

COMMAND COMMENT



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A SERIES OF COMMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, ENUNCIATING POSITIONS, POLICIES AND THOUGHTS BEARING ON THE ARMY. COMMAND COMMENT IS NOT A REGULAR MAILING, BUT IS PREPARED AND MAILED AS PERTINENT MATERIAL BECOMES AVAILABLE.

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This issue of Command Comment is devoted exclusively to the major part of The Posture of the Army statement by General W. C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, United States Army, before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, Second Session, 91st Congress, on 23 March 1970.

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THE POSTURE OF THE ARMY

917. GENERAL W. C. WESTMORELAND, Chief of Staff, United States Army, in his statement before the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, discussed priority objectives, posture of the Army, post-Vietnam posture, resource management and stature of the Army.

INTRODUCTION

Last year, when I appeared before this committee for the first time as the Army's Chief of Staff, I outlined the general direction in which I hoped the Army would move during my tenure. My task was, and is, to develop and maintain a combat-ready Army of adequate size, suitably equipped, and professionally manned -- in the face of diminishing resources. These forces must be able to carry out the Army's portion of the national strategy described by Secretary Laird during his appearance earlier. Our FY 1971 budget has been developed with this paramount requirement in mind.

In my appearance last year, I described a number of specific objectives I had set for the Army in FY 1970 -- objectives to which I intended to devote particular attention. These objectives basically dealt with the structure and stature of the Army -- how we must increase its professionalism and competence, and how we must improve the morale and welfare of our soldiers and their families.

Today, I want to review our progress toward achieving those objectives, and how they have been affected by events. I propose to tell you as candidly as I can what we have been able to do with the resources given us this year -- and, frankly, what we have not been able to do. I shall also discuss what we hope to accomplish during FY 1971 with the funds we are requesting. This, I hope, will give you an appreciation for the posture of the Army and help you with the important decisions you face.

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

Let me begin by reviewing our progress toward achievement of our priority objectives for this year and next -- first, to insure that our Army forces in Vietnam are properly supported, and second, to improve the remainder of the Army. These are the objectives which directly affect the posture of our forces throughout the world.

Support to Vietnam

Our buildup of forces in Vietnam had just passed its zenith when I reported to you last. Our broad objectives -- of preventing the North Vietnamese Army from seizing control of South Vietnam, and of giving a respite to that nation while it revives its governmental institutions -- have been largely achieved. The orderly return to the Vietnamese Armed Forces of responsibility for their nation's defense is proceeding in accordance with the President's Vietnamization program. The systematic withdrawal and concurrent reduction of our forces toward a peacetime level has begun. And yet, so long as Hanoi resists a negotiated settlement, fighting will continue -- notwithstanding our declining presence and the diminishing intensity of conflict.

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Improving the Remainder of the Army

As I indicated last year, the need to give an overriding priority to our troops in Vietnam has limited the support we have been able to give our forces elsewhere. Yet we cannot permit preoccupation with Southeast Asia to blind us to developments in Korea, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America -- events that challenge the status, influence, and interests of the United States throughout the world. It is for this reason that my other high priority objective -- second only to the continued support of our forces in Vietnam -- is to correct the manpower imbalances, equipment shortages, and facilities inadequacies that plague the Army everywhere except in Vietnam. Let me briefly describe what we are doing about each of these problems.

Our manpower imbalances stem directly from the decisions to accomplish the Vietnam buildup without mobilization and to limit the tour of duty there to approximately one year. The Army doubled in size. But over one-third of our soldiers are two-year inductees. Thus our experienced people are thinly spread throughout the remainder of the Army. Further, with over half of our trained soldiers serving abroad -- and over half of these on short tours -- we simply do not have sufficient long tour (two- to three-year) base of rotation to and from Vietnam and Korea. My chief concern here has been the general shortage of experienced junior leaders and qualified specialists. I must report that this shortage continues, despite all of our efforts. And it will probably be resolved by events before it is by management. Our eventual withdrawal from Vietnam will essentially eliminate this problem.

