

CHAPTER 13

A STRATEGIC VIEW OF WHERE THE ARMY IS: HOMELAND DEFENSE AND ISSUES OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

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There is a proper understanding within the U.S. Army that the military must minimize its involvement in domestic affairs. Yet, the armed forces have been called on more and more to provide direct aid and support in domestic crises that range from HURRICANE ANDREW to the terrorist bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building. Quick, efficient, and effective responses in these and other cases have generated calls for the armed forces to take the lead in confronting the complex issues of contemporary homeland defense. The argument for this “easy fix” is straight-forward—if not quite correct. That is, the military knows how to plan for and conduct crises operations, and the federal armed forces are not hamstrung by “artificial” legal constraints, boundaries, or jurisdictions. Nevertheless, under the Rule of Law—except under the legal concept of “Necessity”—there are indeed constraints on military involvement in domestic affairs. The armed forces are not a panacea that can circumvent the American Federal Constitution.

At the same time, the Army is further constrained by some of its own problems. Because of contradictions among the missions that the Army is now expected to perform and because of the mismatch of resources provided to perform those diverse missions, the Army is in a quandary. The bottom line is that the Army is torn between “fighting the big wars” and preparing for and executing “operations other

than war.” In a democracy, however, an army does not have the option of choosing the missions it accepts. The hesitancy of the U.S. Army to accept wholeheartedly the missions it is currently being given is thus cause for concern regarding its professionalism.

Professionalism, in general, is in decline within western democracies. Military professionalism is also, it appears, in decline. Professionalism is a result of at least two factors. First, it depends on the effectiveness with which the institution performs its functions. And, second, it depends on the relationship of the profession to society it serves. That is to say, the Army—among other governmental institutions—must do everything possible to do its job right and well, and to help the American public and its representatives understand that it is doing so. In this regard, it is necessary to define clearly and consistently the Army’s institutional purpose and the jurisdiction of its professional work. It is also necessary to reiterate the institutional commitment to self-sacrifice on the part of its members in serving the American people and the Constitution.

Thus, this chapter will proceed to place these problems into the strategic context of military professionalism—a topic little studied in the military now and even less understood outside the profession.¹ We will analyze two issues within the profession now impeding healthy institutional adaptation to the new era—the officer corps’ intellectual muddle over the purpose of the Army, and their ethical muddle over the role of self-sacrifice in the profession’s ethos. We believe these two unresolved contradictions have contributed in very significant ways to the Army’s inability thus far to deal effectively with vexing issues such as domestic defense at home and force protection abroad. We also believe that a principled approach for a renewed self-concept and motivation of the Army officer corps is an underlying theme in this analysis.

Lastly, we believe that the temptation should be resisted to give the U.S. armed forces a mandate to “lead in support” as a quick and easy solution to the contemporary problem of homeland defense. We recommend that the Army and the Department of Defense do everything possible to resolve the present “muddles” and to pursue vigilantly a long-term strategy both to perform primary war-fighting missions right and well, and to develop better relationships between our military institutions and the American society.

Resolving the Intellectual Muddle.

After roughly 5 decades of almost continuous focus on land warfare in Europe, and now almost 1 decade of “peace,” the Army’s officer corps is, candidly speaking, in the midst of an intellectual muddle. That is, institutionally it is thinking and acting in a confused manner, one which belies its fundamental purpose and foundational relationships with the American society it serves.² Given the enormous revolutions through which American society has passed in the last decade, it should not surprise us to find that the Army is showing signs of strain; armies are such intimate reflections of their parent societies that “a revolution in the one [is] bound to cause a revolution in the other.”³ Not all of the causes of this muddle are of the Army’s own making or within its control. There are, however, several important causes of the confusion that are within the institution’s control, and, as we shall explain, it is there that the Army must start to redefine its purpose and organizational essence.

Preparing to Fight the Wrong War? While there is much debate over whether true military innovation springs from inside organizations, from external sources, or from a combination of the two,⁴ there is a growing recognition that cultural factors to a great extent determine whether changes accord with the organizational essence of an Army.⁵ Clearly, during periods of significant external change, it is axiomatic that public organizations simply

cannot proceed with the learning and adaptation that is necessary for effectiveness in their task without a very clear vision of organizational essence and purpose. This is the function of senior leadership, to determine and articulate persuasively a coherent vision for the organization's future. This axiom is even more applicable to military organizations where the histories of successful innovation disclose the absolute necessity of an engaged, well-informed officer corps conceptualizing, leading, and otherwise facilitating the innovations and adaptations necessary for change. Such innovation in periods of transition is, after all, cultural in its essence rather than technological. Such clarity of vision, particularly at the strategic level, is cited by prominent theorists and historians as the essential first step of successful military innovation and adaptation—what is the new strategic task of the military institution, what is the new theory of victory for future war?⁶ Admiral William A. Moffett had a clear vision when naval aviation was born in the 1930s, and there was no doubt in the minds of Generals Gavin and Howze after the Korean War about the new need for airmobility of Army forces. *But such clarity of vision—realistic in its premises, coherent in its components of forces, mission and resources, and thus believable to the officer corps—we believe, has not been provided since the end of the Gulf War and the initiation of the post-Cold War build-down of military capabilities.*

The two most prominent causes of the officer corps' muddle are not hard to identify. Political guidance to the Army still requires conventional capabilities to execute nearly simultaneously two major regional conflicts, hence the retention by many within the officer corps of the "big Army, big war" vision and essence, and also the retention of the bulk of the Army's Cold War force structure and infrastructure. In stark contrast, the Clinton administration has since 1993 repeatedly received the approval of the American people for the conduct of military operations other than war (MOOTW). Given the reality of a

desirable “can do” attitude among the middle and lower ranks of the officer corps, it is not surprising a significant majority of those officers now accept MOOTW missions as the purpose and essence of the Army, indeed, as the vision for the future.⁷ They have experienced nothing else and have been presented with no other vision of the future that is credible to them.⁸

The major positions contributing to the muddle are shown in Figure 1.

