
THE U.S. ARMY TRAINING PROGRAM
FOR ALLIED STUDENTS

By

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Rarely a day goes by without some news media report concerning security assistance. What is not specifically mentioned by the media, however, involves the internal elements of Security Assistance covered by International Military Education and Training (IMET) or Foreign Military Sales (FMS) training programs. Unlike the grant Military Assistance Program, or FMS acquisitions of major U.S. weapons systems, IMET and FMS training rarely makes the front pages of the papers.

The U.S. Army has been actively and successfully involved with the modern U.S. Security Assistance Program since World War II in one form or another. This program is composed of many elements which have been authorized by Public Law. All these contemporary programs began with the Truman Doctrine after World War II, followed by the Marshall Plan. As time passed, impressive policy decisions focusing on these programs were expanded by Presidents Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan to contain aggression. With President Reagan, U.S. foreign policy emphasis is focused on arms sales overseas, with a view toward enhancing regional stability and political independence.

It is important to understand why the U.S. provides security assistance and the general benefits the U.S. derives from it before examining the specific features of the U.S. Army Training Program for Allied Students. The first and most obvious benefit is the security of selected allies. A former Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance stated, "U.S. security interests can best be safeguarded by helping front-line countries become a positive deterrent to aggression." Security assistance programs additionally contribute to the broad cooperative relationships the U.S. has established with many nations which permit U.S. facilities on their territory. U.S. bases in Spain, Turkey, and the Philippines are good examples. Security assistance programs are also a means of gaining influence. We hope to make friendly countries stronger, and strong countries friendlier. Security assistance programs similarly provide a means of demonstrating U.S. constancy and willingness to provide long-term, enduring support. Security assistance helps to overcome economic and social causes of instability and conflict, as well as to open doors to multilateral trade agreements. Further, security assistance complements a recipient ally's military equipment and doctrine with ours, thereby enhancing standardization and interoperability.

The benefits of security assistance are substantial and impressive. One important element of the U.S. Army's security assistance mission is training. Every weapon system or equipment item transferred or sold, and every allied

officer/enlisted person participating in professional military education, offers an opportunity for the U.S. government to enhance foreign policy and fulfill the benefits previously mentioned. In fact, foreign military training in the U.S. produces benefits which transcend those noted above. The obvious foreign benefits of training are related to skill development and the effective operation and maintenance of equipment acquired from the U.S. Training also develops the expertise and the necessary systems required for the effective management of a country's defense establishment.

Of equal significance is a Congressional mandate given to the Department of Defense, and the subsequent issuance of a DOD directive on 15 January 1965 which has become the cornerstone of what is commonly called the "Informational Program" (IP) for foreign military trainees and visitors to the United States. Later, this program was tied directly to "human rights" concerns which are fostered within U.S. foreign policy today. This directive was established to complement and supplement the CONUS training offered to allied students. All military services participate in the program and strive to meet stated objectives in the following twelve areas: U.S. government institutions, the judicial system, political parties, press, diversity of American life, minorities, agriculture, economy, labor, education, public and social warfare, and human rights. These topics come to life through the dedication and selflessness of civilian and military members at CONUS educational activities in each of the military services. Within the Army, the roots of this program run deeply through all Army schools, installations, and depots.

There are two primary objectives recognized by the U.S. Army for all incoming allied trainees. First and foremost is military training, as outlined in Army directives, the Security Assistance Management Manual (SAMM), and DOD instructions. The second objective is to allow each student (and any accompanying family members) the opportunity to gain a balanced understanding of the U.S.--its society, government, political and judicial systems, and virtually every aspect of American life. Our main goal here is to expose all students to the 12 DOD objectives during their training period. Although their participation is voluntary, each trainee is strongly encouraged to join in the numerous activities scheduled by the U.S. Army's Allied Training Officers (ATOs).

The purpose of the article is to recognize the tremendous effort required to follow the progress of allied Army students through their nomination, selection, training, and return home. Also, it is intended to describe some of the many and varied experiences which are built into the Army Training Program for Allied Students.

