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“Ready”

THE U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE, 1960–1964

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Abstract: In the years following the Korean War, the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve devolved into an era of neglect and ambivalence after its chaotic mobilization in 1950 and subsequent uncertain role in President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s “New Look” military. However, in 1960, two Marine Reserve directors and a cohort of reform-minded mid-grade officers began a movement to revitalize the Reserve into a combat-ready organization able to assist the nation in any upcoming crisis. Primarily using articles in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, these officers initiated a campaign within the Reserves to prioritize combat readiness by focusing on better training, improving recruiting and retention, working with the active component and fostering better relations with civilian communities. By 1964, this effort of professional discourse and reform had revitalized the Marine Reserves into a reliable and competent fighting unit finally poised to fulfill their mission of operational readiness for the Corps and the Department of Defense.

Keywords: Marine Corps Reserve, ready Reserve, readiness, reform

During the first half of the twentieth century, the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve earned a reputation for combat effectiveness equal to their counterparts in the active duty forces. During the two world wars and the Korean War, Marine Reserve forces answered the call for mobilization and served with distinction in each of the conflicts. But by the 1960s, shifts in America’s defense strategy forced the Reserves to reevaluate both their organization and place in the national security structure. President John F. Kennedy’s policy of “flexible response” against communism called for a substantial peacetime military force capable of speedy mobilization and deployment. The United States could not assume it would have the extended time to build up to a full mobilization as it had during the world wars. The Marine Reserve articulated its response to this new initiative by engaging

in intellectual discourse in professional journals, most specifically the *Marine Corps Gazette*, about the need to prepare the Reserve forces during the early years of the 1960s. From 1953 to 1959, the *Gazette* had only published five articles pertaining to Reserve issues. However, between 1960 and 1964, Marine officers authored 85 articles and opinion pieces in the journal focusing exclusively on the training and preparation of the Marine Reserve for the next major conflict. Although the *Gazette* had historically given most of its time to the active duty component, it had now become a forum for reservists to make their case for becoming a viable part of the Corps and Department of Defense’s plan for national readiness.

The inspiration for this reform to the Marine Reserve was prompted by the experience of the Korean War mobilization a decade prior. The invasion of North Korean forces across the 38th parallel on 25 June 1950 caught both the active and Reserve components of the Marine Corps both undermanned and unprepared to mobilize in response. Active duty numbers had dropped to below 75,000, with only a fraction of

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those Marines ready for a combat deployment. Since General Douglas MacArthur had demanded a full Marine division as part of his planned amphibious landing at Inchon, Marine leadership had to hastily draw from the Reserves to meet the manpower needs of the operation. However, the Organized Reserve (drilling units) were also woefully under strength at less than 40,000, which forced the activation of members from the Volunteer Reserve to meet the manning requirement (more than 20,000 by October).¹ These Marines were not in drilling status and were part of the civilian workforce (equivalent to the Inactive Ready Reserve today), only having their names on a roster for national emergencies. By early August, thousands of reservists poured into Camp Pendleton, California, creating an administrative and logistical nightmare for commanders who had to both organize and ready for combat this ad hoc group, some of whom had little or no formal training.²

In spite of the chaos of the mobilization, the 1st Marine Division, which took part in Operation Chromite, consisted of 20 percent reservists.³ The Marine Corps, however, would continue to rely heavily on its Reserve forces for the remainder of the Korean conflict to supplement the undersized active force. From 1951 to 1953, the total numbers of both the ground and aviation components were comprised of between one-third and one-half mobilized reservists.⁴ Once the conflict ended, the Marine Reserve found itself lodged in an institutional and organizational quagmire. While reservists had distinguished themselves in combat during the Korean conflict, their experience exposed the fragility of the broader Reserve structure. The overwhelming numbers of World War II veterans that filled the ranks of these Reserve units and

individual replacements helped to disguise the overall unpreparedness of the organization. The director of the Marine Reserve, Brigadier General William W. Stickney, lamented in 1957 that “it was never considered until the Korean emergency vividly illustrated the cost to the nation of the lack of a military training system, in terms of human unfairness and military unpreparedness.”⁵ Realizing that reliance on inactive veterans would not solve the military’s manpower needs for the next conflict, the directors of the Marine Reserve of the late 1950s, Major Generals Stickney, Alan Shapley, and Thomas Ennis, took the lessons learned from Korea and focused on a new training initiative for Reserve forces to ensure the same mistake would not happen again.

The path to reform post-Korea Marine Reserves was daunting. While both the Department of Defense and the Marine Corps made vociferous mandates to maintain a viable and ready Reserve force, the budget restrictions of the mid-1950s drastically inhibited this effort. Historian William P. McCahill notes that during this era the demands “to reduce operating costs” for Reserve units caused numerous “problems with maintaining readiness.”⁶ The cutbacks in funding and recuperation from wartime deployments demanded a mass reorganization of units and notable downsizing of infrastructure. The high turnover of personnel prompted by a sizable postwar exodus of combat veterans left many rosters undermanned. Units also struggled with growing numbers of nonparticipating members in the Organized Reserve as attendance for monthly drills and annual training became increasingly inconsistent.

