



Professionalism and the Officer Personnel Management System

William M. Donnelly, Ph.D.

GENERAL WILLIAM C. Westmoreland served as chief of staff of the U.S. Army from July 1968 to June 1972, one of the most turbulent eras in the service's history. Safe passage through this era's Vietnam storm required the utmost in professionalism from the Army's officer corps, but the state of officer professionalism was suspect. Confronted in 1970 with powerful evidence of a dysfunctional organizational culture, the chief of staff devoted considerable time and attention to this issue for the remainder of his tenure. Westmoreland decided that the keystone to improving officer professionalism was a major revision of the career management system, a project soon known as the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS). This article will examine the development of OPMS and its implementation to assess whether it fulfilled its intended role in cultivating officer professionalism.

In March 1970, the Peers Report on the My Lai massacre concluded that officers in the Americal Division, including its general officers, had not properly investigated whether war crimes had occurred, a finding that Westmoreland found almost as deplorable as the murders themselves.¹ This failure was "a matter of grave concern" to the chief of staff. In April, he tasked the Army War College to conduct "an analysis of the moral and professional climate" in the service.² The study reported there was a "significant, widely perceived, rarely disavowed difference between the idealized professional climate and the existing professional climate."³ Over the next two years this study—along with Westmoreland's own observations and the steady flow of bad news into his office—would prompt him to launch several initiatives to improve the quality of training and leadership. While all these initiatives included aspects of officer professionalism, none focused just on this issue.⁴

William M. Donnelly, a senior historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History, holds a Ph.D. in history from the Ohio State University and is the author of several books and articles on the post-World War II U.S. Army.

PHOTO: GEN William C. Westmoreland (left), commander, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), and GEN Creighton W. Abrams, deputy commander, MACV, pin on LTG William W. Momyer's fourth star in a ceremony held in Saigon, South Vietnam, January 1967.

Better Professionalism through Better Career Management

By the autumn of 1970, Westmoreland had decided that officer professionalism required its own specific initiative. This made him the first chief of staff to acknowledge the unintended side effects of the career management system adopted after World War II and the resulting dysfunctional organizational culture described in the War College study.⁵ In October, after discussions with the deputy chief of staff for personnel, Lieutenant General Walter T. Kerwin, Jr., Westmoreland made it clear that the way to improve officer professionalism was to improve officer career management by establishing the most effective methods for identifying, motivating, and utilizing three groups in the officer corps.

The first was a “select group” whose members were “groomed by experience for high command responsibilities.” The second group was made up of “highly competent specialists” who “must be able to foresee promotion and necessary professional education on an equal basis with the potential commanders.” The third was “that large segment . . . who are neither technicians nor solely troop leaders.”

Westmoreland set several priorities for Kerwin. The first was “to identify our field grade officers best suited to command, to designate them explicitly as such, and to program them into stable command assignments and other positions of great responsibility.” The second was the issue of specialization, both in branch immaterial highly technical fields and in certain specialties of the combat and combat support arms. The third was the need to “institute a *vigorous ‘selection out’* process” for generalists “who have reached their ceilings” and specialists “who have ceased to produce.” These officers undermined unit effectiveness and were “highly detrimental” to the motivation and retention of enlisted soldiers and junior officers. Finally, Westmoreland wanted an efficiency report “that will permit us to identify early in an officer’s career his interest, motivation, aptitude, particular capability, and estimated capacity and potential.”⁶

While the professionalism study had emphasized selecting commanders and culling substandard performers, it had not discussed specialization. Westmoreland was taking note of a deep-rooted, widespread perception in the officer



General Walter T. Kerwin, Jr.

corps that service in such fields would leave one less competitive for promotion and for assignments that would boost careers, particularly troop command. A related issue was a long-standing concern among logistics officers that spending much of their career working in functional areas left them less competitive for promotions, advanced military school slots, and career-enhancing staff billets.⁷

