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8 April 1966

COMMAND AND CONTROL - DECISIONMAKER OR RESPONDER

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Command and Control - Decisionmaker or Responder

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
8 April 1966

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SUMMARY

For the last several years, there has been increasing concern over an apparent centralization of decisionmaking at the highest national level. Startling advances in communications technology has provided a command and control capability that will permit restrictive over-control of military forces. It is the purpose of this research effort to determine if, as alleged, over-control is being prosecuted by a centralized decisionmaking process.

Command and control has been construed to mean more than mere tactical direction; but additionally, the entire process by which the military establishment is directed or managed. The main thrust of this paper is directed then toward the question whether centralization is fostering a community of responders rather than decisionmakers; and if so, what is its impact on leadership development within the armed forces.

A brief history of command and control shows the rationale behind the professed need for this centralized direction of the military establishment, followed by a short description of the communications network necessary for its projection. The scope of the paper does not permit a detailed analysis of the credibility of this communications system; however, it does point out that over-reliance can lead to disaster. It suggests that further research be conducted prior to complete dependence on a control system which necessarily demands a communication linkage that is nothing less than perfect.

A review of centralized control concepts existing today in Washington discloses many areas in which professional military expertise seems to be stifled by a rigid, restrictive methodology. There are indications that military acumen is degraded in favor of a reliance on cost effectiveness and civilianized management practices. There is evidence that the resolute, decisive leader has, in many cases, been supplanted by fact finding bodies or special study groups. Under the mantle of effective management and economics, military judgement has had to compete with computerized war-gaming techniques and civilian theoreticians.

The impact of centralization on leadership development has been studied in considerable depth. Military training has taken on the hue of civilian-oriented education. Traits of leadership, that have withstood the test of time and combat, are being questioned in the light of democratic and sociological ideology.

As the decision level rises toward the apex of the defense department, there is a tendency of subordinates to defer to higher authority decisions that could and should be made at a lower level. There is evidence to support the allegation that trust and confidence are no longer being tendered military subordinates, and an erosion of military authority has taken place. Moral courage, so vital to the profession-of-arms, appears to be weakening. Centralization has fostered a degraded aura of military prestige and professionalism that is being reflected in low retention rates and an overall reluctance on the part of capable young men to consider a career in the armed forces.

A brief evaluation of centralization in the historical sense indicates that the United States, in 1966, is faced with a monumental decision. Shall we continue the present trend, or should we seek a return to normalcy in political/military relations.

This research paper concludes that: due to an ever-present fear of exelation; crisis management; and the interrelationship of military and political activities, centralized decisionmaking is likely to continue. Based on this hypothesis, recommendations are submitted to the military departments that, if implemented, will attempt to confine it to the higher headquarters. If proliferation of centralized control can be halted short of tactical units, the armed forces will continue to be an effective projection of our national power.

"He will win who has military capacity and
is not interferred with by the sovereign."

Sun Tzu--about 500 BC

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

If the national coffers were the repository of one dollar for every word written, discussed, shouted or even testified about the subject of centralization, the US Government could afford to put the Great Society in high gear, build the B-70, and land on the moon next August. While this study does not purport to add to the nation's treasury, it is hoped that some very basic issues will be brought into focus and that the real problem of this complex decisionmaking process is more clearly understood.

It is not within the scope of this paper to argue the relative merits of centralization vs decentralization, but rather to investigate allegations that, through the medium of modern communications, centralized "over control" is stifling military decisionmaking and leadership. It will serve as a means of determining whether, as has been alleged, the military forces are becoming a community of "responders rather than decisionmakers," and if so, is proper leadership development in jeopardy? Pertinent examples of history and contemporary systems will be examined and, in the light of such comparison, some fallout should ensue that will remove some of the opacity from the "hazy gray areas."

When one thinks of centralization, command and control must, of necessity, be viewed as a subsidiary element. A clear cut, concise definition of the term "command and control" is difficult, if not, impossible. Major General John B. Bestic, USAF, Deputy Director for

National Military Command System (NMCS), described the problem in this manner:

In March 1964, Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance designated me as Chairman of a C³ (Command, Control, and Communications) Group to identify resources committed to the C³ area. Members included representatives of the military departments and representatives of five of the Assistant Secretaries of Defense. It wasn't until the 33rd meeting of the group that we ground out a definition of C² (Command and Control) we could agree on.¹

Unfortunately, what they agreed upon is not readily available to the casual reader and there is no guarantee that it would be agreed with if it were. The word Command, used in any context, is inseparable from authority, whereas the word Control connotes the exercise of restraining or directing influence; therefore, one might accept the phrase: "authority and its regulatory projection," as a satisfactory definition. Even though only recently has the term, command and control, been so classified; it has been an integral part of all military institutions since two cave men decided to pool their clubs against the sabre tooth tiger. Sun Tzu, about 500BC in his treatise, The Art of War, gave this definition:

The control of a large force is the same in principle as the control of a few men: it is merely a question of dividing up their numbers.

Fighting with a large army under your command is no-wise different from fighting with a small one: it is merely a question of instituting signs and signals.²

¹John B. Bestic, "Wanted: An Eleven Foot Pole," Data, Vol. 10, Feb. 1965, p. 3.

²Thomas R. Phillips, ed., Roots of Strategy, p. 30.

A study of every highly centralized command and control system recorded in the history of warfare will show that its proponents had advanced a very plausible and cogent rationale for its necessity. Prior to the last century, the control of men and weapons was subject to gradual evolution. Technology and scientific breakthroughs of the early 20th century created weapons and weapons systems that outdistanced a precise method of control, and greater decentralization was mandatory. General direction, based on firmly established doctrine, was exercised at the highest echelon but considerable freedom of action was passed to on-the-spot commanders.

With the demonstrated awesome destructiveness of thermo-nuclear weapons, the consequences of acts of war have increased, both in scope and gravity. Thus, there has been ever-growing civilian/political concern over vesting this power and control in the hands of the military. This concern has been borne out in a desire for a much closer political supervision, and to a marked degree, personal involvement in the actual command of military units.³

The art of decisionmaking has grown in complexity and difficulty with the threat of nuclear proliferation, more complex and sophisticated weapons and weapons systems, and the awesome spectre of escalation. The means of projecting this control is considered, by the national leadership, as being vital to the nation's survival.

³Historical Evaluation and Research Organization, A Preliminary Interpretive Survey of the History of Command and Control, pp. 1-2.

The Constitution of the United States provides the basic authority by which the president exercises ultimate executive power over the armed forces.⁴ Subsequent statutes have conferred upon him a wider range of control, and in matters pertaining to national security, more and more power has been vested in the office of President. In his special message to Congress on the Defense Budget in March 1961, President Kennedy indicated that he expected to exercise the franchise:

. . . new emphasis on improved command and control--more flexible, more selective, more deliberate, better protected and under ultimate civilian authority at all times. . . .⁵

If there remained any doubt as to who was going to "call the shots" insofar as making decisions involving the use of US military power, he dispelled it in a speech two weeks later:

We propose to see to it . . . that our military forces operate at all times under continuous, responsible command and control from the national authorities all the way downward--and we mean to see that his control is exercised before, during and after any initiation of hostilities. . . . We believe in maintaining effective deterrent strength, but we also believe in making it do what we wish, neither more nor less.⁶

Thus, the stage was set early in 1961, and after the events emanating from the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, a Presidential

⁴US Constitution, Article II, Section 2.

⁵John F. Kennedy, "US National Security Policy," Compilation of Official Statements 1961-1963, p. 30.

⁶John F. Kennedy, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 1961, p. 255.

directive was issued establishing the concept and organization for a National Communications System (NCS).⁷

There is no indication that the present administration will depart from the precedent established by former White House tenants. In a special message to Congress, 15 February 1965, on the State of Defenses, President Johnson summed it up in this manner:

Our military forces must be so organized and directed that they can be used in a measured, controlled and deliberate way as a versatile instrument to support our foreign policy. . . . We have made dramatic improvements in our ability to communicate with and command our forces, both at the national level and at the level of the theater commanders. We have established the national military command system, with the most advanced electronic and communications equipment, to gather and present the military information necessary for top level management of crises. . . .⁸

The National Security Act of 1947, as amended, and the Reorganization Act of 1958 provide for the establishment of the Defense Department and the basis for its operations.⁹ Thus, the Secretary of Defense has absolute authority over all components of the entire defense establishment, subject only to the will of the President. Secretary McNamara, commenting on his concept of management of the Defense Department stated:

⁷John F. Kennedy, "Establishment of the National Communications System," Memorandum to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, 21 Aug. 1963, p. 1.

⁸Lyndon B. Johnson, "State of Our Defenses," U.S. Code Congressional and Administrative News, Vol. 1, Feb. 1965, p. 42.

⁹US Laws, Statutes, etc., Public Law 253, National Security Act of 1947 as amended, Sec. 202(c)(8), p. 11.

The creation of the Department of Defense resulted from the clear recognition that separate land, sea, and air warfare is gone forever. . . .¹⁰

Although the three military departments have identity, the forces which they train, support, and supply are assigned to various unified and specified commanders for operational control.

. . . it is equally clear that the role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has significantly changed. No longer is their influence greatest as chiefs of their respective services. Rather, as members, . . . their greatest influence is in the strategic dispositions and employment of our combined forces deployed throughout the world.¹¹

It is Secretary McNamara's view that our many global commitments and technological advances have caused such a shortening in time and distance factors which imposes a need for a greater quick reaction capability. He considers any action taken by the United States may be of such transcendental importance that it must be carefully considered and decided upon at the highest governmental level.¹²

The ultimate responsibility rests with the President. Immediate command of the forces is in the hands of the unified and specified commanders subject to the instructions, issued by the President. I, as Secretary of Defense, act as agent for the President.¹³

In the light of the foregoing, one may well be justified in asking questions such as these: Which unified or specified commander controlled the fantastically frustrating and mismanged operation known as "The Oxford-Mississippi Incident" of 1962-1963? Does

¹⁰Robert S. McNamara, "Managing the Department of Defense," Civil Service Journal, Vol. 14, Apr-Jun, 1964, p. 70.

¹¹Ibid., p. 71.

¹²Ibid., p. 70.

¹³Ibid.

CINCPAC specify sizes of bombs to be used on bridges and what type jet aircraft are to be employed on particular missions in Vietnam?

Are these questions of such vital importance that they must be decided at the highest level of the US Government?

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNICATIONS, THE COMMON DENOMINATOR

The previous chapter discussed the rationale, expressed by the Executive Branch of government, behind the absolute need for a centralized decisionmaking capability at the highest national level. Operating on this premise, and all indications are that this must be accepted as a fact of life; it is incumbent, therefore, to provide the "voice of command" with the requisite command-control-communications structure that will permit achievement of this objective. This chapter will discuss some of the more salient problems deriving from this avowed need.

Turning again to a definition of Command and Control; Dr. Eugene G. Fubini, Assistant Secretary of Defense and Deputy Director of Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E), when asked for his definition, stated the following:

Command and control is the complex of procedures, doctrine and devices which supplies an operational, logistic or administrative commander with the information that he or his staff requires to make decisions and to implement them through subordinate units after these decisions have been made.¹

That one paragraph sums up in a general way the story of command and control, but it all hinges on the flow of information and therein hangs the problem.

¹Eugene G. Fubini, "DDR&E's Fubini Discusses C&C," Armed Forces Management, Vol. 11, Apr. 1965, p. 52.

Reams of paper have been generated in the form of studies, committee reports, working group evaluations, and even Congressional testimony on what constitutes a workable system, and what it must provide. These reports cover the complete spectrum of classification; and range from millions of dollars spent in research by professional societies, to unsolicited opinions and theories expressed by practically every stratum of society. All will, however, subscribe to most of these basic tenets:

1. A continuous, up-dated status of US and allied forces, their disposition, and combat readiness posture.

2. A current, valid intelligence display of the enemy, the potential enemy, and even the neutral forces including such detail as disposition, capability, vulnerability, and combat readiness.

3. A continuing up-dated status of all US weapons and weapon defenses including numbers, types, and locations.

4. A current picture of the world-wide political scene, and an evaluation of potential changes that may be influenced by US actions.

5. A system completely valid and consistent with the national interest.

6. A system sensitive and responsive to change and changing conditions.

7. A built-in flexibility to cover the broad spectrum of national power.

8. An instantaneous response to the receipt of information in the form of collation, decision, and implementation.

9. A reliability of 100% under all circumstances with an inherent self-healing capability.

10. Redundancy of such magnitude to provide absolute invulnerability to overt, covert, accidental damage or mechanical/electronic failure.^{2, 3}

At first blush, the immediate reaction is, "impossible--nothing can be that exact!", yet anything less is akin to crossing ones fingers and whistling in the dark.

Proponents of the system will argue that all of the ten points have been achieved by virtue of the establishment of several "super organizations."

The Defense Communications Agency (DCA), established in 1960, was ostensibly an economy measure designed to save money through elimination of unnecessary duplication. However designed, it provides the vehicle upon which all the others are riding. The basic charter of DCA provides for "management and operational direction"⁴ over the communications systems that make up the Defense Communications System (DCS). The DCS, established concurrently with DCA, "is the combined world-wide, long haul, fixed plant, point-to-point

²John B. Bestic, "Development of a National Military Command System," SIGNAL, Vol. XVII, Mar. 1963, pp. 10-11.

