

PART III. MODERN TIMES

CHAPTER IV -- LET THERE BE LIGHT

Oh, somewhere in this favored land, the sun is shining bright,  
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light;  
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,  
But there is no joy in Mudville -- mighty Casey has struck out.

From Ernest Lawrence Thayer's  
"Casey at the Bat"

"Go RA?" choked the purple-faced Corporal as he impaled his tormentor on a furious forefinger "I spit in the Army's mess kit! Save that re-enlistment crap for Simple Simon. You couldn't bribe me to stay in this lousy squirrel cage for all the gold in Fort Knex."

He wasn't kidding.

Neither was he an isolated sorehead incapable of adjusting to military life.

Instead, he represented an appallingly large slice of enterprising young men fed up with the Service long before the end of their first hitch. Swarms of them annually made a bee-line for Separation Centers at the precise moment when their training just was beginning to pay off. Uncle Sam's investment went with them.

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It took the Army the best part of 20 years to work its way into this morass. Policy-makers couldn't hope to winch it out overnight by waving their arms and braying "Abracadabra!"

As it happened, they got a convenient assist from the Cordiner Committee, which was convened in March 1956 to look into more effective means of managing military manpower in all U.S. Armed Forces.<sup>1</sup>

The first findings, published a year later, disclosed that enlisted retention rates were "inadequate to either build or maintain a balanced work force," and that "the point of service at which improved re-enlistments would provide the maximum gain...is at the end of the (first hitch)." To counteract this trend, Cordiner strongly recommended "more stringent controls at both the initial and career re-enlistment points to (eliminate) individuals having lower mental, physical, proficiency and conduct standards than those established as 'desired minimum'."<sup>2</sup>

Good advice. For years, recruiting and re-up campaigns had logged nothing but Maggie's Drawers.

Madison Avenue soft-sell techniques may glamourize deodorants, tranquilizers and sanitary napkins, but they're unlikely to lure many red-blooded young bucks to the profession of arms. Gray flannel suit cuties weren't satisfied with anything as gauche as "JOIN THE ARMY AND BE A MAN." Their posters lisped "Pick Your Branch." "Pick Your Theater." "Pick Your Job." "Fick Your Nose." Do anything but soldier or serve. Daddy Warbucks will pick up the tab.

Who were we tryin' to hoodwink?

The "something for nothing" approach pictured an Army without soul or guts. It sucked in free-loaders who were here today and gone tomorrow, without having contributed anything but headaches -- but

you can bet your fur-lined jungle boots that it attracted precious few prospective career NCO's burning to excel with the bayonet, literally or figuratively.\*

Having cornered the market on patrol leaders who couldn't make contact with Jayne Mansfield in a telephone booth, The Greatest Show on Earth then proceeded to retain every buffoon within sight or hearing who wasn't actually simple-minded, while genuflecting before squiggily lines on multi-colored charts. Quality meant little; quotas were the thing. It wasn't necessary to do anything right. It was only necessary never to do anything wrong, avoid stepping on any tender toes and follow the path of magnificent non-entity into infinity. Future President Kennedy's inspiring plea, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country,"<sup>4</sup> would have been considered a farce.

Come-ons at Fort Bragg, the world's biggest airborne post, yawped "DON'T MISS YOUR BIG ONE. UNCLE SAM GIVES AWAY THE BIG ONES.. ..UP TO TWO THOUSAND OF THE PRETTY GREEN BILLS" (Figure 15).<sup>\*\*</sup>

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\* The Draft was even worse. Congress had decreed that anyone salvaging 10 points or more on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) was welcomed for induction. Mental Category IV (not the same as AGCT Class IV during World War II), comprised of intellectual refuse, had a ceiling of 31. Of all the Services, only the Army was obliged to rely on Selectees -- and thus got all of these dunces. To avoid embarrassment at rejecting volunteers one day and drafting the same men the next, Army enlistment standards deliberately were set low.<sup>3</sup>

\*\* Figure 15 actually was distributed at Fort Bragg in 1964, not 1957, but it exemplifies the type literature in use at that time.

Stick in your thumb and pull out a plum and say, "What a good boy am I!"

Hogwash.

We asked for mediocrity.

And we got it.

The nation was stunned in July 1957, when LTG Bruce Clarke dramatically revealed that nearly 28 percent of his vaunted Seventh Army, NATO's primary bulwark along the Iron Curtain, comprised untrainable eightballs in Mental Category IV. This was no news to the Pentagon -- the Army-wide proportion was 28.2. One apple in every four was rotten.<sup>5\*</sup>

Suddenly, squatter's rights no longer prevailed, and we began to unload unacceptable homesteaders.

