

INFORMATION PAPER

ATZL-MCE
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SUBJECT: Analysis of Army's Past Character Development Efforts

1. Purpose. To identify, describe, and assess some of the Army's past efforts to develop the character of members of the Army Profession.

2. Background.

a. The Army has always had an interest in character development. Since its first establishment in June 1775, Army leaders and government legislators have taken a special interest in assessing, developing, and maturing the character of individual members of the Army, particularly commissioned officers, and through these efforts, in helping to shape the collective character of our Armed Forces. From some of General George Washington's first General Orders, such as the July 1776 order against profane cursing and swearing, to later laws and guidelines, such as the Civil War Lieber Code, specifying how Soldiers should conduct themselves in wartime during America's first million-man mobilization, to the role of chaplains in 'character building and character formation of Soldiers;' to the various formal and informal programs and publications created to address particular issues or articulate our doctrinal principles, character has remained an area of concern and interest to all Army leaders. This paper is primarily focused on the Army's character development efforts over the past century.

b. Prior to and during World War I, as America began to assert more of a role in world affairs in an era of mass migrations, American concerns about the character of young people as citizens led to the ready acceptance and expansion of citizenship type programs, such as the Plattsburgh Camps, the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) and later, the Citizens' Military Training Camps (CMTC) for young men, as aspects of war preparedness. The mass mobilization of more than 2 million young men to create an Army expeditionary force appears to have laid the foundation for the development of modern concepts of character development in the Army. During and following the war, amid existing concerns with indiscipline and misconduct among Soldier and officers, new health concerns with the rampant spread of venereal disease (VD) among young Soldiers created uneasiness among Army and government leaders. Their response included detailed General Orders, the expanded use of the Inspector General Department, and programs specifically directed at each area of concern. Following the war, this led to the explicit assignment of responsibilities and 'character building' duties to the Army Chaplain Corps.

3. Facts and Discussion.

a. Post-World War I and World War II.

(1) The Army officially articulated the chaplains' duties and responsibility for 'character building' in the first edition of Training Manual (TM) War Department Publication 5a. - The Chaplain: His Place and Duties in 1926. Character, character-building, and character formation are mentioned throughout this manual and one of the purposes of the chaplain became, "To promote character building and contentment in the United States Army by precept and example and thus add greater efficiency to those engaged in the military defense of the country." The chaplain was a member of the commanders' staff and confidential consultant "in matters involving morale, morality, and character building."

(2) One recommended method of 'character building' was the use of appropriate moving pictures as a means to stimulate discussions related to character-building. Certain denominations balked at the idea of showing commercial feature films in the evenings, while the Army viewed this as a means to secure larger on-post attendance, and thus, "directly and indirectly the moral character of the men is safeguarded." The chaplain was also to advise on other amusements, in view of the role that public entertainment and, "the pictures have in the forming of ideals and the molding (or marring) of character." They were however also cautioned not to be prudish or ultra-critical. The use of movies or videos, whether commercial or specifically produced for the Army, continues to serve as a means to stimulate thought-provoking discussions.

(3) The TM stated that one of the express goals of education in the Army was to return the Soldier, "to civil life at the termination of military service better equipped for the ordinary duties of citizenship." The chaplain through assisting with recreation, athletics, and education, was, "to contribute to the moral or character-building values of each." Cooperation with local churches and organizations, such as the Big Brother movement and similar activities, was also recommended, as well as the formation of reading clubs to influence character formation.

(4) In terms of responsibilities with new recruits, chaplains were to "... personally interview or advise by public address all recruits coming into the service in matters pertaining to morals and character," and this "... should be brief, informal, and cordial," impressing upon them that "... every soldier represents the dignity, honor, and power of the United States." Chaplains were to have the same role at military training camps for civilians. It was recognized that all creeds were represented at these camps and that chaplains should be impartial. "It is a matter of paramount importance that training at all military camps should be such as to strengthen in every citizen the high ideals of moral character, liberty, justice, respect for the law, regard for the Constitution, and reverence for God."

