

# Rebuilding Psywar

The Psychological Warfare Division, the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, and the Psywar School at Fort Riley, 1950-1951

by Jared M. Tracy



In October 1950, the *Army Navy Air Force Journal* reported that “while plans for psychological warfare in a future emergency have been in progress for the past five years . . . they were undoubtedly speeded up because of the Korean crisis.”<sup>1</sup> However, the claim of progress in planning for psychological warfare after World War II was a gross exaggeration. As a capability, psychological warfare (Psywar) was nearly non-existent after WWII. Only the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) had any real capability in the radio broadcasting arena. Brigadier General (BG) Robert A. McClure, the Chief of Psychological Warfare in the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) during WWII, had advocated for Psywar with an aggressive letter-writing campaign since 1946, but saw little result for his efforts. In August 1950, Major General (MG) Charles L. Bolte, Army G-3, called McClure to the Pentagon to discuss rebuilding the Army’s Psywar capability. Pressured by Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, the G-3 established a Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) two months after war broke out in Korea.<sup>2</sup>

BG McClure’s WWII experience as head of censorship, publicity, and psychological warfare, and his postwar experience as chief of information control and re-education in Germany, made him the obvious candidate to rebuild the U.S. Army’s Psywar capability. As Chief of the Psychological

Warfare Division, G-3, he had three overarching priorities that he addressed simultaneously. First, he wanted to elevate the PWD to Special Staff status at the Pentagon. Second, he needed to coordinate with Headquarters, Army Field Forces (AFF), Fort Monroe, Virginia, to activate new tactical and strategic Psywar units from existing Tables of Organization and Equipment (T/O&E) and Tables of Distribution (T/D). Finally, the new units had to be manned, trained, equipped, and deployed to theater commands and field armies in the Far East and Europe.

Initially, BG McClure had few resources to accomplish these critical tasks other than the lessons of WWII. For organization, troop strength, and equipment for Psywar units, he referenced T/O&E 30-47, dated 15 December 1943 and amended on 22 June 1944. These documents established the template for the Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (MRBC) and provided for twenty officers and one hundred-forty enlisted soldiers (including linguists, radio operators and engineers, printers, loudspeaker announcers, and others), twenty-four trucks ranging in size from quarter-ton to two and a half-tons, two Davidson Duplicator Presses, SCR-696 and SCR-698 Radio Sets, four AN/UIQ-1 Public Address Sets, and other mission-essential equipment.<sup>3</sup> This T/O&E provided Psywar planners the starting point from which to man and equip new units.

In addition to T/O&E 30-47, McClure examined some of the Psywar studies conducted by the Army in the interwar period, which also focused on the organization and operations of WWII MRBCs.<sup>4</sup> In September 1947, the Department of General Subjects (DGS), Intelligence School



MRBC soldiers attached to First U.S. Army broadcasting surrender appeals to German soldiers. WWII MRBCs provided the organizational and operational foundation for the Korean War-era L&L Companies and MRBCs. This photo was included in the Intelligence School’s 1947 report which outlined a provisional Combat Psychological Warfare Detachment.

Brigadier General Robert A. McClure, Chief of PWD/SHAEF in 1944-1945 and the Information Control Division in 1945-1947, became Chief of the Psychological Warfare Division, G-3 in September 1950 and Chief of the Office of Psychological Warfare in January 1951.

Previous page: A common set-up of tactical Psywar units in Europe during WWII, a loudspeaker system is mounted on an M5A1 Light Tank, along with the 37 mm main gun and three .30 cal machine guns.





at the Army Ground General School, Fort Riley, Kansas, completed the study *Tactical Psychological Warfare*. The report determined that radio was “a strategic weapon and had no place in a purely tactical psychological warfare unit.” It also recommended that the War Department establish a provisional Psywar unit called a Combat Psychological Warfare Detachment (CPWD) for “purely tactical operations.” The CPWD would employ loudspeakers and leaflets, though “higher headquarters” might permit them to use mobile short-range radios.<sup>5</sup>

The total number of personnel within the proposed CPWD’s subordinate sections (Headquarters, Intelligence, Publications, and Loudspeaker) was eleven officers and eighty enlisted personnel. The provisional unit loosely resembled the structure of the future Loudspeaker and Leaflet (L&L) Company. The 1947 report revealed the Intelligence School’s initiative in developing Psywar organization and doctrine, and influenced BG McClure’s selection of Fort Riley for a Psychological Warfare Division and School in 1950.

Prior to September 1950, the U.S. Army only had seven experienced Psywar officers on active duty and one twenty-four-man Tactical Information Detachment (TID), activated at Fort Riley in June 1947. In 1950 the Army General School assumed operational control over the TID with the 47th Army Engineer Camouflage Battalion supervising its training. In May 1950, the TID transferred to the Army General School (AGS), 5021st Army Special Unit (ASU), for administration, quarters, and rations.<sup>6</sup>

By late-September, United Nations forces were sweeping northward up the Korean peninsula. As Chief, PWD, BG McClure’s most pressing issue was deploying a tactical Psywar unit to the Far East Theater of Operations. Assured that additional personnel and equipment would arrive soon, the understrength, underequipped, and minimally trained TID deployed to support Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) in Korea in October 1950. So that its organizational and operational needs would be met, the TID was re-designated the 1st L&L Company in November 1950.<sup>7</sup> With the TID/1st L&L awaiting more personnel and equipment in Korea, McClure shifted focus to the complicated tasks of organizing, manning, training, equipping, and eventually deploying additional Psywar units. To overcome the obvious shortage of personnel and units in the active component, he turned to the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR).