³J. S. Butz, Jr., "White House Command Post-1966," Air Force and Space Digest, Vol. 47, Apr. 1964, pp. 73-78.

⁴US Department of Defense, Directive 5105.19, "Defense Communications Agency," 14 Nov. 1961, p. 5.

communications circuitry, currently owned, operated or leased by the military departments."⁵

The National Military Command Center (NMCC) plus several alternates, both fixed and mobile, have been established and are operational. These provide the focal point for display, evaluation, decision and the transmission of commands. Key governmental departments and agencies are represented (State, Defense, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, Central Intelligence Agency and others) providing linkage with the White House Situation Room, other operational centers, and the Unified and Specified Commands. A general/flag rank officer in the NMCC maintains around-the-clock evaluation of the world situation, and this officer is the focal point to which the Joint Chiefs of Staff and higher authority turn to for an immediate review in crisis situations.^{6, 7}

The National Military Command System (NMCS) established by DOD Directive in 1962 charges three major elements of the Defense Department with responsibility for its creation: The Joint Chiefs of Staff (the consumer who states requirements); the Defense Communications Agency (the producer of the system); and the Department of Defense Research and Engineering (who provides technical support). Their combined task would appear to be one of orchestrating assets such as

⁵George P. Sampson, "DCA Communications Control World-Wide," SIGNAL, Vol. XVII, Sep. 1963, p. 10.

⁶J. S. Butz, Jr., op. cit., p. 78.

⁷Paul W. Tibbets, "About Our Working National Military Command System," Armed Forces Management, Vol. 10, Jul. 1964, p. 26.

facilities, equipment, people, doctrine, communications, and procedures into an operational system responsive to the National Command Authority in the direction of the Armed Forces across the entire spectrum of warfare.^{8, 9}

Establishment of the National Communications System (NCS),¹⁰ placing all government communications under a single executive agent--the Secretary of Defense, completed the evolution of the monolithic structure. This last venture brought under one umbrella, the communication assets of the Departments of State and Defense, FAA, NASA, and the Federal Telecommunications System.¹¹ The aforementioned are only a few, because NCS encompasses all governmental communications.

The question as to whether the United States has, in January 1966, a viable, responsive command and control system remains unanswered. Whether the system will stand up under the stress of concurrent geographically separated crises--or even exist in its present state once action is joined in a nuclear exchange remains to be seen. Unfortunately, speculation on these questions is not within the scope of this study. Good, bad or indifferent, fact or fantasy; we have a command and control system--and it is in use. That it may be less

⁸John B. Bestic, "Development of a National Military Command System," SIGNAL, Vol. XVII, Mar. 1963, p. 10.

⁹Esterly C. Page, "The National Military Command System--A Director's View," SIGNAL, Vol. XVII, Apr. 1963, p. 6.

¹⁰US Department of Defense, Directive 5100.41, "Arrangements for the Discharge of Executive Agent Responsibilities for the National Military Command System (NCS)," Washington: 5 Oct. 1963, pp. 2-4.

¹¹Solis Horwitz, "National Communications for the Nuclear Age," SIGNAL, Vol. XVIII, Jul. 1964, pp. 34-35.

than perfect only magnifies the problem.

The White House started the ball rolling with personal direction of the operating forces in the Cuban crisis and it has continued throughout the Vietnam situation--all under the guise of avoiding a possibility of world-wide political repercussions and the fear of escalation. As more and more sophisticated communications and data processing equipment are fed to lower echelon commanders, this over-control will continue to spread. The ability of the Division or Brigade Commander to speak personally with the individual squad leader may be hailed as a milestone of progress, but conversely, it may well be likened to the opening of Pandora's box.

Centralized control of communications and staff procedures in warfare is one of the results of modern electronic progress. Such control has been sought after and achieved in varying degrees throughout military history. However, in connection with the exercise of unit control . . . has its limitations. Mechanical breakdown, or destruction by enemy action, of complex devices and machines, which create such controls is to be expected and planned for under modern operational conditions. When centralized control of communications fails--operational inertia results.¹²

It is therefore incumbent for planners to think in terms of less sophisticated equipment and decentralization of control if the operating forces, spread out throughout the world, will be able to effectively function in their primary mission, the security of the United States.

¹²US Army Combat Developments Command, Combat Operations Research Group, The Evolution of Military Unit Control, 10 Sep. 1965, CORG Memorandum 217, p. 145. (referred to hereafter as CORG-M-217)

One factor becomes increasingly important in an examination of command and control and that is people. In spite of the very latest communications gadgetry, the absolute reverence that automatic data processing commands (ADP), and the multi-hued displays available in a command post; in the final analysis, it is people who make up the component that is not quantifiable. It is people who have to connect, install, and monitor communications; write programs for computers; exercise judgement on what, when, and why a bit of information is transmitted. People have to formulate and implement doctrine and procedures; therefore, the whole command system is a structure of people, not machines, and it is these people that this paper is concerned about.

Subsequent chapters will discuss how centralization impinges on the development of these people into competent leaders.

CHAPTER 3

CENTRALIZATION OF THE DECISIONMAKING PROCESS

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH

There seems to be little doubt that the decisionmaking process is centralized in Washington, and that there is, in being, a vehicle for its projection. The question that must be faced are: is such a restrictive policy in the best interest of national security; and what is its effect on the human element charged with implementation?

The entire free world has come to look to the White House for immediate solutions to any international problems; however, at no time in our history has a president been so whipsawed by political, domestic and international pressures. He is undoubtedly the most influential man in the world but world circumstances and the rigidity of the control system impose limitations beyond precedent.¹ He and his two major departmental secretaries should be able to delegate details to their subordinates, leaving themselves free to deal with policy and general outlines.

The significant positions of such groups as the JCS, Council of Economic Advisors, AEC, CIA, National Security Council and a half dozen other agencies does not place a premium on his ability to work out flexible formulas and to remain in control of the situation. The massive institution of which he is the center will continue to restrict even as it assists.²

¹Sidney Warren, The President as World Leader, p. 430.

²Ibid., pp. 436-437.

Private industry has seen the fallacy of centralization. A comparison between government and business is most certainly valid when it is a truism that government is the biggest business in the United States today. Prior to 1940, General Electric operated under strict centralized management. During wartime expansion, however, it became mandatory that greater planning, flexibility, and faster more informed decisions were required at subordinate levels if the company was to remain competitive.

Unless we could put the responsibility and authority for decisionmaking closer in each case to the scene of the problem, where complete understanding and prompt action are possible, the Company would not be able to compete with the hundreds of nimble competitors who were, as they say, able to turn on a dime.³

The problem that General Electric faced can be contrasted with the position that the United States faces today versus the Communist dictatorships.

A QUESTION OF QUALIFICATION

No informed military man questions the right or even the desirability of ultimate control of military actions being vested in the office of President, as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. However, the inescapable fact remains that this power includes that of life or death. For centuries Generals and Admirals have had to send men to what was certain death; and the men went willingly, knowing the leadership that committed them to the action was a direct decision

³Ralph J. Cordiner, New Frontiers for Professional Managers, p. 46.

reflecting personal responsibility. Political power, on the other hand is, generally speaking, both indirect and impersonal. Political, managerial, or any of the arts and sciences disciplines, do not concern themselves with life and death as does military command of men.⁴

Great and unprecedented requirements have been thrust upon the office of President by the environment of this nuclear age requiring decisions affecting not only national security, but the future of man. This calls for a man with such diversity of experience and knowledge seldom if ever seen.⁵ The personal philosophy of the President is of vital importance.

. . . experience has shown that a President will exercise this Constitutional authority in a manner that is personally congenial to him. He will interpret the law, or ignore or evade it, to suit his personal concepts, his personal philosophy, and the particular concepts, and personalities of specially trusted associates and subordinates. This factor of personality will influence the organization, the major decisions, and the execution and supervision of the plans.⁶

No military man, from private soldier to destroyer skipper, would hesitate to sally forth on what might be called a "suicide mission" on the order of a man who "had been down that road himself." The same order by an inexperienced civilian staffer in the White House Command Post, 6000 miles away, would be obeyed but much harder to swallow. While it may be said that national policy or strategy is too important

⁴Henry E. Eccles, Military Concepts and Philosophy, p. 151.

⁵Ernest R. May, The Ultimate Decision: The President as Commander-in-Chief, p. 234.

⁶Eccles., op. cit., p. 151.

to trust to Generals, it is equally true that the question of life and death is too important to trust to amateur armchair tacticians of questionable expertise with no responsibility or accountability.

In the final analysis, does the country want or have a right to expect proven expertise, or statistical cost accounting to be uppermost in the decision as to what plane our pilots will fly and die in?

A QUESTION OF TIME AND METHOD

In a cold war the ability to act and react quickly is mandatory--many times resolving a problem before it becomes a crisis. However, if problems have to be forwarded to Washington for resolution, they run the gamut of proper staffing to get the requisite number of "chops." A simple problem may not receive proper attention until it has become a crisis requiring time consuming action by special committees where semantics become a contributing factor. Eight hours to eight days are often required to provide a solution that could and should have been resolved in a matter of minutes in the field--where first-hand and intimate knowledge of factors involved is present.

A problem ever-present, in centralization of authority, is that decisions are often made by committees, working groups or special task forces. Decisionmaking is stifled by: pressures on individuals from a facet of society or organization that he represents; by divergence of intellectual, environmental, and organizational background; and by basic differences in personality, morals, and psychological make-up. Committees spend much time and effort in collating information at the

top (readily available to the ultimate consumer in the fox-hole), and since these efforts are rarely successful, decisions are made on incomplete and often old information.⁷

More and more we see indications that decisions are being made on consensus. This is undoubtedly a satisfactory method in political matters, but it cannot deal satisfactorily with military command, scientific, and technical questions. Consensus arises from committee work which cannot replace the decisionmaking power of the individual, "nor can committees provide the essential qualities of leadership."⁸

A clear cut example of the time factor, as well as the function of ad hoc committees, in the decisionmaking process can be seen in the Bay of Pigs fiasco.

If Kennedy /President/ were to change his mind and permit American intervention, the time had come for action. On the night of April 18, the President was called from a formal dinner and joined a White House meeting whose conferees included Dulles, Bissel, Bundy and White House Aide Walt Rostow. The men stayed up all night, trying to decide whether American forces should be sent to Cuba, but reached no conclusion. Next morning a similar meeting was held, and Kennedy decided to do nothing, largely because it was too late.⁹

It may have been Cubans who were being killed here, but would the solution have been easier if US troops were involved? It is submitted that a professional military commander would not have slept on it before taking it up the next morning.

⁷Charles J. Hitch and Roland N. McKean, The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age, pp. 236-237.

⁸US Congress, Senate, Committee on Government Operations, Administration of National Security: The Secretary of State, 1964, p. 6.

⁹Andrew Tully, CIA: The Inside Story, p. 255.

Time is the one irreplaceable factor in tactical employment of national power. It places a critical limitation on both mobilization and projection. If political/military plans and doctrine are wisely and carefully formulated and then employed professionally, time becomes an asset. If wasted through a series of uncoordinated and "quick fix" projections, time is an insurmountable liability.¹⁰ Although timeliness has become more critical in the thermonuclear era, it is nothing new in the art of warfare. Frederick the Great, in the famous "Instructions to his Generals" stated:

Often, through an hour's neglect, an unfortunate delay loses a reputation that has been acquired with a great deal of labor. Always presume that the enemy has dangerous designs and always be forehanded with the remedy.¹¹

Operations during the cold war pose this question in every military man's mind, "just how many Cubas can we handle at a time?" An adequate national strategy in the cold war period will require considerable reevaluation at the highest level to provide timely policy and directions in advance rather than hasty and costly improvisations after a "flap" turns into a full blown crisis. Many and diverse super groups have been formed and charged with all conceivable aspects of national power, but to date they have been woefully uncoordinated; thus, few of our vast undertakings have been unified or directed toward a total

¹⁰George C. Reinhardt, American Strategy in the Atomic Age, pp. 218-219.

¹¹Phillips, op. cit., p. 251.

strategic concept. Oftentimes, sound and even brilliant proposals lack integration with other efforts to make the programs effective. If we have a firmly established national policy, global in scope, for the hot/cold war struggle, it is obscured with amplifications by these splinter groups.¹²

The Cuban missile crisis of 1962 served to indicate to what degree the claims of "destroyed military initiative" were justified. The normal military chain of command was literally bypassed and supplanted with an Executive Committee (primarily civilian) headed by the President himself. They met daily and issued, through the Secretary of Defense, minutely detailed orders direct to the operating units. The responsible operational commander, Admiral Robert L. Dennison, infinitely more qualified tactically for detailed and efficient execution, was cut out of the system by what amounted to an hour-to-hour stream of orders--neither responsive from the standpoint of currency, nor consistent with previous directives.¹³ At one point it reached such ridiculous proportions that a harried destroyer skipper, making an intercept, was asked to look through his glasses to ascertain if the reception committee at the top of the accommodation ladder "was smiling." In his excellent treatise on National Security, William R. Kintner commented on the management of the entire Cuban crisis as follows:

¹²Reinhardt, op. cit., p. 215.

¹³George F. Eliot, "Conflict in the Pentagon," American Legion Magazine, Vol. 75, Nov. 1963, p. 41.