Kerwin responded by outlining the concept that the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (ODCSPER) would use in implementing Westmoreland’s guidance. The ODCSPER had created a “straw man proposal” derived from the chief of staff’s memorandum, comments from recent senior officer promotion boards and senior service college selection boards, the War College professionalism study, “the apparent best features” of other services officer systems, and “those key elements of our present officer system.” Combining these sources would “appear to offer the greatest hopes for eliminating nonproductive competition, the ticket-punching syndrome, and the many familiar inefficiencies and irritants variously described in preliminary discussions.” Kerwin had directed a thorough analysis of the concept in order

to define the problem, set objectives, and lay out the most effective lines on which to proceed, and he appointed an ODCSPER general officer steering committee to oversee the project. Work would be coordinated with other on-going Army Staff endeavors concerning professionalism with these efforts to culminate by the mid-1973 target date already set for completing the transition to an all-volunteer force.⁸

In June 1971 the draft OPMS went to the field “for critical comment and indication of acceptability” because of the “extremely sensitive nature of OPMS and the acute personal interest in it of each career officer.” A cover letter acknowledged that “OPMS will elicit a range of views depending on such variables as experience, rank, and expertise,” and it requested that field commands obtain “the widest possible reaction in the time allotted and to report conflicting views where they represent a consensus of a significant segment of the career officer and potential career officer population.”⁹

OPMS proposed the following definition of military professionalism:

Military professionalism is the attainment of excellence through education, experience and personal dedication. It is characterized by fidelity and selfless devotion, which presupposes self-discipline, great skill, extensive knowledge, and willingness to abide by established military ethics and promote high standards, tempered by sound judgement [sic], compassion, and understanding. Professionalism implies a special trust that is inherent in the oath executed by every member of the Army Forces of the United States.

OPMS rejected an officer’s code on the grounds that some officers would resent it, that the commissioning oath was a sufficient code, and that to publish a code “may be construed as an admission that professionalism within the Army Officer Corps is less than satisfactory.”¹⁰

OPMS would create a single component active officer corps. Since 1945, the authorized officer strength of the Regular Army had never been enough to fully man the active force—therefore tens of thousands of non-Regular officers could remain on active duty. Almost all the best career-enhancing schools and assignments, however, were for Regulars, and only Regulars received permanent promotions. These inequities since the mid-1950s had led many high

quality non-Regulars to leave active duty, contributing to the persistent shortage of captains and majors in the active force. The OPMS study concluded that the dual-component system had to go since high morale was vital to fostering professionalism “and it is axiomatic that high morale in the officer corps is now possible for only a minority.” In a single component active officer corps “all officers would compete on an equal basis, and the fittest would survive.”¹¹

The core of OPMS was the changes in the branches managed by the Officer Personnel Directorate (OPD). The existing system had these officers (except for those in the Women’s Army Corps) compete against

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each other on the Army Promotion List. OPMS would have five career fields of related arms and services whose requirements were mutually supporting in the development of officer competence: the Combat Arms, the Combat Support Arms, the Materiel and Movement Services, “Other OPD Managed Branches,” and a new Specialist Corps. Promotion and school selection boards would consider officers only against their peers in a career field. The practice of officers holding temporary and permanent ranks would end. Annual continuation boards would identify officers no longer qualitatively competitive with their contemporaries and remove them from active duty.¹²

Under the existing system, officers in the specialist career program were expected to remain qualified in both their basic branch and their specialty. Under OPMS, these officers would form the Specialist Corps, a new basic branch of the Army. They would be assigned exclusively to positions requiring their specialty, and promotion quotas established for each specialty would ensure career progression opportunity. OPMS also recognized the need to support functional specialties within branches and groups of branches. Entry into specialization would be by the choice of individual officers, consistent with the needs of the service.¹³

To promote improved unit effectiveness and greater professional competence, the way field grade commanders were selected and staffs were manned would change. OPMS saw field grade command as a position of such complexity that it should now be, in effect, a new special career program. A centralized board would evaluate field grade officers as they entered the zone of eligibility for selection to the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) and would designate them as either best qualified for command or for staff. Officers selected for command would receive priority for command developmental assignments within their career pattern.