However, Congress did pass the Reserve Forces Act of 1955, which doubled the size of the National Ready Reserve from 1.5 million to 2.9 million and gave the president authority to mobilize 1 million Ready Reserves in times of national emergency. The legislation also revamped various manpower policies for better accession and training of Reserve Forces. The act allowed draftees the option of serving six years in

¹ William P. McCahill, ed., *The Marine Corps Reserve: A History* (Washington, DC: Division of Reserve, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1966), 168.

² Bradford Wineman, “Force in Not So Readiness: The Mobilization of the Marine Reserve during the Korean War,” *Leatherneck* 99 (September 2016), 16–20.

³ Forrest L. Marion and Jon T. Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force: The Evolution of the Guard and Reserve* (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2018), 39.

⁴ Ernest H. Giusti, *Mobilization of the Marine Corps Reserve in the Korean Conflict, 1950–1951* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1967), 18–26.

⁵ BGen W. W. Stickney, “The Marine Corps Reserve, Part 3,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 41, no. 12 (December 1957): 36.

⁶ McCahill, *The Marine Corps Reserve*, 183–84.

the Reserve instead of two years active duty and required reservists to receive active-duty basic training and attend 48 drills annually, as well as standardized requirements for Reserve officers.⁷ The directors of the Marine Reserve spent the remainder of the decade using these changes as the framework for their overall reform efforts, hoping their implementation would resolve their distressing manpower issues.

This implementation, left to the individual Services to execute, remained slow and uneven during the remainder of the decade, extending the malaise and discontent in the Marine Reserve. This insouciance toward the Reserve's mission and training was most notably reflected in the minimal attention given to Reserve issues in the Marines' professional journal, the *Marine Corps Gazette*. Major General Stickney provided the only input on Reserve topics in the *Gazette* between 1955 and 1960 in a four-part series examining the Marine Reserve's history in 1957–58. In his final article, Stickney summarized his historical narrative with an impassioned call for greater investment in Reserve forces, particularly in the face of active-duty downsizing of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "New Look" reforms. He insisted that for every reduction in Marine active forces, "we must have really well-trained and combat ready reserves to fill the breach."⁸ There had to be collective action from within the Reserve force to make this happen.

Although the Reserve directors acknowledged the need for reforms in the late 1950s, it was not until 1960 that this need captured the attention of a wider audience within the Corps. In fact, 1 January of that year marked not only a new decade but also new initiative for the Reserve with the appointment of a new director, Brigadier General William T. Fairbourn. He wasted little time in expressing his intentions. Under his direction, the January issue of the *Gazette* included the first in a monthly column called The Marine Reserve in which Fairbourn gave a one-page summary of the Reserve's progress in achieving operational readi-

ness.⁹ Not coincidentally, the corollary article series "Report from the Ready Forces" featured the Volunteer Reserve as the first Marine unit examined before all active-duty divisions and air wings, demonstrating the importance of the Reserve's place in the grand mobilization plan.¹⁰ Fairbourn used the *Gazette* to make his training directive clear and explicit to all Marine readers. In his first Marine Reserve column, he quoted Commandant David M. Shoup—"Never before has our dependence upon the reserves been so great"—as a mandate not only to compel these organizational changes but to make the entire military community aware of the Reserve's progress.¹¹

Eager to commence his readiness campaign, Fairbourn set out to revamp his force's training methods to best fit this emphasis on combat preparedness. Through the *Gazette*, both the Volunteer and Organized Reserve became the topics of numerous suggestions and innovations from enthusiastic officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) wanting to remedy the post-Korean War stagnation in the Reserve system.¹² These articles reflected the transition from simply planning and legislation to definitive action in improving the Reserve's operational readiness. Fairbourn examined all of the "trouble areas" in need of attention and narrowed his focus to three key reforms to enhance the Organized Reserve: the Six-Month

⁹ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 3 (March 1960): 49. The column's title changed to Marine Corps Reserve in 1961.

¹⁰ Maj M. D. Cooke, "Report from the Ready Forces: The Volunteer Reserve—Part One, Training for M-Day," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 1 (January 1960): 36–38, hereafter "Training for M-Day."

¹¹ Fairbourn, The Marine Reserve, March 1960, 49.

