THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UPON THE BLACK AMERICAN SOLDIER

by

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Redacted Signature

Instructor in charge

Redacted Signature

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For the department
Sincere Appreciation is Rendered,

To my advisor, Dr. W. H. Crockett, for advice and assistance, and for observations that provided much of the credibility to this study, and

To the members of my committee, Dr. Paul Friedman, whose influence first inspired the selection of the topic, and Bob Hamlin, who provided much of the procedural advice, and,

To the many commanders and information officers at the Army installations visited in the course of this study, who cooperated with the writer in every way, knowing that this cooperation would probably draw even greater weight to the criticism of their communication efforts, and,

most of all,

To Sylvia, for patience, perseverance, prudence and proofing, without which this study would never have been completed.

T. J. B.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I: THE NATURE OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Terms</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerations for Conclusions</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: The Survey Instrument</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II: THE ARMY COMMAND INFORMATION PROGRAM</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command Information Media</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army Newspapers</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commander's Call</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative Councils</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio, Television, Film</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally Produced Media</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Information Officer</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III: INSTALLATIONS VISITED AND RESULTS</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBTAINED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort A</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort B</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Purpose
This study is designed to fulfill the following major purposes:

(1) To determine a measure of the extent to which Negro American soldiers recognize organizational communication efforts in the United States Army and accept those efforts as meaningful to themselves as individuals.

(2) To evaluate the relationship between (a) a black soldier's perception of the communication environment in which he lives and works and (b) the satisfaction he feels as a member of the Army and of his military organization.

(3) To determine if differences in the information programs operated on selected Army installations result in corresponding differences in expressed satisfaction with Army life by assigned Negro soldiers.

(4) To locate any elements of an information program which may have particular influence on the morale of black soldiers and their satisfaction with their military organization.
Justification

With the cessation of the Vietnam War, Army leaders at all levels are turning their attention to internal problems that have weakened the structure of the Army, caused dissension among soldiers and created unfavorable impressions on the public. One of the more serious of these problems is racial conflict and dissatisfaction among black soldiers. Priding itself as an institutional leader in the interest of racial equality, the Army has given a great deal of attention to the enhancement of the status of minority groups. With the present efforts to recruit an all-volunteer military force, every service is concerned with keeping qualified men in uniform beyond their initial enlistment. In 1972, almost 20 per cent of the new enlistees in the Army were black men.\(^1\)

Despite considerable official concern with eliminating racial prejudice, and convincing black soldiers that it is being eliminated, problems persist. Leading periodicals and newspapers continue to report to a critical public about incidents of racial violence in the Army.\(^2\)

Although causes of racial tension and personal

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dissatisfaction of black soldiers go far beyond the realm of communication, some form of communication is considered the essential ingredient of progress toward eliminating these causes. A recent Department of the Army document distributed to commanders concerning establishment of racial harmony is entitled, "Better Communications -- Better Race Relations," and advises, 3

Those programs that have most successfully eased racial tensions in various commands have had one common feature: each sought first to improve communications between black and white soldiers.

This emphasis by the Army on improvement of communications between races, and the increase in numbers of new black soldiers among Army volunteers, gives impetus to a personal conviction by the writer that an examination of the black soldier's perception of organizational communication within the military could lend insights into the importance and possibly the improvement of Army command information programs.

It is also considered that this research and its results may lend insight into new influences of organizational communication applicable to areas outside the military services. As research which will call the attention of persons outside the discipline to the value of communication in the field of human relations, it is

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3 Department of the Army Pamphlet 360-805, "Commander's Call," Fourth Quarter, FY 1971.
felt to be significant to the field of Speech Communication and Human Relations. Because it deals with a present real problem in communication, one that has not been previously examined from the aspect of this type of research, and because it departs from the academic environment in search of subjects and circumstances, it should be contributory to the collection of new knowledge in the field. This study is therefore considered justified as a program of research submitted as a Master's thesis to the University of Kansas.

Description of Terms Employed

Terms below are described in concepts of their relationship to this study. These descriptions are included here to establish the writer's viewpoint as to the scope of the subjects investigated, and, in some cases to explain common military terms to those unfamiliar with military organizations.

Organizational Communication is intended to mean all communication between a black soldier and his military leaders at all levels, whether oral or written, formal or informal, excepting only those exchanges having nothing to do with either participant's role as a member of the Army.

Command Information is an established program of official and unofficial communication activity designed to keep
soldiers as well informed as possible about their roles as members of the Army and of their military unit. Command information is a continuous process, structured mainly on verbal exchanges that take place between soldiers and their immediate military superiors. These verbal exchanges are supplemented by verbal and written messages from more senior leaders, printed and electronic media, and any other means available to tell soldiers things they need to know. Command information may be considered as the portion of organizational communication in a military unit that is deliberately planned to inform. An extensive description of the Army Command Information Program is included in Chapter II.

Status Satisfaction is a term used in this study to represent the way a black soldier feels about being in the Army and being a resident of his Army installation and a member of his assigned military unit. Status satisfaction will include the black soldier's concept of fair treatment to blacks by his military superiors, racial relations on his post, the personal interest shown in his welfare by his leaders and the lack of racial discrimination evident in his day to day activities. Achievement of status satisfaction need not mean that the soldier likes the Army, only that he perceives his status as equal to that of any other soldier of his rank.

Post is the common term for an Army installation housing
one or more large military organizations. The term "Post" implies intended permanence as a dwelling place for Army units and personnel. Most Army posts are titled with the word "Fort" and the given name of the post, such as "Fort Dix, New Jersey." (Fort Dix was not one of the installations visited in the course of this research.)

**Battalion, or Battalion-size Unit** — Army battalions range in numbers of authorized personnel from less than three hundred to well over a thousand, depending on the type of battalion and the mission it is designed to accomplish. Battalions are normally commanded by lieutenant colonels, and are composed of subordinate organizations (units) called companies, batteries, or troops. Although the difference in numbers of soldiers between an artillery battalion and an infantry battalion may be five hundred or more infantrymen, battalions are usually organized and administered along the same procedural lines. Two or more battalions grouped under the same headquarters are called a brigade, and commanded by a full colonel. The battalion was the basic organization considered as a subject-contributing unit for purposes of this study. In the combat branches of the Army (Infantry, Armor, Artillery) black soldiers frequently make up twenty per cent or more of the assigned personnel.

**Methodology**

This thesis is designed as a study of communi-
cation as it is perceived by a minority group within a large organization, and an evaluation of the influence of that communication upon the attitudes and status satisfaction of members of that minority group. It is a field study, recognized as being subject to many influences apart from those included in the area of organizational communication.

The research is descriptive in nature. Although great attention was given to objectivity, certain subjective judgments were required. Where these appear, they are identified.

The primary instrument of this study was a 20-statement survey, divided into two parts of 10 statements each. (A copy of the survey form is included as an appendix to this chapter.)

Part I of the form includes statements designed to determine the subject's perception of the communicative environment on his post. Part II is composed of statements written to provide indication of the subject's attitude toward the Army and his satisfaction with his status on his post and in his unit. Subjects completed the survey by giving numerical ratings of 0 - 5 to each statement, according to the extent to which they agreed with the statement and considered it to be true. Results of the survey were intended to provide the basis for answers to the following questions:

(1) What does the black soldier think about communi-
cation in the Army? Does he perceive that his military leaders are trying to keep him informed and that they are willing to listen to him?

(2) How influential are the media that the Army uses as the foundation of the structured portion of its command information programs?

(3) Can a black soldier's satisfaction with the Army be at least partially linked to his perception of how well the Army communicates with him? To what extent does Part I of the survey agree with Part II?

(4) Are special procedures required to effect successful communication with black soldiers?

