
A World of Friends

By

Lieutenant Colonel Robert J. Kornacki, USA

International officers have been coming to Fort Leavenworth to study U.S. Army tactics and doctrine since 1894. Since Lt. LeComte, the first such officer, arrived from Switzerland that year, generous, outgoing Americans have befriended the 5,127 international students who have earned the title "Leavenworth Graduate."

Most who come to the United States face considerable cultural change and, along with it, the bewilderment, frustration, and hard work of adjusting to a new way of life.

To alleviate "culture shock," the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College long ago implemented a sponsorship program. It began with in-house U.S. Army officers, but sometime in the mid-1950s expanded to incorporate nearby civilian communities. Its success over the years has led to today's "triple sponsor program." Leavenworth, Kansas City, and the Fort Leavenworth military community each offer our international students an "instant friend" to aid, counsel, and befriend them throughout the year. This approach introduces a balanced perspective of American society to our international guest while building broad bonds of friendship.

Some very good logic has driven this program since its inception. Although international officers attend the college which is located within the confines of the post, the limited sets of family quarters available on post require accompanied internationals to establish domiciles among the local civilian community. The Army encourages such students to bring their families with them for the year of study, and statistically, 70% of the 100 or so in annual attendance do just that. Who better to assist them than the civilian members of the community in which they will reside?

Ed and Dolly Gordon, under the auspices of Operation International of the Leavenworth, Kansas, Chamber of Commerce orchestrate local civilian community support. Every international officer, whether accompanied and living on the economy, or unaccompanied and living on the post, receives a set of Leavenworth area civilian sponsors, who assist him in a variety of ways as he settles into the community, or onto Fort Leavenworth. These dedicated civilian members of the community perform a service that provides immeasurable benefit, and allows synergism with the military sponsor who may well know every facet of the post and U.S. Army, but who may also be a relative newcomer to the civilian community. After a point, the busy activities in which the military and civilian sponsors have been engaged, from meeting each family at the airport, to finding quarters, bargaining for a car, getting the phone connected, etc., turn into enjoyable social contacts which last the duration of the year, and often a lifetime.

One instance in testimony to these long lasting relationships occurred in 1982, when the Gordons received a small invitation with a three word return address, The White House. Their officer of 1963, Major Zia, the late President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was being honored in Washington, during a state visit. President Zia's first thoughts were to his sponsors and long time friends, with whom he had maintained contact over the years. He was dedicated to ensuring that they shared the affairs of state with him during his visit to the national capital. Of course, as poignant, is the remorse felt by the Gordons and this community with the recent tragic loss of President Mohamed Zia Ul Haq.

In this area of the Midwest, the large urban center is Kansas City, which lies some 30 miles from Leavenworth. This community, under the auspices of the Kansas City Chapter of People-to-People International, gives our guest a third set of sponsors. President Joan Fletcher, along with Margaret and Skip Skaptason, the sponsor committee co-chairmen, diligently match prominent Kansas Citizens with international officers. This allows them to experience the contrast between big city and small town life, as well as to have a third pillar of support throughout the year. Despite the distance, their Kansas City friends become involved in the international families' lives to a surprising degree.

As the year begins, activities for the officers are sponsored by each of these civilian organizations. A picnic with band, squaredancing, games, and many activities for the children, is hosted by Leavenworth, while a rodeo, complete with normal rodeo events, plus gunslingers, dance hall "fluzies," and real Indians, is presented by the Kansas City folks. Perhaps, most significantly, the officers share in American family activities in a decentralized, but most personal and effective manner. Whether a sortie to the zoo, a visit to a museum, or an action packed adventure trip to purchase a microwave oven, this continuing contact in a family environment presents and explains American values as effectively as any of our more formalized Informational Program activities.

Are a military and two sets of civilian sponsors for each international officer and his family overkill? Well, as the old adage dictates, "Nothing succeeds like success!" Historical perspective has shown that such attention given by the sponsors from the moment an international officer and his family arrive at the Kansas City International Airport, through the difficult and traumatic time spent setting up a domicile in a different land, pays true dividends over time, not only individually, but, institutionally as well. Long after what has been learned in the classroom begins to fade from memory, the experiences and friendships established over the course of the year remain vibrant for the international officers and the sponsors alike, whose lives have been touched by their relationship.