We have accelerated promotion to captain in order to retain junior officers beyond their two-year obligation. The training and promotion of exceptional soldiers to the grade of sergeant has also been speeded up. These and similar programs have been successful, but their effect on the problem is limited.

A prime consideration in formulating our FY 1971 budget, as in previous years, was the long deferred modernization of our equipment throughout the Army. This involves both the procurement of tested hardware and the longer-range research and development of future systems. Our proposed FY 1971 PEMA authorization will permit a modest degree of improvement.

It has been over twenty-five years since an American Army has been under serious air attack. Only a handful of us remain who have suffered that experience. Yet in future conflicts our combat troops are not likely to enjoy the immunity from air attack they have had in Korea and Vietnam. To remedy this, we have fielded the first of our new CHAPARRAL/VULCAN weapons purchased from prior-year funds, and this year we are requesting authorization to buy more Improved-HAWK and CHAPARRAL missiles.

In the area of antitank weapons, our course is not quite as well defined. Several years ago, after careful study and a critical review of the alternatives, we chose the TOW and the DRAGON as the systems best meeting our infantry's requirement for an effective antitank weapon. We expect TOW and DRAGON to do for the infantry what SHERIDAN is doing for our armored cavalry. We are also taking another look at the SHILLELAGH to see if it can meet our needs in the infantry ground role, and on personnel carriers and helicopters as well.

In FY 1971 we can continue to equip our armored cavalry squadrons with the SHILLELAGH-firing SHERIDAN reconnaissance assault vehicle, overcoming a long-standing deficiency in their mobility and effectiveness. Our armored force will be strengthened by another increment of M60A1 tanks. We will begin buying the LANCE missile which we developed to replace the aging SERGEANT and HONEST JOHN systems. The increased range, accuracy, mobility and rate of fire of LANCE will provide us a major improvement in tactical firepower. The laser rangefinder, which can greatly improve the accuracy of many weapons, will also be fielded for the first time next year. And, we are gradually replacing our older tactical radios with the newer models that have performed so well in Vietnam.

Our proposed FY 1971 buy of aircraft is a relatively modest one. We are again asking for a quantity of COBRAS and UH-1s, as we did for this year.

Now, let me turn to the other major source of modernization, our research and development program. I want to touch briefly on three major development efforts -- helicopters, tanks, and air defense.

One of the Army's most critical needs is for an advanced attack helicopter that can kill tanks and give very close and accurate direct aerial fire support -- even at night and in bad weather -- to our cavalry and airmobile forces, as well as to our ground elements. As you know, we have had some problems in developing the CHEYENNE -- particularly in rotor stability. We are confident that these problems will be solved, and we are giving high priority to this. Meanwhile, because of the delays in the CHEYENNE program and our overriding need for a better aerial antitank capability, we are planning to mount antitank missiles on some of our COBRAs as an interim measure....

In the tank field we have also been occupied with technical problems. In the case of the M60A1E2 tank -- the upgraded version of the M60A1 firing both caseless conventional ammunition and the SHILLELAGH missile -- we are still pressing for a solution to the turret stabilization problem that has been plaguing us. Meanwhile, we are redoubling our efforts to get our Main Battle Tank program moving more rapidly -- and at considerably less cost. As Secretary Packard announced recently, we are now working toward a more austere version of the tank -- which we have redesignated the MBT-70/XM803 -- without some of the expensive refinements. This will fill our basic needs at a more reasonable cost. And, we are discontinuing our joint development program with Germany, which proved more difficult from a management standpoint than we had hoped. With this re-orientation, I have high hopes for the MBT-70 XM803. In a demonstration which I watched recently, its mobility and accuracy of fire were impressive. It has the dramatically improved capabilities that we simply must have to maintain our superiority over Soviet tanks.