The survey was administered to 200 black soldiers serving their first tour of duty with the Army. Men who had re-enlisted were not considered because of the possibility of ego-involvement affecting their attitudes toward the survey. The subjects were randomly selected on the basis of alphabetical positions on unit rosters when possible, though the request for 10 subjects from each of five battalions sometimes resulted in all the first-term black soldiers in a small battalion being included in the survey. Fifty subjects from four different Army posts were surveyed. The installations concerned are all located in the mid-western or western United States. The surveys were administered in groups of from five to 10 men. In most cases, all the subjects from a single
battalion were surveyed collectively. The men were assembled in unit classrooms, day rooms, or mess halls. No other member of the subjects' military organization was present during administration of the survey or the talk periods that followed. Each group of subjects was introduced to the survey with the following presentation, delivered via cassette tape recording or read verbatim by the researcher.

"I am Major Thomas Barham, an infantry officer presently assigned to study communication at the University of Kansas. My purpose here at Fort ____ is to try to get an idea of how black soldiers at this post feel about communications in the Army, and how they feel about being in the Army. You men have been randomly selected to assist me in gaining this information. You are not ordered to participate in this activity, and anyone who wishes to leave and return to his unit may do so as soon as I have finished speaking. If you stay, you will be one of two hundred black soldiers I'll talk to before my study is complete.

"I'm going to give each of you a form containing twenty statements. These statements are all written as though you were saying them or writing them yourself. Next to each statement is a short blank line. On that line, I want you to write a number from zero to five, according to how true you think the statement is. The
meaning of the numbers are written at the top of the form.
(Survey forms then distributed)

"The most important thing is to be as honest with me and with yourself as you possibly can. You are not required to sign the form, and no one but me will ever see it. If you feel that a statement is totally false, give it a zero.

"Please read each statement carefully before you rate it. Don’t let the man next to you influence your judgment. In fact, don’t even look at what he writes down, and don’t let him see what you write. Take time to consider why you are giving a statement the rating you do give. Don’t give a statement a higher rating than it deserves just because you personally like your commander. At the same time, don’t low-rate your unit just because of one officer or NCO that you dislike.

"At this time, take a few minutes to read over all the statements. Ask any questions you like about the statements or the procedures to be followed, but please hold any opinions about the survey or what it covers until after everyone has turned in his form.

"Feel free to write anything you like on the back of your form, if you feel it will give me a clearer picture of how you feel about the Army or about Fort ____.

"Now, before you start, look at statement number four of Part II, and let me explain what a black militant is so far as this study is concerned. A militant, in
the Army, is a soldier who deliberately disobeys orders, picks fights with whites, destroys Army property, hassles any black who associates with whites, and tries to get all other blacks to act like he does. A soldier who is working within the law to make things better for black people is not a militant. If you know any militants, in the sense that I described them, and you think many people listen to them, then you should give the statement a low rating. If you don't know anyone like that, or you know them but do not believe many people pay much attention to them, give the statement a high rating.

"What you tell me will form the basis for a paper that I will submit to the University of Kansas and the Department of the Army. I have hopes that this paper will help to improve communications between the Army and the black soldiers in the Army.

"Please go ahead now and complete your form. If you have any further questions, raise your hand and I will come to your position."

In each case the researcher was wearing the winter uniform of a Major of Infantry. The only decorations worn were the Combat Infantry Badge, Parachutists Badge, and Ranger Tab.

Following completion and collection of the survey forms, subjects were encouraged to talk about the items included on the survey. Their ideas about communication
on their post and their opinions of their treatment by the Army since their entry were solicited. These questions and comments provided a partial basis for a subjective judgment on the part of the researcher as to the soldiers' general perceptions of their status as members of their military units. An early intention to record the post-survey sessions was abandoned because the presence of the tape recorder seemed to inhibit and influence the verbal participation of the subjects. They either did not want to be recorded or they wanted to make impromptu speeches into the recorder. In lieu of the exact replication of a recorded session, the general attitudes, nature of the questions asked and substance of the comments made were entered by the researcher into a notebook immediately following each meeting.

During periods not involved in administration of the survey instrument, the researcher conducted a subjective analysis of the command information program on each post visited. This analysis consisted of the following primary considerations:

(1) An interview with the post information officer, to determine (a) the extent of his training and experience, (b) his ideas on command information, (c) his opinion as to the command interest in support of his particular information program, (d) his judgements about the efforts of subordinate units in maintaining a viable command information program post-wide, and (e) his interest and knowledge
about communication with minority groups. This interview was disguised to some degree in that no information officer was informed that his reflections would contribute to the researcher's analysis of his program, or even that such an analysis was being conducted. Consequently, the impressions gained by the researcher are considered more valid than had each information officer felt compelled to protect his program and his commander from possible criticism. Since no installation or personality will be identified in the study, this minor subterfuge on the part of the writer is felt to be justified in the interest of factual integrity.

(2) A review of the post newspaper for the previous six months of publication. This was conducted with the intention of gaining a general idea of the appeal of the paper to black soldiers. A key indication of this appeal was felt to be the amount of news of interest to blacks and other minorities that appeared in the paper, and the regularity with which it appeared. It was also noted whether the paper provided the opportunity for readers to have their views published, in the form of "letters to the editor," or some other form of feedback from the readership. Concern for the viability of Army newspapers has for some time been a major interest of the Army Chief of Information. Further explanation of the standards considered "desirable" for newspapers sponsored by Army posts is contained in Chapter II.
(3) A determination of the existence and design of racial harmony councils (or similiar groups) on the post.

(4) A review of "Commander's Call" training periods. These periods are the small unit commander's primary medium of command information, but no records were maintained by any information office as to the content of any Commander's Call periods. Other than general discussions with commanders and information officers, the effectiveness of this phase of the post command information had to be judged from the ratings given it by the black soldiers surveyed. The concept and procedures for Commander's Call are also discussed at greater length in Chapter II.

When information programs are described in subsequent chapters, it must be recognized that these analyses of such programs were all highly judgmental.

In addition to the analysis of the command information program, the researcher attempted to gain a general impression of the racial situation on each post. This was essentially confined to observing the co-mingling between black and white soldiers at snack bars, service clubs and mess halls. A review of military police records in search of incidents of violence between blacks and whites proved unsatisfactory, even on the one post where the provost marshal permitted it, because records of ethnic group or race are seldom kept by military police unless there is a distinct overtone of racial implications
to the incident precipitating the arrest. Determination of the racial proportions of men in the post stockade was not conclusive, since many of the stockade inmates had been arrested while absent without leave from other posts and had never been assigned to the post in question. Thus the researcher was basically limited to an intuitive sensing of the racial environment of the post that contributed little to the objectivity of the study.

Considerations for Conclusions

Because this study seeks to determine not how things are, but rather how black soldiers think they are, heavy reliance is placed upon the results of the survey. Conclusions concerning the relation between communication and status satisfaction among blacks are based upon the degree to which most subjects rated their approval or disapproval of their communicative environment congruent with their expressed satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their status in the Army. Conceptions of the effectiveness of information programs on the installations visited are taken from the scores awarded the statements dealing with these programs on the instrument. Judgments of how organizational communication can affect status satisfaction among black soldiers are arrived at by comparing the information programs at each post with the ratings awarded to both parts of the survey at that post.
Statistical Analysis

Although the lack of a closely controlled environment and the presence of many contributing influences apart from communication render a statistical analysis of the survey results subject to many sources of invalidity, an independent groups analysis of variance was performed in an effort to determine treatment effects attributable to the differences among the information programs on the posts where the subjects were stationed. This was the only complete analysis attempted, though comparisons of mean scores are made throughout the study.

Restrictions and Limitations

Subjects considered for this survey were restricted to Negro soldiers in the U.S. Army who were serving their first tour of active duty. Since no trainees were considered, each subject who participated in the study had between five months and three years service. Average time in service for participants was one year and eight months. At three of the installations visited, subjects were selected only from battalions of the combat branches. At the fourth post, a training facility, subjects were serving primarily in training support positions.

With random selection from rosters, control over the ratio of volunteers to draftees was not feasible. Results of the ratings rendered at each post are not identified by service commitment. However, if the status of a
black soldier as a volunteer or a draftee influences his perception of communications and status satisfaction, it does so only marginally.

In order to minimize the influence of individual personalities at the subordinate unit level, no more than 10 soldiers from any single battalion were used as subjects. This resulted in considerable variance of population samples among battalions of different sizes and with different proportions of black soldiers assigned, but the emphasis on the survey was on samples of the entire post, and selection of at least five different units to make up this sample is considered adequately representative.

