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PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION: ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

BY

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PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION: ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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Training and Education are the Heart of the Profession of Arms and Have Profound Implications for the Warfighting Abilities and Long-Term Posture of our Military Forces.
Carl Vuono[1]

As the United States stands between the end of a cold war and a headlong rush into the twenty-first century, questions exist concerning the continued viability of the military organizations and structures that served the country well during the previous 45 years. Quite naturally, with the common, though possibly misguided belief, that peace is breaking out all over, the entire military establishment is undergoing close scrutiny. Some believe that cuts in military structure are what the country needs to fuel a recovery from the ills brought about by over forty years of superpower confrontation. The Army Professional Military Education System is one specific area which needs examination and possible restructuring during a period of downsizing. This paper will explain why continuing education is important to the profession of arms and trace the development of military officer education from its early beginnings through the great Prussian model. Next, a history of military officer education in the United States will show how the present system developed. The paper will then describe challenges for the system, outline several alternatives as the Army downsizes, and recommend actions to prepare the Army Professional Military Education System for the twenty-first century.

WHY CONTINUING EDUCATION?

A modern military career officer is a practitioner of the profession of arms in much the same way that a doctor is a practitioner of the profession of medicine.[2] Specific technical knowledge, institutions peculiar to itself, and an educational system and career patterns adapted to specific needs characterize the profession of arms as well as all professions.[3] The latter characteristic, a specialized educational system, is the subject of this paper.

Few would argue that the profession of arms does not have its own distinguishable body of specific knowledge and doctrine. Understanding the correct functioning of high-technology weapons systems requires extensive training and education. But, if this was the extent of warfare's special knowledge, a single, intensive period of education with periodic refresher sessions would most probably satisfy the profession's educational needs. Today's system of continuing military education would then be unnecessary. However, learning to use high-technology weapons systems is barely the equivalent of apprenticeship in the profession of arms. The true expertise of the military professional lies not in the generation of violence but in the management of that violence for constructive purpose[4] - the application of force toward a military objective to achieve some political end. This means that military officers must learn how to think about, plan, organize, and conduct warfare at

successively higher levels of organization and degrees of complexity. The pursuit of this special expertise is the basic requirement for the profession's system of education.

Several factors influence an officer's ability to achieve the requisite level of expertise. These are the changing nature of weapons systems, tactics and techniques of employment, and the social, political, and economic environment. At the lower levels of the profession, a military officer is concerned with correct employment of weapons systems and correct application of tactics and techniques. This is the apprentice level of expertise. As an officer progresses in rank and responsibility, he must learn how to combine weapons systems and units, generally within a single service, to generate the most advantageous effect upon adversaries - a journeyman level of expertise. Finally, as an officer arrives near the top of the profession, he must understand how and under what circumstances to employ force to achieve political objectives in the domestic and international environments.[5] Because of the diversity of knowledge required to meet all the demands placed on a military professional throughout his career and the virtual irrelevance of the knowledge required late in an officer's career to the pressing demands of his early service, a single, massive dose of education (as in medical school, for example) with short, periodic updates would not suffice. Additionally, it is not economically sound to invest the resources or the time to teach every entry-level officer the knowledge and skills of seasoned

professionals since many will never achieve that position. Thus, a professional development system that essentially spans an officer's career, interspersed with periods of formal education and field experience is required.[6]

The Army's Professional Military Education System is just such a system. The Military Education Policy Document published by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff prescribes a five-level education system covering an officer's entire career. The system begins at the pre-commissioning level. It ends at the general officer level with a capstone course. This study will not directly address the highest and lowest levels of the system. The precommissioning level generally refers to education received through the nation's public and private education system. Military policies and reforms have little impact there. The Military Academy at West Point and other public military schools are notable exceptions. At the other end of the spectrum, the capstone course for all newly selected general officers will only receive cursory treatment. Few officers achieve requisite rank to attend that school.

Primarily, this discussion will focus on the three middle levels of the system. These represent the heart of the process and have been the most susceptible to change over the years. They shape virtually every professional military officer. They each have a purpose that closely corresponds to one of the three levels of knowledge requirements described above. The three levels are:

1. Primary Level - to educate lieutenants and captains in the technical aspects of weapons, tactics, techniques, and doctrine - the apprentice level;

2. Intermediate Level - to educate majors in the combining of weapons and unit effects to develop optimum combat power - the journeyman level; and

3. Senior Level - to educate lieutenant colonels and colonels in the application of force in the pursuit of political ends - the professional level.[7]

A more complete discussion of the current system appears later in the paper. First, it is important to review briefly how military officer education evolved historically through the great Prussian military education system and subsequently how military officer education developed in the United States.

HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

Formal military education and the appearance of a trained officer corps corresponds to the evolution of the military as a profession and the development of the nation state. Prior to the 18th century, most education for military commanders was actually practical training in combat. In fact, most early commanders were more warriors than professionals and most obtained their position through political status or noble birth. The idea that officers needed some sort of specific military education above practical training and experience originated in the 17th Century. Advancing technology, especially in artillery, engineering and fortifications, required officers to possess a far greater knowledge of applied sciences, especially

mathematics. Additionally, the transition from mercenary to professional armies forever changed the concept of the military officer. In the mercenary armies of the 16th and early 17th Centuries, commanders and officers were merely entrepreneurs seeking personal profit. Officers of professional armies, on the other hand, were individuals seeking a lifetime of military service. Commanders in professional armies increasingly required young aspirants to complete courses of study in preparation for their duties.[8]

This education was equivalent to the current levels of precommissioning and primary education. It provided the recipient with the credentials for commissioning (even though substantial numbers of officers still received commissions based on favor, experience, or monetary payment) as well as the basic technical skills he needed to employ the technical services of artillery, engineering, and fortifications. Several of these courses became the forerunners of military academies for lieutenants (subalterns) which evolved in the eighteenth century.[9] However, even during this period when the military was becoming increasingly sophisticated, there were no officer educational programs beyond entry level.

