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MODELS OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS

AT THE ELITE LEVEL*

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INTRODUCTION.

Discourse on the quality of civil-military relations in the United States has focused on the possible existence of an unholy alliance between military organization and industrial bureaucracy, dating back to C. Wright Mills' (1956) warning us of the power elite and Dwight D. Eisenhower's warning us of the military-industrial complex (see for example Pilisuk and Hayden, 1965). It is our thesis that differences in the nature of interpersonal networks between military and civilian arenas and differences between military and civilian organizational structure preclude the development of a power elite as Mills saw it. These same factors make military organization in the United States unresponsive to public opinion. If relations between the military and civilian sectors of American society are indeed unholy, they are unholy in ways not anticipated by critics of the military-industrial complex.

THE POWER ELITE MODEL

The basic assumption underlying Mills' formulation was that a high degree of interpersonal contact takes place among corporation executives, military leaders, and elected public officials in both formal and informal settings. These three groups of people were purported to come from similar social backgrounds, to travel in the same social circles, and to take each other's interests into account in the process of making decisions within their own organizational spheres.

Similarity of background would certainly expedite sociability among these three groups. However, from what we know of their backgrounds, they are not all that similar.

American business leaders tend to be the sons of business leaders and in general are recruited from the higher strata of society. They tend to come from the Middle Atlantic, New England, and Pacific Coast states, and are likely to have been born in large urban areas. Most tend to be college educated (Warner and Abegglen, 1955). Military leaders also tend to come from high status backgrounds, with over half their fathers having been in business and the professions (Warner et al, 1963). Military leaders, however, are far more likely than corporation officials to come from rural areas, and to overrepresent the southern states (Janowitz, 1960). In addition, of course, military leaders and corporation executives receive their higher educations at different institutions, the former being preponderantly military academy graduates. Thus, the ranking officers of the American armed forces differ from their industrial counterparts in terms of urbanization, regionalism, and ties to institutions of higher education.

Although we are not concerned here with differences among the civilian elements of the power elite, let us note that such differences exist. Hacker (1961), in a comparative study of U.S. Senators and corporation presidents, noted that while both groups were roughly geographically

representative, senators tended to have been raised in rural areas, while corporation presidents came from urban centers. Similarly, although both groups were college educated, the corporation executives were more likely to have gone to Ivy League schools, while senators were more likely to have attended state universities. Hacker argues that these background differences lead to disparate images of society and a lack of communication between these groups.

THE QUALITY OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Beyond the differences in social background that exist among the groups that are postulated to comprise the power elite, our knowledge of human sociability in modern society would lead us to question the existence of a military-industrial clique as described by Mills.

In the ideal-typical simple society, individuals do not have highly differentiated role sets, and they relate to each other as total personalities rather than in the context of specific social or economic exchanges. Such societies are characterized by high levels of affective investment in one's interpersonal relations (Tönnies, 1957). In complex modern societies, by contrast, individuals have highly differentiated role sets and relate to others in the context of these roles rather than as total personalities. Such relationships tend to be constrained by the temporal and

spatial limits associated with specific roles. They are
functionally related to the roles being played, and are
characterized by relatively low levels of intimacy and
affect. Such affective neutrality is one of the hallmarks
of ideal-typical bureaucratic organization. Contemporary
organization theory suggests that such alienation from
one's social contacts is even more characteristic of post-
bureaucratic society (Bennis and Slater, 1969; Riesman,
Potter and Watson, 1960).

There are, of course, arenas of modern life that may
be characterized by intense primary affective ties, rather
than by secondary relationships. The most common of these
is defined by life-cycle phase. During childhood, roles
are not highly differentiated. The child has the same
persons as friends, neighbors, and school-mates, and develops
deep attachments to them. The ties that are developed later
in life with associates who are either neighbors or work-mates
or fellow club members do not seem to be as intensive, due in
all likelihood to the differentiation and compartmentalization
of these roles (Granovetter, 1969). The weakening of social
ties with age is reflected in sociometric studies, some of
which indicate that friendship choices are less likely to be
reciprocal in older than in younger groups (Laumann, 1969).