It was noteworthy, however, that the basic policy and major decisions of this operation, involving the risk of a much wider conflict, appear to have been formulated with limited participation of senior military representatives except for that of the Chairman of the JCS himself. It also appears that there was considerable detailed operational direction by both the President and the Secretary of Defense. . . . In short, the broad mission-type orders by which major military commands normally operate were not always used in this particular situation. The Cuban crisis, an integral part of the total world confrontation, could be dealt with by a limited EXCOM of the NSC. It is reasonable to ask, however, whether any such committee could simultaneously keep track of the myriad forces, hostile, friendly, and neutral, that were simultaneously in operation elsewhere and could at the same time determine how US resources should be developed and deployed to deal with the other problems. . . . the strategy group in the trilogy of policy-strategy-operations utilized in the October 1962 Cuban crisis is far too limited to cope with the wider vista of global conflict. Furthermore its representation was not weighed in proper correlation with the importance of the various factors which must be considered in devising a comprehensive long-term national strategy for the United States. The group dealt effectively with the ad hoc problem of the single crisis--Cuba, but it is questionable that it would be adequate in its present form to deal with multiple problems on a long-term basis.¹⁴

Even if it was the unalterable decision of the President to run the show, it was equally incumbent upon the Secretary of Defense to protect the integrity of the military chain of command. The degree of harm to civilian/military relations by this demonstrated failure to include military experience and judgement in the formulation of national policy is incalculable.

¹⁴William R. Kintner, "The Politicalization of Strategy," National Security: Political, Military, and Economic Strategies in the Decade Ahead, David M. Abshire, ed., pp. 404-405.

While it is not implied that the military should take over global strategy, neither should the civilian be in a position to over-commit troops. A coordinated effort of both civilian and military minds is required. Professional men-at-arms are often able to foresee strategic intangibles that the civilian might not appreciate, thus our foreign policy must be tailored to that which is within the scope of the armed forces capability.

COMPUTERS VS JUDGEMENT

During the past several years the words "systems analysis" has become two of the most hated words known to man, and there is a continual tug of war over the merits of computers. It is unfortunate that this is true because both have a very significant place in today's world. The designers of the machines are firm in their acknowledgement that human judgement is not becoming obsolete, it is the fuzzy thinking user who fails to see them as they were designed to be, a tool. This tool or machine can do nothing that it has not been planned or programmed to do. It can perform all the mathematical functions and spew out a very legible read out, but it cannot think and it is only as accurate as the data fed into it. They have a definite use in the decisionmaking process, but are not ends in themselves. Dr. Alain C. Enthoven, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Systems Analysis) in 1963 said in an address:

. . . it is wrong to cover the whole area of defense planning with the mantle of "military judgment" or operational experience." Military judgment, if by this

is meant specifically the experience and knowledge gained by military men in combat or conducting military operations, is something very precious indeed. Unlike most of the things we know that which are earned at the price of hard work, the military profession has had to pay in blood for its combat experience. This valuable currency is cheapened by attempting to apply it to things to which it does not apply. Military judgment should not be the basis for a view with respect to technical feasibility.¹⁵

One cannot help but question the fact that if the military again has to pay in blood for technical infeasibility, then it is not a question of point of view but rather a mandatory requirement that military judgement be an integral part of any such decision. The address continued:

Nor is it fair to suggest, when the Secretary of Defense makes a decision contrary to that of his military advisors on the procurement of a weapon system, that military advice and experience are being ignored or that military judgment is being downgraded.¹⁶

Viewing this last statement in the light of the TFX contract award (service Chiefs were unanimous in disapproval), it would appear that it is very fair to suggest that military advice and experience are being ignored, downgraded, and disregarded.

The art of systems analysis, on which much of current Pentagon decisionmaking is based, revolves around the system model. Real system experimentation is limited because it can only become operational in times of emergency. A model, by definition is a simplified

¹⁵Alain C. Enthoven, "Choosing Strategies and Selecting Weapon Systems," p. 23. (Italics added).

¹⁶Ibid.

representation of the real object and may take the form of flow charts, diagrams, mathematical equations or computers. Since the model is much simpler than the system itself, much detail is omitted that is unimportant to the study in question. Some problems are capable of accurate measurement such as the relative merits of one type gun vs another. Some problems are possible to measure and quantify such as one destroyer with 6-5" guns vs a destroyer with 5-5" guns and one twin 3" gun. Other problems are incapable of measurement for insertion into the model. These include such intangibles as leadership; morale; state of training; sufficiency of food, fuel, and ammunition; psychological factors; weather; and many others. These factors have a profound effect at the delivery or user end; the fact that they can only be supplied by subjective judgement based on experience cannot be refuted. The old phrase "the estimate of the situation" is still valid. It is designed to focus attention on the heart of a problem by gathering and analyzing information and all relevant factors on the key point of the exercise. It considers contingencies and alternatives and identifies all obstacles so a decision can be reached that will reflect a course of action based on adequately stimulated thought and judgement. These functions are not within the capacity of machines and mathematical techniques; though both have a definite input to the background for a decision.¹⁷

¹⁷William A. Reitzel, Background to Decision Making, pp. 58-59.

COMMAND VS MANAGEMENT

There is increasing use of the words management and cost effectiveness throughout the defense establishment and less is heard about leadership and command. In a previous chapter command was defined as being inseparable from authority. Management, however, is a process of utilizing the resource of men, money, and materials to accomplish a preplanned objective. To be effective, management must be completely integrated with operations, plans, and logistics, and not a replacement for either.

The British found this out the hard way. The Ministry of Supply found themselves in the procurement and design of aircraft, weapons, and supplies for all three services. Among other faults, that eventually became quite apparent, was the inefficiency and sluggish response that ultimately was considered responsible for lack of progress in military aircraft R&D during the decade beginning 1945. The Ministry was completely abolished in October 1959. France has fallen into the same trap operating under a civilian-dominated, central logistic procurement organization. In 1954-1955, spare parts procurement was so slow and so hide-bound by regulation, that the system was completely unresponsive to needs. Had it not been for the US Military Aid Group, mine and patrol craft could not have moved from Brest to Toulon for Mediterranean operations.¹⁸

¹⁸Eccles, op. cit., p. 162-163.

Management tends to delegate the authority to say "no" more often than "yes." Thus, in effect, junior staff functionaries in the management/command chain are exercising this authority to turn down proposals of senior commanders. All too often these juniors have, at most, only a vague idea of what the proposal amounts to, but on the basis of cost, they wield their sharp-edged sword. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle G. Wheeler described it this way:

I am reminded that one of the outward manifestations of this unrealistic approach was the "quasi-policy maker" who abounded in the Pentagon at that time. These gentlemen had the authority to say "No" to a proposal, but they could or would not say "Yes." We call them the "Abominable No-Men" and I think they were typical of our former somewhat hazy approach to the management problem.¹⁹

Although the system may be excellent, continual hazard exists of ineffective implementation, and there is danger of over-control and over-management. Commanders in the field should not be stifled by management directives emanating from theorists at a higher headquarters. Managers and Commanders must keep in mind their respective functions. The commanders' responsibility is military operations. The managers are to provide the commanders requisite support in the form of men and equipment when needed--not the management of the commander.²⁰

Another unfortunate aspect of program reviews and approvals that must emanate from the very top, is that the ritual tends to become

¹⁹Earle G. Wheeler, "Management Is For the Troops," The Journal of the Armed Forces, Vol. 103, 25 Sep. 1965, p. 32.

²⁰Ibid.

more important than the end for which it was designed. All too often the easy decisions are made quickly, with the more difficult ones being deferred. Few fully appreciate that a decision may be deferred only if it isn't really required. If a decision is required to prevent a program delay, deferral is essentially a decision to delay. There is not a one-to-one relationship between decision delay and program delay.²¹ In ship construction, a two month deferral could amount to an ultimate delay of well over a year.

The writer has no quarrel with management per se; a baseball team should have a manager, as should a grocery store or automobile plant. The supply department on the ship should reflect good management. But the ship skipper isn't a manager--he is in command! The destroyer skipper doesn't want his young officer-of-the-deck on the bridge, on hearing the word, "Sonar Contact," to start managing. Neither does he want his supply officer, untrained in ship control, to take command on the bridge. This is not intended to imply that the man exercising command doesn't require management ability. That same mythical OOD on the destroyer's bridge uses management techniques every day. He operates his department on a fixed budget that requires a very careful and judicious use of resources and manpower. Succinctly stated, command connotes management--the reverse simply does not!

²¹Thomas A. Callaghan, Jr., "Why Lead Time Becomes Lag Time," Armed Forces Management, Vol. 7, Jan. 1961, pp. 21-22.

The Unified and Specified Commands, and the Defense Agencies that have been created, resemble somewhat the War Department before Elihu Root took over in 1903. Operating under the Bureau System, the combat forces were organized into a series of separate units assigned to "Unified" commands called Department of the East, Department of Missouri, etc. The Secretary of War had supervisory authority over the agencies while a Commanding General directed the armed forces. Lack of coordination between the several bureaus was horribly exposed by the Spanish-American War. For this reason, Mr. Root wanted (and got) a General Staff, but not even this was sufficient to break the power of the bureaus.²² Only the lack of a Commanding General mars the contrast between the present day Department of Defense and the pre-Root bureaucratic tangle. However, even this one lack of similarity is offset by the fact that the Secretary of Defense actually may act in the role of Commanding General. In 1961, a special study group, appointed by the Secretary of Defense, submitted a report recommending the creation of a Commanding General for all Unified Commands.²³ In 1964 Roswell L. Gilpatric (former Deputy Secretary of Defense), writing on unification in general, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in particular, recommended a change that would create what amounts to Commanding General:

²²John C. Ries, Management of Defense, p. 191.

²³Ibid.

This change would take the Joint Chiefs as a body out of the chain of command over military operations, which would then extend down from the President as Commander in Chief through the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to the heads of the combat commands Among other benefits from such a change would be a clearer and quicker line of command and control from the President on down.²⁴

Any difference between this recommendation and that which is in-being would be hard to distinguish. There was certainly very little control of the naval forces in the Cuba quarantine by the Joint Chiefs--as a body. Only the Chairman had a part, and that as a minor functionary in the Executive Committee of the NSC formed to deal with the situation. John C. Ries, commenting on the similarity of the pre-Roosevelt days and the present day Department of Defense, stated:

Fantastic though it may seem, defense reformers have succeeded in turning the calendar back sixty years and are ready to face the demands of "modern warfare" with a bureau system similar to one that failed to meet the test of the Spanish American War!²⁵

THE WAFFLE CONCEPT

One of Secretary McNamara's maxims is: "If you can't explain your answer, you don't understand the problem," and by this he means a quick, precise answer that is backed up with supporting studies capable of being mathematically quantified. Answers based on experience are often shelved in favor of those supplied by research analysts from

²⁴Roswell L. Gilpatric, "An Expert Looks at the Joint Chiefs," The New York Times Magazine, 29 Mar. 1964, p. 72.

²⁵Ries, op. cit., p. 191.

the large think factories. These highly intelligent young men, completely without military experience, drawing on information supplied by subordinate military officials produce answers that are faster than those coming out of the JCS and more to his liking and understanding.²⁶ Sending up split papers is tantamount to asking for a "kiss of death." In a vain attempt to accommodate divergent service views and achieve a degree of unanimity yet still be responsive, the services have been guilty of "waffling" their papers. This ambiguous and indecisive response to the fundamental question reflects discredit on the ones involved, but is a by-product of the system. Succeding paragraphs will attempt to show why this sort of thing has developed--why it is safer to respond rather than to volunteer.

The insidious danger in this domination of decisionmaking at the top is that each time decisions are referred to higher authority, the ability of all levels is diminished. As more and more decisions are pushed up the line, higher authority has less time to adequately cope with its primary problems, and the lower echelons become less and less able to make any decision.

AUTHORITY WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY

As previously mentioned, the number of officials in the Pentagon with no responsibility for anything but with authority to say "No" is

²⁶Eliot, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

a source of major concern. The story of the Jupiter Missile is tragic testimony to the failure of the decisionmaking body in Washington and its complete disregard or trust in experienced and qualified advice. Explaining the delays and frustrations he had faced, General Gavin commented:

By the time a decision is finally made in the Department of Defense, many months, and in some cases years, have elapsed. All of the pleading and urging of those in uniform, who see national survival almost slipping through their fingers, can be of little avail if the Department of Defense declines to act. Its inability to act stems, in the last analysis, directly from the fact that hundreds of civilians, many of them lacking competence in their assigned fields have now transposed themselves between the senior civilian Secretaries of the Services and Congress and the Executive.²⁷

Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, in his testimony before a Congressional Committee inquiring into satellite and missile programs, was quite explicit in pointing out where research and development programs were hamstrung with red tape and unclear lines of authority. As Assistant Chief of BuShips for Nuclear Propulsion, he noted that his people were continually running into interference and demands by committees for justification for a specific line of research. The basic issue was the separation of responsibility from authority. Staff people, with little technical knowledge and no responsibility, once held up procurement of nuclear cores for 4 months and later for 6 months. Part of his testimony included:

²⁷James M. Gavin, War and Peace in the Space Age, pp. 168-169.