Fighting and Winning the Nation's Wars—or Operations Other Than War?		
	Big Army, Big War	MOOTW
Political leaders	Yes	Yes
Military leaders	Yes	No . . . Perhaps ⁹ Yes (1997)
Mid-, Lower-officer corps	No, not credible	Yes

Figure 1.

As the diagram shows, America’s political leaders are telling the Army its essence is to do both big wars and MOOTW; and senior Army leaders are in turn telling the institution the same thing. But at the lower level, where the bulk of the officer corps accepts MOOTW as the way of the present and the future, it is a quite different story due to at least four other causal factors:

- The resources, both financial and human, requisite to placing both missions within the core purpose of the Army have not been forthcoming. Whether that is a failure of responsibility of political leadership or of senior military leaders is now largely irrelevant. To the majority of the serving officer corps, it is simply inconceivable, given a modernization “holiday” of almost a decade and steadily

declining funds for collective training over the same period, that senior leaders, whether uniformed or not, can expect “more with less.” In fact, this issue is one of the most frequently mentioned as cause of the unprecedented, and growing, gap in trust and confidence between the lower echelons of the Army officer corps and its senior leadership.¹⁰

- The Army’s operational tempo, caused by a 37 percent reduction in force structure since the Gulf War, coupled with repeated MOOTW, is up roughly 300 percent over Cold War levels. Army-wide, soldiers are deployed an average of over 140 days per year away from families and home post; the average is well over 200 days per year for those soldiers and families assigned within Europe. Understandably, this unsustainable rate has increasingly demoralized soldiers and their families, contributing heavily to the exodus of junior officers and, likely, to the current recruiting crisis for the volunteer force.

- The Army officer corps, until the onslaught of MOOTW in the mid-1990s, generally held the self-concept, and thus the motivation, of leader-trainers. This was the successful result of the TRADOC-led training revolution in the 1970s and 1980s.¹¹ To be an officer was to be a leader and trainer of soldiers, practically regardless of the officers’ branch. This self-concept correctly placed great emphasis on achieving positive results from rigorous training in individual and, particularly, collective skills. Unfortunately, given the multiplicity of missions and paucity of training resources currently confronting the Army, those same officers, several now in or selected for battalion and brigade command, are leaving the service in almost unprecedented numbers.¹² They echo the refrain, “It isn’t fun any more.”¹³ More regrettably yet, their junior officers are also leaving, stating that “I’ve seen what my commander has had to deal with the past 2 years, and I don’t want to do that.”¹⁴ *It is a sure sign of a military profession in trouble that junior officers do not aspire to serve in their commanders’ position.*

- All soldiers, regardless of rank, have watched for the past 7 years the amazing success of the American economy, but have not participated in its benefits at a commensurable rate. More importantly, sociologically this is not the Army of the 1970s or even the 1980s; roughly 60 percent of the soldiers are now married, with 85 percent of spouses working outside of the home. Thus, the impact of the excessive operation tempo on the current “married with working spouse” force has no precedent in Army history. Although some redress is on the way in FY 2000 in the form of across-the-board and focused pay increases, the failure of the Army to provide adequately for quality of life issues is cited by enlisted soldiers as the main reason—far above any other—for the lowest state of soldier morale in the 1990s.¹⁵

These facts about the current organizational climate within the Army, particularly within the operational force structure, document the consequences of an amazingly large mismatch between resources and missions. To be sure, there have been quantitative analyses aplenty describing the degree to which the Army lacks funding for modernization alone, and offering comparable explanations of why the Air Force is now flying the oldest fleet of aircraft in their service’s young history.¹⁶ Yet until 1999, with the appearance of a systemic failure of recruiting for the volunteer force and the unremitting exodus from the Army officer corps, the magnitude of the overall danger to military professionalism was not so clear. *It is now evident, however, that the option of continuing to “muddle through” this transition is no longer an option.*

One Solution: Fight the Wars American Society Approves. Since this chapter is focused on problem identification and analysis rather than solutions, which are the purview of current uniformed leaders, we offer here only brief insights as to how this intellectual muddle over organizational purpose and essence might be resolved—one way among many, we are sure.

In a democracy, an Army does not get to choose the missions it accepts—at least, no professional army does. The hesitancy of the U.S. Army to accept wholeheartedly the missions it is currently being given strikes the authors of this chapter as cause for concern in the context of military professionalism. *We believe that means defining the Army's organizational purpose, its essence, simply as serving the American society, and fighting the conflicts they approve, when they approve them.* Any other essence or purpose statement places the institution in the illegitimate and unprofessional position of declaring its intellectual independence from the society it was formed to serve. And as we have deduced from the evidence presented, if the Army continues to resist organizing, training, and equipping itself to fight and win the “wars” it is currently being asked to fight, it may no longer have a sufficiently professional officer corps when the next big war occurs.

The Army can create a vision and an organizational climate that accepts the importance of MOOTW while maintaining much of its desired focus on training/adapting for future regional wars. But for that to occur, Army leaders must resolve the resources-missions gap in ways that are credible. This must be done very quickly. There are many options, from gaining relief/change in the “two-MRC” guidance, to obtaining increased resources, to reducing unneeded structure and infrastructure, to specializing roles within the total Army. None are easy nor without costs. But it is equally clear that radical action to close the gap is well past due; the cost in declining professionalism is already too great.

In light of these facts, it is encouraging that Army Chief of Staff General Erik K. Shinseki recently addressed many of the problems with which we have expressed concern in this chapter, and explicitly articulated a vision to “adjust the condition of the Army to better meet the requirements of the next century.”¹⁷ That vision is clear about the need to dramatically change the Army; a vision of “Soldiers on point for the Nation *transforming* this, the most respected Army

in the world, into a *strategically responsive force* that is dominant *across the full spectrum of operations*.”¹⁸

To accomplish this transformation, General Shinseki has promised that by the end of FY 2000, the Army's divisions and armored cavalry regiments will be manned at 100 percent of authorization, removing some of the strain on units as soldiers no longer have to do the job of two or three. Even more importantly, General Shinseki established a vision of a lighter, more strategically deployable Army which will “allow us to put a combat capable brigade anywhere in the world in 96 hours once we have received ‘execute liftoff’, a division on the ground in 120 hours, and five divisions in 30 days.”

