

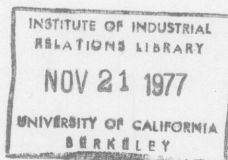
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THE INFLUENCE OF MILITARY MANPOWER POLICIES

[by]

George A. Daoust, Jr.
(Formerly) Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Manpower Research and Utilization,
U. S. Department of Defense



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The military personnel in the United States Armed Forces provide a small, closed sample of our society which is an excellent model for social problems. Public housing, integration, equal rights for women and social medicine are areas in which the military has made considerable progress. The 2.1 million active duty military personnel and their 3 & 1/4 million dependents reflect the problems of our society, except for those in the bottom 10% who are not permitted to enlist. This is not to imply that the Armed Forces hold the solution to all of society's problems, but rather that they have problems much the same as in the rest of the country, and in certain areas have made considerable progress.

Two great advantages in using this group as a model are the excellent data base, which is essentially complete for recent years, and the responsiveness of the military to directives - such as "integrate, now!" Issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, education and crime are somewhat easier to isolate and resolve in the Armed Forces because of the authoritarian system. And, the military is under the constant scrutiny of the Congress, the Press and the Public to insure a considerable amount of honesty and candor. The diverse backgrounds and attitudes toward the military establishment of both officers and enlisted persons have produced a far from monolithic system.

We live in an age of statistics, and grow accustomed to relating to numbers and percentages. Those associated with military manpower are quite impressive. The Armed Forces of the United States contain only 1% of the population, but they require 16.8% of the Federal budget. That is about 3 & 1/2% of the GNP - for military manpower alone, not the total defense budget.

Furthermore, the Armed Forces need over 1/3 million young men and women to voluntarily enlist each year. This means that every sixth young man in the country will enlist for a period of two to six years with the average serving over three years. The cost of military training this year is 7.2 billion dollars, up from 6.6 billion dollars last year. The Department of Defense allocation for military manpower this year is 48.5 billion dollars, which is 56% of the total defense budget. A rather unfair but accurate way of looking at cost is in the per capita share of the defense manpower budget, which comes out to \$22,000 per soldier, sailor, marine and airman.

Just what are we getting for all of this money? During the past few years, and particularly during the Vietnam war, there has been considerable criticism of the military. However, in a nationwide poll taken last fall, the United States military was rated highest among 15 public and private institutions; followed closely by Colleges and Universities. This poll reflects one reason why the Armed Forces are able to attract 17% of the young men in the country to enlist. Despite the Vietnam experience, the military has regained a position of trust and respect which reflects, I believe, the reasonable day-to-day operations within the Armed Forces. Despite advertising programs or other attempts by the Armed Forces to influence young people, the opinions of fathers, brothers and close friends who have served in the military is the most important influence for most potential enlistees. A survey found that well over half of the military age males had close friends in the services; over 2/3 had fathers who had served and 1/5 had brothers in the Armed Forces. In contrast, the most widespread recruiting

contact, which was television, was remembered by about 3/4; and less than half had any contact with a recruiter or had ever visited a military base. I believe the current popularity of the Armed Forces reflects a residue of good will from World War II and Korea, plus the All-Volunteer program which has done much to improve military life in the past four years.

Apart from the well publicized efforts to abolish K.P., end senseless details and treat military personnel in a more humane manner, there have been concentrated drives to improve service attractiveness. Modern living conditions, liberal leave policies, increased educational opportunity and the elimination of unessential military formations have all helped to improve the image of the services.

To give some meaning to these statistics, there are three ways to examine the influence of military manpower policies on our society. Easiest to quantify is cost - which as I said is 48.5 billion dollars this year. Part of this is due to the pay increase of 1971, which was designed to make the military comparable with other careers. Entering pay is now \$326 a month, and in addition food, housing, clothing, medical care, insurance, etc. are provided, which can amount to as much as \$9,000 per year in total benefits.

This pay scale for entering personnel was considered necessary to remove a major barrier to a volunteer force, as the previous pay had been less than half as much. It also ended a double inequity for those who were drafted and paid about half what their labor was worth. Between the Korean war and Vietnam as few as one out of twenty was drafted, and over 90% of new personnel

were "volunteers". Many of these volunteered for the service and duty of their choice, rather than await an invitation from Uncle Same to join the Infantry.

Having once established comparable pay for all grades in the military it would be very difficult now to quickly go back to the old scale for entering personnel. Therefore, should the draft be reinstituted, military manpower costs could be expected to climb rapidly. Even were the size of the Armed Forces to remain the same, the shorter period of service, poorer retention and additional training costs would make the draft much more expensive than the volunteer force.

Costs can be reduced by a more stable force, with longer initial periods of service and by eliminating unnecessary training costs. For example, at one Army Base 40% of the new arrivals were immediately assigned to duties other than those for which they had just been trained; and an additional 20% were subsequently transferred to other tasks. All services are not this wasteful, nor is the Army always, but much remains to be done to use the extensive training which the services are conducting.

