

Statement
to the
House Armed Service Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
on
Twenty Years Later: Professional Military Education
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Introduction

My first encounter with the subject occurred in the over forty years ago when I investigated the views of the people who founded the military establishment in the 1780s and 1790s on military education.

Since then, PME has been a continuing interest and involvement, from teaching in these institutions, training some of their faculty, consulting to their leadership, serving on visiting committees and boards, discussing their mission and operation with officers and civilians on their faculties (a few of whom were my own graduate students), to discussing the subject in my courses on civil-military relations and American military history.

Mission

The mission of these institutions has not changed since their founding in the 19th century: to educate officers in the waging of war. Pre-commissioning (the academies, ROTC) aims to provide basic military training, a college education for lifelong learning and for a career in the profession of arms, an introduction to the culture of a particular armed service, and preparation for leadership at the tactical level of war, that is, leading men and women in small units in combat or in organizations that support combat units. Intermediate service school (ISSBthe staff colleges and follow-on year programs such as SAMS, SAASS, and SAWS educate at the

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operational level of war, preparing officers for command and staff work in the larger units and military formations that fight battles and campaigns. Senior service school (the six war colleges) educate at the strategic level for leadership in major commands, theater staffs, and higher government military and civilian agencies whose purpose is to plan and lead military campaigns that achieve national policies and purposes.

Over time the emphasis in these institutions should shift further away from training (instilling specific knowledge or skills) to education: the ability to identify assumptions, ask the right questions, recognize reality through in the flood of information and uncertain evidence, engage in deep analysis, apply innovative methodologies, think critically, and formulate original solutions to difficult, ambiguous, and sometimes intractable problems.

I believe that PME at every level has largely improved in the last forty years but has not reached the standard of qualityBin insisting on rigorous and precise thinking and writing, and in challenging studentsBprevalent in the civilian professional schools to which the armed services aspire, and to which they often compare themselves. The impediments lay rooted in the way students are selected, the qualifications and backgrounds of the faculties, the organization and leadership of the schools, and to some degree their culture and that of the armed services.

Below I outline these problems and propose some remedies.

Pre-Commissioning Education

On the basis of many visits and presentations, training some of their faculty in graduate school, and serving on some consulting committees, the three military academies seem the strongest leg of the PME system. They provide a basic college education, and in recent years have upgraded the academic experience with honors programs, study abroad, and other

enhancements.

Unlike the staff and war colleges, they insist that their faculties have rigorous academic training in the subjects they teach in residence at some of nation=s finest graduate schools. West Point and Colorado Springs, under prodding from the Congress, have increased the percentage of civilian professionals, and Annapolis has begun sending officers for PhDs in civilian institutions. All grade their students on every academic and military activity and publish a ranked order of merit on graduation that determines assignment to duty.

Yet Army and Air Force still entrust the bulk of instruction to officers of little or no academic experience, and masters level training, on the grounds that role modeling trumps depth of disciplinary expertise and experience. All three cram character development, required physical and military training, and extra-curricular activities into a proscribed four year curriculum. All three overemphasize engineering, reflecting 19th century origins when war was largely an engineering problem and American predilection for waging high tech, capital intensive warfare.² None possess anything approaching the range and number of courses and

²The great novelist James Michener told the story of Afour of us@in the Navy being Ataken into a small room@ at the beginning of World War II. AA grim-faced selection committee asked . . .>What can you do?=@ and the [first] man replied, >I=m a buyer for Macy=s, and I can judge very quickly between markets and prices and trends.= The selection board replied, >But you can=t do anything practical?=@ The man said no, and he was shunted off to one side. The next man was a lawyer and . . . he had to confess, >I can weigh evidence and organize information,=@ and he was rejected. . . . But when the fourth man said boldly, >I can overhaul diesel engines,=@ the committee jumped up, practically embraced him, and made him an officer on the spot. At the end of the war . . . the buyer from Macy=s was assistant to the Secretary of the Navy, in charge of many complex responsibilities requiring instant good judgment. He gave himself courses in naval management and government procedures until he became one of the Nation=s real experts. The lawyer wound up as assistant to Admiral Halsey, and in a crucial battle deduced where the Japanese fleet had to be. . . . I was given the job of naval secretary to several congressional committees who were determining the future of America in the South Pacific. And what was the engineer doing at the end of the war? He was still overhauling diesel

