STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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# THE MILITARY OF TOMORROW: MILITARY VALUES AND AMERICA'S VALUES

BY

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# The Military of Tomorrow: Military Values and America's Values

by

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## ABSTRACT

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The mission of America's military forces is to fight and win our nation's wars. The readiness of these military forces is ultimately linked to the quality of the American people. Values taught and lived in the military forces should be instilled in America's youth to prepare them for future military service. Ultimately, these values will not only prepare them for military service but will also prepare them to become good citizens and leaders of our country. This study examines the pool of prospective recruits and seeks to identify their morals, values, and readiness for military service. It explores the problems surrounding the morals and values of America's youth and suggests what we as a nation can do to better prepare young men and women to be quality citizens who are capable of leading our country and, more specifically, our military forces. It is imperative that we institute policies to make education in moral values a part of our primary and secondary educational systems. This study will describe such a policy and recommend how it may be instituted in our schools.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS


ABSTRACT ..... III

PREFACE ..... VII

THE MILITARY OF TOMORROW: MILITARY VALUES AND AMERICA'S VALUES ..... 1

SPIRITUAL/BIBLICAL VALUES ..... 2

AMERICA'S VALUES ..... 4

MILITARY VALUES ..... 5

DECLINE IN MORAL VALUES ..... 7

CRISIS RESPONSE: EDUCATION AND THE MORAL CRISIS ..... 8

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY ..... 10

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO? ..... 11

HOW SHOULD THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY RESPOND? ..... 12

WHAT ROLE SHOULD THE NATION'S SCHOOL SYSTEMS PLAY? ..... 12

HOW CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HELP? ..... 13

WHAT CAN THE MILITARY DO? ..... 15

A PROPOSED EDUCATION POLICY ON MORAL VALUES ..... 16

MORAL VALUES EDUCATION OBJECTIVES ..... 17

PROPOSED SUBJECTS FOR MORAL VALUES EDUCATION ..... 17

CONCLUSION ..... 18

ENDNOTES ..... 21

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 25

## PREFACE

This study is the result of my keen interest in and concern for America's youth and their moral preparedness for the future. The study provides information to stimulate dialogue and serve as a catalyst that could lead to positive changes in America's education system. It identifies the problem of the lack of moral values in America, especially among our youth. Since education is a social process, it should provide a foundation for the whole complex of human behavior that we call life. As such, it should serve the interests of the citizenry and the nation. It should as well prepare young men and women for military service by ensuring they already possess the values they need to be successful in today's society.

I am grateful to my SRP advisor COL James Gordon for his guidance in the completion of this paper. Without his urging that I keep my shoulders to the wheel and his superb advice and editorial suggestions, this study would not have been possible. I am also thankful for the guidance and assistance provided by COL Cortez Dial, Professor James Hanlon and Professor Joyce Dial. Their advice, editorial comments, and encouragement have made this paper far better than it would otherwise have been. I am especially grateful to my husband, Henry Manning and some of my War College classmates who have as well made valuable suggestions out of their broad experience and read and responded to various stages of this study.

# THE MILITARY OF TOMORROW: MILITARY VALUES AND AMERICA'S VALUES

Values have been described as a person's attitudes about the worth of people and concepts. Values are developed in childhood and nurtured through experience. Individual values convey who a person is and what that person is about. They contribute immensely to how people behave. Since people are shaped by what they see, by what they learn, and by whom they meet, it is imperative that they share a common set of values to accomplish a common goal. The military has such a set of values. America's military needs quality people who possess high moral values.

> Quality people—military and civilian—are our most critical asset. The quality of our men and women in uniform will be the deciding factor in all future military operations. In order to realize the benefits of the transformation of our military forces, we must ensure that we remain the most fully prepared and best trained fighting force in the world. To ensure the quality of our military personnel, we will continue to place the highest priority on initiatives and programs that support recruiting, quality of life, and the training and education of our men and women in uniform.[1]
>
> —A National Security Strategy for a New Century (NSS)

Military leaders emphasize training and education as one of its highest priorities to achieve this NSS goal. Military leaders train their personnel on values; they also model and live these values every day. Values education is critical to ensuring that America's military is ready to fight and win America's wars. Likewise, values education is as important for the youth in our society as it is for the military. It will enhance the preparedness of our youth to become effective, trustworthy future leaders not only in our military, but in all our national institutions.

This study focuses on moral values. What is morality anyway? Why should we Americans be concerned about teaching moral values? Are high moral values important qualities for military recruits? The moral condition of America indeed has grave implications for the future of the military. Military forces live by certain values. These values must be instilled in those who serve. Given the decline in moral values in America, especially among our youth, military leaders have good reason to be concerned about the future of the military and the quality of its personnel. People are the military's most valuable asset, and the quality of the people it recruits will determine its preparedness. Therefore, American citizens must take corrective action to improve the nation's morality. It is imperative that good moral values are ingrained into the fabric of our society if we expect to have an adequate population from which to recruit military personnel. This study will document America's moral crisis and recommend what its citizens can do to improve it.

As Americans enter into the new millennium, they must be cognizant of the widening values gap between our military and American society at large. Military culture reflects a different set of values than does America's society generally. Because of this decline, Americans must respond to a critical question: How can they as a nation influence the value system of their children to such a degree that they grow

children who possess the core values needed for better citizenship, values compatible with military service?