Some sectors of modern adult life are constrained by
occupational or institutional boundaries in such a way
that people either do not have highly differentiated role

sets, or the other people with whom they come into contact tend to comprise a constant set regardless of what roles they are playing. The former may be exemplified by the total institution--the institution that circumscribes the totality of the lives of its inhabitants (Goffman, 1961). Both the boundary conditions and the low level of social differentiation in the total institutions discussed by Goffman are reminiscent of simple societies and childhood peer groups. Were it not for the tendency of their inmates to be characterized by affective disorders, we would anticipate close primary ties among them.

Certain occupations place similar although less compulsory constraints on their members, in that they define the set of individuals with whom a member is likely to associate both on and off the job. Thus, at the very least, the roles of friend and workmate are superimposed. Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1956) demonstrate that this is the case among some typographers.

Among the occupational groups that expedite and encourage primary relationships, the military profession ranks high. Having discovered that it is group cohesion rather than ideological commitment that makes effective fighting men (Shils and Janowitz, 1948), the American military services have explicitly set out to build cohesive organizational units (cf. Shils, 1950).

Again, sociometric data are useful in demonstrating

differences in group cohesion. Davis and Leinhardt (in press) analyzed the structure of 30 adult groups and 30 student groups, selected randomly from an archive of socio-grams, in an effort to test seven predictions regarding group structure based upon Homans' (1950) propositions. Their data indicate that among the military adult groups, an average of 5.8 of the 7 predictions per group were supported by the data. The corresponding figures for the student samples and for the adult non-military samples were 4.97 and 4.76 respectively. That is, the military groups conformed more to the bases of subgroup structuring anticipated by Homans than even the student groups did, age differences notwithstanding.

An additional indicator of the degree to which military structure is based on primary relations and thus differentiated from civilian life is the establish-ment of "traditions" of military careers within families. Warner et al. (1963) report that 9 per cent of the military leaders they studied had fathers in the armed forces at the time they themselves entered military service. While only a minority of military officers seem to be recruited through such ascriptive in-breeding, there is a higher rate of occupational immobility with regard to the military than is the case for other sectors of the American labor force.

In brief, then, we suggest that styles of interpersonal life differ between the civilian and military arenas. The

military is characterized by strong affective ties to one's fellow-workers, supported in some cases by affective ties to the military profession as a family tradition. The modern civilian administrator, on the other hand, is not strongly tied to his fellow-workers on affective grounds, and has only moderately stronger ties to friends and neighbors who, unlike military personnel, are unlikely to be fellow-workers.

The civilian administrator either in the governmental or corporate sphere is unlikely to involve himself in a highly cohesive power-elite. Such a degree of cohesion is foreign to his interpersonal style. The military leader, for his part, is unlikely to invest a great deal of affect in compartmentalized contacts. His affective ties are elsewhere.

THE BUREAUCRAT VS. THE POST-BUREAUCRAT

Another aspect of the power-elite model is the interchangeability of personnel between military and civilian organization. Clearly, there is no lateral entry of members of the political or corporate elites to the upper reaches of the military hierarchy. There is some flow of personnel in the other direction, but its magnitude is not great. Biderman and Sharp (1968) point out that fewer than 30 per cent of retired officers work for large business establishments, and defense industries make up only one

subgroup of such establishments. Moreover, less than 30
per cent of retired officers are in business and managerial
positions. It is unlikely that these two sets are totally
overlapping. Therefore, the number of retired officers
who assume high level positions in defense industries
cannot be great. Further, those who do move into the
industrial structure are unlikely to have the necessary
skills to reach the highest strata of that structure.

