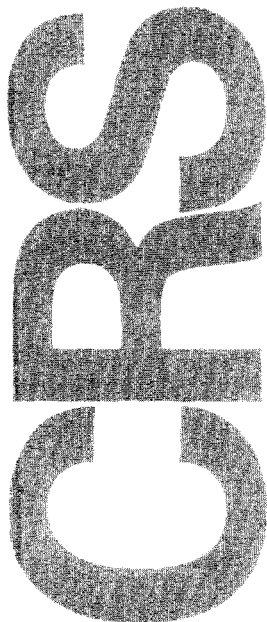


RECRUITING, RETENTION, AND QUALITY IN THE ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

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ABSTRACT

This report highlights some of the major issues of recruiting, retention, and quality raised by the transition to an All-Volunteer Force (AVF) and efforts to maintain it in the 1970s and 1980s. The strategic and political basis of current military manpower policy provides the framework for a discussion of quantitative, qualitative, and analytical and administrative issues regarding the AVF.

The report concludes that: (1) meeting quantitative requirements is likely to be more difficult than maintaining adequate manpower quality; and (2) the institutional effects of manning the Armed Forces entirely with volunteers may remain long after challenges of quantity and quality have been met.

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SUMMARY

Background, Purpose, and Scope

This CRS report highlights some of the major issues of recruiting, retention, quality, and institutional characteristics raised by the transition to an All-Volunteer Force (AVF) and efforts to maintain it in the 1970s and 1980s. The strategic and political bases of current U.S. military manpower policy provide the framework for a discussion of quantitative, qualitative, analytical and administrative issues regarding the AVF. All three components of the military manpower structure -- the active Armed Forces, Selected Reserve units, and pretrained individual reservists -- are included. Only enlisted personnel issues are discussed; officer personnel matters are not treated.

The Strategic and Political Framework

The United States entered the All-Volunteer Force era in 1973 with certain strategic and political factors underlying the conceptual and ideological bases for its military manpower policies. Based on a NATO/Warsaw Pact war as the most demanding, manpower-intensive military emergency U.S. Armed Forces were likely to face, it was assumed that adequate U.S. military manpower to meet anticipated contingencies could be maintained by manning both the active and Reserve forces with volunteers in peacetime, with a standby Selective Service System theoretically capable of quick reactivation to provide draftees in an emergency.

Since the AVF began in 1973, several aspects of the international strategic situation underlying these assumptions have changed. Soviet

military capabilities have increased substantially, while U.S. military manpower strength has dropped, and the United States has acquired military and strategic responsibilities in the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean-Southwest Asia regions which it did not have in the 1970s.

#### Quantitative Requirements

The All-Volunteer Force as it now stands is meeting explicitly stated active force recruiting goals and both active and Selected Reserve congressionally authorized manpower strengths. On closer examination, however, this apparently satisfactory situation may disguise underlying manpower problems. Peacetime authorizations for the active forces have been steadily reduced since the inception of the AVF in FY 1973, for no clearly stated reasons. This raises the possibility that requirements over the past eight years have been adjusted downward in response to a declining capacity to recruit. The increased active force requirements of the Reagan Administration beg the question even further. Selected Reserve wartime requirements are still larger than Selected Reserve strengths, despite some improvement since the end of FY 1978. Overarching all of these figures is the large gap between the actual strength of the Army Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) and mobilization requirements for a NATO/Warsaw Pact war.

Because the active forces are at congressionally-authorized strength, and the Selected Reserve is not drastically below DoD-stated mobilization requirements, it seems reasonable to assume that they could be maintained at these levels or slightly increased without a wholesale restructuring

of recruiting and retention incentives and policies. The gap between Army Individual Ready Reserve strength and DOD-stated requirements, however, would appear to be so great that it could take considerably more than "tinkering at the edges" to bridge it. The ability of the All-Volunteer Force to meet increased manpower requirements would, on the basis of past experience alone, appear to be much more problematical.

Thus, U.S. force planners now face a set of major policy issues regarding the quantitative manpower requirements of the Armed Forces. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the view of most concerned analysts and military and political leaders was that U.S. military manpower levels were adequate or even excessive. In the 1980s, if the assumptions noted above are accepted, there is a sense that current manpower strengths are either adequate or insufficient. The Reagan Administration in fact plans to expand manpower requirements. There is thus first a question as to whether current DOD-stated requirements understate actual military requirements. Second is the questions of whether, if requirements should be increased, the current military manpower system can supply increased numbers of military personnel of requisite quality without radical change.

#### Quality

The discussion of personnel quality in the All-Volunteer Force has been marked by extraordinary controversy. Not just conclusions, but methodology and standards as well, have been the subjects of intense debate. Certain conclusions, however, can be drawn after eight years of experience with the AVF:

-- The percentage of above average and average individuals in the enlisted ranks -- measured by educational attainment or mental test score -- has declined since the AVF began. This corroborates near-unanimous, impressionistic reports by officers and NCOs that such persons are found much less often in the junior enlisted ranks -- especially above average individuals.

-- The proportion of below average personnel has risen substantially since the mid-1970s. Though many career military personnel had believed this to be the case, their view was quantitatively reinforced only recently by revelations of mental test inaccuracies during FY 1976-1980.

-- The brief history of manpower quality evaluation in the All-Volunteer Force suggests the limitations of relying too heavily on statistical data, rather than informed judgment, in determining overall policy. It would appear to be more useful for some purposes to use general indicators and impressions of unit readiness and proficiency, rather than those of individual skill competence. After all, it is the units that deploy to fight, not a mass of unorganized individuals.

-- The AVF junior enlisted ranks contain a disproportionately high representation of blacks. The complex nature of the interaction between black and white Americans, and the causes and consequences of racism in American life, make evaluating the effects of this overrepresentation on military performance very difficult.



-- It is not clear that career retention problems result primarily from the advent of the All-Volunteer Force. The evidence suggests that career retention problems preceded the AVF by many years. It may be that intangible or secondary effects of the transition to an AVF exacerbate career retention problems, but if past laments of retention study groups in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s are any indication, the major reason for career retention problems was and remains career force compensation levels.

#### Analytical and Administrative Issues

One of the central features of manpower policy management in the All-Volunteer Force is the dominance of economic criteria, market-place analogies, and quantitative analyses. This has come about because an AVF must compete in the labor market for personnel. It is not surprising, therefore, that some of the strategies the Armed Forces adopt to induce individuals to enter and remain in military service will bear a close resemblance to those used by civilian business and commercial enterprises.

The transition to an All-Volunteer Force, however, merely reinforced a broader trend toward approaching military manpower policy from a civilian-oriented managerial, industrial, and utilitarian perspective, rather than a more specifically military, geopolitical, and strategic one. This has resulted from a combination of traditional political, strategic, and social circumstances and a variety of post-World War II developments that reinforced these circumstances. The characteristics of this style of policymaking have included:

-- Heavy reliance on long-range projections to provide a basis for comparing existing policies and programs with those being proposed. These predictions and the analyses based on them are frequently overtaken by events or changes in fundamental assumptions.

-- The redefinition (to what degree is not clear) of military service from an "institution" or "calling," with special requirements of discipline, service, loyalty, and commitment, toward an occupation or job, no different from civilian employment.

-- Emphasis on the economically and bureaucratically efficient management of a peacetime armed force rather than on the combat effectiveness of that peacetime force upon mobilization for war.

-- Increased personal autonomy of military personnel in their lifestyles and habits, and a concomitant decrease in the subordination of individual desires and wishes to the organizational and institutional goals and needs of the Armed Forces.

-- Attempts to "tailor" recruiting and retention incentives to short-term policy goals for the sake of economic and budgetary efficiency. These attempts have made the compensation system quite complex and unpredictable from the individual servicemember's point of view.

#### Concluding Remarks

Quality problems in the All-Volunteer Force at its current strength seem susceptible to solution through the targeting of increased resources on precise problem areas or through the precise adjustment of enlistment

standards. It appears likely, however, that major problems in recruiting an adequate quantity of personnel will result if manpower requirements grow in the 1980s. Such increased quantitative requirements would apparently require drastic increases in budgetary resources -- for recruiting incentives far beyond current pay scales, if current recruiting problems are any guide, or higher political costs resulting from a return to conscription.

Problems of quality and quantity, however, may not be the most crucial issues facing the All-Volunteer Force. The AVF has intensified old and generated new analytical, administrative, and philosophical problems that do not seem to have much to do with specific recruiting and retention policies or quality levels. Rather, they result from the fact that the Armed Forces, to obtain recruits, must assume many of the characteristics of a civilian business enterprise in order to compete in the labor market effectively. There has been increased adaptation to the individual desires of military personnel, rather than emphasizing more traditionally authoritarian military discipline. Major reliance has been placed on quantitative indicators of personnel quality, without sufficient account being taken of the subjective judgment of experienced officers and NCOs, or enough attention being given to the precision and practical applicability of quantitative techniques. Finally, budget constraints and the scarcity of manpower as a resource have forced the services to attempt to carefully structure their organizations to meet particular goals, even when goals may be short-term and subject to constant change.

This "prevents flexibility by eliminating what does not contribute to achieving the current objective so that alternative means are not available if the objective is changed." 1/ The cumulative effect of many of these changes in the military's way of "doing business" and deciding what its business is may, in the long run, be creating as many problems for the All-Volunteer Force as the more obvious and tangible ones of recruiting, retention, and quality, and may linger long after difficulties with the latter seem to have been solved.

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1/ Palmer, Gregory. The McNamara Strategy and the Vietnam War: Program Budgeting in the Pentagon, 1960-1968. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 1978: 5.

## I. BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE 1/

### Background

Public disenchantment with the Southeast Asia conflict during the 1960s coupled with traditional American antipathy to conscription resulted in increasing pressure throughout the decade to abolish the draft and establish an All-Volunteer Force (AVF). In February 1969, soon after assuming office, President Nixon appointed a commission chaired by former Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates to "develop a comprehensive plan for eliminating conscription and moving toward an all-volunteer armed force." 2/ In February 1970 the Gates commission recommended that the country complete the transition to an AVF by July 1, 1971. Though President Nixon and the Department of Defense (DoD) accepted the goal of an All-Volunteer Force in principle, the pressures of the Vietnam War and the need for a more orderly transition to an AVF necessitated deferral of the target date from July 1, 1971, to July 1, 1973. Actual inductions of draftees into the Armed Forces ended on December 29, 1972, 3/ and on July 1, 1973, with certain minor

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1/ This report was originally prepared for Senator Roger W. Jepsen in his capacity as ranking minority member and subsequently chairman of the Manpower and Personnel Subcommittee, Senate Armed Services Committee. The earlier version, dated December 2, 1980, has been statistically updated and substantially revised for publication as a CRS Report.

2/ Report of the President's Commission on All-Volunteer Armed Force. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1969: vii.

3/ A few individuals who had actually been called for induction during or before December 1972 but whose obligations had been deferred continued to enter active duty through FY 1977. Although the last induction took place on December 29, 1972, the actual announcement to the effect that no more persons would be drafted was made on January 27, 1973, after signing of the Vietnam peace agreements. All-Volunteer Force: A Report. Commanders Digest (Department of Defense), April 19, 1973: 1, 3; The Volunteer Army -- One Year Later, Report of the Secretary of the Army Howard H. Callaway to the President, February 14, 1974; Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Washington Headquarters Services, Department of Defense. Selected Manpower Statistics, FY 1979: 131, Table P27.3, Department of Defense Summary of Enlisted Personnel Procurement, FY 1973-1979.

exceptions, the authority of the President to induct men into the Armed Forces expired. 4/ Standby draft registration continued, however, until April 1975, when it was suspended by executive order of President Ford. 5/

### Purpose

This paper highlights some of the major issues of recruiting, retention, and quality raised by the transition to an All-Volunteer Force and subsequent efforts to maintain the AVF in the 1970s and 1980s. Quantitative manpower requirements are an overarching consideration in the continued viability of the AVF. Some analysts feel that an AVF of sufficient quality can be maintained within current (or reduced) force levels with comparatively minor adjustments in recruiting and retention policy and procedure. The strategic and geopolitical context of the 1980s, however, provides some grounds for believing that force levels may have to be raised, and the Reagan Administration has stated its desire to do so. 6/ If this step is taken, the pressure for major changes in recruiting and retention policy will probably be greatly increased. This report will survey the current enlisted recruiting

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4/ Subsection (c) of 50 USC App. 467 [Subsec. a (35), sec. 101, Title I, P.L. 92-129, approved September 28, 1971; 85 Stat. 353] provided that no persons could be inducted into the Armed Forces after July 1, 1973, except for persons deferred from induction, who remained eligible for induction as provided by law after the basis for their deferment ceased to exist.

5/ Presidential Proclamation No. 4360, April 1, 1975, 40 F.R. 14567, suspended registration pending "new procedures" which were in fact never announced.

6/ Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger appearing on ABC News, Issues and Answers, March 29, 1981, stated that the active Navy and Air Force alone would have to be increased by 130,000-160,000 persons to maintain increased force levels, along with as yet undetermined but definite Army strength increases.

and retention situation, discuss some conceptual and methodological issues on managing and making AVF recruiting and retention policy, and make some tentative suggestions about how all of those problems might be dealt with.

#### Scope

This study is divided into four major sections: quantitative issues; qualitative issues; analytical and administrative issues; and concluding remarks. All three components of the military manpower structure -- the active Armed Forces, Selected Reserve units, and pretrained individual reservists -- are included. Only enlisted personnel issues are discussed; officer recruitment and retention is a different matter best considered separately.

## II. QUANTITATIVE ISSUES

The Strategic and Political Basis of Current Manpower Policy

The United States entered the All-Volunteer Force era in 1973 with certain strategic and political factors underlying the conceptual and ideological bases for its military manpower policies. For the most part these fundamental assumptions are still intact, but some have been modified and others, more subjective in nature, are questioned by many interested analysts.