Although the Army had inactivated all of its Psywar units after WWII, the U.S. Army Reserve had demonstrated better foresight. In 1947, Colonel (COL) Garland H. Williams, a veteran of the Office of Strategic Services and commander of the 1173rd Military Intelligence Group (USAR) in New York, established a Psywar Section. On 22 November 1947, COL Ellsworth H. Gruber, an intelligence officer during WWII and printing supervisor at the New York *Daily News*, assumed command of the section. On 21 June 1949, the 1588th Psychological Warfare Battalion (Training) replaced the 1173rd’s Psywar Section and absorbed its personnel, including COL Gruber. A year later, 1588th personnel transferred to the 1118th Organized Reserve Army Service



A veteran of both world wars, COL Ellsworth H. Gruber (second from right, walking) commanded the 301st RB&L from October 1950 to August 1952. The 7721st RB&L, the 301st’s replacement in Mannheim, credited COL Gruber with being “instrumental in contributing much materially to the further development of the [301st] and Psywar.”



NBC employees Robert M. Zweck, David Housman, and Walter D. Ehr Gott of the 406th MRBC reporting to the military induction center in New York on 1 May 1951, the day of the 301st RB&L Group’s federalization.



During WWII, Brigadier General David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board of RCA and founder of NBC, worked on GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower’s staff and helped rebuild communications in Western Europe. After the war he insisted on being called “General” Sarnoff in RCA’s boardrooms. Sarnoff petitioned the Army to establish the 406th MRBC, which became the MRBC of the 301st RB&L in October 1950.

Unit, Army Field Forces Intelligence School. With COL Gruber still in command, the detachment formed a Special Projects Branch within the school.<sup>8</sup> These units were further augmented by civilian companies that could form Psywar units in the USAR.

Participating in the Army's post-WWII Industrial Affiliation Program, private sector companies formed reserve units from their pool of existing employees. The program's intent was to have trained personnel available for activation into Federal service. First Lieutenant (1LT) Robert M. Zweck, employee at the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), believed that the Industrial Affiliation Program better prepared the Army for war. When federalized, company-specific reserve units "wasted no time. Guys suddenly took off one set of clothes, put on another, and [they were] ready to go."<sup>9</sup>

**LTC Frank A. McCulloch, a WWII veteran of the 34th Infantry Division, worked in the Psywar Division, G-2, Army Field Forces in 1950. He attended the first Psychological Warfare Officers Course in May-June 1951, stayed at Fort Riley to command the 5021st Psywar Detachment, ASU, and later commanded the 301st and 7721st RB&L Groups in Mannheim, Germany.**



**CPT Robert Asti, a Field Artillery Officer transferred to Military Intelligence and later to the 5th MRBC, was a key member of the Psychological Warfare Division staff and faculty from October 1950 to November 1952.**



**CPT Robert Asti (facing camera), 5th MRBC commander, in a quarter-ton 4 x 4 truck. The white label on the left rear of the vehicle reads "USFET" (U.S. Forces, European Theater), indicating that this photo was taken after July 1945 when the 5th MRBC had transitioned from Psywar to information control.**

David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board of Radio Corporation of America, founder of NBC, and former general officer assigned to SHAEF during World War II, petitioned the Army to activate the 406th MRBC in the USAR, which it did on 15 November 1948.<sup>10</sup> Captain (CPT) William B. Buschgen, commander of the 406th MRBC, and other employees from NBC drilled monthly in New York City.<sup>11</sup> The 406th provided the core of enlisted personnel for the MRBC of the 301st Radio Broadcasting & Leaflet (RB&L) Group, activated in the USAR in October 1950.<sup>12</sup> Dated May 1950, Tables of Distribution 250-1201, 250-1202, and 250-1203 provided the template for the 301st RB&L's Headquarters, Reproduction (Repro), and Mobile Radio Broadcasting Companies.<sup>13</sup> With the 301st established in the USAR, BG McClure received approval to activate the 1st RB&L in November 1950. Consisting of the Headquarters Company, the 3rd Repro, and the 4th MRBC, the 1st RB&L trained at Fort Riley until it deployed to Far East Command (FECOM) in August 1951. The RB&Ls became strategic assets at the Theater Command level.

