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Critics of the military establishment have often cited the "military mind" as a disturbing element in international affairs. According to this criticism, long continued military service renders one's outlook aggressive, authoritarian, and basically antidemocratic. No research effort, however, has sought to examine the validity of this stereotype in the light of modern social science methodology. In this article the author uses a psychological testing vehicle to compare a group of military officers at the Naval War College with a group of civilian executives. He concludes that the popular stereotype of the military officer is not justified.

AN ELEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS-- THE MILITARY MIND

A research paper prepared

by

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Since the end of World War II there has been an increased awareness of the expanded and vital role the military must play in the peacetime affairs of the Nation. Because of the threat of nuclear war, this awareness is most apparent in the making and implementation of U.S. foreign policy. In an age when very rapid and rational responses may be required in crisis situations, when each element of our worldwide representation must be alert to possible dangers involving our national interests, the best possible forethought and planning are required from all subsections of our society. Because of this need for excellence, military planning and policy have become interdependent with foreign affairs planning and policy. This interdependence has been reflected in the expanded role of the military in the making of American foreign policy.¹

One result of the increased participation of the military in our national affairs has been the reemergence of considerable concern over the ability of the civilian side of the Government to maintain effective control over the military. In the press, in magazines, and in books the issue of civil-military relations and the danger of "the man on horseback" have been explored. The most recent development, and one which has been the target of bitter attacks, is the "military-industrial complex," first called to the Nation's attention in President Eisenhower's Farewell Address in 1961.² Through popular writings the central issue, expressed or unexpressed, has been a fear of "the military mind."

Previous Studies of the "Military Mind." Any researcher culling the scholarly literature for relevant data on the

military mind is immediately struck by the paucity of information and research. Professional journals present subjective appraisals; some of these attempt to refute the traditional picture embodied in the stereotype,³ and some point out the desirability of a "military mind" in the sense of the professional concept of the "legal mind" or the "medical mind."⁴ There are a few excellent studies of military sociology⁵ and some penetrating constructs of theoretical frameworks for analysis of civil-military relations.⁶ It should be noted, however, that many of these studies are the outgrowths of investigations conducted during World War II and are somewhat dated. Research on attitudes, motivations, or value judgments of active duty military personnel are extremely limited, being for the most part studies of groups who are training to become officers.⁷

In addition to the American investigations, two Scandinavian studies should be cited. The first of these is an in-depth study of Swedish noncommissioned officers and officer candidates in training.⁸ The primary object of the study was to test hypotheses derived from current sociological and social psychological theories concerning social influence processes in small groups. In the second study, applicants to and students of the Norwegian Military Academy and Naval Academy were selected as subjects for a large variety of empirical investigations.⁹ The results of this study demonstrated that attitudes toward foreign affairs seem to be correlated with nationalism, with psychodynamic conflicts, and with manifest reactions in everyday conflict situations. No correlation was found with respect to personal insecurity or international knowledge.

These two studies are not highlighted here to build upon the conclusions they develop. Rather they demonstrate the types of research which are being carried out in other parts of the world.

It is curious that corresponding empirical work in this country is so conspicuously absent.

The Research Tool. If there is one word which is applied to the military mind more than any other, it is "authoritarian." This holds true in the serious studies as well as in the popular media. For this reason the initial search for the proper research tool centered on the massive work of Adorno and the "California Group" contained in *The Authoritarian Personality*.¹⁰ The object of that study was to identify the form and causative factors of prejudice. In the light of World War II and Hitler's Germany, in 1944 the American Jewish Committee set up a Department of Scientific Research designed to initiate studies in the phenomenon of prejudice and to stimulate new studies in that field. As the study progressed a number of scales were developed, but of all of the methodology and scaling techniques used, by far the most widely known was the California "F" Scale. This relatively short test addresses such subcategories as Conventionalism, Authoritarian Submission, Authoritarian Aggression, Anti-intraception, Superstition and Stereotype, Power and "Toughness," Destructiveness and Cynicism, Projectivity, and Sex.

