

A Clearer View of Psywar at Fort Riley & Fort Bragg, 1951-1952

by Charles H. Briscoe

In late fall 1952, a blimp-shaped silver balloon mysteriously appeared 250 feet above the recently-established U.S. Army Psychological (Psywar) Warfare Center on Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The ghostly object hovered over the parade field that separated the Special Forces barracks from those of the Psywar units, where on most Friday afternoons, Colonel (COL) Charles H. Karlstad reviewed his command. Armed guards preventing access to a taped-off square cordon below the balloon explained that it was lifting an antenna to extend the range of the 8th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company radio transmitters. Standing watch in the center was another with his M-1 Carbine at the ready to shoot down the antenna balloon if the cable broke. A typical comment by the curious was, "So that's what you Psywar guys do."¹

Our knowledge about the units stationed on Smoke Bomb Hill, Fort Bragg, NC has been Special Forces-centric since the 1950s. Forgotten is that Special Forces began as an office in the Psywar Center in April 1952. COL Aaron Bank was working for Brigadier General (BG) Robert A. McClure, Chief of Psychological Warfare (CPW), when he left to become the Center Executive Officer and SF Office director for COL Karlstad.²

The Psychological Warfare Center was the umbrella organization for the Psywar School (proponent for Psywar and SF doctrine and training), a Psywar Board to test material, tactics, techniques, and procedures for Psywar and SF, the 6th Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group (RB&L) recently transferred from Fort Riley, KS, and the formation of Special Forces.³ When the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) departed for Germany in October 1953, the 5th Loudspeaker & Leaflet (L&L) Company departed Fort Riley, KS for Europe.⁴

The purpose of this article is to show how *The Psyn-post*, first published on 16 January 1952 by the 5021st Psychological Warfare Detachment A.S.U. (Army Special Unit indicated provisional status) at Fort Riley, KS as *The Weekly*, provided a view of the 8th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (MRBC), a 6th RB&L unit.⁵ LTC Frank A. McCulloch, the detachment commander, explained the value of a weekly unit newsletter: "It is the medium whereby we can share bits of fact and humor. In time, it will be the mirror of missions and accomplishments, the weekly reflections of our daily lives and a continuing history of our service to our country."⁶

War revitalized the Army's moribund Psywar capability. Shortly after the North Korean Peoples' Army (NKPA) invaded the South in June 1950, the Tactical Information Detachment (TID) at Fort Riley, the only operational Psywar element in the Army, which supported the Aggressor Force of Army Field Forces, was alerted to deploy to Korea. The 30-man TID became the nucleus of the 1st Loudspeaker & Leaflet (L&L) Company and provided Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) tactical Psywar support throughout the war. BG McClure succeeded in getting the 1st RB&L activated to conduct strategic



COLs Charles H. Karlstad (U.S. Army Psychological Warfare Center & School Commandant) and Aaron Bank (Center Executive Officer) with LTCs Lester L. Holmes (6th RB&L Group commander) and John O. Weaver (Psywar Division Chief of the Psychological Warfare School) pose by the Headquarters sign on Smoke Bomb Hill, Fort Bragg, NC.



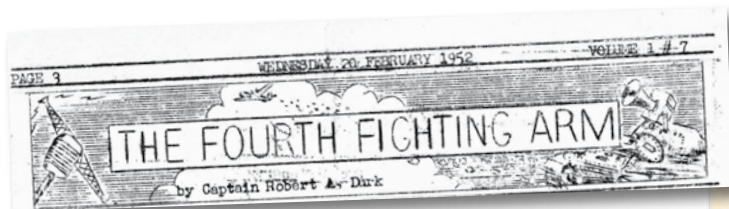
WWII veteran LTC Frank McCulloch commanded the 5021st Psychological Warfare Detachment, Army Special Unit at Camp Forsyth, Fort Riley, KS.



The title headers for the *Weekly* and *The Psyn-post*, were roll-printed using a mimeograph. It took some skill in commercial printing to introduce the brown color.



Enlisted Psywar Course #1-52 was the last one conducted at the Army General School, Fort Riley, KS.



This was *The Psyn-post* header for CPT Robert A. Durk's article, "The Fourth Fighting Arm."



A 5021st Psychological Warfare Detachment soldier stands by the unit sign at Camp Forsyth, Fort Riley, KS.



Psywar for Far East Command (FECOM), the 301st RB&L [U.S. Army Reserve(USAR)] for Europe, and several more L&L companies (2nd, 5th & 9th) as well as the 5021st Psywar Detachment at Camp Forsyth, Fort Riley that became the basis for the 6th RB&L headquarters and its subordinate companies.⁷ While the official Psywar record reads well, it did not reflect reality.

Captain Robert A. Durk, a student in the Army General School's second Staff Officers Course (January-March 1952), showed how broken Psywar was and the lack of attention given to it by the Pentagon eighteen months after war exploded in Korea. In his *Psyn-post* article, "The Fourth Fighting Arm," CPT Durk stated, "In 1952, the Psywar Division of the Army General School at Fort Riley, KS was in its second year of operation. Organized at the end of 1950, the school had graduated one Psywar Staff Officers Course, a Psywar Officer class, and an NCO class by January 1952."⁸ Few graduates of these 30-50 man courses went to Korea.⁹

What CPT Durk did not mention was that PFC George Vlandis was the PsyWar Division Instructor Committee chairman for the Enlisted Psywar Course, which required a college degree and a score of 110 or better on the G.E.D.

(General Educational Development) tests.¹⁰ Ninety percent were college graduates, some with advanced degrees.¹¹ Using faint praise attributed to General Dwight D. Eisenhower to show Psywar's importance to the Army only emphasized how postwar leaders perceived its usefulness: "Without doubt, Psychological Warfare has proved its right to a place of dignity in our military arsenal."¹² One can better appreciate the uphill battle that BG Robert A. McClure, GEN Eisenhower's European Chief of Psychological Warfare, fought to revitalize Psywar capabilities in the Army.

The 5021st Psywar Detachment, a collection point for Psywar personnel, had been "created in September 1951 by the flick of the 2nd L&L Company clerk's fingers on a typewriter keyboard preparing another Morning Report" read a May 1952 *Psyn-post*.¹³ The Department of Army screened prior service records for Psywar experience and relevant skills and draftees for the "scientific professional" program. But, priorities for officer and enlisted schooling and the limited equipment went initially to units slated for overseas, the 1st and 301st RB&Ls.¹⁴

Psywar unit T/Ds (Tables of Distribution for provisional units) and TO&Es (Table of Organization & Equipment for authorized units) were being built by the Psychological Warfare Board. But, its members included the course instructors in the Psywar Division, Army General School.