The missions to which these lighter-weight units will respond—and which their presence and capability should help to deter—are the very peacekeeping and stability operations which have confounded the Army's force structure and manning system since the end of the Cold War. General Shinseki intends to begin procuring weapons systems to man two new “middle-weight” brigades immediately. Changing the institutional culture, which still looks askance at peacekeeping missions, however, will take longer—but the need for change has been recognized, and the process has begun. It will take time to see whether this vision will prove credible and motivating to the bulk of the officer corps. As we have noted earlier in this chapter, such a credible vision has been missing, contributing to low morale and diminishing trust between officers serving in the field and their leaders in Washington. *In our view, solving the gap between missions and resources remains the unsecured, critical link to turning this new vision into more than simply another declaratory policy.*

The Comfortable Myth of a “Casualty Averse” American Public. Despite the promise of substantial change in the structure and organization of the Army to meet the needs of the new world order in which we find ourselves, there is a second, equally disturbing trend of incipient decline within

another component of military professionalism, the ethical component. That is the trend for senior military leaders to accept, as political leaders have accepted since the early 1990s, the myth that the American society is “casualty averse.”

As we noted earlier, the issue of force protection draws some of its salience from the accepted conventional wisdom that the modern American public is very averse to accepting U.S. casualties in operations abroad. This “wisdom” is most often cited in reference to the participation of U.S. armed forces in humanitarian and peace operations. On other occasions it is presented as a broadly accepted wisdom applicable to all military operations abroad, regardless of purpose. It is a wisdom held by, and almost always voiced by, influential elites in the nation’s foreign policy community, opinionmakers such as elected politicians, members of the press, columnists, and the ubiquitous chattering classes of Washington talk shows. As we shall see, not all scholars agree with this myth, particularly serious academics and serious polltakers.

The origins of such wisdom are varied, but one most often cited is the incident in Mogadishu in October of 1993. Eighteen U.S. Army Rangers were killed in that action. Live television coverage in the United States subsequently showed the body of an American soldier being dragged through the streets surrounded by jubilant Somalis.¹⁹ Four days later President Clinton announced the end of U.S. involvement in the operation, ostensibly because of the public’s adverse reaction to the casualties. He also announced a rapid timetable for withdrawal of all U.S. forces. The incident ultimately led to the sacking of Clinton’s Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, further heightening the understanding within the policy community that because of the public’s sensitivities, casualties could not be tolerated.²⁰ At about the same time, a sociological explanation for the American public’s aversion to military casualties was offered by an American scholar on the pages of one of the most prestigious journals,

Foreign Affairs.²¹ Thus the myth grew—the public's intolerance of casualties results in quick reversals of public support for military operations abroad. Political leaders therefore need to factor into their foreign policy decisions the risk of such reversal, and the political costs potentially to be incurred. Subsequent political guidance to U.S. military leaders has not ceased to emphasize the urgency and importance of absolutely minimizing U.S. casualties, and by extension any collateral damage to civilian populations.

The most recent example—Kosovo, a war without a ground campaign and with U.S. pilots flying at 15,000 feet—is a clear manifestation of such political guidance. The point here is that the conventional wisdom is a myth. In fact, the American public is quite willing to accept casualties, and, doubtless, political leaders are aware of this. Recent scholarly research demonstrates, once again convincingly, that there are two conditions that must be apparent in order for the U.S. public to accept casualties:²² they must be convinced there is a consensus among political leaders that the operation is in the nation's interests; and that this same consensus among political leaders is sufficient to see the venture through to a successful conclusion (Lincoln's, "that these dead here shall not have died in vain . . .").²³ The elite consensus was obviously missing, and thus in the public's mind so also the willingness to see it through successfully, both in the case of Somalia in 1993 and in Kosovo in 1999.²⁴ It has been the unwillingness, or inability, of the Clinton administration to create an elite consensus that leaves their policy "hostage" to the public's recoiling from the loss of American soldiers' lives. But this is not the doing of the public. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that there is room for political leaders to shape public opinion and create a forum for deliberation and debate of intervention decisions. To be sure, in that debate the public will consider in a rational calculus the risks to American lives as well as other costs and benefits of the intervention, but it is not a debate that is foreclosed because they are "casualty averse."

Therefore, if it is understood that such behavior by political leaders who as a class, and forthrightly so, are more concerned with reelection than with accomplishment of any military mission,²⁵ it becomes even more imperative to ask why senior military officers are signing operational orders with the identical guidance. As we discussed in the introduction, such is the case today with Army division commanders in Bosnia, and by implication of more senior commanders also. Is it possible that senior Army officers have adopted the policy attitudes of political leaders or, more of concern, their behavioral norms? Clearly that is the impression the junior officers have, and as well one held by those of the public interested in the issue. Even more perplexing than occasionally bowing to political pressure is senior officers' intellectual acceptance of such a myth. It is true that political leaders are going to behave as though the myth was real; it is often in their individual self-interest to do so. Thus, for practical purposes senior military leaders must accept the myth as a real influence. It is influential irrespective of its validity. But precisely because it is a myth, senior military leaders must be articulate and persuasive in advice to civilian leaders that the public is, in fact, not so casualty averse. Only then can they fulfill their profession's responsibility for candid and forthright advice to political leaders as well as their responsibility for preservation of the profession's ethic.

The gap between top military leaders and junior officers—and the public at large—is instructive here. Most mid-career officers and the American public believe that, while casualties should obviously be minimized, they remain an inevitable part of any deployment. They also believe that the accomplishment of MOOTW missions are, under certain circumstances as noted above, worth the risk of loss of American lives. This perspective is demonstrated in Figure 2.