One particular manpower-intensive military emergency involving U.S. forces has constituted the planning base for manpower requirements since the transition to an AVF began. This is a major war with the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the North Atlantic, with ancillary action worldwide. DoD believes that such a NATO/Warsaw Pact conflict would begin with a period of exceptionally intense combat resulting in a continuing high level of casualties, and the concomitant mobilization of U.S. civilian industry and manpower to continue the war as long as necessary. Such a war would require massive manpower mobilization, particularly to meet ground force requirements for replacements and force expansion. 7/

Using this scenario as a starting point, a series of assumptions shaped current military manpower policies beginning in the early 1970s:

1. The United States needed enough conventional forces to permit responses to threats without resorting to strategic nuclear war (both U.S. and Soviet conventional forces have tactical nuclear capabilities). Most American

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7/ For discussions of this scenario, see Office of the Secretary of Defense. An Evaluation Report of Mobilization and Deployment Capability Based on Exercises Nifty Nugget-78 and Rex-78. June 30, 1980; and FY 1982 Annual Report of the Department of Defense. January 19, 1981: 103-06.



analysts consider conventional military power to be a more credible deterrent and a more controllable military instrument than nuclear forces. Possession of sufficient conventional forces provides a range of options other than resorting to nuclear weapons and/or strategic nuclear warfare.

2. The United States faced a long-term challenge from the presence of large Soviet conventional forces in Europe and the USSR that were configured to pose a direct threat to NATO forces in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the North Atlantic, and to U.S. national interests in the Middle East and East Asia.

3. Active duty military strength needed to be maintained at approximately 2.2-2.3 million, along with combat-ready and responsive Reserve components, to ensure a prudent minimum level with which to meet initial U.S. national security commitments worldwide. 8/

4. Major military manpower assets would be furnished by our NATO allies in the event of a conflict in Europe.

5. The manpower requirements for any contingencies more limited than a full-scale U.S./Soviet conflict would be less than those for the broader contingency.

6. Any military action anywhere in the world other than a comparatively minor show of force would probably require the augmentation of active duty forces with Reserves and possibly draftees; a NATO/Warsaw Pact war would require immediate reinstitution of conscription.

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8/ These are the force levels which a variety of official statements implied were required in a post-Vietnam War environment during the early 1970s. See below, pp. 10-13. They were predicated on increased reliance on the Reserve components compared with previous years -- the "Total Force Policy" explicitly adopted by the Nixon Administration. See Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird on the Fiscal Year 1972-76 Defense Program and the 1972 Defense Budget, March 9, 1971. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1971: 21, 130.

7. Adequate U.S. military manpower to meet anticipated contingencies could be maintained by manning both the active and Reserve forces with volunteers in peacetime, with a standby Selective Service System theoretically capable of quick reactivation to provide draftees in an emergency. <sup>9/</sup> Several of the underlying assumptions on which those manpower policies are based, however, have changed since the AVF began in 1973. Soviet military capabilities have increased substantially, in terms of quantity and quality of manpower; quantity and sophistication of materiel; command, control, communications, and intelligence capability; and meshing of doctrine with the forces required to carry it out. In light of these increased Soviet capabilities, as well as other doctrinal and technical reevaluations of NATO/ Warsaw Pact war scenarios, the projected tempo, intensity, and duration of such a war have all increased. <sup>10/</sup> At the same time, U.S. active duty military strength has dropped from the levels envisioned when the transition to an All-Volunteer Force began. Reserve force strengths

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<sup>9/</sup> The Military Selective Service Act Amendments of 1971 [50 USC App. 460 (h); P.L. 92-129, subsection 101 (a) (29), approved September 28, 1971; 85 Stat. 352] required that after induction authority ended on July 1, 1973 the Selective Service System be maintained as "an active standby organization, with (1) a complete registration and classification structure capable of immediate operations in the event of a national emergency, and (2) personnel adequate to reinstitute immediately the full operations of the System..." The President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force (the "Gates Commission," named after its chairman, former Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates) also recommended that a similar standby draft mechanism be maintained after the All-Volunteer Force went into effect. Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., February 1970: 119-24 (hereafter cited as Gates Commission Report).

<sup>10/</sup> For broad overviews of these trends, see United States Military Posture for FY 1982 and Supplement. General David C. Jones, USAF, Chairman of the Joints of Staff and the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and John M. Collins. U.S.-Soviet Military Balance: Concepts and Capabilities, 1960-1980. [Washington], McGraw-Hill Publications Co., 1980.

have also declined -- in the case of the Individual Ready Reserve, the drop has been drastic.

Moreover, the United States has acquired military and strategic responsibilities in the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean-Southwest Asia regions which it did not have in the early 1970s. The likelihood of military action in these areas, which are in general those least accessible from North America, has greatly expanded the scope of contingencies which U.S. planners must take into account in evaluating manpower requirements.

#### Specific Quantitative Issues

To examine specific quantitative manpower requirements and AVF recruiting results, it is first necessary to describe the four-tiered manpower structure of the Armed Forces:

The active Armed Forces -- full-time military personnel -- form the most ready and available category of personnel.

The Selected Reserve components of the Armed Forces (which include the National Guard) provide trained units for augmentation of the active Armed Forces upon mobilization. The Selected Reserve consists largely of Reservists in paid status who are required to perform approximately two weeks of active duty training annually and usually one weekend of inactive duty training ("drill") per month.

The Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) provides a pool of previously-trained individuals who are promptly available upon mobilization. These individual reservists are needed to bring undermanned and unmanned units in the active and Selected Reserve force structure to full war strength and provide replacements for casualties until such time as draftees are available. The IRR consists largely of personnel who have served on active duty, are

not members of the Selected Reserve, and who have not completed their total six-year military obligation. <sup>11/</sup> They are not currently required by DoD to train periodically, although they are legally obligated to do so if ordered.

Draftees are required upon mobilization to provide for wartime expansion of the force structure and replacement of casualties.

While these four categories of military manpower are listed in a broad descending order of readiness and availability, it is inaccurate to assume that only the active force and/or the Selected Reserve "count" in evaluating whether or not quantitative manpower requirements are being met. This is particularly important in the case of the IRR. Even if the units of the active force and Selected Reserve are at full strength at the beginning of hostilities, adequate numbers of individual reservists must be available to replace casualties until trained draftees are available. This interdependence means that recruiting and retention policies that do not result in adequate numbers of personnel in all categories of manpower cannot be considered successful. Adequate manning of the Reserve Components as well as the active force is no less important to sustaining the Armed Forces in battle than adequate active force strength.

#### Active Force Quantitative Requirements

It is difficult to evaluate the success of the all-volunteer active forces in meeting quantitative requirements. Manpower strength levels of

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<sup>11/</sup> By law (10 USC 651) any person who becomes a member of any armed force shall serve in the Armed Forces for a total period of six years. Any portion of such service that is not active duty shall be served in a reserve component.

the active forces under the AVF, like all peacetime manpower strengths of any nation's armed forces, are below potential wartime requirements. To compare actual peacetime active force strengths with wartime requirements, therefore, is unrealistic. Furthermore, DoD does not provide unclassified estimates as to what the wartime manpower requirements for a total mobilization 12/ for a major war with the Soviet Union would be.

DoD does provide wartime requirements estimates which specify what the wartime manning levels are for the currently maintained active and Reserve peacetime force structure. These estimates, however, do not include manpower figures for the major expansion of the force structure which would take place in time of war. They are consequently less than adequate as a benchmark for judging the sufficiency of current active duty military manpower strengths.

Ideally, rather than measuring peacetime active force strengths and recruiting attainments against wartime requirements, there should be a series of peacetime strength objectives which represent different degrees of budgetary constraints and/or military risk. At one extreme would be a low manpower level representing either rigid fiscal discipline or acceptance of a high degree of military risk, or a combination of both. At the other would be a much higher level requiring much greater budgetary

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12/ There are three broad levels of mobilization. A partial mobilization would require only selected portions of the peacetime active and Reserve force structure to be activated and brought to wartime manning levels. A full mobilization would bring the entire active and Reserve peacetime force structure to war strength. A total mobilization would exceed the requirements of a full mobilization by activating new units not maintained in the peacetime force structure and bringing these new units to war strength as well. U.S. Congressional Budget Office. The Selective Service System: Mobilization Capabilities and Options for Improvement. Budget Issue Paper for Fiscal Year 1980. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., November 1978: 4.

resources and/or providing a much greater degree of protection against risk. Various active force manpower strengths in between would represent less extreme situations. All, however, would be recognized as peacetime levels, below that needed in time of war, and requiring augmentation with Reserves and/or draftees upon mobilization.

DoD does not provide such a series of alternative peacetime strength levels for public analysis. It is therefore necessary to turn to implicit indications of peacetime active force requirements less constrained by immediate budgetary concerns than annual congressional authorizations. Historical examples are the most useful type of such indications.

At the beginning of the transition to an All-Volunteer Force, in February 1970, the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Force (the "Gates Commission") did not recommend post-Vietnam force levels. It based its analyses on how best to achieve an All-Volunteer Force (not, it should be noted, whether or not an AVF was feasible or desirable) on the assumption that future active force levels would range between 2.0 and 3.0 million. However, most of its detailed analyses centered around 2.25 and 2.5 million person strengths. <sup>13/</sup> Department of Defense reports on the AVF in its early stages (1972-1973) repeatedly stated that maintenance of then-current force levels of approximately 2.3 million were imperative. <sup>14/</sup> Actually, after the AVF began in FY 1973,

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<sup>13/</sup> Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., February 1970: 35-40 and passim (hereafter cited as Gates Commission Report). The Commission felt that up to a 2.5 million-man force would be sustainable if the pay raises and personnel policy changes it recommended were implemented.

<sup>14/</sup> Report of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird to the President and the Chairmen of Armed Service Committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives. Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force. August 1972: 30-31; All-Volunteer Force -- A Report. Commandrs Digest, April 19, 1973: 3, 12, and passim.

active duty military strength declined to approximately 2.05 million by FY 1978, where it has since more or less stabilized. <sup>15/</sup> Current (March 31, 1981) active duty strength is about the same as FY 1979 and FY 1980 congressionally-authorized levels, 9 percent below actual FY 1973 strength; 9 or 18 percent below the two most commonly-used Gates Commission projections for post-Vietnam force levels; and 23 percent below FY 1964 (the last full pre-Vietnam War fiscal year):

ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY STRENGTH TRENDS, FY 1964-PRESENT (IN THOUSANDS)  
COMPARED WITH CONGRESSIONALLY-AUTHORIZED STRENGTHS (IN PARENTHESES)

<u>End FY Strengths</u>	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DoD Total
FY 64	973 (NA)	668 (NA)	190 (NA)	857 (NA)	2,687 (NA)
FY 73	810 (829)	565 (602)	196 (198)	691 (701)	2,253 (2,330)
FY 74	783 (804)	546 (566)	189 (196)	645 (666)	2,162 (2,232)
FY 75	784 (785)	535 (540)	196 (196)	613 (628)	2,128 (2,149)
FY 76	779 (785)	525 (529)	192 (196)	585 (590)	2,082 (2,100)
FY TQ	783 (783)	528 (536)	190 (196)	583 (590)	2,084 (2,115)
FY 77	782 (789)	530 (541)	192 (192)	571 (571)	2,075 (2,093)
FY 78	772 (787)	530 (536)	191 (192)	570 (571)	2,062 (2,085)
FY 79	759 (776)	524 (524)	185 (190)	559 (566)	2,027 (2,056)
FY 80	777 (777)	527 (528)	188 (189)	558 (558)	2,050 (2,052)
FY 81 (31 Mar 81)	774 (775)	536 (537)	188 (188)	564 (565)	2,062 (2,065)
FY 82 (requested)	(786)	(555)	(192)	(587)	(2,120)

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<sup>15/</sup> All military manpower strength levels cited in this report were obtained from the Department of Defense from a variety of sources. Wherever possible we have used single sources; in some cases, the usual problem of mutually irreconcilable data in making statistical analyses could not be avoided. Principal sources for historical data were the annual volumes on Selected Manpower Statistics published by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), as updated by monthly charts issued by the same office. Congressional authorizations were obtained from the actual public laws.

Neither DoD nor the Congress have stated that authorized strengths reflect anticipated recruiting difficulties or are inadequate to meet military requirements. On the other hand, they have never repudiated their earlier requests for or approvals of greater active duty military strengths in the early and mid-1970s, begging the question of why authorized strengths have been reduced. <sup>16/</sup> Since FY 1976, congressionally authorized active duty strengths have varied between 2.05 and 2.10 million and DoD requested strengths have fluctuated between 2.05 and 2.12 million. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, regardless of declines in both authorized and actual strengths in the past, that a tacit floor of 2.05-2.10 million has been reached. Force levels lower than these are apparently regarded by the executive and legislative branches as incapable of sustaining current national strategy as discussed above (pp. 4-6).

The Reagan Administration believes that increased active force strength is required. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger has stated that planned expansion of the Navy and Air Force force structure will require increased active force strength of 130,000-160,000 in those two services alone, and that the active Army will be increased by as yet undetermined numbers

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<sup>16/</sup> There have been major reductions in headquarters, training, and support manpower during the 1970s, for stated reasons of pruning unnecessary spaces and improving efficiency and productivity. There is considerable controversy, however, about the extent to which these cuts have in fact affected combat readiness and sustainability. There is no one source which summarizes these cuts in support manpower; they can be traced in the annual Manpower Requirements Reports of DoD from FY 1973 through FY 1982; and in the annual statements of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics) and the service assistant secretaries for manpower, reserve affairs, and logistics before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and Defense Appropriations Subcommittees throughout the 1970s.



of persons. <sup>17/</sup> These increases would boost active force strength to approximately 2.3 million -- or the level apparently deemed necessary when the transition to an AVF began in FY 1973. Various groups identified or associated with the general trend of defense policies proposed by the Reagan Administration also support active force increases to the 2.3 million person level. <sup>18/</sup>

The extent to which the active Armed Forces have met recruiting objectives sheds little light on whether or not the decline in active duty military strength reflects recruiting problems:

PERCENT OF THE TOTAL ACTIVE FORCE ENLISTED RECRUITING OBJECTIVE MET, FY 73-PRESENT

	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DoD Total
FY 73	98	92	100	100	97
FY 74	94	99	85	100	97
FY 75	102	101	101	102	102
FY 76	100	100	100	101	100
FY TQ (Jul-Sep 1976)	96	95	96	101	96
FY 77	99	96	95	100	98
FY 78	98	94	100	100	98
FY 79	90	94	98	98	93
FY 80	100	100	100	101	100
FY 81 (1st half)	99	103	103	100	101

The above table indicates that in most years, for most services, approximately 100 percent of active force recruiting requirements have been achieved. This result, however, is no real indicator of the "success" or "failure" of All-Volunteer Force recruiting. If the

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<sup>17/</sup> Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger interviewed on ABC News, Issues and Answers, March 29, 1981. See also Richard Halloran. Reagan Military Plan Envisions up to 250,000 Additional Recruits. New York Times, April 26, 1981: 1.