The birth of higher military education did not occur until near the end of the eighteenth century. More complex logistic and administrative demands caused by the ever-increasing size of armies created the need for a few highly qualified professional officers on large unit commanders' staffs. Traditionally,

commanders did not believe these demands constituted part of warfare and delegated their solution to a specialized officer called the quartermaster. The quartermaster and his small staff of five to seven officers generally disbanded at the end of the war or campaign because they had no peacetime function and were not part of the permanent army. This created the problem of recruiting and training new staffs at the start of the next war or campaigning season. In an effort to overcome this problem, commanders and monarchs sought methods to retain these staffs between campaigns. They clearly needed a peacetime function.

In 1763, Frederick the Great retained "staff" officers which he formed into an "academie des nobles" for study and then provided them to commanders of large formations as assistants.[10] This initial staff school was not a great success because of its failure to spend enough time on military matters. Finally, in 1783, the French minister of war, Philippe de Segur, offered peacetime employment to 68 men whose services he would otherwise have lost at the end of the American Revolution. For most of these officers, the task was to study. This was the forerunner of the first true staff college.[11]

Even though the Frenchman, de Segur, arguably formed the first staff school, advanced officer education unquestionably originated in Prussia under the auspices of Frederick the Great. The king took three steps to remedy what he believed to be a lack of education in general, and with his generals, in particular. He organized five schools of study, encouraged

creation of military libraries in garrison towns, and developed the academie des nobles. Even with these arrangements and the king's personal interest in the matter, modern advanced officer training did not really begin until 1801 when Gehard von Scharnhorst assumed the position of director of the Militarakademie - the old academie des nobles.[12]

Scharnhorst inherited an academy in urgent need of reform. The students were young officers of noble descent who had not passed entrance examinations or secured appointment on merit. Only two permanent members comprised the faculty. His time as director included the period of great turmoil caused by Prussia's ignominious defeat by Napoleon at the Battle of Jena-Auerstadt in 1806. In reaction, Scharnhorst dramatically reformed the institution into the model for all such schools in the world. His reforms were wide-ranging, including renaming the school the Allgemeine Kreigsschule (General War Academy). He increased the faculty and extended the program of study to three years. Perhaps his most far-reaching revision was the addition of military history and foreign languages to a greatly expanded curriculum. In a final measure he instituted formal, written entrance examinations.[13]

These reforms clearly made the academy a more rigorous institution. Coincidentally, events within the Prussian Army greatly added to its reputation and increased the desire of serious military officers to attend. Most significantly was the general discredit of the system which limited promotion to the

highest ranks to officers of proper descent and patronage. The academy was able to establish itself as a requirement for service on the highest staffs and an important consideration for higher commands. This inseparably linked the school to the great German General Staff.

With the status of the academy thus firmly established and integrated into the Prussian Army structure, it continued to grow and develop through the nineteenth century. During the 1860s, under Chief of Military Training, General Eduard von Peucker, the school went through modifications that further enhanced its reputation in and out of the military. Peucker wanted the academy to be more than just a top-notch military school. His goal was to make the academy a complete university and the seat of higher military learning from whence new ideas would originate and spread throughout the army.[14] Combining the academic ideas of great civilian educational reformers of the day with those of Scharnhorst and Clausewitz, Peucker developed an academy for exceptionally talented, professionally committed officers who already possessed an adequate military-scientific education and wished to extend it. It offered them both a first class professional education and advanced instruction in those disciplines which were regarded either as foundations or auxiliaries of military art.[15] The academy became the most prestigious military school in all of Europe and quite probably enjoyed a reputation that exceeded most civilian universities. Virtually every aspiring officer wished to attend but a series

of written examinations, with a pass rate at or slightly below 20%, insured that only the very best succeeded.

Not only did the academy attract the most aspiring young officers as students, it garnered some of the top professionals from the army as faculty. Former graduates and General Staff members on their way to high positions within the German Army volunteered to spend a tour teaching at the Kriegsakademie, as the school was now called. For great soldiers, such as Hindenburg and Ludendorff, teaching at the Kriegsakademie was both a most coveted assignment and an honor. They added to the school not only inspired teaching and wisdom, but also exceptional role models. Young officers could emulate their careers in the hopes that they too could reach such a position. Teaching at the Kriegsakademie was clearly not detrimental to an officer's career. Rather, it was widely regarded as an essential step on the way to a senior post.[16]

Thus, the Kriegsakademie was in a most favorable situation. It had the ability to choose the cream of the officer corps as students and faculty and provide a rigorous course of instruction lasting three years. It is small wonder that the Kriegsakademie and the organization from which it came, the General Staff, occupied such prestigious positions among the world's military institutions by the end of the nineteenth century.

After World War I, the Treaty of Versailles formally abolished both the Kriegsakademie and the General Staff.

However, through subterfuge and dedication the few officers remaining in the German Army under the terms of the treaty kept both the academy and the staff functioning. To avoid detection, they dispersed the academy into small schools in the military districts. But, they retained the school's high standards. Only one officer in ten passed the difficult entrance examinations. Course length stayed three years, but only the top third of the students attended the last year of studies in Berlin.