Again, the solution appears straightforward. Senior Army leaders should replace all service guidance and doctrine that treats the prevention of U.S. casualties as

anything other than an inherent component of any operational mission.²⁶ *The trust in operational commanders' ability to accomplish missions prudently and competently, irrespective of the number of American casualties, must be restored, and immediately so.*²⁷ *Without that, few officers aware of the profession's need to maintain its own unique ethic will seek command. Ultimately there will be no profession, only an obedient military bureaucracy with no autonomy, one which responds in an unthinking and uncritical manner to the requests and directives of civilian leaders. We doubt the military effectiveness of such a bureaucracy.*

An Analysis of Casualty Aversion		
	Is the U.S. Public Casualty Averse?	Why?
Political Leaders	Yes	Intervention is High Risk
Military Leaders	Echo	High Risk; Less Preferred Form of War
Junior Military Officers	No	Willing to Sacrifice

Figure 2.

Resolving the Ethical Muddle.

Both history and present research confirm that it is during times of uncertainty and change in mission requirements that a firm foundation of shared understanding of professionalism is most needed to sustain the military organization.²⁸ We therefore offer several ideas on how to refocus individual officers, and thus the officer corps itself, on the ethical foundations of professionalism.

We turn first to the concept of self-sacrifice, specifically addressing the issue of risk as an inherent part of an officer's concept of duty. In other words, if an officer is morally obligated to lead her unit to successful mission accomplishment (the moral claim of the mission) is the obligation of, and thus the risk of, self-sacrifice inherent within that duty? And if so, what happens to the officer's moral obligation, and thus to the profession's ethic, if political leaders proscribe such risk as part of a policy of "radical force protection?" In the paragraphs that follow we address the first question by a review of the origins of the American military ethic, and subsequently answer the second by using examples of the recent NATO operation in Kosovo and Serbia.

The Inherence of Self-sacrificial Risk: Sacrifice is not always above and beyond the call of duty. While sacrificing may sometimes be above and beyond the call of duty, it is not always the case. We often apply words like "saint" and "hero" in a variety of situations, all of which involve sacrifice, but not all of which involve circumstances that are above and beyond the call of duty. We do call heroes people who do their duty even when considerations of self-interest or self-preservation would cause most others to fail. For example, consider the terrified doctor who remains with his patient in a plague-stricken city. Clearly he is heroic, but it is still his duty to tend to his patient. The presence or absence of the plague does not alter the fact that a doctor's duty is to remain with his patient.²⁹ It only affects how we judge the character of the doctor who does so.

Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to simply assert that there are conditions when sacrifice can be obligatory; we must spell out what those conditions are. Just as with actions in war, we must not think our concept of sacrifice must either permit everything, or allow nothing. It is hard to argue, for example, that the soldier who falls on a grenade to save his fellow soldiers was merely doing his duty. Such an action seems to be beyond the call of duty. If it is not, then it is not clear that any action ever could be. Nevertheless, it

seems equally clear that soldiers, and especially the officers who lead them, are obligated to risk their lives to accomplish legitimate missions. What remains is to give a principled account of this distinction.

In giving such an account, it is important to resist the temptation to justify such obligations by virtue of the fact that one agreed to take the job. A trucker, for example, may contract to deliver specified goods to a certain destination by a certain time.³⁰ However, he cannot be morally obligated to drive at high speeds over a dangerous shortcut, even if that means he may not be able to fulfill the provisions of the contract. The trucker, while he may have certain contractual obligations, cannot be morally obligated to put his and others' lives at risk to fulfill them. He will simply have to live with the penalty and the customer will simply have to live without the goods. The officer, however, cannot simply live without the victory that he or she may have otherwise achieved. For this reason, especially given the kinds of sacrifices that the officer is required to make, it is important that the obligation run much deeper than a mere "contract."

In fact, the obligation does run more deeply. It is rooted ultimately in the fact that the service the officer corps provides is essential if human beings are to thrive and flourish. When officers play their roles well by effectively defending a defenseless society, they are contributing to the well-being of fellow citizens. If it were otherwise, we would not be able to justify their obligation to make the sizable sacrifices officers are often called upon to make.

But these sacrifices are justified. Human beings are, among other things, social creatures. If they are to thrive, they must form the kind of societies and structures of governance that permit, if not promote, the good life for all members. In any socio-political setting, a tension arises between the needs of the community and the needs of the individual. That tension is resolved in the American constitutional system by recognizing that individuals have

certain rights, namely the right to life and the right to liberty. A socio-political setting that recognizes such rights, even if it sometimes resolves specific issues imperfectly, would be one worth defending as is the American Republic.

But rights entail obligations. If someone has a right to something, someone else has an obligation to provide for it. If a person has a right to life, the obligation falls onto someone to safeguard that life. If someone has a right to liberty, then it falls onto someone to safeguard that liberty. This is why states have an obligation to raise and maintain armies.³¹ Armies then perform a *morally* necessary function: safeguarding the rights to which the members of that society are entitled *vis-à-vis* external threats to their security, individually and collectively.

Since it is a tragic, but no less true, fact that some human societies feel a need to destroy other human societies, it must then be a necessary feature (at least as long as this fact is true) of a good society that it be able to defend itself. This also means that it will be a good thing, though perhaps under some conditions not morally obligated, to use force to stop or prevent violent conflict, since the cessation of violent conflict is a necessary condition for a good society.

Since the authority to decide when the use of force is appropriately in the hands of the civilian authorities, professional soldiers have a *prima facie* obligation to accomplish the missions civilian authorities assign them. Since it can be morally permissible, if not obligatory, to use force outside national boundaries to stop or prevent violent conflict, professional soldiers are then obligated to perform such missions, as long as they are not blatantly immoral. As we have argued earlier, humanitarian interventions are not blatantly immoral.

