

# Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium

*Exploring the Professional Military Ethic*

## Symposium Report

Eisenhower Hall  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
November 15-17, 2010

*Edited by*  
*Mark H. Wiggins and Chaplain(Maj.) Larry Dabeck*



*Co-sponsored by the*  
**U.S. Army Command and General Staff College**  
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# Report Documentation Page

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE <b>NOV 2010</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2010 to 00-00-2010</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 66027</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			



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100 Stimson Ave., Suite 1149  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

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ISBN 978-0-615-49105-9

Layout and design by  
Mark H. Wiggins  
MHW Public Relations and Communications

Printed in the United States of America by Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas

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# Acknowledgements

The Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium 2010 was co-sponsored by the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the CGSC Foundation, Inc.

## **Command and General Staff College Department of Command and Leadership**

Dr. Ted Thomas, Department Director, Mr. Ted Ihrke and Chaplain (Major) Larry Dabeck, from the CGSC Department of Command and Leadership (DCL) were instrumental in planning, organizing and executing this symposium. As the CGSC staff lead, DCL was responsible for coordinating college support, the symposium agenda, identification of attendees and intellectual contributions from across the military services and academia. The DCL ensured engagement and support from the College's leadership, as well as led coordination for elective credit for CGSC student attendees. Chaplain Dabeck, the lead planner, did yoeman's work in making this second annual symposium a great success.

## **Command and General Staff College Foundation, Inc.**

Bob Ulin, Foundation CEO, was the lead for sponsor identification and coordination and symposium organization and structure. Under Bob's leadership the foundation provided funding and support for symposium execution and follow-up, to include prize awards for CGSC students and faculty whose papers placed first, second or third in the competition portion of the "call for papers."

Mark H. Wiggins, Foundation Director of Communications was responsible for creation and maintenance of the symposium website; and designing and producing all the printed products for the symposium, such as the symposium agenda booklet, signage, press kits and follow-up documents (proceedings). He was also responsible for conducting media relations in coordination with CGSC Public Affairs.

Ann Soby, Foundation Business Manager, was responsible for symposium site logistics and coordination as well as handling civilian attendee protocol and other general support. Her organizational skills were key in keeping this event on track.

## **Command and General Staff College—General Support**

Special thanks to Rita Durocher, Visitor Coordination Officer, who was the primary representative on the CGSC staff who coordinated and mobilized other staff elements within the college for required support at the Lewis and Clark Center and Eisenhower Hall. Thanks also go to the staff in Eisenhower Hall for their support.

## **Sponsors and Partners**

CGSC and the CGSC Foundation thanks Flint Hills Resources for their extraordinary support of the Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium. We would also like to thank the law firm of Spencer, Fane, Britt and Browne LLP for their support. In addition, this symposium was greatly enhanced by the support, cooperation and participation of the Army's Center for the Professional Military Ethic, led by Col. Sean Hannah.



# Foreword

The U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Command and General Staff College Foundation are pleased to present this report from the 2010 Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium, *Exploring the Professional Military Ethic*. The Aim of this symposium was to contribute to the Chief of Staff's vision of an Army that lives the Army values and embodies a Professional Military Ethic (PME) to meet the moral and ethical challenges faced in this era of persistent conflict. As the second ethics symposium at Fort Leavenworth, our intent was to build upon the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic's (CAPE) foundational work on an official PME.

Last year's symposium initiated the discussion on ethical and legal issues that U.S. Army leaders face in contemporary conflict. As a result, those attendees concluded that the U.S. Army needs robust ethics training and education at all levels that are supported by guiding principles for ethics in the profession of arms. During this year's symposium, members from CAPE presented TRADOC's White Paper on the Profession of Arms. This white paper should serve as a start point on the development of a PME. As LTG Caslen stated in his address to symposium attendees, "If the Army is a profession, it sets its ethical standards."

The 2010 Ethics Symposium enjoyed world class speakers whose work directly contribute to CAPE's efforts on a codified PME. For example, Dr. Jonathan Shay's presentation on "Moral Injury" hauntingly describes to us how violations of what's right adversely affect veterans' mental health. We also heard from Dr. Martin Cook who presented his views on how the professional military ethic should be integrated into military education and training. These are only two examples of the phenomenal speakers whose prepared remarks and papers are in these "proceedings."

The 2010 Symposium theme, *Exploring the Profession Military Ethic*, was timely, as the Chief of Staff of the Army has declared the year 2011 as an official "Review of the Army Profession in an Era of Persistent Conflict." During this official year of review, we encourage you to reflect on the works contained in this book, comment on the blogs, provide feedback to CAPE, and perhaps most importantly, share your experiences within your organizations. In order to ensure our Army lives by a guiding PME, we cannot rely on these symposiums alone. This symposium's proceedings should serve as a source of discussion as we continue to define our profession and its ethic.

Together, we must ensure that our Soldiers and Leaders are mentally armed with the right skill sets to successfully confront the ethical challenges of the 21st Century. Army Strong!

Brig. Gen. Sean B. MacFarland  
Deputy Commandant  
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College

Col. Robert Ulin, U.S. Army, Ret.  
Chief Executive Officer  
CGSC Foundation, Inc.

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Lt. Col. Erik Anderson  
LTG (Ret.) Robert Arter  
Maj. Mark Ayoob  
Chaplain (Maj.) Geoff Bailey  
Maj. Derek Baird  
Dr. Chris Barnes  
Chaplain (Maj.) Bradford Baumann  
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Lt. Cmdr. Mitchell Becker  
Maj. Jaime Bell  
Maj. Keith Borden  
Maj. William Brown  
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Dr. William Davis, Jr.  
Maj. Karla Davis  
Maj. James Davis  
Maj. Kelly Dobert  
Maj. Charles Downie  
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Maj. Augie Gonzales, Jr.  
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Dr. Jim Willbanks  
Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Kenneth Williams  
Col. (Ret.) Marvin Williams  
Lt. Col. (Ret.) John Williamson  
Maj. Brian Witcher

# Symposium Agenda

Monday, Nov. 16

- All Day**                      **Travel**
- 1530-1545**                    **Welcome Remarks** (*Lewis & Clark Center- Eisenhower Auditorium*)  
Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Arter, Chairman CGSC Foundation and Brig. Gen.  
Sean MacFarland, CGSC Deputy Commandant
- 1545-1700**                    **“Professional Ethics Across the Career Spectrum”**  
(*Lewis & Clark Center- Eisenhower Auditorium*)  
Dr. Martin Cook, Admiral James Bond Stockdale Professor of  
Professional Military Ethics at the United States Naval War College
- 1700**                            **Reception** (*Lewis & Clark Center- Atrium*)

Tuesday, Nov. 16

- 0730-0830**                    **Registration** (*Eisenhower Hall*)  
Coffee & Danishes; Registration
- 0830-1000**                    **Plenary Session** (*DePuy Auditorium*):  
**“Tensions in the Professional Military Ethic”**  
Dr. Don Snider, Col. (Ret.), Senior Fellow at the Center for the Army  
Profession and Ethic (CAPE)
- 1000**                            **Break**
- 1015-1130**                    **Panel** (*DePuy Auditorium*): **The Joint Professional Military Ethic**  
Dr. Davis, Maj. Manning, Col. Mattox
- 1130-1230**                    **Lunch**
- 1230-1530**                    **CAPE Presentation** (*DePuy Auditorium*) —  
**“Profession of Arms Assessment”**  
Col. Sean Hannah
- 1530-1730**                    **Open/free time**
- 1730**                            **Cocktails** (*Riverfront Community Center- Leavenworth, Kansas*)
- 1800-2100**                    **Dinner and Guest Speaker: “Moral Leadership”**  
Jonathan Shay, M.D., Ph.D.  
Dress: Jacket and tie/Class A or ASU

**Wednesday, Nov. 17**

**0730-0830**                    **Coffee and Danishes (*Eisenhower Hall*)**

**0830-1000**                    **Breakout Sessions (*Eisenhower Hall Classrooms*)**

Break Out 1 (Rm 252A)- Civil/Military Relations & PME  
Break Out 2 (Rm 252C)- International PME Considerations: Genocide  
Break Out 3 (Rm 253A)- Forming and Norming the PME  
Break Out 4 (Rm 253C)- The Ethic of a Business Professional

**1030-1130**                    **Breakout Sessions (*Eisenhower Hall Classrooms*)**

Break Out 5 (Rm 252A)- Train & Educate the PME  
Break Out 6 (Rm 252C)- PME & Mission Command  
Break Out 7 (Rm253A)- PME & Resilience

**1130-1230**                    **Lunch (*Eisenhower Hall*)**

**1230-1400**                    **Plenary Session (*DePuy Auditorium*):**

**“The Army Officers’ Professional Ethic”**

Col. Matthew Moten

**Closing Remarks**

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Arter



# Introduction to the Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium: *Exploring the Professional Military Ethic*

**Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr.**

**Commanding General, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
Commandant, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College**

*Editor's Note: This text Lt. Gen. Caslen's remarks "as prepared" for his videotaped presentation at the opening of the Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium, Nov. 15, 2010.*

Hello, I am Lieutenant General Bob Caslen, Commanding General of the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. It is my pleasure to officially welcome you to the 2010 Command and General Staff College's Ethic Symposium. As the Intellectual Center of the Army... responsible for instilling our Army's values and ethics into our Army's doctrine, training and leader development... Fort Leavenworth is honored to have the privilege of hosting this extremely important and relevant event. Our symposium's theme: *Exploring the Professional Military Ethic* is a powerful and relevant topic for us as professionals to reflect upon after nine years of persistent conflict. I would suggest that a worthwhile goal for this symposium would be to build off the work already accomplished by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic and share your ideas with one another in a truly collaborative environment. I ask you to *reflect – reflect* personally and collectively – on what ethically defines us as professionals in the profession of arms, and more so how that definition, whatever it may be, affects our relationship with the American people.

I regret not being able to be with you in person. Unfortunately, my schedule is not my own, and there are no stops in Fort Leavenworth this week. Although I cannot be with you in person, rest assured that I will be keeping close tabs on your progress and am eagerly awaiting the results of your hard work this week.

To our out-of-town guests I would like to say welcome. Welcome to this symposium, and especially, welcome to the Midwest and the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. I would also like to welcome you to Fort Leavenworth – the oldest Army installation west of the Mississippi. Fort Leavenworth has always served as a vital gateway for our country... as an embarkation point along the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails... to today... as the Army's gateway for leader development, education, doctrine and training. We are certainly glad you've taken the time to be with us this week... as we collectively reflect on our professional military ethic.

As our Nation and Army embark into the second decade of the 21st Century, a decade that will most likely be distinguished by persistent conflict, we must be aware of the rapidly changing nature of the world. We face a future that will be severely impacted by the emergence of several significant global trends.

As the world rapidly evolves around us, so too will the character of conflict. The conflicts of the 21st Century will likely be waged by a diverse combination of state and non-state actors. Our adversaries in the 21st Century will pursue a dynamic combination of means, shifting their employment in rapid and surprising ways. Future adversaries will likely use a tailored mix of sophisticated conventional and unconventional tactics and weaponry to mitigate our advantages and accentuate their own strengths.

**"Hybrid Threats"**, epitomized by Hezbollah against Israel in Southern Lebanon in 2006, will increasingly challenge state actors' ability to maintain security domestically and peace internationally. These "hybrid non-state actors" will demonstrate many of the traits of a nation state such as sophisticated weaponry and tactics, yet will not be handicapped by things such as bureaucracies and geographical boundaries. They will be distinguished by their organizational flexibility, agility and adaptability. These non-state actors with direct or indirect state support, often operating in

friendly or neutral nations will asymmetrically employ a dynamic combination of conventional, irregular, terrorist and criminal capabilities against the United States and our Allies designed specifically to counter our advantages.

Future conflict will increasingly be waged amongst the people, rather than around them. As our enemies draw closer to the people to blunt our advantages, gaining and maintaining the support of the indigenous populations will be a primary focus of combatant commanders. Our ability to build partner capacity and partnerships to mitigate these threats will be of vital importance – and we must have leaders that possess the right balance of skills to successfully bridge the cultural divides that separate different peoples.

It is within this context of time, circumstance and conflict that we will place our Soldiers and leaders. The dynamic, complex and uncertain operating environments of the 21st Century will test the mental agility, adaptability and moral consciousness of our Soldiers and leaders as never before.

As the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Casey, recently stated, “The 21st Century security environment, and the continuous adaptation of the Army in order to remain ahead of rapidly evolving threats, will put a premium on leaders of character and competence, leaders grounded in Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. This will require a commitment by the institution, leaders and individuals to lifelong learning and development as well as a balanced approach to training, education and experience as the foundation of any leader-development plan.”

The Army has decided to introduce the Campaign for the Profession of Arms to develop leaders of character and competence required to meet the dynamic challenges of the 21st Century. This campaign is designed to define and reinvigorate what it means to be a professional in the Profession of Arms. As we embark on this mission, we must reflect on the values and traits that define and distinguish us as a unique profession. Once this is established we must ensure that our DOTMLPF processes are instilled with the appropriate balance of ethical “**enablers**” that foster and maintain the conditions necessary to develop an Army that reflects on and lives that ethic.

According to FM 1, *“The purpose of any profession is to serve society by delivering a necessary and useful service...Each profession establishes a unique subculture that distinguishes practitioners from the society they serve while supporting and enhancing that society. Professions create their own standards of performance and codes of ethics to maintain their effectiveness...they develop particular vocabularies, establish journals and sometimes adopt distinct forms of dress... [and they hold] their membership to high technical and ethical standards”*.

So what does that mean to us? It means that if we are serious about calling ourselves a profession we must ensure that there is substance behind our words. We must ensure that our professional standards are demanding and rigorously enforced - that our behavior is habitually consistent with our ethic – and that we recommit ourselves to a lifetime of study, discourse, work and vigilance in order to perfect our craft.

After nine years of war we are seeing trends that require our attention. For example, Officers are increasingly foregoing educational opportunities in favor of the experience gained in combat. Rather than achieving the desired balance between experience and education, our officers are progressively becoming more one-sided...and thus less agile and adaptive. Also, operational demands imposed by nine years of continuous combat have led to high selection rates which meet the short-term demands for numbers, but tend to dilute the talent base within our ranks. A profession by its very nature demands distinction by merit, and it is in this merit-based promotion policy, where talent is rewarded and mediocrity is removed.

The very nature of counterinsurgent operations demand decentralized and distributed operations in order to retain the ability to develop the situation through action. These “wide-area security” missions are inherently more risky, as smaller units find themselves displaced from their traditional support and command structures. But what must occur is a frank discussion between commanders about risk and where risk is mitigated. In order to have this dialogue, a command climate that allows candor, transparency and trust is essential. Although the values of trust and collaboration underlie our profession, to truly establish a culture of trust and collaboration will require us to institutionally adopt, instill and inject these values into our DOTMLPF process – which is one

of the objectives I'd ask you to think about this week.

To successfully confront the challenges before us we should consider our roots. Over our Nation's history what were the sources that shaped the character of our Nation. These sources are the values and principles laid out in our Nation's Constitution. They are the bravery and work ethic of our ancestors...and they are the essence of our home, families, communities and installations. Collectively, they have created our ethically-based Army with its bedrock values that define acceptable and unacceptable behavior of our most junior leaders and Soldiers operating in small units at the tactical edge.

The task before us is daunting, but I am sure you are up to the challenge. I have no doubts that you will be successful in this fundamentally vital mission for our Army and our Nation.

The potential consequences of our inaction are immense. Today, after nine years of continuous combat, our Army is strained, and the stresses placed on our Soldiers are real. Yet the values of our Nation and Army have gotten us through tough times before; ***they can and will again***. That is why your work this week is so important.

Thanks again for coming. Good luck to all of you and I know you will have a great week... God Bless you...And God Bless the United States of America! Army Strong!



## **Part 1: Papers Presented**



# Professional Military Ethics Across the Career Spectrum<sup>1</sup>

by Dr. Martin L. Cook

Admiral James Bond Stockdale Professor of Professional Military Ethics  
United States Naval War College  
Newport, RI

## PROLOGUE AND GENERAL FRAMEWORK

In the past decade, the Army has made great progress in defining and sharpening the central idea that military officers are “professionals” in a strong normative sense. Although we often use the term “professional” quite loosely to refer to anything a person does for pay, the Future of the Army Profession project and its successors have done much to bring a more precise and focused meaning to the term. Among the central features of that understanding are the ideas that professional possess a specialized body of abstract knowledge, that they provide an essential service to the “client,” and that they are responsible to advance that body of knowledge so as to insure its relevance to the changing circumstances of practice and are trusted by the client to applied their expert knowledge at discretion. In addition, the focus on professionalism highlights the ideas that the motivations of a professional are and ought to be altruistic service, and that professionals are accountable for maintaining their own standards and discipline.

In this paper, I want to focus on the concept of professional ethics as a developmental arc that spans a whole career. Professionals are grown and developed over the course of decades of growth in expertise and responsibility. It is important, therefore, that professions think as deeply as possible about this developmental arc and view professional ethics as a cumulative process. In that developmental process, each stage of development requires explicit attention. What are the essential foundations of professional development for newly entering members? What new skills, knowledge and attitudes do they need as their responsibilities grow and broaden in mid-career? What are the unique challenges face the senior members of the profession as they take full ownership for the health and future of the profession? What has the profession done to ensure that they have been properly prepared to assume those duties? In this paper, we will reflect on these questions for the span of the career path of a military professional.

Let’s begin with a definition of “professional military ethics.” Professional military ethics is a set of normative expectations of what military officers should be, know and do in their behavior. A brief reflection is in order on the word “normative.” Often, because there is a tendency to like empirical approaches to the world, military personnel and organizations look to the social sciences to insight when they want to discuss leader development, values, formation of character, and similar issues. It is important to flag explicitly the limitations of that approach. By their very nature as empirical disciplines, social sciences are inherently *descriptive* in their approach: they discuss what is and what is measurable. In philosophy there is something commonly called the “naturalistic fallacy” which points out that “you can’t get an *ought* from an *is*.” It is occasionally quipped that all social scientists can tell you in the area of ethics is that “most people are average.” In other words, we need to get norms (the “oughts”) from disciplines that deal with the normative such as philosophy or functional exigencies of the profession itself. Once norms are identified, social science can be of great use in determining the best approaches to training and development to increase the adherence to norms – but only after norms have been clearly identified by normative disciplines.

The central themes we will develop in what follows are the suggestions that professional military ethics is a) developmental and cumulative – i.e., that different challenges and developmental needs arise of the course of a career and new skills and expectations build on foundations of earlier development and b) it is multidimensional, involving educational questions of things officers ought to know, functional excellence and settled traits of character that define the kind of persons officers

ought to be, and specific expected behaviors in different circumstances – what we expect officers to do. In other words, the older Army framework of “be, know, do” captures the right dimensions to explore. But traditionally it treats those elements somewhat statically whereas what this discussion hopes to add is the developmental and diachronic dimension of officer development.

## **PRECOMMISSIONING AND JUNIOR OFFICER DEVELOPMENT**

At the precommissioning and very junior officer level of development, a bulk of the emphasis on ethical development is necessarily on questions of personal ethics. Whether or not one agrees with often heard nostalgic references to the “good old days”– that there is a general decline in societal ethical standards that results in more morally compromised entrants into the profession – it is still the case that entering members need to be taught and habituated to high standards of personal moral conduct. They need to be both taught and trained in the importance of honesty, courage, truthfulness, and the other aspects of conduct that give specific moral content to the often overused all-purpose military moral term: integrity.

Although these traits are, of course, desirable in any human being, it is important from the outset that junior members of the profession have the link explicitly drawn for them between these traits and the functional requirements of the profession they are entering. Perhaps Sir John Hackett’s claims that successful military service is impossible in the absence of these traits are a bit overstated. Nevertheless, it is not hard to demonstrate that honesty, for example, in a sit-rep is critical to battlefield success since, in the absence of it, commanders misunderstand the situation of their subordinates.

My eight years’ experience teaching at the Air Force Academy leads me to think that getting this foundation properly laid is both essential and difficult. Even for junior and senior cadets, the idea that they were already junior members of a profession was not as palpable to them as would be ideal. To its credit, the Academy is taking measure to increase that felt sense by sending cadets on summer immersion programs to operational units. Everything we can do to maximize that professional reality at the precommissioning level is an essential contribution to getting the foundation of professional ethics properly laid.

There are some specific areas where “unlearning” is clearly required. For example, study after study shows that cheating in academic environments is both rampant and broadly culturally accepted among young people. Clearly those attitudes need to be addressed and unlearned. There have been incidences where failure to unlearn them has resulted in cheating scandals even at schools of commissioned officers. So clearly there is a challenge to the profession in doing everything possible to insure those attitudes don’t carry over into service.

Some aspects of the professional ethic unique to military service are, of course, legal. Therefore insuring the cadets and young officers understand the unique requirements of the UCMJ is essential. Further, when possible, linking those requirements to the unique requirements of military service is important so that they understand not just what the requirements are but why, if they vary significantly in some areas (e.g. fraternization) from broadly accepted social practices, how those unique requirements are necessary for military effectiveness. It is critically important, however, that even as the legal requirements are explained, cadets and junior officers are taught to understand the professional ethics is much more encompassing than legal requirements. (I note that many senior officers I talk with feel as if “ethics” is “law” – a view reinforced by the annual so-called “ethics brief” by the JAGs).

Although at this level necessarily the bulk of professional ethics is concerned with getting personal beliefs and behaviors aligned with the requirements of junior members of the profession, by no means is that the whole scope of the foundation-laying required at this level. It has been my observation that few modern 18-22 year old Americans have been educated well if at all on distinctive Constitutional and historical aspects of the United States. Although the foundation of the American professional military ethic lies in the oath to the Constitution, few have even read it, let alone possess a deep historical grasp of the meaning and central values it represents. Redress-

ing this need and countering some popular cultural misunderstandings of these issues is a critical foundation cadets and young officers need to build their professional self-understanding.

Specific Constitutional issues young officers need to understand concern the tremendous fears of the Founders about the role of military forces in a democratic republic. They need to know, for example, that the Constitution provided only for the state militias (the modern National Guard), normally under the control of the state governors, and a navy, with only a provision for raising an army as necessary, and only for two years unless specifically reauthorized. Understanding this fact is, in my opinion, a critical foundation for a proper understanding of civilian control of the military and proper civil-military relations. They need to clearly see that the powers to regular and control the military are in Article I, thereby placing primarily control of the military in the Congress. They need to understand that, while Article II clearly names the President the “commander in chief,” the Constitution intended there not to be a standing military for the President to command in normal times. And they need to understand that the large standing military made necessary by the Cold War is, in fact, a historical anomaly and one that would have alarmed the Founders who believed based on historical examples that standing militaries in the end always subvert democratic government. Perhaps President Eisenhower’s Farewell Address ought to be required reading at all levels of PME. In it, we all recall, he grudgingly accepted that a large standing military and a permanent arms industry would be necessary for the foreseeable future. But he also noted the radical departure this represented from the American Constitutional tradition and the danger it posed in terms of unbalancing American priorities between military and other social good. Understanding all this undergirds a deep understanding of the historical basis of the American professional military ethic and helps inform a deep understanding of the role of the military officer in American society generally. In particular, strengthening the understanding of the depth of these concerns at the Founding may be essential to rebuilding the apolitical commitment of the officer corps that has in recent decades been alarmingly eroded and desperately needs to be rebuilt. It is important to remember that Samuel Huntington’s classic *The Soldier and the State*, written fairly early in the Cold War, was meant to reassure the nation that the large standing military the Cold War would require, despite the great departure it represented to the American tradition, would be acceptable precisely because the officer corps would maintain a scrupulous political neutrality. Unfortunately, those reassurances don’t reflect the reality of recent decades in which the officer corps has identified almost entirely and often openly with one party. This is a trend which must be reverse if the social trust of the profession is to be maintained.

There are, further, a few areas of recent controversy of failure where officers need to deeply understand historical and Constitutional reality – in some cases in the face to strong cultural currents feeding misunderstanding. There are two in particular that recent historical experience would indicate need reinforcement. The first is reading the Constitution on the status of ratified treaties. Constitutionally, it is crystal clear that ratified treaties (e.g., the Geneva Convention) are exactly equivalent in status to U.S. Federal law. It follows that any instruction to violate ratified treaty requires are illegal orders and should be understood as such.<sup>2</sup> As General H. R. McMaster articulated, after this many years of redeployments and combat, the challenge of maintaining the moral core of our services will inevitably be strained and the strategic consequences of violating our own principles have already shown themselves to be high. This is one area – compliance with law – where our officers must be deeply grounded from the very beginning of their careers. Although we teach military personnel that that can and should disobey illegal orders, we in fact do little to prepare them well to do so.<sup>3</sup>

The other is the correct understanding of the scope and limits of religious self-expression on the part of an officer of the Federal government. Admittedly case law on exactly how to balance the free exercise clause and the non-establishment clause of the First Amendment is confused and confusing. But the spirit of the Constitutional requirement is clear: officers must assiduously avoid using the color of rank or authority to the benefit of any given religious opinion or to the detriment of any other, and must do everything possible with the constraints of good order and discipline to insure the free exercise of all subordinates equally. Ideally, officers should not only understand

these as legal boundaries imposed upon them. A proper understanding of American history, I believe, makes religious liberty and non-establishment one of the cornerstones of an informed American patriotism. We can't be reminded enough that the only places in the predominantly Christian world where a Jew or a Muslim could be assured of equal treatment and religious liberty in the 17th century were Rhode Island and Pennsylvania, and that the U.S. Constitution was unique in the complete absence of any reference to God. It is a cornerstone of American liberty that the Constitution assures its citizens that "all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States" (Article VI, Paragraph 3).

I dwell on this specific issue because I personally have witnessed quite senior officers flagrantly violating not just the spirit, but the letter, of the law on this point. Further, there is abroad in the land a substantial counter-factual historical revisionism arguing that the Founders were all devout Christians and intended the nation to be explicitly founded on Christian principles. This bogus history is used as the basis for a call to "return" America to this imagined history. These beliefs are widespread enough the culture that it is inevitable some of our officers and soldiers will encounter them and perhaps even be attracted to them.<sup>4</sup> But it is critical to a correct understanding of the Constitution and therefore of the meaning of their oath to it (and probably to their proper behavior in this area) that they be strongly disabused to any such beliefs. As former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (and a few others!) is often reported to have said, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts."

Lastly, even at precommissioning and junior officer levels, it is important that junior members of the profession have some understanding of the international system and international law. Essential elements of this are the key tenets and some of the moral grounding of the just war tradition in both its philosophical and its legal forms and a fundamental understanding of the system of international relations formed at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Ideally, they should understand why the sovereign state system was introduced and the tensions between state sovereignty and human rights that have (at least on paper) diminished absolute sovereignty from the Genocide Convention of the new United Nations through the recent Responsibility to Protect. They should know the legal framework established by the United Nations Charter and the many challenges that have arisen in making the UN an effective organization in many cases.

Lastly, junior members of the profession should begin early on to understand the tensions inherent in thinking about themselves as professionals in the area of civil-military relations. As professionals, one key component of self-understanding is that one has a body of professional expertise that others do not have. Therefore, professional military advice may be clear, but not accepted, or overridden by civilian leaders. Thinking early about these tensions is necessary if as they advance in rank they are to develop the intellectual skills and nuance to maintain a proper course through those tensions.<sup>5</sup>

Some suggest that the range of issues I've suggested are foundation are "above the pay grade" of precommissioned and junior officers. It is true, of course, that traditionally they have not been significantly addressed at those levels. I would suggest, however, that the fact that they are not well developed at that level and the assumption that all will be well if they are held back for later stages of PME is mistaken. Officer development should be continuous. Some years of teaching at the War College level has provided a basis to assert that officers arriving at that level are very far behind where they ought to be in understanding this range of issues – and indeed, some of the most embarrassing failures of very senior officers in recent years have suggested that even at later stages of development some officers still haven't "got it." The solution, it seems to me, is to build the whole foundation at the earliest stages where an officer has a bit more time and leisure to be educated so that when time and opportunity is more compressed at senior ranks, smaller doses of additional development in these dimensions are not entirely novel and can quickly augment what is already there.

## PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND THE FIELD GRADE OFFICER

For field grade officers, one should be able to assume that issues of fundamental personal ethics are adequately squared away (to the extent that they ever are for any of us). What, then, are the developmental needs that are distinctive to the Field Grade level?

The most obvious distinctive element at this level is that officers are on a trajectory of ever more complex webs of responsibilities. As junior officers, responsibilities are primarily for personal conduct and to one immediate superiors. As a company commander, for example, an officer now has lateral responsibilities to peers (fellow company commanders), downward responsibilities to his or her unit, upward responsibility to commanders, and the beginnings of the more amorphous world of personal as contrasted with positional power in their ability to gain or fail to gain status as someone whose opinion is solicited and valued.

Because the environment is more complex (and will only continue to become more complex as rank and responsibility increase), officers need to develop skills in moral reasoning to allow them to cope effectively with that complexity. Typical failures of professional ethics at this level often result from focusing too narrowly on one or a few of these obligations to the neglect of others. For example, being too focused on satisfying one's commander can lead to a neglect of appropriate concern for one's unit's welfare – or vice versa. Moral life begins to resemble a vector analysis problem in physics, where many forces are in play, pulling in different directions with varying magnitudes. Opportunities to reflect systematically and carefully on real-world moral dilemmas and challenges are one of the critical elements of advancing officer ethical development at the ILE levels of PME.

Increasingly, our units deploy as part of complex coalitions and, given the nature of the conflicts we are now engaging, into close interaction with culturally quite alien societies. All of that suggests that everything we can do to increase skills for understanding and coping with cultural, religious and linguistic differences are key to the competencies officers will need to operate successfully at this level.

Another aspect of the complexity of modern coalition operations is that officers need to understand the structure and interactions of organizations present with them other than their own service or branch. Obviously this means “jointness” in terms of the U.S. services, but increasingly also the UN and regional security organizations and the whole range of NGOs likely to be present in the AOR. I would especially highly the subtle and complex issue of working effectively with NGOs, while understanding and even appreciating the reluctance of many of them to be seen as cooperating with the military excessively.

As mid-grade officers, the issues of partisanship and religious beliefs I mentioned above begin to appear in a new and more complex form. As leaders of units, officers need to begin to develop the self-discipline to distinguish sharply between their personal beliefs and their responsibility to lead their organization in such a way that all members feel equally valued and included. For some officers I have observed, their own self-understanding of their motivations for military service are deeply grounded in their religious world view, and some have strongly held political opinions or opinions about specific elected leaders. The reason I stressed a deep grounded at the very outset of the career in a proper understanding of Constitutional issue regarding religion and the fear of a politicized standing military is that this is a level where officers need to begin to develop the self-discipline to distinguish sharply between the role as officers of the Federal government of the United States and their personal convictions on such matters. The fact that an officer could rise to General McChrystal's rank and tolerate a staff who spoke so disrespectfully of civilian officials without correction suggests we need to do a far better job at earlier stages of officer development to police the culture of the military against such expressions. And the fact that an officer such as then Brigadier General Johnny Weida could so blatantly engage in religious proselytizing while Commandant of the Air Force Academy (to cite only one of many egregious examples of such behavior) suggests we have to develop not only more restraint on such matters but, as I suggested above, a deep positive appreciation of the First Amendment's place in a well-informed American patriotism.<sup>6</sup>

## ETHICAL CHALLENGES OF THE SENIOR OFFICER CORPS

At the Army War College in Carlisle, PA, they invented an acronym which is intended to convey to War College students the unique nature of the strategic leader environment that distinguishes it from the lower levels: VUCA. It stands for volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. The central idea is one we touched on earlier: that because military organization need to plan clearly for as many contingencies as possible and depend on reliable execution of orders, they inevitably foster a mindset that prefers clarity, specificity, and detailed planning. The “pitch” throughout the year at Carlisle is that those very skills which have made officers successful enough to get to War College may no longer serve them all that well in the strategic environment because it is not generally amenable to that approach.

Although it is counterintuitive to many, I wish to suggest that ethics, too, has an ever-increasing VUCA aspect as one advances in rank. Many prefer to think of ethics as straightforward and simple – an unchanging rock amidst other complexities and uncertainties. But as we have already seen, with increasing rank comes an ever-more complex web of obligations. This fact necessitates the “vector analysis” approach to those obligations, but at an even more complex level. Think for a moment of the ethical environment of a Chief of Staff or a Regional Combatant Commander. They have obligations to the current administration, to the Congress, to international partners, broadly to the American people and even to the international system. Those obligations in some cases span decades. For example, a Chief is responsible for the health of the service (in terms of leader development and acquisitions programs, for example) decades out – long after their term of service will have elapsed.

It requires fairly sophisticated intellectual skills and tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity to balance all those considerations properly. Empirical evidence for the effectiveness of ethical development programs is, unfortunately, fairly scarce. But what there is indicated that discussion of complex cases among peers is the most effective approach to improving skills for moral reasoning. This would indicate that insuring such discussions are a part of PME at the most senior levels is vital.

An area we at the Naval War College have begun to explore is the phenomenon of quite senior officers who have obviously been successful and dependable throughout long careers who suddenly appear to “lose it” at high levels of command (e.g., the high number of reliefs for cause in recent years in the Navy). Most of these are ethical failures around issues of sex and money. We do a session of a couple of hours at the Major Command Course in Newport – a week long course for even Navy O-6 about to assume a major command (e.g., a destroyer squadron or equivalent). When we began that course and were discussing what to include, we initially decided that issues of “zippers and money” were not worth our time and attention.

One of the students in that course brought to our attention a provocative article entitled “The Bathsheba Syndrome.”<sup>7</sup> Drawing an analogy from the Biblical story of David and Bathsheba, the authors tantalizingly explore the question of whether some ethical failures result not from fear of failure or the desire to get ahead, but rather precisely from a history of past successes. The article eventually came to the attention of the Chief of Naval Operations, and he distributed it to all the Flag Officers in the Navy.

The author’s suggestion is that successful leaders who rise to high positions may be liable to systematic moral misperceptions and mistakes that they would not have fallen into at lower ranks. The specifically identify four factors that may blind senior leaders and lead them into error. First, they may lose strategic focus. The idea is that they’ve worked so hard to get where they are, and have been so successful, they allow themselves to coast and not concentrate as hard as in the past on their central tasks. Second, they now have privileged access to information and people that gives them power they’ve never experienced before. Third, they control vast resources they can use with considerable discretion and little supervision. And last, they come to have an inflated sense of personal power that leads them to think that even if they misbehave they have power to control damage and outcomes.

A similar set of insights comes from a newly developing field within philosophy called “experimental philosophy.” This movement attempts to reconnect normative philosophical thought with empirical information to better ground ethical claims in the realities of human psychology. One fascinating experiment took two groups of seminarians at Princeton Seminary and gave them an identical lecture on the New Testament story of the Good Samaritan which, as you will recall, praises a man who gives aid to an injured person out of the goodness of his heart. The control group was then dismissed and encountered an actor pretending to be in distress as they left. As one might imagine, they rendered aid. The second group was dismissed, but with the addition of an admonition that it was vitally important to get to a meeting across campus in a short time period. Eighty percent of this group walked right past the actor.

The point of both stories is that situational factors play a large and perhaps decisive role in shaping behavior. In light of that, perhaps we should explore those factors more deeply because, if we understand them, we may be in a position to better prepare officers for them. By analogy, we know human sensory perception is inaccurate and distorted in some situations (e.g., tunnel vision under high G loads, or optical distortion through water). When we know that, we can design training to prepare individuals to correct for that misperception before they experience it. Is there an analog to this in ethics? Perhaps we need to better prepare officers (and perhaps especially senior ones) to be morally self-aware and, in particular, aware of the distortions senior leadership positions may generate.

This is particularly relevant when we consider how military organizations usually deal with instances of moral failure. When there has been a major failure, typical responses are to fire the leadership, mandate new training, and perhaps issue more policies. But what if the real root causes of the failure are not addressed by any of these factors? A clear example is GEN Shinseki’s initiative to improve the Army’s readiness reporting system. As Chief, he realized the existing reporting system made it impossible for junior officers to report accurately. If they were below C-2, they would be counseled not to report that or, if they did, would probably have the report pencil-whipped by higher headquarters. Consider the case of a company commander inaccurately report his or her unit as C-2, when it’s really C-3. Is that officer lying? Certainly they are knowingly presenting a false report – close to the textbook definition of lying. But it would be foolish to judge that officer in that way. The issue is not the honesty or dishonesty of the individuals in question. And if someone decided that because this false readiness report came along they should fire the commander, mandate more training, or issue new policies, that too would be wrongheaded and would in no way “fix” the problem. The problem is the system in which that officer is embedded, and until someone with rank and authority fixes that system, the inaccurate reports will inevitably continue.

This analysis is vitally important when we think about the ethical character of the profession because with increasing rank and officer controls or affects more and more of that system. Explicitly reflecting on this dimension of professional ethics broadens the usual considerations and invites officers at every level to think through the systems they control and work under and to explore the behavior they drive, allow, and reward. As system that only allows heroes and martyrs to do the right thing is unlikely to see a great deal of ethically ideal behavior.

I’ll conclude with a model of moral development that I think usefully lays out the dimensions we need to consider when we think comprehensively about professional ethics. Educational Psychologist James Rest developed a “four component” model of moral development that is widely used. According to Rest, moral development involves 1) moral sensitivity, 2) moral reasoning and judgment, 3) moral motivation and 4) moral character. Only if we develop and consider all four, he argued, have we comprehensively address moral development.

Moral sensitivity is the ability to recognize that there are ethical aspects worthy of consideration on the situation before us. This may seem obvious, but especially in a military environment where there is so much reliance on SOP’s, and such a strong pressure toward conformity and risk of group-think, this is an aspect of moral development we should perhaps reflect on more deeply. Moral sensitivity is best developed by open discussion and a unit climate that allows the “space” for raising moral questions. Even more importantly, if leaders value it, they have to model it by

raising moral aspects of decisions themselves – thereby signaling to subordinates that opening and discussing such dimensions is permitted and even encouraged.

Moral reasoning and judgment is the ability to think carefully through a moral problem. Kohlberg famously developed a six-stage developmental scale of moral reasoning and that scale has been operationalized into a psychological test called The Defining Issues Test (DIT). It has been well validated. It is the one aspect of moral development that has so far been amenable to empirical research. It has been shown that the intervention of an ethical course of instruction – especially one in which complex cases are discussed with a skilled facilitator – can move a study group to higher scores on a DIT.

The limitation of the DIT, however, is that it measures only the moral reasoning component of the Four Component Model. Because it is limited to one of the four components, therefore, it does not correlate to any statistically significant degree with overall moral behavior. Nevertheless, I have argued that we do need to help officers think more deeply and clearly about moral complexity as they rise in rank, and therefore this aspect of moral development is worth specific attention.

The moral agency component concerns the degree to which an individual feels as if he or she is able to exercise meaningful moral autonomy and to act on his or her convictions. Obviously in a military environment, concerned with good order, discipline and uniformity, the degree to which at various ranks the organization wants to encourage moral agency is a tricky question. It is worthy of reflection, however, that when individuals are placed in coercive environments where they are routinely or systematically forced to engage in actions they feel to be morally wrong, they can be driven to moral apathy or even amorality. This is a perpetual challenge for any military organization. For example, it was my observation at the Air Force Academy that despite all the verbal emphasis on “character development” of cadets, the fear of cadets “messing up” was so great, that the institution responded by attempting to regulate every aspect of their behavior to avoid the embarrassment of failure. In such an environment, it is critical to note, even if cadet *behavior* is perfect, one has no idea whatsoever *why* – is it because they are (to use the jargon of the Academy) “officers of character” (one might have preferred “officers of *good* character!”), or merely because they conform to avoid punishment? Unless individuals have scope to actually made moral choices, we have no idea about that until they’re in an environment where they do. This suggests that even military organization need to think deeply about where they can afford to create “space” for such choices.

The last component, moral character, addresses the aspect of morality which was Aristotle’s focus: the formation of habits of behavior that become so much the part of identity and they flow naturally and even pleasantly for an individual. Much of military training is devoted to precisely this kind of formation of habit. In important areas such as respect for prisoners or for the Law of Armed Conflict generally, the training and habit formation aspect of development is almost certainly of greater effect under stress than the moral reasoning/judgment part.

## CONCLUSION

The development of professional ethical identity for an officer is developmental. It spans the whole of a career. It is cumulative in the sense that we need to think deeply about what aspects need to be addressed at each stage of that development. I believe deeply that we need to provide a stronger and intellectually deeper bases at the outset of an officers’ career than we have believed necessary in the past.

The Army’s widespread focus on the Army Profession is the perfect vehicle for that comprehensive review. It comes at a time when then Army is stressed and it is altogether wide and prudent to focus intensely on these questions at the juncture in our history. At every level of rank, you are both the members of and the owners and managers of the profession. These reflections are intended, I hope, helpful suggestions, from one who deeply respects who you are and what you do but who bears no similar responsibility. We all trust you to manage your profession wisely and well – that is the trust the American people place in you by granting you professional status.

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## Endnotes

1. I wish to thank my esteemed and learned colleague, Dr. (COL, ret.) George Reed of the University of San Diego for critical reading and suggestions for revision of an earlier draft of this paper.
2. I realize, of course, these issues were arguably cloudy in the recent Iraq war because legal advice was indeed offered in some quarter indicating the some of the actions taken which most would view as illegal were, according to counsel, asserted to be legal. But at least in cases where the instruction came from civilian or military leaders in the absence of legal advice which officers are entitled to rely on, even if later it becomes clear that it was legally in error, refusal of illegal orders remains the proper framework for analysis.
3. An excellent and provocative discussion of what it might require if we were to prepare military personnel to do so is found in Mark Osiel's excellent book, *Obeying Orders: Atrocity, Military Discipline & the Laws of War* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999)
4. I first encountered these views when I was given a book by a retired Army Colonel friend and colleague. The book was America's Godly Heritage by David Barton. My friend had received it at the evangelical Protestant church he attended and thought it was good solid history. I note that my friend was a very well-intentioned and intelligent man – just not especially knowledgeable about American history. The book is well-produced and has the appearance of scholarship including many footnotes. It is, however, almost entirely a collection of distortions, out-of-context partial quotations, and occasionally just made up claims. Barton, however, is a one-man industry producing such materials which are widely disseminated through evangelical churches and Barton himself speaks all over the country, including at military organizations. Further information about him and his work can be found at [www.wallbuilders.org](http://www.wallbuilders.org). An independent scholar, Chris Rodda, has made it her business to debunk his work down to the level of tracking down every single quotation. Her book doing so is called *Liars for Jesus*, and her website [www.liarsforjesus.org](http://www.liarsforjesus.org) summarizes most of that information. All this has been further exacerbated lately with television personality Glen Beck's embrace of Barton and a still loonier book *The Five-Thousand Year Leap* by Glen Skousen – a book that had fallen into well-deserved forgetfulness until Beck brought it back and pushed it on his television show and also in "courses" in "Beck University" – a collection of online courses produced by the Beck organization. Officers and soldiers engaged by any of this are liable to extremely serious mis-education on the Constitution, and specifically on the place of religion in Constitutional government. But if they sincerely believe this alternate "history," it necessarily is going to deeply condition their understanding of the Constitution itself.
5. An excellent example of the importance of thinking about these matters clear is found in the cautionary tale of the publication of an article in *Joint Forces Quarterly* by Marine Lieutenant Colonel Andrew R. Milburn entitled "Breaking Ranks: Dissent and the Military Professional" (<http://www.ndu.edu/press/breaking-ranks.html>) in which the author takes the concept of military professionalism and uses the concept of professional autonomy to argue the military should function as, in effect, an independent branch of government since civilians don't have the expertise or have not fulfilled their Constitutional duties to his satisfaction.
6. Although occasionally shrill, the cases of such behavior documented by the Military Religious Freedom Foundation on its website are definitely worth looking at from time to time. They clearly demonstrate a pattern of at least insufficient sensitivity and care around these issues and, it would appear, occasional deliberate intent not to respect Constitutional limits to the use of Federal authority and resources to, in effect, endorse and favor some specific religious groups and beliefs over others. See [www.militaryreligiousfreedom.org](http://www.militaryreligiousfreedom.org)
7. Ludwig and Longenecker, *Journal of Business Ethics* (April, 1993).



# The Army is NOT a Profession Just Because it Says it Is!

by Don M. Snider, Ph.D.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the central challenges to understanding the idea that the Army can be a profession of arms is to come to grips with the fact that the Army actually has a dual nature. It is, simultaneously, both a government occupation housed in a hierarchical bureaucracy *and*, if it qualifies, a profession of arms.

It is the former by design of the Founding Fathers, the Constitution, and the implementing statutes, such as Title 10 U.S. Code, which specify the organization and structure of the Army under both Congressional and Executive control. When it is the latter, a profession of arms, a interaction of two factors has occurred: (1) the intention and actions of the leadership within the Army to shape it into the behavior and actions of a unique occupational group, a profession; and (2) the subsequent judgment of the American people, the collective client of the Army, that the Army leaders have been successful in their leadership and that the Army is, in fact, performing in their service effectively and ethically as a profession of arms.

Therefore, the American people get to decide when the Army is a profession. As we shall see, that is the way it is with professions in western economies, whether the Army likes it or not. The Army cannot simply declare itself to be a profession. To be sure, it can and should declare in its doctrine the intention to move beyond the ethic and practices of a government occupation and to maintain itself as profession and to develop its Soldiers as professionals. But in the end, the client gets to decide when the Army has earned that coveted status and when, conversely, it has not moved beyond its “default” character of a government occupation.

The importance of this fact of the Army’s dual character should not be missed because it is also the case that any Army Soldier who seeks to become a professional cannot do so unless there is a profession within which he or she can develop. Just as lions do not eat hay, government occupations do not develop professionals; it is not in their character to do so. Thus the principle finding of extensive research on the Army as profession was summarized by an Army Soldier in 2002 as:

*How can I be a professional, if there is no profession?<sup>1</sup>*

So, if the Army is not led to be a profession of arms by its strategic leaders, the American people will have only an obedient government bureaucracy to do its fighting!

Briefly explaining this set of circumstances, the reality in which Army leaders lead, is the intention of this short essay. And I shall do so in three steps: first a very brief overview of the past, then an examination of the three alternative logics used by productive organizations followed by a contrast between the two logics and organizational forms that are applicable to the Army, those of government bureaucracy and profession.

## THE PAST, BRIEFLY...

For a large portion of the Army’s history, it was only a government occupation structured as a hierarchical bureaucracy. Even before it was created in 1803, the colonial militias of “well-armed citizenry” were under the close supervision of the colonial legislatures.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, and without shedding its nature as a hierarchical bureaucracy, it is generally accepted that the Army Officer Corps was professionalized during the late nineteenth century under the influences of Sherman, Upton, and Mahan as the educational system was deepened with staff schools at Forts Benning and Leavenworth and, just after the turn of the century, the creation of an Army War College. At that

time, education was the primary means of professionalization for any aspiring vocation, education to create leaders capable of developing the expert knowledge and effective practice needed for professional status.<sup>3</sup>

Describing this organizational shift and with focus only on officers, Huntington observed in 1957 that: "...officership is a public bureaucratized profession. The legal right to practice in the profession is limited to members of a carefully defined body. His commission is to the officer what his license is to the doctor."<sup>4</sup> Of course, since that time professional status within the Army has extended well beyond the commissioned officer corps to include warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and some Army civilians.

So even as the Army as earning initially its professional status among vocations in American, historians have long understood that there was a second character to the institution, one that had been there since the inception of the colonial militias.

## **VIEWED FROM THE LOGICS OF PRODUCING ORGANIZATIONS**

Another way to look at this fact of the Army's dual institutional character is from the logics used by those organizations in American that produce things. In fact, the Army is a producing organization—producing "the human expertise, embodied in leaders and their units, of effective land combat."<sup>5</sup> As a producing institution, the Army and each of its subordinate units and organizations could be organized, as are armies in other societies, under one or a hybrid of three ideal models—a business, a government occupational or bureaucracy, or a profession.<sup>6</sup>

In the first model, businesses generally operate within the interactions of competing markets with economic profit and productive efficiency serving as the motivating forces. However, the Army is most certainly not a business. The Army was established by the Founding Fathers to accomplish its operational missions as now stated in Title 10, not as an organization to turn a profit.<sup>7</sup> The Army can therefore structure and motivate itself as either (or a hybrid of) a governmental occupation or a vocational profession.

## **GOVERNMENT OCCUPATION**

In the second case, government occupations generally work with non- expert knowledge, designed to do socially necessary, repetitive tasks with efficiency (e.g., a state Department of Motor Vehicles). Such bureaucratic organizations generally rely on structure and process, formalization and differentiation of roles and tasks, centralized management, and standard operating procedures to do their work. Being efficient producers of non-expert work, they survive over the long term by competing successfully among other bureaucracies for necessary resources. They generally focus little on developing their personnel, as most can be easily replaced by acquiring and training new personnel.<sup>8</sup>

Make no mistake, as will be discussed later, our Army needs a "professional" bureaucracy in its supporting organizations to maintain our manning, equipping, training, and other systems. What is critical is that those systems are all aligned to support the Profession of Arms, versus that profession being conformed and constrained by its supporting organizations.

## **PROFESSION**

As noted in the introduction a profession is an organization for producing uniquely expert work, not routine or repetitive work. Such expert work requires years of study and experiential learning before one is capable to practice effectively, e.g., a medical doctor doing surgery, a lawyer arguing a brief before the bar, or an Army commander synchronizing the various elements of combat power in a modern COIN environment. Since the members of the society served are utterly dependent on these professionals for their health, justice, and security, a deep moral obligation rests on the profession, and its professionals, to use their unique capabilities only in the best interests of

their client, and not in their own interests. Thus all professionals inherently are servants, morally bound to an ethic of non-exploitation via their expertise. More specifically military professions are generally considered “social trustee” professions in that their life blood is the trust in which their collective client, their society, holds them to be able to do something that the society cannot do for itself, but yet without which the society cannot survive; and to use that expertise according to the values held by the client.<sup>9</sup>

The fields of medicine, theology, law, and more recently the military have traditionally been organized in western societies as a social trustee form of profession.<sup>10</sup> Effectiveness, not efficiency, is the key to the work of professionals—the sick want a cure, the sinner wants absolution, the accused want exoneration, and the defenseless seek security. To be sure, all clients in any professional field want efficient service, but effectiveness—truly efficacious results from the profession’s expert practice—is their overriding goal.

Thus, professions are self-forming, self-regulating, and self-initiating organizations for the provision of expert services. And the servant ethic of professions is therefore characterized as *cedat emptor*, “let the taker believe in us.”<sup>11</sup> The Army’s professional ethic is built on trust with the American people, as well as with civilian leaders and junior professionals within the ranks.<sup>12</sup>

It follows from these descriptions that the means of motivation and social control within a profession—its Ethic—is also quite distinct from those of a business or a government occupation. The client (i.e., the American people in the case of the Army) trusts the profession to produce the expert work when and where needed. And because of the client’s trust in the profession’s expert knowledge and practice, the American people are willing to grant significant autonomy to professions to create their own expert knowledge and to both certify and police the application of that knowledge by individual professionals.

An exemplary Ethic is thus a necessity for the Profession of Arms to retain such trust from the American people. The profession must actively self-police the use of its Ethic, precluding to the extent possible any incidents that serve to undermine America’s trust in the effectiveness of their Army or its Ethic, e.g., the strategic failure at Abu Ghraib, the failures at Walter Reed Medical Center, the terrorist massacre at Ft. Hood, and the more recent failures at Arlington Cemetery.

Further, while businesses and government occupations traditionally motivate their workers by reliance on extrinsic factors such as salary, benefits, promotions, etc., professions in contrast use means of social control that are more inspirational, largely intrinsic factors such as the life-long pursuit of truly expert knowledge, the privilege and honor of service, the satisfaction of nurturing and protecting life enabling society to flourish, and the social status of membership in an ancient, honorable, and revered occupational group. Thus true Army professionals are always more personally motivated by the intrinsic aspects of their service, rather than by its extrinsic factors.

We can fairly summarize this discussion by noting that an organizational continuum exists along which every Army command and unit finds itself every day. Here we simply restate the facts: the Army has a dual character, it is both a military profession and a governmental occupation and these two types of organizations have different cultures and behaviors, following different ethics.

The end points of this continuum of organizational culture are described in the chart below; and it clearly is a continuum, with every Army organization reflecting some aspects of each. Based on their assigned mission, there may be an optimum balance between professional and occupational behavior that differs across Army organization types. A supply depot, for example, and a brigade combat team may rightly differ in character based on their profession/occupation mix.

COMPARISON	PROFESSION	GOVERNMENT OCCUPATION
Knowledge	Expert, abstract and practical; requires life-long learning and certification	Non-expert; quickly learned on the job largely through training vs. education/development
Practice	Knowledge applied with discretion to new situations by individual professionals	Repetitive situations, work done by following SOPs, administrative rules, and procedures
Key to Success	Focus on effectiveness of applied practices	Focus on efficiency of resources used
Culture/Ethic	Granted autonomy to practice within a self-policing ethic	Closely supervised; imposed governmental ethic
Investments	Priority investment in developing individual professionals	Priority investment in hardware/software, routines, and systems
Growth	Individuals develop coherent professional worldview	A worldview is unnecessary to the work
Motivation	Intrinsic, altruistic toward client; work is a calling	Extrinsic: work is a job for personal gain
Leadership	Develops leaders who inspire and transform effective professionals	Trains managers who focus on efficient processes and systems

*Table 1-1. A Continuum: Profession to Government Occupation.*

The goal of all Army leaders, obviously, is to create everywhere within the Army the culture of a Profession of Arms while making subservient the cultural influences of necessary supporting occupational organizations. One way to understand how professions conform their supporting organizations is the concept of a “professional” bureaucracy as opposed to a “machine” bureaucracy, or of hierarchy based on the logic of explicit and implicit authority distinctions in professional and social relationships.

For example, because of their role of exercising legitimized violence, military organizations are to varying degrees hierarchical, disciplined, rule-driven and conservative. Given the destructive resources at their disposal, it would be irresponsible of them to be otherwise. A hierarchical ‘chain of command’ and communications allows leaders to exert close control over tasking and resource allocation, and the discipline that exists within units and the adherence of subordinate commanders to rules and standard operating procedures, within defined limits of discretion, makes the organization as a whole obedient, reliable, and predictable.

In some government occupations, this would result in the organizational form known as Machine Bureaucracy in which personal discretion of staff is neither needed nor wanted, and behavior is guided by strict adherence to elaborate rules and regulations.<sup>13</sup> But in the Army and its supporting organizations there need to exist countervailing forces that militate against such a tendency. Military organizations indeed tend to be at some level bureaucratic, but preferably in the much more constructive form known as Professional Bureaucracy. The orientation of a professional bu-

reocracy is standardization of effective outcomes in an unstructured and uncertain environment. Professional bureaucracies rely for control on the specialist and discretionary expertise of highly-educated professionals and their exercise of discretion is not only important but is demanded and self policed as in a profession.

Equally, hierarchy in the professional bureaucracy not only leads to organization and control of work activities but, just as importantly, provides its members with moral and contextual frames of reference. Procedures and hierarchy are as much about how and why the individual's work fits into the overall mission as they are about doing things "by the book". The hierarchical structure thus serves as a road-map to enhance each member's understanding of where their contribution relates to that of others.

## CONCLUSION

So, where will the balance be? This central question frames the major challenge now facing the Army's strategic leaders, the sergeants major, colonels, and general officers: how to lead the Army in such a manner that its culture, ethic, and behavior are those of a profession capable to implement in the future the concepts inherent within the capstone concept of Operational Adaptability, and not those of a government occupation.

In today's volunteer Army, and particularly within the commissioned and noncommissioned ranks, citizens volunteer with the intention and expectation of becoming professionals and being able to do their work in the physical environment and organizational culture of a profession. They want a unit organizational culture and climate that facilitates their individual development and grants them significant autonomy to organize and execute their own work to become the "expert and professional" that they aspire to be. (Ninth stanza of the Soldiers Creed).

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## Endnotes

1. Gayle Watkins and Randi Cohen, "In Their Own Words: Army Officers Discuss Their Profession," chapter 5 in Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 1st Edition (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2002): 77-100.
2. See, Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*, Revised and Expanded ( NY: Free Press, 1994): 5.
3. Ibid., 133-137. See also, Leonard Wong and Douglas V. Johnson II, "Serving the American People: A Historical View of the Army Profession," chapter 4 in: Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition ( NY: McGraw-Hill, 2005): 93-120.
4. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Belknap Press, 1957), 16.
5. See Les Brownlee and Peter Schoomaker, "Serving a Nation at War," *Parameters* 34 (Summer 2004): 4-23.
6. See Eliot Friedson, *Professionalism - The Third Logic: On the Practice of Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
7. It is also the case that the Army internally has several "enterprises" that manage Army-level systems, e.g., material acquisition, etc., on a not-for-profit basis using techniques sometimes adapted from businesses. Such enterprises do have many Army professionals serving within

them, but beyond that they tend to be bureaucratic in their structure and operations, operating on annual budget cycles and following highly centralized and standardized management processes and procedures.

8. See Don M. Snider, "The U.S. Army as Profession," chapter 1 in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition, op. cit.:3-38.

9. See T.O Jacobs and Michael G. Sanders, "Principles for Building the Profession: The SOF Experience," Chapter 20 in Snider and Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition: 441-462.

10. For major recent works on professions see, Andrew Abbott, *The Theory of Professions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) and, Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy and Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

11. David Segal and Karen DeAngelis, "Changing Conceptions of the Military Professions", chapter 10 in Suzanne C. Nielsen and Don M. Snider (eds.), *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009): 194-212.

12. For an explanation of the three main trust relationships of the Army as a profession of arms, see: Don M. Snider, *Dissent and the Strategic Leadership of Military Professions* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2008).

13. Henry Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1979); and, Henry Mintzberg, "Managing Government, Governing Management," *Harvard Business Review*, 74, 3 (1996) 75-83.

# The Army Officers' Professional Ethic

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I propose a written professional ethic for the officer corps. To do so, I will survey the history of the Army's unwritten ethic and then assess today's strategic, professional, and ethical environment. I will argue that a clear statement of the Army officers' professional ethic is especially necessary in a time when the Army is stretched and stressed as an institution. The Army officer corps has both a need and an opportunity better to define itself as a profession, forthrightly to articulate its professional ethic, and clearly to codify what it means to be a military professional. Finally, I will offer a brief statement of such an ethic that I hope our profession will adopt.

The Army's professional military ethic has never been codified, but its spirit is resident in a number of documents. During World War II General George C. Marshall commissioned S.L.A. Marshall to write *The Armed Forces Officer*, an inspirational work meant to assist officers with their self-development that has gone through several editions over the decades.<sup>1</sup> General Sir John Hackett briefly and eloquently chronicled the history of the military profession in *The Profession of Arms*, released as a U.S. Army pamphlet in 1986.<sup>2</sup> More recently, Richard Swain has written an article that details the various sources of the professional military ethic from the Constitution to authorizing legislation to Field Manual 1 *The Army*.<sup>3</sup> Yet the fact that Swain felt compelled to write such an article points up the absence of a common understanding of the Army's professional military ethic.

Other American professions have clearly promulgated statements of ethics. The American Medical Association's *Code of Medical Ethics* is an updated version of a code that was first published in 1847.<sup>4</sup> That document, in turn, descends from the Hippocratic Oath. Likewise, the American Bar Association recently published a centennial edition of its *Model Rules for Professional Conduct*, dozens of rules that are regularly amended by the ABA's House of Delegates to codify standards of professional legal behavior.<sup>5</sup>

Even within the Army there are extant statements of ethical responsibility. The NCO Creed has guided non-commissioned officers for many years and, more recently, the Army has adopted the Soldier's Creed. Indeed, we now have an Army Civilian Corps Creed. All of these creeds are clear and precise statements of who their adherents are, what they believe, and what responsibilities they have accepted.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ARMY'S PROFESSIONAL ETHIC<sup>6</sup>

The Army's sense of itself, its culture and its ethic have grown and developed over four hundred years of American history. In the colonial era most Americans equated military service with citizenship. White males who expected to have a voice in community affairs also understood that they were liable to defend their communities through militia service. Community leaders gained commissions either by appointment or election and led their fellow citizens whenever local crises arose. The militia's purpose was local defense and the duration of service was usually brief. Along with this citizen-soldier tradition, Americans, like their English cousins, maintained a fear of standing armies as oppressors of their liberties. Thus, early American military service was both universal and anti-professional.<sup>7</sup>

The American Revolution bequeathed other traditions. The first, mainly a legacy of General George Washington's example, was strict adherence to a principle of civilian control of the military. Second, despite long-standing fears the new nation found it necessary to raise a regular army—local militias were not sufficient to the task of winning independence, although they proved to be a

welcome complement to the Continental Army. Third, General Washington attempted to commission men of gentle birth, maintaining the European belief that only gentlemen had the ability to command soldiers. He was unsuccessful in this endeavor because there were too few gentlemen in America to provide all the officers the Continental Army required. Still, professionalism was not yet a component of commissioned leadership.

After the Revolution, American leaders found the Articles of Confederation inadequate to governing the new republic, mainly in providing for the common defense. The Constitution remedied that shortcoming, clearly codifying principles for raising military forces, providing for their leadership, and establishing war powers. Just as clearly, the Constitution divided control of the military between the Executive and the Legislature, creating dual loyalties that govern, and complicate, American civil-military relations to this day. Yet the Constitution's most profound legacy was to foster a national reverence for the rule of law and not of men. The requirement that each Federal officer swear an oath "to support and defend the Constitution of the United States" enshrined that principle in the professional military ethic.

Over several decades, the new government raised one army after another to respond to various crises. There was little continuity of service, either for officers or enlisted men, and thus little sense of belonging to a distinct profession or of responsibility to the people. For a while, James Wilkinson, the senior general in the United States Army was also a paid secret agent of the Spanish crown!<sup>8</sup> The establishment of the United States Military Academy in 1802 was a halting step in the direction of a national army and a professional officer corps, but many years would pass before it had much effect.

The war of 1812 showed that the United States could no longer afford to rely on state militias and hastily raised regulars for its defense. With all its defensive advantages, the country came within a whisker of defeat. After the war, reformers such as Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, General Winfield Scott, and Colonel Sylvanus Thayer laid the foundations for a standing, regular army with a long-service officer corps. The days of relying on state militias and raising a new army for each emergency were waning. For the first time, Calhoun pronounced that the purpose of the army was to prepare for war, to stand in readiness to defend the republic. It was a new departure. The Army codified regulations, wrote tactical manuals, and established schools of practice to train its units. Thayer reformed the Military Academy, making it both the nation's first engineering school and a reliable source of officers for the new regular force. Military journals sprang up, fostering an exchange of views on professional subjects. Officers began to think of themselves as professionals—competent, apolitical servants of the nation.<sup>9</sup>

The army also served the growing nation in ways that were not strictly military, exploring the western frontier, building roads and canals, and superintending public works. They also built a coastal fortifications system and administered western territories, protecting Indians and settlers from one another, an early peacekeeping mission. Part of this legacy, the removal of Indians from eastern states and territories to reservations in the west, is morally distasteful to us now, but the Army served as the national government directed.

In the late-1840s, the professionalizing regular army, augmented with thousands of volunteers, proved its mettle in its first expeditionary war against Mexico. A generation of young West Point graduates—Lee, Jackson, Grant, McClellan, and Meade, to name a few—demonstrated superb tactical skills, while General Winfield Scott ably led at the strategic and operational levels. The victory came fast and was so complete that finding a Mexican government with which to negotiate terms of surrender was problematic. The resulting peace treaty greatly expanded U.S. territory. If the regular army possessed a high-level of professional skill, its officers also began to develop a prideful disdain for volunteer soldiers. That arrogance would have no place in the next war.

The American Civil War produced two massive, citizen-soldier armies, both led at their highest echelons by the professional officers of the antebellum era. These officers were competent practitioners of the military art, highly dedicated to their duty. By trial and error they learned to lead volunteer soldiers. Yet the fact that almost a third of the U.S. Army's officer corps resigned and defected to the rebel cause pointed up a critical flaw in the professional military ethic—loyalty to

the Constitution and the national government was not pervasive. It matters not that larger proportions of other institutions—the Congress, the Supreme Court, eleven southern states—also chose secession. The Army had been split asunder by a political crisis. Rekindling a sense of national loyalty as a central tenet of the professional ethic was of primary importance in the post-war army.

As the Civil War progressed it became more and more brutal, both in terms of tactical destructiveness and in the armies' treatment of noncombatants. A felt need to control the violence led President Lincoln to publish General Order No. 100, a set of rules to guide military actions. Based on religious and philosophical thought, the general order gave the Army its first set of codified ethical guidelines.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the Army's evolving professional ethic now contained elements of military competence, loyalty to the nation, defense of the Constitution, obedience to civilian authority, leadership of citizen-soldiers, and a moral component to govern the employment of armed force.

After a rapid demobilization, the U.S. Army took on the mission of administering southern reconstruction and redeployed to the western territories to fight the Indian wars. The army was too small for these were difficult missions that often presented tactical problems with strategic ramifications, much like the stresses of counterinsurgency today. Military thinkers argued about roles, missions, and organization. Emory Upton advocated a Prussian model army, with a great general staff and long-service conscript soldiers. John Logan promoted a return to a citizen-army, much like the old militia with citizen-officers as well.<sup>11</sup> The nation was still too close to its fears of a standing army to agree with Upton, but had learned too much of the hardships and complexities of war to accept Logan's ideas. In the late nineteenth century, General William T. Sherman established a school at Fort Leavenworth for the education of officers, a renaissance of Calhoun's seminal idea that an army's purpose is to prepare for war.

After decades of tactical employment in small units across the West, the Army performed abysmally at the strategic and operational levels when it deployed to Cuba for the Spanish-American War. Once there, the Army made short work of its enemy, only to take far more casualties from disease than it had from combat, largely because of logistical failures. On the other side of the globe, the Army invaded the Philippine archipelago, quickly overthrowing the Spanish government, but then finding itself unprepared for a years-long insurgency that varied in tactics and intensity from island to island and from town to town. This was a company commander's war, for which tactical doctrine from the Indian wars and the ethical guidelines of General Orders 100 were equally inadequate. American soldiers committed war crimes because their leaders were tactically and ethically unprepared for the type of war they were fighting.<sup>12</sup>

In response to these shortcomings, Secretary of War Elihu Root began another series of reforms, creating an Army War College, a general staff, and encouraging legislation to raise the readiness standards of the reserve components. When millions of American doughboys entered the Great War a decade later, they mobilized and deployed on the orders of a general staff composed of Leavenworth and War College graduates speaking and writing a common professional lexicon. Likewise, their commanders and staff officers in the American Expeditionary Forces in France demonstrated the fruits of the Army's officer education system. By war's end America had entered the ranks of the world's great powers, thanks in no small measure to the professionalism of its army.<sup>13</sup>

Another rapid demobilization left that army with a small core of veteran professional officers. Hamstrung by small budgets and a national sense of having survived "the war to end all wars," the army nonetheless attempted to innovate and develop the technologies that had been born on European battlefields—the airplane, the tank, and the wireless. Those efforts were imperfect and the Army made mistakes, but it continued to learn, and to experiment. More than at any time in the past, the Army officer corps went to school. Indeed, Omar Bradley later opined that "the greatest difference" between the Army before and after the Great War "was the school system." Twenty-five of thirty-four corps commanders in World War II had spent ten or more years in army schools as students or instructors. Through a thorough-going commitment to officer education the interwar Army developed a body of professional expertise that would be the foundation of victory in the Second World War.<sup>14</sup>

The senior Army leaders in that war were well educated, broadly experienced professional of-

ficers with a strong sense of corporate culture and responsibility to the nation. They led a draftee Army of some eight million soldiers and airmen deployed in theaters around the globe. They were skilled in joint and combined operations, worked effectively with the U.S. Navy and Allied forces, and provided strategic advice to the president and his fellow commanders-in-chief at a number of Allied conferences. They managed an immense mobilization of the national economy, turning American industry into the “arsenal of democracy” that equipped not only Americans, but British, French, Russian and other Allied forces as well. And they guided the Manhattan Project, a \$2 billion effort harnessing the finest scientific minds in the world to bring the promise of quantum physics to the dread reality of the atomic bomb.

At Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the most brutal and violent war in human history ended and a deadly new age began. War had approached a Clausewitzian absolute. Six million Jews had been exterminated in the Holocaust. Tens of millions of soldiers and civilians had lost their lives in the fighting. Almost no one on Earth had gone untouched by the war. Atomic weapons seemed to have changed the very nature of warfare. Over the next several years, diplomats and politicians, lawyers and soldiers tried to find a way to step back from the abyss. The United Nations formed. The Geneva Conventions built on the laws of war to further codify rules to limit armed violence.

A new geostrategic reality emerged. The former great powers lay prostrate from years of debilitating warfare. Only the Soviet Union and the United States retained the ability to project military power. Ideologically incompatible, the two superpowers became locked in a forty-five year Cold War, which kept the possibility of mutual annihilation mere minutes away, but ironically fostered an era of relative stability.

The Army demobilized after World War II, but it has never again been a small force. Global responsibilities required an end to the traditional bias against a large, peacetime army. President Truman ordered the armed forces to integrate African-Americans, ending more than a century of official discrimination. A new Uniform Code of Military Justice fostered regularity in a formerly haphazard administration of military law. The non-commissioned officer corps, long the backbone of company-level formations, grew in size, responsibility, and stature. Within twenty years, commanders at all levels had senior NCOs assisting them in leading a large, regular enlisted force.

In 1950 the Army began a bloody, frustrating, war in Korea for which it was again ill prepared in almost every way, from manning to equipment to training and operational planning. North Koreans overran the South and almost drove responding American forces into the sea. A daring amphibious envelopment at Inchon reversed fortunes, allowing General of the Army Douglas MacArthur to attack into North Korea in a bid to reunite the nation. Then the Chinese intervened, embarrassing the Eighth Army and driving it back to Seoul.

At this point, chafing under political restrictions fostered by fears of a third, probably nuclear, world war, MacArthur publicly challenged President Truman’s strategic direction, violating the Army’s long tradition of obedience to civil authority. Truman relieved MacArthur and restored control, but the nation had been awakened to an unsettling possibility. In a nation possessing the most powerful weapons ever known, one rogue general could threaten global stability. Civilian control of the military had never been more important.

After the Korean War, the Army adjusted fitfully to a new era. President Eisenhower’s military budget tightening and emphasis on nuclear deterrence left the Army in an ambiguous position. Land power seemed irrelevant in comparison to the nuclear capabilities wielded by the newly independent U.S. Air Force and its Strategic Air Command. What was the Army’s mission? Whither its professional expertise? Another Asian war provided an unsatisfactory answer. Vietnam was not a conventional, “big-unit” war, as much as some tried to make it so. The American army found itself fighting another insurgency halfway around the world. Strategic indirection yielded operational and tactical confusion. The American people grew restive with a war for which they could see little purpose. Racial tension, drug epidemics, and official corruption plagued the Army. Uncertain of its mission, doubtful of victory, torn by internal strife, the Army lost its professional moorings. The criminal tragedy at My Lai was a symptom of a profession that once again needed reform, this time of its values.

After the war in Vietnam, the first unqualified strategic loss in the history of American arms,

the Army went into the wilderness. Army Chief of Staff Creighton Abrams led it out. In his words, “People are not in the Army. People are the Army.” The draftee army was gone; the all-volunteer force was in. The Army conducted a study of its officer corps and found the profession wanting in its ethics and values.<sup>15</sup> It slowly began to purge itself of its drug culture, expelling soldiers who could not maintain standards of discipline. Abrams commenced a modernization effort, building five new major weapons systems. Senior officers rewrote the Army’s operational doctrine to employ those weapons, focusing on a campaign of maneuver against a numerically superior Soviet foe. A training revolution demanded a realistic battle-focus in new centers devoted to tactical planning, rehearsal, and execution against experienced and proficient opposing forces. One of the first and most important changes in the training revolution was the institution of performance-based training that required soldiers and units to meet a set of clearly articulated standards. Startlingly candid after-action reviews forced leaders to confront their mistakes, and then to try again. A new leadership manual that went a long way toward defining our professional ethic, propounded the novel idea that those leaders were not born, but could be—had to be—developed. FM 22-100 focused on team building and positive actions to get the best out of the volunteer soldiers who remained in the service.

At the end of the Cold War two brilliant campaigns, Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama and Operation DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM in southwest Asia, demonstrated how far the Army had come in fifteen years. With two widely different forms of operational maneuver, light and airborne infantry in the first instance and rapid mechanized warfare in the second, the Army quickly enveloped, overwhelmed, and defeated its enemies, and just as quickly withdrew.

Yet the stability provided by the bi-polar Cold War rivalry had given way to a much more fragmented world. In the 1990s the Army found itself 40% smaller and deploying two to three times as often as it had previously done. The reduction in force, or RIF, had the Army “doing more with less.” Senior leaders began to “micro-manage” and seemed far less forgiving of their subordinates’ mistakes. Junior officers, especially those with attractive private-sector options, left the service in high numbers, forsaking professional careers. As the United States, “the world’s only superpower,” became more and more involved in overseas conflicts, some soldiers complained that they were being asked to take on non-traditional missions, such as peacekeeping and nation-building, forgetting the military history of nearly every decade before 1941. Declining morale and a series of scandals sent the Army back to basics, focusing on seven core values—Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Courage.

At the turn of the century, Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki led the Army into a thorough transformation, one part focusing on near-term readiness, another on training soldiers and developing leaders, and a third on a long-term modernization campaign to build a force for the future. Simultaneously, a small group of academics and soldiers gathered at West Point to conduct the first in-depth study of the Army profession since 1970. It probed the corpus of Army professional expertise and attempted to map its contours. Defining four principal clusters, the Future of the Army Profession project set about developing and expanding the Army’s knowledge about itself, its missions, and its competencies. Those four clusters yielded four facets of an officer’s identity—the warrior, the servant of the nation, the leader of character, and the member of a time-honored profession.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, by the summer of 2001 the United States Army had developed a mature professionalism, but one that waxed and waned over time. Wartime crises tended to produce, or perhaps to expose, the profession’s shortcomings, which peacetime reformers then sought to correct. The Army’s professional ethic embraced national service, loyalty to the Constitution, obedience to civilian authority, mastery of a complex body of doctrinal and technical expertise, positive leadership, and ethical behavior. It was less healthy in terms of its junior professionals’ acceptance of a lifelong call to service and time would show that it was doctrinally unprepared for the trials that lay ahead.

## **THE ARMY’S PROFESSIONAL ETHIC—THE PRESENT**

The attacks of September 11, 2001 punctuated the professional renaissance begun at the turn of

the century. Already stretched thin by multiple deployments, the Army soon found itself deployed in two wars on top of an increased homeland defense mission. A quick strike into Afghanistan yielded initial success, but the nation soon neglected that war for several years in favor of another. A strategic decision to deploy too few forces into Iraq exacerbated a lack of planning for post-manuever operations. Iraq soon descended into insurgency and civil war. Nine years later the Army finds itself a profession that looks eerily reminiscent of its early-1970s predecessor.

Those years of repetitive deployments have left the Army “stressed and stretched.” The force is exceptionally combat experienced, but it is also fatigued by continuing deployments and training requirements to prepare for them. There is a collective pride in the Army’s accomplishments, but also a sense that the Army is at war while the nation is not, that soldiers have done their duty and perhaps it is someone else’s turn. Open-ended commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan create a concern that this high operational tempo is unsustainable without a large buildup of forces. Attrition rates within the junior officer and mid-grade NCO corps, problems before 9/11, are rising again. The Army has been forced to decrease its standards for enlistment and increase its rates of promotion. Some observers think the Army is near the breaking point.

Another concern is the type of warfare the Army is being asked to conduct. Counterinsurgency is a complex form of war. Tangible accomplishments can seem fleeting. The enemy is hard to identify and so the ways and means of combating him are difficult to determine, as is assessing their effectiveness. Moreover, fighting an enemy who does not abide by the laws of war is morally ambiguous and the resulting stress is enormous. Moral and legal lapses, such as those at Abu Ghraib and Mahmudiya, are partially attributable to these difficulties, but the mere fact of their occurrence harms morale and indicates problems with indiscipline.<sup>17</sup> Of equal concern is that commissioned officers have been involved in every incident that has gained notoriety.

Outside the profession’s control, but impinging on its jurisdiction, some government policies in what was then called the “Global War on Terror” served to undermine the Army’s ethical principles. A Justice Department finding on the treatment of captured enemies dismissed the laws of war as “quaint.” It disdained the terms combatant and non-combatant and refused to define the captured as prisoners of war, settling on the term “detainees.” Secret and ambiguous policies on the treatment of these detainees and an unwillingness forthrightly and publicly to define torture left the Army in a doctrinal quandary. These questions are policy matters and they became political issues, but for the military officer, they are and should be professional concerns as well because they strike at the heart of the Army’s moral-ethical framework. Officers, above all, must fight to maintain and safeguard the laws of war as a professional jurisdiction.

Since the post-Cold War drawdown the armed forces have chosen to rely more and more heavily on commercial contractors. In many cases, this reliance has been unavoidable and indeed liberating, such as in the manufacture of complex weapons systems. Properly overseen, this military-industrial partnership can be a boon to national security. In many other cases, however, contractors have assumed responsibilities that heretofore were considered inherently military, such as logistical support, protecting installations and high-ranking officials, and developing professional doctrine. An army that depends on commercial enterprise to deliver its food and fuel is subcontracting its sustenance—an army travels on its stomach. An army that relies on contractors for its doctrine is farming out its thinking—an army fights with its brain as much as its arms. And an army that permits civilians to employ armed force on the battlefield tolerates mercenaries, the antithesis of professionals. Today, the Army is selling large tracts of its professional jurisdiction. Moreover, as the Army contracts out these core functions, it not only cedes professional jurisdiction to private enterprise, it loses some of its ability to sustain and renew its expertise, to develop the next generation of professional officers, and to nurture the ability to think creatively about new problems—each of which is intrinsic to a healthy profession. An army that chooses short-term expediency over long-term professional health also chooses slow professional death.

Finally, there have been several troublesome developments in the realm of civil-military relations. Many observers have faulted former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and others in the Bush Administration for their treatment of senior officers and their general handling of the

military. Among the issues raised was Secretary Rumsfeld's choice to interview candidates for numerous flag officer positions, a practice that many saw as tending to politicize the officer corps. While those are matters of concern, as policy choices by civilian leaders they lie outside the scope of the professional military ethic. On the other hand, the behavior of several retired general officers and colonels does not. In 2006, six recently retired Army and Marine generals called for the resignation of Secretary Rumsfeld because of his handling of the wars and treatment of the military. This dissent and the widespread perception that the retired generals "spoke for" their former colleagues still on active duty threatened the public trust in the military's apolitical and non-partisan ethic of service as well as the principle of civilian control. Equally troubling was a 2008 report that numerous retired officer-commentators on television news programs had parroted without attribution "talking points" provided by the Department of Defense. Some of these former officers, most of them former generals, also had fiduciary ties to defense industries with contracts in support of the war effort. Those ties had also gone undisclosed. In November 2009, the Department of Defense and the United States Senate launched probes into the Pentagon's employment of 158 retired flag officers as advisers and "senior mentors," many of whom were also employed by corporations in the defense industry, raising questions of conflicts of interest.<sup>18</sup> The palpable sense that those retired officers had sold their professionalism to the highest bidder cast an ethical shadow over all the military services.

## **THE CASE FOR A PROFESSIONAL MILITARY ETHIC**

Predicting the future, especially about an enterprise as complex as war, is problematic. However, several trends are evident. Recent history shows that the Army has been deploying more and more frequently since the end of the relatively stable era of the Cold War. Then, the events of September 11, 2001 brought into sharp focus a deadly new type of non-state actor bent on our destruction. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan came about in response to that global threat and they remain of uncertain duration. Many observers expect a protracted conflict against insurgents, extremists, and terrorists. Furthermore, there are many other potential trouble spots around the world, including Pakistan, Iran, China, and North Korea. Health and environmental catastrophes could present crises in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The scarcity of resources, especially water, may provoke conflict in many less-developed regions of the world. The places and forms of future conflict remain unpredictable, but its likelihood is not. As long as the United States maintains global responsibilities and interests, the American people will expect the United States Army to remain ready to project military power around the world.

As we have seen, the Army tends to reform at the end of wars that have pointed up its shortcomings of one kind or another. Now, we are faced with a different situation. Our Army is stressed and stretched, and ethical strains have begun to show. The stresses on the force and their likely continuation in a long period of conflict present both an opportunity and a requirement to define the Army's ethical standards clearly and forthrightly. The Army must reform itself even as it fights.

The essence of the professional ethic needs no radical change. The ethics of a professional officer serving this constitutional democracy have evolved toward an understanding of the military's place in and duty to society, a high level of professional expertise, a sense of military service as a full-time occupation and a long-term calling, a subordination to duly elected and appointed civil authority, an ethos of positive and responsible leadership of subordinates, and a moral-ethical compass fixed on the laws of war and the Constitution. While adherence to those values has waxed and waned through history, the common understanding of them as guiding principles has steadily evolved.

Today, there is little debate that military officers must abide by a professional ethic. Yet adherence to ethical standards is inconsistent. In part, the reason for lapses and inconsistencies is that the ethic has never been clearly and succinctly codified. Several authors have written about the professional military ethic, including S.L.A. Marshall, Sir John Hackett, Samuel P. Huntington, Allan R. Millett, William B. Skelton, and Richard Swain.<sup>19</sup> The general impression that one can derive from these works is that the Army's professional ethic is akin to the British constitution—it exists in a

variety of forms, but it is hard to get one's arms around it. One scholar, BG (ret.) Anthony Hartle, has attempted to explicate and ramify the professional military ethic. His *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making* (2d edition, revised 2004) is a compact treatise that drew little official notice at the time of its first publication in 1989, yet it is a thoughtful treatment of military professionalism, the provenance of the professional ethic, and the implications of adhering to an ethical standard.

Does the Army officer corps need such a statement of ethics? I think it does. The Army's history demonstrates an evolving articulation of the professional ethic, and each year brings more and more research about the values and virtues of professional military service.

Yet some have expressed concern that a written code would push the profession toward a legalistic sense of itself. If the code were a list of punishable infractions written in legalese, then that concern would be valid. If the Army is to have a written code, it must focus on the moral and ethical, not the legal requirements of the profession. It should be inspirational, an exhortation to better behavior, rather than a list of offenses. I believe that the Army should set for itself a goal of issuing a succinct statement of professional ethics focusing on the roles of commissioned officers.

Toward that end, I will propose a short statement that blends BG Hartle's ideas with the four identities of officership developed in the Future of the Army Profession project, with one exception. In this statement, the word Soldier replaces Warrior. Just as the Warrior Ethos is but a part of the Soldier's Creed, the attributes of warriors are only a part of what Americans expect of their Soldiers.

This brief statement is written in the first person and meant to be spoken or recited. It is both descriptive of the officer corps' responsibilities and values and intended to inspire officers to live up to them. It uses inspirational words such as loyalty and character and the Army Values. It also employs hard phrases such as "total accountability" and "unlimited liability." It demands selflessness to the point of self-abnegation. It stresses the servant nature of our profession: service to the Constitution and the law, service to our political superiors, and service to our Soldiers.

Before the Army accepts such a statement of its professional ethic, much debate is in order. Should we use such challenging rhetoric? What are officers' core responsibilities as leaders and how far do they extend? How concisely should we explicate our adherence to the principle of civilian control? Should we espouse non-partisanship as part of our ethic? The debate required to answer such questions will provide impetus for an Army-wide discussion about the profession, its ethical values, and the role that it should play as a servant of American society in the future. I conclude my remarks today with my answer to those questions:

## **THE ARMY OFFICER'S PROFESSIONAL ETHIC**

I am a Soldier, a leader of character, a servant of the nation, and a member of the profession of arms.