One doesn't normally think of the midwest as an important international and cultural center, but here the exception can easily be found, for it is in this "Heartland of America" where each year, up to 128 international officers from as many as 75 countries share their lives and from which they ultimately gain the true perspective about Americans and their country.

The point is well established that these senior officers tend to become the leaders of their nations as generals, statesmen, and businessmen. Better than one in three attain star rank. Hundreds have become ministers, ambassadors, and legislators. Twenty-two have become heads of state. These are important statistics. However, the most important statistic is that thousands have become friends.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Report of *The DISAM Journal* Reader Survey

INTRODUCTION

The Fall, 1988, issue of *The DISAM Journal* included a separate mail-back reader survey form designed to assess the value of the *Journal* to the security assistance community. The following report provides an analysis of the findings of that survey.

A total of 2,150 survey forms were dispatched, and respondents were encouraged to make additional copies of the survey as required for the use of other readers of the *Journal* in their organizations. A total of only 220 survey forms were returned to DISAM, a return rate of just 10 percent of the total forms directly distributed by DISAM.

Analysis of the present survey was accomplished by the *Journal* editorial staff. A special computer program developed by Lieutenant Commander Paul W. Callahan, SC, USN, of the DISAM Department of Research and Information, greatly aided the survey analysis. We also wish to express our gratitude to Dr. Guy Shane, of the Air Force Institute of Technology, for his able guidance in helping develop the computer program.

ANALYSIS

Respondents were asked to identify themselves by both organizational and functional categories. Table 1 below reflects the number of respondents in each of the various categories. As expected, responses were greatest from the military services which had received the largest number of survey forms. In terms of functional categories, respondents were permitted multiple selections to reflect diverse work assignments. The data reflects Training/Education and Logistics as the two most frequently identified functional categories.

TABLE 1

Organizational and Functional Categories of Respondents
(No. of Respondents / %)*

I. Organizational Category	
OSD/Defense Agency/OJCS:	26/12%
U.S. Military Service:	109/50%
Unified Command/Overseas Component:	10/5%
U.S. Embassy/SAO/DATT:	36/16%
Other U.S. Government:	8/4%
U.S. Contractor or Private Party:	13/6%
Foreign/International Activity or Party:	6/3%
Other:	12/6%
II. Functional Category**	
Policy/Legislation:	39
Training/Education:	71
Logistics:	61
Research and Development:	10
Finance and Accounting:	27
Planning, Programming, and Budgeting:	29
Contracting:	14
Program/Country/Case Manager:	37
Industrial Sales/Marketing:	12
Other:	45

* Percentages shown in this and the following tables may not equal 100% due to rounding.

** Multiple responses were permitted for functional category identification.

Respondent evaluation of the *Journal* was very encouraging. When asked to characterize the overall usefulness of the *Journal*, 211 respondents (96%) found it "highly useful/somewhat useful," with 127 (58%) of the respondent group reporting the *Journal* to be "highly useful." The Appendix at the end of this report provides a representative sampling of individual comments which accompanied the responses to this question regarding the *Journal's* usefulness.

The respondents were also asked to characterize the usefulness of each of the seven separate sections in the *Journal*. Here again the results were quite supportive of DISAM's efforts. As reflected in Table 2, the five general substantive sections (Cover Feature, S.A. Legislation and Policy, S.A. Perspectives, S.A. Community, and Points of Contact) were all rated as "highly useful/somewhat useful" by a minimum of 86 percent of the respondents. The three highest positive ratings were given to the sections on Legislation and Policy (96%), Security Assistance Perspectives (92%), and the Cover Feature (90%). The Training Notes section was rated overall as helpful by 75% and the Research and Consultation form received a 64% rating as helpful. The somewhat lower ratings for these sections is understandable, as they address specific audiences--the S.A. training community, and those in the general security assistance community with particular research questions.