Furthermore, this issue goes to the deeper issue of the ongoing redefinition in America of what it means to be a good citizen. While some may reject the idea that citizens owe any service to their country, our argument suggests otherwise. If America is a good society in the relevant sense,

then some citizens all of the time, or all citizens some of the time must either support the defense through the payment of taxes or offer themselves for service in the case of a national emergency.

And those who answer the call for service incur special moral obligations. As we have shown, what justifies these obligations is that they are necessary if the state is to be properly defended. Since a successful defense depends on successful accomplishment of certain missions, the accomplishment of those missions has moral force. This means those who undertake such missions, unlike the tardy truck driver cited earlier, are morally obligated to see them through to success—even if that means putting themselves and their soldiers at risk to do so. The only thing that could negate this is some weightier moral claim.

This obligation to sacrifice is not limited to times of conflict. Many, if not most, missions undertaken in the defense of a state engender some risk. Even in peacetime, training missions often have the potential to result in injury or death of those who participate. Thus by extension, self sacrifice on the part of the officer corps to make possible realistic training which ultimately contributes to mission accomplishment is also morally obligated.

All of this is not to say that officers can ever be indifferent to friendly casualties. Rather, it is an officer's duty to consider the risk of casualties, as well as several other factors when planning how best to accomplish assigned missions. The point is that the considerations of casualties, as well as other relevant factors, are inherent to the moral duty to defend a defenseless society.

Hence, a coherent view of the officer's duty is presented in Figure 3.

As stated before, the moral claim of the mission can only be superseded by a weightier moral claim. Self-interest, and even sometimes self-preservation, cannot serve as weightier moral claims. If they could, the possibility of

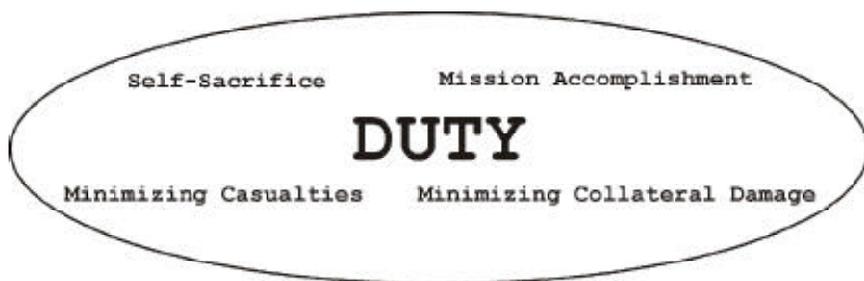


Figure 3. Coherent View of the Officer's Duty.

defending society would be undermined. And, as indicated earlier, that is not morally permissible. But, that there can be such claims must be understood before we have a complete conception of sacrifice for the military professional. The Just War Tradition (JWT), upon which the Laws of Land Warfare are founded, embody one such set of obligations. JWT recognizes that everyone has the right to life and liberty, regardless of the nation to which they belong. This right can be mitigated, even negated, but only under a certain set of conditions.

One of the fundamental principles that underlies the JWT is that soldiers are obligated to take risks to preserve the lives of noncombatants. By gaining the right to kill (which is necessary if they are to properly serve and defend the state), soldiers have given up the right not to be killed. Noncombatants have not gained the right to kill, and as such, still retain their right not to be killed. While this can be mitigated somewhat by the application of the doctrine of double effect,³² that doctrine requires, among other things, that soldiers take extra risks to preserve civilian lives.³³

This may seem counterintuitive to many military leaders. We often hear officers claim that their soldiers' lives are more valuable, and thus more worthy of protection, than

the lives of noncombatants.³⁴ But those who make such claims clearly misunderstand the extent of a soldier's moral obligations. A soldier exists to defend on behalf of the state the individual rights of its citizens. It makes no sense to say that soldiers, who have given up their right not to be harmed, may enjoy additional protection at the expense of the lives of civilians, who do have a right not to be harmed. Still, it is not the case that to preserve civilians' lives soldiers are obligated to take any and all risks. Their risk is limited by the following conditions: by taking this risk, (1) one cannot accomplish the mission, or (2) one will not be able to carry on future missions.

To illustrate this point, consider the following example. In World War II, French pilots flying for the Allies (over France) had the problem that if they bombed high, they could destroy their target with little risk to themselves, but at a high cost in civilian casualties. If they bombed low, they could destroy their target and their bombing would be accurate enough to minimize civilian casualties, but their casualty rate would be very high. The casualty rate would be so high, in fact, that they might be able to carry out one or two "suicide" missions, but would not long be able to sustain the effort, and the Germans would have emerged victorious. To resolve this tension, the French pilots bombed low enough to reduce civilian casualties but high enough that their casualty rates would allow for not only mission accomplishment, but also for sustained operations against the Nazis. Since all noncombatants—regardless of their nationality—retain their right to life, soldiers (or airmen in this case) are obligated to accept these extra risks as inherent within their duty.³⁵

This illustrates well the problem a policy of radical force protection poses for the professional military ethic. Consider the recent bombing of Kosovo and Serbia, where Allied air forces bombed high enough to be out of range of Serbian anti-aircraft weapons, and Allied ground forces would not even mount a ground campaign for fear of casualties.

To our understanding, these tactics, driven by Alliance and domestic political considerations, were more designed to preserve soldiers' and aviators' lives than to rapidly and effectively accomplish the mission, thus allowing more civilian casualties than would have otherwise been the case.³⁶

By not using Apache helicopters, A-10s, or NATO ground troops to destroy Serbian military capacity, NATO forces failed to take risks they should have taken. Certainly these forces were more vulnerable than high altitude bombers, but by keeping them out of harm's way, soldiers and aviators placed risks they could have taken onto civilians. But soldiers and aviators, as we have discussed before, are obligated to take risks, at least up to the point of certain failure, that civilians are not. If it was the case that NATO could have accepted the additional risk without dooming the mission, then NATO was obligated to do so.