A study of the expert critical comment on the original work disclosed statistical, procedural, methodological, and selectional reasons for withholding complete support for the conclusions which were advanced in it.¹¹ Perhaps the most salient criticism was that the test seems to be able to identify the authoritarian of the "right" but is incapable of distinguishing the authoritarian of the "left." The investigator does not agree with the concept advanced: that a continuum exists, along which may be found the authoritarian (undesirable) person, the middle-of-the-road gradations, and at the other extreme the liberal (desirable) person. The

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"constellation" concept appears much more valid: that there are varying clusters of attitude and opinion, each of which has its "desirable" and "undesirable" aspects. For these various reasons, this study was considered inadequate as a research tool.

Several references to a study conducted within the Department of State led the investigator to a study done by Dr. Regis Walther, then with the State Department and now with The George Washington University as Project Director of the Social Research Group.¹² Dr. Walther had developed the Job Analysis and Interest Measurement (JAIM) Test as a result of the discovery that certain self-descriptive items answered by State Department personnel were useful in predicting the staying power and performance ratings of new employees. This led to the conclusion that the achievement of a satisfactory level of job satisfaction and performance is facilitated by an adequate psychological match between the job and the individual and that self-reported beliefs, typical behavior patterns, preferences, and values provide useful information for judging the adequacy of the match.

The present modification of the JAIM test has evolved over the years through a series of studies of mature workers in over 40 occupations and professions including business executives, juvenile court judges, ambassadors, physicists, social workers, policemen, Army OCS candidates, engineers, lawyers, and secretaries. It has been possible to distinguish between successful performers within a job category and those who perform at a lesser level. The three clusters of personality variables used to discriminate between groups are behavioral styles, activity preferences, and values. One hundred and fifty-four questions provide correlations to support 28 measurement scales.

Contact with Dr. Walther revealed a fortuitous mutual connection with The George Washington University which

allowed access to the University Computer Center where the analytic programs for the JAIM test were available. It was decided to conduct a sampling of volunteers from the student body of the Naval War College in an effort to gain empirical data on active duty officers from the various services.

The Research Design. Volunteers were solicited from the military officers enrolled in the U.S. Naval War College during the 1969-1970 academic year. The total populations of the various services in the School of Naval Warfare (senior school) and the School of Naval Command and Staff (junior school) were as follows: Navy - 244 (includes five Coast Guard), Army - 42, Air Force - 22, Marines - 33; a total of 341. Voluntary responses were received from 190 Navy (three Coast Guard included) (78 percent), 34 Army (80 percent), 19 Air Force (86 percent), and 24 Marines (73 percent). The overall response, then, was 267 (78 percent) for the entire student body.

While a major goal of the study was to make comparisons between the various subgroups of the student population, it appeared even more important to select a control group from outside the community to provide needed perspective. It was unfortunate in this regard that modifications to the test over the years have made it impossible to make direct comparisons between the present group and the State Department occupational groupings reported on in the earlier study.¹³ However, among the groups which have been tested by the present version of the test is a group of civilian executives in the Government. These individuals held Government Service (GS) ratings of 13 - 15 and were enrolled in a higher management training course when they were tested. It was felt that a civilian executive group would provide a most useful comparison, especially since they could be correlated to some extent with

groups of young presidents of companies and young executives of corporations included in the State Department study. Later in the study, data became available which made it possible to include a comparison of the War College population against a group of West Point cadets, plebes in the class entering the Academy during the fall of 1969.

All data was processed at The George Washington University Computer Center, using the scoring and analytic programs designed by Dr. Regis Walther.

The Findings. A summarization of the data derived in a comparison of the civilian executives in Government and the War College respondents is contained in figure 1.¹⁴ The details of construction of the figure are contained in the note at the bottom of that page.

The fundamental difference between the average War College student and the average civilian Government executive is that the former is more self-confident and self-assertive, more trusting and even-tempered, and more willing to give support and comfort to others. He is more willing to assume a leadership position and is more goal oriented. He derives greater satisfaction from societal recognition of his prestige and influence and wants his environment to be one which is stable, ordered, and benevolent. The civilian Government executive is distinguished by his desire to participate in group activities, especially if it involves important work.