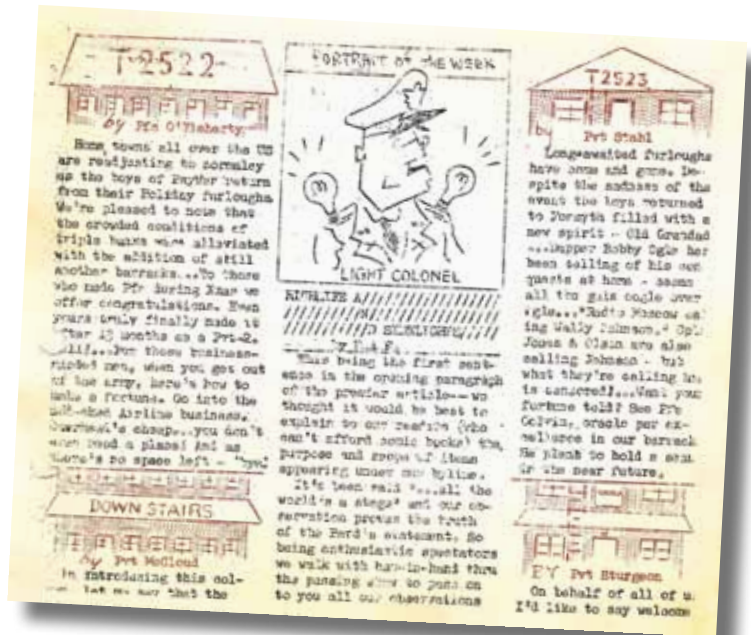
The Psywar Division in the Directorate of Resident Instruction, Army General School, Fort Riley, KS was responsible for all Psywar officer, staff officer and enlisted courses in 1951-52.



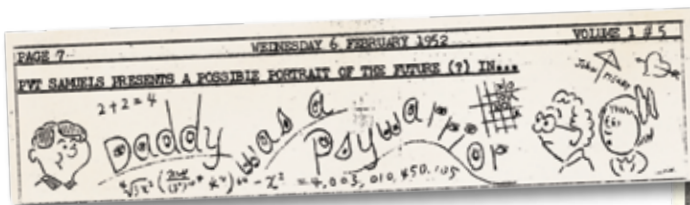
Mobile Radio Broadcasting Companies served throughout the European Theater during WWII.

In May 1952, A *Psyn-post* photo revealed how small the Psywar School staff was: one sergeant, three corporals, and eight PFCs with LTC John O. Weaver as Director.¹⁵ The personnel section of the T/Ds and TO&Es was done first. Identifying specific unit and individual assigned equipment was a “constant work in progress” involving the Psywar Division, 5021st officers and BG McClure’s staff in the Pentagon.¹⁶ The only available Psywar model was the WWII Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company and significant technology advances had been made since 1944.¹⁷ But, the personnel engine once started, kept pumping qualified soldiers into the 5021st.

The 6 February 1952 *Psyn-post* reported enlisted talent being siphoned to fill the 5021st Psywar ranged from chemists and botanists to lithographers and printers. Stefan Osusky, Paris-born in 1928, had moved to London in WWII with the Czech Government-in-Exile. He graduated from Oxford in 1948 before emigrating to the U.S. when his father went to work for Radio Free Europe.¹⁸ PVT Kursk was described as a “capable mathematician-physicist.”¹⁹ Linguists Ladislav Rezler, Ernst Smitka, Milan Kuchta, and Joseph Kucal, were all East Europeans who



Each of the four elements in the 5021st Psywar Detachment was allotted a column in *The Psyn-post* and posted according to their assigned areas in the two Camp Forsyth WWII barracks, T-2522 and T-2523 (“T” prefix meant a temporary building).



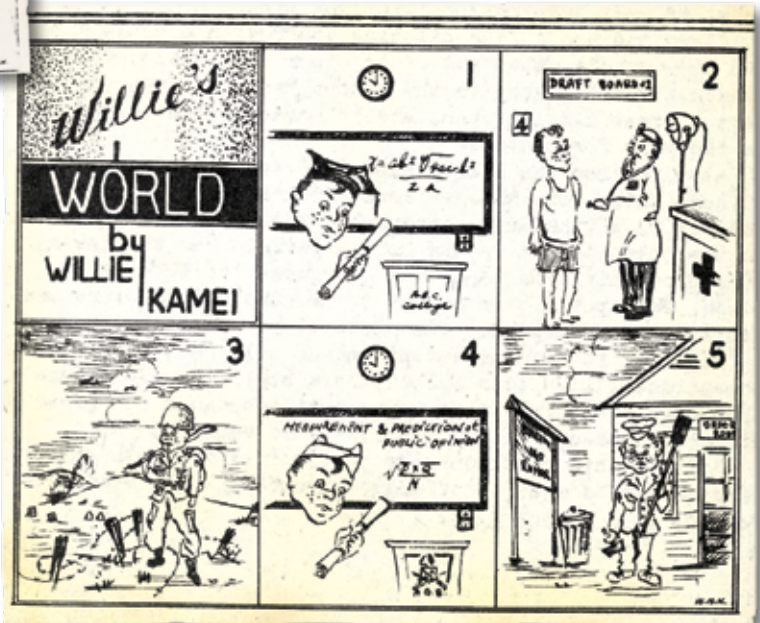
This *Psyn-post* caricature shows the respect accorded the Psywar soldiers at Fort Riley.

enlisted under the Lodge Act and did not volunteer for airborne training.²⁰ An early 1950s T/D for a MRBC had 11 linguists and interpreters authorized: 2 in the Monitoring Section; and 3 each in the three MRB platoons.²¹

March 1952 was a big month for accomplishments. At that time the 5021st had two hundred personnel organized into four provisional units. They were assigned to a pair of two-story WWII wooden barracks, T-2522 and T-2523, at Camp Forsyth. Each unit had its own barracks floor. SGTs Alfred Paterson and Curtis Johnson, veterans from the 1st L&L Company in Korea, joined the detachment along with Private Alan H. Smith, a graduate of Syracuse University (1951), who had worked for CBS Shortwave and Syracuse Radio Station WAER in New York.²² Despite the highly-educated and well-credentialed soldiers being assigned to the 5021st, the *Psyn-post* got little respect.

