

INFANTRY

NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER CANDIDATE



COURSE

UNITED STATES ARMY INFANTRY SCHOOL

Fort Benning, Georgia



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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Infantry Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course is to fill the Army's critical shortage of junior NCO's with the best qualified and best trained men available.

Candidates to attend this course will be selected from volunteers among the brightest young soldiers who have demonstrated in Basic Combat Training, Advanced Individual Training or in a subsequent assignment that they possess outstanding leadership potential. The Infantry Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course will develop this leadership potential and train these men to become Infantry junior leaders.

This brochure will provide details and criteria for the selection of candidates, a brief description of the course, and an enumeration of the extraordinary advantages awarded to its graduates.

Upon completion of 21 weeks of training, the individual will not only be technically proficient but will have developed those intangible qualities that combine to make him a leader of men.

AS THEY SEE IT



Major General Melvin Zais
Director of Individual Training
Office, Deputy Chief of Staff
for Personnel

CONCEPT

Currently, the demand for experienced NCO's in Vietnam exceeds the supply. We are trying to meet these shortages by making a two-grade substitution of personnel. This means the platoon leader in combat is forced to pick up the brightest young PFC he can find, declare him the sergeant, and entrust the lives of a dozen men to his care. Under the NCO Candidate Course concept, this same bright young PFC will be the man selected for intensive leadership training. Now, he will be given the opportunity to undergo 21 weeks of additional seasoning prior to assuming responsible leadership positions. We are doing now by design what we were doing heretofore by accident.

THE FIRST CLASS

I wanted this opportunity to address the most important men in the Army today. I say that without any exaggeration. I am not sure you can possibly appreciate the significance of this course.

You are going to be trained by men who have served in Vietnam. This is a full course. You are going to be taxed physically and mentally. Your instruction will be almost entirely hands-on instruction. You will be trained in the field. It's a hard course, because the war in Vietnam is a hard war. Plan now to commit yourselves wholeheartedly.



Major General John M. Wright, Jr.
Commandant
United States Army Infantry School



Sergeant Major Wm O. Wooldridge
Sergeant Major of the Army

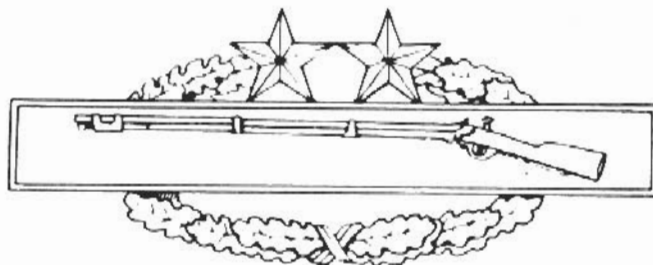
GRADUATION

You are on your way to being fire-team and squad leaders—the “glue” that holds that team, that squad together—the man who gives it direction, spirit and the ability to perform its mission.

In 12 weeks of training, you must show that those who selected you were correct. You will put this training to work in training centers and then with your units in combat.

I know you will do well. I have great confidence in you and your future.

Great things are expected of you.