The results for the several branches of the Armed Forces are presented in figure 2. It is obvious, due to the preponderance of naval officers in the total sample, that the Navy comparison would not differ significantly from that of the War College students as a whole. In fact, the only difference between the two is the absence in the Navy sample of a higher degree of status attainment as a nonsignificant tendency. Beyond this the Navy sample indicates a stronger liking for structure and a lesser

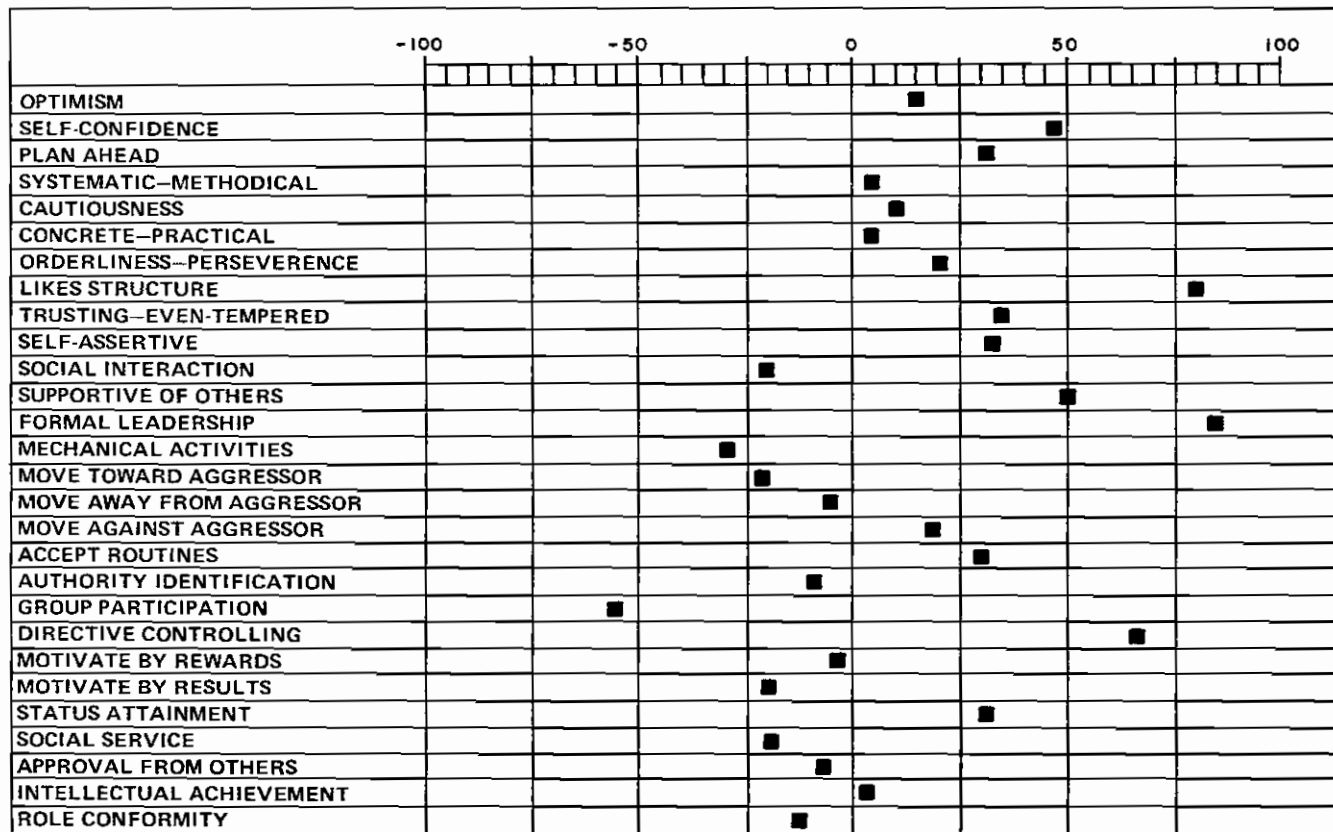
degree of being supportive of others. In general, what can be said for the entire population can also be said to operate for the Navy.