This system persisted until the Kriegsakademie formally reopened in 1935. As before the war, the academy's curriculum continued to emphasize tactics, military history, and foreign languages although topics such as international relations, economics, foreign armies, and logistics were included. Also, instructional techniques continued to rely heavily on applied, individual work that was critiqued by the instructor. The practice of selecting instructors who were highly qualified, experienced, general staff officers who could serve as role models for their students also continued.

During the years prior to 1935 when the Kriegsakademie was dispersed throughout Germany, the final year of study in Berlin provided the best example of this practice. The school's faculty was handpicked by the chief of training of the General Staff and included future field marshals von Kluge, List, Model, and Paulus, as well as future colonel-generals Guderian, Halder, and Jodl.[17] The Kriegsakademie flourished in the interwar years

until significantly downgraded just prior to World War II when Germany's armed forces underwent a drastic reorganization. At the outbreak of the war, the Wehrmachtakademie, as the Kriegsakademie was then called, closed.[18]

To summarize, for over a century the Prussians and Germans set the standard for professional military education. Most other countries built systems modeled on the Prussian example, but none achieved the prestigious position and reputation of the Kriegsakademie. The following summary by van Creveld explains it best:

> The Kriegsakademie owed its foundation to Scharnhorst and to the incipient consciousness that war was not just a practical art but a science that could be subjected to historical and analytical study. ... The system of selection, the three years' practical and theoretical training, and the probationary period ensured that the product - a lieutenant colonel capable of acting as a divisional chief of staff - would be thoroughly trained and competent. It also ensured that the army's key officers, those on the staffs of major formations and those appointed to the general staff in Berlin, would share a common outlook and a common language. ... Equally as important were the intimate mutual acquaintance and espirit de corps it fostered among a relatively small body of elite personnel, destined to occupy senior positions throughout the army. Uniformity of thought, in turn, enabled the army to give individual commanders a large measure of independence. It thus served as the basis for the decentralized command system known as *Auftragstaktik* (mission-type orders), ... a key element in the army's success.[19]

Notwithstanding its preeminence, the Kriegsakademie had faults. It educated staff officers and future commanders of large units up to and including Army-level, but it did little to prepare its students for command at levels where social,

political, and economic factors were equal to purely military considerations. Even though some courses in politics, economics, and international relations were taught, martial subjects and foreign language dominated. The school's product, therefore, was a military technician who, in spite of immense grasp of military art and science, had very little understanding of the varied nonmilitary aspects of war. This is one of the major differences between the Prussian and American methods.

AMERICAN ARMY OFFICER PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

Early Years

Professional Military Education in the United States developed differently and more slowly than in Prussia (Germany). Prior to the American Civil War there were no schools for advanced military officer education except for the Artillery School of Practice founded in 1824. In fact, only a few entry-level military education schools existed. West Point, founded in 1802, provided pre-commissioning education for most U.S. Army officers. Several other schools established by individuals previously associated with West Point also required military training as part of their curriculum. Norwich University was the first such school when it opened in 1819. Twenty years later, in 1839, the Virginia Military Institute opened followed in 1842 by the Citadel. Generally, these schools' curricula

paralleled that of West Point and some of their graduates entered the army as regular officers.[20]

The state of educational affairs in the army emanated from organizational weaknesses in the War Department. With the department formed into separate bureaus, each reporting not to the Commanding General of the Army but to the Secretary of War, it was not possible to establish firm responsibility for advanced education. Additionally, the resurgence of antimilitary feeling throughout the nation in the 1830s did little to promote the advanced education of officers, and actually resulted in the closing of the School for Artillery Practice.[21]

Nevertheless, some officers saw the need for professional education along European models and rued the inability of the organization to provide it. Henry W. Halleck, later Commanding General of the Army during the Civil War, stated that:

> the principles of military art and science constitute the body of a profession and that it makes no more sense to entrust the professional duties of a military officer to a civilian than to give the practice of medicine to a carpenter.[22]
>
> But the importance of maintaining in our military organization a suitable system of military instruction is not confined to the exigencies of our actual condition. It mainly rests upon the absolute necessity of having in the country a body of men who shall devote themselves to the cultivation of military science. ... By perfecting ourselves in military science, paradoxical as it may seem, we are therefore assisting in the diffusion of peace, and hastening on the approach of that period when swords shall be beaten into plowshares and spears in pruning hooks.[23]

Unfortunately, the outbreak of the American Civil War put attempts at reform on hold.

Post Civil War

After the Civil War, two unrelated influences renewed the struggle and established the model for advanced officer education. Disillusionment with the Army's condition at the beginning of the Civil War and its early battlefield failures fueled the growing demand for educational reforms. The dramatic Prussian victories in the Austro-Prussian (1866) and Franco-Prussian (1870-71) Wars suggested that the Prussian system could provide a model for the United States. Commanding General William T. Sherman dispatched Brigadier General Emory Upton to study the European examples, especially the Kriegsakademie. On his return, BG Upton proposed founding advanced officer education schools for infantry and cavalry staff officers, as well as a war college along the lines of most European countries.[24]

During this period, the army as a whole began to realize that new technological developments in warfare, both weapons and tactics, and the supply procedures to sustain them necessitated more comprehensive officer education. The powerful Army staff bureaus supported a series of service schools, the forerunners of the modern branch schools. But, they opposed Upton's recommendation for a war college which they interpreted as a weakening of their power and autonomy. This delayed the first real attempt at a combined staff school until 1881, when the

School for the Application of Cavalry and Infantry opened at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The school offered little in terms of academic work. Its primary purpose was to train young officers in the business of leading infantry companies and cavalry troops. Academic studies consisted mainly of courses in remedial writing, mathematics, and grammar. Rather than being a proper staff college, the school was more like a remedial school for semiliterate officers.[25]

Root Reforms

The next major impetus to army officer education came in the wake of the Spanish-American War of 1898. As the army mobilized and deployed to war, it became painfully evident that the military education system had ill-prepared the armed services for the challenges presented by the mobilization, logistics, and transport at the scale required. After the war and a subsequent series of investigations concerning what went wrong, President Theodore Roosevelt put his Secretary of War, Elihu Root, in charge of a reform effort.[26] The task was enormous and his reforms were far-reaching. The reform of professional military education was only a small part of the Root reforms.

