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RETENTION OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL IN THE
ARMY

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8 March 1972

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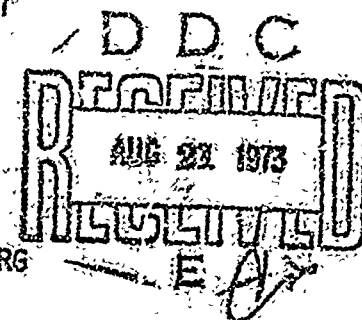
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USAWC RESEARCH PAPER

RACIAL ATTITUDES AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE RETENTION
OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL IN THE ARMY

AN INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH REPORT

by

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unlimited.

AUTHOR: David T. Teberg, LTC, Inf

FORMAT: Individual Research Report

DATE: 8 March 1972

PAGES:

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

TITLE: Racial Attitudes and Their Effect on the Retention of Enlisted Personnel in the Army

The purpose of this research report is to analyze how racial attitudes and prejudices are developed and their effect on the retention of male enlisted personnel in the Army. The scope includes the factors influencing racial attitudes and the causes of racial antagonism, a historical review of the Negro soldier in the Army, racial misconceptions existing by both blacks and whites, and a determination of the impact of racial attitudes on the retention of enlisted personnel in the Army. Methodology consists of a review and discussion of selected studies, surveys, and published works treating the subject of racial problems. An interview of 13 enlisted personnel at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, is used to relate the findings of the published works with the present-day soldier. It is concluded that racial issues, tensions, and attitudes do not directly impact on the retention of enlisted personnel in the Army, but can significantly affect morale, harmonious individual and group relations, and successful mission accomplishment.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order Number 9981, declaring, "that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the Armed Services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin."¹ In the 24 years since this order was signed, many changes have occurred in both the military and civilian societies. This order was the catalyst which began the end of segregation in the Armed Forces and initiated major pressures for integration and the elimination of discrimination throughout American society.

The end to segregation in the Army was well under way by the end of the Korean War and had finally been recognized as inefficient in training procedures, combat strengths, unit uniformity, and equality in duty assignments.² The military could no longer afford the high cost of segregation. Maximum effectiveness in the defense effort could only be obtained through the full utilization of the maximum potential of every individual, anything less being wasteful and "contrary to the basic tenets of our government."³ As was shown during the Korean War, the fighting ability of the Army was not degraded by integration of its units. In a manner never seen before, "the American Army in Korea proved the necessity and value of racial integration."⁴ The military lead in integration initiated pressures for the civilian society to adopt policies which would provide equal opportunity and treatment for all citizens.

The period between 1954 and 1964 was termed "the revolutionary decade," for active Negro dissent was concerned with the desegregation of public facilities throughout the United States.⁵ This was the period of visible and vocal demands for equality as evidenced by sit-ins, freedom marches, demonstrations, and boycotts. The rising expectations of the Negro community, coupled with continued frustrations and prejudice, have led to racial tensions and violence in both the civilian community and the military. This unrest has vividly shown that, even though discrimination can be legally and officially abolished, and equal opportunity directed, individual or group prejudice and racial misunderstanding is not so easily or quickly eliminated. In the chapters of this study the significance and current persistence of this problem will be discussed in greater detail.

A former soldier, David Parks, relating his day-to-day experiences and observations as a draftee and black combat infantryman in Vietnam, illuminates attitudes and feelings at the individual soldier level. In February 1967 he wrote:

Whitey is the same throughout this whole damn organization. Somehow I thought it would be different this time. Especially over here [Vietnam], where survival is the thing. . . . Sometimes he's human. At other times he treats us souls like we are dirt. . . . Ten more months of this crap. These guys bug me more than Charlie. I'm learning one hell of a lesson in here [the Army]. Whitey's a good teacher.⁶

Though it may seem that David Parks reflects the views of only one soldier in 1967, the author believes that what he portrayed was

indicative of rising unrest in the Army. Individual prejudice and discrimination has not been eliminated and racial unrest is ominous and widespread.⁷ Commanders do have racial problems and these problems are not confined to any one unit, post, or geographical command.⁸

THE PROBLEM

What are the causes of racial antagonism, and the major factors which influence racial attitude? What impact do racial issues, tensions, and attitudes have on the retention of enlisted personnel in the Army?

ORGANIZATION

Chapter II is devoted to an analysis of the roots, causes, and foundations of prejudice, with emphasis on the Negro and white relationship. Significant factors which influence racial attitudes, discriminatory practices, and racial misconceptions (thereby creating tensions and unrest) are discussed. With an understanding of the nature of prejudice, Chapter III reviews Negro history in the United States Army from the Revolutionary War to Vietnam. This review of Negro history in the Army is considered necessary to show the past service rendered by black soldiers under circumstances more discriminatory and prejudicial than present today and to compare the past with the present.

Chapter IV investigates the racial situation in the Army today. Studies, surveys, and published works treating both the

military and civilian aspects of racial problems are used.

Attitudes currently prevailing in the military are, in many cases, the results of prejudices or beliefs acquired prior to enlistment, but are attitudes with which the Army must cope. Also considered are the changing social and economic patterns in America, the beliefs and expectations of military age youth, and racial attitudes and incidents.

Chapter V considers the specific problem of racial issues, tensions, and attitudes and their impact on enlisted retention. In addition to information which is discussed in earlier chapters, a recent study which specifically addresses the likes and dislikes toward the Army by potential reenlistees is reviewed, along with the findings of interviews conducted by the author of selected soldiers at Carlisle Barracks.

Chapter VI consists of a summary of the overall study findings and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER I

FOOTNOTES

1. Richard J. Stillman, Integration of the Negro in the US Armed Forces (1968), pp. 40-41.
2. Ibid., p. 49.
3. US Department of Defense, Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Personnel, Integration in the Armed Forces (1955), p. 8.
4. Victor Hicken, The American Fighting Man (1969), p. 371.
5. Stillman, p. 59.
6. David Parks, GI Diary (1968), p. 87.
7. Michael Getler, "Trouble in the Ranks," Armed Forces Management (June 1970), p. 11.
8. "Black vs. White," Armed Forces Management (June 1970), p. 20.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF RACIAL PREJUDICE

Prejudice and discrimination have existed in most societies throughout all periods of history and have covered the full spectrum of physical, color, economic, and religious differences.¹ During the Roman Empire when famine threatened, epidemics raged, or natural disasters occurred, the Christians were targeted as the cause of these misfortunes; and the Roman populace was provided a minority group upon which they could release their anger and frustration.² The Christians thereby became a means for the government to direct the general anger and displeasure of the population toward a minority group which could not threaten the existence of the rulers. The caste system in India and the extermination of Jews by Hitler, before and during World War II, are examples of prejudice and discrimination and the use of minority groups for the benefit of competing classes or rulers. Characteristically, prejudice is fashioned and sustained by self-gratifying considerations or functional significance for the holder and in some cases follows a blind conformity with the prevailing customs of the particular society.³ Prejudice in many instances becomes a simple method to disguise ulterior motives or to find scapegoat for existing problems or failures.

THE ROOTS AND CAUSES OF PREJUDICE

To understand prejudice it is necessary to have a meaningful definition. Webster's dictionary defines prejudice as "preconceived judgment or opinion . . . an opinion or learning adverse to anything without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge. . . ."4 In the World Book dictionary it is defined as ". . . an opinion formed without taking time and care to judge fairly . . . harm, injury . . . an opinion, usually unfavorable, formed beforehand with no basis except personal feelings. . . ."5 From these definitions we observe that prejudice is basically a prejudgment without sufficient knowledge. Prejudice can be both favorable and unfavorable, though it is usually used in the negative or unfavorable connotation. A group of students were surveyed on their attitudes toward ethnic groups, and their replies showed eight times as many antagonistic attitudes as favorable ones.⁶ Even the dictionary definitions tend toward the negative connotation through the use of the terms "adverse, harm, and injury."