Another important development program is the SAM-D air defense missile system. We are counting on the SAM-D to meet the threat. It is progressing through advanced development and is expected ultimately to replace the HERCULES and HAWK systems in the field army.

Maintenance of facilities of all kinds has been successively deferred, along with much-needed improvement and new construction, because of limited funds. I think we all recognize the false economy of deferring this too long. The pressing need here is to restore or replace our production base and permanent physical plant. Our antiquated and inefficient ammunition plants are still in desperate need of rehabilitation. Such a program was started this year. When completed, it should insure our capability to produce ammunition for emergencies. That program should continue to receive your support. Barracks for our troops, family housing, utilities, and training and welfare facilities on many posts require immediate repair and modernizing. In addition to the obvious economic reasons for maintaining these valuable properties, they have a direct bearing on troop efficiency, morale and retention.

Before leaving the subject of modernization, let me add this: our present situation is largely the result of our own decisions -- decisions deliberately taken to minimize excesses at the end of the Vietnam war. The premise here is, of course, that as demands for Vietnam decrease, resources will be freed to restore and improve our overall posture. We have already begun to see progress in this direction. However, implicit in our strategy of Vietnamization and U.S. withdrawal is the modernization and improvement of the Vietnamese Army which must carry on the struggle. This is another competing demand on resources already constrained by the current mood of economy and austerity -- a mood which the Army shares with the country at large.

POSTURE OF THE ARMY

Having described our recent and projected progress toward these first two related objectives -- supporting our troops in Vietnam while improving our forces elsewhere -- let me now discuss the effect of that progress on the posture of each major segment of the Army worldwide -- in Vietnam, Europe, Korea, and here in the United States.

Worldwide Force Structure

This has been a year of considerable change for the Army. Most of the forces we have withdrawn from Vietnam have been inactivated -- along with other supporting units here in the United States. We began FY 1970 with 27 $\frac{2}{3}$ division forces worldwide -- 19 $\frac{2}{3}$ of them in the active Army. In addition to these division forces there are four special mission brigades (two in Alaska, one each in Berlin and Panama) and two school troop brigades here in the United States. These forces are maintained with a total Army strength of about 1,400,000. By the end of FY 1971 we expect to be down to a total active Army strength of around 1,240,000. This is only a planning figure. Its validity depends upon future Presidential decisions on our involvement in Vietnam.

Posture in Vietnam

The greatest change in the Army's posture this year has occurred in Vietnam. This will continue throughout FY 1971. As we pursue our strategy of building up the forces of the Republic of Vietnam and of turning over to them more and more responsibility for their own defense, our forces shrink in size. We will have reduced from our peak of 8 $\frac{1}{3}$ division forces there in early 1969 to 6 by the end of FY 1970. What additional reductions we make during FY 1971 again will depend upon future Presidential decisions.

The proper support of these committed forces, whatever their size and composition, is receiving highest priority. To give you an indication of how well we have been able to provide this support, let me cite a few of our recent accomplishments. We have equipped most

of our reconnaissance squadrons with the SHERIDAN. We have kept our assault helicopter units up to strength with the COBRA, and have maintained a full measure of mobility by replacing our losses of CH-47 and UH-1 helicopters. One of our most successful programs has been in the employment of target acquisition and detection devices. These, along with improved night vision systems, have done much to improve our ability to locate the enemy and his weapons, particularly at night. We continue to provide qualified, highly trained replacements to all of our units in Vietnam. Our training programs here at home are geared to take full advantage of the hard-learned lessons and invaluable experience gained from combat operations. Not only does this Vietnam-oriented training increase the effectiveness of our troops, it is also instrumental in reducing our casualties.