The *Psyn-post* reported that to uninitiated soldiers, Psywar was the “weird result of a misspelled word on a set of orders from the Pentagon. Mail and individual assignment orders often read: “Psycho Ward,” “Physical Warfare,” and “Pie Training Detachment.” Fort Riley medics sent notices to “Sigh War,” Psy Wad,” and “Surgeon, Psycho Ward.”²³ Others labeled them the “Dry War Detachment”, “Physiological Carfare Detachment”, “Psycho Warfare Department”, and the “Sigh War Detachables”.²⁴ Quite ironically, Fort Riley had a number of unusual units. “Fort Riley was filled with oddball units; sonic wave units, a camouflage & deception unit, the Psywar elements, and a brigade-size Aggressor Force dressed in dark green uniforms, wearing Centurion-like helmets having a top fin, and all speaking *Esperanto*, the universal language,” recalled Alan Smith.²⁵

Keeping these highly-qualified and educated soldiers focused on their mission without having equipment for training frustrated the 5021st commander, WWII infantryman LTC McCulloch. He tried to boost morale through *The Psyn-post*: “We lack, at the moment, one vital essential—equipment. From this lack there probably arises the feel [ing] of uselessness. But, connect the talented personnel with the proper equipment and you have a unification of men and material; you have a reason [for serving] even as you have a purpose and an obligation.”²⁶ Little did he know that the talented, work-experienced draftees and recalled reservists from the radio and television broadcast industry and the commercial print sector would prove very innovative. It was 1LT Nevin F. Price, a U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF) B-26 radioman/gunner in WWII, described by PVT Alan Smith as the



This *Psyn-post* satirical cartoon by William Kamei depicted the reality of these college-educated draftees being assigned to the 5021st Psywar Detachment at Camp Forsyth.

“world’s greatest scrounger,” who succeeded in getting radio equipment for the provisional MRBC.²⁷

In early July 1951, 1LT Nevin Price was assigned to the provisional MRBC, which like the other 5021st elements, lacked T/D equipment. The Signal Corps lieutenant, slated to attend Psywar Officers Course #2 at the Army General School in January 1952, wanted his soldiers to have “something to play with” other than the shortwave receiver in his 1950 Nash Ambassador automobile.²⁸ But, before he could start scrounging, a horrendous storm struck, flooding central Kansas and Nebraska just as the 1st RB&L was to entrain to begin their trip to Japan. Fort Riley and the surrounding area, inundated with water, was paralyzed by massive power outages.²⁹

Private Wallace A. Johnson set up his HAM radio at the highest spot on Camp Forsyth to establish communications “with the outside world.” With Private Hans R. Ulander to share radio shifts, the two became the Army link to Fort Riley for almost a week. The rest of the 5021st soldiers filled sandbags to stem overflowing rivers. The nearest railroad station not affected by flooding was in Lincoln, Nebraska. The 1st RB&L troops were bussed there on 12 July 1951.³⁰ Once that emergency was contained, the MRBC lieutenant began an earnest search for radio equipment.

Following the 1st RB&L bus route, LT Price took a 6X6 truck to Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, Nebraska. In their salvage yard he found old radar station components—power transformers, radio receivers, transmitter drivers—and obsolete aircraft radios. These served as trading material with the Fort Riley units, including the MARS



The header for *The Psywar Monitor* printed by the 6th RB&L Group at Fort Bragg, NC.



The Military Affiliate Radio Station (MARS) replaced the Army Amateur Radio System after WWII.

5021st Psywar Detachment interpreters and linguists monitor international radio broadcasts at Camp Forsyth, KS.



(Military Affiliate Radio Station replaced the WWII Army Amateur Radio System) station. Price planned to rebuild shortwave radios.³¹ By the end of February 1952, Price had accumulated sufficient parts for a half-dozen radios. An Amateur Radio Station supervised by the MARS had been established by the MRBC soldiers and on-the-job-training (OJT) had been arranged at the Public Information Office on Main Post for some MRB soldiers. LT Price's work did not go unnoticed.

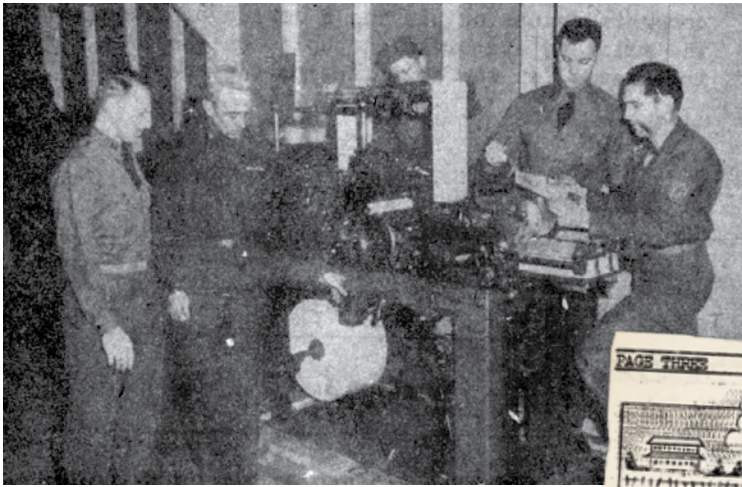
According to a May 1952 *Psyn-post* the MRB element "overcame its greatest obstacle, by collecting various pieces of radio equipment" and creating a radio room in the old Detachment Classroom. Much headway was made in the field of radio monitoring and record cataloguing—for use in future Psywar productions. "Although limited by geographical location, the assigned linguists were monitoring foreign broadcasts around-the-clock and turned in excellent reports," stated 1LT John J. Rutmayer, provisional unit commander.³²



Caricature depicting a 6th U.S. Army Mobile Radio Broadcaster in action (MAJ Nevin Price collection).

The reality was that "LT Price and several licensed HAM operators connected a number of rebuilt AN-GRC 26 Collins shortwave radios to WWII-era tape recorders to collect *Radio Moscow*, *United Nations Radio*, *Voice of America*, and other overseas broadcasts," said Alan Smith.³³ Three shifts of interpreters and linguists culled world news for 18 hours each day and prepared brief summaries for the 5021st intelligence section. These reports became the basis for *The PsyWar Monitor* that was first published as a daily training exercise on 8 April 1952.³⁴ This work kept MRBC interpreters and linguists actively engaged and gave writers, photographers, and print soldiers something practical to do. *The Psyn-post* had evolved for the same reason. But, it was just busy work. The only Psywar mission the detachment had received from the Pentagon was to assemble personnel.³⁵ In the meantime, 1LT Peter A. DeFranco, nicknamed "Press" by the soldiers, obtained access to the Fort Riley print plant in Building 193, Main Post, Fort Riley which had a Webendorfer Press.