Segal (1970) has suggested a structural explanation
for the low level of civil-military managerial inter-
changeability. On the basis of recent theories of formal
organization, he suggests that management in the civilian
context has come to be increasingly professionalized.
Large corporations have come to be run not by personnel
who have demonstrated competence with regard to the
specific product or service that the organization provides,
but rather by professional administrators. These men may
have very little familiarity with the specific production
processes within their organizations. Rather, they have
the ability to establish organizational climates within
which coordination and collaboration are expedited, so
that "technocrats" can deal with specific operational
problems. These organizational skills are postulated
to be transferable among corporate enterprises (Bennis
and Slater, 1969).

Military organization, on the other hand, is thought

to approach more and more closely the bureaucratic model
(Grusky, 1964). Bureaucratic careers are characterized
by upward mobility within the organizational structure
on the basis of demonstrated competence in the provision
of the product or service that the organization supplies.
In the case of the military this service is combat, and
several studies have shown that it is the combat special-
ists who ascend to the top strata of the American military
hierarchy (Van Riper and Unwalla, 1965). Indeed, if military
organization in fact requires "generalist" administrative
skills at the top level as civilian bureaucracies are pur-
ported to, then the promotion of officers to general and
admiral grade on the basis of combat specialist skills may
be seen as a special case of the Peter Principle, viz.,
military officers are promoted to their own levels of
incompetence because the skills on the basis of which
they are evaluated has nothing to do with the job they are
expected to perform at the highest levels of the structure
(cf. Peter and Hull, 1970).

MODELS OF MILITARY STRUCTURE AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

We have suggested three different models of elite social
structure in military organization. Each of these models
has different implications for the structure of civil-military
relations at the elite level. The first, which we may call
the pre-bureaucratic model, suggests traditionalistic recruit-
ment bases, and intense affective ties among military personnel.

We would anticipate that careers in such an organization would be based on ascriptive non-rational criteria. We would expect such a structure to be associated with a military ideology that viewed the military as an active and largely autonomous force in the political system (Derthick, 1962).

The second model is the bureaucratic model, which is characterized by a broadened recruitment base, and by careers oriented toward promotion based upon achievement with regard to rational criteria of evaluation. These criteria, in turn, are postulated to reflect the mission of the organization: in the case of the military, combat expertise. The ideological stance of the ideal-typical bureaucratic military organization is one of affective neutrality. We would expect such an organization not to be involved in the formulation of political decisions, but rather to implement decisions involving military activity made within the civilian governmental structure.

Finally, we have suggested a post-bureaucratic model of organization in which people would be expected to reach the top levels of military structure on the basis of organizational and administrative skills, rather than combat skills. Because of isomorphism with civilian corporate structure, we suggest that the military leader qua professional manager would be most comfortable in the company of professional colleagues who manage corporations in the civilian sector, and would

therefore be the most likely type to participate in a
military-industrial directorate.

THE UNITED STATES NAVY AS A CASE IN POINT

Segal (1970) has elsewhere presented data on the United
States Air Force. Since the Air Force is the newest branch
of the American armed forces and has the most complex technol-
ogy of the armed services, it was expected that it would have
a highly rationalized structure. It was indeed shown to
approximate the bureaucratic model, but combat rather than
administrative skills were shown to be the criteria on
which promotion to general officer grade and assignment
to principal command and staff positions were based.

Previous research suggests that the bureaucratic model
is a poor one for the United States Navy. Davis (1948) sug-
gests that although the Navy aspires to a bureaucratic
structure, it is characterized by buck-passing, excessive
legalism, insulation from civilian life, and ceremonialism.
All of these factors mitigate against organizational ration-
ality. Similarly, Turner (1947) sees certain characteristics
of the Navy as hindering efficient bureaucratic functioning:
conflicts between regulations and orders from superiors, the
juxtaposition of rank and role, and the network of informal
relationships. Indeed, we can conclude from these studies
that the Navy is at the very least less bureaucratized than
the Air Force, and therefore less similar in structure to

civilian corporate organization. The Navy might best be characterized as a "mock bureaucracy" (cf. Gouldner, 1954: 182 ff.).