The decision exercised by allied/friendly foreign governments to train their students at U.S. Army training installations goes beyond the selection process and the basic mechanics used by the overseas U.S. Security Assistance Organizations (SAOs). Each country selects its best qualified candidates who are properly motivated and fairly well versed in English language usage. Basically, the operation and maintenance of weapons systems are principle concerns, for it is essential to have trained personnel in these areas; but it is equally important to establish a doctrine and systems management philosophy compatible with the U.S. to ensure interoperability in the event of conflict. The SAO is critical in making sure that students have

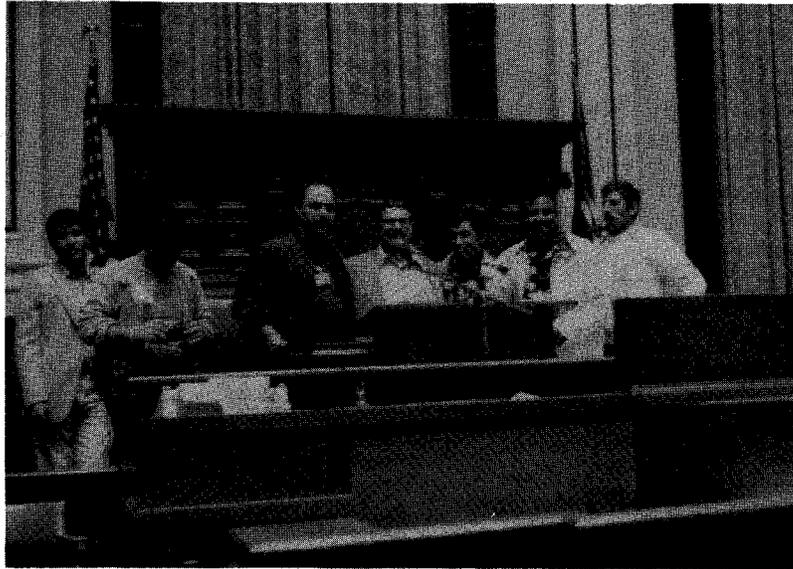
been selected to perform the country's military mission, and more importantly, to assure that students meet established prerequisites before they depart for the United States. The costs associated with travel and living in the U.S. are also major concerns.

Prior to departure, students are usually provided welcome packets and prebriefed on what to expect in the U.S.; and so, with adequate clothing selected and packed, copies of the Invitational Travel Order (ITO) in hand, the student heads for the airport. For what may be the first time in his/her life, the student is suddenly separated from friends, family, loved ones, customs, and culture, and thrust into a strange, alien world. Excitement and anxiety mount. The plane ride seems endless. Seats become uncomfortable, and the food is unfamiliar. Eventually, the huge plane touches down at JFK or another strange airport, and the student enters a whole new world. It hardly matters whether or not a student comes from a thriving metropolis or from a remote tribal community--personal feelings and emotions are now a mixture of anxiety and confusion. Fortunately, the U.S. Army encourages having all students greeted at the airport by a U.S. Army military representative to ease any emotional strain or initial cultural shock.

A community sponsor also is often available to assist in getting the student settled. This initial friendly greeting is of paramount importance and often has lasting, long-range benefits for the student (and family members); it creates a solid foundation for the proper motivation essential to a meaningful training experience. Additionally, any preconceived anxieties about the U.S. are often minimized or even totally allayed by the presence of the U.S. representative. To further ease any unforeseen experiences, such as theft or loss of baggage, which may occur as the student proceeds from one training installation to another, the U.S. representative is always there to help. To aid the greeting officials, all SAOs send arrival messages to the U.S. port of embarkation, providing specific data, such as name, rank, country, and number of dependents. Travel to the U.S. is generally scheduled during normal duty hours to preclude potential problems for both the greeting official and the student: arrival on weekends or holidays is discouraged.

Most U.S. Army training courses are designed to receive the trainee at least one week prior to the start of the formal training. This preliminary period allows the students to become acclimated to their new environment, become familiar with spoken English (and any specific dialects) and obtain an initial indoctrination by the ATO. Additionally, if not accomplished earlier, the U.S. Army makes every attempt to assign a sponsor family from the post or local community prior to the start of training. Lasting friendships are developed from this approach, and it greatly facilitates the student's stay in the U.S.

Many U.S. Army training installations have established an excellent, well-balanced Informational Program (IP) agenda, and students often find it difficult not to get involved. The IP is conducted in tandem with the formal training programs. The two most effective means of acquainting allied students with our way of life are supervised trips to support IP objectives and the use of planned sponsor activities. The free time of students is planned to the maximum, and a balance is set to ensure that each of the IP objectives is covered through the entire training period for each student.