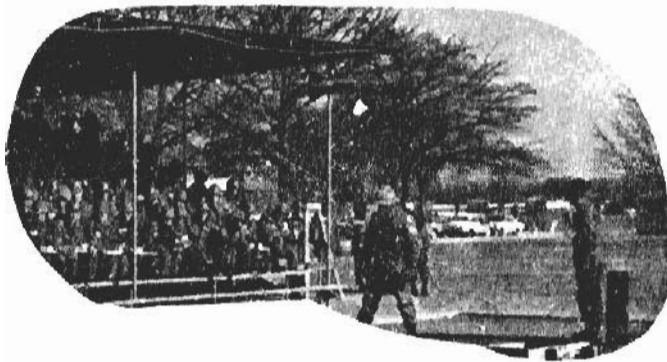


SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Security clearance of Confidential.
2. Infantry score of 100 or higher.
3. MOS 11B, skill level 1 and 2 and 11C or 11H at skill level 1, 2, or 3.
4. Grade E-5 or below. (Grade E-5 must have prior approval from USCONARC.)
5. Demonstrated leadership potential.
6. Selected by unit commander.
7. Have 13 or more months remaining in service after completion of the course.
8. Be POR qualified for assignment to restricted area.
9. Not on orders for Vietnam when selected — except for former Officer Candidates and AIT graduates who, if selected, will be deleted from existing assignment instructions.
10. Individuals having received accelerated promotions to E-2 will be given special consideration.
11. Must be a high school graduate or equivalent. This criterion may be waived based on an aptitude area GT score of 90 or above.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Personnel selected to attend the course must be highly motivated, fully cognizant of the purpose of the course, and aware of the increased responsibilities they incur upon its completion.



Success of the NCO Candidate program is directly related to the quality of candidates assigned to the course. Accordingly, it is essential that BCT and combat arms AIT commanders present vigorous orientation programs to their units. Those highly motivated individuals who meet the selection criteria must be encouraged to attend the course.

Commanders should also encourage airborne volunteers, former OCS candidates, and permanent party personnel who meet the selection criteria to attend the course.



ADVANTAGES TO THE CANDIDATE

The NCO candidate receives the best training available and an increase in rank, prestige, and pay without incurring any additional service obligation.

The selection of an individual for the Infantry Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course results in his:

....IMMEDIATE PROMOTION
TO CORPORAL E-4



SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION
RESULTS IN
PROMOTION TO SERGEANT E-5



OR

....IN THE CASE OF OUTSTANDING
GRADUATES, PROMOTION TO STAFF
SERGEANT E-6



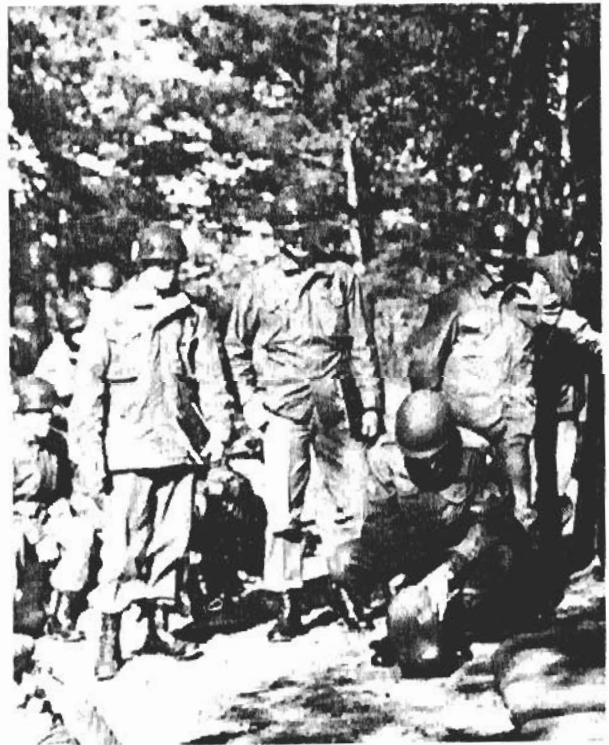
Those who complete the 21-week period of instruction will earn during that time over \$400 more than their classmates from AIT who do not attend the NCO Candidate Course. If the candidate is selected for promotion to Staff Sergeant E-6, he will earn over \$1,000 more in a two-year tour of duty than his classmates from AIT who do not attend the course. The foregoing sums will, of course, vary depending on individual circumstances.