Next time the purchase of nuclear cores came up there was 6 months delay. Even though the Chairman and the General Manager of the AEC were for it, it wound up with the necessity for an official request from the Navy to the AEC via the Secretary of Defense. . . . I went over to see General Loper with the draft of the letter which he agreed to and which he initialed. After that it took the initials of 15 to 20 officials in the Pentagon and a month's delay before the letter got out of the Pentagon. So it took 6 months just because one staff person with no responsibility but with authority had on his own decided that the policy was wrong. This is the sort of thing we face.²⁸

An excellent working arrangement had been set up with all three services and the AEC with no difficulty having arisen over a several-year period. Later it was decided that a committee should be formed to coordinate their efforts. Admiral Rickover testified:

They have published a proposed change in our method of operation which is not even technically correct. Fighting this sort of coordination is time-consuming and interferes with our jobs. Ultimately this committee will probably win out. They have the time to play at this sort of thing; we don't. It will achieve control, set up a few more jobs in the Pentagon, and it will become much harder to get anything done. This is the sort of interference I am talking about. Its effect is destructive. It discourages and frustrates the people who are responsible for getting the job done. Instead of helping us, a committee such as this hinders us. But it has to manifest activity, it has to keep busy doing something, to prove the need for its existence.²⁹

²⁸US Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Inquiry Into Satellites and Missile Programs, 1958, p. 1394 (referred to hereafter as "Congress, Senate, Satellites and Missiles).

²⁹Congress, Senate, Satellites and Missiles, p. 1426.

At one time during the post World War II period the Army was given some helicopters to evaluate. The Army considered that they had tremendous possibilities for air mobility and urged procurement. Plans ran afoul, however, in the office of Director of Requirements, who closed the conference with this comment:

I am the Director of Requirements and I will determine what is needed and what is not. The helicopter is aerodynamically unsound. It is like lifting oneself by one's boot straps. It is no good as an air vehicle and I am not going to procure any. No matter what the Army says, I know that it does not need any.³⁰

Considering the use of this "unsound" vehicle in Vietnam, the statement sounds rather ridiculous. It must be similar in tone to what General Billy Mitchell must have heard from the Morrow Board in 1925. It can be currently compared with pleas for such other unnecessary items as the manned bomber, the anti-missile-missile, the nuclear powered air craft carrier, and adequate amphibious shipping.

In spite of announced efforts to streamline things, the Department of Defense continues to grow. There is an increasing number of Assistant and Deputy Secretaries, the Joint Staff continues its fantastic growth, and special agencies and coordinating groups multiply like rabbits. Such a ponderous organization is choked by its own weight and dilutes the overall defense effort.

³⁰Gavin, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

THE PENALTY OF INTEGRITY

History of the Department of Defense since 1947 is replete with examples of outstanding officers who have paid in full for their expressed loyalty to subordinates, and their honest testimony concerning the security of the nation. This fact alone must account for some of the charges that have been levied against senior military officers such as: "military indecisiveness," and "responders rather than decisionmakers." The scope of this paper does not permit a detailed description of each case, nor does it include case histories of many who were either fired or voluntarily retired due to frustration and disillusionment.

Admiral Denfeld, Chief of Naval Operations, was fired in 1949 because of his support of subordinates testimony concerning the defense of the nation being entrusted to a single concept of war--the B-36 and the atomic bomb. An oddity of this episode was that all officers who testified had been assured that reprisals would not be taken against any witness. A particularly cruel stroke was the way in which the Admiral learned of his firing:

Denfeld learned that he had been fired only when Vice Admiral John Dale Price (who had gotten the news from a reporter) burst into the office and blurted: "Admiral, the President has just relieved you as Chief of Naval Operations." Denfeld looked up incredulously, said in an odd voice, "is that so?" and lapsed into stunned silence.³¹

³¹"Punishment," Time, Vol. LIV, 7 Nov. 1949, p. 20.

Arleigh Burke, later to become Chief of Naval Operations, was hit with the same broom that swept Admiral Denfeld out. His name appeared on a December 1949 list of selectees recommended by a selection board for promotion to Rear Admiral:

The board however was reconvened and ordered to do its work over. When it finished the second time, Burke's name was not on the list. It had been replaced by the name of Captain Richard P. Glass, Navy Secretary Matthew's 51-year old aide, who would be retired from service if he were passed over for promotion.³²

In 1958, Lt General James M. Gavin announced his retirement from the Army because in his words, he was "no longer being considered for promotion and assignment to a more responsible position."³³ The general impression of a good many newspapermen and a Congressional committee was that General Gavin, who had been tacitly promised an assignment to CONARC, was told he was to stay in Washington for another year after he had earlier testified in Congress on missile development and had been critical of the bureaucratic system in the Department of Defense. When asked by the Chairman of the subcommittee (Senator Lyndon B. Johnson [D.-Tex.]) if he felt that his earlier testimony had anything to do with this change in his subsequent assignment, he replied:

I feel intuitively that the decision was colored by my testimony. . . . You don't help yourself by coming up to a committee and being straightforward and frank. . . .³⁴

³²"Stopped Cold," Time, Vol. LIV, 26 Dec. 1949, pp. 9-10.

³³Congress, Senate, Satellite and Missiles, p. 1448.

³⁴Ibid., p. 1454.

When asked for observations concerning whether Congress was being cut off from fresh, adequate, resourceful advice from military men because of fear of duress, and why it seemed to be difficult for the committee to even get officers to speak "off the record," he replied:

I would say you are facing increasing difficulties, certainly in getting witness up here, if, in the wake of their appearances, things of this sort happen. . . . I know how he feels, because when you are asked why you said so-and-so, and if your are right it is all right, but you never know when you might be just a little bit wrong. Then you are in trouble.³⁵

General Gavin commented later in his book about the problem of either lying to Congress or being insubordinate to superiors:

One soon learns that he must make a basic decision. One must either be straightforward and honest, speaking from personal conviction based upon study and understanding of the problem, or one must decide to become a military chameleon, an individual who changes his point of view according to the mood of the moment and the apparent pleasures of Congress or the prevailing civilian superior in the Department of Defense.³⁶

The list of heroes is long. Names like Admiral Anderson, General LeMay, Major General Medaris are remembered with pride. The circumstances surrounding their leaving the services are mute testimony that it doesn't pay to stray from the party line. More recently (October 1965) two more Admirals in the Bureau of Ships submitted requests for retirement--on the issue of centralization. In an

³⁵Ibid., p. 1455.

³⁶Gavin, op. cit., pp. 172-173.

article printed in the New York Times, the reasons given were:

. . . the two officers have become increasingly distributed /sic/ over centralization, the power being exercised by Mr. McNamara and his subordinates, and the resulting degradation of the authority and responsibilities of the Bureau of Ships. In particular, they were concerned about the power of the Controllers Office at the Pentagon, which is Mr. McNamara's right arm in providing budgetary control over the military departments. . . . The two admirals had frequently found that relatively low-ranking civil service employes /sic/ in the Controller's office were intervening in the business of their bureau and "calling the shots."³⁷

The following day another article appeared in the same paper in which Deputy Secretary of Defense, Cyrus R. Vance told reporters:

Another factor was the plan to procure two newly authorized cargo ships, known as FDL's (for fast deployment logistics), by going to private contractors for "conception formulation and design."³⁸

It is significant at this point to note that the current Chief of Naval Operations when asked by reporters if he personally believed there was too much centralization in the Pentagon, stated: "In many ways, yes," he replied, paused, then added: "In some ways, no."³⁹ If that smacks of waffling--can you blame him? Perhaps he felt he could do more good where he is than service as an Ambassador.

General Ridgway, in his farewell letter to the Secretary of Defense, summed up the position of the professional senior officer very clearly. A brief extract is quoted as follows:

³⁷John W. Finney, "2 Admirals Quit Posts in Protest Over M'Namara," New York Times, 28 Oct. 1965, pp. 1, 21.

³⁸Jack Raymond, "Admiral Explains Why He Resigned," New York Times, 29 Oct. 1965, p. c-7.

³⁹Ibid.

In the foregoing pages, I have sought to outline a broad concept of the strategy which, as I see it, is most likely to serve United States interests. . . . In the light of current national military policies, this responsibility is not always clear, even to those to whom the responsibility is assigned.

I view the military advisory role of a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as follows: He should give his competent professional advice on the military aspects of the problems referred to him, based on his fearless, honest, objective estimate of the national interest, and regardless of administration policy at any particular time. He should confine his advice to the essentially military aspects.

If the military advisor's unrestricted advice is solicited he should give his considered opinion, for in today's climate national security planning is broad and encompasses many aspects. . . .in my opinion, the military advisor should be neither expected nor required to give public endorsement to military courses of action against which he has previously recommended. His responsibility should be solely that of loyal vigorous execution of decisions by proper authority.

This aspect is perhaps the most difficult one for the military advisor, particularly as he strives to keep himself detached from domestic politics at the time domestic political forces attempt to use him for their own purposes. In his role of advisor, he gives his best advise /sic/. In his role as a commander, he implements decisions. Both roles must be respected by civilian officials, as he must respect theirs.⁴⁰

The foregoing should serve as a poignant reminder to all who practice the profession of arms.

⁴⁰Matthew B. Ridgway, "Security and Well-being of the United States," A Farewell Letter to the Secretary of Defense, Jun. 1955, p. 8.

ORDERS FROM WASHINGTON

That there is some dubious reward for centralization was spelled out by John Ries in his book "Management of Defense":

. . . there is a reward for becoming immersed in detailed operating decisions. They are easier to deal with and easier to make. No one likes to risk the onus that accompanies protected negotiations and decisions involving B-52's and B-70's, Polaris and Minuteman, or whether air cover should be provided for a Cuban counterrevolution. No decision, at worst, results in failure, but wrong decision brings blame. In sum, it is easier and safer, if not healthier to make minor operating decisions than the ones that are really called for at the top. And this provides an attractive incentive for top echelons to absorb themselves in the minutiae that floods upward in a centralized organization.⁴¹

That this concept is being followed was rather pointedly brought out during the 1965 Christmas weekend. Newspapers and television announcements spread the glad tidings that the Commander US Forces Vietnam had been given the authority to extend the cease-fire in Vietnam. However, Washington was, the week before, still specifying the size of bombs to be used on specific bridges, and specific types of jet fighters to be used for particular night missions.⁴² It would appear to even a casual observer that General Westmoreland had been given the task of making a national policy decision, while the Pentagon was dabbling in business that should properly be decided at Squadron level.

⁴¹Ries, op. cit., p. 210.

⁴²"A Bitter Refrain: "Orders From Washington," U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, Vol. LIX, 27 Dec. 1965, p. 40.

This chapter has been concerned with establishing the climate for decisionmaking in the Department of Defense. More and more decisions are being made at the highest level of government. A situation exists that will permit either no decision or indecision at subordinate levels. An erosion of decisionmaking by qualified, experienced individuals has taken place and is growing. Personnel with no responsibility are given or are assuming supervision and control over persons charged with responsibility and accountability. A system is in effect that is massive and appears to be unresponsive to the needs of national security. And finally, this system has a direct and potentially hazardous impact on the development of military leadership which United States must have in order to face future problems of global significance.⁴³

⁴³US Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Report of Special Subcommittee on Defense Agencies, p. 6632. (Referred to hereafter as "Congress, Defense Agencies").

CHAPTER 4

THE IMPACT OF CENTRALIZATION ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Previous chapters have described how centralization has spread across the entire spectrum of high military headquarters. This has been done deliberately to accentuate the problem--for it is at the core that the disease breeds and will tend to spread the contagion throughout the entire military establishment. Every junior officer in the armed forces knows who is really calling the shots. Officers who return to the field after tours of duty in the Pentagon are well indoctrinated in the "consensus" concept of decisionmaking. Expressions like, "here comes another refugee from Fort Fumble"¹ are becoming commonplace. Although these young officers are equally as good as those of 20-30 years ago, unfortunately they are developing in a climate that will not permit the growth of outstanding leadership.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING TODAY

Under the aegis of the present command and control system, the military commander, be he a force commander or CO of a small tactical unit, will be subject to complete direction from higher authority. In other cases he will get little or no advice or guidance. Often, it will be received too late to be applicable, or worse still; it will be so detailed and restrictive that he is completely limited in

¹The current term in Vietnam for the Pentagon.

thought, initiative, and action. Acting on one set of instructions, he may embark on a course of action and then have those instructions countermanded by a different version that, at his end, may require a complete reversal of his initial planning and tactics.² He is likely to be called upon to answer to two or more commanders, each with a different concept of the objective. Frustration, indecision, and tactical disaster can be the ultimate result.

Operating under such a system, commanders at all echelons must have the intellectual, psychological, and physical capacity to withstand such a handicap. At the same time, they must develop such forceful leadership within their units to forestall demoralization and frustrations that can render their unit completely ineffective. They must never lose sight of the truism that sophisticated equipment and technology can fail; but leadership, as characterized by the individual, must not!

All the attributes that are eagerly sought in the selection of young officers such as intelligence, decisiveness, logic, and judgment, are equally in demand by industry. There is where the young men are going--just as soon as the military provides the finishing school. And why not! Pay is better; hours are better; retirement plans, in many instances, are superior; fringe benefits are, if not better, at least consistent; and from a long range look, industry is more trustworthy.³ The services take these young men, give them a

²Eccles., op. cit., p. 42.