A major limitation to the study was the inherent difficulty for an outsider to analyze the total organizational communication environment of any post or individual unit. Organizational communication in the Army includes countless unrecorded verbal exchanges, and the effectiveness of these exchanges varies with each personality involved. If a military unit includes 50 sergeants who have authority over portions of the personnel assigned to the unit, any number of these sergeants may be effective communicators, contributing to the overall communication success of the unit. Any number of others may be poor communicators, detracting from that success. During studies conducted in the Army in World War II, men with low educational levels listed the ability to explain
things clearly as one of the most necessary abilities a non-commissioned officer should have. It would require someone personally acquainted with every sergeant in a unit to thoroughly analyze that unit's organizational communication effectiveness. Thus only the recorded, formal and quasi-formal elements of post communication programs were available for analysis. These were the media of the command information programs.

In any unit, the talent and interest of an individual commander can salvage a poor post command information program or ruin a good one. This is another reason why subjects at every post were selected from several different subordinate organizations.

In those areas where direct observation of communication activity was not possible, the ratings given on the survey are considered indicative of the quality of the existing communication activity in a unit, at least so far as the black soldiers in that unit are concerned.

Higher level personalities, such as the commanding general, deputy commander, chief of staff, etc. are held to be in contribution to (or detraction from) the total information effort at a post. Therefore, influence from the senior command level was not considered

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except as a total part of the information program at each post.

Another major limitation in judging the accuracy of the ratings given on the survey form is the possible influence of clandestine black militants who seek to set every soldier against the "white" Army. These angry blacks remain unknown to the researcher and probably to the leaders of the posts upon which they are located, yet they may be known by, and have influence over, the men who participated in the survey, causing them to give lower ratings to both parts of the form than had the militant influence not been present. The only defense against this possible influence was the encouragement by the researcher for each man to think for himself, and the statement on the form pursuant to the influence of "black militants" on the post. Whenever more than one-half of the subjects from any battalion rated this statement below a score of 2, all of the forms from that unit were discarded, and a new unit scheduled to complete the sample of 50 from the post. (This actually happened in only one instance.)

In addition to the influence of black militants, another factor that was considered as possibly influential to survey scores rendered was the location of the post and the attitudes encountered by black soldiers when they entered the civilian community adjacent to the post. These attitudes, and the availability of things to do and
places to go, as well as the numbers of blacks in the
civilian community, could affect a soldier's satisfaction
with his location. This satisfaction with locality could
conceivably influence the ratings given to statements on
the survey, even though the statements included deal
exclusively with the military environment. A description
of the off-post situation at each installation as it was
perceived by the researcher is included in Chapter III.

Personal Factors

The final section of this chapter is devoted to
consideration of the personal biases and influences of
the researcher, some of his opinions, and the professional
goals sought after in this study. This information is
provided here that the reader may make more accurate
judgments as to the objectivity of this study and the
validity of the conclusions developed.

The writer of this thesis is a Regular Army offi-
cer with nearly 15 years service in the infantry. He
currently holds the rank of major, and is on the selected-
for-promotion list to lieutenant colonel. His educational
background includes a BA degree in Journalism from Louisi-
ana State University in 1958, and six hours graduate study
in Guidance and Counseling at Loyola University of New
Orleans. His military experience and education have been
primarily with infantry organizations in the United
States and overseas.

Selection of this topic for research reflects a genuine concern on the part of the writer for the communicative procedures of the United States Army. Prior to being ordered to the University of Kansas as a student, he was selected for future assignment as an Army information officer, so insights gained from this research will be of great value in the future. Although as yet without experience in the information field, the writer is a graduate of the Defense Information School at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, and a close observer of military information procedures. His tenure at the University of Kansas is considered as additional preparation for information duties.

The justification of considering the black minority in the Army as subjects for communication research has already been explained. What is important for the reader to understand is the great desire of the researcher that this study produce information that can be used by the Army in improvement of the Army Command Information Program, and that this criteria at times took precedence over academic standards of totally objective research.

As a future information officer and a strong believer in modernization of present information programs, the writer conducted his analysis of the programs at the posts visited with strong attention to the inclusion of fairly recent information techniques, and some
impatience with those programs that reflected no change from the procedures of 20 years ago. Some of this bias is probably reflected in the report rendered on each post in Chapter III. In defense of the writer's viewpoint, all of the techniques considered as "recent" have been evaluated and approved by the Office of the Chief of Information, Department of the Army, and their inclusion in local information programs officially encouraged.
APPENDIX 1 to CHAPTER I
THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

This appendix is provided to explain the researcher's rationale for selection of the particular statements to be included on the survey form.

In anticipation that most of the subjects would be given time away from their normal duties to participate in the survey, the instrument was designed to require not more than 20 to 30 minutes to complete, even with time allowed for careful consideration of each statement by the subjects.

The function of the instrument was to provide the subject the opportunity to express his opinion about most of the areas of organizational communication encountered in a military organization, and then to give him means of indicating his general attitude toward life in the Army and in his military unit. The two parts of the form were weighted with the same possible maximum score to provide a means of comparison between opinions of communication and attitudes toward the Army. This comparison could have been made more accurately by use of a longer, more complete list of statements with the opportunity to show consistency, or lack of it, on the part of each subject. Such an instrument, however, would have lengthened the time required from each subject, added to
the possibility of confusion and, because of the added
time required away from the subjects' duty stations, in-
creased the difficulty of gaining the cooperation of the
unit commanders who made the men available to be sur-
veyed.

For the statements included on the instrument,
the following rating instructions were given in writing
at the beginning of the form:

0 - means you strongly disagree with the statement.
1 - means you think the statement is false most of the
time.
2 - means that you are undecided about the statement.
3 - means you think the statement is true part of the
time.
4 - means you think the statement is true most of the
time.
5 - means you think the statement is true nearly all
of the time.

Statements included in Part I of the survey were:

1. All in all, I believe the senior officers and NCOs on
this post do a pretty good job of keeping their men in-
formed.

Rarely does a soldier feel that he is adequately
informed. He seldom is, and in the writer's experience,
he seldom pays much attention to attempts to inform him,
unless those attempts are skillfully and emphatically
carried out. This statement gives subjects the opportun-
ity to recall recent efforts by their leaders to provide
information about future activities, unit policies, expected standards of performance, etc. The natural response to the realization of a state of ignorance is to blame those responsible to inform as failing in their duties, so this would normally be a low-rated statement by troops of any race. However, response to Statement 1 provides insight into recent efforts on the part of commanders to keep their men informed, and the success of these efforts. High ratings on this statement by most of the men of a battalion would reflect a very strong program of information on the part of the unit leaders. This statement is also intended as the first of five statements which will indicate the subjects' level of approval of the media of command information used on the post where they serve. This media includes, as a minimum, direct announcements from the unit leaders, the post newspaper, and meetings known as "Commander's Call."

2. **A black soldier on this post who has a problem can usually find someone in authority who will listen to him.**

Giving confidence to soldiers that their personal and professional problems are important to their leaders is a key element of leadership and an integral part of an information program. Blacks on some installations have voiced the feeling that white leaders classify all their complaints as racial dissatisfaction, and try to ignore them. Often, when this statement was discussed, the subjects asked, "Do you mean just listen to our prob-
lems, or do you mean do something about them?" The reply given was that no leader can always solve all of the problems of all of his men, and the statement was meant to see if the men thought their leaders were willing to give them the time required to hear their problems out, consider them, give advice, and help if possible.

3. In my outfit, blacks are kept as well informed as whites about what is going on.

This statement was included to determine if black soldiers felt they were being deliberately or neglectfully omitted from the information programs on their posts.

4. I believe that every post should have a race relations council, made up of blacks, other minorities, and whites, of all ranks, because talking things out can help prevent trouble.