disciplines comparable civilian colleges offer. In an age when the United States has finally recognized that war is more of a human than a technical, scientific, or engineering phenomenon, no academy possess an anthropology or sociology department. As one friend who rose to three stars to superintend his service=s academy said years ago, when asked whether he had read a certain basic military text in college: Ayou know I didn=t go to college, Dick; I went to the _____ Academy.@ The academies have the same quality of students as the best colleges and universities in the nation, and they provide outstanding training for junior officers. However my personal experience is that their graduates are not as prepared for graduate school as their civilian counterparts. Military students certainly learn how to manage their time, comply with authority, cut corners, and game requirements, but they seem not to be afforded the time or space to pursue the intellectual interests on which a college education depends. Too many times over the years I have heard knowledgeable people remark that while academy graduates by and large exceed their civilian peers in discipline, work efficiency, and sense of responsibility, they seem often to lack emotional and intellectual maturity.

To improve the education, enrich the college experience, and make both more relevant to the profession of arms today, the academies should:

B Increase civilian professional faculty, only one-third of whom should be retired professional officers, in order to diversify approaches and perspectives and upgrade the experience and expertise of faculty in their subject matter.

B Require more O-6 officers with PhDs at the Air Force and Naval Academies, teaching

engines.@ James A. Michener, *A Michener Miscellany, 1950B1970* (New York: Random House, 1973), pp. 52, 54.

within the departments as opposed to serving in institutes, centers, administration, or other capacities, to expand and diversify the military experience of cadre, provide more mature mentoring of students, and increase the collegiality of departmental culture.

B De-emphasize engineering both in required courses and number of majors, the latter not to exceed fifty percent of each graduating class.

B Institute departments of, or majors in, anthropology with a required course in cultural anthropology.

B Require proficiency in at least one foreign language to the extent of fluency, with at least one course in the history, politics, literature, or culture of a country or a region where that language is primary.³

B Bring the procedures for tenure, promotion, and faculty review up to the standard of comparable civilian institutions. Specifically, institute outside disciplinary review of every department at least every ten years; outside review for every tenure and promotion action whether internal or at appointment; periodic (at least every five years) review to include Board of Visitors and outside disciplinary members, and a study of the command/academic climate for the reappointment of academic department heads.

My experience with ROTC extends back some forty years with cadets and midshipmen

³To its credit, the Air Force Academy has expanded its language and culture capabilities by hiring 17 new foreign language instructors and nearly doubling foreign language class enrollment and cadet foreign exchange programs since 2005. The Academy has also dramatically increased participation in language and culture immersion trips, from 82 cadets in 2005 to more than 400 cadets in 2008" and expects 600 in 2009. *The United States Air Force Academy Self-Study Report Prepared for the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Spring 2009: Executive Summary*, p. 5 (accessed May 15, 2009).

taking my courses. For eighteen years I served on the faculty committee that oversees ROTC programs at UNC (fourteen as chair of the committee). I observed ROTC during the 1980s when I was Chief of Air Force History for the USAF and served on the TRADOC Commander's Advisory Committee on Military History Education, and during 1995-2001 when I served on the Air University Board of Visitors.