A major portion of the support for our effort in Vietnam, and one of increasing importance, is the improvement and modernization of the Vietnamese Army. This is the keystone of the Vietnamization program that enables the ARVN to gradually replace our forces, which may then be withdrawn. This program, which we have supported with advisors, materiel, and funds, seems to be succeeding. As the Vietnamese units become more self-sufficient, some of our advisors -- so important in the early stages -- may also be withdrawn. We continue to provide modern weapons, vehicles, radios and helicopters. Vietnamization has not been without its share of problems, however. In training Vietnamese helicopter pilots, for example, the entire program was impeded by their limited understanding of English. Because of this sort of problem, late last year I established an Army Staff Vietnamization Director to coordinate our support for the overall program.

Posture in Europe

In Europe we continue to maintain a 4 1/3 division force plus air defense, missile and support elements. This, along with 2/3 of the 24th Infantry Division in the United States -- the result of project REFORGER -- constitute the Army portion of the nation's initial commitment to NATO defenses. Our principal concern here is that U.S. and other NATO forces on the ground are capable at all times of meeting a Warsaw Pact attack. The immediate threat is a composite Soviet and Eastern European force equipped with modern tanks and mechanized carriers, supported by sophisticated air and air defense weapons. We saw a graphic example of the Warsaw Pact thrust -- and how efficiently it can execute the Brezhnev doctrine -- in Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1968. The abruptness of the Soviet intervention was further proof of the old military maxim about the folly of relying on an estimate of an opponent's intention -- rather than on the reality of his capability.

To my mind, the stability and security which NATO forces have brought to Western Europe over the past two decades is ample justification for our contribution. We should not upset this stability

by unilateral withdrawal, however tempting that may be. In a larger sense, our forces in Europe are our insurance against the loss of Europe. We cannot afford to cancel the policy simply because we haven't had any claims against it yet -- or because we're tired of paying the premiums.

But if our deterrent is to be effective, it must be credible. Since it is impractical for us to match the Warsaw Pact in numbers, we must rely on the superior quality of our forces. It was for this reason that I emphasized earlier the need to improve and modernize the Army. And it is why again this year I am concerned that we continue to maintain these units in a suitably high state of combat readiness.

Another major element of our NATO reinforcement capability is the strategic mobility represented by the Air Force's C-141 transports -- and the C-5As which will soon be available. This growing capability -- and the prepositioning of equipment which I mentioned a moment ago -- increases our ability to deploy and sustain our strategic reserves. If complemented by a modern, responsive sealift, this should enable us to respond with enough speed and strength to defend in Europe -- and to contain other situations that might otherwise develop into large-scale, protracted involvements.

There are some specific improvements in our European posture which I can report. Majors, captains, senior sergeants, technicians and specialists -- experienced veterans of combat in Vietnam -- are beginning to fill the gaps in the line which still holds in Europe. SHERIDAN, TOW, CHAPARRAL, and the "HUEY" have joined them -- or soon will. It is imperative that we continue to improve the posture of these forces as rapidly as our declining involvement in Vietnam permits. Only in this way can we maintain the credibility of our resolve and insure our success in combat.

Posture in Korea

Sixteen years ago the United Nations Command and representatives of North Korea agreed to a cease-fire as the first step toward a negotiated settlement of the Korean "police action." In the ensuing years of parley, little has passed but time and invective. An uneasy peace has been maintained -- interrupted by incidents of espionage, murder, piracy and other provocations by the North Koreans. Last year I reported an increase in these incidents and in our response to them. More recently these have tapered off to previous levels.

We have maintained two divisions in Korea in recent years. Our basic purpose in Korea, of course, is to preserve the de facto peace by deterring the North Koreans from resuming the fighting there.

The FY 1970 authorizations and our FY 1971 requests will allow a modest improvement in the posture of our units in Korea. Here again we face an armor and a substantial air threat.

Posture in the United States

Having discussed our principal overseas deployments, let me now turn to our Army at home -- our strategic reserve, our training base, and some general considerations.