The *Psyn-post* went from a mimeographed, hand-stapled weekly newsletter to a finished offset printing press product.³⁶ COL David T. Hall in the Office of the Commander, Army Field Forces (OCAFF) at Fort Monroe, Virginia, an old friend of McCulloch, praised the new format: "Our hearty congratulations on the fine appearance of the new *Psyn-Post*! Even in its



LTC Frank McCulloch presses the “Start” button as CPT Otto Bennett looks on. PVT Rus, 1LT Peter A. DeFranco, and SGT Gilbert examine the first copies of an offset press-printed *Psyn-post* in Building 193, Fort Riley.

The *Psyn-post* header for LTC John O. Weaver's article on Fort Bragg, NC.



“Spotlight on Psywar” on 27 March 1952, produced by the OJT personnel from the MRBC.”⁴⁰

Suspicions that Psywar would be moving from Fort Riley to Fort Bragg, NC, were confirmed in January 1952. LTC John O. Weaver, Chief, Psywar Division, Directorate of Resident Instruction, Army General School, published his impressions of the Smoke Bomb Hill area in *The Psyn-post*. It was the ultimate in disinformation propaganda as most of the original SF soldiers can attest:

“The area has barracks, mess halls and assorted buildings which have been completely rehabilitated. The landscaping surrounding these newly-painted buildings might match a picture in some ‘House Beautiful’ magazine. The area can boast of paved streets. All of Psywar will be centered in this ideal location—school, units and personnel. Each unit will have its own company area—which means its own barracks, mess hall, day room and orderly room. As beautiful as the buildings and area itself, is its location on Fort Bragg. It is only 10 miles from the nearest town, Fayetteville, which has a population of 40,000 people. The Post provides bus service direct from Smoke Bomb Hill to Fayetteville. Our area is only about a half mile from the Main Post.”⁴¹ More articles about Fort Bragg and the surrounding area followed, but the 5021st had begun to organize into functional units in April 1952.⁴²

The 6th RB&L, consisting of a Headquarters & Headquarters Company (HHC), the 7th Reproduction Company, the 8th MRBC, and 9th L&L Company (totaling 11 officers, 2 warrant officers, and 134 enlisted men), was provisionally activated by Department of Army (DA) Letter on 14 April 1952 at Fort Riley, Kansas. The Tables of Distribution (T/D) specified: 6 officers, 2 warrant officers, and 69 enlisted men for HHC; 2 officers and 31 enlisted for 7th Reproduction Co; 3 officers and 34 enlisted for the 8th MRBC. The 9th L&L Co had a TO&E for 5 officers and 66 enlisted men.⁴³

During the official activation LTC Frank McCulloch relinquished command to a fellow infantryman, LTC Lester Holmes, a WWII veteran (Provost Marshal, 12th Armored Division, Europe), Class of '27, University of Iowa, who attended the Psywar Officer Course #2 with his

mimeo form it was outstanding in style, content and newsy presentation, but the new format right off the offset press, surpasses any that I have seen in the way of a unit publication.”³⁷ This opened further inroads to other Fort Riley assets.

According to *The Psyn-post*, the Psywar soldiers most active in the establishment of the Fort Riley Amateur Radio Station (ARS) under the MARS network supervision were Privates Wallace A. Johnson, Hans Ulander, and Albert Mandel and LT Charles Johnson. The ARS was situated next to the MARS station in Building 1770 at Camp Funston, the other WWII barracks facility that was a part of Fort Riley, KS.³⁸ By then a half-dozen “Psy-Warriors” were doing OJT (On-the-Job-Training) in the PIO (Public Information Office) supervised by CPT Robert Hibbard. They were “PFC David Glascock, CPL Mike Rupee, a former disc jockey-salesman for a Milwaukee radio outlet, PFC Rudy Simons, ex-radio and TV director for a Detroit ad agency, PFC Doug Stone, one-time engineer for an independent radio station in Michigan, and Privates Al Mandel and Al Smith, who have TV and radio experience ‘under their belts.’”³⁹ The OJT in radio and news dissemination was helpful. The weekly Fort Riley *Guidon* began including a Psywar column called



The 8th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company assembled in front of their Camp Forsyth barracks for this commemorative photo before leaving for Fort Bragg, NC.



The Coat of Arms for the 6th Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group

LTC Lester L. Holmes assumed command of the 6th RB&L Group at Camp Forsyth, Fort Riley, KS.



Major General Thomas F. Hickey was the Commanding General of Fort Bragg in July 1952.



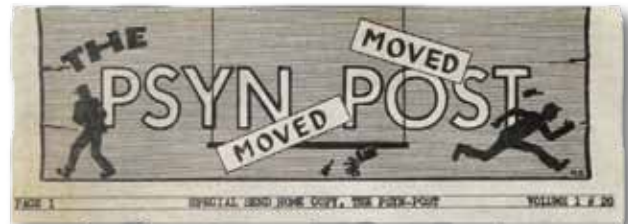
unit officers from January to March 1952.⁴⁴ The two lieutenant colonels served together at Fort Monroe, VA in the Office of the Chief of Army Field Forces

before Fort Riley. LTC Holmes received the Greek Military Cross for distinguished service with the American Military Mission in 1948, the most turbulent year in that country's modern history according to the 10 April 1952 *Psyn-post*.⁴⁵

The 6th RB&L was alerted for movement on 5 May 1952 and scheduled to depart on or about 1 June to arrive at Fort Bragg by 8 June 1952. Command was shifted from Fifth U.S. Army to Third U.S. Army.⁴⁶ It would be a simple movement of personnel since none of



When the 6th RB&L Group left Fort Riley, they moved from Fifth U.S. Army command to the Third U.S. Army.



Before departing Fort Riley, *The Psyn-post*, produced a commemorative edition that the Psywar soldiers could mail home.

the RB&L elements had received their unit equipment. Shortly before the RB&L movement order arrived BG Robert McClure got Department of Army to make some major changes affecting Psywar.