This study then will compare military values with our nation's values and explore the lack of moral values among America's youth, noting its implications for the future of our military. It will rely heavily on the values published by the United States Army since the Army's values include the values of all services. This study will also examine the pool of prospective recruits to identify to their morals, values and readiness for military service. It explores the problems surrounding the morals and values of America's youth and suggests what we as a nation can do to better prepare young men and women to be quality citizens who are capable of leading our country. Specifically, it shows how we can embrace the values needed to serve in today's military. It concludes with a plea to focus attention on this issue and institute policies that will bring about this necessary outcome. We as a nation must ensure that the prospective pool of military recruits possesses the moral values needed, not only for the future of our military, but for our nation's future as well. These moral values have been derived from the basic spiritual values our country was built on.

**SPIRITUAL VALUES**

What are spiritual values? The values of love, unity of family, honesty, respect, self-control, justice, and mercy are some of the more important ones. These values take us back to the nature of God; that is, they are divine values. We should communicate these values to our youth.

Love is the universal language. Dionne Warwick sang, "What the world needs now is love, sweet love. The Beatles claimed, "All you need is love." And Michael Bolton says, "Love is a wonderful thing." What makes love so special and why is it a virtue—a value worth teaching? Even in the youthful medium of music, we communicate this value.

A rabbi once posed a question to Jesus: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all you heart and with all you soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22-37-39). This value thus teaches us to love God and our fellow humans. But the love of many has waxed cold today because many in our society do not possess this divine value. Despite this seemingly increasing trend, man must learn to love God and others in order to better the morality of our nation.

A Newsweek magazine story responded to the "family values" debate in the 1992 U.S. presidential election with certain questions: Whose values? Whose family? Who makes the choices? The answers are found in God's Word. Men can trace attitudes and behaviors through precept to principle, and ultimately to the nature and character of God Himself. God gives specific precepts regarding the family. The Ten Commandments include the command to "Honor your father and mother," which seems a thing of the past in today's society. Many of today's youth are openly rebellious and refuse to obey their parents or any adult. Children sometimes take the child abuse laws to the extreme and use them as an excuse to do whatever they want. Some parents feel handicapped and neglect to discipline their children

because of the fear of being labeled child abusers. The Bible instructs parents to discipline as well as train their children and teach them the fear of the Lord. When men fail to take these tasks seriously, then they have incidents like the two recently reported in Atlanta, Georgia, where children murdered their own parents.

God commands a loving, giving, and respectful relationship between husbands and wives. He instructs children to obey their parents, and fathers not to provoke their children. These commandments reflect the universal value of unity. Perhaps teaching the value of the unity of family to today's youth will prevent abusive relationships, child abuse, and familial murders. God's standards for marriage and family provide for healthy role models, which is definitely what America's youth need today. Good role models are becoming fewer and fewer. Children are having children and thus we have inexperienced, immature children undertaking the awesome task of raising children. Americans seem to be drifting away from its spiritual standards. Many in the religious community believe that part of America's morality problem is a move away from God.

Honesty is another spiritual value. God issued the commands: "you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony against your neighbor, you shall not steal, do not lie, do not deceive one another, do not swear falsely and do not defraud your neighbor or rob him." The laws of our nation reflect these commands. God made it very clear to us that lying, cheating, and stealing are wrong. In essence, honesty is the quality of being truthful, transparent, and trustworthy. It can be defined as what it will not do. It is a value well worth teaching.

Everyone wants to receive respect: children, adults, parents, politicians, comedians, singers, actors, and athletes. But many of us are less adept at giving respect. This value is disappearing from our culture. The first commandment with a promise, according to the Bible, is the precept, "Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you." The Bible makes it clear that people are not only to show proper respect to each other, but to authority as well. God's standards of respect for others protect us from harmful relationships and provide for healthy relationships. A person who respects him/herself and others will neither tolerate nor inflict abuse. A respectful person practices self-control.

Yet many in our society live without self-control. Anything goes in this day and time. In other words, everyone decides what is right for them, simply creating their own standards. But God has given specific precepts that command self-control. He issued precepts against anger, rage, malice, slander, drunkenness, and greed. He wants us to control our urges and desires, rather than be controlled by them. Our youth can be taught to appreciate self-control.

The Bible tells us to "defend the cause of the weak and fatherless and maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed" (Ps. 82.3). This precept can be summed up in what has been called the Golden Rule: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Justice means treating everyone fairly: it is the underlying principle of the Golden Rule. Parents, pastors, teachers, and youth workers are surrounded with daily opportunities to model, teach, and reinforce justice to our youth.

The central task of every generation is to transmit morality. In American life, religion has been the primary force that transmits from one generation to another the moral understandings that are essential to liberal democratic institutions. Religion focuses our minds and hearts on obligations to each other that arise out of our shared existence. Religion informs us that we have been created in the image of our creator. Our churches foster values that are essential to human wellbeing and to democratic, civil society: personal responsibility; respect for moral law; and concern for others. These values also help to promote social change.

Americans should teach these values on a larger scale to their children to prepare them to be good citizens with the moral values needed to not only lead our country, but to serve our military. These biblical values have been the traditional values in American society throughout its history.

**AMERICA'S VALUES**

The values of our nation—American Values—are based on certain moral ideas about the person and the nature of a good life. These moral ideas limit or guide our choices. They are biblically based. In Reclaiming Morality in America, William Murchinson asserts that "Moral values at their best are religious values." There is no escaping this. And yet the extraordinary period in American life marking the 1960s through the 1990s has been in large measure the history of a people in flight from God.[2] Despite this flight, Murchinson goes on to provide statistical information that Americans remain devout religious people. According to the National Opinion Research Center, 90 percent of Americans affirm God's existence. The Gallup Poll says 70 percent claim church membership.