The first of these, the strategic reserve, consists of the active Army forces in the United States and our reserve component units. Their mission is to be ready to respond to contingencies. Active Army units consist of 4 1/3 divisions (the STRAF). These are available either for reinforcing NATO in Europe or for commitment elsewhere. The reserve components' 8 divisions provide against the contingency of a conflict with the Soviet Union or Communist China. They also include the necessary support units to back up the active Army in sustained combat. Matching our strategic reserve to foreseeable contingencies is always a judgment of some risk. Considering the military capabilities and potential for mischief of our principal communist adversaries, we are presently accepting a high level of risk by maintaining such a small strategic reserve.

Of course, the major portion of our strategic reserve consists of the 8 combat divisions and 18 brigades of the National Guard, 3 Army Reserve brigades, and necessary support units of the reserve components. Many of these units, along with members of the Individual Ready Reserve, took their places with active units in Vietnam in 1968 where they served with distinction. They have now been returned to reserve status where the experience gained in combat will contribute to the general excellence and professionalism of the reserve components. The efficiency and competence of our National Guard units in the control of civil disturbances -- another of the Army's missions -- has been demonstrated on many occasions during the past year, and speaks well of their training and discipline.

The combination of reduced force levels and budget limitations has recently led us to reduce our training base. Last December we discontinued basic training at three posts -- Forts Bliss, Benning, and Gordon -- and made reductions in other training activities elsewhere. Advanced training has been eliminated at Forts Gordon, Huachuca and McClellan, and cut by half at Fort Lewis. This has allowed a reduction of about 6,300 military and 420 civilian spaces.

CONUS Air Defense

A matter which particularly concerns me this year is our CONUS air defense. Over the last half-dozen years, we have reduced our NIKE HERCULES batteries to the point that we now have, with the Air Force, the smallest credible defense of the United States. There have been suggestions that this be reduced further, in view of current budgetary constraints. There has been no concurrent reduction

in the number of Soviet bombers available to attack us, in spite of predictions to that effect. It costs only about \$180 million a year to support our remaining air defense missile units. For that relatively small saving, I do not think it would be wise to denude the country of its terminal air defense.

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POST-VIETNAM POSTURE

Thus far I have covered the posture of the Army as I see it today and during the coming year -- both overseas and at home. I would now like to make a few general remarks about our plans for the future.

Once again we're approaching the end of another war -- even though the timing and nature of its ending is still far from clear. Most of us here in this room have lived through three such wars -- first the all-out effort in World War II, next the unexpected conflict in Korea, and now the fighting in Vietnam. All of us, both in and out of the military, have learned the same basic lessons from these wars:

-- We understand the intense public distaste for warfare and the casualties it produces, particularly within the Army and Marine Corps. We share this feeling.

-- We know, however, that the nation will continue to call upon its ground forces when our interests and security are threatened. This most certainly will be the case as far into the future as any of us can see.

-- We recognize, therefore, that it is in the national interest to preserve this military capability, at a prudent level and with adequate support.

In looking ahead to the post-Vietnam period, then, my concern is both for the size of the Army and for its quality. I am keenly aware of the practical constraints which we face in the future. There will surely be increasing demands from the domestic sectors of our economy for a larger share of the national resources. There will just as surely be continuing pressure for a reduction in our international responsibilities and commitments.

What we must do, in planning for the future, is to strike a judicious balance between fiscal restraint and austerity on the one hand, and an Army capable of supporting our national strategy on the other. This is a far more difficult, soul-searching process than the building up of a great military force.

During the next few years we will be casting the mold for the Army of the future -- the Army that the country will have to depend

In addition, our largest stateside commands -- the Army Materiel Command, the Continental Army Command and the Combat Developments Command -- are conducting internal reorganization studies to improve their efficiency. Other major reorganizations are undertaken whenever we sense a need for them -- such as that completed last year within the support structure of U.S. Army, Europe.