TABLE 2
The Usefulness of the DISAM Journal
(No. of Respondents / %)

Sections	Highly Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Neutral/ No Opinion
Cover Feature	95/44%	98/46%	11/5%	11/5%
S.A. Legislation & Policy	136/62%	69/32%	7/3%	7/3%
S.A. Perspectives	114/53%	84/39%	12/6%	7/3%
S.A. Community	107/50%	80/37%	11/5%	18/8%
Training Notes	77/35%	87/40%	25/12%	29/13%
Research and Consultation (Inquiry Submission Form)	51/25%	81/39%	25/12%	50/24%
S.A. Points of Contact	118/54%	70/32%	13/6%	3/8%

The next survey question asked the respondents to identify any topical areas which they felt should be added or expanded in the *Journal*. Eight topics were suggested, plus any other topic they might suggest. Table 3 reflects the respondents level of agreement/disagreement with adding/expanding the eight suggested topics. A large number of respondents clearly wish to see additional coverage in the *Journal* of several areas, with the greatest level of support involving the following: regional/country-specific programs; technical aspects of security assistance management; and security assistance management systems. Additionally, several respondents suggested other topics for future emphasis in the *Journal*. Two such topics--defense cooperation in armaments and legal aspects of security assistance--were stressed in these comments.

It should be noted that while the DISAM Editorial Staff makes every effort to include these and related types of articles in the *Journal*, we remain dependent on the security assistance community for contributions. In recent years there has been a significant increase in such community contributions, particularly in terms of articles written specifically for original publication in the *Journal*. With the specific interests of our readers now known, DISAM will work closely with the community to meet those interests. In this regard, respondents were also asked if they or their organizations would be interested in preparing an article for a future issue of the *Journal*. Forty-four respondents indicated such interest in a wide variety of topics, but only 21 provided a point of contact (POC). DISAM will follow-up on those respondents who furnished a

POC, and has also published an item in this issue of the *Journal* to elicit responses from those individuals who failed to include a POC.

TABLE 3
Respondent Views on Adding/Expanding Topics for the DISAM Journal
(No. of Respondents / %)

SUBJECT	ADD/EXPAND?			
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Neutral/ No Opinion
Explanations/tips concerning technical aspects of security assistance, e.g., SAO role in lease monitorship, maintaining FMS case files, etc.	95/44%	71/33%	14/7%	34/16%
SA management systems and innovations, e.g., desktop computer applications, automated price and availability systems, systems for non-standard support, etc.	92/42%	66/30%	19/9%	40/18%
Regional or country-specific programs and perspectives, especially in conjunction with regional feature articles.	103/48%	66/31%	15/7%	30/14%
Notes on industry activities relative to SA	74/34%	91/42%	13/6%	37/17%
Board of Contributing Editors' Commentary	21/10%	97/46%	28/13%	66/31%
Consolidated chronological list of annual events/conferences	81/38%	65/30%	15/7%	53/25%
Update on DISAM curriculum/activities	77/36%	67/31%	17/8%	55/26%
Annual index of prior <i>Journal</i> articles	86/40%	69/32%	20/9%	40/19%
Other	8/19%	1/2%	2/5%	31/74%

A final substantive question sought the respondents opinions regarding the purpose(s) of the *Journal*. Eight specified purposes were offered, and respondents could also add any others of their choice. Table IV identifies the respondents level of agreement/disagreement with the proffered "purposes." While all of the available choices received significant support, the respondents emphasized the following purposes which the *Journal* should serve: notification of policy and regulation changes; providing the status of pending security assistance legislation; furnishing general information; and exchanging ideas, concerns, and opinions.

The survey also included a number of administrative questions through which DISAM sought to confirm respondents' mailing addresses and to determine the number of copies of the *Journal* received/required by an organization. Responses to these items have aided considerably in updating the *Journal* distribution list. Respondents were also asked to identify the number of readers per copy of the *Journal*. Sixty-nine of the respondents, or nearly one-third, indicated that each copy was being read by six or more people; the remainder of the respondents reported that readers per copy ranged from one to five.