Our spiritual values date from the origin of our nation. People of profound faith founded this country. They mentioned Divine Providence and the guidance of God twice in the Declaration of Independence. The Constitution wouldn't be what it is without James Madison's religious values. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison instituted laws to ensure religious freedom in America. Most recently, President Clinton signed into law the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993, which reversed the decision of the Supreme Court that made it easy for government to restrict the exercise of people's religious liberties. Our belief in God is emphasized by the deep-rooted belief that "In God We Trust," which is found on every piece of American currency. Belief in God presupposes belief in spiritual or biblical values, which equates to good moral values.

In "A Call to Civil Society," Jean Bethke Elshtain reminds us that The Founders insisted that our democracy depend upon the competence and character of our citizenry. She argues convincingly that democracy begins in the home, beginning with the family and person-to-person associations, which is the seedbed of civic virtue. She posits that the following institutions are the foundational sources of competence, character, and citizenship:

- family
- community
- neighborhood
- faith communities and religious institutions
- voluntary civic organizations

- arts and art institutions
- local government
- system of primary and secondary education
- higher education
- business, labor and economic institutions
- media institutions
- shared civic faith and common civic purpose
- public moral philosophy

Society begins with the individual. The purpose of government and all other institutions is to help foster the conditions for human flourishing. The prerequisites for human flourishing are the elements of what Americans call democratic civil society. These elements are anchored in moral truth, based on biblical values. America can help its youth develop into good citizens if it communicates these spiritual or biblical values to them, using every form of education available to them. Though it is seldom mentioned, military values are also biblically based, stemming from the Constitution. They have been the "hallmark" of the American soldier for over 223 years.

**MILITARY VALUES**

Values are the bedrock of our military. The Army declared a year of "Army Values" under the command of General John A. Wickham Jr. John O. Marsh, Jr and General Wickham then issued their "Values" proclamation: "The Army Ethic comprises four enduring values: loyalty to country and the Army; loyalty to the unit; personal responsibility; and selfless service. It is beneath these overarching values that our soldierly and ethical standards and qualities— commitment, competence, candor, courage, and integrity— are nurtured and given opportunity for growth."[3] These values were recently revised to include duty, honor, courage, respect, selfless service, integrity and loyalty. These are the Army's Core Values. They are the bedrock of the military; all soldiers are expected to live these values. They are defined as follows:

- **Loyalty**: Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other soldiers.
- 
- **Duty:** Fulfill your obligations.
- **Respect:** Treat people as they should be treated.
- **Selfless-Service:** Put the welfare of the nation, the Army, and your subordinates before your own.
- **Honor:** Live up to all the Army values.
- **Integrity:** Do what's right, legally and morality.
- **Personal Courage:** Face fear, danger, or adversity (Physical or Moral).

The Army's leadership manual asserts that these values are vital to the cohesiveness of military organizations: "These are more than a system of rules. They're not just a code tucked away in a drawer

or a list in a dusty book. These values tell you what you need to be every day, in every action you take...They are the glue that binds together the members of a noble profession."[4]

The Army spends a great deal of time and money on values training to instill the core Army values in soldiers. Wouldn't it be more cost effective if our nation's educational systems undertook this training early on? Such training would benefit the entire nation, not just the military:

> Those men and women who serve in the military are quality people whose values, diversity and teamwork are examples for others to emulate. Contributing to the wellbeing of the Nation we serve both directly and indirectly, Army installations and organizations are good neighbors for America's communities. The soldiers of the Selected Reserve balance their military service with full-time civilians. These soldiers and families bring the vitality of America to the Total Army. They also take Total Army values to their civilian endeavors.[5]
>
> —United States Army Posture Statement FY00: America's Army--Assuring Readiness for Today and for the 21st Century, The Honorable Louis Caldera and General Dennis J. Reimer, Feb. 1999.

"More Americans serve in the Army than in any branch of Service. Army leaders often say that soldiers are our credentials, but American soldiers are America's credentials as well."[6] These citizen soldiers take the values they learn and live in the military back to their communities. Values training at an early age would transfer into the military and then back into the society, reinforcing values-based institutions throughout the country. Society would then improve greatly from this dynamic reinforcement of values.

In any organization, the single most important factor for success is quality people. People are especially important for the military. The military is people. The Army emphasizes three principal criteria to monitor the quality of soldiers entering its ranks: level of education, the Armed Forces Qualification Test and the Armed Services vocational Aptitude Battery, and enlistment eligibility and military Occupational Specialty assignment qualifications. Other branches of the military use similar tests. The military can improve these tests by incorporating questions that will help to measure the moral values of perspective recruits.

Values are the cornerstone of any organization. This is why the military "will remain a values-based institution where loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage are the cornerstone of all that we do today and all of our future successes. Our soldiers, who exemplify these values every day, are the best in the world."[7] This is why the world uses us as peacekeepers. Further, "These values have been the hallmark of the American soldier for over 223 years. While these values are not new, competing values in our society can obscure and dilute them."[8] It is imperative that all Services institute a selection criterion designed to measure the moral values of recruits, given the fact that there has been a decline in the moral values exhibited in today's society, especially among our youths. We must do something about the decline in the moral values of America if we are to continue to recruit the caliber of individuals needed for in today's military.

## DECLINE IN MORAL VALUES

Addressing his close friend Timothy, the Apostle Paul warned, "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"[9] These words describe many in our society today.