¹² *Semiannual Report of the Secretary of the Navy and the Semiannual Reports of the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of the Air Force, July 1 to December 31* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 1956), 180–81. The Marine Corps Reserve during this time was composed of two training categories: Volunteer and Organized. The Volunteer Reserve (a.k.a. Class III) was largely made up of former active duty personnel available for mobilization who served without pay. Their units, Volunteer Training Units (VTUs) provided training at a minimum expense for those unable to join the Organized unit. The Organized Reserve (Class II) attended paid monthly drills and were supposed to function as normal combat units. Mobilization organization designations overlapped these two categories. The Ready Reserve included reservists to be called in the first six months of a general mobilization. All those left over constituted the Standby Reserve, which was unlimited in size. Confusingly, the Volunteer Reserve consisted of a portion of the Ready Reserve and the entire Standby Reserve.

⁷ Reserve Forces Act of 1955, Pub. L. No. 84-305 (1955).

⁸ BGen W. W. Stickney, "The Marine Corps Reserve, Part 4," *Marine Corps Gazette* 42, no. 1 (January 1958): 47.

Training Program, creation of smaller units, and the implementation of the “multiple drill” schedule.¹³

Even though the Marine Reserve had existed for nearly half a century, it still had no organized system for bringing new, nonveteran recruits into Reserve units. A remedy to this problem, inspired by the post-Korea downsizing, came in the form of the Six-Month Training Program created by the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1955. As stipulated in the legislation, the program required all newly enlisted reservists to perform the first six months of their contract on active duty to complete basic, combat, and occupational training. After this, these Marines were contracted for five and a half years of obligatory service on Reserve status. Trainees would participate in the same recruit programs as their active counterparts to create a uniform standard of training and professionalism. The program also allowed Reserve units to dedicate more time to training at higher operational levels and to spend less time on bringing trainees up to the minimum level. Fairbourn reassured skeptics that “our Reserve units are constantly growing in stature and purpose—and our Six-Month trainees are growing right along with their units.”¹⁴ Once these trainees proved their competence and ability in their Reserve units, commanders could focus on broader training goals.

Again, learning from the lessons of Korea, Fairbourn reinforced the need for a large number of small units rather than a handful of large ones. Small unit structure allowed for less complicated mobilization procedures and made it possible to give more personal attention to the fundamental details of military training. To make this happen, several units had to be either trimmed down or refitted. Between 1960 and 1962, Fairbourn reorganized or redesignated more than one-half of the Reserve’s 218 ground units to better prepare them for entering combat alongside the

active units in the next conflict. Unit location proved just as key to the reorganization process, as reformers suggested the need to consider home armory locations in the readiness equation. Captain Leon Dure III’s May 1960 article “Reserve Regiments” proposed a geographic reorganization of Ready Reserve divisions to better utilize command, communications, and training assets in each region. This would allow for a reduction in surplus staffs and eliminate the need for larger, self-supporting units through the sharing of resources.¹⁵ Once these units enacted these reconfigurations, Commandant Shoup praised the reorganization process of the Reserve in his 1962 annual message and lauded the movement’s contribution toward mobilization readiness by pledging, “We will continue to reorient and to streamline our organizational structure and to update our equipment for Reserve units.”¹⁶

The Volunteer Reserve also instituted several other structural changes that better incorporated its forces into the larger mission to combat readiness. In April 1959, director of Marine Reserve Major General Alan Shapley convened a board to improve the Volunteer Reserve, specifically the Volunteer Training Units (VTUs). The board initiated the first major effort to improve the readiness of VTUs since their creation. Their recommendations included a requirement for attending 24 drills per year, placing all members of the VTUs into the Ready Reserve, and ensuring that each individual unit selected a specialty in which to train. *Gazette* articles examining the readiness of the Volunteer Reserve also suggested a more thorough screening of personnel to elicit maximum mobilization potential for all members and enforcing mandatory participation for all Marines enlisted in volunteer units.¹⁷ The board’s analysis of the Volunteer Reserve’s combat readiness confidently predicted that their force would soon “take its place shoulder-to-shoulder with

¹³ Fairbourn, *The Marine Reserve*, March 1960, 49.

¹⁴ Fairbourn, *The Marine Reserve*, March 1960, 49; and Maj T. Owens and Capt J. A. Everett, “Report from the Ready Forces: The Organized Reserve—Part One, Combat Readiness,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 10 (October 1960): 40–42. Owens and Everett claimed there were skeptics of the Six-Month Program, but who those skeptics were and over what remains unclear.

¹⁵ Capt L. Dure III, “Reserve Regiments,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 5 (May 1960): 48.

¹⁶ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, *Marine Corps Reserve*, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 1 (January 1962): 58.

¹⁷ Cooke, “Training for M-Day,” 38; BGen W. T. Fairbourn, *Marine Corps Reserve*, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 7 (July 1962): 51; and BGen W. T. Fairbourn, *Marine Corps Reserve*, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 10 (October 1961): 14.

the Organized Reserve in the mobilization readiness picture.”¹⁸

Fairbourn’s reorganization plan took its next step in 1962 with the creation of an entire ground unit and air wing made solely of Reserve forces: the 4th Marine Division and 4th Marine Aircraft Wing. Functioning as its own consolidated division and air wing, Reserve forces could now train in conjunction with active duty units and also be deployed in similar fashion.¹⁹ With major organizational changes completed by the summer of 1962, Marine Reserve commanders focused their efforts on the more complex challenges of training, personnel, morale, and the formation of a mobilization standard operating procedure (SOP).