Nominated by the President of the United States and confirmed by the United States Senate, I am an officer in the United States Army. I hold a commission through which the President has reposed special trust and confidence in my patriotism, valor, fidelity, and abilities. My oath of loyalty and service is to the Constitution of the United States.

As a Soldier, Army Values and the Soldier's Creed are my touchstones. I . . .  
place my duty first;  
subordinate personal interests to my professional requirements;  
and I develop and maintain the highest level of professional expertise in order to accomplish  
the broad range of missions that I may be ordered to perform.

As a leader of character, living an honorable life is my dedication. My word is my bond. I . . .  
set a worthy example in everything I do;  
obey all lawful orders and give orders in my own name;

*continued*

take full responsibility for the manner in which my orders are carried out;  
accept total accountability for my decisions and unlimited liability for the accomplishment  
of my assigned missions;  
place my Soldiers before myself;  
promote and safeguard, within the context of mission accomplishment, their welfare as  
persons and as Soldiers;  
share their dangers and their hardships;  
develop my Soldiers to accomplish their missions and to grow through positions of  
increasing responsibility;  
I am a leader—a teacher, a trainer, and a coach.

As a servant of the nation, service is my watchword and defense of the Constitution is my calling. I . . .  
adhere to and enforce the laws of war, the laws of the United States, and Army regulations  
in performing my professional duty;  
conform strictly to the constitutional principle of military subordination to civilian authority;  
render candid professional advice when appropriate, and I faithfully execute the policies of  
the United States Government to the best of my ability;  
and I am non-partisan—I do not involve myself or my subordinates in domestic politics.

As a member of the profession of arms, I . . .  
am a life-long learner, seeking continually to enhance my professional education;  
employ my education, training, and experience in the daily conduct of my professional  
duties—the continual exercise of discretionary judgment;  
respect the laws, institutions, and people of the United States without reservation or qualification;  
respect our allies, all combatants and non-combatants according to the laws of war;  
know that the accomplishment of my mission will happen only in combination and  
cooperation with professionals in other branches, services, and agencies;  
respect the capabilities and professionalism of fellow members of the Armed Forces and  
officers of the Government, regardless of rank, position, or branch of service;  
and I conduct myself at all times as a member of the profession of arms, whose traditions  
of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and moral and physical  
courage are exemplary.

I am a commissioned officer in the United States Army—a Soldier, a leader of character, a  
servant of the nation, and a member of the profession arms.

## Endnotes

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## **Part 2: The Joint Professional Military Ethic**



# Summary of the Panel on the Joint Professional Military Ethic

by Maj. Noah Marquardt  
USMC

The panel consisted of three members who had recently published papers discussing the joint professional military ethic. The first presenter, Dr William Davis, currently serves as an associate professor at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in Fort Lee, VA. Dr Davis discussed how a cultural incongruence exists in the military, particularly among field grade officers. The second presenter, Maj. Mike Manning, currently serves as the Legislative Liaison to the Rhode Island National Guard. While a student at the Naval Command and Staff and Maritime Advanced Warfare School he published a paper proposing a codified joint professional military ethic (CJPME) that could guide the Department of Defense (DoD) transformation in the 21st century. The third presenter, Col Mark Mattox, currently serves as the Dean, Defense Threat Reduction University. His presentation discussed the distinctions and similarities between the service core values statements.

Dr. Davis, while discussing the cultural incongruence in the field grade ranks, highlighted that the U.S. military, despite being a values based organization, often times exhibits values in use that are different than its espoused values. The presentation illustrated this paradox with the commonly used non-attribution policy for speaking events in academic settings such as CGSC. His research used survey results (Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument) from a group of officers at Ft Lee, VA to highlight a competing values framework. The findings of his research determined that the preferred Army culture (Clan) is incongruent with the perceived culture (Market). His discussion concluded with a recommendation that the Army take action to move towards a more flexible, agile and adaptable organization; traits that are expressed in Army espoused values but not in the values in use.

Maj. Manning's presentation postulated that the DoD would benefit from a governing framework for moral behavior, a CJPME, to guide the conduct of U.S. servicemembers. A CJPME would help transform the military in the 21st century as the joint operating environment becomes increasingly complex. He recommends a CJPME that has its basis in the U.S. Constitution, U.S. Code Title X and the oaths of office and enlistment. He further highlights some ways to implement a CJPME across the DOTMLPF structure. He completed his presentation with a recommended CJPME, consisting of four articles: courage, duty, honor and sacrifice.

Col Mattox provided a thoughtful presentation on the core values statements of each service and the DoD. He highlighted the unique values that each statement captures as well as identifying common trait across the services' core values. Further, he questioned why the individual service statements differed from the DoD's values instead of being nested with higher's values. He proposed a critical evaluation of the value statements that would either verify the efficacy of individual service core values or determine a common ethic to be more prudent for the entire DoD.

A short question and answer session followed with the following responses.

*How to provide useful training to servicemembers on ethics and core values?*

Col Mattox stated that the training needed to be conducted by the commanding officer and not the chaplain or the judge advocate general to truly have merit. Maj Manning also highlighted the importance of providing historical examples for illustration.

*Will operational differences between the services dilute the idea of a common CJPME?*

Maj Manning stressed that the purpose of the CJPME is to capture the commonalities among the services rather than the differences.

In summary, all three presentations called for a critical review of the core values and ethics that define the profession of arms. Due to the increasing complexity of the operating environment and the need to have members who exhibit moral courage not only in the face of the enemy but in ethically challenging situations, a common ethic can guide the military's transformation in the 21st century.



# **The United States Army: Values Based Organization, but What Values? Utilizing competing values framework to identify cultural incongruence among field grade officers.**

**by Dr. William J. Davis, Jr.**

**Associate Professor, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College**

## **FOREWARD**

*“As the flag officer approaches the door, the lights in the auditorium flicker on and off, and the boisterous din ceases immediately as the crowd comes to attention. The officer takes a seat in the front row and a lengthy biography is read in a clear and emphatic voice by a field grade officer. Upon completion of the biography reading, another officer arises, this time a colonel, who reminds the audience that the guest speaker has graciously decided to come speak to the class, and will offer some insight and perspective, and that the class should be reminded that there is a strict policy of non-attribution at the school.”*

The above scene is played out daily across professional military educational institutions in the United States Armed Forces. However, the irony of the situation usually is lost on the military officers in attendance. The irony is that senior leaders in the U.S. military, who identified integrity to be the most important value upon which professional and personal credibility and trust rested (Alderman, 2004) need to hide behind the veil of non-attribution in order to speak the truth. This highlights a significant incongruence within the value system of the military: those senior U.S. military officers representing the institution which this year topped the Harris poll as the most trusted in the United States, need the protection of a non-attribution policy so they can speak with integrity.

When people within an organization are asked how they might act under certain conditions, they normally provide their espoused “theory-of-action” for the circumstances given. However, despite belief that their espoused theory of action would in fact govern their behavior, the theory that actually governs their deeds most likely will be a “theory-in-use.” Often times, unbeknownst to the actor, the theory in use is quite different from the espoused theory of action. In other words, the actions of people are not congruent with their beliefs. As an example, an Army battalion commander may espouse that family is important and that his or her organization could not accomplish the mission without the support of families; however, upon closer scrutiny, the working hours, conditions, and rules set by the commander are detrimental to family unity (required happy hours with officers, weekend working hours on short notice, punitive measures forcing early morning or late afternoon formations or physical training, etc.).

Unfortunately, oftentimes the behavior of an organization that advocates being a “values based” organization, either occupationally or organizationally, belies a manner quite contrary to the espoused values of the organization. Argyris and Schon (1974) propose a theory of incongruence, wherein what one states the reason for doing something is not the reason at all that they are doing it. The thesis of this paper is that the United States military is a values-based organization, but its behavior, both organizationally and occupationally, is based upon values that are not espoused (LDRSHIP; Honor, Courage, Commitment, etc). The United States military suffers from cultural incongruence (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). This cultural incongruence, if left unattended, will result in, at best, less than optimal performance, and at worst, scandals that tear at the fabric of the organization such as Abu Ghraib, Tillman, and Tailhook.

## PARADOX AND INCONGRUENCE IN MILITARY BEHAVIOR

Although the Services espouse a set of values they purport to have primacy in the organization, in reality, like most organizations, they will have underlying “values-in-use” that are the primary indicators of its normative behaviors (Argyris and Schon, 1974). I offer that it is a chasm between what each Service espouses as its values, and what each Service “values-in-use” that not only has generated the paradox of the non-attribution policy, but threatens to keep the Services from becoming true values-based organizations. What is meant by the term “values-in-use” is that it notates those actions and/or accomplishments, that, when performed, elicit rewards (monetary, hierarchical, esteem, etc) from the institution (Schein, 2004). An institution is made of people, and those people, through their actions, will reflect the true culture of an institution. The people of the institution will do things that are truly valued, or in plainer terms - whatever gets attention and rewards. For example, in a for profit business, the primary value-in-use is typically profit. Indeed, oftentimes profit is so valued that suspect activities are ignored to the overall detriment of the organization – the ENRON scandal is a case in point.

The U.S. military has not been without its own ENRONs : Abu Ghraib, various incidents in Iraq, Tailhook, Aberdeen, the A-12, etc. Each time a scandal occurs, the U.S. military is quick to call it an aberration and denounce it as not indicative of the “values” of the organization. For example, immediately following the Aberdeen scandal, Togo West, the Secretary of the Army, was quoted in an Associated Press interview as stating, “The particular incidents that have been alleged have to do with the question of whether people in positions of authority, abused that authority by violating clear rules of leadership, conduct, and law, that is not a culture question, that is a disobedience of law question.”

However, a closer look at each of the military’s scandals might reveal a more insidious cause than “bad apples” who have lost their way. Potentially, scandals that happen in the military are most often manifested for the same reason that the ENRON scandal occurred – the institution is focused on its values-in-use and not on the espoused values. In cases of scandal, the espoused values, which are usually contradictory to the unethical behavior displayed in scandals, are trumped by the values-in-use. By examining the values-in-use of the Services, a better model of the culture of the Services arises, a model which goes beyond the checklists of values that the Services espouse. Should the officers fully adopt and apply the values that are speciously trumpeted (and perhaps not gain the rewards of their institution), or do they follow the values-in-use (and hence reap the rewards)?

General Anthony Zinni, USMC, (ret) delivered a speech titled “The Obligation to Speak the Truth” given in the Spring of 2003 at the United States Naval Academy Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership. In it, he presciently addressed a problem that would take center stage in a national debate in the Spring of 2005 when a group of recently retired flag officers called for the resignation of the Secretary of Defense:

*“It worried me that sometimes the system could put us in a position where we don’t create and develop officers who are willing to speak the truth and feel the sense of obligation to do it, regardless of the cost, or who won’t be respected or admired or rewarded for doing that. I would hope that we would never find ourselves in a position where we would create an atmosphere where our subordinate leaders didn’t feel free to speak.”*

The system that General Zinni referred to in the quote above is the type of system generated because it rewards the institution’s values-in-use, not its espoused values. If the system cannot produce officers who speak “truth to power” (as evidenced by the fact that the retired flag officers in the Spring of 2005 who spoke out waited until retirement to challenge the chain of command on ideas that were detrimental to national security), then the value of integrity, which is a component of each Service’s espoused values, appears as a hollow rallying point.

The challenge that must be faced by the U.S. military is that it ought to conduct a self-appraisal

of its values-in-use vice its espoused values. If a chasm does exist between the values-in-use and the espoused values, then the institution must address that potentially debilitating gap.

## ESPOUSED MILITARY VALUES

There is no dearth of literature on military values, the professional military ethic, or military codes of conduct (McGrath, 1993). Schein (2004) offers that organizational culture has three levels: artifacts that can be easily seen but difficult to draw meaning from (level I), espoused values that are written down and well-known by the members of the culture (level II), and a shared pattern of basic assumptions (level III) that are neither debated nor discussed, but are the essence of culture within an organization. It is the core values of the Services that usually are espoused as the basis for behaviors within each of the Services. However, a professional military ethic cannot be a code which is regurgitated using mnemonics, but needs to be useful enough to aid personnel in making moral and ethical decisions (Hallgarth, 2003). The core values of each Service are prominently displayed on their websites, normally are openly exhibited on the walls of units within the Services, and are voraciously touted as the basis of the organization by leaders as is evidenced by the quote below taken from a USA Today article:

*“This is a values-based organization, and I know that makes people impatient who think it all has to be legalistic, Marine Gen. James Mattis...head of Joint Forces Command commenting on crisis concerning the propriety or impropriety of hiring retired general officers as mentors within the military.”*

In addition, the core values of the Services are a part of professional schooling throughout the careers of military members. Figure 1 below illustrates the short version of each of the values espoused by the Services:

SERVICE	Espoused Values
Army	Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honesty, Integrity, Personal Courage
Navy	Honor, Courage, Commitment
Marines	Honor, Courage, Commitment
Air Force	Integrity First Service Before Self Excellence In All We Do

*Figure 1: Espoused Core Values of the Services*

However, the researcher posits that the values shown in figure 1 are indicative of level II values (according to Schein). The values that will be measured by the Competing Values Framework (CVF) are more culturally ingrained and are level III values as defined by Schein (2004). It will be the level III values measure by the CVF that will be used as the basis for analysis in this study.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research was based upon two theoretical frameworks – Argyris and Schon’s (1974) theory on congruence and learning and Cameron and Quinn’s (1999) theory of competing values framework. These two theories are inextricably linked.

## THEORY ON CONGRUENCE AND SINGLE AND DOUBLE LOOP LEARNING

Argyris and Schon are educators whose work has focused on the conscious and unconscious actions undertaken by individuals. They believe that an individual has certain maps in mind when he/she plans, takes action, and subsequently evaluates his/her actions. However, he/she advocates that the map or theories an individual uses to take action are not always the same maps or theories espoused. For example:

### **Espoused Theory**

The world view and values people believe their behavior is based on

### **Theory-in-use**

The world view and values implied by their behavior, or the maps they use to take action (Andersen, 1997).

It is hypothesized that this incongruence between espoused theories and theory-in-use will result in either single loop learning or double loop learning as shown below (Andersen, 1997):

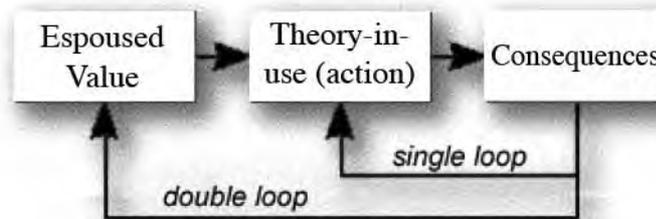


Figure 2 – Double and Single Loop Learning

In figure 2, the espoused value should be a catalyst for the theory-in-use (action) and should result in intended consequences; thus confirming the theory-in-use. However, if unintended consequences arise, then the theory-in-use may be counter-productive to achieving the espoused variable. An organizational example of this would be the Army's current policy (theory-in-use) that all Soldiers may not carry umbrellas. The espoused values driving the action are conformity and compliance. The unintended consequence is that Soldiers will feel degraded because they have served in a complex combat environment but the Army policy is interpreted as one of oppression. Single loop learning occurs if the Soldier who complains is told to be quiet and "suck it up," thus confirming the value of conformity. Double loop learning occurs when the value of conformity is examined and perhaps changed to another value which promotes independent thinking.

## COMPETING VALUES FRAMEWORK

The Competing Values Framework (CVF) was developed to interpret a myriad of organizational phenomena. Organizations, because they are made up of people, are not static or linear, so the instruments developed to study the culture and effectiveness of organizations need to be equally dynamic. The CVF emanated from research conducted by Campbell (1977), who created a list of approximately thirty-nine factors that were found to be representative of organizational effectiveness if present. A factorial analysis of the factors was conducted and the product was the emergence of two major organizational aspects which categorized the factors into four main clusters. One of the two dimensional elements that emerged differentiated criteria that promote flexibility, discretion, and dynamism from criteria that focus on stability, order, and control; the other element differentiates internal orientation, integration, and unity from external orientation, differentiation, and rivalry. These resultant elements are best shown in figure 3 below:

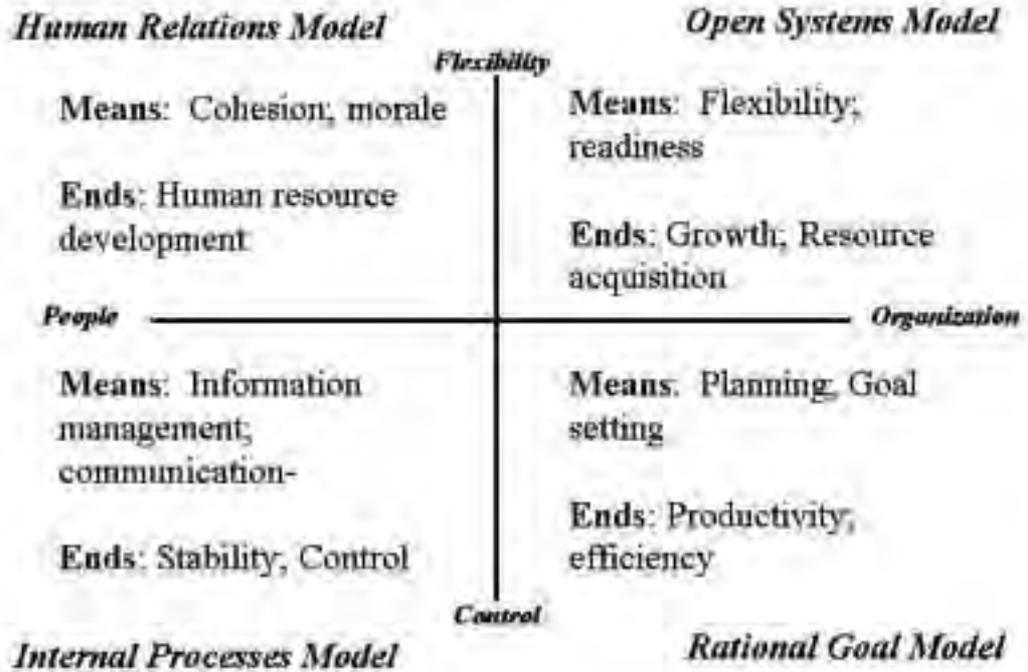


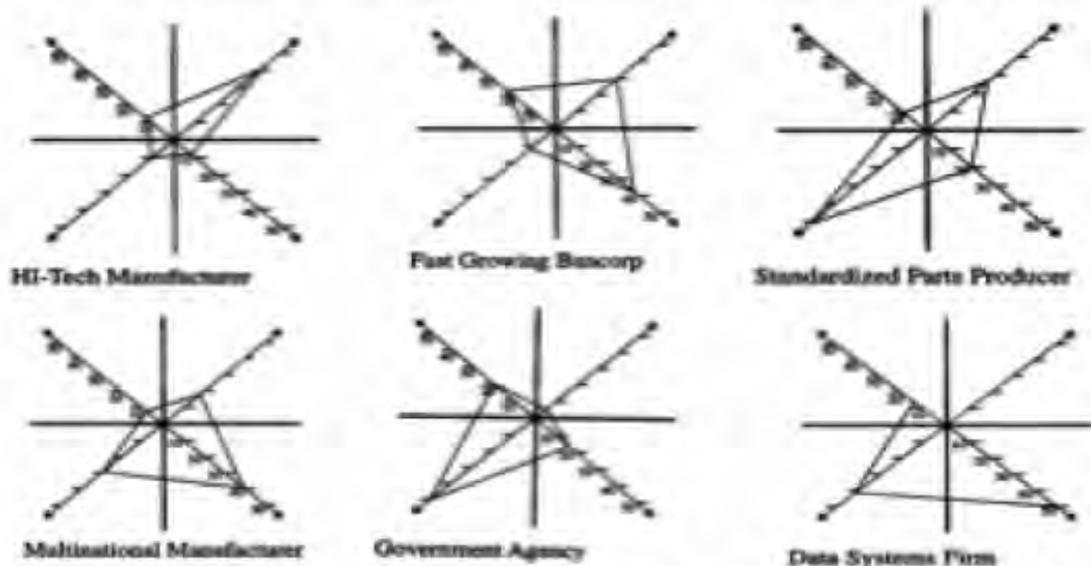
Figure 3. A summary of the competing value sets and effectiveness models. From Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981, p. 136.

Paparone (2010) adeptly summarized Cameron and Quinn's CVF as shown in figure 4. In addition, figure 5 is indicative of the general patterns that can be expected when conducting CVF research at typical organizations. The distinctiveness of this model is that Cameron and Quinn assert that all four of the cultures are present to some degree within every organization; thus a pattern of dominant values within can be drawn.

<p><b>The Clan Culture.</b> A very friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves. It is like an <b>extended family</b>. The leaders, or the heads of the organization, are considered to be mentors and perhaps even parent figures. The organization is held together by loyalty or tradition. <b>Commitment is high.</b> The organization emphasizes the long-term benefit of human resources development and attaches great importance to cohesion and morale. Success is defined in terms of sensitivity to customers and concern for people. The organization places a premium on teamwork, <b>participation</b>, and consensus.</p>	<p><b>The Adhocracy Culture.</b> A dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative place to work. People stick their necks out and take risks. The leaders are considered innovators and risk takers. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to <b>experimentation and innovation</b>. The emphasis is on being on the leading edge. The organization's long-term emphasis is on growth and acquiring new resources. Success means gaining unique and new products or services. Being a product or service leader is important. The organization encourages individual initiative and freedom.</p>
<p><b>The Hierarchy Culture.</b> A very formalized and structured place to work. <b>Procedures</b> govern what people do. The leaders pride themselves on being good coordinators and organizers who are efficiency-minded. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is most critical. <b>Formal rules and policies</b> hold the organization together. The long-term concern is on stability and performance with efficient, smooth operations. Success is defined in terms of dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low-cost. The management of employees is concerned with secure employment and predictability.</p>	<p><b>The Market Culture.</b> A results-oriented organization whose major concern is with getting the job done. People are competitive and goal-oriented. The leaders are hard drivers, producers, and competitors. They are tough and demanding. The glue that holds the organization together is an emphasis on winning. Reputation and success are common concerns. The long-term focus is on <b>competitive actions and achievement of measurable goals and targets</b>. Success is defined in terms of market share and penetration. Competitive pricing and <b>market leadership</b> are important. The organization style is hard-driving competitiveness.</p>

Figure 4. Concise descriptions of each culture type (adapted from Cameron & Quinn, 1999).

## Organizational Culture Patterns



From Cameron, K. S., and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Figure 5. Cultural value patterns across several kinds of organizations (Cameron & Quinn, 1999, p. 61).

## **PURPOSE**

The U.S. Army is committed to two major conflicts while undergoing significant organizational transformation and it must be aware of the values upon which its transformation rests (United States Army, 2009). I have given many examples of behavior within the military that might indicate cultural incongruence. The purpose of this study is to identify cultural congruence or incongruence and to use that information in order to make recommendations for aligning values with actions.

The primary research question answered by this paper is:

1. Does cultural incongruence exist within the field grade officer ranks of the Army?

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study will use a causal comparative research design and will incorporate only quantitative methods. There was no attempt to manipulate any of the independent variables determined for use. The participants in this study were chosen because the researcher was granted access. The research population consisted of United States Army officers at the rank of O-4 or O-5. The officers surveyed were attending course at U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Lee, Virginia. By administering the survey to all officers attending the targeted course at the aforementioned institution, selection criteria became a moot issue. The target population for this study was all mid-rank (O-4 thru O-5) Army officers. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College provided IRB approval. In addition, permission to use the OCAI was received from the instrument authors.

Surveys (annex A) were given to students on a Monday morning at the institution and students were given the week (approximately 5 days) in order to complete their surveys. Researchers emphasized the point that the surveys were voluntary and were not to be discussed among them. The researcher collected all surveys and personally input data into the database. A total of 64 surveys were handed out with 47 returned (42 useable) for a total response rate of 66 percent.

## **LIMITATIONS, DELIMITATIONS, AND ASSUMPTIONS**

As with any study conducted, there are limitations that are inherent in this study. The first limitation was that this research was conducted using only quantitative methods. While there are many examples, both anecdotal and in the literature, to aid in the analysis of the quantitative data, there was no corresponding qualitative research conducted of the subjects used.

A second limitation to the study was the self-report nature of the data collected on the interviews. Despite the researcher's assurance of anonymity to the participants, there might be some doubt as to the validity of the researcher's assurances. In addition, social desirability and reluctance to report any negative aspects of one's experience might have resulted in skewed data. The researcher emphasized the assurance of anonymity. In addition, the chosen educational institutions have a strict policy of non-attribution for all involved. This policy was emphasized to the participants during all phases of data collection.

A delimitation of the study was the causal comparative nature of the research. Normally this type of design would be limiting, but in this case, which is a measurement of values, the best information is gathered from a non-interference approach.

The following are assumptions for the intent of this study:

1. The results of this study can be generalized to the experimentally accessible population and the target population that is Army officers between the ranks of O-4 through O-5.
2. The conduct of this study had a non-reactive effect on the subject's measured perceptions.
3. Subjects responded honestly and without undue external influence regarding the data.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT (OCAI)

The OCAI has been used by many researchers conducting studies of various types of organizations and has high reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the extent that an instrument measures variables consistently. A most notable reliability study, which tested 10,300 executives from 1,064 companies, was conducted by Yeung, Brockbank, and Ulrich (1991). The results were an average reliability of .78 across the four quadrants of the OCAI. A study was conducted using higher education organizations (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991). In this case 1300 respondents were surveyed with an average reliability rating of .77 across the quadrants. Both of these reliability ratings fall into a satisfactory reliability range for instruments.

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures the variables that it is supposed to measure. Cameron and Quinn (1999) conducted extensive studies to prove the internal, external, construct, and criterion validity of the OCAI. The variables were tested using 334 institutions of higher education. The causal relationships of the variables measured were proven to be consistent across the cultural dimensions; the resultant data provided that the relationships among the variables and the predictability of the variables was high (Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

### DATA

Data was collected at the approved research institution as previously detailed. The overall number of participants for this research was  $n = 42$ . Table 1 details the demographic data collected:

FREQUENCIES OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA			
Variable	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Grade (0-3 (p))	2	4.8	4.8
Grade (0-4)	39	92.8	97.6
Grade (0-5)	1	2.4	100
Combat (yes)	38	90.5	90.5
Combat (no)	4	9.5	100
Sex (male)	32	76.2	76.2
Sex (female)	10	23.8	100
N=42 for this group			

*Table 1*

Additional data, using a Likert scale, with five possible answers (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) were also collected on three statements as follows in table 2:

RESULTS OF STATEMENT DATA						
S1. The U.S. Army does a good job taking care of soldiers and families.						
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
#	1	8	8	23	2	
Pct.	2.4	19.0	19.0	54.8	4.8	
Cum. Pct.	2.4	21.4	40.4	95.2	100	
S2. I must follow an order if it is lawful; even though it may be completely contrary to my personal values.						
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
#	1	1	2	18	20	
Pct.	2.4	2.4	4.8	42.9	47.5	
Cum. Pct.	2.4	4.8	9.6	52.5	100	
S3. The Army values officers who are “out of the box.”						
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
#	6	13	9	14	0	
Pct.	14.3	31.0	21.4	33.3	0	
Cum. Pct.	14.3	45.3	66.7	100	100	

*Table 2*

Figure 6 is the diagram resulting from having administered the OCAI to the 42 respondents. The diagram illustrates the preferred organizational trait as well as the perceived level of the trait that is currently within the organization.

The Army Culture According to Officers of CGSC ILE, FORT LEE



n=42 (of 64 surveys; 47 were returned, 42 valid = 66% response rate)

Figure 6. Results of the OCAI.

**FINDINGS**

First to be addressed are the results of the OCAI. In this instance one can see that the general preferences of the surveyed participants were to have an increase in the Clan and Adhocracy cultural components of the Army while desiring a decrease in the hierarchical and market components. More specific analysis of the OCAI data follows:

**Now:** The overall tendency for the Army is to have a domineering market culture. This is a culture which is competitive and results-oriented. The leaders are the drivers of the organization, and they are tough and demanding. It is indicative of an organization that focuses on external positioning (as in competing with other Services for missions and/or money). This positioning toward the stability and control axis of the CVF is coupled with a tendency for an organizational focus on the hierarchical cultural component. This component focuses on internal stability and control. Following rules, developing and upholding structures of authority, and maintaining hierarchical control of items such as budget expenditures are indicative of this cultural leaning. On the other side of the CVF resides the concept of flexibility and individuality. The participants generally perceived a low aggregate of these cultural components.

**Preferred:** The preferred CVF organizational picture is significantly different than that which was perceived as current. A balance among the four components is desired in the Army to come, with a slight domination by the Clan cultural component. The Clan cultural component is charac-

terized by a friendly workplace wherein leaders are perceived as mentors. The organization would attach great importance to cohesion and morale. In addition, leaders would also be viewed as innovators and risk-takers. This balancing of the organization across the four cultural components would provide for an organization that was able to adapt to the environment without becoming amoeba-like.

**Finding:** That according to field grade level Army officers, the preferred Army culture is incongruent with the perceived Army culture of today. This incongruence normally results in the stimulation of an awareness of a need for change at best and significant organizational ineffectiveness at worse (Argyris and Schon, 1974). Since 90.5 percent of the responding officers served in combat missions, it might be prudent to conjecture that the well-documented fluidity and complexity of the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan serves as a catalyst for the increase in preferred cultural preferences toward the flexibility and individuality axis.

An analysis of the data concerning Army field grade officers' responses to statements detailed in table 2 follows:

**Statement 1. The U.S. Army does a good job taking care of soldiers and families.**

Taking care of Soldiers is one the Army's oft espoused values; as a Google search of "taking care of Soldiers" results in numerous websites sponsored by the U.S. Army, and even elicits the finding of a "takecareofsoldiers.com" website. The results showed that only 59.6 percent of Soldiers agree or strongly agree with the statement, while 21.4 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. A total of 19 percent felt neutral about the statement.

**Finding:** That field grade level Army officers substantively agree that the Army does a good job of taking care of Soldiers. Despite this substantive agreement, there are a significant number of soldiers who are unsure or disagree with this statement. In addition, although this espoused value appears on almost all Army websites and major strategic documents, only 4.8 percent strongly agreed with the statement. This is indicative of an espoused value that may not in fact be a shared value among all members of the organization.

**Statement 2. I must follow an order if it is lawful: even though it may be completely contrary to my personal values.**

Following lawful orders is a primary component of good order and discipline within military organizations. It is so important that an order given may be inferred to be legal unless it manifests an act so inappropriate that any person of common sense would know it to be illegal (Budziszewski, 2003). This concept is also taught throughout professional military development (Morehouse, 2000). An overwhelming 90.4 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Only 4.8 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed and 9.6 percent replied neutral.

**Finding:** That field grade Army officers overwhelmingly support the concept of following orders regardless of personal values. In fact, although he explicitly states that "Again, I do not mean to reduce moral reasoning only to what works militarily," Toner (2006) advocates that morality should be avoided when talking to troops. What this line of thinking indicates is that although the Army may announce itself to be a values-based organization, the overriding value is adherence to order.

**Statement 3. The Army values officers who are "out of the box."**

The Army Leader Development Strategy for a 21st Century Army (2009) purports that future Army leaders must be adaptable, flexible, and agile, and be able to solve the complex problems of the future. However, 45.3 percent of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that the Army values "out of the box" officers. None of the officers strongly agreed with that statement and only 33.3 percent agreed.

**Finding:** That field grade Army officers largely do not feel that the Army values officers who are "out of the box." In 2007, at the apex of the conflict in Iraq, the Army was failing to promote the most successful officers in the war because they were perceived to be "out of the box" (Tilghman, 2007). It appears that despite strategic Army documents which purport the need for officers who can critically think, the perception among field grade officers is that being "out of the box" is not an appreciated trait.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Army appears to be on the precipice of a cultural revolution, wherein the victor is uncertain. Will the winner be inflexible hierarchy, a flexible people oriented organization, or a balanced organization agile enough to respond to the uncertain environment? The current Army, according to field grade officers, demonstrates cultural incongruence. They perceive that as an organization, the Army's proclivities for hierarchical control and goal-oriented competitiveness are not optimal. Anecdotally, there is still much evidence to suggest that those proclivities are not going away, for example: four months has gone by and a battalion still hasn't been given the authority to write tickets in a parking lot that it owns because the hierarchy does not want to decentralize; reflect on the following directive issued to majors (many have lead men and women in combat)

*Cold Weather Uniform Change. ...has made a decision for uniform changes due to cold weather. If the weather is 30 degrees or below (wind chill counts) Soldiers are authorized to wear their skull cap (black or green). They also must wear the other cold weather gear associated with that which includes, Gortex or Fleece jacket and gloves. Note: Soldiers will not wear the skull with ACU only or whatever duty uniform they are wearing that day;*

consider the directives at most commands that require a "special" pass if you are going outside of a certain distance on your liberty, despite the fact that Army regulations did away the requirement some time ago. All of these are indicative of an organization which is characterized by hierarchical control. The Army needs to move forward and capitalize on the lessons learned during the past 10 years of war; however, it appears that instead of being able to capitalize, there is a significant cultural push against anything that doesn't resemble the tightly controlled hierarchical Army. Schein suggests that an organization values whatever it is that the leaders value and reward (2004). The Army needs to value and reward those values of flexibility, adaptability, and agility that are written within its recent strategic documents. Perhaps by restructuring its evaluation reports to grade officers on these qualities, the Army will begin to see a cultural movement to those attributes required in the future.

Another recommendation is for the Army to conduct further qualitative and quantitative research concerning the statements of valuing officers who are out of the box and taking care of soldiers. The data for both of these questions were indicative of an incongruence that could cause dysfunction within the organization; particularly as it pertains to two values that the organization espouses.

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### Biography

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# A Codified Joint Professional Military Ethic: The Cornerstone of 21st Century U.S. Military Transformation

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## ABSTRACT

### *A Codified Joint Professional Military Ethic: The Cornerstone of 21st Century U.S. Military Transformation*

As the Department of Defense (DoD) pursues the CCJO-defined transformation of the U.S. armed forces and military profession, it is imperative that, in addition to structural and organizational changes, the human domain of the U.S. military profession evolve as well. As the February 2010 *Joint Operating Environment* (JOE) postulates, and as demonstrated by full spectrum combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, human beings in war count more than any other factor. In this current JOE and the JOEs of the future, military personnel must be capable of making on the spot decisions in ambiguous situations devoid of higher leadership. The Department of Defense (DoD) must pursue and advocate transformation in the technology realm; similarly, the DoD must also ensure that transformation in the human dimension occurs at all levels in order to achieve ‘mission success’ on battlefields of the future. Accordingly, this paper proposes that the DoD articulate a codified joint professional military ethic (CJPME) in order to provide a governing framework for the moral behavior of U.S. military persons in times of peace and war. Such an ethic would be the cornerstone of 21st century U.S. military transformation. It would chart the necessary ethical development of U.S. military persons by means of the professional military education system, and thus enable all U.S. military personnel, regardless of rank or position, to be more effective in their profession.

The good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes, or because of its adequacy to achieve some proposed end; it is good only because of its willing, i.e., it is good of itself.

— Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Since 2001, the United States has been a country at war. Senior U.S. military leaders generally recognize that the U.S. ‘steady state environment’ will continue to be punctuated by war and conflict for the foreseeable future. It is in this dangerous environment that U.S. joint forces are tasked to operate. Concurrently, however, the U.S. military establishment is also transforming to meet the demands of national security, a transformation requiring major changes along doctrinal, organizational, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel and facility (DOTMLPF) lines.<sup>2</sup>

The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, document *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* (CCJO) is guiding 21st century transformation of the joint force within the Department of Defense; it articulates the vision for U.S. joint force employment in the future operational environment. Of primary importance, the CCJO emphasizes that bringing this vision to fruition will require commanders who are ‘knowledge empowered, innovative, decisive leaders, capable of leading the networked joint force to success in fluid and perhaps chaotic operating environments.’

As the Department of Defense (DoD) pursues the CCJO-defined transformation of the U.S. armed forces and military profession, it is imperative that, in addition to structural and organizational changes, the human domain of the U.S. military profession evolve as well.<sup>4</sup> As the February 2010 *Joint Operating Environment* (JOE) postulates, and as demonstrated by full spectrum combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, human beings in war count more than any other factor. In this current JOE and the JOEs of the future, military personnel must be capable of making on-the-spot

decisions in ambiguous situations devoid of higher leadership.<sup>5</sup> Yes, the DoD must pursue and advocate transformation in the technology realm; similarly, the DoD must also ensure that transformation in the human dimension occurs at all levels in order to achieve ‘mission success’ on battlefields of the future.

Accordingly, this author proposes that the DoD articulate a codified joint professional military ethic (CJPME) in order to provide a governing framework for the moral behavior of U.S. military persons in times of peace and war. Such an ethic would be the cornerstone of 21st century U.S. military transformation. It would chart the necessary ethical development of U.S. military persons by means of the professional military education system, and thus enable all U.S. military personnel, regardless of rank or position, to be more effective in their profession.

Development of a U.S. CJPME will be a time and resource consuming task. It will require change along the full spectrum of DOTMLPF and synthesis of all-Service core values. Accordingly, this paper offers historical and legal bases for the creation of a CJPME, recommends processes necessary for CJPME creation, and identifies analysis-based, key elements of a potential CJPME.

## BACKGROUND

*Ethic* is defined by the *World Book Dictionary* as a “system of ethics.”<sup>6</sup> In contrast to other U.S. professions such as law and medicine, the U.S. military profession does not have a single codified ethic, although the individual Services have written standards for Service-specific ethical and moral behavior, such as the *U.S. Army Soldier’s Creed*. However, independent of legal tomes such as the *Joint Ethics Regulations*, there is no unifying joint ethical document governing all Services and pay grades.

The two sources that underwrite the military professional’s moral covenant with the nation are the tenets of the profession of arms and moral obligations acquired through the oath of office whereby Service members testify to ‘support and defend the Constitution.’<sup>7</sup> Of particular interest, according to Anthony Hartle in *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making*, U.S. Army officers are expected to embody four inter-dependent characteristics: warrior, servant to the nation, leader of character, and member of a profession. Extrapolating to the whole, Hartle argues that these characteristics ‘clarify the application of the professional code that guides...the conduct of men and women in uniform.’<sup>8</sup>

## DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

U.S. military traditions and regulations pertaining to the duties of commanding officers and those in positions of authority derive from language developed initially by the U.S. Navy in 1775. In fact, U.S. Navy tradition, which provided the basis for the U.S. Army and later the U.S. Air Force concerning exemplary behavior, originated from the November 28, 1775, “Rules for the Regulation of the Navy of the United Colonies.” These regulations were drafted for the Marine Committee of the newly formed Continental Congress by John Adams. Adams based his work on the British Navy’s “Regulations and Instructions Relating to his Majesty’s Service at Sea;” this compendium of regulations was first published in 1731, and is commonly referred to as the “Admiralty Instructions.” The “Admiralty Instructions” exhorted Captains and those in positions of authority to ‘show themselves a good example of honour and virtue to their men.’ The ‘Instructions’ also addressed the obligations of office for the Captain and the purser. At their core, the British “Admiralty Instructions” were utilized to address issues of central discipline and uniformity in the fleet and among ships of the line. It was for this very same reason that the fledgling Continental Navy integrated the “Admiralty Instructions” into its organization. To this day, the influence of the ‘Admiralty Instructions’ can be found in Title X, U.S. Code language, nesting comfortably with the values and principles inherent to the U.S. Constitution.<sup>9</sup>

Although U.S. Service members today swear an oath ‘to support and defend the Constitution of the United States,’ loyalty to the Constitution has not always been pervasive. In fact, during the

U.S. Civil War, almost a third of the U.S. Army officer corps crossed over and joined ranks with the Confederates. During the same war, in response to the conflict's brutality and mistreatment of non-combatants and non-combatant property, President Lincoln published *General Order No. 100*. This order, based on religious norms and philosophical thought, provided the Union Army with a codified set of ethical guidelines.<sup>10</sup> Authored by Francis Lieber, the Order's Article II stated that, "As Martial Law is executed by military force, it is incumbent upon those who administer it to be strictly guided by the principles of justice, honor, and humanity - virtues adorning a soldier even more than other men, for the very reason that he possesses the power of his arms against the unarmed."<sup>11</sup>

Predating *General Order 100*, the U.S. Navy issued its own guidance to U.S. Naval Forces in 1862 with *An Act for the Better Government of the Navy*. Article I stipulates that, "...the commanders of all fleets, squadrons, naval stations, and vessels belonging to the Navy are strictly enjoined and required to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination; to be vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all who may be placed under their command; to guard against and suppress all dissolute and immoral practices, and to correct all persons who may be guilty of them, according to the laws and regulations of the Navy, upon pain of such punishment as a general court-martial may think proper to inflict."<sup>12</sup> Thus, as the two aforementioned citations indicate, the U.S. military attempted to regulate the actions of U.S. Service members in the 19th century by means of codified law.

### *Establishing a Legal Basis for the CJPME*

Although a single codified military ethic currently does not exist, the basis for such an ethic may be found in the oath of enlistment, the officer commissioning oath, and Title X U.S. Code language governing the conduct of officers and others in positions of authority in the U.S. armed forces. Accordingly, it is important to examine these sources in order to extrapolate an origin or basis for a CJPME.

The enlisted oath states –

I, (*name*), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the *Constitution of the United States* against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the *President of the United States* and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the *Uniform Code of Military Justice*. So help me God.

The commissioning oath states –

I, [*name*], do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the *Constitution of the United States* against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.<sup>13</sup>

Both Oaths pledge to 'support and defend the Constitution of the United States.' Upon enlisting or accepting an officer's commission in the U.S. armed forces, an individual by extension is thereby obligated to defend, represent, and uphold the moral rights, principles, and values contained in the U.S. Constitution.<sup>14</sup>

Title X, U.S. Code, specifies the *roles* of the U.S. Military Services and their members, while the more specific *Service functions* are stated elsewhere in national strategic documents as directives and charters.<sup>15</sup> Title 10 § 5947, the Requirement of Exemplary Conduct (Aug. 10, 1956, ch. 1041, 70A Stat. 372.) which is part of Chapter 551, delineates responsibilities of Officers in Command and authority as follows:

*All commanding officers and others in authority in the naval service are required to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination; to be vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all persons who are placed under their command; to guard against and suppress all dissolute and immoral practices, and to correct, according to the laws and regulations of the Navy, all persons who are guilty of them; and to take all necessary and proper measures, under the laws, regulations, and customs of the naval service, to promote and safeguard the morale, the physical well-being, and the general welfare of the officers and enlisted persons under their command or charge.*<sup>16</sup>

The Requirement for Exemplary Conduct clearly provides a framework by which ‘commanding officers and others in authority’ should govern their conduct as military professionals. Additionally, this statute recognizes the primacy of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination as the qualities of a good leader. The above example is chapter 5947 governing the Naval Service (Navy and Marine Corps); chapters 3583 and 8583 govern the Army and Air Force respectively with almost identical language. Thus, between values embedded in the U.S. Constitution and Code, basis exists for a ‘universal’ military ethic.

### ***The Joint Operating Environment***

Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, U.S. military forces were assigned new overseas commitments to Operations *Enduring Freedom* (OEF) and *Iraqi Freedom* (OIF). Additionally, U.S. military personnel in the continental United States (CONUS) were reoriented to support the ‘homeland security’ umbrella. National command level decisions were made to deploy limited forces to Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003). Although the short-duration, major combat operations were very successful, multiple factors, including failure at various leadership levels to craft the essential Phase IV (Stability ops) of the OIF campaign, created a vacuum whereby Iraq was cast into civil war and insurgency.<sup>17</sup>

In 2010, U.S. armed forces continue to deploy with great regularity in support of contingency operations across the globe. Nine years into the ‘*Global War on Terror*,’ unceasing deployments of an all-volunteer force have placed great strain on military persons. General George Casey, Army Chief of Staff, reflected on the 2007 state of the Army, opining that seven years into the fight, his Service was “stressed and stretched.”<sup>18</sup> This author contends that General Casey’s comments about the Army are probably indicative of the U.S. armed forces writ large. In addition to this vitality-sapping high operational tempo, the type of conflict in which U.S. armed forces are embroiled is also taking a toll.

During the prosecution of OEF and OIF, U.S. armed forces have addressed threats across the full Range of Military Operations. In Iraq for example, servicemen first defeated the military arm of Saddam’s regime, then confronted insurgents, local and national crime organizations, and international terrorists. These threats are not unique and certainly the U.S. military has addressed them in previous conflicts. However, what makes today’s ‘steady state environment’ distinctive is that U.S. armed forces must confront many of these threats simultaneously in the same battlespace. The net effect of dangerous, high pressure, widely ranging operations, where exceptional care must be taken to protect non-combatants, is increasingly muddled ethical decision making on the battlefield.

Regarding non-combatants, the ability to ‘secure’ the local population is critically important when conducting widely ranging operations or facing a ‘hybrid’ threat as defined by the current ‘steady state environment.’ U.S. Joint forces are required to secure the local population and simultaneously deprive an indigenous enemy the opportunity to live among these people. U.S. military force capacity to build trust and develop mutually beneficial relationships is of paramount importance; these relationships are only possible when U.S. personnel comport themselves in an ethical manner, earning the trust and confidence of the local population and political leadership.<sup>19</sup>

Even in straight-forward conventional combat operations, ethical decision making for soldiers

on the battlefield can be ambiguous and chaotic. Thus, in an insurgency or complex contingency, and Soldier inexperience with the nature of the fight, the ethical decision making process is greatly complicated. Soldiers often find themselves in non-traditional roles governed by restrictive rules of engagement, trying to balance traditional war fighting tasks and the much more difficult tasks associated with stability and support operations.<sup>20</sup>

### *Ethical Decision Making on the Battlefield*

At the request of General George Casey when he commanded Multinational Force Iraq (MNFI), the Office of the U.S. Army Surgeon General created the Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT) with the primary purpose of assessing Soldier and Marine mental health and welfare. MHAT IV assessed the mental welfare of deployed Soldiers and Marines from August to October 2006.<sup>21</sup> As part of this assessment, the MHAT crafted a survey to address ethics on the battlefield and the effectiveness of ethics training for Soldiers and Marines preparing to deploy for Iraq combat operations. Prior to this request from General Casey, MHAT had not addressed ethics.<sup>22</sup> The inclusion of an ethics survey in the overall MHAT assessment suggests that the MNFI Commander recognized battlefield ethics issues among deployed ground forces. Not surprisingly, the MHAT IV study proffered that well led troops were less likely to commit violations of the Rules of Engagement than troops who were poorly led.<sup>23</sup> Thus, it is this author's contention that a codified ethic coupled with good leadership would further reduce instances of ROE and ethics violations on the battlefield.

On 17 November 2006, the final MHAT IV report was published. In the report, the majority of survey respondents divulged that they had received pre-deployment training concerning the proper treatment of non-combatants while conducting combat operations in Iraq. However, approximately thirty-three percent of Marines and over twenty-five percent of Soldiers disagreed with the survey statement that their officer and non-commissioned officer supervisors had made it clear not to mistreat non-combatants. Additionally, twenty-five percent of all Service member respondents reported that while conducting combat operations in Iraq, they confronted ethical dilemmas where they did not know how to respond correctly.<sup>24</sup>

More telling, while Soldiers and Marines reported having received ethical training, approximately thirty-three percent of those surveyed acknowledged having been presented with ethical situations while deployed to Iraq where the ethically correct response to the situation was unknown to them. In short, the ground force pre-deployment ethics training was judged insufficient by some, and did not provide the tools necessary to be successful on the battlefield (or only addressed some ethical possibilities and neglected others).

After analyzing and compiling the survey data, MHAT IV made recommendations to the commander. One was to provide Soldiers and Marines with ethics training rooted in the 'Soldier's Rules' using settings based on combat operations in Iraq. The hope was that this training would enable Service members in Iraq to discern which behaviors are appropriate on the battlefield and, given an ethics violation, what measures a Soldier or Marine should take to remedy the incident.<sup>25</sup>

It is also fair to argue that lapses in ethical decision making are not just battlefield issues. Richard Kohn in his essay, "Tarnished Brass," has argued that 'Partisan politicization is a cancer in the military, particularly inside the officer corps. It has the potential to divert soldiers from their tasks and to affect their morale, and thus their fighting ability.' The case of Admiral William Fallon, former U.S. Central Command Commander, provides an example of this – as COMUSCENTCOM, Admiral Fallon interfaced so often and freely with the press that he was forced into early retirement by the President and SecDef in 2008 after publicly disclosing his disagreements with them over U.S. strategy for Iraq.<sup>26</sup>

Other examples of professional military misconduct include the misrepresentation of U.S. Soldier Jessica Lynch's experience in Iraq, mistreatment of wounded military personnel at Walter Reed Army hospital, and unlawful suppression of a U.S. Army assessment of the Iraq War, to name a few. Such failures in professional military conduct reveal fissures within the ethical decision making apparatus of the military profession itself.<sup>27</sup>

## *Joint Chiefs Recognition of Need for a CJPME*

In Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the U.S. Armed Forces*, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff state that, "U.S. military service is based on values that U.S. military experience has proven to be vital for operational success. These values...are common to all the services and represent the essence of military professionalism." Joint Publication 1 identifies the values of Integrity, Competence, Physical Courage, Moral Courage, and Teamwork as having a unique impact on the execution of joint operations.<sup>28</sup>

Consistent with Joint Publication 1, the *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* proffers a methodology for operational change, which can be applied to joint operations across the full spectrum of military Operations, Actions, and Activities (OAA). A pivotal principle of the CCJO entails developing the harmonizing capabilities inherent to an individual Service, which in turn will benefit U.S. military events across the spectrum of joint military OAAs.<sup>29</sup>

To augment the CCJO and advance the CJCS mandate, in February 2006 Caliber Associates conducted research to determine the core competencies required by future joint leaders of the U.S. armed forces. When conducting this research, part of the Caliber Associates methodology was to identify core values common to all U.S. Services, which are: Dedication, Excellence, Respect, Honor, Courage, and Team (Team Oriented).<sup>30</sup> The Caliber Associates study supports this author's proposal of a CJPME later in this paper.

The preceding discussion concerning CJPME historical basis, the JOE, and ethical decision making on the battlefield articulates the foundation and need for a CJPME. Each point provides a 'key' or principles for unlocking the door leading to a CJPME. It seems appropriate that U.S. Military Service leaders embrace these principles and establish a CJPME in their units to ensure U.S. military personnel govern themselves according to the 'truths' inherent to the U.S. Constitution and Title X Code. Further, as the Caliber Associates study reveals, there are values inherent to, and shared among, the individual Services. In essence, the ethic exists, but to date it has not been codified nor applied comprehensively.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is clear to this author, given the results of the MHAT IV survey and incidents like Abu Ghraeb, that U.S. military personnel need ethics education and skills. In order to address these requirements, in addition to modifying the way that the U.S. military 'ethically shapes' its people in education and training, there is a need to identify the governing ethical principles by which U.S. military personnel should conduct themselves. In short, the U.S. military needs a codified, joint professional military ethic to guide the conduct of members of the military while they perform duties and responsibilities both in and out of combat.

The ambiguity associated with the JOE and the fluid threats to U.S. National Strategic Objectives demand that the U.S. military equip its personnel with the tools necessary to confront and defeat threats on the battlefields of today and tomorrow. The CJPME is a major tool that U.S. military members can integrate in their craft. This ethic is not proposed to be a 'list of rules,' but rather guidelines to ensure that U.S. military personnel comport themselves in accordance with the high ideals of the U.S. Constitution and Title X Code. As the last nine years of combat suggest, U.S. military personnel must deal with non-combatants in ambiguous situations unlike anything for which they have prepared. To achieve counter insurgency goals, the importance of securing the indigenous population and winning their trust is of paramount importance. A CJPME is one means that will enable the U.S. military to be successful when undertaking this enormous challenge.

Growing a military organization of personnel who possess the correct ethical norms and understand the need to select ethically correct courses of action on and off the battlefield will not be an easy task. This is precisely why the U.S. military must start this process now. The American people deserve a military capable of achieving National Strategic Objectives, and the American Way of life and the associated 'rights and liberties' as defined by the U.S. Constitution. Additionally, it

is imperative that the President of the United States and the Congress receive unbiased, apolitical counsel concerning military affairs from U.S. military leaders. The following recommendations proffer ways to implement this process in a timely and cost effective manner.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper concerns the genesis and justification for a codified joint professional military ethic. The following paragraphs propose a method for creating a CJPME by providing a detailed examination of the CJPME against the DOTMLPF model. The author also suggests categorical tenets or key elements for the basis of a CJPME. This is accomplished by synthesizing the Caliber Associates research and Service common core values (dedication, excellence, respect, honor, courage, and team), relevant Title X language (virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination), and personal experience as a commissioned officer and combat leader.

### *Recommendation I – Synthesize the CJPME with DOTMLPF:*

*Doctrine* – The Joint Chiefs should develop and publish policy and regulations governing a CJPME. This process will commence with the individual Services agreeing on the content of the ethic and the means by which the ethic will be socialized in the force. The end state will be the publication of a Joint Publication addressing the CJPME. However, before the U.S. military can disseminate new doctrine to the field, it must first select from research and scholarship expert knowledge and then sieve those ideas through a filter of combat experiences. Only then will the U.S. military be capable of writing new doctrine capable of transforming the Services.<sup>31</sup>

*Organization* – U.S. Military Service organizations and commands such as the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) should reassess their core values, such as the *Army Values*, and then discuss the ‘ways and means’ by which the joint force will be indoctrinated to the ethic. More importantly, the U.S. military must adopt a model of human development to utilize within its school houses and doctrine.<sup>32</sup>

*Training* - Just as “soldiers’ hone their skills and develop an aptitude for excellence with a weapon during a live fire exercise, so must the CJPME be operationalized for stressful conditions. Antagonistic training -- designed to elicit fear, fatigue, and discomfort -- should be performed on a regular basis to inculcate the CJPME and reinforce the positive.<sup>33</sup> It is imperative that officers and enlisted alike are exposed to realistic training scenarios where they are presented with ethical dilemmas at both the tactical and operational levels of war. It is during these events that a “soldier’ will develop the ‘muscle memory’ and confidence in his or her ethical decision making abilities.

Also, the CJPME must be integrated into the professional military education system for officer and enlisted personnel, in both Joint and Service venues. This author advocates that Service members receive ethics education and training at all professional development levels. For example, a Soldier would first be exposed to the CJPME at basic training, then again at the Primary Leadership Development Course, the Basic Non Commissioned Officers Course, Advanced Non Commissioned Officers Course, and finally the Sergeants Major Academy. Thus, with advancing rank and responsibility, the ethic and, more importantly, the necessity for the ethic are reinforced in the minds of Soldiers and leaders.

*Materiel* – Resources should be acquired and made available to members of the U.S. military. Examples include a ‘CJPME Card’ that uniformed service members can carry on their persons, small ‘CJPME placards’ that can be worn on individual sets of dog tags or ‘smart books’ containing ethical vignettes that a Service member can carry on person.

*Leadership* - In order for this proposed CPJME to take hold, its inherent ethical tenets must be embraced by U.S. military personnel. Equally as important, for this ethic and its inherent tenets to become part of U.S. joint force fabric, leaders at all levels ‘must revitalize shared beliefs and values, draw upon them as a source of motivation...Leaders must conceive and articulate goals in a way that will lift people out of their petty preoccupations and unite them toward higher

ends. Sometimes we need to be called to our duty.’ Leaders must demonstrate that the values of Duty, Courage, Honor, and Sacrifice are important to them as individuals and to their respective organizations; they must impart this ethic to their subordinates. Subordinates in turn will identify their superiors as authentic leaders who in turn will establish ‘leadership authority,’ also known as ‘referent power.’ Authentic, legitimate leadership breeds loyalty and positive ‘mirror imaging;’ the leader who lives the CJPME will inspire others to do the same. Finally, there must be a ‘covenant’ of accountability. This covenant will ensure that leaders and their subordinates alike are held to the same ethical standard. To bring this to fruition, leaders must push authority down to the lowest level and empower first line supervisors to take the initiative.<sup>35</sup> Marine Corps Commandant, General James Conway, captured this when he said of his officers that “they must set a bold example for their Marines...Officers must challenge their Marines to demonstrate moral and physical courage, and in the end, hold all accountable for their actions.”<sup>36</sup>

*Personnel* – If the CJPME receives sufficient support from senior military leaders and is subsequently implemented by the joint force, the U.S. military will have the personnel trained and aware of the CJPME. More importantly, U.S. Service members will ‘live’ the ethic on and off the battlefield.

*Facilities* - The U.S. military should ensure that the right infrastructure and facilities are in place to support the training and education associated with the CJPME. Additionally, this author maintains that organizations similar to the U.S. Army Center of Excellence for Ethics and Values should be created within all Services of the U.S. military. These centers would be charged with ensuring that the legal and moral foundations are in place to fully support the CJPME.

### ***Recommendation II: Adopt the following CJPME:***

*Courage:* I am a member of the U.S. Armed Forces and a joint war fighter; I will always demonstrate bravery in the face of adversity; I recognize that key to my success as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces is self control, and to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of my position to the best of my ability regardless of the personal cost.

*Duty:* As a member of the United States Armed Forces and a joint war fighter, I will support and defend the U.S. Constitution; I will always place my personal needs beneath the responsibilities and functions of my position, and I will always adhere to the subordination of the U.S. Armed Forces and my position within them to U.S. Civilian Authority.

*Honor:* As a member of the U.S. Armed Forces and a joint war fighter, I accept full responsibility for my actions and the actions of those in my charge; I will always choose to recognize and respect the dignity of those Service members entrusted to my care, as well as the individual dignity of enemy combatants and non-combatants, and I respect the need for, and the individual contributions of, the Services comprising the joint force.

*Sacrifice:* As a member of the U.S. Armed Forces and a joint war fighter, I will demonstrate to my superiors, subordinates, and other members of the joint team the ‘will to win’ and complete all assigned missions in spite of the operating environment and associated hardship; I recognize the necessity of demonstrating high professional standards and the importance of continuously seeking ways to improve myself and my unit of assignment.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

In 1978, Admiral James B. Stockdale, then President of the U.S. Naval War College, co-taught a course with Professor Joseph Brennan titled “The Foundations of Moral Obligation.” Stockdale had enlisted Professor Brennan to help teach the course because, “The Moral challenges of life come to us every day, in many different forms and circumstances. To meet these challenges successfully, to emerge from them with our integrity intact, we need to prepare ourselves...”<sup>37</sup>

The need to ‘prepare ourselves’ is just as strong today as it was 30+ years ago when Admiral Stockdale created “Foundations of Moral Obligation” with Professor Brennan. Recent history of-

fers many examples of ethical lapses in combat and rear echelon. These examples are far reaching and involve all military levels - from the retired general officer who speaks improperly on behalf of a political party on a national stage to the E-4 who mistreats non combatants on the battlefield. These examples suggest that ethical violations take place every day in the military and are not isolated to a particular Service or rank. A Codified Joint Professional Military Ethic can do much to reduce such occurrences. As the military continues to transform, such an ethic can positively influence the human domain and the transformation of the joint war fighter.

This author does not advocate that the Services yield their individual cultures. Rather, I suggest that the U.S. military as a whole embrace the ethical values shared by all Services. These values are inherent to the U.S. Constitution and governed by U.S. Code Title X.

Today in the Joint Operating Environment, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Air Force Airmen conduct combat operations alongside one another. Likewise, at varying locations across the globe, Service members in Geographic and Functional Combatant Commands, albeit out of harm's way, make daily decisions that directly affect U.S. security. The U.S. military must codify its ethical standards in order to ensure that all members understand what 'right looks like' and do it.

This ethic should become part of 'joint culture' fabric. Leaders and subordinates alike must master the standards of the ethic and take accountability for their actions. Finally, we must integrate this ethic into our professional military education system. Implementing this paper's recommendations will go a long way in actualizing what it truly means to 'support and defend' the Constitution of the United States.

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# Values Statements and the Profession of Arms: A Re-evaluation

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## INTRODUCTION

It seems altogether reasonable to assume that a conference on professional ethics would attract men and women of goodwill—either members of the profession in question or persons who are vitally interested in that profession, who recognize the foundational role of ethics in professional life. Believing this to be so, I feel both honored and humbled to occupy a few moments of the conference’s time. I wish to invite each of us to undertake a critical self-examination of the vehicles used by the profession to communicate to its members—particularly its newest members—its core ethical commitments. Human values—and in particular, soldierly values—are serious matters. Contemplation of those values reminds one of well-known words from antiquity: “This is not a trivial question,” Socrates is quoted by Plato as having once said in a related vein. “[W]hat we are talking about is how one should live.”<sup>1</sup> How well does our Army’s core values statement contribute to the end of capturing the essence of how a Soldier ought to live? How well do our sister Service’s core values statements accomplish that purpose? May I suggest that questions like these are central to the task of assessing how well we are doing at imbuing the members of the profession of arms with a sense of what it means to belong to the military in a democratic society.

Over the past decade and a half, the Army, its sister Services, and the Department of Defense have all issued core values statements, as follows:

**DoD:** Duty, integrity, ethics, honor, courage, and loyalty

**Air Force:** Integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do

**Army:** Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage

**Coast Guard:** Honor, respect, and devotion to duty<sup>2</sup>

**Marine Corps and Navy:** Honor, courage, and commitment

The first thing one notices about these statements is that each is different, even though the uniformed members of these respective organizations are all members of the same executive department and of the profession of arms. In their 2009 review of these core values statements, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission offered the following apologetic explanation for this lack of uniformity:

*Although the DoD core-values statement indicates that uniformed military members share a common set of core values, each Service’s identity is reflected in its own uniquely defined core values, which serve as common ground for all its members. For example, the Marine Corps’ core values “form the bedrock of [a Marine’s] character” (Sturkey, 2001), the Air Force’s “tell us the price of admission to the Air Force itself” (United States Air Force, 1997), and the Army’s are “what being a soldier is all about” (United States Army, n.d.).<sup>3</sup>*

This descriptive statement, coming from a commission with a mandate to promote diversity, comes as no particular surprise; and, in all fairness, there is nothing overtly objectionable about it. Upon further reflection, however, it raises some questions which properly claim our attention:

- Since DoD has a common set of core values, and DoD is the organization which encompasses the profession of arms in the United States, why should its subordinate organizations find it necessary to have different core values? More generally stated, why would organizations within the same profession have different core values statements?

- Is there something fundamentally different between DoD and the Uniformed Services or among the Uniformed Services themselves which makes distinctions in their core values a matter of logical necessity?

- Do the Services' values actually differ, or do the differences in wording and composition exist merely for cosmetic reasons?

- If their values actually differ, why is this so?

- If their distinctions are merely cosmetic, might not such artificialities actually have the effect of detracting from the seriousness that should attach to core values statements?

- Are the individual tenets themselves logically necessary or are they essentially arbitrary?

- If they are logically necessary, on what grounds is this so?

- If they are arbitrary, does that mean that *any* list of virtues would suffice as a military core values statement?

- Are the Army core values qualities that Soldiers have a unique requirement to possess, or are they merely desirable qualities that any virtuous citizen in a free society should have?

Before venturing to address these questions, I wish to remind us that, as members of a profession, we have an obligation to be self-critical—to look for ways in which to better and more effectively discharge the special public trust which distinguishes us as a profession. That means we must, from time to time, scrutinize cherished notions, ideas that we have grown to hold dear, or things which, because of the passage of time, have come to be regarded as part of our identity. Would any of us be willing to entrust our personal well-being to a member of another recognized profession—say, a physician, or a lawyer—who was unwilling for sentimental reasons to examine critically his or her operational assumptions and methods? Surely the answer is “no,” and surely we can expect nothing less from ourselves. Thus, in this process of self-examination, if we encounter discomfiting flaws in our own assumptions or methods, we must resist the temptation to dismiss those encounters out of hand, but instead, take as our touchstone the question, “What is best for America?,” and relegate other emotionally bound considerations to a secondary status.

## **CORE VALUE STATEMENTS COMPARED**

A comparative analysis of the DoD and individual service core values yields the following table:

CORE VALUES											
DoD	Duty	Integrity	Ethics	Honor	Courage	Loyalty					
Air Force		Integrity First					Service Before Self	Excellence In All We Do			
Army	Duty	Integrity		Honor	Personal Courage	Loyalty			Respect	Selfless Service	
Coast Guard	Devotion to Duty			Honor					Respect		
Marine Corps				Honor	Courage						Commitment
Navy				Honor	Courage						Commitment

Figure 1.

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CORE VALUES

On the basis of this table, the following observations emerge:

- All five of the Uniformed Services contain one or more elements found in the DoD core values.

This should come as no surprise since, after all, DoD is the parent organization. What should be startling, however, to anyone who has ever written or even read a standard five-paragraph operation order is that there is so *little* overlap between the DoD's core values statement and those of the individual Services! Let us liken, then, as Socrates would have us do, the unfamiliar to the familiar, and compare the DoD core values statement to a superior command's operation order and the core values statements of the individual Services to the operations orders of subordinate units, derived from the order received from the superior headquarters. If the DoD core values statement were to appear in what we might call an "ethics operation" order, where would it appear? It seems clear enough that it would appear either as paragraph two, the mission statement, or in paragraph three in the concept of the operation subparagraph which addresses the commander's intent. One might argue that the individual Service core values statements are simply instances of the "restated mission statement" found in subordinate unit operation orders. Perhaps; but the problem with this interpretation is that there is no obvious connection between the superior unit mission and the subordinate restated missions. (To the Army's credit, it should be noted that the Army compares more favorably in terms of executing the superior "commander's intent" than any of the other Services.)

- The next thing we note is that *none* of the Services include "ethics" in their respective core values statements.

At first blush, this may seem nothing less than incredible. Indeed, one might ask, "How can it possibly be that none of the subordinate commanders find "ethics" to be important enough to include from the superior command's ethics operation order into their own?" However, the likely answer is that the subordinate commanders omitted "ethics" precisely because its inclusion serves no clear

purpose. Is inclusion as one of DoD's core values is redundant, self-referential, and hence, a vacuous gesture. In this regard, the superior command's core values statement does not serve the subordinate commands very well.

## AIR FORCE CORE VALUES

Let us now turn to the individual Service core values statements, in alphabetical order, as shown on the chart, beginning with the Air Force.

- It becomes immediately clear that the Air Force statement is the least aligned of all the Services with the DoD core values statement.

That in no way implies, of course, that the Air Force does not cherish ethical values; it simply means that the DoD and Air Force statements do not, *prima facie*, appear to reflect a reliance on each other as might be expected between superior and subordinate organizations.

- In particular, one is struck by the Air Force core value not found in any other core values statement, namely “excellence in all we do.”

In practical terms, this is not a particularly helpful tenet. It does not require a lot of reflection upon general life experience to conclude that if everything truly is excellent then nothing is excellent. Human beings simply do not do everything excellently; and when they try to lead their lives in ways that insist upon excellence in every single aspect of their lives, they often end up frustrated and excellent in nothing. Certainly members of the profession of arms are better served by being imbued with the understanding that they must learn to look at tactical situations, quickly and accurately assess them to separate that which is important from that which is not, and relegate that which is not important to the possibility of less-than-excellent outcomes.

- The next most prominent feature in the Air Force core values statement is its reference to “service before self.”

This statement is not precisely the same thing as the value of “selfless service” articulated in the Army statement. “Service before self” suffers from the same theoretical malady that attends many such moral-philosophical statements: If one always serves others before attending to oneself, one's ability to serve others ultimately diminishes because he or she fails to “sharpen the saw” as it were. On the other hand, “selfless service” suggests that when one does serve—with the assumption that the idea of “service” in the profession of arms represents the norm and not the exception—one should do so *selflessly*. This characterization of service probably more closely reflects what is actually intended in the Air Force core values statement.

## ARMY CORE VALUES

Turning now to the Army core values statement, one observes the following:

- The Army's statement is the most closely aligned of all the Services with the DoD values statement.

- At the same time, however, it is also the longest—raising the question of whether Occam's razor might be advantageously applied.

But why exactly is it the longest? The unfortunate answer is that a corporate decision was made to express the Army's core values as an acronym, no matter what contortions needed to be applied

to make it so. The acronym is L-D-R-S-H-I-P—what has come to be soldier-speak for “leadership.” If you will pardon an autobiographical reference, the present speaker first learned of this acronym in a most unexpected way. In 1998, he wrote an article on ethical leadership, which was subsequently selected for award of a prize and publication in a prominent Army periodical. While the article was being written, the Army core values were making their public debut. Therefore, he included reference to the core values in the article, ordering them in a way which best seemed to reinforce the article’s point. When the article appeared in print, the core values were ordered in their now familiar presentation, and the author was informed that institutional leadership deemed the acronym to be so important as to trump all other presentational considerations. Now that by itself would be fine; after all, what drill sergeant would object to having the aid of an acronym to help new recruits remember a long list of values, alongside many other lists that trainees surely would be expected to digest? However, insistence on this particular acronym appears to have imposed certain artificialities upon the values statement. For example:

- The Army core values statement refers not to not to “courage,” but to “*personal* courage.”

This is, quite frankly, a rather odd and counterintuitive construction since courage, by its very nature, *is* personal. Indeed, what would it mean if one were to refer to “corporate” courage? There is no such thing as a courageous squad, a courageous platoon, or a courageous company. Only the *members* of that squad, platoon, or company can be courageous. Courage, like all moral values, can only be meaningfully experienced at the individual level. Even if every member of a collective is courageous, the collective does not thereby become courageous; only its individual members can do that.

- The other apparent artificiality in the LDRSHIP acronym is “honor.”

On the face of it, this does not appear to be a problem, especially since every DoD and Service core values statement, except for the Air Force, explicitly includes it. However, its artificiality in the context of the acronym is betrayed by the Army’s own official definition of what it means by “honor,” to wit: “Live up to all the Army values.” The notion thus becomes self-referential and to that extent, vacuous; for what good is a “value” that merely tells one to “live the values”?

The idea of making a core values list fit an acronym is something which, frankly, merits discussion among Army professionals. However well intended the gesture, might it not be the case that forcing a fit with an acronym results in a case of misplaced emphasis? Moreover, the acronym, LDRSHIP, is itself a choice which invites some untidy questioning. Is the intent to suggest that core values are the province of leaders only? Is it to suggest that everyone in a civilian-led military (in which all uniformed personnel are, to that extent, followers) are actually leaders—and if so, in what sense? Indeed, moral values are not about leaders *per se*; they are about persons. To confuse the two is to misunderstand something fundamental about our humanity. Values apply to leaders because they are persons; values do not apply to persons based on whether or not they are leaders.

## COAST GUARD CORE VALUES

We turn next to the Coast Guard.

- The Coast Guard core values statement is not particularly distinctive, except for its reference to “respect”—a reference shared with the Army’s core values statement.

*Prima facie*, it is not entirely clear what role “respect” should play as an essential characteristic of the profession of arms. This is not to say that “respect” is not an honorable or desirable trait; but how does it contribute to the essential character of the profession of arms any more than, say, “cheerfulness,” “friendliness,” or “courteousness” does? Contrast “respect” with ideas like “courage” or “duty” and it quickly becomes clear that no special explanation is necessary for why one carrying a

loaded weapon in defense of the Nation should be courageous or dutiful. Again, this is not to say that “respect” is not a desirable trait; it is merely to raise the question of how it contributes to the essence of the profession of arms as a distinct social entity with highly specialized responsibilities. Upon considered reflection, it may be that those values statements which refer to “respect” as a core value are doing so as a genuflection to political correctness. If so, it should be noted that any such genuflection undermines the spirit of seriousness that ought to attend ethical reflection. Perhaps inclusion of a value like “respect” is a reactive response to media scrutiny in recent years of cases of physical or other kinds of abuse among military members. If so, the oddity of its inclusion in a military core values statement stands in even greater relief, for there is no rational basis whatsoever to say that a member of the Uniformed Services has a greater responsibility to demonstrate respect for others than every other member of American society does. The law holds—or should hold—every American citizen accountable for the abuse of other persons. If that is what “respect” refers to here, it simply is not the case, legally or philosophically, that a distinctive standard need exist on this point for members of the Uniformed Services. In contrast, there is both a legal and philosophical basis for expecting that a member of the Uniformed Services be expected to demonstrate “courage” in a way that cannot necessarily be expected of members of American society at large. “Courage” must be understood not only as fundamental to the performance of military duty—as a defining hallmark of the profession—but also distinctively so in a way that “respect” must not necessarily be understood.

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY CORE VALUES**

The Department of the Navy core values, as manifested in both the Marine Corps and Navy core value statements, feature a remarkable elegance that is worthy of our special attention.

- The Marine Corps and Navy core values are presented as having been derived from the Constitution of the United States.

This is a remarkably powerful and sophisticated approach, because it provides a grounding and derivation for the core values and a rationale for their selection. Hence, the Department of the Navy statement does not suffer from the apparent arbitrariness in selection of core values that plagues the other statements. The Navy statement ties each core value to key phrases from the oath administered upon entry into Naval service<sup>4</sup>, to wit:

- Honor: “I will bear true faith and allegiance ...”
- Courage: “I will support and defend ...”
- Commitment: “I will obey the orders...”

Even if the connection of the Navy and Marine Corps core values to these key phrases is not intuitively obvious, the Navy’s official explanation of the connection is compelling and makes an excellent basis for elucidating the import of these core values—and for explaining precisely why they are core values—in instructional settings with Naval personnel.

- On the down side, the fact that the key phrases come from a mixture of the Navy’s oath of enlistment and from its commissioned officer oath of office constitutes a curious juxtaposition which may detract from the philosophical elegance of the arrangement.

This goes to a point which some might consider esoteric, but which in fact deserves consideration, namely, what exactly constitutes the “professional” part of the military profession? By their very nature, codes of ethics pertain most directly to the professional segments of society. For example, while medical doctors are bound by the Hippocratic Oath, it does not follow that the hospital medical records clerk or the radiology clinic receptionist are professionals in the same, relevant sense. They may be skilled technicians or tradesmen, but it is hard to make the case that they are classifiable as

“professionals” in the traditional sense of the word. We have grown so accustomed, in the last quarter or third of a century, to referring to *anyone* who is gainfully employed as a “professional” that the concept has become quite diluted. Hence, we routinely refer to “professional” golfers, “professional” air conditioner repair persons, “professional” sales clerks in department stores, and the like. Please note that this is not to say that “professionals” thus described do not make meaningful contributions to society (although some might understandably assign more modest value to the “professional” golfer’s social contribution than might be assigned to the value of the air conditioner repair person on a hot, muggy summer afternoon). Rather, it means that members of professions hold special responsibilities that set them apart from the rest of society. Properly speaking, professionals are persons charged with the control of expert knowledge not easily obtained by and not readily available to lay persons.<sup>5</sup> That is why the medical doctor is a professional in the relevant sense and the medical office receptionist is not. In a similar vein, it is not entirely clear that every member of the Uniformed Services is a “professional” in the relevant sense. At least the question should be asked as to whether there is a relevant difference, in terms of professional status, between the young enlistee who drives a truck and the company commander who has far-reaching responsibilities concerning everything his or her company accomplishes or fails to accomplish and or everything his or her subordinates do or fail to do. Of course, that does not mean that the truck driver is not important in his or her own circumscribed sphere; it just means that the label “professional” may not apply to that person in the same way as it does to a company commander. In any case, the issue invites the question of whether the profession of arms should have a core values statement for those in *bona fide* professional positions, as is the case with medical doctors vis-à-vis the medical profession, or for all members of the team, as it were. The answer is probably the latter, and that is probably the best answer, given the enormous ethical decision making responsibilities reposed even in junior enlisted personnel and given the context of America’s egalitarian social priorities.

## CONCLUSION

In light of these observations, let me be very clear: The foregoing is not a critique of the proposition that we ought to champion core values, nor is it questioning whether we should have core values statements. Rather, it is a reevaluation of the efficacy of the current core values statements in terms of their ability to communicate to the members of our profession the serious nature of the ethical enterprise. Some might feel inclined to counter by saying, in effect, “Aren’t we making much too big a deal about this? Is it not far more important that we have a core values statement than it is that we have any *particular* values statement?” The question is a fair one, but it is also one which invites us to recall again the words of Socrates: “This is not . . . trivial, what we are talking about is how one should live.”<sup>6</sup> Presumably, the various Uniformed Services expect their members to take their respective core values statements seriously—to memorize them, to reflect upon them, and to incorporate the values thus enshrined in their individual lives. However, if serious reflection upon the content of a core values statement results in the impression that the statement itself is in some respect deficient or ill conceived, that statement, rather than producing the intended sense of gravitas, might actually have a very different effect. It may serve to trivialize the ethical enterprise and thus call into question the ethical commitments of the institution which embraces the statement. Instead of inspiring awe, the words actually could become, as the ancients might have said, merely “sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.”<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps the time has come for the Department of Defense and each of the Uniformed Services to consider what values distinctively define the profession of arms in a democratic society and why, if at all, there should be any differences among the statements. After all, it is one thing for the Uniformed Services to have distinctive uniforms that serve the need of their varied operating environments, but it is quite another thing for a Uniformed Service to have core ethical values that differ from other segments of the profession of arms.

Moreover, if a Uniformed Service’s core values really are “core”—not merely an arbitrary list of desirable traits that it would be nice if everyone had, military professional or not—then members of

the profession of arms should be able to articulate a defense of why this is so.

Some members of the profession might find these claims to be unduly theoretical. Some might regard them to border on irreverence. They might place such questioning in the same class with, for example, tinkering with the words of “America the Beautiful” or of the Pledge of Allegiance. However, one should consider that the current core values statements were not chiseled in stone and delivered through the fiery clouds and thunder of Mount Sinai. They deserve to be scrutinized. If, after a decade of experience with the various core values statements, their words are found to withstand scrutiny, they will become stronger and more enduring. If they are not able to withstand scrutiny borne of careful reflection, they need to be changed. In either case, it may well be that the time has come to conduct that re-evaluation.

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## Biography

*Colonel John Mark Mattox is the Dean of the Defense Threat Reduction University and Commandant of the Defense Nuclear Weapons School, Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico. He holds degrees from Brigham Young University (B.A. with honors in theoretical linguistics); The U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (Master of Military Arts and Science); The U.S. Army War College (Master of Strategic Studies); and Indiana University (M.A., Ph.D. in philosophy). He has served on the faculty of the United States Military Academy at West Point and the University of Maryland. He has published articles on a variety of subjects, to include linguistics, military tactics, professional military ethics, and Shakespearean literature, and is the author of *St. Augustine and the Theory of Just War* (London: Continuum Publishers, 2006, 2009).*

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## Endnotes

1. Plato, *The Republic*, Book 1, 352:d.
2. While it is understood that the Coast Guard is aligned bureaucratically with the Department of Homeland Security and not the Department of Defense, the nature of its work as a uniformed service charged with the nation’s defense aligns it, for purposes of the present discussion, both conceptually and philosophically with the Services under the Department of Defense.
3. “Department of Defense Core Values,” Military Leadership Diversity Commission, Issue Paper #6, December, 2009, p. 1, available online at [http://mldc.whs.mil/download/documents/Issue%20Papers/Core\\_Values\\_6.pdf](http://mldc.whs.mil/download/documents/Issue%20Papers/Core_Values_6.pdf), accessed 29 July 2010.
4. The oaths are as follows.

For enlisted personnel: “I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God. I swear (or affirm) that I am fully aware and fully understand the conditions under which I am enlisting.”

For commissioned officer personnel: “I, (state your name), having been appointed a (rank) in the United States (branch of service), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the office

upon which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

5. See the extensive discussion of this point in Andrew Abbot, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).
6. Plato, *The Republic*, Book 1, 352:d.
7. 1 Corinthians 13:1.



## **Part 3: CAPE “Profession of Arms Assessment”**



# **An Army White Paper**

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## **The Profession of Arms**

**-- CG TRADOC Approved--**

**--02 December 2010--**

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**Purpose:**

This White Paper serves to facilitate an Army-wide dialog about our Profession of Arms. It is neither definitive nor authoritative, but a starting point with which to begin discussion. It will be refined throughout calendar year 2010 based on feedback from across our professional community. All members of the profession and those who support the profession are encouraged to engage in this dialog.

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Authorized for distribution 2 December 2010:

Martin E. Dempsey  
General, U.S. Army  
Commanding General

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## **The Profession of Arms**

*"I am an expert and a professional."* - The Soldier's Creed

### **Why do we need a campaign to understand the Profession of Arms and the Professional Soldier?**

Ten years ago, references to the Second Battle of Fallujah, Sadr City, Wanat, Abu Ghraib, IEDs, the so-called "revolt of the generals," the "lost art of garrison command," modular brigades, combat outposts, mission command, and ARFORGEN would have been virtually meaningless to most, if not all, American Soldiers. Today, these references are instantly recognizable to us all and comprise just a few of many profoundly important influences on the U.S. Army over the past decade. In the face of so many challenges, we have demonstrated great strengths such as the determination and adaptability of our junior leaders and their dedication to service shown through numerous deployments. Yet we have also struggled in some areas to maintain the highest standards of the Profession of Arms. As we have at other times in our history, we assess that it is time to refresh and renew our understanding of our profession.

With this in mind, the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff have directed that CG TRADOC lead a review of the Army Profession. They have issued "terms of reference" in which they state that, as a profession, it's now "essential that we take a hard look at ourselves to ensure we understand what we have been through over the past nine years, how we have changed, and how we must adapt to succeed in an era of persistent conflict." To do so we must answer three critical questions:

- 1. What does it mean for the Army to be a Profession of Arms?**
- 2. What does it mean to be a professional Soldier?**
- 3. After nine years of war, how are we as individual professionals and as a profession meeting these aspirations?**

We don't know the answers to these questions yet. In 2011, we will conduct an assessment and encourage a discussion about our Profession. By the end of the year, we hope to have learned enough to clearly articulate what we believe is foundational to our Army as a profession. Undoubtedly, the Army is considered a profession today. But, we must remember that the Army is not a profession just because we say so. The military services are well respected and are highly rated in every poll of public trust -- we can be justifiably proud of how well the Army and our Soldiers are shouldering the heavy burdens they have borne over the past nine years. However, we can't take our approval for granted. Our client, the American people, gets to make the judgment of the extent to which we are a profession and they will do so based on the bond of trust we create with them based on the ethical, exemplary manner in which we employ our capabilities.

In adapting to the demands of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as to the new strategic realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we have been so busy that we have not consistently thought through how these challenges have affected the Army as a Profession of Arms. We now need to consider how well we are self-policing ourselves both on the battlefield and in garrison, the extent of our ability to care for Soldiers and their families, and the broad development of Army professionals. We need to assess our personnel management systems to ensure they are focusing on and capitalizing on the exceptional talents of our junior professionals and broadening them for future service. We must assess our civil-military relations as we interact with and support the Nation and its elected and appointed officials. These and many other factors need to be assessed and then addressed to enable the Army to succeed in this era of persistent conflict.

The questions the Secretary and Chief asked are serious and deserve serious answers. To help frame the discussion, this paper is intended to introduce terms, concepts, and some proposed definitions. This is the beginning, not the end, of what should be a year of rigorous analysis and vigorous debate.

## **Section 1 – The Army as a Profession of Arms**

### **What does it mean to be a Profession?**

Professions produce uniquely expert work, not routine or repetitive work. Medicine, theology, law, and the military are “social trustee” forms of professions.<sup>1</sup> Effectiveness, rather than pure efficiency, is the key to the work of professionals—the sick want a cure, the sinner wants absolution, the accused want exoneration, and the defenseless seek security.

