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A FRAMEWORK FOR MILITARY PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: RESOLVING THE ETHICAL TENSION OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

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A FRAMEWORK FOR MILITARY PROFESSIONAL ETHICS:
RESOLVING THE ETHICAL TENSION OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

by

Richard McLean

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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ABSTRACT

A FRAMEWORK FOR MILITARY PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: RESOLVING THE ETHICAL TENSION OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

by

Richard McLean

Fundamental military ethical values derive from American civil religion and are based on the myths of the American republic. Consistent with religious archetypes, these values express the American character in which the nation is sovereign.

For the Christian, however, God is sovereign. While military ethical values may be consistent with Christian values, there are occasional tensions for the Christian soldier as he does his duty. The soldier resolves these dilemmas depending on his relationship to his God at that given moment.

General Omar Bradley, an honorable American soldier, believed human welfare to be more fundamental than national sovereignty. His public statements reveal a Christian and universal ethic, transparent in the sense that the national value center is one with Being itself; democratic in the sense that the individual is free to respond to other beings; and relational in the sense that soldiers make moral decisions based on relationships.
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INTRODUCTION

The nation which already had its fill of scandal and corruption was shocked, sorry and puzzled by the news from West Point. Ninety of the Academy's 2,500 cadets, among them the bulk of Army's disciplined and magnificent football team, faced dismissal for a breach of the cadet corps' sacrosanct honor system...At week's end, the West Point affair seemed less like a scandal than a cause for self-searching on the part of both the nation and the Army.

Why all the concern over cheating in an institution of higher learning? What was so shocking? One can assume that there was cheating in other schools that did not make national news. Occasionally some incidents make the news, but they do not shock the soul of the nation as drastically service academy scandals.

Other occurrences of service school cheating were to follow. The above incident occurred at West Point in 1951. The Air Force Academy faced the crisis in 1965, and West Point again suffered the embarrassment in 1966. Each case was an occasion of national soul searching. In each of those three years, a search of Time and Newsweek produces no comparable cases of cheating in civilian institutions. Something was different in the academy scandals.

On 20 August 1951, Time reported that "throughout the U.S. last week, the West Point scandal was raising dust-storms of argument...Nearly everybody--from editorial writers to policemen--had something to say on the subject."
This report spoke of ethical mistiness that characterized the American moral climate. Somehow, these events caused Americans to question themselves and their values. The humanity of some of the nation's finest young men confronted American citizens with their own human nature. These were not just the private wrongs of several students. On the contrary, they were a national sin, a violation of values esteemed good and right by the American public. This cheating violated the spiritual essence of American life.

There have been several attempts to isolate and articulate this spiritual fabric inherent in American culture. Chief among these is Robert Bellah's description of Civil Religion. He observes:

While some have argued that Christianity is the national faith, and others that church and synagogue celebrate only the generalized religion of "the American Way of Life," few have realized that there actually exists alongside of and rather clearly differentiated from the churches an elaborate and well-institutionalized civil religion in America...this religious dimension has its own seriousness and integrity and requires the same care in understanding that any other religion does.

Whatever the name, this religious sentiment has been a part of the American nation since its birth. American civil religion owes much to the Judaeo-Christian heritage which is so often used to identify the religious background of our culture. While this heritage describes the majority of our national spiritual underpinnings, it should not be confused with the personal faith of one who is an actively committed
member of the Christian or Jewish communities.

Much of the symbolism, myth and ritual, and many of the values of this generalized civil religion are borrowed from the Christian and Jewish traditions; but the purpose is to provide a mythic basis for the nation, not to persuade citizens to accept a particular faith stance. The values of this national spiritual dimension provide a moral base for the American republic's legitimacy among other nations in the world community. But a Christian or a Jew acting in response to his faith in God may be called upon to raise questions if the nation moves in directions that question or counter God's revelation. In short, the person who has a committed personal faith often lives in tension with civil religion because the two value centers are different.

Obviously, the American civil value center is not universal. It establishes the basis for American culture. American's have a set of mores, customs, values and manners that are both constitutive and descriptive of who they are. Anyone finds it difficult to think of himself apart from this heritage. If he leaves America, he may travel to Turkey, or Germany, or England. As much as he may think of himself as a world citizen, he is still an American. He may be able to accept another country as a place of residence and even establish citizenship in that country, but when he returns to America, he is coming home. Lest this seem like national chauvinism, one could easily substitute Russian
culture for the Russian, or German culture for the German, or Chinese culture for the Chinese. The principle is the same. Citizens of a foreign country are considered aliens.

This American value center, the spiritual dimension so deeply rooted in the fabric of American culture, is the reality threatened by the service academy scandals. The shared values of the military and civilian communities are derived from this national faith. When cadets as servants of American culture violate academy values, they violate the values of the larger community. West Point enshrines this ethic in the motto "Duty, Honor, Country." This motto prescribes the standards violated by the students.

The purpose here is not to single out the service academies as the bad apples in the barrel. One could describe numerous situations where active duty military personnel of all ranks have violated the standards of behavior considered worthy of the "special trust and confidence" mentioned in the officer's commissioning document. Scandals perpetrated by civil servants and elected officials, like Watergate with its abuses of power and use of position for personal gain, are not foreign to the American scene. But there is an essential difference in the military. Military units require disciplined teamwork in order to accomplish their mission. Attention to ethical values is crucial for the trust necessary to build this teamwork.

Civilian life is not as regimented as the military and
it has more leeway for the individual to exercise personal freedom. This is acceptable because the civilian does not have as much overt power to threaten the public as the soldier. But because of the cataclysmic power entrusted to the military, there is much more sensitivity to a breach of values. What is mildly disagreeable or even condoned in the average citizen's behavior may not be considered appropriate the part of the soldier. For instance, the soldier who leaves his job without authorization could well wind up with a federal court record, while the civilian who does the same thing would at worst lose his job. Our culture has a basic need to bridle the awesome power of the military by governing its values and expecting more of the soldier as he serves his nation.

The military is unique. It is distinct in kind and magnitude from other cultural services. Its constitutional imperative, its fundamental mission is to preserve the nation and its culture. This basic mission is an integral part of American civil religion and its mythos. Both want to preserve the nation and those moral values such as human dignity, justice, and liberty which are the bedrock of American culture.

Another reason for the focus on military behavior is the historical tradition of civilian control of the military. Because of this absolutely important doctrine of American government, the civilian populace has position
power to check a powerful and aggressive military. When the military is ordered to engage in warfare, it is at the direction of civilian leadership. When military commanders reach boundaries set by the political entity, they must have the self-discipline to stop unless, and until, the civilian sector expands the area of operation. Such was the case of General Douglas MacArthur in the Korean War. He thought, and with much logic and knowledge of the enemy, that our forces should pursue the war into mainland China. Because he was not willing to follow the policy and desires of the political leaders, General MacArthur was fired.

The military, then, has a special relationship with the American public. Born of that body, the military is challenged with the mission of protecting it. The overarching spiritual dimension and the fundamental values are the same for both. The difference lies in the preeminence of the civilian sector. The military is a public servant, a theme that goes far back into the Hebrew tradition.

Thus far, the discussion has been about the corporate aspects of the service academy scandals and the cultural value structures in terms of civil religion. There is an equally important aspect in the scandals, the clear presence of individual value conflicts. These conflicts occurred between the personal values of students, parents, onlookers, and the system values represented by the honor code.

The value differences between the students and the code
system is reflected in the following statement by Cadet
Harold Loehlein, honor cadet, captain-elect of the 1951
football team, and president of the senior class:

I would have been higher in the standings had I not
helped the others. Sure I cribbed at times, but a lot
of the boys thought it was justified because we gave a
lot of time to the football team. In some cases,
friendship comes above the honor system...The full
attack has been directed against us and yet no one has
questioned the honor system itself.

It may be assumed that this outstanding cadet was not an
indiscriminate troublemaker. His abilities and achievements
are a matter of record, but he reflected a distinctly
different set of standards when it came to this issue. His
loyalty to his peers was decidedly more important to him
than following West Point's honor code.

Parents were also involved. Speaking of the 1965 Air
Force Academy scandal, one parent bitterly attacked the
non-toleration clause by saying:

This is ridiculous, almost sadistic. For most of us,
to snitch on our playmates has always been regarded as
being as bad as cheating. Something is wrong with a
system that permits this to happen.

Clearly, there was a value conflict between what the
students and at least one parent considered as appropriate
behavior, and what the academies deemed important. The
students considered the extra hours that they spent with the
football team as mitigation for what they did. In this case,
they chose friendship and loyalty to comrades over the honor
code. By their standards, disloyalty to the other students would probably have been more dishonorable. The parent saw the conflict rooted even more deeply in the past when children are first taught loyalty to their primary groups. Both the parent and the students felt strongly that the system should be changed to accommodate individual values.

The notion of honor, the value considered most basic by Sylvanus Thayer as he shaped West Point, is non-negotiable because it is rooted in the deepest religious sentiments of the Republic. Honor involves values described as trust, integrity, and loyalty. Most important, the honorable person is expected to deal responsibly with the values of the national ethic. This is necessary for the preservation and stability of the nation. The person who supports the values inherent in the national heritage lives out the ethic of the civil religion.

In spite of heavy criticism, the honor code complete with the non-toleration clause has remained intact since 1951. The students probably viewed the code's application as intransigence, while for the service academies it reflects the non-negotiable values required to build and preserve the special trust is critical for military service.

Thus far, we have dealt with a tension between the values of civil religion and the personal values of cadets, their families, and other onlookers. As a Church spokes-
man, Cardinal Spellman added another dimension when he asked the three Catholic men's colleges in his archdiocese to admit any West Point cadets who applied for entry. He commented on this action using the familiar maxim "To err is human, to forgive divine." This magnanimous gesture makes an informative distinction. While the other differences were significant in terms of practiced values in the community, Cardinal Spellman articulated a different set of values by demonstrating the Christian principle of forgiveness. His response, reflecting his Christian ethic, was significantly different from that of other major universities. In the same issue of *Time*, it was reported that a number of other schools either categorically denied admittance to the students, or awaited some indication of dishonor in their transcripts before deciding.

It is not likely that the Cardinal's approach would work in the service academies. Indeed, one could say that it would be inappropriate. While this act of love and forgiveness might be possible in the context of a private Church-controlled school, the academies are altogether different. They must consider the standard of fairness for those who did not cheat. The public and the alumni, who have a strong personal investment in the traditions of these schools, take very seriously the professionalism inherent in the honor code. The services are extremely interested in graduating the very finest officers in the military profes-
sion. The established values and moral standards of the military are non-negotiable expectations for these young officers.

Considering this in conjunction with the action of Cardinal Spellman, and the statements of the others, there is a clear statement of the dilemma inherent in the scandals. First, the values of the honor code state in clear terms what the standards of the system are. Next, there is the conflict with the personal values of those involved in the situation. Further, a preeminent representative of the Church in America became involved by modeling Christian values. While this conflict is not monumental, it clearly indicates a difference in kind between the various value centers.

The values of the military ethic establish the world in which it operates. In optimum circumstances, these cherished ideals are consonant with the national values found in the civil religion. The sovereign in the case of these national values is embodied in the nation-state and its culture.

By contrast, the Christian is called and empowered by the sovereign God. He is the value source for the believer. H. Richard Niebuhr's understanding of Radical Monotheism will help establish the implications of God's kingship over all the world, and the limits that necessarily exist in the nation-state.
The tension between these two value centers confronts the man of faith in the military system. Jean-Jacques Rousseau observed this reality when he posited two basic types of religion in the society of the nation-state. One of these is the "religion of the community" (or citizen) which correlates to civil religion as the value base for the nation and, in this case, the military. The other is the "religion of the person" which affirms the sovereign God as the value center for the individual.

This tension between value centers is not academic. It is the plight of every person called upon to serve his country while taking seriously his personal faith. These two worlds may be compatible to some degree, but they will never be congruent, for they have different purposes and different value centers. Living in these two worlds is a dialectical relationship that will never be totally synthesized.

John Dominic Crossan provides a model of analysis that is helpful in understanding this tension. He describes myth as that which creates world, reconciles paradoxes, and provides stability. The world created by national civil religion has its basis in the myths of the American culture. This mythic stability is the purpose of the national ethic, and, by extension, the military ethic. For example, the purpose of the military is to "support and defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic." This mission to preserve the democratic way of life is
primary, and its expression is the preservation of a way of life. The military ethic, which supports this mission, is an articulation of the military ethos. As such, it provides stability for the military culture.

By contrast, Crossan depicts parable as the opposite of myth. Parable upsets and subverts our world. It raises questions. Parable is "deliberately calculated to show the limitation of myth, to shatter world so that its relativity becomes apparent." Parable shows us the seams and edges of myth...Parables are meant to change, not reassure us."

Using this model, the military ethic provides stability for the soldier. On the other hand, as a Christian, he is a questioner, a conscience, and a prophet. This is in keeping with the tradition of Jesus who confronted individuals as well as the religious and national systems of his day.

Most seriously, the Christian soldier must settle the question of war in relationship to Jesus' teachings. Responsible faith calls for the individual to make a basic decision to serve or not to serve. If in good conscience the Christian cannot become a part of the military system, then the honorable thing to do is to follow his conscience. Though it is a minority opinion in our culture, there are provisions in the national ethic to honor such conscientious decisions. Once the decision is made to enter the military there is an allegiance to the values of the military ethic. Faith asks the soldier to establish a viable position with
reference to the military, one which honors as much of the system as possible while in a Christian spirit raising questions when human dignity, justice, and other important Christian values are compromised. He must be able to question practices that challenge God's sovereignty in the name of loyalty to a military ethic. H. Richard Niebuhr raised the sovereignty issue very clearly. For him the sovereignty of God involves the Christian soldier in a tension between being a citizen and a soldier, and giving absolute allegiance to God. For Niebuhr there is but one God. Any competing value systems are penultimate and must be measured by the implications of this reality.