What causes prejudicial attitudes? Anxiety, fear, or apprehension are believed to favor the growth of prejudice. Threats to a person's well-being, either socially, economically, or physically, create anxieties. The greater a person's underlying anxiety, the more prejudiced he is, and the pressure of his anxiety weakens his personal controls. Thus weakened, he seeks relief

through prejudice, thereby reducing his initial anxiety by suggesting to himself that he is better than others.⁷

An individual with prejudicial attitudes toward another has several different ways in which to express these feelings. One author has categorized the expression of prejudice into five actions: (1) antilocution or talk; (2) avoidance; (3) discrimination; (4) physical attack; and (5) extermination.⁸ We have observed all of these actions in operation at one time or another and, except for the fifth action, they exist in American society today. The basic definition which will be used in the remainder of the paper when the term "prejudice" is used will reflect a negative or unfavorable attitude or opinion held, either by individuals or groups, against others, without sufficient knowledge.

It has been found that when persons speak of prejudice, it is likely to mean "race prejudice."

This is an unfortunate association of ideas, for throughout history human prejudice has had little to do with race. The conception of race is recent, scarcely a century old. For the most part prejudice and persecution have rested on other grounds, often on religion.⁹

As this paper is investigating the nature of racial attitudes and their effect on reenlistment, it is necessary to understand the term "race."

RACE

The concept of race is new, and its interpretation to differences in people, or the objection to others on racial or biological

grounds, is a modern innovation.¹⁰ Race, as defined in the dictionary, is ". . . a family, tribe, people, or nation belonging to the same stock . . . a class or kind of individuals with common characteristics, interests, or habits. . . ."11 A second dictionary defines race as ". . . a group of persons connected by common descent or origin: a great division of mankind having certain physical peculiarities in common: human beings as a group . . . a group, class, or kind, especially of people. . . ."12

Most anthropologists agree in classifying the great part of present day mankind into three broad divisions: the Mongoloid, Negroid, and Caucasoid Divisions.¹³ In July 1950, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization published a statement on race which in part stated:

Scientists have reached general agreement in recognizing that mankind is one: that all men belong to the same species, Homo Sapiens. . . . Whatever classification the anthropologist makes of man, he never includes mental characteristics as part of the classification. . . .¹⁴

Ashley Montagu in his book, Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race, considers the full spectrum of how the concept of "races" developed. He does not dispute the fact that physically distinguishable populations of men exist and are consequently termed races, but he does warn that this term then implies that physical and mental traits are linked, and that mental ability can be tested and evaluated to determine that one population is better than another. This concept he has termed "The Myth of Race."¹⁵ In fact, it has been stated that the term "race" itself,

as it is generally applied to man, is scientifically without justification, and, as commonly used, the term corresponds to nothing in reality.¹⁶

A more scientifically sound manner of characterizing groups of different origins is to use the term "ethnic," thereby encompassing, much of the time, minority groups within a society.¹⁷

In the United States, the major ethnic groups are differentiated in three ways:

1. By race. People with a common biological heritage involving certain physical distinctions. The most important minority racial group in the United States is the Negro.
2. By religion. People with a common, and different, system of worship. The most visible American groups are the Jews and, in some respects, the Catholics.
3. By nationality. People with a common national origin . . . e.g., the Irish, the Italians, the Mexicans, the Puerto Ricans.

Thus, ethnic relations refers to attitudes and behavior toward "unlike" people on a we-and-they basis.¹⁸ This behavior corresponds to the same circumstances that are observed in racial relations. Some authors in the study of "race" have proposed that it would be more correct to use the term "ethnic" instead of "race."

In the modern usage, race and prejudice have become closely connected. The simplicity of "race" provides an immediate and visible mark by which to designate victims of dislike. The consequent fiction of racial inferiority developed as an irrefutable justification for prejudice.¹⁹ However, when the concept of race is investigated in detail, it has been scientifically determined

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that there is no basis for designating any one group inferior to another on the basis of racial or ethnic characteristics.

RACIAL PREJUDICE AND MISCONCEPTIONS

How do people develop prejudices? Prejudice and discrimination are not innate but are learned, usually within the family and often without conscious intent.²⁰ Closely following prejudice is the stereotyping of individuals who fall into the "minority," though nothing prevents minority groups from holding prejudices and developing stereotypes themselves. The misconceptions that exist are in many cases myths that have been generated to support an attitude of superiority by one person or group over another. It has been determined that these myths are created to fill psychological needs.²¹ A set of erroneous popular beliefs, or myths, include the following elements:

1. The differences between groups are all due to hereditary biology and nothing can change them.
2. The habits, attitudes, beliefs, behavior, and all things learned are determined before birth.
3. All differences between a minority group and the majority group are thought to be signs of inferiority.
4. If there should be biological crossing of the groups, the children will be more degenerate than either of the parent groups.²²

None of the above elements can be scientifically supported.²³

In the case of the Negro, the need to make him inferior has given rise to the mythology of his inferior characteristics, whereas, scientifically, the differences between the Negro and

white are very small indeed.²⁴ However, science does not always control the attitudes and misconceptions a person develops about another. In the chart below are listed some characteristic stereotypes and the beliefs held by both Negroes and whites as to whether the stereotypes pertain to only Negroes or both Negroes and whites.²⁵

Stereotype	White respondents		Negro respondents	
	Negro	Negro & White	Negro	Negro & White
Low Moral Standards	40%	42%	10%	59%
Keep Body Clean	8	39	11	72
Poor Students	24	39	13	47
Lazy	53	30	13	52
Rundown the neighborhoods in which they live	57	25	29	40

In all cases, the white respondents reflected significant unfavorable beliefs or attitudes toward Negroes. Negroes also hold racial beliefs toward the white population. In 1970, a special Time-Harris poll examined stereotypes blacks have about white society, and is indicative of why racial tensions and polarization exist.²⁶

Negro Belief or Stereotype	Percent Negroes Believing
Whites consider Negroes inferior	80
Whites are scared that blacks are better people than they are	66
Whites today regret having abolished black slavery	63
Whites give blacks a break only when forced to	77
Whites have a mean and selfish streak in them	65
Whites are physically weaker than blacks	55
Whites are less honest than blacks	50

In the survey previously mentioned, two questions were asked of both blacks and whites, and again the difference in belief readily appears:²⁷

1. Question. Do you think that most whites in this country are sympathetic or not to the problems of Negroes?

	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Negroes</u>
Sympathetic	51%	28%
Not sympathetic	38%	59%

2. Question. Do you feel that whites want equality between the races?

	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Negroes</u>
No	54%	67%

Striking as these misconceptions may be, there is some hope that perhaps some of the racial misunderstanding is being corrected.

The following question was asked of whites, and shows a decided improvement with time.

Question. In general, do you think Negroes are as intelligent as white people with the same education and training?

