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POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF A POLITICIZED U.S. OFFICER CORPS

BY

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ABSTRACT

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This paper will investigate the increasing trend of Army Officers to identify themselves with a particular political party, its impact on the military as a trusted institution and its potential to negatively affect the decision-making process concerning our national security. I will examine this issue by first looking at the history of civil military relations in the United States as described in Professor Samuel P. Huntington's classic work *The Soldier and the State*. Next, I will look at the role of General Maxwell D. Taylor in the early stages of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and how his politicization may have muffled the national security policy debate. Next, I will discuss in detail General Colin Powell's development as an officer, examine his service as Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and address critics of the Powell Doctrine and his politicization during the 1992 Presidential Campaign. Finally, I will wrap up the paper by discussing the possible effect the association of the U.S. Officer Corps with a particular political party might have on the creditability of the Officer Corps in making, and the civilian leadership accepting, solid recommendations on national policy to future Presidents.

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PREFACE

I would like to acknowledge the coaching, teaching and mentoring of Dr. Martin Cook, Professor of Ethics at the United States Army War College. Dr. Cook has significantly increased my ability to rationally think through tough issues facing our Army today. On approaching Dr. Cook with the subject for this paper, he focused my research and writing to get at the heart of what I believe to be a significant issue for today's senior level leader in the Army, The Politicization of the Officer Corps. He has insured that the argument is balanced and fair. I have thoroughly enjoyed our many discussions and look forward to his guidance in my future Army career.

Additionally, I would like to thank COL (Ret) Harold W. Lord for his 18 years of mentorship. In my humble opinion he represents what the Army is looking for in its Senior Officers and I have been the beneficiary. He has watched over my development as an officer since I was a no time in grade Captain. He has taught me critical lessons in moral courage and the writing of this paper is but one example.

Next, I would like to thank COL Mark W. Dille. COL Dille's guidance and mentorship during my tour as a Battalion Commander of the 485th Corps Support Battalion, 16th Corps Support Group, have galvanized my thoughts and understanding on standards and discipline within Army units and with the incredible responsibility Senior Officers have for the development of Junior Officers within their command.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife Debbie for 16 plus years of wonderful marriage, three beautiful children and the exceptionally outstanding support she has given me in my Army Career. She is truly one in a million.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF A POLITICIZED U. S. OFFICER CORPS

The 2000 Presidential Election is over, George W. Bush is President with 271 Electoral College votes, having carried Florida by the slim margin of 537 votes following a month long legal battle which ended in the United States Supreme Court.

An ABC News article, dated 15 November 2000, stated "the military are responsible for a large chunk of overseas absentee ballots."[1] Later in the same article, the authors state that the "Republicans have traditionally held the edge in Florida's overseas voters, due to the military."[2] President Bush beat then Governor Clinton, 48% to 33% in the 1992 election among Florida overseas voters and Senator Dole captured 54% of the 1996 Florida overseas vote.[3] A separate news article said that Democratic plaintiffs want about 15,000 overseas ballots to be thrown out in Seminole County, Florida.[4] Why would the Democratic team want to count all the votes in the Florida counties of Dade, Palm Beach and Broward and throw out votes in Seminole? We find the answer later in the article, which stated "An estimated 4,900 [of 15,000] votes would be lost for Gore according to his team. That means as many as 10,000 votes would be lost for Bush."[5] Could it be that the Gore team feared the Florida overseas vote might be against them and that throwing out these votes would swing the election to the Democrats? I submit that without much of a leap in reasoning, one could say that the military overseas vote might have provided the margin of victory that elected George W. Bush President of the United States and the Democrats know it.

This paper will investigate the increasing trend of Army Officers to identify themselves with a particular political party, its impact on the military as a trusted institution and its potential to affect negatively, the decision-making process concerning our national security. I will examine this issue by first looking at the history of civil military relations in the United States as described in Professor Samuel P. Huntington's classic work *The Soldier and the State*. Next, I will look at the role of General Maxwell D. Taylor in the early stages of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and how his politicization may have muffled the national security policy debate. Next, I will discuss in detail General Colin Powell's development as an officer, examine his service as Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and address critics of the Powell Doctrine and his politicization during the 1992 Presidential Campaign. Finally, I will wrap up the paper by discussing the possible effect the association of the U.S. Officer Corps with a particular political party might have on the creditability of the Officer Corps in making, and the civilian leadership accepting, solid recommendations on national policy to future Presidents.