The designers of OPMS claimed that this process would eliminate the current corrosive competition for command slots but would not split the officer corps into an elite of commanders and an inferior class of staffers. Under “staff functionalization” only the unit commander, executive officer, operations officer, and liaison officer positions would be designated as branch material. Other staff positions would be filled by specialists in the functional area of that position, ending the practice of commanders using “the staff as a place to hold incoming/outgoing and/or unfit subordinate commanders.” The capability to provide sufficient qualified officers for a greatly enlarged wartime Army had been the crucial consideration in designing the existing career management system. OPMS sacrificed some of this capability but its developers argued that it would still produce officers able to assume positions of a higher grade, noting that senior infantry captains under OPMS would have more experience at the battalion and brigade level than most current field grade infantry officers.¹⁴

ODCSPER had already begun revising the officer evaluation system because most officers had lost confidence in the established process. In 1969, Kerwin had approved a recommendation to develop a new efficiency report and institute other changes to take effect in fiscal year 1972. The OPMS study found that these actions would support the new career management system. Several studies had discovered that the absence of an effective career and performance counseling system was a major cause of officer dissatisfaction. The OPMS steering committee concluded that addressing this need was so urgent that the plan for counseling training that was developed by the study should be implemented without waiting for approval of the entire OPMS concept.

Kerwin accepted this recommendation and implementing instructions were issued in April 1971.¹⁵

Staffing OPMS: “We Must Not Give the Appearance of Running Scared”¹⁶

Comments from the field were a shock to ODCSPER. There was inadequate support for several key concepts, including the Specialist Corps and separation of field grade officers into command and staff tracks. There was a general preference for keeping the current system with minor modifications. There was little support for what many saw as radical change at a time when the Army faced so many challenges. There was concern that OPMS was based on insufficient study and analysis. Some in ODCSPER suspected that the staffing process had been dominated by general and field grade officers, thereby providing an incomplete picture of the plan’s actual reception, since company grade officers were presumed to be more supportive of radical changes.¹⁷ The OPMS steering committee, however, decided this possibility did not outweigh the clear dislike of OPMS by many officers, and Kerwin concluded that the most successful field grade officers—those selected to attend CGSC—were “more conservative than we think.”

The negative reactions prompted a hurried effort within ODCSPER during the autumn to revise OPMS and still deliver a decision briefing by the end of the year. The deputy chief of staff for personnel stressed the need to reduce the pressure of ticket punching, especially for troop command assignments. Kerwin also made it clear that in presenting the revised OPMS to Westmoreland “we must not give the appearance of running scared.” Out of these discussions emerged a consensus that the original OPMS had been “simply too big a package” and that the revised version should be cut back to the “gut issues” that were most critical to improving officer professionalism.¹⁸

The revised version, referred to at this time as OPMS II, dropped the Specialist Corps, branch group specialization, and the concept of staff functionalization. A new concept of the “dual-track” gave officers a primary specialty based on their branch and then a secondary specialty in a functional area. Centralized selection of field grade officers for command assignments remained, but the formal sifting of officers into



(U.S. Army)

By December 2013, officers will be rated under a new evaluation system—one that is designed to both strengthen rater accountability and reflect current Army leadership doctrine.

command and staff career tracks was abandoned. The Army promotion list for OPD-managed branches was still subdivided, but with the abandonment of the Specialist Corps, there were now four groupings: Combat Arms, Combat Support Arms, Logistics Services, and Administrative Services. The counseling training system and the new efficiency report remained. The definition of professionalism was deleted as too contentious. (Many comments had called it insulting to officers.)

Because he had insufficient time to staff OPMS II in the same manner as OPMS I, Kerwin sent a team to CGSC to brief students on the revisions. The overall reaction was 60.7 percent favorable, with the new promotion system as the least-liked element. Among the branch groupings, combat-arms officers were the least supportive and logistics officers were the most supportive. Next, ODCSPER briefed the principals of the Army Staff and other senior officers. Their reactions varied “from mild acceptance to enthusiastic support.”¹⁹

In January 1972, Kerwin briefed Westmoreland on OPMS II. The discussion that followed found the chief of staff’s closest advisors in disagreement. While the vice chief of staff, General Bruce Palmer, Jr., considered dual-track career development and centralized field grade command selection to be “desirable changes,” he argued against any changes to the promotion system. For Palmer, the core activity of the Army was combat and therefore the service “must continue its orientation on the combat arms within its corps of officers.” “More particular management,” such as specific instructions to promotion boards, could satisfy any need for specialists. The assistant vice chief of staff, Lieutenant General William E. DePuy, fully supported OPMS II and argued that the “officer corps should adjust to the needs of the Army, not the converse.”