Last year I mentioned briefly my concern with the need to improve the management of our Army installations. As a result of our study of this matter, we have now developed basic doctrine and uniform procedures for installation management, as well as standard organization structure for each type installation. This has given us a common basis for training and assigning personnel to garrison duties, and has set common management standards throughout the Army -- all aimed at better garrison operation for each dollar spent. At the same time, however, we are having to use more of our troops to do the routine housekeeping chores that ought to be done by civilians. Much as we would like to free our combat units from installation support tasks so they can concentrate on maintaining combat readiness, we have to use some of them on basically non-military jobs instead. To minimize the impact on unit readiness, we are trying to pick those units whose combat missions are somewhat parallel to the housekeeping tasks that have to be done.

Surveillance and Target Acquisition

One of the most impressive lessons we learned from our Vietnam experience is that we have more firepower and mobility than we can apply to the targets we are able to find. This has led us to make a concerted effort to overcome our surveillance and target acquisition shortcomings -- so that our ability to find the enemy can equal our ability to destroy him. Last summer I established a Surveillance Target Acquisition and Night Observation (STANO) Systems Manager at Department of the Army headquarters to guide this effort. He will oversee the integration of new STANO devices and related doctrine into an integrated battlefield control system. In addition, to support our field experimentation with STANO devices, I activated Project MASSTER (Mobile Army Sensor System Test, Evaluation and Review) at Fort Hood last fall. Its immediate objective is to improve the fighting quality of our forces in Southeast Asia. Its longer range objective is to improve the Army's combat capability worldwide. Ultimately this project should save us both money and lives, and give us a target acquisition capability comparable to our firepower.

Personnel Management

As our personnel strength recedes toward peacetime levels, management of this most valuable resource takes on, if possible, even greater significance. Our objective here is to attract and retain individuals of high caliber. In this we compete not only with the other Services, but increasingly with other public and

private pursuits. The selective service system, upon which we rely so heavily for manpower during wartime, has recently been revised to provide a more equitable and acceptable selection system. Along with the clamor for draft reform, there have been serious suggestions that we move toward an all-volunteer Army. However, in all probability the draft machinery would still have to be maintained to insure that we could meet the requirements for a major mobilization. There is much to recommend an all-volunteer force, and I recognize many of its desirable consequences. However, this step may be impractical for some time to come. For example, there are indications that it will cost more than the country is willing to pay to attract the number of people with the skills and abilities we need.

Meanwhile, we continue to have difficulty retaining enough qualified junior officers, skilled enlisted specialists and junior sergeants. As I mentioned earlier, we have already accelerated some promotions. We also are working to improve housing conditions, offering expanded educational opportunities, and providing a broader range of individual choice in assignments and enlistment options. In spite of these efforts, retaining the kind of men we want remains our most perplexing problem in personnel management.

Last year, as student turmoil was at its height, the ROTC program came under attack on several campuses. We have seen a drop in basic course enrollment -- over half of which is attributed to the conversion from a required to an elective program at 39 schools. Other factors may be declining draft calls (and a shorter period of vulnerability to the draft), some reduction in academic credit, and campus dissatisfaction with the Vietnam war and military service in general. Advanced course enrollment is also down, but not enough to prevent us from meeting our FY 1970 and 1971 objectives. In our discussions with college administrators we try to tailor the program to the needs and desires of each institution. The emphasis during the normal school term is more upon academic subjects, often taught by the civilian faculty. The cadets' preparation for leadership is made at the summer camp -- six weeks of intense field training at one of our regular posts. Our current problems are really in the retention of junior officers rather than in their initial acquisition.

STATURE OF THE ARMY

The military services generally enjoy public respect to the extent that they are identified with the goals and aspirations of the society they serve. My concern in the coming year is to assure that the Army warrants and receives the respect of the American public. This concern stems from the unfavorable light in which the Army has frequently been cast in the past year. We have been the target of anti-war dissent -- both from society at large and to a very small degree from within our own ranks. Our motives and

integrity have been questioned because of the actions of a few officers and NCO's. We have been accused of harboring racial intolerance. So before closing this review of our posture, I want to touch briefly on each of these problems.