"Engine Charlie" Wilson's decision at this time to cut the military establishment by 100,000 officers and men -- half of which were Army -- gave DCSPER the necessary boost.<sup>7</sup> Recruiting and reenlistment standards were jacked up substantially,<sup>8</sup> and commanders everywhere were ordered to board soldiers who were below par mentally.<sup>9</sup> More than 66,000 were ditched in FY 58, followed by 25,000 more the next year.<sup>10</sup>

Three cheers! We done it at last.

Naturally, any such purge requires judgment and common sense. Regulations recognized this. Waivers were granted Regular Army

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\* In 1957, 23 percent of Navy enlisted men were in Mental Category IV, the USMC had less than 20 percent, and the Air Force an enviable 14.<sup>6</sup>

enlisted men in grades E-4 through E-7, provided they registered a passing score in any one of the Army Classification Battery Aptitude Areas (instead of the usual three), and provided they were CK'ed by The Adjutant General himself. Men with more than 15 years active and honorable service could hang on for a 20-year retirement, regardless of grade, as could winners of the Distinguished Service Cross or Silver Star and wounded combat veterans; Medal of Honor holders had a job for life.<sup>11</sup>

With a few exceptions, the clean-up worked well.

As always, pigeon-chested personnel officers peering through perforated punch cards with their Spec Four Witch Doctors sometimes fancied themselves as Jesus come to cleanse the temple, and waivers were wrapped in miles of red tape. Some jokers who read all the ink blots right slipped through; a few loyal, hard workers got dumped.

"Old Army" First Sergeant Wayne Jendro wistfully recalled the type -- like his gunner, who couldn't read nor write, but "could make a lot of Joe Colleges look sick when it came to applied math. He never did know what the hell the mil formula meant, but when we wanted a man on the base piece for some split-hair shooting, he was our man." And he longed for a grease-smearing Motor Sergeant who "had doctored every model of tank since the Mark VIII. He and his illiterate mechanics could make some sort of medicine with pliers and wire that kept more vehicles off deadline than any outfit in the Motor Park."<sup>12</sup>

All of us have known soldiers like these, but they're not nearly so numerous as we're led to suspect. After this laundering, the Army was in vastly better shape than it had been for years.

Nevertheless, having been burned, and burned bad, personnel planners still hadn't learned their lessons. They waited for the mid-1960's before realizing belatedly that the Army can't appeal to potential enlisted leaders with early morning bird calls or Tasmanian basket weaving, and that they had to pay more than lip service to the need for superior sales people.

Phoenix began to rise from the ashes in October 1964, with the activation of a U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) at Fort Monroe, Virginia.<sup>13</sup>

This unremarkable action produced some fairly remarkable results. By relieving the six Army Area Commanders of all recruiting responsibilities and concentrating the world-wide program directly under Department of the Army, it paved the way for uniform advertising, counseling, enlistment and processing tactics, as pertain to volunteers. Non-prior service men are the principal target.<sup>14</sup>

USAREC soon proved to be big business, embracing 1041 outlying stations and nearly 8,000 personnel, including more than 2,200 pitchmen -- 450 of whom were added to the force within the past year. Thirty percent of the \$28,616,000 FY 66 budget went directly for recruiting.<sup>15\*</sup>

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\* 44 percent, the lion's share, supported 74 Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Stations, the remainder went for overhead and other odds and ends.

To justify this sprawling outlay, USAREC must pay off big, in value as well as volume. The headquarters staff freely admits that "initially, there will be some growing pains," but they express considerable confidence and enthusiasm that they'll snare more than a quarter of a million eager young converts this year.<sup>16</sup>

Which is a large order, considering wide-spread anti-Vietnam student rallies on major campuses across the country; teach-ins, wherein prominent educators, clergy and lawyers advise unwashed undergraduates how to beat the Draft; defections to Canada; public Draft card burnings; wholesale deferments for intellectual bums and professional athletes; 1,001 publications extolling ways to evade conscription (some of which are baldly displayed at Brentano's Book Store in the Pentagon); political gymnasts; conscientious objectors; and semi-traitorous tightrope walkers who prefer jail to obligated service.<sup>17-24</sup> Green Beret Captain Charles Q. Williams, winner of a Medal of Honor at Dong Xoai, and now head of the Special Warfare Center's Special Forces Procurement and Re-enlistment Office, may find that he has just begun to fight.<sup>25</sup>

But he won't have to go it alone.