The completion of Reserve unit restructuring and reorganization allowed commanders to turn their attention toward creating a more solidified training agenda. Senior officers remained in agreement that the “first priority in Reserve training goes to M-Day—nationwide mobilization for all-out war.”²⁰ The catchphrase “M-Day” routinely emerged in the journal articles during this period and succeeded in giving commanders a definitive goal to target their training. Their preparation also centered on studying the Reserve activation in the Korean War as the definitive case study. Determined not to repeat the same errors made in 1950–51, Commandant Shoup’s 1962 annual message highlighted “readiness as a keynote” and outlined his intention to ensure that the Reserve’s “new streamlined organization (was) capable of immediate mount-out in event of mobilization.”²¹ Contributors

to the *Gazette* took on this challenge and addressed a wide range of topics that had to be considered by all Marine reservists in anticipation of being recalled for another war and often went beyond simply ensuring readiness for combat.

To resolve the administrative complications inherent to the short notice of a national emergency mobilization, Fairbourn initiated a program to issue advance mobilization orders for Reserve officers in the fall of 1960. Advanced orders eliminated the potential backlog due to postal services if orders had been mailed out during a general mobilization and also avoided delays in releasing orders in the event of an attack on the United States. Officers who received these advance orders now knew ahead of time if they would be called during the first month of the general mobilization and could prepare for an immediate departure. Fairbourn’s October 1960 column published a facsimile of the new Mobilization Orders Card, perforated in the middle so half could be signed and returned to the commander of Marine Training Reserve by the Reserve officer and the other half would be retained at all times as his checklist of where to report and his new billet.²² By February 1962, Fairbourn issued these advanced “hip pocket” orders to enlisted personnel as well. Again, he touted the advantages of how the advance notice would allow Marines “time for wrapping up loose ends” and would minimize the overall administrative “confusion and cacophony.”²³

The training emphasis of mobilization placed a greater responsibility on the individual Marine. Captain Carl R. Venditto challenged his reservist readers to think seriously about their plan of action in case of mobilization. Using the same tactics as the Commandant and Reserve directors, Venditto composed an article focusing on “recall horror stories” from Korea involving reservists shipping off immediately after their honeymoons or in the middle of college semesters. He hoped cautionary tales such as these would motivate reservists to think about such preparatory

¹⁸ Capt F. M. Nelson and Capt J. A. Everett, “Report from the Ready Forces—Part Two: Programs to Improve Readiness,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 1 (January 1960): 42.

¹⁹ *U.S. Marine Corps Reserve: The First 50 Years* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 1966), 30–31.

²⁰ “Reserve Officers—The New Picture,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 3 (March 1961): 3.

²¹ Fairbourn, “The Marine Reserve,” January 1962, 58. While the Marine Reserve served with distinction in Korea, a growing number of officers in Marine Corps Headquarters considered the mobilization process far from successful. The most blatant shortcoming was the individual reservists’ unpreparedness for deployment. The Marine Corps Reserve’s official history noted that “the call-up had created a measure of resentment” among organized and retired reservists who were caught off-guard by the mobilization. The enormity and quickness of the call-up also found the administrative and logistics of Reserve units unprepared as well. See *U.S. Marine Corps Reserve*, 181.

²² BGen W. T. Fairbourn, “The Marine Reserve,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 10 (October 1960): 36.

²³ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, “The Marine Reserve,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 2 (February 1962): 58.

necessities as will writing, life insurance, bill payment and the like. His suggestions also included such practical measures as carrying a wallet-size checklist covering all of the necessary items to consider in the event of a mobilization.²⁴ This demand for individual readiness in the event of a major conflict transcended the differences between active duty and Reserve Marines. Letters from regular unit commanders, such as Major Robert E. Barde of the 1st Marine Division, praised Venditto's advice stating, "Every troop leader should become familiar with the contents of this article."²⁵

Columns in the *Marine Corps Association Newsletter* also examined Reserve mobilization but within a broader context and used more recent examples to urge flexibility. Several newsletter articles in 1962 translated the new Reserve mobilization SOP in plain terms for its readers, explaining the specifics of which Class II and III units would go where and when. They frequently referenced President John F. Kennedy's call for the Reserve during the 1961 Berlin Crisis and repeatedly warned of the possibilities of "a limited war like Korea," or a "Korean type call up" to keep reserves prepared for a "partial mobilization."²⁶ Reserve battalions, particularly in the Class III Reserve, continued to update their rosters to screen out those not attending drill and those who were physically unqualified (another reaction to problems with the Korean War recall). The Department of Defense then took advantage of those Marines dropped from rosters by giving them assignments to local, state, and national civil defense programs. This plan allowed standby and retired reservists to still contribute to national defense in time of war without being mobilized. This preparation was also reflected logically as Brigadier General Ronald R. Van Stockum noted that the Marine Reserve modern-

ized its procurement system to ensure Reserve units would be issued the exact equipment as their active counterparts. By 1964, the Reserve director argued to high-level Marine leaders that the Reserve's logistical system was so sound that it could prevent equipment combat losses in whatever situation for which they were deployed.²⁷