After the discussion, Westmoreland directed ODCSPER to revise OPMS II “to demonstrate, with greater clarity, the preeminent importance of the combat arms officer,” to defer asking for

changes in promotion laws “until experience sufficient to justify such a proposal is acquired,” and to develop an implementation plan “with the flexibility to incorporate minor improvements without jeopardizing the basic soundness of OPMS II.”²⁰

Centralized selection for field grade command soon became controversial when the OPMS steering committee abolished the command equivalent policy because “competence as a troop commander, as contrasted to managerial or technical competence, is of paramount importance for effective discharge of command responsibilities.” Army Materiel Command and the Corps of Engineers quickly attacked this decision, arguing that “the list of ‘commanders’ is an identification of the elite who will become the leaders (general officers) of tomorrow’s Army.” Soon thereafter, many of their command equivalent positions were restored.²¹

Cultivation of Professionalism

Westmoreland’s successor, General Creighton W. Abrams, Jr., shared Palmer’s unease over OPMS. The emphasis on specialization would compartmentalize the officer corps. Officers would be forced “into a narrow mold poured in Washington,” leaving them unprepared for “the tough, unstructured jobs that must be done.” Abrams suggested that its real objective was advancing “the interests of specialists’ groups which subordinate the interests of the Army to narrow special interests.” Despite these concerns, Abrams accepted counter-arguments for the new system and approved its implementation, although he cautioned officers “to bear in mind that how well you do in the Army depends not on our system of management, but rather on your individual efforts and dedication to service.”²²

OPMS did not cultivate a more professional officer corps. A study of the CGSC class of 1972, the same class Kerwin had used to staff OPMS II, found that the majority of students still believed that the former generalist career pattern, with its emphasis on troop command, was the route to promotion and status. The study concluded that success for OPMS “will be determined by how clearly it identifies the true values of the officer corps and how effectively it changes these values,” and that “a firm central authority must recognize the true

needs of the Army and establish a program which will meet these needs.”²³ A 1978 study found that the true values of the officer corps, as expressed in the officer evaluation system, remained the values of the generalist and that the “rational, albeit disconcerting,” response was to continue “the less risky, traditional ‘officer generalist’ behaviors.”²⁴ Indeed, from 1970 to 2011, similar critiques of officer corps professionalism and the career management system have been made.²⁵

The ideal and the practice of professionalism are weaker in 2013 than they were in 1970. The Army has given contractors many functions—such as training, logistics, and doctrine writing—formerly held to be the exclusive responsibility of soldiers, eroding the service’s jurisdictional claim to expertise. A 2002 study on the state of professionalism concluded that “today’s Army is more bureaucracy than profession.”

It also found that one of Abrams’ concerns had been prescient: the career management system since 1974 had “shifted the balance away from individual development and toward a lock-step, centralized system that requires all officers to follow specific timelines and fill certain positions if they are to succeed.” These developments created a “trust gap” between junior and senior

The service as an institution in these years “essentially relayed the message that it prizes warriors over soldiers

officers that “has reached dangerously dysfunctional levels.”²⁶ Furthermore, the years of war since 2001 have encouraged much of the officer corps to limit the definition of professionalism to competence in tactical combat operations. The service as an institution in these years “essentially relayed the message that it prizes warriors over soldiers.”²⁷

The decision by Kerwin and Westmoreland to abandon OPMS I—and Abrams’ ambivalence over OPMS II—made it clear that there would be no firm central authority realigning the true values of the officer corps to support the true needs of the

Army. Furthermore, along with most of their peers, these generals did not want to confront their responsibilities for the state of officer professionalism.²⁸ Despite the deplorable actions by general officers of the Americal Division, neither Westmoreland nor OPMS provided any direction on how general officers should improve and sustain their professionalism. As a recent evaluation of the service's current efforts to improve professionalism pointed out, "The responsibility to conform the Army's behavior to that of a moral, military profession vice occupation or bureaucracy rests squarely with the senior leaders of the profession . . . because they, rather than mid-level uniformed officers and civilians, control the major management systems of the Army."²⁹

Westmoreland believed that effective managers using the proper management structures and

procedures could solve any problem, and he made changing the career management system his primary response to the crisis in officer professionalism. As Bruce Palmer has noted, Westmoreland also was "the shrewdly calculating, prudent commander who chose the more conservative course."³⁰ Strong objections from senior officers led him to jettison the radical aspects of OPMS I. His command style also prevented any serious examination of the assumptions that had shaped officer career management since 1945. Thus, he approved a version of OPMS that could not reduce the gap between the idealized professional climate and the then-existing climate. As a result, more than 40 years after Westmoreland commissioned the War College study, officer corps professionalism remains a matter of concern. **MR**

NOTES

1. William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976): 375.

2. Letter, 18 April 1970, Chief of Staff to Commandant, U.S. Army War College, "Analysis of Moral and Professional Climate in the Army," Enclosure 1 to U.S. Army War College, *Study on Military Professionalism* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 30 June 1970).