(5) Suggested efforts include religious, recreational (social, athletic, entertainment), educational, moral, and community cooperation programs. 'Character building' education included lectures, observation of special occasions and days (such as holidays and organization days), and using the classroom to tactfully instill lessons of morality and thoughtfulness, incorporating moral axioms and proverbs. Suggested subjects including marks of a good soldier and wearing the uniform (standards and discipline), customs and traditions of the service, military exemplars, American military history, technological advances, future war, and duties of citizens, including laws, government, political parties, the government's responsibility to the citizen and citizen's responsibility to the government. Other general subjects included, customs and courtesies, unit history, and life skills and attributes (thrift, insurance, honor, man and womanhood, patriotism, self-respect, charity, courage). Lastly, moral culture subjects including education on sexual hygiene and the moral 'phase' of sex relations we taught in conjunction with health professionals. Since at least World War I this link between health care professionals and the chaplain was an important aspect of the effort to fight VD as a matter of character-building, self-discipline, and temperance.

(6) The successor manuals, TM 2270-5 - The Chaplain in 1937 and FM 16-205 - The Chaplain in 1941 continued to articulate similar 'character building' duties and a variety of chaplain supervised character-related activities.

(7) During the mobilization for World War II, which ultimately saw the expansion of the Army to more than 8 million Soldiers, the roles of the chaplain and commander in character development and ethics continued to be reassessed in revisions of FM 16-205/FM 16-5 and other doctrine, as well as in Army courses.

(8) By at least the 1940s, the Command and General Staff College included a one-hour practical exercise course on military ethics "[t]o demonstrate to the students that moral problems are military problems."

b. Post World War II.

(1) Before the war, one in five servicemen was under age 21. After the war more than half the military was under 21 and this cohort accounted for 70 percent of Army enlistments. America's new Army was perceived as "puerile, impressionable and naïve;" in need of experience and maturity, as well as moral and character formation. The Selective Service Act of 1948 not only ensured that America would maintain a large peacetime Army during the Cold War, but in effect also helped to ensure that most enlistees and draftees would continue to come from this young cohort.

(2) The changes brought about by the National Security Act of 1947 which created the Department of Defense, the National Defense and Selective Service Acts of 1948 which instituted a peacetime draft, and Executive Order #9981, which was to end segregation in the Armed Forces and establish equality of treatment and opportunity in

the military for people of all races, religions, or national origins, brought into sharp focus the need to reshape character and beliefs in the Army.

(3) The period following the war saw rising anxiety over the Soviet Union, the spread of Communism, and nuclear proliferation as we entered the period of the Cold War. It also witnessed concerns about how the war had spiritually and morally traumatized many of those who served. Studies of veterans, such as those conducted by Erik Erikson, gave rise to new concepts of psychology, identity, and character. Also, as in World War I, the high incidence of VD, especially among Soldiers in occupied Germany, raised concern back home.

(4) Partially in response to these concerns, Universal Military Training (UMT) featuring character education, was one option considered. Although UMT was not implemented, the debate over it resulted in the Fort Knox Experiment in 1947, which tested new methods of military basic training. The program also emphasized religion, 'character building', and citizenship in the form of specific moral, religious, and citizenship instruction, which became formalized as the "Character Guidance Program." The religious orientation however was not favored among some line officers.

(5) The Army's Character Guidance Program, under the direction of Army chaplains, consisted of films (such as the Army's "The Big Picture" television series (1950-1975) and facilitated discussions and lectures to inculcate personal and civic virtues. This program curriculum was an expanded, but apparently not far different, version of what had been recommended in Army chaplain doctrine since the 1920s. The Character Guidance Program was to stress the value of self-discipline, temperance, and reverence, and was conducted at all levels, including Reception Centers, Training Centers, Units and Organizations. Other related recreational activities, such as sports programs designed to boost morale, were also to teach sportsmanlike-conduct and contribute to "character building and moral rectitude". In a 1948 memo to all Army commanders, Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall noted, "[T]he Army has an obligation, especially to the parent of the youthful soldier, to continue insofar as possible under the conditions of military service, the wholesome influences of the home, the family, and the community."

(6) The focus on preparedness to confront the threat of Communism took on a religious character, and the importance of religious faith and the religious foundations of our American way of life were emphasized. This religious orientation was manifest not only in the Army's Character Guidance Program, but across the nation in making "In God We Trust" our national motto and in adding the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.

(7) The creation in 1949 of ST 16-158 – The Chaplains' Character Guidance Manual for Training Divisions and Training Centers laid out a very specific program of instruction (POI) that with few changes was followed for the next three decades. The chaplains' responsibility for building character through the Character Guidance Program and Unit Training Program was further delineated in the 1952 version of FM 16-5 - The

Chaplain, and post or unit character guidance councils were created. In terms of the relationship between character and leadership the 1952 manual states, “The achievement of character is the product of the right use of knowledge. Character gives value and quality to life and religious and moral content to leadership.”