<sup>18/</sup> For example, see A Program for Military Independence. Washington, Capitol Hill Staff Group, 1980: 70-71; Committee on the Present Danger. Countering the Soviet Threat: U.S. Defense Strategy in the 1980s. May 9, 1980: 12.

recruiting objectives on which these percentages are based were driven by the ability of the Armed Forces to obtain recruits, then the approximation of 100 percent of the objective is self-fulfilling, and would not indicate the ability of AVF recruiting to meet requirements. On the other hand, if the recruiting objectives are in fact based on meeting strength objectives which are not constrained due to recruiting problems, then the approximation of 100 percent of requirements would be a true indication of successful recruiting policies and practices. The absence of any open source statements by DoD of requirements other than the annual congressional active force authorization request makes a discussion of the adequacy of active force recruiting very difficult. It would appear, therefore that a priority for congressional decision-makers concerned with the viability of the AVF would be to secure from DoD a range of peacetime manpower requirements data not as closely tied to current budgetary constraints. Such data would be based on U.S. strategic and geopolitical objectives and wartime requirements, and would specify what manpower was needed to achieve these objectives and requirements at relative levels of risk, independent of any one year's budget cycle.

#### Selected Reserve Quantitative Requirements

The wartime manpower requirements DoD provides for the Selected Reserve, as with those stated for the active forces, do not take into account the major expansion of the peacetime force structure which would take place upon total total mobilization. Using these requirements as an indication of ability of DoD to man the Selected Reserve solely with volunteers is subject to the same problems as so using stated active

force requirements. However, the Selected Reserve force structure is based largely on what Reserve forces are needed to support and "flesh out" a peacetime active force of specified strength in time of war. 19/ Measuring actual Selected Reserve manpower strengths stated wartime requirements thus enables one to determine how close the Reserve is to meeting the requirements based on the current active force structure and strength. As noted above, whether the active forces are adequate is another issue altogether.

Once again, historical examples are useful. The Gates Commission did not recommend post-Vietnam Selected Reserve force levels any more than it did active force levels; however, it did discuss Reserve force strengths required to support active duty forces of between 2 and 3 million persons. The Commission stated that in its opinion a substantial number of spaces in the then-current Reserve force structure were unnecessary, and made its estimates accordingly. For an active force of 2.25 million, the Gates Commission figures can be interpreted to result in Selected Reserve requirements of 709,000 to 799,000 (i.e., current Selected Reserve strengths are approximately 60,000 persons above the inferred Gates calculations); a 2.5 million person active force would have required 781,000 to 882,000 Selected Reserve personnel. 20/

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19/ See, for example, the detailed discussion of Army manpower requirements for mobilization in U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 2. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 660-61. This clearly shows that Army Reserve Component requirements are based on what is required to "flesh out" the active for in time of war.

20/ Figures based on interpretations of data in Gates Commission Report: 97-117.

The Department of Defense, at the beginning of the AVF era, appeared to regard maintenance of then current congressionally authorized Selected Reserve minimum strengths as imperative, and urged during 1972-1973 that various recruiting and retention incentives be adopted to raise actual Selected Reserve strength (which was then approximately 925,000) to the mandated level of over 970,000. 21/ Presumably, if DoD did not regard these strengths as true requirements, it would not have endorsed incentives to attain and maintain them.

Actual Selected Reserve strengths, like active force strengths, declined steadily after the inception of the AVF in FY 1973, reaching a low in FY 1978 and recovering substantially since then. Current (March 31, 1981) Selected Reserve force levels are 5 percent below FY 1973, approximately 17 percent below DoD's FY 1982 stated mobilization requirements, and 8 percent below FY 1964 levels.

If one accepts DoD's stated wartime mobilization requirements for the Selected Reserve, therefore, the shortfall in Reserve strength under the All-Volunteer Force is incontrovertible. 22/ While Selected Reserve force levels have recovered greatly from lows reached in FY 1978, strength is still below requirements. If one accepts the assumption that these

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21/ Laird Report: 39-43; All-Volunteer Force -- A Report. Commanders Digest, April 19, 1973: 10-11.

22/ It should be noted that DoD does not plan, in peacetime, to man the Selected Reserve at full wartime requirements, on the assumption that Individual Ready Reserve personnel could be used to fill the Selected Reserve to war strength upon mobilization. The IRR, of course, is itself far understrength at the present time. Peacetime manning objectives for the Selected Reserve in FY 1981 are approximately 93 percent of wartime requirements. See U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1981; report to accompany H.R. 6974. April 30, 1980. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980 (96th Congress, 2nd session. House. Report no. 96-916): 128.

stated wartime requirements are based on the Selected Reserve force structure needed to support an active force of given strength, 23/ if active force strengths were judged to be inadequate then Selected Reserve force levels would fall even further short of requirements.

SELECTED RESERVE MILITARY STRENGTHS, FY 1973-PRESENT (IN THOUSANDS)  
COMPARED WITH WARTIME MANNING REQUIREMENTS WHERE AVAILABLE (IN PARENTHESES)

	Army Natl Guard	Army Reserve	Naval Reserve	Marine Corps Reserve	Air Natl Guard	Air Force Reserve	DoD Total
FY 64	382 (NA)	269 (NA)	123 (NA)	46 (NA)	73 (NA)	61 (NA)	953 (NA)
FY 73	386 (NA)	235 (NA)	126 (NA)	38 (NA)	90 (NA)	44 (NA)	919 (NA)
FY 74	403 (435)	235 (276)	115 (115)	31 (42)	94 (103)	46 (50)	925 (1021)
FY 75	395 (431)	225 (276)	98 (113)	32 (41)	95 (102)	51 (53)	896 (1015)
FY 76	362 (431)	195 (276)	97 (92)	30 (41)	91 (100)	48 (54)	823 (994)
FY TQ	367 (431)	192 (276)	98 (92)	29 (41)	91 (101)	49 (55)	826 (996)
FY 77	355 (431)	189 (276)	90 (52)*	31 (37)	92 (100)	50 (56)	808 (952)*
FY 78	341 (431)	186 (267)	83 (57)*	33 (37)	92 (101)	54 (57)	788 (950)*
FY 79	346 (431)	190 (276)	88 (51)*	33 (44)	93 (101)	57 (65)	807 (968)*
FY 80	367 (436)	207 (266)	87 (49)*	35 (44)	96 (101)	59 (69)	851 (960)*
FY 81	379 (438)	216 (273)	88 (96)	35 (42)	98 (97)	59 (66)	874 (1017)
(31 Mar 1981)							
FY 82	(446)	(286)	(113)	(42)	(101)	(68)	(1055)
(projected)							

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\*Naval Reserve mobilization requirements for FY 1977-1980 reflect attempts by DoD to reduce the size of the Naval Reserve for budgetary reasons. All actual evaluations of Naval Reserve requirements based on wartime needs resulted in force levels of approximately 100,000. Acceptance of these figures for purposes of judging true wartime requirements are therefore highly misleading. See U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 3, Manpower and Personnel. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 1582, for an enumeration of five studies completed during the 1973-1980 period which arrive at a figure of about 100,000.

Individual Ready Reserve Quantitative Requirements

Comparing Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) strengths with requirements during the AVF era is difficult. IRR requirements are based on the number of individual reservists required to support and fill out units in

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23/ See above, pp. 7-10.

the active force and Selected Reserve when mobilized for war. Evaluation of IRR requirements, therefore, is based on compounded uncertainty. As with the active forces and Selected Reserve, IRR wartime requirements are based on how many personnel are needed to bring the current peacetime force structure to war strength and sustain it in battle. Expansion of the peacetime structure is not involved. The lack of regular training status for IRR personnel, and their being a pool of unorganized individuals, makes their actual availability in time of war much more difficult to ascertain, monitor, and control than that of the active force or Selected Reserve. Finally, the use of IRR personnel as casualty replacements makes IRR requirements dependent on both battle and nonbattle casualty estimates for future wars -- a further uncertainty in the generally uncertain field of scenarios and projections.

Controversy over IRR requirements and shortfalls has revolved almost entirely around the Army IRR. It is the Army that requires by far the largest number of IRR personnel upon mobilization, primarily to flesh out active and Selected Reserve units and replace losses; the overwhelming majority of battle casualties are sustained by the ground forces in any war. The Marine Corps, while it would presumably sustain casualties at the same rate as the Army, apparently has an IRR of sufficient size. The Navy and Air Force rely almost exclusively on their Selected Reserve to bring them to war strength.

Estimates of Army IRR requirements and shortfalls have fluctuated drastically since DoD documents first discussed the issue openly in late 1975. Based on requirements for a NATO/Warsaw Pact war, estimates of required Army IRR strength have fluctuated between 400,000-750,000; estimates of the IRR shortfall have fluctuated between zero and 350,000. These

variations reflect disagreement over availability rates and their predictability; a methodological distinction between (1) the number of unfilled spaces in the wartime force structure and (2) the size of the IRR pool that had to be maintained to guarantee that those unfilled spaces are filled (i.e., accounting for IRR members who will not actually be mobilizable); a distinction between gross numerical shortages and shortages in particular skills; and the responsiveness of the standby Selective Service System (of which the utility and presence of peacetime draft registration was a part). At this writing, although the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the Army have apparently resolved the issue of the number of unfilled spaces -- it is now stated to be 270,000 -- there still does not appear to be any consensus as to the actual number of IRR personnel required to eliminate the shortfall. The latter figure is held to be approximately 400,000 personnel by OSD and appear to be closer to 600,000 if Army estimates are used. 24/

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24/ OSD estimates that 400,000 Army IRR personnel (as opposed to the current strength of approximately 200,000) will be on the rolls by the end of FY 1985, and that this number -- plus improved availability rates due to "better management" of the IRR pool -- will be sufficient to meet requirements. See Office of the Secretary of Defense. An Evaluation Report of Mobilization and Deployment Capability Based on Exercises Nifty Nugget-78 and Rex-78. June 30, 1980: 15; and U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 5 of 6 Parts, Military Personnel. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 177-78. On the other hand, if the "improved management" initiatives designed to result in a greater proportion of the IRR pool actually being available for mobilization do not work, then estimates based on testimony of the Chief of Army Reserve imply that the Army IRR requirement would be closer to 600,000 personnel. This testimony can be found in U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 2. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 680-81. This assumes that 70 percent of IRR personnel would be actually usable in the event of mobilization, rather than the 90-95 percent that "improved management" would lead to if successful. It is not clear how any such figures can be verified short of actual test mobilizations. See U.S. General Accounting Office. Can the Individual Reserves Fill Mobilization Needs? GAO Report Nos. FPCD-79-3 and B-148167. Washington, June 28, 1979: 11-14.

The actual trends in Army IRR strength show a drastic decline after the inception of the AVF, followed by a slight increase since bottom was reached at the end of FY 1978. Nonetheless, current (March 31, 1981) Army IRR strength remains 73 percent below FY 1973; 48-65 percent below the variously estimated mobilization requirements; and 55 percent below FY 1964 levels.

INDIVIDUAL READY RESERVE STRENGTHS, END FY 1964-PRESENT (IN THOUSANDS)

	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DoD
FY 64	461	211	57	116	846
FY 73	759	217	116	137	1,229
FY 74	541	179	90	122	931
FY 75	363	122	58	88	632
FY 76	241	106	54	83	485
FY TQ	228	108	55	80	471
FY 77	160	106	45	64	375
FY 78	177	93	40	46	356
FY 79	206	86	59	44	396
FY 80	212	97	57	47	413
FY 81 (31 Mar 81)	208	101	51	46	405

The current requirement for 400,000-600,000 Army IRR personnel is thus 200-300 percent larger than current Army IRR strengths. If Army IRR requirements were raised -- due to higher estimated casualty rates or a larger active and Selected Reserve force structure needing IRR personnel upon mobilization -- then the shortfall would be even greater.

Quantitative Requirements: Situation and Prospects

The above data indicate that the All-Volunteer Force as it now stands is meeting explicitly stated active force recruiting goals and both active and Selected Reserve congressionally authorized manpower strengths.



On closer examination, however, this apparently optimistic situation may be less meaningful than it seems. Peacetime authorizations for the active forces have been steadily reduced since the inception of the AVF in FY 1973, for no clearly stated reasons. The increased active force requirements of the Reagan Administration beg the question even further. Selected Reserve wartime requirements are still conspicuously larger than Selected Reserve strengths, despite some improvement since the end of FY 1978. Overarching all of these figures is the gross inadequacy of the Army Individual Ready Reserve when compared to mobilization requirements for a NATO/Warsaw Pact war.

Exhaustive analysis is not needed to assume that active force strength shortfalls of a few percent below current congressionally-authorized levels (or authorizations of seven years ago) could probably be made up through increased management initiatives and more resources -- recruiting and advertising, compensation and benefits, enlistment and training options, and the like. Current AVF active force levels approximate congressionally authorized strengths and are only marginally, rather than grossly under-strength compared to FY 1973 authorized levels.

Similarly, it would appear that Selected Reserve force levels 5 percent below FY 1973 could be brought back to FY 1973 strength in the same fashion -- an achievement which would reduce the Selected Reserve shortfall against wartime requirements from 17 percent to a more manageable 13 percent. Overall Selected Reserve strength figures are misleading, however. As of March 31, 1981, the total numerical shortfall of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force Reserve components combined was only 14 percent, or 44,000 (280,000 actual personnel as opposed to FY 1982 requirements for 324,000). The two Army Reserve components had a combined percentage shortfall of

19 percent, and a numerical shortfall of 137,000. This would appear to present a greater challenge, given the traditionally greater recruiting difficulties of the Army when compared to the more "glamorous" and/or technically-oriented Navy and Air Force, or more combat-oriented, "macho" Marine Corps. Even halving the shortfall, however -- which would involve marginal strength increases similar to those which do not appear unattainable for the active forces -- would restore considerable gaps in Army Reserve Component strength.

It is difficult, however, to see how any amount of management action or incentives can materially decrease the enormous Army IRR strength shortfall. Claims by the Office of the Secretary of Defense that various IRR strength increase initiatives, coupled with management actions increasing the actual yield of mobilizable personnel from the IRR pool, will remove the shortfall by the end of FY 1985 appear open to question. These claims appear to rest on a best case assumption -- extremely high show rates, low skill mismatch rates, and no major upward revisions in requirements for IRR fillers and casualty replacements. None of these best cases is either susceptible to realistic evaluation, short of test mobilizations, or likely to occur on the basis of past history.