³Colby G. Rucker, "The Fifth Man," United States Naval Institute Proceedings, Vol. 92, Jan. 1966, p. 91.

good background in management and administration, pour millions of dollars into their technical training, then allow little or no opportunity for them to demonstrate what they can do in a leadership role. Paradoxically, it seems the military services are training young business executives, while the arts and sciences are moving into the military field with men possessing scientific, political, and socio-economic knowledge and managerial ability.

Navy's General Order 21 and the Code of Conduct are starry-eyed attempts to cure the leadership problem. The philosophy behind General Order 21 is good, but like other instructions emanating from Washington, it is vaguely written and full of stereotyped generalizations. It bears a marked resemblance to all the others such as, "there will be no more VD."

The order does, however, state as an objective, "an ever-improving state of combat readiness by personal attention and supervision"⁴ How true it is! We are slowly, but surely, managing and personally supervising our people to death.

How about our leadership schools? They are, indeed, beautiful examples of the civilian educators' art, ranging all the way from group therapy, to theory and problems of social psychology. Military education has been so successfully civilianized that leadership training has been largely taken over by the behavioral scientists and general semanticists. Leadership and managerial ability has been tidily quantified into X and Y theories.⁵ Traditional

⁴US Navy Department, General Order No. 21, p. 1.

⁵Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise, pp. 33-35.

leadership qualities are degraded in lieu of the concept of goals, rewards, and committee discussions. And herein lies the basic problem. As one Army Captain wrote:

. . . my company duty covered 7 years. No one will ever convince me that leadership is gleaned from schools or the pages of books. It will always be the day-to-day experiences which make us what we are.⁶

The young officers or NCO's returning from these schools are confronted with many unanswered or unanswerable questions. They soon find they have no authority to give rewards. Within a short time, many will have developed a critical opinion of the leadership within the command--some with very good reason. They have learned the need for leadership, and have learned the qualities of leadership they are expected to exhibit, but all too often they do not see these same tenets being demonstrated by their seniors. Too many times comments have been made, "I wish the old man had attended that course."

Unfortunately, leadership training is being pointed to only one segment of the military population--the juniors. If the philosophy of leadership as taught in schools was practiced by seniors, the problem would be less acute at subordinate levels. These youngsters learn by example and unknowingly emulate their superiors--good or bad.

The Navy continues to pay a penalty imposed by World War II. Present senior officers arrived in the fleet as Ensigns and, because of swift war-time expansion, rapid promotion and short tours in junior billets were the natural result. They quickly rose to command

⁶James E. Fleeger, "Leadership and the First Seven Years," ARMY, Vol. 14, Jun. 1964, p. 78.

and staff level, and have continued in this capacity ever since. They missed the valuable years of division officer or departmental duty working with and understanding people. Their subordinates were either old professionals or highly war-motivated enlistees. Thus, they have never learned leadership where it counts, and that leadership is best learned and taught by example. Unfortunately, many senior officers, with an impressive list of command credits, have little, if any, as junior officers learning their trade at the grass roots. It is these officers who today find themselves with a leadership problem which they are ill-equipped to solve. It will not be solved by writing instructions, most of which are devised solely to provide a legal basis for punishment.

A young officer is brought into the service, full of enthusiasm and desire. We give him a brief indoctrination and send him out to command and lead troops. We then start telling him what to do and how to do it. We by-pass his authority by getting answers direct from his people (in the alleged interest of saving time), while giving him an impression of our lack of trust in his ability or integrity. We then send him off to school to get all the answers. That is exactly what he is getting, all the answers--few of which will help him or the nation, if and when he gets into combat. The teaching of leadership is not akin to the teaching of botany or biology. Schools, seminars, or group discussions will never offset the commanders' lack of true demonstrated leadership.

The accent on schools, across the entire spectrum of military education, seems to be in the area of technical, civil relations,

and staff officer activity. We make him a technician, we make him a good staff officer, but who is making or letting him develop into a combat leader?

It is said that the day of "heroic leadership" is gone. It is doubtful if it were ever valid. Traditional, revered leaders, even though rightly identifiable as heroes, did not owe their ability and reputations to an image. They were human beings well-versed and practiced in the very concepts extolled by the behavioral scientists. No one will argue that Stonewall Jackson, Robert E Lee, George Marshall, Chester Nimitz, and Omar Bradley fit this category. Even the ones with a certain flair, like George Patton, "Bull" Halsey, "Monty" Montgomery or "Chesty Puller" failed to measure up in qualities such as: trust and confidence in their subordinates, loyalty to their wants and needs, rewards for their accomplishments, and, if necessary, censure for their failure.

Qualities necessary for successful management of industrial firms are not comparable with those necessary for command of combat units. Many successful combat leaders have, after retirement, done exceptionally well as executives of large industrial organizations. Whether John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, or other successful industrial magnates would have performed equally well on the battlefield is unknown. An exact parallel between the two tasks simply does not exist. If a firm is suffering monetary reverses, it may take a strong man to inspire employees to accept a reduction in salary, shorter vacations, and longer hours. If the workers do not accept,

they can quit or go on strike! A military leader, in a losing cause, must be able to inspire his men to accept privation, starvation, fatigue, and even the supreme sacrifice of life, without promise of any kind. It is significant to note that history will show our military, functioning under accepted and traditional tenets of leadership, has seldom quit or gone on strike.

In sum, it must be accepted that the profession of arms is not a business; it manufactures nothing, or sells nothing. Its commanders are more than personnel managers or business executives. Its only product is the defense and the security of this nation.

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

Those two words appear in every military commission, but today they seem to be just words. Trust, confidence, and respect that men have in their leadership has meant the difference between victory and defeat in many combat situations. It is faith, based on trust and confidence, that makes men hang on to the bitter end, knowing that they are not being directed by amateurs at a game board. It is regrettable that the major loss of confidence and trust appears to be in that of seniors for juniors. Admiral Anderson expressed their value this way:

. . . CHIEF AMONG THESE, I should say, is that we have confidence in people. We train them, we test them, we drill them, but inevitably there comes a time when we must also trust them. . . . it is not a misplaced confidence we enjoy--we have been convinced through the years that men, if they are trained and respected, will do their best when they assume responsibility. . . .

This state of confidence springs directly from respect for men whose concepts of integrity and honesty warrant it.⁷

What degree of confidence did the United States show in the entire military chain of command during the Cuban crisis? How much confidence and respect for the professional ability of CINCPAC, COMUSMACV, and unit commanders are being exhibited by Washington? To what degree is the young Engineering Officer's leadership, integrity, and confidence diminished when the skipper calls for the Chief Machinist Mate to find out about a problem in the engine room? With the capability inherent in the use of "helmet transceivers," what will the impact be on the Company Commander and Platoon Leader when the Battalion CO directs the actions of an individual squad?

Centralization begins in Washington, but it is continuing to flow downward at a fantastic pace. Operation orders for minor local operations are three times as thick as those of major campaigns in World War II. One cannot help but be amazed at the amount of trivial detail included in these directives--details that are appropriately within the scope of very junior officers and enlisted men. The report's annex staggers the imaginations of those who have to grind them out--fodder for some higher command's file cabinets. Trying to find how a specific unit fits into the overall plan may take days of reading and study. Although designed to explain or clarify, the net result is mass confusion.

⁷George W. Anderson, Jr., "Admiral Anderson Speaks About Respect for People and Integrity," Journal and Register, Vol. 100, 18 May 1963, p. 17.

Leadership is turned away from initiative, judgment, and decision into mere followership.

Mass-punishment techniques have become the rule. Because of demonstrated acts of incompetence by a few, many capable officers have their integrity and competence insulted daily. The phrase, "Command Attention is Directed," has become as commonplace as the exclamation point. It has reached a sad state of affairs when it becomes necessary for an admiral to sign his name to a fleet-wide instruction directing "Command Attention" to the fact that the season of high winds is approaching. If an individual skipper has not displayed requisite qualities of leadership and forehandedness prior to being assigned a command billet, something is wrong with the selection and screening techniques. If damage results because one skipper fails to prepare his ship and crew, he should be relieved of command. Why penalize all the others who did do their job?

Recently, a voluminous brochure was issued concerning details of train travel to and from an adjacent city. Minute directions included guidance for such complex decisionmaking as debarking from the bus at the destination, and caution to the traveler to provide ample time for breakfast and a ten-minute walk to the scene of instruction. The epitome of thought management was reached in the instructions for departure, " . . . personnel are cautioned to be on the alert for the stationmaster's announcement, . . . to proceed expeditiously to the train. . . . personnel not boarding the train on schedule were left behind." These were not instructions to a group of junior high

school students contemplating a field trip, or even directions to a group of military inductees leaving for basic training. It was a testimonial to the competency and integrity of over 200 senior military officers, all with command background, who were in training for higher command. Has initiative regressed, or our thought processes become so stereotyped, that this sort of stimulus is required?

The aftermath of the Tonkin Gulf Incident was a classic of "no trust, no confidence." Because Washington officialdom was dissatisfied with reports from the destroyers:

A special Navy team has been dispatched to the Far East to make a detailed study. The two destroyers involved have been instructed to replot their movements and actions during the night-time encounter. . . . Another piece of circumstantial evidence . . . was the failure of the destroyers or planes the next day to find debris of boats. . . .⁸

It is seriously doubted that many of the officers and men involved (young or old) are going to have much reliance in a national leadership that thinks so little of their professional ability that they send the "out of town experts" to check if they were lying!

Before closing this section, a few words are indicated on the subject of junior officers. In an article, "What's a Lieutenant?," the author describes today's young officer very clearly and summarizes their wants and needs. (Reference to this article will be made frequently throughout the remainder of this study.)

⁸John W. Finney, "US Restudying Tonkin Incident," New York Times, 25 Sep. 1964, p. 1.

Lieutenants trust us to give them direction and virile leadership. In return, they expect us to trust them. Lieutenants will continue to be officers and gentlemen just so long as we treat them and use them that way. If any of them are commissioned errand boys, it's because some commander has made bad mistakes. . . .⁹ They're men and they want to be treated that way.⁹

RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT AUTHORITY

Earlier in this paper a discussion was made on authority without responsibility; now it is time to examine the other side of the coin. It has been said that, "Centralization is the refuge of fear--fear of being critized for actions of subordinates." If this is true, it is going to get more and more fearsome because subordinates are getting less and less opportunity to use their initiative and judgment. Only through decentralization of the decisionmaking process will it be possible to train and test our young leaders by providing an opportunity for them to develop qualities of responsibility, integrity, judgment, and confidence.¹⁰

In today's world it is simply not feasible to wait until after war starts to weed out the incompetents and install the leaders. This is an assumption which even the proponents of a highly centralized command and control system will agree, yet this same system is slowly, but surely, robbing us of flexibility and decisiveness in our military commanders.

⁹Everett M. Willey, "What's A Lieutenant?" ARMY, Vol. 14, Nov. 1963, p. 88. (Referred to hereafter as "What's A Lieutenant?")
¹⁰Hitch and McKean, op. cit., p. 237.

We must start with the selection of young men who are potential leaders; screen them to determine if they can make decisions under extremes of stress, pressure, and fatigue, then give them authority and let them develop. This development can occur only if they are allowed to think, to exercise their ability and initiative, and be permitted to demonstrate to themselves and their units that they are fit to command.

If even a fraction of the tax dollar currently being spent on weapons systems, communications facilities and command and control studies, were invested in people and leadership development, we might find we didn't need so much of the former. If leaders are allowed to exercise initiative and command, it won't be necessary to constantly look over their shoulder. It won't require telling them what to do or how to do it. In the final analysis, they won't turn into military robots or sounding boards.¹¹

Our Army /Royal Australian/ has developed the bad habit since 1945 of failing to allocate responsibility to the appropriate rank. Too often have we seen the major concerning himself with the work of lieutenants while the latter find themselves doing the work of corporals. To engender confidence in your junior staff officers, to train him for higher appointments, and to spread the work load, give him responsibility. Tell him on what matters he has authority to make decisions, and then see that he does.¹²

While it may be of some solace to see that our allies have similar problems, it would be better if we had evidence that it had spread to

¹¹Russel V. Ritchey, "Identifying and Training the Potential Combat Leaders," Military Review, Vol. XLIV, May 1964, p. 35.

¹²H. A. East, "Hints to General Staff Officers," Military Review, Vol. XLIV, May 1964, p. 75.

the enemy camp. What are we doing about giving our leadership authority and making them use it? Do we make the perpetual vacillator or "no-decision" officer use his God-given common sense and experience? No! Unfortunately, the trend is to say, "never mind--I'll do it myself," or worse yet, send someone else down with instructions on how to do the job. We then carry the perfidy one step further by transferring the irresolute one to some staff position where he won't have to make decisions. The issue would seem to be, to put some "guts in the chain of command." If they won't or can't produce--fire them. Get them completely out of the service, don't infect some other command or staff with the same disease.

The following is a good example of how centralization of decisionmaking has spread to the field. Often times a written report, concerning a problem in a subordinate command, requires the approval of a flag/general officer. The subordinate unit gets the information and sends it to the appropriate approval authority, where a junior staff officer makes the decision for the "old man" to authenticate with his signature. Thus, A First Lieutenant, completely removed from the actual facts, makes the decision that should appropriately be made by a Lt. Colonel, who--at the knowledge level, is not allowed decision authority.