The following groups replied "yes."²⁸

<u>Group</u>	<u>1942</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1958</u> ²⁹
Northern whites	48%	82%	--
Southern whites	20	59	--
Total, US	42	77	86%

Many incorrect attitudes and perceptions and general misperceptions are dominant in one degree or another in American society. Even though the situation is changing for the better, prejudicial racial attitudes affect everyone both in the military and in civilian life. To correct the misconceptions and simple prejudices that have existed for so long in our society, it is necessary to first remember that the nature of prejudice is a socially sanctioned and socially learned attitude which can be best eliminated through education.³⁰ Education for tolerance must reach the child before he is of school age, since that is the age during which the rudimentary personality is first formed and those tendencies developed which become more rigid as the individual approaches maturity.³¹ Prejudice (unless deeply rooted in the character structure of the individual) may be reduced by equal status contact between the groups in the pursuit of common goals.³² The reduction of prejudicial feelings through close working relationships will

be observed in the next chapter, when, during World War II, black and white infantrymen were in the same companies.

This chapter has attempted to illuminate the fact that prejudice is primarily a "prejudgment of an individual or group of individuals, without sufficient knowledge," and that the fallacy of racial prejudice is compounded when the truth is recognized that there is no scientific basis for the belief that any racial or ethnic group is superior to another, physically or mentally. However, in the next two chapters we will see how these false attitudes have persisted and created the problems our generation faces today.

CHAPTER II

FOOTNOTES

1. Victor Hicken, The American Fighting Man (1969), p. 7.
2. Ashley Montagu, Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race (1964), p. 142.
3. Gordon W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (1954), p. 12.
4. Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (1963), p. 670.
5. World Book Dictionary (1967), p. 1533.
6. Allport, pp. 6-7.
7. Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, Social Change and Prejudice (1964), pp. 54-55.
8. Allport, pp. 14-15.
9. Ibid., p. xv.
10. Montagu, p. 37.
11. Webster's Dictionary, p. 704.
12. World Book Dictionary, p. 1601.
13. Montagu, p. 363.
14. Ibid., p. 361.
15. Ibid., p. 24.
16. Ibid., p. 351.
17. Bernard Berelson and Gary A. Steiner, Human Behavior: Shorter Edition (1967), pp. 90-91.
18. Ibid.
19. Allport, p. xv.
20. Berelson and Steiner, p. 97.
21. Montagu, p. 316.

22. Arnold Rose, The Roots of Prejudice (1951), p. 15.
23. Montagu, p. 370.
24. Ibid., p. 316.
25. Opinion Research Corporation, White and Negro Attitudes Towards Race Related Issues and Activities (July 1968), p. 3.
26. "Behavior," Time (April 6, 1970), p. 65.
27. Opinion Research Corporation, p. 7.
28. Bettelheim and Janowitz, p. 11.
29. Opinion Research Corporation, p. 2.

(The percentages for 1968 are considered proper to portray the trend in improved racial understanding as the poll used asked the question pertaining to natural intelligence between black and white babies.)
30. Montagu, p. 142.
31. Bettelheim and Janowitz, p. 282.
32. Allport, p. 281.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL REVIEW

An analysis of American history provides an abundance of material reflecting individual bravery on the part of Negro soldiers in all of America's wars.¹ The year recognized by historians as the official beginning of black history in America is August 1619, when 20 Africans, both men and women, arrived in Jamestown, Virginia. These Negroes were not slaves but indentured servants, required, just as white immigrants, to give seven years of service in exchange for their passage to America.² However, because of economic pressures, slavery soon became sanctioned and remained legal until the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.³

The first Negro involvement in American conflict occurred on March 5, 1770, in Boston, Massachusetts. Discontent with British rule had been sweeping the colonies for nearly two years and finally erupted into violence between a large crowd of Boston townspeople and a contingent of British soldiers. In the ensuing melee, shots were fired by the British and eleven colonists were hit, of which five died. The first man hit and killed was Crispus Attucks, a black dock laborer in Boston, whom history has recognized as the leader of the crowd, in this, the "Boston Massacre." Colonial propagandists cited this incident as evidence of British oppression, and it soon became one of the milestones toward the Revolution.⁴

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

During the Revolutionary War, Negroes were employed in the colonial militia in small numbers. Though there was some hesitation and fear by the colonials toward arming Negroes, the simple shortage of manpower outweighed this concern.⁵ When the call for volunteers was published in the spring of 1775, colored men presented themselves and were accepted. Negroes took part in the Battle of Lexington, where one of the American casualties was Prince Estabrook, a Negro from West Lexington.⁶ However, this early use of Negroes in the militia did not continue, due to that original fear of the possible consequences of arming men that were slaves. Throughout 1775 there were many arguments on whether or not to allow Negroes to serve in the Army. In General Orders published on November 12, 1775, General Washington stated, "Neither negroes, boys unable to bear arms, nor old men unfit to endure the fatigues of the campaign, are to be enlisted."⁸ Free Negro soldiers already serving in the Army objected to this policy and carried their protest to Washington's Headquarters. Washington was sympathetic and on December 30, 1775, published orders allowing enlistment of free Negroes. When Washington advised Congress of his actions, Congress provided, "That the free negroes who have served faithfully in the army at Cambridge may be reenlisted therein, but no others."⁹

Early in 1779 an attempt was made to enlist 3,000 able-bodied Negro soldiers from the States of South Carolina and Georgia and

form them into Negro battalions. Strong prejudice against Negroes and slaves caused this project to fail due to deep-seated aversion to the idea of committing "... the defence of the country to servile bands, or share with a color, to which the idea of inferiority is inseparably connected, the profession of arms. . . ."10 Though continual obstacles toward Negro service in the military were imposed, Negroes did serve throughout the entire period of the war and continued to be recruited to meet the manpower needs.¹¹ Even though official policy was not in favor of such enlistments, the immediate and realistic demands for personnel caused commanders at the unit level to accept willing Negroes. One of the reasons this Negro service did not become a major issue, was that they fought side by side with whites, rather than in separate organizations, and consequently were not conspicuous as a racial group.¹² The one exception in which Negroes fought as a distinctive group occurred in the battle of Rhode Island in August 1778. A regiment of approximately 125 colored soldiers held one of the positions assaulted by the British-Hessian forces, and performed in a creditable manner as noted, "In nearly four hours of hard fighting, the colored troops held as firmly as the white patriot troops."¹³

Following the war, many of the Negroes who had won their freedom through valorous service were joined by white abolitionists in attempting to gain freedom for all colored persons in America.¹⁴ However, in 1792, Congress limited enrollment in the militia to white citizens and in 1798 issued a policy directive which forbade the use of blacks in the Army, Navy, or Marines.¹⁵

This directive, as in the past, was again largely ignored at the unit level, for Negroes filled an immediate need for personnel and they were considered equally capable as other men.

WAR OF 1812

With the advent of the War of 1812, the need for increased employment of Negro troops was necessary. The battle of New Orleans highlights the military service of Negro troops during this war. General Andrew Jackson, commander of the Seventh Military District, with responsibility for the defense of New Orleans, upheld the right of Negroes to defend their country on an equal footing with the white soldier. William C. Claiborne, Governor of the Louisiana Territory, was another determined supporter of the "free men of color," and when the British captured Pensacola, Florida, and were moving toward New Orleans, Claiborne wrote General Jackson that there were units of free blacks ready to assist in the defense of New Orleans. Governor Claiborne also pointed out that these men "were always relied on in time of difficulties and on several occasions evinced in the field the greatest firmness and courage."¹⁶ These black units were accepted by Jackson, and in the defense of New Orleans, history records the largest assembly of black troops ever gathered on American soil up to that time. Two battalions of nearly 500 free blacks were side by side in the center of the line and additional black companies were scattered throughout the white regiments located in other sections of the line. Though the major British attack

did not develop against the center black battalions, it was reported that the colored troops "were so anxious for glory that they could not be prevented from advancing over our breastworks and exposing themselves."¹⁷ One of the thirteen Americans killed in this battle was Negro, and about one-third of the wounded were from the black battalions, while the British lost more than 2,000 men. "The audacity of Jackson and the mutual courage of his black and white troops had won the day."¹⁸

THE CIVIL WAR

On April 15, 1861, three days after the Civil War began, President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 men for the Union Army. As in past conflicts the Negroes in America were willing, and in some cases eager, to assist. Negro individuals and groups from Boston, Providence, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Detroit joined together to offer their services. However, these Negroes, when going to the recruiting offices, found signs saying "White Men Only."¹⁹ The National Militia Act of 1792 was still in effect and Negroes were not welcome in the Union ranks. This policy remained effective for over a year until it became necessary to utilize all available manpower resources and additionally to achieve a psychological victory from the standpoint of social equality.