This writer is not attempting to portray the values of the American system as inferior. In fact, many of these values are consistent with, if not identical to, those of the Christian faith. The purpose is to identify the fundamental tension that exists between the two value centers. In order to do so, Chapter One examines the sequential relationship between civil religion, national sovereignty, and military culture as a basis for military ethics. Chapter Two discusses the demands of faith in a sovereign God as a way of measuring the military ethic. It further proposes a model for Christian behavior based on responsibility in relationship. Finally, utilizing collected speeches and writings of General of the Army Omar Bradley, the tension between these two perspectives will be discussed
vis-a-vis the responsibility of faith. It proposes a framework for military ethics which attempts to synthesize the competing demands that impinge on the Christian soldier.
CHAPTER I

CIVIL RELIGION, NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY,
AND MILITARY CULTURE

Introduction

Our continued efforts for peace and for America, based always on human rights, must pioneer the pathway of freedom, destined someday to be the open highway to a new and better world. General Omar N. Bradley

The messianic nature of this statement exemplifies the national character of The United States of America which is rooted in the myths that describe our origins. These foundational myths developed an American dream that pioneered a pathway of freedom for the oppressed. It was a dream of freedom not only for Americans but for the world. In America, the mission of keeping the peace and protecting freedom has been vested in the military whose constitutional charter is "to provide for the common defense." To maintain perspective, the military operates as a servant of the people. The most influential values in this mission are those of the individual soldier for they are the tie between the culture of the nation and the culture of the military. It is the soldier meeting the enemy eye-to-eye who establishes either the nobility or the disgrace that can affirm
or deny the most basic values of American civilization. The society expects the individual soldier to exhibit behavior supportive of its most cherished values. This fact establishes a military professional ethic based on national sovereignty.

In order to trace this progression, The discussion will deal first with the American myth as the basis for national character. Then, it will turn to principles of national character which provide a suitable basis for the military culture. Third, the discussion will deal with the military ethic as found in military culture. Then some concrete expressions of the ethic will be examined.

The American Myth, Basis of National Character

After nearly three hundred years of gestation, America was born on the world scene on 4 July 1776. This new nation carried many of the hopes of men in Europe. America was a new beginning. Her birth period spanned the Declaration of Independence, the Revolutionary War, and the Constitution. This complex of events is the focal point where the myths of the past and subsequent mythology meet. In that sense, they express both the past and the future of the new nation. The writings of this birth experience form the sacred scriptures of civil religion. They issue from the American myth, are the written statement of the sovereignty of the nation, and establish the basis of national character.
In a significant sense, this new nation represented a new juncture in world history. The nation state was a relatively new development along with its separation of Church and state. The secular state was developing and rationalism was becoming the model for government. Science and philosophy were fellow travelers with this new state as they developed the new world together. The myth of the state was left to develop on its own. In the past, the ship of state was informed by both the sacred and the secular realms. The mythic basis for the state came from state religion. Then the nation was cut away from those ties and the American myth developed to support the early settlers. America was the last unblemished frontier in which men could experiment with this new form of government. With the Industrial Revolution and scientific advances, America stood at the bridge between the past and the future. Locked in a struggle with "savages" who represented the primitive, she was prepared to risk the step into the unknown.

This promise would have remained only promise without some commitment to the future. The events of the birth process articulated this commitment. In this process, past, present, and future joined. The Declaration of Independence was the formal commitment to fight for freedom and America's future. Once the war was decided, the colonies formally constituted themselves. In these events America was founded in two senses. First, she was founded in the sense of being
new. She was also founded in the sense of being born with a stable foundation based on myths of American civil religion.

Mircea Eliade helps understand the mythic nature of these birth pangs. One of the themes that Eliade identifies in his study of the nature of religious experience is "chaos and cosmos." The act of creation brings order out of chaos and movement into harmony with cosmos. The colonies were progressing rather well and were relatively calm, but searching for a new identity was a distinct threat to the identity of the past. In the wilderness of this new world, the colonist found his only stability in his thoughts of the old country. For the new to be born, this old had to die. As distasteful as it was to some, the influence and government of the old world provided stability. There was no in between. To leave the old would throw their world into chaos until a new world replaced it with hope. In 1763, hostilities broke out between the colonists and the crown. It was fully possible that the hopes and dreams for the future of the new world would never occur, but once they were committed to action, there was no turning back.

The risk paid off. In one creative event, these refugees from the old country took the wilderness, gave it a name, declared a break with the rest of the world, and after a cosmic struggle for existence founded this new world in the Constitution of the United States of America. In this document, we find the "center" for American life. While it
may not meet the traditional stereotype for myth, this
hallowed document along with the Declaration of Independence
and the Revolutionary War perform symbolic mythic functions.
They provide stability, serve as a focus for codifying the
American myth, and participate in the mythical archetypes of
universal history.

One might argue that the Constitution is a utilitarian
legal document; that it has nothing of myth in it; and that
it is simply derived from the rationalism of contractual
government that was sweeping the Continent. To this, Eliade
would say that "the archaic world knows nothing of 'profane'
activities: every act which has a definite meaning...in some
way participates in the sacred." ¹ Certainly, we must agree
that the Constitution has a "definite meaning." It is law,
but it is more than law. For instance, it seeks justice for
its people, and Eliade observes "the fact that human justice
...which is founded upon the idea of 'law', has a transcen-
dental and celestial model in the cosmic norms is too well
known for us to insist upon it." ⁵ Indeed, for him, the law
is hierophany—an act of the manifestation of the sacred.
It is a "disclosure by a divinity or a mystical being." ⁶
Without admitting to a finely tuned theory of natural law,
one must agree that law does lead to order and integration
in society rather than disintegration and chaos. In this
sense, we are brought closer to the reality of the gods.

The creation of the Constitution in itself connects us
with the sacred. Bellah observes:

We will want to consider the act of conscious meaning creation, or conscious taking responsibility for oneself oneself and one's society, as a central aspect of America's myth of origin, an act that, by the very radicalness of its beginning, a beginning ex nihilo as it were, is redolent of the sacred.

In the formation of the Constitution, the writers set out to institutionalize their dream of a land of justice and freedom. It was an act of meaning-creation and responsibility. It was a risk on a new venture in self-government.

Eliade discusses several spiritual patterns that shed light on the articulation of the national culture. Among these is the notion of "the center." The birth event of America, as mentioned earlier, forms the focus, or center-point, of the past, present, and future. In terms of religious history, as interpreted by Eliade, America's birth is one with sacred space, where the three cosmic planes of heaven, hell, and earth intersect.

The true world is always at the center, for it is here that there is a break in plane and hence communication between the three cosmic zones...A universe comes to birth from its center; it spreads out from a central point, that is...its navel.

The importance of this center can be observed constantly in the day-to-day activities of our culture. Whenever crisis threatens liberty and justice, the Supreme Court is called upon to adjudicate in order to maintain those values. When black Americans sensed that the time was right to move for
their rightful place in the society, the only significant way to cement their place and institutionalize their grievances was in the Supreme Court. The cases did not automatically change things in the marketplace, but they did raise the issues that forever stated their case, something that was not done by the drafters of the original documents. They established the principles, but, as Bellah observes, they did not live up to them.

Another expression of the center is found in the American liturgical calendar. J.O. Robertson identifies this calendar as one that:

marks an annual cycle of specifically American secular and religious ritual celebrations, which make the year American and which provide for the annual renewal of American ideals and national myths.

For Robertson, the American calendar begins the birthday of George Washington. It is a celebration of revolution and the establishment of our nation. The calendar ends with Thanksgiving which celebrates family and community in the New World. There are two distinct cycles in this liturgical year. The first cycle is concerned with the revolutionary mythology of America, while the other celebrates her people and the land itself. The placement of the Fourth of July is especially significant, for it is the center of the calendar and the first holiday of the second cycle. This places Independence Day in a position to proclaim itself as the center of all activity of the nation. It follows sequen-
tially the remembrances of war and of valorous heroes.

In her formative days America stood as the bridge between the past and the future, and at the center of history. The hope which was invested in her by her citizens is reflected in the liturgical calendar and is yet being fulfilled today. The military implications of this are considerable. When our nation's goal is to put out brush fires in order to nobly act out our messianic role in the world, the onus frequently falls on the military to work out the political goals implicit in the situation. Part of America's serious soul-searching during the last few years was due to the frustration of "losing" in military situations. The nation still has romantic notions of our messianic role in World Wars I and II. Indeed, we came to the rescue of our allies, but when it was all over, the same frustration was present. Why did we not once and for all end the evil German threat? Why did we have to compromise with the Russians while it is said that the spoils go to the victor, the strongest? Yet, in the final analysis, many American's felt that we gave away the upper hand over the communists in Europe. Somehow this violated America's messianic role.

Another principle in Eliade's analysis of myth is the notion of "sacred time." In the act of creation, time is abolished, and the current moment of creation is one with the primordial moment. While the birth events of our nation
took place between 1776 and 1787 A.D. in calendar time, in
mythical time, they were coterminous with the original act
of creation.

Probably President Abraham Lincoln most faithfully
represented the best in American Civil Religion. In his
memorable address at Gettysburg, Lincoln reflected the
notions of sacred time and sacred space:

In a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot hallow
--this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who
struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor
power to add or detract...It is rather for us to be here
dedicated to the great task remaining before us...that
we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have
died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a
new birth of freedom—and that the government of the
people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish
from the earth.

In those moments Lincoln connected his audience with the
noblest traditions of military service and sacrifice. The
staying power of this address testifies to its enormous
significance. The reason is that those moments in the
cemetery at Gettysburg transcended spatial and temporal
boundaries and became one with the ages.

The same phenomenon occurs when military leaders call
upon the great traditions of valor and honor which have been
the hallmark of battlefields from time immemorial. To some
degree, this was a common denominator on the battlefields of
Europe during World War I and World War II where respect for
military professionalism transcended the role of friend or
foe. Even when captured, professional soldiers demonstrated
a sense of honor in giving proper treatment to respected enemy prisoners.

This phenomenon of Gettysburg exemplifies another closely related theme in Eliade, the "myth of the eternal return." For a people to be a people, it is critically important that they return to the events and myths that are constitutive of their existence. Celebrating the Fourth of July is more than firecrackers and flags. It is more than memorializing the beginning of our country. It is returning to and participating in the creative moments of the nation's birth. The themes of this myth are death and resurrection. Significantly, most of our national holidays have to do with soldiers, or with those who were in symbolic power positions during armed conflict. War and destruction seem inevitable to the transition from chaos to cosmos. The war of liberation stood in the midst of the birth event. Its purpose was to bring liberty and justice to all. The implication is—the hope of our nation is—"all" in a universal sense, not just Americans. This theme forms the substance of our national character, and its connection with the military as a viable and necessary agent of national life is undeniable.

National Character, Basis for Military Culture

Eliade's mythic categories, which express our national character, are manifest in what Robert Bellah has called civil religion. Bellah identifies the Revolution as a part
of the sacred history of America:

There is a sense in which the American Revolution and the American civil religion are the same thing. When I use the term 'civil religion' I am pointing to that revolution in the minds of men that John Adams argued was the real revolution in America. That was the revolution that culminated in the Declaration of Independence, even though the revolutionary war had just begun.

This paper will consider the entire birth complex as constitutive of the civil religion of the American Republic. The birth of the Republic covers a period from the outbreak of hostilities through the writing of the Constitution until the direction of the national character was firmly fixed. It does not contradict Bellah's position, but only expands it further.

For Bellah, the "Revolutionary Faith--what Lincoln called 'our ancient faith'"--is "the American civil religion, or at least its normative core." Bellah closely identifies civil religion with two major conflicts in American history, one which formed the Republic and one which saved it. In so doing, he reflects the inextricable link between military culture and American civil religion. In a larger sense, national culture expressed in civil religion, military culture and personal faith intersected in Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln was mentioned above as the president who most closely blended civil religion and his personal faith into one. Because of the momentous times in which President
Lincoln served he probably knew more than any other the
tension that existed between personal codes and the
realities of office based on the principle of civil religion
which established the survival of the state as the highest
good. Trueblood observes that:

Before entering the White House Lincoln had understood
the evil character of human slavery, but in the agoniz-
ing months which followed his inauguration he came to
see a still bigger issue, of which the slavery issue was
only one part. This was the issue of the perpetuation of
the idea of democracy...What Lincoln was producing...was
an intellectual and spiritual clarification of the
importance, for the whole world, of the American
experiment in government.

Lincoln was charged with leading the nation while keeping
faith with the Constitution. As President, his highest
priority was the preservation of the state as the expression
of the "American experiment of government." As a citizen
and as a public servant, the nation was sovereign. The
tenets of civil religion were important. At the same time,
drawing on W.J.Wolf, Trueblood concludes that:

Lincoln went deeper than "self-evidence" for these
truths, even further than the somewhat deistic phrase
"endowed by their creator." For Lincoln the Creator was
the living God of history, revealed in the Bible, Whose
judgements were continuously written on the pages of
history and recorded in the human conscience. Because he
was aware of another dimension than that of politics,
Lincoln was amazingly liberated from the dangers of
idolatry, including idolatry of the nation. No nation, he
held, is wholly sovereign because every nation is
under judgement.

Lincoln exemplifies both types of civil religion out-
lined by Bellah. In his 1967 essay, Bellah only spoke of a
general civil religion, but in a 1976 essay, he further
developed his theory. In The Revolution and Civil Religion,
Bellah defines two types of civil religion, "general" and
"special." General civil religion is the lowest common
denominator of church religion. Bellah identifies general
civil religion with the tradition of natural religion, which
was considered for many centuries to be an indispensable
prerequisite for government. He uses Roger Williams and Ben
Franklin to support his position, but he feels that George
Washington in his farewell address is the classic expres-
sion. He quotes Washington:

Of all the suppositions and habits which lead to
political prosperity; religion and morality are
indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim
the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert
these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest
props of the duties of Men and citizens...reason and
experience both forbid us to expect that National
morality can prevail in exclusion of religious
principle.

With this and other sources, Bellah identifies the ethic of
this general civil religion. It is based in virtue and
"defined as concern for the common good."