There is another sense, however, in which the Navy is worthy of our consideration. The Navy is the ranking service in terms of the social background of its officers (Janowitz, 1960: 81). Therefore, if any branch of service is likely to have social networks that extend into the civilian elite, and to promote officers through its hierarchy on the basis of their positions in this network, the Navy is likely to be that branch.

DATA

The homogeneity of the Navy elite in terms of educational background, as well as the incidence of managerial as against combat skills in this elite is indicated by data in the Navy Register. Segal's (1967) data on the Navy indicated that in 1951 and 1964, all vice-admirals, admirals, and fleet admirals of the United States Navy were naval academy graduates. Some non-academy officers did attain rear admiral rank. As Table 1 demonstrates, our analysis of the educational backgrounds of U. S. Navy admirals in 1958, 1962 and 1968 confirms this finding. In all three years, all admirals in the top three grades were academy graduates. While there is increasing representation of non-academy officers at rear admiral grade,

Table 1. Per cent of U. S. Navy admirals with academy
degrees: 1958, 1962, 1968

Officer rank	1958 % academy	N	1962 % academy	N	1968 % academy	N
Fleet Admiral	100	2	100	1	--	-
Admiral	100	7	100	7	100	9
Vice Admiral	100	30	100	32	100	35
Rear Admiral	99	206	98	207	92	212

Source: United States Navy Register, Adjutant General's
Office, 1958; Register of Commissioned Officers
of the United States Navy and Marine Corps and
Reserve Officers on Active Duty, Adjutant General's
Office, 1962 and 1968.

this representation is still miniscule. It is clear that no
old school tie links the Navy elite to the political or economic
directorate.

As a test of the bureaucratic versus professional manage-
ment models of elite ascent, we coded the training experience
of U. S. Navy admirals on the basis of whether they were geared
toward administrative or combat training. Our results are pre-
sented in Table 2. The most dramatic datum in this table is
the dearth of managerial training among the men who run the
Navy. No admirals or fleet-admirals in any of the four years
studied had such training. By 1958, a small percentage of
rear admirals had received such training, and the percentage
has remained relatively constant since, with little indica-
tion that rear admirals so trained will be promoted to higher
flag ranks.

Table 2. Per cent of U. S. Navy admirals with management* or combat** training: 1952, 1958, 1962, 1968.

Rank	1952			1958			1962			1968		
	mngt.	cmbt.	n	mngt.	cmbt.	n	mngt.	cmbt.	n	mngt.	cmbt.	n
Fleet Admiral	-	67	3	-	50	2	-	100	1	-	-	-
Admiral	-	60	5	-	43	7	-	100	7	-	100	9
Vice Admiral	-	70	23	-	80	30	3	100	32	-	100	35
Rear Admiral	-	67	193	6	76	206	6	92	207	5	95	214

*Management training: post-graduate training in business administration, management, industrial engineering, industrial management, naval administration, island government, personnel administration financial management, public administration, police administration, advertising, commerce, comptrollership, computer systems management, economics and systems analysis, foreign trade, hospital administration, hotel administration, logistics management, petroleum management, procurement management, systems inventory management, transportation administration.

**Combat training: destroyer command, naval aviation, submarine duty, submarine command, Air Command and Staff School, Air War College, Armed Forces Staff College, Army War College, Command and General Staff College, General Line School, Imperial Defense College, National War College, Naval War College, Amphibious Warfare School, Canadian Defense College, NATO Defense College, United Kingdom Joint Services Staff College, French Naval War College, Spanish Naval War College, Inter-American Defense College, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Royal Naval Staff College, Royal Air Force Staff College, German General Staff College, Indian National Defense Service Staff College, post-graduate study in weapons systems, nautical science, naval science, merchant marine.