Seduction techniques have come so far since USAREC launched its offensive that it's hard to believe that less than three years have elapsed since Recruiting magazine burbled, "The 'Soldier -- Key to Landpower' theme has been applied to a new promotion program by the Office of the Chief of Information, Department of the Army (in coordination with) the Pure-Pak Division of the Ex-Cello Corporation of Detroit (Figure 16):



SOLDIER -- KEY TO  
 LANDPOWER  
 ...wherever he goes  
 MILK and ICE CREAM  
 GO WITH HIM

"Recruiters in the field can avail themselves of this new public information tool in fulfilling their missions....(but) to get the greatest benefits....will have to pursue an aggressive communication program with representatives of the milk industry."<sup>26</sup>

All this parody lacked was the electrifying punch line, "Add five zero quarts of tutti-frutti, and fire for effect!"

Today, USAREC peddles slick paper publications which please the eye and challenge friends to advance and be recognized.

Like The Mark of a Man. "Only an 'Action Guy' can qualify to wear the insignia of the combat arms. How do you stack up as an 'Action Guy'?"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Am I man enough to take a new direction and give up the old routine?"	Yes	No
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"Am I in tough physical condition -- able to take a rugged outdoor life?"	Yes	No
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"Am I able to think for myself in a tight spot?"	Yes	No
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"Am I a good team player, when teamwork counts the most?"	Yes	No
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"If you can answer 'yes' to these questions, chances are you can qualify as a combat soldier....Combat. That's what the Army is

all about. Since Valley Forge, Gettysburg and 'Pork Chop Hill', the Army has had just one purpose: to fight the land war and win it.... Sound rough? It's no picnic. That's why it takes a man -- a big man -- to carve a career out of the blued steel of combat soldiering."<sup>27</sup>

Great -- if we followed through.

As yet, we don't. USAREC's growing pains are showing.

Part of the Recruiting Command's mission is "to establish and maintain liaison with educators and associations at the national, state and local level."<sup>28</sup>

There are many ways to do this, but one permanent method, on file in high schools and colleges from coast-to-coast, is the half-inch-thick U.S. Army handbook for civilian teachers, guidance counselors and students entitled Army Occupations and You.<sup>29</sup> Of its 160 pages, only 10 are devoted to combat arms, and a single 74-word paragraph pertains to NCO's. The remainder of the book extolls virtues of specialties ranging from food service, prosthetics and animal care to utilities and data processing. All of this is necessary and praiseworthy, but the tail is wagging the dog.

USAREC special emphasis programs include OCS, the Army Nurse Corps, warrant officer male nurses, WAC's and a high school graduate specialist attraction -- but nothing, repeat nothing, for NCO's.<sup>30</sup> Pamphlets and brochures respond to this set-up. Drums beat a tattoo on street corners for physical therapists and yo-yo champions, but it's a rare recruiter who button-holes prospective clients and growls, "Hey, kid. How'd ya like to be a leader of men? Like me?"



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4. Recruiting Sergeant charms another bird from the trees. Most likely a Specialist bird. The manual in hand gives scant thought to potential leaders.

As for retaining non-commissioned wildcats once we've got 'em in uniform, recent re-enlistment rates register a healthy improvement since the post-Korea low that sparked Cordiner's investigation, but we've still got a fur piece to go:<sup>31\*</sup>

	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965**</u>
Regular Army				
1st Term	23.8%	22.2%	27.9%	27.1%
Career	86.8	89.2	84.4	84.7
Draftees	20.1	11.2	3.6	10.0

These naked numerals, of course, scarcely tell the whole story.

Re-up percentages aren't standard across the board. First term rates, for Draftees as well as RA, are lowest where the training investment is high in relation to time and money expended. This is a prime reason behind retention efforts heavily weighted in technical areas.

Excessive turn-over of high quality personnel can be traced to causes that are pretty much unchanged since Cordiner wrote his report. Most of these are divorced from Army-generated policy, and are largely beyond Army control: temptations of civil employment; inadequate pay; enforced absence from family; and unsatisfactory on-post housing, despite stepped-up Capehart construction.<sup>33</sup>

However, not all issues can be side-stepped so glibly.

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\* Over-all re-enlistments (not just first terms) were down to 18 percent in 1954.<sup>32</sup>

\*\* First two quarters only.

For Cordiner also found "that lowered non-commissioned officer prestige not only adversely affected the re-enlistment intentions of senior career personnel, but that it....removed the goals and incentives for a first-term man to advance and make a career."<sup>34</sup> Over this, the Army does have control. But progress is terrapin slow.

Finally, symposia of six-stripe enlisted men cited lack of full respect and confidence for commissioned troop-leading in general, and for junior officers in particular -- short-term, inexperienced youths "continually preoccupied with 'getting out' and 'going home'."<sup>35</sup> This problem's not yet been licked, nor is it likely to be until the current mania for centralizing responsibility and authority is compromised or completely resolved.

As always, though, there are at least two sides to the story. Here and there are nagging indications that, in some instances, re-up rates may be too high.