Professionals require years of study and practice before they are capable of expert work. Society is utterly dependent on professionals for their health, justice, and security. Thus, a deep moral obligation rests on the profession, and its professionals, to continuously develop expertise and use that expertise only in the best interests of society—professionals are actually servants. The military profession, in particular, must provide the security which society cannot provide for itself, without which the society cannot survive, and to use its expertise according to the values held by the Nation.<sup>2</sup>

Professions earn the trust of their clients through their *Ethic* – which is their means of motivation and self-control. The servant ethic of professions is characterized as *cedat emptor*, “let the taker believe in us.”<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Army’s professional Ethic is built on trust with the American people, as well as with civilian leaders and junior professionals within the ranks.<sup>4</sup> That trust must be re-earned every day through living our Ethic, which incidentally, can’t be found now in any single document – a doctrinal omission this campaign will help change. Because of this trust, the American people grant significant autonomy to us to create our own expert knowledge and to police the application of that knowledge by individual professionals. Non-professional occupations do not enjoy similar autonomy. A self-policing Ethic is an absolute necessity, especially for the Profession of Arms, given the lethality inherent in what we do.

Lastly, other organizations motivate their workers through extrinsic factors such as salary, benefits, and promotions. Professions use inspirational, intrinsic factors like the life-long pursuit of expert knowledge, the privilege and honor of service, camaraderie, and the status of membership in an ancient, honorable, and revered occupation. This is what motivates true professionals; it’s why a profession like ours is considered a calling—not a job.

### **Refining our Understanding of the Army as a Profession of Arms**

*“The preeminent military task, and what separates [the military profession] from all other occupations, is that soldiers are routinely prepared to kill...in addition to killing and preparing to kill, the soldier has two other principal duties...some soldiers die and, when they are not dying, they must be preparing to die.” - James H. Toner<sup>5</sup>*

Among all professions, our calling, the Profession of Arms, is unique because of the lethality of our weapons and our operations. Soldiers are tasked to do many things besides combat operations, but ultimately, as noted in the quotation above, the core purpose and reason the Army exists is to apply lethal force.<sup>6</sup> Soldiers must be prepared to kill and die when needed in service to the Republic. The moral implications of being a professional Soldier could not be greater and compel us to be diligent in our examination of what it means to be a profession, and a professional Soldier. This is an ambitious

undertaking, but a good start point for understanding our profession is the legal foundation of the U.S. Army as established in Federal Statute, Title 10, U.S. Code, Section 3062 (a):

*“It is the intent of Congress to provide an Army that is capable, in conjunction with the other armed services, of:*

- 1. Preserving the peace and security, and providing for the defense, of the United States, the Territories, Commonwealths, and possessions, and any areas occupied by the United States;*
- 2. Supporting the national policies;*
- 3. Implementing the national objectives; and*
- 4. Overcoming any nations responsible for aggressive acts that imperil the peace and security of the United States.”*

The Army has now been an established institution of our federal and state governments for some 237 years. And notice that it was established with the intention to provide an Army that is capable of producing certain security conditions enumerated in the statute. In fact, like many other organizations in America, the Army is a producing organization—producing “the human expertise, embodied in leaders and their units, of effective military power for land campaigns.”<sup>7</sup>

Before a standing federal Army was created in 1803, the colonial militias were under close supervision of the colonial legislatures.<sup>8</sup> The Army Officer Corps was later professionalized in the late nineteenth century through professional military educational systems such as staff schools at Forts Benning and Leavenworth and the Army War College. With these reforms, bonds of trust between the Army and the American people began to grow. For many years some believed that only officers were professionals<sup>9</sup>, but in the aftermath of Vietnam while rebuilding the “hollow” Army, professional status was extended beyond the officer corps and was earned through professional development by warrant officers, NCOs, and many Army civilians.

The Army’s degree of professionalism has waxed and waned over the years, sometimes displaying more the characteristics of an occupation than a profession—more professional in periods of expansion and later phases of war and more “occupational” in periods of contraction after wars, e.g. post-WWII into Korea and post-Vietnam. This trend continued even after the establishment of an all-volunteer force in 1971 and the rebuilding of the Army NCO Corps post-Vietnam. It was highly professional in Desert Shield-Desert Storm and less so through managerial practices over the next decade of force reductions, the exodus of captains, and other talent.<sup>10</sup> A recent report suggests that today’s operating forces after nine years of war, exhibit more the traits of a profession than the force-generating, or institutional, side of the Army.<sup>11</sup> Learning from our history of post-conflict transitions, we must not allow these professional traits to suffer—because today we are in an era of persistent conflict. There will be no “peace dividend” or “post-conflict” opportunity to relax our guard

As the Army reflects now on what it means to be a profession in midst of persistent conflict, a central question frames the major challenges now facing the Army’s strategic leaders: the sergeants major, colonels, and general officers. How do we create the specific conditions for, and achieve those key attributes that ensure that the Army is a profession - one in which all Army professionals recommit, in the words of CG, TRADOC, GEN Martin Dempsey, “to a culture of service and the responsibilities and behaviors of our profession as articulated in the Army Ethic”?

### **Maintaining the Army as a Profession of Arms**

To remain a strong profession in the face of today’s challenges, Army leaders at all levels need a solid understanding of what it takes to earn our status. We then need to reflect on how well we are meeting these requirements, what strengths of the profession have sustained the Army, and what weaknesses and friction points need to be addressed. Toward this end, we need to agree on two important definitions:

- **THE PROFESSION OF ARMS.** The Army is an American Profession of Arms, a vocation comprised of experts certified in the ethical application of land combat power, serving under civilian authority, entrusted to defend the Constitution and the rights and interests of the American people.
- **THE PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER.** An American Professional Soldier is an expert, a volunteer certified in the Profession of Arms, bonded with comrades in a shared identity and culture of sacrifice and service to the nation and the Constitution, who adheres to the highest ethical standards and is a steward of the future of the Army profession.

Obviously, these two definitions are inherently linked—to be a professional is to understand, embrace, and competently practice the expertise of the profession. It is clear that professional Soldiers, as defined above, must be immersed in the environment and culture of the profession of arms, particularly in their early career. Soldiers must be led and inspired by exemplary role models to become experts and to assume the identity, character, and capabilities of a member of this profession. Soldiers must always feel that their role is a calling and not just a job or they will lack the inspiration and find it difficult to meet their aspiration to be an “expert and a professional” as stated in the ninth line of the Soldier’s Creed.

The key components of these definitions describe the specific conditions that must be created by Army leaders on the ground—in every Army unit every day to maintain the Profession of Arms. They merit careful reflection, individually and institutionally, as this campaign proceeds.

***“The Army as a Profession of Arms is a unique vocation.” Professional Soldiers are “volunteers... bonded with comrades in a shared identity and culture of sacrifice and service”*** Army leaders establish a professional identity and culture rather than one of government occupation. This culture sponsors altruism, selfless service to the nation, and ethos toward the Army and its mission. It sponsors continuous self-assessment, learning, and development that together enable the Army to be an adaptive, learning profession. Within that culture, members of the profession create a Soldier’s identity with a sense of calling and ownership over the advancement of the profession and the exemplary performance of its members, and serve in a bonded unity of fellow professionals with a shared sense of calling. Army leaders establish a culture where effectiveness prevails over efficiency and place primary importance on maintaining the profession through investing in the development of its Soldiers.

***The profession is “comprised of experts.” “An American professional Soldier is an expert...in the Army Profession of Arms”*** Foremost, the Army must be capable of fighting and winning the nation’s wars. Thus, the Army creates its own expert knowledge, both theoretical and practical, for the conduct of full spectrum operations inclusive of offense, defense, and stability or civil support operations. The Army develops Soldiers and leaders throughout careers of service to aspire to be experts and use their lethal expertise, both as individuals and as units, with the highest standards of character, for the defense of the Constitution, the American people, and our way of life.

***The Army profession and its professional Soldiers are “certified” in the “ethical application of land combat” and the “Profession of Arms”*** To maintain the effectiveness of the profession, the Army tests and certifies its members to ensure each meets the high standards of the profession (both competence/ expertise and morality/character) required to ethically apply land combat power before being granted status as a full member of the profession; and recertifies each professional at each successive level of

promotion/advancement. It therefore maintains systems to train and educate individuals in a trainee or apprenticeship status where they are mentored and developed until professional standards can be met.

***The Army and its professionals are “serving under civilian authority”*** The Army has no purpose except to serve the Constitution and the American people and thereby their elected and appointed representatives. In all aspects of its existence and operations the Army Profession advises with disciplined candor and is willingly subordinate to, and a servant of, the American people through their elected and appointed civilian authorities. Further, members of the Army clearly understand and accept the subordination of their personal needs to the needs of the mission.

***The Army is “entrusted to defend the Constitution and the rights and interests of the American people”*** Through exemplary duty performance, the Army maintains a trust relationship with the American people and earns institutional autonomy and high vocational status by demonstrating both effective military expertise and the proper and ethical employment of that expertise on behalf of the Nation. This is how the Army earns its legitimacy to operate under Joint Command, as negotiated with senior civilian officials, in Major Combat Operations, Stability Operations, Strategic Deterrence, and Homeland Security.

***The profession practices the “ethical application of land combat power” and an American professional Soldier “adheres to the highest ethical standards”*** The Army establishes and adapts an Ethic that governs the culture, and thus the actions, of the profession and the practice of individual professionals, inspiring exemplary performance by all members. This Ethic is derived from the imperatives of military effectiveness and the values of the American society the Army serves. Further, the Army self-polices such that all leaders at each level guard the integrity of the profession inclusive of both its expertise and its Ethic. They set standards for conduct and performance, teach those standards to others, establish systems that develop members to meet standards, and take rapid action against those who fail to achieve standards. The duty to set the example for others falls to the greatest degree on the most respected and qualified members of the profession.

***Each professional Soldier “is a steward of the future of the Army profession”*** The profession is maintained by leaders who place high priority on and invest themselves and the resources of the profession to develop professionals and future leaders at all levels. Leader development is an investment required to maintain the Army as a profession and is a key source of combat power. Leadership entails the repetitive exercise of discretionary judgments, all highly moral in nature, and represents the core function of the Army professional’s military art, whether leading a patrol in combat or making a major policy or budget decision in the Pentagon. Discretionary judgments are the coin of the realm in all professions; foremost the military.

### **The Key Attributes of our Profession of Arms**

We can now identify those attributes, at least an initial offering for debate and dialogue, which we as an Army should consider “key” as we seek to reinforce the profession during this transition. They are key in that while not inclusive of everything it means for the Army to be a Profession, they are inclusive enough to serve as “guideposts” for the development and stewardship of the profession. It’s important to note that these attributes must be developed at both the organizational (the Profession) and the individual (the Professional) level:

#### **THE PROFESSION**

Expertise  
Trust  
Development  
Values  
Service

#### **THE PROFESSIONAL**

Skill  
Trust  
Leadership  
Character  
Duty

The rationale for this short list is straightforward.

- The Profession of Arms requires expert knowledge (i.e. *expertise*), and that expertise is manifested as unique *skills* in the individual professional and by Army units.
- The profession exists only through a relationship of *trust* with the client; and that trust is the same trust that enables the individual Soldier to develop within the Army as a profession, for Soldiers and units to bond, for Soldiers' families to trust the Army through myriad deployments, and for Army leaders to engage effectively in civil-military relations. In fact, that is why *trust* is clearly the most important attribute we seek for the Army. It is equally applicable and important in its simplest form to both profession and professional. It is our lifeblood.
- To maintain that trust, the profession requires the continuous *development* of human practitioners, (i.e. experts) who hold high levels of knowledge, adaptability, resilience, and other attributes that make them effective members of the Profession of Arms. That development is manifested in *leadership* by professionals at all ranks.
- The profession requires unwavering, deeply held *values* on which to base its Ethic. Those values, when well internalized, are manifested in the *character* of individual professionals. Such strength of character would include internalization of the Army values and ethos amongst other aspects of the Ethic.
- Finally the profession provides a vital *service* to American society and does so in subordination. That service is manifested in the *duty* of the individual professional.

### **A Broader Framework for the Profession of Arms**

Having specified the attributes that define the Army as a Profession of Arms and its members as Professionals, we can turn to a discussion of a broader framework for our discussion. Modern military professions have a unique character, a *moral and legal foundation*, that reflects their nation's heritage, values, and culture. In addition, all modern professions display at least three other common traits: they create and maintain internally their own expert knowledge and practices (*expertise*); they apply that expertise in an external situation or arena wherein their client wants it applied (a *jurisdiction*); and after a period of time, depending on their virtue and effectiveness, they will have established a relationship of trust with the client (*legitimacy*).<sup>12</sup> We will briefly discuss each of these in turn.

The *moral and legal foundation* of the Army is the uniquely American values now embodied in our Constitution and subsequent statute, including Title 10. We are the American Army, we are American Soldiers, and that uniqueness shapes our soul, both institutionally and individually! Thus our Ethic, our regulations, and professional standards are based on these larger moral and legal foundations. Our Oaths of enlistment and service, the Soldier and NCO Creeds, the Warrior Ethos, and the Soldier's Rules, among other expressions of our moral underpinnings, all express the will of the American people for their Army. This foundation answers the core questions such as: Why does the Army exist? Whom does it serve? Why does it fight? How do we fight? These topics are taken up in later sections.

*Expertise.* The first key attribute presented of the profession is its premier *expertise*—the art and science of ethically applying coercive or lethal land combat power to establish a more just peace, thus upholding and defending the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic. To do this, the Army must continually build the expertise needed to be effective in future conflict and then develop new

professionals certified in that evolving expertise of the profession. Given the demands of the Army's new doctrine of Operation Adaptability, the range of knowledge and expertise needed in the future will remain broad and include more than purely military tasks. To better understand the Army's professional expertise we can conceptually group it into four fields:<sup>13</sup>

- **MILITARY-TECHNICAL EXPERTISE** enables the Army to conduct effective offense, defense, and stability or civil support operations on land at each of the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. This includes expertise in doctrine and TTP, our knowledge of the employment of combat power, the employment of weaponry and equipment and systems, as well as our knowledge and capabilities in science and technology, research and development, and acquisition to develop those tools of the profession.
- **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT EXPERTISE** enables the Army to socialize, train, educate, and develop volunteers to become Soldiers and then to develop those Soldiers to be leaders within and future stewards of the profession. This includes training, education and development systems, human development, and mental and physical fitness.
- **MORAL-ETHICAL EXPERTISE** enables the Army to fight wars and employ combat power morally, as the American people expect and as domestic and international laws require. This includes expertise related to ethical combat principles, ROEs, ethical culture and climates, individual moral development, and institutional values.
- **POLITICAL-CULTURAL EXPERTISE** enables the Army to understand and operate effectively in our own and in other JIIM cultures across organizational and national boundaries. This relates to the fields of civil-military relations and media-military relations and includes language and cultural proficiency, negotiation, and civilian advisement.

These four broad areas of professional expertise enable the Army to generate and employ ethical combat power to achieve operational adaptability across the full spectrum of operations. Such capabilities extend beyond merely having knowledge in each area. It also includes the motivations of individuals and groups, their psychological and physiological attributes, culture and climate, and larger management systems and processes that must be synchronized to create each of the four fields of expertise. Further, each field of expertise has individual, organizational, and institutional level components. For example, Soldiers require sufficient moral-ethical expertise to guide their own conduct, yet at the organizational level, ethics need to be reinforced through leadership and unit culture. Furthermore, processes and systems must exist at the institutional level to enable moral-ethical practice and the development of individual professionals. Therefore, each of the four fields should be looked at as a multilevel system, with each level necessary but not sufficient by itself for the Army to be considered a profession. Again, the Army is not a profession just because it says it is. That prerogative rests with the client, the American people, who judge for themselves whether the Army is expert and virtuous.

War is a human event, a contest of wills between human groups. Therefore, it is the development of human knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes associated with each field of expertise that are of most importance to the profession.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, a robust leader development system is the *sine qua non* for a professional Army. While every professional must have a sufficient level of expertise in all four fields to be effective, they don't need to be equally qualified in all. Development of professionals is a career-long process through training, education, and experience which should be managed to create the varied talent pool needed by the broad Army. Furthermore, the relative importance of the four areas of expertise changes across operational environments. Stability and support operations, for example, have shifted the need for political and cultural expertise to earlier in the career of many Army leaders.

The final element of this framework is the external environments in which the Army operates—where it applies its expertise with effectiveness and virtue—thereby earning the trust and confidence of the American people and its claim to status as a true profession. The Army practices in the JIIM environment in four general *external jurisdictions*, negotiated recently with our civilian leaders and the other services in 2006: major combat operations, strategic deterrence, stability operations, and homeland security.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Practice of the Army Professional and Trust**

To understand the Army profession, we need to understand that the actual “practice” of the Army professional, irrespective of rank or position, is the “repetitive exercise of discretionary judgments”<sup>16</sup> as they employ their professional skills. The essence of this definition is that true professionals control their own work. Most often no one tells the professional what to do or how to do it. Their actions are discretionary. Think of a leader on patrol in Iraq or Afghanistan, or a senior leader in the Pentagon making policy decisions. Each exercises discretionary judgment—not solved by a formula, rather drawn from years of knowledge and experience. That is the practice of the military professional’s art. It is what the American people trust us to do.

Second, most of these discretionary judgments have a high degree of moral content, where decisions directly impact the life of other human beings, whether Soldier and family, the enemy, or an innocent on the battlefield. Such judgments must therefore be rendered by Army professionals of well developed moral character and who possess the ability to reason effectively in moral frameworks. As America trusts the Army’s character and competence, no one tells us what to write in doctrinal manuals. Leaders have wide discretion in setting policies to educate and train Soldiers with that knowledge, and field commanders execute operations with wide discretionary authority. The nature of war requires this, even more so now under increasingly dynamic, decentralized operations.

The Army’s operational successes and transparent attempts to learn from its challenges and failures (e.g., efforts to abate suicides, to care for wounded warriors, to develop resilience, etc.) have reinforced the trust relationship with the American people. However, just as we can build a reservoir of trust, we can also deplete it. There have been times in the past when the Army lost autonomy and some legitimacy with the American people when it failed to abide by an Ethic approved by the client. These incidents caused the Army to lose both legitimacy and autonomy, and external regulations were imposed. In the 1980’s, an investigation revealed Drill Sergeants at Aberdeen Proving Ground were systematically abusing trainees. The abuse was long-standing and widespread. Because the Army failed to self-police adherence to an appropriate Ethic, Congress passed legislation with very specific language on how to train and lead our Soldiers. The people had lost trust in the Army’s ability to repetitively exercise discretionary judgment, so they took that authority and autonomy away. Incidents such as prisoner abuse and unlawful or indiscriminate non-combatant deaths also deplete our reservoir of trust. Trust is the “coin of the realm” for professions – “may the client believe in us.” If we were to lose our trust relationship with the American people, the entire edifice of our profession would crumble.

### **The Balancing Role of the Profession’s Leaders**

The continuous challenge for the strategic leaders of the Army since the latter decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the U.S. Army was professionalized has been to keep the Army “balanced.”<sup>17</sup> While there are many aspects to *balance* within an institution as massive as the Army, two are of particular relevance to this discussion.

The first is the role of strategic leaders, the sergeants major, colonels, and general officers, in balancing the relationship between the Army's four fields of expertise and its current and potential future operating environment. When out of balance, the Army does not have the right capabilities to employ when and where the nation needs them. For example, after the fall of Baghdad in March 2003, it became apparent that the Army fell short in maintaining this balance. Junior leaders found themselves fighting a counterinsurgency campaign for which they lacked the necessary expertise and equipment. Thanks to innovative and heroic leaders, the Army was able to adapt its doctrine, materiel, and operations to change the course of the Iraq war over a period of two to three years.

The second area of balance is the relationship between the Army's culture and climate and its institutional practices. How well these are aligned will influence the mindset of Army professionals, their commitment, satisfaction, and well-being. Specifically, as strategic leaders manage the institutional systems of the Army, their every action influences the five key attributes of the profession, the four fields of expertise, and has near or long-term effects on culture and climate. Strategic leaders' actions also signal to Soldiers and junior leaders whether they are serving in a profession where, for example, individual merits of competence and character are the sole measures of certification or, instead, in an occupational or bureaucratic system where other measures apply. Such actions determine whether Soldiers see themselves as professionals serving a calling or as time-servers filing a government job.

"Good bureaucracy" that provides the institutional support needed for the profession to thrive is critical. Thus strategic leader's actions must make clear to all that the institutional management systems support the profession and that when in conflict with other demands profession takes precedence. Strategic leaders, for example, must control personnel development, evaluation and certification, and assignment and utilization processes in ways that motivate aspiring professionals as they progress through a career of service. Some of these systems are now out of balance after nine years of war, making the current challenge more urgent. In short, strategic leaders ensure that they produce the necessary conditions for the Army to be a profession. Meanwhile, Army leaders below the ranks of sergeant major, colonel, and general officer make their own part of the Army more professional daily even if they don't control the levers of the major developmental systems, policy, and resources.<sup>18</sup>

The American people also care about these necessary balances. They want an effective and virtuous Army for the security of the Nation, one in which their sons and daughters can develop and mature positively through their years of service.

## **Section 2 – The Army's Professional Culture**

### **Army Culture and Its Influences on the Profession**

In the contemporary era, understanding the way institutional culture shapes professional behaviour is an essential leader competence. Self-awareness at the institutional level is as important as is self-awareness at the personal level. What cannot be understood cannot be changed. Is the Army's culture well adapted to its current missions, and is it well adapted to the full spectrum of missions anticipated in the near future under the doctrine of "Operational Adaptability"?

Army culture is the system of shared meaning held by its Soldiers, "the shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize the larger institution over time."<sup>19</sup> Institutions – organizations that endure – have distinct stable cultures that shape their behaviour, even though they comprise many, ever-changing individuals.<sup>20</sup> An organization's culture generally reflects what it finds to be functionally effective in times of strong need. Culture goes beyond mere "style." It is the spirit and soul of the body

corporate, the “glue” that make units and commands distinctive sources of identity and experience. It is essentially “how we do things around here.”<sup>21</sup>

Closely associated with an organization’s culture is its climate. In contrast to culture, which is more deeply embedded, organizational climate refers to Soldiers’ feelings and attitudes as they interact within the culture. A “zero defect” culture, for example, can create a climate where Soldiers feel they are not trusted and create attitudes where transparency and open dialog are not encouraged. Climate is often driven by tangible aspects of the culture that reflect the organization’s value system, such as rewards and punishments, communications flow, operations tempo, and quality of leadership. It is essentially “how we feel about this organization.” Unlike the more deeply embedded culture, climate can be changed fairly quickly (e.g., by replacing a toxic leader or improving a poor selection system).

### **Levels of Army Culture**

**Artifacts.** These lie at the surface of culture. They include all the tangible phenomena that Soldiers see, hear, and feel when operating in an Army unit: its language, technology and equipment; symbols as embodied in uniforms, flags, and ceremonies; the myths and stories told about the unit; its published list of values. Chain of command pictures in a unit’s orderly room, for example, are artifacts reminding all viewers of the hierarchy of authority and responsibility that exists within the Army.

**Espoused Beliefs and Values.** These are what the Army *says* is important by its published doctrines, regulations, and other policy statements. Beliefs and values at this conscious level will predict much of the behavior and tangible material that can be observed at the artifact level. For example the Seven Army Values make up one representation of the core of the Army Ethic which is manifested at the artifact level in values cards and special dog tags. If leaders allow disconnects between word and deed, gaps can be created between *espoused values*, and *values in use*—when Soldiers or leaders do not “walk the talk” in line with espoused Army beliefs and values. This creates confusion across the ranks and leads to dysfunctional and demoralizing behavior. For example, if the Army espouses the importance of Soldier and leader education and professional development yet does not invest in it adequately, or has selection practices that make leaders who pursue broadening developmental experiences less competitive for advancement, the Army appears hypocritical. However, if the espoused beliefs and values are reasonably congruent with the Army’s deeper underlying assumptions, then the articulation of those values into a philosophy of operating can be a powerful source to help create cohesion, unity of effort, and identity.

**Basic Underlying Assumptions.** This is the deepest level of culture. When a solution to a problem confronting the Army works repeatedly, it comes to be taken for granted. What was once a hypothesis gradually comes to be treated over time as reality. Assumptions such as “volunteer Soldiers and their families should be treated as deeply valued people” become so accepted it is rarely ever discussed except to determine how the Army can make them feel more valued.

**The Functional Utility of Army Culture.** We can identify three major cultural dimensions derived from its *underlying assumptions* that help us to understand what leaders must focus on as they guide the transition of the Army.<sup>22</sup>

**Professional Identity.** Guides the behavior of Soldiers at all levels and is characterized by an ethos of striving for excellence in functional specialties (e.g., infantry, logistics, aviation, etc.) and, at a higher level, on developing combined-arms campaign capabilities. It is buttressed by Soldiers’ identification with the goals and ideals of the Army and by an Ethic of “service” before self and putting “duty first.”

**Community.** The bonds in and among units, influencing cohesion with Soldiers and their families, a cohesion that results from belonging to a “professional family” with shared mission, purpose, and sacrifice. Such cohesion is often best observed in a strong sense of clannishness, e.g., the “band of brothers” ethos reflected in Army subcultures such as Cavalry, Special Forces, etc.

A sense of community broadens Soldier’s identity by developing the ‘I’ into the ‘we.’<sup>23</sup> This is the well-spring for cooperation and 360-degree loyalty and service derived from professional networks and the basis for unfamiliar attached units to quickly establish “swift trust.” These networks and the values on which they are based cause Soldiers to exert themselves for the benefit of those in other units and to put the institution’s interests ahead of their own. It is also the root of selfless service for intrinsic reasons as no Soldier can ever be paid his or her true value to the Republic.

**Hierarchy.** Army culture has a strong tendency towards *hierarchy* based on explicit and implicit authority distinctions. Hierarchy not only leads to order and control, but also provides Soldiers with moral and contextual frames of reference. An effective hierarchy is as much about how and why the individual’s job fits into the overall mission as they are about doing things “by the book.”

*Professional identity, community, and hierarchy* are rarely in perfect alignment. They exist in dynamic tension and must be managed by Army leaders. While “what works” changes as circumstances change, institutional reaction to new circumstances is not always rational. For example, the deep assumptions underlying the Cold War Army carried over in to the mid-1990s, causing the Army to continue to prepare for the “big conventional war” even though experiencing a decade of small conflicts against unconventional threats “amongst the people” in Panama, Somalia, Kosovo, and Haiti.<sup>24</sup>

In this next transition, the Army must consider carefully its professional culture. That is one thrust of this White Paper and campaign, to ensure culture is adapted appropriately at each of the three levels—artifacts, values and beliefs, and basic underlying assumptions. Cultural changes are occurring, perhaps in ways not yet realized or being managed. High promotion rates, for example, have implications on Army culture and its belief in a professional meritocracy. Therefore, the proper question is not whether Army culture will change in this transition, but rather how quickly and in what directions Army leaders will manage such change.

### **Section 3 – At the Core of Culture: the Army Ethic**

#### **The Heart of the Army: The Ethic**

The moral complexity of the Army’s lethality on the battlefield necessitates a strong professional Ethic at the institutional level and well-developed character and ethos at the Soldier level. Both are necessary conditions for the Profession of Arms. The U.S. Army now has many artifacts at the surface level of its culture that reveal the foundations of the deeply moral character of our profession. The purpose they all serve for aspiring professionals is spelled out in the Army’s Blue Book that all new Soldiers receive:<sup>25</sup>

Being a Soldier means conducting yourself at all times so as to bring credit upon you and the Nation—this is the core of our Army culture. Our Army is a unique society. We have military customs and time-honored traditions, and values that represent years of Army history. Our leaders conduct operations in accordance with laws and principles set by the U.S. Government and those laws together with Army traditions and Values require honorable behavior and the highest level of individual moral character...

The Army Ethic is best understood as a framework for guiding relationships among *moral values*, *ethical principles*, and *the martial virtues* that create professional character, individually and institutionally. The Army currently has no published doctrine on the integrative role that these guiding relationships play. So for the purposes of this White Paper, the proposed definition of the Army's Ethic is:

The moral values, principles and martial virtues embedded in its culture that inspire and regulate ethical behavior by both Soldiers and the U.S. Army in the application of land combat in defense of and service to the Nation.<sup>26</sup>

Such a definition moves us beyond the realm of mere fact into the realm of values and moral relationships. The values we defend are the citizens' human rights and their collective right to political autonomy as a legitimate nation. It is because of its duty to the United States that the Army can do what private security firms or non-state actors cannot do: legitimately use coercive force as representatives of a legitimate and a sovereign nation. All Soldiers, regardless of rank or position, are thereby duty-bound to uphold the value that grounds that legitimacy—human rights.

A deep understanding of *why* and *how* we fight is no mere academic effort, but a functional imperative. Leaders must be able to teach these principles to their Soldiers to instill in them the unrelenting spirit to fight, knowing they are in pursuit of a noble and right cause. Army leaders must communicate these principles to our Nation to maintain their support of military operations and to inspire citizens to join the ranks of a virtuous Army, knowing they will serve with other professionals in an honorable manner. Leaders at all levels must also be able to externally communicate why and how we fight to coalition partners to gain and maintain their support. Finally, we must uphold these principles to potential adversaries, negating their ability to use our own unethical actions as reason to join against U.S. forces. These principles are outlined below to provide leaders with a narrative to articulate these core concepts.

### **Why We Fight – Foundational Values**

The Army Ethic begins with the *moral values* the Army defends. The Army protects the rights and interests of the American People by conducting military operations in the service of government policy in a manner that respects the basic human rights of others.<sup>27</sup> This is the foundational duty of the Army – it is *why* we fight.<sup>28</sup> The defense of basic human rights from threat is the primary service that the Army provides the Republic. Its first duty is the defense of the security and integrity of the United States as a political nation—America's right to political autonomy. The Army is also called upon to defend other nations and peoples from aggression, massacre, or genocide. The moral legitimacy to use force in those cases still stems from protecting and respecting basic human rights. This is the *only* thing that can give the American profession of arms its legitimate claim to employ coercive and often deadly force. Further, this understanding provides Soldiers meaning, purpose, and justification for their often lethal actions.

The Nation, therefore, does not simply act in self-defense. Political autonomy is not an individual human right. It is a collective right of the American people. It is critical to understand that this right to political autonomy is based on the protection *of* human rights—therefore the Army must restrain its actions and fight with virtue to maintain its legitimacy as a profession and to steward the legitimacy of the United States. Thus, the values we defend—*why* we fight—are: human rights and the American citizens' right to political autonomy.<sup>29</sup> This explanation has a number of important insights:

- The United States' right to political autonomy is the moral basis for the Army's Ethic.
- The protection of this right is the purpose the Army provides for the country it serves.

- The Army fights to protect rights, and thus must seek to not violate rights in the process.
- The Army’s use of lethal force to defend the political autonomy of the United States or to defend other states, or political entities that adequately protect and respect human rights is lethal force directed toward a relevant good.
- This moral purpose of the Army is defensible and necessary and provides Soldiers with moral purpose and justification and aids in their ability to make meaning out of their actions.

In sum, if a military action is justified, it is by definition morally justified. A firm understanding and internalization of this by Soldier’s has been the core of their fighting spirit in past actions and often the difference between victory and defeat in cases where the Army has been outnumbered and outgunned.

### **How We Fight – With Values and by Ethical Principles**

Understanding why we fight is necessary, but alone is insufficient. Values not expressed in action are meaningless. As the “way of war” evolves based on changing threats so has—and must—the Army’s practice of war. The framework of the Ethic must tell us *how* to meet evolving threats without sacrificing the unchanging moral values such actions protect. To combat hybrid threats, the Army is challenged to broaden Soldiers’ moral understanding of the means and ends of war and to change how it is characterized. Ends and means must vary across the spectrum of conflict and so too must the Army’s Ethic if it is to provide Soldiers and leaders guidance as to the proper amount of risk and force necessary in a given operational context. *The Army Ethic requires Soldiers and the organizations they create to move beyond resorting to deadly force whenever they can (according to law) by showing when they should (according to the Ethic).*

The Army Ethic must accomplish at least three purposes:

- First, it must establish core principles as guidelines for moral judgments based on the moral goal of a given operation, e.g., defense of America’s autonomy and territory or responding to a humanitarian crisis. Each operation varies in goals and thus should also in means and ends
- Second, it must inform operational design and mission command by helping leaders adapt to the operational context through applying the principles of the Ethic
- Third, it must provide the standards and framework for the development of individual Soldier’s character by instilling the profession’s values and virtues

***Moral Values.*** While the character of war has changed, the moral values we defend remain constant. The Army defends these values by bringing about the conditions for a sustainable peace. The *Army Capstone Concept* alludes to the core principle of seeking a morally better state of peace<sup>30</sup> which must be the ultimate objective of conflict. This core principle generates four basic responsibilities for the Army when planning, executing, and assessing military operations:

- A clear understanding of the primary moral value of the operation
- A clear understanding of the threat posed by the enemy to key operational goals
- A clear understanding of what is the permissible moral cost to one’s own and enemy forces and noncombatants in the pursuit of the operation

- A clear vision of what “winning” entails and how the operation will reach a clear and satisfactory end state by achieving that envisioned better state of peace

Addressing these four points facilitates operational adaptability as called for in the Army’s new capstone doctrine. This occurs as leaders continuously evaluate, anticipate, and manage transitions that occur among the four moral responsibilities above as operations evolve.

***Principles of use of force.*** Tactically and operationally, leaders manage how their units fight through applying three primary *ethical principles* that establish the moral limits of military force. Applying these principles allows the professional to allocate risk among the competing goals of mission accomplishment, force protection, and avoiding harm to innocents. These principles are *necessity*, *discrimination*, and *proportionality*. These principles guide moral reasoning in operational planning and execution to determine who is liable to military force, the correct operational design, and the organizational and individual tactical actions employed. Ensuring moral action in conflict entails, whenever possible, forethought in the planning and rehearsal processes to identify relevant moral considerations and judgments *before* direct contact and tactical action.

The first ethical principle, *necessity*, states that the object of the military action, the enemy, must be the sort of threat that only responds to military action. The second principle, *discrimination*, is the requirement to target only non-innocent persons and property. The third principle, *proportionality*, is the requirement that the moral value of the goal achieved by the military action or operation is sufficient to offset the intended and unintended harm of the operation. Moreover, as the context and operational goals change, the relationship between the relevant moral variables also changes.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, the Army must have robust moral development programs to develop leaders at all levels who understand these changing criteria and can employ moral wisdom.

### **Developing Individual Character to Enable the Use of Ethical Principles**

Moral values, such as the seven Army values, and ethical principles must be expressed through action or they serve no purpose. The profession’s moral-ethical capabilities must be manifested at both the institutional and the individual levels. At the institutional level, the Army Ethic provides the framework for developing units and Soldiers’ professional character by placing the required martial virtues in the service of the Army’s duty. Based on the duty of the Army, Soldiers must commit to take actions and make sacrifices that place them at increased risk of danger or death to safeguard innocents, accomplish the mission, and protect their fellow Soldiers. A Soldier’s character is then reinforced through leadership and unit culture and climate.

Ethical principles such as *necessity*, *discrimination*, and *proportionality* can guide tactical action. However, many of the critical ethical actions required of Soldiers in conflict do not admit to cool reflection, but must happen rapidly by habit, “moral intuition,” and ingrained strength of character. As noted by Fehrenbach, we need something that comes to life in a professional Soldier “and knowing they are disciplined, trained, and conditioned brings pride to men – pride in their own toughness, their own ability, and this pride will hold them true when all else fails.” Developing this well-placed pride and discipline in the Soldier is the role of Army leaders at all levels. In sum, as noted by Sir John Hackett, “What a bad man cannot be is a good soldier.” Such strength of character can be motivated through key psychological capacities and ethos.

***Ethical psychological capacities.*** Soldiers must be able to call upon psychological “resources” under complex and difficult moral dilemmas to maintain their moral compass. Key psychological resources for moral action include capacities for *self-command*, *empathy*, and *moral pride*.<sup>32</sup> If Soldiers have a clear grasp of the ethical principles of necessity, discrimination, and proportionality, these moral

capacities will allow them the ability and confidence to turn moral understanding into professional action. This is because moral action requires one to take responsibility, be motivated to act, and overcome their fears to act morally. If any of these are lacking, moral action will not occur. Developing these capacities in Soldiers supports operational adaptability by placing the capability for ethical action under the control of autonomous professionals. This can empower the individual Soldier to take the right actions quickly and without excessive dependence on higher control.<sup>33</sup>

*Self-command* motivates Soldiers to confront dangers and accomplish the mission while respecting human dignity. Virtues underpinning this capacity are moral and physical confidence and courage, conscientiousness towards duty, selfless service, and honor among others.<sup>34</sup> The capacity for *empathy* motivates Soldiers to bear risk in a way that accomplishes missions and protects the force. The capacity for *moral pride* creates an enduring and resilient personality that can act in trying circumstances. Corresponding virtues include integrity and discipline and taking ‘ownership’ over the ethical behavior of others in the unit.

**Warrior Ethos.** Beyond these ethical psychological resources, there is a more intangible spirit of the Soldier. Soldiers are not just called upon to perform mere ethical behavior (e.g., doing what is expected and not committing unethical acts). That is necessary but not sufficient. What is required of Soldiers is ethics beyond expectations—that is virtue. What makes a Soldier brave enemy fire to save a wounded comrade is not ‘ethics’ as normally defined, but a developed personal spirit, a love and bond with fellow comrades that we can define as *Ethos*—“extreme levels of strength of character required to generate and sustain extra-ethical virtuous behavior under conditions of high moral intensity where personal risk or sacrifice is required in the service of others.”<sup>35</sup> Such virtue was clearly evident in the heroic actions of Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta in Afghanistan who recently earned the Medal of Honor. Ethos is generated, as in Sergeant Giunta’s case, from an individual’s possession of high levels of character, such as valor, integrity, chivalry, empathy and goodwill toward others.

The Army has four statements of *Warrior Ethos* in the Soldier’s Creed: **“I will always place the mission first, I will never leave a fallen comrade, I will never quit, I will never accept defeat.”** These statements list exemplary behaviors which would flow from a Soldier’s ethos and provide the inner strength for an individual to “willingly endure the cognitive, emotional, and physical hardships normally associated with dangerous contexts—and if ultimately needed—to risk physical injury or death with little extrinsic reward.”<sup>36</sup> As an Army it will be important, as a part of this campaign, to define the developmental processes that build ethos and to reinforce them.<sup>37</sup> We know that development of professional character occurs at three levels – institutional, unit, and individual. Professional character requires a pervasive disposition toward the ethical capacities of *self-command*, *empathy*, and *moral pride*. The creation of such disposition is, perhaps, the Army’s primary moral task because it enables an authentic and stable expression of the values our profession exists to defend.

### **Organizational Level Influences on Ethics and Virtue**

Leaders at all levels can set the conditions for ethical culture where ethical and virtuous behavior is rewarded and unethical behavior is punished. Leaders can also create normative pressures to align ethical behaviors by communicating the values and ideals of the unit that all Soldiers are expected to honor.<sup>38</sup> Finally, leaders serve as powerful role models for others’ behavior by showing what expected behaviors are through their own example which leads to Soldiers’ emulation of their leader’s actions.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, ethical and virtuous behavior do not stem from just the individual Soldier. Building moral-ethical character must occur across organizational levels. Units develop collective norms that influence Soldiers through mechanisms such as unit climate and culture.<sup>40</sup> Units can thus “bolster” the character of their Soldiers through various social learning and social identity processes. For example, as a unit develops shared beliefs about the treatment of prisoners of war, these shared beliefs may be

reinforced as members observe other group members' actions with prisoners, and thus over time become part of the group's norms for expected actions. These norms then serve to guide individual actions and become part of culture and taught to new members as the 'correct' way to act.<sup>41</sup> This reinforcement then influences individuals' identity and values over time—they come to see themselves as a moral actor.<sup>42</sup>

#### **Section 4 – The Army Ethic and External Relations**

Trust is the cornerstone for the Army's relationship with the American people. One major aspect of that trust is the foundational subordination of the Army to civilian authority. Such subordination is derived from two sources: legally from the Constitution and federal statute and morally from the values of America and the norms of American civil-military relations. Under these moral norms civilian leaders, Executive and Congressional, have full authority over the military, and upon considering the advice of military leaders, are empowered by the American public to have ultimate authority over the military, its capabilities, and its use. In contrast, every volunteer Soldier upon oath, regardless of rank or component, becomes a servant of the State to do its will while subordinating their own will and some of their rights as a citizen to the true faith and allegiance they willingly bear to the Constitution.

The Army Ethic must encompass and control these relationships by committing Soldiers and leaders to disciplined candor when advising and interacting with civilian officials or public audiences. Soldiers and leaders must also keep in mind the common goal that both civilian and military authorities serve to defend the Republic. Soldiers must be mindful of military-media relations such that their remarks to the media do not embarrass, slight, or constrain the decision-making ability of civilian officials.

#### **A Moral Conception of Service**

In America, the military's subordination to civil authority is codified in law. But that has never been needed to keep the American military subordinate within our well-established democratic system. However, military insubordination can occur in other forms not covered by statute and in more subtle forms such as selective sharing of information, stonewalling civilian initiatives, bureaucratic foot-dragging on policies, or institutional policy promotion in the media.<sup>43</sup> It is thus the moral basis for military subordination that is most critical to support the foundational values of the Army's Ethic. Soldiers at all levels must accept that a core moral imperative from the founding of America is that the military will never threaten the democratic ideals of the Nation.

All Soldiers swear to support and defend the Constitution. However, the Constitution alone is not the source of their authority. The source of military authority flows from the American people through the Constitution, through elected and appointed officials, to the officers they appoint, and finally to those Soldiers entrusted with executing orders. There is a dynamic relationship in this authority hierarchy. The people have the power to amend the Constitution and to elect the political leaders who both authorize and fund the military. The military remains loyal to the people and the Constitution by fulfilling its function in accordance with the guidance, laws, and regulations passed by those with the authority to do so.

This chain of authority argues against the idea that the ultimate loyalty for Army professionals is simply to the Constitution. Rather, Army professionals are loyal to the Constitution, and thus to the people, by being obedient to elected and appointed officials and the Commander-in-Chief. Thus, being willingly subordinate to civilian authority is based on loyalty to the source of its authority. This principle was perhaps best exemplified by General George Washington in his resignation to Congress at the close of the Revolutionary War. By this act he ensured that his immense national popularity as a military leader and hero would not overshadow the necessary power of the fledgling Congress. Thus the American military has long recognized and embraced a moral tradition of subordinating service to country.

## Norms for Civil-Military Relations

Within the military's willing subordination to civilian authority, the spheres of responsibility of civilian and military leaders do overlap as the line between making and executing policy is not always clear. Military professionals hold unique expertise and their input is vital to formulating and executing effective policy. This requires that the military's unique perspective and advice be heard in the formulation of laws and policies that create, support, and employ our armed forces, or its effectiveness can be reduced to the detriment of the Republic. Thus, it is the moral duty of leaders to ensure that the military perspective is candidly presented in all appropriate forums, just as much as it is a moral imperative that such advice is offered properly, respectfully and as advice not advocacy. This is known as correctly "representing" the unique perspective of the Profession of Arms, "to represent the claims of security within the state [government]."<sup>44</sup>

History has shown that the key condition for effective American civil-military relations is a high level of mutual respect and trust between civilian and military leaders.<sup>45</sup> And, the best way for military professionals to fulfill their obligations to create such respect and trust is by following a set of norms that have proven successful in the past in civil military interactions that produced effective policy and strategy. This list is for dialogue and refinement as this White Paper is discussed throughout the Army:<sup>46</sup>

- The military's first obligation is to do no harm to the democratic institutions and the democratic policy-making processes of our government. Military leaders should apply their candid advice and expertise without taking any actions that, in effect, have a self-interested effect on policy outcomes.
- Military professionals should have the expectation that their professional judgments will be heard in policy deliberations; however they must also develop the judgment to recognize when the bounds of the policy making process might be breached. When acts of dissent take them beyond representation and advice into policy advocacy or even public dissent, they must recognize that they have gone beyond the limits of their uniformed role and have exhibited behaviors that potentially undermine the authority of those elected officials responsible for policy formulation and execution.
- Military professionalism requires adherence to a strict ethic of political nonpartisanship. Army professionals must be capable of serving any officials that prevail in our democratic political process. Such non-partisanship must be recognized as entailing some voluntary limitations on Soldiers and leaders liberties as citizens.
- Retired Army Soldiers and leaders have continuing responsibility to act in ways that are not detrimental to the effectiveness, and particularly the publicly held trustworthiness of the Profession of Arms. Such responsibilities specifically include precluding perceived conflicts of interest in their partisan political activities, their employments, and their roles in the media.
- The effectiveness and legitimacy of Army professionals depends also on their healthy interactions with the "fourth estate" of our government—the news media. Within reasonable standards of operational security, Army professionals must accept the opportunities that occur to facilitate the press's legitimate function within American society and its political processes without undermining or limiting the policy making options of civilian authorities.

Clearly, one of the Army's enduring challenges, and one that needs careful focus now after nine years of war, is how and how well it is developing leaders at all levels who are capable of, and comfortable with, living and serving by these moral civil-military norms.

## Section 5 - Conclusion

### Adapting the Army as Profession of Arms After a Decade of War

This White Paper is intended to supply the framework and common language needed to begin a dialogue among Army professionals about ourselves and our future both as individuals and as a revered and effective military institution. To that end, sections of the paper have provided general understandings of the key attributes of the Army as Profession, its Culture, its Ethic, and its external relations. These concepts and definitions will be refined through dialog and later published in doctrine. It is time now to turn to key questions and start the dialogue and assessments.

As the Army assesses itself as Profession of Arms, there are major strengths that have sustained the profession as well as tensions within its professional culture and Ethic. Some of these tensions existed before the attack on 9/11 and have been exacerbated by the decade of war (e.g. the tension between industrial-age personnel systems vs. the talent needs for the current and future Army<sup>47</sup>) while others are new due to that extended conflict (e.g., the promotion of Soldier health and well-being vs. the debilitating demands of repeated combat deployments<sup>48</sup>). To these two examples could be added many more.

After nine years of war, we need a thorough assessment across all of the key attributes of the Profession of Arms. Again, to center our efforts we will begin by focusing on five key attributes of the profession and the Army professional:

<u>THE PROFESSION</u>	<u>THE PROFESSIONAL</u>
Expertise	Skill
Trust	Trust
Development	Leadership
Values	Character
Service	Duty

The specific questions with which we will start are:

- What are our current strengths as a profession/as professionals?
- What are our current weaknesses as a profession/as professionals?
- Have we identified the right key attributes of the profession/of professionals in this white paper?
- Are we adequately developing those attributes in our professional military education, in our tactical units, and in our self-development, and do our organizational systems and processes reinforce these attributes?
- Are the roles and responsibilities in sustaining the profession different for officers, NCOs, and Warrant Officers, and are we adequately preparing leaders for these stewardship roles?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the Army Civilian in sustaining the profession and are we adequately preparing leaders for these sustaining roles?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the retired military in sustaining the profession?
- How do responsibilities change as the professional gains seniority and, in particular, in dealing with the public, the media, senior civilian leaders, and coalition partners?

So, now on to the work of a learning institution doing what it must do to reinforce itself as a Profession of Arms after almost decade of conflict. Let the dialogue and assessment begin.

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<sup>1</sup> For major recent works on professions see, Andrew Abbott, *The Theory of Professions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) and, Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism Reborn: Theory, Prophecy and Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> See T.O Jacobs and Michael G. Sanders, “Principles for Building the Profession: The SOF Experience,” Chapter 20 in Snider and Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2005): 441-462.

<sup>3</sup> David Segal and Karen DeAngelis, “Changing Conceptions of the Military Professions”, chapter 10 in Suzanne C. Nielsen and Don M. Snider (eds.), *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009): 194-212.

<sup>4</sup> For an explanation of the three main trust relationships of the Army as a profession of arms, see: Don M. Snider, *Dissent and the Strategic Leadership of Military Professions* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> James H.Toner, *True Faith and Allegiance: The Burden Of Military Ethics* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1995): 22-23.

<sup>6</sup> Sean Hannah (forthcoming). *Leadership in the Profession of Arms*. The Oxford Handbook of Leadership. Oxford University Press.

<sup>7</sup> See Les Brownlee and Peter Schoomaker, “Serving a Nation at War,” *Parameters* 34 (Summer 2004): 4-23.

<sup>8</sup> See, Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*, Revised and Expanded ( NY: Free Press, 1994): 5.

<sup>9</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*,(Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1957): 16.

<sup>10</sup> For an excellent discussion of the negative impact of that issue on the Army Officer Corps, see Mark Lewis, “Army Transformation and the Junior Officer Exodus,” *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 31, No.1 (Fall 2004): 63-74.

<sup>11</sup> TRADOC/ARCIC Study of Army Culture, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> See James Burk, *Expertise, Jurisdiction and Legitimacy*, chapter 2 in Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2005): 39-60.

<sup>13</sup> See, Richard Lacquement, “Mapping Army Professional Expertise and Clarifying Jurisdictions of Practice,” chapter 9 in Don M. Snider and Lloyd J Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition: 213-236.

<sup>14</sup> This widely acknowledged conclusion remains unaddressed; many of the Army’s human development and human resources systems remain from industrial age practices, likely inadequate to the present and future needs of the profession. See the monograph series: *Toward a US Army Officer Corps Strategy for Success* by Casey Wardynski, David S. Lyle and Michael J Colarusso (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2009-2010). This conclusion was further reached in a research project on the Army as profession in 2002; it is doubtful that it is invalid after nine years of war in which the Army had to rely more on its human than its technological capabilities. See Don M. Snider and Gail Watkins, “Project Conclusions,” chapter 25 in: *The Future of the Army Profession*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition): 537-547

<sup>15</sup> Joint Publication 3.0 *Operations* (pub data)

<sup>16</sup> See Don M. Snider, *et.al*, “The Multiple Identities of the Professional Army Officer,” chapter 6 in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition: 143.

<sup>17</sup> This is a commonly used phrase of the current Army Chief of Staff, General George Casey, in addressing points of imbalance between current and desired states of the Army; particularly during the first two years of his tenure of stewardship.

<sup>18</sup> See Leonard Wong and Don M. Snider, “Strategic Leadership of the Army Profession,” Chapter 28 in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition: 601-624.

<sup>19</sup> See, FM 6-22 *Army Leadership* (Washington DC: HQ, Department of the Army, 2006): 8-1.

<sup>20</sup> A. L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhorn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (NY, 1952); Edgar Schein, Sense and nonsense about culture and climate, in *Handbook of Organizational Culture and Climate*, ed. Neal M. Ashkanasy, Celeste P. M. Wilderom and Mark F. Peterson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2000), xxiii-xxx..

<sup>21</sup> See Joseph J. Collins, *et.al*, *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2000). See also, Don M. Snider, “An Uninformed Debate on Military Culture.” *Orbis* 43(1), 1999: 11-16.

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<sup>22</sup> Nick Jans, with David Schmidtchen, The real C-cubed: Culture, careers and climate and how they affect military capability, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No 143: Strategic & Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University: 2002; see also John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (London, 1993), xv.

<sup>23</sup> The landmark study in this field, of regional economic performance in Italy, found over a 20-year period that social capital in each region was a crucial factor in explaining differences in wealth creation, business innovation, entrepreneurship, and government performance. See Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

<sup>24</sup> James Dewar, et.al., “Army Culture and Planning in Time of Great Change,” draft RAND Report, DRR-758-1-A, September 1996.

<sup>25</sup> HQ, Department of the Army, TRADOC Pamphlet 600-4, October 2010: 16.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Caslen, Jr., & Erik Anderson (2010), reconnecting with our roots: Reflections on the Army’s Ethic. *Military Review*, 110-116; also see Chris Case, Robert Underwood, & Sean Hannah (2010). Owning Our Army Ethic *Military Review*, 3-10.

<sup>27</sup> A definition of human rights is contentious. To avoid controversy, the human rights in this paper are “thinly” conceived. This means the rights that matter most in military operations are a small set of basic human rights consisting of the rights against torture, rape, unjustified killing, arbitrary imprisonment, access to basic subsistence, and personal liberty. This conception of human rights is both consistent with the founding of the United States and defensible as objective moral goods which serve in part as a founding source of the Army Ethic.

<sup>28</sup> In order to establish a moral basis for the Army Ethic we need to examine the good the Army provides. Field Manual 1 states the Army is the defender of “our way life.” However, achieving objectives or defending a “way of life,” are goals that many organizations could adopt as their purpose. Drug cartels, the mafia, or Al Qaeda, could easily make the same *factual* claim. They too are defending their ways of life. Another view of the Army’s purpose is that it provides for a “common defense.” Again, other organizations that practice collective violence can make the *factual* claim that they act in their own “common defense.” However, the defining difference between these organizations and the Army is the moral end, or purpose, which our use of collective violence seeks to achieve. The Army’s purpose is the defense of the United States as a political nation that protects and respects human rights. This gives the American profession of arms its *legitimate* claim to employ coercive, and often lethal, force. This moral purpose separates the Army, and Soldiers within it, from organizations that practice unjustifiable collective violence. Not just *any* state can justifiably defend its power through violence or violence leading to no moral good would be permissible. Simply put, the Army’s and its Soldiers’ duty to provide for the “common defense” is more than the simple protection of power.

<sup>29</sup> For example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights lists 26 human rights, among which are rights to leisure and rest. While it seems reasonable that such a right deserved defense through political action, it seems unreasonable to defend it through the use of force. So, for the purposes of this paper, the authors recognize that we have left some ambiguity regarding what rights under what conditions should be defended by military force. The authors also recognize that determining when force should be used is primarily the responsibility of the government.

<sup>30</sup> “National security guidance requires the military to be prepared to defend the homeland, deter or prevent the use or proliferation of WMD, win the nation’s wars, deter potential adversaries, protect the global commons (sea, air, space), develop cooperative security, and respond to civil crises at home and abroad.”

<sup>31</sup> Rodin, David, “Justifying Harm,” Forthcoming, provided by author.

<sup>32</sup> Glover, Jonathan, *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*, pg. 22-27. Glover’s terms for the moral resources are “respect” “sympathy” and “moral identity.” The terms in this paper are, arguably, consistent with Glover’s use and more immediately relevant to developing a military moral psychology.

<sup>33</sup> Sean Hannah, & Bruce Avolio (forthcoming), “Moral Potency: Building the capacity for character-based leadership,” *Consulting Psychology Journal*. See also, Sean Hannah, Patrick Sweeney, & Paul Lester (2009). The courageous mindset: A dynamic personality system approach to courage. In C. Pury & S. Lopez (Eds.), *The Psychology of Courage*. American Psychological Association; and, Sean T. Hannah & Patrick Sweeney. Chapter 4 in Snider and Matthews (eds.), *Forging the Warriors Character*. (McGraw-Hill, 2008): 65-90.

<sup>34</sup> This list is not intended to be the definitive list of the virtues the Army requires.

<sup>35</sup> Sean Hannah, & Bruce Avolio (forthcoming). Leader character, ethos, and virtue: Individual and collective considerations. *Leadership Quarterly*.

<sup>36</sup> Sean Hannah, Donald Campbell, & Michael Matthews (2010). Advancing a research agenda for leadership in dangerous contexts. *Military Psychology*, 22, S157-S189.

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<sup>37</sup> Sean Hannah, & Bruce Avolio (2010). Ready or not: How do we accelerate the developmental readiness of leaders? *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30, pp. 1-7.

<sup>38</sup> Brown, M. E., Treviño, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. 2005. Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 97, 117-134; Power, C., Higgins, A., & Kohlberg, L. (1989); Treviño, L. K., Weaver, G. R., & Reynolds, S. J. 2006. Behavioral ethics in organizations: A review. *Journal of Management*, 32, 951-990.

<sup>39</sup> Mayer, D. M., Kuenzi, M., Greenbaum, R., Bardes, M., & Salvador, R. 2009. How low does ethical leadership flow? Test of a trickle-down model. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 108: 1-13.

<sup>40</sup> Power, C., Higgins, A., & Kohlberg, L. (1989). The habit of the common life: Building character through democratic community schools. In L. Nucci (Ed), *Moral Development and Character Education: A Dialogue* (pp. 125-43). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan; Selznick, P. (1992). *The moral commonwealth*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

<sup>41</sup> Hofmann, D. A., & Jones, L. M. (2005). Leadership, collective personality, and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90, 509-522; Hinds, P. J., & Mortensen, M. (2005). Understanding conflict in geographically distributed teams: The moderating effects of shared identity, shared context, and spontaneous communication. *Organization Science*, 16, 290-307.

<sup>42</sup> Aquino, K., & Reed, A. 2002. The self-importance of moral identity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83: 1423-1440.

<sup>43</sup> Risa Brooks, "Militaries and Political Activity in Democracies," chapter 11 in, Suzanne Nielsen and Don M. Snider (eds.), *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a New Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009): 213-238.

<sup>44</sup> See, Matthew Ridgway, "The Statesman vs the Soldier," in *Soldier: Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgeway* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956): 266-273. See also, Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, op. cit.:71-74.

<sup>45</sup> This is a central finding in Nielsen and Snider, *American Civil-Military Relations*, op cit.

<sup>46</sup> List adapted from, Marybeth Ulrich, "Infusing Normative Civil-Military Relations Principles in the Officer Corps," chapter 20 in: Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews (eds.), *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2d Edition: 655-682. See also, Matthew Moten, "Out of Order," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 5 (September-October 2010): 2-4.

<sup>47</sup> See the monograph series by Wardynski, Lyle, and Colarusso, *Toward US Army Strategy for Success: A Proposed Human Capital Model Focused on Talent* (Carlisle: Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2009-2010).

<sup>48</sup> See, *Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention Report* (Washington DC: HQ, Department of the Army, 2010).

# Summary of the Human Development Capacity Breakout Session

by Maj. Kristen N. Dahle

All symposium members received an introduction of the four capacities of the profession: military-technical, human development, moral ethical and political culture by Col. Sean Hannah. Following the introduction, symposium members broke into smaller groups assigned to discuss one of the four pillars. Discussions in the breakout groups were to look into the problems and causes, internal and external environments, and the “larger picture” of the pillar from the individual, organizational and institutional aspects.

The breakout leader, Mr. Clark Delavan, the Acting Director for the Center for Army Leadership, defined Human Development Capacity (HDC) for the Human Development Capacity session members. HDC enables the Army to socialize, train, and develop civilians into our profession and the development starts from civilians to Soldiers then developments them as future stewards of the profession. Mr. Delavan clarified the individuals to develop were not the civilians that support the Army but those that enter the Army. The session members were to focus on changing and developing civilians into ethical Soldiers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers.

To start the discussion, Mr. Devalan asked if the Army has a problem with HDC. Responses varied but the consensus was essentially yes, because Soldiers are a product of their individual backgrounds. Examples included Soldiers from two parent families, single parent families and gang members.

The session revolved around trying to answer several questions along the three lines of the individual, institutional and organizational levels:

## ***Individual Level:***

Should the Army identify an individual’s initial level of moral and ethical framework before entering the military and throughout their military career? Part of the group thought individuals be tested before entering the military and again as the individual progressed in the Army. Another view was individuals not be judged at their initial level but their potential to perform.

## ***Institutional Level:***

What is the correct initial ethical and moral framework required to teach Soldiers to understand “Army values”? In order to determine what should be taught during initial training a better understanding of the moral “end state” the Army desires to instill in individuals is required. The ethical values need to be part of a development program where initial training is the starting point to continue learning.

Should the training consider the individuals’ initial level or start all individuals the same? Overall, yes, if it is possible to determine an individual’s initial level of moral and ethical framework then tailored training is appropriate. A baseline level of moral and ethical training should occur before arrival to a unit for additional training at the organizational level.

## ***Organizational Level:***

How does the Army check the continuing education of Soldiers once they arrive to units? Continuing education through realistic ethical training incorporated into all training. This training would have to be out of the classroom environment to be effective.

Mr. Devlan posed a second question. Does the Army invest enough in developing ethical behavior? The discussion in the group focused primarily on officer development, the difference between mentorship and counseling and how early each should occur. Many of the officers present did not feel as though adequate counseling was occurring in units.

The discussion concluded with the difference between developing and forming ethical and moral leaders. The Army should be developing leaders’ abilities to make moral and ethical decisions through a life long learning process.



# Summary of the Moral-Ethical Capacity Breakout Session

by Maj. Jaime Bell

The breakout group that I was responsible for taking notes for was titled Moral Ethical Capacity. It was a very interesting discussion on an important topic that I as an Army leader definitely needed to participate in; good morals are needed in order to facilitate ethical behavior. There were six main discussion points of our breakout session: 1) What are the strengths within the moral ethical capacity that have sustained the Army during our current decade of war, 2) What are the stressors within the moral ethical capacity, 3) What is the Army's expert knowledge in the ethical moral expert domain and where is it codified, 4) How is the moral ethical domain assessed and certified, 5) What is the desired current status for the moral ethical domain? Where are the gaps in this domain, 6) How effectively is the Army managing the interface between the internal (our four capacities) and external environment (operating environment) with regard to the moral ethical domain.

I have been in the Army for 17 years in a variety of assignments to include Platoon Leader, Battery Commander, Brigade Plans Officer and lastly as a Brigade Executive Officer prior to my assignment to the Command and General Staff College.

The Army is still morally and ethically strong because there was a united cause (9/11) and a surge of patriotism during the last nine years which has kept a steady stream of fresh recruits enlisting into service hoping to be a part of a greater cause than themselves. This is part of the corporate identity associated with the U.S. Army that is a significant enticement for the younger generation. We all lose part of our individual identity because we are part of a much bigger team that we absolutely do not want to let down. In corporate America, individuals focus on the bottom line whereas we focus on the team, families, unit, etc. Our bottom line is given to us, we only have to spend the money (train, equip, deploy, fight and win the nations wars) not raise it.

Military customs as well as civilian laws are tied to the U.S. Constitution which also helps guide our moral and ethical convictions. Some other countries do not have this strong of a tie in as the United States as their democracies are not as far developed or they just have a different form of government. Soldiers are sworn to defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies from the outset of our military service and this is constantly reinforced thru re-enlistment ceremonies, etc. We are not sworn to obey unjust, unlawful, unethical laws or to blindly follow a morally corrupt leader as other nations militaries do at times. Our morals, ethics and values are too deep rooted in righteousness to go down this path.

Teaching these values is important because people have different interpretations of what they mean depending on what circumstances they grew up in. The Army Values gives everyone a base to fall back on and anchor to in times of varying circumstances and pressure to do just and unjust things.

People are the greatest source of this stress which is directly tied to some of the choices we make. The lens thru which we see the world is going to filter what decisions are made. Education and experience plays a role in becoming an expert in order to better facilitate the decision making process. We are working on gaining the expert knowledge we need but have to continue training because we are certainly not there yet. There are so many things to train on these days that it is often hard to fit this on the plate when commanders may not see an immediate benefit, but it is certainly a pressing need.



# Summary of the Political-Cultural Capacity Breakout Session

by Maj. Kelly Dobert

As defined in the Profession of Arms White Paper, the topic of the Political Cultural Capacity is a field of knowledge that tells the Army how to operate effectively in our own and other cultures across organizational and national boundaries, including the vital fields of civil-military relations and media-military relations. Dr. Don Snider was the facilitator for this breakout session and had a significant role in authoring the description as it relates to the Military Ethic. Dr. Snider is an expert in the field and has authored numerous works as a researcher, professor, and former military officer with a PhD in public policy, and Master's degrees in economics and public policy.

There have been several strengths in this capacity in the last 9 years and the group discussed how we might capitalize on them, as well. The Army's size provides vast experience and knowledge and the ability to reach back and out. Institutionally the Army looks more to the specialties it has to deal with things knowledgeable. The Army identified a need for brigade commanders to have more cultural information so it assigned anthropologists to brigades. Military leaders ended up being "Political leadership" role but because they were not politicians they were more effective. Young officers were often faced with making political decisions for people with a different culture and training has evolved to support this. Much success is due to adaptive thinking and being sensitive to other cultures as we try to help better a quality of life and introduce a democracy. One member of the group asked his interpreter for advice, and it made all the difference to the success of the officer as well as his mayoral community. Media training has increased so officers are better able to work with them and frame bad things in a better light from the start instead of being dragged down by liberal media agenda. Continually putting out the positive command messages has improved. The romantic vision of war, mass power and destruction, has not changed as evidenced by the CAPE video introduction, but the mission has changed drastically. How do we define the enemy? Why not work with the enemy instead? Could that be success? Outside the box thinking like that can be a strength.

The group discussed several weaknesses as well as possible ways to improve. The size and bureaucracy of the Army organization often inhibits rapid adaptation. The Marine Corps is less robust than the Army, but is far more flexible and adaptable due to its smaller size. Perhaps the Marines have more of an "adhocracy" that the Army might consider when feasible. While media training has improved, and institutionally we sought to embed journalists at the lowest level, there are still high profile examples of our shortcomings, not only with the "strategic corporal" but with experienced generals. The ability for everyone to make any statement public, as with blogs, increases the need for prudence. We can write whatever we want but when we do we may suffer consequences. We are also restricted whenever it might conflict with the use of military forces. We support and defend the constitution so some need help to transition to being a professional. We train Soldiers what to say and give them talking points. We need to teach how to think well enough to respond aptly. We need to better explain why we have more restraint than other cultures. Ambiguous or unattainable political goals are sometimes difficult to support. Our duty is to fight the war and win. Perhaps winning is the wrong term and we should consider success and failure instead of victory and defeat. We have a new concept of war; it's no longer annihilation. If ends change maybe the means and ways need to change as well.

The group found that although the Army has been successful it is more due to individuals humbling themselves, being highly adaptable and doing the best they can to better themselves, their buddy, the organization all while serving the institution that serves us. It is the greatest institution, we believe, that supports our culture and allows each one of us to have a political voice that we are proud to say may be practiced freely by the rest of our nation.



# Summary of the Military-Technical Capacity Breakout Session

by Maj. Charles Downie

This breakout session was led by Col. Stephen Michael, the Senior Service College Fellow to the Teachers College at Columbia University. Col. Michael's Fellowship is in support of the Army's Center for the Professional Military Ethic and will focus on how the Army maintains its moral and professional ethic in this era of persistent conflict fighting an enemy that is not likewise constrained.

The Army Capability and Integration Center (ARCIC) is the proponent for assessing this capacity Army wide and will attempt to answer these questions:

1. What are the strengths within each Profession of Arms capacity that have sustained the Army during this decade of persistent conflict?
2. What is the Army's expert knowledge for each capacity? Where is it codified? Is it adequate?
3. Is there an adequate doctrinal foundation for each capacity?
4. What developmental processes, systems, and organizations exist for each capacity? Are they adequate?
5. How is each capacity and each cohort assessed and certified?
6. What is the current/desired status of each capacity at the individual, organizational, and institutional levels? Where are the gaps?
7. How well are leaders prepared to and are practicing the development and integration of all capacities across individual, organizational, and institutional levels? How well are leaders employing these capacities?
8. How effectively is the Army managing the interface between and the integration of internal and external environments/
9. What are the stressors within each capacity?

The work group focused on the Military-Technical Capacity from the Individual, Organizational (Unit), and Institutional perspective. Given the time available we answered only questions 1 and 9, the Capacity's Strengths and Stressors.

The breakout group comments covered: Equipping, Readiness reporting, Fires, Contractors, Low Density MOSs, Expansion of MOS duties, NCOES challenges, Behavior health, Detention operations, Joint/Interagency/Combined Operations, and Toxic leadership. The discussion reflected the shared experiences of the group that span the current operational environments the military has been operating in over the past nine years. The feedback suggests that we have fine-tuned many of the operational and tactical systems but reflects a great amount of stress on the Soldiers repeatedly executing the missions.

This assessment is the beginning, and ARCIC will be touching every piece of our Army, with a premium being placed on the bottom up feedback.



## **Part 4: Civil/Military Relations and the PME**



# Summary of the Civil-Military Relations and the PME Breakout Session

by Chaplain (Maj.) Mark Stewart

This précis briefly outlines matter set forth during the *Civil-Military Relations and the Professional Military Ethic* breakout elective during the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Military Ethics Symposium, November 17, 2010. Two authors posited. LTC Eric Hollister presented “The Professional Military Ethic and Political Dissent: Has the Line Moved?” LTC Hollister serves as a curriculum developer for the Department of Logistics and Resource Operations at CGSC. He holds a Master of Arts in Humanities from California State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from University of California Los Angeles. Donald B. Connelly, Ph.D., who works for the Department of Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Operations U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, presented “The Unequal Professional Dialogue: American Civil-Military Relations and the Professional Military Ethic.”

The contrast in core arguments emerged with clarity. First, LTC Hollister argued that the “line”—the demarcation between politics and a fully apolitical stance—has not appropriately moved within the professional military ethic of officers. Hollister suggests that our ethic should encourage political dissent and discussion, especially before the final decision. He compared the civil-military process of engagement with the intra-Army leadership praxis. In other words, Hollister states that we allow for discourse and dissent up to the point that the Commander weighs-in, then officers follow and execute. Hollister sees this as a critical, healthy part of officer civil-military ethics. In Hollister’s words, “While this dissent is not necessarily in line with the understood military Professional Military Ethic, it is clear that the apolitical military culture has not kept up with changes in retired officer behavior, operational environment complexity, generational characteristics, or communications technology.”

Next, Connelly argued that the U.S. military officers, by necessity of position, should continue at the short end of the “unequal professional dialogue.” Connelly suggested that the professional military ethic has suffered losses at the hands of the military professionals who made autonomous decisions to dissent through media during politically-charged times. This, Connelly asserts, caused significant damage in terms of both the nation’s trust in military officers and the execution of policies. Upon highlighting the most important of these breeches, Connelly offered six implications for consideration as we define the professional military ethic:

1. The pervasiveness of politics effects our actions
2. Retired officers should be considered military professionals and thus adhere to the ethic
3. Civility dictates that candor should never devolve to insult
4. The officers in charge rate the highest deference because they are the ones accountable and responsible
5. Transparency must inform both public and private dialog
6. Humility and trust create the personal context for authentic civil-military and professional dialogue

On the whole, the presentations, as well as the discourse afterwards, proved captivating to attendees. Though no clear “preference” surfaced during the session, the topics provoked energy and civil debate. Lucid opinions emerged as to whether or not a retired officer continues under the professional military ethic, for example. Further, the group seemed keen for more discussion regarding the role of emerging media via the internet and personal management devices. One point of general consensus that materialized centered upon the idea that military professionals must at all times strike a balance between dissent and subordination with regard to press and media relations.



# The Unequal Professional Dialogue: American Civil-Military Relations and the Professional Military Ethic

by Donald B. Connelly, Ph.D.

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## INTRODUCTION

In his book *Supreme Command*, Professor Eliot Cohen coined the term the “Unequal Dialogue” by which he meant the conversation between political leaders and generals that needed to be candid, and sometimes even offensively blunt, yet remained always unequal, or forever resting on the final and unambiguous authority of the political leader. Over the past several decades the purpose, rules, limits, and even legitimacy of the “unequal dialogue” between soldiers and civilians have been challenged. Some critics have accused civilians of ignoring military advice. Others have accused the military of not rendering candid advice--of being “yes men.” Still others have argued that generals should have professional autonomy or a virtual veto over certain decisions that affect the military.

Unequal relations and communications are an inherent fact of military life, so why have “unequal dialogues” between politicians and soldiers produced so much conflict and confusion? This paper will argue that the “unequal dialogue” is not simply a peculiar characteristic of civil-military relations, but a central feature of the military’s professional ethic. Furthermore, the principles and practices, the obligations and limitations of the professional dialogue within the military apply directly to how we engage with both political leaders and the larger society.

In exploring this subject, I will first explain Professor Cohen’s concept of the “unequal dialogue” and how it also applies to the unequal dialogue within the military professional. I will then make use of some recent examples, primarily related to Iraq surge decision-making process, to illustrate some of the ethical aspects in both the civil-military and internal military dialogue. Finally, I will suggest some basic, though by no means comprehensive, principles for the various “unequal dialogues” of the military professional.<sup>1</sup>

## TWO DIALOGUES

Before I begin my analysis, let me begin with two illustrative examples of unequal dialogues.

In the years after the invasion of Iraq, Colin Powell has described how he spent two and a half hours attempting to talk President Bush out of the decision to invade. Yet, in his book, *Plan of Attack*, Bob Woodward’s more contemporaneous account suggests something more complicated. According to Woodward, Powell, “the ‘Reluctant Warrior’ was urging restraint, but he had not tossed his heart on the table.” “He had not said, ‘Don’t do it.’” Woodward goes on to explain that in his years in the military, Powell, “had learned to play the boss and talk only within the confines of the preliminary goals set by the boss.” Either Powell or Woodward concludes, “Perhaps he had been too timid.” In recounting George Bush’s memory of the meeting, Woodward describes how the president believed that Powell was talking about tactics, the difficulties and the need for allies, rather than the strategy and the decision to go to war.<sup>2</sup>

In his book, *Vietnam at War*, Phillip Davidson describes how in 1954 before the ill-fated operation at Dienbienphu, the battlefield commander, General René Cogny began to have doubts about the operation that he himself had originally proposed. Rather than send to General Henri Navarre, the theater commander, the hard-hitting analysis written by his staff, Cogny delivered a more careful, equivocal memorandum. This memo raised some of the problems, but did not seriously chal-

lunge the wisdom of the operation. Apparently, Cogy's staff sneered at their boss's "straddle." The book's author, a retired U.S. Army major general, shrewdly observed that staff officers are usually "blunter and bolder" than their principals because they stand protected behind their leader and will not directly bear the repercussions of an unwelcome recommendation or failure.<sup>3</sup>

I think these two brief examples capture some of the complexities of the "unequal dialogue." Whether advising civilian or military superiors, it is very difficult for military officers to challenge the boss, especially on his objectives. However, such indirect methods such as "playing the boss" or "straddling" does not achieve the candor or clarity needed when vital matters are at stake. One can also sense that both Powell and Cogy were hampered by their own doubts and uncertainties. On the other hand, we can contrast their hesitation and diffidence with the confidence and conviction of staff officers. Of special significance for the formulation of strategy, is the willingness of military officers to question objectives issued by superiors. This goes against most of their experience and training. One normally regards the objectives issued by higher headquarters as fixed and it is the ways and the means that are in play. Yet, if strategy is about balancing ends, ways, and means, then the suitability or affordability of the ends must be considered. Thus, a subordinate must sometimes challenge the value of the objectives.

### **COHEN'S "UNEQUAL DIALOGUE"**

With that preamble, let me turn to Eliot Cohen's concept of the "Unequal Dialogue." In his book, Professor Cohen advocated an aggressive and sometimes intrusive role for civilian leaders in the planning and conduct of war. While acknowledging that a political leader seldom directly disregards military advice, Cohen observed "a politician finds himself managing military alliances, deciding the nature of acceptable risk, shaping operational choices, and reconstructing military organizations."<sup>4</sup>

There are three principal reasons for this "selective meddling." First, war is profoundly political. Hence, political leaders are often more experienced or more qualified to make political assessments, and ultimately they are the ones politically accountable for the decisions. The second reason for active or intrusive involvement in military issues is because generals and admirals frequently disagree. The political leader must sometimes arbitrate these disagreements. He must ultimately decide which course of action is best. The final reason Cohen offers is that the senior officer may not be the best advisor for the specific circumstances or the particular war. Military officers are shaped by their training and experiences. The qualities needed for peacetime generalship may not fully transfer to war. Cohen also observed that military experience is often highly specific and conditional. An officer's experience in a certain kind of war does not necessarily translate into expertise in another type of warfare. Thus, a primary duty of the political leader is to select the proper military leaders.<sup>5</sup>

While Cohen stresses the unequal nature of the dialogue, he also embraces the mutually candid and occasionally sharp character of the dialogue. The building of trust and confidence between civilian and military leaders cannot rely on formalities and false comity. As Cohen observed, "A bland pleasantness in civil-military relations may also mean civilians are evading their responsibilities or that soldiers have succumbed to the courtier mentality rather than that true harmony exists."<sup>6</sup>

### **THE "NORMAL" THEORY OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

Cohen contrasts his theory of civil-military relations with what he terms the "normal theory" of civil-military relations. This theory assumes a rather clear cut division of labor and authority between general and statesmen. The statesman decides on the strategic objectives and the general resources and then turns over the conduct of the military operations to the generals. This theory has its theoretical origins in Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and the State*. However, I submit that the moment the military became self-consciously professional they embraced what is really a claim to professional jurisdiction.

It is in the nature of professions to establish jurisdictional boundaries; to claim, “This is my area of responsibility and authority.” As Cohen and many other commentators on Huntington’s theory contend, the basic problem with this division of labor is that in the real world political and military domains are very blurred and the boundary, to the extent that one is ever agreed upon, is constantly changing. While especially true at the strategic level, we have seen that the spheres blur at the operational and tactical levels as well.

While it is not surprising that many military professionals prefer these separate spheres of authority, many politicians also embrace this jurisdictional boundary. In 1951, Senator Robert Taft and other Republicans castigated President Truman for not following the professional military advice of U.S. theater commander, Douglas MacArthur. In 1999 Senator Gordon Smith lamented the “degree to which political considerations affected NATO’s military strategy” in the Kosovo War.<sup>7</sup> Still more recently, many Democratic and Republican political leaders accused the Bush administration of ignoring professional military advice on Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2007, civil-military theorist Michael Desch demonstrated that the “normal theory” was alive and well when he recommended in his article, “Bush and the Generals”:

*“The best solution is to return to an old division of labor: civilians give due deference to military professional advice in the tactical and operational realms in return for complete military subordination in the grand strategic and political realms.”<sup>8</sup>*

Peter Feaver has recently argued that the academic debate has produced broad camps, the “professional supremacists” and the “civilian supremacists.” The first group argues in support of a military sphere of authority unhampered by political meddling and micro-management. In addition to Desch, Feaver includes in this group: Samuel Huntington, Dale Herspring, and military officers, Colonel Chris Gibson, and Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling. In the “civilian supremacist” camp which argues that the military should participate in policy matters only within the chain of command and only in private. They acknowledge that military officers must respond truthfully and candidly to Congress. Members of this group are Eliot Cohen, Richard Kohn, Mackubin Owens, and Peter Feaver.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps, Dr. Feaver is being a bit puckish in his two groupings. Certainly it is not surprising to find Huntington and two military officers in a category that advocates a high degree of military autonomy. However, Michael Desch and Dale Herspring would reject the label of “military supremacist.” Yet both denounced the Bush administration for supposedly ignoring military advice. I suspect Feaver was chiding Desch, Herspring and other Bush critics as favoring a more partisan form of civilian control –control of the military only by civilians who agree with them.

### ***CIVIL-MILITARY FACTIONS***

Political partisanship has been part of most civil-military clashes. Civil-military conflict in American history is seldom simply a matter of civilians versus the military. Far more commonly, it is a conflict between one faction of civilians and soldiers versus another civil-military faction. In the famous Truman-MacArthur controversy mentioned earlier, we see Generals Bradley and Marshall supporting President Truman against General MacArthur who had the support of the Republicans in Congress. Most budget battles follow this pattern, and while the military may be considered an interest group, their real power exists in alliance with other civilian interest groups. In American history, the central question has never been whether to have civilian control over the military, but rather, which civilians, and which military advisors, will have a say in the formulation and execution of policy.

The decisions on Iraq reflect this pattern with many different civil-military factions arguing for different policies and courses of action. The conventional media narrative reflected in the Desch and Herspring accounts pitted neoconservative ideologues, with the acquiescence of spineless courtier generals, against the nearly unanimous advice of military professionals in both the planning and

the conduct of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF). I think this narrative tends to ignore both the diversity and ambiguity of the internal debates. It also glosses over the extent to which some of the military “dissent” seems to have involved objections to the political objectives which were well beyond the purview of the military. I agree with Peter Fever’s assessment that the problems in Iraq were not the result of inadequate political “deference to military experts,” nor the “dereliction of generals in not more forcefully thwarting civilian leaders,” but to mutual civilian and military mistakes and misjudgments.<sup>10</sup>

Ironically, I believe that the most fateful decisions in the initial phases of the war in Iraq were based more on a long standing agreement between the political and military leadership that the military should not play a leading role in nation-building. I would further submit that between summer of 2004 and 2006 there was a high level of agreement between President Bush, Secretary Rumsfeld, and the military chain of command, down to the operational level, in keeping what might be termed a small military footprint in Iraq. Nevertheless, by the end of the summer of 2003, the American military found itself in a different war, a war for which it was doctrinally and temperamentally ill-prepared.<sup>11</sup>

### ***THE UNEQUAL PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE***

My purpose is not the review the decisions to invade Iraq, to reiterate Cohen’s rationale for the “unequal dialogue: war is political, generals disagree, and military experience is not always relevant to the current situation. Moreover, I argue that these factors also apply to the “unequal dialogue” within the military profession. Politics not only dominates strategy, it pervades nearly all aspects of war, especially irregular war. Just as generals often disagree when offering military advice to political leaders, within professional circles generals (and colonels, captains, and sergeants) often disagree. Finally, military expertise and experience are often highly specific and no officer can be an expert in every aspect of the profession.

The political dimension of the military profession is too often ignored. Most military officers express distaste for politics and pretend that it can be separated from military life. Yet, politics not only permeates war it permeates everything. Politics, broadly defined, is how organizations make decisions. In rejecting politics, most officers mean party politics that seeks special or partisan advantage at the expense of “the public good.” There is a certain cognitive dissonance when officers reject the messiness of politics, yet intrinsically know that interests and factions play a part in their own organizations and decision-making processes. Military specialties, branches, and services constitute our version of tribes, clans, and parties. For the professional military ethic this means reconciling the special interests of the various tribes and factions with public or national security interests.

Moreover, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have provided the American military an extraordinary political education. Many junior officers found themselves assuming the responsibilities of civil authorities in Afghanistan, and especially Iraq. They have been called upon to negotiate with or arbitrate among various factions. Military officers have been heavily involved in providing public services, building public projects, and organizing government ministries. While the military has generally preferred to call these things cultural education or stability operations, this is politics at its most elemental level. With this in mind, I believe military officers require a greater understanding of politics, and especially comparative politics. They need to appreciate how individuals, groups, and institutions interact in forming civil society and civil governments. Some need to know the practicalities of local and intermediate level government.

In the interest of brevity and, perhaps, clarity, let me combine Cohen’s two other factors: managing professional disagreement and the specificity (or limits) of military experience and expertise. Generals, colonels, captains, disagree because they have differing experiences and expertise. What is often termed inter-service rivalry, assumes this kind of basic divergence of viewpoints. The soldier and the airman generally have very different visions of war and the kinds of wars they prefer to fight. Moreover, a soldier’s specific military experiences shape his attitude and ideas on war. For

example, Matthew Ridgway's airborne infantry experiences in World War II better prepared him for the desperate battles with the Chinese armies in Korea in 1951 than did his predecessor Walton Walker, who had been Patton's armored spearhead. Many commentators have remarked that the Army's operations in Vietnam tended to conform to its experiences in World War II and Korea rather than the unique circumstances of Vietnam.