I need not list for you all of the ways in which individual and group dissent has been expressed this past year. The discontented have challenged all of our established institutions. Most of our traditionally accepted values have been assailed by one faction or another. It is not surprising that the Army has come in for its share of attention in this public forum. Nor is all of this criticism emotional, irrational or unjustified. It would be intolerant to condemn every outburst of public impatience or dissent. Still, consider the paradox of a portion of American youth performing so magnificently under fire to guarantee the right to public expression -- while another portion pours through the street waving banners of our battlefield foe. The American soldier is especially vulnerable to this form of ingratitude. Never has our country asked so much from its soldiers -- nor have fighting men given more. It is to the everlasting credit of those gallant, responsible young men and women who have served their country so well, that they have withstood these divisive and erosive attacks. The occasional dissident in uniform, while annoying, has been dealt with firmly and fairly. Although never a serious internal problem, this form of activity now appears to be leveling off.

The challenges to our integrity have stemmed from incidents such as those involving a former Sergeant Major of the Army and a general officer accused of unethical conduct, and accusations of indiscriminate killing of Vietnamese civilians in combat. I think it is essential to recognize that allegations of this sort, even if proven to be true, are not representative of individual and group conduct within the Army. They must not be permitted to dishonor the dedicated service of the thousands of soldiers who have served in Vietnam -- and are serving now -- with honor and distinction.

This is particularly important in cases such as that at Son My in March of 1968, where group ethics are in question. Following the belated public disclosure of this incident, there were accusations that the American shield which had warded off the blows of the North Vietnamese had in fact laid waste to those we would protect. Yet never in warfare have we exercised so much restraint in the use of firepower to protect the lives of innocent civilians. Never in our history, while fighting a war, have we concentrated so intensely on helping people. In Vietnam we have brought medical care to thousands who had never seen a doctor. Schools and public buildings, wells and drainage systems have been built by soldiers who gave their time and sweat -- as well as their blood -- to help the Vietnamese to a better life. There are always a few individuals

in the Army, as in any segment of the society from which they come, who disregard national morality. We will find out if that occurred at Son My...according to law.

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As for racial tensions -- it is disappointing that the Army, which led the way in racial integration and has staunchly supported the principle of equal opportunity, should still experience some of the same racial friction that plagues society at large. Vexing as this is, it should come as no surprise. For the Army is simply a mirror of American society. Under military discipline and training men will react instantaneously. But their attitudes and patterns of social behavior respond more slowly and to subtler stimuli. The prejudice and hostility that have been slowly formed over years of daily experience cannot be reshaped overnight by an Army regulation. And the progress made on the drill field and in the barracks today may be erased on Main Street tonight. The same ingenuity and boldness that are so effective in battle are equally capable of mischief and outrage. The solution lies in awareness, sensitivity, and absolute, constant impartiality and respect for each individual. Unfortunately it is our most inexperienced leaders who have to deal with this problem -- the junior sergeants and officers who live and work directly with our soldiers every day. Selecting and training these leaders and guiding their development is the serious duty of our senior ranks. Our success in minimizing the severity of racial problems is a tribute to the character and social responsibility of these fine young men.

Lest I leave the impression that the Army is more concerned with its welfare than its responsibilities, I assure you such is not the case. We set high standards for integrity, loyalty and performance of duty. We train our officers and men to meet those standards -- and require that they measure up. Those who do not will be held to account.

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In the final analysis the Army must -- and will, I am sure -- be judged not on the basis of its periodic problems but on the collective performance of its soldiers. And that performance has been my greatest source of pride over the years. I have seen the men and women of the Army in action all around the world -- in garrison, in training and in battle. They are magnificent. They have done whatever the nation has asked them to do -- and more -- without faltering, without complaining, without considering the rewards or the risks. And if we equip them properly, lead them wisely, and treat them with the dignity they deserve, they will serve us just as splendidly in the years ahead.

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