The first all black regiment was officially mustered into the Army in November 1862.²⁰ The next major event, directly affecting the Negro, was President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation,

which, on January 1, 1863, freed all persons held as slaves. The proclamation dealt two blows to the Confederacy; first, it hit at the heart of the Confederate war base being supported by the Negroes working in the fields providing food and those working in the industrial plant supplying material goods; and second, it officially authorized, throughout the North and occupied South, the enlistment of Negroes into the Union Army.²¹

Before the end of the war, the black soldier demonstrated that he could and would fight, and fight well. He proved his capacity as an infantry soldier at Miliken's Bend, during the Vicksburg Campaign, and at the storming of Fort Wagner in the middle of 1863.²² By the end of the war, more than 178,000 black soldiers had served in the Union forces. The Negro soldier proved his courage in 449 separate engagements against Confederate forces, won over 14 Medals of Honor, and received 68,178 casualties.²³

1865 TO 1917

Between the end of the Civil War and World War I, four Negro regiments served in the US Army; the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry Regiments and the 24th and 25th Infantry Regiments. Noted throughout the latter part of the 1800's were the exploits of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, the "Buffalo Soldiers," in their engagements with the American Indians and their part in helping to bring peace to the West.²⁴

With the advent of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the size of the Army had to be increased. Negroes volunteered to serve,

and Congress, without hesitation, passed authorization for the formation of ten black regiments. However, due to the rapid developments of the war and the requirements for immediate deployment of troops to Cuba, the only sizable black units which saw action were the four regular Army regiments already in service; the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry. The exploits of Colonel Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders and the battle of San Juan Hill are well known, but there has been little publicity of the service or exploits of the black soldier in this campaign. The black regiments were there, fought side by side with the Rough Riders, and are reputed to have saved them from disaster. "If it had not been for the Negro cavalry the Rough Riders would have been exterminated," said one white officer, ". . . but the Negroes saved that fight, and the day will come when General Shafter will give them credit for their bravery."²⁵ After this action and just before the next operation against the Spanish, Roosevelt stated, "No troops could behave better than the colored soldiers."²⁶ The Negro soldiers had again done the job assigned them and received the commendation of their commanders.

WORLD WAR I

With the beginning of World War I, the plight of the Negro in America society had reverted back to the Civil War period. Most of the gains in racial equality had been lost through the enactment of "Jim Crow Laws" in the South, and by the fears of

immigrants and industrial workers in the North that Negroes threatened the labor market. Negroes had supported Woodrow Wilson in the presidential elections of 1912, based on assurances of fair dealing and the advancement of Negro interests in the United States. After being elected, President Wilson reneged on these issues by extending segregation to restaurant and rest room facilities used by Federal employees. Thus, when World War I began, Negroes in America were more concerned with racial inequality than either the war or politics.

Within the military, on the declaration of War, only 20,000 men of the 750,000 were black. One-half of these were assigned to the four black Regular Army regiments. The remainder were in segregated National Guard units.²⁷ Following the enlistment of the necessary manpower to support the war effort, two Negro Divisions, the 92nd and 93rd Infantry Divisions, were formed and served in France. Though initially commanded in the company grades by black officers, racial animosities with the French populace, poor discipline between black officers and men, and other difficulties, caused white officers to be assigned to these divisions.²⁸

Though individual Negro soldiers and units distinguished themselves in combat, the final evaluation of the performance of Negro units in World War I was poor. The combat performance of the all-Negro 92nd Infantry Division came under heavy criticism, primarily due to the failure of the 368th Infantry in one engagement. In contrast, it was observed that the black American units

operating with the French forces, in a more racially tolerant atmosphere, performed well.²⁹ Motivation, leadership, and respect were lacking in the relationships between blacks and whites in American units. One French officer who had served with Negro troops stated, "They needed respect from their fellow white soldiers before they could be expected to fight well."³⁰

Two divergent views of the performance of Negro troops in the War emerged. The first, and favorable view, developed during the conduct of the War and resulted from the consistently favorable news reports on the achievements and abilities of the Negroes in both combat and support roles. The unfavorable view developed when white officers, subsequent to the War, began writing their reports and memoirs on Negro performance. Concurrently, Negroes began relating incidents of prejudice and discrimination.³¹ These views resulted in a confused mass of information, without a satisfactory conclusion, and persisted throughout the period between World War I and World War II, much to the disadvantage of the Negro.

When the War ended and the Negro soldier returned home, he found that life for the Negro in the United States had not made significant improvement. Though initially welcomed with the fanfare reserved for any returning soldier, it was not long before the color of a man's skin became of prime importance. Though there were 40,000 black soldiers in the Army at the time of the Armistice, this number declined until in 1939 there were less than 4,000 Negroes in uniform. This was less than the number in service

in 1900. With World War II approaching, this figure rose until by December 1941 nearly 100,000 Negroes were in the service.³²

WORLD WAR II

The history of Negro troops in the Second World War is extensive and covered in detail in the Official History of the US Army in World War II. Significantly, Negro enlisted participation in the Army rose from the low in 1939 to a total of 701,678 in September 1944. At the peak of Negro enlisted strength, blacks constituted 9.54 percent of all enlisted in the Army.³³ Negroes served in all theatres and in all types of units, though segregation continued to remain the official policy. The major concern of virtually all Negro personnel during the War was that of racial discrimination.

Many complaints common to soldiers of both races, such as lack of recreational facilities, poor food, and slowness of promotions, acquired a special significance among Negro soldiers and took on the potential to be perceived as racial discrimination.³⁴ Stouffer, from data in 1945, listed the complaints by enlisted men, toward the Army, in order of frequency.

NEGROES

Racial Discrimination
Discharge Policies
Job Assignment
Promotion Policies
Outfit or Branch Criticisms
Rotation, Furlough, Pass
Officers
Miscellaneous

WHITES

Job Assignment
Promotion Policies
Outfit or Branch Criticisms
Discharge Policies
Rotation, Furlough, Pass
Politics and Favoritism
Officers
Miscellaneous

The data of June 1945 consistently indicated that Negroes were somewhat less likely than whites to say that they had a square deal from the Army. As seen from the above comparison of complaints by Negro and white soldiers, even though many issues were the same, for the Negro soldier racial discrimination was his first complaint and of continuing concern.³⁵

Integration of units would have helped eliminate many of these racial complaints, for it has been determined that segregation encourages a racial perspective such that minority group members tend to interpret everything unpleasant which happens to them in terms of racial discrimination.³⁶ Segregation, in addition, did nothing to raise the low opinion of Negro abilities held by some whites but tended to confirm it. One author has shown how this then created a dilemma.