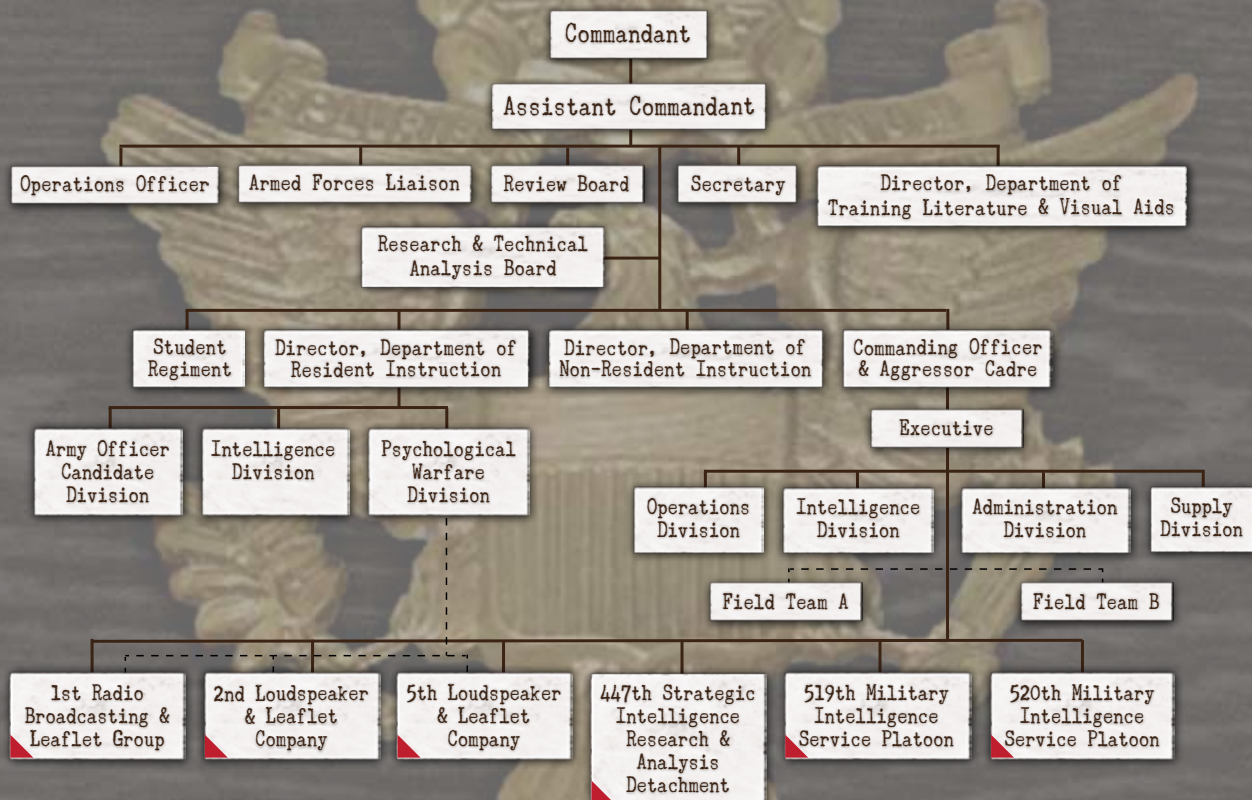
On 1 September 1950, the Department of the Army published T/O&E 20-77 for the tactical L&L Company. Consisting of a Headquarters section, three platoons (Publications, Propaganda, and Loudspeaker), and eight officers and ninety-nine enlisted soldiers, the L&L became a field army asset like the WWII MRBCs.<sup>14</sup> T/O&E 20-77 allotted each L&L eighteen M38 quarter-ton trucks, nine two and a half-ton "vans," three Davidson Model 221 lithographic presses, two LS-111/UIQ-1 loudspeaker systems, twelve AN/UIQ-1 public address sets, five AN/VRC-10 and two SCR-244 radios. McClure received approval from Army Field Forces to activate the 1st and 2nd L&Ls in November 1950 and the 5th L&L in March 1951 with the necessary equipment, but at reduced strength levels.<sup>15</sup>

As Chief of the PWD, Army G-3, BG McClure cooperated closely with the Psychological Warfare Division, G-2, AFF, though he exercised no command or control over it. The Chief of the PWD, AFF, COL Donald F. Hall, had served as commander of the 2679th Headquarters Company, Psychological Warfare Branch (PWB), Allied Force Headquarters and later as the Military Director of the PWB during World War II.<sup>16</sup> Under Hall were WWII Italian campaign veterans Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Frank A. McCulloch, former commander of 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division, and LTC John O. Weaver, former commander of Fifth Army's Combat Propaganda Team.<sup>17</sup> Working together, BG McClure, COL Hall, and their respective divisions spent the rest of 1950 establishing a Psychological Warfare Division and School at the AGS, Fort Riley. This required approval from Army Field Forces.

Commanded by GEN Mark W. Clark, AFF played a key role in the activation of new Psywar units and the establishment of a PWD at the AGS in 1950-1951. In September 1950, LTC Neil M. Matzger, AFF's Assistant Adjutant General, sent a memorandum with supporting documents to MG George D. Shea, Commandant of the



**Army General School, 31 March 1951**  
(T/D\* 65-5021-1)



Attached T/D\* & T/O&E\*\* Units not included in T/D 65-5021-1

\*Table of Distribution (T/D); \*\*Table of Organization & Equipment (T/O&E)

AGS, urging that “the training program in the [Psywar] field must be strengthened and expedited; and the importance of the [Army General School] in that program is obvious.” LTC Matzger warned that the “limited availability of officers qualified as instructors in the field will present a considerable problem in setting up the proposed training and policy center.”<sup>18</sup>

Planners from within the Pentagon’s PWD forwarded proposals to the AFF regarding a Research and Development (R&D) program for Psywar equipment, training courses for Psywar officers, and the development of training materials such as field manuals. Additionally, they suggested prerequisites for the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 9305, Psychological Warfare Officer: college degrees and/or experience in fields such as journalism, advertising, applied psychology, history, or political science. On 26 October 1950, LTC Matzger forwarded these proposals to MG Shea. Army Field Forces directed the Commandant to obtain sufficient staff to support those missions as it endeavored “to obtain the assignment of a qualified [Psywar] officer to the [school] to aid in the development of this program.”<sup>19</sup>

The effort to build a Psywar division and training program within the AGS fell heavily on a handful of

officers who had WWII Psywar experience and had either retained their commissions in the USAR or rejoined the Army on their own. These officers included CPT Robert Asti and 1LT Frederick C. Schnurr, veterans of the 5th MRBC, and CPT Robert E. Palmer, an intelligence officer. On 21 October 1950, CPT Asti received orders into active military service from the USAR and assignment as a faculty member at the AGS. With no Program of Instruction (POI) in place, Asti met CPT Palmer and 1LT Schnurr at the AGS to write the Psychological Warfare Officers Course.<sup>20</sup>