Paradoxically, the military's difficulties in Iraq initially stemmed from agreement more than disagreement. That Vietnam greatly shaped the perspectives of the military leaders of the 1980s and 1990s, is now conventional wisdom. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, the U.S. Army or its mainstream, turned away from Vietnam and anything associated with counterinsurgency. There have been many books and articles about the military's, and especially the Army's, reluctance to get involved any operation other than Desert Storm-like war. This resistance became so intense that in the Clinton Administration, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright famously said to General Power, "What's the point of having this superb military you are always talking about if we can't use it."<sup>12</sup>

Many readers are probably thinking that the diverse shaping experiences of military officers and the management of the resulting disagreements are nothing new. This is true. Military leadership doctrine has long addressed the importance of building consensus, especially by organizational and strategic leaders. The new Army Field Manual 5-0, *The Operation Process*, defines dialog as "a way to collaborate that involved candid exchange of ideas or opinions among participants that encourages frank discussions in areas of disagreement." It goes on to affirm that "effective collaboration includes continuous dialog that leads to increased understanding of the situation." The new FM 5.0 also describes ill-defined problems as those where even professionals will disagree on the nature and definition of the problem. And thus, there must be extensive dialogue and debate on defining the problem before ever considering to solutions.<sup>13</sup>

Again, my main point is that Cohen's unequal dialogue is not simply an aspect of civil-military relations; it is a central feature of military life and therefore must be at the heart of our professional ethic. However, incorporating this into our professional behavior is not simply a matter of listing principles or rules. I think our professional ethics are shaped by thousands of experiences, sharpened by tough cases that provide substance if not rigorous consistency, and reflect ambiguity as well as clarity. So, now let me turn to some examples of civil-military and military to military unequal dialogues from the surge in Iraq.

## **UNEQUAL DIALOGUES FROM THE IRAQ "SURGE"**

The Iraq "surge" decision is a distinctive event in the history of civil-military relations. In deciding on the new strategy for Iraq, President Bush overruled the recommendations of virtually the entire military chain of command--General Casey, General Abizaid, General Pace and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Yet, military opinion was not unanimous and civilian proponents of the surge tapped alternate sources on military advice and expertise. Again reflecting American historical experience, we see civil-military factions versus other civil-military factions. Moreover, understanding how national security decisions are made when military experts disagree is a central question of the "unequal civil-military dialogue." These episodes also provide grist for the consideration of the unequal professional dialogue.

### ***THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP***

The bipartisan study commission is hardly perennial in American government. It has been a very common form of civil-military dialogue. For example, in the nineteenth century, Congress, either directly or indirectly through the executive department-lead commissions, would undertake broad studies of military or security policy--notably on Indian policy and coastal defense. Commonly, all of the generals of the army would be asked to provide their opinions. These statements were generally independent of the official War Department positions. Thus, the Iraq Study Group

follows a long line of political-military inquires.

Formed in March 2006 at the behest of Congress and the reluctant acquiescence of the Bush Administration, the primary members of the Iraq Study Group (ISG) were prominent political figures, headed by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. It also included future Defense Secretary Robert Gates. The ISG's Military Senior Advisor Panel consisted of retired flag officers: Admiral James O. Ellis, Jr., General Edward C. Meyer, General Joseph W. Ralston, Lieutenant General Roger C. Schultz, Sr., and most significantly General John M. Keane. Like previous such commissions, the ISG interviewed many other active and retired officers.

Typically, the ISG final report reflected political consensus-building and compromise. It reinforced the prevailing conventional wisdom that the primary objective should be withdrawal not success in Iraq. Some members like Gates were apparently supportive of troop increases, but others leaning in that direction were dissuaded by Iraq commanders George Casey and Peter Chiarelli who insisted that increased troops were neither sustainable nor effective in the long term.<sup>14</sup>

It is perhaps not surprising that the recommendations of bipartisan commissions tend to reflect conventional wisdom or divide into more passionate majority and minority reports. In many ways they become political theater and its public, almost ritualistic, character does not necessarily produce a candid, much less blunt civil-military dialogue. Like testifying before Congress, military testimony before bipartisan commissions produces a dilemma. How far can or should an officer go in offering views that conflict with the policies of the commander-in-chief. General Petraeus's May 2006 testimony provides a good example of the pulled punches of such venues. Petraeus reportedly said "U.S. strategy over the last 18 months has been sound." "I would not break up the team of military and civilian leaders currently in Iraq." He acknowledged that Iraq was "the most challenging security environment he had seen in 31 years in the military," and like Casey and Abizaid, he stressed political reconciliation. Echoing what had become the bipartisan "party-line," the problem could not be solved militarily. "It had to be solved politically."<sup>15</sup>

### ***NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR***

By the summer of 2006, National Security Advisor, Stephen Hadley and key aides like Meghan O'Sullivan recognized that the existing strategy was not succeeding and something needed to be done. Given the approaching elections, Hadley moved cautiously in launching a new strategy review. Initially, this was the review was confined to a few trusted civilian aides, although it did include National Security Council staffer Brigadier General Kevin Bergner. Hadley did not bring the Joint Chiefs of Staff or Multination Forces -Iraq (MNF-I) directly into the review, but instead elicited their views by requesting answers to a lengthy list assumptions and questions and through video conferences. By October, Hadley had merged a State Department team into his review effort. On 11 October, retired navy captain, Dr. William Luti, submitted a primarily military plan to Hadley's deputy, J.D Crouch. Luti's plan called for surging about five brigades to primarily to Baghdad, assigning the mission of "secure and hold," eradicating both AQ and Shia militias, and increasing the Army and Marine Corps end strength. Hadley forwarded this plan to General Pace for assessment.<sup>16</sup>

Peter Feaver, a member of the NSC staff, maintains that Hadley was the driving force behind the ultimate surge decision. Rather than devising plan and forcing it through the system, Hadley and the NSC brought the various governmental departments along gradually. For example, they avoided a situation in which all of the departments brought their options to the table for an up or down decision by the President. Instead, they first changed the mission priority from "train and transition" to "population protection." The civilian-led process reached out to various military individuals and factions sympathetic to counterinsurgency and a new direction. And finally, after having their say senior generals acquiesced slowly, reluctantly.<sup>17</sup>

### ***JCS COUNCIL OF COLONELS***

By the fall, other departments were conducting their own quiet reviews. For the purposes of

this paper, the JCS review is the most relevant. The impetus for the JCS review may have been a meeting between Rumsfeld, Pace and retired General Jack Keane on 19 September. According to Tom Ricks, at that meeting, Keane forcefully argued five points. First, the insurgency could not be defeated simply by attacking them or transitioning that job to the Iraqi forces. Second, the only way to win was to protect the people and isolate the insurgents from the people. Third, stop running patrols out of big bases and start living among the people. Fourth, stop talking about drawing down troop levels. Finally, get some new generals. Although, Rumsfeld and Keane had had an excellent relationship--Rumsfeld had urged Keane to become Army Chief of Staff--Rumsfeld was not persuaded. A few days later Pace met with Keane. Keane critiqued Pace's hands-off approach to Iraq. Keane also repeated his conviction that new leaders were needed. He suggested that ADM Fallon replace Abizaid and Petraeus replace Casey.<sup>18</sup>

General Pace apparently took Keane's admonishment to heart and quickly formed a study group of 16 officers, dubbed the "Council of Colonels." Initially, General Pace and Lieutenant General Walter Sharp, director of the Joint Staff gave the colonels a rather broad charter: reexamine everything regarding the global war on terrorism. Gradually they focused on the "800 pound gorillas in the room--Iraq."<sup>19</sup> Ultimately, this group proved to have little influence on policy or strategy. The "council of colonels" proved to be just as divided as the rest of the government and the military. While former commanders in Iraq, Army colonels Peter Mansoor and H. R. McMaster and Marine colonel Tim Greenwood supported changing the mission to "population protection" and a substantial increase of forces. The Navy and Air force officers were "anti-surge." Their recommendation of a small troop increase suggests compromise and was not very different from the final recommendation of George Casey, which Pace and the JCS had been inclined to support from the beginning.<sup>20</sup>

### ***KEANE AND THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE***

Outside of Stephan Hadley and the NSC, the most influential civil-military faction in the surge decision proved to be the most unusual. Scholars at the American Enterprise Institute, and especially Frederick Kagan had generally supported the invasion of Iraq, but were appalled at the resultant troubles. Kagan, a military historian and former West Point professor, had been pressing for troop increase for some time. On the weekend of 9-10 December invited a group of scholars and retired officers to participate in a war game of what a surge might be able to accomplish. This exercise would be the basis for a report to counter the Iraq Study Group recommendations. Among the scholars were: Frederick Kagan, his wife Kimberly, Danielle Pletka, Thomas Donnelly, Rend al-Rahim, and Michael Rubin. Among the retired officers were: General Jack Keane, Lieutenant General David Barno, Colonel Joel Armstrong, and Major Daniel Dwyer.<sup>21</sup>

The AEI plan is remarkable for its quality, detail, and accuracy. Dr. Kagan had taught at West Point with fellow historian H.R. McMaster, and Tom Ricks claims that there were unnamed active duty officers, affiliated with H.R. McMaster also in attendance at the exercise. He goes on to surmise that McMaster's operations at Tall Afar were the model for the AEI Plan. The plan that resulted from this exercise proposed specific forces, deployment locations, missions, and concepts of operation. It clearly explained why five brigades were needed and how they could be employed. It also forthrightly turned the political-military assumption of the campaign on its head--improved security would lead to a breakthrough on political reconciliation. Even General Keane, who had access to classified information, was impressed with the quality of analysis from open sources.<sup>22</sup>

Maybe by coincidence, Jack Keane was scheduled to meet with the President and the Vice President the next day. Keane's weekend at AEI would have certainly given him even greater ammunition and confidence in his recommendations. The 11 December 2006 meeting in the White House was another extraordinary civil-military dialogue. Attendees included Dr. Eliot Cohen, then counselor to the Secretary of State, Dr. Stephen Biddle of Council on Foreign Relations, and retired generals, Barry McCaffrey, Wayne Downing, and Jack Keane. Cohen urged a more aggressive strategy and a new team in Iraq. Next, Keane empathically advocated a robust surge and

new command team in Iraq. McCaffrey and Downing both disagreed with Keane and argued that escalation was not sustainable and produce little lasting effect. Instead they urged more effort and resources in training the Iraqi security forces. Dr. Biddle also believed that adding more troops was the only option that offered a chance of “turning things around.” Both Bush and Cheney still seemed to play their cards close to their chest, but after the meeting, as Cheney walked to his office with Keane, General McCaffrey thought the “fix was in.” Woodward reports that the AEI plan that Keane showed the vice president was very persuasive.<sup>23</sup>

### ***THE PRESIDENT AND THE JCS***

Two days after meeting with the outside experts, President Bush came to the Pentagon to hear the views of the JCS. Again according to Bob Woodward, the president came armed with “sweeteners” including a promise to increase the size of the Army and Marine Corps. As the president pressed them on what could be done to improve the security situation in Iraq, the JCS first urged that the president get commitments of action and support from Prime Minister Malicki. Regarding a surge of up to five brigades, they warned that this constituted the nation’s strategic reserve and that the military would be unable to readily respond to a crisis elsewhere. The president indicated that he was more concerned about the current war than a hypothetical one. Army Chief of Staff Schoomaker advised that deployment tours would need to be extended and more Reserve and National Guard units would need to be called up. When Schoomaker suggested that a surge might break the force, the President asked the Chiefs which was more likely to break the force, a humiliating defeat or sustaining the surge over the next few years. The Chiefs acknowledged that defeat would be more damaging.<sup>24</sup>

At one point, the army chief opined that generating the surge force would take time and expressed doubt that the president had the time, meaning the political time. There are several versions of the president response, but essentially the president indicated that in his political assessment, he had the time. Although the president had told them he had not yet made his decision, Woodward concludes that the joint chiefs had “sniffed him out.” The president favored a surge.<sup>25</sup>

If General Schoomaker’s intrusion into the political sphere was a breach of protocol, I submit it was a minor one. The question of the political time necessary to conduct the surge was not a trivial matter. That the army chief raised the concern showed he had some sense of the political pressure under which the Commander in Chief was working. Moreover, Schoomaker, in bringing up the issue, did not insist that his political judgment was superior to the president’s. The blunt “unequal dialogue” should permit the military to challenge political assumptions or objectives, as in the example of Colin Powell I cited earlier. However, by no means should the military be permitted to reject or ignore political judgments or objectives.

One final point about this meeting. Although the JCS believed the president had already decided on the surge, Bush indicated that he was only leaning that way, “but the door wasn’t shut.” At a SOCOM OIF After Action Review in 2003, Special Forces Colonel Patrick Higgins observed that politicians like to play their cards close to their chest and make their final decisions only when they must. Even if they are leaning in a certain direction, they like to leave their options open to the last possible minute. In contrast, the military are “planful” and make decisions as soon as possible so others can get on with their planning. This difference frustrates and confuses the military.

### ***KEANE ON PACE***

While the civil-military dynamics of the surge decision-making process offer illustrations of the unequal civil-military dialogue, other episodes provide interesting insights of the military professional dialogue. In *The War Within*, Woodward recounts how around Christmas 2006 Jack Keane received a call from a major general in the JCS J3. The general informed Keane that General Casey’s surge recommendation for two army brigades and two marine battalions had arrived and that he was going to advise Chairman Pace that this would not work. Later the general called back

and said that Pace's response was, "I don't want to know that. I don't want to hear it won't work. I want you to tell me how to sell this at Crawford." [The Bush ranch was the site of next NSC meeting on 28 December.] Keane's apparent response to that was to dismiss Pace as a sycophant who was letting down the people in uniform and fighting in combat. Keane concluded that Pace was hiding behind Abizaid and Casey, using them "to protect himself." Keane immediately called John Hannah, Vice President Cheney's national security advisor to declare the Casey recommendation was "wholly inadequate."<sup>26</sup>

Peter Feaver has a very different perspective on the role played by Chairman Pace. Feaver explains how important Pace was in reconciling Casey and the JCS as the President's views on Iraq strategy shifted. Pace had three somewhat conflicting roles: advisor to the president, advisor to the Secretary of Defense, and principle advocate for the views of the JCS and combatant commanders. As Feaver notes, "Pace did not oppose the surge in the same way that the Chiefs and the combatant commanders did, but he was cautious and focused on devising a decision-making process that would bring the military along with the evolving views of his Commander-in-Chief." I would add that the varying political roles a Chairman must play are not well understood.<sup>27</sup>

### ***CASEY OBSTRUCTS PETRAEUS***

On 2 January 2007, JCS Chairman Peter Pace, according to Bob Woodward, informed then Lieutenant General Petraeus that he had been selected as General Casey's successor in Iraq. This was eight days before President would announce the "surge" strategy. Shortly afterward, Pace called to ask how many brigades he would need. Petraeus asked if he could first call Lieutenant General Ray Odierno, the corps commander in Iraq. Pace said OK and Petraeus got Odierno's recommendation of deploying all five available brigades. Meanwhile, General Casey remained opposed to five more brigades, but had been cautioned a week earlier by General Abizaid: "Look, the surge is coming. Get out of the way." When Casey found out that Petraeus had talked to Odierno directly, he called Petraeus and chastised him for calling his subordinates. Petraeus explained that he had been asked for his views and since he would have to execute what was eventually decided, he needed to speak with the operational ground commander. The incoming commander then asked if he could "start getting some briefings and things." According to Woodward, "Casey said no."<sup>28</sup>

### ***"YOU'RE NOT ACCOUNTABLE"***

Casey's unhappiness did not end when he left Iraq. Again, Bob Woodward reports that in the summer of 2007, GEN Casey ran into Jack Keane at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Casey greeted Keane and inquired if the Chairman of the JCS had called him yet. Keane responded no and asked why. Casey replied: "Because we feel -- the chiefs feel -- that you are way too out in front advocating a policy for which you're not accountable. We're accountable. You're not accountable, Jack. And that's a problem." Keane responded the he was as a member of the Secretary Defense Policy Board he was supposed to offer independent advice and all he was trying to do was help Petraeus. Unlike others, he had supported the Abizaid/Casey strategy for years. "And at some point, I no longer could support it. I'm not operating as some kind of Lone Ranger." Casey reiterated, "It's not appropriate for a retired general to be so far forward advocating a policy that he is not responsible or accountable for." Keane did not agree.<sup>29</sup>

Later, Keane, again according to Bob Woodward, had "heard through the Pentagon grapevine" that the new JCS Chairman, ADM Mike Mullen, "had told colleagues that one of his first plans was to "get Keane back in the box." Keane went to see the chairman. In the meeting Mullen told Keane, "I don't want you going to Iraq anymore and helping Petraeus." "You've diminished the office of the chairman of the Joint Chief." Eventually getting the heart of the issue, Keane remarked that, "to the degree that you're putting pressure on Petraeus to reduce forces, you're taking far too much risk, and that risk is in losing and not winning." Mullen did not agree. When the Pentagon denied Keane's country clearance, Keane contacted the Vice President's office, and soon Secretary Gates

received notes supporting Keane's visits to Iraq to advise GEN Petraeus. One note was from the Vice President and the other was from the President.<sup>30</sup>

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL MILITARY ETHIC**

### ***PERVASIVENESS OF POLITICS***

So what do these stories tell us about "unequal dialogues" and the professional military ethic? One of the first implications is the pervasiveness of politics. As I stated earlier, politics is about how groups make decisions and thus it is endemic to the military profession. All officers swim in some kind of political pond, lake, or ocean. Whether conducting stability operations, contingency planning, or systems acquisition, there is a political dimension to the job. Political and military affairs are inextricably linked and the boundaries are sometimes unclear. Thus, no elected leader would grant discretionary authority to the military if he did not have confidence they understood the political implications of military operations.

In arguing that officers become more politically aware or sensitive, I am not saying they should be more politically partisan. In fact I believe just the opposite. Military advice visibly influenced by partisanship becomes partisan advice. Partisan advice undermines the credibility of the profession. Thus, the politics of the professional military ethic demands that the officer adopt the habit of political impartiality. Regardless of his personal views, the officer must demonstrate that his professional analysis has seriously considered all sides of an issue. An officer's advice may end up supporting the position of one political faction or another, but it always be based on clearly and fairly articulated professional considerations.

### ***RETIRED OFFICERS***

This leads me to the question of retired military officers and the professional ethic. First and foremost, I believe that retired officers remain part of the military profession. Second, they serve as valuable teachers and mentors to the active military. While George Casey objected to Jack Keane's relationship with Peter Petraeus, it did not stop him from seeking the advice of such retired officers as Shy Meyer.<sup>31</sup> Third, retired officers serve as valuable advisors and sounding boards to political leaders. Retired generals Barry McCaffrey and Wayne Downing had been providing military advice to both the Clinton and Bush administrations. My few examples contained only a small number of those engaged in educating and advising our political leadership. Finally, retired officers can serve as invaluable teachers, translators, and interpreters to the American public. They do not always have the same constraints of active duty professionals.

Fewer constraints do not mean no constraints. Retired generals are citizens and have right to speak, but they must also remember their obligations as a military professional. If political activism and partisanship on the part of the military, active or retired, convinces our elected leaders that the selection of senior military officers should be treated no differently from any other political appointment, our professional status and credibility will be destroyed. Administrations will demand personal and political loyalty and incoming administrations will remove incumbent generals to make way for their own "loyalists." Just as federal prosecutors are routinely replaced at the Department of Justice and judges must pass through political filters, the selection and promotion of generals could become overtly political.

### ***CANDOR AND CIVILITY***

My chief disappointment about the so-called "revolt of the generals" in 2006 was that it became too personal, too simplistic, too partisan. It obscured or ignored the tremendous complexities and difficulties decision-makers faced. The generals presented one-sided philippics rather a reasoned analysis. They attacked Secretary Rumsfeld's motives and patriotism. They claimed a

monopoly on wisdom rather presenting the alternatives facing the Secretary and explain why his decisions were wrong. While emotionally satisfying for some, they attacks distracted us from the open professional analysis and the candid professional judgment we owe our elected leaders and the American people.

Thus, another implication for the professional dialogue is the need for candid and respectful debate. Respect and candor go together. Candor is a sign of respect; a sign of trust. In the past few decades, we have seen punditry replace serious analysis, insult replace argument, accusation replace evidence. Calling people who disagree sycophants, yes-men, dilettantes, idiots, cowards, or criminals is uncivil, but more importantly it's unprofessional. Name calling does not necessarily make one's own position any more accurate or wise. Even in private, a military professional should refrain from attacking another's motives and character. Perhaps more common than name-calling and contempt is the use of hyperbole and sarcasm in the professional dialogue. Hyperbole is merely another way to over-simplify complex subjects and sarcasm or ridicule a different technique to avoid engaging with the real argument. Exaggeration and disdain do little to advance a genuine debate and produce true understanding, much less agreement.

### ***TRANSPARENCY***

The next implication for the professional military ethic I would like to discuss is the matter of accountability or responsibility. While I think it was legitimate for General Schoomaker to raise the question of political time and the surge, George Bush was correct to point out that it was his decision and he would be held accountable, ultimately. George Casey was quite right that as a joint force commander and Chief of Staff of the Army, he was accountable in a way that a retired general like Jack Keane was not. Certainly General Casey's decisions have greater direct impact than General Keane's recommendations. Yet all officers of the government--civil or military, commander or staff officer-- must be responsible for their conduct and accountable for their recommendations or decisions. Whether a retired advisor or a staff officer for General Cohn, all military professionals must remain accountable for the quality, candor, and fair-mindedness of their professional actions. These are the basis for professional reputation and professional credibility.

However, rather than focusing on relative accountability and authority, I would like to approach the issue from a slightly different direction--that of transparency. If our professional ethic demands a candid and fair-minded analysis, the professional dialogue requires an open or transparent debate. A transparent debate does not necessarily mean a public debate. A transparent debate is one in which the participants openly and fairly share their information, opinions, and recommendations. Professionals should be willing, even eager, to explain and defend their positions without stifling or stigmatizing opposing points of view. The professional dialogue demands a fair, even if unequal, debate.

A transparent debate need not begin with all interested parties. It may legitimately begin with a select group such as Hadley's national security team or Pace's council of colonels developing an organizational perspective or position. Yet ultimately, these participants must include all the relevant parties. Thus, when the JCS J33 informed Jack Keane of GEN Casey's two brigade- two battalion recommendation, I contend that he may have been a partisan, but he was also maintaining the transparency of the debate among authorized participants, because by that time Keane had a recognized role in the civil-military dialogue concerning strategy in Iraq. On the other hand, I submit that General Casey's effort to restrict General Petraeus access to key personal and information directly relevant to his impending assignment was not furthering transparency of dialogue and debate.

The attempt by ADM Mullen to block Keane visiting and advising Petraeus and Odierno was another breach of transparency. Certainly Mullen and many of the JCS were irritated with what they regarded as interference with the chain of command. Tom Ricks argues that Jack Keane had become the defacto Chairman of the JCS. But Mullen's authority as Chairman ultimately depends on his credibility as an advisor to the Secretary and President. Controlling information and access

are the weapons of the bureaucrat, not the professional, whose real power resides in the quality and persuasiveness of his advice and the trust that advice engenders.

I also believe that the transparency, and accountability, of the professional dialogue requires that most of it be on the record. Of course, there are times when some things should not go on the record such as when General Pace asked Keane of his opinion on Pace's performance. However as a historian, I am a frustrated, and a bit appalled, at the amount of political-military decision-making that is being conducted with no record. As useful as Bob Woodward can be, I would much rather have the minutes of the NSC meetings than the filtered memories of self-interested participants. After all, are we not all the heroes of our own stories and thus selectively recall events from our own perspective.

There is also something to be said for formalized bureaucratic processes. I recall listening to a speech by a former JCS J-5 who took Defense Under Secretary Richard Armitage to task for "short circuiting" the policy process by inviting J-5 staffers to participate in OSD working group meetings. The general's point was that these staff officers could not and did not represent the views of the JCS, because the JCS had not yet considered the issue or formulated recommendations. Jack Keane's back channel efforts give me similar concern. Yet, Keane did not invent this situation. I regret that modern decision-makers are leaving fewer and fewer fingerprints and that there will enormous gaps in the record of our national security and the military decision-making process. This is bad for accountability and transparency.

Many old hands, wise in the ways of bureaucracy, will regard my appeal for transparency as naïve. There is some justice to this charge. After all, the control and manipulation of information has been with us since scribes first put styli to clay tablets. Our competitive culture, and especially our adversary legal system, constantly reinforces that idea there are winners and losers. Military professionals are probably more competitive than most; losing an argument is nearly as unbearable as losing a war. But ethical principles and codes are not based on the lowest plane of practice, but the higher reaches of our ideals. Moreover, many military values--obedience, collectivism, readiness to kill--frequently conflict with the values of the larger society. Our insistence on transparent and fair-minded professional dialogue may not be always reciprocated, but I that should not stop us from adhering to our own professional values. In the long run, I believe it will breed trust.

### ***PRIVATE AND PUBLIC DIALOGUE***

A transparent dialogue can be both public and private. One of the striking aspects of the surge dialogue was the relative absence of leaking by the various participants. While there was some contemporary reporting and participants were surely leaking to Bob Woodward, there was no damaging battle of leak and counter leak that had marred earlier strategic debates. The public deliberation generated by the ISG process may have provided cover for the private, internal debates. Leaking is not about transparent debate. It is taking the debate to a different venue. It is the almost unvaryingly calculating, selective, and manipulative. It is destructive to genuine dialogue. During the run up to the Iraq war, genuine dialogue within the Bush administration was short-circuited by leaks. For example, Secretary Rumsfeld would not let cabinet officers keep copies of the Iraq war planning briefings because he did not trust his colleagues because he had seen too many such documents given to the media within hours. The behavior of both Rumsfeld and his colleagues greatly damaged the nation.

While much of our unequal professional dialogue must be done in private, there is a vital public dimension to as well. While much of the public debate about Iraq became partisan, vituperative, and destructive, the dialogue in military professional publications and journals remained civil, constructive, and professional. Since 2001, the Army War College and the Command and General Staff College have produced many trenchant analyses and critiques of policy, strategy, tactics and techniques. The ability that the military has shown to regroup, rethink, and retrain itself to conduct stability operations, to successfully counter insurgents is remarkable. The American military demonstrated a tremendous ability to adapt. The American people are rightly proud of the courage

and discipline their soldiers display on the battlefield. They can be equally reassured by the intellectual energy displayed in forging new expert knowledge and skills. The “surge” would not have been successful without both the hard-won combat experience and creative professionalism of the American military.

### ***HUMILITY AND TRUST***

In conclusion, I would like to make one final point about the unequal civil-military dialogue and the unequal professional dialogue. They both require humility. Experts need to teach, yet professionals must continuously learn. Military expertise can never be taken for granted and it is not simply the product of experience. The military profession will always face new and different challenges that require new solutions and the forging of new areas of expertise. A professional should never fear testing, proving, improving that expertise. As much as we might lament it, we do not possess a monopoly on national security knowledge or expertise. We must expect to be constantly challenged by other national security experts and political leaders. If professional expertise is the product of lifelong learning, then a military professional should value learning from others. Challenging professional dialogues and debates are as important in professional fitness as physical training. All leaders--civilian and military, senior and junior--benefit from such encounters.

Finally, the military profession depends on trust. Trust is the central civil-military relationship and the fundamental bond among soldiers. Trust begins with a shared commitment to service. It requires mutual respect and understanding. Society does not grant the military discretionary authority without trust and the military does not delegate authority without trust. Bias or partisanship taints professional expertise and advice and undermines trust. Any meaningful and candid unequal dialogue ultimately depends on trust.

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### **Endnotes**

1. Two cautions. I am a historian and a former military officer, not an ethicist. My approach to the Professional Military Ethic (PME) will be more discursive and illustrative rather than systematic. In addition, I will be using examples primarily from published, but largely journalistic sources. In writing the “first draft” history, journalists do not generally have the advantages of voluminous written documents, multiple personal memoirs and reflections, and the perspective of history. I do not claim that these stories are true in all their particulars. However, I believe them sufficiently representative to illustrate the question of the unequal professional dialogue.
2. Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 151-2.
3. Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War: The History 1946-1975*, 181-82.
4. Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime*, 208, 10.
5. For example, the combat experience of Westmoreland and Abrams in World War II did not prepare them for Vietnam and the experience of Powell and Schwarzkopf in Vietnam was not directly translated into expertise about conducting Desert Storm.
6. Eliot A. Cohen, “Supreme Command in the 21st Century,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Summer 2002), 51.
7. Eliot A. Cohen, “Supreme Command in the 21st Century,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Summer 2002), 206.

8. Michael C. Desch, "Bush and the Generals," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2007.
9. Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," Paper prepared for the International Studies Association Conference, February 2010, version 9, 7-13.
10. Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," Paper prepared for the International Studies Association Conference, February 2010, version 9, 52.
11. This is not to suggest there was no disagreement. Perhaps the greatest dispute was between Secretary Rumsfeld and the Army and Marine Corps over a permanent expansion of end strength. Meanwhile in Iraq, Rumsfeld, Abizaid, and Casey all agreed that a relatively small U.S. military footprint and the priority of rebuilding the Iraqi security forces.
12. Michael Dobbs, *Madeleine Albright: A Twentieth-Century Odyssey*, 360.
13. Army Field Manual (FM) 5-0, The Operation Process, March 2010, 1-6, 2-4, 3-2
14. Tom Ricks, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*, 53-54. Feaver wryly concludes that the ISG report has little influence except to demonstrate that if the existing Casey approach were relabeled as anti-Bush, it could achieve bipartisan support. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," 31-32. The ISG's final report was released in December 6, 2006. It consisted of a lengthy list of recommendations, some of which were already being implemented, but the overall thrust was to increase diplomatic and political efforts while beginning a phased U.S. military withdrawal. It rejected the options of: Precipitate Withdrawal, Staying the Course, More Troops for Iraq, and Devolution into Three Regions. It did recommend increases in trainers and imbeds for the Iraqi security forces and acknowledged the possible need for a small, temporary troop increases for Baghdad, but nothing the size of the eventually surge decision.
15. Woodward, *The War Within*, 43-45.
16. Woodward, *The War Within*, 60-1, 73-4, 170-1. Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," 23-4. Michael Gordon, "Troop 'Surge' Took Place Amid Doubt and Debate," *New York Times*, August 13, 2008.
17. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," 31-7.
18. Ricks, *The Gamble*, 88-90. Woodward, *The War Within*, 141-46.
19. The group was composed of three from the Marine Corps., four from the Army, four from the Navy, and five from the Air Force. Woodward, *The War Within*, 158-59.
20. Ricks, *The Gamble*, 88-90, 101-04.
21. Frederick W. Kagan, "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq, Phase I Report," A Report of the Iraq Planning Group at the American Enterprise Institute, January 5, 2007.
22. Ricks, *The Gamble*, 94-98. Woodward, *The War Within*, 276-78. "Choosing Victory." AEI Interim Report, December 14, 2006. Frederick W. Kagan, "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq, Phase I Report," A Report of the Iraq Planning Group at the American Enterprise Institute, January 5, 2007.

23. Ricks, *The Gamble*, 98-101. Woodward, *The War Within*, 279-82. Frederick W. Kagan and Jack Keane, "The Right Type of "Surge"; Any Troop Increase Must Be Large and Lasting," *Washington Post*, December 27, 2006.
24. Woodward, *The War Within*, 287-89. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," 29.
25. Woodward, *The War Within*, 287-89. Peter Feaver suggests the president's response to Schoemaker political assessment may have been a bit more pointed. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," 29.
26. Woodward, *The War Within*, 297-99. The J3 general was probably MG Michael Barbero, J33. Ricks, *The Gamble*, 80.
27. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge," 35-6. Tom Ricks suggests that Pace took a somewhat hands-off approach to Iraq because he could focus on the rest of the world, while two four stars were "on the case" in Iraq. Ricks, *The Gamble*, 88.
28. Bob Woodward, *The War Within*, 310,306.
29. Bob Woodward, "You're Not Accountable, Jack," *Washington Post* , September 9, 2008, A01; Bob Woodward, *The War Within*, 371.
30. Bob Woodward, "You're Not Accountable, Jack," *Washington Post* , September 9, 2008, A01; Bob Woodward, *The War Within*, 399.
31. David Cloud and Greg Jaffe, *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army*, 268-69.

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# **The Professional Military Ethic and Political Dissent: Has the Line Moved?**

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The recent firing of General Stanley McChrystal has once again highlighted the concept of civil-military relations and the friction that occurs when military matters and civilian policy collide. Many wonder if the line separating military affairs and politics has moved or been erased. The Army has what is often called a long-standing history of steering clear of politics or politically-charged discussion. A closer examination of our history, however, casts doubt on this assertion. The past 235 years have shown many incursions into the political realm by members of the military, both junior and senior, with varying results. The apolitical culture which has informed our Professional Military Ethic was born and cemented during the two World Wars of the twentieth century, and has failed to keep up with the times. The change in behavior of retired general officers, the increase in operational environment complexity, the shifting generational characteristics of the military, and transformational advances in communications technologies necessitate a change in the military-political boundary line that restricts the military from public debate and dissent on political issues that affect the armed services.

In order to determine whether or not the boundary line has moved, we need to understand what the line is and where it came from. The founding fathers had an understandable aversion towards standing armies, given their experience with British troops before and during the Revolutionary War. In light of this, they wanted complete control of the nation's military. They ensured this through various means, including dividing the authority between Congress, who raises and funds the military, and the President, who commands it. This concept of civilian control of the military was inculcated into the Revolutionary Army by George Washington both during, and more importantly following the Revolutionary War. Early military regulations reflected a slightly altered copy of the British articles of war. It is interesting that a nation who had just liberated itself from monarchical rule would so quickly adopt such laws regarding warfare and soldier conduct. But John Adams, who was given the thankless task of updating the inadequate colonial articles of war at the behest of General Washington, felt that "there was extant one system of articles of war which had carried two empires to the head of mankind, the Roman and the British" and was "convinced that nothing short of the Roman and British discipline could save us."<sup>1</sup>

The British articles of war intermittently contained various prohibitions against contemptuous, traitorous, or disrespectful words against the sovereign since the mid-sixteenth century. Adams altered these references to prohibit words against "the authority of the United States in Congress assembled, or the legislature of any of the United States in which he may be quartered."<sup>2</sup> The articles of war were administered poorly, however, as they were not codified by the War Department or made available to the officer corps.<sup>3</sup> The result was that they were unevenly enforced prior to the War of 1812. These articles have evolved over time and are the basis of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, with the aforementioned language serving as the basis for Article 88, Contemptuous Words Against the President. While political dissent does not (and should not) necessarily include contemptuous words against elected officials, oftentimes dissenting statements are measured against this article first, so it is important to have an understanding of its context.

The line between the military and politics was blurred in the first hundred years of our nation's existence, as officers regularly used political influence to advance careers and interests, both professional and personal. Frontier Constabulary duty following the revolution found officers assuming both civilian and military authority roles in their areas of operation.<sup>4</sup> Officers formed an association to protest the post-War of 1812 drawdown, bringing their message to Congress and the press.<sup>5</sup>

The 1820s and 1830s found officers embracing their military professionalism and thinking about service to the nation as opposed to a political party.<sup>6</sup> This feeling carried through the mid-nineteenth century. In 1866 the *Army and Navy Journal* repeatedly urged apolitical behavior from officers, telling them to stay “aloof from all politicians” and avoid “all political meetings.” Gen John Schofield in 1867 refused an overture to run for Virginia Senate, and in 1892 urged West Point cadets to “abstain from active participation in party politics.” By 1920, the apolitical officer was so ingrained in the Army culture that a group of officers’ wives voting in a local election was viewed as scandalous.<sup>7</sup> The military-political line was very clear; aided, no doubt, by post-World War I peace and prosperity.

World War II produced a bit of a paradox. Senior leaders such as Generals George Marshall and Omar Bradley didn’t vote in elections as a matter of duty. Conversely, military voting increased as a new generation of officers exercised their right to vote, thanks in part to the Servicemen’s Voting Rights Act which attempted to improve the absentee ballot voting process.<sup>8</sup> The act of voting theoretically led to a need to know, comprehend, and discuss the political issues of the day, both in private and in public. The Cold War and its major conflicts, Korea and Vietnam, were a time of great turmoil for the nation and its military, and the boundary line blurred again with military leaders causing rifts in civil-military relations. Some maintain these rifts are still with us today.

## STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

Statutes and regulations provide a somewhat muddy and at times contradictory codification of the line delineating the boundaries of political dissent. The officer’s commission states that “The President has reposed special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities” of the officer. All officers take an oath upon commissioning, swearing to “support and defend the Constitution,” which implies recognizing the President as Commander-in-Chief (Article II) and obeying the laws of the land (Article VI). Of chief concern among these are the provisions of Title 10, which codifies how the armed forces will be raised and maintained. Section 3583, Requirements of Exemplary Conduct, states that “All commanding officers and others in authority in the Army are required...to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination” as well as “to take all necessary and proper measures, under the laws, regulations, and customs of the Army, to promote and safeguard the morale, the physical well-being, and the general welfare of the officers and enlisted persons under their command or charge.”<sup>9</sup> It is quite clear that the officer must be loyal and subordinate to the President and his civilian chain of command according to Title 10, support and defend the Constitution and the laws of his land, while safeguarding his branch of service, unit, and those that are in it.

Within this context, other directives have an impact on the ability of officers to differ with their civilian superiors. The aforementioned Article 88 makes this provision: “If not personally contemptuous, adverse criticism of one of the officials or legislatures named in the article in the course of a political discussion, even though emphatically expressed, may not be charged as a violation of the article.”<sup>10</sup> Title 10, Section 1034 prevents restrictions on members of the armed forces’ lawful communication with a Member of Congress. Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 1344.10 addresses the political activities of members of the armed forces. Among many limitations in this 15-page document is the prohibition of “Speak[ing] before a partisan political gathering, including any gathering that promotes a partisan political party, candidate, or cause” and “Participat[ing] in any radio, television, or other program or group discussion as an advocate for or against a partisan political party, candidate, or cause.” It does, however, allow a service-member to “Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper expressing the member’s personal views on public issues or political candidates.”<sup>11</sup> DoD Instruction (DODI) 1325.06, *Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces*, states that “A Service member’s right of expression should be preserved to the maximum extent possible in accordance with the constitutional and statutory provisions...and consistent with good order and discipline and the national security” but “No commander should be indifferent to conduct that, if allowed to proceed unchecked, would destroy the effectiveness of his or her unit.”<sup>12</sup>

DoD directive 5230.09 covers the clearance of both official and unofficial DoD information for public release. The directive includes such guidance as:

*“DoD personnel, while acting in a private capacity and not in connection with their official duties, have the right to prepare information for public release through non-DoD fora or media. This information must be reviewed for clearance if it meets [specified] criteria...Such activity must comply with ethical standards...and may not have an adverse effect on duty performance or the authorized functions of the DoD” and “To ensure a climate of academic freedom and to encourage intellectual expression, students and faculty members of an academy, college, university, or DoD school are not required to submit papers or materials...when they are not intended for release outside the academic institution. Information intended for public release or made available in libraries to which the public has access shall be submitted for review. Clearance shall be granted if classified information is not disclosed, DoD interests are not jeopardized, and the author accurately portrays official policy, even if the author takes issue with that policy.”<sup>13</sup>*

Army Regulation 360-1, *The Army Public Affairs Program*, seems to contradict this, stating: “Unofficial materials do not require clearance” and “Service school students, faculty, and staff and think tank-type organization members may publish articles without the standard review and clearance process.” It soon becomes more confusing, as “Authors may disagree with current national policies as long as the policy is correctly stated. However, should military forces become operationally engaged supporting that policy, the author may not publish or distribute the material.”<sup>14</sup> This could become problematic, considering if the nation is truly in an era of persistent conflict, all discussion of current operations could be prohibited, depending on one’s definition of “policy.” It gets worse, however, as the Army’s new Operations Security (OPSEC) regulations require an OPSEC review of *anything* being posted or published in a public forum.<sup>15</sup>

## CULTURE AND TRADITION

These directives don’t really help in defining the boundaries of political dissent. Instead, the services have defined it themselves, through the passing-down of culture and tradition. When General Bradley was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), he was asked if he would speak out to the American public if he felt a political decision was affecting what he felt was correct militarily. Bradley responded that he would not. When pressed, he stated he would speak to the “constituted authorities” but would stop there.<sup>16</sup> General Matthew Ridgeway, in his first meeting with the Army Staff, stated the three primary responsibilities of the professional officer:

*“First, to give his honest, fearless, objective professional military opinion of what he needs to do the job the Nation gives him. Second, if what he is given is less than the minimum he regards as essential, to give his superiors an honest, fearless, objective opinion of the consequences. Third, and finally, he has the duty whatever the final decision, to do the utmost with whatever is furnished.”<sup>17</sup>*

General Douglas MacArthur, in his farewell address to West Point Cadets in 1962, stated: “Let civilian voices argue the merits or demerits of our processes of government...These great national problems are not for your professional participation or military solution.”<sup>18</sup> General Harold K. Johnson stated that he and the other senior military leadership had all been brought up in the ethic that “you argue your case up to the point of decision. Having been given a decision, you carry it out with all the force that you can.”<sup>19</sup> Finally, *The Officer’s Guide*, an unofficial “owner’s manual” traditionally given to new Army Officers, has this to say:

*“The soldier must give professionally sound, accurate, fearless, objective information exactly as he sees it. Upon that solid foundation, when military capability is a consideration, the states-*

*man may then proceed within his own sphere of responsibility to formulate sound policy. Once national policy has been determined, the soldier must prepare to support it. Decision in the field of international relations is the responsibility of civilian leaders of our government. The military leader supports it with all his skill, and all his heart, never divulging that he has or has ever had doubts as to its wisdom.”<sup>20</sup>*

Later editions preface the above with “All officers of the armed forces...are bound by their oath to do the utmost to achieve the prompt and successful completion of the mission assigned...without regard to their personal views as to the correctness of the national policy of wisdom of the orders under which they act.”<sup>21</sup> The tradition of apolitical behavior passed down to the Army through the quotations above lead one to believe it is a black or white issue. The overtly political acts by those quoted suggest that it isn’t that simple.

The military’s civilian leadership hasn’t helped to clarify these boundaries either, but have instead sent a series of mixed messages, right up to the present day. President Truman’s Secretary of the Navy, Francis P. Matthews, insisted before a Congressional Committee that members of the military keep their criticisms to themselves.<sup>22</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara assured General Johnson that he could be completely candid with Congress, only to later attempt to influence and direct his testimony.<sup>23</sup> Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson asked General Ridgeway’s replacement, General Maxwell Taylor, pointed questions by about his ability to carry out orders from civilian leadership, even when he didn’t agree with them.<sup>24</sup> President Eisenhower, stated that Americans should “never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion,”<sup>25</sup> but felt that public dissent once policy had been decided was insubordination<sup>26</sup> and that as Commander-in-Chief he was entitled to his subordinates’ loyal support.<sup>27</sup>

President Kennedy insisted that the military, from the Joint Chiefs on down, factor political considerations into their recommendations and prepare to “take active roles in the policy making process.”<sup>28</sup> Uncleared remarks by two Army generals in the late seventies led Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Thomas Ross to say: “There are right and wrong lessons to be drawn...the right lesson is that military men should not speak out against established policy. The wrong lesson is that military men should refrain from speaking to the press.”<sup>29</sup> In remarks to the Command and General Staff College, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates encouraged the officers to

*“take on the mantle of fearless, thoughtful, but loyal dissent whenever the situation calls for it... I say this because in the positions you will soon assume, you are certain to face situations where you must stand alone in making a difficult, unpopular decision; when you must challenge the opinion of superiors or tell them that you can’t get the job done with the time and resources available; or when you will know that what superiors are telling the press or the Congress or the American people is inaccurate. There will be circumstances when speaking blunt truths could offend superiors and your peers as well.”<sup>30</sup>*

Guidance by the civilian leadership has been inconsistent, largely due to the personalities involved and the given political situation of the day.

## **HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF POLITICAL DISSENT**

Having somewhat defined the generally accepted line delineating the boundaries of political dissent, it is instructive to determine the historical perception of what was deemed permissible or necessary. In 1794, Brigadier General James Wilkinson openly challenged his superior Major General Anthony Wayne, going so far as to publicly criticize Wayne’s successful Fallen Timbers campaign and blame him for dissention in the officer corps.<sup>31</sup> In 1806, Aaron Burr and Wilkinson planned a private military expansion into Mexico and West Florida, in what became known as the Burr conspiracy. Wilkinson became pessimistic regarding the endeavor’s success, and betrayed Burr, hoping to look like the Nation’s savior. He even testified at Burr’s treason trial, managing to

keep his role in the conspiracy from coming to light.<sup>32</sup> In 1812, Brigadier General Wade Hampton challenged Secretary of War William Eustis to a duel (Eustis accepted, but the dispute was settled peacefully).<sup>33</sup> Considering the duel's possible outcome, this could certainly be construed as a shocking challenge to civilian control of the military.

The political implications of filling the vacancy of Commanding General of the Army led President John Quincy Adams to consider abolishing the position in 1828. He eventually chose Chief Engineer Colonel Alexander Macomb to fill the slot. Brigadier General Winfield Scott "refused to recognize the new Commanding General, demanded his arrest, and appealed to Congress."<sup>34</sup> General Scott (who eventually acquired the position he so coveted) accepted the 1852 Whig party nomination and ran for president while still in uniform.<sup>35</sup> This did not create any concern among the military or general population, as the practice of generals rising to high public office was nothing new. General George McClellan followed suit in 1864.

In 1916, then-Brigadier General John Pershing published a piece in the *New York Times Magazine* lamenting our nation's preparedness program, especially in light of the war raging in Europe.<sup>36</sup> This was just before President Woodrow Wilson campaigned for re-election under the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War." Later that year, as commander of the Punitive Expedition into Mexico, a frustrated Pershing's self-censorship reached its limits, and he unleashed the embedded reporters, saying "nothing, now, should be kept from the public."<sup>37</sup> Pershing's loyalty was subsequently questioned by President Wilson twice: first during the expedition and later when Pershing was considered to lead American forces in Europe during World War I.<sup>38</sup>

World War I hero Brigadier General Billy Mitchell's very public battle advocating airpower led to his 1925 court martial, ordered by President Coolidge himself.<sup>39</sup> Mitchell was convicted by a military panel that included none other than Major General Douglas MacArthur. The firing of General MacArthur by President Truman as Commander of UN Forces during the Korean War is a well-known case of an officer crossing the line of political dissent, evidenced by MacArthur's ultimatum to the Chinese and his correspondence to the opposition party criticizing the president's policies, some of which was read on the floor of the House of Representatives.<sup>40</sup>

Truman's successor had his issues with generals as well. General Ridgeway's battles with President Eisenhower from 1953 to 1955 over the Army's role in his New Look strategy are well documented. Ridgeway conducted his dissent on three fronts: direct opposition, through the media and civilian elites, and through the Army's doctrine.<sup>41</sup> General Harold K. Johnson and the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were not so public in their disagreements with President Lyndon Johnson's administration over the conduct of the Vietnam war—a shortfall General Johnson would later regret: "I made the typical mistake of believing I could do more for my country and the Army if I stayed in than if I got out. I am now going to my grave with that lapse in moral courage on my back."<sup>42</sup>

The modern era has had its dissenters as well. In 1990 CJCS General Colin Powell urged more time for sanctions against Saddam Hussein in the *New York Times*.<sup>43</sup> Later, General Powell published an essay in *Foreign Affairs* arguing against President-elect Bill Clinton's views of a more assertive U.S. policy of humanitarian intervention.<sup>44</sup> The President Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal of 1998 led many to openly question why the Commander in Chief wasn't held to the same standard as members of the military. This paradox was especially acute with the 1997 threatened court-martial of Air Force Lieutenant Kelly Flynn, the forced retirement of Major General John Longhouser, and the withdrawal from consideration for Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff by General Joseph Ralston for similar offenses.<sup>45</sup>

President Clinton's troubles with the military began with the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which has twice caused open dissent in the military, when it was first instituted in 1993 and now during debate regarding its repeal. The current friction has seen a division of opinion between the Service Chiefs and the CJCS Admiral Michael Mullen,<sup>46</sup> opinion pieces by currently serving generals,<sup>47</sup> and gay uniformed soldiers speaking out publicly. The most vocal of the latter category is Lieutenant Daniel Choi. Since acknowledging his homosexuality on MSNBC in March of 2010, Choi has been extremely public in his dissent, including handcuffing himself to the White House

fence and conducting a hunger-strike.<sup>48</sup>

The current wars have produced their share of political dissent as well. In 2006, First Lieutenant Ehren Watada refused to deploy to Iraq with his unit, claiming the war was illegal, and that President Bush had deceived the country.<sup>49</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Larry Larkin feared a different deceit, when in 2010 he refused to deploy to Afghanistan without proof, in the form of a birth-certificate, that President Obama met the citizenship qualifications for president outlined by the Constitution.<sup>50</sup> Also in 2010, General McChrystal was relieved from his Afghanistan command after disrespectful and insubordinate comments by the general and his staff appeared in a *Rolling Stone* article. While none of the comments were viewed as disagreement with the administration, McChrystal had already been accused of crossing the line when a leaked operational assessment and a London speech in late 2009 were both viewed as his attempts to influence the Obama administration's Afghan policy review.

## **RETIRED GENERALS HAVE THEIR SAY**

The behavior of retired generals with regard to political activity and dissent has undergone a transformation. The 24-hour news cycle has made retired military experts a hot commodity during the Gulf War, and the subsequent increase of channels and programming has only driven up the requirement. While initially limiting themselves to military topics, movement into the political realm has steadily increased, quite possibly beginning with retired admiral and former CJCS William Crowe's public support for candidate Clinton in 1992.<sup>51</sup> This appeared to open the floodgates to political endorsements, the most dramatic being the 2004 endorsement of President George Bush by recently retired commander of Central Command, General Tommy Franks.<sup>52</sup>

Retired generals have not limited themselves to political endorsements, however. In 2006, when operations in Iraq were not going well, several retired generals called for the resignation Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, in what has become known as the "Revolt of the Generals."<sup>53</sup> Similarly, retired generals have been outspoken recently about the Obama Administration's Afghanistan policy—specifically the July, 2011 timeline.<sup>54</sup> In 2008, a report suggested that retired generals appearing as military experts on news programs were spouting DoD-provided "talking points," and that some of these officers had ties to defense industries that stood to benefit financially from DoD policy decisions.<sup>55</sup> Retired General Barry McCaffrey, in his role as an Adjunct Professor at West Point, published an after-action report regarding a visit to Mexico in which he concluded: "Mexico is on the edge of the abyss – it could become a narco-state in the coming decade." This paper prompted the Mexican Foreign Minister to counter the assertion.<sup>56</sup>

Outspoken retired officers are certainly nothing new. General Ridgeway and his successor, General Maxwell Taylor, both continued their battles against the Eisenhower administrations policies in retirement. Taylor wrote *The Uncertain Trumpet*, and Ridgeway continued to speak out in various public forums.<sup>57</sup> The difference now is that the communications technologies of cable television, web sites, and blogs proliferate the opinions of today's officers. As their views are heard vastly more than those of officers still wearing the uniform, it is assumed by many that the retirees are speaking for the military. Interestingly, since retired officers have not resigned their commissions, they are technically still covered by the regulations cited above. In fact, Title 10 specifically mentions retired officers as being part of the Regular Army.<sup>58</sup> Even so, retired officers, except for the rarest of cases, have not been prosecuted under the UCMJ.<sup>59</sup>

## **AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

History shows political dissent in the military occurs on a relatively constant basis. Even so, many today feel that civil-military relations are in crisis. There is one school of thought that says the senior military leadership has been politicized to the extent that they are no longer able to "respectfully air judgments to civilian policy makers while on active duty."<sup>60</sup> The other side feels that civil-military relations have deteriorated to the point that military advice is being ignored by

civilians and that the military are on the verge of open revolt.<sup>61</sup> Certainly both cannot be true, and in fact they aren't. Friction has always been a part of civil-military relations, and always will be. What is more helpful is to analyze possible sources of the friction to get a better understanding of why it happens in the first place.

In his essay *The Proper Role of Professional Military Advice in Contemporary Uses of Force*, Martin Cook makes the following observation:

*"The lower one goes on the scale of contingencies in peace and humanitarian operations, the greater the complexity one can expect in the intermingling of political ends sought, concerns for domestic political support, issues of media coverage and public reaction to it (the so-called "CNN effect"), and the military means employed."*<sup>62</sup>

This concept is very important to the topic at hand, especially as the examples of dissention given above are analyzed. General Pershing's frustrations in 1916 occurred during an irregular war in which his actions were limited by political considerations. General Mitchell's anger was directed at the short-sightedness of a country (and military) at peace that had just fought "The War to End All Wars." General George Patton, a brilliant military commander, was relieved not for actions on the battlefield, but for politically-incorrect statements and actions during his tenure as military governor of Bavaria post-World War II.<sup>63</sup> General MacArthur was fired because of politically-charged statements and actions during a limited war with significant political considerations. General Ridgeway was battling against an administration's policy that would forever alter both the moral code and the mission of the military. General Johnson ran up against an administration determined to fight another limited war with politically motivated restrictions. General Powell openly resisted the military being saddled with overtly political humanitarian assistance missions.

Viewed in this light, one quickly notices absences of political dissent from strategic levels during World War I and World War II. There is good reason for this. "Only in large-scale warfare... are political leaders likely to give the military a large measure of autonomy in conducting military operations."<sup>64</sup> The last line of Pershing's order assigning him to command of the American forces in Europe during World War I reflected this: "And in general you are vested with all necessary authority to carry on the war vigorously in harmony with the spirit of these instructions and towards a victorious conclusion."<sup>65</sup> Because these two wars were large-scale, military battles virtually ensured that the civilians in charge would defer to the judgment of the military leaders while war was being waged. The quotations regarding providing military advice up to the moment of execution cited above were spoken by men who had grown up in a military that was allowed to do its duty in two awesome, terrible, and "just" wars—wars in which the entire Nation participated, both military and civilian. The fact that the quotations are from Ridgeway, MacArthur, and Johnson, all of whom acted either publicly or privately against their own advice, speaks volumes to the idea that the accepted boundaries for political dissent have not evolved with the changing operational environment.

## **GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES**

If the increased complexity of the operational environment is not reason enough to move the military-political boundary line, perhaps generational differences are. While there is still debate about whether there is an actual "generation gap," there is some consensus on the general characteristics and viewpoints of different generations outlined below. While our military is currently led by members of the Baby Boom generation, its field-grade officers and below are made up of Generations X and Y, and differences between the three are worth consideration.

Baby Boomers generally grew up in a nuclear family where dad worked and mom stayed home to raise the children. Boomers were doted on and told they would change the world, which they tried to accomplish by working relentlessly at the expense of everything else.<sup>66</sup> This is one of the reasons their children, Generation X, are known as latchkey children, born to dual-income

or divorced parents. Because of this Xers typically are independent and keep their options open. Many saw their parents laid off by companies after years of loyal service, making them distrustful and cynical. They remembered their workaholic parents and sought balance between work and family. Generation Y grew up in similar circumstances as the Xers, but different parenting styles made them open-minded, expressive, accepting, socially and environmentally conscious, and with higher moral standards.<sup>67</sup> They have been called the “most demanding generation in history,” and they very much want to feel like they add value to their organization—be it a classroom, club, or workplace.<sup>68</sup>

In turn, this organization has to demonstrate values and integrity in order to gain the loyalty of Generations X and Y, as both feel that loyalty is a “two-way street.”<sup>69</sup> Technology continues to make each successive generation more well-informed, so consequently they will know when a superior is misrepresenting the facts or lacking candor. The 24-hour news cycle and shows such as *The Daily Show* display endless political infighting, grandstanding and self-aggrandizement, which only serves to feed the cynicism and distrust of the younger generations.

Generations X and Y also differ from Boomers in how they operate in the workplace. Since the 1980s, early education has emphasized participation in the decision-making process.<sup>70</sup> As a result of this, Generation Ys want their ideas valued and respected—they want to make an immediate significant contribution.<sup>71</sup> In college, Xers were encouraged to think critically and challenge accepted answers.<sup>72</sup> They are also not overly-impressed with rank, and will not hesitate to ask piercing, pointed questions.<sup>73</sup>

This became obvious when what could be considered the first shot across the “generational gap” was fired by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling, when in 2007 he published “A Failure of Generalship” in the *Armed Forces Journal*. The paper was a scathing rebuke of the Army’s General Officer corps, in particular its lack of candor in its professional advice to civilian authorities leading up to and during the Iraq war. The paper set off a firestorm of debate and discussion, and resulted in at least one instance of a general addressing an assembly of Captains to rebut Yingling’s views.<sup>74</sup>

Yingling’s initial incursion violated cultural limitations on political dissent that were solidified and codified by the Silent Generation, characterized as a group that valued “hard work, conformity, dedication, sacrifice, and patience.”<sup>75</sup> These boundaries were subsequently reinforced by the loyalty and work-ethic of the Baby Boomers, and are now being severely tested by Generations X and Y. Dramatic changes in technology are giving their voices the means to reach the masses.

## TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

Electronic technologies such as email, blogs, and social network sites have dramatically altered how we communicate. Samuel Huntington stated that a nation’s military would reflect “the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant” within its parent society.<sup>76</sup> Generation X has rapidly assimilated these new technologies, and Generation Y hasn’t known adult life without them. The proliferation and perceived indispensability of these technologies necessitates addressing their impact on the limits of political dissent.

Email, the earliest of these advances, has become the standard form of communication in the military, supplanting even the telephone in most cases. It is also the primary means of communication between deployed militaries and their families, in the same way veterans of past wars wrote letters to their loved ones back home. The major difference is in the malleability of the content of an email: it can be forwarded in its entirety, cut and pasted into another email, or segmented and used in other forms of digital media (including blogs and social network sites). Once sent, the email’s author is at the mercy of the receiver(s), who may or may not be a member of the military and mindful of its codes, cultures, and regulations. Forwarded email can multiply exponentially (and rapidly), as every follow-on recipient can potentially send the message to two or more people. This danger has been around since the early days of email, evidenced by a message detailing the rescue of pilot Scott Grady six days after he was shot down over Bosnia in June of 1995. This email spread through the system like wildfire, prompting DoD to belatedly publish reminders regarding

the handling of sensitive information over computer networks.<sup>77</sup>

An email from a service member to his mother would be classified as “private communications.” It is unclear if the same could be said when a message in which he complains that the country has sent him to war with improper equipment gets forwarded by his well-meaning mother to his Congressmen or the press. In his private correspondence, General George McClellan wrote things like “The [President] is an idiot, the old General in his dotage—they cannot or will not see the true state of affairs” and “The [President] is nothing more than a well-meaning baboon.”<sup>78</sup> Ironically, McClellan was nearly undone by the original electronic mail system: the telegraph. Following the Gaines’s Mill defeat in June of 1862, he sent an angry wire to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. After describing the battle, McClellan added:

*“I have seen too many dead & wounded comrades to feel otherwise than that the [Government] has not sustained this Army. If you do not do so now the game is lost. If I save this Army now I tell you plainly that I owe no thanks to you or any other person in Washington—you have done your best to sacrifice this Army.”<sup>79</sup>*

This message made it through at least two telegraph operators before the Washington head of the War Department telegraph office received it and decided to cut out this portion of the message prior to giving it to Stanton.<sup>80</sup>

Clearly some spectacular forwarded messages could have been born at the keyboard of McClellan; fortunately for him it took more of an effort to send along a hand-written letter to another recipient. Written correspondence was (and usually still is) treated as meant for the recipient only, although many Civil War letters were printed in local newspapers.<sup>81</sup> Sending something via email carries with it a lowered expectation of privacy. This idea of privacy in the digital age is an important one, as perceptions of what defines privacy are changing rapidly. Younger generations who have grown up with this technology are used to greater levels of personal transparency.<sup>82</sup> They have replaced old forms of private personal or peer communication such as letters or diaries with far less private new ones: social network sites and blogs.<sup>83</sup> They do so with a belief that online conversations are more private than they actually are.<sup>84</sup>

Social network sites exist between an email’s tenuous grip on private correspondence and the public nature of a blog. Said one Army Officer and blogger: “My personal opinion is there isn’t that much difference between e-mail and social media. If I’m sending an e-mail back home to the family or posting something on Facebook that I allow my family to see, I don’t see much difference between the two.”<sup>85</sup> Sites like Facebook allows users to share personal information and pictures to those who have been accepted as “friends” by the account owner. Certain aspects of the account are available to anyone, depending on the user-defined settings. Information posted to Facebook is similar to a pre-forwarded email: everyone on your friend list gets to see and comment on it immediately. Much like an email, any recipient can copy posted information and use it as they please. The younger generations have embraced online social networks as an escape from environments that have become more constrained—such as life in the military.<sup>86</sup> Because they feel they still control the audience of their posts, there will be less self-policing with regards to content, and unfiltered emotions will be on display. Most users of social network sites treat the content like a casual conversation, as contrasted to the more “official-feeling” discussion of a blog.

The military has recently embraced blogs as a place for professionals to exchange ideas, with the Combined Arms Center (CAC) blog leading the way for the Army in June 2008. Blogs have allowed discussions that used to take place in offices and break areas expand to anyone who wants to join, unleashing formerly non-public dissenting opinions. These online discussions are encouraged:

*“The U.S. Army Combined Arms Center Blog Library is intended to inform and educate readers while providing a medium for intellectual discussion and debate about important issues involving the U.S. military in today’s environment. The blogs contained in this library are intended to elicit comment. Our blog rules provide a wide degree of freedom. They are intended to allow indi-*

*viduals to express opinion and ideas in the interest of intellectual discourse and increased mutual understanding. We strongly encourage intellectual comments and debate.”<sup>87</sup>*

*“[The DoD Blog] is intended to encourage familiarity with and discussion of Department of Defense content. We welcome productive participation from all visitors.”<sup>88</sup>*

Blogs have been and will continue to be the forum of choice for those wishing to present an opinion, “altering the tone of discourse between those who would lead and those who would follow.”<sup>89</sup> Additionally, the military’s acceptance of blogs as a forum for discussion will force the Army’s leadership to “dig deeper into issues, to think harder about them.”<sup>90</sup> This, of course, is a good thing, but it could cause some friction with members of a generation known for its loyalty and work ethic. The sheer number of blogs makes any kind of policing in line with the aforementioned OPSEC review problematic. The Army Live blog site alone has links to 22 other official Army blogs. A website set up by Army National Guardsman Jean-Paul Borda indexes military blogs from all over the world. The current total is 2,822 (with 1,994 in the United States), up from over 1,500 four years ago.<sup>91</sup> Clearly military blogging is a growth industry, and one that should be policed by enforceable standards, not “cover your back “ regulations that cannot possibly be executed as written.

## **THE REQUIREMENT FOR MILITARY PUBLIC DISSENT**

All of these changes in the complexity, political nature, demographics, and technology of the operational environment mandate the inclusion of public debate into the Professional Military Ethic—debate which might conflict with the policies of our civilian leadership. As far back as 1957, just after the aforementioned Ridgeway and Eisenhower battle, Law professor Detlev Vagts argued “In preventing unofficial opinions from competing in the military marketplace of ideas, we grant a dangerous monopoly to official dogma that may shelter a stagnation and inefficiency we can ill afford in these swift and perilous times.”<sup>92</sup> Fifty years later, our times seem more swift and perilous than ever, as Greg Foster wrote in 2004:

*“The age in which we live is distinctly post-modern in character. It is an age characterized by, among other things, the magnifying and multiple effects of the media, the compression of time and space, the growing interdependence of all things in all places, the convergence of the strategic and tactical, and heightened public demands on and expectations of government.”<sup>93</sup>*

Clearly such an environment requires engaged, critical-thinking, strategic-minded officers to lead our military and advise our civilian authorities. It is this type of officer that must take the lead “in modifying those aspects of culture that must change to meet the challenge of the twenty-first century.”<sup>94</sup> It requires cultivating this spirit in our junior officers so that they can develop into the strategic leaders of tomorrow.

In our current operations, we are asking our officers to be politicians without giving them a voice in the policies that sent them to war in the first place. This lack of a voice is exacerbated by the fact that we have an All-Volunteer Force. Because there is no draft, the current “long war” is being executed by about 1% of the population. Draft armies touched most corners of the Nation, so the sacrifice was felt and shared by many. Today you could live in the United States and be personally untouched by the war. There are no Vietnam-sized protests, no gasoline rationing, no war taxes. There are very few public voices assuming the role of dissenter for the military—and those few who do speak more from politics than policy.

One of those assuming this role, the retired officer, must be balanced by that of those currently serving. This is especially important given that the retired officers belong to the Silent and Boomer generations, and have had completely different experiences than those on active duty. Members of Generation Y have not only served in a completely different Army, they have a fundamental need to contribute, be heard, and receive feedback regarding the direction of their Army. If they don’t feel

their input is valued and respected, they will vote with their feet and depart the service.<sup>95</sup> Further, the Army's strategic leadership must ensure that the public understands that they alone provide the official Army view, and that the retired officers speak for no one but themselves.<sup>96</sup>

Those who are worried that public dissent by the military could damage the concept of civilian authority over the military, or worse, spawn some kind of an uprising, need only look at the numerous checks and balances that ensure decisive civilian control of the military. As stated earlier, authority is shared between the Executive and Congressional branches, with officers serving at the pleasure of the President, and Congress approving all officer promotions. Any and all funding, including operating budgets and pay, is controlled by Congress. Add to this the fact that even though military dissent has always been present, even at the highest levels as demonstrated above, civilian control has never been challenged, even when our country was a fledgling democracy.<sup>97</sup>

## DRAWING THE NEW LINE

Having determined the necessity of military public debate and dissent, the question becomes what, if any, boundaries would need to be placed on this new freedom. Clearly speech without any regulation could become highly disruptive or damaging, at least to the Army if not to the concept of civilian control itself. The previously cited DoDI 1325.06 provides nearly all the oversight needed for such an endeavor. This is because the DoD instruction enjoins the commander to properly balance a soldier's right to free speech with the continued effectiveness of the unit. The actual text says the speech must not "destroy" the effectiveness of the unit, providing ample room for dissenting speech.<sup>98</sup> In four simple sentences the instruction (along with applicable articles in the UCMJ) provides commanders at all levels everything they need to know to ensure the balance sought is achieved.

A commander can turn to history to find help in determining when dissent crosses the line. President Lincoln, during debate regarding the imprisonment of a protester during the Civil War, outlined three conditions he felt that, if met, justified the restriction of public speech: "1) the person intends to cause unlawful conduct, 2) the speech interferes with military activities, and 3) the speech does not discourage unlawful conduct."<sup>99</sup> Similarly, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes outlined a "clear and present danger" test in 1919: "The question in every case is whether the words are used in such circumstances and are of such nature as to cause a clear and present danger... When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight."<sup>100</sup> Weighed against these tests and the UCMJ, commanders should be able to determine what constitutes speech that destroys unit effectiveness.

While the policing of this dissent falls to the commander, he would not be permitted to share in the public debate and dissent, nor would any other green-tab leader at any level. This is part of the "weight of command," as leaders at all levels must take ownership of their orders. Any inkling that a leader does not fully support an order he is giving results in a lack of enthusiasm or efficiency during execution at best, or a downright refusal to obey at its worse. This would clearly destroy the effectiveness of the unit, and thus be in violation of DoDI 1325.06 as stated above. Leaders at all levels must use their professional expertise and experience to ensure their chain of command has all the necessary information to properly execute the mission. They must, as General Johnson said, argue their case up to the point of decision, and then execute their orders to the best of their ability.

There are options available to leaders at all levels when their level of disagreement cannot be morally overcome. They can seek an audience with the next level in the chain of command, they can request removal from their current assignment, or in extreme cases, they can resign in protest. Much has been written regarding the latter option. One school of thought maintains that leaders must be prepared to "resign in protest over matters of fundamental principle, rather than hiding behind the cowardly careerist plaint that they can do more good by remaining silent and working from within the system."<sup>101</sup> Those taking the opposite view think resignation is an overtly political act, maintaining that:

*“if servicemen and servicewomen at any level of the military begin to condition their continued service on personal moral standards or whether they agree with their civilian superiors, the U.S. military would become thoroughly politicized from the inside, and might come apart in wartime.”*<sup>102</sup>

Most of the debate centers on the dilemma of General Johnson during the Vietnam War, and whether or not he should have resigned. It is interesting to note that Johnson himself received counsel from General Omar Bradley, who encouraged him not to resign, but continue to fight his battle on the inside to the best of his ability.<sup>103</sup> Bradley was nearly 20 years older than Johnson—a generation apart, as it were. The resignation of such a senior officer could definitely have an impact on the effectiveness of the organization, again violating the DoD Instruction, so any such decision is not to be taken lightly.

These two sets of rules may appear unfair to some, but restricting the public dissent of those in leadership positions will not be as stifling as it appears. When officers and noncommissioned officers are leading, their focus and energies are rightfully consumed in the training, equipping, and welfare of their organization, and the study of the application of their craft. Their public discussions should revolve around the doctrine and tactics of their particular unit. When these individuals are no longer in leadership positions, they are afforded the time and opportunity to look at the bigger picture, and should be encouraged to apply their knowledge and experiences to a healthy debate on any topic that impacts the military, directly or indirectly. Once the restriction on them is lifted, one would imagine these former leaders would be eager to share their views.

Of course, in all public discourse, whether in print media such as military publications and newspapers or in electronic forms such as blogs, members of the military need to keep a few things in mind. First, the military is a profession, and any and all discussions should reflect that. Second, they are subject to all the articles of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice, and all the laws of the land, particularly those of Title 10. Finally, in accordance with AR 360-1, they must remember to inform others that “The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.”<sup>104</sup>

When a senior noncommissioned officer remarked to General Johnson that the trainees “did an awful lot of griping,” Johnson replied: “Well, Sergeant Major, they’re infantry privates, and that’s one of the few privileges they have.”<sup>105</sup> Our soldiers and officers are not allowed to publicly debate tactics and ongoing operations because of operational security reasons. Leadership issues are discussed within units or through the chain of command. Members of the military must be able to thoughtfully discuss the plans and policies that shape the future of their Army and how, when, and where it might be used. This intelligent, public, debate—even if dissenting—will improve the quality of our Army, its leaders, and the decisions made by its civilian authorities. While this dissent is not necessarily in line with the understood military Professional Military Ethic, it is clear that the apolitical military culture has not kept up with changes in retired officer behavior, operational environment complexity, generational characteristics, or communications technology.

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## **Part 5: International PME Considerations**



# Summary of the U.S. Military and Genocide / Mass Atrocities Breakout Session

by Chaplain (Maj.) Brad Lewis

“Incidents of genocide and mass atrocities have always occurred and will continue to occur for the foreseeable future.” So began the hour long breakout with Dr. Charles Heller. As the hour progressed Dr. Heller cited Samuel Huntington as queried whether the ethic defined by Huntington in his classic work *The Soldier and The State* was adequate to meet the challenges of a professional military in the 21st century or do we have a need to relook how we as military professionals conduct ourselves?

Samantha Horn highlighted several instances of genocide and mass atrocities from the last century. One of the most notorious occurrences was the holocaust in Nazi Germany. The mentality in the early days of the holocaust among European Jews was that they would survive this attempt to destroy them, just as they had so many others throughout their history. Auschwitz, Birkenau, and other Nazi death camps would do their best to ensure that survival didn't happen by taking the lives of 6 million Jews and at least 5 million other “undesireables”. Dr. Heller then pointed out that The U.S. Government was aware of the killing but did nothing. It even went so far as to deliberately mislead the War Refugee Board we approached by that body for its lack of responsiveness.

The reign of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia was, “a systematic terror unparalleled since Nazi regime”. But again, the U.S. Gov't did nothing despite its knowledge of the “Killing Fields”. This theme, that genocide has and continues to occur while those with the ability to stop it do nothing because of the political ramifications of action, ran throughout Dr. Heller's presentation. The suffering of the Kurds under Saddam Hussein, the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, the killing of 800,000 people in 100 days in Rwanda all serve as examples not only of man's inhumanity toward man but of what happens when good people do nothing. Hopefully, that trend will change as the professional military in the 21st century seeks to redefine its ethic.

In the last 10 minutes of the breakout we heard from Mr. Tibby Galis and Mr. Fred Schwarts of the Auschwitz Institute. Genocide, they said, is like an earthquake...unpredictable, unavoidable, and violent. The goal, then, is to deter, prevent, or limit incidents of genocide to the greatest extent possible. Like the earthquake, it is something we react to, with the goal of reducing it to an acceptable level.



# **The U.S. Military and Genocide/Mass Atrocities: National Security Decision-Making to Intervene**

**by Ms. Samantha Horn and Dr. Charles E. Heller**

The professional officer's ethic, explains Samuel Huntington in his classic work *The Soldier and the State: the Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, "consists of the values, attitudes, and perspectives which inhere in the performance of the professional military function...if it is implied by or derived from the peculiar expertise, responsibility, and organization of the military profession." As the United States military profession enters the twenty-first century's post-modern world this definition requires reexamination. Stateless terrorism, rogue nations, continual need for peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance for natural and manmade disasters have shown that the military ethic requires a broadening of its meaning to include a knowledge and expertise in other areas.<sup>1</sup>

One such focus area is that of the need to be intellectually prepared to respond to the continual reoccurrences of Genocide and mass atrocities that have increased since the end of the Cold War. Specifically there exists a need for United States military professionals to have the intellectual awareness, knowledge and skills to be able to advise civilian authorities in the identification, prevention and when and how to intervene in cases of Genocide and mass atrocities. No longer can the United States military profession as in the past ignore or back away from the humanitarian obligation to be involved in decision making and planning and execution of intervention in the face of genocidal acts and mass atrocities.

This requirement is made apparent in President Barak Obama's National Security Strategy of May 2010. For the first time a United States Administration has included the issues of genocide and mass atrocities in its National Security Strategy. The document, in part, declares:

*The United States... endorsed the concept of the "Responsibility To Protect" .... this responsibility for preventing genocide passes to the broader international community when sovereign governments commit genocide or mass atrocities or when they prove unable or unwilling to take necessary action to prevent or respond to such crimes inside their borders. The United States is committed to working with our allies, and to strengthening our own internal capabilities, in order to ensure that the United States and the international community are proactively engaged in a strategic effort to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. In the event that prevention fails, the United States will work both multilaterally and bilaterally to mobilize diplomatic, humanitarian, financial, and – in certain instances- military means to prevent and respond to genocide and mass atrocities.*<sup>2</sup>

This essay will discuss the U.S. Armed Forces officer's military ethic and how it requires adjustment to meet the United States National Security objective in the twenty-first century. The question posed is should Armed Forces officers go beyond the traditional military ethic of offering advice and recommendations to the National Security Council, the U.S. Congress and President of the United States on purely military matters. Should the military be prepared to offer guidance and recommendations for preventing, identifying and intervening in cases of genocide and mass atrocities? Is it part of the military ethic to include the possibility of military intervention or the threat of intervention? To fully understand this addition to the current military ethic requires an historical overview. This review of past experience will include an examination of the U.S. military professional's responses to: the Jewish Holocaust in Europe; the murder of the opposition, elites and the educated population in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge; the mass murder of the Iraqi Kurdish population by Saddam Hussein; the Rwanda Hutu attacks on the Tutsi; Serbian ethnic cleansing of Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo. Military advice in each incident has usually concluded that: crimes being committed do not impact upon United States National Security, the cost of committing troops or aerial bombardment would be prohibitive, large numbers of troops would

be prohibitive, or doubts that U.S. involvement would not be sufficient stop the killing.

## JEWISH HOLOCAUST

Prior to the outbreak of war with Germany the world was well aware of Nazi Germany's systematic isolation and increasing violence towards its Jewish population culminating in "Kristalnacht" (night of broken glass) in November 1936. There was an international outcry, but nothing was or could be done as German moved closer to war and the extermination of European Jewry. No one, not even the victims, were willing to believe that such a possibility existed.

In 1939, prior to the Germany invasion of Poland the German leader Adolf Hitler stated, "... if Jewry should plot another world war in order to exterminate the Aryan peoples of Europe, it would not be the Aryan peoples which would be exterminated, but Jewry." On November 23rd and 24th, 1942 the Jewish Press in Palestine reported what had commenced in June of that year, the deportation of Jews, men, women and children to an area with buildings housing concrete gas chambers with "great crematoriums at Oswiecim, near Cracow" (Auschwitz is the German name for Oswiecim). In the United States, that same day, Secretary of State Sumner Welles met with Rabbi Stephen Wise to confirm the reports of extermination showing him documents from the U.S. legation in Switzerland. The Secretary said "...these confirm and justify your deepest fears." Welles explained he could not release the information, but Wise was free to do so. Wise held a press conference and released the information that two million Jews had been murdered "in an extermination campaign."<sup>3</sup>

Further reports streamed out of Eastern Europe. The London based Polish Government in exile issued a statement that Heinrich Himmler, SS chief had given order to exterminate three million Jews in 1942 and listed death camps for Jewish "resettlement at Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor." Other accounts followed including those from the Polish Minister of Finance in New York and a Catholic underground group operating in Poland. Still it was a lot of information, but lacking details. In fact it was not until 1944 that there was enough conclusive information regarding the importance of Auschwitz in the extermination machine network. None the less, the U.S. government and its military were well aware of the fate of European Jewry.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the constant flow of information and entreaties by Jewish individuals and organizations to bomb rail lines and death camps the military officers in the War Department refused to act. In January 1944 the War Department responding to repeated requests by the U.S. War Refugee Board issued internally, a confidential policy statement:

*It is not contemplated that units of the armed forces will be employed for the purpose of rescuing victims of enemy oppression unless such rescues are the direct result of military operations conducted with the objective of defeating the armed forces of the enemy.*<sup>5</sup>

When it came time to respond to requests from the United States War Refugee Board to bomb the gas chambers and crematorium U.S. Army Air Force Operational Plans Division (OPD) told the Board that bombing should not be reallocated from important "industrial target systems" when the Auschwitz Industrial Complex was already identified as one of the those "systems." Interestingly enough OPD explained that there were a number of aircraft options that could accomplish the mission: heavy or medium bombers and dive bombers or fighters with bomb loads. But it apparently mislead the WRB by stating "The target [Auschwitz] is beyond the maximum range of medium bombardment, dive bombers and fighter bombers located in *United Kingdom, France or Italy* [italics are authors]." OPD in its response explained that the "Use of *heavy bombardment* from *United Kingdom* bases would necessitate a round trip of flight unescorted of approximately 2000 miles over enemy territory." However, after the response, U.S. heavy bombers came closer and closer to Auschwitz until on August 20, 1944 127 B-17 Flying Fortresses accompanied by 100 P-51 Mustangs bombed within five miles of the death camp. A raid the following month dropped bombs on the industrial area adjacent to Birkenau (Auschwitz II). On this raid one stray bomb hit a

rail siding leading to the gas chambers.<sup>6</sup>

Thus it appears that the U.S. military was unwilling to launch humanitarian air raids to halt the killing by destroying the gas chambers and crematorium at the German's major killing factory at Auschwitz. It took the advancing Russian Army to stop the genocide.