Negro units, by the very fact that they were segregated, tended to be less efficient than a comparable white unit which did not operate under the disadvantages of segregation. This lesser efficiency was taken as proof of Negro inferiority, and Negro inferiority was cited as one justification for segregation in the Army.³⁷

Toward the end of the War, integration of platoon-size Negro units into white companies occurred for the first time and provided unexpected results. It was found that the Negro fighting man was far more motivated to combat than ever before and that combat by integrated units tended to erase racial antagonism.³⁸ As one commander who had a Negro Voluntary Infantry replacement platoon join his company remarked,

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As the men of this platoon took their places in the company, not a single incident of friction occurred. . . . The Negro troops of this platoon gradually came to be accepted not as unusual, or special, but as normal soldiers, neither better nor worse than usual.³⁹

One battalion commander concluded:

I know I could not receive a superior representation of the colored race as the average AGCT was Class IV. I do know, however, that in courage, coolness, dependability, and pride they are on a par with any white troops I have ever had occasion to work with. In addition, they were, during combat, possessed with a fierce desire to meet with and kill the enemy, the equal of which I have never witnessed in white troops.⁴⁰

In the studies conducted by Stouffer, two questions highlight the general feelings of white personnel.⁴¹

1. Question. How well did the colored soldiers in this company perform in combat?

<u>Rating</u>	<u>White Company Officers</u>	<u>White Plt Sgts and other EM</u>
Very Well	84%	81%
Fairly Well	16	17
Not so Well	--	1 & 1 undecided

2. Question. With the same Army training and experience, how do you think colored troops compare with white troops as infantry soldiers?

<u>Rating</u>	<u>White Company Officers</u>	<u>White Plt Sgts and other EM</u>
Better	17%	9%
Same	69	83
Not as Good	5	4
No Answer	9	4

The attitudes expressed above, by soldiers and officers, who had the opportunity to serve with Negro soldiers, differ favorably from the attitudes generally held in a survey of March 1943, before integration of units was initiated on any scale. The question then asked was, "Do you think white and Negro soldiers should be in separate outfits or should they be together in the same outfits?" White respondents were in favor of separate outfits by 84% to 12%, whereas Negroes were evenly split at 37% and 36% respectively. The remaining percentages were in the "undecided" or "makes no difference" category.⁴²

As was observed in Chapter II, when discussing human behavior, prejudice is generally reduced through close working relationships. This is indicated in the surveys discussed above, but even more dramatic results were obtained by Stouffer when he compared the attitudes of personnel who had varying degrees of service experience with Negroes. The respondents were asked the question, "Some Army divisions have companies which include Negro platoons and white platoons. How would you feel about it if your outfit was set up something like that?"⁴³

Group A: "Would like it."

Group B: "Just as soon have it as any other set up."

Group C: "Rather not, but it would not matter too much."

Group D: "Would dislike it very much."

<u>RESPONDENTS</u>	<u>A%</u>	<u>B%</u>	<u>C%</u>	<u>D%</u>
Infantrymen in a company which has a Negro platoon.	32	28	33	7
Infantrymen in other companies in the same regiment.	18	33	29	20
Field Artillery, Antitank, and HQ units in the same division.	9	29	38	24
Cross section of other field forces units which do not have colored platoons in white companies.	2	9	27	62

The results of this part of the study clearly demonstrate that racial animosity decreases with association.

The picture of Negro soldiers revealed by the studies conducted by Stouffer in World War II changed some of the existing stereotypes associated with Negroes. The first difference, also discussed in Chapter II, was that there was little basis for categorizing the Negro mentally inferior; for comparison of Northern Negroes with Southern whites found that because of more equal educational systems, there were insignificant differences. The second difference, stereotyping the Negro as a happy, dull, indifferent creature, content with his social status, was disproved by the Negro soldier being highly sensitive to evidences of racial discrimination, both real and imagined. There was a readiness to protest, which was quite inconsistent with the stereotype of happy-go-lucky indifference.⁴⁴ More of this latter characteristic will be seen in the next chapter, where it becomes very clear that Negro youth of today will not sit contentedly by and let injustice,

prejudice, and discrimination prevent them from achieving their rightful benefits from American society.

1945 TO THE PRESENT

The Army at the conclusion of the War determined the need to establish a clearer postwar policy on the employment of Negro troops. To meet this need, a board of officers was appointed and headed by LTG Alvin C. Gillem, Jr. to investigate the "Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Post-War Army Policy." Unfortunately, the Gillem Board report did not initiate any real changes to the then existing Army policies toward the Negro and segregated units. The successful results obtained during World War II in employing Negro rifle platoons in white infantry companies were not recognized for the potential advantages they could offer to future Army policies.

The first major breakthrough for Negroes in the military came not from the Army but the Navy, when Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal issued Administrative Orders in December 1945 and February 1946, which stated ". . . that in the administration of Naval personnel, no differentiation shall be made because of race or color . . ." and the ". . . lifting of all restrictions governing types of assignments for which Negro Naval personnel are eligible."⁴⁵ However, none of the services aggressively or decisively implemented changes to existing segregation or discrimination policies until President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 in July 1948.

Even so, when the Korean War began two years later, the Army still had segregated units, such as the all-Negro 24th Infantry Regiment.

After sufficient time had elapsed to observe the performance of segregated Negro units in combat in Korea, it was noted,

The organization of the units, not the men, had been inferior. Segregated groupment stimulated tensions between whites and blacks, causing a weaker unit than integration which placed men by ability, not by race.⁴⁶

By the end of the Korean War the Army was essentially integrated, and the few remaining small scattered segregated units disappeared within a year.⁴⁷ From any standpoint it is felt that the racial integration of the armed forces stands as one of the most remarkable achievements in directed social change.⁴⁸

The Korean conflict was the end to segregation in the Army, and with integration, Negroes had achieved a major success, both in the military and civilian society. However, the next, but more difficult goal arose; that of obtaining equal opportunity and the elimination of prejudice and discrimination.

The Army in Vietnam has witnessed the black soldier fighting alongside the white soldier in all units. It is in Vietnam that the United States has fought its first war with a completely racially integrated military.

But that the military has not become a panacea for racial relations is also evident. An increasingly dominant theme in the most recent accounts is the recurrence of racial conflict on the military scene, particularly in the contrast between on-duty integration and off-duty racial separation.⁴⁹

In the next chapter we will discuss the recent changes in both the civilian community and the Army, and how these events are impacting on the Army.

CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER IV

AMERICAN SOCIETY AND THE US ARMY

The preceding chapter has described the progress made by the United States Army in developing an integrated organization with the goal of equal opportunity for any individual, based only on his or her ability. However, even with the advances already achieved, racial turmoil, tensions, animosities, and violence are evidenced in both the military and civilian society. This chapter will discuss recent Negro gains in America, American youth, current attitudes by military age youth toward the Army, and racial unrest in the Army.

NEGRO GAINS IN AMERICA

Black Americans made substantial progress in jobs, incomes, education, and housing between 1960 and 1970; however, Negroes still remain behind whites in most social and economic categories.¹ A brief summary of these gains is:

Population: The Negro population grew from 18,871,831 in 1960 to 22,672,570 in 1970 and now represents 11.1 percent of the total population. In 1960 this share was 10.6 percent.