TABLE 4

Respondent Opinions on Desired Purpose(s) of *The DISAM Journal*
(No. of Respondents / %)

	(0) Strongly <u>Agree</u>	(1) Somewhat <u>Agree</u>	(2) <u>Disagree</u>	(3) Neutral/ <u>No Opinion</u>
Provide general information	135/64%	60/28%	9/4%	7/3%
Provide specific information on selected activities /organizations	107/51%	79/38%	10/5%	13/6%
Amplify specific procedures, such as processing IMET students, reconciling delivery and billing status, etc.	80/39%	64/31%	30/15%	33/16%
Provide notification of changes to policies and regulations	146/69%	49/23%	8/4%	9/4%
Provide status of pending SA legislation	141/67%	53/25%	6/3%	12/6%
Exchange ideas/concerns/opinions	124/59%	68/32%	6/3%	14/7%
Feature Unified Command activities	56/27%	97/46%	26/12%	30/14%
Provide feedback from CONUS activities to the field and vice versa on issues or perceptions	75/40%	69/37%	6/3%	39/21%
Other	1/50%	1/50%	---	---

CONCLUSION

The DISAM Journal Reader Survey served to identify a high level of reader support. In terms of the *Journal's* general utility and specific section/article usefulness, the readership gave the *Journal* high marks. Reader topical interest and identification of purposes to be served by the *Journal* had been previously assumed, but now have been confirmed and will serve as a guide in the selection of future articles. The survey has also served to stimulate potential future contributors to the *Journal*, and DISAM looks forward to such contributions. Finally, important administrative items, such as mailing addresses, numbers of required copies, and numbers of readers per copy have been confirmed.

Although DISAM had hoped to elicit a higher respondent rate than was obtained, nonetheless, we are very appreciative of the efforts made by those who took time to respond, particularly those who added their personal comments. As always, the *Journal* is designed to support the entire security assistance community, and those who responded to our survey have helped us to meet that objective.

APPENDIX

The following provides a representative selection of respondent comments regarding the usefulness of *The DISAM Journal*.

1. "Excellent cross-section of material. Good avenue to keep current and apprised of other SAO activities. Only means of receipt of in-depth FMS current events."
2. "The *Journal* is very informative and makes employees feel as if they are part of the security assistance process."
3. "Keeps me up to date on happenings. Good show!"
4. "Good, professional. Well done. Articles well written and readable for busy executives."
5. "Reports of country-specific stories are not particularly useful."
6. "Country-specific SAO articles are the best feature of the *Journal*."
7. "Good source of information about directive guidance changes."

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8. "The *Journal* provides good coverage of global issues as well as policy viewpoints. I depend on the *Journal* a good deal."
 9. "Keeps us folks in the hinterlands well informed."
 10. "Very useful to the 'traditional SAO,' moderately useful for cutting edge/advanced developed SAOs. More focus is needed on the expanded SAO function to promote, implement, and expand defense technology cooperation between the U.S. and its friends and allies."
 11. "Dr. Samelson and Company are doing an excellent job of keeping the 'field folks' energized."
 12. "The *Journal* needs some controversial articles. Every article is what could be expected from a Government publication."
 13. "Very useful, well-written *Journal*. Look forward to each issue. Has good training material for my SAO action officers, as well as current topics of interest. Excellent publication!"
 14. "Indispensable. It created a community of analysts/policy makers where few existed prior to its publication."
 15. "Good publication. I would like to see more articles by DSAA, etc., attorneys regarding common legal issues and how they were resolved."
 16. "Articles should play a 'proponent role,' picking a current programmatic issue on the way to Congress and providing data and rationale to help drive a positive decision on the issue."
 17. "Excellent. We need the *Journal* to keep up with current changes."
 18. "An exceptionally useful and unique reference source for all actors in DOD security assistance, combining inter-service, executive, and Congressional perspectives; a current and authoritative compendium of useful information."
 19. "Has proven very helpful on numerous occasions--to prepare presentations and inform executives of system changes not advised of."
 20. "Excellent. A primary source of data and information for me and my staff relative to security assistance."
 21. "Provides a 'total perspective' of security assistance."