GEN Clark appointed LTC Weaver as the Chief of the new Psychological Warfare Division within the AGS. BG McClure forwarded Clark’s request to the Army Adjutant General. In December 1950 LTC Weaver and his staff arrived at Fort Riley to meet Asti, Schnurr, and Palmer, set up the PWD, and finalize the course.<sup>21</sup> The staff modeled the curriculum on the WWII Psywar training programs at the Military Intelligence School at Camp Ritchie, Maryland, and at nearby Camp Sharpe, Pennsylvania.<sup>22</sup> With little else to reference, planners used WWII MRBCs as the basis of the curriculum. Private First Class (PFC) David E. Lilienthal, Jr., recalled that he and the rest of the PWD staff used “materials from WWII intelligence [and] public information sources” to





A "Safe Conduct Pass" inviting students taking the Psywar Officers Course to a social at the Fort Riley Officers' Club, 5 October 1951.

build teaching plans based "on general themes," which were then "broken down into subordinate parts." He added that materials were "pretty sparse" and "we had to rely on our imaginations for a fair amount."<sup>23</sup>

Lilienthal recalled his lesson "on Negative Propaganda . . . based on a paragraph or two [describing] the Aleutian campaign, when the Army suddenly ceased all radio broadcasting to the Japanese forces occupying the islands as a tactic to . . . unnerve or confuse the enemy, make them tense up in expectation of an imminent assault."<sup>24</sup> Relating those types of historical lessons to the present day, Field Operational Units (Lesson # 4104) informed students: "Based on [the MRBCs'] experience in the field and considerable recent planning the following, presently authorized, operational units evolved," the RB&L and the L&L.<sup>25</sup>

By the end of 1950, BG McClure's plans had fallen into place. The Department of the Army had approved T/O&E

20-77 for the L&L and T/Ds for the RB&L. Army Field Forces had approved the activation of the 1st and 2nd L&L Companies and the 301st and 1st RB&L Groups. The Psychological Warfare Division at the Pentagon, Army Field Forces at Fort Monroe, and the Army General School at Fort Riley had worked together in establishing the Psychological Warfare Division and School. Still, there was much more to accomplish.

Beginning in October 1950, BG McClure argued that the PWD, G-3, should be elevated to a special staff section in order to properly train, equip, and man Psywar units at the theater command and field army levels.<sup>26</sup> On 15 January 1951, the Army established the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare (OCPW) as a special staff division under the Deputy Chief of Staff and supervisory control of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3.<sup>27</sup> Headed by BG McClure, the OCPW had no two-star buffer between it and the U.S. Army Chief of Staff. McClure organized the OCPW to reflect its mission to recruit, organize, equip, train, and provide doctrinal support to Psywarriors.<sup>28</sup> In addition to the Chief, Deputy, Executive, and Administrative Offices, the OCPW had three major divisions—Psychological Operations (or Propaganda), Special Operations (sometimes referred to as Special Forces), and Requirements.<sup>29</sup>

The OCPW's Requirements Division ensured that the T/O&E provided adequate personnel and equipment for tactical Psywar units. It relied on insight from officers assigned to the L&Ls. For example, in February 1952, 1LT David O. Cochran of the 5th L&L wrote to his friend, CPT Asti, "Propaganda writers should have a special MOS, encompassing the writing and the linguistic skills. My MOS . . . is the same as the PIO (Public Information Officer) MOS; that specialty is *not* called for in an L&L Company.

At least the Propaganda Section T/O&E should call for two linguist writers and one supervisory writer."<sup>30</sup> The OCPW requested that Army Field Forces make changes to T/O&E 20-77 to account for such feedback. Changes to the T/O&E occurred on 24 April 1951 and again on 30 December 1952 to reflect mission, equipment, and personnel requirements of the L&Ls deployed to Europe and Korea.

Much of the effort to expand the Army's psychological warfare capability focused on R&D. The Psychological Warfare Division at the AGS and the Psywar Board at Fort Bragg field tested new equipment such as the Harris 35" x 45" press using junior enlisted soldiers



Seventh United States Army SSI



United States Army  
European Command SSI



and noncommissioned officers as part of an on-the-job training program. The Research Branch within the OCPW's Requirements Division compiled assessments from these divisions and later from units in the field.<sup>31</sup> While McClure envisioned futuristic "new and ingenious devices" (including the "possibility [of a] guided missile capable of circling over an enemy city for a half hour or more, broadcasting propaganda and dropping leaflets"), the Requirements Division made the timely and practical decision to place large orders for the latest "off-the-shelf" technologies with companies such as Harris and Gates.<sup>32</sup> From 1951-1953, overseas RB&Ls and L&Ls forwarded assessments of their printing presses, loudspeakers, and radio broadcast systems to the OCPW through their respective theater and field army-level Psywar branches.<sup>33</sup>