By not taking the risks necessary to destroy Serb tanks and other military and paramilitary forces, NATO forces did not diminish the Serb capability to carry out their brutal policies. By aiming at Serbian infrastructure and military bases (resorting to the World War II strategy of attrition), NATO forces failed to stop the continued slaughter of innocent civilians, and, as some have argued, might have accelerated it. If this is the case, that by adopting tactics with more risk for allied soldiers they could have degraded more rapidly Serb military capacity and thereby saved innocent lives, then NATO air forces were obligated to take those extra risks. This last point is important. Under the rules of land warfare, NATO forces had at least a prima facie obligation to take risks to preserve innocents' lives, and they did not do so.

These tactics may have been justified if the political consequences of increased NATO military casualties would have precluded intervening on behalf of the Albanians at all. If political pressure in Germany or Italy, for example, would render NATO incapable of conducting operations

against Serbian efforts to ethnically cleanse Kosovo **AND** if failing to intervene would still result in a Kosovo cleansed of ethnic Albanians (though the cleansing would undoubtedly have proceeded at a much slower pace), then NATO's course of action, at least with respect to preserving soldiers' and airmen's' lives at the expense of rapid accomplishment of the mission, would be morally permissible. We suggest, however, that was not the case. It is quite clear that the operation could have continued as a "coalition of the willing" from within NATO, much as did the initial phases of the Bosnian campaign.

The problem for the PME should now be obvious. Servicemen and women are not only morally required to take those risks necessary to accomplish the mission, they are morally required to take some additional risks to preserve the lives of noncombatants. Even if one wants to argue that the priority mission was, in fact, force protection, the claims to the rights of life and liberty on the part of the noncombatants supersede, in this case, the moral claims of force protection as a mission. Thus, under the imposition of a policy of radical force protection we have a situation where, while serving the interests of the state, which officers are obligated to do, the state places the officer corps in a position from which it cannot fulfill its other moral obligations. This creates a contradiction that renders the professional ethic incoherent and ineffective at its most basic purpose: to provide moral guidance for behavior to both the institution and individual members.

A Principled Approach to Officership.³⁷

Thus we offer the following set of principles from which all officers, and particularly those at pre-commissioning levels, should draw both their vision and their motivation.

1. The officer's duty is to serve society as a whole, to provide that which they cannot provide for themselves—security. Thus a moral obligation exists between the officer and the society he or she serves, a moral

obligation embodied in the officer's "commission." Officers act as agents of society, both individually accountable to them and, as well, serving to strengthen the claim of the service on the affections of the American people.

2. Professional officers always do their duty, subordinating their personal interests to the requirements of the professional function. They serve with unlimited liability, including life itself. When assigned a mission or task, and particularly in combat, its successful execution is first priority, above all else, with officers accepting full responsibility for their actions and orders in accomplishing it.

3. Officers, based on their military expertise, determine the standards of the profession, e.g., for tactical competence, for equipment specifications, for standards of conduct for all soldiers. Within a professional self-policing role, officers set/change the profession's standards, personally adhere to the standards, make the standards known to all soldiers, and enforce the standards.

4. The officer's motivations are noble and intrinsic, a love for his or her craft—the technical and human aspects of providing the nation's security—and the sense of moral obligation to use this craft for the benefit of society. These motivations lead to the officer's attainment and maintenance of the highest possible level of professional skill and knowledge.

5. Called to their profession and motivated by their pursuit of its expertise, officers are committed to a career of continuous study and learning.

6. Because of both the moral obligation accepted and the mortal means employed to carry out his or her duty, the officer emphasizes the importance of the group over that of the individual. Success in war requires the subordination of the will of the individual to the task of the

group—the military ethic is cooperative and cohesive in spirit, meritocratic, and fundamentally anti-individualistic and anti-careerist.

7. Officers strictly observe the principle that the military is subject to civilian authority and do not involve themselves or their subordinates in domestic politics or policy beyond the exercise of the basic rights of citizenship. Senior military officers render candid and forthright professional judgments when *representing* the profession and *advising* civilian authorities (there is no public or political *advocacy* role).

8. The officer's honor is of paramount importance, derived through history from demonstrated courage in combat—the professional soldier always fights when called on—it includes the virtues of honesty and integrity. In peace, the officer's honor is reflected in consistent acts of moral courage.

9. The officer's loyalty is legally and professionally to an office, rather than individual incumbents, and in every case is subordinate to their allegiance to the ideals codified in the Constitution.

10. The officer's loyalty also extends downward to those soldiers entrusted to their command and to their welfare, as persons as well as soldiers, and that of their families during both peace and war.

11. Officers are gentle-men and -women—persons of character, courtesy, and cultivation, possessing the qualities requisite for military leadership.

12. Officers lead by example, always maintaining the personal attributes of spiritual, physical, and mental fitness requisite to the demands of their chosen profession. Through leadership, officers invest in their subordinates, both as soldiers and as persons—and particularly in the vital non-commissioned officer corps—to the end that they grow in character, maturity and skill.

Further, we believe that the vocation of officership should be understood and executed, indeed lived, in a consistent and principled manner.

Conclusions.

The concept of service is central to a principled understanding of officership. It holds that the profession serves the American people by providing a socially useful and necessary function: defending Americans and their interests by being schooled in war and hence able to apply effectively protective violence at their request. As noted in this chapter, this meeting of a societal need creates the moral dimension of the Army's professionalism as well as the noble character of the individual officer's service to his fellow citizens. Embodied explicitly in the commission and implicitly in the unwritten contract with society, this moral obligation requires of the officer unlimited liability, including life, as well as the moral commitment always to put service before self. Therefore, if involved in the type of crisis noted above, there should never be in the officer's mind the need to preserve self nor to take any actions at all in that direction. To the officer, self is always to be abnegated to the higher calling through the disciplined application of moral or physical courage. *A self-abnegating officer has no legacy save the character and quality of his or her service, and to attempt to create or maintain such a legacy would violate the basic concept of service inherent to the profession and to a principled understanding of officership.*