A HISTORICAL LOOK AT CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS.

An examination of the history of civil-military relations in the United States must start with the Constitution. In the Constitution, the Founding Fathers divided power among the three branches of government in order to implement the checks and balances system. This ensured that political power would not be vested in a single individual or group of individuals by dividing and checking power among the three branches of government. Specifically regarding the military, the U.S. Congress and the U.S. President share political power or control over the military. Article I, Section 8 states that "the Congress shall have the power to declare war...to raise and support Armies...to provide and maintain a Navy...to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia." Article II; Section 2 states that "the President shall be the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States and of the Militia of the several states."[6] This sharing of political power creates tension when congressional and presidential ideas and policies collide. Professor Huntington, in *The Soldier and the State* says, "This separation of powers is a perpetual invitation, if not an irresistible force, drawing military leaders into political conflicts."[7] The senior officer must always be aware of this potential conflict. This is not necessarily because the military seeks political power in and of itself. But the congress and the president may seek to increase their political power base at the expense of the other and may use the military as a pawn in the political power struggle. A segment of this drama is played out each year when the four Military Service Chiefs and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff testify before Congress concerning military preparedness and the Presidential Budget.

Prior to the Civil War, the American military tradition can be summed up as a small standing Army fleshed out by citizen soldiers when required, always returning to a small standing Army when the threat had subsided. As the Civil War drew to a close in 1865, the United States entered into a period of peace where industrial business consumed the nation. The nation's elite and businessmen viewed the military as being "actively destructive, pure consumers, parasites living off the fruit of other men's labors."[8] This attitude pushed the military into years of isolation and subjected it to the "...unrelenting hostility of virtually all the American community...."[9] However, this isolation and rejection by American society provided the military leadership the opportunity to withdraw into their own organization, to look critically at themselves as a professional institution and to develop a distinctively military character.[10]

Who were the fathers of the U.S. Army's professionalism? They were General William T. Sherman and General Emory Upton.

General Emory Upton's contributions to American military professionalism were his great works *The Armies of Europe and Asia* and *The Military Policy of the United States*. Upton's

books express the fundamental postulates of a professional military ethic and the need for a strong military force.[11]

General Sherman's most important contribution to military professionalism was "the importance of military education."[12] He started the Infantry and Cavalry schools at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; he reestablished the artillery school at Fort Monroe, Virginia; and supported a complete liberal and technical education for the West Point cadets.[13]

Additionally, Huntington credits Sherman with initiation of the military tradition of political neutrality.[14] "On party politics, Sherman is quoted as saying "no army officer should form or express a [political] opinion.[15] This tradition mostly held firm till after World War II. Of particular note, General Eisenhower did not register to vote until drafted by the Republican party for the Presidency and General Marshall did not vote until after his decades of public service.[16]

I found this very interesting as I pulled out my Officer's Guide, which I was issued on the day I entered West Point in the summer of 1975. It clearly states that:

> It is traditional that the Army member avoids partisan politics. The career officer serves in support of national politics without regard to the political party in power, and with equal zeal in their effective performance. We could not tolerate Republican Officers and Democratic Officers with a vast switch of positions with each change of party in national power. Loyalties go to the nation and to its form of government.[17]

World War II saw a change in the political influence of the military. This came with President Roosevelt putting the country into a total war effort. The nation poured everything it had into the execution of the war and the defeat of Germany and Japan. "The Joint Chiefs of Staff became, next to the President, the single most important force in the overall conduct of the war."[18]

By the end of the war, the Joint Chiefs were firmly planted in the role of advisor to the President and this advice was not limited to just military matters. This was in large part due to the migration of officers who served in World War II moving into political appointment positions within government which were normally held exclusively by civilians.[19] General Marshall as Secretary of State and later Secretary of Defense is but one example.

However, as time moved away from World War II, the influence of the Joint Chiefs receded to policy concerning national military policy. During the Truman administration, the Joint Chiefs were used to backstop or be public advocates for President Truman's national security policies. This is contrasted with the power and prestige of the Eisenhower Presidency, during which he preferred and received silent public support from his Joint Chiefs of Staff for his

national security policies.[20] It is interesting to note that both Army Chiefs of Staff during the Eisenhower Presidency, General Matthew B. Ridgway and General Maxwell D. Taylor, had trouble accepting the Eisenhower national security policy of massive retaliation.