Education: In the 25-29 year age group the number of Negroes with four or more years of High School rose from 38 percent to 56 percent. In the white population the percentage rose to 78 percent.² The median number of years schooling for nonwhites in this same age group rose from 10.8 years to 12.2 years, while the median

for whites rose from 12.3 to 12.6. The number of Negro college graduates in the 25-34 year age group rose from 4.3 percent in 1960 to 11.7 percent in 1970. White college graduates were 16.6 percent in 1970.³

Economic: The number of nonwhite families with an annual income of more than \$10,000 rose from 11 percent in 1960 to 28 percent in 1970. The number of nonwhites living in poverty decreased from 56 percent to 32 percent.⁴

Job Market: During the ten year period, the Negro share in the technical and professional field increased, while their share in the unskilled field declined.⁵

These favorable statistics fail to show, however, that black Americans pay more than whites for comparable housing and are four times more likely to live in substandard housing. In black slums, the housing density is almost double that of middle class urban areas and 100 times greater than in the suburbs.⁶ It is also noteworthy that there has been a shift in the Negro population from the rural areas to the central cities and suburbs, from 68 percent in 1960 to 74 percent in 1970.⁷

Of particular importance to the Army is that segment of society which provides that basic manpower, American youth. American youth in the age group between 14 and 24 years old totals 40 million persons and comprises 19.5 percent of the 1970 population.⁸ The achievements of the younger Negroes are increasing in the educational field just as we saw for the total Negro population. As an example, while the percentage of Negroes enrolled in college

(compared to all races enrolled) was 6.6% for the 16 to 34 year age group, for the 18-21 year age group the percentage is 7.5.⁹

Increasing achievements by Negroes throughout the American society have also developed greater expectations for the future, a greater influence on community affairs, and increased competition with whites and the entire population. These gains have also created an impatience for more rapid progress and a refusal to accept status as a second class citizen. Where gains are unfairly slow, or thwarted, the potential for trouble is high. In the following sections of this chapter we will discuss the attitudes of youth towards the military and racial unrest within the Army.

ATTITUDES OF YOUTH TOWARD THE ARMY

In recent years several studies and reports have investigated the motivations and attitudes of American youth toward the military service. This section presents some of the key findings of the following selected reports: (1) Young Men Look at Military Service, by Jerome Johnston and Jerald Bachman, a study of high school seniors during the spring and summer of 1969; (2) Attitudes and Motivations of Young Men Toward Enlisting in the U.S. Army, by the Opinion Research Corporation, conducted in February and March 1971; (3) Military Attitudes Among Negro Males, 16 to 25 Years of Age, Nationally and in Camden, New Jersey, by National Analysts, conducted for the National Guard Bureau; and (4) Attitudes of Youth Toward Military Service, by the Gilbert Youth Research, Inc.,

conducted in May 1971, to determine selected items of information about American youth for the Department of Defense.

From these reports, with many of the findings mutually supporting, motivating factors which favored a young man toward the military service included: self-development and gaining maturity; receiving technical training; job security; opportunities for travel, adventure, and excitement; and patriotism and a chance to serve the country.^{10, 11} Deterrents toward military service were perceived to be: the danger of service in Vietnam and a dislike for the current US foreign policy; dislike of discipline and restricted freedom; a loss of identity; and the lower status of enlisted men.^{12, 13}

Significantly, in none of these studies, did prejudicial racial attitudes emerge as having a direct bearing on the motivations of youth toward the service. The Opinion Research Corporation study found that whites and blacks generally agree in their thinking toward the service. This study also indicated that whites are slightly more favorable in attitude toward the service than blacks, but blacks volunteer in disproportionately large numbers, which can undoubtedly be related to economic and other pressures in their environment.¹⁴ This finding was also supported by the Johnston and Bachman study, which observed that most respondents saw the military as providing favorable opportunities for the disadvantaged. Over half of this same group thought that a Negro would have a better chance of getting ahead in the military and would face less discrimination than in civilian life.¹⁵ The

Gilbert Youth Research study found that blacks were more positive toward the service than whites,¹⁶ which develops from the service attractions of educational and training benefits, in addition to job security. A low level of discrimination was anticipated in the military as shown by the National Guard study of Negro males, where "relatively few of the young Negro men perceive the 'military life' as being heavily endowed with the threat of negative racial components (not being treated on an equal social basis, etc.)."¹⁷

In summation, the most favorable motivations toward the military were: (1) found in the lower income classes, the least educated, and younger men; (2) that it offered the greatest possibility for improving a man's position in life; and (3) not affected by racial prejudice or racial attitudes.

RACIAL UNREST

Though, as has just been discussed, racial discrimination or prejudice is not perceived as a potential problem by military age youth prior to entry into the service, a different situation emerges when service life is viewed from within.

Racial unrest within the military is ominous and widespread, particularly in the Army and the Marines. . . . Though the armed forces for the past decade have made more strides toward equal rights than society as a whole, the forces of peaceful progress seem to be losing ground.¹⁸

Racial tensions and incidents in the Army became evident in 1970 and have continued up to the present. Assaults by blacks against whites were not confined to posts in the United States but were

reported in base camp areas in Vietnam.¹⁹ It was also observed, in the 1970 time frame, that racial conflict in the US Forces in Germany had reached such an intensity that many observers believed that morale and efficiency were seriously affected and that a violent racial confrontation could erupt at any moment.²⁰ Black soldiers are reacting to perceived discrimination, which is obvious in such statements as, "Both the promotion and the justice systems are basically unfair to the black soldier. The best assignments go to the whites because they control the personnel system." Other statements reflect years of exposure to racial prejudice, such as, "Whites can never understand blacks because they have never experienced the same humiliation." and "Prejudice against blacks begins in the white man's home. Whites must teach their kids that they're no better than the blacks."²¹

What does the black serviceman want? In response to this question, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Defense for Civil Rights, Mr. L. Howard Bennett stated,

He wants the same things that a white serviceman wants: respect for his personality as a man; fairness in selection for duty detail; fairness in selection for educational and training opportunities; fairness in assignments to positions of supervision, high trust, and responsibility; fairness in evaluation of work and duty performance; fairness in promotion; and an appreciation of and recognition for meritorious performance.²²

In the first chapter, reference was made to the book GI Diary by David Parks. This book vividly portrays how a man's attitudes change over a relatively short period of time. When David Parks

entered the service he appeared to have no strong racial prejudices and was apparently annoyed with those who did, as shown by the following diary entry after five weeks of basic training,

The fellows in my platoon are becoming nicer guys. . . . A white guy . . . who hadn't known Negroes before, said he feels we are no different from his own people . . . a lot of the other white guys are beginning to feel the same way. Big deal.²³

A diary entry two months later begins to reflect a different attitude emerging:

Never had such bad feelings against white guys before either. But then I've never met white guys like these before. They don't let you forget that you're colored and that they're white for one minute. I've never thought so much about color before, even at school when I was the only soul. The question of color never comes up at home. Everyone is treated the same. I'd like to take one of these cats home with me and let him get an eyeful. Ever since I was a kid our backyard looked like the United Nations.²⁴

After his unit had landed in Vietnam and had been in combat for approximately one month, we see another entry which indicates that even the pressures of staying alive have not eliminated racial problems.

So far he's [a senior NCO] fingered [for forward observer duty] only Negroes and Puerto Ricans. I think he's trying to tell us something. . . . Everytime he comes around I get a feeling that I should have been born white. . . . If only the souls and Puerto Ricans could tell the world what really happens to them in this man's army.²⁵

And then the final entry after he had landed in California and is on his way home and back to civilian life:

The white guy who sold me my ticket at the airport gave me some really dirty looks. He pitched my ticket at me like I was dirt. There is nothing like the army to make you conscious of such things. . . . Well. I'm a Negro and I'm back home where color makes the difference.²⁶

The preceding illustrations question the idea that prejudice is seen only in the nonhostile setting. As we discuss next, other studies have also supported the feelings of David Parks.