Race relations councils, also called racial harmony councils or incorporated in human relations councils, are popular in the Army's effort to improve human relations within its ranks. Many leaders remain unconvinced as to the worth of councils as problem solving agencies. This statement was designed to solicit the perceptions of black soldiers of the use and benefits of racial councils, and also to determine their attitudes toward communicating with their military leaders. Consistent low ratings on this statement would indicate a feeling that "talking things out" does not work, which, in the writer's opinion, would be an ominous sign of severe bitterness on the part
of black soldiers.

5. I usually read the post newspaper.

6. The post newspaper sometimes features articles of special interest to black soldiers.

7. The post newspaper tells it like it is.

Statements 5, 6, and 7 are included to gain the black soldiers' evaluation of one of the Army's primary mediums of command information. The Army newspaper system is discussed in Chapter II. These statements will also be used in the media evaluation group.

8. My unit conducts Commander's Call regularly, and the subjects discussed are usually interesting.

Commander's Call, a meeting period in which the unit commander should discuss items of interest with his assembled unit, is essentially a function of the small unit (company, battery or troop). A subject's rating of this statement is considered a direct reflection of the interest and effort put into command information by his immediate commanders. This is the last of the designated "media statements."

9. Most white officers and NCOs I know can talk to a black without insulting him.

Understanding of the language sensitivities of minority groups is important today. Leadership schools for officers and NCOs are stressing the need for Army leaders to be aware of terms that are considered offensive to minority group members. There is also an effort
to teach junior leaders to avoid the sometimes real, sometimes perceived, habit of "talking down" to minority group personnel. This statement tests the success of such training, and the total scope of the subjects' perception of verbal exchanges with their leaders. Some of the black soldiers may have rated this statement low simply from a general conviction that no white man knows how to talk to a black on really equal terms.

10. I believe my company and battalion commanders have a pretty good idea about how the blacks in my battalion feel about the outfit.

This statement provides an indication of the subjects' perception of the opportunities for two-way communication in their units. It further tests for ideas of black soldiers regarding the extent to which their leaders listen to them. In this aspect, it provides a measure of consistency when compared with Statement 2. In some cases it may also reflect opinions by insightful soldiers as to their own efforts and success as organizational communicators.

Statements composing Part II of this survey were:

1. Race relations on this post are as good or better than at other posts where I've been stationed.

This statement bears greater or lesser individual significance, depending upon the experience of the subject
Every soldier surveyed had served on at least two Army posts. This statement provides the chance to evaluate general perceptions of race relations on the installation where he completed the survey.

2. In my battalion, black soldiers receive fair treatment.

The admission of fair treatment may be a difficult thing for many young blacks to do. Some of the subjects may have rated this statement low out of conviction that few blacks anywhere in the U.S. receive truly "fair" treatment. In cases of high ratings, the researcher envisions either a particularly open-minded soldier or a very successful effort on the part of some commander to prove to black soldiers that they are considered equal to any other soldier of their rank. Low ratings, whether given justifiably or not, signify lack of this effort, or lack of success for its objectives.

3. If I was sure of getting the same treatment in every outfit that I get in the one I'm in now, I might consider staying in the Army.

This statement courts a low rating because it involves not only an admission of satisfactory treatment, but also a commitment that few soldiers are willing to make until a few weeks before their initial discharge. However, it provides an indication of the Army's present effectiveness in retaining black men beyond their first enlistment, and gives a measure of consistency when compared with Statement 2.
4. **Black militants do not have much influence on this post.**

Reasons for inclusion of this statement have been previously explained.

5. **I am willing to work hard for any officer or NCO of any race, so long as I receive fair treatment.**

This statement was primarily a test of attitude, seeking a high rating. It was included to determine if black soldiers in any number are so embittered that they are no longer willing to accept orders from a white man, regardless of how fair the man or the orders may be.

6. **A black officer or NCO can do the job the Army expects him to do without becoming an "Uncle Tom."**

"Uncle Tomism"—catering to whites for approval—is a charge sometimes leveled at a black military leader who brings disciplinary action against a black soldier, regardless of how justified that action may be. According to some reports, black soldiers who seek promotions are also often placed in the "Uncle Tom" category. This statement gives the subject the opportunity to express his own attitudes about black leadership in the Army.

7. **I think most white officers and NCOs realize that the black man can be an outstanding soldier if he is motivated.**

A conceived result of poor communication between a black soldier and his white leaders is the possibility that the black soldier could develop the opinion that his leaders consider black men to be inferior in potential as soldiers. This statement was included as a test of the presence of that opinion among subjects surveyed.

8. Although there are still many prejudiced people in uniform, I believe the Army is really trying to eliminate racial prejudice at all levels.

This statement gives the subject a chance to show his perceptions about the Army's efforts to make itself a recognized institution of equal rights. Consistent low ratings on this statement would indicate a rather ingrained attitude that the black man can never expect an equal opportunity in the Army, and signify the present attempts to convince minority groups that they have a future in the Army as failures.

9. In the long run, going back to segregated, all-black units would hurt both the Army and the black soldier.

Black separatism in the military services is a source of concern to Army leaders. A signified desire to return to all-black units would indicate that black soldiers have given up on hope for successful integration with whites, and now desire maximum possible exclusion of whites from their lives.

10. I believe that within the next five years, racial
prejudice in the Army will be almost all gone, and an Army career will be a good way for a black man to earn his living.

This statement was included as the last entry to provide an indication of the subjects' hope for future improvement in racial relations in the Army. The period of five years was selected as the maximum time period to which a young soldier could relate, and the maximum time he would be willing to allow for the effect of changes to policies and attitudes which he now perceives as discriminatory.

Although each statement included in Part II of the survey instrument was designed to provide some specific indication of the perceptions of black soldiers toward their status in the Army, the primary use of this part of the survey was to provide a general indication of attitudes and perceptions of Army life with which to compare Part I. As one untrained in either psychology or racial relations, the writer will not attempt to thoroughly analyze the results of each statement of Part II. Only general conclusions based upon the more obvious implications of Part II scores will be rendered.
CHAPTER II
THE ARMY COMMAND INFORMATION PROGRAM

The command information program of an Army post represents a large portion of the organizational communication effort of the leaders on that post, and much of the unofficial communication that takes place within a military unit must be considered as part of the overall command information activity of the unit. This chapter is therefore devoted to a description of the purpose, techniques and content of the Army Command Information Program.

The objectives and policies of the Army Command Information Program are cited in Army Regulation 360-81, which will be often quoted in subsequent pages. The spirit and intent of the regulation are interpreted by the writer, who is a trained (albeit inexperienced) Army information specialist. Much of this interpretation is inspired by the writings and comments of Major General Winant Sidle, the present Army Chief of Information.

Army Regulation 360-81 defines command information (CI) as

a leadership tool designed to assist the

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commander to inform and discuss with all internal audiences those matters which will engender mutual understanding and optimum performance in support of the Department of the Army.

As a definition, this leaves considerable room for interpretation. The vagueness is understandable when it is realized that, in spirit, command information includes almost every communication directed toward informing a soldier (or a civilian worker or military dependent) about anything pertaining to the Army or his association with it. The form and content may range from the Commander-in-Chief sending a Presidential Message to the armed services explaining a national policy, to an infantry squad leader warning an incoming soldier about the dangers of venereal disease at his new station.

The Office of the Chief of Information, Department of the Army, contains a Command Information Division, where concepts, methods and media of CI are considered and developed. Much material applicable to large numbers of personnel is originated there and passed along to Army posts in the U.S. and overseas for use in local CI programs. This includes a quarterly CI plan and appropriate support materials. However, because of the concept of CI as a tool of leadership, local commanders retain almost

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2Writer's concept, supported by paragraph 1-5b of AR 360-61, which reads, "Command Information is a continuous and comprehensive effort which uses all available communication media."
complete authority over their individual programs.

The only demands placed on a commander's CI activities will come from a higher commander, not the Chief of Information or any office dealing exclusively with information functions. These offices do have the obligation to offer advice and assistance to unit commanders in the development of all their information programs. However, no information staff officer has the authority to order any commander to originate, alter or increase an information program unless it is in the name of the commander's commander. More about the duties of information officers will be offered later in this chapter.