The crux of the issue was the immorality in the policy of massive retaliation and the associated downsizing of the Army. Both officers cut short their time as Army Chief of Staff, preferring the option of honorable retirement over continued uniformed service which required public support before Congress for a policy they did not personally support. On retirement, both officers eventually went public with their dissent. General Maxwell D. Taylor wrote the book, *The Uncertain Trumpet,* in which he outlined his opposing security strategy of Flexible Response. This then sets the stage for the next segment of this paper, General Taylor's role in the early stages of U. S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

GENERAL MAXWELL TAYLOR, THE KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION AND VIETNAM.

As the Kennedy Administration entered office in 1961, he asked America youth to "begin anew", "pay any price" and "bear any burden" to extend the virtues of their country to the rest of the world.[21] Kennedy came from the next generation and contrasted with the older generation of men who ran World War II. H. R. McMaster observed in his book *Dereliction of Duty* that "Kennedy's personal style influenced the way he structured the White House staff to handle national security decision making."[22] McMaster makes the following assessment and conclusion with regard to the Kennedy national security policymaking team:

> [Kennedy] regarded the Eisenhower National Security Council (NSC) structure as cumbersome and unnecessary. Immediately after taking office, he eliminated the substructure of the NSC by abolishing its two major committees: the Planning Board and the Operations Coordinating Board. In place of the formal Eisenhower system, Kennedy relied on an ad hoc, collegial style of decision making in national security and foreign affairs. Under Eisenhower, military officers connected with the JCS were assigned to the Planning Board and the Operations Coordinating Board. Through these representatives, the JCS could place items important to the military on the NSC agenda. During NSC meetings Eisenhower considered differing opinions and made decisions with all the Chiefs in attendance....Kennedy's structural changes and his practice of consulting frankly with only his closest advisers...diminished the voice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in national security matters.... [The] Joint Chiefs lost the direct access to the President, and thus the real influence on decision making, that the Eisenhower NSC structure had provided....Diminished JCS access to the president reflected Kennedy's opinion of his senior military advisors...Kennedy viewed the Eisenhower JCS with suspicion.[23]

This suspicion was made worse during the Bay of Pigs crisis. The Bay of Pigs was a holdover Eisenhower CIA operation involving a Cuban exile force for the purpose of

overthrowing the Castro government. Kennedy allowed the Cuban exile force to invade, but decided against U.S. air cover. The result was a disaster, 100 killed in action and 1200 taken prisoner.[24]

Embarrassed in the first months of his administration, unable to trust his JCS, Kennedy looked for a military officer whom he could trust. He found that officer in retired Army General Maxwell D. Taylor. Taylor, as was mentioned before, had retired as Army Chief of Staff because he was unable to support the policies of the Republican Eisenhower Administration. Taylor's book, *The Uncertain Trumpet*, outlined the policy of massive retaliation as "reciprocal suicide" and put forth an alternative of flexible response.[25] Kennedy believed that Taylor was a man he could work with.

McMaster states, "Taylor's ideas were evident in Kennedy's first presidential address on defense policy."[26] Kennedy brought Taylor back on active duty at Taylor's retirement rank of four stars with the title of Military Representative to the President. A short time later, Kennedy reassigned General Lemnitzer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to the position of Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, dissolved the position of Military Representative to the President and assigned General Taylor as Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

We now have a senior military officer who had honorably retired due to his inability to serve under the policies of a Republican administration. As was his right as a retired officer, General Taylor makes critical statements in a published book of his former Commander in Chief's national security policy. He receives laudatory comments from a Democratic President concerning his critique of the Eisenhower Administration's national security policy of massive retaliation and acceptance of his counter proposal policy of flexible response. Following the Bay of Pigs crisis, General Taylor accepts an offer to return to active duty in a job that clearly interposes himself between the President and the JCS. Next, he accepts appointment as the Chairman, JCS, when Kennedy pushes out General Lemnitzer.