(8) A major change that had sweeping effect on the military services was the creation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) in 1950 which went into effect the following year. This revised codification of the Articles of War that had been in effect since 1806, as amended in 1916, 1920, and 1948, established a new legal system. What might be considered as moral offenses, such as sodomy and perjury, which had previously been punishable under the Various Crimes or General Article of the Articles of War were now categorized under individual articles and expanded upon; and other moral-type offenses, such as stalking, carnal knowledge, and adultery specifically became part of military law. The changes to the military legal system may have had an indirect effect on military perceptions of moral character, as well as on later teaching of ethics and standards of conduct, and the language “of good moral character” was now proliferated throughout new Army doctrine. (See Military Publications addressing Character or Character Development).

(9) Another important project initiated during this period by General George C. Marshal, the aspirational compliment to the legal changes, was the writing of the first edition of *The Armed Forces Officer* by S.L.A. Marshall in 1950. This guide to leadership, customs, roles, and practical knowledge was designed to serve not only to consolidate these in a single volume, but to serve as an ethical touchstone for young commissioned officers. In the introduction it stated, “*The Armed Forces Officer* is much more than a book on leadership. At its core is a conviction that the disciplines represented by superior officers are the same disciplines needed everywhere in American society.” Character is mentioned more than 80 times in this work and it even hints at some understanding of its relational development when discussing the forming of military ideals: “No man is wholly sufficient unto himself even though he has been schooled from infancy to live according to principles. His character and the moral strength from which he gains peace of mind need constantly to be replenished by the force of other individuals who think and act more or less in tune with him.” This guide, after multiple revisions and editions, is still in use today.

c. Post-Korean War and Vietnam.

(1) During this period the Army appears to have begun using the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values, which had been in use since the 1930s, as a tool to assess the values philosophy of members of the Army. Since that time a number of other assessment measures, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), have been used by the Army.

(2) Another result of concerns about the conduct of Americans held as Prisoners of War in Korea, where it appears that as many as one in three prisoners collaborated with the enemy, was the promulgation of the Code of Conduct. The Code

of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the United States was articulated in Executive Order 10631 in 1955 and established principles (6 Articles) to inform the conduct of American Soldiers when captured. The Code was slightly modified in 1977 by Executive Order 12017, and again in 1988 by Executive Order 12633 to use gender neutral language.

(3) After the Korean War the scope of the Character Guidance Program was narrowed in the early 1960s and following the Supreme Court's 1962 ruling on school prayer, a more secular version was created. In addition, in 1963 DoD Directive 5120.36 to end racial discrimination, and provide equal opportunity (on and off-base) for all uniformed members/dependents and all civilian employees irrespective of their color, once again refocused some aspects of the program.

(4) In 1966, the Chief of Chaplains decided that the topic "One Nation Under God" would no longer be used in the Character Guidance program for basic trainees. Explaining the action, the Chaplain's Office pointed to two concerns: first, that "an inadequately instructed chaplain" might present the topic "in such a way as to provide at least a superficial basis for criticizing the Character Guidance program as trespassing on the sphere of religion"; and second, that the topic violated the First Amendment." In 1970 and 1971 DA PAMs 165-6/7/8/9 – Character Guidance Discussion Topics – Our Moral Heritage replaced the previous POI manual. The program remained in effect as the Army's primary formal program of character development through the 1970s. Threats of an ACLU lawsuit about the religious character of the Army's Character Guidance Program ultimately brought about its demise.

(5) The aftermath of the My Lai Massacre in Vietnam in 1968 sent shock waves through the military and broke trust with the American people. The Peers Commission Inquiry into My Lai resulted in further Army-wide assessments such as an Army War College study of the moral and ethical climate of the Army. The Study on Military Professionalism of 1970, often called the "Westmoreland Study," found among other concerns that a majority of Army officers perceived "... a system that rewarded selfishness, incompetence and dishonesty." This led to the expansion of ethics instruction by chaplains at all levels of Army schooling. Other studies and assessments followed.

(6) In response to the Civil Rights movement and growing racial tension in America and within the Army, the Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI), which later became the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), was established to lessen racial tensions & improve readiness. This organization later assumed responsibilities related not just to Equal Opportunity, but to a number of character related areas.

d. Post-Vietnam.