The Veterans Administration conducted a series of five seminars during the period of April and May 1971, with the Vietnam era veteran as the subject of the study. Though the seminars covered a full range of problems pertinent to Vietnam veterans, the comments of two veterans are particularly enlightening from a racial standpoint. The following comment was made by a black veteran:

I went to Vietnam as a young man--I wasn't too up on what was happening. I didn't really want to go . . . yet I wanted to serve my country, do my job, get my military obligation over--then we ran into the problem of racism in the service . . . "nigger go home" written on the wall . . . the pressures of this are added to the pressures of war . . . our base got down to the point we didn't want to go on patrols with each other. We had a cross burning on the base the day that Martin Luther King got killed--we had a semi-race riot, shooting at each other--it was like a nightmare. . . . On patrols we couldn't do our job because we were watching the man in back instead of the man in front--it got to be real hassle . . . the Army doesn't make a man

prejudiced but changing such things as allowing beards, long hair . . . isn't getting down to the grass roots of the problem we're having.

Then directly following him was a white veteran who had the following statement:

I agree with him entirely from what I saw in my 3 years in Vietnam--the problem existed in base camps, existed on patrol, existed at night off duty--in a war in which we are supposed to be fighting together we are divided against each other.²⁷

Though these last examples are related to the situation in Vietnam, racial tensions and unrest have been widely reported in Europe:

By far the most explosive of its [the US Seventh Army in Germany] problems, however, is the racial one. About 20,000 USAREUR soldiers are black, and the Army . . . hasn't yet come to grips with the admittedly difficult problem of black power.²⁸

In September 1971, The Washington Post published a series of articles reporting on the current problems in the US Army throughout the world. These articles reiterated those already familiar problems of drug abuse, substandard housing, dissidence, personnel turbulence, rejection of authority, and a breakdown in the ability for all levels to communicate with each other. However, in all of these articles, the problem of racial tension, real or perceived discrimination, and general misunderstanding between racial groups was evident.

If the soldier is black, it is natural for him to find racial discrimination.

Many leaders, of all races, never openly acknowledge the existence of racial differences, or even state what their policies on this matter are; thus permitting tensions to mount in their units. . . . Often they complain about the same things white soldiers complain about; but the black soldier blames discrimination while the caucasian faults the Army as a whole.²⁹

In October 1969, then Secretary of the Army Resor, comparing the Negro soldier of 1969 with the Negro soldier ten years before, illuminated why confrontations and incidents are occurring:

The Negro soldier . . . is different from his counterpart of ten years ago. Formerly, he countered acts of racial discrimination only with hard work and endurance. Today he is more likely to make his resentment known. Today, in the young black soldier, there often is more personal and racial pride, more bitterness at real or imagined injustice. Like the white person entering the Army, he seeks to retain his personal identity, and in that identity his race is a part. A Negro in uniform does not cease to be a Negro and become a soldier instead. He becomes a Negro soldier.³⁰

Discussed in the preceding pages have been the gains made by Negroes in the past ten years; the attitudes of both black and white youth toward the service; and the expectations of Negroes for equal treatment and recognition of their abilities. In the next chapter, the affect of racial attitudes, as pertains to the Army soldier and reenlistment, will be investigated.

CHAPTER IV

FOOTNOTES

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17. National Analysts, Inc., A Study of Military Attitudes Among Negro Males--16 to 25 Years of Age, Nationally and in Camden, New Jersey, Volume 1 (1968), p. 5.

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CHAPTER V

ENLISTED RETENTION

This chapter will investigate the motivations favoring reenlistment of Army personnel and determine what impact racial attitudes have on retention.

The Research Analysis Corporation (RAC) in May 1971, published a Survey of Military Opinion, which investigated the likes, dislikes, and potential improvements relating to conditions, practices, and customs in the Army. Of particular importance was an additional part of the study which obtained a quantitative estimate of the potential for reenlistment, both before and after improvements suggested by the respondents had been made. The RAC study included a sample of 530 personnel in the grades of E1 through E4. This group provides the most critical reenlistment group, as it was determined that personnel with increased years of active Army service are more favorable to reenlistment.¹

The dominant concerns of the respondents identified as potential reenlistees were found to be:

He likes what the Army provides with respect to his personal growth and development, both in and out of service. He dislikes and suggests change in things associated with Army duty as a job: pay, duty hours, assignment, evaluation and promotion. He would like better living conditions and food; he suggests changes to reduce harassment, to help maintain his identity, to give him greater control over his time and appearance.²

The aspects of military life that the potential reenlistee in the E1 to E4 group is least concerned about are: military justice, on-post living conditions, details and extra duty, liberalization of Army policies, and his personal attitudes toward the military mission.³

Suggested improvements which increased the likelihood of reenlistment were in the area of health care, improved duty hours, training for his Army job, his duty assignment, less restrictive standards as to personal appearance and behavior, reduced harassment, and a greater tolerance toward a regimented and military life.⁴ The more education a respondent had, the greater was his likelihood to reenlist when suggested improvements were implemented. As might be expected, the draftee had a significantly lower inclination to reenlist either before or after improvements.⁵

Nowhere in the RAC survey were racial attitudes or prejudices identified as a problem. The loss of personal identity, as stated above, was a concern, and caused many suggestions for improvements in better communication across grades and organizational boundaries.⁶ Improved communications has also been determined as having a significant bearing on improving race relations.

The lack of effective communications, both vertical and horizontal, is the largest scale obstacle to the effective resolution of the race problem in the Army. In one way or another, communication in its broadest sense is implicated in all racial tension problems.⁷

In a survey of 13 enlisted men conducted at Carlisle Barracks in February 1972, the author observed attitudes and concerns that

have appeared in other publications. Though this small a sample is not meant to represent the Army, the findings are of sufficient interest to warrant brief discussion.

The group surveyed consisted of seven Negro soldiers and six white soldiers, stationed at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. A copy of the interview form is at Appendix I. Seven selected questions and the responses are discussed below:

1. In your opinion, what do you think is the major problem in the Army today?

Negroes: Senior NCO's were concerned with difficulty in interpreting Army policy related to VOLAR, the loss of authority and responsibility by NCO's, and that the new pay raises are going to the junior enlisted men more than the more senior. Personnel in grades E5 and below were concerned with harassment, not being kept informed, malassignment, racial problems, and prejudice.

Whites: Concern was detected in a lack of responsibility, malassignment and promotion procedures, lack of communications between EM and NCO's (unfriendliness), having men in the Army who don't want to be in, and barracks life, harassment, and the Army environment.

2. Do you think there is more prejudice or discrimination in the Army or in civilian life?

Negroes: Three respondents said it was equal; four said, "more in civilian life, but not much more."

Whites: Four respondents said civilian life; one said in the Army; and one said it is the same.

3. Do you think that progress is being made to eliminate discrimination in the Army? Too fast, too slow, about right?

Negroes: Four said too slow, three said about right or as fast as can be expected.

Whites: One said too slow, two said about right, and three had no response (they did not perceive significant change).

4. Are you planning to reenlist?

Negroes: Three said no, three were committed to achieve retirement, and one didn't know ("survival better in Army").

Whites: Six said no.

5. Have you benefited by being in the Army?

Negroes: All stated yes. Benefits have been in training, education, meeting and understanding people, gaining maturity, retirement benefits, self-satisfaction, and financial and health benefits.