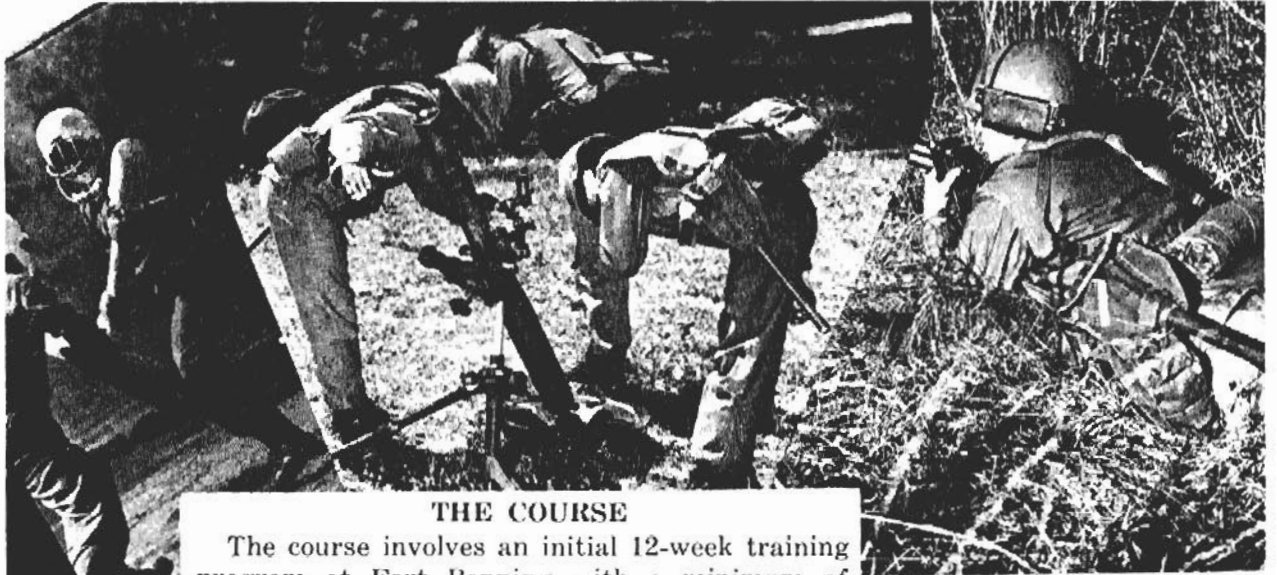
ADVANTAGES TO THE ARMY



The program makes maximum use of the two-year draftee and the first enlistment Regular Army enlisted man. The opportunity for rank in the first tour of duty will induce many to reenlist for further advancement.

On his return from Vietnam, a graduate of the Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course will be of immense value to CONUS training bases.





THE COURSE

The course involves an initial 12-week training program at Fort Benning with a minimum of classroom instruction. The emphasis is on practical training in the field, approximately one-third of which is at night.

Three distinct phases of the course develop the candidate into a noncommissioned officer who can discharge his command responsibilities with confidence and competence.

The end of 12 weeks at Fort Benning does not complete the course. From Benning the new NCO's are assigned to Vietnam-oriented training centers for 9 weeks of on-the-job training. During on-the-job training, the new NCO's will perform in responsible leadership positions such as squad leaders, platoon guides, and assistant platoon sergeants.





PHASE I

During Phase I, comprising the first five weeks, the candidate builds a foundation for the tactical training to follow in Phase II. He engages in physical and leadership training and learns to navigate over all types of terrain. He masters the weapons and communications equipment organic to a rifle platoon. He learns to care for major wounds and to call in medical evacuation helicopters.





PHASE II

The four-week second phase consists of fire team, squad, and platoon tactical training together with internal defense and development training oriented toward Vietnam. Concurrently the candidate is taught the principles and techniques of camouflage, demolitions, and indirect fire support — to include air, mortar and artillery support.