(1) The Post-Vietnam Era, consisted of the decades of the 1970s that saw the creation of the All-Volunteer Army, a Reduction in Force (RIF), and the period of the

“Hollow Army”; the 1980s when new Airland Battle doctrine reshaped the Army’s structure and character; and the 1990s with the Post-Cold War drawdown and the First Gulf War.

(2) During this period the Army continued to reassess and attempt to improve what was perceived as a lack quality, character, and professionalism in the Officer Corps, the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Corps, Army Civilians, and the Army in general. Aspects of this process touched upon character and character development. The Westmoreland Study assessed the commissioned officer corps and considered creating an officer code of ethics; however, this was never approved.

(3) The creation of the All-Volunteer Army in 1973 set the stage for many changes in doctrine, such as Airland Battle; and force structure, including a RIF and major changes to the roles of the Army Reserve and Army National Guard as part of the Total Army.

(4) Work to professionalize the NCO Corps and re-establish their role in leadership and character development led to the publication in 1974 of FM 22-101 Leadership Counseling. However, it cautioned them not to do amateur character analyses.

(5) This period of professionalization also brought about the informal creation of the NCO Creed in 1974, which was formally published in 1985. The creation of a variety of aspirational creeds proliferated during this period and resulted in the Ranger Creed, the Soldiers Creed, the Cadet Creed, and many others.

(6) The 1977 cheating scandal at the US Military Academy not only led to changes in the Cadet Honor System, but also to the expansion of ethics education and interest in values across the Army.

(7) In 1979, DRRI became the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Office (DEOMI) reflecting changing issues of sexual harassment, sexism, extremism, religious accommodation, and anti-Semitism.

(8) Also, beginning in the late 1970s a number of Chiefs of Staff of the Army (GENs Edward C. Meyer (1979-83), John A. Wickham (1983-87), Carl E. Vuono (1987-91), Gordon R. Sullivan (1991-95), and Dennis J. Reimer (1995-99)) emphasized values as the bedrock of our profession and began to specifically articulate what ultimately became the seven Army Values. A series of Army White Papers (e.g., DA Pam 600-50, White Paper 1985 – Leadership, 1 April 1985; White Paper 1986 – Values, 22 May 1986), Annual Army Themes (e.g., The Year of Leadership, The Year of Values), and Army Doctrine manuals (e.g., FM 100-1 The Army, 1981; FM 22-100 Leadership, 1983) began to address the need for an Army Ethic and to articulate the importance of shared professional values and ethics, calling upon leaders to set the example and making them responsible for articulating, transmitting and enforcing those values within their organizations. However, the rapid changes in Army doctrine from this period contained

confusing and ever-changing lists of values, until they were formalized as the seven we still use today.

(9) In describing how we develop and transmit values, General Wickham stated that "... character is a habit," and that "... unlike soldierly skills, ethics and values are more 'caught' than 'taught,'" from their leaders, peers and the ethical climate in their organizations. This is what COL Brian Michelson would describe in his 2012 article as the Army's "laissez-faire approach" to character development.

(10) During this period, attempts at improve assessment of pre-commission cadets were undertaken by West Point and ROTC. The results would be the ROTC Cadet Assessment Model and the Cadet Leader Development System (CLDS).

e. The Post-Cold War.

(1) The end of the Cold War created uncertainty and instability in the world and in the Army. The First Gulf War, in some ways was a culmination of the efforts of the 1980s, tactical, technical, and professional improvements. However, during the 1990s a series of scandals rocked the military services, beginning with the Navy's Tailhook sex scandal, and appeared to further propel another period of review and new programs. However, as one senior Army chaplain put it, "Our military continues to respond to socialization challenges as it always has—with individual, isolated regulatory or statutory programs." (e.g., Equal Opportunity, Violence Prevention, Sexual Harassment, Suicide Prevention, etc., programs). Also at this time, the service academies began to create character development programs (e.g., Consideration of Others) and centers. However, as the same chaplain explained, there was no grand strategy to more broadly apply methods and curricula across the service, and there were no mechanisms in place to assess efficacy.

(2) Not so much in response to scandal, since the Aberdeen sex scandal, extremist incidents at Fort Bragg, and the General David Hale sex scandal came later in the decade, but rather looking forward to the requirements of 21st century leadership, the Army initiated the Character Development XXI workgroup in 1996. This was to establish a plan for reinforcing values, ethics, and character. The workgroup was tasked by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel to "Develop a long-range, values-based program that: Challenges soldiers and civilians at every professional level to live the Army values and professional ethos [and] ... [s]ustain an environment of mutual trust and respect where human dignity and worth are esteemed." Chief of Staff Dennis J. Reimer noted, "[We] must institutionalize [a] cradle to grave program." It was also noted that we needed a mechanism to measure the effectiveness of the character development process across the life cycle of the individual and across all levels of the Army.

f. 2000 to the Present.