The Army officers, in addition to those characteristics indicated for the Navy, are more optimistic, more self-confident, more orderly and persevering, more supportive of others, and more concerned with status and prestige. They are less concerned than the Navy officers for formal structure in their organization, and in relation to the executives are less inclined to be mechanically oriented. Their high ratings in self-confidence, support of others, and formal leadership reflect a strong desire for executive position, coupled with an equally strong concern for the welfare of their subordinates.

The Air Force officers showed less difference than the Navy or Army when compared to the executives. While they repeated the pattern of desire for executive position, they were slightly less self-confident than the Army or Navy. They did, however, display a higher personal satisfaction in their intellectual attainments than did any other group tested.

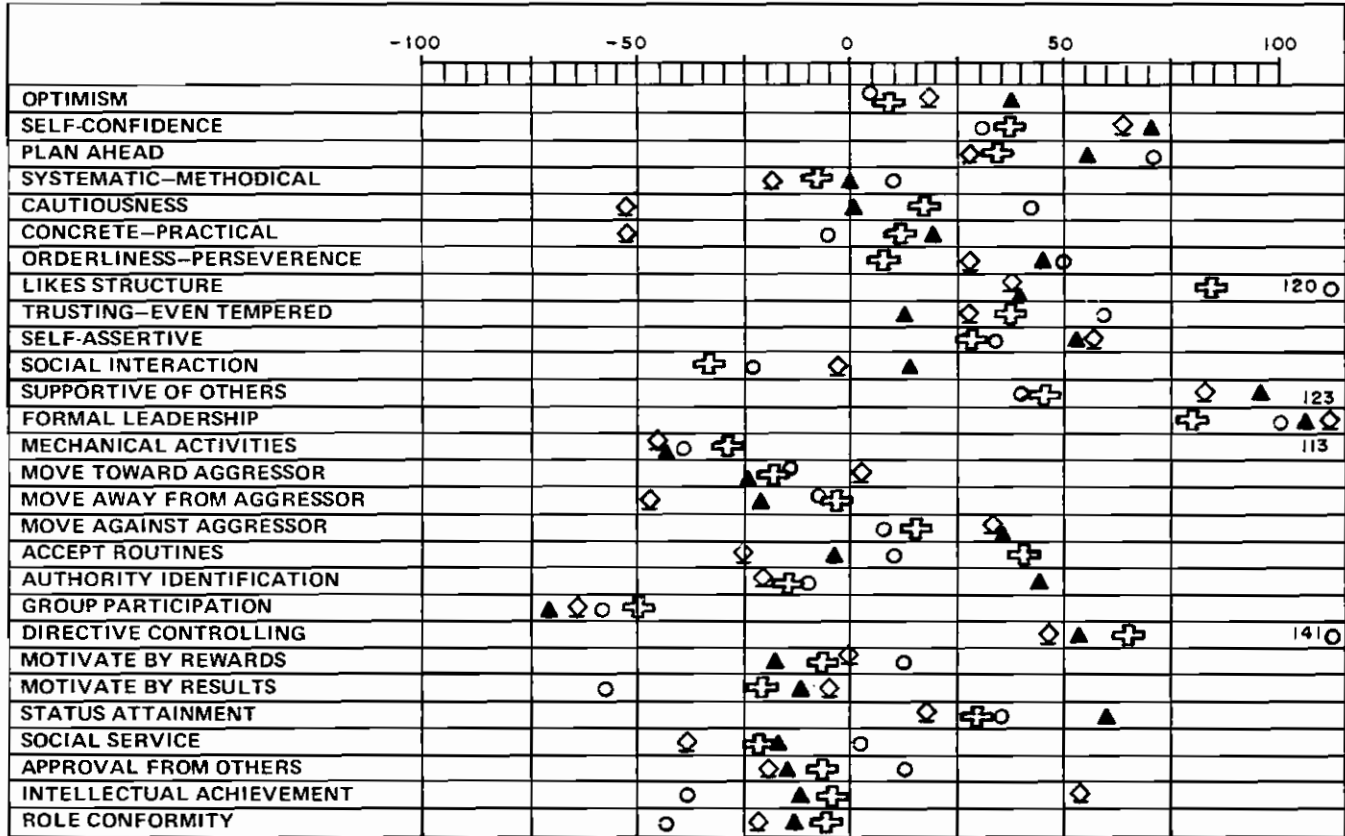
The Marine officers resembled the Navy officers very closely. While there are minor differences in degree in some scales, in only one scale do they show a significant strength over the executives that is not found in the Navy response. The Marines are more orderly and persevering. They are more inclined by a slight margin to group participation than any of the other services.