I believe that the proper utilization of manpower is the greatest problem the military faces today. Assigning soldiers as drivers at the Pentagon, for example, is a very expensive way to provide transportation. Civilian drivers cost about three quarters as much, and the repetitive recruiting and training costs could be eliminated. None of the usual justification for putting military personnel in jobs which should be performed by civilians works when a young man is enlisted in the Army and performs his entire military duties as a sedan driver at the Pentagon. He receives up to

six months of training to be a soldier, gets two months of vacation during the two years he spends in the Army, and for the remainder, minus travel time, he drives a sedan. This man does not provide a rotation spot for a soldier serving in an isolated post, he does not maintain a critical skill against mobilization requirements - he is in fact a liability in that he has to be recruited in a tight market, and will probably leave the service with a poor opinion of military life. The current Army program to create a combat division out of such unproductive support personnel is a big step in the right direction, but there is so much more to be done. When the last man is enlisted to drive a sedan in Washington we will know progress is being made.

The second way military manpower influences our society is as a user of people. Over one third of a million young men and women enter the services each year, and nearly 2.2 million people are in the regular forces. During the 33 years of conscription, which ended in 1972, there were 17 million young men drafted. Few families in this country have not had members serve in the Armed Forces during the past 30 years. While not all individuals have profited from the experience, there are some distinct advantages for society beyond the primary functions of national defense.

One great benefit denied from the defense expenditures is in the training provided. The Department of Labor estimates that one out of every six craftsmen in this country received his skill training in the Armed Forces. Airline pilots and nuclear power plant technicians have even higher ratios. The military

training program should be recognized as a national asset, with steps taken to insure that maximum use is made of such skills both while in the service and in civilian life. Too often discharged servicemen report that they are unable to secure recognition of either the training or job experience they received while in the military; they are just 3 or 4 years older with a sense of frustration. Government supported education, particularly after World War II, eased the transition to civilian jobs for millions of veterans. Educational benefits and job training both rank high among incentives for enlistment.

Probably the greatest influence the military has had on the nation in the past 35 years is in the area of social progress. The upheaval and mass movements of people during World War II acclimated us to the mobile society. Integration of the Armed Forces was ordered by President Truman in 1949, in advance of the rest of the nation. Women receive equal pay and have equal opportunity for promotion in the military - in contrast with most of society today.

Some three percent of our population are eligible for medical support from the military medical services. The problems of clinics, emergency treatment, optional surgery and the provision of such things as medicine and eye glasses have been worked out within appropriated funds. We have a form of socialized medicine functioning with public funds in the United States today. However, another problem, the cost, is also evident. Without the draft, which together with subsidized medical training provided an adequate flow of medical professionals, the Armed Forces are

unable to meet peacetime requirements. The salaries necessary to attract medical professionals, that is, comparable with civilian medical pay, are excessive by military pay standards and are cause for reflection on the cost of adequate medical care today. This issue seems to be coming into focus in the military, but it is a problem which the whole country faces.

I should add that the level of medical support provided is part of the problem, and yet it has a Catch 22 aspect to be resolved. If medical support were only provided to the active duty military personnel, the requirements would be low and manageable. However, if all that was offered medical personnel in peacetime was physical examinations for the healthiest young people in the country, no one would be willing to serve. By including dependents, who frequently are living in isolated areas without adequate medical support anyway, the task becomes more interesting. Include retired personnel, who served with the understanding that they would receive lifetime medical care, and we have a full range of patients, and a large requirement for medical support.

One little publicized aspect of military life is government housing - some 360,000 family units. The problems of allocation, high turnover, vandalism and maintenance have been quite successfully handled, particularly in view of the age of many of the units, and the wide geographic dispersal of the housing. Another military service, dependents schools, has 161,000 students world-wide, on military posts in isolated areas and overseas.

Potentially, one of the better programs in the Armed

Forces is the increased use of military women. In the Armed Forces women provide a shining example to the rest of the nation in terms of equal pay and equal opportunity. Enlisted women approximate men in rate of advancement over their entire career, and are about two tenths of a grade ahead of men during the second to twentieth years. On the negative side is the small number of women in the military - about 2.5%. Despite plans to double this number in the next ~~four~~^{three} years their participation will be far behind that of women in the U.S. work force and in the percentage of Department of Defense civilians.

Most military jobs are now opened to women; some 89% of all military occupation specialties can be filled by either men or women. With only 2.5% of the personnel women, there are all the problems of tokenism found with other minorities - except for the equal pay which is mandatory and equal promotional opportunity which has been developed by the Armed Forces.