Root's reform of military education had three parts. First, he increased the size of West Point to insure an adequate supply of new officers. Second, he developed the Fort Leavenworth school into a combined staff school at an educational level above the branch schools. Students were

generally captains who had completed their branch school and came from most branches within the Army. Merit selection rather than competitive examinations determined attendance eligibility. The school's declared purpose was to prepare its students for effective service at divisional, corps, and army headquarters.[27] The third Root reform for military education was the formation of the Army War College. Established in Washington D. C. in 1901, the college was intended to provide advanced study for army officers. In reality, it became the War Department's General Staff with students under faculty supervision working on projects for the department. In 1903, Congress approved the formation of a general staff causing a gradual shift of the staff function away from the war college.

Coincident with the opening of the Army War College, the idea of progressive education also entered the education system. Under the concept, officers would attend post schools, branch schools, the staff school, and then the war college interspersed with periods of regular duty. At each level of education, selection based on previous achievements would reduce the number of officers attending each course. This insured that only the most qualified and capable reached the ultimate school, the Army War College.[28] At no school, was entrance eligibility established by a competitive examination.

Interwar Years

World War I temporarily interrupted the growth and development of the advanced officer education system but both

resumed in the interwar years. Not all levels within the system developed uniformly. By the late 1930s, there were 19 branch schools where officers learned the procedures and tactics of their respective branches. The Command and General Staff School remained essentially unchanged while the Army War College underwent extensive changes. By 1919, the college had severed its planning requirement with the War Department and extended its course from four months to one year. In a major curriculum shift, the college placed increasing emphasis on foreign policy, national political objectives, the coordinated use of military and economic power, and the role of public opinion in war.[29]

Incorporating lessons from World War I, the Army developed a philosophy for winning wars fought by great, industrial nations. It held that success in combat required large amounts of materiel that could only be produced through general mobilization of the country's economy. Furthermore, if mobilization was to be effective, it required close cooperation between the military and private citizens.[30] As a natural outgrowth of this philosophy, in 1924, the Army established the Army Industrial College whose task was "to educate officers in the useful knowledge pertaining to the supervision of procurement of all military supplies in time of war and to the assurance of adequate provision for the mobilization of material and industrial organization essential to war-time needs."[31] Though the college's first students were only nine reservists, it grew steadily. By 1939, the class contained sixty-two

students including regular, reserve, and national guard officers and civilians from some governmental departments.[32]

Both the war college and the industrial college closed with the outbreak of World War II. At Fort Leavenworth, the staff school became a series of intense, short courses to meet the greatly increased demands of a rapidly expanding army. These courses trained officers in large groups in general staff procedures and then used smaller groups to train specific staff officers on large unit staffs. The branch schools also continued to train the many thousands of officers required in Europe and the Pacific.

World War II

The war years saw two developments in the army school system which have had continuing impact on army education. Early in the war, The Judge Advocate General of the Army, Major General Allen W. Gullion, saw a need for special instruction for military officers in military government. In 1942, General Gullion, now as the Provost Marshal General, arranged to start a school at the University of Virginia to prepare officers for staff level involvement in military government. Subsequently, the Army opened Civil Affairs training schools at ten civilian colleges to train officers for their responsibilities during field operations.[33] This type of training has remained a permanent part of the army structure.

The other wartime development was the creation of the Army-Navy Staff College. By 1943, leaders in the Army, Army Air

Corps, and Navy saw that officers needed more knowledge concerning operations as part of a joint headquarters team. General Henry "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the Army Air Corps, was a driving force in establishing the Army-Navy Staff College in June, 1943. The school occupied facilities left mostly vacant by the closing of the Army War College. Portions of the twenty-one week course were also taught at various Army, Navy, and Air Corps schools across the country. Approximately four hundred officers, generally colonels or their equivalent, from the three services and the State Department attended the school during the war.[34] Equally important to the training, was the new emphasis on joint training which has remained and expanded until the present.

Throughout the mid-1940s, both the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Army directed studies of the officer education system. A joint review recommended including more instruction in joint operations, that the Army-Navy Staff College and Army Industrial College become permanent joint schools, and that both be joined to the proposed State Department senior Foreign Service School.[35] These recommendations, though not formally adopted, had far-reaching effects on development of the army education system through their influence on subsequent review boards.