Many observers note that we have a moral crisis in America. Crisis is defined as "a perception of an event or situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds the resources and coping mechanisms of a person, group, or community." Indeed, America is in such a state: Where moral values are concerned, America is plagued by a moral crisis and suffers from a general lack of morality. And as our social morality deteriorates, life becomes harsher and less civil for everyone. High levels of violence, disintegration of the family, and poor race relations are just a few of the woes we now endure because of this decline. The result of the shift in values in our schools and homes is now spelled out in blood in our streets. Teenage gangs terrorize entire neighborhoods and kill each other daily. Prime-time television offers nightly advanced courses in violence. Children are becoming mass murderers from grade school to high school. Guns, knives, and illegal drugs have replaced prayer in the schools. What used to be called sexual perversion is now simply one's sexual preference. What once was termed "living in sin" is now an "alternative lifestyle." What people once called obscene is now called art. As social problems multiply, we lose confidence that we as Americans are united by shared values.

Recent events have shaken the collective conscience of our nation. The killings at Columbine High School in Colorado and other schools have brought home to every American the degree to which they are failing their children. The most basic and profound responsibility that our culture has is raising our children. Americans are failing in this responsibility, and the extent of their failure is being measured in deaths and injuries to children in schoolyards and on the streets of their neighborhoods and communities. Rome destroyed itself from within because of its decadence. If the morality of America doesn't change, it will experience a similar fall as well.

Though Americans hate to admit it, this crisis has occurred because of a significant, long-term shift in the way they look at God and the world. So, before America can consider a solution to the problem, it must take a close look at the problem in light of history. Murchinson describes the problem well:

> America is plagued by a moral crisis of unprecedented proportions—and this crisis must be addressed immediately. Drug abuse, violent crime, domestic violence, and the break-up of family are devastating problems, but they are only symptoms of the greater problem—moral decay of our society. A full-blown moral crisis is surely upon us...We cannot live without morality. Yet having failed in our own time to cultivate moral awareness, we are reaping the deadly consequences. Although, we still have the power to reverse those consequences—if we truly wish to, and if we work at the task with persistence and courage.[10]

This moral crisis is evidence that not enough people in America are working at cultivating moral awareness. Parents have given up and left their children's moral education in the hands of the public school system, for the most part. The public school system is prohibited from teaching moral values for fear of violating laws separating church and state. Christian parents have left their children's moral education in the hands of the Christian community. If parents are not responsible, who is? Surely parents must assume the greatest responsibility for their children's moral education. But they should as well expect the schools to reinforce this moral education.

The moral crisis in America is taking its toll throughout the land. William Bennett has diagnosed the problem as *acedia,* a synonym for sloth or laziness. He defines the term well: "undue concern for external affairs and world things...[and] an absence of zeal for divine things."[11] From the loss of biblical values has sprung the current environment in which pleasure, indulgence, and vanity rule. This is evident among all of our professionals, doctors, lawyers, politicians, and soldiers, from the least to the highest office in our nation. "America is afflicted with a corrupted heart and a decadent mind. We are becoming uncivilized. National tolerance is the camouflage for our loss of moral purpose; the illness called acedia."[12] What has caused this acedia?

Americans continue to ask: "What has happened to our youth?" "Where did we go wrong?" The answer can be found in the lack of moral values—caused largely by the downplay of religion and our failure to transmit or transfer from generation to generation those needed values that are biblically based.

In March 1993, forty-two Christian youth leaders joined in a symposium in Dallas, Texas, on the state of the youth culture. They discussed the most pressing problems of today's youth and pondered what America could do to address the problems of this generation. They wrestled to identify not only the symptoms of the diseases that afflict today's youth, but the root causes as well. One hundred percent of the group ranked this generation's loss of a biblically based value system as their number one concern.

Negligence of parents, churches, schools and the government have contributed immensely to the decline of moral values among our youth. All responsible adult Americans must become intensely involved in the moral education of America's young people in order to alleviate America's moral crisis. America must address this moral crisis if it is to rebuild its solid moral foundation and bring about recovery that cures both the symptoms and the root of the nation's problems. Americans must pool their efforts and focus on raising and educating today's youth for leadership tomorrow.

**CRISIS RESPONSE: EDUCATION AND THE MORAL CRISIS**

A primary goal of federal education policy for the past 30 years has been to ensure quality of education. "The creation of programs like Title I, Head Start, and bilingual education in the 1960s and special education for handicapped children in the 1970's have directed federal resources to children who have been poorly served by the nation's state and locally based education system."[13] The current push in federal policy is to devise strategies that improve student performance for all groups. The current policy

known as Goals.2000: Educate America Act, emphasizes this goal. Its purpose is to provide a framework for meeting the national educational goals established by Title I of this Act:

> To improve learning and teaching by providing a national framework for education reform; to promote the research, consensus building, and systematic changes needed to ensure equitable educational opportunities and higher levels of educational achievement for all students; to provide a framework for reauthorization of all federal education programs; to promote the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and certifications; and for other purposes.[14]

Measured by the goals of removing legal barriers and providing quality of access, this federal policy has been successful. We applaud the federal government's efforts to ensure equality of education and improve student performance. However, current policies and goals lack an important dimension: moral values training. America's policy makers need to expand upon these goals and explore ways to improve upon the policy by explicitly including values education to increase the morality of American citizens.