Bellah sees a positive connection between this kind of
civil religion and special civil religion. For him,

Special civil religion defines the norms in terms of
which the common good is conceived. Perhaps the central
norm in the American civil religion is expressed in that
great phrase of Jefferson in the Declaration of
Independence: "All men are created equal."

To sum up the connection and distinction between the
two, Bellah asserts that:

There is, then, a biting edge to the civil religion. Not just general civil religion, but virtue. Not just virtue, but concern for the common good. Not just the common good defined in any self-serving way, but the common good under great objective norms: equality, life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness.

Given this sketch of civil religion, Bellah speaks of two historical structures of interpretation, biblical and utilitarian. Biblical interpretation is expressed in covenant and natural law, while utilitarian interpretation is expressed in the social contract and natural rights. "The meaning of every key term in the civil religion—certainly liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but also equality and even life—differs in those perspectives." He views the Declaration of Independence as a document reflecting virtue, and the Constitution as a document which strikes compromises between various interests.

The two principles of interpretation have important application for the military. They establish a dialectic between a deontological and a utilitarian approach to the ethical norms of the soldier. In a real sense, the military espouses a deontological approach in which certain ethical values are determined to be necessary for a professional officer to believe in. On the other hand, the utilitarian approach is found in the deeply held value of mission success.

Given this discussion, what are the practical implica-
tions for the professional soldier? What do the foundational documents have to say? What is the source of duty that controls the soldier?

**Military Culture, Basis for a Military Ethic**

It is important to remember that certain principles are important parts of soldiering irrespective of a particular culture. Duty, honor, loyalty, obedience, patriotism, and other common values are usually mentioned whenever professional soldiers from any country discuss a code of behavior for the profession. These might well be called universal professional values, for they are generally applicable to any established army anytime. They have been found to be necessary for an effective and trustworthy force. Consider the following:

Military ceremonies have a tremendous impact on men's feelings. The presentation of the unit Colours, drill parades, presentation of awards, rendering of military honours prompt the serviceman to devote special thought to such moral categories as honor, duty, and conscience.

This quote could come from most any army. In fact, it is a statement by a Russian Army officer. This raises the need to understand the uniqueness of the American professional soldier vis-a-vis the Russian, the English, the French, the Chinese, or any other nationality.

The distinctiveness of American military culture comes from the national character expressed in the civil religion. This civil religion finds its basis in the myths
of the American culture. It is informative to examine this military culture as a means of understanding the source of the military ethic.

A helpful analogy has been developing in the business world over the past few years. Peters and Waterman began searching for "companies of excellence" several years ago. Their approach was to find companies that met certain criteria of excellence and examine their operation from a number of perspectives. One of the important aspects that they found was the presence of what they call "culture." Tapping into the reality of man's search for meaning, these authors quote Bruno Bettelheim:

"If we hope to live not just from moment to moment, but in true consciousness of our existence, then our greatest need and most difficult achievement is to find meaning in our lives." Bettelheim emphasizes the historically powerful role of fairy tales and myths in shaping meaning in our lives.

They continue:

As we worked on research of our excellent companies, we were struck by the dominant use of story, slogan, and legend as people tried to explain the characteristics of their own great institutions.

After recounting the presence of myths, stories, and legends in Boeing, McDonalds, IBM, Bank of America, and others, Peters and Waterman observe that:

In an organizational sense, these stories, myths, and legends, appear to be very important, because they convey the organization's shared values, or culture.
The entity that these writers call "culture" is, in the opinion of this writer, the spiritual dimension of these organizations. It is a corporate religion, so to speak, that provides the stability and vision to reach for excellence. Employees are attracted to it because the company that has it provides meaning for the worker and has concern for him as well. Culture captures the imagination of the employee and motivates him to adopt the company's values and goals as his own.

Certainly, this is an unusual direction from which to approach myth and story. But in another sense, it is not. The Army is a bureaucratic organization. Its leaders practice management and leadership principles. It has "employees" who need to find meaning and stability. It has stories, legends, and myths that form the glue that bonds the organization together.

Unlike these corporate organizations, the American Army has a long tradition rich in symbols, legends, and myths. One only has to stand in a retreat ceremony or a review to feel the pride and sense of history that so richly pervade the Army. To see the beaches of Normandy and feel connected with those who died on D-Day; to serve in the 1st Cavalry Division and realize its great heritage; to go to Bastogne and sense the presence of the 101st Airborne Division as its soldiers delayed a numerically superior force; to be aware of the many lesser known units that have fought
valiantly on battlefields over the world; these all connect one with a timeless tradition. In the sense of Eliade, sacred time and sacred space intersect and one stands on holy ground connected with sacrifice through the centuries. The flag, the Medal of Honor, the Purple Heart, the company guidon, the battalion colors with a myriad of campaign streamers attached to the flag staff indicating campaigns in which American soldiers have fought, all are a source of pride to the professional soldier. The important thing for the Army is that all these noble traditions are continuous with the foundations of our nation. The warrior myths of the Revolution, Valley Forge and Yorktown, Washington and the Minutemen of New England, stand alongside St Lo, Bataan, Pearl Harbor, Normandy, and Iwo Jima as a part of the great history of the American Army. They all participate in the myths of America the Messiah and in the pristine possibility of bringing "freedom and justice for all" to an eager world.

Since we have such a noble history, what is the connection between the soldier today and those memories that so warmly arouse our patriotism? What today is continuous with that great tradition? Every soldier swears an oath of enlistment and every officer swears an oath of commissioning. It is this oath that establishes a link between the soldier, the Constitution, the traditions of the Army, and the basis for professional behavior. What principles are inherent in the oath that frame the commitments of the
soldier? The oath is worded as follows:

I, ______________________, having been appointed an officer in the Army of the United States, in the grade ____________, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, that I will take this obligation freely, and without mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter, so help me God.

In taking this oath, the officer is engaging in an activity significantly different from his life as a civilian. It is an agreement to bring significant power to kill, hurt, or maim an enemy who threatens the survival of our nation. Further, because of certain responsibilities that America as an emerging world power has assumed or has had thrust upon her, the soldier is accepting resistance against any ideology that threatens the traditional principles for which America stands. Whenever human dignity, justice, and freedom are threatened, the principle of democracy is threatened. It is here that the American myth of the New World based on these principles informs the ethic by which the soldier lives. In this oath, the soldier is committing himself to adopt the essentials of the Constitution as his own and to "bear true faith and allegiance" to them. In so doing, he is not just giving intellectual assent to the values, he is swearing to live by them, to allow them to affect his behavior.

The importance of this connection to the Constitution
cannot be underestimated. Our nation is based on the value of human freedom with its inherent reality of pluralism. Each soldier enters the military with a set of personal values, some of which are of ultimate significance to him. In the Army, each soldier has certain professional values expected of him. Articulated in the oath of commissioning, these values derive from the constituting events of our nation. Likewise, each soldier has certain bureaucratic expectations which influence his life. For example, caring for his family may be a very important personal value to him, while he is told that integrity is a non-negotiable value for the military professional. At the same time, the bureaucratic value of efficient production may be threatened by unfortunate circumstances such as lack of time or vital resources. The mission, the supreme unit value, could be in danger of failing. The combination of the worthy concern that he take care of his family and the perceived bureaucratic threat of a bad report or of legal disciplinary measures if he fails to accomplish his mission can apply significant pressure causing him to question the Army value of integrity in exasperation, "Does it pay to be honest?" Or, "Will it hurt if I cut corners just this once?" In this situation, there is a conflict of values, all of which are legitimate. The decision can have serious consequences on either his family, himself, or the Army.

An Army ethic should allow for maximum interface
between the bureaucratic realities of the situation, the traditional values cherished by the military, and the personal values of the soldier caught at the intersection of these planes. Since the Army is an American bureaucratic system, dependent on amicable relations between a variety of personal religious expressions, the constituting events provide the most common basis for this interface. As a citizen guided by these events, the soldier has a common mooring, an anchor, some stability in a world of conflicting value systems. These formative events provide the stabilizing myth.

Following are some values that emerge as universals from this tradition. Most religious communities find them important. They are fundamental to American life and can inform bureaucratic life in America, particularly the military which is the focus of this paper.

As stated earlier, Bellah considers the central norm of special civil religion to be the principle that "All men are created equal." From that central norm, several ethical values emerge. Chief among these is justice which is among the most debated values in ethical circles. "We the people of the United States, in order to...establish justice...do ordain and establish this Constitution..." is the Constitutional expression of this important principle. The implications for the professional soldier are considerable. Justice has implications for the way in which the Army
treats its members, the leader treats his subordinates, and the soldier treats his enemy. This is not just another policy or directive, it is a constitutional and moral imperative. Since we are a government of laws and not the whims of individuals, the Army officer does not have the option of commander's prerogative to discriminate against his soldiers based on race, sex, or religious background. Each soldier has the right to due process and fair treatment under the law. James Sellers considers this tradition of justice as the fundamental value and reality of American life. In the past, justice has been accomplished, reluctantly at times, usually in response to gross injustice. Sellers feels, however, that justice has become more proactive and is becoming more of a way of life in America.  

Another facet of this fundamental norm is the principle of human dignity. Sellers considers this principle as an element of justice expressed in the three inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. For Sellers, "it is the idea of dignity, and not just survival, that is expressed in the proclamation of 'life' as the first of the inalienable rights." This right is established in the Declaration of Independence, and the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution expresses it as the right to life. This guarantee is more than basic physical existence. Sellers observes that "Dignity is that without which human life loses its meaning and becomes mere survival." To
give it up is to sell our soul, to lose our integrity. Even if a person does not have freedom or liberty, even if he is a prisoner, no one has a right to take away his dignity. Any practice that strips soldiers or the enemy of this basic dignity is opposed to the basic ethic inherent in the Constitution which the soldier is sworn to uphold.

Community is another critical principle or value for the Army. In some ways it is more basic than justice, for without it, justice would not be an issue. Justice is a social principle. It assumes the principle of community without which any concern for fairness is unnecessary. Justice becomes necessary when men are living together and find need for arbitration. Community is a proactive principle, and somewhat voluntary, while justice is more reactive. This is the reason for Sellers' observation that we deal with justice more out of sensitivity to injustice than in actively pursuing it. The Constitution assumes community when it states "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union..." The Declaration of Independence likewise assumes community in the assertion, "When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them another..." These statements assume and state the fundamental fact of community in American life. We are not only a collection of individuals with rights; we are in some sense an organic unity in which
the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. It is this overarching principle that draws the individual dimensions together and gives them their fundamental purpose. It creates the necessary tension between the thoughts, beliefs, ideas, and creeds of the individual and his voluntary initiative to identify himself as an American. Sellers discusses this voluntary aspect of American life as an animating or dynamic principle of "commitment to one's greater community expressed in the act of citizenship." Sellers goes on to utilize the notion of "willed initiative" or *la vertu*, coined by Montesquieu to describe this phenomenon.

It conveys the idea that the citizen of a republic finds the beginning of his participation in governance in his own inner spirit, but that this spirit takes the form of action, and especially that kind of action that expresses willingness: initiative.

Human dignity, justice, and community are significant elements of military culture, and derived ultimately from American civil religion and the myths of American culture. They should be fundamental to the military ethic that guides the soldier in all situations. The next section examines some stated expressions of military ethics.

**Some Practical Ethical Statements**

What do professional soldiers and scholars have to say on the subject of military professional ethics? The ensuing discussion examines three articles published by soldiers along with a selection from a civilian writer.
In order to measure these articles, a framework must be chosen that includes the referents discussed above. In this case, the referents are national sovereignty, the military system, and civil religion. The framework is a spectrum with a "closed system" at one pole and "open system" at the other. The significance of these categories may be illustrated by a stone thrown into still water with ripples moving in ever-widening concentric circles: the closer to the center, the tighter the ripples, the further from the center, the more expansive and universal the waves. Likewise an ethical value center may have a tightly drawn universe, for example, a professional ethic which attempts to delineate acceptable standards of conduct for a member of a profession. Such a "closed" system may not have to go outside of the profession to find its center of value. The more the system moves out to a universal value center, the more "open" it is.

As specifically applied to the present subject, a "closed system" is one in which unique military values are universal for the participants, though penultimate in a real sense. As the system expands, the values which apply to the military become more closely aligned to traditional ethical principles. In any case, at best, the most open military ethical system rests in the American national culture.
Dealing with the future when we deal with ethics nonetheless ties us with the past, specifically with our political past as Americans. For we are discussing here not only a general question about ethics and the military profession but specifically the ethics of the U.S. military profession and ethical standards appropriate for it. We and our military services exist in a historical context that, to some extent, defines the nature of our ethical response... (our) heritage is distinctly American in character. We must act as Americans... as a people imbued with a specific political heritage.

In the final analysis, national sovereignty determines the value structure of the military ethic regardless of how open or closed it is.

General Maxwell Taylor was one of the great soldiers of World War II. He later became Chief of Staff of the United States Army. A man of high principles, General Taylor feels that officers should adhere to a strict code of professional behavior. He is concerned that they:

Try working out for themselves a code of conduct that might help them cope with their ethical problems— one which they would consider worthy of adoption by the entire officer corps. This is the do-it-yourself approach to a professional ethic which I recommend for serious consideration.

In order to define this code, Taylor starts with his description of an ideal officer. This sketch identifies the professional officer as "one who can be relied upon to carry out all assigned tasks and missions and, in doing so, get the most from his available resources with minimum loss and waste." This officer is not a perfect man in any ethical, religious, or cultural sense. Concern for traditional moral
values is not as important as getting the job done. (Though Taylor may agree that these traditional values have merit, he does not consider them germane.) Taylor's focus on carrying out the tasks assigned to the military, commonly called "mission accomplishment," definitely supports the national will expressed by and in the sovereign state. The radically closed nature of Taylor's ethic is reflected in the following statement:

In our present study, we have found no need to invoke extra-professional help to support our conclusions and judgments. Nor have we been obliged to call on any of the great names of philosophy, ethics, or religion to justify our interpretation of right and wrong in our life's work. The voice of long experience tells us that, in our profession, that which favors mission success is right or good and that which works to the contrary is wrong or bad. We need not look elsewhere for confirmation of what, for a soldier, is a self-evident truth.