ROTC is perhaps the weakest PME program in the Department of Defense, reflecting its priorities first as a recruiting program, then as an orientation/training/indoctrination tool, and last as an educational effort. Courses are decidedly inferior in substance and difficulty to those of the host civilian institutions, rarely offering much academic challenge; the services impose standard content and materials nationwide to be used equally in the best Research I universities and lesser regional state colleges. Recently the Air Force abandoned the use of a history of air power course at UNC-Chapel Hill, taught for credit by a retired USAF reserve officer PhD in military history, because his course (so popular and well taught that it regularly attracts over 200 undergraduates) lacked the specific content of the regular AFROTC curriculum. ROTC standards are lax; a recent study showed grades in Army ROTC at UNC in two recent fall semesters averaged 3.91 and 3.82 on a four point scale, high even for Carolina's grade inflation (which is in line with national trends).⁴ Across the board, faculty drawn from active duty or retired officers are inferior to civilian colleagues in knowledge, expertise, and teaching experience; Carolina has rejected many ROTC nominees because they lack the minimum college

⁴Educational Policy Committee, A Grading Patterns at UNC-CH, 1995-2008: Annual Report to the Faculty Council, @ Final Report April 22, 2009, pp. 8, 15, <http://www.unc.edu/faculty/faccoun/reports/2008-09/specialrepts/2009EPCFinalReportonGrading-04-22-09.doc> (accessed May 16, 2009).

grades (3.0 average) that would qualify for admission to our graduate degree programs, believing that it should not appoint to the faculty people who would be rejected to the graduate school. All of this leads the best schools to deny graduation credit for most ROTC courses. All of this engenders in the best students disrespect for the services, their values and people and their intelligence and seriousness.

The remedies for ROTC center on upgrading the faculty and the curriculum.

B Substitute for courses taught by cadre, courses offered for credit by host schools using their own or adjunct faculty with professional credentials in subjects that fit into their regular disciplinary offerings, specifically leadership, history, and international relations, as is already done by the army and navy for military/naval history.

B Upgrade the faculty by making ROTC duty comparable in status to operational and staff assignments.

B Require senior ROTC faculty to have graduate degrees in residence from civilian institutions comparable or exceeding in quality the schools of their duty assignments; if younger officers are assigned lacking in graduate degrees, they should be required to be accepted and enroll in residential (not distance or online) graduate programs at or near their duty stations and complete the degrees during their tours.

B Require the leadership of ROTC units, and their superiors, to have served tours as faculty either in ROTC or at a military academy; just as the services assign commanders only with prior experience in the branch or function, they should not assign officers to command or administer in education if they possess no faculty experience.

Intermediate Service Schools

My experience with staff colleges and their follow-on year-long programs (SAMS, SAASS, and SAWS) began in the 1980s when as Chief of Air Force History I visited Air University frequently, and visited and lectured at Leavenworth. I served on committees advising commanders at both institutions, then in the 1990s served on the Air University Board of Visitors, and from then until today made presentations at the staff colleges and SAASS.

The staff colleges vary in length of residential programs and in quality more than schools at the other PME levels, from interesting and relevant courses, heavy reading loads, demanding assignments, extensive writing requirements, and experienced, high-quality faculty to lesser quality activities and weaker faculties. Graduate students whom I have advised, who have attended or taught at these institutions, and my own observations in visits beginning in the 1980s for lectures and panel discussions, lead to the conclusion that while rigor and work loads have improved over time, most of these schools operate well below the demanding level of comparable civilian professional schools.

Although I have not done a detailed study of staff college curricula, their relevance to the operational level of war seems uncertain. Some work seems remedial in nature; some topics, such as strategy, or high-level civil military relations, while relevant to the profession of arms, seems less appropriate for ISS, which should focus on higher level staff work, and command, planning, and the other functions necessary for large formations of land, naval, and air forces to operate in combat and contingencies around the world in different types of wars and greatly varied circumstances. First and foremost students need to learn the technical business of operating their armed forces in different environments. They should be upgrading their personal language fluency and familiarity with the countries and cultures of that language, learning to

cooperate with other government agencies and allied military forces, and becoming familiar with military operations among civilian populations.