Education is not meant solely to prepare one for employment, but also to help create a better society. Education should do more than prepare young people to earn dollars; it should also teach them to be responsible citizens. This education process must begin at birth. Parents, grandparents, extended family, the church, and community must get involved in the moral education of our children if we are going to reverse the decline in moral values in America. Values education is essential in helping our nation's children achieve their full potential.

America's educational system simply is not teaching young people how to exercise good morals. Americans need to re-evaluate how they educate their children. "The schools are responsible not only for preparing students for further education and employment, but also for assuring that children grow up to be responsible adults who can get along with others...The future of our society will be largely determined by how well the public schools educate children."[15]

Among the many crises facing American society, one is often overlooked: our moral crisis. Every facet of society should be held accountable for the education of our children. Children learn what they are taught. If the entire American population does not join together and teach its youth good moral values and set good examples, they will not become quality citizens. As a result, the military will not have sufficient numbers of quality citizens from which to recruit.

Raising children—better citizens and future military personnel--is an awesome task. The Old African adage "It takes a whole village to raise a child" is very true. America can succeed in raising children with good moral values if we all pursue this awesome task through a team effort. The bulk of this responsibility lies on the parents of these future citizens. But we would be naive to think that parents can do this alone. It will take the parents, schools, the religious community, and assistance from the entire United States government working together for the common purpose of raising citizens who possess the values needed in our society and in today's military. Federal policy can emphasize the need for schools to embrace the efforts of families and communities in moral values training. "Widespread urban school success will require education, community, and family policies that positively affect preparation on both sides—community and family, and schools."[16] This applies to both urban and rural schools.

The moral crisis in our society warrants greater moral accountability from the highest government office to every citizen throughout America. "High levels of violence, the disintegration of the family and poor race relations are just a few of the issues responsible for the current decline."[17] Negligent parents, the religious community, school and government officials all bear some responsibility for this moral crisis. America is negligent in that it does not provide adequate education to its children on moral values. Also, we are not sufficiently modeling those values. School officials are reluctant to mention moral values because they are generally synonymous with religious values. Legislators have not taken the initiative to institute laws to ensure our children receive this vital education in moral values. Everyone must join forces to deal with the problem, in making our representatives aware of our need and desire for moral values in our education system. This is one of the ways that American citizens can effect changes in our society and improve the nation's morality.

Education deals with the intellectual powers of people. Their moral and spiritual powers are seen as the domain of the family and the religious community. But all three agencies must work in harmony. Although a human has three aspects, he is still one person. Therefore, education at all three levels must address all three aspects of humanness, as President Clinton observes:

> There are those who say that values and morals and religion have no place in public education; I think that is wrong. First of all, the consequences of having no values are not neutral. The violence in our streets—not value neutral. The movies we see aren't neutral. Television is not value neutral. Too often we see expressions of human degradation, immorality, violence, and debasement of the human soul that have more influence and take more time and occupy more space in the minds of our young people than any of the influences that are felt at school anyway. Our schools, therefore, must be a barricade against this kind of degradation. And we can do it without violating the First Amendment . . . The First Amendment does not require students to leave their religion at the schoolhouse door. We wouldn't want students to leave the values they learn from religion, like honesty and sharing and kindness, behind the schoolhouse door...And reinforcing those values is an important part of every school's mission.[18]

Only the federal government is powerful enough to focus these efforts to benefit the entire nation. President Clinton spoke the right words. But, just as faith without works is dead, so are words without action. Therefore, it is imperative that national policies include moral values training in our nation's educational system, at least in grades K-12. With the help of God, policies geared toward moral development of our children from early childhood through high school will truly benefit our nation and prompt real changes for the better throughout the fabric of our society. We must work together to devise a strategy that will improve the education of our children and hopefully begin a positive change in America's society.

**DEVELOPING A STRATEGY**

> *Where there is no vision the people perish.*
>
> Proverbs 29:18

The Strategic Leadership Primer asserts that vision provides a sense of ultimate purpose, direction, and motivation. It is the first step in the development of strategies and plans for change. America must first state its vision for moral stability, then develop strategies and plans to counter the culture of moral degradation in our society. Policy-makers should develop policies and provide resources to make the vision of a re-moralized America a reality.

How can people know and do what is right when all around them is moral chaos? Doing what is right depends upon knowledge and education. Education is different from training in that good education concerns itself in substantial part with virtue: "A course of schooling that cannot or will not separate right from wrong or honor from shame may be instruction or training, but it is not education in its proper, classical sense. One should never merely teach about ethics; one must teach ethics."[19] Likewise, one must not merely teach about moral values; one must teach moral values. In order to teach moral values to America's children, America's adults must model those values in their own lives. How do Americans begin teaching and modeling these values? All subgroups of American society need to build a coalition to help America regain its moral bearings. What can parents, the religious community, the schools, the military and the Federal Government do to counter the current culture and produce law-abiding citizens who possess good moral values?

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

In "Their Eight Secrets of Success," Claudia Wallis lists eight things parents can do to help make a better student. She included "Don't forget morals" in her list. "A strong ethical framework, religious or otherwise, will help children resist the ever present siren call of negative peer pressure."[20] From birth, parents must be actively engaged in teaching their children moral values. The parents must also model these values by living them. They should share the truths about sex, honesty, family, love, respect, mercy, etc. Books and videos can help parents better communicate these values. Parent can enrich their relationships with their children by teaching and modeling good moral values. They should seize every opportunity to affirm their convictions about truth and morality with their families. Talk about moral values when you sit at home and when you get up. And it is absolutely essential that the parents exhibit their belief in God throughout this process.