Cold War Years

In December 1945, the War Department convened a board of three general officers headed by LTG Leonard T. Gerow, Commandant of the Command and General Staff School at Fort

Leavenworth to evaluate military officer education. The board recommended sweeping changes based on the increased technology of the profession. Modern warfare also required officers to understand combined arms operations as well as matters outside the world of conventional military affairs. The education system had to satisfy these needs and acquire a greater interservice focus.[36] To meet these requirements, the board reaffirmed the idea of a progressive hierarchy of military schools separated by periods of regular duty.[37]

The Gerow Board also recommended a new structure for the more senior levels of military education to reflect the growing need for joint education. It believed that substantial interservice education should start at the Command and General Staff School level. The board proposed that the Leavenworth school be replaced by an Armed Forces College on the model of the wartime Army-Navy Staff College. There, officers would learn about the combined employment of air, ground, naval, and service forces. Expanding on the earlier joint review board's recommendations, they proposed a National Security University consisting of five colleges for senior level education. These would be:

1. National War College - to study the employment of armed services in the furtherance of national policy,

2. State Department College - to educate Foreign Service officials,

3. Administrative College - to educate military and civilians in the proper management and administration of civilian and military manpower,

4. Industrial College - to insure mobilization and demobilization of industry and resources in time of war, and

5. Intelligence College - to insure overall organization and operation of intelligence and counterintelligence.[38]

The War Department and the Joint Chiefs adopted several of these recommendations. Even before the board had adjourned, the War, Navy, and State Departments announced the establishment of the National War College in February 1946. In the Army's opinion, establishment of a National War College negated the need for an Army War College. Therefore, the college did resume classes and its facilities passed to the National War College. The Department of the Navy, on the other hand, reluctantly agreed to the opening of the National War College and refused to close the Naval War College.[39]

Another recommendation of the Gerow Board was the transformation of the Army Industrial College into a joint school. This occurred in April 1946 when it became the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. In August 1946, the War Department implemented the last of the board's recommendations when it founded the Armed Forces Staff College. However, the newly formed college did not replace the Army's Command and General Staff School as the board had proposed. Rather, it replaced the wartime Army-Navy Staff College at Norfolk, Virginia.[40] Thus, by the end of 1946, most of the institutions of the present day Education System, with the exception of the Army War College, were in place.

Over time, the system continued to develop. When the Navy did not close its War College to support the National War College, the Army began to have serious doubts about its decision to close its war college. An initial indication appeared in 1947 when the Army redesignated the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth as a college. It incorporated into the school's requirements those of the former staff school and the war college.[41] From 1947 to 1949 three different review boards met to evaluate the Army's system.

The last of these, headed by Lieutenant General Manton Eddy, Commandant of the Command and General Staff College, consisted of the commandants of all principal army schools. This knowledgeable group made some minor changes to the staff college, but its major contribution was the recommendation of an advanced course of study (an Army War College Course) as a second year at the staff college. Initially one hundred selected staff college graduates would attend the course. The recommendation was clearly the first step in the revitalization of the Army War College. As the Department of the Army reviewed the report, it deleted the recommendation for the formation of an advanced course at Fort Leavenworth and added its own plan for the reactivation of the Army War College. It envisioned the war college as the apex of the Army Educational System.[42] The war college reopened for its first postwar class in 1950 at Fort Leavenworth. The 1951 class, moved to the college's present site at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

During the period 1951-1980, there were few dramatic changes to the officer education system. Essentially, when the Army War College arrived at Carlisle Barracks, the infrastructure and philosophy that would dominate the system for the next thirty years were firmly in place. To be sure, curriculum changes occurred in nearly all the various schools as technology, tactics, techniques, and doctrine underwent changes. A noticeable trend of the period, primarily in the more senior level schools, was the increasing inclusion of international affairs and other subjects not solely military in the curriculum. In an important change of December 1967, the Army adopted the practice of the Air Force and the Navy and stopped sending staff college graduates to Armed Forces Staff College. In so doing, it placed the Leavenworth and Norfolk schools on an equal plane.[43]

Throughout the period, ever-increasing numbers of officers attended civilian institutions in pursuit of graduate-level degrees. This practice generated much debate concerning the program's validity considering the monetary and manpower costs.[44] Several studies attempted to answer the question. Two of them upheld the importance of the graduate school experience. One reported that military officers who had attended civilian graduate schools tended to be less absolutist in their approach to situations. They also possessed a much greater spread of opinions than officers who did not have the experience.[45] The other found that graduate education provided important

development of intellectual skills necessary to deal with the domestic and international environment and instilled a greater awareness of society.[46] This type of information justified the continued emphasis on civilian graduate school attendance. A graduate degree became critical for officers with the potential for attaining senior rank.

Since 1980, there have been several significant changes to the education system, two of which resulted in an expansion of the school at Fort Leavenworth. The first actually began in the late 1970s. Chief of Staff of the Army, General Bernard Rogers, ordered a study of officer education to insure that an adequate system was in place for the army of the 1980s and 1990s. The report included a recommendation for a school to teach staff skills to officers not selected for the Command and General Staff College.[47] In 1981, the pilot course for the school, the Combined Arms Staff and Service School (CAS^3), opened at Fort Leavenworth with the purpose of teaching staff procedures to company grade officers. Rather than being a course for those officers who missed the staff college, the school became a two-phased requirement for all Army captains. During Phase I each officer participates in a non-resident correspondence course started after his branch advanced course that terminates with successful completion of a comprehensive examination. Phase II is a nine-week resident course at Fort Leavenworth.[48]

Concurrently, there was a realization by some at the Command and General Staff College and others in the Army, that

instruction in the command and general staff college was not sufficient to meet the Army's needs. Not enough time was available for officers to complete comprehensive study and acquire an understanding of the complex demands of the modern battlefield. Students increasingly turned to "cookbook" solutions and formulas to try to add order to what appeared to be chaos. This trend was in stark contrast to the developing belief that true battlefield advantage belonged to those who could understand, think through, and prepare for the more complicated battlefield.[49] Additionally, growing awareness of an Operational level of war between tactics and strategy and its omission from any school's curriculum suggested a significant deficiency in the education system. Clearly there was a need to learn how to think about war in broader terms.[50]

In 1983, the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) opened at Fort Leavenworth to satisfy this need. The school was a second year follow-on to the Command and General Staff College. Its purpose was to provide officers in-depth study in the science and art of preparing for and conducting war at the tactical and operational levels.[51] Starting with an initial class of only fourteen Army officers, the school has since grown to forty-eight students from most branches in the Army and from all services. Entrance into the school is competitive with selection based on interviews and an entrance examination - a concept new in the American Army education system. The school focuses its instruction on the study of warfare, the foundations

of military theory, military history, and the development and application of the operational art.