The Chief of Psychological Warfare convinced Army Chief of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins to consolidate Psywar and Special Forces training activities. In May 1952, Department of Army announced the activation of the U.S. Army Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg to do just that.⁴⁷

The 6th RB&L was welcomed to Fort Bragg by the Commanding General (CG), MG Thomas F. Hickey. The general's letter was published in the first *Psyn-post* printed at Fort Bragg: "The importance of your work in the struggle between governmental ideologies is inestimable. Where the artillery and mortar barrage softens by physical violence, your way is more subtle but equally essential. The influencing of the enemy mind can save untold numbers of lives and possibly avoid global conflict."⁴⁸

The first Fort Bragg *Psyn-post* also had photos and short biographies of the key Psywar Center personnel. The Center and School Commandant was COL Karlstad, a graduate of South Dakota State College, Class of '17, who as the CG, Combat Command A, 14th Armored Division, WWII had used tank-mounted loudspeakers during combat operations in Europe. His Executive Officer was OSS veteran COL Aaron Bank. LTC Carleton E. Fisher, a veteran WWII battalion commander in the 115th and 346th Infantry in Europe was slated to replace Bank. COL Gordon Singles, USMA Class of '31 was the Assistant Commandant.⁴⁹

In September 1952 the five company commanders in the 6th RB&L were: Signal Corps 1LT Nevin F. Price, 8th MRBC; Signal Corps 1LT James W. Lester, HHC; Infantry CPT George B. Blackstock, 2nd L&L Company; Infantry CPT Otto R. Bennett, 7th Reproduction Company; and Infantry 1LT Dwayne A. Panzer, 12th Consolidation Company.⁵⁰ By this time, *The Psyn-post* (Vol. 2, No. 1), 12 September 1952, had been reduced to digest-size like *The Leaflet* of the 5th L&L Company in Germany and the 6th RB&L

Assistant Adjutant, Infantry 1LT Don M. Anderson, who had coined the weekly's title, was the editor.⁵¹ The pin-up "Psy-rene of the Week" was movie star Cyd Charisse, co-star with Gene Kelly in *Singin' in the Rain*.⁵² The first "Psy-rene," none other than Marilyn Monroe, appeared in the 3 April 1952 *Psyn-post* published at Fort Riley.⁵³

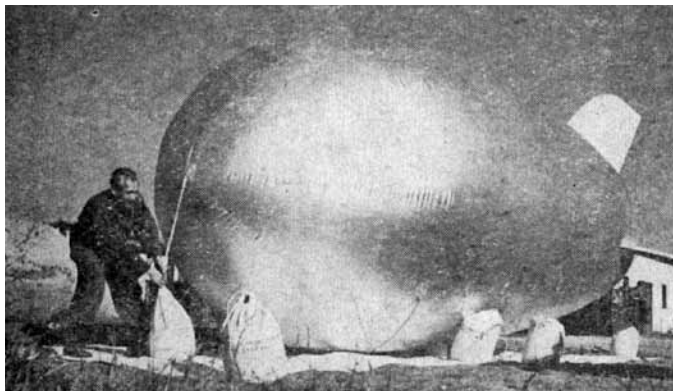
According to 1LT Price, the 8th MRBC commander, "Due to the lack of authorized equipment, the company has busied itself building various pieces of radio gear, organizing the radio shack, and fixing up the company area. Nine enlisted men were OJT at the transmitter site and studios of WFNC in Fayetteville. A group had gone to Quincy, Illinois to pick up their long-awaited transmitter and receiver."⁵⁵

Those that went to Gates Radio Corporation, a subsidiary of Harris Radio Corporation, were LT Price and 11 soldiers from the HHC, 8th MRBC, and the 7th Reproduction Company. Price was the 6X6 truck

commander and two tractor trailer trucks accompanied them to Quincy to haul two 26-foot Graham trailers that housed a mobile broadcast radio transmitter with its transformer and a mobile radio studio.⁵⁶ The balloon described in the introduction and a 180-foot steel tower antenna arrived separately.⁵⁷

There is obviously more to this history, such as the soldiers of the 8th MRBC finally being issued weapons at Fort Bragg when PFC Bast and 28 others qualified with the M-1 Carbine on 29-30 September 1952, the specifics on the broadcast radio transmitter and studio, and exactly where the unit was located on Smoke Bomb Hill. But, this is a start. The equipment T/D and/or TO&E for the 8th MRBC has to be found and veterans from a MRB platoon located. While this article was centered around the 8th MRBC, *The Psyn-post* also contains a wealth of information about the 5021st Psywar Detachment, the courses taught by the Psywar Division, Army General School from

These photos in the *Fort MacArthur News*, 13 February 1953, show the training provided to the 306th RB&L Group, USAR, by 1LT Nevin F. Price and CPL Hans R. Ulander, 8th MRBC.



OPERATIONS OF THE LEAFLET section of the 306th Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group are shown in these exclusive photos. In the above photo 1st Lt. Al Hernandez, CC of the Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company stands beside an inflated balloon used to float leaflets across battle lines. Lieutenant Hernandez and Cpl. Hans R. Ulander (center photo) complete attachments to balloon. 2nd Lt. Eugene S. Ritterburg (right photo) stands by with carbine to shoot down balloon in event it gets loose from its moorings.



The 12 September 1952 pin-up "Psy-rene of the Week" was movie star Cyd Charisse. The first "Psy-rene," Marilyn Monroe, appeared in the 3 April 1952 *Psyn-post* published at Fort Riley.

1950-52, the 6th RB&L Group, and its other subordinate units. But, the Psywar Board, the 12th Consolidation Company, and what became of the 9th L&L Company remain big unknowns and potential future *Veritas* articles.

Despite being formed without a mission statement and unit equipment, it was innovative, well-educated officers and soldiers with previous radio broadcast and print experience selected by the Army for Psywar who managed to prevail and practice critical skills. A combination of World War II veterans and well-educated draftees persevered to make the 8th MRBC a viable combat force multiplier. These tough pioneers provided a solid

foundation for Army PSYOPS and Special Operations Forces today and outstanding models to emulate.

