MAJOR EFFORT INTO SHIP'S MAINTENANCE--NO EARLY LIBERTY. TO KEEP HIS SHIP AT MAXIMUM READINESS HE ONLY GRANTED ONE SECTION LIBERTY. HE DID A GOOD JOB ACCOMPLISHING THREE IMPORTANT MISSIONS: PUBLIC RELATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND READINESS. I CLAIM, THOUGH, THAT HE NEGLECTED THE PRIMARY MISSION IMPLIED BY THE SENDING OF THE SHIP TO HONG KONG. THAT VISIT, ~~WHEN HE SENDS A SHIP~~

~~INTO HONG KONG~~, IS THE HIGH POINT OF A
WESTPAC DEPLOYMENT FOR THE CREW. ^{When he sends a ship to Hong Kong} COM-
SEVENTHFLEET'S MAIN INTEREST IS BOOSTING
MORALE, YET, WHEN THIS SHIP LEFT, YOU COULD
HAVE BOUGHT ALL HER MORALE FOR A HONG KONG
DOLLAR. THE COMMANDING OFFICER MIGHT HAVE
BEEN BETTER OFF HAD HE SAT DOWN WITH HIM-
SELF AND ASKED THE SIMPLE QUESTION, "WHAT
IS MY MAIN MISSION IN HONG KONG?" THE
FIRST STEP IN COMMAND LEADERSHIP IS CHOOSING
OF MISSIONS.

THE NEXT STEP IS THE OLD FAMILIAR
ORGANIZE, DEPUTIZE AND AUTHORIZE. BUT AS
WE GO THROUGH THIS STUDY IT WILL BE WELL
IF YOU THINK SERIOUSLY WHETHER THIS IS THE
SAME PROCESS FOR A COMMANDING OFFICER AS IT
IS FOR, LET US SAY, A DIVISION OFFICER. AT

LEAST TWO REASONS COME TO MIND WHY IT IS NOT. FIRST, ALL OTHER OFFICERS HAVE THEIR SPECIFIC DUTIES, BE THEY OPERATIONAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE, FAIRLY SPECIFICALLY LAID DOWN. WE THINK OF A GOOD DIVISION OFFICER AS ONE WHO IS CONSTANTLY ON THE GO, WHO KNOWS ALMOST MINUTE BY MINUTE WHAT HIS MEN ARE DOING AND WHAT THE CONDITION OF HIS EQUIPMENT IS. IS THE SAME TRUE OF THE SKIPPER? FRANKLY, YOU WON'T FIND UNIVERSAL AGREEMENT ON THE SUBJECT, BUT IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE SKIPPER WHO IS SO ATTENTIVE TO DETAIL WOULD HAVE LITTLE TIME FOR THE BROAD JUDGMENTS--THE ABSOLUTE JUDGMENTS THAT A C.O. MUST MAKE. THE SECOND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A C.O. AND THE OTHER OFFICERS IS THAT THE MILITARY SYSTEM HAS BUILT-IN CHECKS AND

BALANCES FOR ALL OFFICERS--EXCEPT THE C.O. THE DEPT. HEAD RIDES HERD ON THE DIVISION OFFICER, THE EXEC ON THE DEPT. HEAD, THE C.O. ON THE X.O. BUT THE C.O. STANDS OR FALLS ON HIS OWN DECISIONS. SO HE HAS TO ORGANIZE, DEPUTIZE, AND AUTHORIZE SO THAT HE WILL HAVE CHECKS AND BALANCES. WE MIGHT CONSIDER TWO AVENUES OPEN TO ACHIEVE THESE CHECKS AND BALANCES. FIRST, ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY JUST AS FAR DOWN AS YOU HAVE CAPABLE OFFICERS TO HANDLE IT. MANY MEN SHUDDER AT THIS THOUGHT. AFTER ALL, HIS CAREER DEPENDS ON HOW HE HANDLES HIS COMMAND. WHY SHOULD HE ENDANGER HIS CAREER BY ASSIGNING ANY MORE RESPONSIBILITY THAN NECESSARY? MY BEST ANSWER IS TOLD BY THE EPISODE FROM THE "CAINE MUTINY." YOU RE-

MEMBER WHEN CAPTAIN QUEEG TOOK THE CONN WHILE THEY WERE TOWING A TARGET. AFTER CALLING FOR LEFT STANDARD RUDDER, HE WAS DISTRACTED. WHILE HIS VARIOUS OFFICERS WATCHED WITH EMOTIONS RANGING FROM GLEE TO AMAZEMENT, HE RAN OVER AND CUT HIS OWN TOW LINE. THE FACT WAS THAT HE WAS SO MUCH A "DO IT YOURSELFER" THAT HE NEVER ASSIGNED ANY RESPONSIBILITY IF HE COULD HELP IT, AND HE WOULD NEVER BROOK ANY SUGGESTION OF HIS OWN LACK OF PERFECTION.