Because of the exclusive authority of local commanders over their own programs, command information activities vary greatly with regard to emphasis, formality, content, scope and success.

Every CI program has as its general purpose, the improvement of morale, well-being and performance of soldiers or other members of the Army's "internal public."

Especially important to this study is the intention of command information as a two-way channel of communication. Provisions for feedback are essential. Paragraph 1-5a, 3

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3Paragraph 1-5c, AR 360-81, provides, "Within the guidance furnished by Headquarters, Department of the Army and major subordinate commands, implementation of the program is decentralized. Command information needs vary from unit to unit and between geographical areas. Thus the needs of each commander can best be fulfilled when the program is specifically tailored for personnel in relation to their particular environment."
AR 360-81 specifies,

...the program is dedicated to the principle that soldiers who are well informed about the Army and their role in it and who feel they have a channel of communication to those in authority are more likely to be in a state of mind to perform in their most capable manner. Command information is the commander's means for effecting this two-way communication. The program should serve as the voice of the commander expressing facts which inform and motivate and as his listening post in interpreting the interest and attitudes of those in the command.

Command Information Media

Just as any military communication that informs the soldier may be considered in some context as command information, so any medium used to convey this information may be considered as command information media. The Department of Defense, through the Office of Information for the Armed Forces, and the Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Information, provide publications, films, TV tapes, speechmaker kits, posters and other material that a commander may elect to use as part of his CI media. However, except for certain one-time presentations on subjects considered critical to soldier education, a commander is rarely required to use any of the material provided. At the post level, where this study took place, the most common CI media are announcements from the commander, the post newspaper and "Commander's Call" training periods. These are normally
supplemented with command bulletins when the post or organization commander wishes to announce a specific policy or make a special point of information.

Army Newspapers

Any military organization with access to a reproduction device and sufficient funds to purchase paper can sponsor a unit newspaper or newsletter. Many such publications exist on a regular or intermittent basis. They are normally produced as an additional duty by soldiers or junior officers with some experience or interest in basic journalism. They serve as a kind of unit "house organ," featuring items of interest to members of the unit. They can be an excellent and easily produced medium of CI at the company, battalion or brigade level, but they exist at the pleasure of the unit commander, and they influence only the members of units that sponsor them. While unit-level newspapers may have had some effect on subjects included in this survey, they are not considered here as part of the installation CI program.

Every major Army post in the United States features a post newspaper, usually published on a weekly basis. This paper should contain items of interest to the internal public of the entire post. This includes officers and non-commissioned officers, dependents, civilian workers, and -- especially -- junior enlisted
men. The post publication may be in the category of an authorized Army publication or a civilian enterprise newspaper.

Authorized Army publications contain no commercial advertising except as may appear in inserts (comics, magazine sections, etc.) that may be used as supplements. These papers are published at Army expense and the content is controlled by the installation commander.

Civilian enterprise newspapers are provided by a civilian publisher, who sells commercial advertising to merchants and companies wishing to reach on-post readers. The advertising pays the publishing expense and gives the publisher whatever profit he makes. Except for the inclusion of advertisements, the content of civilian enterprise newspapers is normally little different from that of authorized Army newspapers. Most of the copy is provided the publisher by the post or organization information office. The operational editor of the paper is usually a member of this office, working under the supervision of the information officer. The military editor does the layout, selects the copy to fill the space allocated by the publisher, writes the headlines, etc. However, the names of military personnel may not appear in the masthead of a civilian enterprise newspaper.

Although civilian enterprise newspapers operate under certain re-

\[\text{Paragraph 2-9c (3), AR 360-81.}\]
strictions placed upon them by the Department of the Army regarding political announcements and other subjects where editorial bias could appear, local commanders have no authority to prohibit publication of any issue of the paper. However, commanders do have the requirement to review each issue of the paper before distribution. Should a local commander decide that the content of any specific issue of a civilian enterprise newspaper is likely to "interfere with the successful accomplishment of his mission or affect morale and discipline within his command," he has the authority to deny distribution of that issue of the paper on his post. In practice, the publisher seldom includes any copy not provided by the post information office. He is in business to make a profit from his sale of advertisements, and paying a civilian reporter to write for the "Army" publication would increase his expense.

In the United States, civilian enterprise newspapers are preferred as post newspapers, since they serve the needs of the post without expense to the Army. Also, many soldiers and dependents on the post like to read the advertisements of local merchants.

Regardless of the financial mechanics of the post newspaper, it is the primary printed medium of command information on the post. Though bulletins, letters, and

5 Paragraph 2-9d (1), (2), AR 360-1.
"chain of command" announcements may be more depended upon to ensure that critical information gets thoroughly disseminated, the post newspaper provides the chance to explain and illustrate in detail those information items of interest to soldiers, and to inform them of matters necessary to their general education but not immediately essential for the routine performance of their duties.

The vitality and interest-appeal of an Army newspaper is in many ways a reflection of the commander's interest in his CI program and his willingness to place facts and various opinions on "controversial" issues before his men. In recent years, the style, content and appeal of Army publications has been of increasing interest to career Army information officers and to some commanders. Publishing a really interesting newspaper on an Army post is not an easy task. An editor has usually only a few pages with which to work, and an audience to appeal to ranging in age, education and interests from the foot soldier to the general's wife. In a hierarchical environment it is easy for the readership appeal of a paper to drift toward the interests of the officers and senior NCOs, even without command pressure to that effect.

Another problem is that few papers have a large enough staff to afford full-time reporters. The editor must depend on units assigning someone to turn in reports of interest and unit activities to the editor.
Post newspaper coverage of sensitive topics is an indication of the willingness of a commander to have his CI program tackle the "gut issues" of leadership challenges that face the Army today. Such controversial subjects as drug addiction, race relations, military justice, and protest present such legal and social problems of publication that many military editors prefer to avoid them altogether, and many commanders feel they have enough problems without "rocking the boat" with their post newspaper.

In July, 1971, the Chief of Information published a letter to all commanders and information officers involved in publishing Army newspapers, urging revitalization of their publications. Changes in style and format were recommended, and commanders were encouraged to have their papers publish "gut issue" articles. Some post papers have moved toward more interesting and pertinent content. Others, evidently content with a "no controversy - low readership" editorial style, continue to publish only "safe" articles. Although unofficially discouraged as poor and unappealing photography by the Defense Information School, the most common type of news photograph found in many Army newspapers today is that

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6 Department of the Army Letter, Subject: "Changes to the Newspaper Portion of the Army's Command Information Program." 15 July, 1971, Major General Winant Sidle, Chief of Information.
of a senior officer presenting some award to another officer or senior NCO. These are known in information jargon as "grip and grin" photographs. They are interesting to the subjects of the photograph and their immediate family and friends. They are not at all interesting to enlisted men who do not know the subjects of the photo, except possibly by position, and are not very concerned with which mess steward in Third Brigade won the "Best Leftover Preparation of the Month Award." These pictures are, however, very safe to publish. No one objects to them, and it makes brigade commanders happy to see their commands represented in the post paper.

Post newspaper appeal to minority groups in the Army has been cited as a significant weakness in the Army command information area. A recent article in the Army Times, headlined, "Post Newspapers Dull," reported an analysis of Army newspapers in the United States by the Office of the Chief of Information and concluded, ".... many editors are not meeting the information needs of their target audiences." The lack of attention to news of minority group interest was specifically cited.

Three of the newspapers analyzed received heavy criticism of news coverage. One weekly,

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7 Per the writer's tenure as a student at the Defense Information School, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana.


9 Ibid.
with 2880 available editorial inches during 1972 devoted zero inches to minority news and 12 inches to drug abuse problems.

A second post newspaper with 5120 total inches, carried six inches of minority news, 14 on drug problems and nothing on military justice. The third newspaper, one of the largest civilian enterprise weeklies, with 8096 available column inches, ran only five inches of copy on minority news, 12 on military justice, 36 inches of items of interest to young soldiers and nothing on WAC news.

In a meeting with the editorial staff of one newspaper studied, the researcher was told, "...we consider every man as a soldier first; not black, white or chicano. We write for soldiers, not races."