Secondly, just as the officer's commitment to service is grounded morally in his or her obligation to society, under our form of government it is also grounded in law, both in the Constitution and in subsequent statutes. But just because the commitment has two overlapping foundations does not mean that both are to be valued equally by the officer, nor equally available to the officer dealing with crisis. Particularly within an increasingly legalistic society,

the officer's reaction to crisis must always be to place fulfillment of the moral obligation over that of the legal obligation, even at personal or professional expense. His or her role must be to do the right thing, to pursue the right outcome on behalf of those served, American society. It is clear that any issue of intense divisiveness, pushed far enough by hyper-legalism and equivocation, becomes a political issue resolvable only by political means—reasoned discourse and compromise aimed, rightly, at the resolution of principled disagreements. But for the officer to pursue such resolutions is to politicize the profession, exactly the opposite of what is needed for professionalism to survive. *A principled understanding of officership requires instead that officers strive to attain the highest of moral standards, regardless of the minimum that the law might allow.*

Third, and last, is the issue of truth. Not only must commissioned officers always revere the truth, they must also never be in fear of it. The crises being discussed here do not involve truth on which there might be understandable disagreement because of epistemological concerns. The issues in political-military crises are much more mundane, but no less important—what happened, when, where, what were the causes, who responded, and how? Since the truth, as well as the absence of fear about it, cements the bond of trust between officer and society, it is always to be pursued and displayed with exceptional vigor. Utter transparency is the desired, indeed obligated, state between the accountable officer and the American people. That means as a matter of highest principal that the officer speaks “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” at all times because he or she is perpetually under moral oath, upon accepting the commission. *Given this attitude and behavior, coupled with the concept of selfless service noted above, fear of the truth holds no power whatsoever over the officer. It is, in fact, his or her very best companion during the long journey of service.*

Thus, application of the principles yields attitudes and behavior often at odds with those within the society the

officer has chosen to serve. Does this then mean that the officer is in any manner better than those in American society? We do not believe so. It means only that the officer is different, and has unreservedly chosen to be so. Triumphalism and self-righteousness do not become the serving officer nor the profession any more than self-serving actions, appeal to legalisms, and disdain for the power of the truth. It is better, we believe, for the officers, operating in camaraderie under the imperatives of their commission, to tend in a principled manner to each other, to their profession, and to its ethos.

We trust this chapter demonstrates that we are deeply concerned by the cracks in the edifice of professionalism in the United States Army. We remain confident that a refocus on the framework of professionalism as presented here will help to correct what we see as serious corrosion, even violation, of the professional military ethic. And we are encouraged by the recent creation of a Center for the Professional Military Ethic (CPME) at the United States Military Academy, West Point. Hence we offer through that Center this chapter as a starting point for the officer corps' review, reflection, and dialogue on their, and the Army's, purpose and ethic. We believe such to be essential to help the Army refocus on its key role as the willing and effective servant of the American people.

CHAPTER 13 - ENDNOTES

1. Portions of this chapter previously were published in Don M. Snider, John A. Nagl, and Tony Pfaff, *Army Professionalism, the Military Ethic, and Officership in the 21st Century*, Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, December 1999.

2. This paper was written prior to the announcement by Army Chief of Staff General Erik K. Shinseki of his vision for reforming the Army, address to the Eisenhower Luncheon at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) annual meeting on October 12, 1999. The arguments presented in this essay, we believe, support his vision to do just that.

3. Michael Howard, *War in European History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976, p. 75.

4. See Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984; Stephen P. Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991; and Kimberly Martin Zisk, *Engaging the Enemy: Organization Theory and Soviet Military Innovation, 1955-1991*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993; and Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, eds., *Military Effectiveness*, Three Volumes, Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990; see also Allan R. Millett, Williamson Murray, and Kenneth H. Watman, "The Effectiveness of Military Organizations," *International Security* 11/1, Summer 1988.

5. John A. Nagl, "Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: British and American Army Counterinsurgency Learning during the Malayan Emergency and the Vietnam War," *World Affairs* 161/4, Spring 1999; Alastair Ian Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19/4, Spring 1995; Carl H. Builder, *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1989.

6. See Rosen; and Williamson Murray and Allen R. Millett, eds., *Military Intervention in the Inter-War Period*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

7. Deborah Avant, "Officer Attitudes and Change in the post-Cold War U.S. Armed Services" in Theo Farrell and Terry Tarriff, eds., *The Sources of Military Change: Military Organisations and Their Changing Environments in the Modern Era*, forthcoming.

8. Given the paucity of resources used to exploit its unknown potential, the vision of high-technology, major-power warfare as portrayed in *Joint Vision 2010* and *Army Vision 2010* has, we believe, proved thus far to be incredible to the majority of the Army officer corps.

9. The decision in 1997 by Chief of Staff of the Army General Dennis Reimer to deploy one of the Army's premier heavy divisions, the 1st Cavalry Division, to peacekeeping duty in Bosnia can be seen as evidence that the senior leadership of the Army eventually accepted the importance of performing MOOTW missions. It can also be interpreted as evidence of the extreme stresses placed upon the institution in the post-Cold War world.

10. A multi-year study of the U.S. military will be completed in late 1999. Conducted independently by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC, but with the cooperation of the separate services, it examines empirically by field research the organizational climate within the armed forces today and recommends policies and adaptations to maintain service cultures most supportive of future military effectiveness. For a discussion of the growing "perceptions gap" between senior Army leaders in Washington and the junior grade officers in the field, see *American Military Culture in the 21st Century*, Executive Summary; and chapter 6, Center for Strategic and International Studies, forthcoming.

11. For the training revolution, see Robert K Griffith, *Today's Army Wants to Join You: The U.S. Army's Transition from the Draft to an All-volunteer Force*, Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1995; and Anne W. Chapman, *The Army's Training Revolution, 1973-1990*, Ft Monroe, VA: Training and Doctrine Command, 1990. For recent research into the importance of self-concept in motivation and leadership, see Robert G. Lord, Douglas J. Brown, and Steven J. Friedberg, "Understanding the Dynamics of Leadership: The Role of Follower Self-Conceptions in the Leader/Follower Relationship," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 78, 3, June 1999.