Assuming current, more pessimistic estimates of IRR requirements and show rates, the IRR will still be several hundred thousand personnel short of requirements by FY 1985. It would seem, therefore, that the Army IRR strength increase required to prudently anticipate wartime requirements is so great that incentives and policies adequate to make up merely marginal deficiencies would not be sufficient. Strength increases would

have to be orders of magnitude greater than those attainable with currently envisioned plans.

To summarize, the active forces are at congressionally-authorized strength, and the Selected Reserve is not drastically below DoD-stated mobilization requirements. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that they could be maintained at these levels or slightly increased without a wholesale restructuring of recruiting and retention incentives and policies. The Army Individual Ready Reserve, however, would appear to be so quantitatively deficient that it could take considerably more than "tinkering at the edges" to reconcile IRR strength with requirements. The ability of the All-Volunteer Force to meet increased manpower requirements would, on the basis of past experience alone, appear to be much more problematical. The Gates Commission estimated in 1970 that the pay increases it recommended would recruit and retain enough male volunteers to sustain a 2.5 million-man force; instead, a force of approximately 2.1 million, which is 8.5 percent female, is being maintained with some difficulty, albeit without the full pay comparability with civilian wage levels recommended by the Gates Commission, and with a diminution of recruiting resources.

There is thus a major policy issue regarding the quantitative manpower requirements of the Armed Forces which did not exist a decade ago. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the thrust of most concerned analysts and military and political leaders was that U.S. military manpower levels were adequate or even excessive. In the 1980s, if the assumptions noted above are accepted, there is a sense that current manpower strengths are either adequate or insufficient. The Reagan Administration in fact plans to expand manpower strengths. There is therefore a question

as to the adequacy of stated requirements themselves, even if fully met.

A logical corollary of this question is whether the current military manpower system can supply increased numbers of military personnel of requisite quality without radical change if more are needed.

## III. QUALITATIVE ISSUES

Background

Recruit quality was not a major issue during the draft era, except for periodic national concern about the number of young men found physically, mentally, educationally, or morally unfit for military service. This concern, however, was with the social and philosophical state of the nation and the American people in general rather than the capability of the Armed Forces in particular. <sup>25/</sup> The services, through the draft, were always able to assure themselves of adequate recruit quality. Then as now, though, there was concern over shortages of noncommissioned officers and key technical specialists in the career force, due in large part, it was believed, to extremely low career pay scales.

This chapter discusses the quality of manpower in the All-Volunteer Force, as measured by the conventional indices of educational attainment, mental category, levels of career personnel, and military skill proficiency. It examines social indicators -- such as race and socioeconomic status -- as well. Both statistical and judgmental material is presented.

Indices of Quality

The Armed Forces measure personnel quality in a variety of ways. The two best known standards are educational level (in particular, high school graduate status) and mental category (basic intelligence measured through a standard aptitude test). Military skill proficiency and career personnel strengths are also indices of personnel and force quality. A

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<sup>25/</sup> See, for example, One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service. President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation. January 1, 1964.

related issue involves the extent to which the Armed Forces are representative of the population at large, in terms of race and/or socioeconomic status.

The intense concentration on the quality of military personnel, and first-term recruits in particular, is largely a product of the All-Volunteer Force era. Proponents of the AVF have attempted to defend it by citing qualitative statistics, and opponents have attempted to attack it by citing the same or different numbers as the proponents. The marketplace environment in which AVF recruiting takes place encourages the use of precise measures of personnel quality, so that progress can be measured and policies adjusted to fit the needs of the recruiting market.

#### Education

The measurement of educational levels of military personnel is complicated by a variety of methodological problems and utilization controversies. The most commonly-used educational indicator -- high school graduation -- must be precisely defined to distinguish between high school graduate equivalency established by testing (military personnel who obtain such an equivalency rating have the same degree of first-term attrition and disciplinary problems as non high school graduates) and actual receipt of a high school diploma.

Much more important than definitions of what is being measured are controversies about the meaning and utility of educational indices in making military manpower policy. One school of thought holds that educational levels per se are irrelevant, and can in fact result in unnecessary stigmatizing of military personnel not having particular diplomas or degrees. What counts, say proponents of this view, is the ability of an individual military member to perform his or her military job in the

military environment. 26/ Analysts who regard educational levels as valid indices with which to establish quality control do not question this premise as far as individuals are concerned. They simply note that high school diploma graduation has proven to be a reliable index of military performance in the aggregate. The rate of attrition of first-term high school diploma graduates is lower than that of non-graduates (80 percent of high school diploma graduates finish three years of service, as opposed to only 60 percent of non-high school diploma graduates). 27/ Furthermore, the incidence of disciplinary problems -- AWOL, desertion, nonjudicial punishments -- is also lower among high school diploma graduates when compared with non-graduates. Indeed, the military services note that high school graduation -- especially in an era of declining educational standards -- does not so much mean that an individual has attained a particular level of education as it indicates self-discipline, perseverance, and a willingness to stick to a course of action for future gain. 28/

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26/ One of the leading exponents of this point of view is Clifford Alexander, Secretary of the Army under the Carter Administration. See his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee in U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Status of Army Manpower. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. June 11-12, 1980. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1981: 7-9, 14, 29, 32-33, 48-50.

27/ DoD Manpower Requirements Report for FY 1982. February 1981: VIII-1.

28/ See the remarks of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics) Robert Pirie in U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 5 of 6 Parts, Military Personnel. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 168; and FY 1982 Manpower Requirements Report of the Department of Defense. February 1981: VIII-1/2.

The following tables summarize educational attainment of military personnel in the All-Volunteer Force: 29/

TOTAL ACTIVE DUTY ENLISTED FORCE, MEN AND WOMEN, PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES (includes some high school equivalency through tests); AND PERCENT WITH SOME COLLEGE (in parentheses)

Fiscal Year	<u>65</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>
High School	82	86	87	87	88	88	89	89*	88*
Graduates									
Some College	(20)	(16)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(17)	(10)*	(10)*

ACTIVE DUTY NONPRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENTS, MEN AND WOMEN, PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA GRADUATES AND PERCENT WITH SOME COLLEGE (in parentheses)

Fiscal Year	<u>65</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>a/ 75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81 b/</u>
High School	68	68	61	66	69	69	77	73	68	77
Diploma										
Graduates										
Some College	NA	(7)	(5)	NA	(6)	(6)	(7)	(6)	(5)	NA

TOTAL SELECTED RESERVE ENLISTED FORCE, MEN AND WOMEN, PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES (includes some high school equivalency through tests) AND PERCENT WITH AT LEAST SOME COLLEGE (in parentheses)

Fiscal Year	<u>74</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81 b/</u>
High School	89*	87*	85*	82	81	79	79	78*
Diploma								
Graduates <u>c/</u>								
Some College	(39)*	(34)*	(30)*	(25)	(17)	(10)	(10)	(14)*

SELECTED RESERVE NONPRIOR SERVICE MALE ENLISTMENTS, PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA GRADUATES AND PERCENT WITH AT LEAST SOME COLLEGE (in parentheses)

Fiscal Year	<u>70</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81 b/</u>
High School	94	68	46	51	55	45	39	39	42	39*
Diploma										
Graduates <u>c/</u>										
Some College	(54)	(25)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(6)	(6)	(4)	(4)	(4)*

ACTIVE DUTY NONPRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENTS, PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA GRADUATES, BY SEX

Fiscal Year	<u>64</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81 b/</u>
Men	68*	66*	58	64	67	68	75	70	65	75
Women	NA	96*	89	92	91	90	91	91	86	89
Total	68	67	61	64	69	69	77	73	68	77

a/ Excludes certain Naval Reserve enlistees.

b/ First quarter (October-December 1980) only.

c/ Excludes high school seniors who enlist in the Reserves before graduating from high school, but who are not high school dropouts.

29/ All data were provided by the Accession Policy Directorate, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Personnel Policy), November 14, 1980 and April 22, 1981, unless otherwise indicated by an asterisk. Asterisk-marked data are from a variety of other DoD sources. As in all cases when data are not drawn from one source, the possibility of differing and mutually irreconcilable criteria must be noted.



Several salient observations can be made from examining these data:

-- They do not support the notion of a drastic decline in the minimum or average educational level of military personnel under the AVF.

-- They do indicate a considerable decline in the proportion of military personnel with more than a high school education.

-- There has been a greater decline in the educational levels of the Selected Reserve enlisted force since the AVF began, compared to that of the active enlisted force.

#### Mental Category

The measurement of intelligence levels or innate mental ability of military personnel is a complicated and controversial issue. Intelligence testing has been attacked in recent years as being culturally biased and reflective of socioeconomic status differences, rather than measuring true intellectual ability.

The Department of Defense uses an index of mental ability which divides personnel into five categories, based on test results. These categories are labeled by roman numerals I through V. Personnel in Categories I and II score in the superior or above-average ranges, respectively; Category III personnel are rated in the average range (i.e., from slightly above to slightly below the median level); Category IV personnel are below average; and Category V individuals are at the lowest levels of mental ability. (Since 1948, Category V personnel have been forbidden by law to enter the Armed Forces.)

Category determinations are based on the scores individuals make on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). The ranges of intelligence covered by each category, however, are often misunderstood. They are not based on particular percentages of the total population tested, or on percentages of the American population as a whole. Rather, individual test scores are ranked according to how they would stand among the total population on active duty during World War II. Since World War II, the tests used by the services to measure intelligence levels have been reused several times. In each case, the tests have been designed so that the result would be equivalent to the World War II test in terms of difficulty, thus enabling the scores to be comparable over time.

It appears that faulty procedures caused DoD to radically underestimate the number and proportion of personnel enlisted during FY 1976-1980 who were mentally below average. In April 1980 the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics) testified that serious errors had been made in calibrating test scores. In July 1980, DoD released a report which stated that the actual proportion of Mental Category IV recruits (the lowest category currently acceptable for enlistment into the Armed Forces) during FY 1979 was much higher than previously stated figures, and that the actual proportion of Mental Category III recruits (average intelligence level) was much lower. The proportions

of recruits in Mental Category I and II (superior and above average intelligence) were apparently recorded somewhat more accurately by the original tests; DoD found less error in their case. Further analysis revealed that recruits enlisted from the second half of FY 1976 (January-June 1976) through FY 1980 were tested incorrectly, and that the proportion of recruits in Mental Category IV for these 4 1/2 years was radically higher, and those in Categories I-III lower, previously stated by DoD especially in the Army. 30/

Analysis of trends in the intelligence levels of military personnel is therefore complicated by the following factors:

-- Mental ability is not measured against the population as a whole, but against a 35-year old subsample -- World War II active duty military members -- that was by no means representative of the population then (due to the deferment of men for age, medical, or occupational reasons, and the exclusion of women), let alone now.

-- Several tests have been used by the Armed Forces since World War II to measure intelligence, causing potential comparison problems each time the transition has been made from one test to another.

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30/ The most comprehensive discussion of the mental category system, what it measures, and the recent problems discovered in its application, are found in U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 3, Manpower and Personnel. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 1285-1300, 1304-16, 1322-23, 1332-45, 1359-60; History of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). A Report to the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics). DoD ASVAB Working Group, March 1980; DoD Manpower Requirements Report for 1982. February 1981: Chapter VIII, Recruit Quality.

-- During FY 1976-1980, the AFQT in use greatly overstated the average mental ability of AVF recruits, although the new test introduced at the beginning of FY 1981 corrects this error. 31/

The statistics below reflect these recent test problems: 32/

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31/ Due to Congressional concern over the quality of All-Volunteer Force recruits, section 302 of the FY 1981 DoD Appropriation Authorization Act (P.L. 96-342), as amended by section 9, P.L. 96-584, Military Pay and Allowances Benefits Act of 1980, placed statutory restrictions on enlistment quality for the first time since FY 1974. These were as follows:

- No more than 35% of Army male nonprior service enlistees during FY 1981 can be non-high-school graduates.
- No more than 25% of DoD enlistees during FY 1981 and FY 1982 can be in Mental Category IV.
- No more than 20% of DoD enlistees during FY 1983 can be in Mental Category IV.

Also, the Secretary of Defense is required to report to the Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate at the end of each quarter of FY 1981 on whether the mental category limitations have had a negative impact on combat readiness.

32/ All data were provided by the Accession Policy Directorate, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Personnel Policy), November 14, 1980 and April 22, 1981, unless otherwise indicated by an asterisk. Asterisk-marked data are from a variety of other DoD sources. As in all cases when data are not drawn from one source, the possibility of differing and mutually irreconcilable criteria must be noted.

ACTIVE DUTY NONPRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENTS, MEN AND WOMEN, PERCENT IN MENTAL CATEGORIES I (SUPERIOR); II (ABOVE AVERAGE); III (AVERAGE); AND IV (BELOW AVERAGE)

Fiscal Year	1964	1973	1974	1975	1976 b/	1977 b/	1978 b/	1979 b/	1980 b/	1981 h/
I	6	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	3
II	32	32	32	34	35	26	28	25	23	30
III	47	55	55	56	51	40	43	42	42	45
IV	15	10	10	6	10	30	25	30	33	22

SELECTED RESERVE NONPRIOR SERVICE MALE ENLISTMENTS, PERCENT IN MENTAL CATEGORIES I (SUPERIOR); II (ABOVE AVERAGE); III (AVERAGE); AND IV (BELOW AVERAGE)

Fiscal Year	1970	1973	1974	1975	1976 c/	1977 c/	1978 c/	1979 d/	1980 d/	1981 h/
I	17	10	5	3						3*
II	45	31	21	22	NA	NA	NA	72	73	19*
III	33	44	47	54						66*
IV	4	15	28	21				28	27	12*

ACTIVE DUTY NONPRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENTS, PERCENT IN MENTAL CATEGORIES I-IV, BY SEX

Fiscal Year	1964	1970	1973	1974	1975	1976 f/	1977 g/	1978 g/	1979 g/	1980 g/	1981 h/
<u>I</u>											
Men	7	5	4	3	3	NA	9	4	3	4	3
Women	3	3	3	14	14	NA	5	3	3	2	3
<u>II</u>											
Men	35	32	30	29	31	NA	25	27	24	22	30
Women	45	48	45	64	57	NA	38	35	28	23	27
<u>III</u>											
Men	51	42	53	58	59	NA	39	41	41	41	44
Women	52	50	52	21	29	NA	52	54	54	46	49
<u>IV</u>											
Men	8	21	14	11	7	NA	32	28	32	33	22
Women	e/	e/	1	e/	e/	NA	6	7	15	28	21

a/ Pre-FY 1974 data includes males only.

b/ All originally reported mental test scores for FY 1976-1980 were discovered to be invalid. Recent analysis has revealed that the original scores substantially understated the proportion of recruits in Mental Category IV (below average) and overstated the proportion in Mental Category III (average). The proportions of recruits in Mental Category I (superior) and Mental Category II (above average) were also overstated, but not as greatly as in the case of Category III recruits. These percentages represent recomputations of the original raw data to correct for the errors discovered. A new test, designed to avoid the errors of the old, was introduced at the beginning of FY 1981.

c/ Recomputations of the mental test scores for Selected Reserve recruits in FY 1976-1978 have not yet been completed. See above, note b/ to this table.

d/ Only partial recomputations of the mental test scores for Selected Reserve recruits in FY 1979-1980 have been completed, showing only the proportions of recruits in Mental Category IV (below average). The breakdown of Mental Categories I-III is not yet available. See above, note b/ to this table.

e/ Less than one percent.

f/ Breakdown not available by sex for FY 1976.

g/ See above, note b/ to this table.

h/ 1st quarter (October-December 1980) only.