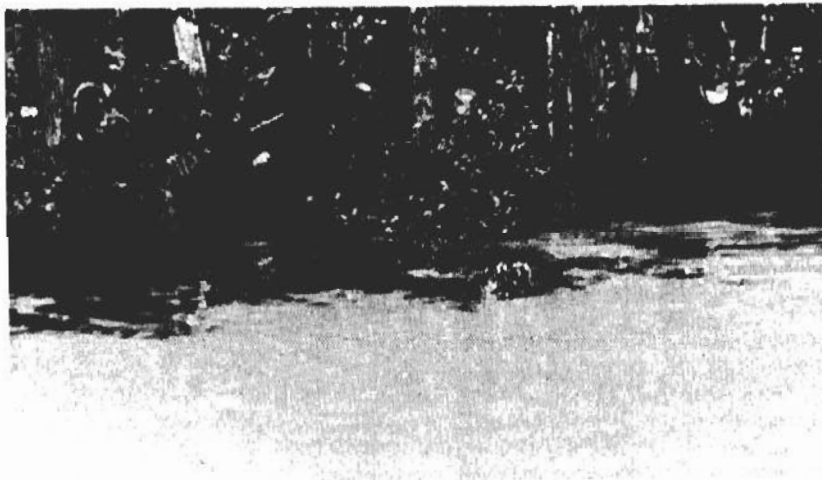
PHASE III

During the final phase lasting three weeks, the candidate puts all his previous training to test — a dress rehearsal for Vietnam.

Phase III concentrates on extensive patrolling and counter guerrilla training structured along the lines of the Ranger Course. Cadre-led patrols, jungle quick kill techniques, aircraft rappelling, artillery support, aerial resupply and a candidate-led counter guerrilla exercise highlight the training.

During quick kill training, candidates protected by masks and padding engage each other with air rifles to attain realism and sharpen reflexes.

Near the end of the course, the NCO candidates are given an opportunity to question a panel of recently returned Vietnam veterans. Here all unresolved questions are discussed.





EVALUATION

Throughout the course, the candidate is observed and his performance is rated by his tactical NCO and by his instructors. These ratings consist of formal reports whenever warranted on the candidate's performance, attitude, conduct and appearance. The company commander and tactical NCO use these reports to evaluate and counsel the candidate.

The NCO Candidate Evaluation System is accomplished by the Infantry School in academic areas and by The Student Brigade in leadership areas. Both scores are combined to determine a candidate's final class standing.

MONTANA SOLDIER IS FIRST HONOR GRADUATE



THE FIRST HONOR GRADUATE

On the 25th of November 1967, Melvin C. Lervick of Billings, Montana, the outstanding graduate of the first class to complete the Infantry Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning, walked across the stage of Marshall Auditorium to receive his stripes and diploma.

Following Lervick were 115 of his classmates. Behind these first graduates, thousands of others will follow.

The history of the Infantry NCO Candidate Course is unwritten. You read these words as it is being forged in sweat in the pine woods of Georgia and in the training centers across the country. Ultimately it will be written by its graduates in the jungles, rice paddies, and mountains of Vietnam.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

The completion of the 12 weeks of the Infantry Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning does not end the course. From Fort Benning the new E-5's and E-6's are assigned to Vietnam-oriented training centers in 16-man teams. These training centers are at Forts Polk, Gordon, Lewis, Jackson, and McClellan. There the graduates continue their training for nine weeks as fire team leaders, squad leaders, or *platoon sergeants*. *In actual troop leading situations, they gain practical experience in leading and training troops.*

In addition to the outstanding graduates previously promoted to staff sergeant at the end of the academic phase at Fort Benning, the outstanding individual in each 16-man team may also be promoted to staff sergeant upon completion of the training center phase of the program.

THE CHALLENGE

THE MAN WITH THE RIFLE

Men may argue forever on what wins their wars
And welter in cons and in pros
And seek for their answer at History's doors,
But the man with the rifle knows.

He must stand on the ground on his own two feet,
And he's never in doubt when it's won:
It's won if he's there. If he's not, it's defeat.
That's his test after fighting is done.

When he carries the fight, it's not with the roar
Of armored wings spitting death.
It's creep and crawl on the earthen floor,
Butt down and holding his breath. . . .

Saving his strength for the last, low rush,
Grenade throw and bayonet thrust.
(And the whispered prayer, before he goes in,
Of a man who does what he must. . . .)