I have no issue with General Taylor's serving in the Kennedy Administration as a retired officer. Quite the contrary, I believe, as a civilian, he could have acted as a calming force in the tension that existed between the Joints Chiefs of Staff and President Kennedy. What I have issue with is his return to service as an uniformed officer after having taken a clearly partisan political stance. Taylor was part of the Kennedy political team. The Chiefs' saw Taylor's return to active duty, Lemnitzer's reassignment and Taylor's eventual acceptance of the Chairmanship, as a threat. Taylor broke every rule of the profession designed to ensure the President gets solid apolitical military advice from his JCS.

His return destroyed the mechanism the President has to ensure communications with his most senior military advisors. Now Kennedy only heard what he wanted to hear and Taylor seemed content to give it to him. This interjection of a politically declared active duty officer into the national security decision making structure muffled the opinions of the JCS and significantly contributed as a root cause of defective decision making at the national security policy level during the Vietnam War.

GENERAL COLIN POWELL AS A MODEL SOLDIER-STATESMAN.

Now I will examine General Colin Powell, Chairman of the JCS. Specifically, I will look at the two major events of downsizing the Armed Forces and the conduct of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm in order the answer the question: Is General Colin Powell a model soldier statesman? Next, I will address some criticisms of General Powell's Chairmanship with respect to the application of the Powell Doctrine and his participation in the policy debate of U.S. involvement in Bosnia during a Presidential Campaign.

Any discussion of General Powell as a strategic leader and soldier-statesman would be lacking without a presentation of some biographical data on his life and Army career. General Powell was born and raised in the Harlem section of New York City to Jamaican immigrants in 1937.[27] He graduated high school and attended the City College of New York (CCNY).[28]

As a junior officer he had a rather normal career path serving in Germany as a platoon leader, company executive officer and later as a company commander. As with most young officers in the early 1960s, General Powell served his first of two combat tours in Vietnam as an advisor to a South Vietnamese Infantry Battalion.[29] On completion of his first combat tour, he returned to the United States and attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.[30] After graduating second in his Leavenworth class, he was off to another tour in Vietnam.[31] It was here that the Army recognized him as a potential standout among his peers.

While assigned as a battalion executive officer of an Infantry Battalion, he was selected for duty as the Division Operations Officer (G-3) over many senior officers.[32] On completion of his second tour, General Powell was selected to attend the George Washington University in order to study for a Masters Degree in Business Administration.[33] Having been recognized as a standout in Vietnam, General Powell was nominated to compete for, and was ultimately selected for, the White House Fellows Program.[34] Following a short tour in the Pentagon working for General DePuy on the future of the Army following the Vietnam War he was off to the Nixon Administration. This single event lead to a series of assignments and friendships, all

of which were out of the mainstream Army, but all if which were critical to his development as a future strategic leader and soldier statesman.

General Powell served his White House Fellowship in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the mentorship of Mr. Frank Carlucci and Mr. Casper Weinberger.[35] General Powell was then assigned tours as an Infantry Battalion Commander in Korea, a student in the National War College, and as an Infantry Brigade Commander at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.[36]

While at Fort Campbell, General Powell was called to Washington for duty as a Military Assistant to Mr. John Kester, Special Assistant to both the Deputy Secretary and the Secretary of Defense in the Carter Administration. Following the election of Ronald Reagan as President, General Powell was asked to stay on as Military Assistant to the incoming Deputy Secretary of Defense, Frank Carlucci, and was promoted to Brigadier General.[37] Next, he served a one-year tour as the Assistant Division Commander for the Fourth Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. This was followed by a short assignment as the Deputy Commander of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas[38] before Washington called again for duty as the Military Assistant for the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Casper Weinberger and promotion to Major General.[39]

He stayed in this job for three years overlapping the back-to-back Reagan Administrations. He was held back from command of a Division and jumped to a three star command of Fifth Corps (V Corps) in Europe. He stayed there only a short six months before being personally recalled to Washington by President Reagan to again work for Mr. Frank Carlucci.[40]

Mr. Carlucci had just taken over as the National Security Advisor for President Reagan following the Iran-Contra scandal. Shortly thereafter, when Mr. Weinberger resigned as the Secretary of Defense and Mr. Carlucci took his place, General Powell was elevated to the position of National Security Advisor to President Reagan.[41] He held this position till end of the Reagan Administration. He received his promotion to four star rank and command of Forces Command in Georgia.[42]

Again, this command was short lived, because President Bush and Secretary of Defense Cheney recalled General Powell after only four months in command to become the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.[43] On retirement he chose to head the non-profit organization for American youth "America's Promise."