The belated discovery that the proportion of below-average mental category personnel enlisted in the Armed Forces during FY 1976-1980 was much higher than hitherto believed would appear to confirm impressionistic reports by officers and noncommissioned officers -- until recently officially discounted by DoD -- that recruit quality did decline drastically in the late 1970s. <sup>33/</sup> More detailed analysis of mental category data is hampered by the fact that the recomputation of the erroneous FY 1976-1980 data is not yet complete. Furthermore, the press of current business and the limited resources and time available to DoD may prevent a full revision of all the statistics derived from FY 1976-1980 mental test score data from ever being completed.

#### Levels of Career Personnel

The services require sufficient numbers of career enlisted personnel to provide leadership and technical/administrative expertise, "career"

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<sup>33/</sup> A representative selection of such impressionistic detail, typical of that found in numerous newspaper, magazine, and journal discussions, is in U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Status of the All-Volunteer Armed Force. Hearing, 95th Congress, 2nd session. June 20, 1978. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1978. Impressionistic data, of course, has its own limitations. These include social biases and/or unrealistic nostalgia on the part of older officers and noncommissioned officers -- a desire to return to a "Golden Age" which may in fact be overdrawn. In addition, the extensive public discussion and controversy surrounding the All-Volunteer Force may have led its critics to blame the AVF for recruit quality problems which have arisen simultaneously with the AVF, but which may not in fact be related to the AVF at all. For vigorous defenses of AVF recruit quality, based in large part on the mental category test score data later found to be in error, see Richard V. L. Cooper, Military Manpower and the All-Volunteer Force. Report no. R-1450-ARPA. Santa Monica, California, The Rand Corporation, September 1977: 128-41; and America's Volunteers: A Report on the All-Volunteer Armed Forces. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics). December 31, 1978: 24-35.

being defined as persons who have completed their first enlistment term (or in some cases as those with more than three years of service).

It is difficult to gauge, however, what actual requirements for career personnel are. The Navy, for instance, has had a perennial shortage of petty officers compared to stated requirements during the entire post-World War II era; this has not, however, prevented the Navy from satisfactorily performing its assigned missions during two wars and 36 years of sustained overseas peacetime operations. Until actual operations are impeded by career force shortages -- as has been the case in recent years when some Navy ships have had to greatly reduce their tempo of operations due to lack of trained crews -- then it is almost impossible to determine how critical career force shortages really are.

Reenlistment rates are based on stated requirements. Are stated requirements based on what would be "nice" to have, what would be "useful" to have, or what the services must absolutely have at a minimum to conduct important assigned tasks? Without tracking the personnel requirements validation process step by step, it is impossible to say.

The following table provides a summary of reenlistment statistics since FY 1955: 34/

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34/ Data from Directorate for Information Operations and Reports. Washington Headquarters Services. Department of Defense. Selected Manpower Statistics, FY 1980: 130-31, 134-35; Selected Manpower Statistics, April 11, 1966: 53; and DoD News Release 48-81. Military Manpower Strength Assessment, Recruiting and Reenlistment Results for October-December 1980 (Active Force). February 11, 1981. Figures do not include draftees, but pre-1976 figures include draft-induced voluntary enlistees. The "unadjusted" reenlistment rate is defined as "the ratio of total reenlistments occurring in a given period to total separations of personnel eligible to reenlist in the same period, expressed as a percentage."

UNADJUSTED REENLISTMENT RATES FOR ENLISTED PERSONNEL a/

Fiscal Year	<u>1955</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>b/</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>c/</u>
First-Term Personnel	16	21	24	24		30	37	30	35	37	37	39	45	
Career (2nd and Later Term Personnel)	74	85	87	83		81	82	76	75	72	68	71	77	

a/ Statistics here do not include draftees, but pre-FY 1976 figures include a substantial proportion of voluntary enlistees whose original enlistment was undoubtedly draft-induced. The "unadjusted" reenlistment rate is defined as "the ratio of total reenlistments occurring in a given period to total separations of personnel eligible to reenlist in the same period, expressed as a percentage."

b/ First AVF fiscal year.

c/ First Half.

(These overall DoD figures, it should be noted, mask much more drastic decreases in Navy and Marine Corps career reenlistments since FY 1973.) Detailed examination of career reenlistment rates during the FY 1955-1975 period shows an average in the 85-90 percent range for each year; the drop below 75 percent after FY 1975-1976 therefore appears to be a radical departure from post-World War II norms. The first-term reenlistment rates during FY 1955-1975 generally stayed in the 25-30 percent range; here, the improvement to the high 30s/low 40s range is also a new phenomenon.

These reenlistment rates (plus other factors) resulted in the services being short 104,000 personnel in grades E-4 through E-9 as of January 1980, most such slots being filled by junior enlisted personnel. 35/ While the shortage was only about 6 percent of the total enlisted force, statistics on shortages in particular skills leave little doubt that retention is critical in a variety of areas, particularly those which

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35/ U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Appropriations. Department of Defense Appropriation Bill, 1981; report to accompany H.R. 8105. September 11, 1980. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980 (96th Congress, 2nd session. House. Report no. 96-1317): 23-24.



involve combat and/or arduous duty in peace or war (ground combat skills, Navy engineering ratings, and the like) or which require technical training and education which is in high demand in the private sector (electronics in particular).

What is not clear is the extent to which retention problems result from the transition from a conscription-based force to an All-Volunteer Force. An examination of the historical record suggests that while first-term recruit quality may indeed have dropped under the AVF when compared to the draft era, career enlisted retention has been a pervasive military personnel policy problem since the end of World War II. A host of reports, studies, and analyses since the late 1940s -- notably proposals for major increases in career compensation levels -- have stated that career enlisted retention rates are inadequate. Virtually all of these discussions have identified pay levels as the primary reason for retention problems. <sup>36/</sup> In the early 1970s -- during the first few years of the AVF -- military compensation was actually roughly comparable with private sector compensation for the first time since 1945,

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<sup>36/</sup> See Career Compensation for the Uniformed Forces. A Report and Recommendation for the Secretary of Defense by the Advisory Commission on Service Pay [the "Hook Commission"], and Appendix. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., December 1948; A Modern Concept of Manpower Management and Compensation for Personnel of the Uniformed Services. Volume I: Military Personnel. A Report and Recommendation for the Secretary of Defense by the Defense Advisory Committee on Professional and Technical Compensation [the "Cordiner Committee" Report]. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., May 1957; Department of Defense. Modernizing Military Pay. Report of the First Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation. Volume I: Active Duty Compensation. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., November 1, 1967. Any interested analyst who believes that career retention is a problem unique to the All-Volunteer Force need only survey these three pre-AVF studies to dispel such notions.

according to several compensation analyses. By 1975-1976 military compensation had started to lag behind civilian compensation, and continued to decrease until late 1980. 37/ Major increases in military compensation enacted in 1980 halted the erosion relative to civilian pay, although it did not restore the purchasing power of military personnel to the relative high reached in 1972-1973. 38/

Most of the 1980 military compensation initiatives were explicitly directed at retention rather than first-term recruiting, and did not directly address the major overall gap between military and civilian compensation which developed during the 1970s. The actual effects of these compensation increases, anticipation of their enactment, and the indication that they provide tangible public and congressional support for career personnel all had positive effects on career retention. DoD career enlisted retention was up in FY 1980 compared to FY 1979, and

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37/ A variety of analyses have confirmed that the purchasing power of military compensation peaked in 1972-1973 and has eroded steadily since then, at an accelerating rate after 1975-1976. See Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Personnel Policy). Report of the Pay Adequacy Study. October 1979; U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1980. Part 4, Manpower and Personnel. Hearings, 96th Congress, 1st session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979: 1970-75; Richard L. Eisenman, with Paul Zinsmeister and Robert L. Goldich. What's Happened to Military Pay and Benefits through the Past Decade? Report 78-9F. Washington, Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, December 30, 1977; Melvin R. Laird. People, Not Hardware: The Highest Defense Priority. Special Analysis 80-1. Washington, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980.

38/ The Military Personnel and Compensation Amendments of 1980 (P.L. 96-343, September 8, 1980; 94 Stat. 1123); several provisions of the FY 1981 DoD Appropriation Authorization Act (P.L. 96-342, September 8, 1980; 94 Stat. 1077); and the Military Pay and Allowances Benefits Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-579, December 23, 1980; 94 Stat. 3359) were the principal statutes involved.

even higher in the first quarter of FY 1981 than in FY 1980. Navy career enlisted retention has recovered from a low of 62% in FY 1979 to 73% during the first half of FY 1981; Marine Corps career enlisted retention rebounded from 52% in FY 1979 and 50% in FY 1980 to 74% in the first half of FY 1981. Army career enlisted retention rates have also increased from FY 1979 lows.

#### Military Skill Proficiency

At first glance it would appear that measuring the ability of individual military members to perform their jobs would be one of the best indications of quality, as it would measure direct competence in military tasks rather than indirect indicators of the ability to perform those tasks, such as education or intelligence. However, while military skill proficiency tests may measure the ability of individuals to perform specific actions -- fire a rifle accurately, operate a computer properly, or diagnose an electronic malfunction and repair it -- they do not measure the ability of the individual to perform as a member of a team, on a cooperative basis, frequently under stress. They do not take account of disciplinary problems. They do not measure the ability of a person to perform consistently, as opposed to a one-time test situation. Furthermore, like all tests, they are subject to manipulation and coaching, especially in a structured military environment.

Much controversy has arisen about high failure rates of Army personnel taking their individual skill proficiency tests -- Skill Qualification Tests (SQT), first introduced in 1977. <sup>39/</sup> There is no way to determine, however,

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<sup>39/</sup> Juri Toomepuu, Ready, Willing, Able to Fight. Army, January 1980: 6-7; Jack Taylor, Military Suffers Manpower Crisis, The Sunday Oklahoman, September 14, 1980: 1.

whether this problem is due to low quality recruits, unrealistic or inaccurate testing, or the difficulty of applying written tests in a non-academic environment. Furthermore, there are no time series available with which to measure the fluctuations in skill proficiency over the years. What would SQT passing rates have been in 1965 or 1955, had such tests been used then? What proportion of World War II soldiers would have passed World War II SQTs? It may be that detailed numerically-scored tests are simply invalid tools with which to measure military skill proficiency if evaluated in isolation from a working environment, especially in the case of combat or other occupational specialties performed in the field. 40/

The Navy and Air Force have used written skill tests -- not in isolation from the other tools of personnel evaluation available to commanders, but as one of several such tools -- for many years, with considerable success. It may be that the Army's problems with such tests simply involve "growing pains," due to the Army's lesser experience with them. It is important, however, not to automatically or exclusively blame tests for bad results; this is the analytical equivalent of "killing the messenger that brings the bad news."

#### Race and Socioeconomic Status

The extent to which the All-Volunteer Force is representative of American society as a whole has been debated at great length. Some feel

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40/ General Donn A. Starry, U.S. Army. Values, Not Scores, the Best Measure of Soldier Quality. Army, October 1980: 38-43.

that the issue of representativeness is irrelevant, while others believe that it has implications for the combat capability of the services as well as social equality. Perhaps the most salient point about representativeness is that it must be measured in comparison to some other group, and that group must be selected on the basis of judgment and intuition rather than hard and fast logic. Should the issue of racial representation, for instance, be discussed in terms of the total black population of the United States, the black population in the 18-34 age group (which contains most active duty enlisted personnel), or the black population in the 18-30 age group not enrolled in college or with higher education (which approximate the enlisted force even more closely)? A literal comparison for purposes of racial or socioeconomic representation may very well ignore the social and political realities of less precise, but more visible and understandable, comparisons.

Measurement and judgment problems become even more acute when applied to standards such as income level, which can be measured only through sample surveys. When dealing with such vague terms as "socioeconomic status," quantitative measurement breaks down completely. What is the "socioeconomic status" of a white male graduate of a high school in a generally affluent area who does not go on to college and comes from one of the few poor households in his area? Specific indicators for such an individual would be highly contradictory. Under such circumstances, it is often misleading and even risky to use quantified data.

The following statistics indicate that the proportion of blacks in the Armed Forces has risen substantially under the AVF. (Overall figures for

DoD mask substantially higher proportions of blacks in the Army and among Army enlistments -- approximately a third in both cases): 41/

BLACKS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ACTIVE AND SELECTED  
RESERVE ENLISTED FORCE, MEN AND WOMEN

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81</u> <u>a/</u>
Active Force	10	14*	16	16	17	18	19	21	22	NA
Selected Reserve	NA	4	6	8	11	14	15	16	16	16

BLACKS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ACTIVE AND SELECTED RESERVE  
NONPRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENTS, MEN AND WOMEN

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>64</u> <u>b/</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>81</u> <u>a/</u>
Active Force	9	18	21	18	17	20	23	26	22	20
Selected Reserve	NA	11	26	27	29	28	28	26	22	19*

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a/ First half.

b/ Males only; includes some Army non-whites.

