

The Colonel says
c. 1985

Unawares
is a word
we don't like to hear.

Afraid
that we'll be caught
with the proverbial pants down.

Embarrassed
by what we don't know.
Why can't they keep me informed?

Don't
they know that I like to be read in?
Kept up to date. What's the latest poop?

See
if you can find out
what's going on down there at the

company level
or if the flag suits you, up at Corps.
I've been blindsided one too many times.

How
come it is that the
Old Man knows, and I don't?

I'm the boss,
can't they get that straight?
And I'm the last goddamned one to know!

No
I really
don't like to be caught unawares. #

Christmas Songs. [These ditties are typical of warriors under stress, parodies of Christmas carols, prepared by staff officers but were never sung for a holiday party scheduled for Christmas 1984. The party was called off because people were too busy to come. The reference to the atomic bomb echoes America's major cold war deterrence strategy. The TOC or Tactical Operations Center is the maneuver brigade or battalion's nerve center of all combat operations. The Brigade Commander always wrote his staff notes and memos in green felt tip marker. The Brigade Executive Officer kept the brigade's motor officers hopping to make sure that all vehicles were operational.]

(Tune: O Tannenbaum)

O Atomic Bomb
O Atomic Bomb,
You stand and watch our neighbors
O Atomic bomb,
O Atomic bomb,
You keep us out of trouble!

You're standing tall in many forms
Pershing, MX, and Polaris too
O Atomic Bomb
O Atomic Bomb,
You keep us ever faithful! #

Christmas Songs: II
(Tune: We Three Kings)

We three guys from S-4 are
Looking for drinks we travel so far
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Searching for that open bar.

O bar of wonder,
Bar so right,
A bar with babes is a beautiful sight,
Awkward leaning, still proceeding
Oft in search of that neon light. #

Christmas Songs: III

(Tune: Up on the House Top)

Out in the field duty calls
And here comes good old Santa Claus
Into the TOC with lots of toys,
all for the little ones' Christmas joys.

Refrain:

Ho, ho, ho, we shouldn't go;
Ho, ho, ho, we won't go
Out in the field, click, click, click,
Into the TOC goes old St Nick.

First comes the stocking of little Guy
Oh, dear Santa, Why oh why?
Give him a pen that writes in green
So he can say we're the best he's seen!

Refrain:

Next comes the stocking of little Jack
Come on, Santa, take him back!
Here's one thing that might be fun,
Give him a jeep that doesn't run!

Refrain: #

By a long shot

Speaking of
missiles, a battalion
commander at a small
Kaserne just outside Herzogengerauch
was asked, "Do you go to Baumholder?"
His reply: "No, we can hit it from here." #

Markings

One word *that* people paid attention to: The mark rate, important as it was for how far the dollar would go for little extras like some *Rhein Wein*, a *Schnitzel* lunch at the *Gonsenheimerhof*, a bouquet of flowers at the *Pieter's Blumen*, some D marks for the kids' field trip. So by mark words or dollar words, people really did live by words, even if it was only to see the DM going up, up, up, or down, down, down, and the word on the mark was printed in the *Stars and Stripes*, to be read, tallied, and pondered, and quibbled over as couples planned to take the words to the bank, cash in hand, words they wanted so desperately to believe in.
#

**The uninterrupted continuity of
Bronze Age bulls and warriors**

The ADA,
the Air Defense Artillery
went to an island
in the Med
—Crete—
where the warriors
of King Minos
bravely fought
the bulls
vaulting over
their horns,
and today
you can
see the
painted athletes,
in ochre daubs
on stadium
walls, urns,
and vases,
of the ancient
kingdom,
beautiful
and full
of the graces
of contests
pitting man
against beast,
not the least,
as
Americans
fire missiles
in a high arc,
overreaching the
bull's back,
straight into
the sea. #