12. For an analysis of the impact of the reduction in officer numbers on the officer corps, see David McCormick, *The Downsized Warrior: America's Army in Transition*, New York: New York University Press, 1998.

13. CSIS, *American Military Culture*.

14. *Ibid.*

15. The data on Army morale in the 1990s is taken from, Department of the Army, *DCSPERQOL Survey*, Sept 1998-June 1999.

16. Michael O'Hanlon, "The Pentagon's Unrealistic Procurement Plans." Available at www.brookings.edu/views/articles/ohanlon/1998af.atm, accessed on-line.

17. All citations are from a text of the AUSA speech disseminated throughout the Army over e-mail on October 13, see footnote 1. The speech was covered by the media on the same day, drawing generally favorable reviews; see Steven Lee Myers, "Army is Restructuring With Brigades for Rapid Response," *New York Times*, October 13, 1999, p. A16.

18. Emphasis added.

19. For a thorough treatment of this incident, see Mark Bowden, *Blackhawk Down: A Story of Modern War*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999.

20. For the relief of Secretary Aspin, see chapter 24 of Elizabeth Drew, *On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.

21. In fact, Edward Luttwak's theory as presented in *Foreign Affairs* was largely an assertion without empirics to support it, and has subsequently been clearly refuted. For his theory, see Edward Luttwak, "Where are the Great Powers?" *Foreign Affairs* 73, July/August 1994, pp. 23-28; "Toward Post-Heroic Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 74, May/June 1995, pp. 109-122; and "A Post-Heroic Military Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 75, July/August 1996, pp. 33-44. For a devastating critique of Luttwak, see James Burk, "Public Support for Peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia: Assessing the Casualties Hypothesis," *Political Science Quarterly*, 114, 1, 1999, pp. 53-78.

22. The recent research is: Steven Kull, "Americans on Kosovo," The Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, May 27, 1999. This research into American public opinion on Kosovo specified a successful outcome for U.S. goals, and in turn a substantial majority of Americans responded they would continue to support the effort, notwithstanding 250 U.S. military casualties. The two conditions cited in the text have been well-known for years by public opinion scholars, most of whom also hold that the relationships between public and elite opinion are extraordinarily complex. See, for example, Benjamin I. Page and Robert Y. Shapiro, *The Rational Public*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; and Bruce Russett, *Controlling the Sword*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.

23. See Eric V. Larson, *Casualties and Consensus*, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1996.

24. In contrast, Americans supported the Gulf War in 1991, fully aware of predictions of a significant number of casualties. But even then, the Bush administration barely created the elite consensus the public sought; the Senate vote to support the intervention passed only 52-48.

25. The "Mayhew hypothesis," which suggests that the first concern of any political leader is his or her reelection, was first presented in

David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

26. This issue of “radical force protection” eroding service ethics may point to a serious flaw in the Goldwater-Nichols legislation of 1986. This may be a case of political guidance and military orders flowing through joint channels of communication/command which are at serious ethical odds with the service’s Title 10 responsibilities to “man, equip and train” forces which embody an ethical culture supportive of effective warfighting.

27. It should not be lost on senior Army leaders, as it has not been lost on the Army officer corps in general, that this was one of the principled reasons for the resignation of Air Force Chief of Staff General Ronald Fogelman.

28. Andrew Gordon, “The Doctrine Debate: Having the Last Word,” in Michael Duffy, Theo Farrell and Geoffrey Sloan, eds., *Doctrine and Military Effectiveness*, Exeter, UK: The Strategic Policy Studies Group, 1997, p. 47.

29. J.O. Urmson “Saints and Heroes,” in A. I. Melden, ed., *Essays in Moral Philosophy*, 1958, pp. 199-202.

30. The authors are grateful to Colonel Anthony Hartle for assistance in developing this example.

31. See Porter, particularly chapter 7; and Huntington, particularly chapters 1 and 2.

32. Originating with Catholic theologians in the Middle Ages, the principle of double effect is the view that there is a difference between the consequences of our actions that we intend and those we do not intend, but still foresee. See Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 2d ed., Basic Books, 1992, p. 152. While it has a variety of applications when applied to military situations, it explains when a military force may act in such a way as to bring about the deaths of noncombatants. The principle has four conditions: (1) the bad effect is unintended, (2) the bad effect is proportional to the desired military objective, (3) the bad effect is not a direct means to the good effect, and (4) actions are taken to minimize the foreseeable bad effects, even if it means accepting an increased risk to combatants.

33. By extra risks, we mean those risks not minimally necessary to accomplish the mission.

34. This, in fact, was Lieutenant Calley's defense during his trial for atrocities he and his platoon committed at My Lai. He claimed, "If there is one thing I am guilty of, it is valuing my soldiers' lives over that of the enemy." Since by enemy he meant more than 400 women and children, most of whom posed no threat to his unit, we can see that in fact he is claiming that no noncombatant's life that was worth that of a soldier's. We can also see by this example, the absurdity of such a claim. While he may have killed, with minimal risk, some people who would later kill some of his soldiers, such an action is not morally defensible. See *Frontline* Episode, "Remember My Lai," March 5, 1989.

35. Walzer, p. 157.

36. See, "Foreign Policy: The ABC Club," *Economist*, May 22, 1999, pp. 30-31; and Michael Debbs, "Post-Mortem on NATO's Bombing Campaign," *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, July 19-26, 1999, p. 23. For more detail, see Paul Kahn, "War and Sacrifice in Kosovo," *Philosophy and Public Policy*, 19, 43, University of Maryland, Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy, Spring/Summer 1999, pp. 1-6.

37. This list was compiled by Dr. Snider in 1996 from multiple sources within the literature of civil-military relations, military ethics, and military professionalism. It has been improved by comments from several senior officers and refined in class discussions and research projects during 2 academic years, during which time it reached its present form.