Aside from a disagreement with this particular staff that their paper had much appeal for "soldiers" of any race, it is a contention of this study that many soldiers in the Army today are black men. They were black men before they entered the Army, and they will be black men after they are discharged. To expect them to lose their racial identity in the Army, especially during their first few years of service, is an unrealistic approach to communication.

**Commander's Call**

Commander's Call is a technique of command information designed for units small enough for all personnel to be collected in one place and verbally addressed by a single individual (in theory, the unit commander). This means that Commander's Call is normally conducted at the
company level. Larger units may, and often do, hold Commander's Call meetings, but it requires a large area, some assembly effort and careful scheduling to collect a majority of an entire battalion without serious mission interruption. Battalion commanders normally order such assemblies only for special purposes, so a battalion Commander's Call would be scheduled for a specific presentation rather than on a regular basis. At company level, Commander's Call should be a regularly scheduled activity, usually on a one hour per week frequency.

Commander's Call is an opportunity for unit leaders to see all of their people at one time, and more important, to talk directly to all of them without having to relay information through subordinate leaders. Equally important, is the opportunity for each soldier to see and listen to his commander, and to have the option of making comments or asking questions.

A unit commander should never be at a loss for a topic of discussion at Commander's Call. The Office of the Chief of Information produces quarterly packets of information and support materials that provide in-depth, easy-to-explain information of general interest to soldiers. Local information officers are expected to be active in assisting commanders in preparation of Commander's Call presentations. An unimaginative unit commander can easily acquire a complete brochure which he merely needs to study for a short time to have all the
facts, discussion materials and outlines required for a complete presentation. Extensive use of prepackaged materials is discouraged, however. Soldiers are almost always more interested in topics of direct concern to themselves and their particular units. A commander who truly wishes to conduct a viable Commander's Call will blend topics of general interest with a great deal of locally applicable information. Soldiers may or may not be attentive to the overall rank structure of the Army, but they will likely be much more interested in how their particular commander goes about selecting a man for promotion. Within the spirit of the Army Regulation, Commander's Call may be correctly used for any activity that contributes to the soldiers' knowledge of the Army and his role in it.

In the experience of the writer, Commander's Call is frequently treated as an unwelcome obligation that a busy commander must fit into his schedule because higher headquarters requires it. In such cases, prepackaged presentation materials are hastily procured from appropriate files, quickly previewed, and used as the total program for a "read-the-lecture" type presentation. The effectiveness of this type program is further negated when the presentation is made not by the unit commander, but by an equally unenthusiastic subordinate. Soldiers come to dread this type Commander's Call, and since the site of the meeting is frequently a very hot
classroom or a very cold set of uncovered bleachers, the total result is a deterioration of morale rather than any increase in the soldier's knowledge. If, in addition to poor preparation, the commander is a poor speaker or is uncomfortable before his men, the negative aspects of the situation multiply.

Despite the potential for negative results, Commander's Call can and should be a period of informative and useful communication between a small unit leader and his men. It should be planned to enhance the education and understanding of soldiers regarding their mission and each man's part in performing it. It should be a major source of feedback to the commander regarding the morale, attitudes and ideas of the soldiers he commands.

Representative Councils

At the prerogative of the post commander, an Army post may convene councils of troop representatives to discuss items of interest, conflict or misunderstanding with the commander or his designated stand-in. Types of councils most common are those of junior officers, non-commissioned officers, enlisted men of lower rank, and representatives of minority groups. These "Interracial Councils," or "Racial Harmony Councils," are the only type with which this study is directly concerned. The concept of councils is to give lower-ranking members of a military organization a chance to communicate
directly with their senior commanders. In the case of racial councils, the idea is to ensure that the commander is aware of the feelings, needs, aspirations and irritants of members of minority group races. Racial councils have been formed and used with varying degrees of success at many Army posts in the U.S. and overseas. Some individual brigades and battalions have formed their own subordinate racial councils, either at the direction of the post commander or the desire of the particular unit leader. Councils may be chaired by the commander, his deputy, the inspector general, the chaplain or the information officer (or anyone else so designated). While councils are not normally considered as a medium of command information, they are included as such in this study because of the opportunity for information exchange presented by their existence. Racial councils can provide a primary source of feedback to the sensitive leader regarding attitudes of troops of different races. Councils give the commander a chance to speak directly to representative members of minority races on his post, or in his command. Though intended as an advisory group and a tension-reliever in interracial actions, councils function exclusively through information exchange, and the writer feels totally justified in including them as a medium of command information.

Councils may be structured in any manner the commander feels will best serve his needs. Representatives
may be elected or appointed by leaders of the units they represent. Meetings may be regularly scheduled or held on an on-call basis. Most council meetings are administered informally, with each member having an opportunity to speak.

Some commanders encountered in the course of this study reported a distinct lack of success with interracial councils. According to these officers, the "representatives" often represented no one but themselves, and some seemed to feel that their election or appointment to the council meant they must present a complaint at every meeting. Occasionally a single individual would try to dominate the meeting, or the complaints made and questions asked would be petty and without substance. Chairmen would grow impatient with the lack of progress and the councils sometimes caused more misunderstanding than they reconciled. Even those commanders who favored the use of racial councils admitted that successful administration of a council requires considerable patience and skill on the part of the chairman.

Radio, Television and Film

As this report is being written, there are no post-sponsored television stations operating in the United States. Present Army Regulations prohibit the establishment of television stations or radio stations on posts
except where civilian commercial facilities are "unavailable or inadequate." ¹⁰ This is normally considered to be overseas, where local broadcasting is done in languages other than English. However, according to reports from various information officers, two Army posts in the U.S. now have their own radio stations. One of these posts was visited during the study. Since troops willingly listen to music, sports commentary and other radio features, radio adds considerable dimension to a CI program. Announcements of an informative nature reach audiences not influenced by any other media.

Films on many subjects are available through the Office of Information for the Armed Services. Though valuable as an aid in explaining important subjects or breaking the monotony of an all-verbal discussion period, films can be used to excess. They are handy in circumventing the task of planning and conducting a viable CI program at the unit level, and provide an easy alternative to preparation of an interesting Commander's Call. Used in this fashion, films can actually decrease the effectiveness of command information efforts.

Locally Produced Materials

Army Regulation 360-81 encourages production of CI materials at the local level. Clearance of such

¹⁰Paragraph 1-22, AR 360-81.
items by the Department of the Army is not required.\textsuperscript{11}
At the battalion level, the most common locally produced media is usually the unit newspaper or newsletter, though nothing prohibits a local commander who has the time, talent and funds from producing his own films, slides, pictures, tapes or any other material designed with general adherence to propriety and common sense.

Restrictions

As stated, official restrictions on command information activities are few. In general CI is regarded as requiring encouragement, not restriction. However, to ensure that the CI image does not become sullied with connotations of "indoctrination," paragraph 1-5f, of AR 360-81 specifies, "Command information facilities will not be used for military intelligence or psychological warfare purposes."

Of particular importance to this study is that portion of the regulation which reads,\textsuperscript{12}

Information provided must be factual, objective, timely and serve the needs of the command. It must be insured that no group is, or has reason to believe that it is, being unjustly excluded, discriminated against, or made an object of disrespect or derision because of race, sex, creed, national origin, or for any other reason.

\textsuperscript{11} Paragraph 1-22, AR 360-81.
\textsuperscript{12} Paragraph 1-5e, AR 360-81.
This official sanction against failing to convince minority groups that they are specifically included in their post and unit command information program gives added professional impetus to this study of the black soldier's perception of organizational communication.

The Information Officer

Every Army command of division size or larger has the position of information officer (IO) included on the personal staff of the commander. The IO should be a field grade officer (major or higher) with training in both the information field and the combat or service mission of his organization. He is the primary administrator of the command information program for his post or organization. As a member of the commander's personal staff, the IO serves in the same category as the inspector general, the staff judge advocate and other staff officers whose functions fall outside the general purview of personnel, intelligence, operations and training, logistics, or civil affairs. Ideally, the IO should have direct access to the commander at all times.

