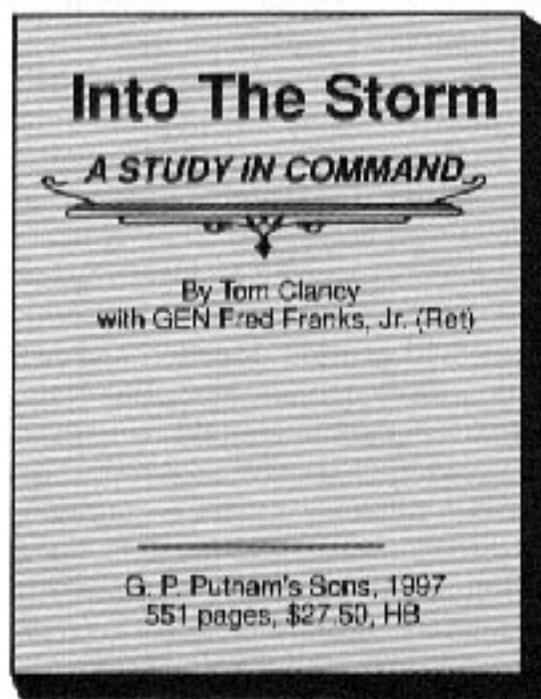


This book is a history of how VII Corps fought in Operation Desert Storm. It's also the personal story of GEN Fred Franks, Jr. and how he overcame the amputation of one of his legs, to continue in a successful Army career and of the reforms that took place in the U.S. Army during the 1970s and 1980s. Clancy's ability as a writer keeps the volume from sounding like a dry textbook and makes it a good account of military operations.

Franks basically tells his side of the story. He discusses how he received his warning order to deploy VII Corps, the challenges he faced and how VII Corps succeeded. Franks also gives his side of the story of the dispute he had with GEN H. Norman Schwarzkopf with the ap-



parent slowness of VII Corps during the ground war. Franks maintains the delay was caused because of the amount of time it took for the remainder of VII Corps to move through the breach after the 1st Infantry Division broke through the Iraqi berm. The book contains many diagrams. One of them is of the breach on day one of the ground war. The breach looked like a classic bottleneck on a major highway and to get his units through safely and into the assault formations, simply took time. He also cites faults in the outdated radio equipment that he used to command his corps. Once the breach was broken and the divisions properly formed, the attack went according to plan, except much faster. Franks is generous in his praise for the commanders and soldiers for the work they did in Operation Desert Storm.

This book should be read after reading Schwarzkopf's autobiography, "It Doesn't Take A Hero." Schwarzkopf is critical of Franks' performance and this is Franks' opportunity to respond. The two books also display the two different leadership styles of the two officers. The challenges of running Corps Level and Theater Level Tactical Operations Centers are displayed. There are many accounts of information overload and lack of information and how this affected the decision-making process.

This book should be read by all Operation Desert Storm veterans so they can appreciate the magnitude of their actions. It should also be read by all NCOs. We have all, at one time or another, cursed higher headquarters for their decisions. This book gives insight as to how decisions are made at the corps level and the problems of communicating these decisions down the chain of command. I believe certain chapters of the book should be prior reading for the Battle Staff NCO course. It would impress upon the students the importance of the information they will be handling.

SSG John S. Penman
Ft. Riley, KS

Letters to the Editor

beliefs. The Army is an institution with standards for all to obey, train by, work by and survive by.

When I came in the military in the late 1960s, the standard was instilled in you and you didn't forget it. You lived by it, worked by it and fought by it. Your survival and whether or not you made it in the military depended on how you adapted to the standards. There were no short cuts nor were standards compromised. If you couldn't cut the mustard [standards], you were out. Soldiers and leaders accepted them as they were. We didn't question the standards or our leaders. We had the utmost respect for our superiors. We dared not question their word.

Soldiers now question superiors and compromise Army standards whenever possible. They seem to think they have the right to do this. And that is our fault, for we as senior leaders and the Army as a whole have given them [soldiers] too much freedom to express their rights. Soldiers now have too many rights, while senior leaders seem to have less. It used to be that soldiers obeyed orders when they were given. Now soldiers ask why.

Throughout my career of almost 30 years, I have seen the Army change in a

way that is not what it used to be. Maybe I am an old salty dog whose time has come to an end. But the way I see it, a standard is a standard and it should be followed through as it was intended to be. Standards will always exist even after I am gone, but those following in my footsteps must take a hard look at themselves and the soldiers they are leading and ask themselves, "Will I set the standard as it was meant to be and stand by it, or will I compromise the standard to fit in with the new wave of the 1990s?"

SGM David J. Budzinski
USASMA, Ft. Bliss, TX

Oops! Our Mistake

Reference: The NCO Journal (Spring 97), the article "Strategies for Sergeant and Staff Sergeant Promotion," incorrectly cited AR 672-5-1, Awards and Decorations. This regulation was superseded by AR 600-8-22, Military Awards, dated 25 February 1996. Thanks to MSG L. Mathlin, USASOC, Ft. Bragg, NC, Editor.