## **CAMBODIA**

On April 17, 1975, the Khmer Rouge (KR) entered the capital city of Phnom Penh, Cambodia after a brutal and bloody five-year civil war. The KR defeated the U.S. backed Lon Nol government and were welcomed into the city. The population greeted the victors anticipating a peaceful transition and a return of normalcy. Instead they were faced with a compulsory mass exodus from the capital. Over two million Cambodians were forced from their homes and out of the city by foot. By early May all of Cambodia's major towns were evacuated, rice paddies emptied and the few foreign observers left in the country indicated to outsiders that it was as if that the Cambodian city dwellers people had just disappeared. Pol Pot, the KR leader, set out to engage in ethnic cleansing of Cambodia's ethnic Vietnamese, Chinese, Muslim Chams, and Buddhist monks, grouping them all as traitors to the KR regime. There was also an eradication of "class enemies," which included "intellectuals," or those who had completed the seventh grade. The KR did not hesitate for a moment killing even their own supporters and murdering anyone suspected of disloyalty. Given the inconceivable horrible conditions Cambodians were living under during this time, almost everyone fell into this group. As Samantha Power writes, "Khmer Rouge revolutionary society was predicated on the irrelevance of the individual." From 1975 to 1978 an estimated two million Cambodians were killed under the Khmer Rouge regime while it hid behind a veil of silence, secrecy and propaganda.<sup>7</sup>

Early warnings that a bloodbath would follow a KR triumph were available to U.S. policy-makers in President Gerald Ford's administration, but few trusted the information. This probably resulted from the speculative nature of the reports due to the KR's secrecy. Also the Americans public and media following Watergate and Vietnam were skeptical of their own government's statements. As a consequence the U. S. barely condemned the massacres in Cambodia. Aside from casual appeals by the State Department for "further inquiry," the U.S. did not launch its own inquiry or act upon the facts already known, effectively engaging in a policy of non-engagement. When a new administration came to power, President Jimmy Carter made the first public denunciation of the genocide. This was April 1978, three years after the fall of Phnom Pehn. The State Department issued a declaration that it was following the situation in Cambodia and stated the Administration had had no intention of seeking military intervention. One lone voice in the Senate called for intervention. Senator George McGovern, known for his fierce opposition to the Vietnam War, believed the U.S. should respond politically and militarily. With the shadow of Vietnam clouding the scene the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) advised against military action and, the Carter Administration would not act without their support.<sup>8</sup>

## **IRAQ**

Nearly a decade after the massacres in Cambodia, and just one year after the U.S. Senate ratified the UN genocide convention, Iraqi president Saddam Hussein set out to eradicate his Kurdish population. In 1980, during the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein expressed concerns about his "Kurdish problem" sounding much like Hitler's "Germany's Problem." From 1987-1988 forces under Hussein destroyed many Kurdish towns and villages, killing an estimated 100,000 Kurds through the military action, brutal concentration camps, firing squads and chemical weapons. This was a long-standing campaign that destroyed a centuries-old way of life and displaced at least one million of Iraq's estimated 3.5 million Kurdish population. It is known as the al-Anfal Campaign, meaning "the spoils." Many victims were women and children. Reports renewed violence surfaced almost immediately. At the time there was little protest from the U.S. government, who was

backing Iraq during its war with Iran. It was not until September 1988 when tens of thousands of Kurds fled from Iraqi chemical attacks to Turkey, that the U.S. denounced the regime for using a weapon of mass destruction against its own people.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout the Iran-Iraq war, America's first priority was to make certain Iran did not triumph over Iraqi forces and thus keep oil flowing to the U.S from Iraq. However, officials at the State Department were monitoring Saddam Hussein's campaign against the Kurds. Unfortunately, for the Kurds, the U.S. wanted to maintain a good relationship Iraq, and had no intention of pressuring Saddam Hussein to refrain from genocidal acts against his own people. President Ronald Reagan's Administration continued to insist that it could not be certain that Iraqi troops were responsible for the chemical attacks. Members of the Reagan administration made it clear that the fate of the Kurds was simply not their concern. In his opinion, supported by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), it was not in the Nation Security interest and it was best to ignore issue and not involve the military. Finally, in 1991, with the Gulf War concluded the Kurds staged a revolt which was brutally repressed by Iraqi forces. Finally, after much foot-dragging the U.S., in April 1991, joined with the United Kingdom and France launched Operation Provide Comfort establishing a security zone for the Kurds in northern Iraq. Under Lieutenant-General General John Shalikashvili, with a force of 12,000 U.S. troops along with 9,000 allies forces set up Refugee camps. U.S., British and French aircraft protected the zone.<sup>10</sup>

## **BOSNIA-HERZGOVINA**

Only a few years after Hussein's campaign against the Kurds, the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina sought independence from Yugoslavia. Within days of its secession, the Serb-dominated Yugoslav National Army joined forces with local Bosnian Serb militia and, under the direct authority of Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic; they began targeting non-Serbs for beatings and execution. In the opinion Professor Vamik Volkan, the founder of the Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction at University of Virginia, a Serbian nationalist mentality found its roots in the trauma of their defeat at Battle of Kosovo in 1389. The 600-year old memory of humiliation and the end of a glorious period of Serbian history was resurrected by Milosevic through sophisticated and overwhelming propaganda to emotionally prepare the Serbian people for the atrocities they were to commit against Muslims and other non-Serbs. As Serbs sought to "re-create" their own identity, mass killings and displacement of Muslims and Croats began to take place in Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>11</sup>

The Serbian practice of targeting civilians and ridding their territory of Muslims and Croats was termed "ethnic cleansing," a phrase having its roots in the Nazi practice of "cleansing" Europe of Jews. Serb aggression turned into a brutal killing campaign taking place not only in concentration camps throughout Serb dominated territory, but also in the villages and homes of those targeted. Gunman would storm into Muslin areas, remove families from their home and land and during the process often raped women and forced fathers to molest their daughters. Under Yugoslav leader Marshal Tito's forty-five year rule, the religious and ethnic groups lived in harmony and the varying communities lived intermingled. Because of this mentality, most found it extremely difficult to heed the warnings of their neighbors. Consequently, even after two years into the war when more than 100,000 of their fellow citizens had been killed and thousands more brutally displaced, thousands of Croats and Muslims refused to leave Serb-held territory.<sup>12</sup>

Senior officials in the George H.W. Bush administration were staunchly opposed to military intervention. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and the Chairman of the JCS General Colin Powell all opposed intervention. When the Administration debated the request for humanitarian aid via an airlift to Sarajevo the JCS estimated the need for 50,000 troops to secure the airfield's thirty mile perimeter. The number of troops required surprised civilians in the Administration. As a consequence fearful of a major deployment it was thought best not to intervene. Eventually United Nations (UN) forces, British and Canadians, assumed the mission and were able to secure the airfield with only 1,000 soldiers. The Senate appropriated

funds for relief work only to be told in hearings by Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey, Assistant to JCS Chairman, that “400,000 troops would be needed to enforce a ceasefire.” Lord David Owen estimated 50,000 and British officials echoed the same number. Brent Scowcroft suggested the figure was inflated, but thought that civilians would be accused of meddling in military affairs and scorned as “arm chair strategists” if they challenged the military experts. Ambassador Warren Zimmerman complained that large estimates of troops and possible significant casualties were “a military trump card that the Joint Chiefs played time and time again. ... They never said, ‘No we won’t or we can’t,’” he explained. “They just tossed around figure on what it would take that were both unacceptable and because of who was supplying then uncontestable.” This internal strife was a civil war and to intervene was not in the interest of United States national security. The Defense establishment developed its own criteria for the use of military force. Powell resurrected Defense Secretary, Caspar Weinberger’s cautious doctrine, which stated that armed intervention should proceed only if used only to protect the vital interests of the United States or its allies; carried out vigorously with a clear intention of winning; have clearly defined political and military objectives; have widespread public and congressional support; and be used only as a last resort. Powell added to his former superior’s Doctrine the requirement of using “decisive” force and a having a clear “exit strategy.” After Vietnam, the American military leadership was opposed to military intervention and especially involvement on purely humanitarian grounds. Deterrents included the projected steep cost of intervening, both in lives and financing and the memory of Vietnam.<sup>13</sup>

Colin Powell’s opposition was instrumental in the Bush administration’s decision not to intervene. After his stunning victory in the Gulf War, his dominance over military affairs was uncontested, and those who argued for intervention could not overcome the chairman’s recommendations for non-involvement. President Bush was easily persuaded and was unwilling to deploy military forces in any capacity. The war dragged on through the end of Bush’s term and continued into President Bill Clinton’s Administration. During this time period many prominent Americans and members of Congress became distressed by President Clinton’s passivity. Although the Clinton administration deplored the pain and suffering of Bosnians far more than the Bush White House, Clinton still backed off from the use of force due to the military’s continued advice against intervention. Clinton, because of his uneasy relationship with the military, was willing to defer to his military advisors, recommendations rather than accept the advisement of his Secretary of State and other officials who urged him to intervene.<sup>14</sup>

## RWANDA

On the evening of April 6, 1994, exactly two years after the Bosnian crisis, Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana’s private plane was shot down with Habyarimana and the Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira aboard. Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, the army staff director and a Hutu, announced that the death of the President. He indicated the government had collapsed and the army needed to take control. The President’s death was being used by hard-line Hutu leaders a pretext to begin mass killing in revenge for past Tutsi mass atrocities. Lists of Tutsi and moderate Hutu were prepared ahead of time and read over the radio. From April 7 onward, the Hutu-controlled military systematically purged Rwanda of its Tutsi. Tens of thousands fled their homes only to be slaughtered at checkpoints and bodies littered the ground. Over the course of 100 days, an estimated 800,000 Tutsi and politically moderate Hutu were murdered.<sup>15</sup>

After Rwanda gained independence from Belgium in 1962, three decades of Hutu rule were ushered in, and the Tutsi were systematically discriminated against, as well as subjected to killing waves and periodic cleansing. In 1990 a group of armed Tutsi exiles on the Ugandan border, known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RFP), began to gain ground against Hutu forces. In 1993, Tanzania facilitated peace talks between the two groups, which resulted in a power-sharing agreement known as the Arusha accords. UN peacekeeping troops were then deployed to maintain a cease-fire and ensure a stable and safe environment for exiled Tutsi to return. Unfortunately, hard-line Hutu saw themselves as extremely vulnerable and with nothing to gain from the terms of the

peace agreement. Memories of the Tutsi's privileged status under Belgian control lingered in the hearts and minds of the Hutu, and many a Hutu child could recite the sins Tutsi committed against their ancestors. Thus, Hutu extremists began to acquire and distribute munitions and machetes to begin the killing campaign.<sup>16</sup>

There were no plans to send U.S. troops to restore order in Rwanda, even though Marines had been dispatched to Burundi. They were deployed to the region in case the American evacuation from Rwanda did not go smoothly. This criteria was true for European troops as well. During the three days in which some 4,000 foreigners were evacuated, an estimated 20,000 Rwandans were killed.<sup>17</sup>

As a result of U.S. ratification of the genocide convention, the Clinton Administration opposed referencing the term genocide out of fear that it would then have an obligation for intervention. Regardless of the U.S. government's opposition, the State Department's Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, Toby Gati, concluded that this was in fact genocide as defined under international law. This did not, however, usher in any response from the White House. Rwanda never warranted top-level analysis, and once Americans were evacuated, the subject could be avoided safely at no political cost. The Administration did not actively consider the use of military intervention to stop the killings; it blocked the deployment of UN peacekeepers, and even refrained from undertaking soft forms of intervention. Lieutenant General Wesley Clark noted that "The Pentagon is always going to be the last to want to intervene... It is up to the civilians to tell us they want to do something and we'll figure out how to do it." It was not until late July of 1994 when U.S. troops were sent into Rwanda strictly for humanitarian relief that there was any U.S. military involvement. General John M. Shalikashvili, JCS Chairman noted in the midst of the killing that,

*We have the capacity like almost no one else to help with tragedies of the magnitude we're witnessing in Rwanda, but we also at the same time need to strengthen the United Nations so they can do more on their own without always having to call upon us, or that we don't have to play as large a part.*

In Rwanda the U.S. did neither. In fact, the U.S. actually prevented the UN to downsize its own plans and put off sending 5,500 African troops to Rwanda. Lastly, the Clinton administration instructed government officials including the military avoid the use of the word genocide when discussing the killings in Rwanda. It did so when the UN's Secretary-General and other prominent officials indicated they were certain the violence there was to exterminate an entire ethnic group.<sup>18</sup>

## **BOSNIA—AGAIN**

In April of 1993, the U.N. Security Council adopted resolution 819. This act declared Srebrenica and five other enclaves' safe areas and that a general cease-fire must be agreed upon by the warring factions. On July 11, 1995, three years into the Bosnian crisis and one year after the Rwandan genocide ended, Bosnian Serb forces were ordered commit genocide. They invaded the Srebrenica UN safe area, disarmed a small contingent of Dutch peacekeepers and took control of the over 40,000 Muslim men, women and children. Dutch Peacekeepers, few in numbers and command by a weak commander did nothing to resist the Serbs. Leading up to the July attack, Serb forces increasingly blocked UN convoys from delivering aid to the civilians within the enclave. The Dutch peacekeepers needed the interdiction of NATO aircraft. However, their repeated requests were denied until it was too late. No one was going to stop a Serbian occupation. The Serbs realized, to their amazement, realized Western powers were not resisting their encroachment into the safe area.<sup>19</sup>

In the early morning hours, Serbian forces began to bombard civilians inside Srebrenica, invoking panic and chaos. The Muslims were unarmed and at the mercy of Serb forces prepared to wipe out the population. Serb forces took the entire area. More than fifty-five Dutch U.N. troops were taken hostage when the use of air strikes by NATO began. However, it was too little too late.

The Serbian military threatened to kill the hostages and fire on the civilian population if the air strikes were not called off. The strikes halted and the UN effort switched to “damage control.”<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile, more than 15,000 Muslims took to the hills in anticipation of the Serb’s arrival. With little chance of surviving the trek through minefields and dense forest, they preferred this path to their fate in the enclave; 25,000 Muslims remained. On July 12 Gen. Ratko Mladic, commander of the Bosnian Serb army began to carry out the deportation of civilians. UN soldiers looked on while men were separated from women and children and executed a short while later. NATO allies, especially the British were upset at the U.S. advocating tougher measures against the Serbs while their ground forces were not involved. President Clinton remained committed to a “lift and strike” option that is airlifting arms to the Muslims and launching air strikes. While this policy was discarded the U.S. would not military intervene on the ground in the Balkans.<sup>21</sup>

## **KOSOVO**

In 1995 the Dayton peace agreement ended the Bosnian conflict and 60,000 NATO peacekeepers were deployed to enforce the accord and create a peaceful environment. During the settlement process, Kosovo’s Albanians hoped the U.S. and other Western powers would pressure Serbia to restore the province’s autonomy. The subject, however, was not placed on the negotiation table. As a consequence the Albanians formed the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which pledged to achieve independence and protect their fellow citizens. Unfortunately, every KLA attack was followed by Serbian retaliation on the civilian population. In 1999 more than 3,000 Albanians were killed by Serb military and paramilitary forces and over 300,000 of them displaced, their property confiscated or destroyed.

The killings were well documented and televised and the West could not ignore the mass atrocities. U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, a staunch supporter of intervention, expressed concern that the situation could grow worse. In February 1999 the major Western powers gathered in France to discuss military intervention. The decision made was to respond if Serb forces refused to cooperate, NATO would launch air strikes. The Serbs after becoming accustomed to empty threats refused to stop the reign of terror. On March 24, 1999, air elements were ordered by General Wesley Clark, NATO Supreme Allied Commander, to strike targets in Serbia. Ultimately, military action halted Serb atrocities and Kosovo became an independent entity.<sup>22</sup>

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The twenty-first century world continues to evolve and change. Rapid globalization and mass communication have brought open markets, economic growth, social progress, and democracy. However, new threats have emerged as with the rise of international terrorism, rogue nations, nuclear weapons proliferation, failed states, economic dislocation, and changing world climate presenting greater possibilities for ethnic, racial and religious strife. Human Rights organizations, such as Genocide Watch, indicate there are eighty nations across the globe that could, potentially, commit internally genocide or mass atrocities.

Until the May 2010 United States National Security Strategy was published the U.S. military push back for intervention in cases of genocide and mass atrocities was accepted. Times have changed and today ethnic, tribal, religious and political strife destabilizes not only neighbors and the surrounding geographic region, but also the global community of nations. This nation and, by extension, its military has established itself as a protector of human rights and democratic ideals. While National Security starts at home with a strong economy, a well educated population, powerful military, and energy independence. However, with Globalization comes the need to examine what other elements are required to strengthen National Security. The cornerstone elements are the values we hold as a nation. President Barak Obama declared in the May 2010 National Security that “our strategy starts by recognizing that our strength and influence abroad begins with the steps we take at home....The international order we seek is one that can resolve the challenges of our times....”<sup>23</sup>

The challenge this paper addresses is the potential for genocide or mass atrocities in eighty countries across the globe. In the twenty-first century National Security requires a broader definition to include saving lives of population of a nation anywhere in the world targeted for genocide or mass atrocities. The United States is now committed to ensuring that it takes a leading role in preventing the slaughter of innocent civilians. It will do so as part of a coalition or unilaterally. The Armed Forces will, when diplomacy fails, take a leading role in intervention along with the interagency members.

Thus Huntington's definition of the military ethic is being challenged in the post-Cold War world and a new definition appears necessary. Professional military officers now require the knowledge to identify, prevent and intervene in genocide and mass atrocities. U.S. military involvement at all stages of an event is necessary and vital to U.S. National Security. The rationale includes humanitarian assistance to save people's lives, and also the image projected by the United State in becoming involved as a shining beacon of liberty and liberal democratic ideals will be recognized by the global community. It is for the U.S. to back its National Security Strategy up with actions and support the UN Genocide Convention goals.

Steps are already being taken by the U.S. Army to educate officers who might be in positions to identify, prevent and intervene in situations of the threat of genocide and mass atrocities. A Congressional earmark in the 2010 Defense Appropriations provided the funding of two seminars presented by the Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Both were held at the Nazi Death Camp at Auschwitz, Poland. The first seminar was for faculty and the second for Academic Year 2010-2 students. This initial offering will be expanded to a Genocide and Mass Atrocities Program within the College's Department of Command and Leadership. Also U.S. Military Academy at West Point recently established a Genocide Studies Department. Lastly, the U.S. Army War College, in conjunction with the Harvard Kennedy School, wrote and published a guide for *Mass Atrocity Response Operations (MARO): A Military Planning Handbook*. These actions appear to indicate the Army's Professional Military Ethic will involve more than advising and planning for war. This beginning has the potential to build a cadre within the U.S. Armed Forces, located in 560 installations across the world, with the knowledge and expertise to be able to advise the nation's leaders at each step in the process of prevention, identification and intervention should genocide or mass atrocities appear possible or occur.

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## **Part 6: Forming and Norming the PME**



# Summary of the “Forming and Norming the PME” Breakout Session

by Chaplain (Maj.) Andrew Lawrence

The “Forming and Norming the Professional Military Ethic (PME)” break out was presented by Capt. Walter J. Sowden and Dr. Peter Lee. Capt. Sowden is working toward a Ph.D. in Psychology. He has conducted research for both Center for the Army Professional Ethic (CAPE) and the Virtual Enhanced Immersive Learning System (VEILS) project. Dr. Peter Lee presently teaches at the Air Force College in the United Kingdom. Previously he was a Chaplain in the Royal Air Force. He is an ordained Methodist minister and earned his doctorate with a study that looked at the Just War tradition from 1500 to present.

Capt. Sowden presented his paper focusing particularly on the cultural dimension of the PME. He uses as his starting point the definition of culture found in FM 6-22. He based his paper on the results of his research for CAPE and the VEILS projects. In the course of his study he noticed a trend of mistrust between levels of leadership. This mistrust was equally present from not only the lowest direct level leaders but also to many of the more senior strategic leaders. He believes much of this has to do with a view of the Army as a bureaucratic organization as opposed to a professional organization. Sowden argues leaders at all levels should be allowed “professional discretion” in dealing with complex problems. He makes the assumption Soldiers, regardless of rank, are professionals by virtue of belonging to the organization. Moreover, he argues, conversations on who is a professional tend to get us sidetracked and keep us from getting to really discussing the PME. He proposes as a starting point a focus on building trust relationships based on the shared understanding of duty found in our cultural artifacts (Oath of Enlistment, Constitution, etc.)

Dr. Peter Lee focused the presentation of his paper on the role of moral codes in forming the PME. We use a variety of unwritten codes as part of our culture which, form the creative part of the PME and lead to a process of “creative self-norming.” Dr. Lee indicated the self-norming process consists of four elements: 1) we all have some ethical substance about us; 2) individuals are called to recognize this ethic; 3) changes in conduct occur as we recognize the need to act in some way; and 4) in doing this we move to become some kind of person. This process is at work in all individuals, and is often based on our underlying codes. Moreover, our underlying codes can be morally good, neutral or morally bad depending on our understanding of them at a given moment in history, thus it is incumbent for every generation to interpret our codes for today.

The group discussion focused on the systemic issues of the Army culture in integrating the PME, specifically as it relates to matters of trust across all levels of leadership. Inherent in this process is the need for corporate buy in. While many agree on the importance of defining the PME, without buy-in from the senior Army leadership, any attempt to form and norm the PME is destined to fail.



# Forming the Ethical Military Professional: Beyond the Limits of Codified Morality<sup>1</sup>

by Dr. Peter Lee

This paper will explore the question: What are the means by which the Ethical Military Professional is formed? The parameters of this exploration will be set out in the first section, using a conception of ethical subjectivity as being simultaneously constituted through conformity to codes as well as through creative ethical self-formation that goes beyond the limits of those codes.<sup>2</sup> This study assumes a minimum 'thin' conception of identity whereby the individual is capable of constituting herself or himself in relation to both social situations and ethical discourses as a work of self upon self.

It will be argued that the development and enforcement of a Professional Military Ethic prioritises codes, both written and unwritten: conformity to military law, law of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, Just War, honor codes, regimental traditions, and so on. These codes, both written and unwritten, are enforced by proscriptions, interdictions and punishments, and aspects of the West Point Cadet Honor Code will be examined briefly to highlight not only the strengths but to draw attention to areas of potential further development in such an approach. Consequently, the focus of the second section will shift to what I will call creative, ethical self-formation: an ever-present yet frequently overlooked dimension of the military professional. Four aspects of ethical self-formation will be set out and are presented in the form of questions:<sup>3</sup>

- 1) What is the ethical substance of the military professional? That is, the beliefs, qualities and characteristics upon which ethical behaviour is constructed (religious faith, social conscience, patriotism etc.).
- 2) How are individuals incited or encouraged to recognise their moral obligations?
- 3) What are the ways in which individuals change themselves in order to become ethical military professionals?
- 4) What is the type of being to which an individual aspires when behaving in a moral way?

Given the constraints on this paper, discussion will focus on the first of these four questions, leaving a more extended discussion for another occasion. The final section of the paper will consider some of the challenges facing the military professional in forming himself, or herself, as ethical in the face of an enemy whose own ethical subjectivity is formed in relation to radically different codes. The paper will conclude that instead of increased reliance on ever more detailed codes of behaviour, creative ethical self-formation should not only be acknowledged but encouraged and nurtured as a work of self on self in an expanded Professional Military Ethic.

## THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL AND MORAL CODES

In a study of the formation of the subject in the classical Greek and early Christian periods Michel Foucault identified systems of morality based on rules and prohibitions, which he named the 'moral code'.<sup>4</sup> This moral code comprised laws and customary practices: both written and unwritten. These were, in turn, juxtaposed with 'ethical problematizations based on practices of the self':<sup>5</sup> different aspects of creative self-forming that operated, at least to some extent, independently of the wider moral codes. This section will consider the place of moral codes in shaping the ethical military professional, focusing

*on the instances of authority that enforce the code, that require it to be learned and observed, that penalise infractions ... where the ethical subject refers his conduct to a law, or set of laws to*

*which he must submit at the risk of committing offences that may make him liable to punishment.*<sup>6</sup>

The codes to which the modern military professional must conform are many and varied. For example, some of the codes that guide the lives and conduct of Royal Air Force (RAF)<sup>7</sup> personnel are the set out in *Queen's Regulations for the RAF*, which state:

*Every officer is to make himself acquainted with, obey, and, so far as he is able, enforce, the Air Force Act, the Queen's Regulations for the RAF, and all other regulations, instructions and orders that may from time to time be issued. He is also to conform to the established customs and practices of the Service.*<sup>8</sup>

This list of codes to which members of the Royal Air Force is expected to conform, with members of other armed forces bound by similar obligations, is extensive and contains both written and unwritten elements. In both peace and war the written elements, such as Military Law, are enforced by judicial process either at Orderly Room hearings or full Courts Martial, with punishments for infractions ranging from administrative action to detention in a military prison. Transgression of unwritten customs and practices can be punished by administrative action or the reproach of both peers and superior ranks. In addition, all personnel deployed to operational theatres are subject to the Law of Armed Conflict: 'All personnel must be aware of the basic rules of the law of armed conflict, including the practical application of the principles of military necessity, proportionality, distinction and humanity'.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, as well as obligations under domestic civil and military law, every combatant of a signatory state is obliged to conform to the constraints set out in the Geneva Conventions. According to the Geneva Conventions, all combatants should be made aware of their responsibilities under international law, with compliance achieved through regular instruction. Instructional methods are even suggested: 'lectures, films, slides, audio-visual methods, war games including questions and answers etc'.<sup>10</sup> The British armed forces – like many other armed forces around the world – use such techniques to ensure that their combatants are familiar with the law and know how to act in conformity to it. The combatant consequently forms himself, or herself, as ethical by conforming to the multiple and various aspects of codified morality set out above: with conformity enforced through the threat and exercise of sanction and punishment.

In recent years ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have provided numerous examples of valor and selfless commitment above and beyond the call of duty but they have also provided instances of dereliction of duty where the codes that govern military conduct have been transgressed. Amongst the most notorious, and politically damaging, of those failures to conform to military codes was the abuse of prisoners by both U.S. and UK military personnel in Iraq. In those instances, and others, the military judicial systems of both allies provided appropriate investigations, trials and, in turn, punishments for the perpetrators. As a result, Standard Operating Procedures were reviewed and applied with greater diligence, with changes made where necessary in order to prevent any subsequent reoccurrence. To be clear, however, these incidents did not occur because of a lack of codes that proscribed such abuses; these incidents occurred *despite* the presence of the codes: the codes were simply ignored.

At a lower level, the events I describe below as Incident 1 took place during the opening phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom and capture a different, though still negative, attitude to military codes:

### ***Incident 1***

*The author – white, British and at that time a Royal Air Force chaplain – was lifting weights in the gym with two U.S. Air Force NCOs: both African-American Firefighters. British Forces' radio was playing quietly in the background and a relaxed training atmosphere pervaded the gym. A new group arrived and one of their number – early 20s, white, American, tattooed and wearing a Confederate bandana on his shaven head – replaced the radio music, without consulting anyone, with a Death Metal CD and cranked up the volume to maximum. The atmosphere changed instantly when the 'music' mentioned killing Jews, n\*\*\*\*rs and wh\*\*\*\*s. The author immediately switched off the*

*music and a tense stand-off ensued. Following the customary exchange of pleasantries (“Who the \*\*\*\* switched off my music!!” “Me – the chaplain! Who’s asking?”) the first line of defence adopted by the protagonist concerned was, “I don’t see any sign that says I can’t [play this music]!”*

One individual, with the encouragement and tacit support of three colleagues, set out to make – at the very least – some kind of warped personal statement; probably intended to cause offence; and possibly sought to provoke some kind of reaction from the other gym users: specifically, the African-American personnel. When challenged about the offensive and inappropriate nature of the music that had been played at maximum volume the individual concerned avoided the language of right and wrong and sought to justify his actions on the basis that there was no specific, publicised prohibition written on the wall of the gym. In other words, if it was not banned then it must be allowed. The lack of a specific prohibition was taken as a licence to denigrate and disrespect fellow human beings, fellow Americans and allied partners in a time of war, as well as contravening equal opportunities legislation. [Note: following the initial confrontation the ranking non-commissioned officer present intervened to pursue follow-up disciplinary action.] Emboldened by a combination of anger that my training partners would rather accept the offence and ignore the hate lyrics than challenge the perpetrator and a quick mental calculation that if events spiralled towards violence there would be enough numbers supporting me to ensure I did not take too much of a beating, I produced the best challenge I could think of in the circumstances: “Does your mother know what kind of music you listen to?” His response took me by surprise: “Yeah, she bought it for me.”

Taking the two previously mentioned examples together – the prisoner abuse and the racial incitement – it can be seen that the presence of military codes, written and unwritten, does not in itself ensure that conformity will follow. Not even the risk of judicial intervention or administrative punishment managed to deter inappropriate or illegal conduct in the examples provided. The establishing of codes to which individuals are expected to conform is only one aspect of the formation of the ethical military professional. Furthermore, regardless of the care with which codes are defined, enacted and enforced, they are limited in their efficacy because they are limited to the extent, if any, that they explore the creative, self-forming aspects of the military professional: the ethical substance which forms the basis of an individual’s ethical choices; the means by which the individual is made to recognise his, or her, moral responsibilities; the changes in behaviour that are required in order for the individual to form himself, or herself, as ethical; or the type of being the ethical military professional aspires to be as a result of ethical self-formation.

Looking again at the gym confrontation, there was no opportunity to explore in depth with the offending individual the reasons why he acted in a manner that would cause offence to most people, in a military environment where discipline is strict and equalities laws enforced. It would appear from our brief conversation that his racial attitudes were brought to the armed forces rather than learned *in* the armed forces. More importantly, deeply entrenched racial views had clearly survived throughout the military training process and his introduction to all the laws, rules and other written and unwritten codes that regulate behaviour in the armed forces.

In contrast, consider the events that took place only a few days later, described here as Incident 2:

### ***Incident 2***

*A U.S. Air Force chaplain colleague suggested that we use the Chaplaincy Centre facilities (a former Mess Hall with kitchen and large dining area) to lay on pancake breakfasts over two consecutive days. Breakfast was timed to catch the shift changeover so that personnel could eat either before or after their 12-hour shift. When the breakfasts were first advertised, several days in advance, volunteers of different ranks came forward and offered to flip pancakes, serve coffee, wash dishes and clean up afterwards. For some, this entailed an 0400 start and two hours less sleep before going to work; for others it meant two further hours of work following a 12-hour night shift. After the success of the first breakfast even more volunteers came forward to help the following day. More than 1000 pancake breakfasts were served over the two days.*

Over the course of the two days I was interested to find out what motivated tired, hard-working and homesick individuals to give up their time (and especially their sleep time) to do something altruistic for their colleagues, most of whom would be unknown to them. Responses to my enquiries included: a religiously inspired desire to do something for others; “I miss making pancakes for my kids”; “to remind me of home”; “because I’m bored”; “to remind me how much I hated my first job flipping pancakes”; and, “to do something I choose to do”. Everyone involved gave up their time to help out but the reasons for doing so were many and varied. For some it was about being a particular kind of person – neighbourly, religious, caring or dutiful – while for others it was an external expression of values and attitudes: in all cases there was a sense of contributing to the common good. However, no orders were given or inducements made to motivate the volunteers to make and serve pancakes. Furthermore, while written and unwritten codes may encourage individuals to place a concern for others above a concern for self, this particular action was not specified. The decision to give up time and make a positive contribution to community life during deployed operations illustrates a positive, creative, self-forming aspect of what it is to be an ethical military professional.

The psychological influences and processes involved in the formation of the ethical military professional are many and complex and a thorough investigation is beyond the scope of this paper. However, recent research by Fred Korthagen in the use of reflective practice as a tool for the development of teachers incorporates ideas which show potential for a similar application in a military context:

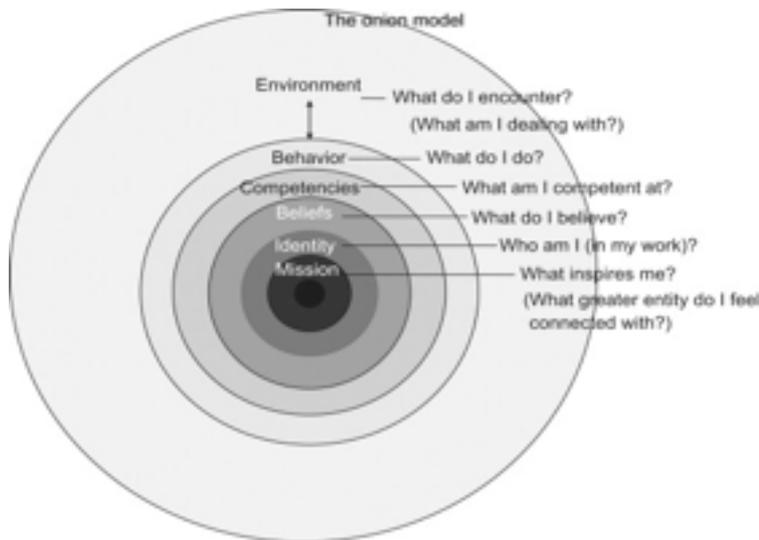


Fig. 1: The ‘Onion’ Model<sup>11</sup>

Korthagen’s ‘Onion’ model shows a socially situated subject whose personal development can occur across a number of ‘levels of change’ – from the environmental and exterior to the interior and self-identity.<sup>12</sup> Tigchelaar *et al* use this model to demonstrate the challenges faced by second-career teachers in forming a new sense of identity, where previously identity had been formed in another social and professional context entirely. Parallel social and psychological transitions are experienced by civilians joining the armed forces as they adjust to the externalities of a new context and assimilate the ethical and other requirements placed upon the military professional. The ‘interior’ aspects of this model – Beliefs, Identity and Mission – must all be addressed in the process of forming, and encouraging the creative self-forming of, the ethical military professional.

The notion of ethical self-creativity will be examined further in the next section by exploring both the strengths and limitations of the use of honor codes, drawing upon the author’s experience of teaching moral education within the RAF and citing further examples from both training and operational environments.

## THE SELF-FORMING ETHICAL MILITARY PROFESSIONAL

This process of ethical formation begins as soon as new recruits commence military training, through instruction in, and personal exploration of, the core values of the Royal Air Force in what is referred to as The Beliefs and Values Programme. Every member of the RAF, officer and enlisted, receives a copy of *The Ethos, Core Values and Standards of the Royal Air Force*, which states:

*Core values are those values by which we lead our lives and which we aspire to develop in others. The Royal Air Force core values are: Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence, nurtured by effective and consistent leadership ... Every member of the Royal Air Force has the duty and ability to lead and the moral responsibility to live by our core values.*<sup>13</sup>

Military instructors issue this text to new members of the RAF and order that it should be read and the RAF core values adhered to. However, it falls to the chaplains<sup>14</sup> – over four sessions spaced throughout initial training – to enhance the adoption of these core values by exploring their significance with classes of recruits or officer cadets: encouraging the process that is referred to here as creative self-formation. Each core value is approached thematically (Respect, for example) in a separate session. Hypothetical incidents are outlined and the recruits invited to imagine themselves located in the scenario as, say, the perpetrator or the victim of bullying, or as an armed combatant in time of war. Self-reflection is then encouraged, using questions such as: How do you think you would feel [in such a situation]? What do you think of your colleague's response? How does such a reaction reflect the core value of, for example, respect or integrity? Such sessions progress in what might be termed a 'confessional' dynamic: individuals (including myself as chaplain at that time) publicly describing how a particular action could result in either a positive or a negative outcome, as well as making known the feelings that such hypothetical actions engender.<sup>15</sup> These 'confessions', or descriptions, would, in turn, be discussed by the group. Following these elements of self-reflection and discussion the final part of a session would then encourage or incite further self-forming in relation to the RAF core (and other) values. Each session would conclude with the recruits being encouraged to continue to apply the core values to their current and future actions. Overall, the process might be more accurately described as encouraging, or inciting, critical self-reflection, self-policing of attitudes and actions, adherence to codes and creative ethical self-forming.

There are a number of strengths and weaknesses to be found in this approach. On the positive side, in addition to the order by military instructors to observe the core values and put them into practice, time is spent with recruits and officer cadets exploring possible responses using hypothetical examples drawn from military life. Not only were responses by discussed and collectively analysed, the consequences of particular responses were assessed. For example, one recruit voiced his opinion that shoplifting was a socially acceptable hobby in the deprived area he came from, while 'grassing'<sup>16</sup> on your colleagues – no matter how severe or criminal their actions – should be punished by violent retribution. Over the course of four sessions the implications of these activities were explored with the class of recruits, considering how theft can lead to the breakdown of individual trust, unit cohesion and morale, and ultimately impact upon fighting effectiveness. The consequences of a 'no grassing' approach were also considered: bullying and other anti-social or criminal activities could escalate, leading to a breakdown of unit cohesion and military discipline. While the peer influence of the group hopefully persuaded the former gang member to refrain from stealing and to report activities such as bullying, there is no evidence to show that such an outcome was definitely achieved. Further, there was insufficient time available to explore the much deeper social and psychological origins of his views. However, I remain convinced that having even limited space in the training programme to explore such issues and their potential consequences is more likely to lead to a positive outcome than simply setting out rules and punishments. If someone has spent a lifetime ignoring rules and caring less about punishment there is little likelihood that the donning of a military uniform will have some magical ethical effect.

A more thorough and complex system of ethical advancement is found in the West Point Cadet

Honor Code, succinctly set out in the words: ‘A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.’<sup>17</sup> Refined over many years, the code is predominantly juristic in nature: a codified morality to which individuals are expected to conform their conduct, with Honor Investigative Hearings and possible removal by the Secretary for the Army for those who do not. The Honor Education Program – underpinned by the ethos: “the more we educate, the less we investigate” – combines education and self-reflective practice with the intention of enhancing the ethical development of cadets. Yet even a refined and developed codified moral system such as this has its weaknesses. By its very wording it is prohibitive in nature: specifying what honorable and ethical, cadets will *not* do. The emphasis is on *enforcing* a minimum standard of ethical conduct whilst *aspiring* to a higher standard. A creative, self-formative dimension of ethical subjectivity exists within this system, though it appears to be subordinated to the juristic aspect of the code. Further, it appears to focus, for example, on *active* lying while being less specific about lies of omission. For example, when set alongside the controversial ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ policy the Cadet Honor Code creates an ethical conflict. The gay or lesbian cadet who spends any time away from the college with their partner is obliged, when sharing in any conversation about off-campus activities, to be less than candid in a way that non gay or lesbian cadets are not. This observation is not made with the intention of denigrating a well respected and established honor system, but rather for the purpose of identifying the limitations of codified moral systems.

## BEYOND THE LIMITS OF CODIFIED MORALITY

This paper suggests that a professional military ethic can be enhanced by going beyond the limitations of codified morality and exploring in greater depth the creative, self-formative aspects of ethical subjectivity mentioned here. An information paper on the West Point website states that the classes in the Honor Education Program ‘are not designed to provide “right answers;” they are designed to challenge the cadets to examine their own value systems and to promote internalization of the West Point value system’.<sup>18</sup> There is already a creative, self-reflective dimension to this programme where cadets are encouraged to relate their own value systems to the West Point value system. The questions I have set out previously assist in this process by breaking down this self-reflective and self-formative approach further:

*What is the ethical substance of the military professional? That is, the beliefs, qualities and characteristics upon which ethical behaviour is constructed (religious faith, social conscience, patriotism etc.). How are individuals incited or encouraged to recognise their moral obligations? What are the ways in which individuals change themselves in order to become ethical military professionals? And, what is the type of being to which an individual aspires when behaving in a moral way?*

These questions throw up some difficulties as well as provide assistance in the process of ethical self-formation. For many people the ethical substance upon which their character and conduct are based is deeply held religious faith: being a good Christian or Muslim or Jew and so on. However, to publicly acknowledge this, and especially to include this aspect of ethical self-formation in any formulation of military policy will be problematic in any polity that is built on the separation of state and religion. For the non-religious person this may seem like a trivial or even irrelevant point but to the person of faith it runs to the core of their being and any denial or marginalisation of their belief system can be unsettling or destabilising. Contrarily, some of the current fiercest enemies of the US, UK and their other NATO allies use religious faith, as many have over the centuries, to fuel political motivations and ends. To be clear, this is not to justify or promote any form of religious war, merely to point out that the religious faith of a U.S. soldier who happens to be a Muslim is of no less significance in his or her ethical formation than the faith of the Muslim who fights for the Taliban or Al-Qaeda. The most obvious difference is the more prominent role played by religion in the motivation of the latter fighters. Jean Bethke Elshtain sums up the dilemma in writing about

the training of American soldiers to avoid both intentional and unintentional killing of the innocent: ‘No one is encouraged, or even allowed, to call the killing of civilians “God’s will” or, even worse, an act carried out in God’s name’.<sup>19</sup> She contrasts this approach with appeals to Divine authority in the training materials of Islamist radicals, quoting: ‘You have to kill in the name of Allah until you are killed ... Our enemies are fighting in the name of Satan. You are fighting in the name of God.’<sup>20</sup>

Understandable political sensitivities may encourage military and political leaders to avoid addressing the role of religion – if only for some – in the process of ethical self-forming in a military environment. A Christian soldier who takes seriously the biblical injunction, ‘Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends’<sup>21</sup>, is allowed to make this kind of self-sacrifice but political and military spokespersons are highly unlikely to point to religious motivations within the combatant’s ethical approach. The same applies for equivalent actions of individuals from other faith traditions.

## CONCLUSION

With regard to honor codes and the creative ethical self-forming of the military professional, possibly the greatest problems arise when a cadet or other serving person has a value system that clashes with the standards expected in the military in which they serve. Incident 1 above highlights such an example where someone of one colour considers a person of another colour to be somehow a lesser human being. My own experience of the Royal Air Force and the published guidance from the West Point Honor Education Programme identifies approaches to ethical development that are not prescriptive and avoid telling cadets *what* to think. However, in cases where someone’s ethical framework or value system runs counter to the values of the military and country they are supposed to represent, it would appear that the only option available (because they are not instructed in *what* to think) is to release that person from service. This in itself is an ethical judgement but one that from time to time should be made. The tactical and strategic consequences of soldiers violating not only military law but the moral underpinnings of the law can be severe. From the rice fields of My Lai to the prison cells of Abu Ghraib the actions of the unethical military professional have undermined the morale of uniformed colleagues, diminished public support for the armed forces and lowered the reputations of entire nations in the eyes of the world. Consequently, it is important to conform to the legal and ethical codes set out for military personnel. Perhaps more importantly, we should strive to look beyond the limitations of such codes to encourage uniformed personnel to continually form themselves as ethical military professionals in both operational and non-operational environments.

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## Biography

From 2001 to 2008 Dr. Peter Lee served as a chaplain in the Royal Air Force. He spent the first five months of Operation Iraqi Freedom at a military hospital in Cyprus providing pastoral and welfare support to wounded, maimed and injured soldiers who had been airlifted from the battlefield. During this period he developed a keen interest in the way the intervention was justified, particularly by Prime Minister Tony Blair, which prompted him to undertake a PhD alongside his military commitments. Between 2005 and 2008 Dr. Lee taught personal ethics, in the form of the Beliefs and Values Programme, to RAF enlisted recruits and officer cadets. Since 2008, Dr. Lee has been employed by King’s College, University of London as a Lecturer in Air Power Studies based at Royal Air Force College Cranwell, specialising in the ethics of war. He lectures to officer cadets on the Initial Officer Training Course and senior officers undertaking the Higher Air Warfare Course. In 2010 he gained his doctorate degree in War Studies from King’s College London for a thesis entitled *A Genealogy of the Ethical Subject in the Just War Tradition*. Dr. Lee is regularly invited to lecture on this subject to military, academic and wider audiences.

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## Endnotes

1. Paper for “Exploring the Professional Military Ethic” Conference, 15-18 November 2010, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
2. The conception of ethical subjectivity adopted in this paper can be found in the later works of Michel Foucault and, more recently, William Connolly.
3. These four aspects are adapted from Foucault’s exploration of the ethical subject in Foucault, M., “On the Genealogy of Ethics,” in Foucault, M. and Rabinow, P. (Ed.) *The essential works of Michel Foucault 1954 - 1984 Volume 1: Ethics – Subjectivity and Truth* (New York: The New Press, 1997) p. 263-5.
4. Foucault, M., *The History of Sexuality Volume 2: The Use of Pleasure*, Trans. R. Hurley, (London: Penguin Books, 1984) p. 25.
5. Ibid, p. 5.
6. Ibid., p. 25ff.
7. Members of the Army, Navy and Marines are also subject to the same laws, with subtle variations according to the branch of the Services.
8. *The Queen’s Regulations for the Royal Air Force*, Para. 989, Parts 1 and 4, p. 15-1.
9. *Aide Memoire on the Law of Armed Conflict*, JSP 381, Revised February 2005, Ministry of Defence, located at <http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/749088E6-E50A-470E-938D-459A74481E88/0/jsp381.pdf> , Para. 4, accessed 10 January 2009.
10. Programmes of military instruction, Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. Part 5, Section 1, Article 83, Para. 3376, located at <http://cicr.org/ihl.nsf/COM/470-750108?OpenDocument>, accessed 15 January 2010.
11. Korthagen, F. A. J. (2004). “In search of the essence of a good teacher: Towards a more holistic approach in teacher education,” *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(1), 77–97.
12. Tigchelaar, A., Brouwer, N., and Korthagen, F., “Crossing Horizons: Continuity and change during second-career teachers’ entry into teaching,” *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol.24 (2008) pp.1530-1550.
13. *The Ethos, Core Values and Standards of the Royal Air Force*, p. 7.
14. At the time when the author taught the Beliefs and Values Programme all uniformed RAF chaplains belonged to Christian denominations. Ministry of Defence-appointed civilian chaplains from other faiths – Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist – were also available to provide specific religious guidance when needed.
15. What I refer to here as a ‘confessional dynamic’ can be seen throughout history from the works of Augustine to the 12-step programme of Alcoholics Anonymous and countless self-help books. It is not to be confused here with any form of religious instruction.

16. Reporting an individual or an event to any form of authority.
17. The Cadet Honor Code, <http://www.usma.edu/committees/honor/info/main.htm>, accessed 1 September 2010.
18. Ibid.
19. Elshtain, J.B., *Just War Against Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 2004) p. 21.
20. Ibid., p. 21/2.
21. John 15:13, *New International Version*.



# **Discretionary Judgment and the PME**

## ***Trust, Empowerment and the Application of Discretionary Judgment; Force Multipliers in Decision Making on the Modern Battlefield***

**by Capt. Walter J. Sowden**  
U.S. Army

### **ABSTRACT**

Due to the nature of modern conflict, the U.S. Army is in the process of undergoing a massive revolutionary change in how it operates. This has touched every aspect of how the Army prepares for contingencies, and wages full spectrum operations. This all encompassing change has affected every corner of the organization and has been driven by the shape and consistency of the modern battlefield. By using two phrases from our vernacular that have come to define the contemporary operating environment, “The Three Block War” and the “Strategic Corporal”<sup>1</sup>, we are able to describe the dynamic, ambiguous and demanding nature of the current environment. We can use these cultural artifacts to help ascertain the necessity of trust, empowerment and discretion as absolute values and requirements for leaders, within our organization.

This paper will make the argument that due to the rapid, extended and fluid nature of the contemporary operating environment, and in the spirit of change and evolution, the Army must break out of its bureaucratic nature and fully adopt the ideals of a professional culture in a holistic sense. This cultural shift, from one of a blended bureaucratic-professional organizational structure, to that of a homogeneously applied profession must occur and be felt at all levels of the leadership system within the organization. This cannot be applied to just one facet or part of the leadership system, i.e. at the strategic level, but must be applied throughout the entire leadership system, especially at the direct / tactical level. Then and only then will lower level leaders be empowered to apply discretion in their decision making, realize responsibility and maximize their efficacy. The need for each decision to be analyzed and scrutinized with every bit of available information, and for lower, direct level leaders to be closely supervised, versus mentored and coached, is not only unnecessarily bureaucratic, but it’s detrimental to mission accomplishment.

Leaders at every level of the organization need to be considered professional Soldiers, engaging in the art and science of warfare, and allowed to exercise risk, judgment, and decision-making abilities. I’m not advocating that we simply just slap the name “professional” on all leaders and call it a day. It’s quite the contrary. What I’m advocating is that all leaders, both commissioned and non-commissioned officers enjoy and be measured against the principals that guide professions. By cultivating and advancing the values of trust, empowerment, and discretion throughout the entire leadership system, leaders at every level will not only feel / be authorized (and expected) to exercise discretion in their decision making, but this increased trust and empowerment will also increase the likelihood of personnel at the lower ends of the organizational hierarchy to conduct themselves in a manner that is in accordance with the Army’s Professional Military Ethic.

*“The Soldier is a man; he expects to be treated as an adult, not a schoolboy. He has rights; they must be made known to him and thereafter respected. He has ambition; it must be stirred. He has a belief in fair play; it must be honored. He has a need of comradeship; it must be supplied. He has imagination; it must be stimulated. He has a sense of personal dignity; it must be sustained. He has pride; it can be satisfied and made the bedrock of character once he has been assured that he is playing a useful and respected role. To give a man this is the acme of inspired leadership. He*

*has become loyal because loyalty was given to him.”*

— General George C. Marshall<sup>2</sup>

It's dusk, and although the sun is setting, it is still brutally hot in the Salah ad Din Providence. Over the past nine months of conducting combat operations, B Company has been attacked several times while moving down the main supply route (MSR). Recently, the enemy's weapon of choice has been the improvised explosive device (IED). The Soldiers of B Co. are tired, frustrated, and have suffered multiple casualties. Whenever the unit is attacked, the Soldiers do everything right and follow the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to the letter. However, no matter how effective and efficient they are to react, their efforts seem to come up short in finding, and holding accountable, whoever is responsible for the attack.

Today, it's 3rd Platoon's mission to move down the MSR and search a town council building. While moving down the MSR, the platoon is attacked by an IED and the lead HMMWV is catastrophically damaged. Following the blast, the immediate area is secured by the platoon and a house is identified where the suspected triggerman may be located. The house is searched, and again, as with previous incidents, there is the same middle-aged Iraqi man found, who has been reported 'coincidentally' at previous attack sites. The entire company is suspicious of this man, but there has not been enough evidence, to date, to apprehend and accuse him of any wrong doing. However, this time, the platoon leader decides that he has enough evidence to apprehend the man and bring him in for questioning. During the initial search of the house it was determined that there was nothing that could link the attack to the suspect, but after questioning, the platoon returned to the house, conducted a second search and found some wire, an AK-47 and an excessive amount of ammunition on the premise.

At first blush everything seemed to match, an attack, a suspect, corroborating evidence, and a dubious coincidental track record. It wasn't until the S2 reported to the battalion commander that the suspect had adamantly and repeatedly exclaimed that he had nothing to do with the attack that things began to fall apart. On a hunch, the battalion commander launched a commander's inquiry into the attack and subsequent apprehension. During the investigation it was found that the platoon leader was known to "roll" with an AK-47 in the back of his HMMWV, with the explicit reason to place it on a suspected enemy combatant just in case there was any ambiguity in determining if the suspected individual was armed and a threat. Additionally, he was quoted as saying "I would not even bat an eye to plant the weapon, if it meant that would protect me or one of my Soldiers from being wrongfully accused of a war crime". The investigating officer also found evidence that the platoon had planted the evidence in the house. They knew that this suspect had something to do with the repeated attacks. If they were able to get this guy off the street they would be possibly saving American and Iraqi lives.<sup>3</sup>

Why would a platoon leader carry an AK-47 in his HMMWV, ready to falsely plant as evidence?

## **TRANSFORMATION**

It has been well documented that over the past 20 years, Contemporary Operating Environment (COE) has been defined by its crescendo of uncertainty, instability, ambiguity, competitiveness and decentralization. In response to this the United States Army has redefined the paradigm of conflict, and adapted accordingly to this dynamic, evolving landscape by undergoing a massive and holistic revolution in how it operates and functions. This all-encompassing change has affected every corner of the organization; from the structure, interplay and biorhythm of its formations<sup>4</sup>, the methodology of strategic development and tactical implementation<sup>5</sup>, to even influencing the pedagogical approach to the training, education, and development of Soldiers and leaders<sup>6</sup>. This ongoing and complete organizational overhaul has been crucial to the Army's ability to meet the needs of the country, accomplish its mission and increase its effectiveness. Although this transformation has been universal, cogent and efficacious there is still more progressive change that needs to occur.

One domain of the organization that has been somewhat immune to this change is its culture.

There is a very good explanation as to why the Army's culture has been preserved while more malleable aspects of the organization such as structure, resource management and operational scope have evolved. That explanation is simple: that even after a decade of continuous conflict and tumultuous uncertainty, the Army has performed magnificently and its culture remains healthy, practical, and effective. However, even though the overall organizational culture in the Army is positive, there are still pockets, or aspects, of the culture that could use some tweaking in order to maximize both organization, and individual member efficacy. This paper will attempt to examine an aspect, or facet, of the Army's organizational culture- relational trust, leader empowerment and the application of discretionary judgment -and make the argument that the Army should enact positive change at the cultural level in this domain- just as it has done with other aspects of the organization.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND THE PROFESSION**

Organizational culture is a massive, comprehensive construct, that when holistically applied can pertain to a wide range of organizational measurement and nuance. We begin our discussion with this large, and at times, cumbersome construct for three reasons. The first is to frame the discussion by coupling the organizational-wide transformation that the Army is currently experiencing with an umbrella-like construct that mirrors the scope of this widespread transformation. In using organizational culture, we can frame the discussion with the change-culture union, trace it down through other organizational concepts ultimately to a more manageable and applicable domain. The second reason is to connect organizational culture to the Army's Professional Military Ethic (PME). It is the PME that embodies the Army's culture, the ethos of the Profession of Arms and the identity of the Professional Soldier (Snider, Oh & Toner, 2009). Linking organizational change, culture and The PME together will allow us to engage in the examination of relational trust, leader empowerment and the application of discretionary judgment with some clear parameters and guidelines. The third reason, is to target our discussion at the more comprehensive and fixed stratum of organizational culture and to not get stuck at the more accessible and malleable level of organizational climate. Army doctrine articulates the connectedness and differences between culture and climate. FM 6-22<sup>7</sup>, the Army's principal human development and leadership doctrinal cannon, states that: "Culture refers to the environment of the Army as an institution and consists of the shared attitudes and values, goals, and practices that characterize the larger institution over time.....climate is how members think and feel about the unit's daily functioning, right now..... culture is a longer lasting and more complex set of shared expectations than climate.....culture is deeply rooted in long-held beliefs, customs and practices" (FM 6-22, 8-1). Although, organizational culture and climate are undoubtedly related, with clear overlap, climate is typically used as a lens to measure culture (Burke, 2002). This is best described here:

*"Climate is much more in the foreground of organizational member perceptions, whereas culture is more background and defined by beliefs and values. The level of analysis for culture is the organization. Climate is, of course, affected by culture, and people's perceptions define both, but at different levels" (Schneider, 1985).*

Climate is an aspect of culture. These perspectives and definitions make it clear that the appropriate place to conduct our examination and argue for change is at the cultural versus climatic level of organizational analysis.

How discretion is applied, and where it is maintained within the organization is an inveterate and ethereal characteristic of the organization. It is born from the PME and relates directly to the Army's professional knowledge and to the identity of professional Soldier-leaders. It is not just a current reflection of how people feel about their micro-level organization, but rather an institution wide, deep-rooted phenomenon.

There are numerous interpretations and applications of the term culture in the management and organizational literature. We start with the basic anthropological definition of culture which is “a body of learned beliefs, traditions, and guides for behavior shared among members of a society or a group” (Barrett, 1984). Then with further interpretation through the organizational lens (Deal & Kennedy, 1982) we narrow our interpretation down with two complementary and defining aspects of the Army’s culture and the Profession of Arms. The first is the Army’s PME and the second is the construct of leadership. Ethical culture is best described as the ethical elements of both the formal and informal systems that work together to support the ethical conduct in the organization (Trevino, Hartman & Brown, 2000). This concept of Ethical Culture combined with Schein’s (1992) definition of culture serve as a baseline description of the Army’s organizational culture for this discussion. I’ve used Schein’s definition of culture because the Army is a values-based, leadership-centric organization (FM 1, 2005) and this interpretation inseparably bonds leadership and organizational culture. According to Schein culture is:

*“A pattern of shared assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 1997, p.11)*

From this definition we see that organizational culture refers to those elements of a group, or organization, which are matriculated, ingrained and normalized into the organization’s members. This process is driven by the leaders of the organization, for it is leaders who have the most influence in creating, managing and changing cultures within an organization (Schein, 1997, p.206). This is in clear alignment with the Army’s definition of leadership at its most basic level. Army leadership is defined “as the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization” (FM 6-22, 2006, 1-6). This statement is applicable at the individual-interpersonal level of leadership as well as at the organizational level. It is at the latter that we will focus on here, in which we substitute the word ‘people’ with ‘the organization’, or better yet- ‘The Profession’.

In the Army, embedded in (and almost synonymous with) the broad context of organizational culture, lies the PME. Although the PME has not been codified, for this discussion we will use the following definition to guide us:

*“A collection of values, beliefs, ideals, and principles held by the Army Profession and embedded in its culture that are taught to, internalized by, and practiced by its members to guide the ethical conduct of the Army in defense of and service to the Nation.”<sup>8</sup>*

From this definition it is apparent that the PME and organizational culture share the same genetic theoretical code and are members of the same organizational species. By understanding the interconnectivity of these kindred constructs, it is now possible to take license and draw correlations from the organizational culture body of literature and apply some of its inherent concepts to the study of the Army’s PME. However, before we do that it is imperative that we define the purpose and parameters of our examination.

The purpose of this paper is to argue that the professional license of discretionary judgment, that is traditionally maintained by individuals who reside at the strategic and organizational end of the Army’s leadership spectrum, be also commanded by all of the members of the leadership gamut that operate at the direct level of leadership. This widespread use of professional discretion is a byproduct of the institutional inculcation of transcending relational trust. Leaders at every level of the organization will be considered professionals in the Profession of Arms, engaging in the art and science of warfare, and empowered to exercise discretion in their decision making.

## THE ARMY HIERARCHY

The Army stratifies its leadership system via a tri-tier hierarchy (FM 6-22, 3-31). This is done in order to best understand and determine a leader's position within the chain-of-command, or hierarchal pyramid. Factors in determining where the leader's position lies within the leadership system include, but are not limited to, the leader's span of control, level of responsibility, extent of influence, types of operational tasks to conduct, number of people responsible for, and planning horizon. A leader's rank or hierarchal location of the unit they are assigned do not dictate the level of leadership the leader operates at (3-34). The three levels of Army Leadership are: Strategic, Organizational, and Direct (3-31). Strategic leaders occupy the top tier of the Army's leadership hierarchy. Strategic leaders command the largest units in the Army, i.e. The Army Staff and Regional Commands. They are responsible for force structure, allocation of resources, the communication of strategic vision, and shape the future of the Army as a whole (3-42). It is the leaders at the strategic level of the Army's leadership system that Schein would advocate as having the most influence over the culture of the organization.

Organizational leaders occupy leadership positions that range from the Brigade to Corps level. They are responsible for setting and establishing policy, managing multiple priorities and resources, establishing long-term vision, empowering others to perform the mission, and generate the organizational climate of their subordinate formations (3-39). Organizational leaders influence people through policy making, systems integration and the commander's intent rather than face-to-face contact (3-40).

Direct Leadership is where the proverbial 'rubber-meets-the-road' in the Army's leadership system. It is at the Direct Level of leadership where we find most Non-Commissioned, Company and Field Grade Officers (3-32). It is also at the direct level of leadership where the 'Strategic Corporal' lives and operates (Krulak, 1999). Direct leadership is where 'face-to-face' or 'first-line' leadership takes place in the Army. Direct Leadership occurs in teams, squads, platoons, companies and battalions (FM 6-22, 3-35) and entails tasks that revolve around the near term planning, monitoring, coordinating and execution of unit operations (3-37). Within the direct level of leadership is an extremely wide range of positions within the leadership hierarchy. As one can surmise, there are a multitude of differences in the complexion of the leadership milieu between a patrol leader (a leader at the lowest end of the direct level of the leadership spectrum) and a combined arms task force commander (a leader at the highest end of the direct level of the leadership spectrum). However, for our discussion, this range of variance will be acknowledged only in the autonomy a leader enjoys in applying discretionary judgment. If we were to investigate this phenomenon at the climatic level we would not only have to deal with the wide fluctuation at the different hierarchal levels within the direct level but also suffer from the variance of the unit-to-unit dimension. This is why this discussion on relational trust, empowerment, and discretionary judgment will occur through the lens of organizational culture.

Understanding this stratification is critical for our analysis. Each of the leadership strata serve a unique, but interdependent role in Army organizational culture. Using the definitions presented in FM 6-22 and Schein's levels of culture (Schein, 1992, p. 17) we can see that it's the leaders at the strategic level who have the most penetrating and widespread affect on the Army's culture and can best influence the 'basic underlying assumptions' (Schein, p.21), or the deepest, oldest and most ingrained aspects of the organization's culture. Organizational leaders, because of their position in the organization, are responsible for shaping and actualizing the culture. Leaders who operate at this level of the system are situated best to articulate, demonstrate and manage the vehicles that deliver the organizational espoused values (Schein, p.19) of the PME and the Profession of Arms. Finally, it is direct level leaders who do the work and translate this culture into unit level climate. They are the ones who socialize new members into the profession, and interpret, translate, activate, demonstrate, and manage the cultural artifacts (Schein, p.17) of the PME.

Using the levels of leadership to examine the Army's culture, and ultimately the PME, we can examine an aspect of the PME at the direct level of leadership while considering where, and by

whom, the leaders at the direct level of the hierarchy are influenced by and to what capacity they are affected. It the spirit of a ‘means-to-an-end’ examination, the level of strategic leadership and organizational culture is the ‘means’ while the values of relational trust, empowerment and the application of discretionary judgment at the direct level of leadership are the ‘ends’. In the Army, the culture must be targeted for change at the strategic and organizational levels of the profession in order for lasting and impactful change to be felt throughout the direct level of leadership.

## **ALL LEADERS ARE PROFESSIONALS**

In order to further control the scope of this paper it is important that we are circumspect of, but not consumed by, the larger debate among the erudite members of the organization about the grand application and measurement of the Army, and its subcomponents, in terms of where it lies on the bureaucratic-professional continuum (Bond, 2010). Although it is germane to the discussion, deliberating whether the Army should be classified as a profession, a bureaucracy, an amalgam, or an anomaly would engulf and overwhelm this essay. Instead, this paper relies on the assumption that all individuals who enlist or take an oath, complete their initial entry training and are promoted to the rank of Officer, either Commissioned, Non-Commissioned, or Warrant, are professionals, in a profession, with specific expert knowledge, and operate in an organization with some bureaucratic tendencies. The last part of this assumption is supported by the original sociological definition of a bureaucracy presented by Max Weber and reinforced by contemporary experts and scholars in the field<sup>9</sup>. Weber (1946) defines a bureaucracy around the way that organization socially organizes, executes and enforces the rules of work. He does this along the following structural concepts: “a well defined division of administrative labor among persons and offices, a personnel system with consistent patterns of recruitment and stable linear careers, a hierarchy among offices, such that the authority and status are differentially distributed among actors, and a system of formal and informal networks that connect organizational members to one another through flow of information and patterns of cooperation” (Weber, 1946). All of which accurately describe the Army’s hierarchal structure.

This assumptive description of the Army’s hierarchy is critical to moving forward, because if there is dissonance here and instead we decide that either; a) members of the Army’s leadership system are not professionals, or b) only a portion of the organization (the Officers) are professionals, then we will never be able to break the psychological barrier of this larger issue and only, if at all, scratch the surface of the concise argument around discretionary judgment presented here. Our discussion will not focus on whether or not all or some of the Officers of the Army are professionals, but will instead explore the question: should all Officers, at all levels of the leadership system, be afforded the privilege of a professional and enjoy the use of discretionary judgment in their decision making? That is not the purpose of this essay.

According to Dr. Don Snider (Snider, 2005), a preeminent expert on the PME, the Army is “a producing organization that has a dual nature- that of a hierarchical bureaucracy and that of a vocational profession.” What the Army produces is “ready and effective land power for the combatant commander to employ.” In differentiating a profession from a bureaucracy, Dr. Snider uses several organizational characteristics such as knowledge, practice, measure, culture, investment, growth, and motivation in contrasting professions and bureaucracies (Snider, 2005, p.14). Critical to our examination here, is his separation in how the two different types of organizations go about the accomplishment of work. In his juxtaposition, a professional “applies knowledge with discretion to new situations” and the bureaucrat “completes work in repetitive situations by following SOPs, administrative rules and procedures (Snider, 2005, p. 13).” It is the word “discretion” that is essential in this comparison and the centerpiece of our discussion. Webster (Merriam-Webster, 2010) defines discretion as the power or right of free decision, latitude of choice, or to act according to one’s own judgment. This is the essence of the difference between professional and nonprofessional entities- the power to generate and exercise expert knowledge. In the COE it is imperative, due to the nature and complexity of the operations, that all leaders have the ability to apply discretion. All leaders need to possess the ability to engage in what Paparone and Reed (Paparone and

Reed, 2008) describe as reflective practice in order to contribute and grow the profession's expert knowledge. In the COE, it is the leaders at the lowest level of the leadership system, engaged in the 'The Three Block War' (Krulak, 1999), who are practicing the adaptive application of the professional body of knowledge, contributing to the creation of new divergent knowledge and absorbing the associated professional risks that come with such practice and action. Shouldn't they be trusted, empowered and allowed to make decisions with professional discretion?

## **THE PME**

At its heart, the PME defines the Army as a profession, comprised of professionals that assume in their oaths of office 'an unlimited liability', inclusion into a profound culture of service and sacrifice, and seek to master the unique expert knowledge of the profession (CAPE, 2010, p.7). Soldiers (members of the organization) are all volunteers, who freely take the obligation to risk their own life and well-being for the greater good of the country, the American people, and their fellow comrades. This sacrifice is extraordinary and applies to all uniformed members of the Army and the Profession of Arms. Furthermore, the Profession of Arms is a vocation comprised of professional experts certified in the ethical application of land combat power, serving under civilian authority, entrusted to defend the Constitution and the rights and interests of the American people. Succinctly, the American Professional Soldier is an expert, a volunteer, a member of a team, is certified in the Profession of Arms, adheres to the highest ethical standards and is a steward of the future profession. (CAPE, 2010, p.7)

"Professional knowledge is information that members of the profession believe provides meaning and value in promoting understanding of how things work in their field" (Paparone & Reed, 2008). The Army's professional expert knowledge is comprised of four domains of expertise. These domains are: The Military-Technical, Moral-Ethical, Human Development, and Political-Cultural fields of knowledge (Snider, 2005). The Military-Technical field of knowledge dictates to the Army how to conduct full-spectrum operations. The Moral-Ethical Field of Knowledge guides Soldiers in the virtuous and principled execution of their duties and responsibilities. The Political-Cultural field of knowledge instructs the Army how to operate effectively across the cultural, national-international and organizational spectrum, including the vital fields of civil-military and media-military relations. Lastly, and most importantly for our discussion, the Human Development field of knowledge educates the Army in how to socialize Soldiers into the Army and then how to train, educate, and develop them as they develop into leaders within the profession (CAPE, 2010). Although the domains of Military-Technical, Moral-Ethical and Political-Technical knowledge are germane to the discussion of discretionary judgment, it is the Human Development field of knowledge that we will use to frame our analysis. Directly linked to the four domains of expertise are the four shared identities of the professional Soldier. These four shared identities are: Leader of Character, Servant to Nation, Warrior, and Member of the Profession (Snider, 2005, p.143). As with the domains of expertise, all the identities apply to the current discussion, but it is the identity of Member of the Profession that is salient to this argument.

The Army's PME is founded upon a variety of historical, legal and moral sources. This collective authority creates the shared system of beliefs and norms that build the PME. From this foundation rises a framework that assists us in describing and delineating those foundations. A group of scholars, led by Dr. Snider (Snider, Oh & Toner, 2009) defined and divided the framework of the PME into four distinct and interdependent quadrants. The four quadrants are: 1) The legal-institutional, 2) the moral-institutional, 3) the legal-individual and 4) the moral-individual. For this discussion, it is prudent to focus in on quadrant two, the moral-institutional foundational, for it a) illustrates 'trust relationships' within the profession as part of the PME and b) by being at the institutional level of analysis, it reinforces the philosophy that trust, empowerment and discretionary judgment are part of the PME at the cultural level and that the social phenomenon resonates deep and wide throughout the organization. Furthermore, the Professional Knowledge - Professional Identity - Framework of the PME crosswalk helps us to embed relational trust within the

Human Development field of knowledge, connect the application of discretionary judgment at the direct level of leadership to the Professional Identity of a Member of the Profession together and ultimately bolster the argument to empower all leaders in the Army with the power to use and apply discretionary judgment.

## V. TRUST AND EMPOWERMENT

By understanding the foundations and explanations of The PME<sup>10</sup> and incorporating the edicts and espoused value statements that Soldiers pledge to and embody such as the Army Values, Soldier's Creed, Warrior Ethos, Oath of Enlistment, NCO Creed, Officer Oath, Army, Title 10 of the U.S. Code and The Soldiers Rules, it appears that the license of the PME is extended to all sectors of the Army and to all members of the Profession of Arms. However, within the Army, true discretionary judgment is only allowed to leaders at the higher end of the hierarchy. It is only the Officers at the strategic and organizational level that have the power of free decision, latitude of choice and action according to one's own judgment. For example, in order to maximize the Army's ability to function, succeed and flourish in the contemporary environment, the Army must break this separation and infuse a culture of trust that pervades throughout the organization, is cherished at every level of the leadership system, and is a key ingredient of the leader socialization process. Within the status quo of the Army's Professional Military Ethic resides a bifurcation of authority, responsibility and discretion in the accomplishment of work. Although harsh, one could interpret that there is a culture of micromanagement in the Army that may contribute to some of the ethical indiscretions of leaders at the direct level of leadership.

In the opening epigraph we are introduced to a leader who has made the decision to violate the values and ethos of the profession and commit a war-crime. Again, why would a platoon leader carry an AK-47 in his HMMWV, ready to falsely plant as evidence? Is he just a 'bad apple' who failed to do the right thing? Why, would a squad leader directly, and knowingly, violate the ROE in order to ensure the force protection of his Soldiers? And why would a leader tell a lie, or half-truth, on a report to her superiors about the intensity of action during an engagement where collateral damage has occurred? More important than why, is what environmental or organizational factors influence this behavior? Are there any measures the Army, as an organization, can take that will mitigate or prevent such behavior? The answer to these questions lies in the application of one small word, and that word is *trust*.

*"The role of the leader is central to all Army operations and trust is the key attribute in the human dimension of combat leadership. Soldiers must trust and have confidence in their leaders. Once trust is violated, a leader becomes ineffective." (FM 3.0, 4-6)*

The word trust is a powerful word. In the book 'Leadership Lessons from West Point', COL Pat Sweeney (Sweeney, 2008) describes how trust is the linchpin of positive professional relationships between the leader and follower in the Army. He defines trust as: "one's willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another person (leader, subordinate, or peer), based on a sense of confidence in the other person's competence to meet role requirements and character to behave cooperatively" (p. 253). This definition articulates the differences between compliance based relationships and trusting ones. It is this delineation that is of vital importance to leaders in the Army. In the Army, or any potentially extreme context where leadership is exercised, compliance based relationships only go so far and in some cases may be counterproductive (Campbell, Hannah, & Mathews 2010). It takes mutual trust to positively grow the relationship between leader and followers in order to maximize mission accomplishment and enhance Soldier well-being.

In COL Sweeney's study (Sweeney, 2008, 2010) he queried 72 Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom about their feelings, attitudes and perceptions about relational trust between from the perspective of the led to the leader. In his research he identified ten attributes of a leader who can be trusted in combat. Those traits are competence, loy-

alty, honesty/good integrity, leadership by example, self-control (especially in terms of stress management), confidence, courage (physical and moral), sharing of information, a personal connection with subordinates, and a strong sense of duty (p. 255). Of these ten characteristics he identified the two most important leader qualities, as reported by the Soldiers in combat as: 1) competence and, 2) the importance the leader places on the welfare of their Soldiers. This is supported by findings in the organizational trust literature. Mayer and his colleagues (Mayer, Davis, Schoorman, 1995) found that leaders will demonstrate their trustworthiness along three key dimensions: behavioral integrity, managerial competence, and the concern they have for their subordinates' personal welfare. By taking into account both of these supplementary assertions on trust perceptions between leader and followers, we see that trust is a two-way street.

Trust begets trust- it is reciprocal. Leaders in the Army are constantly asking themselves questions such as "do I trust my subordinate leaders?" "Am I brave enough to underwrite an honest mistake or poor decision from one of my subordinates?" "Are my leaders capable of doing the right thing, even when I'm not looking?" Leader behavior is often defined by how a leader responds to these types of internal questions. There is a tension between direct level leaders and leaders at the organizational and strategic level, as well as leaders at different sub-levels within the direct level of leadership, along the lines of empowerment and the use of discretion in their decision making. It is this friction that at times may contribute to the junior-level leader making an unethical decision and / or behaving in a way that is incongruent with the PME. As the junior leaders struggle to reconcile the conflict or dissonance between conflicting values, they respond in a way that they believe is protecting themselves or their Soldiers from their superiors.

Leaders who want their followers to act in an autonomous manner, where their actions need not be supervised, are in accordance with the commander's intent, and aligned with the espoused values of the organization, need to understand one basic rule that transcends all relationships and is particularly important to the relationship between leader and led, that is- treat people as you want them to behave. This idiom is a derivative of the golden rule: Treat others how you want to be treated. Although the grammatical differences between the two statements are slight, the impact one has on the leader, follower, and the organization over the other is great.

To better understand how this idiom and the ideal of relational trust operate, it will help to start with the psychology of motivation. For it is motivation that will not only help us to understand the idiom, but it will also serve as the indispensable connection between developing relational trust in the organization, empowering leaders and allowing the leadership-system wide application of discretionary judgment. Trust is an extremely critical characteristic of any relationship, but especially in the context of the Profession of Arms. The value of trust, and more specifically the application, use, and exploitation of trust in the form of leadership empowerment has been determined as one of the most important factors leading towards unit cohesion and effectiveness (Sweeney, 2010). Trust is also a multiplier in the proliferation of lower lever leaders applying discretionary judgment in their actions and behavior.

The propagation of relational trust exists within the Army leadership exchange system and the PME. In developing trust, Army leaders must understand how motivation relates to the inculcation and development of the professional identity of a Soldier and the sense of belonging to the Profession of Arms. The Human Development field of knowledge guides Army leaders on how to socialize, train, educate, and develop Soldiers, and then to transform those Soldiers into leaders within the profession (CAPE, 2010). Motivation can be defined as the willingness to do something and is conditioned by this action's ability to satisfy some need for the individual (Robbins, 2003). In reviewing the literature on motivation we can actualize the individual motivation-relational trust-leader empowerment-discretionary judgment connection within the PME.

## **MOTIVATION AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Looking at historical theories of motivation, we see that it is directly related to needs fulfillment. According to Abraham Maslow's (Maslow, 1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory a person's needs are

organized into five sequential strata- physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization, in that order (Maslow, 1943, p. 395). What Maslow hypothesized was that in order for a person to be driven to meet the needs at one level they must have, at least minimally, already fulfilled the needs at the previous levels in the hierarchy. In a crude and elementary example- in order for a Soldier to be motivated to behave in accordance with the Army Values and 'do-the-right-thing' when there is dissonance between two or more values operating in conflict with one another, the Soldier must feel as though they are safeguarded and recognized appropriately by their chain-of-command. This may be construed as an oversimplified anecdote, but it properly illustrates Maslow's theory and could be a contributing cause to the platoon leader's actions in the opening vignette. Subsequent motivation research has concluded that people can be motivated to meet needs at a superior level of need while being frustrated in an inferior level, or simply that needs are not strictly hierarchal. Associated to this is the Frustration Regression Hypothesis (Alderfer, 1969). This interesting theory states that when an individual is frustrated at meeting a need at a higher level they may look to a lower level to satisfy a need. This would explain a Soldier's motivation, intent and behavior in the opening epitaph eschewing the values of honor and integrity for loyalty to their Soldiers.

The Dual Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg, 1967) is another theory that helps to paint the linkage between motivation to trust, empowerment and discretionary judgment. The Dual Factor Theory describes the dichotomy between the work factors that motivates people, or increases job satisfaction, when present versus what depresses motivation, or decreases job satisfaction, when missing. The relevance to our discussion are the factors that Herzberg classified as a motivating, or positive, versus what factors he found to be depressing, or negative factors. Along with opportunity for advancement, job challenge and recognition, responsibility was classified as a positive factor; whereas along with job security, interpersonal relationships, working conditions and adequacy of pay and benefits, quality of supervision was a negative factor. Looking at this through the lens of the PME we see that seeking and gaining responsibility is an inherently motivating factor to Soldiers. A Soldier needs to feel as though they are responsible for something larger than themselves in order to be positively motivated to achieve what is required of them in the COE. It is that feeling of responsibility, not being micro-managed, that will positively push them to fulfill their obligations. Conversely, with quality of supervision being found to be a negative factor in terms of motivation, it is clear why poor, incompetent and careless leadership can lead to a plethora of poor performance throughout the unit, especially when it comes to follower job satisfaction, motivation and achievement.

One of the Army Values (FM 1, 2005, 1-61) is Duty. Duty is directly related to the value of responsibility, or being responsible. The definition of duty according to the Army Values (FM 1, 2005) is fulfilling your obligations. Furthermore, in every Oath or Creed that serves as an espousal of the PME for Soldiers in the Army there is a declaration of responsibility. In the Soldiers Creed the entire stanza that is known as the Warrior Ethos is all about Soldier responsibility: "I will always place the mission first, I will never accept defeat, I will never quit, and I will never leave a fallen comrade (1-62)." The opening sentence of the Creed of the NCO (FM 7-22.7, 2002) begins with "No one is more professional than I".....the second stanza contains the statements: "My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind- accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers.....I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role." The third paragraph begins with: "Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine." All of these statements are directly related too, and speak to the motivation of, responsibility. This emphasis on responsibility is as prevalent in the Officer's Oath of Office (FM 6-22, 2-7). Within this Oath the statements, "I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies" and "I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter", like the Soldier's and NCO Creed these statements cry out responsibility. As with trust, responsibility is also part of the core DNA of the PME.

## THE ROAD AHEAD

Throughout this paper I've argued that an aspect of the Army's organizational culture must be transformed. I've advocated that all leaders in the Army, even the Sergeants and Lieutenants at the platoon level, be considered Professionals in the Profession of Arms. All leaders are to be trusted, empowered though the motivation of responsibility and provided the license of discretion in their decision making and judgment. Over the course of this essay I've attempted to paint the parameters as to why this is necessary in our Profession. By trusting and empowering direct level leaders, they will not only feel authorized to exercise discretion in their decision making and experience greater job satisfaction, but this increased trust and empowerment will also increase the likelihood of the leaders and their followers at the direct level of leadership to conduct themselves in a manner that is in alignment with the Army's PME. Lewin's Equation (Lewin, 1938) states that a person's behavior is a function of the interaction between their personality and the environment, or  $B = f(P, E)$ . With this in mind, could a culture of micromanagement, or even distrust help, in some part, to motivate the Platoon Leader to violate the Army Values and the PME?

As a profession we espouse the importance of delegation, empowerment, and the use of effective intent, vision, and guidance (FM 3-24, 1-145). However, there is an underlying tone in some pockets of our profession that subscribe to the tenants of micromanagement: the excessive use of control measures, 'by the numbers checklists', redundant reporting procedures, and overwhelming supervision. These are all tools of the bureaucracy, not a profession. As part of his Adaptive Leader Model (ALM), Vandergriff (Vandergriff, 2006) states:

*"in order for the Army to be able to fight and win in COE, or 4th generational environment of warfare the Army must conduct a revolutionary change in the way that senior leaders nurture and protect younger leaders who practice and execute adaptive models of leadership which relies on the application of discretionary decision making at the lowest possible level of leadership."* (Vandergriff, 2006, p. 14)

From the beginning of this argument I've declared, because this is a deeper, more cultural than climatic issue, that the impetus or catalyst must be generated and championed at the highest level of leadership. I was wrong. In order to revolutionize how leaders at the lowest level of the leadership system are empowered to execute their duties and employ discretionary judgment relational trust must be developed between and throughout *all* the levels of the leadership spectrum, the direct, organizational and strategic.

By 'attacking' this change from all three levels of the organizational leadership structure the Army will be creating true professionals from one end of the organization to the other. The relationships between leaders throughout the system will be built on trust. Leaders at the lower end of the direct level of leadership will feel responsible, be motivated and empowered to take on any challenge that the COE brings. Leaders at every level of the organization need to be considered professional Soldiers, engaging in the art and science of warfare, and allowed to exercise risk, judgment, and discretion in their decision making. I'm not advocating that we simply just slap the name "professional" on all leaders in the Army and call it a day. It is quite the contrary. What I'm championing is that all leaders enjoy and be measured against the principals that guide professions. In order to cultivate and advance the values of trust, empowerment, and discretion throughout the entire leadership system, leaders at every level will have to embrace the change and do their part to progress the culture of the organization. Does this require risk at all levels of leadership? Yes, but that is the nature of the profession. In order for this revolutionary change to take shape all three levels must 'buy in' and do their part. For this to be a true cultural change the leaders at the strategic level must codify and directly articulate the values of trust and responsibility, in the same fashion it has with the already existing Seven Army Values. Organizational leaders need to employ these new codified values by advocating and modeling the behavior of trust and empowerment for the direct level leaders to emulate. Finally, for leaders at the lower end of the leadership system

to enjoy the ability to apply discretion in their decision making, be empowered to act and not have their decisions questioned, they must embody the values, norms and espoused behaviors of the PME and consistently ask themselves the question: “should I be trusted to make an autonomous decision?” Finally, all levels of the leadership system will be accountable for their decisions, because with responsibility and authority, comes accountability, but now that accountability will be based on the trust that has already been established between leaders throughout the organizational hierarchy.

## CONCLUSION

Due to the fluidity and dynamic nature of warfare in the 21st century it is critical that the U.S. Army breakout of its bureaucratic nature and fully adopt the ideals of a professional culture in a holistic sense. This cultural shift from a bifurcated bureaucratic-professional organization to one of homogenously applied professional norms and privileges must be felt at all levels of the leadership hierarchy within the organization. More specifically, the ideal of discretionary judgment cannot be maintained by only a portion of the leadership system, but instead it must be applied throughout, to every professional member of the organization. Then and only then will the value of trust permeate throughout the organization, lower level leaders will feel empowered in their decision making and the Army’s ability to fully operate and succeed over the full spectrum of operations in the contemporary operating environment be fully realized. The need for each decision to be analyzed and every bit of available information scrutinized, and direct level leaders be closely supervised vs. mentored and coached is not only unnecessarily bureaucratic, but it’s detrimental to mission accomplishment. Leaders at every level of the organization need to be considered Professionals, engaging in the art of warfare, and allowed to exercise risk, judgment, and decision making abilities in accordance with the Army’s Professional Military Ethic.

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## Endnotes

1. Charles C. Krulak (1999). “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War”. *Marines Magazine*.
2. Quote by George C. Marshal in 1944.
3. Adapted from the vignette entitled “Anger and Frustration: A Recipe for Unethical Behavior” form 1. Ethics and the Military Leader: A collection of real world ethical dilemmas. *U.S. Army Command and General Staff College*, Published at Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2009. p. 9-11.
4. Draft Army Regulation (AR) 525-XX, Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN) Fundamentals, Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), 12 MAY 2010
5. FM 3-0, *Operations*, HQDA, February, 2008
6. FM 7-0, *Training the Force*, HQDA, December 2008
7. FM 6-22, *Army Leadership, Competent, Confident, and Agile*, HQDA, October 2006
8. From the 21 SEP 2010 Draft version of the “The Profession of Arms After 10 Years of Persistent Conflict” Pamphlet produced by the Center for the Army Professional Ethic, Combined Arms Center, TRADOC
9. This is the underlying theme in the book on the Professional Military Ethic and the Profession

of Arms: Snider, D. (Dir.), Matthews, L. (Ed.) (2005). *The Future of the Army Profession*, (2nd Ed). Boston: McGraw-Hill

10. The various obligations and commitments that Soldiers must affirm too are fully articulated and described in FM 1, *The Army*, HQDA, June 2005

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# Who is a Professional?

by Maj. Michael Thiesfeld

Does experience, educational background, military occupational specialty or rank matter when determining if a Soldier is considered a “professional?” While some scholars and educators have defined certain specific attributes and characteristics that contribute to the make-up of a “professional” military Soldier, the label professional is too often referred to those in the Commissioned Officer ranks as well as certain select senior Non-Commissioned Officer ranks. The lower enlisted corps of Soldiers are typically left out of the conversation due to multiple reasons despite the fact that each of them recite “I am a professional” in the Soldiers Creed.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss whether or not those attributes (educational experience, rank, etc.) matter when defining what a military professional is. While most educators and scholars, such as Anthony E. Hartle, Samuel P. Huntington, focus their attention and research on the Officer Corps, they will passively mention those in the Non-commissioned officer (NCO) ranks, minus those senior NCO’s (Command Sergeants Major, Master Sergeants and Sergeant First Class). In this paper I will argue that our military and society have coined the term professional to describe our military as a whole, because the term is blind to rank. They do this through such documents as the NCO Creed and the Soldier’s Creed. Furthermore, I will discuss how those above mentioned authors spend too much time comparing and defining the term professional through the eyes of the civilian sector, while they tend to ignore the fact that all Soldiers in the Army are professionals as they are part of a “Professional Army.” What this paper will not reflect is that I am blind to the very fact that commissioned officers possess many if not all of the attributes of being a professional as described by Hartle and Huntington. The attempt is to look deeper and provide an argument that the term professional should not be limited to one group, but rather be applied with an open mind as it relates to our current operational environment and through common sense. Furthermore, though I will reference Anthony Hartle quite often in this paper, the intent is not to create the impression that this is a book review or critique on Hartle’s book.

First and foremost, the members of the United States Army belong to an institution expressed as a professional organization. As stated in Army Field Manual (FM) 1, “The purpose of any profession is to serve society by effectively delivering a necessary and useful specialized service. Professions create their own standards of performance and codes of ethics to maintain their effectiveness.”<sup>1</sup> Therefore, regardless of time in service, rank or experience, the expectations and standards require each individual Soldier to be a professional and to conduct himself in such a manner which epitomizes the standards, rules, Warrior Ethos and Army Values. Hartle points out in “Morale Issues in Military Decision Making”, that not all Officers can be considered “professionals.” Snider and Matthews reported that in a study, “the officer corps shared basic Army values, but members did not share an understanding of the Army as a profession; they had little of a profession’s common language, conceptions or identity. Many saw themselves as employees.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore, with each individual belonging to a professional institution, the question to be answered is, does membership grant the title? I will now discuss Anthony Hartle’s viewpoint regarding who is a professional and what characteristics are “required” to be called a professional as it relates to education, position and rank.

In Hartle’s “Morale Issues in Military Decision Making”, a chapter is dedicated to discussing what a military professional is. Hartle argues in his book that “under any authoritative definition available, a distinct segment of the armed forces clearly qualifies as a professional group... The senior non-commissioned officer corps meets most of that criterion.”<sup>3</sup> Hartle further argues his opinion on “what constitutes” a professional by stating that “the sense of the term ‘professional’ refers to an occupation involving advance study and specialization.”<sup>4</sup> Hartle attempts to support his opinion through referencing the works of Samuel Huntington. Huntington contends that “career” military service possesses all three characteristics (expertise, corporateness, and responsibility) and

that they are necessary in order to achieve the status of a profession.<sup>5</sup> Hartle (through Huntington) addresses each characteristic primarily through the commissioned officer corps. He argues that a professional is an “expert” in his field of work and points out in chapter 2 that “members of most professions have a diversified basic education supplemented by a formal, substantial period of advanced education.”<sup>6</sup> This statement is obviously biased towards the commissioned officer corps because most officers possess a bachelor’s degree (or can be commissioned without one with the requirement that they will obtain one shortly after) and throughout their career they will have both numerous advanced military and civilian educational opportunities. In contrast, most enlisted Soldiers do not possess a bachelor’s degree; rather most will enter with a high school diploma or equivalent and some will possess at least an associate’s degree.