When the responses of the Navy officers are compared with those of the officers of other services, several significant differences are apparent. The Marines are most like the Navy, and the Army is the least like them. Army officers are more self-confident, optimistic, supportive of others, and prone to social interaction. They are more self-assertive and prone to move against social aggressors. While they identify



KEY: ■ All Services Combined

FIG. 1—COMPARISON OF TOTAL MILITARY RESPONDENTS WITH CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVES



KEY: ▲ : U.S. ARMY + : U.S. NAVY ◇ : U.S. AIR FORCE ○ : U.S. MARINE CORPS
 NOTE: The mean scores for each of the Armed Forces has been converted to standard scores based upon the average of the civilian Government executives. The mean for this group has been designated as zero; one standard deviation above the mean has been designated as 100, and one standard deviation below the mean has been designated - 100.

FIG. 2—COMPARISON OF SEPARATE SERVICES WITH CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVES

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with authority more than does the Navy, they still prefer to work on their own to a greater extent than do naval officers. On the other hand, naval officers are stronger than their Army counterparts in their desire for an ordered structure, less unscheduled activities, and slow change to the existing order. Air Force officers are less cautious, more self-confident, and more aggressive. They are more inclined to value themselves in the light of their intellectual achievement. Naval officers are more practical and more willing to accept routines. Marine officers are more orderly and inclined to be more goal oriented than the Navy.

A review of the data presented in table I shows that certain traits are common among most of the Navy subspecialties: Likes Structure, Formal Leadership, Supportive of Others, and Directive-Controlling. These scales indicate the general desire for an ordered society and working relationship, the willingness to take a leadership position, and the willingness to support and comfort fellow workers. A higher degree of self-confidence and trust is found in some subspecialties. On the other hand, the executives generally show a stronger desire for group participation and social interaction than do Navy groups.

It was theorized that little difference would be found within the subspecialties of a given service. The one population which was large enough to support a valid analysis was the Navy, and here very little difference was found. The highest number of scales where significant difference existed was six in the supply vs. 1100 officer. The 1100 officer is more optimistic, self-confident, self-assertive, conciliatory, and supportive of others. The supply officer appears to have a profile very similar to the commercial officer of the State Department, as measured in previous testing.

Within a subspecialty it was theorized that differences due to age would

be very small. The two groups which provided a population large enough for analysis, Navy surface line officers and naval carrier aviators, strongly supported the theory. An interesting fact is that the closest correlations occurred between the oldest and youngest groups. Table II presents the significant variations among age groups. In most scales the 30-33 age group established a value, the two succeeding groups tended to be either high or low, and the oldest age group tended to score nearer the 30-33 value. However, few of the differences were significant.

When the analysis shifts to comparisons based on educational background, only slight differences are found among the various educational levels. The officers who have an M.A. or Ph.D. degree are more self-confident, more supportive of others, and require less direction for themselves.