With the improvement of unit organization and Reserve recruit training, reformers turned their attention to the methodology of home armory training and its execution. Prior to 1959, many Reserve units treated drills apathetically, more often meeting one evening a month for rudimentary classroom instruction and multiple coffee breaks. Headquarters had encouraged the practice of multiple drills (i.e., single drills back to back for longer training) but Lieutenant Colonel Cecil E. Moore noted that such "pressure was oral and unofficial."²⁸ Moore emphasized the need for mandatory multiple drills to create more opportunities for field training instead of armory instruction. "Multiple drills," he added, "also give troops the feeling of being full-time members of the team—not bench sitters."²⁹ Once-a-month drills also took advantage of better-trained junior Marines (Six-Month Training Program) and better-organized ground units to create more realistic combat training exercises.

Many Reserve officers embraced the new emphasis on back-to-back drills as the key to developing the combat readiness of their units. The *Gazette* published a number of articles targeted at mid-grade officers to encourage more productive drill weekend operations. Similar articles written by operation officers Lieutenant Colonel Moore and Major Paul E. Godfrey provided unit commanders and training staffs with step-by-step directions on planning a highly effective field training exercise. Moore acknowledged the overwhelming challenges in planning due to the newness of the weekend drill concept and lack of experience of all of those involved. However, he viewed these is-

²⁴ Capt Carl R. Venditto, "Recall and You," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 9 (September 1962): 43–47. This article was subtitled, "Nuts and Bolts Advice on What to Do before You're Called to Go to War. Though Written for the Reserves, It's What All Marines (and Their Wives) Need to Know."

²⁵ Maj R. E. Barde, letter to the editor, "In the Money," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 12 (December 1962): 8.

²⁶ "Recall and You," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 10 (October 1962): 1; "Mobilization Plan," *Marine Corps Association Newsletter* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 7; and "Reserve Strength," *Marine Corps Association Newsletter* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 7.

²⁷ BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "Reserve Report," *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 3 (March 1964): 51.

²⁸ LtCol C. E. Moore, "Better Reserve Training," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 4 (April 1960): 51.

²⁹ Moore, "Better Reserve Training," 51.

sues with organizing personnel, logistics, and equipment as “objectives, not problems.”³⁰ Godfrey’s article described the more ambitious side of Reserve training by explaining how to plan a combined Reserve exercise comprising multiple air and ground units during one weekend drill, using his own experiences as examples. Both Marines stressed identical key issues in their how-to approach toward commanders: detailed early planning, increased information flow between units and within units, sound logistics and communication coordination, and a system of valuation and critique. While their articles focused on the minuscule details of arranging a short field exercise, they also kept their higher mission in mind, agreeing that “mobilization readiness has been achieved through greater emphasis on unit and individual training.”³¹

Fairbourn hoped to leave as one of his many legacies to change the paradigm of “home armory” drills into a more productive concept. He aspired to have every unit participate in the most realistic training possible during their drill weekends. His columns explained how units worked in a diverse array of climates and traveled great distances to “get to the geography in which they were likely to fight” on their field exercise. He applauded commanders for creating training operations where the troops could get dirty in combat-like situations.³² Similar articles describing Reserve units training in snow, bayous, deserts, and the black of night appeared more frequently in the pages of the *Gazette* after 1960. Fairbourn also commended commanders’ efforts to train with units from other Services, particularly the Air Force and Naval Reserve forces, as a way to initiate Joint Service amphibious landing operations with close air support. Fairbourn’s staff also kept a close eye on the training of Class III (Volunteer) units and their mobilization preparation. While not physically going on field operations, VTUs supported both active duty and Organized Reserve units by performing administrative

tasks, conducting classes and workshops, organizing the larger combat exercises, and participating in the Secretary of the Navy’s Reserve Policy Board. In fall 1961, after President Kennedy addressed the nation on the current situation with the Berlin Crisis, thousands of active and retired reservists contacted Marine Reserve Headquarters to volunteer their services. Regardless of their active or inactive status, Fairbourn celebrated their enthusiastic commitment by boasting, “Our reservists know what is expected of them and will act accordingly.”³³