SOURCE: United States Navy Register, Adjutant General's Office, 1952, 1958; Register of Commissioned Officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps and Reserve Officers on Active Duty, Adjutant General's Office, 1962, 1968.

These figures include all line officers at flag rank for 1952 and 1958. The figures for 1962 and 1968 include all unrestricted line flag officers. In addition, the following designated categories

formerly included in general line listings are retained for comparability: (for 1962) engineering duty, aeronautical engineering, SDO cryptology, SDO law, SDO intelligence, (for 1968) engineering duty, aeronautical engineering, SDO cryptology, naval intelligence, judge advocate general's corps. The services not included for any year are: supply corps, corps of civil engineers, TAR, medical service, dental service, chaplain service, nurse corps.

With regard to advanced training in combat skills, on the other hand, there is an upward trend at all grades, reaching unanimity at all grades above rear admiral by 1968.

While not all rear admirals have received in-service combat training, the trend is clear at this grade. Sixty-seven per cent of the 1952 cohort of rear admirals had received such training. By 1968 the figure was up to 95 per cent. Moreover, given the unanimity of combat training at the top three flag grades, it would be reasonable to anti-cipate that only rear admirals with such training will be promoted to those grades in the future. Thus, the skills of the ranking admirals of the Navy differ from those of the captains of industry both in their lack of training in admin-istrative matters and in their explicit training in activities that are overtly disvalued (if covertly cherished) by a civil society where the value of human life is sacred (though not all human lives are equally valued in American society). This fact of different training suggests further barriers to civil-military elite integration.

The importance of combat skills for advancement in the Navy may be seen more specifically with regard to adaptations to aviation technology at flag grade. These data are presented in Table 3. While we are dealing here with only one particular kind of combat skill, note that by 1968, 40 per cent of the rear admirals had aviation training.

Table 3. Per cent of U.S. Navy admirals with aviation training: 1952, 1958, 1962, 1968

Officer rank	1952 % aviator	N	1958 % aviator	N	1962 % aviator	N	1968 % aviator	N
Fleet admiral	--	3	--	2	--	1	--	-
Admiral	40	5	43	7	57	7	33	9
Vice Admiral	35	23	47	30	44	32	43	35
Rear Admiral	35	193	36	206	39	207	40	212

Source: United States Navy Register, 1952 and 1958; Register of Commissioned Officers of the United States Navy and Marine Corps, and Reserve Officers on Active Duty, 1962 and 1968.

Implicit in our earlier discussion was an expectation that the Navy would be characterized by a traditionalistic pre-bureaucratic command structure. Our data, however, suggest that the Navy might be described by the same model that fits the non-traditional and highly technologized U. S. Air Force: a bureaucratic model in which promotion to the top strata of the hierarchy is based upon mission-oriented skills.

DISCUSSION

We have suggested three ideal-typical models of structural modernity for military organizations. Each model is characterized by skill distributions and styles of interpersonal relations that have implications for the development of a military-industrial power elite.

We had anticipated finding the pre-bureaucratic model to most closely describe the structure of the U. S. Navy. Our analysis of the formal training experiences associated with mobility through the Navy hierarchy to flag grade, however, suggests that the bureaucratic model may fit best. Military family traditionalism, of course, is likely to create some deviations in a pre-bureaucratic direction.

The bureaucratic structure of military organization poses two major obstacles to the formation of a military-industrial cabal. First, the academy-trained and combat oriented military bureaucrat has little in common with the professional civilian executive, in terms of either background or interest. Second, one of the characteristics of bureaucratic organization is the maintenance of a posture of ethical neutrality.

The assumption of ethical neutrality does not preclude the military officer from valuing military activity positively, or from viewing warfare as a reasonable way to conduct foreign affairs. It should, however, prevent the military from being the strongest pro-war lobby, while contributing to the development of a political environment that nurtures sentiments of belligerence originating in other quarters.