IN CONTRAST, I THINK OF ANOTHER DESTROYER. SHE WAS THE SMARTEST SHIP IN A SMART SQUADRON. WHEN SHE CAME ALONGSIDE FOR REPLENISHMENT SHE SNAPPED INTO POSITION AS IF IN IRONS, GRABBED OFF HER SUPPLIES, AND FAIRLY JUMPED BACK TO HER SCREENING

STATION. ON AN ASW CONTACT, SHE WAS HARDER TO SHAKE THAN A BULLDOG. EVERYTHING SHE DID SHOWED HER BRIDGE TO BE WIDE AWAKE. BUT BEFORE LONG I NOTICED A PECULIAR THING. WHEN SHE WOULD COME ALONGSIDE, THE CAPTAIN WASN'T HANGING OVER THE POLARIS. HE WAS AFT ON THE BRIDGE TALKING QUIETLY TO A COUPLE OF JO'S, AND SOME YOUNGSTER WAS CONNING--AND THIS HAPPENED CONSTANTLY, DAY OR NIGHT, ROUGH OR SMOOTH. THE SKIPPER'S PHILOSOPHY WAS THAT HIS SHIP WAS SAFER WITH A COMPETENT OFFICER TENDING THE CONN WHILE THE SKIPPER LOOKED OVER HIS SHOULDER READY TO OVERCALL HIM, THAN IF THE SKIPPER HIMSELF HAD THE CONN WITH NOBODY TO OVERCALL HIM. THIS IS ONE EXAMPLE OF HOW THE C.O. ORGANIZED, DEPUTIZED, AND AUTHORIZED TO

GET HIS CHECKS AND BALANCES.

A SECOND SUGGESTION IS ALSO OFFERED FROM THE "CAINE MUTINY." YOU REMEMBER QUEEG WAS A HARD-BITTEN, REGULATION S.O.B. HE WAS MEAN, UNREASONABLE, AND UNAPPROACHABLE. INCIDENTALLY, HIS EXEC. WAS A NICE GUY WHO SPENT A GOOD BIT OF HIS TIME INSULATING THE CREW FROM THE WHIMS OF THE OLD MAN. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PERSONALITY OF THESE TWO WAS REVERSED FROM THE IDEAL. THE JOB OF AN EXEC. IS TO CARRY OUT THE OLD MAN'S QUOTE WHIMS UNQUOTE. IT IS THE SKIPPER'S JOB TO BE AS APPROACHABLE AS POSSIBLE. IDEALLY, ANYONE UNDER HIS COMMAND SHOULD BE ABLE TO VOICE HIS HONEST OPINIONS WITHOUT FEAR OF REPROOF OR CENSURE. ADMITTEDLY, FEW OF US CAN STEEL OURSELVES

COMPLETELY AGAINST CRITICISM, BUT THE SKIPPER NEEDS FRANK ADVICE AND CRITICISM TO MAKE HIS ABSOLUTE DECISIONS.

THE CHECKS AND BALANCES ON MOST OFFICERS ARE BUILT INTO THE MILITARY SYSTEM. THE COMMANDING OFFICER HAS TO FURNISH HIS OWN IF HE IS TO EXERT EFFECTIVE COMMAND LEADERSHIP.

