

THE

NCO



Backbone of the Army



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INTRODUCTION

Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh, Jr. and Chief of Staff GEN Carl E. Vuono have designated 1989 the "Year of the NCO." The Pentagon Library has prepared this bibliography and list of quotations to commemorate the Army's Theme. The books, articles and quotations have been selected from the resources of the Pentagon Library.

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QUOTATIONS

- ✓1. I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh.

MATTHEW 8:9

2. He is to be vigilant, temperate, active, and readier to execute the orders he receives than to discuss them; strict in exercising and keeping up proper discipline among his soldiers, in obliging them to appear clean and well dressed and to have their arms constantly polished and bright.

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378

- ✓3. The choice of non-commissioned officers is an object of the greatest importance: The order and discipline of a regiment depends so much on their behavior, that too much care cannot be taken in preferring none to that trust but those who by their merit and good conduct are entitled to it. Honesty, sobriety, and a remarkable attention to every point of duty, with a neatness in their dress, are indispensable requisites... nor can a sergeant or corporal be said to be qualified who does not write and read in a tolerable manner.

BARON VON STEUBEN
REGULATIONS FOR THE ORDER
AND DISCIPLINE OF THE TROOPS
OF THE UNITED STATES
1779

4. If a selection of good sergeants and corporals be made by the officer at the head of the regiment, and if that officer will only allow those individuals to do their duty, there is not the least doubt that they will do it.

UNKNOWN BRITISH SERGEANT
PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN
c. 1812

- ✓5. The backbone of the Army is the non-commissioned man!

RUDYARD KIPLING
THE 'EATHEN
1896

- ✓6. Any officer can get by on his sergeants. To be a sergeant you have to know your stuff. I'd rather be a outstanding sergeant than just another officer.

GUNNERY SERGEANT DANIEL DALY
USMC, 1873-1937

- ✓7. There should be no question about the importance of the NCO; unless he is well trained, highly disciplined, loyal, and a keen leader you can expect very little from that organization. He must be good.

GEN GEORGE C. MARSHALL
MEMORANDUM FOR COLONEL
A. ROBERT GINSBURGH
21 JUNE 1941

- ✓8. Unless each officer and noncommissioned officer has capabilities greatly in excess of the responsibility he holds, he is basically an unprofitable part of the military machine.

GEN OMAR N. BRADLEY
MILITARY REVIEW
JANUARY, 1950

- ✓9. The American soldier is a proud one and he demands professional competence in his leaders. In battle, he wants to know that the job is going to be done right, with no unnecessary casualties. The noncommissioned officer wearing the chevron is supposed to be the best soldier in the platoon and he is supposed to know how to perform all the duties expected of him. The American soldier expects his sergeant to be able to teach him how to do his job. And he expects even more from his officers.

GEN OMAR N. BRADLEY

- ✓10. The sergeants -- the NCO chain of command -- prepare, conduct and evaluate individual training. Noncommissioned officers are thus at the heart of the Army training system, for individual training is the primary responsibility of the NCO corps. It is what I call sergeant's business.

GEN DONN A. STARRY
MILITARY REVIEW
May, 1978

- ✓11. The noncommissioned officer corps has reearned the title of "the backbone of the Army." Sergeant's work must be that of training our soldiers so the officers and senior commanders can do their jobs of planning and organizing our future operations.

SMA WILLIAM A. CONNELLY
ARMY
OCTOBER, 1978

- ✓12. I learned at the very outset of my career that the NCO corps was the real backbone of the Army both in unit and staff.

GEN RICHARD G. STILWELL
SOLDIERS
NOVEMBER 1985

FOOTNOTES TO QUOTATIONS

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