Our basic position is in agreement with that of Admiral Hyman Rickover, who feels that the military isn't a contributing partner to a "military-industrial complex," but rather is

an agency that is used to the economic advantage of certain sectors of American industry. We similarly agree (if not sympathize) with corporation executives who feel that they should get top billing, viz., that social scientists and journalists should speak about the industrial-military complex, although they are probably still overstating the role of the military.

We concur with Fusfeld's (1968) analysis, which traces America's willingness to engage in foreign wars to the corporations that profit from those wars. The magnitude of federal monies spent on the military is frequently cited as evidence of the existence of a military-industrial complex. If indeed military expenditures represent 15 per cent of American GNP, as Fusfeld estimates, we view this as the best evidence that it is private corporations, rather than the military, that reap the spoils of war.

This is not a uniform indictment of the American corporate structure. We know that some industries, notably ordnance, aerospace, primary metals and marine transportation stand to lose the most if peace breaks out (see Leontief and Hoffenberg, 1961). Others, such as construction, stand to gain. In the aggregate, however, the costs of war seem to be carried most by the consumer, who has trouble buying butter when the government is buying guns, and only secondarily by the butter-producing industries (cf. Russett, 1969).

Another bit of evidence frequently cited for the existence

of a military-industrial complex is that some high ranking

military officers do indeed move into corporate positions after

retirement. We have argued above that the magnitude of such

mobility is small, and that the officers who make such moves

are unlikely to have the necessary skills to reach the top

of the corporate hierarchy. There are other points to consider

as well.

Perhaps most often overlooked is the fact that the earlier

an officer terminates his military career to enter civilian

industry, the lower his military rank when he leaves. Even

those officers who leave after 20 or 25 years of service

are far more likely to be colonels or brigadier generals

than they are to be major generals or generals. Thus, such

mobility does not move military elites into civilian industry,

although it may provide linkages between civilian and military

elites to the extent that the colonels who enter industry

were academy class-mates and friends of the generals and

admirals who remain in the military. The crucial point,

however, is that it is not the military elites who are moving

into civilian industry.

A second point is that the concentration of economic

power in the United States has been attributed largely to

interlocking directorates among banks and large corporations.

The military is not directly involved in these networks of

interlocks. While occasionally retired high ranking military

officers may be appointed to the boards of directors of
large corporations and may use friendships with the
"military directorate" in the interest of their corpora-
tions, what is important here is that such activity takes
place _after_ the completion of the military career of the
person involved. Thus, military participation is through
cooptation, not cooperation.

These structural factors notwithstanding, the military
has been identified by the antiwar movement in the United
States as the primary evil in the military-industrial
complex. Far more of the movements' resources have been
aimed at severing university relations with the Reserved
Officers Training Corps (R.O.T.C.), preventing universities
from accepting Department of Defense research contracts
and grants, interfering with military recruiting, demonstrat-
ing in and around armed forces installations, and harassing
the Selective Service than with protesting the role of pri-
vate corporations in the war effort. While such protests
have occurred (as in the case of Dow stockholders who
objected to the manufacture of napalm or the relatively
isolated instances of harassment of industrial recruiters)
demonstrations against private corporations in the United
States are far more likely to be rooted in policies regarding
pollution or discrimination against minority group members and
women in employment than they are to confront the issue of
war profiteering.

This focus on the military has at least two important consequences for American society. First, by channeling the resources of the antiwar movement away from what we see as the true economic impetus of American military activity, it probably extends the life of military operations, rather than hastening their demise.

Secondly, the success that the antiwar movement has experienced in moving R.O.T.C. units off campuses and in opposing conscription has placed restrictions in the input of civilian sensitivities into the armed forces. We concur with Moscos' (1970) observation that as the military becomes increasingly separated from civilian society, greater latitude for international irresponsibility on the part of civilian leaders is a consequence that may be anticipated.

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