I HAVE DWELT AT SOME LENGTH ON THE ABILITY OF A PROPER ORGANIZATION TO MAKE THE COMMANDER MORE EFFICIENT, BUT POSSIBLY MORE IMPORTANT IS THE ABILITY OF ORGANIZATION TO MAKE ALL OFFICERS MORE EFFICIENT. THE FACT IS THAT FEW COMMANDS USE ALL OF THEIR TALENT EFFICIENTLY--THAT IS FEW OFFICERS USE ALL OF THEIR ABILITY. THIS ISN'T A QUESTION OF PUTTING IN MAXIMUM

HOURS ON THE JOB, BUT ONE OF USING ALL THE BRAINS AND LEADERSHIP AVAILABLE. I HAVE IN MIND A SHIP WHICH WAS ALMOST LOST DURING THE WAR. THE SKIPPER RAN EVERY DIVISION FROM THE BRIDGE. ~~HE~~ HE PRACTICALLY SPOTTED THE FLIGHT DECK HIMSELF. THE EXEC TOLD ME HE WAS JUST A "THREE STRIPE MESSENGER BOY." FEW OF HIS DEPARTMENT HEADS REALLY USED THEIR ABILITY, AND BECAUSE OF THE OLD MAN'S TIGHT SUPERVISION, REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEIR JOBS WERE. BY DRIVING THE CREW HARD, A FAIRLY DECENT JOB WAS DONE FOR THE ^{FIRST} MONTH IN COMBAT. THAN FATE CAUGHT UP. BECAUSE THE CAPTAIN HAD NO CONFIDENCE IN HIS AIR DEPT.'S ABILITY TO REARM IN A HURRY, HE ORDERED THE SECOND WAVE LOADED ON THE HANGAR DECK AS THE FIRST WAVE TOOK OFF. DOWN CAME

A KAMIKAZE, ITS BOMB GOING DOWN INTO THE LOADED HANGAR DECK. PANDEMONIUM REIGNED. ALL CIRCUITS TO THE BRIDGE WERE JAMMED WITH ORDERS. DAMAGE CONTROL CENTRAL SENT PARTIES RACING ALL OVER THE SHIP, ONLY TO HAVE THEM RECALLED AND SENT ELSEWHERE BY THE CAPTAIN. THE CHIEF ENGINEER'S ORDERS IN MAIN CONTROL WERE COUNTERMANDED. IN THE CONFUSION ALL EIGHT BOILERS WERE EXTINGUISHED AND ^{ONLY} PARTIAL FIRE MAIN PRESSURE MAINTAINED BY EMERGENCY DIESEL ~~ENGINE~~ ^{PUMPS.} TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT, THE SHIP EVENTUALLY GOT THE FIRES OUT, HAD A FIFTEEN DEGREE LIST AND WAS ^{so badly damaged that she was} ₁ NEVER AGAIN AN ACTIVE WARSHIP. IT IS TO BE EMPHASIZED THAT THE CAPTAIN WAS NOT A CAPTAIN QUEEG TYPE. HE BEHAVED HEROICALLY. ALL THE BRIDGE CREW TESTIFIED

TO HIS VALOR AND COOL HANDLING OF THE SITUATION. THE PROBLEM WAS THAT WITH ALL THE TALENT ON THE SHIP, ONLY HIS OWN WAS PUT TO FULL USE. UNDER ALMOST IDENTICAL CIRCUMSTANCES A SIMILAR SHIP WAS HIT SHORTLY AFTER. THERE WERE NO ORDERS SENT DOWN FROM THE BRIDGE. THE CAPTAIN KNEW HIS OFFICERS ON THE SCENE WERE COMPETENT AND UNDERSTOOD THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. HE ALSO KNEW THEY COULD MAKE BETTER DECISIONS ON THE SCENE THAN HE COULD FROM THE BRIDGE. WITHIN AN HOUR, FIRES WERE OUT, DEBRIS CLEANED UP AND THE CARRIER WAS OPERATING HER AIRCRAFT. ALL OF THE TALENT ON THAT SHIP HAD BEEN USED.

JUST A WORD IN ANSWER TO THE OFTEN SAID, "BUT IF SOMEBODY MAKES A BUST IT IS I, THE SKIPPER, WHO IS LEFT HOLDING THE

SACK." WITHOUT GOING INTO THE PLATITUDES ABOUT PROPER INSTRUCTION AND SUPERVISION, LET ME SAY PLAINLY "YES, YOU DO HOLD THE SACK." TO QUOTE HARRY TRUMAN, "IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT, YOU HAD BETTER STAY OUT OF THE KITCHEN." CONFIDENCE IN YOUR SUBORDINATES IS ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF A COMMAND LEADER.