Returning to public life, GEN Powell has publicly stated his political party preference as Republican and has been sworn in as Secretary of State in the George W. Bush presidential administration.

Now we know how General Powell got to the position of Secretary of State, let's looks at an assessment of his performance as a soldier statesman. I will examine two major events for the United States Armed Forces that occurred during General Powell's career. First, the conduct of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm and second, the draw down of troop strength following the end of the Cold War.

To examine his ability as a soldier statesman, some analysis of his career outlined above is in order. Since General Powell was promoted to Colonel, he has spent at least eight years working in the inner circles of political power. Most of that time he worked for Frank Carlucci and Casper Weinberger. He, more than any other officer of that time, developed a trusting relationship with the main power brokers of both the executive and congressional branches of government during the Gulf War. He was well connected with the decision-makers. General Schwarzkopf summed up General Powell's position within the Administration with this comment:

> ...There is no doubt in my mind that General Powell was the best man for the job during this crisis [The Gulf War]. Not since General George Marshall... had a military officer enjoyed such direct access to the White House inner circles---not to mention the confidence of the President.[44]

There is not doubt that General Powell's ability as a strategic leader was greatly enhanced by his significant clout within the inner circles of the administration and that this influence enabled him to persuade and lead his peers through the crisis.

During an meeting of the National Security Council considering options for the Gulf War, General Powell asked the group of assembled leaders "...if it was worth going to war to liberate Kuwait? Before we start talking about how many divisions, carriers and fighter wings,...we have to ask 'to achieve what end?'"[45]

We see that General Powell had a full understanding of the employment of force to achieve political ends. He combined his political knowledge with his military experience to insure that President Bush was able to describe accurately the political objective and end-state for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. With that end-state articulated, he then went about supporting a methodical and measured increase of economic, political and military pressure to get Iraq out of Kuwait. His goal was to bring as much national power he could muster to bring an end to the Gulf War.

General Powell insured that the required resources in terms of troops and materiel were available to General Schwarzkopf to enable him to prosecute the war with minimal involvement from Washington. On the basis of this analysis, one can easily say that General Powell meets any litmus test for soldier statesman with respect to his strategic leadership in the Gulf war.

Now let's examine the General Powell's leadership in the draw-down of the Armed Forces following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In his autobiography, General Powell stated that, when he entered his Chairmanship:

> I started to crystallize what I really wanted to accomplish as the Chairman...my thoughts were guided by what I had observed in world summits, by my experience as the National Security Council, and by what I like to think of as informed intuition.[46]

Using this method to develop a vision, General Powell crafted what would eventually become known as the "Base Force".[47] He defined the Base Force as the "smallest force that could meet our world responsibilities".[48] General Powell was on a mission for the nation and its security. He knew that "unless we came up with an overarching strategy to guide reductions, the Pentagon's political enemies were likely to come at us with a chain saw".[49]

He developed a political campaign plan to win over the military, congressional and executive branch bureaucracies. He used every bit of persuasive ability available to him and finally won approval from the President. Thus, General Powell again exhibited the qualities of a soldier statesman by having a clearly defined vision and the peer leadership skills necessary to achieve it.

In order to provide balance to my discussion of General Powell, it is necessary to address some of the critiques that have been levied against General Powell by the some academic and media elite.

Retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General Bernard Trainor made the following point during the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies panel discussion on Colin Powell as JCS Chairman.

> [The Vietnam conflict] scarred Colin Powell as it did most of the officers of his grade...They felt the politicians did not have clear objectives concerning the use of force and they wasted not only force, they wasted a lot of effort, and most of all they wasted a lot of lives...[The Powell Doctrine states] we should use overwhelming force in order to achieve a decisive outcome, always have an exit strategy, and emphasize low casualties. Each [tenet] is noble in it own right. However, if you apply them rigidly and literally, you will never use military force. There seems to be a tendency of Colin Powell to be an ultra conservative in this regard. He seems to favor setting military force aside and using it separately from diplomacy, whereas traditionally, military force has been the steel fist inside the velvet glove of diplomacy. The result is some what of a paralytic effect on the conduct of foreign policy and the use of military force by the President of the United States...I would submit that this is not in the interest of the republic yet this legacy is very much alive in the Pentagon today.[50]

New York Times national security correspondent Michel Gordon also made comments with respect to the Powell Doctrine during the same John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies panel discussion on Colin Powell as JCS Chairman.