Students are chosen for the resident courses with little regard to academic background, ability, or even interest in higher education by selection boards convened by the personnel divisions of each service, overwhelmingly on the basis of the officers' military experience and promise for higher rank. In civilian graduate and professional education, acceptance rests in the hands of the schools, which set their own standards, and focus on applicants' academic achievement and capability, and suitability for the course of study and the profession.

Faculties vary greatly in quality. A few are extraordinarily accomplished officers with strong operational and/or academic backgrounds. Some are civilians with outstanding academic credentials and accomplishments. At some of the schools, however, too many are active duty officers without classroom experience or expertise in the subjects they must teach, or are retired officers lacking strong academic training, hired for their availability and compatibility with military or service culture. In some cases they would not qualify as students in their own institutions. Course directors and department heads are almost always active duty officers with less education, experience, and expertise than their civilian colleagues.

As a result, the burden of work falls unequally. Furthermore, faculty are distracted by incessant meetings to prepare everyone in the group for a lesson, or by additional duties such (such as escorting guest speakers) that should be assigned to support staff.

The most damaging result of weak faculty, however, is that classes are not carried on at the level of graduate education. Thus students who are among the most accomplished and energetic in their year groups lose interest, and even more disturbing, respect for the curriculum,

the work, the school, and ultimately intellectual effort and PME itself. This would be bad enough, but it is aggravated by the fact that many students approach PME as relief from the pressures of operational duty, or as Atime off@ to reconnect with their families, or as schoolwork to be endured with as little effort as possible, in the name of advancing their careers. Too few accept PME (beyond rhetorical acknowledgment) as part of the larger continuum of professional development that includes varied assignments and self-study. In these instances, PME reinforces the general anti-intellectualism that characterizes the officer corps.

Commandants are often chosen with no prior experience in higher education except as students. The military is usually careful to appoint to command only officers who have the appropriate knowledge and experience. The army and marines would not appoint a logistics officer to command an infantry battalion, the navy a supply officer to command a warship, the air force an intelligence officer to command a fighter wing. Nor would the best civilian universities or professional schools appoint presidents or deans who had no experience teaching or leading in higher education or professional practice in the field of endeavor. Yet all the services regularly put inexperienced flag officers in command of PME institutions, often as a final assignment prior to retirement. Some attempt change for its own sake or for career recognition, or pursue enthusiasms based on their experience as students; others are placeholders who either out of lack of interest or understanding fail to recognize, investigate, and address the problems in their schools.

Deans, if empowered by their commandants, might provide the leadership but often do not command the respect or have the authority to institute changes, or are limited by the availability of competent faculty, or are constrained by outside requirements imposed by JPME,

their services, accreditation, or budget. Unlike at the academies, they do not, by and large, seem to rise from the faculty but rotate in on assignment because of an academic credential.

To address these problems, the Subcommittee should consider the following:

B Institute minimum entrance requirements set and administered by the schools, to include minimum scores on the graduate record examination and service/subject matter expertise, to assure that students have the capability and preparation to complete a rigorous course of study.

B Institute application procedures set and administered by the faculties of the institutions, to include a short essay by each applicant on what they expect, and wish, to achieve in ISS, to assure that entering students have the motivation to take seriously intermediate PME, beyond enhancing their chances for promotion.

B Change service personnel procedures to make uniformed faculty assignments comparable in status and promotability to the best operational and staff duty.

B Prohibit assignment to the faculty of officers who would not/did not qualify for assignment to take the course in residence as active duty officers, whether they have academic credentials or not. The bottom 25 percent of officers should not be teaching the top 25 percent.

