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HEADQUARTERS, XVIII AIRBORNE CORPS AND FORT BRAGG
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AFZA-CG

22 September 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR LEADERS OF XVIII AIRBORNE CORPS AND FORT BRAGG

SUBJECT: CG Policy Letter #1: Commander's Intent and Leadership Philosophy

1. Purpose. This is the Corps' primary policy letter. This Commander's Intent and Leadership Philosophy form the primary and enduring framework from which all other Corps and Installation policies and guidance flow.

2. This policy provides my intent, or vision, for members of the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg to achieve. It provides the foundation for all training guidance and all other directives or policies for the Corps and Installation. In the absence of a specific policy in a particular area, leaders can find guidance in this policy that will enable them to act within my intent in any situation.

3. Overarching Policy Guidance.

a. ***The XVIII Airborne Corps is America's Contingency Corps and Fort Bragg is the Home of the Army's Airborne and Special Operations Forces.*** When crisis comes and America needs her armed forces in a hurry, the first phone calls come to Fort Bragg. We will be ready around the clock.

b. ***We are one team.*** I expect units, commanders, and directorates to think, speak and operate as such.

c. ***If it's dumb...it ain't our policy!*** Policies are usually emplaced for good reason. Sometimes these reasons are less obvious with the passage of time. Leaders should question policies that don't make sense on the surface, but try to find out the original "why" behind the policy before you do.

d. ***In all cases, use your best judgment and take action.*** I expect you to use disciplined initiative and take action rather than waiting for instructions or following orders that no longer fit the situation.

e. ***I will involve Commanders in all decisions that will have significant impact on their units.*** When the staff brings me a proposal, my first question is, "What do the commander's think?" Before I decide, you can expect me to seek your input. I expect you to do the same.

4. Until otherwise modified or rescinded, all other standing Corps and Installation policies and procedures remain in effect.

5. I am proud to soldier alongside you as part of America's Contingency Corps and the Home of the Army's Airborne and Special Operations Forces. All the Way!


STEPHEN J. TOWNSEND
LTG, USA
Commanding

Encls

- 1- Commander's Intent & Enduring Priorities
- 2- Command Philosophy

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Enclosure 1 - Commander's Intent/Vision and Enduring Priorities

Commander's Intent:

The XVIIIth Airborne Corps is "America's Contingency Corps" and Fort Bragg is the Home of the Army's Airborne and Special Operations Forces. When America needs her armed forces in a hurry, the first phone calls come to us. The Corps, the Army's strategic response force, is skilled, tough and ready around the clock to deploy, fight and win. Fort Bragg is the Army's flagship power projection platform that provides world-class support to America's Airborne and Special Operations warriors and their families.

- ***The Troopers of XVIII Airborne Corps are Skilled, Tough, Ready, Alert and Confident Warriors who act with Disciplined Initiative*** ...We live Army Values and Warrior Ethos...We dominate our surroundings, the situation, the enemy.
- ***The Leaders of XVIII Airborne Corps are Agile, Decisive and Lead from the Front by Personal Example***...adaptable in thought...unafraid to take measured risks...Acting confidently in the absence of orders or when orders don't fit the situation.
- ***Fort Bragg is the Army's Flagship Power Projection Platform***...where tough, realistic training, readiness, rapid deployment and taking care of Corps and SOF Soldiers and their families are the top priorities.

My Enduring Priorities as the Corps and Installation Commander are:

1. **Readiness.** If not deployed on operations, the first duty of every Army leader is to train their formation for war—all else is secondary. My #1 priority is maintaining the readiness of XVIII Airborne Corps to deploy rapidly, on short notice, to deter, shape, fight and win and to preserve the readiness of Fort Bragg to generate, deploy and sustain units.
2. **Leader Development to Strengthen the Profession of Arms.** Be and develop the leaders we all want to be led by—alert, calm, approachable, competent and committed leaders of character who lead by personal example. Confident, agile, adaptable and decisive professionals who foster trust, teamwork, cohesion and unit esprit. Leaders who know how to conduct tough, realistic training. Trusted professionals who are doctrinally sound, foster a positive command climate and lead with a philosophy of disciplined initiative and mission command.
3. **Installation and Community Support.** Maintaining a world-class Army Installation and Community that is focused on training, readiness, rapid deployment and taking care of Soldiers and families. Continuing to develop and enhance readiness and power projection capabilities for the future.
4. **Risk Management.** Our missions will involve risk, sometimes danger, even in training. We cannot completely avoid risk but must accept and manage prudent risk to accomplish the mission and protect the force. We must teach our junior leaders to do the same.

Enclosure 2 – Commander's Philosophy on Soldiering and Leading...Four Things to Remember

1. Keep Your Honor Clean—Live and Soldier by the Army Values, Warrior Ethos, Discipline

- ***Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage... 'nuf said***
 - Never embarrass your Family or your Regiment
- ***I will always place the Mission First***
 - Be dependable, enforce standards, build a reputation for getting the job done
 - Get everything you have into the fight...Don't fight fair, do everything you can to WIN
 - You can't be afraid to give the order that may risk your Soldiers...take prudent risk
- ***I will never accept Defeat...I will never quit...***
 - Do your best...Be Tenacious...Refuse to Quit or Lose...*Get comfortable being uncomfortable... Persevere despite privation, chaos, uncertainty... Adapt, Improve, Overcome*
- ***I will never leave a fallen Comrade***
 - We Move Forward Together, We Fight Together, We All Come Back Together
 - If you are in trouble, we will come

2. Live on Amber...Alert...Aware...Always Ready to Deploy, Move or Fight

- Physically and mentally prepared...***Expect the Unexpected***
- Plan carefully in advance, it gives you options later, but be flexible, ready to react to the unexpected or take advantage of a sudden opportunity
- ***"The best form of welfare for the troops is first-class training"*** (Erwin Rommel)
 - Before anything else, train your Soldiers so they are ready to win and come home alive
- ***"The more we sweat in peace, the less we bleed in war"***
 - You will fight just like you have trained...You DO have to practice being miserable!
 - Continue to train—even in theater: PT, shooting, first aid, comms, battle and mobility drills
 - We must remember the lessons we learn in peace or war—get a little better every day
- ***Before we bed down: our horses are fed, our guns are oiled, and sentries are posted***
 - Your unit is always secure and ready to move or fight on no notice
 - Leaders secure their command before bedding down-- We are never surprised
 - Be prepared to go to war with the equipment we have on hand...Maintain it

3. Act with Disciplined Initiative ...Take Decisive Action to Achieve the Commander's Intent

- ***Do what's right—even when nobody's looking...See what needs to be done and do it***
- Follow the plan but be smart enough to see when it no longer fits or is going to fail; be smart enough to come up with a plan that will work, and have the guts enough to do it
- Deviate from the plan if you must—Inform others that you are doing so as soon as you can
- When you know you must act, use common sense and your best judgment...I'll back you up

4. Lead by Example.... Every XVIII Airborne Corps trooper is a role model for someone

- ***Treat others as you want to be treated...Be the leader you want to be led by***
 - Get to know your Soldiers/Civilian employees as people, keep them informed
- ***Take your work seriously but not yourself—enjoy the journey, have a little fun***
 - Balance: Enjoy the experiences in your life, the people around you and your Family
 - Soldiering can be an adventure, even if the task at hand isn't fun--make the best of it
 - Soldiers will find something humorous even when things are bleak—encourage this
- ***It all boils down to leadership by example... There's only one standard...it applies to all***
 - Be responsible and accountable for your decisions, your troopers and your equipment
 - If it's hard, sucks or is risky, be there with them...be ready to go first and lead them