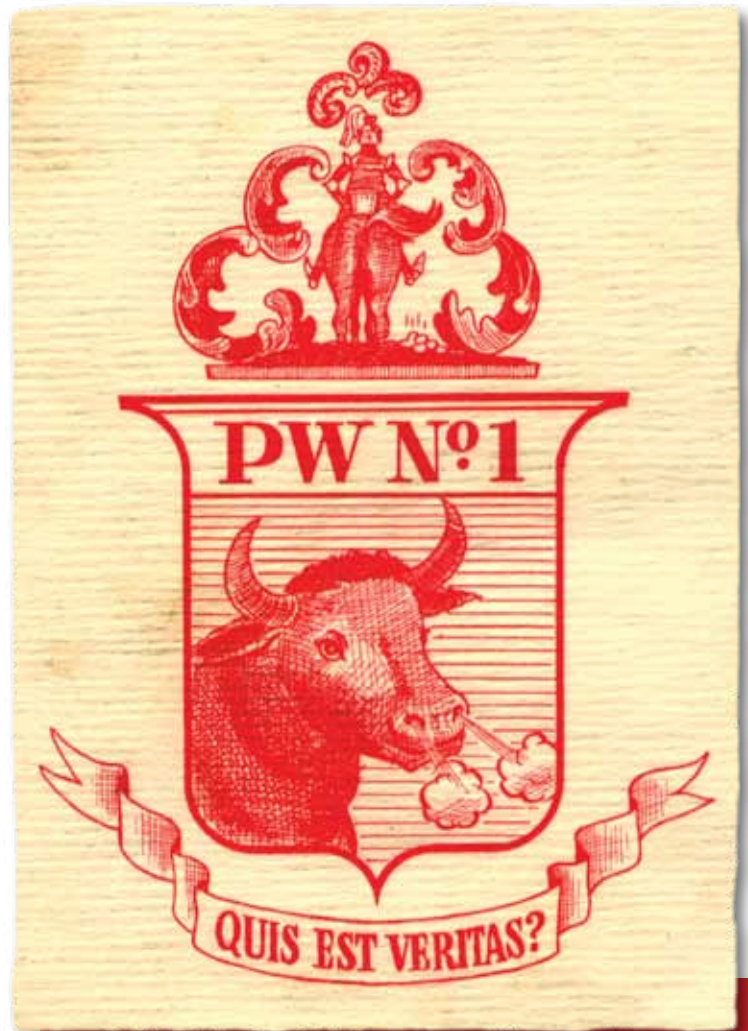
As the programs for equipment research, procurement, and training accelerated, LTC John O. Weaver, CPT Robert Asti, and other faculty members finished developing the POI for the Psychological Warfare Course. On 17 April 1951, LTC Weaver appointed CPT Asti as Senior Instructor.<sup>34</sup> LTC Edward M. Smith, commander of the 5021st ASU's Student Regiment, finalized the official roster of Psychological Warfare Course #1 which contained forty-three officers, mostly from the 1st and 301st RB&Ls. The class roster included LTC Frank A. McCulloch from the Psychological Warfare Division, G-2, Army Field Forces.<sup>35</sup>

On 2 May 1951 the first six-week Psychological Warfare Course began. BG L.D. Carter, acting commandant of the Army General School, told the assembled body of students, "The graduate of this course will take with him the most complete knowledge and tactical knowhow of psychological warfare ever possessed by an American soldier. It will be his duty to pass on this information and techniques to personnel and to train psychological warfare operational units." BG Carter confirmed that "the Army's specialized training is a natural outgrowth of actual experiences and developments in World War II."<sup>36</sup>

Heavily reliant upon the lessons of WWII, Psywar modules included Historical Examples; Present Concepts; Psychological Warfare Staff Organization in the Field; Field Operational Units; the RB&L; the MRBC; the Repro Company; the L&L; Types and Phases of Military Propaganda; Propaganda Techniques, Devices, and Themes; and many others, totaling 317 hours of instruction.<sup>37</sup> Even in the academic setting, the humor, wit, and sarcasm of the faculty and students shone through. For example, instructors handed out and students were expected to sing the class song, which included the following verses:

*Fare thee well, fare thee well/  
We are on our psycho way/  
We'll apply the school solution to create superb confusion/  
Spreading propaganda-doodle all the day  
Fare thee well, fare thee well/  
As we draw our clearance pay/  
And we reach for our diploma, wars will have a new aroma/  
Spread by propaganda-doodle all the day!*

(The security level of the class song was "Constricted."<sup>38</sup>)



The logo printed on the reception invitation for the first graduates of the Psychological Warfare Officers Course, June 1950. "Quis Est Veritas?" is Latin for "What is Truth?"

The first Psywar School class graduated on 15 June 1951. The number of graduates had dropped from forty-three to thirty-nine students, as Second Lieutenants (2LTs) William F. Brown and Arthur S. Holch and CPTs Edward C. Janicik and Frederick P. Laffey left early for other duties. Held at the Patton Hall Auditorium on Fort Riley, the ceremony's guest speaker was COL Donald F. Hall, former editor of the *Kokomo Tribune* and Chief, PWD, G-2, Office of the Chief of Army Field Forces since 1946.<sup>39</sup> Graduates were invited to a reception that evening. The program read:

**PSYCHOS, RELAX!** *Do you suffer from propaganda fatigue? Have you targets before your eyes? Have your generalities lost their glitter? Have you doubts about your ability to function as a reproduction officer? Are your Tac leaflets dull and poor in color? . . . Then, chum, you've had it. You're historical. You've just finished the first course in Psy War in the History of the U.S. Army. So tonight RELAX! Cease your honorable resistance.<sup>40</sup>*

# Captain Robert Asti



Serving in the U.S. Army from 1942-1946 and 1950-1952, Captain (CPT) Robert Asti's military experience revolved around training and leading Psywar personnel. Born in Freeport, Pennsylvania, on 12 March 1916, Asti graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1938 and was inducted into the U.S. Army in February 1942. He completed field artillery basic training at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in November 1942. He then joined the 731st Field Artillery Battalion at Camp Maxey, Texas.