The Joint Years

The aborted hostage rescue attempt known as Desert I (1980) and the invasion of Grenada, Operation Urgent Fury (1983) stimulated an ever-increasing demand for greater jointness in service operations and education. The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 established some specific rules for the education and service of military officers in the joint arena. In 1987, Congress established a standing panel on military education chaired by Congressman Ike Skelton. This panel made numerous recommendations concerning joint education.

The 1990 Military Education Policy Document (MEPD) was the Department of Defense implementating document for many of these recommendations. It prescribed very specific policies for Joint Professional Military Education (JPME). In the MEPD, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff stated that the inherent mission of all Professional Military Education is to prepare officers for service in a joint environment.[52] The Goldwater-Nichols Act and the Skelton Panel have generated continuing interest and oversight of the JPME system. Also, the panel's use of the General Accounting Office for close scrutiny of system development creates additional pressure to adhere to recommendations. The challenge for the officer education system is to complete the implementation of published joint guidance without sacrificing excellence in service-specific instruction.

The education system has already executed many of the changes resulting from the joint emphasis. The transition process is underway for several others. The general framework of the current education system is a Skelton Panel recommendation that was converted to guidance by the 1990 MEPD. The development of a two-phased Joint Specialty Officer (JSO) education program is another result of joint emphasis. Phase I of the JSO program is one of the service intermediate or senior level schools. Upon completion of this phase, the officer attends a 12-week course at the Armed Forces Staff College specializing in joint instruction for Phase II. An integral part of the program was the 1992 conversion of the Armed Forces Staff College into a JSO producing school. No longer a staff school of equal status to the service staff schools, its primary focus now is the Phase II JSO course. Only students who have successfully completed a Command and General Staff Course at one of the service schools are eligible to attend, and this revision returns AFSC to its original status when founded in 1946.[53]

These actions satisfied several requirements from the Goldwater-Nichols Act and the Skelton Panel Report. They insured the education of JSOs in joint schools while increasing joint course quality in the service schools. Additionally, since AFSC attendance now requires prior completion of a service intermediate school, there has been an increase in the quality

of officers seeking JSO nomination. This, in turn, will increase the rigor with which AFSC can conduct its courses.

A final change already implemented is recognition of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the individual responsible for all joint education. Clearly, he sets the curriculum azimuth for the schools of the National Defense University. He controls the joint portion of service school curriculum through a joint education accreditation process. The process occurs at 3-4 year intervals for each military school accredited or seeking accreditation as a joint instruction school. It strengthens and sustains the excellence and integrity of joint professional military education and gives the services freedom to develop and maintain the service specific portions of their school curricula.

The Army's senior and intermediate schools are in the process of implementing two other changes brought about by the increasing joint emphasis. Over the past several years, the schools have increased the number of other service students and faculty members. During the 1989-1990 school year, the Army War College had almost achieved the MEPD prescribed goals for both student faculty mix.[54] The Command and General Staff College was not as close to compliance as the war college but the GAO report projected compliance with MEPD goals by the 1992-93 school year.[55] However, final compliance with the MEPD will still leave the schools far short of the Skelton Panel's recommendations. The panel felt strongly that joint education

depended as much on "affective learning" from interservice contact as it did on classroom instruction.[56] Accordingly, its recommended percentages for non-host service participation in service schools faculty and students are more than twice those of the MEPD. Resolution of this incongruence will be a challenge that will keep pressure on the education system for years to come.

Current System

The Army Officer Education System has grown into a system with the singular theme of preparing officers for the conduct of war. It accomplishes this purpose by teaching them how to employ combat forces at the three levels of war: tactical, operational, and strategic. These levels used in conjunction with the three levels of military education create a useful conceptual framework within which to place the complete education system. The following figure from the 1990 MEPD depicts the military education framework as it currently exists.

GRADE	CADET	O-1 TO O-3	O-4	O-5/O-6	O-7 TO O-10
LEVEL OF MILITARY EDUCATION	PRE-COMMISSION	PRIMARY	INTERMEDIATE	SENIOR	GENERAL
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND COURSES	Service Academies ROTC OCS	Basic Course Adv. Course CAS3	Command and General Staff College SAMS JSO (APMC)	War College	Capstone
FOCUS OF MILITARY EDUCATION	Introduction to Service Missions	Warfare Spec. Branch Ops Service Values Leadership Staff Skills	Operational Art Combined Arms Intro to National Military Strategy	National Military Strategy (NMS) National Security Strategy (NSS)	Joint and Combined Operations Synthesis of NMS with NSS
LEVEL OF WAR EMPHASIZED	Conceptual Awareness	TACTICAL	OPERATIONAL	STRATEGIC	

Figure 1 Current Officer Education System.

The primary level focuses on learning warfighting skills at the tactical level of war. Covering about the first ten years of an officer's career, the primary level of education contains branch basic, advanced, and specialty schools as well as civilian graduate school and CAS^3. In addition to tactical warfighting skills, primary level schools orient the officer to the service and begin his development as a leader. Early courses teach him service values and traditions. They develop the leadership and decision making skills required of an effective combat leader. Most instruction is service oriented, initially concentrating on his specific branch. Only at CAS^3 does the focus begin to shift to combined arms operations. But, even then, instruction is only service oriented. The limited joint education that occurs at this level is generally to

develop an awareness of the other services organizations and missions.