A comparison can also be made between the graduates of the Naval and Military Academies and those who graduated from civilian institutions. Again the differences are small. The non-Academy and the USMA graduates are equally supportive of others, while

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Comdr. William H. Robinson, Jr., U.S. Navy, did his undergraduate work at the University of California at Los Angeles in history, did graduate work there in the same field, and holds a master's degree in

international affairs from The George Washington University. He was commissioned in 1947 upon the completion of flight training and has since served in a variety of duty on attack carriers and attack squadrons, the most recent being Commanding Officer of VA 144. Commander Robinson is a graduate of the Naval War College, School of Naval Warfare (Class of 1970), and is currently assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP60).

TABLE I—COMPARISONS OF NAVY SUBSPECIALTIES
WITH CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT EXECUTIVES

Navy Higher	Civilian Executives Higher (N=32)
Navy 1100 (N=48)	
Self-Confidence +*	Group Participation +**
Likes Structure +**	
Trusting-Even Tempered +*	
Supportive of Others +*	
Formal Leadership +***	
Directive-Controlling 1*	
Navy Submariner (N=5)	
Likes Structure 1*	Social Interaction +*
Directive-Controlling +*	
Navy VA Pilot (N=37)	
Self-Confidence +	Social Interaction +* Authority Identification + Group Participation +
Likes Structure +*	
Self-Assertive 1*	
Supportive of Others +**	
Formal Leadership +**	
Directive-Controlling +*	
Navy VF Pilot (N=16)	
Orderliness-Perseverance 1	
Likes Structure +*	
Formal Leadership 1*	
Navy VP Pilot (N=29)	
Orderliness-Perseverance +*	Group Participation +* Social Service +*
Likes Structure +*	
Supportive of Others 1	
Formal Leadership +**	
Accept Routines +*	
Directive-Controlling +**	
Status Attainment 1*	
Navy VS Pilot (N=18)	
Likes Structure +***	Optimism + Mechanical Interests 1 Accept Routines 1
Trusting-Even Tempered +*	
Formal Leadership +*	
Directive-Controlling +**	
Navy Supply (N=11)	
Cautiousness +*	Move Toward Aggressor +**
Likes Structure +**	
Formal Leadership +*	
Move Away from Aggressor +*	
Other Navy Officers (M=15)¹	
Formal Leadership +*	Concrete-Practical +* Social Interaction +* Mechanical Interests +* Group Participation +** Role Conformity +*
Intellectual Achievement +	

¹Includes 2 Legal, 3 Special Warfare, 2 Mine Warfare, 2 Construction Engineer, 1 Dental, 1 Medical Service, 1 Intelligence, 1 Chaplain, 1 Meteorologist, and 1 PAO.

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**TABLE II—COMPARISONS OF SUBSPECIALTY GROUPS
AS A FUNCTION OF AGE**

Navy 1100 Ages 34-37 (N=15) None	Navy 1100 Ages 30-33 (N=15) Concrete-Practical + Move Toward Aggressor +*
Navy 1100 Ages 38-41 (N=17) Plan Ahead +* Intellectual Achievement +*	Mechanical Interests +*
Navy 1100 Ages 42-45 (N=7) Orderliness-Perseverance +	None
Tailhook Pilot Ages 34-37 (N=37) Group Participation +*	Tailhook Pilot Ages 30-33 (N=8) Likes Structure +
Tailhook Pilot Ages 38-41 (N=25) None	None
Tailhook Pilot Ages 42-45 (N=4) None	None

**TABLE III—COMPARISONS OF NAVAL, MILITARY, AND NON-ACADEMY
OFFICERS WITH CIVILIAN EXECUTIVES**

Non-Academy Graduates (N=191)	Civilian Government Executives (N=32)
Self-Confidence +** Plan Ahead +* Likes Structure +** Self-Assertive + Supportive of Others +** Formal Leadership +*** Directive-Controlling +** Status Attainment +	Group Participation +**
U.S. Naval Academy Graduates (N=34)	Civilian Government Executives (N=32)
Self-Confidence +** Plan Ahead + Likes Structure +*** Trusting-Even Tempered +** Formal Leadership +** Directive-Controlling +**	None
U.S. Military Academy Graduates (N=15)	Group Participation +**
Self-Confidence +* Likes Structure +* Self-Assertive + Supportive of Others +** Formal Leadership +***	