Epilogue

The short biographies of these four key men reveal why the 5021st Psywar Detachment achieved some success at Fort Riley. They further explain why the 6th RB&L at Fort Bragg sent the three from the 8th MRBC to train RB&Ls in the Army Reserves. All were well-educated, technically proficient and experienced in their professions, and innovative leaders that could "make things happen." ♣

Nevin F. Price, born 9 October 1924 in Canadensis, PA, was sixteen when he graduated from Barrett High School (Mountain Home, PA) in June 1941. Too young to enlist after Pearl Harbor, he went to work in his brother-in-law's radio & electronics shop in Newark, NJ, attending the United Radio and Television Institute (URTI) at night, and studying for a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) second class



commercial radio operator license. When Price graduated in the fall of 1942, he had earned a FCC first class radio license, the key to working on the largest commercial radio broadcast systems.⁵⁷

But, it was wartime. Voluntary enlistment had been halted. So, Nevin Price asked to be drafted as soon as possible, hoping to join his brother-in-law in the Army Signal Corps at Fort Monmouth, NJ. Instead, he was picked for the Army Air Corps, did basic in Miami, and then went to radio school in Chicago and Scott Field, IL. Hallicrafters Radio Company technicians provided the instruction. Then, PFC Price was sent to a B-26 Marauder crew in Savannah, GA, that was hopping to Northern Ireland via Homestead Field, FL,

Georgetown, British Guyana, Belem and Natal, Brazil, Ascension Island, Liberia, Dakar, and Marrakesh, French Morocco.⁵⁸

Radio Gunner Price flew his first combat mission on 20 April 1944 with the 599th Bomb Squadron, 397th Bomb Group, Ninth Air Force from Rivenhall, England and completed his 65th (requisite number) from Airstrip A-72, near Peronne, France, on 29 November 1944. Technical Sergeant (T/Sgt) Price, who walked away from a forced belly-landing at Beaulieu, England, on 11 August 1944, departed the 599th Bomb Squadron in early December. He wore thirteen Air Medals, a distinguished unit citation, and four European Theater campaign stars and was bound for an radio instructor assignment at Scott Field, IL. Discharged on 9 July 1945, the twenty-year old Price was hired on VJ Day (14 August 1945) as an apprentice Radio Transmitter Engineer for Port Washington radio WEAJ on Long Island, NY.⁵⁹

WEAJ became WNBC (forerunner of NBC radio & television) in 1946. The postwar Army reinstated a WWII program in 1948 to organize USAR specialty units within industry. WNBC agreed to sponsor the 301st MRBC. Based on his USAAF wartime record and experience, Price was offered a direct reserve commission in the Signal Corps as a Second Lieutenant (2LT). The commander of the 301st MRBC was USAR Captain (CPT) William Buschgen, a WWII Signal Corps officer who was the Program Director for WNBC. It was a married 2LT Price that left the 301st and WNBC in January 1950 to move his family back to Pennsylvania. When he volunteered for active duty in March 1951, 2LT Price was ordered to Fort Monmouth, NJ, to attend the Signal Officers Basic Course. A newly promoted First Lieutenant (1LT) Price reported to the 5021st Psywar Detachment at Camp Forsyth, KS in late spring 1951 bringing a wealth of practical radio broadcasting experience.⁶⁰



Peter A. "Press" DeFranco, born 20 March 1928 in Chicago, Illinois, was a second generation print man. After graduating early from Carl Schurz High School in January 1946, DeFranco enlisted. Completing armor basic training at Fort Knox, KY, the new private shipped out for Third U.S. Army (TUSA) in Heidelberg, Germany and was assigned as a clerk in the Adjutant General (AG) office. Three plus years of Junior ROTC in high school was sufficient to warrant selection for the TUSA Officer Candidate School (OCS) in nearby Seckenheim in December 1946. Three weeks later a newly-minted 2LT DeFranco, USAR reported to the 33rd Field Artillery Battalion in Fulda. "The postwar Army units in Europe were so hard up for junior officers that Third Army came up with this abbreviated OCS. I was assigned as the Munitions Officer in a firing battery, but traveled



all over Germany collecting up unexploded WWII ordnance [duds]." When he was released from active duty in December 1947, 2LT DeFranco transferred to the active USAR and became an offset and linotype printer at E. Raymond Wright Printing Company in Chicago. 1LT DeFranco was recalled to active duty in mid-summer 1951 with the 10th Infantry Division (today's 10th Mountain Division) at Fort Riley. Expecting assignment to an artillery unit, DeFranco

was surprised to find out that he had just been reassigned to the 5021st Psywar Detachment at Camp Forsyth. "The Army had been screening military records and had checked with the big city printing unions to identify personnel who had just left for the service. All the enlisted men in my element came with a print background."⁶¹

Former CPL Hans R. Ulander, 5021st Psywar Detachment & 8th MRBC soldier, was born in Stockholm, Sweden on 11 January 1927. Following a mechanical & electrical engineer father, Ulander finished a Masters degree in Electrical Engineering in 1945 before his compulsory one-year service in the Swedish military as an Air Force radar instructor. He emigrated to the U.S. in 1949 where he got an engineering position in electrical vacuum tube manufacture. The Korean War brought a draft notice— "Serve or go home." High expectations of the US Army were dashed at Fort Knox, KY during basic when the trainees were used as "extras" for a Hollywood movie being filmed on post. "After three months of this, we weren't fit to go anywhere, let alone war. None of us went to Korea; a few went to Germany. Since I was bilingual and had an engineering



degree (engineering Masters degrees in the 1950s were rare), I was assigned to Psywar at Fort Riley (under the Professional Specialist program) to write leaflets and do radio broadcasts in my native tongue."⁶² One of the founders of the Amateur Radio Club at Camp Funston, Ulander did OJT at a local Junction City radio station with PVT Alan Smith, and in March 1952 began the last four-week Enlisted Psywar Course #1-52. The Swede was excused from classified parts because he did

not have a security clearance. PFC Ulander set up the loudspeaker system for the radio broadcasts, but he also pulled a lot of guard duty at the old Fort Riley water purification plant. Later CPL Ulander assisted 1LT Price when the pair trained the 306th RB&L (USAR) at Fort MacArthur, California in February 1953.⁶³

Former SGT Alan H. Smith, born 31 March 1930 in New York City, to a wire service writer/journalist and medical doctor's assistant, graduated from Forest Hills High School, Queens, NY in January 1947. He worked full time at CBS Shortwave. Smith's aspirations of being a CBS or NBC radio announcer after finishing Syracuse University in 1951 (Speech & Drama Arts and Broadcast Journalism) were delayed when he got his draft notice in October. Expecting to go to Korea, PVT Smith was surprised half way through basic at Fort Dix, NJ when an Army Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC) agent interviewed him to verify his broadcasting experience prior to assignment under the reactivated wartime Professional Specialist



program. Bored with guard duty and Aggressor Force support details, Smith volunteered to help 1LT Price "midnight requisition" shortwave radio equipment from the Air Force bases near Topeka and Wichita. The two hid their "finds" in Junction City homes of friends. "Even though we were doing nothing, we were immune from reassignment levies, especially overseas. That was the truly the biggest secret about Psywar at Fort Riley." Privates Henry Bast and Hans