It is generally agreed that the art of delegation is one of the keys to successful management and leadership. That delegation is an art must be true because there is such a preponderance of evidence that

it is done so inexpertly. Although addressed to the role of the Secretary of Defense, the following is equally applicable at any level:

. . . a principal objective of any reorganization plan should be to create conditions in which the Secretary of Defense can give a more effective lead to the initiation and formulation of broad military policy, while delegating to the substructures of the defense organization a substantial portion. . . .¹³

Having grown to maturity in an era of centralization, commanders will be less likely to delegate properly. Accountability and responsibility they will freely assign, but authority, never. Why not delegate authority? Why--simply because no one else is competent enough! Also, there is the inherent danger that, if authority is delegated, the subordinate might become capable enough to endanger the boss's position.

Centralization which separates responsibility and authority fails in the training of professional leadership now more than ever before. In today's nuclear environment, units will be so dispersed that failure to exercise independent thought and decisiveness could mean the difference between success and failure.

Lieutenants have a lot to learn. They want to learn. They'll provide the perspiration. They expect us to furnish the opportunity. Lieutenants expect to acquire experience and maturity of professional judgment with the passage of time. . . . They want jobs that will test them to the upper limits of their capabilities, and they are willing to gamble their professional futures that they can do them well.¹⁴

If military leadership doesn't provide this opportunity to think, to work, to exercise ability and initiative, our officer corps will

¹³Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Inc., Special Studies Project, International Security--The Military Aspect, p. 30.

¹⁴"What's A Lieutenant?" op. cit., p. 87.

degenerate into a body of indecisive followers waiting for someone to press their button.

DISCIPLINE AND MORALE

The true test of effective leadership can be found in an examination of the state of discipline and morale within a unit. Discipline in the present context does not infer punishment, as punishment is actually the end result of a failure, or lack of discipline. A well-disciplined organization is one whose members work with enthusiasm, and willingness, separately and as a team toward a common cause. Lack of discipline is reflected in such things as mediocrity of performance of duty, resignations, low reenlistment rates, slackness, degradation of authority, and an overall loss of combat efficiency.

Discipline is an inseparable function of leadership and command. As morale cannot be delegated to the chaplain, neither can discipline be delegated to the legal officer. It is the commander's personal business to see that his leadership spawns a climate wherein trust, honor, confidence, dignity, and respect will not only grow, but multiply.

All too often we see the Fitness or Efficiency Report, the Courts Martial and Non Judicial Punishment used as a substitute for leadership. Had leadership been effective, many cases would not have become statistics haunting the man for the rest of his time in service. Quoting again from "Lieutenants":

When they do something right, they like to know it.
When they goof, they expect to be instructed. . . .
When they have a chewing-out coming, they know it.

They expect us to have the courtesy and the courage to make it a private session. . . . When they respond properly to this treatment, there is no need to report the seance in their next efficiency report where it will be read by selection boards for the next 25 years.¹⁵

How many fine careers have been ruined over the years just because some commander failed in his leadership and then compounded the felony by failure to carefully consider the impact of a hastily written report of a trivial incident?

No exploration is intended into a possible "discipline/authority gap" between the US and Soviet military societies; however, a comparison of authority in non-judicial punishment makes interesting reading. In the US Army, the Squad Leader, Platoon Sgt., First Sgt., or Platoon Leader has no disciplinary powers, except through the medium of extra instruction. In the Soviet Army, the first level of command, the Squad Leader may reprimand, deprive of a pass, and assign extra duty.¹⁶ It seems only logical that if the immediate superior had the legal power to "pull a pass" it would have infinitely greater impact on the individual who knows that this minor case must transit four levels of responsibility before it reaches a decisionmaker, the Company Commander.

The foregoing is not intended as an indictment against the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ); however, that publication

¹⁵What's A Lieutenant, op. cit., p. 87.

¹⁶Richard A. McMahon, "Military Discipline of the US and USSR," ARMY, Vol. 12, January 1962, pp. 48-49.

and its civil-oriented approach to military jurisprudence, has probably done more to harm the authority of command than any other single document published in recent years. With the advent of the Code, Commanding Officers began to lose effective control of discipline and, with it, an accompanying loss in morale and leadership. It is accepted that, in World War II, there was some miscarriage of justice--even instances of gross failures on the part of some individuals. Instead of punishing the offenders in those exceptional cases, the entire military establishment has been made to suffer a significant deterioration of prestige and authority.

We deplore the fact that recently in civil court, a judge of uncertain qualifications, freed two thugs who had attacked two policemen attempting to restore order. Yet we see manifestations of this same laxity every day in the armed services. Chronic misfits, malingerers, and disciplinary problem children remain in the services because of ponderous, time-consuming administrative stumbling blocks that must be overcome before they can be removed. A sailor, due to his own actions, may miss movement of his ship when it sails, yet may not be convicted of the charge because of the necessary proof of intent. It has become necessary to get a signed receipt from every man on board that he has been officially notified of the sailing time--for possible disciplinary action. In the meantime, 3000 other members of the crew have had their intelligence and integrity insulted because we wouldn't trust or believe them without a signed statement.

When thousands of senior officers in the Department of Defense are required to sign a statement that they have "read and understood the

Code of Conduct," the nadir of distrust has been reached. Only the clamor of the press and an indignant Congress recently forestalled a suggestion that flag officers, and even high civilian officials in the Defense Department, submit to the humiliating degradation of a lie detector test.

. . . we have developed the most incredible complaint system you ever saw. Any Pfc can pull in any senior officer in front of the Inspector General practically any time he wants, if he's got any kind of a valid story.¹⁷

DECISIONMAKER OR RESPONDER

As the authority and responsibility for decisionmaking at appropriate levels continue to erode, the evils of the system tend to compound. As the level of decision continues to rise, the ability of the subordinate to make a decision continues to deteriorate. When even so short a time ago as Korea, a Battalion CO could have got a broad mission-type order like, "Colonel we want that high ground overlooking the southern approaches to bridge B over the Imjin River. I want you to take hill 495, while the second Battalion takes the one on your left. I will hold the first Battalion in reserve. You have Z Battery for artillery support. Let me know when you are in position and keep me advised if you run into trouble." Not so today! With his new command and control halo the "Boss" hovers over the area and tells Pete just where he wants his companies placed and that he will handle the artillery

¹⁷Mayer, William E., "Communist Indoctrination--Its Significance to Americans." Military Leadership, US Military Academy, Dept. of Military Psychology and Leadership, p. 128.

from up there. Pete responds "yes sir" and shouts down to his company commanders, "say fellas, did you get that," and they say, "Yes Sir," and so on down the line. In the meantime, "Boss" has maneuvered his machine over to see how Joe was doing on the left. The enemy, having been tuned in on the conversation, plays nasty and pins down the right flank company. The Company Commander needs artillery support and instructions from Battalion, but Pete, not being privy to the reasoning behind the initial instructions, gives him a "wait-out" and calls "Boss." Unlike back in the ZI, those guns down there below and to his right were real. "Boss" and his control system are out of action--among the statistics. It won't be long before Joe, Pete, and all the fellas will be listed as MIA--a casualty to centralization. The last transmissions heard on the net were, "Say fellas, remember the word on the Code of Conduct about being prisoners," to which came a chorus of "Yes sirs." Ridiculous--oversimplification--not a bit! The technology is here--the equipment is available and in the field. Bullets we may be short of, but communication and control equipment, we're loaded! Remember, too, these people have been "Pentagon trained."

Here are a few examples from 1965:

Little, if any, decisionmaking is permitted to officers on the battle scene. The orders come through from Washington, outlining in precise and specific terms not only what is to be done but when, by whom, and in what fashion. Many of the orders go against the judgment of experienced officers in Vietnam--and the methods that Washington orders often don't work." Four US fighter-bombers were assigned to bomb a bridge in North Vietnam. The orders specified that they were to use 750-pound bombs. The mission was flown as directed. The bridge was only damaged--not destroyed. Two US aircraft were

lost to ground fire. Before and after the mission, the US pilots asked: "Why can't we use 3000-pound bombs on this kind of mission and make sure we knock out the bridge?

A particular type of jet fighter was specified for a particular type of night mission. The pilots assigned to the mission objected. They said they had experimented with a similar plane on similar missions--and it wouldn't work. But the mission was flown as directed. It didn't work. Two aircraft were lost.¹⁸

Both of these incidents were on "Orders from Washington."¹⁹ If this kind of detailed control can be pursued from Washington, 8000 miles away, in 1965; it is reasonable to assume that it can surely happen in 1970--from a distance of only 3000 meters.

Another report stated:

There is need here for another MacArthur with power to run this war from the scene of trouble, using some breadth of vision and self-confidence. This war has been run from Washington 8000 miles and by civilians, for so long that it is doubtful if it could be fought competently by anyone in the military here, if the ball was thrown this way.²⁰

Another reporter, speaking on the continuing clash between the Defense Secretary and Congress, stated:

. . . McNamara--now on the job five years--has accomplished what seven predecessors were unable to achieve. For the first time in its 18-year existence, the Defense Department responds almost automatically to the wishes of a single civilian.²¹

Very succinctly, this is the end result of centralization. When initiative and original thought are discouraged; when all decisions

¹⁸"A Bitter Refrain: 'Orders From Washington,'" op. cit., p. 40.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰"Washington Whispers," US News & World Report, Vol. LX, 17 Jan. 1966, p. 25.

²¹Donald Zylstra, "McNamara Armed Against Fresh Congressional Attack," Sunday Patriot-News (Harrisburg), 23 Jan. 1966, p. 16. (Italics added)

are made at the apex of the organization; the ability to act or think independently atrophies. This, then, is the danger that the military forces face in 1966. Will the creeping paralysis of centralization continue the theft of our flexibility, our decisiveness, and our leadership capability?

MORAL COURAGE

This aspect of leadership is the hardest to quantify and infinitely the hardest to attain. It is the courage that makes a man stand up and be counted, to make the tough unpopular decision. It is that quality that makes officers like MacArthur, Anderson, Gavin, and Denfeld, sacrifice greater personal prestige and power for what they believed was right. It is that quality that distinguishes a truly dedicated staff officer or unit commander who will stand up and tell a general or flag officer that he's wrong--if he is wrong. If, through lack of moral courage, the staff officer knowingly lets his superior make a mistake--he is guilty of the worst kind of disloyalty.

The lack of this quality of leadership turns an officer into a "yes man," a responder. A "yes man" in command begets "yes men" in subordinates. Initiative and imaginative thinking are suppressed. Bad habits are engendered in young officers and NCO's who are some day going to be the leaders who will have to assume responsibility in combat.

One of the most glaring examples of the failure of moral courage occurred in World War I. Intelligence estimates were so patently

distorted, and the condition of enemy prisoners was so grossly misrepresented, that the British Prime Minister and Field Marshal were convinced the Flanders offensive of August 1917 was worthy of continuance.

Unfortunately, Haig placed complete confidence in . . . head of Intelligence Service . . . Charteris was a good psychologist--if not a very strong character--and always told Haig something he especially wanted to hear. . . . These misconceptions of the real situation cost the British Army dearly on more than one occasion.²²

Half truths, misrepresentations, and clever management of statistics (which we laugh off as Pentagonese language) are used daily to sell a program. This may be an appropriate political tool, for use on the general public, but it has no place in an organization charged with national security.

This insidious trend to tell the "old man" what he wants to hear, to minimize discrepancies, or cover up dirty linen, starts in the very top echelons of the Defense Department and spreads downward like the plague. It is submitted that this partially originates from a lack of moral courage to present adverse or discouraging reports through fear that it may be reflected in the next efficiency report or duty assignment.²³

Training of our units is often pointed toward a high grade on a test or inspection, not on basic training of the man or unit combat readiness. Training has taken the form of demonstrations, carefully rehearsed and stage-managed, to make an impression on the

²²Leon Wolff, In Flanders Fields, pp. 150-151.

²³"Congress, Senate, Satellites and Missiles," p. 1394.

reviewing or evaluation group. The individual unit commanders who look on this with contempt and train their people for realistic combat readiness, soon discover that normal training errors don't contribute to a good grade. He is judged, not on the basis of what his command can do or what they have learned as a result of these drills (where errors were corrected), but on the basis of the grade he got. The result--a poor efficiency report, and probable failure of promotion. The next commander, seeing the result, gets on the band wagon.

Thus, the efficiency report has become one of the greatest contributors to the failure of resoluteness. In the quest for promotion and prestige, and with the short tours of duty in which to "make their mark," the tendency at all levels is to please the boss, "because he writes my efficiency report." Therefore, the cries, "don't rock the boat," or "don't make waves," become watchwords.

THE PROBLEM

One of the greatest problems facing the services today is the shortage of trained personnel brought about by increasingly low retention rates of young officers and trained non-commissioned officers. Many gimmicks have been tried, all with education and money as the theme. Except for a short-term gain, the problem remains unsolved.

It is submitted that the search for the reason should be divorced from material gain and be concentrated in the psychological

area. A realistic appraisal will point out that dissatisfaction with service life is the overwhelming reason for their leaving. The following factors, all rooted in centralization, are pertinent to the problem:

A feeling that they are oversupervised and untrustworthy in the eyes of their superiors is manifest throughout the services. This is brought about because their superiors are required to maintain close personal "command attention" and control. For the same reason, they are, in turn, required to oversupervise or overcontrol their subordinates, forced to delve too deeply into minute details in order to insure, to their superiors, that they are keeping a finger on the problem.