These figures can be contrasted with U.S. Census data that show that during 1950-1979, blacks as a percentage of the total U.S. population increased from approximately 10 to almost 12 percent and black males increased from over 11 to almost 13 percent of all U.S. males ages 18-24;

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41/ All data were provided by the Accession Policy Directorate, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Personnel Policy), November 14, 1980 and April 22, 1981, unless otherwise indicated by an asterisk. Asterisk-marked data are from a variety of other DoD sources. As in all cases when data are not drawn from one source, the possibility of differing and mutually irreconcilable criteria must be noted.

blacks as a percentage of the experienced civilian labor force remained at about 10 percent; and blacks as a percentage of the non-professional civilian labor force remained about midway between 11 and 12 percent. 42/ In short, by any conceivable general measure blacks are substantially overrepresented in the enlisted ranks of the All-Volunteer Force.

It is conceivable that much more specific comparisons -- the proportion of blacks, say, among all 18-24 year old males with a high school education or less working in blue-collar or low-level white collar positions -- would show a smaller disparity. 43/ Nonetheless, such a specific comparison assumes the issue of racial representation in the Armed Forces is related only to specific occupational structure rather than to broader social and philosophical issues of equity and burden-sharing; and that understandable reasons for overrepresentation remove it as a social issue. 44/

There are two sources of socioeconomic data on recruits (see table on p. 44). One involves a computer matching of the residence area of enlistees with U.S. Census data on family income by residence area, using zip code

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42/ Data from U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. Current Population Reports. Population Estimates and Projections. Series P-25. #870. Estimates of the Population of the United States, by Age, Race, and Sex, 1976 to 1979. January 1980: 7, 25; 1960 Census of Population. Volume I: Characteristics of the Population. Part 1: United States Summary. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1964: 1-148/152; 1960 Census of Population. Subject Reports. Occupational Characteristics. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1963: 21-30; 1970 Census of Population. Subject Reports. Occupational Characteristics. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., June 1973: 12-27.

43/ Richard V.L. Cooper. Military Manpower Policy and the All-Volunteer Force. Rand Report R-1450-ARPA. Santa Monica, California, The Rand Corporation, September 1977: 205.

44/ For an example of this point of view, see Cooper, Military Manpower Policy and the All-Volunteer Force: 209-21.

CALENDAR YEAR 1969 FAMILY INCOME DATA COMPARED WITH CALENDAR YEAR 1969  
DISTRIBUTION OF MEDIAN INCOMES FOR FISCAL YEARS 1974, 1975, 1976, TRANSITION  
QUARTER, 1977, 1978, AND 1979 ENLISTEE'S RESIDENCE 45/  
[In Percent]

Income	Calendar Year	Distribution of Calendar Year 1969 Median Incomes						
	U.S. Family Income Distribution a/	of DOD Enlistees' Residences (fiscal years)						
		1974	1975	1976	TQ	1977	1978	1979
Under \$6,000	26	7	6	5	6	6	6	7
\$6,000 to \$7,999	14	25	24	22	22	23	24	25
\$8,000 to \$9,999	14	32	32	33	32	32	32	32
\$10,000 to \$11,999	13	24	25	26	26	26	25	24
\$12,000 to \$14,999	14	10	11	12	12	11	11	10
\$15,000 to \$24,999	15	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
Over \$25,000	4	b/	b/	b/	b/	b/	b/	b/
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
=====								
Median (in 1969 \$)	9,433	9,078	9,250	9,667	9,375	9,317	9,210	9,165

a/ Bureau of the Census, series P-60, No. 70, Consumer Income-1969.

b/ Less than 0.5 percent.

Note: Median family income in calendar year 1978 was \$17,640 or 87 percent higher than in 1969.

REPORTED FAMILY INCOME BY SERVICE, FISCAL YEAR 1979 MALE ACCESSIONS COMPARED TO  
U.S. POPULATION DATA 43/  
[Percent Distribution]

	Population Data, Families with Heads 35-54 yr old c/	Total DOD	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$10,000	16.1	34.0	42.9	26.8	37.3	23.3
\$10,000 to \$14,999	27.7	20.8	21.1	21.4	18.3	20.9
\$15,000 to \$19,999	16.3	16.9	13.5	20.1	16.8	19.9
\$20,000 to \$25,999	16.4	10.9	8.6	12.4	9.8	14.0
\$26,000 and above	39.2	17.5	13.8	19.2	17.9	21.9
=====						
Median Income	\$21,547	13,800	\$11,700	\$15,400	\$13,500	\$16,400
Percent total with unreported income	NA	28	40	21	23	18

c/ 1978 family income families with heads 35 to 54 yr. old. Taken from Census Bureau publication P-60, No. 118 issued in 1980.

Source: AFEES (Armed Forces Entrance and Examination Station) survey.

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45/ U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Military Compensation. Hearing, 96th Congress, 2nd session. June 2, 1980. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 26-27.



areas as the geographical unit of measurement. The other involves surveys of recruits which request information on their family income (this latter invariably reveals a great lack of knowledge of family incomes on the part of young persons, and must therefore be treated with some caution).

These two sources of data indicate a substantial underrepresentation of the affluent among AVF recruits. It should be noted that this has been true of voluntarily recruited military forces throughout history. <sup>46/</sup> There is a corollary indication of overrepresentation of persons well below the median income, although the zip code-based data appear to show that the very poor -- those at the absolute bottom of the socioeconomic scale -- are as underrepresented as the affluent.

#### Quality: A Summing Up

It is very easy to get bogged down in a plethora of data when attempting to analyze the quality of the All-Volunteer Force. This report has tried to avoid doing so, so as to extract generalizations which do not demand that the reader follow tortuous reasoning. Certain conclusions, however, can be drawn:

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<sup>46/</sup> For examples, see New Cambridge Modern History, Volume IV. The Decline of Spain and the Thirty Years War, 1609-48/59. Chapter VI: Military Forces and Warfare, 1610-48. Cambridge, Great Britain, at the University Press, 1970: 209-10; New Cambridge Modern History, Volume VI. The Rise of Great Britain and Russia, 1688-1725. Chapter XXII: Armies and Navies. Part 2: Soldiers and Civilians. Cambridge, Great Britain, at the University Press, 1970: 763-77; John Childs. The Army of Charles II. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1976: 21-24; Francis Paul Prucha. The Sword of the Republic: The United States Army on the Frontier, 1783-1846. Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 1977: 320-30; Robert M. Utley. Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1890. New York, Macmillan Co., 1973: 22-24; Alan Ramsay Skelley. The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977: 281-300; John M. Collins. Depression Army. Army, January 1972: 12-13.

-- The percentage of above average and average individuals in the enlisted ranks -- measured by educational attainment or mental test score -- has declined since the AVF began. This corroborates near-unanimous impressionistic reports by officers and NCOs that such persons are found much less often in the junior enlisted ranks -- especially above average individuals. The absence of the latter, in particular, removes an important "informal leadership cadre" from the junior enlisted ranks, as well as a group which is able to master technical detail and procedures much more quickly than less-educated, less-intelligent individuals. It may also augur ill for the quality of future NCOs, as these must come from today's junior enlisted personnel.

-- The proportion of below average personnel has risen substantially since the mid-1970s, a belief held by many career military personnel which was reinforced by recent revelations of mental test inaccuracies during FY 1976-1980. These tend to support the repeated impressionistic evaluations from officers and NCOs that there is a disturbing and disproportionate number of AVF recruits who, even if their quantifiable characteristics are considered "adequate," are comparatively deficient in the qualities of "character" which are necessary for success in both military and civilian life. 47/

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47/ One of the shorthand expressions for this impression is the assertion that regardless of test scores and/or educational levels, or even skill proficiency, a large number of "losers" are entering the All-Volunteer Force -- individuals whose actual levels of socialization and commitment are low, regardless of their quantifiable capacities. See Charles C. Moskos, Jr. "The Enlisted Ranks in the All-Volunteer Army," in John B. Keeley, Editor. The All-Volunteer Force and American Society. Charlottesville, Virginia, University Press of Virginia, 1978: 61-76; Captain Stephen D. Westbrook, U.S. Army. Sociopolitical Alienation and Military Efficiency. Armed Forces and Society, Winter 1980: 170-89; Captain Stephen D. Westbrook, U.S. Army. The Alienated Soldier: Legacy of our Society. Army, December 1979: 18-23.

-- High school diploma graduate proportions among new recruits were generally not much different in the late 1970s from those of the early 1970s. In the late 1970s, however, the services -- the Army, in particular -- were recruiting an increasing number of persons who were both non-high school graduates and below average in mental test scores. Thus, the average intrinsic mental capability -- as measured by the DOD tests -- of non-high school graduates in the early and mid 1970s was much higher than that of the non-high school graduates of the late 1970s.

-- Even if some previous statistical indicators did not support claims of substantial decline in the educational and intelligence levels of military personnel entering the All-Volunteer Force, this did not indicate that such changes had not taken place. Rather, it reflected limitations on the usefulness and/or accuracy of existing quantitative data in measuring such characteristics. In addition, statistics on educational attainment and intelligence levels did not fully measure the willingness and motivation of individuals to use and apply those attributes in real-life situations, to function effectively in a group environment under stress, and to obey orders and instructions.

-- The decline in average educational attainment, mental category, or other, less quantifiable indices may have had an impact on military skill proficiency. How much is almost impossible to determine, due to the lack of meaningful comparative data. One way in which lower basic abilities or motivation of recruits has affected skill proficiency, however, is to increase the amount of training time required to master specific tasks, and the amount of drill and repetition required to maintain skill proficiency.

-- The brief history of manpower quality evaluation in the All-Volunteer Force suggests the limitations of relying too heavily on statistical data, rather than informed judgment, in determining overall policy. A reading of the voluminous literature on AVF manpower quality indicates that, in large part, defenders of the All-Volunteer Force have used statistics to assert its "success," and critics have used the same raw data, interpreted differently, to indicate "failure." It would appear to be more useful to use general indicators and impressions of unit readiness and proficiency, rather than those of individual skill competence. After all, it is the units that deploy to fight, not a mass of unorganized individuals. In addition, unit readiness measurement is -- or can be -- more comprehensive and based on informed judgment in addition to quantitative data. 48/

-- The AVF junior enlisted ranks do not appear to be representative of the nation as a whole in terms of race. The complex and profound nature of the interaction between black and white Americans, and the causes and consequences of racism in American life, make evaluating the effects of this overrepresentation on military performance very difficult.

-- It is not clear that career retention problems result primarily from the advent of the All-Volunteer Force. The evidence suggests that career retention problems preceded the AVF by many years. It may be

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48/ For a concise discussion of unit readiness measurement criteria, see Melvin R. Laird with Lawrence J. Korb. The Problem of Military Readiness. AEI Special Analysis 80-3. Washington, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980: 17-26.

that intangible or secondary effects of the transition to an AVF exacerbate career retention problems, but if past laments of retention study groups in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s are any indication, the major reason for inadequate career retention was and remains inadequate career force compensation.

## IV. ANALYTICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Nature of Supporting Analyses

One of the central features of manpower policy management in the All-Volunteer Force is the dominance of economic criteria, market-place analogies, and quantitative analyses. Much of this has come about because in the AVF environment the Armed Forces must compete in the labor market for personnel. It is not surprising, therefore, that some of the strategies the Armed Forces adopt to induce individuals to enter and remain in military service will bear a close resemblance to those used by civilian business and commercial enterprises.

The transition to an All-Volunteer Force, however, merely reinforced a broader trend toward approaching military manpower policy from a civilian-oriented managerial, industrial, and utilitarian perspective, rather than a more specifically military, geopolitical, and strategic one. <sup>49/</sup> This has resulted from a combination of traditional political, strategic, and social circumstances and a variety of post-World War II developments that reinforced these traditions. In blending their English heritage with North American circumstances, Americans opted for a military manpower system -- and a system of thinking about military manpower -- which sacrificed wartime

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<sup>49/</sup> A variety of works examine this tendency, but it has never really been addressed from a broad perspective. See Gregory Palmer. *The McNamara Strategy and the Vietnam War: Program Budgeting in the Pentagon, 1960-1968*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978: especially pp. 9-18; R. James Woolsey. *Military Options: Backward March*. Washington Post, February 26, 1978: A-19; Jeffrey Record. *The Fortunes of War*. Harper's, April 1980.

efficiency for what they perceived as general liberty and freedom from unnecessary military coercion and military presence. <sup>50/</sup> These attitudes were carried over into what the Constitution refers to as the "raising and maintaining of armies" due to the lack of constant set of strategic problems throughout American history; the lack of a sustained major military threat to the homeland; the absence of enemies with equivalent natural resources and population; and the presence of a large, well-educated, highly-skilled, and easily trainable population ideal for soldiering if persuaded of the need to do so. To these strategic and demographic factors must be added the English anti-military tradition brought over as part of the Americans' political and social baggage, <sup>51/</sup> and the American faith in "efficiency" and "organization" resulting from the massive industrialization of the second half of the 19th century.

A variety of post-1945 developments reinforced these traditional American ways of looking at military manpower policy. The increased general role of science and technology in military affairs (and specifically in the development and use of nuclear weapons) led to an increased

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<sup>50/</sup> Robert L. Goldich. Historical Continuity in the U.S. Military Reserve System. Armed Forces and Society, VII (Fall 1980); Samuel P. Huntington. The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations. Cambridge, Mass., The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957; Charles Royster. A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and the American Character, 1775-1783. Chapel Hill, North Carolina, The University of North Carolina Press, 1979, all discuss the historical background of this attitude.