Ulander were his classmates in Enlisted Psywar Course #1-52, which turned out to be the Army General School's last. A few months after the 8th MRBC established itself at Fort Bragg, NC, PFC Smith went to Chicago with 1LT Price to train a USAR RB&L on its equipment.⁶⁴

Special thanks go to Douglas Elwell, 4th PSYOPS Group, former Sergeant Alan Smith, former Corporals Henry Bast and Hans Ulander, former Lieutenants Peter DeFranco and William Dana, Jr., and retired MAJ Nevin Price, the 5021st Psywar Detachment and 6th RB&L Group veterans, for all their assistance in this groundbreaking article on the 1950s Smoke Bomb Hill "Forgotten," the Psywarriors.

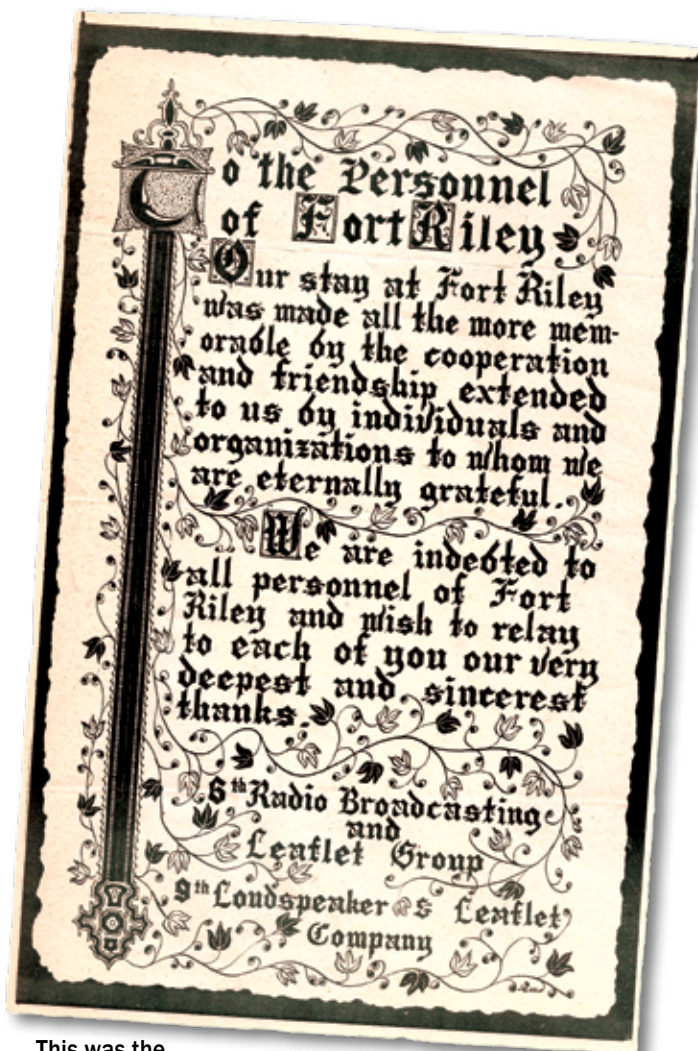
Charles H. Briscoe has been the USASOC Command Historian since 2000. A graduate of The Citadel, this retired Army special operations officer earned his PhD from the University of South Carolina. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, in El Salvador, and the Lodge Act.

Endnotes

- 1 Retired MAJ Nevin F. Price, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 September 2009, Rockville, MD, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 2 In the post-WWII military reductions in force (RIF), officers that had received accelerated wartime promotions in the U.S. Army Reserves to assume wartime combat assignments, reverted back to their highest Regular Army rank. However, when they retired, they did so at the highest grade attained. Thus, when COL Karlstad, the former CG, Combat Command A, 14th Armored Division, European Theater of Operations, retired in the fall of 1953, he did so as a Brigadier General. Office of the Commanding General, Headquarters, Fort Bragg, NC letter, SUBJECT: Welcome to Fort Bragg to the Officers and Men of the Psychological Warfare Center dated 10 July 1952 in 6th Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group, *The Psyn-post*, 12 September 1952, Vol. 2, No. 1, in personal files of former CPL Henry Bast, 8th MRBC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter simply *The Psyn-post* and appropriate citation and Price interview, 30 September 2009.

- 3 *The Psyn-post*, Christmas Edition 1952, Vol. 2, No 3, Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., "Major General Robert Alexis McClure: Forgotten Father of US Army Special Warfare" at <http://www.soc.mil/psypo/mcclureday.html>, 8/31/2009, and Ex-SGT Frank R. Haus, "Recollections of the 2nd Loudspeaker & Leaflet Co" at <http://www.geocities.com/franks-tale/recollections.html>, 11/16/2004.
- 4 Retired LTC Fred W. Wilmot, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 10 November 2004, Carrollton, TX, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 5 5021st Psychological Warfare Detachment A.S.U., Fort Riley, KS, *Weekly*, Vol I, No 1, 16 January 1952 in the personal files of former CPL Henry Bast, 8th MRBC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter simply *Weekly* with appropriate citation.
- 6 *Weekly*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 23 January 1952.
- 7 Paddock, "Major General Robert Alexis McClure: Forgotten Father of US Army Special Warfare" and Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 8 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 11, 5 March 1952.
- 9 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, EUSAK, APO 301, Seoul, Korea, *Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)* dated 10 August 1952; CPT Herbert L. Avedon, "Command Report No.18," June 1952 Avedon Collection, USAJFKSWCS Archives, Fort Bragg, NC, and U.S. Army General School, Fort Riley, KS, Graduation Exercise for Psychological Warfare Officers' Class No. 2, 1 March 1952. In an effort to affect the lack of school-trained loudspeaker (L/S) personnel, the 1st L&L Company commander, CPT Herbert L. Avedon, a WWII Ranger signal officer and OSS Psywar veteran, instituted a seven-day course in Psywar principles and training on loudspeaker equipment. Increased field requirements for L/S teams across Korea, personnel rotations, combat casualties, and inexperienced enlisted instructors minimized the effectiveness of this solution. CPT Avedon, 1LT Nevin F. Price (4th MRBC), 2LT Ivan G. Worrell (1st L&L Company, L/S Platoon Leader) and the 4th MRBC personnel in Pusan were among the few school trained officers in Korea.
- 10 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 3 April 1952.
- 11 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 3 April 1952.
- 12 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 11, 5 March 1952.
- 13 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 20, undated (May 1952).
- 14 Former SGT Alan H. Smith, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 1 June 2009, New Rochelle, NY, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 15 Photo entitled "The Psychological Warfare School" in *The Psyn-post*, 8 May 1952, Vol. 1, No. 20.