Foreign Students Visit the Georgia Capitol

An example of a trip which may be conducted is a week long visit to Washington D.C. Selected allied officers enjoy a guided tour of the Capitol, visit the many landmarks, join in a lunch hosted by a member of Congress, and have an opportunity to visit their respective embassies. Local trips are organized to provide the student a general knowledge of the workings of city and county governments. Other visits may be made to the local Chamber of Commerce, financial organizations, TV stations, medical colleges, industry, shopping centers, and recreation facilities, to name only a few. Each of the IP objectives is covered in visits, lectures, discussions, etc. The Allied Training Officer and his staff conduct these visits, and are available to students on a 24-hour, seven-day week basis.

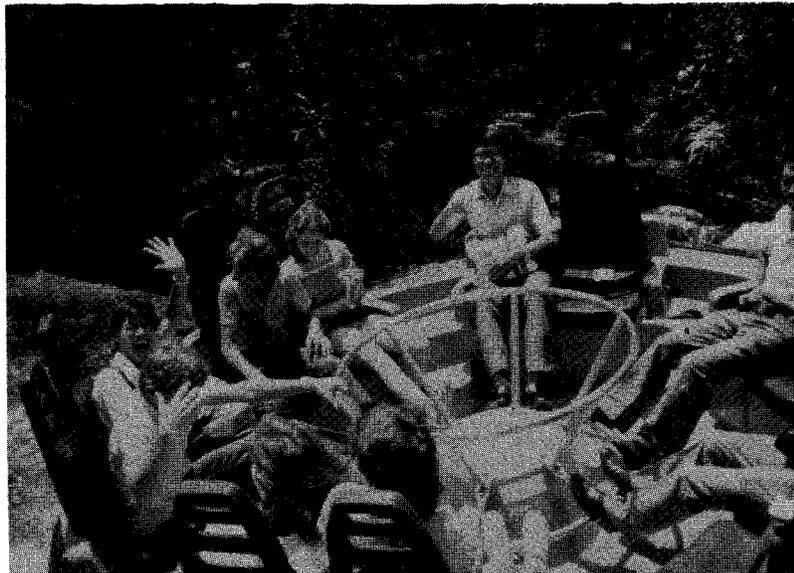


A Foreign Student Group at Stone Mountain, Georgia

The sponsorship program is intended to extend hospitality which transcends the military or formal training relationships. It is intended to show allied students that the United States is family oriented and to acquaint them with home and community activities. This is often one of the best ways for the student to relate America to his countrymen, with the family unit as a common denominator.

To further aid our trainees, each installation assigns an in-class or course sponsor who provides technical assistance, and also often creates lasting relationships. This sponsor gives the allied student an opportunity to work with someone who has the same academic background or interests. Thus, the student feels more comfortable asking questions or seeking advice which he would not be able to obtain in the formal classroom setting.

To avoid any misunderstanding about the application and implementation of the IP, each administrator must be aware of the sensitive nature of the IP and avoid any hint of indoctrination or forced structural education. Although the funds provided to offset the cost of the IP may come from either FMS or IMET sources, the desired results remain unchanged. It is imperative to avoid any misconceptions concerning the primary focus of the IP and to steer clear of structured lectures or classroom training. The focus of these activities must be to expose each trainee to a balanced understanding of U.S. society.



Foreign Students Enjoy "Rafting" at Six Flags Over Georgia

It has proven much more effective to engage the allied students in a variety of activities, such as an intellectual discussion involving a frank dialogue with honest answers, rather than to create a propaganda or contrived environment. To ensure compliance with prescribed IP objectives, each MILDEP headquarters must scrutinize its programs carefully, monitoring both the quality and quantity of activities. For example, although many allied students attend various courses throughout CONUS, only those attending the

advanced officer courses are eligible for the coveted Washington D.C. tour, and they may have only one such trip!

In the final analysis, it is our firm belief that, as these students return home, they carry with them fond memories and lasting relationships. There must be a sense of total commitment throughout the entire chain of security assistance participants, beginning with the SAO in each country, and ending only upon the students return to their home country. It is vital to the interest of the United States government and U.S. foreign policy to ensure that the philosophy of the IP is thoroughly understood and effectively implemented. Dollar for dollar, the IP continues to be the most cost-effective aspect of our foreign policy; long after the classroom and field training activities are ended, the memories of IP activities linger, and the lasting friendships and mutual understandings developed during the student's U.S. training will pay dividends long into the future. Many of the leaders of the developing nations have come from the military. Over 20 allied graduates of the Army's Command and General Staff College have achieved the rank of Head of State. The Presidents of Pakistan and Sudan graduated from CGSC, and numerous others have participated in the formal Army training program. The free world depends on a united attempt by both civilians and military alike to demonstrate what freedom is all about.

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