As an ethical standard, "mission accomplishment" is not ultimately significant outside the military. It carries such weight in the military because of the importance of protecting our nation and its way of life.

There are at least two significant problems inherent in Taylor's efforts. First, his position on the conservation of resources implies that men are considered along with all other resource such as fuel, ammunition, or spare parts, as something to be used. This position does not honor the principles of justice, human dignity, or human worth upon which the national character is based. Second, the suprema-
acy of mission accomplishment as the measure of goodness or badness of the leader is foreign to the spirit of those same principles. It raises significant question as to whether it is an unprincipled utilitarianism which can justify any means by the end.

In attempting to describe the "core military ethic," Robert C. Carroll identifies what to him are the two central values of the military profession. Rank ordered, these principles are "1) Subservience to civilian control, and 2) The desire to win wars if engaged." This rank ordering is important for Carroll, because if it were reversed, it would set the stage for mutiny. These two principles presuppose the notion of obedience. The first principle states the historical doctrine of civilian-military relations. It further includes the reality of national sovereignty which is at the base of any military ethic in the western world. But it states the principle from the perspective of obedience of the soldier to this historical principle of service to the nation. Giving Carroll the benefit of the doubt, one has to assume that the sovereign considers the justice of the cause before engaging in hostilities. Unless the sovereign acts justly and wisely, the soldier must have the choice to dissent. Likewise, the soldier must be concerned about how the war is won as well. There is considerable dispute about both issues. Does the military salute and say "Yes sir" and pursue the war, or does it have
some say in the engagement in the beginning? What kinds of war behaviors are appropriate to our national character?

Samuel P. Huntington wrote one of the modern classics about the civilian-military relationship. He very clearly establishes the relationship by asserting that "the military profession exists to serve the state." The immediate implication is that:

Loyalty and obedience are the highest military virtues. When the military man receives a legal order from an authorized superior, he does not argue, he does not hesitate, he does not substitute his own views; he obeys instantly... His goal is to perfect an instrument of obedience; the uses to which that instrument is put are beyond his responsibility. His highest virtue is instrumental not ultimate.

While obedience is the "supreme military virtue," Huntington feels that a subordinate may disobey a leader if he is certain that an order can cause an operational disaster, or if he is certain that he knows a better way to accomplish some tactical movements. Huntington is treading on extremely tenuous ground here. In opening these options, he severely undercuts the extreme importance he assigns to obedience.

Huntington identifies further clashes of obedience with values outside the military. There can be conflicts between military values and political decisions of the civilian leaders; between military efficiency and political interference in specifically military decisions; between military obedience and legality; and between military obedience and
basic morality. In all these cases, the benefit of the doubt goes to the political arm unless the soldier's position is certain. Huntington's proposal is another expression of a "closed system." Probably the most critical statement of the argument is expressed as follows:

The soldier cannot surrender to the civilian his right to make ultimate moral judgements. He cannot deny himself as a moral individual. Yet the problem is not as simple as this. For politics as well as basic morality may be involved here. The statesman may well feel compelled to violate commonly accepted morality in order to further the political interests of the state... For the officer, this comes down to a choice between his own conscience, on the one hand, and the good of the state plus the professional virtue of obedience upon the other.

In describing this situation, Huntington established the tension between national sovereignty and allegiance to a higher order value system on the part of an individual. Unfortunately, he answers the dilemma in a questionable manner:

As a soldier, he owes obedience; as a man, he owes disobedience. Except in the most extreme instances it is reasonable to expect that he will adhere to the professional ethic and obey. Only rarely will the military man be justified in following the dictates of private conscience against the dual demand of military obedience and state welfare.

Clearly, this ethic is a closed system based on the utility of decisions to the ends of national interest.

In an example of a more open system, Colonel Malham Wakin, Chairman, Department of Philosophy and Fine Arts at the United States Air Force Academy speaks on the ethics of
leadership. Wakin attempts to show "that such strong involvement between the moral and the military exists and/or ought to exist from a normative point of view that the moral neutrality position must become untenable." Indeed, Wakin counters the utilitarian approach of Huntington in these terms:

But the military professional, the officer leader, ought in fact "to seek after" the "justice of the cause." Obedience to orders is not in itself either a legal or moral claim of right action although it is certainly a mitigating circumstance. Military leaders cannot be merely instrumental to the state. They are instrumental, yes; but they must at the same time accept a portion of the responsibility for the uses of the military instrument.

For Wakin, the professional lives in the tension between being a good officer, being true to his word, and holding to higher moral principles. His private life as well as his duty behavior is important in measuring professionalism.

Wakin warns of the leadership which sees "the role of morality in military leadership too narrowly or from a relativistic framework." He asks today's leader to:

Be neither absolutist or relativist but retain a balanced perspective that understands the full complexity which characterizes the interweaving of moral value with military function. We ask him to be that good man, that wise man, that the Greek philosopher could advise subordinates to find and imitate...The way to do is to be.

Wakin's system is much more open than the others considered. He calls the leader to feel a "frightening responsibility to respect the dignity of individual
subordinates at the same time that military order and discipline are preserved." His hope is that the leader will be able to make the moral choice in the face of the important values of loyalty and obedience.

Wakin's system provides some space for the serious Christian, but its ultimate purpose is the support of the military. Its sovereign is the nation.

These writers, in attempting to articulate an ethic for the military, exemplify the tension that exists for anyone in the system. In much of the literature, this tension is expressed as a debate over military-civilian relations. Some feel that the military should have a greater voice in policy formation when it has military implications. Others feel that the military should have no voice at all. Their position is that the military should display unquestioning obedience to any national policy decision. This is no place to debate the issue of the civilian-military relationship. This writer feels that this issue reflects a deeper issue. The public fears that the military will become too strong in the political arena. Absolute loyalty and obedience assuage the anxiety of the public, but probably more importantly, that of the military leadership. They are concerned about an unbridled force that would mutiny, desert, or otherwise resist accomplishing the mission. The danger is that irrational fear might overtake the moral decisions of critical people at critical times. We as a nation have proven our
loyalties in times of national crisis. We are a society in which trust is vitally important, and the tradition of involvement is fundamental to the myth of equal participation, civil religion, and the national character. This is not to take the important values of loyalty and obedience lightly, they are extremely critical. In the following words, the Declaration of Independence establishes a sacred right to dissent if the cause is grave enough:

To secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it and to institute new government.

It counsels extreme caution in using dissent, but it does validate it as a legitimate means of dealing with crucial issues in our society.

A further obligation inherent in the civilian-military relationship is the ability of civilians to trust the military to make decisions at every level based on the American myth, national culture, and military culture from which the military ethic is derived. For instance, in spite of what Maxwell Taylor argues, mission accomplishment cannot be achieved without reference to the means. The principles of justice, community, dignity, and freedom must inform the ways in which the military does its business. When it ignores these fundamental principles of national character, it betrays the purposes of the nation whose mission it is to
serve. The tension becomes more pronounced when the mission is balanced against the conscience of the Christian soldier, for in his frame of reference, right and wrong are judged differently, and human worth is far more universal.

The Christian soldier calls for a restatement of the original issue, for he is a part of two faith worlds, complete with mythic structures, ethos and ethics. While these two worlds may be compatible at points, they differ completely in terms of sovereignty. For the military ethic, the nation-state is sovereign. For the Christian, the one God is sovereign. When these two value centers conflict, the Christian is in a dilemma. The choice is between two worlds. The Christian soldier's frame of reference in response to his sovereign Lord is the subject of the following discussion.
CHAPTER II

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER
AND UNIVERSAL SOVEREIGNTY

Introduction

The Christian soldier stands in two worlds. The world of the military was discussed above, and the implications of his Christian world are considered in this chapter. For the Christian, God is sovereign. He is the ultimate value center who expressed the supreme value of love in the life, death and resurrection of his son Jesus Christ. In Christ, God demonstrated for all time his essential nature—that which is necessary for man to know in order to live a whole and productive life amidst the ambiguities of daily existence. Christ always pointed us to his Father in heaven. He never presented himself as an object of adoration or worship. Any loyalty outside the one God is penultimate. Further, the Christian soldier has an obligation, out of love for this God, to behave in ways consistent with the teachings of Jesus.

The Dilemma of the Christian Soldier

Whenever the sincere Christian faces a crisis between his life as a citizen soldier and as a person of faith, his duty to his one God can become painfully evident. As a
soldier he owes allegiance to the sovereign state while as a Christian he must respond in faith to the universal sovereign God. In theological terms, this sounds lofty, but in practical terms, it is very real. Consider the soldier for whom worship attendance on a regular basis is a matter of conscience. When the leader deals with this soldier in a combat situation, he must consider the principle of military necessity. According to this measure, the commander must make a judgement given due consideration to the soldier's rights, the unit mission, and the critical nature of the military situation. If allowing the soldiers of his command to attend worship could threaten the safety of his unit or endanger accomplishment of the mission, then the commander has the legitimate right to ask the soldier to delay his worship. In this case, the consideration of the pain and suffering that could be caused by such a breach of military discipline would most certainly be a universal consideration, beyond the matter of the good of the mission for the state. If, however, as rarely happens, the commander uses "military necessity" as an excuse for a trivial mission and prevents his soldiers from exercising their right to worship, the Christian must respond out of his faith in God and protest this action. It is his responsibility to call the military to question when its values violate the ultimate value center found in God. A recent Army Chief of Chaplains characterized the person of faith in this role as the
marginal person. This marginal person is, on the one hand, a viable participant in the Army system, while on the other he challenges the system whenever penultimate Army values are inconsistent with the ultimate values derived from the one God.

One might legitimately question the decision of the Christian in the above situation. How does he determine what is the "right" thing to do? How does he determine that his decision is the "will of God" in the situation? The fact is that there is no absolute certainty. The decision that the soldier makes is, in the final analysis, penultimate. Only his devotion and integrity give credibility to his actions. Even then he must be willing to take responsibility for the consequences of his choice.

This relationship of responsibility and questioning of the system requires that a Christian live in faith in the midst of ambiguity in a system that demands certainty. This lifestyle of faith gives the soldier a foundation to live as a member of a profession whose very existence and legitimacy is morally challenged in many quarters.

This questioning lifestyle is characterized above in the discussion of parable (p.12). Indeed, the parable was more than a mode of verbal communication for Jesus. It characterized who he was. In his life and actions he challenged complacent stabilities and simplistic answers to the complexities and ambiguities of life. Throughout his
ministry he was a loving questioner of the system which was his heritage. Jesus was a Jew. He was born to Jews and at twelve, he spent time in the Temple confounding the religious leaders of his faith. For three years, he spoke in parables which were said to be apparent to those of faith but which were meant to confound those enmeshed in the religious system of his day. At every point Jesus held out the hope that the religious institution would hear his message of grace and life in an atmosphere of law and death. He knew that the law would leave the people with a spiritual thirst and inevitably choke the life from them. Even those closest to him did not seem to understand, for until the very end they expected some sort of physical kingdom. They needed to be able to see and touch the fruits of this new kingdom. They needed a certainty in the midst of the ambiguity that an intangible spiritual realm could not produce for them.

This is indeed applicable to the military situation, for the soldier must be a person of sure faith in the face of the vagaries of military life. Soldiers are always seeking certainty and stability in their situation. Most of this is healthy for they need it to fight effectively. It does prove difficult in dealing with the ethical problems faced by the soldier. In the face of an ethical dilemma, the soldier is inclined to say "if it is legal, it is all right, if it is illegal, it is not." This helps him avoid
the gray area in which he has to determine what to do on a moral basis. The soldier is inclined to look for the "book answer" to the situation because it is certain and objective and helps him respond to the unwritten norm that there is a solution to every problem that life presents.

In the face of this penchant for certainty, the Christian soldier, living in the spirit of parable, is the questioner, the prophet, and the conscience of the system in the presence of the one God.

The soldier who lives by faith lives a life of parable in the face of ambiguity. In order to do this, he finds that faith calls for a higher level of allegiance. It is altogether too simple to place the world of the Christian faith and the world of the state as two equal forces locked in opposition to one another. There are several problems in the development of such a polarity. First, the faith and the state are not always in opposition. Further, the two worlds are not equivalent levels of abstraction. Finally, God is the creator and sustainer of both.

There is a higher level of allegiance for both the Christian soldier and the state. The Christian soldier's allegiance is based on faith in God found objectively in the requirement of Scripture and Christian tradition. The search for higher allegiance on the part of the state--the military--is found in acceptance of the Laws of Land Warfare after the heritage of Just War theory and in quest for
international cooperation through organizations like the United Nations. For both, however, the only final arbiter is the one God who is the ultimate value center, and who exists above both the state and institutional religion.

Below this ultimate level of abstraction, the soldier has to deal with the reality of sin and evil in the world. As a matter of fact, war, the ultimate apocalypse, is his profession. In the face of a system which deals in death and destruction, he is challenged to find trust and humanity. H. Richard Niebuhr in his struggle with World War II sought to find the place of God in the midst of such a holocaust. He warned America of a simplistic approach that aligned God with democracy and the Germans with evil. Indeed, the process of war is essentially evil. It is only in the redemptive and gracious nature of God that one can make sense out of the situation. God judges both sides as he identifies with the ordinary person who is caught up as an innocent victim of hostilities. Niebuhr's judgement on the various positions that allies took is reflected in the following statement.

If we do not reform our war-making as well as our peace-making, our defense of values as well as our aggression, our support of democracy as well as our opposition to totalitarianism, this means that we have excluded some part of life from the reign of God or that we have abandoned monotheism, accepting a double standard and a double deity.

Niebuhr raises question with the entire spectrum of life on
both sides in a conflict. He challenges anyone who would allow personal bias to blind him from his own shortcomings. Indeed, God is not found in the political systems that are locked in war but in the lives of the afflicted.

To recognize God at work in war is to live and act with faith in resurrection. If God were not in the war, life would be miserable indeed. It would mean that the cosmos had no concern with justice. But if God were in the war only as judge, man's misery would be only slightly assuaged since before the judge all are worthy of death, to see God in the war as the vicarious sufferer and redeemer, who is afflicted in all the afflictions of his people, is to find hope along with broken-heartedness in the midst of disaster.