<sup>51/</sup> For a detailed dissection of the origins of English antimilitary ideology, see Lois G. Schworer. "No Standing Armies!" The Antiarmy Ideology in Seventeenth Century England. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

use of quantitative analysis in the formulation of all areas of military policy and a corresponding deemphasis of more traditional geopolitical ideas. At the same time there grew increased reliance on quantitative measurements of human behavior using techniques derived from the social sciences, generally economics, psychology, sociology, and political science. Among both the consequences and causes of this use of quantitative measurements were beliefs in the rationally predictable nature of human behavior generally and in the superiority of quantitatively measurable rational approaches to more traditional concepts in national strategic formulation and military decisionmaking. <sup>52/</sup> Given the comparative ease with which economic activities could be measured compared to other areas of

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<sup>52/</sup> The literature on quantitative and economic-based policy analysis is voluminous. An overall survey is U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Government Operations. Planning-Programming-Budgeting. Inquiry of the Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations. Committee Print. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1970: passim, esp. 121-36, 639-58. The major works by the pioneers in quantitative and economic defense policy analysis include Alain C. Enthoven. Economic Analysis in the Department of Defense. American Economic Review, LIII, May 1963, 413-23; Alain C. Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith. How Much is Enough? New York, Harper and Row, 1971; Charles J. Hitch. Decision-Making for Defense. Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 1965; Charles J. Hitch and Roland N. McKean. The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1960. Skeptical or critical works include Robert Conquest. The Role of the Intellectual. Encounter, August 1978, 29-42; Richard A. Gabriel. What the Army Learned from Business. New York Times, April 15, 1979, sec. 3, p. 4; Richard A. Gabriel and Paul Savage. Crisis in Command: Mismanagement in the Army. New York, Hill and Wang, 1978; Theodore Levitt. A Heretical View of Management "Science." Fortune, December 18, 1978, 50-52; Palmer, The McNamara Strategy; and Aaron Wildavsky. The Politics of the Budgetary Process. 3rd ed., Boston, Little, Brown, and Co., 1979, and Speaking Truth to Power: The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis. Boston, Little, Brown, and Co., 1979.



life, economic criteria rapidly assumed a more and more important role in military policymaking generally and manpower policymaking specifically. 53/

Economic analyses and associated quantitative methodology use long-range steady state projections to provide a rational basis for comparing existing policies and programs with those being proposed. Detailed statistical models of future military manpower requirements, manpower supply, and general economic trends are developed. Such models are constructed so as to provide a set of common assumptions with which to compare the costs and effects of proposed policies.

These predictions and the analyses based on them are frequently overtaken by events or changes in fundamental assumptions. The Gates Commission, for example, predicted that first-term enlisted attrition would take place at levels three quarters below that subsequently experienced. 54/ Similarly, the Gates Commission and other analyses of the AVF made in the late 1960s and early 1970s did not include in their estimates of pay and benefits needed

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53/ Palmer, The McNamara Strategy. 19-77; Cooper, Military Manpower Policy and the All-Volunteer Force, 36-39; and Steven E. Rhoads, Economists and Policy Analysts. Public Administration Review. March-April 1978: 112-20.

54/ The Gates Commission estimated that first-term enlisted attrition would be approximately 5 percent during the first two years of service; instead, it has averaged over 30 percent during the first three years of service. The Gates Commission estimated that a 2.0 million person force would require 259,000 accessions annually to sustain it; instead, it has required between 340,000 and 410,000. Gate Commission Report: 40-43; Studies Prepared for the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force. Volume I. Study 1: Manpower and Budgetary Implications of Ending Conscription. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., November 1970: I-1-1/90; U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1981. Part 3, Manpower and Personnel. Hearings, 96th Congress, 2nd session. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1980: 1336; Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1981: 267.

to attract volunteers the presence of a panoply of civilian Federal programs for persons of military age such as Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG) and jobs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). <sup>55/</sup> They could not, because the programs did not exist at the time the analyses were made.

These latter two examples also illustrate another problem in making long-range steady state projections for the purposes of formulating AVF recruiting and retention policy. All aspects of the procurement, training utilization, and management of military personnel are highly interdependent. There are many variables in the military manpower process. Changing one can drive changes in the rest of the system; other aspects of the system constrain changes in any one other aspect. A primary example of this interdependence involves the effect of the AVF on the Individual Ready Reserve. There is no indication that the drastic decline in IRR strength that would result from the abolition of the draft was recognized, let alone debated during the lengthy discussions of 1969-1973. No documents analyzing the prospects, successes, and problems of the AVF -- in and out of Government -- addressed the issue until late 1975, when DoD tentatively raised the problem of individual reserve manpower. Thus, due to unforeseen consequences of policy changes which reverberated throughout the entire military manpower system, an unanticipated problem became -- and remains -- one central to the whole military manpower structure.

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<sup>55/</sup> It is conceivable that cutbacks in those programs proposed by the Reagan Administration will have a positive effect on recruiting.

Using detailed projections and forecasts for the formulation of military manpower policy appears to create numerous administrative and policy problems. The projections made in numerous AVF recruiting and retention studies may, indeed, be the best possible -- if not the only possible -- projections. Developers and users of such projections and forecasts may note that no alternative has been devised to provide any kind of meaningful method of evaluating proposed changes in policy. During the AVF era, pressures to use such predictive techniques have been exacerbated by increased military manpower costs due to the need to compete with the civilian sector, coupled with fiscally-constrained defense budgets. These resource limitations have spurred attempts to procure and use military manpower in the most economically efficient ways, for the understandable reasons of minimizing costs and maximizing the manpower that can be obtained from available funds. The use of long-range forecasting and planning is an understandable attempt to cope with real difficulties. This does not, however, mean that such attempts to cope do not bring their own serious problems.

Another heavily-debated effect associated with these analytical and administrative trends on military manpower policy under the All-Volunteer Force has been the perception that military service has been, or is being, redefined away from an "institution" or "calling," with special requirements of discipline, service, loyalty, and commitment,

toward an occupation or job, no different from civilian employment. 56/ The extent to which individual military members may have "institutional" or "occupational" values or beliefs has been the subject of sociological study indicating that most have some of both. 57/ However, the very facts of voluntarism rather than compulsion, and of competing as an equal in the labor market rather than having a priority call on the nation's manpower, are bound to indicate such an equation between the AVF as an institution and civilian enterprises, and between military service and civilian employment.

One of the general effects of these trends is an emphasis on peacetime efficiency, in terms of economy of motion, smoothness of effort, and conservation of resources. Priority is given to the economically and bureaucratically efficient management of a peacetime armed force

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56/ The most prominent recent exponent of the movement of the U.S. Armed Forces from an "institutional" to an "occupational" model is Professor Charles C. Moskos, Jr., of Northwestern University. His works include *From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organization*. Armed Forces and Society, IV, Fall 1977, pp. 41-50; *The Enlisted Ranks in the All-Volunteer Army*, in John B. Keeley, Ed. *The All-Volunteer Force and American Society*. Charlottesville, Virginia, University Press of Virginia, 1978: 39-80; (with Morris Janowitz) *Five Years of the All-Volunteer Force: 1973-1978*. Armed Forces and Society, V, Winter 1979: 171-218; and his testimony in U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Continuing Review of the All-Volunteer Force. Hearing, 95th Congress, 2d session. July 11, 1978. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1978; and U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Armed Services. Status of the All-Volunteer Armed Force. Hearing, 95th Congress, 2d session, June 20, 1978. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1978. See also John E. Greenbacker. *The Perils of Pay Comparability*. U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, July 1978, 31-37.

57/ David R. Segal, John D. Blair, Joseph Lengermann, and Richard Thompson. *Institutional and Occupational Values in the U.S. Military*, in James Brown, Michael J. Collins, and Franklin D. Margiotta, Eds. *Changing Military Manpower Realities*. Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, forthcoming; and Michael J. Stahl, Charles W. McNichols, and T. Roger Manley. *An Empirical Examination of the Moskos Institution-Occupation Model*. Armed Forces and Society, VI, Winter 1980, 257-69.

operating on a steady-state basis, rather than the combat effectiveness of that peacetime force upon mobilization for war. One suspects that a major manifestation of this emphasis on peacetime efficiency is the line of thought which argues that small, well-trained, technology-intensive armed forces, manned by qualitatively superior long-service volunteers and with a high proportion of career personnel, are superior to large, less individually-proficient, manpower-intensive forces manned by short-service conscripts and a smaller proportion of career personnel. There can be little question that the former type of force, especially if carefully structured in accordance with stated military and foreign policy objectives, is more economically efficient, and easier to manage, than the latter kind of force. In the past, however, volunteer forces of this nature have proven to be much less effective in providing a mobilization base for intense and perhaps protracted warfare than a force with more surplus manpower and resources less tied to one particular strategic and geopolitical vision. 58/ If strategy

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58/ The classic such example is the small, all-volunteer British Army of 1914, at the outbreak of World War I. The British Army had a much higher level of both individual skill proficiency and unit training than the conscript forces of Continental Europe, but it soon "melted" due to heavy casualties. The lack of massive, conscription-created reserves, plus the lack of surplus capacity in the active force, drastically inhibited the ability of the British Army to mobilize for a long war after the initial few months of combat. See Corvelli Barnett, *Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970: A Military, Political, and Social Survey*. Burgay, Suffolk, United Kingdom, Penguin Books, 1974: 377-80, 389, 397, 403-04, 410-12, 492-94. Also, the comment in Cyril Falls. *The Great War, 1914-1918*. New York, Capricorn Books, 1959: 35: "The British would have been the best of the lot on the Entente side if there had been enough of them. Military critics talk only of the superiority of small professional armees d'elite over 'armed conscript hordes.' Very good, but in the first place, the main enemy had a magnificent army, and in the second, small armies feel losses more sharply than big. Armees d'elite would be invincible if wars were fought without casualties. Things being what they are, armees d'elite are unlikely to remain so long."

and commitments, or the nature and intensity of war, change, there is no slack with which to change direction; 59/ when mobilization comes, there is no surplus of manpower to simultaneously sustain the shock of initial combat losses and support force expansion without threatening initial combat capability. Yet the economic and political appeal of such a force in peacetime is undeniable.

#### The All-Volunteer Force Environment

There has been much controversy about whether or not the creation of the AVF has resulted in "civilianization" of the Armed Forces in terms of attitudes and discipline. There is little doubt that the extent to which the military as an institution exerts control over its members far beyond that of civilian enterprises has diminished substantially over the past two decades. Formerly, this extraordinary control was considered to be a mainstay of military discipline. It both reinforced the necessarily autocratic nature of the military in wartime and provided positive support for military personnel and their families in time of stress, both in peace and war. Almost universally, however, the recruit's encounter with this control in the early months and years of service was notably unpleasant; certainly it went against the social currents of the 1960s and 1970s. Much of this control is gone.

Certain aspects of the AVF appear to have contributed directly to this erosion of control. The dramatic rise in junior enlisted pay, for instance, has given single enlisted personnel much more discretionary income with which to purchase luxuries and recreation hitherto unavailable to low-paid recruits -- cars and frequent off-base excursions are two of the most significant examples. The same rise in pay, coupled with the willingness of the Armed Forces to satisfy the desires of their

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59/ Palmer, The McNamara Strategy and the Vietnam War: 5.

enlisted personnel for personal privacy, has led to a considerable number of single enlisted personnel living off base, and therefore little different from civilian commuters going to and from work each day. The greatly increased proportion of married junior enlisted personnel (for whatever reason) has similarly diminished the control of the Armed Forces over more of its members, for DoD does not provide family housing for junior enlisted personnel. Finally, the steep rise in first-term enlisted attrition unquestionably results from a tacit policy decision by DoD that in a volunteer force, it is more appropriate to discharge a recalcitrant or unsuitable military member than use traditional military discipline to motivate him to finish his term successfully -- "if he doesn't want to be here, we don't want him." Put in another way, "the all-volunteer military, like industrial organizations, is witnessing the common occurrence of its members 'quitting' or being 'fired.'" 60/

Other aspects of "civilianization," while they may have been accelerated by the advent of the All-Volunteer Force, clearly preceded its establishment. The extent to which military justice and discipline has been closely aligned with civilian justice, in terms of procedural safeguards, narrowing of military jurisdiction, and contract law, began in the 1960s, well before the AVF began in 1973. It would seem logical to assume, however, that other aspects of the AVF would reinforce the trend of removing the previous primary goal of military justice -- the maintenance of military discipline -- and replacing it with the general civilian judicial objective of safeguarding the rights of the accused. Similarly, the changing role of women in American society has resulted

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60/ Moskos, The Enlisted Ranks in the All-Volunteer Army: 58.

in an erosion of the traditional concept of the "military wife," in terms of her willingness to move frequently, participate in voluntary activities in support of the military community, and eschew work and career ambitions of her own in favor of a primary role of wife and homemaker. It seems unlikely that the AVF has much to do with this trend at all, although other characteristics of the AVF would certainly reinforce any moves toward personal autonomy rather than subordination to organizational goals.

Other examples of social trends in the AVF, or reinforced by the AVF, could be cited. But it is imperative to note that these changes appear to be in large measure the result of the absolute necessity for the military services to compete in the marketplace for recruits. To the extent that the traditionally "military" aspects of the Armed Forces are deemed undesirable by the target recruiting population, the services would appear to have little choice but to mitigate the severity of the military environment simply to recruit enough personnel. Criticism of All-Volunteer Force policymakers for taking actions which lead to this alleged "civilianization" of the military environment would therefore appear to be misplaced, for the decision to create and sustain an AVF appears to make such a "civilianization" very difficult to avoid.

#### Administrative Problems: Complexity and "Tailoring" of Incentives

The military services currently provide an elaborate mix of recruiting and retention incentives for first-term and career military



personnel. Prospective first-term recruits are faced with a bewildering array of choices. There are four military services to choose from, each with distinctive advantages and disadvantages, real and perceived. There are enlistment terms of two to six years, often linked with special pays, bonuses, and educational benefits; and particular skills, military units, geographical areas, and date of beginning active duty commencement. The prospective enlistee in the Selected Reserve is faced with roughly the same number and type of choices, although the Reservist will have many of his choices made for him in accordance with the type of Selected Reserve units in his home area. 61/ Overarching all of these choices is the inherent complexity of the military compensation and benefits system itself, with its components of basic pay, allowances, tax advantages, and non-monetary benefits such as health care, insurance, discount-purchasing facilities and other morale, welfare, and recreation activities and Veterans Administration benefits available after leaving military service. 62/

While the career military member is probably more familiar with the military compensation and benefits system, he also has a wide

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61/ For a comprehensive listing of recruitment options see Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics). Educational Incentives Study. Washington, February 9, 1980: 1-2/14; and Pathways to Military Service for Men and Women. October 1978.

62/ For explanations of the military compensation system, see U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Armed Services. Pay and Allowances of the Uniformed Services ... as amended through December 31, 1978. Committee Print. H.A.S.C. No. 4. 96th Congress. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1979: passim, especially 81-118.

variety of reenlistment incentives to receive and options to exercise, depending on his skill, desired unit or location, grade, and service, and he too must factor into his choice the availability of veterans benefits after leaving active duty.