3. *Study on Military Professionalism*, 13; James Kitfield, *Prodigal Soldiers: How the Generation of Officers Born of Vietnam Revolutionized the American Style of War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995): 107-113.

4. Robert K. Griffith, Jr., *The U.S. Army's Transition to the All-Volunteer Force, 1968-1974* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1996): 51-53, 63-65, 284-85; *Leadership for Professionals* (Fort Bragg, NC: CONARC Leadership Board, 26 July 1971); Memorandum, 18 February 1972, SGS through GEN Palmer to GEN Westmoreland, "Summary of Follow-on Activities—CONARC Leadership Board (Emerson Board) Final Report," File 1972/210, 9-13, Box 1323, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, Record Group 319, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter RG 319, NARA); COL Walter W. Plummer, Jr., Memorandum for Record, 30 August 1971, "Dynamic Training," File 353 Dynamic Training, Box 45, Office of the Chief of Staff, Army, Program Planning 1971, RG 319, NARA; GEN Paul F. Gorman, *Cardinal Point: An Oral History—Training Soldiers and Becoming a Strategist in Peace and War* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combat Studies Institute, 2011): 57-65; Chief of Staff Memorandum 72-5-112, 23 May 1972, "Army Staff Responsibilities for Implementation of the Approved Recommendations of the Board for Dynamic Training (BFDT)," copy in Historical Resources Branch, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, DC (hereafter CMH); Letter, 26 April 1972, President, U.S. Army Combat Arms Training Board to Commanding General, U.S. Army Continental Army Command, "USACTB Objectives Plan for FY 1973," File 210-08.6a (FY 1973) Combat Arms Training Board, Box 15, DCSPER Dir Plans Program and Budget, 1969-73, RG 319, NARA; *Leadership for the 1970s* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Study of Leadership for the Professional Soldier, 1971); *Final Report of the Office of the Special Assistant for Training, July 1973*, copy in Historical Resources Branch, CMH; Memorandum for Record, 12 June 1972, "OSAMVA Decision Briefing on Behavioral Sciences," File 1972/290, 1-, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, RG 319, NARA; Memorandum, 24 May 1972, SGS through GEN Palmer to GEN Westmoreland, "Progress in Improving Army Leadership," File 1972/210, 9-13, Box 1323, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, RG 319, NARA; "Senior Officer Oral History Program: LTG Walter F. Ulmer, Jr.," vol. I (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army Military History Institute, 1996): 114-15.

5. William M. Donnelly, "Bilko's Army: A Crisis in Command?" *The Journal of Military History* 75 (October 2011): 1183-1215.

6. Memorandum, 16 October 1970, The Chief of Staff for LTG W.T. Kerwin, Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Subject: "Guidance on Improving Army Professionalism," File 1970/210 39—, Box 1162, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-75, RG 319, NARA. Emphasis in original.

7. *Study on Military Professionalism*, 47, 49-50. In 1968 personnel managers conducted studies that proved to their satisfaction that this bias did not exist. Memorandum for Record, 22 May 1968, LTC Richard C. Rogers, "Follow-on Actions Required After Analysis of Survey on Officer's Attitudes and Opinions on Special Career Program," File Officer Specialist Program 1968, Box 25, DCSPER Planning and Program Files, 1964-70, RG 319, NARA, and "Officers Special Career Program: Promotions, First

Time Considered," File Officer Specialist Program 1968, Box 25, DCSPER Planning and Program Files, 1964-70, RG 319, NARA. In late 1969, however, the new deputy chief of staff for personnel, LTG Kerwin, was not so sure and his inquiry into the matter started another cycle of study on the issue. Memorandum, 13 January 1970, MG W.E. Brinker for the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, "Generalists and Specialists in the Officer Corps," File IV-D(2) Generalist and Specialists in the Officer Corps 1970, Box 1, DCSPER Instr 1970, RG 319, NARA. On logistics officers' concerns, see Summary Sheet, 19 March 1970, Director Military Personnel Policy to Chief of Staff, Army, "Major Issues Facing the Army (Project Seventy Actions)," File IV-C Branch Designations 1970, Box 1, DCSPER Instr 1970, RG 319, NARA, and Memorandum, n.d. [but sometime in November 1970], DMPP-CSD to Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, "Reports on Logistics Military Careers and Logistics Doctrine and Training," File IV-C Branch Designations July-Dec 1970, Box 1, DCSPER Instr 1970, RG 319, NARA.