Suggestions on improving the Reserve’s two-week annual training (AT) naturally complemented the efforts to create better home armory training in the journals. Both Reserve directors Fairbourn and Van Stockum emphasized the need for Reserve units to participate in the most realistic combat training exercises available for their summer ATs. Van Stockum pressed particularly hard for this goal by dedicating the majority of his Marine Corps Reserve column summaries to the upcoming AT operations in late 1962 and in early 1963. He emphasized the necessity of getting the maximum amount of training out of AT within the restrictions of the limited amount of time available. He also expressed that AT provided an opportunity for individual Marines to apply the benefits from the hard work they had put into their weekend drills. “If reservists are to pass the test of annual field training this summer, they must learn something new and apply what they already know,” he stated, “they must utilize every moment of training time available, but mobilization readiness constantly in mind.”³⁴ More importantly, he sought to build on the objectives set by his predecessor Fairbourn by encouraging more combined arms exercises as well as training involving both air and ground units. This emphasis on more combat-like training increased the number of reservists training with active-duty units at active duty installations.³⁵

³⁰ Moore, “Better Reserve Training,” 50–53; and Maj P. E. Godfrey, “Planning a Combined Reserve Exercise,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 8 (August 1961): 46–50.

³¹ Moore, “Better Reserve Training,” 52.

³² BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 3 (March 1962): 55.

³³ Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, October 1961, 14.

³⁴ BGen R. R. Van Stockum, “Stand by for Summer Training,” Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 6 (June 1963): 19.

³⁵ Van Stockum, “Stand by for Summer Training,” 19.

The trend of Joint active-reserve training began in the summer of 1960 when the Reserve Air Wing as Marine Helicopter Transport Squadron 767 (HMR-767), a reserve squadron from New Orleans, Louisiana, merged with regular squadron HMR-361 of Santa Ana, California, for a combined operation at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, California. Captain Maurice Dantin's article in the *Gazette* detailed the exercise. He concluded that if this experience was any indication, the Marine Corps should consider merging training for the entire Reserve program.³⁶ Cooperative training spread rapidly through the air wing as Reserve units increased their visits to active-duty air stations to take advantage of more realistic operations and to share the equipment, facilities, and gear they would need for mobilization. Fairbourn proposed similar opportunities for ground units by pushing the "host unit system," where an active-duty unit would invite a collection of Reserve units to its base to train side by side for their summer AT. Captain C. A. Boyd Jr.'s January 1960 article, "Mobilize and Mix," proposed a merger training program that had a Reserve unit perform a mock mobilization and active-duty facility for the first two days of their AT to accustom them to working with "unfamiliar" active-duty faces as they would during an actual mobilization.³⁷ Fairbourn celebrated these operations, stating that "someday, regulars and reservists may again fight it from the same foxhole. They need to be trained as a team."³⁸

Fairbourn's foxhole metaphor represented a parallel effort that accompanied the endorsements for more merger training. As this increased functional interaction between active and Reserve units reinforced one of the Reserve's institutional goals of mobilization readiness, Marines from both sides attempted to foster a better social relationship between the two organizations. While merger operations specifically targeted the practical need to provide more intense combat training for reservists, they also sought to in-

crease active-duty confidence in the Reserve program and erase the stereotype of the reservists as substandard, part-time combatants. Fairbourn repeatedly called for a "bond of mutual respect" and an "attitude of oneness" necessary for combat effectiveness of regulars and reservists. Reserve officers also appealed for a mutual understanding and encouraged their fellow active-duty Marines to familiarize themselves with all the Reserve training programs.³⁹ Even retired Reserve director Major General Stickney chided the active forces, and even civilians, for scorning reservists as "weekend warriors," "Thursday night soldiers," and "citizen Marines." The Reserve component of the Marine Corps, he argued, deserved only one moniker: "professional."⁴⁰ The increased number of Reserve articles in professional journals and the commonality of merger training fostered a new respect for the Reserve program as a viable fighting organization.

To promote professionalism and efficiency in Reserve units, the role of inspector-instructor (I-I) became paramount.⁴¹ Articles written by active-duty officers who recently left I-I duty imparted advice to those who would eventually begin their tour. Although most of the advice came in the form of "how to prepare and survive" manuals, these officers emphasized several themes relevant to enhancing Reserve unit performance, such as staff communication, recruiting, community service, and a cooperative relationship with a Reserve commanding officer.⁴² This last issue drew more attention to the issue when the *Gazette* published a letter from an outgoing officer to his incoming Reserve commanding officer that imparted a great deal of practical advice on how to get the most productivity from his troops, maintain

³⁶ Capt Maurice Dantin, "Merger Training for Air Reservists," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 5 (May 1961): 42-43.

³⁷ Capt C. A. Boyd Jr., "Mobilize and Mix," *Marine Corps Gazette* 44, no. 1 (January 1960): 65.

³⁸ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 6 (June 1961): 49.

³⁹ LtCol E. B. Dane Jr., "Regulars Owe It to Themselves," Know Your Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 7 (July 1963): 52.

