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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

ATZT-CG

22 MAR 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR ~~SEE~~ DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: The Importance of Professional Reading and Development

1. The Army is a learning organization. We can never spend too much time thinking about **our** profession. FM 3-0, Operations, emphasizes, "The duty of every leader is to be competent in the profession of arms." We must all do our utmost to prepare for the heavy responsibilities of military leadership. There is no better way to develop the sure knowledge and confidence required of our calling than a commitment to reading.
2. Reading provides insight and understanding we can gain no other way except actual combat and experience. Reading allows us to think about **our** profession using the experience of others. We experience how armies fight, how leaders motivate soldiers in battle, and how the U.S. Army has evolved over two hundred years. Reading helps us gain an appreciation for constants like the need for training, motivated troops, and strong leadership. We can learn from the past. History discusses actual events experienced by real people. We can more easily identify with the human element than with field manuals and technical books on strategy and tactics. Study the lives of soldiers in the past. Role models, either positive or negative, help us understand the human element of war and gives insight into the successes and failures of others.
3. As leaders, not only must we grow, but also **we** must help others grow. FM 22-100, Army Leadership, is very clear on the subject of mentoring and teaching. It states, "Teaching ..is a primary task for. . .leaders. To be an Army leader, you must be a teacher." Include your reading when mentoring. Mention and discuss specific books and your favorite passages. Exciting and interesting stories reinforce and bring to life your point. Set the example. How can you expect your soldiers to read if you don't? Read, build a library, and share your adventures and discoveries with others.
4. All of us have many demands on our time. Our responsibilities to our profession, family, and community are tremendous. However, it is clearly our moral obligation to find some time to study our profession. I urge everyone, from private to general to civilian, who is serious about his or her profession, to read.

ANDERS B. AADLAND
Major General, USA
Commanding

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Staff Offices