During the first quarter of 1964, Sergeants at Fort Bragg hogged the Provost Marshal's blotter: 41 percent of all traffic violations -- not for noisy mufflers, but drunken driving, leaving the scene of accidents, speeding in excess of 20 mph over the listed limit and fatal, or near fatal collisions -- and a whopping 13 percent of all felonies. Assault. Larceny. Rape. Homicide.<sup>36</sup> More recently, in three widely-separated tactical outfits overseas, NCO's rang up something like 15 percent of all courts-martial and entries in Unit Punishment Books.<sup>37-39</sup>

Representative?

Maybe not. Army-wide statistics on this score are very closely held.

But viewed in context with the seedy soldiers too often seen on pass, swashbuckling buccaneers festooned with belts of gritty machinegun ammunition, grubby area police, wretched correspondence and the backlog of equipment deadlined through abuse, it seems likely that a sizeable minority of non-commissioned pygmies have been catered to too long.

Cordiner had a solution, which in essence said "up or out." His committee viewed each newcomer as "a probationary candidate for the hard core, career establishment, (whose) capabilities, adaptability, physical and mental limitations and other appropriate factors must be put to rigid test early in the first period of service." Those men retained, they said, must "possess qualifications which clearly indicate an ability to progress to the upper level of the occupational structure, or be readily retrainable....where a requirement exists."<sup>40</sup>

Driving home the last nail, Cordiner stressed that "no new legislative authority is required to achieve this objective....This is a management problem. It must be faced realistically."<sup>41</sup>

If the Army continues to follow those guidelines, it can't go very far wrong.



UNCLE SAM GIVES AWAY THE BIG ONES—  
DOLLARS BY THE THOUSANDS!

YES, UNCLE SAM DOES THE BIG GIVEMAY-DOLLARS BY THE THOUSANDS!!!!!!!!!!  
EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT THE BIG RE-UP BONUS, UP TO TWO THOUSANDS OF THE  
PRETTY GREEN BILLS—BUT HOW MANY KNOW ABOUT THE THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS  
AVAILABLE IN SURVIVOR BENEFITS??

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE: THE 24 YEAR OLD WIDOW OF AN SFC COULD, PROVIDED  
SHE REACHED THE NORMAL LIFE SPAN OF 72 YEARS OF AGE, RECEIVE IN SUR-  
VIVOR BENEFITS MORE THAN SEVENTY NINE THOUSAND  
DOLLARS WITH CHILDREN IT WOULD BE MORE.!!!!

BONUS AND SURVIVOR BENEFITS ARE JUST TWO OF THE BIG ONES. FOR THE  
FULL PICTURE, SEE THE MAN IN THE KNOW:

YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR

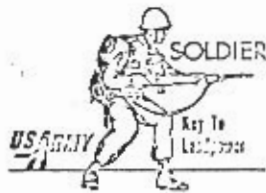


ARMY



FIGURE 16

# MESSAGE ON THE MILK CARTON



## US ARMY



*A New Promotion Program  
That Can Help  
The Army Recruiter*

**T**HE "SOLDIER — Key to Landpower" theme has been applied to a new promotion program by the Office of the Chief of Information, Department of the Army. Developed in cooperation with the industrial community, it should help the Army recruiter in his program.

The project is the result of a cooperative effort by the Industry Relations Branch of the Office of the Chief of Information and the Pure-Pak Division of the Ex-Cello Corporation of Detroit, Michigan, manufacturer of milk packaging equipment.

With the cooperation of Pure-Pak, a series of six art variations have been developed on this Army theme to be used on paper milk cartons. The artwork was prepared by the Vertol Division of the Boeing Company, prime contractors for the Army's Chinook helicopter. It focuses attention on the importance of the individual soldier to the security of the country, no matter how sophisticated and modern the military equipment used by the Army. Different pieces of military equipment are utilized on each of the six pieces of the artwork. Pure-Pak has made a set of six artwork plates available to the major paper converter companies that prepare milk cartons for the dairy industry. Dairy companies are encouraged to cooperate with the Army. Only those companies that have been specifically authorized by the Army will be permitted to include one of the six designs on their milk cartons when they order.

**SOLDIER-KEY TO  
LANDPOWER  
... WHEREVER HE GOES  
MILK and ICE CREAM  
GO WITH HIM**

THIS ATTRACTIVE artwork is one of six designs that will appear on milk cartons in the new Army promotion program. Others will be shown in forthcoming issues.

communicating with the individual da

To make the project as effective as possible, the liaison officers will cooperate with Army recruiters in the field to request their assistance. A determination can be made through such communication as to the specific aspects of the program that they can work together in order to produce maximum public information benefits. Recruiters, in order to get the greatest benefits from the program, will have to pursue communication programs with representatives of the military and addresses of liaison officers are listed. They do not show