- 16 Former 1LT Peter A. DeFranco, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 29 September 2009, Burnsville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited with name and date.
- 17 *The Psyn-post*, Christmas Edition 1952, Vol. 2, No 3 and Paddock, "Major General Robert Alexis McClure: Forgotten Father of US Army Special Warfare."
- 18 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 5, 6 February 1952 and DeFranco interview, 29 September 2009.
- 19 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 13 February 1952.
- 20 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 18, 24 April 1952.
- 21 Headquarters, United States Army Forces Far East. Table of Distribution Number 80-8239-2, 4th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company, 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group, 8239th Army Unit, dated 1 May 1953, personal papers of retired USAR MAJ Nevin F. Price, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 22 *The Psyn-Posts*, 27 February 1952, 13 February 1952, and 20 March 1952.
- 23 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 13 February 1952.
- 24 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 19, 1 May 1952.
- 25 Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 26 *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 5, 6 February 1952.
- 27 Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 28 Price interview, 30 September 2009.
- 29 Robert W. Jones, Jr., "The Ganders: Strategic PSYWAR in the Far East, Part I: Introduction and Movement to the Far East," *Veritas*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 63-64; Price interview, 30 September 2009; DeFranco interview, 29 September 2009, and former CPL Hans R. Ulander, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 October 2009, Wicomico, VA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 30 Jones, "The Ganders: Part I," 63-64; Price interview, 30 September 2009; Ulander interview, 21 October 2009, and DeFranco interview, 29 September 2009.
- 31 Price interview, 30 September 2009 and "Army MARS: The Road Ahead, 19 February 2009" at <http://www.netcom.army.mil/mars/docs/Army%20MARS%20-%20Road%20Ahead.pdf> dated 11/16/09.
- 32 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 20, undated (May 1952).
- 33 Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 34 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 17, 17 April 1952, 6th Radio Broadcasting & Leaflet Group; *News In Brief*, Vol. 1, No. 36, Monday, 8 September 1952, and the *Monitor*, Vol. 1, No. 51, Friday, 12 September 1952 in personal files of former CPL Henry Bast, 8th MRBC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited simply by name and date.
- 35 Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 36 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 13, 20 March 1952.
- 37 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 3 April 1952.
- 38 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 14, 27 March 1952.
- 39 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 14, 27 March 1952 and Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 40 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 14, 27 March 1952.
- 41 *Weekly*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 23 January 1952.
- 42 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 3 April 1952.
- 43 The T/D for HHC (250-1201, 18 July 50 w/C 2 to SR 310-30-1) called for 6 officers, 2 warrant officers, and 69 enlisted men. The T/D for 7th Reproduction Co (250-1202, 18 July 50) called for 2 officers and 31 enlisted. The T/D for the 8th Mobile RB Co (250-1203, 18 July 50 w/C 2 to SR 310-30-1) had 3 officers and 34 enlisted. The TO&E for the 9th L&L Co, Army (20-77, 1 Sep 50 w/C 1 (Colm 8) called for 5 officers and 66 enlisted men. Headquarters, Fort Riley Kansas, ALRGO, SUBJECT: Movement Order #18 dated 23 May 1952 in personal files of former CPL Henry Bast, 8th MRBC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 44 *Weekly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 16 January 1952.
- 45 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 16, 10 April 1952.
- 46 Headquarters, Fort Riley Kansas, ALRGO, SUBJECT: Movement Order #18 dated 23 May 1952.
- 47 *The Psyn-post*, Christmas Edition 1952, Vol. 2, No 3 and Paddock, "Major General Robert Alexis McClure: Forgotten Father of US Army Special Warfare."
- 48 *The Psyn-post*, 12 September 1952.
- 49 *The Psyn-post*, 12 September 1952.
- 50 Office of the Commanding General, Headquarters, Fort Bragg, NC letter, SUBJECT: Welcome to Fort Bragg to the Officers and Men of the Psychological Warfare Center dated 10 July 1952, *The Psyn-post* (Vol. 2, No. 1, Friday, 12 September 1952).
- 51 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 3 April 1952.
- 52 *The Psyn-post*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Friday, 12 September 1952. *The Psyn-post* evolved from a weekly mimeographed news sheet printed by Psychological Warfare Detachment 5021 A.S.U. at Fort Riley, KS. Vol. 1, No. 1 was simply the *Weekly* on 16 January 1952. Two weeks later on 30 January 1952, LT Donald Anderson's suggested title was on the cover page. *Weekly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 16 January 1952 and *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 30 January 1952.
- 53 *The Psyn Post*, Vol. 1, No. 15, 3 April 1952.
- 54 *The Psyn-post*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Friday, 12 September 1952 and *Weekly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 16 January 1952 and *The Psyn-Post*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 30 January 1952.
- 55 *The Psyn-post* Vol. 2, No. 1, Friday, 12 September 1952.
- 56 Headquarters, Fort Bragg, NC, Special Orders Number 209 dated 11 September 1952 and Headquarters, 6th Radio Broadcasting & Leaflet Group, Fort Bragg, NC, Special Orders Number 45 dated 8 August 1952 in personal files of former PFC Henry Bast, 8th MRBC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC and Price interview, 30 September 2009.
- 57 Smith interview, 1 June 2009.
- 58 Price interview, 28 September 2009.
- 59 Price interview, 28 September 2009.
- 60 Price interview, 30 September 2009.
- 61 Price interview, 30 September 2009.
- 62 DeFranco interview, 29 September 2009.
- 63 Ulander interview, 21 October 2009.
- 64 Ulander interview, 21 October 2009 and "Public Gets First Look At 'Psywar' Equipment," *Fort MacArthur News*, 13 February 1953, Vol. V, No.1, 1, 3.
- 65 Smith interview, 1 June 2009.



This was the 6th RB&L leaflet jokingly dropped over Fort Riley after the unit departed for Fort Bragg. Soldiers were policing up the "Thank You" all over post for a week.