8. Memorandum, 29 October 1970, LTG Walter T. Kerwin, Jr., for the Chief of Staff, United States Army, Subject: "Chief of Staff Guidance on Improving Army Professionalism," File 1970/210 5-15, Box 1162, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, RG 319, NARA.

9. Letter, 25 June 1971, Office of The Adjutant General to See Distribution, Subject: "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)."

10. "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," A-1 to A-8.

11. "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," B-4-1 to B-4-10. See Donnelly, "Bilko's Army," for details on what was known as the career category reservist program.

12. "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," C-1-1 to C-2-3 and D-1 to D-9. Left out of this arrangement were the so-called "professional branches"—the Judge Advocate General's Corps, Chaplain, and the Army Medical Department—whose officers required professional credentials from outside the Army.

13. "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," C-6-1 to C-6-5, C-8-1 to C-8-3, and C-9-1 to C-9-B-1. The special career programs were Army Aviation; Atomic Energy; Automatic Data Processing; Comptroller; Foreign Area Specialist; Information; Logistics; Military Assistance; Operations Research/Systems Analysis; Procurement; Research & Development.

14. "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," C-5-1 to C-5-A-1, C-3-1 to C-3-D-1, and C-19-1 to C-19-3. Excluded from the command/staff selection process were officers in the Adjutant General Corps, the Women's Army Corps, and the Specialist Corps.

15. "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," E-1 to E-6 and F-1 to F-1-3.

16. Memorandum for Record, n.d. [but probably 15 October 1971], LTC Paul R. Buckley, "Minutes of OPMS Steering Committee Session," File VII-F OPMS May-1971, Box 2, DCSPER Instr 1971, RG 319, NARA; Memorandum for Record, n.d. [but probably 18 October 1971], LTC Paul R. Buckley, "Minutes of OPMS Steering Committee Session," File VII-F OPMS May-1971, Box 2, DCSPER Instr 1971, RG 319, NARA; Memorandum for Record, n.d. [but probably 19 October 1971], LTC Paul R. Buckley, "Minutes of OPMS Steering Committee Session," File VII-F OPMS May-1971, Box 2, DCSPER Instr 1971, RG 319, NARA; Talking Paper, 20 October 1971, LTC Burrell, "The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)," File VII-B Briefings 1971, Box 1, DCSPER Instr 1971, RG 319, NARA; DDCSPER, "Briefing for the Assistant Secretary of the Army (I&L)," n.d. [but sometime in March 1972], File VII-F

OPMS (Branch Designations, Off Career Development) 1972, Box 2, DCSPER Instr 1972, RG 319, NARA. A defense of the June 1971 version of OPMS was published too late to influence opinions on the topic. LTC William L. Hauser and LTC Zeb B. Bradford, Jr., "Officer Corps Reform is Our Job," *Army* 21 (December 1971): 34-39. Hauser had earlier advocated for a radical change in the management of the field grade officer corps. LTC William L. Hauser, "Professionalism and the Junior Officer Drain," *Army* 20 (September 1970): 16-22.

17. Recent evidence that company grade officers were more dissatisfied with the current state of professionalism and thus would be more open to radical changes appeared in *Survey of Factors Relating to the Retention of Junior Officers* conducted in February-March 1971 by the Personnel Management Development Directorate, U.S. Army Military Personnel Center. The survey found that the "most dissatisfying" aspect of Army life for these officers was "leadership of superiors." This aspect was also the most important factor motivating these officers not to extend after their initial active duty obligation expired. File Attitude Study 1971, Box 1, DCSPER Instr Files 1971, RG 319, NARA.