Women are now precluded by law from serving in combat units. If and when the Equal Rights Amendment is ratified, there will be a very brief two years in which to implement the provisions and bring women into all components of the military. The major problem I believe will be psychological, since women are performing most tasks now, and can be introduced into the remaining 11% of the combat skills as easily as male recruits. But, both women in the services and new enlistees have problems in adjusting to full participation on an equal status with men.

A survey of women officers on active duty in one service showed that a high percentage of them felt they were not equal to

male officers in professional competence, and even in matters of judgement. In discussing this matter with women of the various services I found that all too many really felt unable to compete with men - sometimes even those women that could, and had performed better than many of their male counterparts.

So this is the first hurdle, and it is being resolved slowly - as more women gain in experience and confidence and realize that they are able to perform as well as most men in the various military tasks. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Equal Opportunity stated last week that no real progress has been made in women's or minorities rights in the Armed Forces in the past 10 years. Having established equal pay and opportunity for women the military is slow to take advantage of the potential that women represent. While almost two thirds of all enlisted women are in administrative or clerical positions, only four percent of all military clerks are women. While the services resist bringing additional women into clerical positions because they want them to fill all types of jobs, at the present time most women want to work at the tasks they are comfortable with, and that is predominantly clerical.

The analogy between women and minority males in the military is worth close examination. Prior to 1949 blacks served essentially in segregated units. The WAF and WAVES were only recently dissolved, and the Army still has a separate WAC. After long periods of complete exclusion, blacks and women were promoted to the grades of General and Admiral, but both are still grossly under-represented.

The treatment of blacks and other minorities by the

military has been the subject of much recent discussion, some of it quite inaccurate. Who served in Vietnam, for example? The highest percentage was among Caucasian enlistees with less than High School education. A higher percentage of Blacks went than whites - 65 versus 63 percent; but the Black draftee High School dropout was in the fifth place among the various categories.

Blacks are now enlisting in greater numbers than their percentage of the population. The question is why? - what is the military offering that they want? Why does equal pay, approximately equal opportunity for advancement, considerable job security and educational opportunity appeal to large numbers of Blacks? Are the options in the rest of our society so much less attractive to minorities? Unfortunately, this appears to be the answer - it is not that the Armed Services offer so much, but that other alternatives are worse. Concern about a poor, Black volunteer force is unjustified - although anyone that expects to enlist predominantly rich, college graduates doesn't understand the realities of life. Within the military, college graduates serve as officers, about 16%.

Among college graduates, there is considerable difficulty now in attracting Blacks to become officers because they have better alternatives. Although the percentage of Black officers in the Armed Forces went from 1.8% to 2.5% in the last 10 years, the percentage of Black enlisted men went from 9.7% to 14.9%. It is almost impossible to secure enough officers to bring their participation up to 10 to 15%. Newly commissioned officers would have to be predominantly black for years to redress this ratio. Attempts are being made to expand the ROTC program in Black colleges,

but a military career is just not attracting sufficient educated Blacks who have other options.

So, going back to the enlisted situation, I believe it encumbent upon the rest of society to offer as much to the disadvantaged Blacks as do the Armed Forces. Young Blacks are not flocking to be soldiers because they desire the military life, they are taking the best option open to them. And the same is true of most other enlistees - they look at the choices and decide the military is probably the best.

Permitting military women with children to remain on active duty has removed a major inequity and helped increase the length of tours for women, but it is pushing the Armed Forces into another social development - child care centers. Ninety percent of married military women have military husbands. We are now creating military families. If equality is to be maintained both parents must be able to respond to alerts and other unusual military requirements. Hence the need for child care centers.

These centers cannot be merely child lockers, but must be educational facilities prepared to take children on short notice for periods of up to six months. Anything less will descriminate against one or both parents, and the child. A successful model of a child care center which can handle infants from six months of age in a responsible, educational environment would be of real value to the nation. The Armed Forces need it badly - and will be forced to develop one, even if initially on a random basis. The nurseries on most military posts now are next to the Commissary, run by volunteer officer wives to facilitate shopping. They have a long way to go, quickly.

I hope this brief look at some aspects of military man-

power has given you a better idea of what we are doing with 48.5 billion dollars this year, and that you may see some way to improve the end product. This year another third of a million of our young people will leave the military and start their new role in society. Generally, the Armed Forces have not done a very good job of equipping them for this return because they have been occupied with preparation for combat, with all that that entails. Many successful military officers are unable to see the broad social role the Armed Forces play, and do not realize that the social and military objectives are not incompatible.

While introducing a military manpower bill into Congress, Senator Howard Baker said:

"Human nature makes it most difficult for individuals who are members of the present institutional arrangement to fathom major structural change when the rest of their time is spent defending the status quo".¹

The leadership of the Armed Forces is better at carrying out orders involving social change than it is at devising the change. However, two traits of the military which are of great advantage in any social issue are fairness and impartiality. With proper guidance from the Executive and from the Congress, the Armed Forces can provide both external security and internal social progress.

1. Senate, September 17, 1973.