By creating such a wide variety of pay, training, and service options, the Armed Forces provide explicit guarantees to most enlistees as to exactly what their military skill training and/or duty will involve and where it will take place. The needs of the services can thus be matched to the specific goals of individual recruits. There can be little doubt that this "tailoring" of recruiting incentives to individual recruit desires -- aided by elaborate automated information systems indicating to recruiters what skills, duty stations, formal military schools, and geographical areas have openings for recruits at any time -- has greatly aided the All-Volunteer Force in recruiting. The recruiter can not only "sell" the recruit on military service generally, but "sell" him on a specific job, unit, or location, often in conjunction with specific monetary or non-monetary incentives. Indeed, given that the prospective recruit is looking at civilian employment and checking the same options as provided by civilian employers, such a tailoring of military service options and compensation would appear to be imperative to enable AVF recruiters to compete effectively in the labor

market. <sup>63/</sup> To a lesser extent, the same is true -- has always been true -- of the retention of career military personnel.

It does appear, however, that the military services have paid a price for constructing such a complex network of incentives and options. There are indications that the options have multiplied so much that they have reached the point of near incomprehensibility to both potential recruits and recruiters -- that the number of factors to be weighed is so great that it taxes the ability of both to effectively evaluate their worth. The specificity of an individual recruit's compensation, training and service guarantees -- embodied in his enlistment contract -- also creates expectations, not surprisingly, that those guarantees will be precisely fulfilled during his service. If the exigencies of military service demand that any of these conditions be changed, then the recruit feels shortchanged or cheated. This may be contrasted with the draft era, during which a recruit expected few if any individual preferences to be granted and consequently suffered little if any disillusionment afterwards if he found himself in a situation he would not have chosen for himself. A byproduct of these precise enlistment options is the growing applicability of contract law to enlistment contracts and compensation, training, and service guarantees.

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<sup>63/</sup> The utility of such flexibility in managing recruiting options and incentives is described in U.S. General Accounting Office. Flexible Management: A Must for Effective Armed Services Recruiting. Report to the Congress by the Comptroller General of the United States. GAO Report Nos. FPCD-80-64 and B-199870. Washington, September 18, 1980.

The complexity of recruiting and retention incentives has created problems of analysis and administration as well. It has become difficult for manpower policymakers to predict the effects of individual changes in recruiting and retention incentives -- more or less money for bonuses in particular skills, adding or deleting certain skills from bonus eligibility, increasing or decreasing enlistment terms in accordance with special benefits -- due to the multiplicity of interdependent factors involved. More and more experimental and/or limited programs are being added to the array of incentives already available, each with its own set of criteria regarding compensation, skill training, geographical area in which applicable, length of service, and similar items. It is therefore almost impossible to isolate the effects of changing any one of these items on recruiting or retention, even with the use of standard statistical techniques for doing so.

The problem is compounded by the lack of stringent, judicious, and rigorous evaluation of experimental recruiting and retention incentives. <sup>64/</sup> Accurate evaluation requires the ability to isolate the effects of one particular variable. Changing only one variable in a recruiting and retention experiment, however, conflicts with the need of the military services to be as flexible as possible in varying all of their options in order to attract and retain as many personnel as possible. There is thus a conflict between (1) the overall flexibility that the services need in

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<sup>64/</sup> See Gus W. Haggstrom. The Variable Tour Experiment in the Army Reserve Components. Report no. R-1568-ARPA. Santa Monica, Ca., The Rand Corporation, May 1975: vi, 65-74; and The Pitfalls of Manpower Experimentation. Report no. P-5449. Santa Monica, Ca., The Rand Corporation, April 1975.

order to attract and retain personnel and (2) the incentive policy best suited to evaluating the relative success of specific incentives.

"Tailoring" recruiting and retention incentives creates a related type of tension between the need to insure that incentive programs do not outlive the situations they were designed to deal with and the need to avoid the negative effects of the constant instability in incentives that such flexibility generates. In general, the services have opted for managerial flexibility rather than stability in recruiting and retention incentives. This has prevented unnecessary or even counterproductive expenditures -- such as reenlistment bonuses for skills in which the services are actually overstrength, which the draft-era reenlistment bonus program allowed. On the other hand, it may have cost the services much in terms of their members' having a sense of permanence in their compensation and benefit entitlements.

Some analysts have argued that perceived instability in such entitlements can have as negative an impact on morale -- and presumably recruiting and retention -- as do actual reductions in benefits. <sup>65/</sup> Constant modification of incentives to meet short-term recruiting and retention needs, even if such modifications evened out over the long term, could have as detrimental an effect on recruiting and retention as any specific lack of "tailoring" of incentives to meeting short-term needs. This would appear to be particularly true in the case of skilled technical personnel, such as Navy nuclear-power personnel and health professionals, who are constantly under pressure -- actual and psychological -- to leave military service for more

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<sup>65/</sup> For a concise summary of this point of view, see the remarks of Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., USAF (Retired), in Report of the President's Commission on Military Compensation. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., April 1978: 186-87.

lucrative civilian employment. If assured a certain level of compensation and benefits, such individuals might be more persuaded to forego the monetary advantages of civilian life. However, the constant short-term fluctuations in executive branch support and legislative reauthorizations for retention incentives do little to assure a stable level of remuneration over an entire career, and hence to reassure the individuals involved.

A final issue involves what appears to be a fundamental difference between recruiting and retention problems and the incentives directed towards each. The average hypothetical first-term enlistee in the All-Volunteer Force is not yet socialized into the military environment. He therefore will tend to evaluate job choices according to civilian criteria, which are the only ones he has at his disposal. These include job satisfaction -- in terms of the individual tasks to be performed and the working environment -- and compensation and benefits. It is not surprising that All-Volunteer Force recruiters attempt to formulate their recruiting appeals in civilian terms -- what other terms will a target population of the size they are dealing with understand? While a certain proportion of the civilian population can always be attracted by more specifically "military" appeals to patriotism and adventure, heroism and glory, history suggests that that proportion is rarely large enough to man any All-Volunteer Force of appreciable size. 66/

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66/ See Alan Ramsay Skelley. *The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899*. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977: 247-49; Frederick S. Harrod. *Manning the New Navy: The Development of a Modern Naval Enlisted Force, 1899-1940*. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press, 1978: 46-48, 67-73; and Major Robert K. Griffith, Jr., U.S. Army. *Quality not Quantity: The Volunteer Army During the Depression*. *Military Affairs*, December 1979: 171-77.

For recruiters to emphasize education and training, travel, and pay, rather than the traditional "military virtues," is therefore logical if recruits are to be secured. The values of the "military virtues," and their appeal as an incentive, tend to come after the individual has been exposed to them, which is by definition not the case of the prospective first-term enlistee.

For career military personnel, however, the situation is quite different. The career member has accepted the uniquely different and rigorous nature of the military as an institution by the very fact of his reenlistment. It can therefore be reasoned that the career military member finds the military environment congenial and desirable, and chooses a military career in large part because of the military environment. Two consequences flow from this. First, if compensation and other tangible benefits are maintained at "adequate" -- i.e., not necessarily highly remunerative, but comfortable -- levels, the career military member is thereafter concerned with maintenance of the institutional environment in which he has elected to work and live. Second, retention -- as opposed to first-term recruiting -- policies can and arguably should be much more concerned with maintenance of those aspects of the military as an institution which differentiate it from civilian society. This might involve such fundamental issues as standards of military justice and discipline and rigor and intensity of training, down to such seemingly-prosaic things as uniform and grooming standards.

The maintenance of the distinctly different aspects of military life to improve career retention, it can be seen, thus conflicts with attempts to emphasize those aspects of military life which are the same as civilian society to improve first-term recruiting. The demands of voluntary recruiting in the civilian labor market thus create another set of theoretical contradictions for the Armed Forces.



## V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Preliminary research for this study began on the assumption that one of its purposes was to identify new concepts and/or unconventional, hitherto unexplored options for improving All-Volunteer Force recruiting, retention, and quality. A survey of the numerous studies, analyses, and reports on both specific programs and the general status of the AVF resulted in conclusions that such an attempt was unlikely to prove fruitful. A great deal of analytic talent has been brought to bear on making the All-Volunteer Force work over the past decade, and there are few if any radically new, specific ideas that have not been considered previously.

Some generalizations can be made from this survey:

-- Since the transition to an AVF began in 1969-1970, the services have emphasized the recruiting of nonprior service males, with or without a high school diploma, but probably not college bound in either case. Maintenance of an adequate career enlisted force has stressed the reenlistment of personnel rather than recruitment of skilled older individuals from civilian life. This marks a continuation of draft era policies.

-- The legislative or administrative initiatives designed to accomplish the above ends have varied little from those recommended by the Gates Commission in 1970 or those which form part of the 1980 legislation designed to improve retention and bolster recruit quality. These initiatives include increased compensation and benefits, larger recruiting and advertising budgets and manpower strengths, broader military assignment and training options, and "quality of life" improvements in living and working conditions. Suggestions for

improving AVF recruiting, retention, and quality along these lines, therefore, involve no innovations in policy; rather, they involve increased resources and better management of those resources available.

-- The services have placed comparatively less emphasis on broadening the manpower pool from which new recruits (and, in some cases, experienced NCOs) are obtained. A conspicuous exception to this generalization is the substantial increase in female military personnel, who have generally been of higher educational and intelligence levels and have proved invaluable in sustaining the AVF, but whose use in larger numbers has created problems which have been addressed by the services tangentially, at best.

The underlying assumption behind the services' apparent unwillingness to move further in the area of tapping new sources of untrained manpower appears to be that the conventional one -- nonprior service young males -- is the only one really suitable for military service. Other groups of potential recruits are regarded as being "low quality" (too old, too young, too physically unfit, too uneducated, too unintelligent); "overqualified" (too well-educated, too intelligent, too highly-graded in the case of persons with prior military service); or incapable of being effectively socialized into the military environment (older personnel who are potential NCOs). There appears to be a tacit assumption that enough manpower exists to be highly selective -- that demands are not so great, or supply so limited, as to require less selectivity. The draft combined with the large size of the American population formerly guaranteed this selectivity.

A related assumption appears to be that an individual is either "qualified" or "unqualified" for military service, rather than being

more or less useful, depending on total availability of manpower and the tradeoffs between his liabilities on the one hand and the drawback of having an unfilled military space on the other. In large part, this distinction reflects a less rigorous attitude toward military service -- the unwillingness to employ less qualified persons who might cause risks to life, theirs and others -- rather than being willing to incur such risk as inevitable in military operations. (Parenthetically, this attitude would appear to conflict with the statement of many AVF supporters that the increasingly technological nature of the military has made standards of performance under acute stress less important.)

On the other hand, the belief that higher education may result in an individual being "overqualified" for enlisted military service may also result from an orientation which strictly equates military service with blue-collar civilian work, causing a lack of attention toward recruiting in college environments. Finally, the traditional sensitivity of the American military toward charges of "militarism" has restrained the development of military orientation programs such as the Citizens' Military Training Camps of the pre-World War II era and Junior ROTC, especially in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.

It can be argued that the military services have thus far not adjusted recruiting and retention philosophies in accordance with changing strategic, demographic, and military circumstances and requirements. Manpower "requirements" as publicly stated have not increased since the inception of the AVF and in fact a decline in manpower strength has been accepted. The crest of the demographic wave of baby boom persons has only just passed, in 1980. The strategic environment has been relatively benevolent when compared

to that projected for the future. It appears, though, that some or all of these conditions are likely to change during the 1980s. Nobody seems to be predicting a benign international political situation in the 1980s. Manpower requirements will probably increase, while the number of persons of military age will decrease due to declining birth rates that began in the early 1960s.

Given the likelihood of these changing circumstances, at least a partial reallocation of resources and effort -- both budgetary and intellectual -- may be considered. More comparative emphasis could be placed on expansion of the manpower pool, and perhaps less on recruiting from the current, optimal (nonprior service male, non-college level) manpower pool. Persons from this latter group will, of course, probably continue to form the backbone of the enlisted ranks. But a case can be made that a greater mix from other cohorts is preferable to unfilled slots and qualitative shortfalls.

An expansion of the manpower pool deemed eligible for military service in the AVF will probably be suited to making up shortfalls in quality only. Measures such as reducing physical, mental, educational, and age standards; recruiting more college students (especially junior college students and graduates); and inducing a more favorable attitude toward military service through training programs such as Junior ROTC might assist in making up qualitative shortfalls within the current 2.1 million person AVF. Application of substantially more money and manpower to the usual plethora of compensation-related incentives could assist as well -- in fact, these methods have worked well in substantially improving Selected Reserve recruiting and retention since FY 1978.

Such an "expansion of the manpower pool" may also result from cutbacks in a variety of educational and employment assistance programs offered by the Federal Government which have no service requirements. Major reductions in the number of persons receiving this type of Government assistance could turn a substantial number of young people -- including many with high educational attainment and mental ability -- toward the military. Such a turn could be enhanced by the introduction of more liberal military and veterans educational assistance than that currently offered.

If major problems of quantity are assumed, however, they appear much less susceptible to solution through the targeting of increased resources on precise problem areas or through the precise adjustment of enlistment eligibility standards. Greatly increasing the quantity of military personnel would apparently require drastic rises in budgetary resources -- for recruiting incentives far and beyond current pay scales, if current recruiting problems are any guide, or higher political costs resulting from a return to conscription. It has been said that "quantity has a quality all its own." If this "quality" is sought, securing it may be the most intractable problem of the All-Volunteer Force, long after judicious monetary and policy incentives have eliminated the career retention and mental category/educational level problems that seem to be so critical in the AVF in 1980.

Finally, the All-Volunteer Force has generated analytical, administrative, and philosophical problems that do not seem to have much to do with specific recruiting and retention policies or quality levels.

Rather, they result in large part from the fact that the Armed Forces, to obtain recruits, must assume many of the characteristics of a civilian business enterprise in order to compete in the labor market effectively. This includes adapting to the individual desires of military personnel, rather than emphasizing more traditionally authoritarian military discipline; relying more on quantitative indicators of personnel quality and readiness rather than the subjective judgment of officers and NCOs; and carefully tailoring resources to objectives, even if objectives are not readily predictable. The cumulative effect of many of these changes in the military's way of "doing business" and deciding what its business is may, in the long run, be creating as many problems for the All-Volunteer Force as the more obvious and tangible ones of recruiting, retention, and quality, and may linger long after difficulties with the latter seem to have been solved.