However, if we fall back on Hartle’s statement that senior commissioned officers meet “most” of the criteria to be considered a “professional,” it is worth noting that 90% of the graduates *at* the Sergeant Major’s Academy (USASMA), graduate (from the course) with a college degree.<sup>7</sup> To me, this means that not all senior NCO’s possess a college degree, yet they (those in attendance at the Sergeant Majors Academy) are still considered the cream of the crop in their field and the best among their peers with equal rank. So does possessing a degree really determine a “professional” status? Of course, it is a safe assumption that most of the students at the USAMA possess the expertise, responsibility and in some cases, the corporateness described by both Huntington and Hartle, but does “failing” to possess an advance degree make a Sergeant Major any less of a professional? I would say not.

Moreover, the argument put forth by the authors, that the commissioned officer corps possesses advanced degrees, are able, if selected, to attend advanced military education, such as the Intermediate Level Education at the Command and General Staff College and the War College is misleading. This is because these courses, though designed to further educate the officer in military history, tactics, leadership and policies, they are provided primarily for officers who are in the position for promotion or higher leadership positions. The point here is that the authors make no argument connecting “professional” with positions of leadership. I am not entirely blind to the fact that education, advance civilian degrees, etc. all contribute to or are considered when competing for command positions or key positions, but I would argue that tactical experience, responsibility and a much wider range of qualities, such as the ability to communicate and understand basic foreign language skills, decision making, executing orders, and interpersonal skills are needed and desired aside from a degree. As a branch manager told me, when selecting someone for promotion, possessing a Master’s Degree is a *consideration*, not a discriminating factor. My point is that I believe that Hartle and Huntington are caught up in what it takes to be a leader, a commander, etc. rather than fully describing what it means to be a true professional.

To further support this thesis, consider what the United States Army says about being a “professional” when comparing it to our civilian counterparts. In Field Manual (FM) 1, it states, “the purpose of any profession is to serve society by effectively delivering a necessary and useful specialized service. To full fill those societal needs, professions—such as medicine, law, the clergy and the military—develop and maintain distinct bodies of specialized knowledge.”<sup>8</sup> FM 1 continues by describing other qualities, some similar to what Huntington and Hartle state, such as “possessing expertise through formal, theoretical and practical education.”<sup>9</sup> Though it discusses the education piece, there is not a distinction regarding *whom* they are describing, which is quite different from the opinion presented by Hartle. FM 1, 1-46 does address the non-commissioned officer corps and commissioned officer corps as an “aspect” that distinguishes the American profession of arms as a profession, but again, it (the considerable authority and responsibility granted to them early in their careers and the military professional education and development programs they are sent to) is only an aspect, not an “end all.”<sup>10</sup>

At this point, I would like to discuss the population that makes up a majority of our U.S. Army – the enlisted ranks, and to take on the argument of whether or not our younger Soldiers can or do meet the requirements set forth by Hartle and Huntington in being a “professional.” According to the FY05 Army Profile of September 2005, enlisted Soldiers and NCO’s make up approximately

83% of the force (approximately 555,993 Soldiers).<sup>11</sup> While the focus by Hartle is primarily on the Officer Corps and senior NCO's, there is a disturbing absence referencing the remaining force, our enlisted Soldiers. As Hartle states in chapter 2, page 20, "officer's, by and large, possesses to the greatest degree the characteristics usually cited for a profession." He further states, "Officers constitute a clearly defined group, though not all officers are professionals with respect to expertise and career commitment."<sup>12</sup> I agree with Hartle on these points, but the issue I have is the absence and lack of focus on our enlisted Soldiers. To say that lower ranking Soldiers "do not acquire and apply a significant body of theoretical knowledge and that they lack self-direction and self-regulation"<sup>13</sup> is an insult to those Soldiers, particularly our combat veterans of Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. More times than not, our young Soldiers, some with less than one year of service are placed in situations which require those characteristics that Hartle claims they do not possess. Young Soldiers are patrolling on foot, engaging the populations, making life and death decisions in a matter of seconds, and are often conducting these activities without a Commissioned Officer looking over their shoulder. True, there is probably a NCO accompanying them or a young Lieutenant as well, but the point here is that the individual with the advanced degree is not necessarily always present. But I will now address those three qualities stated earlier and apply them to our junior officers (mainly Lieutenants) and junior NCO's (E5-E-6).

Experience. The majority of the individuals in this group of junior officers and NCOs most likely have less than two years of service or are quite likely to be straight out of Advance Individual Training (AIT) or out of the Basic Officer Course (OBC). In terms of years, combat tours, etc., they obviously do not possess the experience "required" by Huntington and Hartle. But I would argue that what they lack in "time" they more than exceed the requirement through the number of patrols, combat situations, etc., which they may face over a year-long combat tour. These young Soldiers are doing the leg work and seeing combat and the Counter Insurgency (COIN) fight first hand. Further supporting my argument is Field Manual 3-0, which states that "it is the Soldier who accomplishes the mission. Their character and competence represent the foundation of a values-based, trained and ready Army. Soldiers train to perform tasks while operating alone or in groups. Soldiers and leaders develop the ability to exercise mature judgment and initiative under stress."<sup>14</sup> What this brings out is that our institution demands and relies on all of our Soldiers to use judgment and make critical decisions. And they conduct it without carrying around a bachelor's degree certificate in their cargo pocket.

Next is Responsibility, or as Hartle describes, "Social responsibility." Hartle states, "The abilities of a professional officer corps are essential to the security of national interests in a world of shrinking resources..." FM 1 states, "The military serves a collective client, the Nation."<sup>15</sup> Again, there is no distinction made in FM 1 regarding who is responsible to protect our nation and its interests. Rather it alludes to a collective effort by the entire institution rather than burdening one group within it.

Finally, Corporateness. Hartle discusses at length many attributes that the officer corps has which meet Huntington's definition of being "corporate." Hartle reiterates Huntington's opinion that "the professional world of the officer tends to encompass an unusually high proportion of his activities. He normally lives and works apart from the rest of society. The line between him and the layman or civilian is publicly symbolized by uniforms and insignia of rank."<sup>16</sup>

Hartle does admit during this portion that the definition of a military professional is not always clear. However, it is based more on comparing commissioned officers with "sub categories" of commissioned officers in "supporting roles" such as medical, dental, chaplains, lawyers, etc.- those military officers who possess a "profession" but are "supporting" the military. Furthermore, he poses the question whether or not a Navy Ensign could be considered a professional, alluding to whether or not time in service plays a part in defining the term itself. What is again troubling about this part of chapter 2 is the statement that "lower ranking Soldiers "do not acquire and apply a significant body of theoretical knowledge and that they lack self-direction and self-regulation."<sup>17</sup> It is another sign that this author is clearly biased towards the officer corps, and the willful neglect of our enlisted ranks is a shame. As stated in FM 1, "First and foremost, the Army is Soldiers. No

matter how much the tools of warfare improve; it is the Soldier who uses them to accomplish their mission. Soldiers committed to selfless service to the Nation are the centerpieces of Army organizations.”<sup>18</sup> This statement does not refer to officers, non-commissioned officers, doctorates or those in possession of a master’s degree. It is about Soldiers, every one of them.

Having generally discussed the issue of rank, time in service, military occupational specialty and how they factor into the determination of being a “professional” in the previous portion of this paper, I would like to further the discussion briefly. The first area I would like to discuss is whether or not rank and time in service are a factor in being a “professional.” While Anthony Hartle focuses his attention on the officer ranks, I will center my attention on the enlisted ranks and argue why they can and should be considered professionals. In chapter 2, Hartle wrote that “The senior non-commissioned officer corps meets most of that criterion (of being a professional).<sup>19</sup> With senior non-commissioned officer primarily being in the ranks of E-7 (Sergeant First Class) and above, there is little to be said in Hartle’s book about those non-commissioned officers of lower rank. A flaw in Hartle’s statement can possibly be drawn when one considers the definition of a leader found in FM 1, “as influencing people-by providing purpose, direction, and motivation”<sup>20</sup> and compare it to the definition of an E5 (Sergeant), “Typically commands a squad (9 to 10 Soldiers) and considered to have the greatest impact on Soldiers because SGTs oversee them in their daily tasks. In short, SGTs set an example and the standard for Privates to look up to, and live up to.”<sup>21</sup> The flaw is that Hartle’s argument is contrary to what the United States Army believes. The Army places responsibility and leadership on young leaders, and demands quick and accurate decision making from an individual who is not “senior” and may have, due to current rules, been in the Army for only 34 months or even less time (18 months with a waiver). The point here is that, while Hartle is drawing on a definition from educators, scholars and the civilian sector, the Army is calling a young man or woman a leader. Therefore, negating the young NCO from the discussion of being a “professional” fails to fully capture an essential element of our professional Army, and without bringing that to the table, he again does disservice to a proud institution (the NCO Corps).

As a branch to the previous paragraph, let’s now discuss documents and publications which further support the thesis that the definition of professional by Hartle continues to miss the mark. The first document to discuss is the Soldiers Creed. Introduced in 2003, it has become the standard creed of all Soldiers in the United States Army. Within the creed, there is a sentence that states, “I am a Professional.” Though just merely reciting this phrase does not make an individual a professional, it is aspirational as the statement echoes “the nobility of purpose within each member of the Armed Forces and provides deep personal meaning to all who serve.”<sup>22</sup> That statement, along with the rest of the creed, is memorized, echoed, and spoken throughout the U.S. Army. If the U.S. Army followed the logic behind Huntington, would that phrase have been included? Keeping in mind that even our newest Soldiers, those in Initial Entry Training, are required to know the creed, it reflects the expectations that our senior leaders have – that we are all professionals. “Embedded in the Soldier’s Creed is the Warrior Ethos – the very essence of what it means to be a Soldier: I will always place the mission first; I will never accept defeat, I will never quit, and I will never leave a fallen comrade.”<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, “the Warrior’s Ethos describes the frame of mind of the Professional Soldier.”<sup>24</sup> These two passages from one of the United States Army’s capstone field manuals clearly describe and support the concept that all members of the United States Army are considered professionals. Those serving in the U.S. Army are members of a professional institution, the profession of arms.

The next document is the NCO Creed. Before discussing, I would like to go back to Hartle’s statement that “senior non-commissioned officers possess most of the qualities.” As early as obtaining the rank of Corporal (E4), NCO’s follow this creed. Therefore, the “group” I am speaking about may have only 18 months of experience, based upon our current promotion policy and procedures.

While each branch of service has an NCO creed, not everyone uses the term or concept of being a professional. For instance, the United States Marine Corps has two creeds, one for NCO’s (Corporals and Sergeants) and one for Staff NCO’s (E6 and above.) While the Marine’s NCO

Creed does not use the term professional, it does address “being leader of men.”<sup>25</sup> In Army terms or way of thought, being a leader would equal having a degree of professionalism and of being a professional. The second creed, the United States Marine Corps Staff NCO Creed states “I am a member of the most unique group of professional military practitioners in the world” as well as “my professional and personal demeanor shall be such that I may take pride if my juniors emulate me.”<sup>26</sup> Other services such as the Air Force and Navy do not specifically mention the word professional; however, the verbiage does reinforce the strong ties this corps has with being a professional.

As for the United States Army, the NCO creed explicitly and fully embodies the concept of being a professional. The Creed draws its roots heavily from the Professional Army Ethic and reflects a proud organization, blind to educational background, experience and time in service (as it relates to Hartle’s discussion). “No one is more professional than I” is the creed of *all* NCO’s, regardless of rank, promoting a way of life and standards for even the most junior NCO. The Army’s “Year of the NCO” clearly supports that all NCO’s are professionals. It’s “vision” states that “Today’s NCO is an innovative, competent and professional enlisted leader grounded in heritage, values and tradition.” Furthermore, it states, “Today’s NCOs are accomplished military professionals who have combined civilian and military educational opportunities to become the Army’s preeminent body of leadership.” With that being said, Huntington’s and Hartle’s primary focus on the officer corps remains flawed since it does not adhere to what our senior leaders feel and believe regarding the NCO Corps and its creed.

The definition of being a professional as discussed by Hartle is accurate, well defined and logical. However, the argument laid out by both Huntington and Hartle failed to fully address the full-spectrum of being a professional, that is, who the true professionals are. If one would go by the logic that an individual needs to be a careerist and intellectually, technically and educationally robust, one would have to eliminate a good portion of those who are serving. While some company First Sergeants may have a college degree, many do not. This fact doesn’t eliminate them from being considered a professional. First Sergeants obviously possess a wide range of experience, knowledge and skill which warrant being placed into a leadership experience.

Newly commissioned officers may have a college degree and entry-level military training/education. With that pedigree, they would not fit the model expressed by Huntington in being a professional. However, these young men and women are placed almost immediately into positions of leadership, deploying into combat operations and entrusted to make sound decisions and conduct themselves in a manner equivalent to those of much higher rank and experience.

The young private, as I mentioned previously, may hold a high school degree at the most, but he/she too is often placed in situations where rapid decision making means life and death. Furthermore, from the very first phase of indoctrination into the professional Army, a trainee is exposed to the Army Values and Warrior Ethos. The mission of Initial Entry Training as outlined by TRADOC 350-6 is “to transform volunteers into Soldiers who have demonstrated the requisite character and values, possess a warrior spirit, are competent and confident in their warfighting and technical skills, and who can successfully contribute to their first unit of assignment.” Furthermore, the following “endstate(s)” are “(1) Understand, accept, and live by the Army Values and Warrior Ethos. (2) Possess self-discipline, and be adaptable and flexible. (3) Be capable of identifying and solving problems appropriate to their position and responsibility. (4) Willingly subordinate self to the mission and fellow Soldiers. And finally, “By the completion of IET, every Soldier should know the Army’s standards and comply with them because of their full adoption of Army Values and their embodiment within the individual Soldier.”<sup>27</sup> Though these are minimal requirements for a new Soldier, the essence of those requirements sound similar to the requirements discussed by Hartle that “military professionals accept service as their primary duty and defense of the constitution of the United States as their calling, conduct themselves at all times as persons of honor whose integrity, loyalty and courage are exemplary, develop and maintain the highest possible level of professional and skill, and take full responsibility for their actions.”<sup>28</sup>

In summary, the United States Army is a professional organization. It is comprised of individuals and professionals at every level who are required to possess the qualities and attributes defined

by Hartle and Huntington. However long or short an individual serves does not limit what a professional is. Their educational background, both military and civilian does not matter. Each Soldier, regardless of rank and experience, will hold a specialized skill, go through a series of training and educational phases in order to achieve that skill and finally, they are all held to uphold and live by published set of codes.

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## **Part 7: The Business Ethic of Professional Leadership**



# Summary of the Business Ethics Breakout Session

by **Chaplain (Maj.) Ryan Sarenpa**

The business ethics breakout session was led Colonel Bob Ulin, U.S. Army (retired), and Mr. Peter deSilva. In addition to his military career, Mr. Ulin has had a variety of experience in the private sector defense industry, and is presently the Chief Executive Officer of the CGSC Foundation. Peter deSilva is the CEO and President of UMB Financial and Chief Operating Officer of UMB Bank.

Mr. Ulin made the first presentation. The subject of his paper, entitled, “Highly Skilled Barbarians,” is the critical importance of ethical leadership in the business community. The title of his paper is a reference to a quote made some thirty years ago by the President of Johns Hopkins University. “The failure to rally around a set of values means that universities are turning out potentially highly skilled barbarians.” In his presentation, Mr. Ulin reflected on an experience he had as the Vice President for Government Services of a private company. The Chief Operating Officer of the company was a brilliant individual - he was, in fact, a Mensa. Although he had a very high IQ, he also had a very low EQ. That is, he was not emotionally intelligent. Nor was he ethical. He regularly lied, bullied his subordinates, and projected an attitude of arrogance over everyone. He would not take advice, nor would he admit fault. While the company had a list of stated values, his only operating principle seemed to be that the end justified the means. Ironically, he led his company to the brink of failure before he was fired.

Mr. deSilva’s paper is entitled “Examining Ethics in the Face of Great Challenge: Lessons in Principled Leadership from the Financial Crisis.” The subject of this paper is the importance of operating by principle. Mr. deSilva asserts that each of us is an “ethical mosaic” - shaped by our parents, religious training, careers, experience, and a multiplicity of relationships. Some of our more formal influences include lists of rules, from home, school, or church. However, there are not enough rules to cover all of life, so more importantly we form principles which guide us. These govern each of us in the hundreds of decisions we make every day. However, there are forces that work against holding true to our ethic. Mr. deSilva lists three: expediency, performance expectations, and the desire for success. All of these forces can move us to compromise our principles. Using the example of the economic crisis, Mr. deSilva use the positive example of UMB financial to emphasize the importance of operating on principle. UMB refused to get involved in sub-prime lending, even though outside advisors pressed them to do so due to its huge short-term successes. After the crisis hit, UMB refused the government-sponsored bailout, again under tremendous pressure. As a result deSilva reports, UMB financial now stands as one of the most solid institutions in the nation.

The question and answer session proved to be lively, as many engaging topics were broached. Mr. Ulin emphasized the need to focus on ethical leadership: hire for talent, train for skill. That is, character and leadership competency should be first priority in business, while technical knowledge and competency is easier to build up. Mr. deSilva added that leadership must be ethical, and that it must communicate its decisions to its employees in terms of principle. It was important for UMB financial to tell its employees just why they would not get involved in sub-prime lending and other opportunities. Other issues covered included the warning signs of ethically compromised institutions, the danger of a zero-defects mentality, the virtue of a long-term investment viewpoint, and the danger of judging business opportunities by first appearance.



# Examining Ethics in the Face of Great Challenge Lessons in Principled Leadership from the Financial Crisis

by Peter J. deSilva

President and Chief Operating Officer UMB Financial Corporation,

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer UMB Bank

*With assistance from Mandie Nelson and Dr. Jerry Hannah*

There exists an unspoken expectation upon businesses, government entities, nonprofit organizations and the individuals in these organizations and that is of *trustworthiness*. In other words, the behavior of an organization is a result of that organization's DNA. As with human beings, each organization's DNA is made up of different strands and combinations of strands. How they treat their clients, associates and the others with which they interact with are driven by this corporate or organizational DNA.

Individuals choose to do business with an organization or associate within an organization because of the explicit or implicit promises made and the expectation that the results will meet or exceed their expectations. The local retail store accepts returned merchandise as promised. The local post office finds a misplaced package and locates the intended recipient. The local social service agency is transparent about the spending of the funds they receive.

And, while it is an unfortunate event for an individual to experience unethical behavior from an organization (or its people), consider the magnitude of the impact on that person when a large industry and different levels of government show blatant disregard for what is fair, just and proper? When the unraveling of the U.S. economy peaked in 2008, a glaring lack of accountability and transparency among many of the players became apparent. What may have been less apparent, but arguably just as important, was the role that strong, principled leadership could and should have played in avoiding this difficult period in our country's history.

To assess the importance of the points made above, it is essential to understand the backdrop and context of the recent past.

The start of the first decade of the new millennium dawned brightly. The United States, and indeed the world, seemed to be moving forward in a generally positive direction. The national economy had performed very well in the prior ten years and, in fact, between 1993 and 2000, the United States exhibited the best economic indicators of the prior three decades. According to the Brookings Institute, in the year 2000 U.S. economic expansion surpassed in length the expansion of the 1960s and thus became the longest on record. With real economic growth at about 4.5 percent and unemployment hovering around 4 percent, all seemed right with the economy and the country appeared to be on the right track.

In that same year, a peaceful transfer of political power was witnessed in the United States. This time though it was after a long, drawn out legal fight as to who actually won the 2000 presidential election. The power of American democratic traditions and the respect for the judicial process had once again beaten back the specter of potential chaos and potential uprising. It is against this generally serene backdrop that the horrific events of September 11, 2001 occurred. The shock of this unprovoked attack on our homeland caused convulsions in every corner of the globe. Some of these impacts were immediately clear, like the President's new policy of preemption and the war in Afghanistan, while others took many more years to come clearly into focus.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11th, the U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) took aggressive action to prevent an economic slowdown from becoming an economic meltdown by further reducing short-term interest rates and flooding the financial system with liquidity. At the time, few economists argued with the actions taken by the Fed in the days following September 11th. However, as the years passed and rates stayed low for an extraordinary period of time, a growing chorus of

economists warned of the long-term impact of low interest rates and the resulting near zero cost of capital. Many economists talked about the building bubble in real estate valuations, but any worry seemed to be a long way off as the economy continued to turn in generally strong performance.

At the time, many questions were prevalent. Would this extraordinarily low interest rate environment cause investors to take imprudent risks with this cheap money? What would be the long term consequences on the economy? How would the U.S. get back to a more “normal” interest rate environment? Like so many times before, the long term consequences would not be understood for almost a decade to come.

It is with this historical framework in mind that we examine the role that leadership integrity and character plays in both life and business. We look at how it can be either compromised or upheld as pressures push and pull in different, often opposing, directions. Leaders are constantly exposed to numerous challenges. What characteristics cause some leaders to stay true to their own ethical path while others choose a different and sometimes more precarious course? In this paper, we will use the financial economic crisis as a backdrop for this discussion. The intent of this discussion is not to present a specific conclusion, but rather to consider the forces at work and ponder how they might alter your critical decision-making process.

## **INFLUENCING AN EVER-EVOLVING ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**

Each of us is a mosaic. We are the product of the unique experiences we each have throughout a lifetime of learning, observing, growing and overcoming personal and professional challenges. We begin to assemble our ethical mosaic at a very young age, principally from the lessons taught to us by our parents. As we mature, other forces begin to influence our thinking about who we are and what we stand for. These forces can include siblings, religious leaders, friends, teachers, politicians, athletes, historical figures among others. Each of these participants in our lives imparts – either knowingly or unknowingly – a piece of them on to us. This happens as we observe their actions and begin to synthesize those actions within the context of our own experiences. With each observation we continue to knowingly or unknowingly build our own *personal ethical code*. This ethical code is a primary determinant in our decision-making criteria — especially in the face of challenging, sometimes opposing forces.

The nature of this mosaic is a very personal journey. While some adamantly reject certain influences that do not fit into their personal ethical mosaic, others embrace these same influences and add it to their personal ethical code. Each of us can identify with many people who influenced our personal and professional development.

From my own experience, it was largely my parents who influenced my character development. While their love was unwavering, in many respects some uncompromising expectations existed. There were expectations of doing the right thing, being honest and always acting with the utmost of integrity. While I surely let them down from time to time during my formative years, there was a clear understanding as to how I was to conduct myself. This embedded a life-long inspiration of hard work in an attempt to comply with the standards they set forth and remains core to the characteristics which I value both personally and professionally.

## **FOLLOWING THE RULES AND PRINCIPLES**

Throughout the ages, a mix of principles and rules has been developed to guide human behavior. Millions of individual rules have been written in an attempt to prescribe proper behavior. Some rules are written while others are dictated by an implied understanding. These rules attempt to set the parameters for societal actions by imposing firm expectations with specific consequences for non-adherence. For example, the 281 rules contained within the Code of Hammurabi, or the Ten Commandments dictate specifics as to what people must do to remain righteous. The Code of Hammurabi clearly articulates that ‘If anyone commits a robbery and is caught, he shall be put to death.’ The Ten Commandments operate in a very similar manner by setting a very specific code

for moral behavior. In both cases, the rules clearly define expected societal behavior. However, throughout history, codes have continually been broken and the consequences endured. As Henry David Thoreau once said, “Any fool can make a rule, and any fool will mind it.”

By contrast, some organizations counter the tendency to “break” rules by operating with a tight set of principles which can allow for less specific “rulemaking” but still provide a context for actions and decisions. Principles attempt to guide actions and can be left to interpretation by individuals. In contrast to the two “codes” outlined above, the Declaration of Independence firmly declares that most important and basic right of all Americans which is “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all Men are created equal.” In this case, the document provides for a strong “principle” which seeks to firmly guide the establishment of a specific moral code, but it does not attempt to write all of the rules associated with the principle. If the founders had tried to spell out each and every associated rule or law, the length of the Declaration of Independence could easily be in excess of the tens of thousands of pages, exceeding that of the current U.S. Tax Code. This simple statement of principle should be easily understood and yet wars have been fought over this seemingly simple principle - such as in the case of the U.S. Civil War which was dedicated to the abolition of slavery.

Understandably, people are subjected to a mix of principles and rules within their lifetime and daily routines. Some we follow religiously, others we do not. And, from an organizational stand-point, when presented with such real-life scenarios such as opportunity, mediocrity, and crisis, the influence of leadership weighs heavily on how principles and rules are used and balanced.

## **COMPROMISING FORCES AND CONSEQUENCES OF PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP**

Title or rank does not make a leader. Effective leaders possess a variety of skills that can include strategic, managerial, organizational, communication, and people skills among others. Their powers of persuasion are critically important as are one’s intellectual, emotional, physical, motivational, and ethical presence.

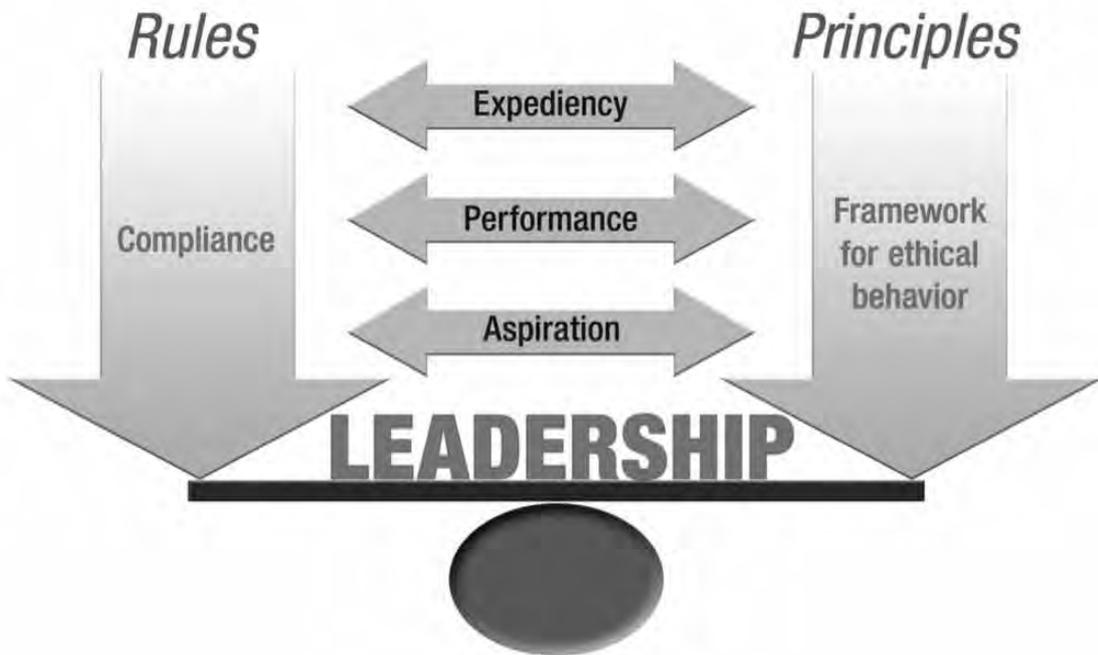
So, what happens when each individual and their unique mosaic comes together within an organizational context? How do leaders emerge and influence the ethical framework of others? And, what result does that have on the overall cultural environment and decision-making framework?

There are a number of forces that challenge and can compromise ethical leadership. The first of these is the desire for *expediency*. We live in a fast-paced world where patience no longer appears to be a virtue, and it is indeed even frowned upon. Real-time communication and quick decision making is more necessary than ever just to keep pace. In our technology-driven society, there is also an expectation of completing any task extremely quickly. There are countless stories of people trying to “make a fast buck.” And, it could almost be considered a common scenario for a company’s new CEO to take over the reins of the business and quickly cut costs, compromise associates, abandon the community and then sell the organization at a handsome premium and receive an exorbitant pay day. The business landscape is littered with these examples. The desire for quick results is one of the influences that can compromise one’s ethical framework to achieve a short-term outcome. Not everyone will be influenced by the “short-cut” approach, but many will be tempted.

A second influence is the impact that unrealistic *performance* expectations have on actions. Limits on personal and organizational performance are constantly being stretched—leading to pressure to get better, move quicker and deliver better results. In an organizational context, there is an assessment of how much risk should be taken to achieve a certain performance level. An old axiom describes that the greater the risk the greater the reward. While this is in fact true, the reverse is also true in that the greater the risk, the more painful the downside if the risk proves to be an incorrect one. It can be tempting to take outsized risks in a performance-oriented culture as there is the expectation of outsized performance. This expectation of superior performance at any cost has proven to be a contributing factor to the financial crisis.

The third influence is the effect that one’s own *aspiration* can have on compromising an ethical code. Everyone has aspirations whether it is a desire to climb Mount Everest or perhaps to

compete in the Olympics. And while in each of these cases it would be difficult to take a short-cut to success due to the intense training required, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that some may try. Such was the scenario involving competitor Rosie Ruiz during the 84th Boston Marathon in 1980 when her aspirations drove her to do whatever was needed to ensure that she finished first. As detailed in a July 1980 article in *Running Times Magazine*, “Apparently, Ruiz had dropped out of the race, hopped on the subway, got off about a mile from the finish line, and ran in from there.” While Ruiz was initially recognized as the winner, she was later stripped of the title following an investigation by the Boston Athletic Association. Not only did her personal aspirations ruin her reputation, but she took away the well deserved glory from the second place finisher. Along the route to achieve an aspiration of any scale there will surely be great challenges to one’s moral compass. In any event, the personal and professional aspirations that one has can certainly challenge the route and the outcome.



*Fig. 1 The simple chart above depicts the relationship between rules and principles and how the forces of expediency, performance and one’s aspirations create tension between principles and rules. As shown at the bottom, effective leadership must balance these opposing forces and the tension that they create.*

**WHAT EVOLVING TO A PRINCIPLE-BASED LEADER CAN MEAN TO AN ORGANIZATION**

Following the unraveling of the U.S. economy, Robert J. Thomas in *Talent Management Magazine* said in December of 2009, “We hunger for ethical leaders. We want to be led by men and women who know what the right thing to do is and then actually do it. The evidence can be found in virtually every organization’s survey of employee engagement. The highest scores routinely go to the men and women who can be relied upon to do what they say, who grasp the difference between legal and illegal – and who have the courage of their convictions to make difficult choices – even when those choices put their own well-being at risk.”

## **A CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP – EXAMINING TRIGGER POINTS OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS**

Drawing from my own experience—the undeniably significant challenge of dealing first hand with the financial crisis and the resulting Great Recession makes an incredible case study for these topics.

In the role of Chief Operating Officer of UMB Financial Corporation—a 97-year-old organization recognized by its customers, associates, communities and shareholders for its time-tested principles and practices—there are many lessons to be gleaned in how doing what is right, and not what is popular, has guided the company’s decisions and actions. At times, this adherence to time-tested principles made the company look different, sometimes even out of step with those chasing the latest fads and trends, making it the target of criticism at times from those seeking expedient results.

However, even as the economy began to unravel and the reputation of the financial industry was being tarnished, the company’s leaders continued to follow their own set of principles which coincided with the company’s historical ethical barometer. Ethics cannot be legislated. Rather, it was this character of UMB leadership and the strict adherence to a long-held ethical code that dictated how this company emerged from the great challenge it faced in even better shape than when the crisis began.

The story of UMB Financial Corporation is a success story in the best tradition of American free enterprise. From a storefront bank in Kansas City, Mo., with first-day deposits of \$1,100 in 1913, it has grown to become a diversified financial services holding company with over \$11 Billion in total assets.

The company has been built in a very deliberate fashion, adhering to a few key principles during good times and bad. For example, it adheres to a long-held belief that it is not proper to lend money to those who cannot afford to pay it back. In this case, the principle derives from the fact that lending money to someone who cannot afford to pay it back results in both the borrower and the lender in a worse position than if neither of them ever entered into the transaction.

Throughout history and as the industry began re-engineering classic financial products to drive greater profits (and compensation levels for executives), UMB was faced with pressure to adjust its business model to seek quicker, more dramatic gains. By many, UMB was portrayed as maybe doing a disservice by not participating in sub-prime lending or other practices that were yielding premiums for investors and access to loans to almost anyone who walked through the door. The decision to adhere to the long-held conservative business model rather than chasing lucrative fads did not necessarily make UMB the envy of Wall Street.

Not deterred by forces related to expediency, performance or aspiration, UMB leadership and the board of directors concluded that while the company might have increased earnings in the short term if it had participated in the sub-prime phenomenon, the longer-term health of the organization was more important than short-term profits. There was also a true sense that this house of cards—sub-prime mortgages and risky loans—was not sustainable and would eventually fall with devastating consequences. Instead, the organization remained dedicated to its core constituents and to a set of core principles about what was right; this allowed UMB to come through the crisis stronger while unfortunately, failed banks across the continent left behind the carnage of ruined lives and careers.

So what caused UMB to resist the temptation of participating in what was popular at the time while so many others fell for it? It all started with a set of time-tested principles and adherence to principled leadership.

## **RELYING ON TIME-TESTED PRINCIPLES AND INTEGRITY**

Looking back at the fall of Wall Street and Main Street beginning in 2007, the origin of this meltdown can be traced back to what was likely a noble cause of fulfilling the American dream

of home ownership. In 1994, Congress established a goal to raise national home ownership from roughly 64 percent to 67.5 percent of households by 2000. This essentially gave ‘permission’ for the mortgage industry to get creative with new products such as no requirement for a down payment on loans, introductory teaser interest rates and limited or no documentation as to the ability of the borrower to repay the debt. This continued lowering of credit underwriting standards was the genesis of the mushrooming problem.

Why, then, did we have a sub-prime crisis that in its most basic form was a violation of the simple principles held by UMB? The answer is a complex one because human behavior is involved. But, largely, it lies in the fact that there was no rule or law that said that sub-prime loans could not be made. And, new products had been created that seemed to be almost too good to be true and, in fact, that there was a tremendous amount of money to be made. Additionally, there was a concentration of organizations and individuals that did indeed succumb to pressures related to achieving immediate or exorbitant results.

When it all came crashing down, there was plenty of blame to pass around including the federal government, regulators, Wall Street and Main street bankers, rating agencies, the buyers of the synthetic securities and yes, even the borrowers who were looking for an easy way to attain home ownership. Additionally, the large investment banks, many later deemed ‘too big to fail,’ created new ways to spread the risk of these toxic loans by packaging them together and selling these packages of loans to unsuspecting buyers – all while making millions of dollars for their services. When the unraveling of this excessive leverage began in 2007, a glaring lack of accountability and transparency among all the players was apparent. What may have been less apparent, but arguably just as important, was the role principled leadership *should have played* in avoiding such demise of our national and global economy.

While the rules of these financially engineered products certainly could have allowed UMB to pursue these profit generating practices, it was the principles practiced by the leadership and those embedded within the company’s culture that dictated behavior. UMB simply would not succumb to the compromising forces.

By September 17, 2008, the peak was reached and began to quickly and dramatically fall. As the impact of the collapse of Lehman Brothers coupled with the breaking of the buck by the Reserve Fund the following day began to ripple through the financial sector, the entire global financial system essentially came to a halt. This triggered an escalation in money market mutual fund outflows, which caused short-term funding for businesses and municipalities to freeze. At the same time, interbank funding markets became locked while overnight rates reached extraordinarily high levels.

In other words, banks were not lending to one another because of the uncertainty as to the value of the collateral. There was immense pressure during those days associated with each decision—as any misstep could potentially lead to dire consequences beyond which we had experienced before.

The financial system was coming apart. So much so that the federal government quickly stepped in with a number of extraordinary programs to stabilize the system. Largely considered the most controversial of these moves was the establishment of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). TARP was established as a way to inject additional capital into banking and financial institutions that were being forced to write down the value of mortgages and mortgage securities and suffering significant capital shortfalls. Without the creation of the TARP program, it is at least conceivable that the entire financial system might have collapsed.

When TARP was first created, the premise was that the strong banks—those with quality balance sheets and substantial capital levels—as well as the weaker banks should take the offer of cheap government capital. The regulators began pushing even the strong banks to take the money in order to show solidarity with the weaker institutions. Some stronger banks took the government up on their offer, but not UMB. Despite significant pressure from the regulators, UMB did not capitulate and held true to its principles.

Over the ensuing weeks, numerous conversations between UMB’s Board of Directors and senior management were held regarding the TARP program. Temptation? No. Even though the

capital was being offered at an attractive rate, UMB never even considered the offer seriously. The leadership and the board always ended going back to the basic principle of *doing what was right and not what was popular*. From the viewpoint of the leadership representing the reputation of UMB, it was not right to take capital that was not needed just because it was being offered, was cheap and might create additional short-term earnings.

During this time, CEO Mariner Kemper lamented about how it was not right for those that did not need the capital to take it just so that they might be able to earn a few extra dollars. In the end, the decision to pass on TARP was a very good one as the program quickly became tainted and those banks that took it were viewed with great skepticism by the general public.

## **REFLECTING ON LESSONS LEARNED**

Temptation will always exist – and it can lead to catastrophe. Did too many business and government leaders to mention let us down as our economy slipped and collapsed? The answer is obvious, and it is yes. What happened the past two years could have been avoided if leaders had carefully weighed the forces of expediency, performance and aspiration and in the end followed a moral compass to do what was right. Given the magnitude of the economic crisis experienced by our nation and the increasingly complex nature of society, clearly many instances exist where leadership was compromised without regard for potential disastrous outcomes.

But companies like UMB, and leaders like those with whom I work every day, can and do make a difference. In the case of UMB, the DNA of the company was so fully engrained that it prevailed as management made decisions to do what was right, not what was expedient or popular.

At the heart of ethical leadership is the question of what roles values and integrity play. Leadership can be thrust upon someone as in the case of a “battlefield promotion.” Or leadership can be earned by performance. In some cases, even in business, individuals are promoted into leadership positions in advance of their readiness to be so promoted. The results are often disastrous.

The reverse is also true. Incredible outcomes can be accomplished where principled leadership is demonstrated. Mahatma Gandhi had no officially designated authority to lead, and yet he is recognized as one of the great leaders of the 20th century. Is it because of the moral code that he followed that gave him the “right” to lead others? Is it because his cause was just and moral? Was it because of the non-violent approach he took to a complex issue or was it his willingness to die for his cause?

If the logic presented within this paper applies, it can be argued that his incredible leadership stemmed from a steadfast adherence to a core set of principles and an unwavering resistance to compromising forces.

The specifics as to what rules or principles each of us follow every day are as diverse as the mosaic frameworks we each possess. If you aspire to lead, you must adhere to the principles you hold true, remaining acutely aware of how they influence those around you, as well as the DNA of the organization you represent. The betterment – or downfall – of your business, your community, and our society is often at stake.



# Highly Skilled Barbarians

by **Col. Robert R. Ulin**

**U.S. Army, Retired**

**Chief Executive Officer, CGSC Foundation, Inc.**

*“The failure to rally around a set of values means that universities are turning out potentially highly skilled barbarians.”*

— Steven Muller, President, Johns Hopkins University, 1980

Thirty years ago, I picked up a copy of *U.S. News and World Report* and observed the cover story alleging that our universities were turning out highly skilled barbarians. The gist of the article was that our schools were good at developing graduates with an understanding of scientific inquiry and business processes but short on exposing them to values.<sup>1</sup> At the time, I was assigned to the faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. I have never forgotten that headline. Many years later I would have a firsthand experience in the private sector that reinforced that view.

The Army is a values-based organization. It professes and teaches values that stress ethics,<sup>2</sup> honesty, integrity and selfless service, among others. It actively polices its ranks by bringing to justice those who violate the law and seek to discredit the uniform and our armed forces. One could argue that the military services are relatively unique in this regard. It stems from the fact that in the military, values<sup>3</sup> matter, especially for an institution that employs deadly force in the execution of its responsibilities. Army values include: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage. Because there are moral and legal constraints on the use of force and the fact that we must retain the respect and support of the American people, the Army must actively police its ranks to ensure that it remains accountable.

As a human organization, and a very large one at that, the Army has its problems. No matter how much it stresses and teaches values and ethics, some fall short. The My Lai massacre in Vietnam, Abu Ghraib and Haditha in Iraq and other incidents point to the inevitable failure of some Soldiers to do the right thing at all times and in all places. When these unfortunate instances occur, they usually have strategic consequences.

The only reason that the military exists is enshrined in the oath of office to “protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” This protection provided by the military enables the citizens of our country to go about the business of business—to invent, produce and sell goods and services that provide shelter, sustenance and a decent standard of living for their families and community.

But what about businesses in the private sector, are they any more or less ethical than the military? I would argue that because of the Army’s constant attention and focus on the importance of trust, honesty and its institutional values, that military personnel are as a profession more ethical. However, I also believe that most businesses are ethical. They conduct their business in a lawful and just manner, and contribute to the wellbeing of their employees and communities. But, there are notable exceptions.

There are tens of thousands of businesses in America, from small mom and pop businesses to large multinational corporations. They all have something in common. Each has a leader and the leader can and must set the tone for the entire organization. Like the military services however, there are egregious examples of wrongdoing in the private sector—the most notorious being Enron<sup>4</sup> and Tyco International, Ltd.<sup>5</sup> – that have become standard bearers for greed, corruption, and irresponsibility. Interestingly, the upper echelons of Enron and Tyco were probably attending universities at the time Steven Muller was observing that our schools were turning our highly skilled barbarians—individuals who were skilled in generating profit without regard for the means and

methods and the impact on their fellow citizens.

Whereas there are ethical and legal standards for military performance, there are likewise standards of conduct for business in the private sector. For example, doctors have a body of ethical statements developed primarily for the benefit of the patient as well as the Hippocratic Oath that includes “to do no Harm.”<sup>6</sup> The Project Management Institute also has a code of ethics and professional conduct. All project management practitioners are committed to doing what is right and honorable as a result of their certification as Project Management Professionals (PMP).<sup>7</sup> However, if a PMP works in a company that values profit over ethical business practices, conflicts arise. In the end it’s all about leadership. If leaders are ethical they set the conditions and enforce the rules for ethical conduct.

My personal story of ethics in the workplace begins upon retirement from the Army in 1992. At the time I was on the faculty of the Army War College. Following retirement I spent two years dabbling in home-based businesses and reading what I call “head books” that helped me condition my mind to the business world. In 1994, I was offered a job in defense industry and in the following nine years I moved up the ladder from analyst to program manager.

I was fortunate to have worked with many good leaders and companies with values and standards compatible to my own. I believe we served our customers with respect and delivered value for their dollar. Most of the companies that I worked for were led by former military officers who were practiced in leadership, stewardship and organizational skills. Each of those companies posted and practiced values that were conducive to a healthy business climate and good employee relations.

In 2003, I was managing an office for a nationally recognized defense contractor in Leavenworth, Kansas. My clients were various activities on Fort Leavenworth. One day I was approached with an unsolicited offer from a privately-held firm in Kansas City that included a substantial increase in salary and a position as Vice President for government services. I visited the company several times and was interviewed by various groups within the company. From all outward appearances, this company seemed like a good match for my background and experience. I accepted the position and on the very first day I was shocked to find out that one of the vice presidents who interviewed me was fired from his position the previous week to make way for me. After a few months on the job I determined that many of the things the chief operating officer (COO) told me about the company turned out to be false. The company was actually smaller than I had been led to believe, most of the company’s remote locations had been closed and the revenues were far below what I had been told when I was interviewed. About six months before I was hired, this same company had hired a friend of mine who was also a retired military officer. He too was disappointed by the con job used to attract him to the company. However, as new officers of the company we were determined to work through these issues and help the company transform to a more efficient, effective and ethical company.

Our COO was a Mensa.<sup>8</sup> Although he had a very high IQ, he had a low EQ—emotional quotient.<sup>9</sup> He was profane and irrational at times and he was a pathological liar. The company had the obligatory “values” posted on the wall, but practiced none of them. I felt sorry for several of the employees because of the relentless pressure to generate new business and profit. Salaries were generous and the young people who worked there, many of whom were highly leveraged with expensive homes and cars, were under constant threat of losing their job thus causing them to cut corners to produce desired results.

The business developers (BDs) were under particular pressure to produce revenue. Those who failed to perform were humiliated by having to conduct simulated sales presentations in front of the corporate officers who berated their performance. I was embarrassed to be a part of one such session. I felt sorry for the BD and ashamed to be a part of such a tawdry spectacle. I confronted the COO after this meeting and observed that our goal should be to provide our BDs with training and support but was told, “Screw them. “They can always quit if they can’t hack it.” He later told me that he practiced the Jack Welch method of management that mandated we fire the bottom ten percent every year. The problem was there was no objective measure of employee performance. The COO got rid of those who did not measure up to *his* standards.

Sales meetings turned into ugly, accusatory events. The business development program was dysfunctional. Each BD was on his own. The concept of teamwork did not apply because BD's were paid bonuses on sales and nobody wanted to help anybody else to close a sale since bonuses could not be shared. Since I grew up with the experience that teams were nearly always more effective than individuals, I tried to change the incentive structure but did not receive any support from the COO.

To make matters worse, the COO was a church going "moralizer" who was totally convinced of his own righteousness and was dismissive of others. He was always the smartest person in the room. He personified the title of a highly skilled barbarian. He was completely without moral compass and bereft of compassion for others. To him the ends justified the means. He expected his employees to do whatever it took to produce the desired numbers. The "command climate" was terrible. As a corporate officer I did my best to correct the situation but was told that I didn't understand the business world and the highly competitive nature of our industry. I spoke to the president of the company and expressed some of my concerns but it became abundantly clear that he had complete confidence in the COO. I never brought the issue to him again.

As the VP for government services, I became the proposal manager for a very important contract that the COO had been developing for about two years. He determined this contract to be a "must win" for the company. The COO was one of the lead writers for the technical portion of the contract and we clashed frequently when I prevented him from grossly misrepresenting our company's past performance data and capabilities. In the end, we delivered a forthright and honest proposal that was highly successful. We won the largest single contract ever won by this company. Shortly after winning the contract, the COO assumed control and "being the smartest person in the room," he alienated the company we had teamed with to win this contract, the government's technical representative, and eventually the government's contracting officer.

Within four months of winning this new contract I left the company because I could no longer be a party to the unethical behavior of our COO. I recall telling my wife that I wasn't feeling good about myself and my inability to effect positive change. I feared that my continued association with this company might have an affect on my personal reputation—something I was not about to put at risk.

On my exit interview, the COO asked while I was leaving. I told him that he was placing the company at risk because of his conduct, that I did not trust him, and that I did not like the way he was running the company. The interview lasted about 30 minutes. I was very frank hoping that he would suddenly "get it." After I was finished, he asked me "How much money would it take to keep you on the team?" I was shocked—clearly, he didn't get it. To him it was all about the money—everybody had a price. To me it was about doing the right things for the right reasons. As I left his office he asked, "Can we still be friends?" We were never friends in my mind.

Within a year after my departure, the remaining vice presidents left for other companies, and a year after that, the company lost the rebid on the \$20 million contract that I helped win for the company. Finally, the president of the company woke up and the COO was pushed out because of the dramatic loss of revenue and lawsuits that had been filed against the company because of the COO's theft of other's intellectual property. Because of this one individual, the company was nearly destroyed. Although that company still exists today, it's a shadow of its former self and its reputation is ruined.

As for the COO of the company, he could be charming and engaging when he wanted something but a bully, a cheat and a liar at other times. He was totally shameless which made things even worse. After I left the company I found out that some employees were actively going behind the COO's back, attempting to correct damage he had done. But, most were shopping their resumes looking for the first opportunity to leave.

It is not the purpose of this paper to judge all businesses by this one egregious example of unethical behavior. Nor is it fair to judge the armed services because of a few isolated incidents of gross misconduct. However, I would argue that "barbarians" are more likely to be found in the private sector since the military services are fairly good at self policing their ranks. In most cases, unethical conduct in the military is discovered and dealt with early in ones career.

The take away is that we are all responsible for our actions and inactions. In my case, my inability to correct a bad situation in the company that I worked for left me no choice but to resign.

For me the decision was easy. As a retired officer, I have a good pension to fall back on. What really troubled me were the other employees who didn't have the luxury of having already earned a pension as I had. The majority were good people who wanted to do the right thing but, for the fear of losing their jobs and their livelihood they reluctantly went along with the status quo. Most eventually left the company after I did but the process of finding work in a weak economy proved difficult potentially putting them into a position to sacrifice their values.

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### Endnotes

1. A Conversation with Steven Muller, "Universities Are Turning Out Highly Skilled Barbarians," *U.S. News and World Report*, Nov. 10, 1980, pp 57-58.
2. Ethics (also known as moral philosophy) is a branch of philosophy that addresses questions about morality — that is, concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice, etc. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethics>
3. In general, important and enduring beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or desirable and what is not. Values exert major influence on the behavior of an individual and serve as broad guidelines in all situations. [www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com)
4. The Enron scandal, revealed in October 2001, eventually led to the bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation, an American energy company based in Houston, Texas, and the dissolution of Arthur Andersen, which was one of the five largest audit and accountancy partnerships in the world. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enron\\_Scandal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enron_Scandal)
5. That case culminated in June 2005 in the convictions of L. Dennis Kozlowski, the former chief executive, and his top lieutenant, Mark H. Swartz, on fraud, conspiracy and grand larceny charges. A Manhattan jury said the two men had defrauded shareholders of more than \$400 million. [www.topics.mytimes.com/top/news/business/companies/tyco\\_international/index.html](http://www.topics.mytimes.com/top/news/business/companies/tyco_international/index.html)
6. *Primum non nocere* is a Latin phrase that means "First, do no harm". The phrase is sometimes recorded as *primum nil nocere*. Nonmaleficence, which derives from the maxim, is one of the principal precepts of medical ethics that all medical students are taught in medical school and is a fundamental principle for emergency medical services around the world. Another way to state it is that "given an existing problem, it may be better not to do something, or even to do nothing, than to risk causing more harm than good. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primum\\_non\\_nocere](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primum_non_nocere)
7. The PMI (Project Management Institute) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct was created by practitioners through the PMI's Ethics Standards Development Committee (ESDC). In 2006 the Code was re-evaluated and released with updated content, relevant for today's practitioners and organizations. <http://www.pmi.org/en/About-Us/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics.aspx>
8. Mensa, the high IQ society, provides a forum for intellectual exchange among its members. There are members in more than 100 countries around the world. Membership of Mensa is open to persons who have attained a score within the upper two percent of the general population on an approved intelligence test that has been properly administered and supervised. [www.mensa.org](http://www.mensa.org)
9. Emotional intelligence (EI) describes the ability, capacity, skill or, in the case of the trait EI model, a self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of one's self, of others, and of groups. Different models have been proposed for the definition of EI and disagreement exists as to how the term should be used. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional\\_Intelligence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_Intelligence)





## **Part 8: Educating and Training the PME**



# Summary of the “Educating and Training the PME” Breakout Session

by Chaplain (Maj.) Brad Baumann

This breakout session focused on the topic of Educating and Training the Professional Military Ethic. Lt. Col. (Ret.) John Williamson (“Common Ground and Higher Calling: Reflections on Ethical Learning in Army Basic Training”) and Lt. Col. Leonard Lira (“Transformation and the Evolution of the Professional Military Ethic: A Current Assessment”) presented their papers to the group. Both men brought a wealth of experience to the table. Williamson, a retired Infantry officer, currently works as a writer at WILL Interactive. This company develops videos designed to produce behavior change and performance improvement methodology where users become the lead character in an interactive movie simulation. Users make decisions, see consequences of their choices, alter storylines and experience outcomes. Lira previously served as an instructor at the U.S. Military Academy (Political Science Dept.), has published numerous articles and currently teaches Strategic and Operational Arts and Science at U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Williamson began the session by giving a brief overview of the eight-week video training program that teaches new recruits about the seven Army values. In short, the video series is designed to tell a story, allow the Soldier to make a decision, and as a group talk about the decision that was made. Williamson discussed in detail what he observed through the interviews with 250 new Soldiers, and the approximately 25 Drill Sergeants. There were two key observations he made. First, he believed that the majority of the new recruits wanted to be a part of something bigger than themselves. Even though the majority of new recruits knew little about the military upon entry, they desired to be part of a quality team. Second, he observed that the majority of the Drill Sergeants were combat seasoned, but not “life” seasoned. The Drill Sergeants biggest desire is to produce the kind of Soldier he/she would want to receive as a team/squad leader. The Drill Sergeants find it easy to train Soldiers for combat, but they struggle with teaching basic life skills. Therefore, the observation was that the videos tremendously aided Drill Sergeants in teaching the Army values because it gives standardization to the overall process.

Lira spoke specifically about the thesis of and conclusions in his paper. As a starting point, he defined change, and the difference between transformation and reformation. He then discussed the inherent tension that exists in the Army today with the addition of civil military operations (Full Spectrum Operations). This tension has increased the need for the Army to define a professional military ethic. The problems the professional Soldier faces during war today are far more complex than in the past. As a result, there is an essential need for education. He defined and discussed three pillars of education that are essential if we are going to see success. The first educational pillar is institutional training that all Soldiers receive upon entry into military service. The second educational pillar is operational training received through personal observation gained while on the job. And the final educational pillar is personal development gained through reading, studying and education apart from the military. His conclusion is that by doing this as a minimum, the military could transform its leader training systems into true holistic developmental systems, and fill the knowledge gaps evidenced in the current major conflicts that the force is involved in and better manage the transformation change resulting in the Professional Military Ethic to better prepare the force for future conflicts.

General consensus was that this breakout session was thought provoking and interesting. Williamson’s topic was more observationally based, but was met with positive feedback from the group assembled. Many commented on the need for this type of material with today’s generation of Soldiers, and they were relieved to hear that the Army was using it. Lira’s topic was met with more resistance. Although well articulated, very few wanted to discuss what had been presented; rather, they wanted to discuss the “so what” of the topic. Lira presented the need, but not the solution.



# Transformation and the Evolution Of the Professional Military Ethic: A current assessment

by Lt. Col. Leonard L. Lira<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

This essay argues that a transformational change is occurring in the U.S. Military because fundamental core changes are occurring to not only how the military operates, but primarily to its moral sense of purpose, in essence its professional ethic. It argues that the military in general and the Army specifically, should address the change with a balanced approach to training and educating. This essay will support its argument by exploring the meaning of the term called “transformation” used to describe change and then attempt to analyze this change phenomenon as it applies the military professional ethic. Finally, it offers a recommendation for balancing both training and educating the force in order to meet the challenges confronting military professionals in today’s conflicts.

*By this it appears how necessary it is for any man that aspires to true knowledge, to examine the definitions of former authors; and either to correct them, where they are negligently set down, or make them himself. For the errors of definition multiply themselves according as the reckoning proceeds, and lead men into absurdities, which at last they see, but cannot avoid, without reckoning anew from the beginning.*

— Hobbes, Leviathan

Since the early 1990’s, experts have been claiming that the U.S. military is going through a change process characterized in Department of Defense terminology as a “transformation.” The recent experiences of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan leave little doubt that that change is still occurring in the U.S. military. However, there is still no consensus as to an understanding of the nature of that change, why the change needs to occur, and how that change is affecting the military’s professional ethic (PME).<sup>2</sup> What is motivating the change? Is information technology driving it or is the change resulting from the rise of immense asymmetrical forces that are able to affect the national security of states? How does change occur and develop in military organizations? Do the changes constitute a true transformation or the requirement for only reformation of the Military’s professional ethic as described in the extant literature on and history of change theory? Based on the answer to these questions, how should the military proceed with regard to training and educating the force on the requirements stemming from its new PME? Answering these questions is of the utmost importance for the military profession, because as history has illustrated and organizational change theory confirms, implementing one type of change when the other is required, or poorly leading the change through misapplied training or educational methodologies may lead to mission or organizational failure.<sup>3</sup>

This essay argues that a transformational change is indeed required because fundamental core changes are occurring to not only how the military operates, but primarily to its sense of purpose, in essence its professional ethic. Further it argues that the military in general, and the Army specifically, should address the change with balanced approaches to training and educating the force, and not take an “either/or” approach because of seduction to the false dilemma typified by the current “COINdini-sta vs. Big War crowd” argument promoted by advocates such as Nagl and Gentile. This essay will first explore the meaning of transformation in order to analyze how this change phenomenon applies to the military professional ethic. Then it will offer a recommendation for balancing both training and educating the force in order to meet the challenges confronting military professionals on today’s operational environment.

## DEFINING CHANGE: TRANSFORMATIONS VERSUS REFORMATIONS

The change in military affairs recorded in writings over the last couple of decades has taken many names, from revolution in military affairs (RMA), military revolutions (MR) to transformation. The term transformation seems for the most part the most recognized term and the one most often used in several different contexts. However, the confusion and the media hype surrounding the terminology “transformation” and the ensuing confusion that followed it led one scholar to lament that “transformation- for all the media attention it has received and all the packaging and marketing surrounding it – is still little more than ‘power point’ deep.”<sup>4</sup> Much of the confusion, however, resulted from the fact that through the recent history of change in the U.S. Military, there have really been two types of change occurring simultaneously and almost in tandem: reformation and transformation. These changes are not mutually exclusive, and are often both root causes of military change. Reformation is simply changing an aspect of an organization that allows it to conduct its core functions in order for it to accomplish its mission. While the organization’s core functions remain the same, the way in which the organization conducts those core functions changes. The organization’s founding assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitute the way that organization views reality and how members of that organization share those aspects do not shift with this simple type of change.

Transformation on the other hand, is a changing of an organization’s core functions in order for that organization to be viable enough to accomplish its mission and to continue to exist properly in its environment.<sup>5</sup> In order for the organization to continue to be viable enough to accomplish its mission, it must change its founding assumptions, concepts, values, and practices or risk becoming irrelevant.

What is critical to note about the above analysis from an organizational change theory perspective is that military reformations explain changes only to how military organizations accomplished their functional purpose. Military transformations, on the other hand explain changes to the functional purpose of military organizations. The following explanation of transformations and reformations from the literature of organizational change theory helps explain why.

The literature on organization change theory confirms the existence of two types of change discussed above. An early organizational change theorist, K.K. Smith, defined these two types as Morphogenesis – a form of change that occurs to the very essence or core of an organization- and Morphostasis – change that enables the organization to look differently while remaining essentially the same.<sup>6</sup> Amir Levy and Uri Merry classified the dual nature of organizational change as second-order and first-order change. According to them, second-order change fundamentally alters the organization’s worldview and design. First-order change incrementally changes the organization but does not challenge the organization’s core structures.<sup>7</sup>

According to Hal G. Rainey, transformation requires not a segmented approach to change but a more holistic, or strategic approach.<sup>8</sup> In addition unlike simple reformation or organizational change, transformation goes beyond changes made to the administrative policies, personnel rosters, equipment, technology, or structure of an organization. It specifies that a condition exists in the organization’s environment in which the organization can no longer properly perform its functions unless “a drastic reshuffling in every dimension of its existence” occurs.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, one could argue that unlike reformation, which may be optional, transformation is necessary in order for an organization to continue to exist.<sup>10</sup>

Stephen P. Rosen provides a similar description of the nature of the “first order change” as posited by Levy and Merry when he asserts that reformations are changes military organizations undergo to bring them back in line with accepted performance standards in order to accomplish their established mission.<sup>11</sup> Levy’s and Merry’s definition of transformation as change that alters the organization’s mission, purpose, or reason for existence resonates with the current literature explaining military transformation. In a recent article, Dr. Jack Kem, a professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College stated, “To transform a large organization one must look at the end product and be willing to make major changes in the functions (which are related to the end product) and organizational structure.” Essentially, military transformation requires a different mindset.<sup>12</sup>

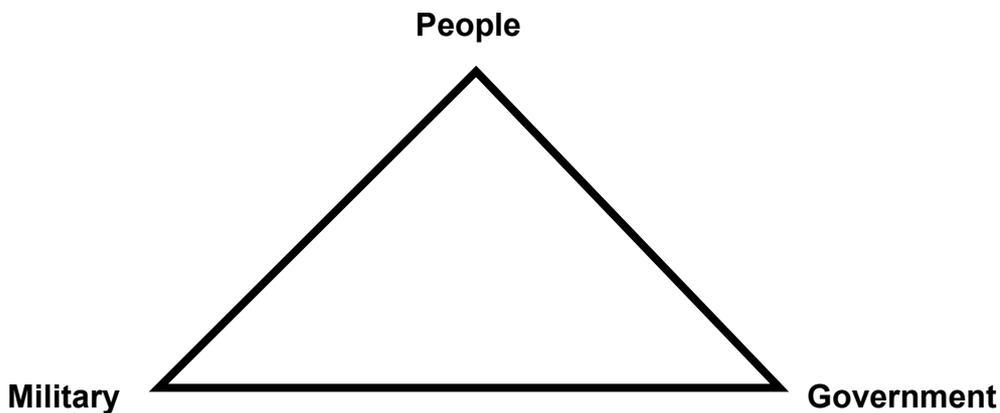
The combination of the information revolution and globalization is creating great social and po-

litical changes. These changes are once again recasting society, the state, and military organizations. For example, the worldwide liberalization of technology, markets, and political participation is changing multiple national societies into one global society. The rise of the non-state actor has challenged the state's province in the monopoly of violence and has allowed the asymmetric warfare technique of insurgency to broaden from local and regional conflicts waged against a single state into a globally applicable method for waging war against multiple states. The requirement for stability in this new world order is causing the military profession to change its functional imperative from solely apolitical combat operations (fighting the nation's wars) to including politically integrated stability operations (securing stability and peace for the nation after combat operations). The resulting change in the purpose of military organization is evident, not only in the new technology that it can bring to bear, but also by examples of "warships" bringing humanitarian aid to storm ravaged coastlines, soldiers performing governance, economic, and social reconstruction in post-combat environments, and all of the military conducting peace operations in conflict torn regions. Even more evidence of the alteration of the military's fundamental purpose is the DOD directive assigning stability operations as a core mission of the military, equal to combat operations.<sup>13</sup> This change in purpose constitutes a change in the professional military ethic by causing the military profession to question its moral sense of purpose.<sup>14</sup>

## **TRANSFORMATION AND THE PROFESSIONAL MILITARY ETHIC**

Transformational changes to why a military operates the way it does are primarily manifested in how the military operates. However, the implicit change is primarily to its essence, or its professional ethic. In other words, it is a change to the military's moral sense of purpose. Such a change forces its professional practitioners to question, "For what reason does a military exist?" The most useful lens of analysis to help us come to terms with this change is through the various theories espoused by field of civil-military relations. This view focuses on the observable relationships between military institutions and their governments, primarily western democratic governments. In general, they mostly take as their basis of analysis the classic Clausewitz frame, illustrating the civil-military relationship as a triangle with the People, the Government, and the military all at opposing angles of a triangle. In our liberal democratic society, the people through their representative government establish the purpose for the military's existence.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Clausewitz Trinity**



*Figure 1<sup>6</sup>*

The picture above nominally symbolizes the relationship between the people, the state, and mili-

tary. Three civil-military theories provide an explanation of how that relationship works and what the resulting implications are for the professional military ethic from each explanation. Two of the theories are the classics from Huntington and Janowitz. The third is from Burk, who presents a new proposal to balance the faults found in the classic theories.

Huntington describes the relationship between the civilian leaders and the military as “objective control.”<sup>17</sup> Objective control implies that the military’s clients, which are the people, express the endstates that they desire through the government, and military professionals determine how best to employ military power to accomplish those endstates. One could extrapolate from this theory an explanation of how the idea that the military only does big wars or only major combat operations came about.

According to Janowitz, another way to explain that relationship is through “subjective control” manifested in three ways: the budgetary process; the allocations of the military’s purpose by defining its roles and missions; and civilian advice to the military’s Commander and Chief, the President, on how to use the military for foreign policy objectives.<sup>18</sup> Subjective control is where the client not only dictates the endstates which they want to accomplish, but also dictate the role the military plays in achieving those endstates. Janowitz’ “subjective control” leads to the proposition that the military should have constabulary functions.<sup>19</sup> It is from the emphasis on constabulary functions of the military where one can observe the connection to the present day propositions that the military needs to function for different reasons than just major combat operations, such as peace operations, counterinsurgency operations, and support and stability operations.

James Burk, in searching for an overarching and unified theory of civil-military relations describes how both Huntington and Janowitz address the issues of the purpose of the military and civilian control from opposing perspectives and thus are both inherently weak.<sup>20</sup> According to Burk, Huntington based his theory on a liberal democratic perspective of democracy, which is that the governmental agency with the most expertise to guard democracy must protect it from outside perils. This explains why one could extract from Huntington that he is arguing that the military be allowed to establish how it would protect its clients from external threats. On the other hand, Burk argues that Janowitz based his theory on the civic-republic theory of democracy, which entails that citizens should take an active role in all aspects of governance, and contrary to Huntington, focuses on sustaining the democratic society through civil participation in the decision on how the military will deter threats to that society. This should make sense to students of democracy who hold to the tenant that civilians must have ultimate say in the utility of the military.

To unify the two opposing theories, Burk proposes a “federal model” which would both sustain and protect the democratic society of which the military serves.<sup>21</sup> The net effect would be a balanced relationship between the civil leaders and military that is a mix of both subjective and objective control by civilians over the military. Therefore, Janowitz’ theory of subjective control can explain how the military would become a tool of a liberal democratic nation, while at the same time explain how the expertise and knowledge of the military professionals should inform decisions on using the military for policy purposes. If the relationship between civilian and military is balanced, it is logical that the manifestation of the relationship is a balanced force that is capable and willing to engage in the hybrid wars that are becoming the standard in the 21st century. A simple ordinal modal of the theories and their derivative military functions is shown below to illustrate the point.

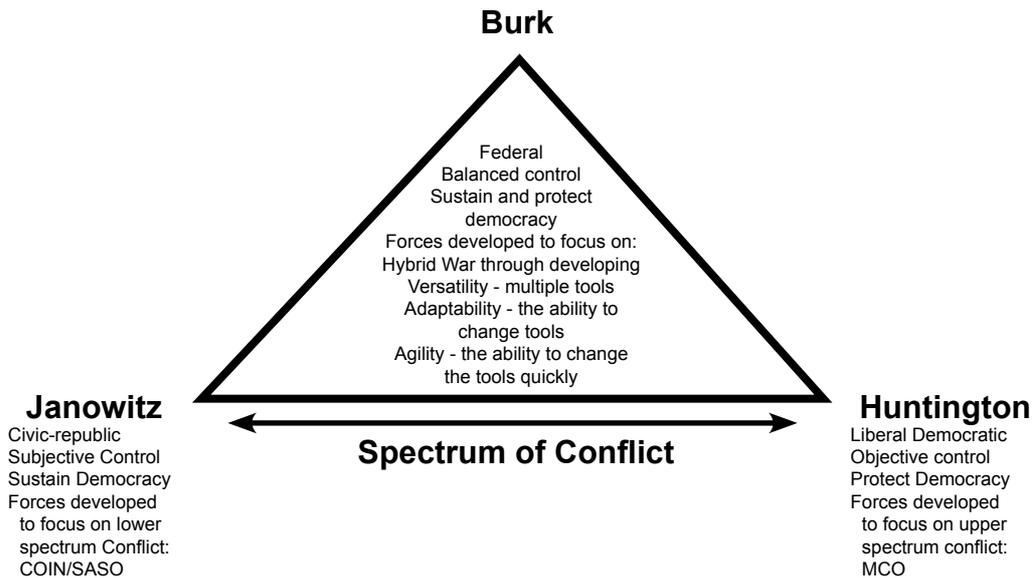


Figure 2

The illustration in figure 2, demonstrates the relationship between the civil-military relations theories that explain civilian control and the resulting role and function of the military resulting from that control. These theories help to illustrate the resulting changes to functional imperative of military forces. For example, Huntington's theory is useful to others in explaining why the primary purpose of the military is only fighting big wars with major combat operations. Given the expertise of the military in the art of combat and the arrangement of objective control, the military would define its purpose to solely combat operations. At the other end, it is also easy to see how Janowitz' theory explains the evolution of military operations into other than major combat operations. Given the arrangement of subjective control, the civilian leadership uses the military tool in any fashion it deems necessary to accomplish their foreign policy objectives, such as using the military for other than major combat operations. However, as Burk indicates, it is not so black and white between the poles. Yes, the civilians will need the military to accomplish other than combat objectives to enable their policy objectives, but the military does maintain a certain professional expertise to inform the utility of the military in performing those functions. Therein lies the rub in the evolution of the military's current professional ethic. The moral purpose of the military, in effect its professional ethic, is transforming to a balanced functional imperative. It is taking on the role not of force or persuasion, but of a versatile and adaptive land, air, and sea power. This change is stemming from the combination of the political requirements of the democratic nation's civilian leaders and the professional expertise of the military in informing civilian leaders on how best to employ the military in pursuit of the affairs of the state. This change is requiring the military to broaden its core competency beyond just combat to incorporating the versatile skills required in multiple operating environments, the adaptability to know when to change what skills to employ, and agility to change among those skills rapidly. How then should the military pursue this?

This dilemma and question of which way to pursue it was recently raised by the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the Chief of Staff of the Army in separate speeches to the students of the Command and General Staff College. Gates frankly dismissed the dilemma by stating,

*To some extent, much of the debate between low-end and high-end misses the point. The black-and-white distinction between conventional war and irregular war is becoming less relevant in*

*the real world. Possessing the ability to annihilate other militaries is no guarantee we can achieve our strategic goals, a point driven home especially in Iraq”*<sup>22</sup>

GEN Casey, in addressing his Service’s approach to the dilemma, stated that what the Army really needed was versatility, which is having multiple tools to draw on for use across the spectrum of conflict, and agility, which is the ability to switch among those tools quickly.<sup>23</sup> The question then becomes how does the military go about understanding its relevancy and adapt to its required role. Any discussion on how to do this, that begin with “move-the-aim-point” of training to something less than major combat operations, but more than peace and stability operations, misses the mark. Even more, it goes counter to the guidance in the 2008 NDS that directs retaining some capability to conduct state-on-state warfare against a near-peer competitor.<sup>24</sup> The “move-the-aim point” type of approach is only valid for reformational changes, and does not get to the heart of the matter. Since this is in fact a transformational change, education of the leaders of the military in applying the principles of their expert knowledge across the spectrum of conflict.

The Army has yet to address thoroughly this issue of how to manage transformation through education. Snider et al, address this issue in their recent 2009 study on the professional military ethic wherein they conclude that the Army’s doctrine and training provides little guidance in how to manage this type change:

*The Army recognizes that “new challenges facing leaders, the Army, and the Nation mandate adjustments in how the Army educates, trains, and develops its military and civilian leadership.” However, FM 6-22 provides little guidance about how such “mandated adjustments” are to occur.*<sup>25</sup>

Fortunately, for the Army, its developmental system is not too far from being able to accomplish this.

## **EDUCATING THE ADAPTIVE WARRIOR – AN ARMY PERSPECTIVE RELATIVE TO ALL SERVICES**

Recognizing the realities of the current operating environment, the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO), the Army Capstone Concept (ACC), the experience of our military’s top leaders in Iraq and Afghanistan and the recently published Army Leader Development Strategy all agree on the substance that should compose requirements for development of military leaders. These combined documents demonstrate a requirement for Army leaders to operate all along the spectrum of conflict by

*having some facility to discern how social, political, economic, and cultural variables interact to create a certain state of affairs in the operational environment. Additionally they demonstrate a requirement for Army leaders to be culturally aware, ethically deliberate, and adept [at applying their proven skills of combined arms operations] while working in complex, uncertain environments [filled with persistent conflict].*<sup>26</sup>

In reality, the U.S. military needs leaders educated well enough to know where along the spectrum they are operating, in what manner to do so, and in what amount they should apply the warfighting skills in order to accomplish their military mission. To prepare the military to operate at all points along the spectrum of the conflict with an understanding of what apportionment of military skills is required demands the equal application of training and education, and provides the liberal democratic nation a military tool with adaptive utility as required.

Arguments to the contrary that propose training for a lower aim point than major combat operations or focus primarily on counter-insurgency operations present a false dilemma between training and education. The gap is not in training. The gap is in education. The way to fill the gap and prepare the force for the full spectrum of conflict is to transform the current military training system into a military developmental system.

## THE FALSE DILEMMA

Several recent articles present the question of preparing the military for the next conflict in terms of a conundrum, should the military forces be organized, equipped, and trained for the lower-end of the spectrum of conflict or the higher end of conflict? One example is Thomas G. Mahnken's recent discussion on this question and its attendant dilemma in an issue of *Joint Force Quarterly*. In this article, Mahnken asserted, "the U.S. military will need to develop and sustain a proficiency in irregular operations equal to that which it possesses in high-end conventional warfare."<sup>27</sup> To wit, he presented his version of the conundrum:

*The fact that the Armed Forces are heavily engaged in complex operations, and are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future, poses a conundrum for defense planners. Should the Services prepare for the best case or the worst? In other words, should DOD plan on being able to concentrate on its main role, which is the use of force to achieve the aims of policy, with other departments and agencies playing their roles? Or should it, based on recent experience, plan on conducting missions beyond its core competency, including reconstruction and stabilization, law enforcement, and development assistance?*<sup>28</sup>

Mahnken presents a valid question that the latest (2009) edition of DOD Directive 3000.05 did not resolve.<sup>29</sup> It is a question that counters experts such as Gentile and Nagl whose discussions on it have turned into an argument characterized as the "COINdinita vs. Big War crowd" argument. Should the Military focus on what is required to fight wars at the higher spectrum of conflict, currently labeled in military doctrine as conventional war, or should it focus on what is required at the lower spectrum of conflict, currently labeled irregular war?<sup>30</sup> If the military's operations in the conflicts over the last century have taught anything, it is that the military will be required to focus on both. Nevertheless, this observation does not change the dilemma, and it does not allow for easy answering of how to develop the force to meet future challenges.

Certainly, the economical analysis required for acquiring the right material necessary for the force given the political and financial constraints is no easy task. It would not be prudent to arm our forces with knives for the lower end of the spectrum and expect that they could then show up to a gunfight at the higher end. However, expecting the military force to learn how to use their high intensity conflict equipment and skills at the lower end of the spectrum, "learning to eat soup with that knife," to paraphrase Nagl, is unfeasible if it is given the opportunities to learn how to use its given skills and tools in new and innovative ways.

Balancing the need for both educating and training our leaders is a reasonable means to prepare the force to be adaptive enough to meet the challenges presented in persistent conflict. For example, if the entry price for the military along any portion of the spectrum of conflict is the skills required for combined arms operations (i.e. move, shoot, and communicate), then military leaders must understand when, how, and in what measure to apply those skills in accordance with the context of the point along the spectrum of conflict in which they find themselves. On the one hand the proponents of focusing primarily on proficiencies needed for high intensity conflicts such as shoot, move, and communicate are really talking about skills; skills that can be trained. On the other, the proponents claiming that we should focus primarily on proficiencies needed for low intensity conflict are really talking about a proficiency in understanding the context in which combat skills are applied; an understanding that the military can develop in its leaders through education. When presented in this manner, the dilemma between preparing the force for skills-which requires training-and contextual understanding-which requires education-evaporates. This is because regardless of how much or little control an organization has over the material inputs required to operate, education of the organization can stimulate its understanding of how to adapt to change and to think differently about how to use the tools it already has in different ways. The real questions then become what are the gaps currently in the education of our leaders and how do we fill those gaps, thereby balancing the development of the force for operations all along the spectrum of conflict? But this requires experiential, academic, and reflective learning of knowledge.

The U.S. Army's training system provides a useful construct with which to examine this paper's propositions against. With regard to developing its leaders for the next conflict, reforming Army training is not in question. The training methods employed over the last century resulted in the world's best-trained Army and its successes in all recent conflicts have stood as a testament to the training methods employed. However, educational gaps do exist in the Army and were highlighted by the Army's Capstone Concept (ACC). The ACC specifically states,

*Experiences in Afghanistan—like those in Iraq—highlighted the need for the Army, in cooperation with the joint force and other departments within the U.S. government, to develop deployable capabilities in the areas of security force assistance, establishing governance and rule of law, developing police forces, improving basic services, building institutional capacity, and setting conditions for economic growth and development.”<sup>31</sup>*

In simple terms, those gaps are in understanding how to apply the professional military skills to settings that require collaboration, cultural awareness, and public administration skills such as governance and economic development skills.

## **TRANSFORMING THE ARMY TRAINING SYSTEM**

Based on this appraisal, the question then becomes how the current Army Training System (ATS), as defined in FM 7-0, could allow the force to address those gaps. With some modifications, transforming the ATS as described in FM 7-0 into a developmental system could dually hone the Army professionals' combat skills (i.e. move, shoot, and communicate) and their understanding of how to apply those specific skills along any portion of the spectrum of conflict, thus increasing the capacity of the force to balance the seemingly competing needs. This is in fact what the Army Operating Concept attempts to convey when it describes its main idea as combined arms maneuver and wide area security to support of the Army's Capstone Concept of Operational Adaptability.<sup>32</sup>

According to chapter 3 of the Army's FM 7-0, the ATS prepares soldiers, Army civilians, organizations, and their leaders to conduct full spectrum operations. The chapter goes on to discuss the institutional, operational, and self-development training domains that make up the ATS.<sup>33</sup>

The institutional training domain includes training base centers and schools that provide initial training for entry-level soldiers and civilians and subsequent professional military education for intermediate and executive leaders. Thus in schools and training centers, Army personnel train on individual tasks that ultimately support their projected unit's core capability mission-essential tasks. This is where the Army professional gains academic/institutional knowledge. The Army thoroughly supports this domain by resourcing it for the training requirements and takes responsibility for this domain. The Army conducts certification for development in this domain by adjudicating the military education level on each soldier's record brief. The developmental assessment control used to progress the individual in this domain is the Academic evaluation report.

The operational domain consists of the subsequent assignments that build on the foundation of individual skills learned in schools. Developmental events include major training events, combat training center (CTC) exercises, and operational deployments that provide experiences necessary for building fully trained units. This is where the Army professional gains experiential knowledge. The Army thoroughly supports this domain by resourcing it for the training requirements; however, unit leaders are required to take responsibility for this domain and ensure their personnel are developed accordingly. The Army conducts certification for development in this domain by assigning rank and pay grade. The developmental assessment control used to progress the individual in this domain is the performance evaluation, such as the officer evaluation report.

Contrary to the first two domains, the self-development domain consists of each individual's own endeavors to expand their knowledge and experience to supplement training in the institutional or operational training domains. This is where the Army Professional gains reflective knowledge. The only certification process is the initial entry requirement for a High School Degree for enlisted

personnel, and a Bachelors Degree for officers. There is no certification control process to ensure that individuals are progressing in this domain. Further, even though the Army and Army leaders support this domain, it is not fully resourced. For example, FM 7-0 states on page 3-9, in paragraph 3-50, that “Successful self-development requires a team effort between leader and individuals.”<sup>34</sup> However, in every organization across the Army individuals are solely responsible for their own professional growth and for seeking out self-development opportunities on their own time.<sup>35</sup> The Army may attempt to stem this gap through mentorship programs and implementation of individual development plans, but mentorship is relationship based and cannot be structured in a program, and the individual development plans are not universal throughout the Army.<sup>36</sup>

The logic that leads to the requirement placed solely on the individual may be faulty. This line of reason presumes that in the overall development of the organization of the Army there can somehow be a separation between the organization and the individual when it comes to learning. To the contrary, much of the latest organizational learning theory indicates that the “knowledge that drives organizational performance is an amalgam of both individual and collective memory systems.”<sup>37</sup> In fact, the research indicates that individual development and organizational development are inherently linked. The implication is that the organization cannot develop to its full potential if it does not fully resource the individual learning capacity.<sup>38</sup>

Two major issues become apparent from reviewing the ATS. First, the institutional domain is too heavily imbued in “training” and not enough in “education.”<sup>39</sup> This may be necessary at the entry level, but at the intermediate, and senior levels, professional military education should balance more toward the educational side of the scale. The operational domain adequately fills much of the training requirements through great work done by operational units and leaders. What the institutional domain should seek to do is to educate leaders in learning to judge when, how, and in what proportion to apply combat skills to all of the environments throughout the full spectrum of conflict.

The second major issue is that the third domain, though emphatically stated as “equally important as the other two domains” in FM 7-0, is left to the individuals to figure out for development and assessment. Thus, the individual domain has very often been left un-resourced for the vast majority of the military professionals. The demands of the institutional and operational domains far exceed the time resourced for the individual military professional to focus on the individual domain for self-development. In fact, one might observe the Army’s fixation throughout the 1980s and 1990s with “muddy boots” path to promotion and infer that it came about as a way to compensate for the Army’s lack of emphasis on self-development demonstrated by the inadequate resourcing of this third pillar. The Army, as an institution, should resource the individual development pillar needs to with time, a certification process, and senior Army leader emphasis.

The Army needs to address two major issues: the lacking emphasis on professional military education focused on developing versatility, adaptability and agility in the institutional domain required by military organizations to support their application across the spectrum of conflict, and the lack of any institutional support or resourcing for individual development required to create adaptable and flexible leaders. Until it does so, the Army’s ability to manage the transformation stemming from the evolving professional military ethic will remain a systemic problem. As the Army’s Campaign of Learning develops, the likely line of efforts that will shape the operational approach should be the institutional, operational, and self-development domains. It will be interesting to see if the institution of the Army resources all three domains equally in order to achieve the operational adaptability that the current and future operational environment requires. These observations are not exclusive to the Army alone, but the Army does serve as a good example from which military leaders in other service branches can draw.

## CONCLUSION

A good current example that illustrates this change in the military mindset is Tom Ricks Book, *The Gamble*, where Ricks details the painful transformation that took place from Soldiers to the Generals. The Gamble shows how the mindset shifted from one of force protection and destruction

of the enemy, to one of population protection and actions to make the enemy irrelevant.<sup>40</sup> It clearly demonstrates that gone are the days when military leaders can focus solely on fighting prowess alone as a hedge against disaster from unfounded or previously unverified organizational, tactical, or strategic change. Military leaders can no longer cite that the consequences of failure in the business of fighting the nation's wars to achieve national policy objectives are too high, or that the possible loss of American lives or the Nation's existence prevents the military from reckoning with its purpose as assigned by the people's government. If history is prologue, then the vast majority of other than big war episodes in the military's history indicate that the reason for the change is upon the military and it has nothing left to do but to own the responsibility for it and address it.

In that regard, transformation truly entails a change to the purpose of an organization. Dramatic change of this nature forces the evolution of the military's professional military ethic. This linkage requires a force whose functional imperative has expanded from just solely fighting in major combat operations of the military's choosing, or just conducting "other than" types of operations to being a versatile, adaptive, and agile land, air, and sea power utility force across the spectrum of conflict. This evolved purpose has required the military to broaden its core competency beyond major combat operations to incorporating those combat skills with other versatile skills. Examples of these versatile skills are those identified in the Army Capstone Concept such as collaboration skills, conflict resolution skills, cultural understanding, and public administration skills such as governance and economic development. Along with versatility, the military needs to learn how to be adaptable in order to know when to change among the required skills to meet the circumstances of a given operational environment, and to know in what proportions to apply combat skills in that environment. Finally, the military needs to learn agility in order to be able to change the proportional application of combat skills rapidly given the conditions of the conflict environment, with other skills required to succeed.

Thus, the question becomes how should the military prepare to take on a versatile, adaptive, and agile mindset? The solution is through educating the military leaders to judge how, when and in what proportion to apply the multiple skills required in full spectrum operations, and by adequately resourcing the third pillar of any organizational learning, the self-development pillar, with at least a certification process and more time. By doing this as a minimum, the military could transform its leader training systems into true holistic developmental systems, fill the knowledge gaps evidenced in the current major conflicts that the force is involved in, and better manage the transformational change resulting in a Professional Military Ethic that better prepares the force for future conflicts.