Parents should encourage their children to be bold about their faith and morals and not be afraid to discuss it with other children. Write about it in their school papers. They should eat, breathe and live the moral values they learn at home and in their religious environments. It is obvious that this type of education will not take place in all homes. Some parents have and want no religious affiliation and have not themselves been taught religious values. However, most of them have been introduced to some type of moral education in the home. For those who have, the next step in the education process is the religious community. The entire religious community should reinforce the moral values education of the children who attend worship services.

HOW SHOULD THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY RESPOND?

Clergy should include moral values education designed specially for children, aimed at their level. As they are learning about God and the prophets through biblical stories, they should be taught how to apply these moral lessons in their lives. The New Testament is rich with stories that have moral messages that the religious community can make interesting and rewarding for children.

There are many resources on the market to help in this endeavor. A series of "Right from Wrong" material includes books, video and audio tapes for all ages. Parents and the church can use these materials to teach moral values from a biblical perspective. This series will help them to take a stand and counter the culture. These materials are not only designed to instill religious convictions within the religious community, but they also include an outreach strategy for "telling the world the truth."

The clergy should empower the religious community to communicate the "Right from Wrong" message simultaneously to adults, teens, and children. A series of messages are usually very effective. One might ask, "Then what about the children whose parents don't believe in God or don't take their children to worship regularly?" Any strategy worth its weight in salt will have alternatives to any situation. In this case, the school systems can easily be the standard bearer for teaching moral values to students who are not fortunate enough to get such instruction at home. Ultimately, the religious community should build a coalition to develop a list of critical subject areas to include in a prospective moral values curriculum for America's schools.

WHAT ROLE SHOULD THE NATION'S SCHOOL SYSTEMS PLAY?

"From the beginning Americans knew what they wanted their schools to deliver. Education was not about theoretical knowledge, it was about practical consequences, such as the imparting of patriotism and democratic values."[21] The school is the most likely place to help in the fight to reverse the moral trends of the day because it is the one place where most children spend the majority of their time. The school system is a fruitful place to begin moral values education for young people, since it is an institution whose values are in constant interplay with the values of society. The school is subject to parental control through their elected representatives, especially members of school boards.

Unfortunately, school campuses have been tormented with violence: attacks on teachers by students, attacks on students by other students, and murders by students or outsiders. A prime example is the recent massacre committed by two teenage boys at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Something has to be done to counter student aggression. Teaching moral values can help.

The public schools must accept their responsibility for our current crisis. "Thomas Sowell charges the public schools with attempts to brainwash students:

> School actually attempt to reshape their attitudes, not only toward sex but also toward parents, toward society, and toward life. A contributing factor was the U.S. Supreme court's famous decisions outlawing official school prayer and classroom Bible-reading. The programs of cultural relativism have as their recurring theme that what our society believes is just one of many beliefs with equal validity—so that individuals have the option to choose for themselves what to believe and value."[22]

This is another reason America's children are confused and lack moral values. This relativism must be rectified if we are to help our children become responsible law abiding citizens. Children must be persuaded that truth is not relative— that truth, in fact, is true.

A more promising avenue for authoritative teaching is the private schools. Many of these schools teach from a biblical basis. New voucher systems in some places afford parents who can't afford to pay for the education of their children an opportunity to choose a private school. Privatization thus increases the role the religious community plays in education as these biblically based schools reach a larger population of children. Public school systems can incorporate some of the educational materials used in the private schools into their curriculum from pre-school through high school.

It's essential to begin moral values training at the earliest stage of development. It is a known fact that children learn what they are taught. Adults have to teach them good morals from the very beginning so these moral values will become engrained in their minds and become a part of who they are. The concern must be for the whole person. Our education system must be comprehensively nurture young people socially, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Moral values education is now critically important because it has been so neglected.

Schools can teach moral values without the inculcation of any specific religion. Everyone must become actively involved in improving the moral state of our country. So Americans must insist that the states act on the crucial task of incorporating this aspect of education into each of their school systems. In conjunction with moral values education, it wouldn't hurt to include some instruction on patriotism. America's children need to be taught to love their country. Their education should motivate them to want to serve their country. This would certainly help in the recruiting efforts of our services. The Clinton Administration "Public Service" initiative is a good start.

It is unlikely that every state and every school system will achieve the same standards of moral values education in the curriculum to establish national standards without the federal government getting involved. If the federal government had not intervened, schools in some states would still be segregated. Only the federal government is powerful enough to institute a national standard to change the education system to ensure moral values education is a part of every child's education.

HOW CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HELP?

Skeptics raise two fundamental questions: "Is it possible to secure common agreement on a set of values to teach? Can public schools effectively teach values?" In early America, schools were committed to teaching morality. The function of the school system was not only to perpetuate the society but also to improve it. "In this connection the Educational Policies Commission, in a statement published in 1951, took the position that there is a generally accepted body of values to which the American people subscribe and which should serve as a guide for the school.[23]

Likewise, American schools have always played an important role in teaching children about citizenship. The schools are responsible not only for preparing students for further education and employment, but also for assuring that children grow up to be responsible adults who can get along with

others. As noted earlier, how well the public schools educate children will largely determine the future of America's society.

The Clinton Administration has come on board in emphasizing the need for educational reform. The Administration introduced the Goals 2000 Education Act in March 1994, emphasizing the mastery of a common academic curriculum. Consider this goal: "By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competence over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography." But Goals 2000 should have addressed some type of moral values education, given the current moral crisis America is experiencing. Schools can easily incorporate a core set of values entitled "Characteristics of a good citizen" into the civics or government courses in middle and high schools. Likewise, schools can incorporate a common core of values for pre-school and grade school children written on their levels.