The primary areas of the information officer's staff responsibility are command information, public information and community relations. Of these areas, the writer firmly believes that command information is the most important. Unfortunately for CI progress, some IOs
and some commanders become more concerned about their relations with the civilian news media and the local community leaders than they do with their obligation to keep their own troops well-informed. Conducting a press conference for a group of critical and sometimes overtly hostile civilian correspondents is a demanding and often debilitating experience for an IO. Keeping his commander out of trouble with the local press, and in the good graces of community VIPs sometimes consumes a disproportionate share of the information officer's time and interest. In such cases, command information suffers. The Army image suffers also, because the best public relations the Army can have come from civilians meeting satisfied, well-informed soldiers, who collectively meet and talk to more people on a personal basis than does any general officer.

In his efforts on behalf of the command information program at his location, the IO should see to it that his post newspaper is as modern and interesting to junior enlisted men as his expertise and his commander's support can make it. He should make frequent readership surveys to determine who is reading the paper and what types of articles have the greatest interest for the men on his post. Information of dry content but of need-to-know value to the troops must be presented in ways that catch and hold reader interest, and much official jargon should be translated into easily readable language.
He should insure that a portion of the newspaper is devoted to publication of letters from the readership, in which troops have the opportunity to criticize, question or praise the policies of their leaders. He should be the most active member of the commander's staff in conducting face-to-face talks with randomly selected soldiers of all ranks. He should use the productions of higher headquarters and his own resources in designing Commander's Call presentations to be used by unit commanders lacking the time or imagination to design their own.

In a recent letter to practicing information officers, the Chief of Information cited an apparent failure of many IOs to provide adequate advice to their commanders regarding information activities. He alleged that this failure is a definite contribution to the Army's "poor image." 13

The commander should be able to rely upon his information officer, more than anyone else, to keep him informed of the moods, feelings and attitudes of his soldiers. If the IO cannot do this with reasonable accuracy, he is the wrong man for his job.

Conclusion

Many observations made in this chapter have been

judgments of the researcher, based on training and study as an Army Information Specialist. The analyses of post command information programs that appear in the next chapter are also judgmental, very subjective, and under possible influence of the personal communication values of the researcher. Other information officers, especially more conservative ones, might find less to criticize in the programs studied.

An important thing for readers to remember is that the media discussed in this chapter are only a small part of a good command information program. The essential element of command information, and all organizational communication in the Army is people talking to people; informing, teaching, encouraging and listening. The success of this primary medium of CI is not apparent through a review of post newspapers, interviews with IOs, or observation of racial councils. Its effect is displayed in how a military organization performs its mission, and how the soldiers in the organization feel about their outfit.
CHAPTER III
INSTALLATIONS VISITED AND RESULTS OBTAINED

In this chapter, each installation visited during the study will be generally described in sufficient terms to establish the environment of the research. A judgmental evaluation of each command information program will be rendered. The results obtained at the four installations will be presented in terms of mean scores and standard deviations for each item on the survey, means of the total scores given each part of the survey, and standard deviations for these mean totals. The final section of the chapter will deal with a comparison of the results among the four posts and an analysis of these results.

General opinions of the researcher regarding the racial attitudes encountered in the communities around each post will be reported, out of concern that these attitudes bear influence on the general state of morale of soldiers who encounter them. This influence could have some affect upon the scores awarded the survey, although each statement was written with the idea of making it as invulnerable as possible to influences from outside the immediate military environment of the subjects. The reported opinions regarding racial attitudes should be considered as a single outlook by an observer untrained in racial relations, whose primary
interest is in communication, not interracial attitudes.

Lack of detail included in the descriptions of installations does not warrant concern for the validity of the study. Identification of certain activities peculiar to the post, detailed reporting of the locale or of specific characteristics of key personalities on a post would quickly identify it to anyone knowledgeable about the Army. Because this study was possible only through the cooperation and assistance of many commanders and staff officers, some of whom must be subsequently criticized, it is not considered appropriate to identify any post or command by name or unit designation. The writer is interested in determining weaknesses in communication with black soldiers throughout the Army, not in condemning any particular post. Thus, the installations visited will be referred to as Fort A, Fort B, Fort C and Fort D. They are not fictional posts, and most military readers will quickly guess the actual installation being described, despite the titular disguise.

Each commander of troops participating in the research was provided confidentially an annotated copy of the survey form, showing mean scores allocated to each item by troops of his command. Information officers or other representatives of the post received copies of the survey form showing average ratings for each statement given by all the participants of a post.
Where exit interviews were desired they were accomplished with the post information officer or the racial relations officer.

Each post is described in the order it was visited. The visits were planned according to the time available to the writer and the distance of each post from the writer's duty station. The order in which installations were visited did not influence the research. No comparison of results was done until all research at the four installations visited was complete.

Fort A

Fort A is the largest of the posts visited during the study. This means, of course, that the sample of 50 represents the smallest population sample included in the research. To allow for this smaller relative sample, all the troops surveyed at Fort A were selected from battalions with combat missions, although there are many other type organizations located at Fort A. Since all of the subjects from two of the three other posts concerned came from combat branch organizations, the sample is considered representative enough of troops assigned to combat units at Fort A, and reasonable to compare with survey results obtained at other posts.

Fort A is located adjacent to a small city. Attitudes of local white civilian residents toward
blacks were perceived by the researcher in cursory investigation as distant and indifferent. The non-military black population of the city is quite small, but military families residing off-post provide a considerable black presence in the town. Most of the local bars and night clubs are "private member" establishments which require patrons to possess a membership card. The writer was offered a card, without charge, immediately upon entering two of the bars. At two others, he was served without reference to a membership card, even though he was unknown to the operators of the establishments and the outside doors were marked with "member only" signs. No blacks were observed at any of the four "private member" clubs visited.

All of the entertainment places located by the writer that catered to (or evidently even tolerated) black patrons are located in a single area of the city. This is the same area that contains most of the non-military black population.

In addition to blacks, the city is the home for a sizable representation of two other racial minorities.

The information officer at Fort A is a lieutenant colonel who has been trained at the Defense Information School. He has several years experience in information duty. He is assisted by a first lieutenant, two civilian secretaries and two enlisted men. The editor of the post newspaper is an Army specialist with
a civilian background in journalism. The post newspaper at Fort A, a civilian enterprise publication, is reasonably well done in style and format, but lacking in viable content. Although occasional stories that might interest blacks were observed, they covered rather "safe" topics such as sickle cell anemia, performances by black entertainers, etc. Most of these stories appeared to be re-writes from non-local sources, and were the types of articles a black soldier could find in a popular civilian publication for black people. In a review of the papers published for the previous six months, only one feature on a black soldier was noticed, and that soldier was a senior NCO. The general content of the paper was classified by the researcher as uninteresting to lower-ranking enlisted men of any race. It appeared to be a rather typical "old style" Army newspaper, containing many articles and pictures on training activities, awards ceremonies and newly arriving or departing senior officers. One troop commander, a full colonel (white) told the researcher, "That newspaper is absolutely worthless as information or entertainment."

The post IO reported "adequate" support of his efforts by the post command group. Recent participation by the commanding general in the post CI program took the form of a reporter's interview of the commander, conducted near the end of 1972. The General discussed
past activities of the post and revealed future plans and objectives. The articles based on this interview seemed well written, but of real interest almost exclusively to higher ranking members of the post.

The post IO could not remember when (of if) the last readership survey of the newspaper had been conducted.

A racial relations council was in existence at post level on Fort A, and, like all Army posts, an "equal opportunity office" functioned out of the post headquarters. The commanding general had personally taken the duty of "racial relations officer"for the post, and had directed major subordinate commanders to do the same for their respective organizations. (Each Army post is required to have, in addition to the equal opportunity office, an assigned racial relations officer. In theory this officer has training or experience in racial relations and devotes full time to his duties.)