⁴⁰ MajGen W. W. Stickney, "USMC . . . Amateur or Professional?," *Marine Corps Gazette* 42, no. 11 (November 1959): 12.

⁴¹ The I-I staff of a Marine Reserve unit consisted of active duty personnel who oversaw the day-to-day operation of the unit during the week and served as advisors to reservists during their weekend drill periods. The I-I staff usually comprised only 10 percent of a unit's T/O (total personnel).

⁴² Capt T. G. Davis, "Prepare for I-I," *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 44-47; Maj Stanley G. Tribe Jr., "I-I: Another Look," *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 9 (September 1964): 36-40; and Sgt W. S. Gilbert, "I & I Duty: A Challenge," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 4 (April 1961): 62.

solid communication with the Reserve and chain of command, and pursue the best methods to instruct reservists. The emphasis especially on the relationship between the Reserve and I-I commander was prompted by a professional debate that took place in the editorial pages of the *Gazette* in 1961, debating whether it was best for units to be commanded by an I-I or a Reserve commanding officer.⁴³ By the end of the discussion, contributors agreed that the Reserve commanders should command the unit and the I-I staff should provide support and cooperation. Director Fairbourn, however, called for a collective appreciation of the I-Is' tireless work by underlining the "20 different kinds of jobs" they needed to execute during a "55 hour work week."⁴⁴ The attention drawn to I-I staffs in the journals demonstrates the concerns with the guidance given to reservists and their preparation for the next war instead of using separate chains of command as an obstacle. Inspector-instructor and Reserve leadership would now work together toward providing the most effective training environment for their units.

Although the I-I provided guidance from active-duty experience, Reserve commanders worried about the need for the Reserve to develop its own core leadership—in particular competent NCOs and officers who could improve the execution of the readiness mission and handle the increased operations tempo. Fairbourn expressed his hopes in 1960 that the Six-Month Training Program, now past its infancy, could supply the Reserve with its own pool of NCOs. Yet, his successors Van Stockum and Brigadier General James L. Stewart still complained of a serious shortage of young company grade officers and experienced junior NCOs in nearly every Reserve unit. Van Stockum

fumed, "We need young officers to take over the future leadership of the reserves as well as experienced NCOs."⁴⁵ He dedicated three successive columns in the *Gazette* to stressing the junior leadership problem in the spring of 1963. His final installment recognized the "overpopulation" of qualified officers at higher levels of command because of the large input of lieutenants from World War II and Korea who had progressively been promoted.⁴⁶ Since the Six-Month Training Program could not produce leadership in large enough numbers, both Van Stockum and Stewart lobbied commanders in the active Fleet Marine Force to take responsibility for remedying the Reserve leadership vacuum. Officers and NCOs who had contemporaries leaving active duty, according to Stewart, "must not fail to make the necessary effort to ensure that we may continue to have fine, young junior officers and NCOs in the Reserve programs."⁴⁷

To bolster this campaign, Stewart focused his entire subsequent Reserve Report column in the *Gazette* on teaching how to convince "reluctant" Regulars to join the Organized Reserve.⁴⁸ His suggested selling points also appeared in previous journal issues in an attempt to accomplish the same task of making the Reserve a viable option for experienced Marines from the fleet. Several of the early Reserve Report columns explained the expanded retirement benefits now afforded to reservists with passage of the Reserve Officer Personnel Act (ROPA) of 1954, which allowed the time in Reserve service to accrue toward the standard retirement after 20 years. ROPA also expanded the grade distribution for officers and NCOs, offering a greater opportunity for Reserve promotions in various command billets. Much like in the fleet, the Reserve based its officer development on a career pattern, with opportunities for staff and command positions, higher education, and various duty assign-

⁴³ Col W. W. Barron, "CO I & I Setup: Anomaly or Good Sense?," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 8 (August 1961): 58–59; and Maj E. F. Penico, "One CO, One Staff—A Better Reserve," *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 8 (August 1961): 59. In this debate, Marines argued whether Reserve units should have an active duty commanding officer from the I-I staff instead of a Reserve officer. I-I commander advocates argued their system allowed for a greater continuity of command and offered more experience in key positions. Dual command supporters asserted that a Reserve commanding officer could relate better to his Reserve troops and still maintain the high standards of active duty professionalism.

⁴⁴ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 4 (April 1961): 57.

⁴⁵ BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "There's No Such Thing as an Ex-Marine," Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 3 (March 1963): 14.

⁴⁶ BGen R. R. Van Stockum, "No Room at the Top for Everyone," Reserve Report, *Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 5 (May 1963): 49.

⁴⁷ BGen J. L. Stewart, Reserve Report, *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 7 (July 1964): 55.