America's policy makers and educators have admitted what has been termed an education crisis. They have attempted to improve performance levels, to encourage more efficient and focused instruction, and to seek greater accountability. At the same time, they have instituted measures that allow families greater participation in the education process.

The same emphasis must be placed on moral values curriculum development. Lawmakers should write into policy provisions for moral values education and make it a required part of educating the nation's children. "Education is a priority for modern societies because it is seen as a means to create a viable unified society with common goals and a shared value system."[24] This seems only reasonable. However, if a common core of values had been taught from K-12, we might not have had as many children committing violent crimes.

> Recent events have shaken the collective conscience of our nation. The murders at Columbine High School in Colorado have brought home to every American the degree to which we are failing our children. The most basic and profound responsibility that our culture—any culture—has is raising its children. We are failing in that responsibility, and the extent of our failure is being measured in deaths and injuries of kids in schoolyards and on the streets of our neighborhoods and communities.[25]

Kenneth Strike of Cornell University argues that America needs to focus attention on the question of what makes for good educational communities. He further states, "Moral traditions are resources for the examined life. Apart from them children are not so much free as they are victims of untutored desire."[26] Strike suggests several activities characteristic of a good education ought to accomplish:

- Every child needs to be initiated into some moral traditions(s) or cultural outlook(s) that provide cognitive resources for reflecting on a good life.
- Every child needs to develop a sense of justice, to be initiated into the civic culture, and to develop the capacity for democratic deliberation.
- Every child needs to be acquainted with and to engage in dialogue with other traditions and cultures. The purposes of this are the development of tolerance and the opportunity to assess one's own culture or moral tradition.

Precisely such activities should be incorporated into every aspect of American life through education in the home, religious community, and school. Once this is done with support of national policy, our educational system will be truly prepared to deliver better citizens to our society.

WHAT CAN THE MILITARY DO?

> Moral courage is a reasoning attitude which enables one to stake career, happiness, his whole future, on his judgment of what he thinks either right or worthwhile...it has to be taught because so few, if any, have it naturally. The young can learn it from their parents (in their homes), from schools and universities, from religion, and from other early influences. But to inculcate it in a grownup who lacks it requires not so much teaching as some striking emotional experience (something that suddenly bursts upon him) something in the nature of a vision or insight. That happens rarely and that's why you'll find that most men with moral courage learnt it by precept and example in their youth.[27]

Clearly, morals must be taught to and modeled for our children at an early age. Those who will serve in the military should have acquired morals at an early age. Values are the heart and soul of the Army. General John A. Wickham, Jr. eloquently asserts their place in soldiers' lives:

> But unlike soldierly skills, ethics and values are more "caught" than "taught." By young soldiers from their leaders and their peers, from the ethical climate that exists in their squads, platoons, and companies. They are "caught" by West Point and ROTC cadets and OCS candidates. They are "caught" by children in families where moral values are lived day in and day out...Schoolroom discussion can never take the place of practical example.[28]

Military professionals rely on a deep tradition of moral values and selfless service because those who serve are prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. The greatness of the military resides in the quality and values of those who serve. Soldiers enrich their lives through the bonds of shared values.

However by the time young people reach the age at which they can serve in the military, their values are formed. By then, it is almost too late to instill the values needed to be successful in any service. This is not to say that the values taught in the military are not beneficial. They are. It takes a lot of work to integrate a new soldier into a highly valued-based institution, but the military makes this a reality every day. It would take less time and resources to train a new recruit if that recruit already possessed the moral fiber needed for military service. Also, the military would not have to discharge so many young soldiers who cannot or do not adhere to military values.

Perhaps the most effective way the military can influence young Americans is to become more active in the civilian community. Military personnel can provide mentoring and be positive role models to set a good example of citizenship, patriotism and selfless service for our youth. By investing this quality time, help instill good moral values in Americans of all ages. The Reserve and National Guard can take an active role in their communities by cooperating with the local school districts in their moral values education programs, just as they now conduct anti-drug education. Positive involvement in the values education of future officer and enlisted accessions will enhance the military's long-term recruiting efforts.

Absent the concerted efforts of our nation to prepare young men and woman for military service, the military should continue to reach those young people who join the ranks through values training and living examples. Americans must do whatever they can to help to salvage their young people while they fight for a policy that will get to the root of the moral crisis in America.

**A PROPOSED EDUCATION POLICY ON MORAL VALUES**

In the United States, education has long been locally controlled, largely free from national control. Some countries like Britain have cast off significant aspects of the local tradition and are moving toward a national curriculum. The United States is trying to induce systematic changes without federalizing education. Rather, the government is creating national standards. This is consistent with current state-control of education. In reality, there is considerable tension between local and national oversight of American public education.

"In matters of curriculum, the federal role has been negligible, by law and common agreement. Although many other nations have a national curriculum and national testing, education in the United States respects the principle of federalism; states have the primary responsibility for what is taught and tested in schools."[29] This is one of the major factors why America is still struggling with how to make public education equitable for all students. America just can't get there from here. Hopefully Goals 2000 will help. The federal government can recommend to the states a curriculum that introduces moral values education. It must, however, mandate standards, if not curriculum, to address the task of alleviating the moral crisis in America. The moral values curriculum must teach the same values throughout the nation. So the federal government must enforce it.