B Prohibit the hiring of faculty from the ranks of retired officers with academic credentials unless they completed ISS in residence while on active duty or in reserve status, again to prevent the bottom half of the officer corps teaching the top half

B Recruit civilian faculty from the academic world in disciplines related to the subject matter taught at the staff colleges; there is a significant overhang of highly trained, competent, professional teachers and thinkers seeking employment who need only to be oriented to the

armed services, their cultures, and the particular specializations needed to be taught. But they must be pursued at the beginning of the academic year using the same hiring processes used in civilian academe, including using personal inquires to the major training programs and attendance at professional meetings, and applying the same standards of quality: the demonstrated excellence in their field based on evaluation of their scholarship and teaching ability rather than their military experience and personal compatibility.

B Institute permanent tenure under the same standards, procedures, and timetables as occurs in civilian higher education. Tenure is commonly misunderstood to lead to the accumulation of dead wood in academic institutions. Indeed the evidence is quite the contrary: the decision on whether to tenure an individual after a period of probation (commonly six years) forces a comprehensive examination of accomplishment, quality, fitness, and promise, and then a very tough-minded decision on Aup or out,@ that leads to a much higher quality faculty. The tiny percentage of faculty in higher education who slough off after achieving tenure are caricatures in popular literature and public imagination. When Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner transformed the Naval War College into an outstanding institution of higher education in the early 1970s, he did it by hiring an outstanding faculty, and retaining it with academic tenure.

B Assure seriousness of purpose by grading students on a competitive basis with rank order of merit at graduation, to be part of their personnel record and to shape their duty assignments following graduation.

B Require commandants and deans to have prior faculty experience at ISS level along with proper academic credentials; deans should be active duty officers chosen from the faculty after demonstrated accomplishment as teachers, leaders, and scholars in their discipline or field.

B Merge the faculties of the staff and war colleges, and SAASS, at Air University so that expertise in subject matter can be shared appropriately and leveraged to strengthen instruction in all three schools. Civilian institutions rarely separate faculty in the same disciplines and fields into separate colleges or schools. In Arts and Sciences, for example, faculty profess their subjects to freshmen, advanced PhD students, and all in between; in medical schools, to entering med students and senior fellows who have already completed their residencies; at the Newport, one faculty teaches both staff and war college students.

Senior Service Schools

My contact with the war colleges has been more extensive than the academies and staff colleges: service as a visiting professor at Carlisle in 1980-81 and 2006-07, adjunct at National War College 1985-1990, dozens of lectures to include all six war colleges to the present, as well as many discussions over the years with faculty, deans, and commandants.

The war colleges seem to have improved more than schools at the other levels, particularly with improved faculty: more outstanding civilians, more military with terminal degrees in their fields, and when hiring retired officers, choosing the strongest in terms of operational and academic experience. Few seem to be drawn from active or retired officers who lack teaching experience, proper academic credentials, or prior military careers that would disqualify them for attendance at their schools as students. The war colleges seem to nurture, support, and reward faculty research, understanding the intimate connections between rigorous thinking, precise writing, publication, expertise, and outstanding teaching.

The weaknesses in war college education lay elsewhere and to some degree mirror weaknesses at the staff colleges.

The students, very much the elite slice of officers at O-5 and early O-6 levels selected by service personnel procedures, usually come directly from command or the most demanding staff jobs, expecting less pressure and to work less. Almost invariably they are greeted by the most senior officers of their services telling them exactly that, immediately undercutting their determination to make the most of the year and the faculty's ability to demand rigor, focus, and determined effort. There are no entrance requirements other than career accomplishment and promise, so the variations in preparation force instruction to the lowest common denominator. While they are graded, there is no rank order of merit on graduation; no one can fail or flunk out. All of them leave with a spotless record—war college certification and a master's degree. By the spring nearly all are focused on their next assignment and eager to get on with it. Yet amazingly, a very large percentage of them retire within four years, calling into question their selection and the value of the year's study.

