It was March and a cheerless rain that had begun to fall chilled her to the bone. The soot-mixed slush on the bridge made walking more difficult. Her feet were nearly numb with cold. The wind had now grown bitter, and the yellow glare of twilight put a sickening pall on the dingy scene. On either side of the street were doubles or duplexes, built years ago and not repainted since. The blistered siding showed weathered wood under peeling paint. Black smoke from the many trains had so impregnated the ground around these houses that it was very nearly sterile. For years no plants had grown in these black yards. Water trickled onto the sidewalks and oozed into the gutter to join more murky water in the sewers.

As she reached a narrow alley she suddenly turned into the rutted lane. The sign, which had once named this alley Howard Street, was no longer legible. The lane was as unkempt as the sign and no houses faced on it. There was only a dilapidated garage whose brown stain had long ago faded. Approaching the garage were narrow uneven cement steps, up which the woman trudged. She was home. There were faded curtains at the windows. The porch, which had been added to the old garage, had a long gaping crack from one end to the other. A well-worn rat run followed the side of the house to the back. She opened the sagging door, which gave out a mournful creak. It groaned as she shut it behind her.

The Handling of Prisoners of War

Hans Steilberger

Modern warfare is not merely a series of haphazard advances, attacks, withdrawals and counterattacks. It is, rather, a series of carefully planned moves directed by the decisions of high echelon commanders, based on such factors as enemy strength, equipment, location, disposition, organization and movement, to mention a few. The knowledge of these factors, in turn, is derived from a number of sources, the more important ones of which include front line troops, reconnaissance patrols, aerial observers, observation posts and listening posts. Intelligence thus gathered is analyzed and interpreted in terms of enemy capabilities, and forms in most cases the basis for the strategy to be employed.

While the aforementioned sources play no little part in military intelligence activities, their combined efforts would frequently be fearfully inadequate, were they not supplemented by what is, perhaps, the one origin of the highest percentage of information—prisoners of war. Much useful knowledge can be gained from them through skilled interrogators, but much of the success or failure of interrogations depends upon the manner in which PW’s are handled.
Handling may be described as the treatment of prisoners upon capture, during evacuation and interrogation, and after interrogation. Its proper execution becomes more and more important when the number of prisoners captured is small. Minor adaptations of accepted doctrines are sometimes necessary to meet local conditions, but the general procedures, which are set forth below, should be followed whenever practicable, for they have been proved sound by past experience.

Immediately upon capture prisoners are disarmed and searched for concealed weapons by the capturing troops, and all articles which could be turned into dangerous weapons or tools for escape are removed. Sometimes, of course, hostile action or a large number of prisoners makes an immediate search impracticable, but the process should not be delayed too long; otherwise prisoners might have the chance to dispose of some valuable documents they may be carrying. Capturing forces must especially guard against the destruction of documents, many of which are highly useful as information sources or aids in the interrogation process. One regiment during World War II issued an order that all documents found on a prisoner should be kept on his person, but in one pocket, such as the right trouser pocket. Since the prisoner had his hands above his head at all times, it was impossible for him to destroy the documents. In this manner, the documents were immediately available to the interrogator at the time of the questioning, so that the maximum amount of information was obtained simultaneously from the documents as well as the prisoner.

The search for documents must be as thorough as that for weapons, if not more complete, for it is much easier to conceal a scrap of paper than a small arm. The prisoner is, however, permitted to keep personal effects, insignia of rank, decorations and objects of value in his possession, and he retains his helmet and gas mask as long as he is in a danger zone.

As soon after capture as possible, often while the search is still in progress, enemy officers, noncommissioned officers, privates, deserters and civilians are segregated to the extent possible. These segregated groups are maintained throughout the journey to the rear. This step is taken in order to prevent the surreptitious whispering of orders or threats by prisoners of higher rank to their subordinates and to achieve or maintain a certain breakdown of morale.