The first real introduction to joint education occurs at the intermediate level of officer schooling. In the intermediate schools, the educational focus shifts to warfighting at the operational level of war (Theater Warfare). The nature of warfare at this level is inherently joint so there is a logical linkage of the educational focus and the introduction of joint education. The service staff colleges comprise most of the schools at this level. In the Army's Command and General Staff College, officers expand their branch knowledge to develop an understanding of combined arms fundamentals. The increased joint instruction carries a distinctive service bias. At the intermediate level, officers begin development of analytical skills and creative thought processes required as they progress to higher level military organizations and more complex problems. Here schools also introduce students to National Military Strategy and National Security Strategy.

Two specialized schools join the service staff colleges at the intermediate level. As discussed above, both occupy a position academically above the staff colleges. The AFSC completes an officer's joint education prior to his nomination as a JSO. SAMS also requires staff college graduation for entry. As stated above, the school focuses instruction for its

select student body on the operational level of war. It teaches officers how to think about war rather than what to think.

At the next level of schools, the senior level, the transition from the operational level of war to the strategic level occurs. Students begin to devote much of their attention to learning how to translate military power into the achievement of national objectives. The primary focus of schools at this level shifts from warfighting to the development of National Military Strategy. The curriculum introduces officers to the political, economic, and social pressures that influence formulation of National Security Strategy. The three service war colleges and the two war colleges of the National Defense University comprise this level. Selection for attendance is highly selective and occurs about the 20-22 year mark in an officer's career.

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

The Army Professional Education System has developed into a comprehensive system for preparing officers for the profession of arms. However, it must continue to change to reflect the changing nature of war and society. The challenge for the system is to identify and implement necessary changes before the system's shortcomings are manifested in battlefield failure. Five questions provide a test of the continuing viability of the system:

1) Does the system prepare officers at the various grades for the different levels of war (tactical, operational, and strategic)?

2) Does the system meet the demands for jointness?

3) Does the system prepare officers to fight and win the next war?

4) Does the system prepare officers to use military force in conditions other than war?

5) Is the system consistent with the current military force structure?

The system must change whenever shortfalls occur in any of these areas. However, in its quest to correct deficiencies in one area, it is imperative that the Army not degrade other areas of educational focus that are still highly relevant and necessary. The following discussion will analyze the current system using the five-question criteria.

Level of War

The success of the professional education system in preparing officers of the appropriate ranks to conduct war at the different levels varies. There is an increasing feeling in the Army that the present education system does not sufficiently prepare any officers as strategists. Such officers are needed in the formulation of national military strategy from national security strategy. Also, they must provide guidance on the appropriate use or nonuse of military force in pursuit of national interests. This uneasiness is quite similar to the concern felt in the early 1980s about the Army's failings relative to the operational art. In that case, the School of Advanced Military Studies filled the need. Now, the objective

seems to be similar. Current studies propose a program of advanced study focusing of strategy. A select group of US Army War College graduates would comprise the student body in a second year of study designed to produce master strategists.

At the operational level, changes implemented in the mid-1980s continue to meet education requirements. The combined effects of SAMS and increased emphasis on operational art in CGSC produce officers well-versed in theater warfare. The Army's success in Operation Desert Storm clearly demonstrates the excellence achieved at the operational level.

Likewise, Desert Storm also showed the high level of proficiency that the Army had achieved at the tactical level of war. However, some believe that the Army may be risking this proficiency in its quest for excellence elsewhere. In 1990, Colonel L. D. Holder presented the argument that enthusiasm for jointness tolerates strategists, but does little to protect or encourage tactical experts. He argued that correction of this error requires an explicit statement of the point that operational success depends on tactical excellence.[57] Holder essentially proposed that as intermediate and senior service schools build the curricula to meet joint requirements, they leave enough flexibility (and that Congress accept enough flexibility) to insure the proper development of tactical specialists. These specialists, unlike operational and strategic commanders and staff officers, would concentrate their studies on the detailed operations within their own service.

This would insure continued tactical excellence as technology, organization, and warfare change. Otherwise, the great enthusiasm for jointness and the study of operational art and strategy will gradually erode excellence from the tactical expertise upon which success ultimately depends.

Jointness

As the previous discussion on educational reform during the joint years indicates, the current system very nearly satisfies the demands for joint education. This is at least true for the requirements established by the 1990 MEPD. Some differences exist between MEPD requirements and Skelton Panel recommendations, especially student and faculty mix and student evaluation at intermediate and senior level schools. These are not substantive issues that create deficiencies within the education system. But, if the Skelton Panel does not eventually accept the requirements as stated within the MEPD, the system will be required to respond to the panel's demands. Such a situation will divert emphasis and energies from other areas. Blind enforcement of the panel's recommendation could lead to degradation of other areas of the education system.

Prepare for Next War

The Army education system that evolved through the 1980s prepares its officers well to fight and win the next war. Both the school system and the training system constantly assess training and actual operations to determine their applicability for the future battlefield. From this assessment, valuable

lessons emerge and the education system includes these in its curriculum. The system uses the study of both recent and more distant history to gain insights on future war. Extreme care is given not to train to fight the preceding conflict.

Prepare for Other Than War

The military education system is responding to changing world conditions in which the military is increasingly called to conduct operations other than war. Intermediate and senior level schools devote portions of their curriculum to the study of the social, political, and economic aspects of national power. Students learn the different tools available for the pursuit of national objectives. They learn the importance of interagency cooperation in the conduct of operations such as disaster relief, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance. In many instances, military officers are probably better prepared for these types of operations than their counterparts from other agencies.