In August 1943 he transferred to the Military Intelligence School at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. There, "I made contact with personnel of psychological warfare." His own students "recruited me for psychological warfare" and he joined the 5th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (MRBC). Operating in Northern France, the Ardennes, the Rhineland, and Central Europe, the unit conducted loudspeaker operations, leaflet drops, artillery

leaflet missions, and broadcasts on *Radio Luxembourg* and *Radio Frankfurt*. After May 1945, the 5th MRBC served under an Information Control Detachment which "controlled publication of German . . . newspapers, radio broadcasting, movies, music, and entertainment throughout the American zone of occupation." Asti left active duty at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, in 1946.

After studying and practicing law from 1946-1950, the former commander of the 5th MRBC returned to active duty: "I was assigned [to] Psychological Warfare for the specific purpose of starting a Psychological Warfare School at Fort Riley, Kansas." As part of LTC John O. Weaver's staff, CPT Asti helped build the Program of Instruction for the Psywar Course and he became the Senior Instructor. Private First Class David E. Lilienthal, Jr. remembered that CPT Asti "was always ready to help and advise anyone in his unit [and] he helped those of us in the fledgling 5th L&L at Riley."<sup>1</sup>

After a six-month military internship with the U.S. State Department, Asti served at the Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg until fulfilling his service obligation in November 1952. At a time when the U.S. Army had no school or program of training and only one Tactical Information Detachment, CPT Asti was a rare commodity due to his firsthand experience as a trainer and leader of psychological warfare soldiers.<sup>2</sup>

## Endnotes

- 1 Emails from David E. Lilienthal, Jr., to Jared Tracy, 17 March 2011 and 2 June 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 Biographical information compiled from personnel documents and Asti's unpublished autobiography, Robert Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.

After graduation, the officers either joined the PWD staff, the school faculty, one of the Psywar units (primarily the 1st and 301st RB&Ls), or one of the fledgling psychological warfare staffs at FECOM, European Command (EUCOM), Eighth U.S. Army, or Seventh U.S. Army. LTC McCulloch remained at Riley to command the 5021st Psychological Warfare Detachment, ASU, "a collection point for Psywar personnel" which was established in September 1951.<sup>41</sup> The Psychological Warfare School at Riley continued training officers until its operations moved to Fort Bragg in mid-1952.<sup>42</sup> On 2 July 1951, the School added a "four-week branch immaterial" Psywar Noncommissioned Officers Course which had been developed by underemployed soldiers and NCOs assigned to an L&L or RB&L at Fort Riley.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to the Psywar Course at Fort Riley, by February 1952 the OCPW had established Psywar classes at the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Additionally, it had

programmed training for Army personnel in "technical jobs such as photolithography, printing, and specialized signal and electronic duties," sponsored by Harris, Gates, and other companies. The Psywar School also trained USAR units such as the 305th and 306th RB&L Groups.<sup>44</sup>

BG McClure permitted Psywar officers assigned to the Psywar School at Forts Riley and Bragg to attend specialized courses at the Civil Affairs/Military Government (CA/MG) School, Georgetown University, and the U.S. State Department. In October 1951, CPTs Robert Asti and Charles W. Stockwell received orders to Student Detachment, Military District of Washington, D.C. for a six-month temporary duty (TDY) assignment with the International Broadcasting Division, Department of State.<sup>45</sup> There they received training by the *Voice of America*. LTC Weaver regretted losing Asti even for six months, writing: "Without the obvious advantages both to you personally and ultimately to the School inherent in your new assignment, I would never have agreed to your release from this staff."<sup>46</sup>



Four Psywar officers were scheduled to finish the internship at the State Department in May 1952, although their performance earned praise even before completion. In March, Charles P. Arnot, Acting Assistant Administrator for the State Department's Press Service, wrote a letter to OCPW thanking BG McClure for "the good services rendered to our organization by five officers of your command": CPTs Robert Asti, James S. Mize (who was not technically on orders), Cono N. Carrano, and LTs Eugene Rittenburg and Charles Thodt.<sup>47</sup> BG McClure told CPT Asti, "It gives me pleasure to transmit to you [Arnot's letter] for the very fine programs on Psychological Warfare as practiced by the Army, which you have presented to personnel of the Department of State. I have heard only good reports of your activities during your period of on-the-job training. I would like to add my congratulations on your outstanding performance." McClure then ensured that the two commendations entered Asti's official 201 (personnel) file.<sup>48</sup>

Arnot's letter influenced the general's decision to transfer CPT Asti to the Training Branch, OCPW, rather than have him return to the AGS as per the prior agreement between OCPW, the Army Field Forces, and LTC Weaver. Weaver, still the PWD Chief at Fort Riley, protested to McClure and reminded him that 1LT Frederick C. Schnurr had returned from the CA/MG School and CPT James S. Mize had returned from Georgetown University. In the process of moving the Psywar School to Fort Bragg as part of the new Psychological Warfare Center, Weaver argued that "the problem is real, and unless corrective action is taken [to return CPT Asti to the school], it will place us in a most embarrassing position." He requested that Asti "be ordered to join our advance party at Fort Bragg immediately upon completing his present tour of duty with the State Department."<sup>49</sup> Weaver's request was approved, and on 16 May 1952 CPT Asti received orders to report to the Third Army's 3240th ASU, Psychological Warfare Center, Fort Bragg, North Carolina no later than 4 June 1952.<sup>50</sup>