Prisoners being evacuated to the rear normally pass through company, battalion and regimental collecting points, guarded by troops of the capturing unit who are relieved of this duty by members of reserve elements as soon as practicable in order to enable front line personnel to return to their positions quickly. Because an interrogation is based on achieving a mental breakdown, prisoners should be brought before the interrogator in as nearly the same frame of mind
—indecisive, fearful and impressed—as when they were captured. In order to maintain this battle shock, as the condition is called, the guards escorting the prisoners to the first interrogation point must follow some definite procedures. They must maintain segregation of prisoners at all times, as outlined previously. In addition, they must prevent prisoners from discarding or destroying any insignia or document which the capturing unit might have overlooked. Another of their duties is to enforce silence among prisoners at all times and to prevent anyone other than authorized interrogators from speaking with them. And, since food, drink or tobacco might heighten the recipients' morale, guards must prevent anyone from giving prisoners such items.

Certain factors or information regarding the prisoner will aid the interrogator in formulating his line of questioning. In order to give the interrogator a lead, the escort commander should furnish him with some brief memorandum stating the date and time of capture, the place and circumstances of capture, and the unit which effected the capture. This may be done by submitting a list or, more frequently, by attaching to the prisoner's clothing a tag containing that information.

Common sense proscribes bringing a prisoner into command posts or headquarters, for there he might well learn items of military importance which could jeopardize future operations, should the prisoner escape and return to his own lines. Therefore, for security reasons, prisoners are held in compounds which are located at a safe distance from any post of operations.

The first real interrogation is conducted at regimental level, although questioning may take place at battalion or company collection points under special circumstances. However, a lower echelon interrogation may be performed only under the supervision of an intelligence officer, and then only on subjects of immediate value to the unit. At the regiment questions are asked on subjects of immediate interest to the regiment by trained specialists of an interrogation detachment, which is assigned to the regiment. After the questioning is completed, prisoners are evacuated to the division "cage" under regimental escort.

At the divisional collection point all prisoners are searched once more by military police under the supervision of intelligence personnel to insure that no item was overlooked during the initial search. The major tactical interrogation is conducted at this level. Data on the prisoner's unit, locations, weapons, reserves, adjacent units, commanders and other pertinent facts are sought and presented to the intelligence officer, or G-2.

From the division enclosure, prisoners are normally evacuated to the Army stockade, although a few selected prisoners, usually those from whom documents of special interest have been taken, may be
sent for further examination to Corps. At Army level only selected prisoners are interrogated to develop further strategic or general military or economic information of value to higher commands. Prisoners selected for this interrogation usually possess information on Army supply, repair, replacements, interior defense, morale, higher organization and similar subjects.

The last stop in the prisoner evacuation channel is usually the Theatre of Operations PW enclosure, where the prisoners sit out the remainder of the war unless, as during World War II in its earlier phases, they are sent to prison camps in the continental United States. Any interrogations at this level are detailed, on specific and diverse subjects, conducted by trained specialists. Prisoners selected for interrogation are themselves specialists or very important persons whose complete knowledge of some specific subject would enable us to obtain detailed important strategic information.

This sequence of prisoner handling and evacuation is standard in our army today. Evacuation methods may differ slightly, depending on the situation, in that the journey from point of capture to the first interrogation station may be made on foot or some suitable conveyance as empty supply trucks returning to the rear. From there the movement is either by truck or rail, until the last stop is made. The method is actually of slight importance. Most contributive to success in obtaining information are the proper handling of prisoners of war and the skill and ability of the interrogator, whose techniques, if he is well trained, are as varied and flexible as the personalities of the prisoners with whom he comes in contact. Prisoner handling procedure is almost a science today, for the captured foe's reaction may gain or lose the interrogator accurate and valuable information which could well make the difference between victory or defeat in battle.

Reflection on Man and Nature's Beauty

Bob Petty

"Beauty is nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current, and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss . . ."

Milton, Comus

To gain full benefit of meditation one must find a spot where the mind can be as nearly to itself as possible, void of care and anxiety. Thus it is that we so often seek the out-of-doors to nurture our more peaceful and unrepining thoughts. We are indeed a funny animal. We cut down, dig out, and level off. We pour concrete, lay asphalt, and rear our temples till they blot out the sky. Then in our leisure time we race frantically with discontented hearts