18. The quotes in this paragraph are from Memorandum for Record, n.d. [but probably 18 October 1971], "Minutes of OPMS Steering Committee Session." The second and third quotes are by MG George W. Putnam, Jr., the Director of Military Personnel Policies.

19. The staffing of OPMS II is discussed in ODCSPER, "Briefing for the Assistant Secretary of the Army (I&L)."

20. Memorandum for Record, 12 January 1972, LTC. O.B. Combs, Jr., "CSA Decision Briefing on the Officer Personnel Management Study (OPMS II)," File 1972/320 1-2, Box 1346, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, RG 319, NARA.

21. Command equivalents were assignments—such as depot commanders, district engineers, and senior advisors in Vietnam—deemed vital but not involving the leadership of American troops. They were designated as command equivalent in order to attract top caliber officers who might otherwise avoid them out of fear of harming their career by not having a field grade troop command tour. Addendum to Summary Sheet, 23 June 1972, MG George W. Putnam, Jr., to Chief of Staff, United States Army, "Centralized Selection of Commanders for Brigade and Battalion Level Troop Commands," File 1972/210.31 14-19, Box 1325, Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, RG 319, NARA; Letter, 17 July 1972, GEN Henry A. Miley, Jr., to GEN Bruce Palmer, Jr., Enclosure A to Summary Sheet, 2 August 1972, DCSPER to Chief of Staff, "Acting CSA Reply to Letter from General Miley on OPMS," File VII-F OPMS (Branch Developments, Off Career Development) 1972 Volume II, Box 2, DCSPER Instr Files 1972, RG 319, NARA; Summary Sheet, 31 July 1973, Director of Military Personnel Management to Chief of Staff, "Notification Procedures and Years of Eligibility to be Used in Centralized Command Selection Process," File 320/14-18, Box 9, Office, Chief of Staff, Army, Instruction Files 1973, RG 319, NARA; *Engineer Memoirs: Major General Richard S. Kem, U.S.A., Retired* (Alexandria, Virginia: Office of History, Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2002): 152-159 and Appendix A.

22. None of the available sources mentions a reason for the name change. Given the importance of marketing the initiative to the officer corps, the change probably was in line with Kerwin's admonition not to appear to be running scared of negative feedback. LTC George R. Iverson, Individual Study Project "Officer Personnel Management: A Historical Perspective" (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1978): 56-59; Memorandum, 15 August 1973, DSGS (CAR) to GEN Foster, "Annotation of DCSPER OPMS Summary Sheet," File 320/51-55, Box 10, Office, Chief of Staff, Army, Instruction Files 1973, RG 319, NARA. Abrams' caution is in Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, *Officer Professional Development and Utilization* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1 March 1974): ii. There was no message from a chief of staff in previous versions of this pamphlet.

23. MAJ Phillip W. Mock, "Delusions of Grandeur: Career Assignment Patterns and Goals of Active Duty Majors in USACGSC Class of 1971-72," *Military Review* 52 (October 1972): 50-65.

24. CPT Philip O. Benham, Jr., U.S. Army Reserve, "OPMS: Demise of the Whole Officer Concept?" *Military Review* 58 (June 1978): 67-72. The distrust and dislike among officers for both the evaluation system and OPMS is also discussed in COL John T. Miller, "Integrity and Reality and Writing Up OERs," *Army* 27 (April 1977):

42-44; COL William L. Hauser, U.S. Army, "Leadership for Tomorrow: An American General Staff System," *Parameters* 8 (September 1978): 9; William L. Hauser, "The Army's Officer Career System: A Continuing Need for Professional and Managerial Reform," *The Bureaucrat* (Fall 1979): 7-15. The new officer evaluation system intended to support OPMS quickly fell victim to ratings inflation, the same fate as its predecessor. Memorandum, 16 August 1973, SGS to General Weyand, "Officer Evaluation Reporting System," File 201.61, Box 5, Office, Chief of Staff, Army, Instruction Files 1973, RG 319, NARA.

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30. "Senior Officers Oral History Program: GEN Bruce Palmer, Jr." (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army Military History Institute, 1976): 433-34; GEN William C. Westmoreland, *Report of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, 1 July 1968 to 30 June 1972* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1977): 124-45. This theme emerges frequently in Westmoreland's comments and directives found in Chief of Staff Correspondence 1963-1975, RG 319, NARA. The quote is from Bruce Palmer, Jr., *The 25-Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985) [Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984]: 134.