In 1950-1951, COL Donald F. Hall, LTC John O. Weaver, CPTs Robert Asti and Richard E. Palmer, 1LT Frederick C. Schnurr, PFC David E. Lilienthal, Jr., and a few other officers and enlisted personnel helped BG McClure to rebuild the U.S. Army's Psywar capability. McClure had made substantial progress in each of his three main objectives. First, in January 1951 the Army established the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare at the Pentagon. Second, by April 1951, Army Field Forces had approved the activation of five tactical and strategic Psywar units based on existing T/O&Es and T/Ds. Between 1950 and 1952, the AGS housed a PWD and School for Psywar Officers and Noncommissioned Officers. Third, by late-1951 four Psywar units were forward deployed: EUCOM and Seventh U.S. Army in Germany had the 301st RB&L Group and the 5th L&L Company, respectively, EUSA had the 1st L&L, and FECOM had the 1st RB&L.

Despite these successes, McClure still faced challenges. Personnel rotations, particularly in the RB&Ls due to their status as T/D units, hindered continuity and

cohesion. Staffing between the Psywar branches and units shifted frequently because of current mission requirements. And testing, analysis, selection, purchasing, and fielding of new equipment and supplies took time. But by late-1951, the state of U.S. Army Psywar had improved dramatically from what it had been prior to September 1950. ▲

*The author wishes to thank David E. Lilienthal, Jr., and Russell and William Asti, sons of CPT Robert Asti, for allowing access to their father's documents and photos.*

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## Endnotes

- "Psychological Warfare," *Army Navy Air Force Journal* (14 October 1950), Robert Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- Robert A. McClure, "Trends in Army Psychological Warfare," *Army Information Digest* (February 1952), 11.
- War Department, Table of Organization and Equipment No. 30-47, 22 June 1944.
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- Special Order #5, Headquarters, 337th Military Intelligence Battalion, 31 August 1950, cited in *Psyche*, a publication of the 301st RB&L Group, 1-2, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- Robert M. Zweck, Broadcasting Company, 301st RB&L Group, interview by Jared Tracy, 20 December 2010, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- Special Order #181, Headquarters, 1242nd Army Service Unit, 21 December 1948, cited in *Psyche*, 2, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- Peter Hellman, *Shaping the Skyline* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 66.
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- Historical Data Card, 301st RB&L Group, provided by the U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH). *Tables of Distribution (T/D) 250-1201, 250-1202, and 250-1203 outlined the three companies of the RB&L.*