The curricula, while more demanding and relevant than in years past, does not focus on or teach the formulation of strategy, nor like professional schools in business, law, and medicine, does it use the case study method except sparingly. Many subjects are taught through theory, which while helpful to these practical, get-it-done men and women of action, does not necessarily prepare them for the higher level of war making or political-military intercourse they will encounter in the rest of their careers. Here the strength of the faculty, the increasing curricular requirements imposed from the outside, the weak backgrounds of the commandants, and the powerlessness of the deans can be a disadvantage. These faculties tend to be much more stable, sometimes to include former deans; from long experience they often have strong views on what should be taught and how, and they are skilled at resisting change or reshape requirements,

particularly when their department heads are active duty O-6s who lack the same level of expertise or experience, and rotate in and out of their positions for a few years. War colleges can be insular and even parochialBmore so than civilian professional schools, in the same way that the military more generally is isolated from the rest of society, although these differences can be overdrawn.

The weaknesses in the teaching of strategy have been manifest in American military performance since World War II. While the navy and army war colleges concentrated on teaching, understanding, and formulating strategy before 1941, with the outstanding results

The same weaknesses of the commandants at staff colleges apply to war colleges. In cases where appropriate flag officers are not available, war colleges could appoint retired flags with outstanding military and academic careers for five year terms once renewable, or even civilians with the appropriate backgrounds. All institutions, but particularly military organizations, benefit from outstanding leadership.

Many of my recommendations for strengthening the war colleges match those for the staff colleges:

B Institute minimum entrance requirements set and administered by the schools, to include minimum scores on the graduate record examination and service/subject matter expertise, to assure that students have the capability and preparation to complete a rigorous course of study.

B Institute application procedures set and administered by the institutions, to include a short essay by each applicant on what they expect, and wish, to achieve in SSS, to assure that entering students have the motivation to take war college seriously, beyond enhancing their

chances for promotion.

B Strongly encourage commandants to drop guest lectures from four-star officers unless directly relevant to specific topics in the curriculum; too many of these presentations are superficial tours of what's going on in their commands and include gratuitous comments about the value or seriousness of purpose of PME.

B Change service personnel procedures to make uniformed faculty assignments comparable in status and promotability to the best operational and staff duty.

B Recruit civilian faculty from the academic world in disciplines related to the subject matter taught at the colleges using the same procedures, and standards, extant in the best of civilian academe.

B Institute permanent tenure under the same standards, procedures, and timetables as occurs in civilian higher education.

B Assure seriousness of purpose by grading students on a competitive basis with rank order of merit at graduation, to be part of their personnel record and to shape their duty assignments following graduation.

B Require six years of active duty after graduation as a condition for attending war college in residence.

B Require commandants and deans to have prior faculty experience at SSS level along with proper academic credentials; deans should be active duty or retired officers, or civilian academics, chosen from the faculty after demonstrated accomplishment as teachers, leaders, and scholars in their discipline or field. The Subcommittee ought seriously to consider making commandant/president/command positions at the war college level three-star billets lasting three

to five years without the possibility of promotion afterward, or civilian positions.

Other Considerations

Abolishing the Academies (and ROTC). The military academies and ROTC could be replaced by competitive scholarships that students could take to the college or university of their choice, probably at substantial savings to the government.⁵ The academies began during the 19th century when the country lacked many institutions of higher education and none in engineering; today the United States possesses the best and most comprehensive system of higher education in the world. ROTC originated in the 19th and early 20th centuries when the country relied on citizen soldiers for national defense and needed to build a large mobilization base of national guard and reserve officers.

A system of national scholarships, awarded on merit by competitive examinations and interviews, would attract a broader slice of American youth to the military and perhaps to military careers, and reduce the isolation and separation of the military from society. Students might serve in the enlisted ranks in the reserves during college to learn military service, and train during summers.