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## Biography

Leonard L. Lira is a Lieutenant Colonel and a Strategist in the U.S. Army. His current assignment is as an assistant professor in the Department of Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Operations of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He teaches Strategic and Operational Arts and Sciences. His recent publications are "Design: The U.S. Army's Approach to Negotiating Wicked Problems" Chapter 27 in *Venturing Beyond the Classroom: Volume 2 in the Rethinking Negotiation Teaching Series*, DRI Press: Saint Paul Minnesota. 2010, "Sab' al Bor, the City of Peace (2008-2009): A Case Study in Counter-Insurgency Operations" *The Armor and Cavalry Journal*, June/August 2010, and "Russia and Japan during the Interwar Period: A Relevant Case Study in Strategic Analysis" *Strategos*, Volume II, Issue I, Spring 2010. His email address is leonard.lira@us.army.mil.

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## Endnotes

1. The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily of the Department of the Army, the U.S. Command and General Staff College, or any other agency of the U.S. Government. The author wishes to express gratitude to Dr. Tom Clark, LTC Eric Hollistor, MAJ Francis Park and Mr.

Kurt Vandersteen for providing insightful feedback, corrections, and commentary on this paper, without which this paper would be a much worse product. That being said, any mistakes in concept, grammar or spelling are solely the author's.

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4. Richard D. Hooker, Jr., COL, Ph.D. "The impact of transformation on the Army Profession" (Paper presented at the 2004 Army as a Profession Researchers conference 4 March 2004).
5. Amir Levy and Uri Merry, *Organizational Transformation*, (New York: Praeger, 1986), 145.
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8. Hal G. Rainey, *Understanding & Managing Public Organizations* 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997) 328-329. I'm inferring that this is Rainey's definition of transformation because in his index listing for "transformation" it states to see "Change: large-scale, pg 328".
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16. Figure modified from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Lesson Plan for Core course “C161: Military Professionalism & Civil-Military Relations,” edited by Donald B. Connelly (AY 2010-11), Slide 12.
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27. Thomas G. Mahnken “A New Grand Bargain: Implementing the Comprehensive Approach in Defense Planning” *Joint Forces Quarterly* 55 (4th Quarter, October 2009), 10.
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34. Ibid
35. I first got this notion from one of my CGSC students, MAJ Timothy Gittons. I have since read of this issue in Major Matthew R. McKinley, "An Assessment of the Army Officer Education System from an Adult Learning Perspective" (School of Advanced Military Studies monograph, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2005) accessible at <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA435942>.
36. We can barely get all of the leaders to correctly follow the evaluation reporting process correctly, such as conducting regular timely counseling, or having senior rater officer provide their OER Support forms prior to requesting OER support forms from subordinate officers.
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39. I am basing this assertion off my anecdotal experience as a student and instructor at the Command and General Staff School. It seemed to me that the primary focus was to train Majors on the rudimentary elements of JOPP and MDMP in campaign and operational planning. The focus seemed less on developing the critical and creative thinking skills required to apply those skills to several different contexts. This was evidenced in many of my students' comments that it appeared that the product was more important to the instructors than the process of how they got there. This was somewhat what confirmed to me when I invited other instructors to review the design concepts that my students completed for A559: Introduction to Design, and the majority of the comments were related to the look and style of the design concepts, and less to the thinking and creativity that went behind the products. To be fair, to my fellow instructors, they were viewing the design concepts out of the context of their creation. To CGSC's credit, the mission statement directs the college to the development of the critical and creative thinking, and many of the instructors and leadership labor daily to meet that mission, but

I think we find ourselves in the same state that other professional schools found themselves in the early twentieth century. The state of other professional graduate level programs was that of nothing more than “trade school status.” For example see Warren G. Bennis and James O’Toole, “How Business Schools Lost their Way” *Harvard Business School Review* (May 2005) accessed 14 September 2010 at <http://www.rasalevickaite.lt/kmtm/skaitinys.pdf> . Our goal in the PME institutes should be not to go too far to the other side of practice and so deep in to the theory that we miss the practical application of our profession.

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# Common Ground and Higher Calling: Reflections on Ethical Learning in Army Basic Training

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## ABSTRACT

The introduction of new Soldiers to Army uniformed service is a key step in the transmission of the Army professional military ethic to a new generation. Research in support of an interactive learning solution for Army Basic Combat Training (BCT) and One-Station Unit Training (OSUT) provided insights into the nature and challenges of ethical learning in initial military training. Drill Sergeants seek to build upon moral strengths of new Soldiers, many of whom come to the Army with a general familiarity with and respect for the values introduced as the seven Army values. However, most new Soldiers lack the life experience to appreciate and have a commitment to those values. Drill Sergeants cannot make up for a profound lack of moral formation in some new Soldiers, nor the strong formation of some individuals in street or survival values which are incompatible with the Army's needs.

Focused efforts to prepare new Soldiers for their first unit and deployment can inadvertently instill attitudes that, in the long term, may undermine the Army's mission and the well-being of the individual Soldier. The Army values should be presented as the Army's Common Ground with American society. They are American success values which provide solidarity with American civil society. The Soldier's Creed and Warrior Ethos comprise the Higher Calling of the Army, and distinguish the Soldier from any other profession. Together, this Common Ground and Higher Calling provide a balanced foundation for continuing maturity of the military professional.

*Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish to be?  
--It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought  
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:  
Whose high endeavours are an inward light  
That makes the path before him always bright;  
Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;  
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,  
But makes his moral being his prime care...*

— The Character of the Happy Warrior  
William Wordsworth, 1770-1850

## BACKGROUND TO THE INVESTIGATION

The Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE) retained WILL Interactive, Inc. and Williamson Research & Solutions to produce a Virtual Experience Immersive Learning Simulation (VEILS) product to support ethics development in Army BCT/OSUT. This product was developed in support of and coordination with the TRADOC DCG for Initial Military Training. Specifically, BCT/OSUT battalions at Fort Jackson and Fort Benning hosted the research, to include focus

groups and interviews with more than 250 new Soldiers, approximately 25 Drill Sergeants, and Company and Battalion cadre such as a Company Commander, Executive Officer, Battalion Commander, Battalion Operations Officer, two Sergeant Majors, three First Sergeants, and two Chaplains. The interactive movie script was reviewed by cadre personnel in “table reads” at Fort Jackson and Fort Benning, and the movie was filmed with cadre advice and support at Fort Benning. Additionally, a “Tiger Team” comprised of BCT/OSUT leaders, from Brigade Commander to Drill Sergeants at several basic training posts, reviewed and guided content throughout this development effort. While this effort benefited immensely from the insights provided from these many sources, the observations and conclusions of this essay are solely those of the author.

While the research was impressionistic, based in interviews and not in a rigorous survey structure, the effort afforded valuable interactions with cadre and new Soldiers. The new Soldiers exhibited a desire to join a quality organization and expressed both patriotism and practical needs as motivations for enlistment. They were proud of their choice to serve in a time of war and expressed desires such as improving their life, getting an education, providing financial support and stability for their family, and to living up to the expectations of family members who had or are currently serving. The Drill Sergeants demonstrated a passion to prepare Soldiers for their first Squad Leader; that is, to send forward Soldiers they would want to have with them on deployment. The Drill Sergeants were young, prematurely seasoned by multiple combat tours, tired, and yet grateful to see their families every night after 16 hour days in Basic training. The First Sergeants and Sergeant Majors were broad, reflective, and aware of the institutional needs of the Army, the regulatory environment, and mindset of Soldiers of every rank. The Company and Battalion officers had great rapport and shared humor with their Drill Sergeants and senior NCOs, and reflected a moral sensibility about the implications of the Basic training experience. The Battalion Chaplains spoke with clarity and objectivity on matters of Soldier character, indiscipline, and even criminality, and contributed a higher vision to the challenges of moral development in individual Soldiers. The Cadre appreciated very much the role of the Chaplain, and Drill Sergeants commented that the Chaplains were a great resource in straightening out the thinking of new Soldiers. Despite the ‘war stories’ of the occasional exotic behavior issues that can become legendary in Basic training units, the research team was struck by the ethically healthy BCT/OSUT environments at Fort Benning and Fort Jackson in which Soldiers and Leaders had a moral compass. BCT/OSUT units perform the arduous work of developing the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes in new Soldiers, and separating individuals who cannot or will not adapt.

The development of this interactive simulation required an instructional design compatible with the BCT/OSUT program of instruction and the specific teaching methods and needs of the Drill Sergeant cadre. Specifically, the Drill Sergeants wanted a product that could be employed in a facilitated, group setting, and one that would support the emphasis on ethics learning needed in the different phases of BCT/OSUT. For example, the Basic training POI provides for a focus on the Army’s seven values in the following manner:

***Immediately Upon Training Start: Army Values Overview***

***Week 2: Loyalty***

***Week 3: Duty***

***Week 4: Respect***

***Week 5: Selfless Service***

***Week 6: Honor***

***Week 7: Integrity***

***Week 8: Personal Courage and Army Values Practical Exercise***

Drill Sergeants use every day events to illustrate how to think about these values. While employing mass disciplinary techniques in the first three weeks of training, Drill Sergeants will question whether a noncooperative new Soldier is demonstrating Loyalty to fellow Soldiers and the unit. Performance of Fire Guard is used as a test of the Soldier’s understanding of Duty. Helping

a fellow Soldier struggling with physical training is pointed out as an example of Selfless Service, and so forth. New Soldiers are also required to learn the Soldier Creed and, contained within it, the Warrior Ethos:

*I am an American Soldier.*

*I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.*

*I will always place the mission first.*

*I will never accept defeat.*

*I will never quit.*

*I will never leave a fallen comrade.*

*I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.*

*I am an expert and I am a professional.*

*I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.*

*I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.*

*I am an American Soldier.*

The overarching guidance for the VEILS learning solution was to help new Soldiers understand Army values in the way the Army employs them. The resulting virtual experience is the story of a high school graduate entering Basic, passing through the phases of Basic, and moving on to a first unit on deployment. In a previous VEILS product developed for Platoon Leaders and Squad Leaders in 2009, emphasis was placed on portraying dilemmas which more experienced Soldiers might encounter. This product focused on the more elementary challenge of gaining the judgment to apply the Army values in simple and clear scenarios. Since new Soldiers do not generally have military experience, with the exception of prior enlisted personnel, the scenarios are placed in a setting which they can all understand: life in Basic training.

With this background, we now focus on the insights gained in the research effort and on the implications they may have for thinking about ethics in the Army today.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The research effort provided several interesting insights; some predictable and some more surprising. New Soldiers come into the Army “as is” – with the moral and ethical formation that they received in their home life, school, sports teams, religious grounding, and other life experience. This produces a fairly wide distribution of individuals of varying degrees of ethical “fitness” for the Army mission and its conception of values and ethical formation. In the center of this distribution, new Soldiers are familiar with the ideas embodied in the seven Army values and have a general respect for them. They sound familiar because they are the same success values that receive positive reference by parents, teachers, and others; yet, most new Soldiers lack the life experience to effectively operationalize these values in daily living. They know of these success values, but may have honored them more in omission than in practice in their own lives. Nevertheless, Drill Sergeants find a core resonance and comprehension in the average new Soldier when explaining the elementary concepts of the seven Army values. The primary challenge for most new Soldiers is understanding the particular application of these success values in the Army environment, under a chain of command, and in the context of unit mission performance. For example, Loyalty to the average new Soldier is strongly inclined toward conformity to peer interests. Soldiers need to learn a hierarchy of interests that command their Loyalty, comprised of the nation and the Constitution, the Army institution, the unit and chain of command, and their fellow Soldiers. New Soldiers tend to invert this hierarchy.

On one extreme of this distribution are new Soldiers who have a strong, personal affinity to the

seven Army values. They have very strong moral formation and may be articulate in their expression of values. Some of these come from military families and grew up hearing and respecting the vocabulary of military ethics and values. Drill Sergeants quickly identify new Soldiers with military family members and appeal to their desire to live up to the expectations of their currently serving or veteran relatives. Family members are sometimes contacted by Cadre to help problem Soldiers gain focus and motivation, and this approach is especially effective when a serving or veteran family member can be engaged. This is not to say that new Soldiers with military relatives were predominant in this end of the distribution, but that their military family connections were a factor in their recognition and response to the Army values.

On the other extreme, there are some new Soldiers who are woefully lacking in values education and moral formation. Or, more accurately, some have received powerful moral formation in a mold that contradicts the Army's needs. As described by the Chaplains, some new Soldiers have a grossly distorted sense of street or survival values in which the same value labels convey an ethic entirely incompatible with Army life. For example, Loyalty is directed to a gang or affinity group, Honor includes the bravado necessary to maintain one's image in front of peers and competitors, and Personal Courage means standing up to intimidation. To such an individual, lying and stealing are entirely acceptable means to protect and promote oneself, Selfless Service is nonsensical, and Duty is not disciplined by a sense of obligation to an objective standard of performance but by the likelihood of adverse personal consequence. This individual may employ survival tactics to include transferring blame to others and subterfuge. New loyalties may develop within selected peer groups as these individuals form new, informal gang-like relations within cliques based on attitudes, ethnicity, language, or other affinities. Barracks teasing and humor may result in acts of violence as such Soldiers seek to "save face" and establish a self-protective identity as an "alpha personality" within the group. Or, a Soldier may go AWOL to attend to personal obligations deemed as higher duties than their new uniformed duties. A Soldier may engage in entrepreneurial activities seen as a win-win for themselves and peers so long as it is undetected by the Drill Sergeants, such as selling cigarettes, pornography, or other contraband. The Cadre must exercise care that efforts at ethical development at this end of the distribution do not merely transfer the loyalties of the street gang member to a new set of "gang" loyalties within the Army unit. Such Soldiers require a "value reset" to redefine and recontextualize their street values. Some are not recoverable.

This largely impressionistic and anecdotal research suggested a rough distribution as in the following figure. The thin tails on either extreme represent strongly formed individuals, either strongly positive or strongly negative relative to the institutional perspectives of the Army. The large central mode reflects individuals who are less strongly formed. Those above the mean more favorably imbued with awareness of the vocabulary of values and a positive inclination to adapt to the Army institutional view. Those below the mean less favorably imbued with awareness of the vocabulary of values and a somewhat lower inclination to adapt to the Army institutional view.



Not surprisingly, Drill Sergeants observed that they cannot provide complete moral formation in 9 weeks of BCT or 14 weeks of OSUT. Consequently, they seek to identify the moral foundations within new Soldiers and build upon them. They seek to associate definitions of Army values with things the Soldiers respect in their prior experience and appeal to their sense of obligation that already flows from their upbringing. Drill Sergeants seek to cultivate a right understanding of these values in the Army context, with its distinct features of a chain of command, mission orientation, and the potential use of force.

Some new Soldiers are quick to adopt new, parochial attitudes and loyalties which can be interpreted as an emerging, strong affinity to the Army and uniformed service. A growing sense of team identity, the experience of physical accomplishment and firing weapons, and the infectious confidence of their cadre leadership contribute to a new identity of which new Soldiers feel they are rightfully proud. Some express this through bravado, speaking scornfully of “civilians” and expressing a prideful superiority in their identity as Soldiers. Some Drill Sergeants commented that they found this behavior humorous because the new Soldier has been in uniform for only a few weeks and “hasn’t had enough experience in the Army to justify this attitude of superiority.”

Both the new Soldiers’ and the Drill Sergeants’ perspectives raise concerns. The change in viewpoint in new Soldiers speaks of the power and potential of forming a new identity. New Soldiers experience a period of plasticity in which their perspectives, priorities, and values are moldable, and BCT/OSUT leaders have a responsibility to set the mold correctly. The response of the Drill Sergeants suggests that they feel that with sufficient experience, such as deployments and other hardships, Soldiers justifiably feel superior to “civilians” who do not share their perspective. This is consistent with the sense of alienation that some Soldiers describe that, after experiencing deployment and hardship in uniform and perhaps witnessing indescribable things, family, friends, and ordinary civilians cannot really understand their experience. This seemed to be a significant insight that bears reflection on the role of values inculcation in the process of forming military professionals with the maturity and capacity to perform for the long haul. And, it may have some relevance in the formation of resilient professionals able to cope with the combat stresses that may produce mental health challenges in some individuals. In this regard, one Chaplain observed that he was not only concerned with the moral underpinning required to perform well on the Soldier’s first combat deployment, but also the moral forming that would shape how the individual would process and live with that experience 30-years hence.

The ethics POI for BCT/OSUT already contains a proper perspective on this. It states, “Army respect means promoting dignity, consideration of others, fairness, and equal opportunity. It includes a sensitivity to and regard for the feelings and needs of others and an awareness of the effect that one person’s behavior has on others.” It also notes that “respect is more than an Army Value. It is an American value.” To their credit, these same Drill Sergeants gave an example of Respect in the need for new Soldiers to speak respectfully to civilian employees at the PX. Even so, this interaction suggested the subtle ways in which attitudes can be shaped in spite of the content of the POI.

## **REFLECTIONS ON ETHICAL LEARNING IN BASIC TRAINING**

This impressionistic research effort left the author reflecting on how ethics development in Basic training relates to the development of the professional Soldier’s understanding of their role in American society. Basic training is a critical step in the transmission of the Army professional ethic to a new generation. How Soldiers are trained shapes their relationship to American civil society and the nation they serve. The Army professional ethic stands astride two concurrent needs that may be in tension: first, the need to forge Soldiers into an organization that can maintain cohesion and perform missions under terrific stress, and second, the need to bring Soldiers into a proper attitude toward civil society. The process is challenging and complex, and demands a significant level of sophistication in the Drill Sergeants entrusted with its execution. Implicitly, ethics instruction in Basic introduces new Soldiers to their relationship with American civil society under our constitutional framework. The fundamental question is whether the efforts to make civilians into Soldiers

ready for combat deployment engender attitudes appropriate for their continued their maturation as Citizen-Soldiers.

The seven Army values and the Soldier Creed/Warrior Ethos represent two distinct dimensions of ethical reference presented in Basic. The seven Army values provide Common Ground with American civil society because they are success values respected in any walk of life. Loyalty to family, friends, and teammates, excellent performance of duties, respectful treatment of coworkers, selflessness in the service of others, honorable behavior and honesty, commitment to right behavior and integrity, and courage to stand for truth are appreciated in homes, religious communities, and work places throughout America. In short, the Army values challenge Soldiers to live up to the best of American civil society; not be separated from it.

If the Army Values bind the Soldier to American society, what distinguishes the Soldier from other professions? The Soldier Creed and Warrior Ethos are the Army's Higher Calling. This Higher Calling is not shared with society at large and distinguishes the military from other walks of life much as the Hippocratic Oath uniquely distinguishes the medical profession. Other professions have their own distinctive oaths and creeds, such as fire fighters, emergency medical technicians, certified public accountants, professional engineers, realtors, and attorneys at law.

Drill Sergeants should tread cautiously when boosting the new Soldier's self-regard upon entering the profession of arms. The bulk of ethical development in Basic should elevate Soldiers in the esteem of their fellow citizens because they live up to the values respected in American society in general. As suggested above, the Army values should not seem particularly foreign to most new Soldiers because they are the success values respected in any walk of life. Likewise, the dysfunctional ethical concepts that some individuals bring from private life, which are incompatible with Army service, are dysfunctional in civilian life as well.

This characterization of the Army values lays a proper foundation to frame the role of the Soldier in relationship to civil society, civil control of the military, and the Constitution. It comports with the American conception of governance and defense in which the Congress, and by extension the Army, is "of the People." This flows from the U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section 8 which empowers the Congress "To raise and support Armies...." The oath of enlistment contains this essential connection to "The People" through the phrase, "I... will support and defend the Constitution of the United States..." (Title 10, U.S. Code). Understanding Army values as America's values provides a healthy balance in the Soldier's view of his or her relation with civil authorities and American society at large. It is valuable for Army trainers and leaders to recognize that their Army's values are America's values. The Soldier living up to the Army values is living up to American values and not rising above them or their fellow citizens.

Subtle statements can arise in official communications that foster separation from and a sense of superiority over civil society. For example, in DOD's "The Armed Forces Officer" (2006) is found the following:

*The Army's greatness as an institution and its reputation around the world is derived from the values and actions of its Soldiers. Living the Warrior Ethos and inspired by the Army's enduring traditions and heritage, **Soldiers are the best citizens the nation has to offer** (emphasis added). (Section 91.)*

Are Soldiers to conclude they are superior to other citizens? The definition of the Corps of Cadets as found in the 1972 Cadet Bugle Notes began with, "The United States Corps of Cadets is an elite body of men...." That definition was revised in the 1973 edition to eliminate the term "elite."

Popular culture also contains strains that elevate the Soldier above the ordinary man. Consider George Orwell's statement, "We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm." The effort to boost morale, esprit, and a special sense of calling must be tempered with recognition of the citizen-Soldier's relationship with civil society. A proper casting of Army values is one way to inoculate the indoctrination process. Contrast the U.S. Title X oath of office to support and defend the Constitution with the traditional oath rendered by Guatemalan Soldiers:

*Our flag, to you we swear enduring devotion, everlasting loyalty, honor, sacrifice and faithfulness until the hour of our death. In the name of the blood and the land, we swear to maintain your highest dignity over all things, in days of prosperity and adversity, guarding even unto death, that you may wave perpetually over a worthy fatherland.*

This oath of highest loyalty and commitment elevates the Soldier to decide when the dignity of the nation or flag is threatened. The history of Guatemala is replete with occasions when the military's leaders felt it necessary to protect the dignity of the flag and patria from unworthy civilian, political leaders.

Why is this important in the framing of ethics in U.S. Army Basic Training? Surely the causes of Guatemalan militarism, and the American aversion to militarism, are far more complex than a Soldier's oath or ethics instruction in Basic training. Nevertheless, inculcating values in BCT/OSUT requires a balance between the Common Ground the Army shares with American society and the Higher Calling that distinguishes Army service from other walks of life. America does not have a distinct warrior class, and it is essential that Soldiers, while adhering to their commitment to mission success at great personal cost, feel a profound solidarity with the citizenry they serve. The foundation for this solidarity is laid in initial military training. Tom Ricks, a Wall Street Journal Pentagon correspondent, is quoted from an interaction at Dartmouth:

*The crowd was the usual mix of students, faculty, and retired alumni. After the talk, a young professor stood. "How can you support the presence of ROTC at a place like Dartmouth?" she asked. "It will militarize the campus and threaten our culture of tolerance." "Wrong," replied Ricks. "It will liberalize the military." He explained that in a democracy, the military should be representative of the people. It should reflect the best of American society, not stand apart from it. Ricks used words like "duty" and "honor" without cynicism, something I'd not often heard at Dartmouth.<sup>1</sup>*

To that, this author would only note that care should be taken in how this sense of "the best of American society" is communicated.

Someday, Soldiers who are products of ethical formation in BCT/OSUT and shaped by foreign deployments and combat may be put on the streets of an American city in crisis or a natural disaster. In 2010, several New Orleans police officers were charged with murder and cover-up, and two may face the death penalty for shooting civilians in the days following Hurricane Katrina. Consider the potential failures in the application of ROE and snap judgments in stressful circumstances. When U.S. Forces entered Panama in December 1989, there were civilian casualties that in retrospect were arguably unnecessary. For example, only days after the invasion, partying teenagers drove toward an 82nd Airborne check point. Without battle seasoning, Soldiers opened fire and killed the unarmed teens. Contrast that with the restraint shown by the 82nd Airborne in Haiti following the earthquake in 2010. There were no civilian casualties despite looting in a complete breakdown in civil society and order. With battle seasoning, Soldiers at every rank recognized the value of communications with the civilian population and the ROE was perhaps tempered both by mission needs and contemporary ethics formation in military training and experience.

The natural BCT/OSUT focus is on preparing the New Soldier for his or her first unit and first Squad Leader, and for deployment into combat. While this seems natural and right, on deployment the Soldier will develop a distinct identity forged in experiences that cannot be fully explained to family and civilians back home. This identity includes moral struggles, fatigue, rationalizations and motivations, and a certain sense of separation... even superiority. Along the way, they will be told "you are the best of American society" and that they belong to a unique profession that separates them from civilians. To some, this separation can fester into disillusion, disaffection, and detachment. Some individuals will struggle with staying grounded in normal relationships and to some Army life on deployment will become easier, better, more manageable, and more emotionally satisfying than relationships with civil society and even family. While researching this learning

product for BCT/OSUT, the author was repeatedly struck that Basic cannot focus solely on preparing Soldiers for combat and for the experience of detaching from civilian life. There is an opportunity to lay an enduring foundation to put them on Common Ground with civilian life. The Army Values are not things that separate the Soldier from American society, but things that can make him or her more successful and respected within society. The Army Values are American success values for any walk of life. There will be plenty of influences to make the Soldier feel disconnected from civil society; BCT/OSUT should not be accelerating that process.

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### **Biography**

John M. Williamson retired from the Army after 22 years of service in the Infantry and as a Latin American Foreign Area Officer.

Upon retirement, he incorporated a research consultancy, Williamson Research & Solutions, in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In partnership with WILL Interactive, Inc., Mr. Williamson has developed 12 feature-length, interactive movie learning products. Topics include leadership development for Company/Battery Commanders, Forward Support Company (FSC) Platoon Leaders, and Field Artillery Platoon Leaders and Platoon Sergeants. Additionally, learning products have addressed pre-command training for Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels in antiterrorism program development, ethical decision-making for Platoon Leaders and Squad Leaders, and ethical values education for new Soldiers in Basic Training.

Mr. Williamson holds a Bachelor of Science from West Point, and a Masters of Arts in Latin American History from the University of Texas at Austin.

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### **Endnotes**

1. Nathaniel Fick, *One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer* (New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005), p. 5.





## **Part 9: PME and Mission Command**



# Summary of the PME and Mission Command Breakout Session

by Chaplain (Maj.) Geoff Bailey

This breakout session was attended by 30 personnel serving in the profession of arms as uniformed service members or as Department of Defense affiliated civilian employees. The purpose of the breakout session was to explore the concept of the Professional Military Ethic (PME) of commanders and its ramifications upon the doctrinal concept of mission command. As Lieutenant Colonel Celestino Perez Jr. (Ph.D.) and Major Chris Case presented their papers, it became clear that the esoteric nature of the PME has obfuscated many leaders within the military creating a false dichotomy between *Jus ad Bello* and *Jus en Bello*. Both authors presented sound arguments for a holistic and integrative approach towards the PME across the levels of war in terms of education, training, and operational design.

Lieutenant Colonel Perez's paper, "The Army Ethic and the Indigenous Other: A Response to Colonel Moten's Proposal" argues that it is essential for Soldiers to understand the duality of their role as a military professional enacting violence as an agent of lethality while setting conditions for stability as a "cooperative and creative political actor." This ability to function comfortably in both roles simultaneously during an era of persistent conflict requires knowledge and understanding of the indigenous other in the environment within which soldiers operate coupled with a respectful attitude towards the indigenous other. This knowledge and respect for the indigenous other creates conditions favorable for the evolution of stability once the indigenous population chooses and creates stability according to their own corporate meta-narrative. Success in this hinges upon integrative reflection by and training of military officers. In many instances, this openness towards others might diametrically oppose a service member's core beliefs and assumptions about assumed and specified social contracts endemic to humanity. This requires a service member to "mine his ontology for elements of openness to peoples and movements whose shared ontologies, personal sensibilities, and actual political activities pose challenges to the soldier's own way of being."

Major Chris Case argues a similar point albeit from what he perceives to be a discordant application of Just War Theory (JWT) whereby the design process bridging the strategic and tactical levels of war seems silent in terms of moral justification and reasoning for the framework upon which tactics operate. In "The Organic View: The Groundwork for any Future Strategy," Case further posits that such an incongruous approach creates a compartmentalized situation with soldiers on the battlefield unaware of strategic goals and a carte blanche in terms of moral culpability so long as the laws of land warfare are followed, regardless of the moral implications of individual actions at the strategic level. To this end, Case offers that all three levels of war are indeed intertwined with a common thread of morality binding them together. This common thread must be articulated at every level during operational planning and execution. This requires understanding "the moral value of the core goal,... [the]...threat posed by the enemy to the...goal,...[as well as]...the permissible moral cost in pursuit of the operation,...[and]...a developed view of how the operation...[creates]...the core goal of the action."

Both Case and Perez base their positions upon a trained, adaptive, and intellectually informed military professional. The PMEs envisioned require decentralized execution at the lowest levels of the military by professionals entrusted with behavior grounded in cognitive and emotional synchrony. This synchrony is implausible without education, appropriate training, implicit trust of subordinates, and faithful articulation from the national level to the strategic corporal on the battlefield. This nascent PME is promising so long as we commit to the arduous teamwork required to make it reality.



# The Organic View: The Groundwork for any Future Strategy

by Maj. Bob Underwood and Maj. Chris Case

This paper argues that we cannot hope to have a consistent professional military ethic without understanding that the conceptual relationship between the strategic and tactical levels of war is a normative or moral relationship. This requires a fundamentally different view of the moral reality of conflict in response to the problems derived from mapping the logic and language of traditional Just War Theory onto our status as a force of volunteers, who, in order to succeed, must use our doctrine of design, battle command, and meet the requirements of operational adaptability. To succeed with this doctrine we need a logic of conflict that is practical in nature, that aims to produce reasons for action based on values. We must understand the organic, discursive nature of conflict to avoid moral and operational error.

Traditionally, Just War Theorists hold that war consists of morally distinct and independent realities. That is, the overall justice of a war or conflict is morally distinct from the actions that are constitutive of that war. Call this the independence thesis.<sup>1</sup> From this compartmentalized view, the traditional theory deduces the rights, liberties, and obligations of the groups, combatants and non-combatants caught up in the conflict. Central conclusions of this view are the “moral equality of soldiers,”<sup>2</sup> permissible targeting based on threat and class status, and proportionality requirements based primarily on the *tactical* value of a given action. However, insofar as the Army holds to the compartmentalized view of the moral reality of conflict, we hazard moral error. In short we will fail to discriminate and respond proportionately to necessary threats. Moreover, we will thereby risk operational error as well because we will not meet the requirements of design, battle command and operational adaptability.

Michael Walzer’s *Just and Unjust Wars* is the canonical treatment of traditional Just War Theory. For Walzer the independence thesis is a straightforward claim: “The two sorts of judgment [i.e. *jus in bello* and *jus ad bellum*] are logically independent.”<sup>3</sup> What this means is that a war may be a crime, but the warfare that constitutes it not criminal. For Walzer there is a latent tension between questions about the ends of war and the means of war and such tension seems to be a simple fact of the “moral reality of war.”<sup>4</sup> When we judge the fighting of a war, “we abstract from all considerations of the justice of the cause.”<sup>5</sup>

By this point, the tension with design, mission/battle command, and operational adaptability should be clear. Design is the “framework that relates tactical tasks to the strategic end state.”<sup>6</sup> But according to the independence thesis, this relation is unavailable. Mission command and battle command are also in tension with the independence thesis. Mission command requires subordinates “understand the mission’s purpose and context.”<sup>7</sup> The requirements of a battle commander are to visualize, imagine, describe and direct the actions of their organization to the achievement of “shared ends.”<sup>8</sup> But how can we do that if the purpose, or end state, of a war is logically separate from its prosecution. Operational adaptability in fact reads like an intentional rebuttal of the independence thesis: “Operational adaptability requires mastery of the operational art, or the ability to link the tactical employment of forces to policy goals and strategic objectives.”<sup>9</sup> Our doctrine and future concepts reject the independence thesis and the resulting moral implications.

Walzer’s moral distinction between the strategic and tactical levels of war rests on the logical distinction that our doctrine denies. It should take little reflection to see that the moral implications of independence, the moral equality of combatants and a tactical view of proportionality, are also inconsistent with our doctrine. Is our doctrine wrong? We do not think that it is, but resolving the contradiction will require a new conception of the moral reality of conflict as the logic of the operational as such.

“Our language must be clear and our logic must be precise.”<sup>10</sup>

War’s logic is practical because it is about the creation of ends, it is a normative endeavor aimed at moving beyond what *is* and calling forth what *ought* to be. This means that conflict is the province of practical reason. Moreover, the logic of conflict is practical because it is a human problem. Human

beings act based on their practical commitments, and these commitments are tied to their values. One of the concerns of practical reason is determining a course of action in vague circumstances while facing competing values.

As a practical problem, our concerns in conflict go beyond making accurate descriptions about what is the case in this or that conflict. In fact, much of the merit in the Army's recent future concepts is the frank admission that theoretical ambiguity is unavoidable due to the nature of conflict. In conflict, accurate descriptions about what is 'the ground truth' are the hardest to come by, but the least important. They are only a point of departure, and our true concerns are practical. That is, we are after what ought to be and how to make those goals the results of our actions. We are not theoretically recounting the world; we are creating it through military action.

Conceiving war's logic as practically concerned is consistent with our current and future doctrine. Understanding conflict as a problem for practical reason is a necessary condition for achieving Operational Adaptability. To achieve operational adaptability we will need to place any particular conflict in its context and thereby ensure the units involved will have the right mix of tactical skills. Moreover, we must anticipate the transitions of that conflict along the spectrum of conflict so that follow on forces are prepared for the changing context of the conflict.

Operational adaptability, then, is the ability to bracket a particular conflict along the spectrum of conflict. Correctly bracketing a conflict allows leaders to contextualize Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security operations appropriately to the context and goal of a given operation. The difficulty is developing an *approach* to conflict that is not laden with its own cognitive obstacles; whose answers for what we think we know doesn't obscure how we know what ought to be done. Our move to operational adaptability (OA) seems to be exactly this sort of commitment.

The strength of OA is that it does not commit itself to a theoretical construct of what the 'next war' will look like. Rather, it is a commitment to develop a capacity in the Army to adapt quickly to whatever the context of the next conflict happens to be. It does not seek to answer the problem of future conflict with a one-size-fits-all strategy. It seeks to answer the problem of future conflict with a strategy about strategies – a meta-strategy. That is, OA is simply the cognitive capacities and tools leaders need to develop in order to design operations in conflict to produce the goals of national policy. The Army needs a logic that can determine and create in operational plans what ought to be.

In this task, OA is still missing a fundamental aspect in the reasoning required to bracket conflict along the spectrum of operations. OA and our doctrine do well enough in the *critical* aspect of preparing leaders for the future of conflict – the commitment to reduce theoretical cognitive obstacles. However, OA runs the risk of being an empty concept, of strategy thinking itself, if it does not also have *formative* cognitive resources – clear practical conceptions of what the Army ought to produce through the use of military force. What are the things that could serve as our "shared ends" that drive battle command and the design process?

The primary resources for such practical conceptions and their corresponding imperatives of action are our moral conceptions. Unfortunately, the Army lacks a clear conception of the moral reality of conflict and, accordingly, we will lack a clear conception of the practical reasoning required for leaders to bracket conflict and plan accordingly. Our logic and language are unclear.

After almost a decade of conflict, it is clear that our dominant approaches to the practical logic of conflict are incomplete. Our two competing quasi-logics – Boydian dominance and Lawrencian obsequiousness – have failed to produce sweeping victories. Our OODA loops appear to spin, frictionless, into strategic irrelevance and moral defeat. Our COIN articles cower demurely to local values and wonder why the human terrain won't fight to protect what we think ought to be.

The case for or against either of these approaches is far from settled. The Army could reconcile its experience of conflict with these logics and the concepts of traditional Just War Theory. The primary consequence of this approach is two ethics: one of maximum force necessary to achieve dominance, and another of obsequious restraint that yields to terrain. The strength of such accounts is the fact that the current fight has taught us that the restrained use of force is critical to the success of the mission in a counter-insurgency fight just as past fights have taught us that agile force at the point of decision are critical to mission success in other contexts. We have, however, theoretical doubts that

the case will close in favor of either of these logics.

A different approach, what we call the Organic View,<sup>11</sup> starts with the claim that the relationship between the mission and the force appropriate to its prosecution transcends the context of COIN and MCO. Rather, this relationship is not only in the character of a particular type of conflict, but in the nature of conflict as such.<sup>12</sup> The logic of war in the Organic View rests on the relationship between our moral values and operational application of these values through principled tactical action. It is properly critical and faithful to OA because it focuses on the practical and not the theoretical. It is also formative and faithful to design and battle command by giving an account of the end we hope to achieve. It can give shape to the values that can resolve the human problem of conflict.

What is the logic of conflict based on the Organic View? Its resolves to three concepts: the core goal of a given operational context, moral reasoning through the application of the structural principles to a given core goal, and the ancillary virtues required to turn moral reasoning into principled tactical action. In this paper we can only sketch the first two.

Because war puts human groups into conflict the moral context of war is paradoxical and so is its logic. The paradox is that in defending moral value, we may have to deny it of others. This means that the Organic View of military ethics will not give algorithmic answers to the problems of conflict. War is a human problem, not an engineering equation to be solved. However, we can acknowledge this limitation and still give clear, principled guidance in complex and uncertain situations.

The Organic View moves beyond traditional Just War Theory and its reliance on self-defense and other defense as the justification for the use of deadly force to render an account that, by acknowledging the organic nature of conflict, is a total theory and therefore applicable to the entire spectrum of conflict. We therefore refuse the choice posed by the competing quasi-logics above. They present a false dilemma, and what is compelling in both accounts points to what is common to conflict, not in context, but as such.

The only goal that can justify the use of military force is the pursuit of a morally better state of peace: the vindication of the wrongs that justified the conflict while respecting rights in a way that does not morally defeat that justification. The *Army Capstone Concept* alludes to the core of a morally better state of peace when it states:

*“National security guidance requires the military to be prepared to defend the homeland, deter or prevent the use or proliferation of WMD, win the nation’s wars, deter potential adversaries, protect the global commons (sea, air, space), develop cooperative security, and respond to civil crises at home and abroad.”*<sup>13</sup>

If these goals justify the use of military force, it is only because they are rightly aimed at a better state of peace. However, these goals, even when aimed at a better state of peace, quickly outstrip the traditional justification of military force according to the self-defense and other defense paradigm.

Morally construed, using military force to accomplish these goals is the application of collective lethal and non-lethal force to persuade or coerce a group to cease threatening or actively violating the rights of another group. But the rights in question are not only the right to life involved in self-defense and other defense. They include basic human rights and the political autonomy of the U.S. citizen.<sup>14</sup>

This core justification for the use of force to establish a morally better peace generates four practical imperatives for military organizations when they are planning, executing and assessing military operations in support of the goals above: First is a clear understanding of the moral value of the core goal of the operation. Second is a clear understanding of the kind threat posed by the enemy to a given core operational goal. Third is a clear understanding of what is the permissible moral cost in the pursuit of the operation. Fourth is a developed view of how the operation is going to come to a clear and satisfactory end by creating the core goal of the action.

These duties are in concert with the Army’s new concept of Operational Adaptability. One of the keys to Operational Adaptability is the ability to anticipate and manage transitions; however, these transitions often occur around the moral duties above.<sup>15</sup>

Threats to a better state of peace can come from across the spectrum of conflict. Therefore the

goals of military operations will vary based on these threats. However, there are three general types of moral goals consistent with the Organic View.

The first goal, the defense of the citizen's right to life, would take its form in a necessary war of national-defense against an enemy that did threaten the existence of the United States. The second goal is the defense of the nation's right to political autonomy. This would take its form in a necessary war defending the state's political organization and viability. The third goal is the defense or support of human rights in general consistent with the interests and viability of the United States.

These goals are arrayed across the spectrum of conflict. The first being associated with operations of high intensity combined arms maneuver. The second represents the types of conflict that occupy the middle of the spectrum in the transition from combined arms maneuver to wide area security and lower intensity conflict. The final is characteristic of operations that require only some emphasis on combined arms maneuver but quickly transition to wide area security missions and lower intensity operations.<sup>16</sup>

There are three structural principles that establish the moral limits of military force based on the goal of a given operation. These principles guide moral reasoning in military planning and produce a judgment of who is liable to military action. A judgment of liability on the part of Army planners is a central factor in determining moral action in military operations. Based on the relationship between the goal of an operation and its moral limits, liability is also a central factor in determining the correct operational design and tactical actions that support operational success.

The first structural principle, *necessity*, states that the object of the military action, the enemy, must be the sort of threat that only responds to military action. The second principle, *discrimination*, is the requirement to target only non-innocent persons and property. The third principle, *proportionality*, is the requirement that the moral value of the goal achieved by the military action or operation is sufficient to offset the intended and unintended harm of the operation.

Contextualizing these structural principles to a given operational goal renders an account of whom and what is liable to military action. As the goal of an operation changes, the relationship between the relevant moral variables changes.<sup>17</sup> The central implication for this relationship is understanding that the criteria to satisfy each principle changes based on the context of the conflict. This means that for high intensity operations, the bar for discrimination is higher. For low intensity operations, the bar for proportionality is higher.

Understanding the moral reality of conflict has implications for the Army's status as a profession. We must create professionals by giving them the cognitive resources to do the job. That is, the moral reasoning required to satisfy the three structural principles that produce a judgment of liability based on the goal of a given operation. This is true at all levels because creating junior leaders with moral understanding is necessary to build senior leaders with a broad and deep understanding for the moral reality of conflict. If we have no professionals, we have no profession. In short, the Army needs to sustain professional excellence by prescribing what professional action ought to be in a given context.

This is a project of practical reason and requires that we understand the organic nature of conflict. Our language and logic must be both critical and formative. It must avoid the traps of holding to what is the case, and move beyond the realm of mere facts to the space of value and human action. It can only do this by holding a clear view of what ought to be the case; it must understand what we intend to create through the use of military force.



Figure 1<sup>18</sup>

### Endnotes

1. These terms follow the current consensus in the literature that follows David Rodin's usage. Cf. *Just and Unjust Warriors: The Moral and Legal Status of Soldiers*, D. Rodin a. H. Shue (ed.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) 2-3.
2. Walzer, M. (2006a), *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, Basic Books, New York. (cf. Walzer's argument "... when soldiers fight freely, choosing one another as enemies and designing their own battles, their war is not a crime; when they fight without freedom, their war is not their crime. In both cases, military conduct is governed by rules; but in the first the rules rest on mutuality and consent, in the second on shared servitude." Pg. 37)
3. Ibid., 21.
4. Ibid., 21.
5. Ibid., 127.
6. FM 3-0, 6-6.
7. Ibid., 3-7

8. The United States Army Functional Concept for Battle Command TRADOC Pam 525-3-3, pg 15
9. Army Capstone Concept, Pg 16
10. GEN Dempsey
11. The organic nature of the ethics of conflict is a product of a conversation between David Rodin, Tim Challans, and MAJ Robert Underwood.
12. The nature of conflict is that it is a “brutal contest of wills.” As such it is subject to the relationship between the human will and moral value. This is the starting point for the theory of military ethics developed in the subsequent sections.
13. Army Capstone Concept, Pg 9
14. “This I or He or It(The Thing) that Fights” Underwood, Case, Forthcoming.
15. Capstone Concept, 17-24.
16. Ibid., 12
17. Rodin, David, “Justifying Harm,” Forthcoming, provided by author.
18. “This I or He or It(The Thing) that Fights” Underwood, Case, Forthcoming (Risk not to scale).

# The Army Ethic and the Indigenous Other: A Response to Colonel Matthew Moten's Proposal

by Lt. Col. Celestino Perez, Jr., Ph.D.

## INTRODUCTION

General David Petraeus instructs that a leader's principal job is to "get the Big Ideas right." A leader at any level must "determine the right overarching concepts and intellectual underpinnings." A leader must then communicate these concepts to his organization, oversee their implementation, and assess and refine them as necessary.<sup>1</sup> The overarching concept this paper examines is the relationship between the military professional and the indigenous *other*; i.e., those persons who live where American troops are deployed. Although top military professionals are indeed communicating the right Big Ideas, the integration of these ideas into discussions about the professional military ethic is lacking. The military professional, besides being a lethal warrior, serves also as a cooperative and creative political actor in the operational environment. It follows that any adequate configuration of the military ethic ought to integrate the soldier's ethical and political obligations toward the indigenous *other*.

My argument proceeds in four steps. First, I show that, contrary to the expectation of top military leaders, discussions about the military ethic fail to account sufficiently for the indigenous *other*. I juxtapose General David Petraeus's counterinsurgency guidance with Colonel Matthew Moten's one-page formulation of the Army officer's ethic to illustrate the latter's inadequacy (Part I). Second, I apply the political theorist Hannah Arendt's distinction between Work and Action to posit that politics is fundamentally a non-instrumental endeavor. One does not "build" a nation or polity; political foundations are fugitive and unpredictable. Since politics occurs among persons with distinctly different views about the morality and politics, attitudes toward the *other* matter (Part II). Third, I argue that the military professional as a political actor cannot *produce* political stability or *build* a nation with instrumental certitude; however, the soldier, can foster favorable conditions and—at the margins—intervene in helpful ways that nudge circumstances toward a desirable state of affairs (Part III). Finally, I suggest that the military officer should cultivate an ethos of engagement to most fruitfully attend to his ethico-political obligations (Part IV).

## PART I: A CRITIQUE OF MOTEN'S PROPOSED ETHIC

The relationship between the indigenous *other* and the military professional has two integrated, tangled cords—the ethical and the political. Admiral Mike Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, includes ethical consideration of the *other* as one of his top three talking points: "Precise and principled force applies whether we are attacking an entrenched enemy or securing the population. In either case, it protects the innocent. We protect the innocent. It's who we are. And in so doing, we better preserve both our freedom of action and our security interests."<sup>2</sup>

Mullen's admonition—"We protect the innocent. It's who we are"—is consistent with the work of philosophers Michael Walzer and Avishai Margalit, who offer the following guideline: "Conduct your war in the presence of noncombatants on the other side with the same care as if your citizens were the noncombatants." Their justification is based on a certain understanding of soldierly duties:

*By wearing a uniform, you take on yourself a risk that is borne only by those who have been trained to injure others (and to protect themselves). You should not shift this risk onto those who haven't been trained, who lack the capacity to injure; whether they are brothers or others. The moral justification for this requirement lies in the idea that violence is evil, and that we should limit*

*the scope of violence as much as is realistically possible. As a soldier, you are asked to take an extra risk for the sake of limiting the scope of the war. Combatants are the Davids and Goliaths of their communities.*<sup>3</sup>

Mullen and Walzer/Margalit are not alone. Petraeus, in his latest tactical directive for Coalition forces in Afghanistan, insists, “We must continue—indeed, redouble—our efforts to reduce the loss of innocent civilian life to an absolute minimum. Every Afghan civilian death diminishes our cause. If we use force or operate contrary to our counterinsurgency principles, tactical victories may prove to be strategic setbacks.”<sup>4</sup> Ethical attitudes toward the indigenous *other* matter.

The second cord linking the American military profession to the indigenous *other* is the political. By juxtaposing “the political” and the military, I do not mean to disturb the venerable apoliticism integral to the civil-military tradition in America. By “the political” I mean only to put my finger on those phenomena that attend to the geographical, historical, and cultural plurality of human persons in community. The political includes, among other things, the study of power and its distribution, political regimes, institutions, lawmaking, socio-political cleavages, political behavior, representation, civil society, culture, religion, economics, rights, legitimacy, justice, and war. Just as with the ethical cord, top military leaders are communicating the right Big Ideas. General Petraeus observed during congressional testimony that our knowledge of the local political “dynamics” was both crucial yet unrealized in too many places in Afghanistan: “Every insurgency is local. Therefore, every counterinsurgency has to be local. And you’ve got to understand the dynamics of each village and city...you know, we fought in Afghanistan for seven years in seven one-year increments, but the fact is that we didn’t capture—we didn’t develop the sufficiently granular understanding of the areas, and that is what this all depends on.”<sup>5</sup>

Generals Martin Dempsey, Stanley McChrystal, and Michael Flynn share Petraeus’s assessment. Dempsey observes that “We operate where our enemies, indigenous populations, culture, politics, and religion intersect and where the fog and friction of war persist.”<sup>6</sup> McChrystal observes that, “Afghan social, political, economic, and cultural affairs are complex and poorly understood. ISAF does not sufficiently appreciate the dynamics in local communities.”<sup>7</sup> Finally, Flynn observes, “The tendency to overemphasize detailed information about the enemy at the expense of the political, economic, and cultural environment that supports it becomes even more pronounced at the brigade and regional command levels.”<sup>8</sup> Knowledge of the indigenous *other*’s politics matters, and the manner by which military professional approach the *other* will be shaped by, among other things, the ethical attitudes that rifle-carrying professionals have cultivated toward other faiths, doctrines, sensibilities, and modes of living.

Ethico-political savvy is important not only for counterinsurgency and stability operations, but for all operations. Working cooperatively with the indigenous *other* will be requisite regardless of where on the spectrum of conflict American troopers operate. Nadia Schadlow explains, “Indeed, in virtually any scenario in which the U.S. Army might be involved, the politics of the situation on the ground will shape the context of the intervention and how the conflict will unfold.”<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the *Army Capstone Concept* observes, “Army forces must be capable of conducting simultaneous actions—of both a military and political nature—across the spectrum of conflict.”<sup>10</sup> Finally, a recent House Committee on Armed Services report echoes both Schadlow’s and the Army’s assessment: “This is the fundamental challenge the U.S. military will confront: providing the education so that future leaders can understand the political, strategic, historical, and cultural framework for a more complex world, as well as possess a thorough grounding in the nature of war, past, present, and future.”<sup>11</sup>

It follows that the ethical and political cords that tug at the American military officer are pertinent to any proposed configuration of the military ethic. Before any creedal formulation of the military ethic wins the day, military professionals ought to think deeply about the various ways of understanding the role of the soldier. These understandings should then feature prominently in vibrant, pointed, and thoughtful exchanges between scholars, military professionals, and policy makers. Colonel Matthew Moten, who has crafted a provocative configuration of the military ethic,

echoes my call: “Before the Army accepts such a statement of its professional ethic, much debate is in order.” Sean Hannah and Douglas Lovelace, who provides the foreword to Moten’s monograph, write, “We urge our readers to take up his challenge and to enter that debate. Let it begin.”<sup>12</sup>

In keeping with Hannah and Lovelace’s let’s-get-it-on spirit, I offer what I hope is a constructive critique of Moten’s one page formulation of the Army ethic that appears in his February-2010 Strategic Studies Institute monograph entitled, *The Army Officer’s Professional Ethic*. By juxtaposing Moten’s proposal with General David Petraeus’s most recent counterinsurgency guidance,<sup>13</sup> I intend to show how Moten’s proposal needs revision as well as posit my own fallible but earnest configuration.

Moten’s proposal is insufficiently cognizant of the indigenous *other*. In light of the Big Ideas communicated by top military professionals regarding the ethical and political cords tugging at the profession, I wonder whether the American profession of arms might see the need to revise his formula or perhaps abandon the attempt to formulate a one-page ethic. In comparison with the ethic that suffuses Petraeus’s counterinsurgency guidance, Moten’s configuration risks appearing too inwardly focused, moralistic, and simplistic. Put simply, the creed seems to articulate a Hotspur-like single-mindedness that is unaware of the ethical and political context wherein soldiers are operating and—according to many predictions—will be operating in the future.

I do not doubt that Moten appreciates the ethico-political ties that bind. Moreover, I am not arguing that there is a bright line between Petraeus and Moten in terms of military professionalism. I am arguing that there is a bright line between Petraeus’s and Moten’s formulations regarding the substance composing the Army ethic.

The inspiration for Moten’s proposed ethic is commendable. The foreword to the document, written by Sean Hannah and Douglas Lovelace, Jr., proclaims that “the Army officer corps needs a concise statement of its ethical values to codify the diffuse understanding that currently exists.” In the monograph’s introduction, Moten asserts that the “Army should set for itself a goal of issuing a succinct statement of professional ethics focusing on the roles of commissioned officers.” Such a statement should “be read...to inspire officers toward ethical and honorable service.” Moten declares, “If the Army is to have a written code, it must focus on the moral and ethical, not the legal, requirements of the profession.” He appreciates also that counterinsurgency “is one of the most ethically complex forms of war.”

Unfortunately, Moten strains credulity when he posits a causal relationship between the lack of a codified ethic and the occurrence of ethical lapses in the field. He writes, “In part, the reason for lapses and inconsistencies is that the ethic has never been clearly and succinctly codified.” There is good reason to doubt that Moten’s one-stop-shop creed will reduce instances of illicit behavior. Too much is known about the tangled, complex relationship between a person’s deeply held beliefs about the world and her ethico-political actions to make such a statement.<sup>14</sup>

Moreover, it is not accurate that the Army’s ethical “spirit is resident in a number of documents.” Indeed, is it not more accurate to write that the Army’s ethic is sufficiently encoded explicitly (i.e., not in spirit, but in black-and-white print) in a number of documents, all of which are well known throughout the force (e.g., Army Values, Warrior Ethos, Soldier’s Creed, the various oaths, the laws of war)? Perhaps the ethical lapses Moten recognizes are attributable to a different shortcoming; i.e., the failure of mid-career military education to engender sustained reflection about the relationship between the deployed soldier and those indigenous persons who surround him. As things now stand, the U.S. Army mid-career officer receives no mandatory exposure to just-war theory, which problematizes the role of the soldier vis-à-vis the indigenous *other* as noncombatant.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the profession itself has yet to theorize and make sense of the institutional expectation that the soldier must both kill enemies and cultivate stable, effective, and humane polities.

Setting causality aside, neither Mullen’s ethical concerns nor Petraeus’s political concerns regarding the indigenous *other* makes it into Moten’s proposed creed. The one-page proposal mentions mission accomplishment five times, yet it fails to link mission accomplishment to the need to cooperate with, serve, or protect indigenous persons. The proposal, written in the first-person, warns the military officer to “not involve myself or my subordinates in domestic politics,” but it

fails to prepare the military professional for the cooperative and political work he will perform in accordance with various “stability sectors” and “lines of effort” contained in military doctrine: security, justice and reconciliation, humanitarian and social well-being, governance and participation, and economic stabilization and infrastructure.<sup>16</sup> Most troubling is that although Moten explains that his proposed ethic should be moral and ethical as opposed to legalistic, he drops into the legalistic register during *the only* mention of the indigenous *other* in the entire one-page document; i.e., “respect our allies, all combatants and non-combatants according to the laws of war.”

Moten’s “succinct statement of ethics” fails to include a single attitudinal reference toward the indigenous *other*. Petraeus’s counterinsurgency guidance puts forth a contrasting, outward-looking ethic. All 24 sections of the general’s guidance relate to the organization for and conduct of operations among and with the indigenous *other*. Moreover, the guidance is emphatic about the military professional’s obligation to serve as both a lethal warrior and a constructive, creative partner.

Petraeus’s guidance articulates an ethos whereby troopers are to care for and serve the indigenous population. Among the expressions Petraeus deploys include: “The decisive terrain is the human terrain,” “Secure and serve the population,” “earning trust and confidence,” “Live among the people,” consultation with local citizens,” “Work with our Afghan partners,” “protect the people from malign actors,” “Help Afghans build accountable governance,” “Don’t let them intimidate the innocent,” “reduce civilian casualties to an absolute minimum,” “Identify corrupt officials,” “Prioritize population security,” “Help our Afghan partners create good governance and enduring security,” “Be a good guest,” “Treat the Afghan people and their property with respect,” “Consult and build relationships,” “ask them questions, and learn about their lives,” “Spend time, listen, consult, and drinks lots of tea,” “engage the population,” “Unity of effort and cooperation are not optional,” “Live, eat, train, plan, and operate together,” and “Respect them and listen to them.”

Were the ethico-political substance that suffuses Petraeus’s counterinsurgency guidance to find some elbow room within a proposed configuration of the military ethic, Moten’s proposal would be improved. Yet there remains a more fundamental problem. This problem relates not only to Moten’s formula, but to the wider discussion about ethics, the profession, and the *other*. The earnest recitation of a creed, or oath, or catalogue of values will simply not stop or reduce the frequency of unethical behavior. Sustained reflection (in solitude and among other professionals) and the cultivation of an ethos of engagement are necessary.<sup>17</sup> I attempt such a reflection in Parts II and III. I describe the ethos of engagement in Part IV.

## **PART II: POLITICS AS CREATIVE COOPERATION AND VIOLENCE AS WILL-IMPOSITION**

The military profession, having taken its cue from post-9/11 politico-strategic documents, has cultivated an interest in the very same political problems that have puzzled rulers, philosophers, and political theorists for millennia. The political theorist Jeffrey Isaac, for instance, observes that Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*

*is continuous with a long and venerable political science tradition. From Machiavelli’s The Prince to Antonio Gramsci’s “The Modern Prince,” from Lenin’s The State and Revolution to Samuel P. Huntington’s Political Order in Changing Societies, writers seeking a “science of politics” have argued not simply about how to understand the dynamics of rebellion and the mechanisms of state power but also about the desirability of different ways of mobilizing and channeling rebellion and of incorporating it within stable political structures.*<sup>18</sup>

These concerns preoccupy not only the United States’ top-level military leaders, but the rank-and-file soldiers as well. The last Bush administration’s strategic admixture of security, stability, human rights, and democracy has elicited a military response that includes, among other things, a new dictum that “Soldiers and Marines are expected to be nation builders as well as warriors.”<sup>19</sup>

Besides offensive and defensive operations, soldiers perform stability operations, which “are

conducted to help establish order that advances U.S. interests and values. The immediate goal often is to provide the local populace with security, restore essential services, and meet humanitarian needs. The long-term goal is to help develop indigenous capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and a robust civil society.”<sup>20</sup> The Department of Defense has, since 2005, declared that “Stability operations are a core U.S. military mission that the Department of Defense shall be prepared to conduct with proficiency equivalent to combat operations.”<sup>21</sup> The result is that generals and privates work together—albeit at different levels—to promote reconciliation between warring groups, mitigate conflict between tribes and sects, nourish effective governance, reduce the suffering of the ubiquitous poor and neglected, cultivate law and order, and help create unified, durable polities capable of moving through history on their own.

The intermingling of war and politics, which now permeates the entire military rank-and-file, demands the studious attention of military professionals and the politicians who send them into battle. When American soldiers try to kill people, they serve their nation as managers of violence and warriors. When American soldiers try to engender socio-political stability, they serve both the United States *and* the indigenous population—to a greater or lesser degree—as political creators and agents. I take for granted that the soldier as manager of violence and warrior is sufficiently theorized under the rubric of Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, military doctrine, etc. I do not take for granted that the soldier as a political agent is sufficiently theorized.

The U.S. government’s and the military’s approach to politics is naively instrumental: If we roll up our sleeves and work hard enough as an interagency team, we can help establish the right socio-political institutions and systems until, alas, a polity is born or revitalized. This is the Frankenstein approach to nation-building. The manner by which a people becomes a polity has less to do with systems and infrastructure and more to do with the empirical mystery integral to political foundations. One can solve a puzzle; however, one does not solve—and much less does one build—those statistically uncooperative moments of political foundation. Such answers, such solutions, *simply arise*—unpredictably, unintentionally, and always in cooperation (or in conspiracy) with others. Oftentimes such solutions fail to arise at all, even at the expense of vast numbers of lives. Such is the simultaneous indispensability and elusiveness of the intangible dimension of politics.

Arendt’s famously distinguishes between Work on the one hand and Action linked to Speech on the other. In Work, human persons fabricate those durable things that compose the material regularity of our existence: tools, vehicles, infrastructure, buildings, etc. Such artifacts “give the world the stability and solidity without which it could not be relied upon to house the unstable and mortal creature that is man.”<sup>22</sup> It is because of Work that we encounter with soothing familiarity the same breakfast table, the same work desk, the same decorations and equipment, and the same house and public infrastructure on a day-to-day basis. Work, or the production of durable artifacts, entails two sorts of violence in the sense that the human person must, first, extract raw materials from the earth and, second, shape and assemble the raw materials into a human artifact.

If the end product of Work is an artifact, Speech and Action have no such definite, tangible, intended end. To act, explains Arendt, “in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin...to set something into motion.”<sup>23</sup> Action, understood in this sense, is never a solitary endeavor; i.e., it is always done in the presence of others: “In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world.”<sup>24</sup> Whereas the product of Work is an artifact, “the ‘products’ of action and speech... together constitute the fabric of human relationships and affairs... Their reality depends entirely upon human plurality, upon the constant presence of others who can see and hear and therefore testify to their existence.” One can recall or remember the occurrences of Speech and Action, which dissipate with their completion, so long as they are preserved: “In order to become worldly things, that is, deeds and facts and events and patterns of thoughts or ideas, they must first be seen, heard, and remembered and then transformed, reified as it were, into things—into sayings of poetry, the written page or the printed book, into paintings or sculpture, into all sorts of records, documents, and monuments.”<sup>25</sup>

When political leaders speak, they frequently allude to two sorts of substance, the tangible and the intangible. One type of substance has to do with tangible politics and power; e.g., budgets, taxes, energy, health care, education, and security. Yet a second type of substance relates to intangible, ethico-political substance; e.g., unifying symbols. In President Barack Obama's 2009 inaugural address, he spoke on the one hand about roads and bridges, electrical grids and digital lines, commerce, technology, schools, and colleges. These items compose the tangible dimension of politics. On the other hand, Obama articulated unifying, intangible symbols familiar to any American; e.g., "We the People," "the common good," "the rule of law," "the rights of man," "dignity," "justness," "humility," and "mutual respect." These symbols compose the intangible dimension of politics.

The intangible symbols that compose Obama's address are, in Arendt's terms, remembrances of the specifically American "fabric of human relationships and affairs." The symbols that emanate from these relationships and affairs arise specifically from words and deeds; i.e., a community's "fabric" arises in the first instance from Action, "in which a We is always engaged in changing our common world."<sup>26</sup> It is the development of this fabric via Action that a community, a *We*, arises:

*Human plurality, the faceless "They" from which the individual Self splits to be itself alone, is divided into a great many units, and it is only as a member of such a unit, that is, of a community, that men are ready for action. The manifoldness of these communities is evinced in a great many different forms and shapes, each obeying different laws, having different habits and customs, and cherishing different memories of its past, i.e., a manifoldness of traditions.*<sup>27</sup>

Arendt describes the fabric of human relationships, which is a prerequisite for a community that is to move durably through history, also in terms of a web from which "stories" emanate:

*The realm of human affairs, strictly speaking, consists of the web of human relationships which exists wherever men live together. The disclosure of the 'who' through speech, and the setting of a new beginning through action, always fall into an already existing web where their immediate consequences can be felt. Together they start a new process which eventually emerges as the unique life story of the newcomer, affecting uniquely the life stories of all those with whom he comes into contact.*<sup>28</sup>

Work produces artifacts. Speech and Action produce stories. To Work is to gather and assemble the means (the resources) in order to accomplish some end (the artifact). To proffer Speech and perform Action is to disclose oneself and thereby affect other persons' thoughts and deeds. Work achieves a definitive, tangible end. Speech and Action begin something new whose near- and long-term results are mostly unintended and unpredictable. The activities attendant to Work are instrumental (i.e., they accord with a means-end logic) whereby we assemble something in order to accomplish a definitive end state. The activities attendant to Speech and Action are performative whereby we as a community begin something new. We initiate a political beginning not so much "in order to" achieve some end state (erecting a barn) but more so "for the sake" of some principle (e.g., "to form a more perfect union" or "establish justice").<sup>29</sup>

The product of Work is an artifact; the eventual outcome of Speech and Action is a story with *meaning*.<sup>30</sup> The product of a successful Work is more or less predictable, intended, and fixed. The outcome of Speech and Action is wholly unpredictable, unintended, and open-ended. One may be the single fabricator of an artifact. Only a multiplicity of diverse persons can engage in that authentic Speech and Action whose remembrance ends up as a story with meaning. The generation of meaning-laden symbols, stories, and narratives is a communal affair with no foreseeable end point—at least according to Arendt's description of human affairs and (thereby) politics.

*It is because of this already existing web of human relationships, with its innumerable, conflicting wills and intentions, that action almost never achieves its purpose; but it is also because of this medium, in which action alone is real, that it "produces" stories with or without intention as*

*naturally as fabrication produces tangible things... Although everybody started his life by inserting himself into the human world through speech and action, nobody is the author or producer of his own life story. In other words, the stories, the results of action and speech, reveal an agent, but this agent is not an author or producer. Somebody began it and is its subject in the twofold sense of the word, namely, its actor and sufferer, but nobody is its author.*<sup>31</sup>

It follows that “Whoever begins to act must know that he has started something whose end he can never foretell, if only because his own deed has already changed everything and made it even more unpredictable.”<sup>32</sup>

### **PART III: THE SOLDIER AS A CREATOR AND POLITICAL AGENT**

What significance does Arendt’s account of political action have for the military professional? To the degree that a soldier is a warrior, he must at some point come to grips with the fact that—as a manager of violence—violence and war have a logic wherein destruction, killing, and domination make sense and have value. The soldier realizes that—as a warrior—he is an instrumental actor, much like Arendt’s fabricator, whose intent is to shape through physical violence a human reality such that it conforms with the military unit’s mission and the commander’s intent. Just as the carpenter does violence to a tree and its wood to produce a chair, so does the warrior do violence to earth and enemy flesh and bone to realize the commander’s aim. The warrior, much like the carpenter, is a fabricator, and the deeds of each have a practical end. The perspective of *the other* matters not to the carpenter, for the wood he reshapes is inanimate. Moreover, the perspective of *the other* matters to the warrior only insofar as seeing through the enemy’s eyes conduces to extinguishing the enemy’s freedom and frustrating the enemy’s tactical or strategic intent (i.e., Sun Tzu’s “know thy enemy”). To be sure, ethics and politics put restraints on the logic of war such that war is fettered; but an understanding of war is impossible without understanding its pure logic.<sup>33</sup>

Politics has an altogether different logic if Arendt is correct. To be sure, she indicts the Western approach to politics, from Plato onwards, for conceiving of politics as an instrumental endeavor or a craft with an end state. If Plato commits this error by constructing his “city in speech” in *The Republic*, she would likely also indict a large portion of the scholarship on nation-building. Although we can expect instrumental reason, violence, and oppression to mitigate or frustrate the ample flowering of the political moment, the logic of politics remains always a force at play. It is for this reason that even a tyrant must account for the force of politics. This force, which is always present in greater or lesser amounts, is the capacity of human persons, through Speech and Action, to create meaning that can change the world through the instantiation of what Machiavelli calls “new modes and orders.” Just as the soldier as warrior must contemplate the logic of war, so too must the soldier as nation-builder contemplate the logic of politics. The alternative is that the soldier is insufficiently aware of his or her environment.

The conduct of war is an instrumental business. The conduct of politics is partly instrumental, but it is also—and significantly—partly a meaning-generating adventure. The conduct of war demands the imposition of one’s will over *the other*. The conduct of politics requires cultivating the space for deliberation and discourse to occur. A battle cannot be won without one person’s succumbing (by death or surrender) to another’s will. Meaning cannot be generated without iterative instantiations of the political moment.<sup>34</sup> If this meaning, as the source of a community’s unifying substance, is an essential component of politics, it follows that a political regime cannot stand for long if Arendt’s politics fails to arise.

If the soldier is to be a nation-builder in accordance with the scholarship on nation-building and U.S. military doctrine, he must see to it that both the tangible and intangible aspects of the regime are “built.” Yet, if Arendt is correct, this is an impossible task. One simply does not “build” symbols, stories, narratives, and meaning. Of course, the soldier as nation-builder can most definitely perform actions that conduce to the development of the tangible (e.g., the provision of essential services, infrastructure, and bureaucracies). Moreover, the soldier as nation-builder might

be capable of helping cultivate the conditions for Arendt's politics to occur (e.g., the provision of security, the establishment of public forums, the construction of legislatures, and the cultivation of civil society). Yet, in the decisive sense, a durable politics and polity will emerge only when the indigenous human persons exercise their capacity to *begin something new* in a positive, constructive way. Such an outcome depends not ultimately on security or essential services, but on what Petraeus identified in his April 2008 testimony before Congress as an "attitudinal shift" among the indigenous population.<sup>35</sup>

Arendt's theorizing should be of interest to military professionals. The United States' politico-strategic vision understands that instability in a country or region poses security risks to the United States. Hence, the United States—which has chosen to carve the world into geographic combatant commands—seeks to seize the initiative:

*The drivers of conflict emerge as numerous symptoms of crises worldwide. In this era of persistent conflict, rapidly evolving terrorist structures, transnational crime, and ethnic violence continue to complicate international relations. These conditions create belts of state fragility and instability that present a grave threat to national security. While journeying in this uncertain future, leaders will increasingly call on stability operations to reduce the drivers of conflict and instability and build local institutional capacity to forge sustainable peace, security, and economic growth.*<sup>36</sup>

The military, taking its cue from presidential administrations, observes that "the recent experience of operations in the Balkans, Iraq, and Afghanistan, coupled with today's operational environments, clearly indicates that the future will be an era of persistent conflict—one that will engage Army forces around the world to accomplish the Nation's objectives."<sup>37</sup>

It is apparent that the human realities of unpredictability and spontaneity are the qualities that prompt American strategic thinkers to worry.<sup>38</sup> Yet it is these very qualities that, Arendt asserts, (a) characterize the very nature of human relations and (b) are requisite for an authentic politics to arise. The stabilization of failed and failing states (if such solutions are to appear at all) will be less the result of a supposed nation-builder's predictable, means-end fabrication. Such solutions—which can be no more than provisional—will be more the result of an unpredictably fortunate confluence of persons, events, and beginnings. Any results that come to pass will be more the result of serendipity than craftsmanlike design. The political moments that troopers in Iraq and Afghanistan await—with hope—are not the stuff of regularity, patterns, trends, or statistical significance. On the contrary, it is the statistical outliers that move the world—for good or ill.<sup>39</sup>

If the foregoing narrative is plausible, American military professionals must take to heart that neither indigenous persons nor expeditionary nation-builders can *build* a durable polity simply by building electrical power plants, schools, government offices, and banks. At most, policymakers may deploy soldiers—as part of a larger "whole of government" effort—in order to *facilitate* those extraordinary moments of political instantiation by providing security, limited governmental mentorship, targeted economic development, comprehensive security-force training, and assistance in the provision of basic human necessities. The American soldier must, given such a role, take to heart the fact that his principal missions relate not only to will imposition via violence, but also to cooperative and creative efforts via Speech and Action. Put otherwise, soldiers—much to their surprise and, possibly, unbeknownst to the American polity—have become in their day-to-day dealings with Iraqis and Afghans participants in indigenous Action and Speech. Their participation, which occurs over countless cups of Chai-fueled discourse, persuasion, cajoling, and arguments, puts the soldiers within range of those moments of political potentiality from which—it is to be hoped—a civilized, human-rights respecting polity might emerge. The soldier, in such an environment, can no longer engage in will imposition alone. The soldier must come to view his mission as partly (albeit significantly) one of a facilitator of political space and a restrained cooperator in political moments. He must serve as a facilitator and cooperator, all the while struggling to remain hopeful that the extraordinary and unpredictable will occur in a salubrious way.

## PART IV: AN ETHOS OF ENGAGEMENT

A way to proceed is to cultivate an ethic (or, better yet, a variety of *ethic-s*) whereby military professionals are as attuned to their creative, political duties as they are to their lethal, violent duties. When Petraeus instructs his troopers to “Help build accountable governance” and “Secure and serve the population,” it is the cooperative, creative energies of his troopers that he seeks to tap. Moreover, when he instructs his troopers to “Earn the people’s trust, talk to them, ask them questions, and learn about their lives,” he is setting the stage for the positive exploitation of creative, political energy. Put otherwise, with tens of thousands of troops cultivating face-to-face ties with the indigenous *other*, the seeds for a political flowering (as well as for a downward violent spiral) multiply. When troopers speak with ordinary villagers, develop political agendas with local key leaders, hand out business grants, patch up a young child’s nasty cut, and strive to achieve increasingly humane conditions for the population, more surface area for creative, political contact becomes exposed.

Although American troopers may serve as major or minor political agents in the creative enterprise of achieving a durable polity, it is true also that they will not be the principal agents of political change. Indeed, it is this realization that leads to calls for greater interagency, whole-of-government efforts. The problem is that the governmental agencies and the bureaucrats on whom soldiers, strategists, and politicians are placing their hopes share the same epistemic predicament as the soldier. Neither the soldier nor the interagency bureaucrat has the requisite mystical or philosophic insight into how to build a polity. Interagency bureaucrats, like the soldier as a manager of violence, are fundamentally instrumental actors. Their expertise relates to intergovernmental communications, or economic-developmental aid, or agricultural practices, or banking. Those fugitive moments of political foundation are just as slippery to the interagency bureaucrat as they are to Plato, Machiavelli, Rousseau, and Petraeus. Polities are not built, they arise. They may grow very quickly and in the wake of horrendous violence, but precedence does not make for recipe. Political foundation and its emergent causes are simply contingent and unpredictable.

How to proceed? The military professional, having examined the ethical and political obligations that Mullen and Petraeus have articulated, must go to work on his fundamental beliefs about the world; i.e., his ontology.<sup>40</sup> The soldier must, without necessarily giving up his beliefs, mine his ontology for elements of openness to peoples and movements whose shared ontologies, personal sensibilities, and actual political activities pose challenges to the soldier’s own way of being. The soldier must reshape and emphasize his own ontology, sensibilities, and actions so as to recognize those ethico-political potentialities that may be the key to his going home. The soldier must develop the habit of mind and skill to recognize when to lead, when to assist, when to tolerate, or when to stay out of the way of those political nodes of potentiality among the indigenous population.

The political theorist William Connolly offers a way to think about ethics that differs from the more traditional moralities established by, say, God, or Kantian Reason, or a fictive contract. Connolly draws his “final source of ethical sustenance...from attachment to the abundance of a world of becoming which, when you set each subsystem of the world into the appropriate time horizon, courses through us as well as circulating around us.”<sup>41</sup> Connolly emphasizes and is inspired by the multiplicity of pluralities at play in the world, some of which are more or less distinct or more or less involved. These multiplicities and their emergent effects change continuously. Connolly emphasizes also the flux, contingency, and intermingling of factors that compose human and non-human reality.

Connolly’s advises the student of politics (which should include the soldier) “to occupy strategic junctures where significant possibilities of change are under way, *intervening* in ways that might help to move the complex in this way rather than that.” Such intervention is guided by latent, barely discernible potentialities that may add something extraordinarily helpful or something deplorable to the world of becoming. Those who choose to intervene in the world as Connolly advises will seek political opportunities where others fail to look. Put otherwise, students of politics will look for and perhaps cheer on underdog movements, even if they at first appear subversive to a more desirable state of affairs:

*The favored domains of intervention are those proponents other traditions often ignore or defer indefinitely into the future: social movements with a potential to invent new rights or promote new identities not heretofore registered on the cultural field; volatile modes of entrant and reentrant combinations between religious and secular practices that disturb previous lines of separation; unique electoral configurations that issue in realignment or a court takeover of the electoral process; protean forces that emerge as if from nowhere, such as the collapse of a regime or the effects of rapid climatic change on the political ecology of contemporary life; practices of humiliation that issue in riot or civil war, or a new settlement previously unexpected by any party. We are drawn to such “events”—where event is defined as the eruption of the unexpected into the routinized—like moths to fire, partly because they signify to us chaotic forces already in play with regularized processes and partly because they spawn new actualizations that brim with promise or draw something dismal into the world.<sup>42</sup>*

I suggest that Connolly’s approach to politically savvy intervention, as open as it is to hopeful possibilities, is in keeping with the Army’s latest initiative to institutionalize Mission Command as articulated in, among other places, the *Army Operating Concept* published in August 2010. This document describes then-Colonel Sean MacFarland’s cooption of the tribal leaders in Ramadi. Through an initiative to create tribal police forces, MacFarland exploited the tension between foreign al-Qaeda fighters and Iraqi tribal leaders: “Once the tribal leaders switched sides, attacks on U.S. forces stopped, almost overnight, in those areas. It was the tipping point that led to defeat of al-Qaeda in Ramadi. In the end, he accomplished the desired outcome using approaches he could not foresee at the outset.”<sup>43</sup> No plan can account for what will become the crucially important circumstances on the ground. Written plans should “get the Big Ideas right,” but military professionals during execution must exercise reflection, initiative, openness, and adaptability to exploit those serendipitous moments that arise during operations.

To be sure, Connolly’s conception of the world differs sharply from those of many military officers. Apart from favoring a leftward politics and being a fierce critic of rightward politics, he is neither a Kantian deontologist nor a Thomistic teleologist. Morality has no intrinsic relation to Reason, or God, or a fictive Social Contract. Yet he is not opposed to engaging persons whose ontologies and sensibilities differ from his own. Of course, he is not shy about pushing his case, but he pushes while cultivating a sense of humility, fallibility, and the openness to learn something new.

Connolly has another image of political intervention that jibes with Petraeus’s concept of “irreversible momentum.” Petraeus does not envision change in accordance with simple cause-effect relations. Notions of simple, efficient causality are rarely helpful to an understanding of war and politics. Instead, Petraeus seeks to exploit positive development arising in several locales in the operational environment. The key, according to Petraeus, is action along several fronts and focused on numerous points to effect change. With respect to Afghanistan, Petraeus explains:

*What we have are areas of progress, we’ve got to link those together, extend them and, and then build on it because, of course, the security progress...is the foundation for everything else, for the governance process, the economic progress, the rule-of-law progress and so forth. Obviously, they influence security as well. They can either reinforce it or they can undermine it...and the trick is to get all of it moving so that you’re spiraling upward where one initiative reinforces another.<sup>44</sup>*

Compare Petraeus’s image of political intervention at several points to achieve an upward-spiraling effect with Connolly’s image of resonance. Of course, Connolly’s image includes the notion that such interventions, if they are to be successful, must occur between persons of sharply different beliefs about the fundamentals of life, religion, morality, and politics.

There are, then, affinities of sensibility stretching across significant doctrinal difference, affinities that might be worked upon to draw proponents of several creeds into a larger assemblage of resonance. To undertake the effort, however, requires radicals, liberals, and secularists to reconsider the role that existential dispositions play in politics and economic life, overturning the self-

defeating drive to quarantine creeds and modes of spirituality in the private realm.<sup>45</sup>

If Petraeus's approach to political intervention is to succeed, military professionals must be able to reach across identity-based differences. This strategy is sometimes relatively easy; however, it can become an emotional and cognitive challenge. Consider, for instance, the agonizing decisions countless American troopers made throughout Iraq to fight alongside Iraqi persons who, perhaps months before, had American blood on their hands.

Military professionals should cultivate ways of thinking and being that include an openness to the plurality of other creeds and the multifarious ways in which each individual creed is actually lived out. Connolly's ethos of engagement and the means of its cultivation suggest why an ethos embodied in a creedal document might not be the best way to proceed. For the military professional to engage the indigenous *other* fruitfully in ethico-political endeavors, the fundamental activity is not principally that he reinforces his ties to a creed already sufficiently mined, theorized, and articulated within the profession; i.e., that creed encompassing familiar conceptions of service, soldiership, character, and professionalism. To revisit these fundamentals again without an eye toward radical reformulation is, given what I have been writing about, counterproductive.

Radical reformulation, not a revisitation, is most needed. Requisite to this reformulation is reflection on the question, What does it mean to be a military professional amidst the ethico-political obligations that today's soldier has incurred? The military professional should cultivate an ethic that extends Moten's four-fold ethic to include two components. The first component is an appreciation for the "productive tension" that exists between a dominant political order on the one hand and that order's interruption "by social movements of modes of governance because of the sufferings or exclusions they embody." (Think Anbar.) The second component of this ethic "is forged by negotiating between a variety of constituencies honoring different moral sources, rather than engendered as the unified product of a nation in which all legitimate participants honor the same moral source." (Think reintegration and reconciliation.) Connolly insists that "No single God, primordial contract, fixed conception of rationality, settled conception of self-interest, unified principle of justice, or practice of communicative consensus sits at the apex or base of an ethos of engagement."<sup>46</sup> I would include, pace General Casey's desire for a single ethic articulated uniformly throughout the Army,<sup>47</sup> that the same applies to a fixed, creedal formulation of the Army ethic.

## CONCLUSION

Moten's commendable but flawed proposal reveals that the Army ethic is insufficiently theorized. Too little is written about the ethical and political cords that link today's American military professional to the indigenous *other*. This shortcoming arises despite that fact that top military professionals "get it"; i.e., they understand that ethical concerns and strategic concerns are inextricably linked. Mullen's striking admonition that the protection of civilians is integral to the profession of arms needs to be thought through, written about, and argued. So too must Petraeus's admonition that we are to serve the indigenous population and help build governance be a focus of vibrant conversations. Visions of the future, policy, doctrine, and military leadership are pulling the soldier in two directions. Whether this is a good thing or not is, ultimately, a political decision. How soldiers respond individually and corporately is a decision for military professionals. But, very soon, the conversation needs to start. Since scholarly reflection and ethical cultivation are unlikely to occur during deployments, the time spent in military education has become that much more valuable.

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## Endnotes

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31. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 184.
32. Arendt, "The Concept of History," 307.
33. Consider, e.g., Clausewitz's concept of Absolute War.
34. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 199: "This space does not always exist, and although all men are capable of deed and word, most of them—like the slave, the foreigner, and the barbarian of antiquity, like the laborer or craftsman prior to the modern age, the jobholder or businessman in our world—do not live in it. No man, moreover, can live in it all the time. To be deprived of it means to be deprived of

reality, which, humanly and politically speaking, is the same as appearance.”

35. David Petraeus, “Gen. Petraeus’s Opening Remarks on Iraq: Address to the Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing,” *CQ Transcripts, Washington Post online*, 8 April 2008.

36. *FM 3-07*, para. 1-10.

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38. See, e.g., Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 230: “The point is that Plato and, to a lesser degree, Aristotle... were the first to propose handling political matters and ruling political bodies in the mode of fabrication. This seeming contradiction clearly indicates the depth of the authentic perplexities inherent in the human capacity for action and the strength of the temptation to eliminate its risks and dangers by introducing into the web of human relationships the much more reliable and solid categories inherent in activities with which we confront nature and build the world of the human artifice.”

39. See Arendt, *Human Condition*, 42-43: “[I]t is a hopeless enterprise to search for meaning in politics or significance in history when everything that is not everyday behavior or automatic trends has been ruled out as immaterial.”

40. Here I use ontology in the sense put forth by Stephen K. White, *Sustaining Affirmation: The Strengths of Weak Ontology in Political Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

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47. Hannah and Lovelace include in the introduction to Moten’s monograph General George Casey’s quip: “If you walked around the Army and asked people what the professional military ethic is, you would get a lot of different answers.” I don’t think this plurality is cause to worry. However, I would prefer (and I think Casey would too) that this plurality be based on sustained reflection and dialogue as opposed to pop-off, unthinking answers.





## **Part 10: PME and Resilience**



# Summary of the “PME and Resilience” Breakout Session

**by: Chaplain (Maj.) Tim Rietkerk**

In this breakout session Chaplain (Col.) Eric Wester and Dr. Rebecca Johnson each presented their papers and led discussion on the thoughts they introduced.

Wester currently serves as the Senior Military Fellow at the Institute for National Security Ethics and Leadership, National Defense University Fort McNair. His presentation covered the analysis of a survey conducted in summer 2009 in which 2,572 Soldiers took part. The survey was the Army’s “Excellence in Character, Ethics, and Leadership (EXCEL)” survey. The survey asked questions on spirituality and if/how that affected ethical decision making and resiliency in the combat zone. The survey used the construct of spirituality as a spiritual worldview, prayer/personal piety, and connection to a faith community

In analyzing the results, Wester concluded that spirituality fit under some different subscales than the survey construct: connection to others, religious identification, and hopeful outlook.

He also showed how higher scores of spirituality correlated with higher scores in ethics and resiliency, especially in moral courage/ownership, moral efficacy, and embracing Army values. The survey also showed that Soldiers experienced Spirituality primarily through religious identification which highlights the importance of ensuring opportunities to practice their beliefs.

Wester included recommendations for commanders and Unit Ministry Teams on addressing and resourcing spiritual fitness in light of its positive correlation with ethical behavior and resiliency.