They sense a loss of prestige and respect for their commissions and their position in the service. This is further evidenced by the way they see their seniors' professional ability and experience ignored and minimized. General White stated it this way, "Certainly, the way senior officers are treated must be expected to have a definite influence on the career intentions of younger officers."²⁴

The amount of collateral duty pressed on the young officer is fantastic, leaving minimal time for learning his military trade. Their assignments include such things as voting officer, fund drive officer, postal audit board officer, mess treasurer, training officer, legal counseling officer, recreation officer, physical

²⁴Thomas D. White, "Rated Officer Cuts: General White Tells No. 1 Problem," Army Navy Air Force Journal, Vol. 98, 24 Sep. 1960, p. 3

fitness officer, etc. Participation alone detracts from their little available time but worse yet are the reports that must be compiled and sent upward through the chain of command. One destroyer Captain conducted a personal survey which showed that, during one month period, "272 different papers requiring some specific action crossed his desk."²⁵ Although the ship was deployed and operating as part of the Sixth Fleet, his officers, standing watches of four hours on and eight hours off, spent "60 to 70 per cent of their waking hours off watch processing paper."²⁶

Added to this pure administrative burden is the overwhelming number of instructions and directives that must be processed. Each DOD Instruction that is written will be implemented with another by each echelon of command. Each one adds further amplifying data and, in many cases, requires periodic reports.

The same is true with tactical publications. The destroyer Captain commented:

. . . every destroyer's bridge began to resemble a reference library with a serious plumbing leak. Difficult in daytime, with various officers madly thumbing through assorted pubs, the reference problem was compounded at night. . . . while proceeding from plane guard to screen station, our problem was whether or not to extinguish our red truck lights. We had to consult no less than three publications--ATP-1, HUK Group Op Order, Current Task Group Op Order, and the OOD dispatch board (someone recalled a recent message modification) before a decision could be reached.²⁷

²⁵Harvey O. Webster, "The Message Gap." USNI Proceedings, Vol. 89, May 1963, p. 30.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., p. 32.

While this may sound humorous, in actuality it's pathetic and has tragic overtones. The consequences of distraction from absolute vigilance at night, while changing stations in a high speed maneuvering task force, are portentous. To appreciate the magnitude of the problem one has only to recall April 1952 and the loss of life resulting from the disastrous collision of the destroyer HOBSON with the aircraft carrier WASP.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

On the assumption that centralization will continue, at least at the national level, what can the services do to develop leadership that will serve the country in the future? The problem is infinitely difficult because the country doesn't realize it needs leadership. The military profession is generally despised by a great majority of the people. Patriotism is considered old fashioned. Civilian education and home environment are pointed to the concept of, "what's in it for me?" There is also a general slackening of ethics and morals. On the subject of the present philosophy of management in lieu of military professionalism, Hanson Baldwin wrote:

Perhaps the greatest danger of all is the one that is not limited to the Pentagon or to the services, but a danger to the nation. This danger can be defined in a number of varying ways: emphasis upon quantity or mass rather than quality; a growth of laissez-faire morality and work habits; the pressures of conformity and the consequent development of the new idol of our times, the "organization man." . . .²⁸

²⁸Hanson W. Baldwin, "CNO--Past, Present, and--Future?" USNI Proceedings, Vol. 89, Aug. 1963, p. 42.

The military forces have become so civilianized that we feel hurt if our work doesn't conform to a 0830-1700 schedule. We tend to fight a war on an 8-hour, 5-day week basis. We have to have three meals a day, turkey on Thanksgiving, eight hours of sleep every night, and recoil at the thought of walking into combat. Yet we are surprised when an ill-fed, poorly equipped gang of guerrillas beat hell out of us. It would appear that we have forgotten the hard lessons of the Indian Wars of 1850-1880, and the island campaigns of World War II.

How many times does one hear service men (unfortunately not only junior grades) commiserating with each other over their being assigned to Vietnam? Any service detail section can give startling statistics on the number of official requests for command or combat which are made for career purposes, and later withdrawn by personal letter or phone call.

We need military people who want to be in Vietnam because they feel they can contribute to the effort, not because it is good for their careers or because they want to try out their gadgets. . . .²⁹

The above was not written by an "old retired gent" reminiscing about the glorious past, or even a militant "right wing" reactionary. It was a young company grade officer, concerned about his country and his service.

It behooves the leadership of this country, civilian and military alike, to think seriously about this problem. It is recommended

²⁹Wayne E. Long, "What We Need in Vietnam," ARMY, Vol. 15, Aug. 1965, p. 6.

that they read letters from military journals written by the people who are the doers, the ones who bleed, and can't be heard. Survey teams or on-site inspectors should get away from the comfortable briefings where they receive a glossy version of what they want to hear. They should seek out and listen to the subordinate unit commanders; field grade and company grade officers and senior NCO's who are professionals trying to do a job. They will have to have some guarantee of immunity; however, because they have learned the hard way, that to "rock the boat" is dangerous "career-wise."

CHAPTER 5

HISTORICAL COMPARISONS

Before concluding this study, it seems pertinent to examine briefly the history of conflict to see if there is any evidence to support or disprove the success of centralized control of military forces.

The following extracts from Huntington's, "The Soldier and the State," make for interesting speculation. Blanks have been inserted where names were mentioned:

The only connection between these two commands was _____ himself and his own personal staff. Even the transfer of a single regiment from one front to the other had to be approved by _____. Independent lines of command persisted out into the field. Numerous special organizations and hierarchies were created for special missions.¹ _____ extended his range for decision down to the most detailed tactical level. Time and again the recommendations of the generals were overridden and countermanded by _____.

He personally supervised the movement of battalions, and he neglected long-range strategic planning. 'All freedom of action was eliminated. Even the highest commanders were subjected to an unbearable tutelage.'²

The final technique of the _____ in altering the complexion of the officer corps was simply the removal of those who adhered to the professional outlook and values.³

¹Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State, p. 118.

²Ibid., p. 119.

³Ibid., p. 120.

Does the foregoing sound familiar? Does the Navy's senior officer, the Chief of Naval Operations, exercise any degree of command over naval forces attached to CINCPAC or CINCLANT? Is it true, as has been said, that in Korea the Eighth Army Commander had to get authority from Washington to transfer regiments or battalions from one front to another? Has not command in Washington extended down to tactical level in both the Cuba crisis and in Vietnam? Have not the recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff been overridden by a succession of Defense Secretaries? Finally, has there not been sufficient evidence that senior officers who disagree with the "party line" find themselves out of a job?

Strangely enough, the cited passages were not written about US military forces. These comments described the most rigid, highly centralized control system known in history--that of Adolph Hitler and Nazi Germany in the years 1938-1945.

PRIOR TO NAPOLEON

Command and control, ranging from highly restrictive to highly permissive, have been demonstrated in all wars. However, in early history, war was prosecuted by Warrior Kings who personified both the supreme military and political authority. Personal direction, as exemplified by the valiant leader himself, was the key to success. The Mongol Army, although made up of wild individualistic warriors, was held under highly rigid control through brutal discipline. The great Roman legions were likewise maintained under restrictive control; but

under Julius Caesar, leadership of the officer corps was made highly flexible. However, after seven centuries of success, even this highly refined and centralized army was defeated at Adrianople (9 Aug. 378 AD) by ill-organized Gothic horsemen.⁴

Frederick the Great greatly influenced the art of war and unit control through iron discipline and training. Although military professionalism is not generally credited as emerging until after 1800,⁵ Frederick must be the exception. His forces, particularly his officer corps, were certainly professional. One of the most famous military classics of all time, "The Instructions of Frederick the Great for His Generals" was quite restrictive including such details; as how deep to dig entrenchments, and that soldiers were to be led in ranks by an officer when they went to bathe.⁶ Although the control over his armies may not be compared to centralization when viewed in the contemporary context, it was none-the-less absolute. However judged, the fact that the method was successful cannot be denied.

Winning battles through centralized control is not necessarily pertinent to the question; however, the endurance of such a system and its impact on leadership development is germane. After Frederick's death, his precepts and philosophy were continued; but with the passage of time, higher ranks were filled with officers who had little experience in actual control, and the deterioration of the officer corps

⁴"Adrianople," Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 1, p. 181.

⁵Huntington, op. cit., p. 19.

⁶Phillips, op. cit., p. 312.

(the key to the Frederickan system) culminated in disaster.⁷

Around the Prussian army, and particularly the cavalry, the prestige of Frederick the Great's glory still lingered; but the younger generation had little experience and the higher commanders were quite unable to grasp the changes in tactics. . . .⁸

Thus, though the officers of the staff were well trained, there was no great leader to coordinate their energies. It came to an end in 1806, following the defeats at Jena and Auerstedt.

THE NAPOLEONIC ERA

Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo in 1815 saw the passing of the Warrior Kings. During his short tenure as General and Emperor, he brought to the art of warfare, new concepts in tactics, strategy, and organization that exists today. The mobilization of the population, conscription of armies, mobility, massing of artillery and infantry, and the introduction of the Corps as a means of unit control were just a few of his revolutionary ideas. "His tactics, as exemplified by General Antoine Henri Jomini in his writings influenced the conduct of the American Civil War."⁹

Napoleon did introduce an element of decentralization into his command and control system, but only in tactical execution. He retained over-all control of the entire army through his Corps Commanders.¹⁰

⁷Huntington, op. cit., p. 27.

⁸"Napoleonic Campaigns," Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 16, pp. 102-105.

⁹CORG-M-217, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁰Antoine Henri Jomini, Summary of the Art of War, pp. 137-140.

Napoleon's presence was all too brief to properly evaluate the development of leadership, and has been discussed only because this was the first example of centralized policy making coupled with some degree of decentralized operations. Oddly enough his ultimate defeat can be laid to inept implementation of his plans by two lieutenants: Admiral Villeneuve at Trafalgar, and General Grouchy at Waterloo.

Grouchy, a second-rate general to whom Napoleon had given a command in reward for political services, blundered, and remained inactive during the great battle which took place on June 18 at Waterloo--the name of a disaster unparalleled since Trafalgar. . . . The Napoleonic drama culminated in disaster.¹¹

Coincidentally, the victory of Lord Nelson over Villeneuve at Trafalgar was more than a victory over France; it was the crowning testimonial to his victory over the British Admiralty. For over a hundred years, from Drake to Nelson, the Royal Navy had been stifled by a command and control system so restrictive and so well enforced that initiative and independent thought was tantamount to court martial. The famous Fighting Instructions were so inflexible that only such a recognized genius of Nelson's caliber, his complete dominance of the sea, and unfailing successes, made him immune to censure. His ships' captains, the famous "Band of Brothers," had a degree of tactical freedom and exercise of initiative hitherto unheard of. The mutual trust and confidence between senior officers combined with

¹¹"Waterloo," Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 16, p. 92.

rigorous and sound training ultimately saved England from Napoleon. With Nelson's death, chains were again placed on the hands of the professionals.

Yet hardly was Nelson in his grave before the British Navy reimposed a greater degree of tactical rigidity than ever before. Indeed so great was it that the initiative of subordinate commanders was wholly stifled.

The outcome can be measured in the results of the battle of Jutland, in which the British fleet was controlled on the principles laid down in the voluminous and very detailed Grand Fleet Battle Orders, which tried to provide for every conceivable tactical contingency. The lesson surely is that tactical orders should be restricted to the minimum necessary to establish broad common doctrine, and should allow a high degree of initiative to subordinate commanders.¹²

Lessons learned between 1793 and 1805 were quickly forgotten and have had to be relearned in each war up to and including the present.

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

This was the first major war that saw significant use made of the new tools of command and control: the telegraph, railroads, and observation balloons. Weapons technology had also advanced, but tactics were virtually unchanged from that of the Napoleonic era. Most commanders carried Jomini's "Summary of the Art of War" in their saddlebags.¹³ This dependence on "the last war" tactics was responsible

¹²Captain S. W. Roskill, D.S.C., RN(Ret), "History: Dust Heap or Cornerstone?" USNI Proceedings, Vol. 92, Jan. 1966, p. 72.

¹³CORG-M-217, op. cit., p. 53.

for the massing of troops; and the resultant slaughter was made possible by increased firepower.

Increased firepower and improved observation foresaw a potential trend toward greater dispersion of forces and a consequent decentralization of command. However increased communications capability, brought about by the telegraph, served to negate this innovation. The means of central control, possessed by President Lincoln, was so restrictive that the Northern forces were completely subservient to political and civilian control. Not only were the Northern generals hamstrung by Presidential tactical direction, but were additionally hampered by Congress. Not until General Grant assumed command in Virginia did Presidential control of troop movements come to an end. It has been said that this was accomplished by Grant "cutting his telegraph lines to Washington."

WORLD WAR I

Except for a brief flurry caused by Elihu Root's war with the Bureaus, peace was the watchword and preparedness, urged by the military, fell on deaf ears.

Again and again the military warned that Peace Palaces would not bring peace, and that treaties could only be relied upon so long as they reflected the underlying realities of power politics. . . . The military particularly criticized the idea that the United States could rely on its "latent-strength"; when war came, military power in being, not potential resources, would determine its outcome.¹⁴

¹⁴Huntington, op. cit., pp. 264-275.

Viewed in the light of history, it is inconceivable that professional military opinion has continued to be held suspect, and so often ignored.