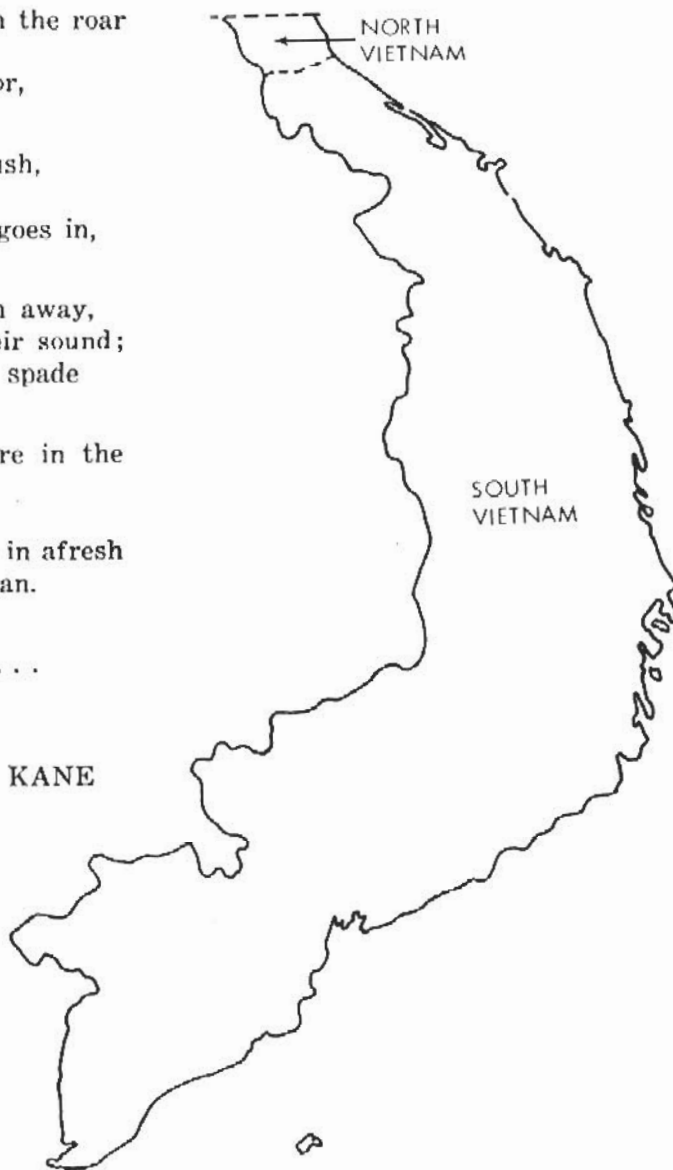
And when he's attacked, he can't zoom away,
When the shells fill his world with their sound;
He stays where he is, and loosens his spade
And digs his defense in the ground.

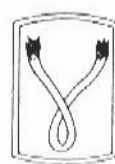
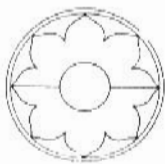
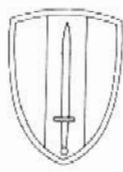
That ground's never ours 'til he's there in the
flesh—

Not a gadget or bomb, but a man.
He's the answer to theories which start in afresh
With each "peace" ever since wars began.

So let the wild circle of argument rage
On what wins, as war comes and goes. . . .
Many new theories may hold the stage,
But the man with the rifle knows.

—JOHN F. KANE





A LEADERS' PRAYER

Almighty God, we who will soon become leaders of men, come to You for guidance in this awesome responsibility.

We pray for humility, O Lord, that any existing selfishness, arrogance, and vanity may be removed from our lives.

Grant us patience in dealing with the mistakes of our fellow man. Let us never forget that no man is perfect, but that perfection for fragile humans is trying each day to be better than the day before.

Keep ever before us our goal, which is not to perpetrate war, but to safeguard Your greatest gift to man — freedom.

Let us never forget our duty to the men whom we will lead. May we instill in them the qualities of honor, integrity, and duty.

Remind us that wisdom is not gained in an hour, a day, or a year but that it is a process that continues all the days of our lives.

Give us courage, O Lord, in the face of danger. Keep us pure in heart, clean in mind, and strong of purpose.

May You always be near, to guide us in our decisions, comfort us in our failures, and keep us humble in our successes.

We ask Your divine blessings as we continue to prepare for the great honor of serving our country. Walk close to us always, our Father, that we may not fail. Amen.