TURNING TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN, HOW ABOUT THE CONFIDENCE THAT YOUR CREW MUST HAVE IN YOU? AS WE PROGRESS IN THIS STUDY WE WILL DO WELL TO KEEP A SHARP LOOKOUT FOR TECHNIQUES THAT A COMMANDING OFFICER MAY USE TO ESTABLISH THE CREW'S CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS REQUIRES THE NICEST SENSE OF JUDGMENT BETWEEN UNDUE ALOOFNESS AND UNDUE FAMILIARITY. AS A

POINT OF DEPARTURE IN THIS MATTER LET ME SUGGEST THAT WE ALL NEED TO DO A LITTLE PLAY ACTING TO BUILD UP AN IMAGE. THE FACT IS THAT NONE OF US WERE BORN ARISTOCRATS, AND YET THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT A COMMANDING OFFICER SHOULD BE IN THE EYES OF HIS COMMAND. HE MUST BE THE MOST COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL ON BOARD. THAT IS, IF HE IS A DESTROYER SKIPPER, HE MUST BE THE BEST SHIP HANDLER. IF HE IS A SQUADRON COMMANDER, HE MUST BE THE BEST AVIATOR, OR AN INFANTRY COMPANY COMMANDER, HE MUST BE THE BEST SOLDIER OR MARINE IN THE COMPANY. NOW YOU MAY FEEL THAT THIS IS A DECEITFUL ATTITUDE, BUT I THINK NOT. REMEMBER A COMMANDING OFFICER GETS HIS JOB JUST BECAUSE HE IS A PROVEN PROFESSIONAL, AND AS A SKIPPER HIS STOCK

IN TRADE HAS TO BE AN ATTITUDE OF SELF
CONFIDENCE.

POSSIBLY A MORE DIFFICULT JOB IS TO
UNBEND TO THE POINT THAT THE CREW CAN KNOW
YOUR HUMANNESS. REMEMBER, THE DAY CAN COME
WHEN THESE MEN ARE GOING TO BE SHOT AT.
NOBODY LIKES TO GET SHOT AT, EVEN IF MEN
HAVE BEEN DOING IT FOR AGES. THE REAL
TRICK IS TO MAKE THEM KNOW THAT IT IS
NECESSARY. SPECIFICALLY, EACH MAN MUST
KNOW IT IS IMPORTANT THAT HE, IN PARTICULAR,
RISK HIS LIFE. HE WILL DO A BETTER JOB FOR
A MAN HE KNOWS--AND WHOM HE RESPECTS. THE
BEST I EVER KNEW AT THIS WAS CAPTAIN JIMMY
FLATLEY. WHEN I WAS HIS EXEC. HE TOLD ME
THAT HE TRIED TO LET EVERY MAN ON BOARD
SEE HIM EVERY DAY, AND THAT HE LIKED TO

TALK TO EVERY MAN AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK. HE DIDN'T MISS VERY OFTEN. EVEN AT SEA, DURING OPERATIONS, HE TOURED THE SHIP EVERY DAY, STOPPING EVERY SO OFTEN TO TALK TO A MAN ABOUT HIS JOB, WHETHER IT WAS THE THROTTLEMAN OR SOME SEAMAN CHIPPING PAINT IN THE BILGES. AS A RESULT EVERY MAN FELT THAT HIS JOB WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH FOR THE OLD MAN HIMSELF TO BE INTERESTED. I DON'T SAY THAT THIS SHOULD HOLD FOR ALL CAPTAINS, BUT SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THIS EXTREME AND THE OTHER IN WHICH THE CAPTAIN STAYS IN HIS OFFICE OR ON THE BRIDGE YOU WILL HAVE TO FIND THE HAPPY MEDIUM OF THE ARISTOCRAT WHOSE COMPETENCE AND WHOSE HUMANNESS ARE RESPECTED BY THE CREW.

AS I CLOSE, YOU WILL NOTICE THAT I

HAVE NOT TRIED TO GIVE YOU ~~MANY~~ MAXIMS ON
COMMAND LEADERSHIP. IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF
DAYS WE WILL HAVE TIME TO GO INTO THE
SUBJECT MORE DEEPLY. IF I HAVE POINTED
OUT THAT COMMAND LEADERSHIP IS DIFFERENT--
THAT DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS ARE
AVAILABLE TO THE COMMANDER THAN TO OTHER
OFFICERS, THIS TIME HAS BEEN WORTHWHILE.