Lessons learned from World War I pertinent to this study are the classic examples of command and control communications failure; and leadership of untrained, non-professional, hastily assembled civilians. Telegraph, telephone, radio, and the use of aircraft and motor vehicles signaled a breakthrough in battlefield communications. On both sides there was a degree of complacency engendered by reassurance that control of forces could be maintained. The German staff envisaged a situation that would enable a commander to become:

. . . no Napoleon on a white horse watching the battle from a hill but a 'modern Alexander' who would direct it 'from a house with roomy offices where a telegraph, telephone and wireless signalling apparatus are at hand. . . . Here in a comfortable chair by a large table the modern commander overlooks the whole battlefield on a map. . . .'¹⁵

The holocaust that followed, proved them wrong. Communications that proved adequate in exercises failed in combat. Belgian and French resistance cadres were quite successful in cutting telephone lines and jamming radio communications. The state of the art was not capable of sustaining prolonged operations. It even became necessary to revert to carrier pigeons for crisis traffic.

By the end of the war, most governments had come to two conclusions: (1) that policy making, politics and technical staff bureaus

¹⁵Barbara W. Tuchman, The Guns of August, p. 213.

were in the realm of civilians, and (2) actual direction of a war should be vested in the professional military leaders, reporting directly to the head of state.

WORLD WAR II

Unprecedented advancements in communications technology, weapons and weapons systems had continued; for the first time in history manpower, firepower, and control capability were equalized. The increased tempo of warfare and its dispersion over the entire world, brought into focus the disaster that could obtain from hasty, ill-conceived, and non-professional decisions.

On the Allied side, the dynamic personalities of Churchill and Roosevelt forced a desire for personal involvement in the actual control of forces; however, both were perceptive enough to see the wisdom of forbearance. For the most part they confined their energies to broad national policy and strategic planning. President Roosevelt was probably even more careful than his opposite number. Although sometimes rather capricious, he not only sought competent military advice, but trusted his professional advisors.

American civil-military relations in World War II paralleled in some respects those of Germany in World War I. . . . When war came, the American military did not reach out after power. . . . Instead, power was unavoidably thrust upon it, and with it, the implicit conditions upon which it was granted.¹⁶

¹⁶Huntington, op. cit., p. 316.

Germany, under Hitler, was the exact opposite. His personal control of field operations was absolute. He eventually surrounded himself with "tame" generals who responded the way he wanted them to.

Under Hitler, conforming to the nature of the dictatorship, the most able people gradually departed and were increasingly replaced by second-rate characters. In the place of calm deliberation and shrewd intelligence. . . the dictatorship preferred a mental attitude that had nothing to do with intelligence, namely an unshakable faith in the wisdom and superhuman importance of the Fuhrer Intelligence came to be regarded as a hinderance in the development of qualities of leadership. Army leaders had either to believe in the myth to which the German people had succumbed, or at least pretend to do so.¹⁷

Speaking on the question of unified command and control, German

General Bobo Zimmerman stated:

It is a matter of irony that Eisenhower, the servant of the great democracies, was given full power of command over an armed force consisting of all three services. With us, living under a dictatorship where unity of command might have been taken for granted, each of the services fought its own battle. Neither Rundstedt or Rommel, try though they might, succeeded in changing the state of affairs in creating a unified command. The result was that the German Army fought singlehanded against all the armed forces of the allies!¹⁸

It is doubtful that Germany could have won the war which the military advised against, even if Hitler had given them unit control; however, it is incontestible that his intervention made it impossible.

¹⁷Frido Von Senger Und Etterlin, Neither Fear Nor Hope, p. 329.

¹⁸Gavin, op. cit., p. 263.

This war provides excellent examples of both centralization and decentralization, and an excellent politico/military working relationship. US national policy was set by the Executive, strategic war planning was done by the military with the Executive's approval. Economic mobilization saw the military and civilian agencies working together, with tactical employment being vested in on-the-scene commanders.

1950-1965

The salient features expressed by most writers of the Korean War seem to have been the "no win philosophy" and General MacArthur's dismissal. In that they are interrelated, they should be discussed together. No military author could help but share the frustration that gnaws at the bone of experience and professionalism, yet each of us know that, by acceptance of a commission, our allegiance and loyalty to the President, as Commander in Chief, must be unquestioned. This writer submits that General MacArthur was completely cognizant of his actions, and patriot that he was, felt that loyalty to his country outweighed allegiance to his President. Thus he became a sacrifice to what he thought was right. A greater testimonial to moral courage cannot be imagined. His actions were the reverse of the German general officers of World War II who went along with what they knew was national suicide.

A startling aspect of the Korean War was the attitude of captured servicemen. Never before in our history had men demonstrated the lack

of desire to escape from their captors or willingness to give "aid and comfort" to the enemy. Intercepted messages between Communist intelligence officers indicated: an overall failure of American will; a lack of understanding of why they were there; a complete lack of patriotism, or confidence in their own ability; no loyalty to anybody or anything; and ignorance of what it is to be an American.¹⁹

An Army psychiatrist commenting on the results of studies of this grave problem states a philosophy that no man should ever leave basic training unless he has the absolute conviction that he has accomplished something, that his organization will take care of him when he is in trouble, and that he is, in the final analysis, a MAN.²⁰ He further states that this concept of training and indoctrination is:

. . . not universal in the Armed Forces. And it will never be universal as long as we succumb to a commercialized kind of approach, as long as we try to sell the services to the country on the basis of its material rewards or its on-the-job training or its retirement benefits or its re-enlistment bonuses or any other materialistic kind of reward. These things are real. But men won't die for these things. They will die only for other men.²¹

Korea was a mobile war, with fluid conditions imposed by the human wave tactics of the Chinese Communists. Firm control of small units was the key to survival.

¹⁹William E. Mayer, op. cit., p. 103.

²⁰Ibid., p. 128.

²¹Ibid.

. . . by reason of both geography and enemy action, /Korea/ was a unit commander's war. The fate of a regiment or of a division might and frequently did depend upon the ability of a platoon commander to solve his own particular problem in the heat of action. . . . the necessity for trained, capable, and courageous small-unit commanders from the squad level up, was reaffirmed.²²

This, from a war that essentially had the communications, and thus the command and control capability, that we have in 1965.

As far as this study is concerned, the major impact of the Korean War was loss of control through enemy action and through it, the glaring lack of lower and middle-echelon leadership. Five years of soft popular-guy commanders, unrealistic training, and lax discipline resulted in a deterioration of will in all but the higher grades and old hands who had been through the baptism of blood in World War II.

Does Vietnam begin to look like another Korea? Through the mantle of "fear of escalation," is history going to repeat itself? Is the price for removal of the chains of centralization and bureaucracy to be paid for in human lives?

Whether the Code of Conduct and cost effectiveness will buttress this lack of leadership and the inability of commanders to command remain to be seen. The issue is in doubt.

²²CORG-M-217, p. 120.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Before arriving at any conclusions, it should be made crystal clear that at no time, was the need for ultimate civilian authority over the military considered an issue. Nor has there been evidence adduced that questions the loyalty of the military establishment for its civilian leadership. However, from the brief, but none-the-less comprehensive, examination of centralization and leadership development, salient factors emerge that are worthy of enumeration.

First, through fear that a general thermo-nuclear war could escalate from actions of subordinate military units, the authority, by law, for release of nuclear weapons has been reserved for Presidential decision. Further, that because of the theory that any military act has both military and political overtones, the Executive department has expressed (by public pronouncement) the fact that unit control could and would emanate from the White House. The fact that this has been, and is being, done is well documented.

Second, with the capability of present-day sophisticated communications, a command and control system has been devised that, if it were 100% reliable, would accommodate such a desire. However, the credibility of this system's reliability, survivability, and availability is suspect.

Third, this rigid control system combines with a cost effectiveness/managerial approach to the operation of the defense department,

to create such a restrictive influence, that both major and minor decisionmaking in the areas of design, procurement, and even tactical control is vested in the civilian hierarchy of Washington. Additionally, this inflexibility has reached the stage that professional military advice and counsel are often neither sought nor respected. And that this superimposed civilianized approach to military matters fosters such problems as:

a. Minor functionaries, without responsibility or accountability, have or are assuming decisionmaking authority over military commanders who, without requisite resources, are held both responsible and accountable.

b. Detailed control from the apex of the defense department fractures the chain of command; and leadership, born of experience, is negated.

c. With more and more decisions being forwarded to the next higher authority for resolution, flexibility and responsiveness are reduced.

Fourth, that centralization of decisionmaking causes an erosion in the subordinate's ability to make decisions; which will ultimately foster mediocrity of military leadership to the degree that the profession will no longer attract aggressive, decisive men of action. Further, that responsibility without requisite authority will continue to spread downward, creating an atmosphere of indecision and a proclivity toward the avoidance of command and responsibility.

Fifth, that as dynamic leadership suffers further degradation, as the commanders control of his unit is more frequently usurped,

military decisionmakers will evolve into mere responders or military automatons.

Finally, that a study of military history indicates that highly centralized command and control systems have not withstood the test of time and combat. And that, even in the days of the Warrior Kings, these all powerful organizations, forged by "one man" leadership, crumbled due to the unfamiliarity or incapability of their successors.

CHAPTER 7

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is easy to criticize and even easier to elaborate on what is right; but it is infinitely difficult to decide how the problem can be corrected. Centralization is a problem that may not even be possible to solve, short of another war--as it has been solved in the past. However, it is questionable whether the United States will, in World War III, have the luxury of time between the opening salvo and "Taps." It must be accepted that the problem will neither go away or cure itself; therefore, it behooves the armed forces, to try. To try to restore leadership and the command of men to their proper stature so that when and if disaster strikes, the nation's survival will not be imperiled through military stagnation and indecision. To this end, the following recommendations are submitted to the military departments for consideration:

1. Conduct all training with one goal, combat readiness. Do not permit, at any level, the separation of authority from responsibility. Assign broad mission type directives, and with them the responsibility and authority requisite for accomplishment. Critique the result keeping in mind that, just because the method might not have conformed to some preconceived "school solution," it wasn't necessarily a wrong solution. Even if the exercise failed, it may have been due to execution rather than concept.

2. Emphasize this type of training throughout the entire military establishment--down to squad, fire team or damage control party level. Make the training dynamic, realistic, and comprehensive. Seek to unearth qualities of imagination, resourcefulness, initiative, and judgement at all levels of control. Start a problem with the normal command structure, and at a critical point, administratively kill the leader to see if continuity of action is frozen. Instill in every man the thought, "what would I do if I suddenly discovered that I was the senior man left."

3. Revise the grading system on all tests, inspections, and drills to reflect either "combat ready," or "unsatisfactory." Do not permit evaluations of individuals' professional ability to depend on criteria such as: how well the command fared in a fund raising drive; competitive exercises; the number of glossy press releases ground out by an ambitious information officer; or an accumulation of "brownie points."¹ Evaluate them instead on their demonstrated ability to make sound and timely decisions, alertness, initiative, enthusiasm, moral courage, and adaptability to changing conditions and alternatives.

4. Revive the all but forgotten phrase, "familiarity breeds contempt." Put the services back on a "last name" or title basis--restore prestige and privilege to the grade and rank structure. If an Ensign,

¹An officer of one of the services was recently told by a detailing section that he could not be considered for a specific billet because he lacked sufficient "brownie points."

or a Commander, insists on placing himself on the seaman level--accommodate him.

5. Curb the vain attempts to compete with private industry.

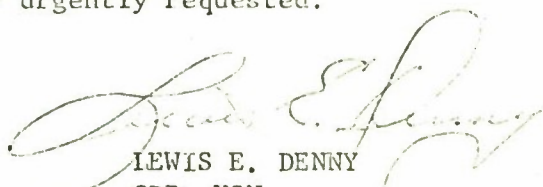
The armed forces will never have sufficient funds to match the civilian salaries or their eight-hour day. Give them the best pay that can be eked out of a meager budget, but more importantly, give them a reason for belonging. Pay an E-4 the salary of every other E-4. Radarman or electronics technicians are no less patriotic or defenders of their country than a gunners mate or rifleman. Accept the fact that we can't buy pride or loyalty--it must be earned and deserved.

6. Revise the awards system--cut out the "automatic" decorations that are increasingly being given as mere "going away" presents.

7. Implement a policy of looking at results, rather than the method or details. Review directives and regulations requiring reports. Discard any that are not absolutely vital to combat readiness. Ensure that all commanders address themselves to command policy, leaving detailed implementation to subordinates.

8. Fill every manpower space with capable individuals who demonstrate a wish to contribute. Decentralization of decisionmaking will clear the deadwood out of massive staffs. Retirement or discharge of incompetents will create additional vacancies. These reductions will create "slots" that can accommodate dynamic professionals who are now leaving the services for lack of understanding or the inability to see that the military profession offers them a future.

Nothing in the foregoing constitutes a breakthrough in leadership development; however, these are some of the areas that must be examined if the armed forces are to remain a viable, dynamic extension of national power. Most of the recommendations can be implemented by a simple statement of policy--support will be overwhelming. None will require the expenditure of scarce funds for leadership studies or schools. Enforcement will be required however, because a segment of the military population will resist clambering out of the rut of mediocrity. First and foremost there must be desire, and it must originate at the top--the law of gravity will do the rest. "High-Command Attention" is urgently requested.


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