With the elements of the dilemma in mind, how does the Christian deal with the military once he is in? There is nothing intrinsically wrong with military service or being a patriot. We simply cannot separate our lives our national identities. How then does a Christian find a comfortable position that allows him to live honestly as a soldier while retaining his Christian identity? If he is invested in a set of Christian rules in which he feels he should know what he ought to do in every situation, he will find it difficult to adjust to the ambiguities of the real historical situation. For example, the pacifist who is convinced that God forbids him to participate in warfare for any reason has significant problems. He must find ways to reconcile his relationship with God and his duty as a part of the community of man. This is particularly true if his nation is engaged in a struggle that clearly protects it
from tyranny and injustice. On the other hand, if the Christian is committed to an ends or goals approach in which he is searching for the great possibilities to which he can commit his life, he runs the risk of violating the will of the God whom he chooses to serve. For instance, suppose he feels that the goal, God's will, is for America to bring justice and liberty to the world in the form of American democracy. This has all the appearances of a worthy cause. But to what extent is he willing to go to accomplish this mission? Is he to believe that whatever he does to reach his goal is moral behavior? It seems that this is the trap of the Nazi in Germany in World War II. To purify the Fatherland, the leadership could justify genocide. This is a significant problem for any who so commingle religion and the state that they are indistinguishable. It was the danger of the era of Senator McCarthy with its communist witch hunts. Everyone who did not agree with his particular stereotype of an American was considered to be a communist. It was the danger of the Christian missionary movement of the 19th and early 20th Centuries. The propagation of the faith became the propagation of American mores, morals, and ideals. It is the danger of the Moral Majority today in which politicians are required to believe a certain way on key moral and political issues or they become targets of the political right. In each of the above cases, what appears
ultimate to the proponents of the position is in reality penultimate.

An approach that holds promise in overcoming some problems inherent in the deontological and utilitarian polarity is the relational approach of H. Richard Niebuhr. Unlike other systems, Niebuhr is not invested in rules on the one hand or ends on the other. He deals with the response of one person to another in the historical situation. The following analysis of Niebuhr's thought will be applied to the world of the Christian Soldier. The first part of the analysis will establish a basis for measuring both the military professional ethic and the soldier's compliance with the values of that ethic. The second will establish guides for behavior in response to the ultimate value center.

Radical Monotheism A Soldier's Criterion

The American Christian soldier comes from a variety of denominational persuasions. He may come from a highly structured liturgical background or an open and free charismatic experience. His theology may be liberal or conservative. He may have been a part of the tradition that takes to the streets to solve political issues, or he may have come from an extremely patriotic church which displays the flag and sings a nationalistic song at least once during Sunday worship. To say that America is pluralistic in its
religious experience is an understatement. This pluralism obviously makes any uniform critique of military ethics from a Christian position difficult. But uniform critique is not what the situation demands. What exists is the Christian soldier among other soldiers, Christian and non-Christian. This gives the relational approach of H. Richard Niebuhr significant credibility, for he is concerned with the response of man in the given historical situation rather than ideal principles or goals. Soldiers have to make decisions each day that involve conflicting value systems reflecting home, church, the Army, the peer group, and many other sub-systems. Can one find a means in Niebuhr's thought to assist in judging the claims of the Army ethic and provide an adequate Christian response?

Niebuhr deals with this problem by approaching various value systems with reference to a relationship with God. In a fundamental essay, he writes about "The Idea of Radical Monotheism." In this work, he distinguishes between the polytheist who believes in many gods; the henotheist who is "loyal to one god among many," and the monotheist who finds only one God "beyond all the many." In the case of henotheism and polytheism, god (or the gods) is the value center, or cause—whatever the person gives ultimate allegiance to. In the case of radical monotheism, the one God beyond the many is the source of all being and at the same time the ultimate value center.
Polytheism does not figure in this analysis much at all. It usually results when a value center that has been a significant force in the life of a person or a group disintegrates. When the ultimate value center falls apart, the individual or group is left to depend on many different value-centers. A recent example of this was the American scene during the Civil Rights activism of the 1960s and 1970s. The Vietnam War came on the scene as a part of this roiling milieu. About the same time, Americans had a rude awakening when a large minority came to the fore saying that they had not been given their proper place in the pluralistic culture whose myth declared that America is "the land of the free." This land of opportunity, home of the huddled and oppressed masses, was not all she claimed to be. It took the American black man a great deal of noise and activity to be heard, and the process precipitated tragic violence. When he was finally recognized, the black exploded some fundamental myths of American culture and left many people questioning their myth systems. In so doing, he was acting in the spirit of parable, exposing the culture-making seams of myth. Added to this was the Vietnam War which questioned other myths of our culture. We were the invincible representative of democratic life to the world. In carrying out this God-ordained mission, we could not lose. All our motives were pure. The face of war had changed and winning was not measured in acquisition of territory, but in carry-
ing out political objectives of containment and of reinforcing democracy, we felt like we were losing. Many citizens raised question about the political goals that seemed to favor the profits of corporations rather than the good of the Vietnamese people. Television brought the violence of war and the hurts of our soldiers into our living rooms. We further felt the sting of moral indignation when some soldiers in a nondescript place called My-Lai indiscriminately killed innocent women and children. Noble America just does not do such things. This turmoil, reminiscent of the transition from cosmos to chaos in Eliade, caused a period of free-wheeling change. In the rude awakening that followed, many Americans lost their value-centers and experimented with many different ways to find reality, some of them bizarre. The variety of experiences that many Americans experienced as ultimates exemplify polytheisms such as existentialism and Epicureanism for Niebuhr.

Henotheism is most relevant to an examination of the military ethic. It describes a unifying value-center which is loyal to one god among many. This form of faith which Niebuhr calls "social faith" is prevalent in many quarters of our world. It is found in the Church as well as the political arena. Nationalism is an example of this form of faith. Whenever one places his confidence in and actively shows loyalty to his nation as his source of value, his faith is in a henotheistic god. Essentially, the nation
becomes his god. This has significant application for all expressions of military professional ethics. It describes the allegiance to the myths of civil religion outlined above. As Niebuhr observes:

When the patriotic nationalist says "I was born to die for my country"...The national life is for him the reality whence his own life derives its worth. He relies on the nation as source for his own value. He trusts it...in the sense of looking constantly to it as the enduring reality out of which he has issued, into whose ongoing cultural life his own actions and being will merge...His trust may also be directed toward the nation as a power which will supply his needs, care for his children, and protect his life.

As described above, the very existence of the Army is to provide defense for the survival of the nation. However, when this becomes ultimate for the soldier, it is henotheistic.

Nationalism shows its character as a faith whenever national welfare or survival is regarded as the supreme end of life; whenever right and wrong are made dependent on the sovereign will of the nation, however determined; whenever religion and science, education and art, are valued by the measure of their contribution to national existence.

In the examples cited above as representative of military ethical systems, three were so closed that they did not even achieve this level of openness. Only Wakin was able to move beyond the closed system of the military community itself.

In Department of the Army Field Manual 100-1, The Army, the value center for the Army ethic is established in the Constituting events. It includes the principles of loyalty
to the Nation, loyalty to the institution, responsibility, and selfless service. In this ethic, the loyalty to the Army must be penultimate to loyalty to the Nation. But the ethic remains henotheistic because of the ultimacy attributed to the nation. This depends, however, on its expression in the actual situation in life where being confronts being. The existential response may reflect monotheism.

For Niebuhr, Radical Monotheism expresses the reality by which all ethical systems can be measured. Realistically, he feels that this form of faith is more "possibility than actuality." "It is very questionable, despite many protestations to the contrary...that anyone has ever yearned for radical faith in one God." He goes on to observe that we must "try to describe it formally, in abstract form..." But its nature is concrete. It is found in the situations of life, religious, communal, and moral, that confront the individual.

For radical monotheism, the value-center is "the principle of being itself." It does not refer to any one or several of the many, but to "One beyond all the many, whence all the many derive their being, and by participation in which they exist." In the One, the principle of Being, being and value are one.

As faith it is reliance on the source of all being for the significance of the self and of all that exists. It is the assurance that because I am, I am valued, and because you are beloved, and because whatever is has being, therefore it is worthy of love. It is confidence
that whatever is, is good, because it exists as one thing among the many which all have their origin and their being in the One—the principle of being which is the principle of value.

Inherent in the One is not only our existence but our worth as His beings. Our being and our value are realized in Him.

This identification of being and value implies an intrinsic worth of the human being that is an important principle in judging a military ethic and its value system. One of the important values that a commander has along with mission accomplishment is taking care of the soldiers. It is his responsibility to see that soldiers are fed, treated fairly, given productive work, shown respect, and considered when the dangerous mission is conceived. The good leader is concerned for his soldiers. Interestingly enough, this is an unwritten rule and a means to mission accomplishment, both deontological and teleological. In doctrine and in the informal credo by which military leaders live, taking care of the soldier is a norm. On the other hand, if the leader wants the mission accomplished, good leadership theory and management principles tell him that he had best take care of the soldier. Significantly, the soldier himself responds best when he feels that he is treated well because of who he is as a person. The average soldier can spot an insincere leader in a moment. He knows whether he is being treated well by the leader because of duty or mission accomplish-
ment. When human dignity and worth are present, and the soldier is treated as a Thou, the working ethic is consistent with the ultimate value-center.

If we are to use the work of Niebuhr as a paradigm for measuring military ethics, it is necessary to understand his approach to values. For him, value does not exist apart from relationship. Justice, love, loyalty, trust, and human dignity have no reality apart from relationships in an historical situation. That is to say that they do not matter unless they are demonstrated in the encounter of one person by another. If a leader prides himself on being fair to the soldiers yet demonstrates a policy of discrimination based on race, sex, or some other factor, justice does not prevail in the situation. Whether they are universal principles or not, they are not a part of the reality of the moment unless they are operant values. This is based on the union of being and value in the One God, the supreme value-center.

But...value cannot be identified with a certain mode of being or any being considered in isolation, whether it be ideal or actual. Value is present wherever being confronts being wherever there is becoming in the midst of plural, interdependent, and interacting existences. Value is the good-for-ness of being for being in their reciprocity, their animosity, and their mutual aid. Value cannot be defined or intuited in itself for it has no existence in itself; and nothing is valuable in itself, but everything has value, positive or negative, in its relations.

Value is present wherever being confronts being, and it has no existence apart from an interactive relationship. When this occurs, we are in touch with The One who is the center
of value and being, indeed, who is being and value. John spoke of this in his first letter: "No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." (1 John 4:12, NIV) The implications of this are profound. Whether we value honesty, love, or any other value as a rule or as a goal, they cannot be considered apart from our relationship with God and a reciprocal relationship with the other. While one might agree that honesty is a universally right principle and dishonesty or lying universally wrong, they do not become active until they occur in the relational situation. For then, the actor must consider the context and the other actor or actors. For instance, it is good to teach the soldier the absolute value of honesty in all situations. Yet one would not expect him to be honest if he were captured and questioned by the enemy about the location of his unit or some other damaging information. This does not deny the universality or validity of honesty, but it does force a choice based on the relational situation. It is right or wrong, good or bad in the context of relationship. Traditionally, the right has described the deontological system while the good has described the utilitarian. But what is good and right must be considered in some other framework.

For Niebuhr, right or wrong, good or bad must be considered in terms of relationship. He feels that the two do not have to be reduced to one or set up as two independent
principles. "Right means that relation between beings, good-for-each-other, in which their potentiality of being good for each other is realized." In this sense, the measure of honesty, for instance, is its importance in the relationship that exists between two beings. When such truth exists in the relationship between two human beings as beings, it has established its outhness, for:

Even truth carries obligation with it because it is a relation between beings, specifically between persons, who are bound to each other in communication and who owe each other the truth because they are values and disvalues to each other.

The value of this approach can be seen in the typical reaction to the two traditional approaches in day-to-day Army life. When the values are communicated as standards, rules, or guidelines, as what the soldier ought to do, there is occasional skepticism. The response is that the ideals are okay to talk about but that is "not the way it really is." The ideals are frequently either discounted or resisted. The problem is that the standards or rules apply without reference to the dilemmas or value system of the individual soldier. They do not take into account the institutional pressures that soldier or leader face. Nor the real situation that they face in response to the other in the situation. On the other hand, the mission, goal, end can cause many bizarre ethical dilemmas. As an example, consider the captain who felt the pressure of a critical mission in Vietnam. Because a particular vehicle was
necessary for the mission, the commander in frustration told the maintenance sergeant, "I want that vehicle ready, I don't care what you have to do to do it." As a result, the sergeant stole another vehicle for repair parts, and in the end both the commander and the motor sergeant were disciplined. In this case, the mission at any cost did not consider the Thou in the situation, the motor sergeant. Only when the Commander considers the other person in giving orders is he likely to respond in keeping with the ultimate value-center.

Niebuhr's theory implies that the day-to-day situation is answered in the responding and responsive relationship between the captain and the motor sergeant. Honesty becomes something that the leader finds important because of the value of the follower. In turn, the feeling of the follower that he is valued causes positive response in terms of loyalty, confidence, honesty and other important values consistent with the Center of Value. This approach led Niebuhr to teach about the Responsible Self which is the thrust of his ethics, and to which we now turn.

The Responsible Self Guide for Behavior

Against the background of traditional ethics, Niebuhr asserts that "something more and something different needs to be thought and done in our quest for the truth about ourselves and in our quest for true existence." His answer
is to turn to responsibility as an alternative. In this symbol, Niebuhr finds:

An alternative or an additional way of conceiving and defining this existence of ours that is the material of our own actions. What is implicit in the idea of responsibility is the image of man-the-answerer, man engaged in dialogue, man acting in response to action upon him.

Niebuhr considers this ethic of responsibility as an alternative or additional way of looking at the world of relationships that defines our existence. He does not see this as an absolutely new way of understanding man's ethical life. But in speaking of responsibility, he outlines the value that he finds in the approach.

The approach to our moral existence as selves, and to our existence as Christians in particular, with the aid of this idea makes some of our life as agents intelligible in a way that teleology and deontology of traditional thought cannot do.