TABLE IV—COMPARISONS OF THE VARIOUS SERVICES WITH WEST POINT PLEBES

War College Higher	West Point Plebes Higher (N=78)
U.S. Navy Students (N=190)	
Concrete-Practical +***	Plan Ahead +**
Trusting-Even Tempered +*	Systematic-Methodical +*
Supportive of Others +**	Self-Assertive +
Mechanical Interests +*	Move Against Aggressor +*
Move Toward Aggressor +**	Accept Routines +***
Motivates by Rewards +***	Authority Identification +*
Motivates by Results +**	Group Participation +*
Role Conformity +**	Directive-Controlling +***
	Approval from Others +***
<hr/>	
U.S. Army Students (N=34)	
Self-Confidence +**	Likes Structure +*
Concrete-Practical +**	Accept Routines +***
Social Interaction +*	Group Participation +*
Supportive of Others +***	Directive-Controlling +***
Formal Leadership +**	Approval from Others +**
Motivates by Rewards +*	
Motivates by Results +**	
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U.S. Marine Students (N=24)	
Concrete-Practical +*	Accept Routines +***
Orderliness-Perseverance +*	Directive-Controlling +*
Trusting-Even Tempered +*	Approval from Others +*
Supportive of Others +*	
Formal Leadership +	
Mechanical Interests +	
Motivates by Rewards +**	
Social Service +*	
<hr/>	
U.S. Air Force Students (N=19)	
Supportive of Others +*	Plan Ahead +*
Formal Leadership +**	Accept Routines +***
Move Toward Aggressor +*	Directive-Controlling +***
Motivates by Rewards +**	Approval from Others +*
Motivates by Results +	
Intellectual Achievements +*	

KEY TO SYMBOLS:

The degree of difference between two groups on a particular scale is designated by a plus sign and asterisks.

- + = a slight difference in a positive direction was found which could not be considered "statistically significant" but more likely than not would be found again if the study were repeated.
- +* = the difference is statistically significant at the 5 percent level and thus could be expected to occur through chance less than one time out of 20.
- +** = the difference is statistically significant at the 1 percent level and thus could be expected to occur through chance less than one time out of 100.
- +*** = the difference is statistically significant at the .1 percent level and thus could be expected to occur through chance less than one time out of 1,000.

In table I, Self-Confidence +** means that War College students are higher on this scale, and the difference is sufficiently large that it could have happened by chance less than one out of 100 times.

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the Naval Academy graduates are more trusting and even tempered. The non-Academy graduate places higher value on his status as an officer than do the officers from either of the Academies, but all are equally willing to take command and direct the activities of subordinates.

It is evident from table IV that many significant differences exist between the cadets and the various service officers. The plebes reveal a strong need for leadership and direction, for a positive indication that their actions are appreciated by their superiors and fellow students. They are inwardly oriented and not prone to social interaction or, more important, to support or comfort others. It is to be expected that change will occur in their attitudes as they gain experience and self-confidence. However, other studies have shown that the formal curriculum at the Academy has only a slight impact on their strategic perspective or certain other attitudes measured and that the major force for change is intercadet socialization.¹⁵ It is suspected, therefore, that a positive training program directed toward increasing the cadet's sensitivity to the need *others* have for support would be beneficial. Their attitudes toward *motivating* others might also be strengthened. In any event it is to be hoped that much change from the indicated attitudes and orientations has taken place by the time these plebes become seniors; otherwise the transition to the officer role will be accomplished concurrently with major revisions in basic attitudes, perhaps with detrimental effects to their effectiveness.

Conclusions. It is concluded that there is indeed a marked similarity in the attitudes, work preferences, and values among the officers of the various services who attended the Naval War College in the years 1969-1970. This is a professional mind, conceptually similar to the medical mind or the legal mind.

When compared to civilian Government executives, relative strengths are found in self-confidence, goal orientation, concern for the welfare of others, trust and even temper, and a strong willingness to accept responsibility in directing others in the accomplishment of an important goal. In only one category are the executives stronger than each of the services, the desire to work in a group.