Consistency with Current Force

One last aspect of the military education system is particularly important. The true test of a nation's military is not its level of education but how it applies its knowledge to achieve success on the battlefield. Knowledge gained in the classroom must be tempered through application under the guidance of more senior, more educated mentors and coaches. A delicate balance must exist between the lure of increased classroom opportunities and field application and coaching.

General Vuono codified this idea with his three pillar concept of successful leader development. Officer education within the formal school system is but one of the pillars. Self-development and operational assignments are the other two.[58] As the Army continues its dramatic downsizing process it must maintain the balance among the three pillars that developed in the mid-1980s. It seems evident that the officer education system must reduce to remain consistent with a reducing Army. However, current trends at the intermediate and senior level schools do not indicate a reduction in student numbers. In fact, the Army's proposal for a strategists' school promotes growth which further exacerbates the problem. Therefore, to meet the requirements of a smaller army, the Army should retain the spirit and philosophy of the current system and incorporate necessary system improvements while reducing the overall size of the system.

THE FUTURE

The Army's task of revising the education system by reducing its overall size without sacrificing quality is certainly achievable. Several options exist. Starting at the top, the services need to evaluate the necessity of having five separate, distinct, and essentially equal war colleges in a period of shrinking military forces. While most would readily agree that five colleges are not necessary, no service wants to

close its own. And, the current focus on jointness dictates retention of both the National War College and Industrial College of the Armed Forces. A possible solution, however, might be modification of the mission of the National War College.

In view of the Army' position that it needs a school above the Army War College in which to train strategists, now may be the time to elevate the National War College to a position above the service colleges for that purpose. Each service could nominate selected students currently attending one of the service colleges for attendance at a follow-on year of more intense study of strategy and policy issues at the National War College. This would place the National War College at the undisputed apex of the joint military officer education system. The Skelton Panel proposed a similar arrangement in its initial report in 1989.[59] At the time, panel members were concerned with the loss of war college spaces that such a shift would cause. With downsizing and shrinking student populations, such concerns are no longer valid. In fact, the loss of war college level spaces from the National War College would more closely balance student and faculty populations with the shrinking military. Furthermore, the arrangement would return the National War College to the position of prominence that was envisioned for it by its founders in 1946.

Such an adjustment to the overall system may also help to eliminate the concerns expressed by Colonel Holder. By

establishing the National War College as the school for strategists, service war colleges would be able to retain more flexibility in their curricula for detailed operations within their own service. This would allow some officers at the senior service colleges to continue their development as tactical specialists. In so doing, it would insure the tactical excellence that provides the basis for operational and then strategic success.

At both the intermediate and senior college levels, the Army must resist the urge to keep overall class size similar to current class size. The results of such a procedure would be heavily felt in the Army's field units and headquarters. Not only would they lose the services of a disproportionately large number of specially qualified officers as students, they would also lose many more to meet the continuing demands for faculty. Essentially, they would be left with serving commanders and those officers not selected for attendance at advanced schools. The obvious solution seems to be to let the schools grow down at a pace commensurate with the rest of the Army. This would keep a reasonable balance between schools and operational assignments and guarantee the availability of high quality, medium-grade officers to fill units. This is especially critical to insure the continued teaching, training, coaching and mentoring by medium to senior grade officers of junior officers in units. It would reinforce the three-pillar concept of leader development.

Changing the current procedure which governs officer attendance at CAS^3 might also offer possibilities for reducing the school system without losing its effectiveness. Obviously, as the numbers of students decline, the required number of classes and hence the required number of instructors will also decline. Additional savings, in terms of officer availability for duties in field units and headquarters, could be achieved by altering the current policy of attending CAS^3 in a temporary duty status while on the rolls of another organization. This policy creates holes in field units and headquarters. A possible solution could be to schedule CAS^3 as an immediate follow-on to the branch advanced course. In such a way, the officer would arrive at his next duty, typically a field unit, more fully qualified for the challenges he will face. In addition, the gaining command will receive a better prepared officer, available for service throughout his assignment.

At the primary level of the education system, reductions in the numbers of officers to train might require more drastic changes. Currently, except for some recent initiatives by the Quartermaster, Transportation, and Ordinance Corps, each branch in the Army has its own branch school that teaches, among other things, officers' basic and advanced courses. As the Army draws down, there may be a point beyond which it is no longer affordable in terms of facilities, instructors, and support personnel to run individual branch schools. This is especially true in the areas of general military education which overlap.

The three branches listed above, have already faced this problem, at least at the officer advanced course level, and adopted the format of a Logistics Officer Advanced Course which offers instructions to officers of all three branches. The rest of the Army may have to consider similar adjustments as well. A shift from branch courses to combined arms courses, both heavy and light, may be a solution for retaining the purpose and intent of the education system while reducing its demands on available personnel, equipment, facility and dollar resources.

CONCLUSIONS

The United States Army Officer Education System has grown into something quite different from the Prussian model built around the Kriegsakademie. Of course, early reformers of the system did not ever intend it to be a copy of the Prussian system, or any other European system. General Tasker Bliss put it quite well in November, 1903:

> "what is especially to be noted is that these foreign systems of training are sound because they thoroughly fit the local theory of military organization. They are unsound when transplanted to a locality where this theory of military organization is quite different."[60]

The system has responded in its development to the demands generated by balancing the continuous evolution of warfare and the distinctly American style of government and its perceptions and theories of military organization. As the country grows and changes, the demands and expectations which society forces on

the military will change. The world, the nation, and the military are all going through a period of tumultuous change as the twentieth century nears its end. The education system must respond to these changes if military leadership is to remain relevant and constructive to the government it serves.

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