His approach to ethics is necessary as far as he is concerned because of changes in our society. Whereas once man could be satisfied with the approach of man-the-maker exemplified by the utilitarian, or with the image of man-the-citizen exemplified by man living under the law, the deontologist, now new interactional patterns of thought are more prevalent. The notion of responsibility expresses these new patterns of our world more adequately, though Niebuhr does not want to replace the older images which still retain some of their usefulness. In searching for the
helpful response to life, responsibility:

Proceeds in every moment of decision and choice to inquire: 'What is going on?...' for the ethics of responsibility the fitting action, the one that fits into a total interaction as response and as anticipation of further response, is alone conducive to the good and alone is the right.

In interpreting this with reference to current speculation about the battlefield of the future, an interesting observation falls out. It is remarkably analogous to the reasons that Niebuhr gives for his ethic of responsibility. Technology and increasingly complex and lethal weapons will challenge traditional securities that have allowed chivalric notions to command behavior on the battlefield.

One almost has to be a devotee of Hobbes in the face of the cataclysmic events that might occur. This is true of the national leaders who have to make the crucial decisions about the use of nuclear weapons. It is true of the soldier who has to make battlefield decisions. The speed and violence of the battlefield; the disrupted communications that isolate soldiers; widely dispersed units that will call for independent actions on the part of the soldier and small unit leader; all bring the challenge of split-second life and death decisions on the part of the soldier. The soldier's ethic must be one that prepares him to face the situation, and the emerging relationships, while retaining connection with the ultimate value system. With such significant changes, many of which have never been confronted on
any battlefield, the stakes are high. Either he can depend on taught or internalized rules or goals to hold sway, or he will have to depend on people interacting with people to make responsible decisions in critical situations.

Obviously, time does not allow the individual soldier to make a significant decision every time he encounters the enemy. As a matter of fact, eye-to-eye encounter will be at a minimum on the next battlefield. The range of normal ground engagements are beyond hand-to-hand distances for the most part. However, when soldier meets soldier, the Army cannot afford a soldier who thinks too much, for his task is to render the enemy ineffective by killing him if necessary.

The rules of war are informative at this point. They provide for acceptable and honorable behavior in the waging of combat hostilities. As long as the soldier does not participate in illegal activity, the killing of the enemy is acceptable behavior. He need not stop and think about it. Hopefully, he has thoroughly considered what he would do prior to combat engagement. This precondition engages when he identifies the target as the enemy. His moral sensors still have to be engaged, even subconsciously, when he must distinguish between the enemy, the friendly soldier, the civilian, or the non-combatant.

While this meeting is rather impersonal, the soldier who encounters the combat situation in relationship is still meeting the other. As long as he makes the moral decision
based on what is acceptable and responsible with reference to the other person, he is participating in the present. His actions are not determined wholly by past rules, or future consequences. The hope of the battlefield is the soldier who, through respect for the other, retains a sense of responsibility in the patently absurd and illogical situation of war. It is the responsible soldier who lives by the spirit of the Army Field Manual which is:

...inspired by the desire to diminish the levels of war by:
   a. Protecting both combatants and noncombatants from unnecessary suffering;
   b. Safeguarding certain fundamental human rights of persons who fall into the hands of the enemy, particularly prisoners of war, the wounded and sick, and civilians; and
   c. Facilitating the restoration of peace.

This inspirational code of ethics articulates the required behavior of the soldier in response to the universal principles of conduct in war. It requires an ability to retain balance and reason while acting as a responsible person in the historical situation. Niebuhr proposes a theory of responsible behavior by relating four elements.

The first element is "the idea of response. All action...is response to action upon us." In terms of the individual soldier, response is to the contingencies of war. In the tunnel of war that takes an otherwise peaceful person from constructive activity in the community, the ultimate moral decisions of mankind take place. The soldier experi-
ences moral obligation for the other because he has the life of his buddy in his hands. He faces critical decisions that affect the lives of innocent civilians or disarmed prisoners of war. He deals daily with other unit members upon whom he depends for his survival and to whom he responds as family. His actions in response to these and a multitude of other situations are moral only insofar as they are interpreted as having meaning.

This interpretative process is the second element in responsibility. Niebuhr uses both individual and corporate illustrations of interpretation, from the way in which the United States closely interprets the actions of the Soviet Union and vice versa, to the mutual response of mother and child as individuals. In both cases, our reactions are based on how we interpret the actions of the other. For instance, if the United States perceives that she cannot trust Russian arms control promises, foreign policy will be wary of any compromise in the negotiating process.

In the case of the soldier in the unit family, interpretation proceeds all the time as he determines the depth of his relationships and the trustworthiness of other soldiers. The response that begins the process of cohesiveness, so critical to the effective unit, is based first on an interpretation that the unit is worth belonging to.

The third element in responsibility is accountability. Our actions are responsible in the context of meanings of
interactions as a whole. As the soldier responds to other unit members and interprets the situation as worthy of his allegiance, he and the other soldiers will begin to move toward a more predictable response pattern. In the stage of accountability, the individual becomes accountable, not only for his immediate response, but for the predictability of future responses. In the case of the soldier who gains the trust of his associates, many combat, life-threatening actions may be placed in his hands. Others trust him with their lives because they have developed faith in his responses. Niebuhr analyzes accountability with reference to political actions but it can be applied to response in the military situation:

A political action, in this sense, is responsible not only when it is responsive to a prior deed but when it is so made that the agent anticipates the reactions to his action. So considered, no action taken as an atomic unit is responsible. Responsibility lies in the agent who stays with his action, who accepts the consequences in the form of reactions and looks forward in a present deed to the continued interaction.

The fourth element of responsibility is social solidarity. Responsible action is a prima facie expression in and of community. One of the key observations of unit life in the Army is the desirability of cohesion among the unit members. Decisions that affect one, affect all. The constant interaction at every level can produce the moral climate called for in the national culture and may possibly be in consonance with the ultimate value-center.
Response, interpretation, accountability, and social solidarity form the notion of responsibility in the living situation. It could provide a model for decisions in the military, but to this point, it is the personal relationship between individuals. Niebuhr goes a step further and describes the relationship to outside entities. Man exists in a triadic relationship, one person interacting with another and the two of them in relationship to the world at large individually and collectively. These triadic relationships are dialectical in the sense that the "I" is in a position of responding to collective forces which generate beyond the control of any one "I."

The one of these triadic relationships that has particular interest to the military ethic is one in which the I-Thou relationship considering a third entity, cause. Referring to Josiah Royce, Niebuhr says that:

He sought to understand the moral life as primarily an affair of loyalty, a notion closely related to our notion of responsibility. Instead of thinking of man as realizer of ideals or as obedient to laws he saw him as one who comes to selfhood by committing himself to a cause. When a person is able to say 'For this cause was I born and therefore came into the world,' he has arrived at mature selfhood.

25

Such a loyalist has a double bond, one to the cause, and one to his fellow loyalists.

So the soldier's loyalty is an affair of faithfulness to his fellow soldiers, and to the cause, never to one of them alone...The patriot is related to his country as the cause and to his fellow citizens. He responds to the actions of his fellow citizens, their calls upon
him for service, their criticisms, their praises, their approvals and disapprovals, as one who is also engaged in dialogue with his nation and looks to it, or its representatives, for ultimate praise or blame.

26

It is at this point that the above discussion of national myth and civil religion as the final basis for the military ethic is pertinent. The soldier is in the service of his nation in relation to other soldiers. In serving the nation, he is serving a community, all his fellow citizens. He is part of a long tradition of men and women who have died for their country. His heritage includes those who were statesmen as well as soldiers. His Commanders-in-chief have formed a long line of leaders involved in the ups and downs of war and peace. All these are part of the American community and its cause. When they make reference to something beyond themselves, it is in the language of cause.

"That cause, when analyzed, always shows again the double character of being something personal and something that transcends the person." 27 The soldier is responsive to his fellow soldiers and citizens, but he is also responsive to a "transcendent reference group and thereby achieves a relative independence from his immediate associates." 28 In these relationships, he is both responsive and accountable. At this point, this ethical response has the chance of rising above henotheism. For this transcendent reference group, the founding fathers and those representatives from the present "refer beyond themselves." Niebuhr observes:

29
They are persons who stand for something and represent something. They represent not the community only but what the community stands for. Ultimately we arrive in the case of democracy at a community which refers beyond itself to humanity and which in doing so seems to envisage not only representatives of the human community as such but a universal society and a universal generalized other, Nature and Nature's God.

Niebuhr, then, establishes a basis for overcoming the closed nationalistic system. The hope is in creating responsive, responsible soldiers who serve their unit, their country, but more, who have a vision for the universal society. If the Army is to build units who can truly represent our Nation and the hopes and dreams of its people, past, present, and future, then we need to be concerned with more than just getting our soldiers ready to accomplish the mission, limited as it might be. We need somehow to relate them to the proud heritage of soldiers who have fought with courage. We need to connect them with our nation and its myths, the stories of the founding fathers and the significance of the constituting documents, so that they know something of the value of those who drafted the Declaration of Independence as "representatives who act as accountable for their actions, who make their statement out of a 'decent respect for the opinions of mankind.'" these representatives understand "mankind" to refer to "an ultimate community in which all men are equal and are related..."to the Supreme judge of the world."

For Niebuhr, "the responsible self is driven as it were
by the movement of the social process to respond and be accountable in nothing less than a universal community."

For the monotheist, life is a "life of responsibility in universal community."

Niebuhr's understanding of God as the supreme value center and his ethic of the responsible self have been examined to provide the soldier a framework to deal with the tension produced by being a person of faith living and working in the Army. The next chapter examines some writings of General Omar Bradley, one of the heroes of World War II and a distinguished soldier and person. In examining his approach to the military, clues are sought to assist in resolving the role of the Christian vis-a-vis the military ethic.
CHAPTER III

THE TOTAL SOLDIER,
RESPONSIBLE TO GOD AND STATE

Introduction

My beloved father was gone; I was but a few days short of fifteen. He left no estate...But he left me with a priceless legacy. Thanks to father, I was determined, no matter how poor we might be, to continue my education all the way through college; to make something of myself; not to squander my time or intellectual gifts; to work hard. He had given me much else as well...A sense of justice and respect for my fellow man and his property, especially the less fortunate. Integrity. Sobriety. Patriotism. Religiosity. No son could have asked more of his father, nor been more grateful for his example.

These words describe the heritage of one of the great soldiers in American history, General of the Army Omar N. Bradley. These basic values are characteristic of many born in the midwestern part of the United States. General Bradley, born in Missouri in 1893, describes his background as poor, but obviously he was rich in other ways. The loving relationships in his home, his love for education, and sound values were far more lasting than financial concerns. Bradley spent much time with his father who taught him to hunt and to read. His parents did not make a public show of their religious faith, but the General observed that they were "Clearly devout and their faith was
strong. They lived a Christian life in every sense of the phrase, and by their example imparted a strong faith to me." His father was a respected member of the community, and through his influence, he probably foreshadowed Omar's greatness. The Higbee Weekly News published this upon his father's death:

No better citizen ever lived among us. He was absolutely honest in all things with himself and with those with whom he came in contact and was for anything and everything that tended to elevate humanity. The world is better for him having lived in it.

From these modest roots, Bradley grew to be recognized as one of the greatest tactical minds the United States Army has seen. Though he was a great leader who could make the tough decisions, his mild manner led to his image as the "soldier's" general in World War II. He carried the legacy of Missouri into the later years of his life. He represents many soldiers who served honorably in all ranks throughout United States history. He was concerned for people, and he was honest. While not overtly religious, he was deeply religious. This fact makes him an ideal person to speak to the ethic of the soldier, and yet his openness to ultimate values enables him to speak to the values that lie in the Being above every being.

First, Bradley will be examined as an American soldier, then as a soldier with a universal vision. Based on this, and H.R. Niebuhr's relational approach to ethics, a theory
of ethical leadership will be considered.

Omar Bradley, American Soldier

Omar Bradley epitomized the American soldier. He was a patriot who lived out the myth of the ordinary man from rural America who rose to fame. He was not the superstar but the man next door who responded to the call of his nation with determination and vision. He participated in a paradigm firmly rooted in the national culture, the citizen soldier who is willing to sacrifice for the preservation of the American way of life. In the process, he became a hero of American civil religion. He was a son of America just as those he described in an article written while he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

The soldiers and the sailors and the airmen are not born in uniform. They come from civilian origins...The character of our civilian society will in a large degree determine the character of our fighting forces. We are fortunate that our civilian society is so rich in the development of personal inventiveness and initiative... We are not a nation of a dominant few and a suppressed many. Every American has almost limitless opportunities for leadership.

General Bradley did not separate the civilian world from the military in any ultimate sense. For him they were but two functions, two expressions, of the same society. Both are firmly rooted in the national culture and articulated in its civil religion. The worker on the assembly line is as important as the soldier in the foxhole. The worker in the civilian world is asked to recognize and appreciate the
supreme sacrifice of his military counterpart. Speaking to wartime graduates at the U.S. Military Academy in 1945, Bradley said of D-Day that "this was not an army, not a navy, but a nation sailing to war. Our ships were filled with the achievements and hopes of the American people." He was counseling these future military leaders to appreciate the total national community from whence the Army comes and to whom it owes allegiance. In a sense, he was espousing a fundamental tenet of the civil religion. The nation was threatened by a common enemy who represented suppression of freedoms and violation of human dignity. The Army was called to lead in battle against this threat to the peace of mankind, the preservation of which is another of the basic principles of our national character.

These leaders, citizen-soldiers, assembly line workers, entertainers, and politicians were ordinary people carrying out the messianic mission mentioned above (Chapter I). Bradley characterized the high purpose of the American cause when he said: "I am convinced that America can, by her example, her strength, her determination and her help, lead the world to peace." This missionary effort of America on the part of the rest of the free world reminds one of the magnitude of Armageddon. For "With civilization itself in the balance, we must not fail, with the help of God, we will not fail." Such a great mission calls for valorous sacrifice. For Bradley, every soldier who would be an effective
soldier must dedicate his life to his country and its principles. In a radio address on the Veterans of Foreign Wars "Medal of Honor" Series, he characterized the service of these patriots as showing:

The spirit which impels Americans to scale the heights of courage and strength...their sacrifices were made not only for America and Americans. They gave their lives for all free people who have united to resist aggression.