Dr. Rebecca Johnson serves as Assistant Professor of National Security Affairs at Marine Corps University’s Command and Staff College, where she teaches courses on Culture and Interagency Operations and Military Ethics. In her presentation, Johnson addressed the topic of how to develop and build moral resiliency in the Professional Military Educational (PME) setting to combat moral injury. In examining the MHAT-V survey results, one sees a complex and oftentimes ambiguous environment which confronts service members with ethical dilemmas. This stress combined with an event that violates one’s moral beliefs, creates the conditions for significant moral injury.

When service members return from these environments, they cope either by emotional distancing or create meaning to deal with moral injury.

To facilitate moral resilience, Johnson described how the PME could develop the service member’s ability to combat moral injury through training, reflection, and critical thinking. In addition to individual development, the PME focuses on assisting the individual to lead teams and units in the complex moral environment.



# Developing Moral Resilience amidst Moral Complexity

by Dr. Rebecca J. Johnson

Assistant Professor of National Security Affairs  
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This paper explores the relationship between moral resilience and moral complexity. At its core, it seeks to explore ways PME institutions can cultivate moral resilience in their students in an effort to combat moral injury. While a growing body of research examines moral injury in a clinical context, less attention has been paid to the role of military education in preparing officers to respond to situations that result in moral injury or in recovering from this specific type of injury once incurred. This is a significant oversight. The Professional Military Educational setting provides a unique environment in which to cultivate moral resilience and enable officers to address existing moral injury. The utilization of cohort groups, (often) reunion with family, relatively relaxed pace, mentor supervision, program length, and access to clinically trained mental health professionals create an environment in which officers can process past morally traumatic events, prepare themselves for the morally traumatic situations they may experience during future deployments, and learn how to prepare their subordinates to do the same.

This paper begins by defining the concept of moral injury and exploring the question whether the cultural differences experienced in current operations may increase the potential for moral injury. The next section explores the concept of moral resilience and its role in moral injury prevention and recovery. It also examines different approaches to cultivating moral resilience. The final section offers recommendations for how PME institutions can structure curricula to develop students' moral resilience and address instances of moral injury.

## MORAL INJURY

Moral injury refers to the injury suffered as a result of “perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations.”<sup>1</sup> This type of psychological injury differs from other forms of Combat and Operational Stress<sup>2</sup> – unlike PTSD, no necessary connection exists between personal threat and the experience of trauma; it is more acute than ‘wear and tear’ stress; and one need not lose anyone as defined by grief. The harm done by moral injury comes from its ability to “shatter an individual’s beliefs about the purpose and meaning of life, challenge belief in God, induce moral conflict, and even precipitate an existential crisis....”<sup>3</sup> Engaging children as combatants, discovering mass graves or execution sites, and committing fratricide are all illustrations of potentially morally traumatic experiences.

Not all experiences of moral trauma result in moral injury. Research by Litz et al. indicates, “If the attribution about the cause of a transgression is *global* (i.e., not context dependent), *internal* (i.e., seen as a disposition or character flaw), and *stable* (i.e., enduring; the experience of being tainted),” moral injury is more likely.<sup>4</sup> An individual’s ability to contextualize, externalize, and compartmentalize the traumatic event reduces the potential for moral injury; however, to the extent an individual views a morally traumatic event as reflective of universal truths (the world is inherently unjust, capricious, etc.) and his own character, that will follow him home from his deployment, he is at increased risk for moral injury. This is because viewing the morally traumatic event as universal and indicative of one’s own character diminishes the individual’s ability to incorporate the event into preexisting beliefs that the world is benevolent and meaningful and that he holds moral worth. This inability to account for the morally traumatic event within one’s existing belief structure threatens that structure, prompting an existential crisis within the individual as he realizes his inability to integrate the experience into his existing moral and relational beliefs without condemning the structure of those beliefs and himself.

Injury is experienced through the dual processes of intrusion and avoidance. According to Litz

et al., “Intrusions, in the form of memories and nightmares are accompanied by extreme arousal and distress, motivating the individual to avoid thoughts and memories (and situations that trigger recall) of the trauma. Although avoidance strategies may temporarily alleviate distress, they tend to interfere with accommodation of and, by extension, recovery from the traumatic experience.”<sup>5</sup> Intrusions and avoidance reinforce injury by reaffirming the seeming inability to accommodate the moral trauma within one’s pre-existing moral structures. Again, Litz, et al. are instructive on this point:

*The more time passes, the more service members will be convinced and confident that not only their actions, but they are unforgiveable. In other words, service members and veterans with moral injury will fail to see a path toward renewal and reconciliation; they will fail to forgive themselves and experience self-condemnation. The behavioral, cognitive, and emotional aftermath of unreconciled severe moral conflict, withdrawal, and self-condemnation closely mirrors the reexperiencing, avoidance, and emotional numbing symptoms of PTSD.*<sup>6</sup>

If moral injury results from experiencing behavior that destroys core preexisting beliefs concerning one’s value system, the potential for moral injury grows significantly in environments where moral systems collide. This has been seen most recently in combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan where the moral code followed by the majority of the people differs from that held by U.S. service members deployed in the region. MHAT-V indicates that 24.6% of soldiers reported facing ethical situations during deployments where they did not know how to respond.<sup>7</sup> While some of these responses likely refer to situations as relatively benign as whether to allow local officials to skim off the top during contracting procedures, it also likely refers to situations as morally fraught as distinguishing between insurgents and noncombatants in a particular engagement or whether to turn detainees over to host nationals when they suspect abuse may result. In the current conflict in Afghanistan, this ambiguity is focused by insurgents’ rejection of noncombatant immunity and the use of tactics western just war practices would view as perfidious. Child soldiers, human shields, and targeting civilians are other examples of battlefield practices that are repugnant to American service members but morally legitimate in the eyes of those employing them. The ambiguity of operating in complex cultural environments heightens the levels of stress experienced by service members<sup>8</sup> when this ambiguity is focused by an event that violates service members’ moral beliefs, the conditions for moral injury are ripe.<sup>9</sup> They are also relatively common.

Service members may experience moral injury from two sources – first, they may witness or do something that violates their moral code; second, they may become so embedded in the cultures they operate in that their moral code begins to incorporate elements of their hosts’ culture. As Hazel Markus and Kitayama Shinobu write, “[c]ultural contexts and social situations provide the very frame within which psychological systems develop. Psychological systems then develop in ways that are culturally resonant and that help establish the person as a member in good standing in a given group or context.”<sup>10</sup> When service members return home, the realization that they have strayed from their families’ and countries’ moral compass can be devastating.

The Army’s *Study of the Human Dimension in the Future: 2015-2024* unwittingly identifies this source of injury when it notes that “...the objective of moral development is the practice of the military and civic virtues and the internalized dispositions to live by those values all day, every day, professionally and in the Soldier’s private life. This is what integrity is all about – aligning individual and professional values in such a way that beliefs and behaviors are internally consistent.”<sup>11</sup> The guilt a service member experiences when he realizes his behaviors – and potentially beliefs – no longer comport with those affirmed by his personal and professional communities can easily create the global, internal, and stable connotations that result in moral injury. Couple that guilt with the shame associated with loved ones and colleagues becoming aware of his actions, and the service member holds a strong incentive to bury any morally injurious experience, reinforcing the avoidance mechanism that compounds his injury.

## **MORAL RESILIENCE**

If irregular warfare increases the potential for moral trauma, what factors mitigate the potential for this trauma to result in moral injury? Psychological resilience “involves the creation of meaning in life, even life that is sometimes painful or absurd, and having the courage to live fully despite its inherent pain and futility. It is a global perspective that affects how one views the self, others, work, and even the physical world.”<sup>12</sup>

Researchers look at resilience in terms of individuals’ feelings of commitment, control, and challenge – all aspects that facilitate a person’s ability to incorporate, rather than alienate, a morally traumatic experience. ‘Commitment’ contrasts with alienation and “refers to the ability to feel deeply involved in activities of life;” ‘control’ (vs. powerlessness) refers to “the belief one can control or influence events of one’s experience;” and ‘challenge’ (vs. threat) refers to “the sense of anticipation of change as an exciting challenge to further development.”<sup>13</sup> Those who demonstrate these traits are able to work under high stress conditions, according to Suzanne Kobasa because “[t]hey know *why* they are facing the stressful events that characterize their profession and also know *how* to face them successfully.”<sup>14</sup>

Rather than regressive coping methods of denying, cognitive and emotional distancing, and catastrophizing the stressful events (the intrusion and avoidance mechanisms that characterizes moral injury), resilient people employ transformational coping strategies of understanding and contextualizing the circumstances of the situation coupled with situation-focused problem solving to reframe the event in terms of a challenge over which the individual has some level of control.<sup>15</sup> These differences in coping strategies influence whether a person is able to maintain relatively stable levels of psychological and physical functioning or whether he adopts unhealthy psychopathological functioning. If the latter course is adopted, the individual is more likely to experience moral injury and require a period of focused recovery from the experience.

While some people are born naturally more resilient than others, resilience can be trained. Resilience is cultivated with two aims in mind – the first is to teach individuals the practice of transformational coping so they are better able to frame their experiences contextually, understand their role in these experiences, and understand how these experiences shape their future actions; the second is to use the experience of transformational coping itself to “deepen the motivational self-perceptions of commitment, control, and challenge.”<sup>16</sup>

The techniques used to cultivate resilience include “situational reconstruction,” a process by which individuals revisit the experience in order to gain additional perspective; “focusing,” in which individuals explore their physical reactions to memories associated with the trauma; and “compensatory self-improvement,” during which individuals identify actions they can take in the present in order to develop confidence in actions they will take in the future.

If the moral complexity of service members’ operating environments is a source of moral trauma and injury, then resilience training must cultivate mechanisms within service members to live in environments with different, even competing moral systems while maintaining a healthy sense of commitment, control, and challenge. General resilience is not enough; this resilience must include specific strategies for managing the moral disconnect service members are likely to face during their deployments. Paul Van Den Berg has labeled this ability “prestige resilience.”<sup>17</sup> He defines prestige resilience as “the set of reactive attitudes, which allows a person *to cope* with the permanent public presence of ‘cultural others’, without harming or denying her own identity.”<sup>18</sup> While I would dispute Van Den Berg’s equation of identity with prestige, his description of prestige resilience is instructive in the present context.

Denying the existence of alternate moral systems is a regressive coping strategy. Accepting the moral equality of alternate moral systems is also regressive because it consciously avoids the morally problematic tensions that may be present<sup>19</sup> (those who accept the ‘Far War’ justification of jihad may sincerely believe that it is legitimate to target civilians in their pursuit of a global *dar al Islam*, but the sincerity of their conviction does not render their belief morally beneficial). Service members need to be able to cultivate transformative coping mechanisms in the face of moral complexity. Anna Abram has tied this process to the cultivation of moral agency, the idea “that, despite the limits of the world in which one lives, one is still able to shape responsibly the image of the

person one ought to become.”<sup>20</sup>

Service members have long grappled with the morality of civilian deaths in combat. This improves their levels of commitment, control, and challenge in an operating environment where the enemy threatens and terrorizes, and targets civilians as a conscious part of their strategy. This does not lessen the grief and potential trauma experienced when a U.S. service member kills a civilian accidentally, but the amount of attention paid to both identifying noncombatants as a protected class in war and recognizing the regrettable, yet not immoral, reality of collateral damage provides a mechanism for service members to both process their own actions in war and characterize the actions of an enemy of that fails to guarantee the same protections. It is important for service members to have this same level of exposure to the morally problematic challenges they face in other areas, like child soldiers. It is morally acceptable for a service member to kill a child in self-defense, though it is devastating for most people in uniform to contemplate such an action. Working through the different justifications for why children might take up arms (either voluntarily or not) and the different justifications for how service members might choose to engage them when threatened increases their sense of control should they ever face the situation.

This is true both in cultivating resilience to ward against moral injury and as a recovery mechanism following injury. Framing the cause of injury in terms of an opportunity for further growth (either to deepen one’s understanding of one’s world view or appreciation for what it means to live rightly) transforms the existential threat into a challenge. According to Litz et al., “...the idea is not to try and fix the past, but rather to draw a firm line around the past and its related associations, so that the mistakes of the past do not define the present and the future and so that a pre-occupation with the past does not prevent possible future good.”<sup>21</sup>

## **THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION**

What role can professional military education play in cultivating moral resilience? This section focuses specifically on officer’s resident PME; it is interesting to consider how distance learning might cultivate resilience in service members, but the mechanisms would necessarily differ from those found in a schoolhouse environment. Likewise, it is essential to consider how resilience training could be incorporated into enlisted PME, but the duration of those courses compared to the months-long courses provided to officers would likewise require a tailored approach.

In the context of resident officer PME, the utilization of cohort groups, (often) reunion with family, relatively relaxed pace, mentor supervision, program length, and access to clinically trained mental health professionals create an environment in which officers can process past morally traumatic events, prepare themselves for the morally traumatic situations they may experience during future deployments, and learn how to prepare their subordinates to do the same. This section provides guidance for how each of these tasks can be incorporated into PME curricula.

## **BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE INDIVIDUAL**

The primary contribution of PME will likely be in cultivating individual service members’ resilience by developing their confidence in confronting morally complex situations in order to reduce the potential for moral injury.<sup>22</sup> The focus of this effort in a school house setting would be to develop service members’ sense of control in situations that lack moral clarity and their interpretation of these situations as challenges, rather than threats. While specific learning objectives will vary by grade, they will center on the following outcomes:

1. Service members will be able to recognize the causes and indicators of moral trauma and how moral trauma results in moral injury.
2. Service members will understand the concepts of commitment, control, and challenge and the different methods used to cultivate them individually.
3. Service members will be able to identify appropriate levels of moral responsibility in situ-

ations of moral ambiguity or complexity.

Service members will demonstrate the recognition of different – sometimes competing – cultural systems, as active, though not necessarily binding, within different AORs.<sup>23</sup>

Material should be presented in a range of formats to present foundational knowledge concerning moral dilemmas, moral complexity, and the causes and symptoms of moral trauma and injury; provide a guided venue to analyze and evaluate specific cases – both historical and personal; and provide opportunities for service members to confront and engage actual traumatic scenarios with their peers and mentors. The critical thinking that serves as the main effort of service members' time in resident PME institutions provides the mental framework for how to engage these case studies. In this way, the pedagogical approach adopted in PME trains the critical perspective taking skills needed to undertake situational reconstruction and compensatory self-improvement as methods of resilience building.

Seminar leaders, school directors, and chaplains should be utilized to present the foundational knowledge needed to analyze and engage morally complex scenarios. Involvement by school leadership is particularly important in building a command climate that is seen as being concerned with the issue of moral trauma and service members' psychological and spiritual well-being.

Ethical decision games, 'hot washes' of historical or personal cases, and simulations allow service members to rehearse their responses to morally traumatic situations. This rehearsal is critical to their developing a sense of control in ambiguous situations by learning to identify an appropriate understanding of their role in the encounter and their range of potential responses. While there tends to be an inclination to focus on cases where individuals have failed in their moral responsibility, it is even more important to provide cases where individuals encountered morally traumatic situations and behaved in a way that can be understood as honorable.<sup>24</sup>

It is also essential that these cases be legitimately ambiguous and complex.<sup>25</sup> Often case books will provide scenarios that serve more as object lessons than real dilemmas that force students to struggle. If scenarios fail to be realistically ambiguous or complex, they fail in their intended goal of developing service members' sense of control and challenge. This is because the repeated practice of engaging morally complex and potentially traumatic situations allows service members to engage difficult decisions with the guidance of their mentors and collaborative support of their peers, build a repertoire of potential responses, and begin to develop the mental and emotional conditioning needed to respond in combat.<sup>26</sup> When students read a case and can immediately discern the 'right' response, they are not sufficiently challenged. This raises the potential for them to feel unprepared when confronted with a legitimately complex situation. In this circumstance, they are more likely to feel threatened, alienated, and powerless.

Also, engaging truly complex cases in seminar allows service members to explore their peers' methods for engaging the case. This creates a collaborative environment for conducting the situational reconstruction that has been shown to improve resilience. Viewing a morally ambiguous or complex scenario in seminar allows service members to confront the absence of 'right' answers, prompting them to see the contextual nature of dilemmas and shift into a more appropriate mode of engagement – they may not be able to resolve the dilemma, solve the problem, or 'do the right thing'. Setting that expectation down opens the possibility for a more productive response.

## **BUILDING RESILIENCE IN SUBORDINATES**

Each level of PME is committed to developing leaders who are able to cultivate subordinates. With respect to reducing the tendency for moral injury, the focus is on fostering service members' level of commitment and improving their ability to promote resilience in their troops. Learning outcomes appropriate to this objective would center on:

1. Service members will demonstrate the ability to foster the traits of commitment, control, and challenge in subordinates within their units.

2. Service members will understand the phases of moral development and how to motivate moral behavior in subordinates at different developmental levels.
3. Service members will demonstrate the ability to prepare subordinates to face morally ambiguous situations with a sense of challenge.
4. Service members will demonstrate the ability to help subordinates reframe morally traumatic experiences after the fact.

An important element of this process would be to educate service members on moral development and how to communicate effectively to individuals with different degrees of moral sophistication. Lawrence Kohlberg has developed a widely used (and widely critiqued) schema for understanding what motivates people to behave morally.<sup>27</sup> While the categorization of specific individuals is not necessary for cultivating resilience, service members should develop an understanding of how to communicate effectively to people with different cognitive and motivational frameworks. Likewise, skills training on the different methods for cultivating resilience (both pre- and post- stress) provide tailored guidance for how to translate what service members learn in an educational setting into techniques and practices they can utilize then they return to the operational forces.

Leaders can have a profound effect on their subordinates' resilience. According to Paul Bartone, "By the policies and priorities they establish, the directives they give, the advice and counsel they offer, the stories they tell, and perhaps most important the examples they provide, leaders may indeed alter the manner in which their subordinates interpret and make sense of their experiences."<sup>28</sup>

In order to improve service members' ability to cultivate resilience in their future units, students could be tasked with developing training materials for how they would develop resilience in subordinates and a plan for how to work with their enlisted counterparts to this end. In addition, seminar groups could run mock 'hot washes' of morally traumatic events (lethal engagement with child soldiers, collateral damage incidents, encounters with morally corrupt superiors, etc.).

The purpose of these activities would not be to look for alternate ways to engage the experiences themselves but for service members to practice how to assist subordinates in framing and interpreting morally traumatic events in ways that are positive and constructive.<sup>29</sup> Framing traumatic experiences as challenges, rather than threats can require intentional instruction and practice for leaders. Likewise, refusing the temptation to complain about support from higher when things are going poorly can be difficult, but can go a long way toward maintaining or restoring troops' sense of commitment. Time in seminar spent working with a cohort of trusted peers under the guidance of a senior faculty advisor can do much to build this ability.

## **FACILITATING RECOVERY**

Perhaps the most important, but easily most difficult objective to achieve in a PME setting is to provide a suitable environment in which service members living with moral trauma or injury can heal. The focus of this effort is on enabling service members to revisit past trauma in order to develop an appreciation of the appropriate context in which the trauma occurred (to counter the tendency to universalize) and to regain a sense of themselves as competent, moral agents. While the majority of this work can only be undertaken with the help of a trained clinical psychologist or chaplain, there are actions the schools can take to reinforce and support the efforts made in counseling. Specific learning outcomes related to recovery include:

1. Service members will be able to differentiate among the different forms of combat and operational stress.
2. Service members will understand that meaningful moral growth can come out of moral failures and moral trauma.<sup>30</sup>
3. Service members will understand the DOD procedures, guidelines, and policy concerning mental health services and their implications for clearances.

Essential to the process of recovery is an understanding of what moral trauma and moral injury are, as distinct from PTSD or other forms of combat and operational stress; service members must also understand the resources and procedures in place DOD-wide for their and their families' support. Schools may differ in their policies, but students at Marine Corps University receive an unobserved fitness report, which allows them to seek professional counseling for the year they are in school with no record of it taking place.

While there are no projects or assignments appropriate to the objective of recovery, the structure of PME is well-suited for recovery to take place. Most PME courses of study are measured in months, not weeks, providing service members with time to decompress from their previous assignment, bond with their seminar group, and grapple with any moral trauma or injury they may have experienced previously. Service members are often reunited with their families for the duration of their time in school (though the number of geobachelors increases with rank). This coupled with the consistency of their interactions with their peers in seminar provides a stabilizing and generally constructive environment in which to process their experience.

## CONCLUSION

While one might think resilience training would be more appropriate for a training environment than the school house, the stability, pace, mentor supervision, and analytical focus of PME institutions provides a more robust setting to achieve the learning objectives of building resilience in individual service members; developing their ability to cultivate the traits of commitment, control, and challenge in subordinates; and healing any existing moral trauma or injury they may bring with them from previous assignments. It also provides the intellectual opportunity to think about the existence of competing moral systems and the effect this has on military operations. By preparing service members to engage constructively in morally ambiguous situations during deployments, PME institutions can make a substantial contribution to reducing the instance of moral trauma. It can also help fortify service members to withstand moral trauma when it does occur, so it does not result in injury. Finally, it can provide a productive environment within which service members already suffering from moral trauma or injury can heal.

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# **Soldier Spirituality in a Combat Zone: Preliminary Findings About Correlations with Ethics and Resiliency**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines results of a survey of U.S. land forces in the combat zone of Iraq collected in the summer of 2009. Named the Army's Excellence in Character, Ethics, and Leadership (EXCEL) survey, it measured spirituality as one of the individual variables among Soldiers. Spirituality is expressed using a composite score and three discrete, correlated factors. The three factors of spirituality in this study are connection to others, religious identification, and hopeful outlook. The paper analyzes statistically significant correlations between higher scores of spirituality with measures of ethics and the resilience of Soldiers.

**Key words:** spirituality, ethics, resilience, character development, religion in the military

The views expressed in this research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Army, National Defense University, or the U.S. Army Chaplains Corps.

## **SOLDIER SPIRITUALITY IN A COMBAT ZONE: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS ABOUT CORRELATIONS WITH ETHICS AND RESILIENCE**

*"It is in the national interest that personnel serving in the Armed Forces be protected in the realization and development of moral, spiritual, and religious values consistent with the religious beliefs of the individuals concerned. To this end, it is the duty of commanding officers in every echelon to develop to the highest degree the conditions and influences calculated to promote health, morals, and spiritual values of the personnel under their command."*<sup>1</sup>

— General George C. Marshall

*"Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy."*<sup>2</sup>

— General Norman Schwartzkopf

Growing conceptual agreement recognizes and seeks to engage spirituality as an element of character for Soldiers in the U.S. Army. For example, spirituality, or the domain of the human spirit, is one of the three elements of the character development model for cadets at the U.S. Military Academy—along with the ethical and social domains.<sup>3</sup> Holistic fitness programs in the Army and across the Department of Defense (DoD) include spiritual fitness.<sup>4</sup> And in the areas of training, education, and development, leaders aspire to inculcate character development, including spirituality, to complement teaching Soldiers competence in their military tasks.<sup>5</sup>

Spirituality and cognate constructs such as morals and values, as noted by Marshall above, have long been viewed as integral aspects of command. Character development is also reemerging as a facet of leading Soldiers, including character development that addresses spirituality. But connections between spirituality and other elements of character have been spoken about more along the lines of "inspiration" than "investigation."

The intent of this paper is to examine results of the Army's Excellence in Character, Ethics and

Leadership (EXCEL) survey about spirituality and how it affects ethics and the resilience of Soldiers.<sup>6</sup> These findings are based on a sample of more than 1,250 Soldiers in a combat zone. This paper offers a preliminary discussion of findings about spirituality and a three-factor construct of spirituality. The three-factor model emerged from the survey data by calculating fit indices of scores on fifteen items. Higher mean scores of spirituality are examined in light of demographic variables. Correlations between spirituality, ethics, and resilience are reported, showing how spirituality interacts with measurements of ethics and resilience. The findings also point to areas for further research.

The EXCEL survey presents an honest and thought-provoking perspective from Soldiers in a combat zone. Items on the survey address ethical attitudes, values and behavior, leadership, physical and emotional health, and spirituality. Items about spirituality were included within the larger, interdisciplinary research instrument. Spirituality, ethics, and resilience converge to give some contours of the interactions of these factors as elements of character in Soldiers.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE ARMY EXCEL STUDY**

In 2008, the U.S. Army initiated designs and plans for the Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNFI) Survey-2009. The study was requested by General Petraeus as he relinquished command of the Multi-National Forces in Iraq in September of 2008. The study had the backing of the Chief of Staff of the Army and was implemented by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE) with collaboration by the Institute for National Security Ethics and Leadership at National Defense University, the U.S. Army Chaplains Corps, and a wide range of military and civilian academic partners. The study tests a wide range of constructs about the ethical attitudes and behavior of U.S. Land Forces. The intent of this study was to aid Army leaders in self-assessment, reflection, and continuous learning.

It was hoped findings from the survey might shed light on earlier findings by the Mental Health Assessment Team (MHAT IV and V) reports. These reports indicated significant percentages of military personnel who stated they would not report a fellow member of the military for “killing or wounding an innocent non-combatant.”<sup>7</sup> The Army has set a high priority on ethics and ethical decision-making in the face of sustained operational demands. Given this reality, ethical dilemmas abound, and Soldiers are constantly faced with demanding challenges. Lapses like Abu Ghraib and other severe ethical failures make it evident that ethics training is an ongoing necessity.<sup>8</sup> Survey results reveal correlations between an individual’s level of spirituality and two other constructs: ethics and resilience. Specifically, spirituality correlates positively with five factors of ethics, such as moral courage and moral confidence, as well as increased psychological and physical resilience.

The original aim of the EXCEL study was to analyze “the variables involved in building strong moral individuals and teams.”<sup>9</sup> Among more than twenty constructs, the survey included items addressing spirituality, ethics, and resiliency. The survey originally aimed to sample 6,000 U.S. Land Forces in the Multi-National Forces-Iraq, both the United States Army and the United States Marine Corps (USMC). Due to practical logistical considerations in administering the surveys, the data represents only Army Soldiers.

## **METHODS IN THE EXCEL STUDY**

**Survey Design.** The EXCEL survey is a paper-and-pencil instrument survey which collects demographic and survey data primarily using Likert-scales. EXCEL addresses topics ranging from ethical attitudes, actions, and observed behaviors in others to leadership, attitudes about the Army, general physical concerns, attitudes, and well-being. The survey was designed in four versions: version A (which featured just the core questions), version B (which featured core questions plus spirituality questions), version A Leader (which featured core questions and was given to leaders), and version B Leader (which featured core questions plus spirituality questions and was given to leaders). Surveys were collected from 2,572 Soldiers deployed in Iraq between June 20, 2009 and July 24, 2009.<sup>10</sup> To protect the anonymity of participants, data was collected from randomly

selected units. Though this total number of 2,572 Soldiers fell short of the targeted sample of 6,000, the large sample size increases the reliability of the results and decreases sampling bias.

**Survey Participants.** This paper focuses on data from version B and version B Leader. Of the 2,572 Soldiers surveyed, 1,366 completed version B and version B Leader, (which included spirituality items.)<sup>11</sup> Of 1,366 version B surveys, there were 1,263 valid responses, meaning surveys were sufficiently complete to be tabulated and analyzed. Table 1 presents a summary of demographics of version respondents. Note that 61 percent of respondents were under age 27, and 76 percent were grade E5 (sergeant) and below.

GENDER	MALE	FEMALE	UNKNOWN
	1123	130	13
AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	
18-22	378	27.7%	
23-27	457	33.5%	
28-32	219	16%	
33-37	130	9.5%	
38-42	77	5.6%	
43-47	43	3.1%	
48+	13	1%	
Unknown	49	3.6%	
MARITAL STATUS	UNMARRIED	MARRIED	UNKNOWN
	736	611	19
ARMY COMPONENT	ACTIVE COMPONENT	RESERVE COMPONENT	
	909	428	29

*Table 1*

From a review of relevant literature, surveys addressing spirituality and well-being most often sample populations in hospitals or other treatment facilities, college students, or congregational members. Some articles rely on larger social science data collection such as the General Social Survey (GSS) of the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. No comparable data was previously available about Soldiers in a combat zone.

**The Spirituality Items.** Fifteen items relating to spirituality were included at the request of the Institute for National Security, Ethics and Leadership (INSEL) at National Defense University and the United States Army Chaplain Corps. Items were selected from established surveys. All items were formatted using a five-point Likert-scale in line with the layout of the larger survey.

Thirteen of the fifteen items included in EXCEL were based on the “Dimensions of Religion/Spirituality and Relevance to Health Research” from the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. The purpose of the study was to “identify unique religion/spirituality (R/S) factors that account for variation in R/S measures of interest to health research.”<sup>12</sup> Their research focus was identifying

religious and spiritual items relevant in health through meta-analysis of personality and medical instruments. Haber and associates took many of their questions from other well-established studies. These include the *Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religion and Spirituality*, by Fetzer Institute/National Institution of Aging, and R. L. Piedmont's *Development and Validation of the Spiritual Transcendence Scale: A Measure of Spiritual Experience*. In addition, Haber *et al* used what they called two "classic measures with exceptional histories of use."<sup>13</sup> The first is the *Spiritual Well-Being Scale*, by C. W. Ellison, which measures well-being associated with God and existentialism. The second is "The Age-Universal" version of Allport and Ross's *Religious Orientation Scale*.

These well-known sources combined with one of Haber's "Religion/Spirituality Motivation, Devotion, & Coping" questions in conjunction with two MNFI-specific questions make up the fifteen items. Appendix A provides a complete list of the fifteen items and their sources.

In the design, the fifteen spirituality items were to measure three dimensions of spirituality in individuals: spiritual worldview, prayer/personal piety, and connection to a faith community. These address private and personal spirituality, as well as the public aspects of spirituality, paralleling the approach in another recent study.<sup>14</sup> Also, by matching leader scores with scores of followers in their units, future analysis can examine spirituality within units and interactions between leaders and followers in multi-factorial analysis.

**Procedures.** To obtain a representative sample, the MNFI Inspector General (MNFI-IG) randomly selected two-brigade sized units from each of the four Army divisions then serving in Iraq. Two battalions were randomly selected within those brigades, from each of those battalions, three companies were randomly selected, and from each of the companies, three platoons were randomly selected. In addition to these troops, key leadership at the platoon, company, and battalion levels also participated in the survey, thus allowing the survey to assess the culture/climate developed by individual leaders in their areas of responsibility. Battalion chaplains and chaplain assistants implemented survey administration protocols, distributing and collecting surveys in platoon-sized elements (20 – 40 individuals). All leaders surveyed were asked as well to rate certain effects of leadership at platoon, company, and battalion level. Further, leaders were asked to evaluate the leadership and unit performance of subordinate leaders—at the next level down from them. All Soldiers completing the survey reported on their individual ethical behavior and beliefs, rated their immediate leaders and the ethical behavior of their peers, and evaluated the culture and climate in their respective units and their psychological and somatic conditions. Respondents receiving version B rated themselves on three factors of spirituality.

Of the original 2,572 Soldiers, 1,366 completed version B and version B Leader of the survey which included fifteen items assessing spirituality.<sup>15</sup> Of the 1,366 surveys returned, 1,263 were valid responses. Based on a literature review, this is the largest sample of Soldiers assessing spirituality in a combat zone. The Army does collect annual data on religious preference for Soldiers, but not qualitative survey data. The closest comparable sample probing aspects of spirituality numbered 800 in an unpublished thesis from World War II probing the effect of combat on religious belief and personal morality.<sup>16</sup>

When the survey respondents completed their surveys, the chaplains and chaplain assistants collected the surveys and conveyed them to the MNFI-IG. The surveys were shipped to CAPE. The data was provided to the following individuals for further analysis: Colonel Sean T. Hannah, PhD, CAPE director, in conjunction with several leading university researchers, including (alphabetically) Dr. Bruce Avolio (University of Washington); Dr. Steve Kozlowski (Michigan State University); Dr. Robert Lord (University of Akron); Dr. John Schaubroeck (Michigan State University); and Dr. Linda Trevino (Pennsylvania State University). The draft Technical Report of the data was prepared by Dr. John Schaubroeck and COL Hannah with assistance from doctoral students at Michigan State University: Nikolaos Dimotakis, Katherine Guica, Megan Huth, and Chunyan Peng.<sup>17</sup>

## **SPIRITUALITY DEFINED FOR THIS STUDY**

Going into the study, the working hypothesis was that spirituality could be assessed using three

subscales. The stated Hypothesis (which included three additional statements) was: “Spirituality incorporates the three elements of a spiritual worldview, personal piety, and connection to a faith community.”

The three subscales in the design did not achieve acceptable levels calculating from fit indices using five items per subscale. What emerged from calculating fit indices of spirituality items confirmed that spirituality is indeed multidimensional, but along different subscales. Items clustered around three factors, but in a different combination: connection to others, religious identification, and hopeful outlook. These three factors do not account for all elements of spirituality. By analyzing data from the survey questions, a unifying construct of spirituality emerged along three subscales. With the exception of four questions, all of the spirituality questions on the survey fell under one of these three categories.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the EXCEL study does not cover all dimensions of spirituality, but it does reveal a workable model of spirituality for the Soldiers surveyed.

The alternative structure supports three factors using the sub-scales and items outlined below:

**Connection to Others:**

Q.151 I feel that on a higher level all of us share a common bond.

Q.152 Although there is good and bad in people, I believe that humanity as a whole is basically good.

Q.154 Although individual people may be difficult, I feel a bond with all of humanity.

**Religious Identification:**

Q.155 My spiritual life is an important part of who I am as a person.

Q.159 I go to my place of worship (Chapel, Church, Synagogue, Temple) because it helps me connect with friends.

Q.160 I believe my personal prayers help me during this deployment.

Q.161 I believe the prayers of my family and friends back home help me.

Q.162 I believe the presence and ministry of my unit chaplain brings value to the unit.

**Hopeful Outlook:**

Q.157 I feel a sense of well-being about the direction in which my life is heading.

Q.163 I feel good about my future.

Q.164 I have forgiven myself for things that I have done wrong.

Using this alternative measurement model, a three-factor sub-structure provides good fit indices. Furthermore, the fit of the three-factor model is much better than a one-factor model. Table 2 presents the fit indices of this revised structure. A fit index above .90 is considered extremely strong. Fit indices at .75 are acceptable.

FACTOR STRUCTURE	X <sup>2</sup>	NFI	NNFI	CFI	GFI	SRMR	RMSEA	AIC
3 Factors	335.12	.952	.943	.958	.952	.040	.077	253.12
1 Factor	1662.12	.759	.705	.764	.767	.102	.173	1574.12

Table 2

**U.S. ARMY CHAPLAINCY AND DOD TERMS OF REFERENCE ON SPIRITUALITY**

The three-factor construct of spirituality above parallels and complements the definition for spirituality which the Army Chief of Chaplains Army employs, “a process transcending self and

society that empowers the human spirit with purpose, identity, and meaning.”<sup>19</sup> The three factors of the EXCEL model of spirituality connect to the three functions in the chaplaincy definition—empowering people with purpose, identity, and meaning. The chaplaincy definition also incorporates awareness of that which transcends self and society. Linking the EXCEL model of spirituality to the Army chaplaincy definition, connection to others relates to identity, religious identification relates to both identity and meaning, and hopeful outlook relates to purpose.

Another relevant definition comes from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction on the Total Force Fitness (TFF) framework. TFF addresses spirituality, defining it as “the expression of the human spirit in thoughts, practices, and relationships of connection to self, and connections outside the self, such as other people, groups, nature, and concepts of a higher order.”<sup>20</sup>

Although these definitions overlap and incorporate various elements, the three factors which fit the data from the EXCEL survey cluster along three similar constructs: connection to others, religious identification, and hopeful outlook. These factors, when present, correlate in the lives of Soldiers to positive attributes and may act as a buffer against some psychological and physical risk factors. Each of the three factors is considered further and then examined in light of correlations between spirituality and subscales addressing ethics and resilience.

### THREE FACTORS OF SPIRITUALITY

**Connection to Others.** McMillan and Chavis defined sense of community as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together.”<sup>21</sup> Soldiers report a connection to others as a dimension of spirituality. This factor correlates with intentions for ethical actions, moral attitudes, and a general increased ability to withstand the rigors of combat. Members of the military are familiar with feeling a common bond with each other, just as Shakespeare coined the famous phrase, “we happy few, we band of brothers.” But this sense of connection to others goes far beyond camaraderie or *esprit de corps*.

While *esprit de corps* is important, it is vital for a Soldier to not just feel both like she or he belongs to the unit but also belongs to the rest of the human race. Soldiers who integrate this perception at a deep level of their humanity recognize even their enemies are still part of humanity deserving certain rights and protections. A connection to others may mitigate enemy abuses, POW mistreatment, and civilian casualties.

The following items comprise the subscale for the factor connection to others:

Q.151 I feel that on a higher level all of us share a common bond.

Q.152 Although there is good and bad in people, I believe that humanity as a whole is basically good.

Q.154 Although individual people may be difficult, I feel a bond with all of humanity.

**Religious Identification.** Spirituality is not experienced in a vacuum. Soldiers who recorded a higher level of spirituality tended to connect that spirituality to some level of participation in recognized religious activity—prayer, prayer by others, and worship. Though definitions of spirituality are sometimes vague, real Soldiers are not vague at all. For Soldiers, practice is important, and practice is a prominent factor in their expression of spirituality. In correlating scores for Total Spirituality, the two items most closely related to this score are those that express beliefs about prayer:

Q.160 I believe my personal prayers help me during this deployment. (.794)

Q.161 I believe the prayers of my family and friends back home help me. (.786)

The EXCEL study data indicates when Soldiers were surveyed concerning spirituality, their spirituality was most typically described with recognizable religious identifiers such as prayer, chapel attendance, and corporate worship, which are common to organized religion. In addition to

the two items about prayer, this factor was measured by:

Q.155 My spiritual life is an important part of who I am as a person.

Q.159 I go to my place of worship (Chapel, Church, Synagogue, Temple) because it helps me connect with friends.

Q.162 I believe the presence and ministry of my unit chaplain brings value to the unit.

Religion and spirituality are sometimes complicated to discuss. As the Instruction issued by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff points out, “Defining ‘spirituality’ in the Armed Forces is difficult because of: the diversity of service members and their preferred spiritual practices; and, the confusion, ambiguity, and blurred lines that exist between understanding and defining ‘spirituality’ and religion.”<sup>22</sup> The EXCEL study shows Spirituality is experienced through religious identification. This underscores the need to ensure that individual Soldiers have the opportunity to practice their respective beliefs with freedom and respect. Soldiers who make use of these opportunities have a higher level of spirituality and, as considered below, this translates into increased resiliency and a strengthened personal ethic.

**Hopeful Outlook.** A third factor of spirituality emerged called hopeful outlook. Hope, optimism, and positive outlook are notable given the conditions under which these surveys were collected—living in a combat zone.

This hopeful outlook was revealed through Soldiers’ responses to the following items:

Q.157 I feel a sense of well-being about the direction in which my life is heading.

Q.163 I feel good about my future.

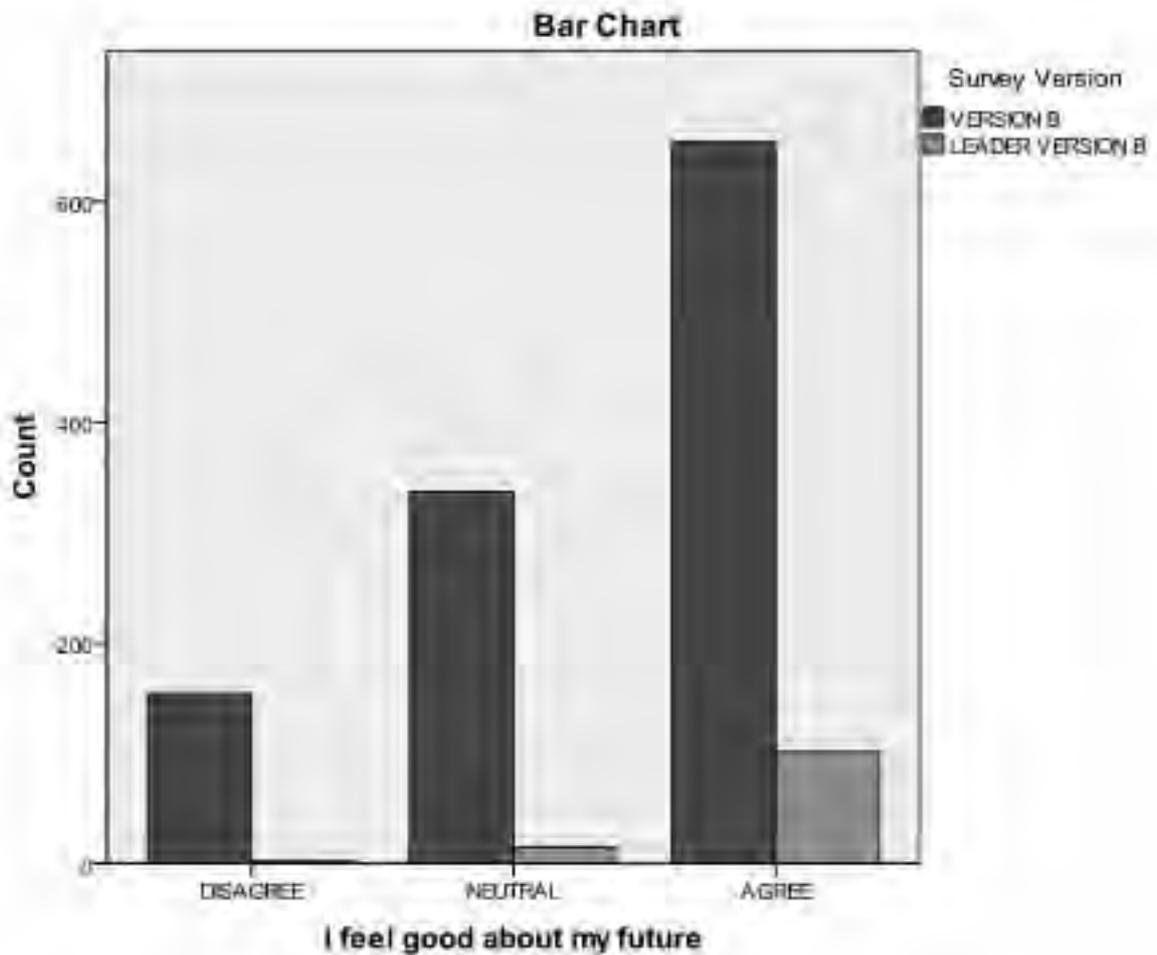
Q.164 I have forgiven myself for things that I have done wrong.

This last item acknowledges the issue of guilt, which combat veterans face. Guilt can often become a debilitating symptom if not properly processed and dealt with. This will be discussed as an aspect of resilience.

## FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS ON SPIRITUALITY ITEMS

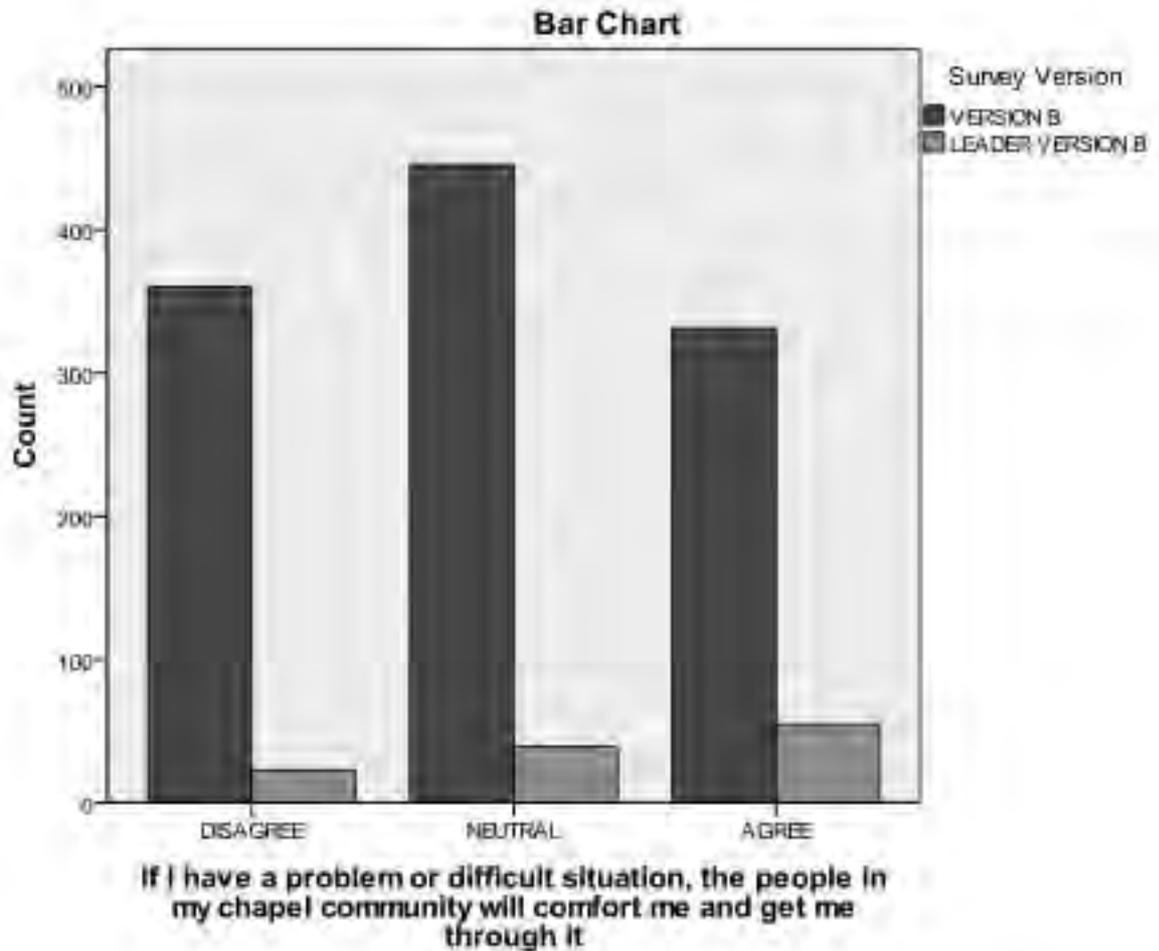
Responses of Soldiers in the survey indicate a wide range of scores about spirituality. Roughly one-third of respondents indicated they were not in agreement with these items about spirituality, one-third of respondents were neutral, and one-third of respondents were in agreement. Two frequency distributions graphs are included that illustrate the lowest and highest response patterns for spirituality scores. In both graphs, responses are grouped into three categories: Strongly Disagree/Disagree; Neutral; Agree/Strongly Agree. Also, each graph depicts the distribution from Version B and Version B Leader surveys. Leaders tended to agree or strongly agree more with items measuring spirituality compared to the larger sample of respondents.

Graph 1 shows the distribution of the highest scores on one of the spirituality items: Q164 I feel good about my future. In this distribution, 156 total respondents marked Strongly Disagree/Disagree, 352 Neutral, and 755 Agree/Strongly Agree.



*Graph 1*

Graph 2 shows the distribution of the lowest scores on one of the spirituality items: Q159 If I have a problem or difficult situation, the people in my chapel community will comfort me and get me through it. In this distribution, 383 total respondents marked Strongly Disagree/Disagree, 484 Neutral, and 386 Agree/Strongly Agree.



*Graph 2*

## **CORRELATIONS OF SPIRITUALITY TO AGE, RANK, AND OTHER VARIABLES**

Regarding spirituality, a literature review identified no longitudinal studies that span the adult life-cycle from early adulthood to senior adulthood which could provide conceptual descriptions of spiritual development. Most evidence of spiritual development comes from the study of individual lives<sup>23</sup> or is generalized from other fields such as analytic psychology,<sup>24</sup> moral development<sup>25</sup> or faith development tied to a quest for meaning without regard to transcendence.<sup>26</sup>

In Table 3, the three factors using subscales for spirituality and the Spirituality Total scores are listed with means from the Likert-scale. The strongest correlations (at the 0.01 level, 2-tailed) indicate:

- Higher spirituality scores correlated modestly with older respondents (.268)
- Higher spirituality scores correlated modestly with increased rank (.213)
- Higher spirituality scores correlated slightly with women (.121)
- Higher spirituality scores correlated slightly with higher education (.168)
- Higher spirituality scores correlated slightly and inversely with marriage (.073)
- Higher spirituality scores correlated slightly with having children (.145)

The significance of correlations is characterized as follows:

Strong	> .350
Moderate	.300 to .349
Modest	.200 to .299
Slight	.100 to .199

The cross-sectional data in this study indicate variables of age and rank produce the strongest statistically significant differences in all measures of spirituality, but leaves open the reasons for these differences.

FACTOR/DEMOGRAPHICS

	CONNECTION TO OTHERS	RELIGIOUS IDENTIFICATION	HOPEFUL OUTLOOK	TOTAL SPIRITUALITY SCORE
Mean (R=1-5)	3.0347	3.0343	3.4717	3.1517
Gender	.114**	.100**	.088**	.121**
Age	.242**	.232**	.181**	.268**
Education	.155**	.127**	.128**	.162**
Component	-.079**	-0.054	-0.023	-.064*
Married	0.026	.063*	.093**	.073**
Children	.090**	.137**	.118**	.145**
Rank	.205**	.161**	.179**	.213**

\*\* - Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* - Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Notes: Range of Likert-scale = 1-5 and N=1,223 to 1,263

Table 3

In the EXCEL data, there are two additional items of note in the correlations. First, there was no statistically significant correlation between the number of deployments and any reported higher or lower Total Spirituality scores or scores on any of the three sub-scales. Second, an interesting and very strong correlation emerged in using single items about spirituality and the Total Spirituality score. The item which best correlates (.794) with the Total Spirituality score is belief in the benefits of personal prayers. This is nearly identical and closely followed (.786) by the item regarding belief in the benefits of prayers by family members and friends. The convergence of belief *about* prayer and the practice of prayer may be of particular interest. These responses on the belief in the effectiveness of prayer provide justification for chaplains and leaders to encourage soldiers' spiritual practice and growth.

**FIVE FACTORS OF ETHICS CORRELATING WITH SPIRITUALITY**

In addition to describing spirituality, this paper examines correlations between spirituality and two constructs: ethics and resiliency. Correlations between spirituality and five factors of ethics will be reported. Further below, resiliency will be analyzed describing correlations between spirituality and two factors, emotional and physical resiliency. In ethics, measuring individual responses indicated a positive correlation between spirituality and the following factors of ethics:

- Moral Courage/Ownership (.408, Strong)
- Moral Efficacy (.391, Strong)
- Embracing Army Values (.387, Strong)
- Intent to Report Unethical Conduct (.335, Moderate)
- Soldier Identification (.295, Modest)

These five factors taken together could frame a useful approach to the ethical dimension of character. Using these to further specify the ethical dimension of character with Soldiers may fit alongside the three-factor model for examining the domain of the human spirit or spirituality. The third major element of character (using the U.S. Military Academy model) is the social dimension. Character is an overarching construct that incorporates the spiritual, ethical, and social aspects of the person in uniform.

*Correlations between spirituality scales and ethics variables<sup>27</sup>*

Factor/ Spirituality Scale	CONNECTION TO OTHERS	RELIGIOUS IDENTIFICA- TION	HOPEFUL OUTLOOK	TOTAL SPIRI- TUALITY SCORE
Moral Efficacy	.355**	.277**	.380**	.408**
Moral Courage/ Ownership	.331**	.257**	.380**	.391**
Embracing Army Values	.318**	.286**	.345**	.387**
Report Intentions	.309**	.232**	.283**	.335**
Soldier Identification	.274**	.219**	.234**	.295**
<i>Notes: N= 1107 - 1220.</i>				
<i>* p &lt; .05</i>				
<i>** p &lt; .01</i>				

Table 4

In the correlations above, these show probabilities < 0.01, and there are notably strong correlations between Total Spirituality scores and moral courage/ownership, moral efficacy, and embracing Army values. These correlations are all between .387 and .408, so there is apparently notable interaction in the character of individuals who identify with the Army values, believe and intend to act on those moral ideas, and the beliefs and practices of spirituality.

**Moral Courage/Ownership (.408).** The EXCEL study used seven items to assess personal moral courage and beliefs about ownership of moral responsibility. These items asked whether or not a Soldier would address unethical acts. Each item was anchored on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*.<sup>28</sup>

*“A majority (56 percent to 72 percent, depending on the ethical issue) of Soldiers reported that they would confront others for unethical acts and would stand in the way of ethical misconduct as shown in Table 26 (Table 5 here). Soldiers were most likely to agree that they would confront a peer, rather than a leader, if they observed that person committing an ethical act. Soldiers were least likely to agree that they would not accept anyone in the unit behaving unethically, but even in*

this case the majority of Soldiers agreed.”<sup>29</sup>

*Soldier Self-reports on Personal Moral Courage/Ownership*<sup>30</sup>

	Percent (disagree or strongly disagree)	Percent (agree or fully agree)
I will confront my peers if they commit an unethical act	9.6%	71.8%
I will confront a leader if he/she commits an unethical act	10.8%	69.1%
I will always state my views about an ethical issue to my leaders	11.5%	63.4%
I will go against the group's decision whenever it violates my ethical standards	12.5%	58.1%
I will assume responsibility to take action when I see an unethical act	10.4%	62.9%
I will not accept anyone in my unit behaving unethically	12.9%	55.7%
I feel it is my job to address ethical issues when I know someone has done something wrong	13.2%	56.0%
<i>Notes: N= 2572 individual Soldiers</i>		
<i>Effective sample size ranges from 2434 to 2468 (includes versions A and B)</i>		

Table 5

In a forthcoming paper, (Hannah and Avolio, in press) propose a psychological concept of moral potency comprised of moral courage/ownership and moral efficacy.<sup>31</sup> Moral potency is framed as the link between moral cognition (built out of awareness and understanding) with moral action.<sup>32</sup> Moral potency is proposed as the key valence in understanding an answer to the question, why do leaders who recognize the right ethical decision or action to take still fail to act when action is clearly warranted? Moral action is preceded by moral awareness and understanding, and perhaps it is in the area of moral potency where spirituality activates one’s sense of identity, courage, and responsibility.

**Moral Efficacy (.391).** “Moral efficacy is essentially one’s confidence in his or her capabilities to organize and mobilize the motivation and cognitive resources needed to attain desired moral ends while persisting in the face of moral adversity.”<sup>33</sup> Moral efficacy is important for individual Soldiers who are facing complex moral dilemmas in the contemporary operating environment on a regular basis. Moral efficacy is developed over time in an individual’s life and indeed is never completely developed. An integrated approach involving cognitive, affective, and social domains would likely enhance moral confidence.

**Embracing Army Values (.387).** The American military is a values-based organization. These values are uniquely expressed by the Army Values, The Soldier’s Creed, and the Warrior Ethos as outlined by the Department of Defense; its ideals are established within the Constitution of the United States of America. The Army Values are presented as a those attributes by which a Soldier must live. The expectation is mandated across forces and deemed probable regardless of the Soldier’s MOS or ranking. There are seven values stipulated as vital to the success of the warrior, thereby facilitating success of the Armed Forces. These values are: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Soldiers who reported that they had internalized the seven Army Value Values to a great extent also reported lower levels of misconduct. They also reported higher levels of moral courage, that is, higher levels of intention to confront others for misconduct.

**Intentions to Report Unethical Conduct (.335).** Six items assessed whether the respondent would report unit members if he/she observed unethical behavior directed toward a non-combatant.

Each item was anchored on a five-point Likert-scale with responses ranging from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree. Soldiers reported an intention to report a fellow unit member if that member was observed mistreating non-combatants as shown below in Table 5. In particular, 70 percent would report a unit member for injuring or killing a non-combatant, while 57 percent would report “a buddy” for “abusing” a non-combatant. A minority of 15 percent stated they would not report a fellow unit member for these unethical behaviors.<sup>34</sup> Note that higher spirituality scores correlated with higher likelihood Soldiers would respond with their intention to report such misconduct.

**Soldier Identification (.295).** Soldier identification means, in a word, internalization. The Soldier internalizes the Army’s values and identifies with the roles and responsibilities of being a Soldier. These are the aims of the character development as the Army furthers initiatives in the tiered learning model: Training—Educating—Development. The pamphlet, *U.S. Army Concept of the Human Dimension in Full Spectrum Operations*, discusses how the Army works to have Soldiers internalize Army values as part of identity.

#### FOUR FACTORS OF RESILIENCE CORRELATING WITH SPIRITUALITY

Researchers in resilience (or “hardiness”) define resilience as “the ability of adults in otherwise normal circumstances who are exposed to an isolated and potentially highly disruptive event such as the death of a close relation or a violent or life-threatening situation to maintain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and social functioning.”<sup>35</sup> For Soldiers, resiliency includes not only sustaining themselves physically and emotionally while in combat but also coming home fit. “The final step in the long road home for the veteran is completing this initiation as a warrior. A veteran does not become a warrior merely for having gone to war. A veteran becomes a warrior when he learns to carry his war skills and his vision in mature ways. He becomes a warrior when he has been set right with life again.”<sup>36</sup>

The effect of combat and the need to adapt upon home is reiterated by a philosopher who observes the effects of combat on veterans as students. She writes how war involves a “...shifting of habit and attitude. The point is that in putting on a uniform and going to war, a soldier grows skin that does not shed lightly. And even when it is time to slough that skin, after years of service, it does not come off easily.”<sup>37</sup>

Because combat affects Soldiers on many levels, the need for resiliency is amplified—before, during, and after deployment.<sup>38</sup>

**Emotional Resilience.** Regarding emotional resiliency, Soldiers displayed the following correlations between their level of spirituality and emotional resilience:

- Higher spirituality scores correlated strongly with positive affectivity (.442, Strong)
- Higher spirituality scores inversely correlated with negative affectivity (-.185, Slight)

Variable \ Spirituality Scale	Connection to Others	Religious Identification	Hopeful Outlook	Total Spirituality Score
Positive Affectivity	.339**	.321**	.424**	.442**
Negative Affectivity	-.157**	-.084**	-.215**	-.185**
<i>Notes: N = 1107-1220</i>				
* <i>p</i> < .05				
** <i>p</i> < .01				

Table 6

Positive affectivity reflects the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert. In Table 6, positive affectivity correlated with spirituality and is similar to results from previous studies (see Greenfield *et al*, Vaillant and Marks, Ellison and Fan, Maselko and Kubzansky). These indicate a potentially notable and strong linkage between spiritual perceptions and psychological well-being. Positive affectivity is generally viewed as a buffer against risks for depression, a serious variable in suicide risk. Also, the inverse correlation between spirituality and negative affectivity indicate some interaction.

Given the soldiers surveyed were in a combat zone, the EXCEL survey found an interestingly high level of hopeful outlook as well as other items reflecting a positive views of the future regarding the Soldier’s situation in Iraq. Among the items describing this hopeful outlook is the reported perspective by Soldiers who forgive themselves for actions which were done in combat. This capacity to forgive oneself is relevant to emotional health in the period following combat deployment.

**Resilience and Dealing with Guilt.** Absolution from guilt is a core dynamic for combat veterans reentering life after war.<sup>39</sup> Encountering veterans as college students, one professor writes of how many combat veterans struggle with guilt. While researching for a recent book, Sherman found “. . .in virtually all of my interviews, guilt was the elephant in the room.” She categorized the guilt which Soldiers experience into three forms: accident guilt, luck-guilt, and collateral-damage guilt. The first of these, accident guilt is rather straight-forward, it is when veterans experience guilt for mishaps that occurred in combat resulting in the loss of their buddies or the lives of innocents. Although nobody can be found to be actually culpable in these types of situations, veterans still can blame themselves and experience “accident guilt.” Luck-guilt, is a form of guilt which Sherman describes as a generalized form of “survivor guilt.” Sherman interviewed Marines recently returned from Iraq, and who were touring Annapolis. They felt genuine guilt at relaxing on a sailboat while their brothers were still in combat. The most troubling kind of guilt which Sherman studied is what she calls “collateral-damage guilt,” associated with the accidental or unintended killing of innocents.<sup>40</sup>

**Physical Resiliency.** A Soldier’s physical health is a large part of resiliency. During deployment, Soldiers may endure a wide array of physical hardships. When they return home, it is essential for Soldiers to get help for injuries and ailments incurred during deployment. This is needed in order to prepare for future deployment. Since the ongoing process of deployment, re-deployment, training, and subsequent additional deployments is a reality, resiliency is important . The correlation between a Soldier’s level of spiritually and his or her physical health is a vital link. The EXCEL study revealed an inverse relationship between a Soldier’s spirituality and somatic complaints and fatigue.

- Spirituality inversely correlated with physical and psychological fatigue (-.183)
- Spirituality inversely correlated with somatic complaints (-.146)

Variable \ Spirituality Scale	Connection to Others	Religious Identification	Hopeful Outlook	Total Spirituality Score
Somatic Complaints	-.140**	-.064**	-.154**	-.146**
Fatigue	-.162**	-.124**	-.160**	-.183**
<i>Notes: N = 1107-1220</i>				
* <i>p</i> < .05				
** <i>p</i> < .01				

Table 7

This study is consistent with other investigations that link spirituality with physical health. Among military populations, Frederick M. Dini, LCDR, SC, USN, wrote an unpublished masters level thesis on a strategy for a military spiritual self-development tool and physical well-being. This thesis lists several previous studies which made this connection.<sup>41</sup> Dini reports these studies show positive correlations between spiritual development and health in the following areas: lower blood pressure, improved physical health, healthier lifestyles and less risky behavior, improved coping ability, less depression, faster healing, lower levels of bereavement after the death of a loved one, and a decrease in fear of death, higher school achievement.<sup>42</sup> These studies describe civilian populations. For military populations, physical health is a potentially a life-and-death issue. A Soldier's health and personal resiliency can very well mean the difference between coming home or not.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper addresses initial considerations about soldier spirituality as one facet of character. It conveys notable correlations between spirituality, ethical attitudes and action, and personal resilience.

Spirituality is multidimensional and includes three factors which emerged from this survey of soldiers: connection to others, religious identification, and hopeful outlook. Spirituality scores correlate moderately with age and rank. Spirituality correlates slightly with gender (higher in women), education, having children, and marriage. Regarding spirituality, the Soldiers' beliefs about prayer (personal prayers and prayers by others on their behalf) comports most closely with their Total Spirituality scores. The convergence of belief *about* prayer and the practice of prayer may offer a primary means for engaging Soldiers regarding spirituality, from a variety of religious perspectives.

Spirituality positively correlates with several elements of ethical attitudes and intentions. Spirituality strongly correlates with moral courage/ownership, moral efficacy, and embracing Army values. Spirituality moderately correlates with intention to report ethical violations observed in others and with soldier identification. These attitudes and intentions may be understood as an expression of character with spirituality as one dimension of character. Fostering moral potency may be a direct benefit for deepening spirituality as a dimension of character.

Spirituality correlates with indications of emotional and physical well-being. Spirituality strongly correlates with positive affectivity and inversely with negative affectivity. Spirituality reveals a strong inverse correlation with somatic complaints and fatigue. Somatic complaints and fatigue contribute to physical risk. As described above, studies of other populations have consistently reported of the apparent connection between spirituality, physical and emotional well-being.

Regarding character, mid-grade and senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) offered perspectives as they presented personal reports of exemplary conduct observed or performed in close combat during an ethics and leadership program at Joint Forces Command.<sup>43</sup> The theme of the symposium was ethical decision-making and high performing teams. It involved approximately 100 combat-seasoned members of the armed forces, U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Joint Forces Command, civilian academics, and law enforcement leaders—all focused on ethical conduct in ambiguous and hostile situations. The NCOs observed that “members of the military operate both with highly trained skills and a human and moral core. This core of *character* is formed before and beyond the military. While in uniform, experiences can both test and potentially help develop moral strength.”<sup>44</sup> This captures the essential context of how personal spirituality and significant family and community influences affect men and women in military service, both in terms of their moral awareness and understanding as well as their resilience under stress.

Soldier spirituality could benefit from further investigation and diligence, using more robust instruments than the truncated combination of items used in the EXCEL study. The EXCEL study helps bring spirituality and its effects into the realm of legitimate study, worth scientific inquiry and further analysis. Though often categorized as the domain of anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists, and religious leaders, the topic of spirituality deserves to be brought into a wider,

interdisciplinary line of effort. Additionally, military leaders and planners can benefit from further analysis into these issues in light of the EXCEL findings. The issues have been identified, Soldiers could benefit, and the opportunity is available.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERS AND CHAPLAINS**

### **Leaders**

- Acknowledge the value and positive impact of religious and spiritual activities on ethical behavior and resilience.
- Promote Soldiers' participation in spiritual activities as a means of moral development within the limitations of regulations. (Although this research was not structured to demonstrate a clear causal relationship, there are correlations which imply influence.)
- Ensure soldiers have opportunity to practice their faith.
- Provide adequate resources (funding, time on the training schedule) to unit chaplains to offer spiritual fitness training and activities.

### **Chaplains**

- Provide opportunities for building relationships as a means for influencing ethical behavior.
- Pray. Provide instruction on prayer. Conduct prayer services. Emphasize prayer as a means of resilience, as an item of personal protective gear. Encourage connections "back home" with those who will offer prayers on behalf of the Soldiers.
- Conduct spiritual fitness training. Provide scripture studies and instruction on the meaning and purpose of life and God working in evil situations. Emphasize the practical application of love. Love is about selfless service; treating others with respect and dignity, even our enemies; incorporate moral dilemmas and what scriptures say about them.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This preliminary report could not be possible without the visionary leadership of Colonel Sean Hannah, director of the Center for the Army Professional Ethic. He opened the proverbial door to investigating spirituality as one of the relevant variables in the moral life of Soldiers. Thanks to Colonel Hannah and his capable team of military, civilian, and academic partners. In particular, Dr. John Schaubroeck and his students made the analytic work possible. Further, the Office of the Army Chief of Chaplains and U.S. Army Reserve provided capable assistance in sending the following chaplain candidates who performed invaluable research assistance: 1LTs David Pyle, Joel Giese, Stacy Fairley, and James Fowler. Mr. Adam Jungdahl of National Defense University deserves appreciation for his dedicated work on refining the statistical reports. Finally, the generous support of Dr. Albert C. Pierce, director, Institute for National Security Ethics and Leadership, National Defense University, and the university leadership all enabled these efforts to move forward.

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## **Appendix A: EXCEL Spirituality Questions with References<sup>45</sup>**

### **1. I feel that on a higher level all of us share a common bond.**

*Question source:* Piedmont-Spiritual Transcendance Scale

*Original question:* I feel that on a higher level all of us share a common bond.

### **2. Although there is good and bad in people, I believe that humanity as a whole is basically good.**

*Question source:* Piedmont-Spiritual Scale

*Original question:* Although there is good and bad in people, I believe that humanity as a whole is basically good.

**3. There is an order to the universe that transcends human thinking.**

*Question source:* Piedmont-Spiritual Scale

*Original question:* There is an order to the universe that transcends human thinking.

**4. Although individual people may be difficult, I feel a bond with all of humanity.**

*Question source:* Piedmont-Spiritual Scale

*Original question:* Although individual people may be difficult, I feel an emotional bond with all of humanity.

**5. My spiritual life is an important part of who I am as a person.**

*Question source:* Allport's Extrinsic Religion<sup>46</sup>

*Original question:* Although I am religious, I don't let it affect my daily life.

*Original question:* Although I believe in my religion, many other things are more important in life.

**6. I feel deep inner peace or harmony.**

*Question source:* Existential Well-Being<sup>47</sup>

*Original question:* I feel deep inner peace or harmony.

**7. I feel a sense of well-being about the direction in which my life is heading.**

*Question source:* Existential Well-Being<sup>48</sup>

*Original question:* I feel a sense of well-being about the direction in which my life is heading.

**8. I have the sense of a larger of purpose in my life.**

*Question source:* Existential Well-Being<sup>49</sup>

*Original question:* I have been able to step outside of my ambitions and failures, pain and joy, to experience a larger sense of fulfillment.

**9. I go to my place of worship (Chapel, Church, Synagogue, Temple) because it helps me to connect with friends.**

*Question source:* Fetzer/NIA Religious Support<sup>50</sup>

*Original question:* I go to my place of worship (Church, Synagogue, Temple) because it helps me to make friends.

*Original question:* I go to my (Church, Synagogue, Temple) mostly to spend time with my friends.

**10. I believe my personal prayers help me during this deployment.**

*Question source:* R/S Motivation, Devotion, & Coping

*Original question:* How important is it to you to be able to turn to prayer when you are facing a personal problem?

**11. I believe the prayers of my family and friends back home help me.**

*Question source:* This question was created by the Chaplain Corps to determine the recognized level of spiritual support from home.

**12. I believe the presence and ministry of my unit chaplain brings value to the mission.**

*Question source:* This question is a military centric question created to meet the specific needs of the Chaplain Corps.

**13. I feel good about my future.**

*Question source:* Existential Well-Being

*Original question:* I feel good about my future.

**14. I have forgiven myself for things that I have done wrong.**

*Question source:* Existential Well-Being

*Original question:* I have forgiven myself for things that I have done wrong.

**15. If I have a problem or difficult situation, the people in my chapel Community will comfort me and get me through it.**

*Question source:* Fetzer/NIA Religious Support

*Original question:* If you were ill, how much would the people in your congregation help you out?

*Original question:* If you had a problem or difficult situation, how much comfort would the people in your congregation be willing to give you?

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**Endnotes**

1. Stewart W. Husted, *George C. Marshall: The Rubrics of Leadership*, (Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army War College Foundation Press, 2006) 179.
2. General Norman Schwarzkopf quoted in an interview, Miles Z. Epstein, "Answering the Call to Leadership: Some 'General' Insights from Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf (Ret.)," *Commerce*, (November 2006), 16.
3. Don M. Snider, edited by Lloyd J. Matthew, *Forging the Warrior's Character: Moral Precepts from the Cadet Prayer* (New York: McGraw Learning Solutions, 2008).
4. See Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and CJCS Total Force Fitness models.
5. LTC Joe Doty and MAJ Walter Sowden, U.S. Army, "Competency vs. Character? It Must Be Both!" *Military Review* (November-December 2009): 72 and Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, VA 23651-1047, "The U.S. Army Concept for the Human Dimension in Full Spectrum Operations 2015 – 2024, *TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-7*(11 June 2008): 15.
6. Rightly and by design, individual religious beliefs and practices have been protected in the military with attention to the twin principles of avoiding the "establishment" of religion for Soldiers and urging "free exercise" through a pluralistic military chaplaincy.
7. [http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhat\\_iv/MHAT\\_IV\\_Report\\_17NOV06.pdf](http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhat_iv/MHAT_IV_Report_17NOV06.pdf) (accessed 3 Sep 10). See p. 37 indicating 45 percent of Soldiers would not report a unit member for killing or wounding an innocent non-combatant.
8. Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., BG, USAF, "The Joint Force Commander and Force Discipline," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* (September 2005): 34-38, reprinted in U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, A534 Syllabus/Book of Readings, Fort Leavenworth, KS: USACGSC (September 2008), L11-5-1. BG Charles J. Dunlap wrote of the effects that the Abu Ghraib prison abuse had upon the military: "The highly publicized reports of the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal energized the Iraqi insurgency and eroded vital domestic and coalition support. Most damaging was the negative reaction of ordinary Iraqis, a constituency whose backing is essential to strategic success. A 2004 poll found that 54% of them believed all Americans behave like those alleged to have taken part in the abuse. So adverse were the strategic consequences that it is no overstatement to say that Americans died-and will continue to die-as an indirect result of this disciplinary catastrophe."
9. Army Center of Excellence for the Professional Military Ethic, "MNF-I Survey Administration Instructions 05 MAR 2009" (2009): 2.

10. CAPE, Technical Report (DRAFT), p 1.
11. See Appendix A of this paper, which lists the fifteen spirituality questions and details on their sources.
12. Jon Randolph Haber, Theodore Jacob, and David J. C. Spangler, "Dimensions of Religion/Spirituality and Relevance to Health Research," *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 77(2007): 271.
13. Jon Randolph Haber, Theodore Jacob, and David J. C. Spangler, "Dimensions of Religion/Spirituality and Relevance to Health Research," *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 77(2007): 271.
14. E. Greenfield, G. Vaillant, and N. Marks, "Do Formal Religious Participation and Spiritual Perceptions Have Independent Linkages with Diverse Dimensions of Psychological Well-being?" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 50 (June 2009): 196, examined a two-factor model of spirituality distinguishing "spiritual perceptions" as the inner perspectives of individuals and "religious participation" as public practice.
15. See Appendix A of this paper, which lists the fifteen spirituality questions and details about their sources.
16. Mahlon W. Pomeroy, "The Effect of Military Service and Combat Experience on Religious Beliefs and Personal Morality," (Unpublished), prepared for a Master of Arts in psychology at Syracuse University, August 1946. Pomeroy and a colleague collected data about the meaning and importance of faith in God and attitudes about prayer from 800 Soldiers on hospital wards at Camp Kilmer, NJ during January of March 1946. He reports 65,000 Soldiers passed through Camp Kilmer some weeks. His major findings are that "men felt their religion meant more to them now than before the war," that "God evidently seemed more personal to the men now," and "34% indicate that they pray more now than before the war, and only 9% pray less."
17. EXCEL Technical report (DRAFT), p. 1.
18. Four questions were removed using the fit indices to identify items which formed the strongest constructs. Three items seem to be vague and did not align with the three factors; one item mixes two concerns in one question.
19. Provided by email from staff at the Center for Spiritual Leadership (CSL), at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, Fort Jackson, SC on 14 May 2010.
20. CJCSI Total Force Fitness Framework - Spiritual Fitness Domain, Enclosure B5, (23 March 2010).
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## **Part 11: Guest Speaker Presentation**



# Moral Leadership Prevents Moral Injury

Jonathan Shay, M.D., Ph.D.

*Editor's Note: This text contains Dr. Shay's remarks "as prepared" for his presentation at the Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium, Nov. 16, 2010.*

Who I am: I am a psychiatrist by trade, whose whole clinical career of 20+ years in the VA was working with combat veterans with severe psychological and moral injuries. These veterans turned me into their missionary to the Armed Forces on prevention of psychological and moral injury in military service. *They don't want other good American kids wrecked the way they were wrecked.*

This is *force protection in the mind and spirit*. For years I have been pushing the veterans' message that three things keep you sane in the insanity of war: Cohesion, Leadership, and Training to protect those we send into harm's way for our sakes.

**Cohesion:** that's positive qualities of community in the face-to-face unit—and *stability* is an indispensable part of this: train Soldiers together, send them into danger together and bring them home together. This is not rocket science. But actually making it happen involves a multitude of changes in policy, practice and culture; it's really heavy lifting for the Services to make these changes. And not one of these recommendations is new with me.

**Leadership:** that spells out as *expert, ethical, and properly supported leadership*.

**Training:** that spells out as *prolonged, cumulative, and highly realistic training for what Soldiers actually have to do and face*.

All three of these are very sensitive—for good or ill—to policy, practice, and culture. That's what I have worked at for more than 20 years as the veterans' missionary. The two books, which people here have been kind enough to tell me were of use to them—*Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* and *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming*—both carry the prevention message. All of Part 3 and Appendix 3 of the latter book are specifically devoted to prevention, and have got to be the *only* reason that Senators McCain and Cleland would have taken the time to write a Foreword to the book, *together*. These two military veterans certainly "saw the elephant" and "paid their dues."

Well, these three—Cohesion/Leadership/Training—are also combat strength multipliers so it's win-win. If you get these right, you get BOTH combat effectiveness AND force protection. So it's an easy sell to line leaders and trainers.

In this talk, I concentrate of course on leadership, specifically the ethical dimension of leadership, but I wanted you to see the context of my whole missionary pitch at the start.

At the end, I plan to ambush you with something *way* off the beaten track—the physiology of ethics. You heard me correctly: the physiology of ethics. Mmmm, what can he mean by that? Is he pushing a virtue pill? Stay tuned.

In the last couple years, there are now two meanings of this resonant phrase, "moral injury," in circulation. Supposedly, I coined the phrase—I find that hard to believe—but whoever coined it, here's how I use it:

Moral injury is the sum total of the psychological, social, and physiological<sup>1</sup> consequences that a person undergoes, when **all three** of the following are present:

1. Betrayal of what's right (the code of what is praiseworthy and blameworthy, part of the culture)
2. By someone who holds legitimate authority (legitimacy and authority are phenomena of the social system)
3. In a high stakes situation (what's at stake clearly has links to the culture and social system, but must be present in the *mind* of the person suffering the injury). The stakes never get higher than

in war, whether one's own death or maiming, or often even more important, the death or maiming of beloved comrades.

We see the whole human critter here: culture, social system, mind, and brain/body. I don't have to tell an audience of line leaders that military training and military functioning comprises **all** of these.

This is a serious audience here—the CGSC students aspire to be and are eligible to become battalion commanders. I am not sugar-coating the critical element here of leadership malpractice.

I know that right conduct matters a lot to you, for its own sake, but this is not a church service, and I am going to concentrate on the *functional* consequences of commanders' ethical failure. It can lead to catastrophic operational failure. That's actually the story of Homer's *Iliad*. Here's the one breath summary:

The CG, Agamemnon, betrays what's right, first with the priest of Apollo, and then with his most effective and respected subordinate commander, the commander of his maneuver force, Achilles, by publicly dishonoring him in front of the whole army. This leads to the latter's combat-refusal, in effect, desertion, and then the near-desertion of the whole army the next day (the stampede to the ships in Book 2). What follows is a near fatal collapse of the Greek amphibious operation, with enormous losses, first from the plague sent by Apollo, and then from the weakening of the force, absent Achilles and his regiment.

So I emphasize the importance of moral leadership, because in its absence *very* bad things happen, and a lot of them:

- Loyalty goes out the window, to the point of physical desertion, even to the point of treason
- Demotivation (this extends to the people who witness the betrayal of what's right or get-knowledge of it)—motivation goes whooshing out of a unit like air out of a balloon, a kind of psychological desertion
  - Selfishness on steroids
  - Fulminating cynicism
  - Embitterment
  - Destruction of trust
  - Vengeful rage: “they can all fucking die” the 101AB Sgt in *Achilles in Vietnam* and Achilles in the *Iliad*.
- Running riot and other crimes against protected persons
- Small units turning into criminal gangs

These all reflect the shrunken moral and social horizon that psychologically injured Soldiers come to inhabit.

Moral injury damages the unit, can damage the nation, and chronically damages the Soldier when he or she returns to Home Station or to civilian life.

So I have worked so hard on this because I see it as this important, yes, but even more because—we can do something about it! I have been an implacable critic of the U.S. military personnel system, especially the officer personnel management system, because I believe it **mandates** careerism, the single most important ethical problem in U.S. forces. Not financial greed or sexual lust, but *careerism*. But making the case for renovating the U.S. military personnel system is a huge subject for another day.

I'm almost finished, and I have to fulfill some promises:

First, I promised to mention the recent use of the phrase “moral injury” by others with a different meaning: This is the meaning advanced by three people I know well and respect: Retired Navy Captain psychiatrist, Bill Nash (the Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Coordinator in his last assignment before retirement), and Shira Maguen and Brett Litz of the National Center for PTSD in Boston.

They use the term “moral injury” this way: the consequences of having to do something that violates one's deepest ethical commitments. I'm here to tell you this *is* devastating, it is profoundly

destructive of the well-being of the service member or veteran who carries that on his soul, and may, by pushing toward suicide, cost a life. To illustrate, so this is not completely abstract: A Marine marksman in Falluja finally locates an enemy sniper who has already shot a number of Marines in the unit. In his scope the marksman can see that the sniper has a baby strapped to his chest in what we would call a “snuggly,” apparently, in the Marine’s judgment, as a human shield. In full accordance with his understanding of the ROE, the Law of Land Warfare, and his duty, the Marine pulls the trigger, sees the round do its work, and lives with that the rest of his life.

I fully concur with the importance and gravity of these horrific incidents that war *always*, in ever-changing forms will produce. Ethical philosophers have addressed such situations under the heading “moral luck,” by which they are speaking of moral *bad* luck. It’s not that I am indifferent to this. It’s just that, short of ending the human practice of war, there’s not a lot we can do to eliminate the sort of moral injury that Nash, Maguen, and Litz have written about. It will always arise here and there in war even in the best circumstances, unquestionably more in counterinsurgencies and less in conventional operations in open terrain.

There is no contradiction between the two meanings of this phrase “moral injury,” just that it’s important to keep them straight. Unfortunately, moral injury as I define it often leads to moral injury as they define it. Command-driven atrocities (“crimes of obedience”), such as the My Lie massacre is a painful example.

So now I’ll wrap with a riff on the practical physiology of ethics: **sleep** is fuel for the frontal lobes of the brain. The physiology here is clear and quite well established. Every hour of sleep loss drains the tank a bit. Emotional self-restraint, ethical self-restraint, social judgment all depend critically on intact frontal lobe functioning. When you are out of gas in your frontal lobes you become a moral moron. You lose the capacity to distinguish between friendlies, armed enemies and protected persons, you fire them **all** up—accurately!!—but without discrimination. Emotional and ethical restraint go completely out the window and social judgment goes to zero. Instead of persevering you perseverate—neurologist’s symptom jargon for doing the same thing again and again despite a failing result.

In the military context sleep is a logistical entity like water, ammo, and fuel. It gets used up and has to be resupplied. It needs to be planned, disciplined, subject to intelligent policy and respected for what it is: a fact of nature like gravity or distance. If you plan a 50k road march with your vehicles and only plan on 25k of fuel, people would think you an idiot, but we do this all the time with sleep. Twenty-five years ago you could have heard people boast that they ran 10k in the heat at Ft. Hood and came back with full canteens. Today, when everyone has a Camelback, you would ask, “what kinda nut is he?” if anyone boasted that way. Where we were then on water discipline 25 years ago is where we are now on sleep discipline.

The obstacles to having a sensible attitude toward sleep are primarily cultural and institutional: think back to when you were a company commander in theater—how comfortable were you being asleep when the battalion commander was awake? Afraid you would be seen as self-indulgent and weak, weren’t you? I wrote about all this 12 years ago in a little paper in *Parameters*, a U.S. Army War College Quarterly, called “Ethical Standing for Commander Self-Care.” I am delighted that the full text is now available for download online. If you read nothing else in this paper, read the two examples of catastrophic operational failure, one naval during WWII, when a lot of people died, the other in a division-size force-on-force certification exercise, where nobody died, but the divisional artillery was entirely eliminated by the OpFor. <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/98summer/shay.htm>

So when you become battalion commanders, find your own voice to say to your subordinate leaders that in order to do your job you have to know that they are taking care of themselves. You will have to set the example by granting yourself enough sleep, by being seen to value rather than punish self-care in your subordinate leaders.

Every recognition of our finite physical capacities, contrasted to our boundless spiritual capacities, makes us squirm. But I want to point out that it is an unfathomable mystery why God created us as partly physical beings, rather than as entirely and purely spiritual beings like the angels. I have no answer to that, but I do know that we’re stuck with it. We are physical body and brain, mind, social

participant and culture inhabitant at every instant. If you neglect your self-care, particularly sleep, as a commander, aiming at more-than-human self-denial, you may catastrophically miss the mark of virtue that you so sincerely aim at. And in a fight, people may die because of it.

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### **Endnotes**

1. The body codes moral injury as physical attack!







# Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium 2010

## *Exploring the Professional Military Ethic*

### Symposium Report

*edited by*

*Mark H. Wiggins and Chaplain (Maj.) Larry Dabeck*

The 2010 Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium was conducted in Eisenhower Hall on Fort Leavenworth, Nov. 15-17, 2010. This report is the complete collection of papers presented along with introductory remarks from the Commandant of the U.S. Command and General Staff College.

This conference was co-sponsored by the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the CGSC Foundation, Inc.

For more information about the Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium contact:

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