"Education is a priority for modern societies because it is seen as a means to create a viable unified society with common goals and a shared value system. Israel is an example of a modern nation that relies upon the education process to assist in the development of a national spirit to continue principles of collectivism—key visions of its founders."[30] This is certainly a difficult process, but at least the policy makers in Israel are taking on the challenge. The effort here would be even more difficult because of the magnitude of the problem for American society, with its many diverse religions. But it must be done. Judging from the following comments by President Clinton, policy makers have the implied permission to initiate such a policy change for America. "Though schools must be neutral with respect to religion, they may play an active role with respect to teaching civic values and virtue, and the moral code that holds us together as a community. The fact that some of these values are held also by religions does not make it unlawful to teach them in school."[31]

The final repository for public education is the presidency. It is the President who sells the ideas that lead to policy changes. American policy-makers must take on the challenge of instituting a policy that will place into law a national curriculum for moral-values education in our schools if any effort is to be effective and successful. "As a federal program, Head Start could become a testing ground for high educational standards. Federal officials could develop curriculum, focused on school readiness, without

fear of intruding on state and local responsibility."[32] Once federal officials have developed a vision and goals to accomplish the vision, they could develop curriculum focused on moral values education. The vision statement in the form of a policy could be stated as follows:

MORAL VALUES EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

America's schools will place more emphasis on the education of the nation's children in the area of moral values. Moral values education will instill in each child a sense of value and purpose. It will foster a strong ethical framework that will help children resist negative peer pressure. Administrators and teachers will provide for each student a moral, ethical school environment. They will seize opportunities to mentor their students and reinforce moral values education with real life experiences when possible. Administrators and teachers will hold parents responsible to become involved in their students' education. They can do this by creating opportunities for parent involvement. Our goal is develop America's children into citizens who have an unmatched work ethic and a strong sense of values; who treat others with dignity and respect; who thrive on responsibility; who are positive role models for everyone with whom they come in contact. Ultimately America will reverse the decline in morality and enhance the lives of its youth.

PROPOSED SUBJECTS FOR MORAL VALUES EDUCATION

1. All children in America, grades K-12, will receive moral values education, which will include instruction on the following values. The curriculum for each grade level will delineate the values to teach at that level:

- Love
- Peace
- Honor
- Honesty
- Respect
- Self-control
- Self-esteem
- Praise
- Justice
- Courage
- Responsibility

2. All teachers designated to teach moral values education will complete two weeks of training to equip them with the skills they need.

3. Each school superintendent will hire a state chaplain who will serve as a consultant to teachers and assist in planning lessons for the moral values curriculum. The state chaplain will act as a conduit in the community to facilitate acquiring resources and providing counseling for identified troubled children.

4. Every school in America will achieve national standards delineated in the curriculum.

## CONCLUSION

In April 1980, an elite group of U.S. servicemen were assigned a secret mission to rescue Americans who had been held hostage for about six months in Iran. The military equipment employed the latest technology; the participants were highly trained experts; the planners were accomplished strategists. The mission ended in failure, however, because of what can only be termed a tragedy of errors. Multiple equipment failures, a swirling dust cloud, and other factors resulted in the deaths of eight servicemen.

Many good ideas have failed because of poor execution. The only way that we can help rebuild the crumbling foundations of morality in our communities is to plan, prepare, and perform with wisdom and careful forethought. America must develop a strategy that will counter the current culture. How can America do it? By instituting a policy to incorporate moral values training in our schools on a national level.

The President of the United States, as most Americans, admits that there is a need to be concerned about our national character as manifested in the lives of our children. "The crime rate is going down in almost every major area in America today, but the threat of violent random crime among very young people is still going up."[33] In his speech to James Madison High School, he emphasized that the questions about religion in the school take on a certain urgency today for personal reasons and for larger social reasons. The President noted that the old debate that Madison and Jefferson started over 200 years ago is still being spun out today as it relates to what can or cannot be done in our schools:

> There are those who do believe our schools should be value-neutral and that religion has no place inside the schools. But I think that wrongly interprets the idea of the wall between church and state. They are not the walls of the school...The First Amendment does not convert our schools into religion-free zones...We have got to get this right...This country needs to be a place where religion grows and flourishes. Don't you believe that if every kid in every difficult neighborhood in America were in a religious institution on the weekends, the synagogue on Saturday, a church on Sunday, a mosque on Friday, don't you really believe that the drug rate, the crime rate, the violence rate, the sense of self-destruction would go way down and the quality of this country would go way up?...I hope that we can have a partnership with our churches to reach out to the young people who need the values, the hope, the belief, the convictions that come with faith, and the sense of security in a very uncertain and rapidly changing world.[34]

Americans can be thankful that the current Administration has clarified the limitations of the First Amendment regarding religious liberty. They can also be grateful for the goals the Administration published to help correct the shortfalls and inequalities in education. But we can't overlook the fact that clarification of religious liberties and a better education system in themselves cannot rectify the crisis America is experiencing, especially among our young people.

American citizens must protect traditional family values and take a stand for First Amendment liberties. Our vision for America must include a revitalization of the foundational values of this country. The Constitution itself is at stake. Also in jeopardy is our ability to recruit and maintain an all-volunteer force. "A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what

it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about."[35] As concerned citizens, legislators must write into policy and mandate standards for moral values education in our schools to improve the morality of America, thereby making this land a better place to live for everyone. In the words of our President, "We have to get it right."

10,214

## ENDNOTES

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