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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013
Student Detachment

IN REPLY REFER TO:

AWCST

22 September 1969

Major General Richard T. Knowles
Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for
Military Operations, USA
Washington, D. C. 20310

Dear General Knowles:

Like all others who have trod these scholarly paths, I am faced with the pleasant task of writing an individual research paper on the subject of officer professionalism, and I am pleading for assistance. My research efforts here at the college have not been too fruitful, particularly in the areas covered by this questionnaire. I have concluded that although the subject is a familiar one there has been more said about it than appears on a printed page. In order to obtain the most professional opinion on these subjects, I have chosen to restrict the sampling to those general officers who have experienced command in Vietnam. Although this number is rather small, I believe the findings will have greater validity if obtained from those general officers who have had recent, first-hand experience. Your opinions on the following questions would therefore be deeply appreciated--and doubly so if you could provide them by the end of October. Although the college believes in the theory of flexible response, it does not apply this doctrine to the deadline date for completion of student theses.

1. The following questions require only a yes or no answer; however, qualifying comments are invited.

a. Does the current system of training officers provide the necessary skills to meet the increasingly varied and complex duties required of officers in the modern environment? (Yes) (No)

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b. Is there a significant difference in the attributes required to perform successfully as a commander, staff professional, or specialist? (Yes) (No)

c. Should each officer acquire a specialty in addition to his branch qualification? (Yes) (No)

d. Did you have some good staff officers in the grade of lieutenant colonel whom you believe could not function successfully as a battalion commander? (Yes) (No)

e. Conversely, did you have some good battalion commanders whom you believe could not function successfully in a key staff position? (Yes) (No)

f. Did you have any field grade officers to indicate by word, action, or inaction that they did not want command? (Yes) (No)

g. Did you have any field grade officers whom you did not consider qualified for a command or a key staff position? (Yes) (No)

h. Were any of your battalion or brigade commanders members of a formal specialist program? (Yes) (No) (Unknown)

i. If the answer to the above question is yes, did they perform successfully? (Yes) (No)

j. Did your combat service support commanders take less time to reach peak efficiency than your combat arms commanders? (Yes) (No)

k. Do you believe that a generalist in one of the combat arms should be promoted to flag rank without having first proved his ability to command at the field grade level? (Yes) (No)

l. Does the current system of promotion and selection to senior service colleges induce some officers to seek command or key staff jobs just to get it on their record? (Yes) (No)

m. Do you believe that the average officer could perform successfully in a number of the formal specialist programs after having received the normal training? (Yes) (No)

n. Is there an ability level of command beyond which a particular officer may not proceed? (Yes) (No)

o. Do you believe there is a way of forecasting command performance prior to actually testing the officer in the assignment? (Yes) (No)

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p. Reference Questions 1b and 1d above: If you conclude that an officer can be an outstanding staff man and a poor commander, do you believe that a low efficiency rating for a command assignment should prevent the officer's normal advancement in staff area or specialist field?

(Yes) (No)

2. What percent of your brigade and battalion commanders performed:

- a. Outstandingly? 80 percent
- b. Satisfactorily? 20 percent
- c. Unsatisfactorily? percent

3. Of those commanders who performed unsatisfactorily, what do you believe to be the most common cause? (circle those applicable)

- a. Lack of overall competence in the officer concerned.
- b. Lack of recent troop experience of the officer concerned, although the officer was basically competent.
- c. Was not a fighter.
- d. Failed to achieve favorable results.
- e. Moral turpitude.
- f. Others.

4. As a general rule technical and administrative service officers receive more training directly related to branch qualification. Compared to the combat arms staff officer, these officers function: (circle one)

- a. More efficiently.
- b. About the same.
- c. Less efficiently.

Sincerely,

G. C. Horton

G. C. HORTON
LTC, Infantry

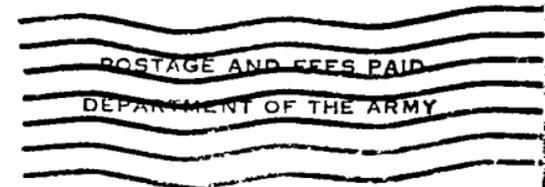
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