(1) Following 9/11 and our involvement in the War on Terror, the Army Chief of Staff created Task Force Soldier and The Warrior Ethos Team in 2003. The most visible result of this effort was the changed wording of the Soldiers Creed and the designation of the central portion of this creed as the Warrior Ethos.

(2) The long War on Terror and a number of serious incidents, such as Abu Ghraib and the Mahmudiyah “Blackhearts” incident led to reassessments of what actions were required after nearly a decade of conflict. The Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leaders (CASAL) became a tool to assess leader perceptions.

(3) In 2007 the Army established the Army Center for the Professional Military Ethic (ACPME) at West Point. In 2010 this became the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE).

(4) The publication of the Army White Paper and the 2011 Army Profession Campaign (APC) of Learning together with APC Surveys I & II initiated an assessment of the state of the Army Profession and put the Army on the path to the next phase to understanding and improving character development. Its successor survey, the CAPE Annual Survey of the Army Profession (CASAP), continues this process.

(5) The publication of Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1 – The Army Profession in 2013 refined definitions of the Army Profession, introduced the legal and moral/ethical foundations for the framework of the Army Ethic, and formally introduced the language of the Army’s certification criteria: Character, Competence, and Commitment. The 2014 Army White Paper – The Army3 Ethic led to the 2015 revision of ADRP1, further refined definitions and added the articulation of the moral principles of the Army Ethic.

(6) In recent years the U.S. Army War College Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) included priority research topics focused on the Army Profession, Army Values, the Army Ethic, virtues, and character development. This has led to a resurgence in related research.

(7) Many new concepts and strategies in Training, the Human Dimension, Big Data, and technology continue to drive changing requirements for how the Army must development character.

4. Summary.

a. During the 30-year period from World War I, through World War II, to just prior to the Korean War the Army recognized the need for what was termed ‘character building’, especially in younger members of the Army, and assigned responsibilities to chaplains and leaders.

b. The next 30 years was the era of the Character Guidance Program. Although the intent appeared to be to use chaplains to guide reflection and discussion as a

means to character development, the reality became more classroom lecture, often with a religious flavor, and with the chaplains, rather than commanders, becoming the focal points for character development programs.

c. Overlapping with this period, the 30 years from the height of Vietnam to the late 1990s witnessed the Army conducting major reassessments of itself, such as the Westmoreland Study; efforts to professionalize the NCO Corps; and numerous attempts to adequately describe Army values, ethics, and leadership doctrine. This resulted in the forward-looking Character Development XXI workshop and the promulgation of the Army Values.

d. During the next 20 years the Army continued to try to better define and describe these same values, ethics, and leadership doctrine. This resulted in the expanded definition of the Army Profession in ADRP 1 in 2013 and the articulation of the Army Ethic in the 2015 revised version of ADRP 1.

e. Understanding the many roads the Army has already traveled on this journey is important to keeping the institution on track to implementing the most effective means to character development.

4. Conclusion: Throughout our Army's history the importance of character and character development has been understood, however the message and methods have been confusing, disjointed, and ever-changing. While the Army has repeatedly attempted to formalize what was variously called 'character building', 'character formation', or character development, through the assignment of responsibilities and most often, with the creation of issue-specific programs, the primary method of effective character development has been the personal interaction of qualified, mature, concerned, caring leadership at all levels, through taking personal interest in the development of their subordinates, peers and even superiors, as a responsibility of stewardship. The individual means vary, whether through coaching and counseling, mentorship, formal and informal assessment and evaluation, leadership by walking around, or a thoughtful or thought provoking word when necessary, but the end result is the sustainment of a command climate that enhances the trust required for the concept of mission command to flourish and for the Army to accomplish all its missions. This can only be achieved through improved leader and instructor assessment and education to enrich understanding of their critical roles in the effective execution of the process of character development, both in the operational and institutional Army, and through viable certification to ensure that the rising generation of Army professionals receives the benefit of best qualified leadership at all levels, while sustaining an ethical organizational climate that supports the Army Culture of Trust.

POC: Mr. Frank Licameli, Research Analyst/Technical Writer, Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, ATZL-MCE, 845-938-0828, francis.c.licameli.ctr@mail.mil.