What would be lost to the military establishment, among other things, would be the regular infusion of officers with civilian in-residence graduate education (the faculties), the special introduction to military culture that the academies provide, and the storied tradition of the academies which serve important functions of cohesiveness and identification inside each of the armed services. Furthermore, graduate programs in military history and national security studies

⁵I suggested such a system in *AAAn Officer Corps for the Next Century*, @ *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Spring 1998, p. 80 footnote 3.

would shrink, diminishing both the size and the quality of those degree programs to the detriment not only of the services, but American higher education and thus society in general.

Civilian Graduate Degrees in Residence. The longstanding emphasis on civilian graduate degrees for officer education and advancement has in recent years been diluted in two ways: first, by the granting of MA/MS degrees by the staff and war colleges, and second, the proliferation of online, on base, and correspondence programs designed for the armed services. These square-filler degrees lack the depth, rigor, comprehensiveness, requirements, faculty, and overall quality of the better residential graduate and professional education. Graduate education on campus throws officers into close interaction with civilian youth and peers in ways active duty personnel rarely experience; the degree programs challenge their assumptions, develop originality and methodological sophistication, and bring to the services the most recent findings and methodologies in fields of study and disciplines of value to the military establishment. The personnel systems of the services should be encouraging in residence civilian educational assignments; Congress should fund them and consider making them an important consideration for promotion to flag rank.

Distance Education. Online courses can be very useful for imparting knowledge but is less effective in teaching critical thinking and other skills. Students in residential ISS and SSS programs could use them to reduce class time and learn such things as the interagency process, the geography of the national security bureaucracy, and the like, thus supplementing regular instruction. I was surprised and impressed when I compared the army war college distance education and in-residence curricula in the spring of 2007. The distance courses were equally substantive and demanding, the product of a remarkable director who was empowered by his

dean to reform and strengthen the distance program. Such programs have inherent limitations, however. Not only do they lack the benefit of personal interchange and Socratic interaction prevalent in residence, but they require a very large faculty to communicate regularly with students for discussion, grading, and feedback, and thus offer little or no savings of cost.

Student Research in PME. The introduction of honors programs at the academies and original research requirements at the staff and war colleges has improved their curricula immeasurably. These assignments teach critical thinking, good writing, rigor, and precision. Equally important, writing a thesis or paper based on original research prepares officers to recognize poor conceptualization, sloppy thinking, inadequate research, and weak analysis and thus improves staff work and command decisions throughout the services. However, supervision of research makes the recruiting of highly trained, widely experienced, and best quality faculty all the more indispensable to PME.

Conclusion

If the problems of PME institutions arise from their structure, organization, and culture, these largely derive from their context in the military: an atmosphere of isolation from, and suspicion of, American society in general and the academic world in particular. Many observers have noted over the years the anti-intellectualism of the officers corps even in its highest ranks. Furthermore, while it would be convenient to blame the operational tempo of the services for problems in staffing these colleges, these problems long antedated the current overseas campaigns and the struggle against terrorism. The real source lies buried in the personnel systems

of the armed services: the rigidity of proscribed careers, the privileging of operational experience and command for promotion, the rigid qualifications for assignments, and the assignment patterns themselves. Officers with extensive civilian graduate school and faculty duty are always at a disadvantage in promotion, often purposely penalized for their time in education.

Many longtime observers of PME believe that few of these problems can be fixed from the inside, for the services have other priorities and largely lack leaders in their flag ranks at who care about PME or recognize its deficiencies. Nor is the civilian leadership in the Pentagon likely to dent such a widely dispersed and decentralized system, even if senior leaders had the time and inclination to devote attention and resources.

PME has not yet attained the level of quality recommended by Chairman Skelton's report of the late 1980s, which is still the most comprehensive and penetrating study of the issues. Indeed in the last twenty years the two influences that have strengthened PME the most have been the Skelton Report (and his personal attention in the years following), and the drive for masters degrees at the staff and war colleges, which has forced the upgrading of faculties in order to qualify the degree programs for accreditation.

Thus the ultimate answer to strengthening PME likely lies with Congress. I hope this statement assists in the effort.