⁴⁸ BGen J. L. Stewart, Reserve Report, *Marine Corps Gazette* 48, no. 8 (August 1964): 26.

ments. Articles on mobilization stressed the growing cooperation of civilian employers toward supporting Reserve programs and even encouraging their workers to join. The broader goals of better training and raising the level of professionalism (examined monthly in the *Gazette*) also contributed to the recruiting effort. When all else failed, Van Stockum targeted their Service pride by referencing the institutional adage that “there is no such thing as an ex-Marine” in a Marine Corps Reserve column headline and if they did not want to “go regular,” they still could be part of the Marine “team” in the Reserve.⁴⁹

While commanders recruited heavily from those departing the active-duty ranks in search of experience and leadership, they also devoted attention to the development of their population of junior Marines from the Six-Month Training Program. Motivated by Van Stockum’s continual call for “more young blue blood” in the Organized Reserve, *Gazette* contributors endeavored to raise the quality of the individual Marine reservist, particularly the young enlisted personnel. They lobbied vocally for junior enlisted reservists to become more military occupational specialty-proficient and pursue more technical training. They encouraged administrative and command staffs to purge their rosters of “noncommitted” Marines with poor drill attendance and focus their energies on those motivated and dedicated to service in the Reserve. Unit leadership could now prioritize training to make their inexperienced junior reservists more capable, competent, and prepared. It did not take long before the high command began to take notice of the upgrade in personnel standards. Brigadier General Fairbourn marveled at the number of college graduates serving in the junior enlisted ranks of many urban units employing nontechnical military occupational specialties.⁵⁰ The Reserve Policy Board noted in the *DOD Annual Report* that thanks to the creation of the 4th Marine Division/Wing and commitment to better training, the Marine Reserves was for the first time ready to have units, rather than just individual

augmentees, and to be mobilized for active service to supplement active forces.”⁵¹

Public perception proved to be as vital an element of the Marine Reserve’s function as combat training and leadership skills. The articles advised that I-I staffers all place primary importance on establishing solid community relations. A high level of visibility within the local area bolstered the image of the Marine Corps overall but also raised civilian awareness of Reserve presence and purpose. A positive perception of the unit improved support from employers who employed reservists and served as an instrument of local recruitment for the Six-Month Training Program. Inspector-instructor members recruited potential Reserve officers leaving active duty by explaining how the unit “community connections” could aid them in finding a good job once they ended their active commissions.⁵² Reservists also committed themselves to productive public relations in their hometowns during their drill weekends. Various columns in the *Gazette* reported instances of units assisting with natural disaster relief, providing city security, or, in one case, helping a local law enforcement torch an illegal marijuana field.⁵³ The journal highlighted how reservists sought to gain as much understanding and support from the civilian population as from their active-duty counterparts. One I-I officer warned his future successors that “how you conduct yourself will have a definitive bearing on what the community thinks about the Marine Corps.”⁵⁴

By the fall of 1964, the attention given to the Reserve forces in the *Marine Corps Gazette* began to decline. The Reserve director’s column remained as a permanent feature of the journal, but nearly all discourse within the Marine Corps focused on the rapidly escalating conflict in Vietnam. Yet, the decrease in Reserve articles cannot be attributed solely to the

⁴⁹ Van Stockum, “There’s No Such Thing as an Ex-Marine,” 14.

⁵⁰ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 45, no. 11 (November 1961): 18.

⁵¹ *Annual Report of the Secretary of Defense and the Annual Reports of the Secretary of the Army, Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Air Force: Fiscal Year 1962* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1962), 60–61.

⁵² BGen R. R. Van Stockum, “Active Inactive Reservists Benefit Corps and Selves,” *Marine Corps Reserve, Marine Corps Gazette* 47, no. 4 (April 1963): 13.

⁵³ BGen W. T. Fairbourn, Marine Corps Reserve, *Marine Corps Gazette* 46, no. 6 (June 1962): 43.

⁵⁴ Davis, “Prepare for I-I,” 46.

widening of this war. Marine writers who dedicated four years of articles, columns, letters, and editorials had contributed to the successful mission of reforming the Reserve and bringing it to a higher state of combat readiness. The caliber of the 1964 Marine Reserve far exceeded the standards and efficiency of the previous decade and erased the stigma left after the Korean War. More importantly, the Reserve remained poised for mobilization during the short but crucial period that included the Berlin Crisis, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Dominican Republic uprising, and growing unrest in Southeast Asia. Historians such as

Allan R. Millett have confirmed the impact of these four years on revitalizing the Reserve, noting that “the reorganization improved the training and equipment’s status of Reserve units and have encouraged a sense of mission and *esprit* based on both professional and local pride.”⁵⁵ The movement to reorganize, reform, and reinvigorate the Marine Corps Reserve in the early 1960s, steered by Marines’ contributions to the professional journals, succeeded in bringing the Reserve to a level of combat effectiveness equal to the regular forces and proved itself as a key element of the Marine Corps’ force in readiness.

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⁵⁵ Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 552.