This has been an exploration in a new area of social or political science. There are many areas of great importance left to be studied. A few of the questions which presented themselves during the course of this study, and which remain unanswered, should be stated. Which combination of managerial styles (delegative, participative, persuasive, directive) is preferred by the military mind? Is there a dichotomy within the military mind between leadership style in peaceful activities and in combat operations? Can these styles, if they do exist, be turned on and off as the situation demands? Are there elements of the behavioral style of an officer which are thought to be "not approved" by the service to which he belongs; and, if so, should they be reconsidered both by the officer and the service? Finally, is there a violent change in the attitudes and orientations of a young officer in his first few months "in the fleet"; and, if so, is there an effective way to ease the transition through example or training?

What can be said as a result of the present study is that the War College officers do not reflect the popular stereotype of the military mind. While they like to have personal responsibility for the accomplishment of important goals, this leadership style is strongly imbued with concern for their fellow workers. Virtually all of the officers chose encouragement rather than criticism as the proper method of motivation; 95 percent felt that an effective supervisor shows his workers that he is

interested in them as persons and concerned about their welfare rather than refusing to get involved with their personal problems. While the War College officer likes his world to be ordered, he wants it ordered toward valuable goals.

FOOTNOTES

1. For the background and character of this new role, see Burton M. Sapin and Richard C. Snyder, *The Role of the Military in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Doubleday, 1954) and Burton M. Sapin et al., *An Appropriate Role for the Military in American Foreign Policy-Making: a Research Note* (Princeton: Princeton University, Organizational Behavior Section, 1954).
2. John K. Galbraith, *How to Control the Military* (New York: Signet Books, 1969), p. 49.
3. Raymond J. Barrett, "Thoughts on the Military Mind," *Air Force and Space Digest*, May 1968, p. 66-67; J. Frank Dobie, "Samples of the Army Mind," *Harper's*, December 1946, p. 529-536; Thomas A. Fleck, "An Examination of the 'Military Mind,'" *Air University Review*, November-December 1969, p. 92-96.
4. Charles Konigsberg, "Reflections on the 'Military Mind,' the Military, and Its Critics," *Air University Review*, May-June 1967, p. 55-60.
5. Morris Janowitz, *Sociology and the Military Establishment* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1959); Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960); Morris Janowitz, ed., *The New Military* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1964); John W. Masland and Laurence I. Radway, *Soldiers and Scholars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).
6. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), passim; Lester Markel, et al., *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1949).
7. Peter B. Peterson and Gordon L. Lippitt, "Comparison of Behavioral Styles between Entering and Graduating Students in Officer Candidate School," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, February 1968, p. 66-70; data on the West Point cadets was gathered under the auspices of Dr. Regis Walther of The George Washington University.
8. Walter Korpi, *Social Pressures and Attitudes in Military Training* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1964).
9. Bjorn Christiansen, *Attitudes towards Foreign Affairs as a Function of Personality* (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 1959).
10. Theodor W. Adorno, et al., *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1950).
11. Richard Christie and Marie Jahoda, eds., *Studies in the Scope and Method of 'The Authoritarian Personality'* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1954).
12. Regis Walther, *Orientations and Behavioral Styles of Foreign Service Officers* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1965). See also Regis Walther, *Manual, Job Analysis and Interest Measurement* (Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1964).
13. Walther, *Orientations and Behavioral Styles of Foreign Service Officers*.
14. These data are based on 245 individuals rather than the subsequent total of 267 because during the initial analysis it was discovered that 22 of the responses had been transcribed onto IBM punch cards in error. For later analyses these cards were corrected and included in the study population.
15. John P. Lovell, "The Professional Socialization of the West Point Cadet," in Janowitz, ed., *The New Military*, p. 119-157.



Democracy is the best system of government yet devised, but it suffers from one grave defect—it does not encourage those military virtues upon which, in an envious world, it must frequently depend for survival.

Major Guy du Maurier: 1865-1915