Whites: Five stated yes, one had no response. Benefits have been in gaining self-confidence, meeting and understanding people, has been a stabilizing influence, and learning how to be away from home and to appreciate things.

6. What do you think are some of the ways to solve the racial problem?

Negroes: Insure a black and white balance in the chain of command (white CO, then black XO, etc.); through education--teach minority history in elementary schools and improve communications and basic leadership in the Army, improve communications-discussion--get problems and misunderstanding in the open, elementary education and at home, and make certain consideration and understanding is given to black attitudes and motivations.

Whites: Improve relations from the top down to the lowest level, get people together and establish communications, and improve leadership and professionalism at all levels but primarily senior NCO's. Three men had no suggestions.

7. Have racial incidents or attitudes precluded you from reenlisting?

Negroes: Five said no, one said yes, and one said at one time, but not now (he had experienced racial prejudice in the past).

Whites: Six said no.

The significant findings of this group of soldiers was in keeping with the attitudes, motivations, and perceptions of

respondents in all of the previous studies and surveys discussed. The concern toward improving communications, education, leadership, and professionalism were particularly strong. As mentioned before, though discrimination and prejudice were perceived to be present in the Army, it was not a primary factor in whether or not the individual would reenlist.

The lack of effective communication has been stressed by several writers, "In the area of racial relations much of the effort presently needed probably should be directed toward increasing communications between races and understanding through the command structure."⁸ The lack of effective communications has also been attributed to the increasing problem of the polarization of the races.⁹

In summary, there is no direct impact of racial attitudes on the retention of personnel in the Army. The basic problem in the area of race relations appears to be in a lack of understanding and an ability to freely discuss personal problems.

CHAPTER V

FOOTNOTES

1. Howard C. Olson and William R. Rae, Determination of the Potential for Dissidence in the US Army, Volume II, Survey of Military Opinion (1971), p. 43.

2. Ibid., p. 40.

3. Ibid., p. 47.

4. Ibid., p. 4.

5. Ibid., p. 43.

6. Ibid., p. 54.

7. LTC James S. White, An Overview of Race Relations in the Army (1970), p. 9.

8. LTC Charles A. Thomas, Views of the Army System and the Counter Culture (1970), p. 6.

9. White, p. 6.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are suggested by the findings and discussions presented in the preceding chapters.

1. Racial prejudice, founded on prejudgments without sufficient knowledge, can be best reduced or eliminated through education and by close working relationships in pursuit of common goals.

2. Negroes have served in the Army throughout American history. When laws or policies were established to prevent their enlistment, Negroes protested until this right was regained.

3. Since the end of segregation in the Army in 1954, Negroes have performed all types of military duties and served in all geographic areas on an integrated basis. The integration of Negroes in previously all-white units increased their motivation and performance to the same or higher level of white combat troops.

4. Economic and social gains achieved by Negroes in recent years have created increased expectations and demands for equality in all endeavors. Thwarting of just expectations has created racial tension and unrest.

5. The Army is perceived to offer greater opportunities than civilian life for improved social and economic standards, especially for the lower income or disadvantaged groups.

6. Negro personnel in the Army believe that prejudice and discrimination do exist, though no more than exist in the civilian society. It has been observed that if black and white soldiers

have the same complaints about the Army, the black soldier will often relate these complaints with discrimination, while the white soldier will fault the Army as a whole.

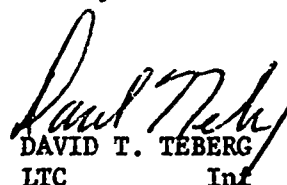
7. Personnel, prior to entry into the service, do not anticipate racial prejudice or discrimination to be a problem. Though racial misunderstanding and discrimination are believed to exist, the primary personal interests of both blacks and whites are directed toward personal growth and development and the need for improvements associated with personal identity, pay, duty hours, duty assignments, evaluation and promotion, better living conditions, and reduced harassment.

8. There is a definite inability for personnel to communicate their concerns, attitudes, and beliefs to others, both horizontally and vertically. This difficulty in communications is one of the most significant problems directly related to improving racial understanding.

What are the causes of racial antagonism and the major factors which influence racial attitude? An individual's racial attitudes are learned, usually within the family, but also from personal associations and the environment. As the individual changes his environment, job, and social position, he often assumes many of the attitudes and prejudices of the new group. The turbulent and unstable Army environment may compound the frustrations and displaced aggression usually found in persons with prejudicial attitudes.

What impact do racial issues, tensions, and attitudes have on the retention of enlisted personnel in the Army? Racial issues, tensions, and attitudes do not directly impact on the retention of enlisted personnel in the Army, but can significantly affect morale, harmonious individual and group relations, and successful mission accomplishment.

Racial integration has been accomplished in the Army and equal opportunity for all persons is expected. The goal of the Army must now be to eliminate existing discrimination and racial misunderstanding through education, improved channels of communication, and professional leadership, especially at the lower levels.


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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW FORM

B _____ 72 _____ hrs
date time

W _____
location

GRADE _____ US/RA _____ EAD _____ DOB _____

MOS _____ 1st Enlistment _____ RELIGION _____ Active? _____

HOME OF RESIDENCE _____

EDUCATION _____

MARITAL STATUS _____

DO YOU: LIVE ON-POST _____ IN BARRACKS _____ OFF-POST _____

IF IN BKS: Number of Roommates _____ B _____ W _____ OTHER _____

IN YOUR OPINION, AND FROM YOUR STANDPOINT, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS
THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN THE ARMY TODAY?

PRIOR TO YOUR ARMY SERVICE, DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING (considering
racial environment)

HOME:

SCHOOL:

WORK:

ATHLETICS:

SCOUTS, YMCA, CHURCH, ETC.:

ARMY SERVICE: (location & racial environment)

BCT:

AIT:

SUBSEQUENT ASSIGNMENTS:

WHILE IN THE ARMY, HAVE YOU OBSERVED, OR BEEN INVOLVED IN, RACIAL
PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION AND RACIAL INCIDENTS?

ON POST (DUTY)

OFF-POST

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTEMPORARIES:

ATTITUDES OF SUPERIORS: (promotion, Art. 15, etc.)

HAVE RACIAL INCIDENTS AFFECTED YOUR ATTITUDE OR FEELING TOWARDS
THE ARMY?

EXPLAIN IN WHAT WAY.

DO YOU THINK THERE IS MORE PREJUDICE OR DISCRIMINATION IN THE ARMY
OR IN CIVILIAN LIFE? (RACISM)?

DO YOU THINK THAT PROGRESS IS BEING MADE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINA-
TION IN THE ARMY? TOO FAST, TOO SLOW, ABOUT RIGHT.

IF FIRST ENLISTMENT: ARE YOU PLANNING TO REENLIST?

WHY?

IF PREVIOUSLY REENLISTED: WHY HAVE YOU REENLISTED IN THE ARMY?

HAVE YOU BENEFITED BY BEING IN THE ARMY?

HOW?

DO YOU THINK THAT BLACK AND WHITE SOLDIERS HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ARMY?

IN YOUR DAILY ACTIVITIES HOW DO THE MEN WORKING TOGETHER GET ALONG?

HOW DO THE MEN GET ALONG IN THE BARRACKS OR DURING OFF-DUTY HOURS?

ASSUMING THAT THERE IS A RACIAL PROBLEM, WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE SOME OF THE WAYS TO SOLVE THAT PROBLEM?

OTHER COMMENTS:

TIME INTERVIEW COMPLETED _____