Bradley saw America as pivotal on the world scene. Ours is a world calling. We have a sacred obligation to protect the principles of our constituting documents which incarnate the unique experience of democracy as a real possibility in the world of human beings. If we as a nation are faithful to the cause and continue to pursue the promise of government by the people, God will bless our efforts. Further, we will make such an experience possible for other citizens of our world community. But we are the focal point in history for this experiment. In order to carry out such a solemn calling, Bradley calls for us to be good citizens who take seriously our obligations and freely pay the cost of our blessings. In addressing this cost, he proclaimed that:

A nation's strength is not to be found in its treasury statements. It lies instead in the national character of its people, in their willingness to sacrifice leisure, comfort, and a share of their talents for the welfare of the nation of which they are a part.

The message is that freedom costs. The freedoms of press,
religion, speech, and others have, on occasion, called for the supreme sacrifice. Usually this sacrifice is borne by the soldier on the field of battle, but Bradley in his insistence that nations go to war, called for sacrifice on the part of all the citizenry:

Self-government is not a luxury on which men may grow fat and indulgent. Rather it is an instrument by which men can—if they have the wisdom—safeguard their individual freedom and employ that freedom in pursuit of happiness and fair reward for their ingenuity, labor, and intellect. Because self-government is an instrument which demands unceasingly the services, the energies, the participation of those who would benefit by it, self-government is weighted as heavily with obligation as it is with privilege. 10

Being a soldier is an obligation of citizenship, necessary because it protects the freedoms that we all enjoy. The soldier's raison d'être in our Democratic society is to protect our existence. But to do this in keeping with the principles of our origins, our national character, our involvement as citizens must be voluntary. While we might draft men and women from the civilian populace during times of national crisis, it is imperative for our way of life that these people choose to serve in an emotional sense.

Bradley reflected the nature of this voluntary involvement when he answered correspondent Charles Collingswood's question about the immediate past and its influence on "a whole new relationship between the citizen and his country." Bradley said:

Sometimes we have behaved as though freedom was a gift to us, a special prize given a man for his
distinguished achievement in having been born an American.

We have had a kind of feeling in our bones that Providence had some special interest in the survival of Americans.

...Every man, woman and child in America must reestimate, now, his whole attitude toward his country, and his plans for his future. He must reexamine the purpose of his life, and realize that his personal interest no longer comes first.

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In these words, Bradley is calling for conscious choice to act out the implications of citizenship. He is speaking of the relationship of the American citizen to his country. "Democracy is not a free ride...Instead of asking 'What's in it for me?', he had better ask, 'What can I do for my country?'" Implicit in Bradley's words, is a form of social relationship based not on contract, but on community. This has significant implications for the military.

This concept was referred to earlier in Sellers' analysis of Montesquieu's notion of la vertu as the "willed initiative" on the part of the citizen. Bellah refers to Sellers and expands by asserting further that "A republic will stand only so long as its citizens love it." For Bellah, this must lead to the individual's voluntary participation in community.

Niebuhr approaches the same concern from a different direction as he deals with the social nature of selfhood. In establishing the primary basis for establishing a society, he declares that:
The fundamental form of human association...is not that contract society into which men enter as atomic individuals, making partial commitments to each other for the sake of gaining limited common ends or of maintaining certain laws; it is rather the face-to-face community in which unlimited commitments are the rule and in which every aspect of every self's existence is conditioned by membership in the interpersonal group.

This emphasis on the organic relationships in community adds significant dimension to the military ethic. It is imperative that military units be bonded together as closely-knit teams. Leaders who like to feel that they can control their total environment are frustrated with any situation that does not lend itself to cause and effect. Effective leaders in the military culture must respond to their soldiers with respect for their dignity and with appreciation for their choice to serve.

Unfortunately, there have been times when the Army has misunderstood this "community by choice." Notably, in recent years, the attempts at making the services more attractive have drifted toward material concerns. Some in Congress have felt that total compensation figures are more important than closed benefits such as Post Exchanges, Commissaries, and other special privileges. But the attempt to recruit under the All-Volunteer Army concept is probably more to the point here. Because of the demand to fill the force, while depending on volunteers, the pressure to produce is high. Slick, high quality advertisement offers a place where the potential soldier can "be all" that he "can be." It is the
atomic approach mentioned by Niebuhr in which the individual as one person is appealed to on grounds of personal gain and the opportunity to serve. In order to do so, the document that consumes the time in the recruiting process is the contract that the soldier is making with the Army. If this contract is violated by some error on the part of the recruiter, the soldier has the option to get out of the service. Of secondary importance is the oath. As a matter of fact, it is perfunctory at times and done without much thought. It signals an ethos that is more contract than community. First of all this is a violation of our national character in which community is important. Secondly, it establishes an environment that is dysfunctional to the acceptance of military values that violate personal values. If, for instance, a battlefield situation calls for sacrifice, it must be a voluntary offering on the part of the soldier. If personal interest is strongly present, there may be hesitation or second thoughts rather than action. However, it would be simplistic to think that the situation could be solved so quickly by each soldier taking his oath seriously, or by teaching him military values.

Bradley cherished freedom as a fundamental element of the American dream. But freedom is not separated from personhood. The value of the individual is fundamental to the American heritage. The soldier's inherent worth is thereby an integral principle of the military ethic which
expresses that heritage. Being and value are one in this notion. In an address in 1950, Bradley made a most basic statement about the nature of our society and by extension to the nature of the military itself. "Our society holds the individual and his freedom as an end in itself. This appeal to mankind is the most contagious and compelling idea in all history." Applying this to the Army, Bradley is saying that the soldier must always be held in the highest esteem, and, it must be noted, he must be accepted as a full partner in the military community if he is true to its professional values. For the soldier, it says that in our minds we must always hold the individual in highest esteem.

In considering Omar Bradley as the American soldier, there are several implications that must inform the military ethic. First, the soldier must be committed to the Nation. His belief in and his love for his nation allows him to freely serve. Secondly, the military is involved in more than a rationalistic and utilitarian mission. It has a classical messianic mission to the world at large, based on the larger leadership of America in the world. The ultimate significance of this mission compels the Army to maintain the most impeccable moral standards. Each soldier at the most basic level of the Army must be prepared mentally, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and psychologically to model justice and respect for human dignity to friend and foe alike. Third, the importance of the American citizen as
soldier who comes from the heartland of America and exemplifies the national character and the American civil religion cannot be overestimated. He must understand the military as an integral part of the larger culture with the mission of assisting the Nation to defend itself, its liberties, and the liberties of the free world. This citizen soldier considers the oath more seriously than the contract as he commits himself in sincere community to the people about him. Finally, Bradley proclaimed the individual and his freedom, being and value, as an end in itself. This is the genius of the American democratic republic. But this presents a problem for the person of faith whose highest good is God. This transcendental dimension is the subject of the following discussion with Bradley assessed as the universal soldier.

Omar Bradley, Universal Soldier

Omar Bradley came from the conservative religious background of rural Missouri. These roots stuck with him throughout his years as a soldier and as a caring human being. Like his parents, he did not measure profound religious faith in terms of active Church attendance. His characterization of his parents deeply religious nature had to do with the way in which they lived. Bradley observed the contrasting styles of the Communist and American systems, and expressed his appreciation for his fundamental spiritual heritage in the following words:
Our enemy has faith in things material. I do not hesitate to say, as a soldier, that we must have faith in things spiritual. That faith diminishes physical hardships and enhances physical valor. It can—and, I am sure, will—shorten our trial and speed our triumph.

In thinking about faith in this context, Niebuhr points us to the One who is the value-center for all the universe. He is the One who is Being and to whom all other value centers are subordinate. An examination of Christian Scriptures in this light uncovers significant relationships to the Christian faith, for Jesus resisted henotheistic goals. People wanted to make him a king in an earthly sense which would set him up as an end short of Being itself. In John 6:15, "Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again into the hills by himself." Had Jesus allowed himself this luxury, he would not have pointed to his Father as the center of all being, but to himself. He would have contradicted the reason for his coming in the first place, to bring people into wholeness in the presence of the One God.

Speaking of this kingdom, Jesus was clear that the kingdom was not meant to be established in the physical world of the present. John records Jesus saying "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." (John 18:36) While this is the case, there is a distinct strain of the immediate presence of the
same kingdom. "The kingdom of God does not come visibly, nor will people say 'Here it is,' or There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21) What is the significance of this paradox? In the current context, it seems reasonable to interpret this to mean that our ultimate value center, Being itself, must rest above and outside any other value centers in this world. At the same time, it seems to be saying that while all of this kingdom is so far removed from the henotheistic value centers of the world, it is imminent every time a person is present with the possibility of God within. When that is the case, the being is connected with Being itself and the result is a significant response to the other beings in the sphere of influence.

One would be hard pressed to count the number of times that soldiers in battle have uttered the words "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven." Certainly, no battlefield in the history of our Nation has ever heard the noise of battle without these words superimposed across it with varying degrees of intensity. The words cover the totality of the kingship of God. He is indeed the king of heaven and earth, of all there is. God is present on that battlefield. In the midst of the chaos and turmoil, God may be found in the faces of the soldier's enemies as well as his comrades.

This kingdom is a place of peace. But peace does not lie outside of relationship with God or our neighbor. Peace
is the inner quality of man that can integrate him into the ultimate value center and could well make him a much fiercer warrior for he is whole and feels strongly about his cause. Peace helps the soldier in periods of intense ambiguity as it connects him with the source of peace and being and it guides him in his daily experience.

The ideal is that henotheism in this world will one day go away and be superseded by the one ultimate value center. The reporter of Revelation records a vision of the ultimate victory from which all being derives and within which all in the heavens and on the earth become one: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)

To speak in the tongues of sectarian faith, is to run the risk of henotheism. God's sovereignty is greater than our perceptions of Him. He is bigger than our wildest imaginings about Him, and our language tends to limit Him even though we are honestly trying to capture His essence. What we really capture is our own experience of Him which is valid, and valuable, but limited. The real possibility is that His being unfolds dynamically as He relates to the world.

The spiritual longings of the people of faith, the people of the world, and the soldiers of the world are one. The kingdom spoken of in the passages above is not only the vision of the Christian, it is the desire of anyone who
treats his fellow man with respect or wants peace on the earth. Speaking of revelatory events in which God speaks to men, Niebuhr says that they:

Did not occur in a peculiarly religious sphere of human action and interest. The events were not mystic visions or ecstatic experiences in which men were transported out of their daily world; they were not answers to human cries for help directed to supernatural powers; they were not peculiarly encounters with the holy. The revelatory moments occurred in the midst of political struggles, of national and cultural crises.

In these revelatory events, the sacred and the profane become one. When this occurs, integration of being with Being is happening. The self must be, and is, one self, with its many environmental systems, perspectives, and responses.

In religious language, the soul and God belong together; or otherwise stated, I am one within myself as I encounter the One in all that acts upon me. When my world is divided into two domains, the natural and the supernatural, or the physical and the spiritual, or the secular and religious... then I have two selves.

There world is divided in many ways today. There are divided political loyalties, national loyalties, Church loyalties, and even varying personal loyalties with friends. But the more one acknowledges:

That whatever acts upon me, in whatever domain of being, is part of, or participates in, one ultimate action, then though I understand nothing else about the ultimate action, yet I am now one.

It is in responding always to the ultimate value-center that one finds integrity in his own being.

This demands of the Christian soldier openness toward
many approaches to the faith. A closed stance towards a sincere person, who is honestly searching for guidance from God, the one source of being, is not in keeping with the needs of the military ethic, nor is it consistent with the notion of grace and unconditional acceptance characteristic of the love which Jesus represented.

Reminiscent of the origins of our nation as a new frontier of freedom where the oppressed peoples of Europe could find a haven, Bradley signals a new world order. In an address to the World Peace Dinner at Birmingham, Alabama, General Bradley characterized the quality of the American dream:

Until the liberty and dignity of the individual everywhere are respected and safeguarded, we shall have a formidable barrier to the attainment of sound and lasting peace. Any permanent solution to the problems of the world must necessarily be based upon the free will of the people; it cannot be based upon the sacrifice of basic human rights.

Planet Earth is now a world community in which the problems of one nation are the problems of another. The problems of one man are the problem of another. In dealing with these problems, Bradley clearly identified the weakness of espousing ideals or goals as a means of helping this world community. The only way for significant assistance is in response to the situation as men become responsible for one another.

In a landmark address to the Annual Jewish Committee,
General Bradley outlined the stance of the military and our Nation to this new world order. Just as this calls for integrity on the part of the individual, it calls for integrity on the part of a nation:

Where government is responsive to the will of its people, the integrity of that government in its relationships with other states will reflect the moral maturity of its people in their regard for the human rights of each other.

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If America is to take her proper place in the court of nations, its behavior becomes important, both individually and corporately. Bradley establishes a cause and effect relationship between the integrity of the nation and the "moral maturity" of its people. The implication is that the military as it fulfills its mission must reflect moral maturity, specifically in the way it treats its own members, but equally in the way in which it treats others, allies and enemies. Anything less violates the standards for which this nation stands. Bradley observes:

We are compelled to ask whether a government can respect the rights and prerogatives of other governments when it trespasses on the rights of its peoples at home. An enduring peace can be nothing less than an accord which places human welfare before even national sovereignty. And it cannot be assured until governments reflect the good will of their people and until their people show honest respect for the human rights of each other.

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This is Bradley at his finest, and it is Bradley at his most universal. Human welfare is more fundamental than national sovereignty. This is a soldier, soon to be the highest
ranking soldier in the Army. The soldier derives his existence from the nation, and he is placing that sovereignty in a subordinate position to human welfare. What are the implications of this universal relationship for the soldier?

Bradley establishes the position of the Armed Forces with reference to this universal position.