> [The Powell Doctrine] I think is, simply put, that the purpose of military force is to win a decisive victory and if you are not certain that you are going to win a decisive victory, you do not take the field. Above all, the image of the American military is to be protected...I think the danger in that sort of doctrine, and the way is does not work to the interest of the United States, is that is very risk averse approach. Applied rigidly, it can amount to an all or nothing doctrine that hobbles American military power.[51]

The charge then boils down to the claim that the Powell Doctrine restricts the President in the conduct of foreign policy. I agree with General Trainor and Mr. Gordon, but only with the qualifier of rigid application. It ensures that we involve ourselves in potential military conflict only when our vital national interest are at stake and the will of the American people has been solidified. Thus we keep faith with the American people and our soldiers.

Richard Armitage sums up General Powell's application of the Powell Doctrine in this way "his reluctance [to use military force is] the personification of an American ideal. That ideal is: slow to anger, but decisively deadly when obliged to employ violence."[52]

Therefore, the issue is not the Powell Doctrine itself, but how it will be applied in terms of defining vital national interest and gaining the support of the American public. The Powell Doctrine places this responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the President and his administration. Making a case to the American people that military action is in their best interest is admittedly a tough test, but one that is absolutely necessary to ensure national policy stays in touch with the American public.

The final charge against General Powell I would like to discuss was briefly discussed in an article by Christopher Hitchens called "Powell's Secret Coup" and a paper by Christopher P. Gibson and Dr. Don M. Snider for the John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies entitled "Explaining Post-Cold War Civil-Military Relations: A New Institutionalist Approach." Both the article and the paper make the point that the timing and subject of General Powell's October 8, 1992 op-ed article "Why Generals Get Nervous" pushed the line of insubordination.[53] [54]

In this op-ed piece, General Powell discussed his rationale for not getting involved in Bosnia. Agreement or disagreement with General Powell's position in the article is not the issue. The issue was that the article was published one month before the 1992 presidential election in which the current Bush policy toward Bosnia was "Stay Out" and the stated Clinton policy was lifting the embargo on military supplies to the Bosnian Muslims.

Gibson, Snider and Hitchens indicate that Powell publication stepped over the bounds of insuring the military stays apolitical. On this point I have to agree. The article had to have been cleared by the Defense Department Public Affairs Office prior to printing to insure it was in accordance with current administration policy, true. But the timing and subject clearly smacked of a sitting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff taking sides over an issue, which was already politicized by the two presidential candidates.

What does this do for future Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs? I believe this has the potential for each succeeding president to be suspect of the military's loyalty, especially if the President is a Democrat. I will examine this further in the next section of the paper.

POLITICIZATION OF THE MILITARY OFFICER CORPS.

There are numerous books and articles in publication today that speak of a gap between the military and American Society. They base most of this assessment on trends in data and overt behavior of officers in uniform which indicate the officer corps is very much willing to openly associate themselves with the Republican party in the United States.

This, is of course, in direct contravention to the passage I quoted from the Officer's Guide earlier in this paper. In this section, I want to highlight some of these voices and using the examples of General Taylor and General Powell, draw some conclusions about the future effects that might lie ahead for the Officer Corps and our national security.

Thomas Ricks wrote on this subject, both in his book *The Making of the Corps* and his article "The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society." In the book he states:

> ...changes are occurring in American military culture, the most notable being the relative politicization of the officer corps. There has, of course, always been a conservative streak inherent in U. S. military culture, just as there has always been an element of antiauthoritarianism inherent in American journalism. But today's officers appear to be both more conservative than their predecessors and more politically active.[55]

In the article he continues this theme with the assertion:

> The military appears to be becoming politically less representative of society, with a long-term downward trend in the number of officers willing to identify themselves as liberals. Open identification with the Republican Party is the norm.[56]