- 14 The Company Headquarters performed the unit's administrative and logistical functions. The Publications Platoon was organized into a platoon headquarters, a Camera and Plate Section, a Press Section, and a Processing Section; the Propaganda Platoon contained an Operations and Intelligence Section and Propaganda Section; and the Loudspeaker Platoon consisted of a platoon headquarters and three loudspeaker sections. Table of Organization and Equipment (T/O&E) 20-77, 1 September 1950.
- 15 The 301st absorbed personnel from the 1588th Psychological Warfare Battalion (Training) and the 406th MRBC. Special Order #24, Headquarters, 300th Signal Service Group, 8 October 1950; *Psyche*, 2; Robert W. Jones, Jr. and Charles H. Briscoe, "The 'Proper Ganders' 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group: Strategic Psywar in Korea, 1951-1954," *Veritas: Journal of Army Special Operations History*, PB 31-05-2 Vol. 7, No. 1 (2011).
- 16 Allied Force Headquarters, *Psychological Warfare in the Mediterranean Theater: A report to the War Department of the part played by the United States Army in the development of Psychological Warfare organization, policy and operational technique in the North African, Sicilian, Italian and Southern France Campaigns*, 31 August 1945, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC), Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- 17 135th Infantry Regimental History for period 15 May 1943 to 31 October 1943, [http://www.34infdiv.org/history/135inf\\_gs4309.pdf](http://www.34infdiv.org/history/135inf_gs4309.pdf) (accessed 9 August 2011); Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 93.
- 18 LTC Neil M. Matzger to Commandant, Army General School, "Program of Psychological Warfare Training," 12 September 1950, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 19 LTC Neil M. Matzger to Commandant, Army General School, "Psychological Warfare Doctrine Development and Instruction," 26 October 1950, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 20 Special Order #24, Headquarters, Fourth Army, 21 October 1950, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 21 Paddock, *U.S. Army Special Warfare*, 93. Established in December 1949, the Army General School was previously known as the Ground General School. MG John T. Lewis and MG Lester J. Whitlock were the commandants of the school during the transition (March 1948-September 1950 and October 1950-November 1951, respectively). "Commandants, the Cavalry School, Fort Riley, Kansas, Since 1888," "The Cavalry School (3), Maps/Official Documents (3)" folder, Box SD 126 (2&3), Fort Riley Cavalry Museum Archives; David E. Lilienthal, Jr., 5th Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, emails to Jared Tracy, 16 and 17 March 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 22 Keving Trostle, *A Brief History of Gettysburg: WWII and the Modern Era: 1941 to the Present*, [http://www.kevingtrostle.com/WW\\_II\\_AND\\_THE\\_MODERN\\_ERA.html](http://www.kevingtrostle.com/WW_II_AND_THE_MODERN_ERA.html) (accessed 10 August 2011).
- 23 David E. Lilienthal, Jr., 5th Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, email to Jared Tracy, 18 March 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 24 Lilienthal email to Tracy, 18 March 2011.
- 25 Army General School, Lesson #PW-118-S-51, "Field Operational Units," in Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 26 "Psychological Warfare," *Army Navy Air Force Journal* (14 October 1950).
- 27 Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, *Notes for Army Research and Development Board Briefing* (6 January 1953), 1, Notes for Army Research and Development Board Briefing folder, and Psychological Warfare School, *National Organization for Psychological Warfare*, Psychological Warfare School Student Summaries, Folder "1953," Box "Avedon, General PSYOP, 1952-1953," USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; J. Lawton Collins, Chief of Staff, United States Army, Special Regulation No. 10, *Organization and Functions, Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, Special Staff* (Washington, D.C.: April 1951), 2. Sections 101 and 201 of the Army Organization Act of 1950 provided the statutory authority for the OCPW.
- 28 The OCPW mission was to develop studies and conduct planning for psychological warfare at the Department of the Army level; prescribe policies (training and organization) for Psywar staffs and units; provide intelligence for units and evaluate U.S. and enemy propaganda; advise commanders on "the utilization of facilities and techniques for mass media communication"; handle research and development; coordinate with theater commands regarding strategic Psywar; advise the U.S. Army Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army on technical matters and overseas Psywar activities. The Psychological Warfare School, Fort Bragg, *Special Orientation Text, Psychological Warfare Operations* (1952), 3-4, USAHEC, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, hereafter cited as Psywar School, *Special Orientation Text*; "General Hickey to Retire After 35 Years in the Army," *New York Times*, 27 March 1953, 7.
- 29 Psywar School, *Special Orientation Text*, 3-4.
- 30 Cochran to Asti, 27 February 1952, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 31 Memorandum from the Office of the Chief of Army Field Forces to the Commandant, Army General School, "Psychological Warfare Doctrine Development and Instruction," 26 October 1950, Robert Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 32 "Psychological Warfare," *Army Navy Air Force Journal* (14 October 1950).
- 33 OCPW, *Notes for Army Research and Development Board Briefing*, 6-7. Between 1950 and January 1953 field tested equipment included the 5-kilowatt mobile, medium wave radio broadcasting set, AN-MRT-5, used by the 1st RB&L Group in Korea; an all wave, mobile radio set, AN/MRR-4, also used by the RB&L in Korea; a prototype mobile printer, capable of printing twenty-four million 5/4" x 8" leaflets per month; a hand-carried, battery operated public address set, AN/UIH-1, which had been field tested in Korea and evaluated by the Psywar Board, Psywar Center, Fort Bragg; prototype models of a 105 mm leaflet shell, 4.5" leaflet rocket; and a 500-watt public address set, AN-UIP-1.
- 34 LTC John O. Weaver to "All Personnel," Psywar Division, 17 April 1951, and LTC John O. Weaver, "Assignment of Faculty Advisor," 14 May 1951, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. In addition to being Senior Instructor, CPT Asti was the faculty advisor for CPT Herbert Avedon, First Lieutenant (1LT) Robert H. Barnaby, and Second Lieutenants (2LT) John R. Blewer, William H. Booth, Jack F. Brembeck, William J. Brennan, William F. Brown II, and David O. Cochran.
- 35 Headquarters, Student Regiment, Army General School, 5021st ASU, "Roster of officers to attend Psychological Warfare Officers Course #1," 10 May 1951, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 36 Undated newspaper clipping, "First Class In Psychological Warfare Opens at Fort Riley," Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 37 CPT Robert Asti, Senior Instructor and Editor, *Original and First Edition of Psychological Warfare Officers' Course*, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Army General School, *Student Handbook* (June 1951), 20, USAHEC, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- 38 Psywar Class Song, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 39 Headquarters, Student Regiment, Army General School, 5021st ASU, "Roster of officers to attend Psychological Warfare Officers Course #1," 10 May 1951; "Army General School Graduates 1st Psychological War Class in U.S. History," Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 40 Post-graduation Reception Invitation, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 41 Charles H. Briscoe, "A Clearer View of Psywar at Fort Riley & Fort Bragg, 1951-1952," *Veritas: Journal of Army Special Operations History*, PB 31-05-2 Vol. 5, No. 2 (2009), 62.
- 42 As early as January 1952, the staff at the Army General School and within the OCPW began preparations to move the course to Fort Bragg. The program had expanded to twelve weeks (528). Army General School, *Student Handbook* (June 1951), 8; Psychological Warfare School, "Program of Instruction for Psychological Warfare Officer Course (MOS 9305)," January 1952, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 43 Army General School, *Student Handbook* (June 1951), 20, USAHEC, Carlisle, Pennsylvania; *Psyche*, 8, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 44 McClure, "Trends in Army Psychological Warfare," 13.
- 45 Office of the Adjutant General thru Commandant, Army General School to CPT Robert Asti, 9 October 1951, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Office of the Adjutant General thru Commanding General, Military District Washington to CPTs Asti and Stockwell, 30 October 1951, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 46 LTC Weaver to CPT Asti, 8 October 1951, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 47 Arnot to McClure, 25 March 1952, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 48 Commendation, McClure to Asti, 31 March 1952, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 49 Weaver to McClure, 18 April 1952, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 50 Special Orders #99, Department of the Army, 16 May 1952, Asti Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.

Leaflets dropped by the Allies on German soldiers in Bitburg, Germany. Tactical and strategic Psywar operations provided the points of reference when the U.S. Army rebuilt its Psywar capability in the early-1950s.