In this revolutionary age, we have no assurance of the eventual triumph of human rights over the absolutism of the state. We cannot afford to be less vigilant in safeguarding the liberties of all free people than we are in protecting our own....It is the Armed Forces to whom the American people have entrusted their safekeeping. And it is these Armed Forces who today patrol the world representing the strength of this nation in defense of justice and human rights.

Soldiers have the mission of protecting the principles of justice and human rights even as they live by them. What does this say about the makeup of the Army? Bradley answers that soldiers have to be given the maximum amount of freedom "within the limits of authority required for the performance of their mission." For Bradley, the universal soldier, a democratic army is necessary:

Our free democratic traditions of equal opportunity, civil rights and the freedom of the individual to assert himself against institutions, is too strongly implanted in our young men to warrant anything but a democratic army...Our best chance for the realization of an army that will mirror this tradition of human rights, lies in the recruitment of officers and men whose intelligence and integrity assure respect for the dignity of the men with whom they work.

This democratic army must inform the character of the military ethic. Since the society is rooted in justice and
human dignity, these principles must constitute the fabric of the ethic itself. In order to keep these principles from becoming ideals apart from relationship, Bradley expressed the importance of brotherhood:

Our hope for peace is founded upon a conviction that the free peoples of this world want justice in their relationships with each other. It is founded upon a conviction that nations will renounce force, that they will arbitrate their differences in an atmosphere where the human rights of free people are inviolate. These convictions derive their strength from the hope that man is at last ready for the brotherhood of man. For in the evolution of our Western Civilization, we have progressed to the edge of a new world where the dignity and welfare of the individual takes precedence over property rights and national aspirations.

Again, Bradley echoes an evolutionary theme of a new world in which the person, being, is superordinate to the parochial henotheism of national interest.

Some of the teachings from General Bradley's heritage have been examined; the unity of the sacred and profane in the world of the soldier has been observed; and the new order based on the principle of brotherhood has been articulated. The relational principles of justice and human dignity, lived out in responsiveness in the situation in life, taking precedence over national interests, have emerged in the universal Bradley. Next the citizen soldier and the universal soldier are merged as the implications for the Army ethic are discussed with reference to Bradley the total soldier.
Omar Bradley, Total Soldier

A democratic society requires, and depends on, superior leadership for its armed forces. This is true for several reasons. The Army is a culture of citizen soldiers living and working as a microcosm of society. As such, these men and women expect good reasons for departure from principles of fairness and respect for human dignity. They can tolerate it if they think it is necessary, but they will question it. Further, American society is innately distrustful of the military establishment. Bradley observes:

By reason of their distrust of the military system, Americans have strongly resisted the growth of an old-world type of military caste. Because such a system would be out of keeping with our democratic government, it is fortunate for the Nation that their vigilance has produced a democratic army.

The tremendous power placed in the hands of military people can threaten the future of peaceful community in the world, indeed, its very survival. Because of such power, it is imperative to have moral people at the helm—realists, yes! Militarists, no!

For these reasons and others, there is a demand for soldiers and leaders with initiative, who have the ability to think and make independent decisions if the situation demands it. The following proposal is a model of wholistic leadership in which relationally whole leaders lead relationally whole soldiers in accomplishing military missions that enhance the prospect of justice and human dignity.
The whole leader is prepared to accomplish his mission, which should always be in consonance with, and behaviorally consistent with, justice and human dignity. There are a number of dimensions of preparedness for which the leader can work.

He needs to be technically prepared to do his job. If his soldiers do not feel that he is competent, they will have a difficult time trusting him. The same is true if he is not prepared for the tactical situation on the battlefield. His soldiers expect him to have good judgment, know his enemy, know what his commander thinks. If he does not, they will hesitate to go into battle with him.

The leader needs to be psychologically prepared for the possibility of war, in order to take care of his soldiers in the midst of the shock, noise, confusion, injury, and death of battle. If he is not ready himself, and has not prepared his soldiers, the unit may lose critical time adjusting. Those precious moments could mean the difference between life and death.

The leader needs to be physically prepared. War is demanding on the stamina and resistance. If leader and soldier are not ready for long periods of movement, sleep loss, constant fatigue, and stress, they will weaken and become casualties in the stress of continuous operations. The leader needs to be mentally prepared. In this realm, the leader develops judgment and perspective that brings
moral sensitivity to bear on day-to-day situations.

The leader must also be spiritually prepared. This means that he has appreciation for his own humanity enough to have confidence in his gifts and realism about his weaknesses. He realizes that his present and future are in God's hands, which gives him a strong sense of personal identity. He has a strong sense of integrity that weighs the mission using the scales of justice and human dignity. In all of these, relationship is critical, for whatever the soldier or leader does, he does in relationship to God and with concern for its human impact.

The ethic that can support these conditions in our democratic culture must be transparent, democratic, and relational. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

The transparent military ethic is open to the ultimate value center which is Being itself. Complete transparency is a situation in which the national value center is one with Being itself. National sovereignty is closely aligned with the sovereignty of God. Transparency is finding the universal in the particular. While it is an ideal, the desirable military ethic is as transparent as possible. In the transparent situation, national values always refer beyond themselves to Being itself. Further, values always have a referent in being in the actual life situation.

Transparency does not necessarily refer to an established religious community. Niebuhr characterizes the
religious nature of the state as follows:

One thing that gives Western politics its character is the presence in it of a ferment of monotheist conviction and a constant struggle of universal with particularist faith. National faith is forever being qualified by monotheism.

This religious sentiment occurs in daily relational encounters in which individual values are transparent to universal values, and to Being itself. Transparency occurs when one soldier sees another in distress and responds to assist. A caring relationship will cause one to leave a relatively safe haven, expose himself to extremely hazardous conditions, and risk his life for his brother. It occurs when a commander encounters a soldier in legal trouble and out of belief in him responds by going the extra mile to uncover some obscure but conclusive circumstances that prove him innocent. In these situations and an infinite number of others, transparency honors the human being, created in God's image, in the midst of the ambiguities of life.

The military ethic should be a democratic ethic. In reflecting on the constituting events, Bellah finds a democratic norm for American civil religion expressed in the words "All men are created equal." Likewise, Bradley felt very strongly about the notions of justice and human dignity as the bedrock of a democratic ethic.

The democratic ethic suggests freedom for the individual to act with initiative and imagination. Without the
background of hundreds of years of autocracy or monarchy, the American lacks a mindset of absolute obedience that can result from such an ethos. On the one hand, this makes it more difficult to exact unquestioned obedience from the American soldier; but on the other hand, he feels freer to innovate and create within proper guidelines. Bradley addressed this in his *Reader's Digest* article:

Our fighting forces reflect that spirit of America—and should reflect it more. Officers train their men not only to obey but to be able to initiate action for themselves in those confused moments of emergency that occur so often in battle. Americans are already the world's most individualized fighting men. They display astonishing resourcefulness in the face of crisis.

32 To have soldiers ready to fight in cohesive, well-trained units, the ideal is interdependence between soldiers and their leaders. Interdependence is a choice on the part of the soldier. Usually, the soldier is to some degree dependent when he first enters the service. The process of initial entry training fosters this dependency and sends a new soldier to his unit less than prepared. One of the early problems in the first unit is living in the more independent and unstructured environment. In order to get soldiers and leaders who are interdependent, the leader must follow a developmental sequence. Dependence is not a positive choice. Independence and interdependence are. In order to get to interdependence, the person must first move into independence. This is the place where he gains the
necessary self-esteem and confidence that will risk interdependence in relationship.

Another facet of the democratic ethic is its requirement for voluntary participation. It might be argued that a draftee is not a volunteer. Further, it might be argued that a person who comes into the Army today is coming in for the pay and upward mobility. Whatever the case, for the soldier to become a productive member of the unit, there must be a conversion experience where he turns to becoming a self among other selves, and chooses to live and work as a team member with them.

One last word needs to be said about the democratic nature of the military ethic. It should have a clear statement of the relationship of the Army to the larger society. Civilian control of the military is a time honored and prudent doctrine in American life. It arises from the distrust mentioned earlier. But it also reflects an Army built on the citizen soldier. However, there are some like General Maxwell Taylor who see very little interaction between civilian and military thinking.

The final dimension necessary is that the proposed ethic be a relational ethic. The ethic should not be just the proclaiming of certain virtues for the person to live by, nor should it be aimed alone at goals or ends such as the mission. The ethic should promote significant relationships between unit members so that they make their
moral decisions in context with due consideration to impact on other persons. In his collected speeches, Bradley routinely connects values with reciprocal relationship.

The nature of this relational ethic is clearly stated in the two great commandments of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. In responding to a lawyer who was testing his orthodoxy, Jesus reaches back into his Jewish roots and brings together the law from Leviticus and Deuteronomy in the following statement:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

In drawing these two specific threads of the law together, Jesus articulated God's priority of love. This relational principle moves to the fore in the midst of laws about work, worship and the Sabbath, laws concerning behavior, and laws governing health and hygiene. His emphasis on relationships is fundamental to the heritage of community expressed in the founding of the American republic, and its is shared by citizens in the American democracy. This relational dimension is absolutely necessary for cohesive units that fight together on behalf of preserving the larger community, the nation, and its culture.
CONCLUSION

The Army will continue to face increasingly difficult decisions in the future. Weapons are growing more sophisticated, effective, and lethal. The power to destroy the earth is in the grasp of even the most erratic despot. This calls for competence and resourcefulness on the part of the leaders and soldiers who are challenged to deal with the ever-changing situation. It calls for moral leaders who are willing to practice discipline and restraint in the face of trying circumstances.

These leaders stand with their feet in two worlds. The sovereign of one of these worlds is the state. The sovereign of the other is God. This tension that implies two worlds was established in the above discussion. Through the application of the theology of H. Richard Niebuhr, it was determined that the two worlds do not necessarily have to remain separate. Indeed, the dimension of transparency indicates the presence of the eternal in the particular situation. For example, when a soldier practices fairness in relationship to one of his peers, if his intention is in respect for the other, then his act is transparent to Being itself.

The values that are basic to the military are found in the national culture of America. In civil religion, the soldier is tied to the foundational acts in the origins of
the nation. The values that come from the pluralistic American religious backgrounds are many and varied. The Christian soldier must reconcile these two. The proposed ethic that will enable this to happen is threefold. It must be a democratic ethic, consistent with the democratic nature of our Republic. It must be a transparent ethic that reconciles the universal with its expression in the particular. Further, it must be a relational ethic that surpasses rules and goals and places responsibility on the person.
FOOTNOTES

Introduction

2. Time 20 August 1951, p.54.
4. John Dominic Crossan, The Dark Interval (Niles Illinois: Argus Communications, 1975), pp.48-57. The discussion and meaning of myth used in this section is taken from Crossan's discussion. Myths are those stories, or conceptualizations, that provide stability, reassurance and a secure world for us. It is that world that we find in the heart of our civil religion.
5. Time Magazine, 13 August 1951, p. 16.
8. In this paper, the Christian faith will be used as the fundamental faith position with full recognition that it represents the full pluralism of faiths in America.
10. Ibid., p.54ff.
11. Commissioning Oath for the American Army Officer.
12. Crossan, Dark Interval, p.60.
13. Ibid., p.56.

Chapter 1

1. General Omar N. Bradley, "The Problem of National Morale", Address on the Columbia Broadcasting System, 26 August 1949. Vol. III, p.261. (The collected speeches, articles, and reports referenced in this work are a bound collection that was presented by General Bradley to the
library of the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.)

2. United States Constitution Preamble.


5. Ibid., p. 32.

6. Ibid., p. 95.


15. Ibid.


17. Ibid., p. 70.


19. Ibid., p. 58.

20. Ibid., pp. 58, 60, 62.

22. Ibid., p. 64.
23. Ibid., p. 66.
24. Ibid.


27. Ibid., p. 75.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.

30. From this point forward, this paper will use the Army specifically rather than the military generally. This is necessary for several reasons, but most importantly, the various services have some differences that make an adjustment in any ethic necessary, though the fundamental culture and myths are the same.

31. These two oaths are not exactly the same, but for our purposes, the significant elements are the same. For purposes of this paper, the Oath of Commissioning will be used.

32. The Oath of Commissioning for officers in the United States Army.

34. United States Constitution Preamble.


36. Ibid., pp. 236-237.
37. Ibid., p. 240.
38. Ibid., p. 235.
40. Declaration of Independence Preamble.
42. Ibid.
45. Ibid., p. 11.
46. Ibid., p. 15.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., pp. 76-78.
51. Ibid.
53. Ibid., p. 200.
54. Ibid., p. 205.
55. Ibid., p. 216.
56. Ibid., p.213.
57. Declaration of Independence Preamble.

Chapter II

1. Personal conversation with Chaplain(Major General) Kermit Johnson, United States Army Chief of Chaplains, 1981.

3. Ibid., p. 633.


5. Ibid., p. 24.

6. Ibid.


8. Ibid., p. 27.


11. Ibid., p. 32.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.


15. Ibid., p. 108.

16. Ibid.

17. Personal experience.


19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., p. 67.

21. Ibid., pp. 60-61.


24. Ibid., p. 64.
25. Ibid., p. 83.
27. Ibid., p. 84.
28. Ibid., p. 85.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p. 86.
33. Ibid., p. 88.
34. Ibid., p. 89.

Chapter III


2. Ibid., p. 20.

3. Ibid., p. 22.


7. Ibid.


10. Ibid., p 10.


15. Niebuhr, The Responsible Self, p.73.


18. All biblical quotes are from the New International Version.

19. Niebuhr, Radical Monotheism, p. 44.

20. Niebuhr, Responsible Self, pp. 122-123.

21. Ibid., p. 122.

22. Omar N. Bradley, Address at the World Peace Dinner of the City of Birmingham at Birmingham, Alabama, Collected speeches, VOL I, p. 454. 11 November 1947. (At the time, General Bradley was the Administrator of Veteran's Affairs.)


24. Ibid., p. 464.

25. Ibid., p. 465.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 466.

28. Ibid., p. 463.

30. Niebuhr, Responsible Self, p. 69.


32. Omar N. Bradley, Reader's Digest Article, October 1950.

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