Ole R. Holsti also wrote on this subject in an article published in *International Security* entitled "A Widening Gap between the U. S. Military and Civilian Society?" Unlike Ricks, who makes the conclusion that the U.S. Officer Corps is more conservative and politically active while admitting that the evidence to support this conclusion is "skimpy,"[57] Holsti uses data from

five surveys covering the twenty year period of 1976 to 1996 from the Foreign Policy Leadership Project to show the following results: A 34% increase in officers willing to identify themselves with the Republican Party; A 5% decrease in the number of officers willing to identify themselves with the Democratic Party; A 24% decrease in the number of officers identifying themselves as independent.[58] From this data, Mr. Holsti, concludes:

> Each of the six FPLP surveys asked respondents: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?" Their answers...provide very strong support for Rick's thesis of growing partisanship and identification with the Republican Party among the military.[59]

Finally, Richard H. Kohn, former Chief of the Office of Air Force History wrote a scathing assessment on the politicization of the American Military in an article that appeared in the *National Interest*, in 1994 entitled "Out of Control The Crisis in Civil-Military Relations" in which he stated:

> The U.S. Military is now more alienated from its civilian leadership than at any time in American history, and more vocal about it. The warning signs are very clear, most noticeably in the frequency with which officers have expressed disgust for the President [Clinton] over the last year. When Clinton visited the carrier Theodore Roosevelt, the Atlantic Fleet commander had to arrive at the ship beforehand to assure a proper reception. The Air Force Chief of Staff had to issue an open demand to his service to respect the President and for proper behavior to be accorded him-and still had to retire a two-star general for disparaging remarks made in public. At the Army's elite Command and General Staff College, a respected Congressman was...greeted by "catcalls" at the mention of the President [Clinton]....When Senator Strom Thrumond was introduced for an award at the Association of the United States Army last Fall [1993], and the speaker noted Thrumond's change of party from the Democrats to the Republicans in 1964, the audience burst into applause, an open sign of just how partisan the military has become in the last generation.[60]

In light of the above comments the American academic and media elites have put the military on notice that we may be in an era of civil-military relations that is not healthy for national security policy debate and decision-making. I agree.

Now let's look at General Taylor and General Powell. Clearly, General Taylor stood on sound principle when he decided to retire as the Army Chief of Staff rather than to continue to serve in uniform while not supporting President Eisenhower's policy of massive retaliation. However, after retirement and as was his right as a retired officer, he engaged in partisan politics by openly disagreeing with the Eisenhower policy and promoting his own theory of flexible response. This is perfectly acceptable.

It is his willingness to put back on his uniform after taking a partisan political stance that I have issue with. I believe that General Taylor could have best answered the call of duty by

serving as a retired officer in a civilian capacity. His acceptance of the offer to put back on the uniform and assume duties as the Military Representative of the President marginalized the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was made worse when he accepted the Chairmanship.

In my opinion, his behavior appears to have been self-serving rather than self-sacrificing and contributed to the muffling of the national security debate within the Kennedy administration.

General Powell presents a slightly different problem. He served in Washington from 1969 to 1993 with the exception of four relatively short troop assignments, served at the National Security Advisor to President Reagan and presided over the 100-hour war in Iraq. He is possibly the greatest American military hero since Eisenhower, MacArthur and Bradley of World War II fame.

His ability to work the political system in Washington is perhaps unrivalled by any other serving or retired military officer. But for all the great things that occurred under his watch as Chairman, these successes are somewhat diminished by his open participation in the political debate on U. S. policy in Bosnia during the 1992 Presidential Election. Although technically correct, this was in my opinion a clear partisan act and incompatible with our military ethic.

So what does this mean to the current officer in uniform? The writing is on the wall before us. Some say the highly republican military vote put George W. Bush over the top in the pivotal Florida election. The American Press has put the officer corps on notice of a gap in civil-military relations when a Democrat assumes the Office of President and the military leans towards the Republicans.

Our Officer's Guide puts participation in partisan politics as out of bounds for active duty military officers. In my view, if we continue down this road, our creditability will be called into question every time a Democrat is either elected to the White House or the Democratic Party controls the House of Representative or the Senate. This clearly does not serve our nation's best interest.

I believe that each officer gave up the right to participate actively in partisan politics when he took the oath as an officer. We must stand by this oath. Our creditability as an institution depends on it.

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ENDNOTES

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