Several officers with whom the researcher came into contact at Fort A mentioned the post commander's keen interest in just and equal treatment for all soldiers. This report was usually a prelude to an opinion by the officer speaking that blacks were generally satisfied with their racial position at Fort A. Several officers pointed out things the post was doing to improve morale of minority group soldiers. This included hiring of black entertainers for frequent appearances in the
post service clubs, periodic serving of "soul food" in unit mess halls, stocking the post exchange with supplies of cosmetics and utensils for black hair and skin care, providing good representation of black-oriented publications in unit day rooms, etc. The general pre-survey opinion of unit commanders at Fort A was, "Unless you happen to talk to a bunch of militants, you should get pretty positive results." Fort A was the only post at which commanders and staff officers seemed ready to make any sort of prediction regarding responses to the survey.

Both the post information officer and the equal opportunity office supervisor, a government service civilian, expressed strong interest in the study and in the results obtained from the survey. Commanders of units providing subjects for the study also exhibited more personal interest in the nature of the research than did commanders at any other installation visited.

Fort A subjects were surveyed in groups of eight to ten men each. In most cases, all the subjects belonging to a battalion were surveyed collectively. Fort A soldiers were, by a considerable margin, the most talkative of all the subjects encountered. Conversation was restricted by the researcher until after completion and collection of all the forms. At that time, comments and questions were entertained.

The prevalent attitudes of Fort A black soldiers
were perceived by the writer as bitterness and resentment toward the Army, and a resigned acceptance that racial prejudice cannot be escaped in the military. They reported having expected to find equal status with whites as soldiers in the U.S. Army, but found Army life no better, and often worse than their civilian experience.

Only seven Fort A subjects were aware of the existence of a racial relations council on their post. During post-survey conversations, the post newspaper and Commander's Call seemed to be held in general contempt by most of the black soldiers interviewed. More than half of the subjects at Fort A provided unsolicited reports of incidents of racial discrimination concerning themselves or a close acquaintance.

Fort B

Fort B is located on the outskirts of a fairly large city. The black population of the city, though relatively small, is much larger than that of any other civilian community near a post visited in the course of this research. Attitudes of the white civilians in the city toward blacks were classified by the writer as generally tolerant, though somewhat distant. Although the "private member" bar system was not apparent in the Fort B city, very few blacks were observed in places other than the establishments which obviously catered to
blacks. These places were most concentrated along a few blocks of a single street in the city.

Because of the obvious advantages accruing to Fort B by virtue of its location near a population center, the writer individually questioned 23 black soldiers about the attitudes they personally encountered in the locality. This group did not include any soldiers included in the Fort B survey. Nine of the 23 were non-commissioned officers. Two were lieutenants. Both officers and all but one of the NCOs reported generally favorable or neutral attitudes encountered among white civilians around Fort B. The remaining NCO, who appeared to be the youngest of the sergeants, and 10 of the 12 junior enlisted men perceived attitudes of local white civilians as either prejudicial or mercenary. ("They're nice to us when they want our money.") All of the men reporting unfavorable attitudes in the city resided in military barracks on the post. Eight of the 11 admitted that they seldom went anywhere other than the "black district."

Fort B is the home of a major combat organization. It is one of a few posts at which certain new policies designed toward making the Army more attractive to volunteers were initially implemented. Known as "Volar Concepts" (from Volunteer Army) these include elimination of reveille formations, use of civilian employees as KPs, more free time for the soldier with
less restriction on his off-duty activity, more liberal policies concerning haircuts, civilian dress, etc. Although these policies were initially tried at places like Fort B, most of them had been in effect for some time at all of the posts visited.

One of the activities of Fort B that has not spread to other posts is a rather massive command information effort. Fort B employs both a post information officer and an IO assigned to the major organization headquartered there. Since the post and the organization have the same commander, the two information officers normally work as a team. The post IO, a lieutenant colonel, is trained and experienced, including an assignment at the Office of the Chief of Information. The organization IO is a major. Though not "school trained," he had held his position for nearly two years at the time of the survey, and appeared quite competent. Should the organization be deployed away from the post, the major would go with it while the colonel would remain to serve those units left on the installation and any newly arriving organizations.

The Fort B information office was by far the most highly staffed of any post studied. In addition to the two field grade officers, several lieutenants (including one WAC) were assigned to the office, along with three secretaries, two senior civilian workers, a senior NCO and a seemingly large staff of junior
grade enlisted men. The post newspaper, a civilian enterprise publication, was edited by a government service civilian, with help from several other enlisted men.

Fort B is one of the posts in the U.S. that operates its own radio station. The station is under the supervision of the post information officer and is managed by a trained NCO with a small staff of enlisted men who serve as announcers and engineers.

Councils, known at Fort B as "Racial Harmony Councils," are active at the post level and at every major subordinate command. In many cases, individual battalions sponsor their own councils.

Although the Fort B newspaper gave more attention to minority news than did other papers, it could not really be considered (by the researcher) as a "progressive" Army newspaper. Generally it covered the same items as are found in most other post papers. "Gut issues," though not totally avoided, were not prominent. However, the Post Racial Harmony Council, publishes a separate tabloid-type newsletter, oriented especially toward minority group interests. Featuring primarily articles of interest to black soldiers (the largest minority on the post) the newsletter appears bi-weekly, presenting news from black communities, biographies of famous blacks, black history articles and editorials, letters and art from the black soldiers
on the post, and representative entries from the other minority groups.

The individual with the keenest interest in the study at Fort B was the organization information officer. Fort B unit commanders, though cooperative, did not evidence the same collective interest in the research as did commanders at Fort A, nor were any of the commanders or staff officers interviewed willing to predict the results of the survey.

The post information officer stated to the writer that he had more people than he needed assigned to his office, and a fully adequate budget. He also reported firm support by the commanding general for the CI program. He was the only IO encountered who would admit satisfaction in all three areas.

Considering the total efforts of a large information office, the diverse media of the CI program and the extent to which it extended throughout the command, Fort B is considered by the writer to have the best CI program of any post visited.

Black soldiers at Fort B were not particularly inclined to talk with the researcher. Only a few personal complaints were voiced. However, positive statements of satisfaction with their status at Fort B were also scarce, even when solicited by the writer.

Of the 50 men interviewed, all but four were aware of the existence of racial harmony councils on
the post and in the subordinate units. Seven soldiers stated that they were serving or had served as representatives of their units on one of the councils.

Surprisingly, only 26 of the 50 subjects reported ever reading a copy of the racial harmony council publication for minority group soldiers.

Fort C

Fort C is another installation that houses a major combat organization. The post is located between two small towns. Civilian attitudes toward blacks in the towns were judged very similar to those in the city outside Fort A -- distant and indifferent. The non-military black population of both towns is very small.

The "private member" bar system was in effect in some of the entertainment establishments in the towns. Other places seemed to accept blacks willingly, though all of the "black clubs" were located in a small area in one of the towns and very few off-duty black soldiers were observed outside this area.

The information officer at Fort C was untrained and inexperienced. Although he seemed to be trying hard to learn his job, he told the researcher that he had no military or civilian background to qualify him for information duty, did not desire the assignment, and had no idea why he was selected for the position.
Other members of his immediate office included a senior civilian worker, a secretary and a first lieutenant. The lieutenant was the director of the printing agency for post publications and only incidentally involved in information work. The Fort C IO was non-committal regarding the support of his activities by the post command group.

The post newspaper at Fort C is a civilian enterprise publication, functionally edited by a trained Army specialist. Two other enlisted men complete the staff of the paper. The Fort C paper had the least space devoted to minority news and interests of any paper reviewed. There was a regular feature devoted to answering questions sent in by readers, but most of the questions printed seemed to come from dependents, civilian workers and sergeants. There was no reference in the "questions" column to anything that could be counted as a "gut issue." Neither the editor of the paper nor the lieutenant in charge of publications could remember if a readership survey had ever been taken.

The distribution criteria of the Fort C paper is considered indicative of the direction of the command information program at Fort C and many other posts in the United States. The Fort C paper was printed for a distribution schedule of one copy for each set of living quarters on the post (occupied exclusively by officers and NCOs), one copy for each officer assigned to
the post, and one copy for every 10 enlisted men. Had enlisted soldiers been greatly interested in reading the Fort C paper, it would have been difficult for many of them to find a readable copy. However, if the interest shown in the paper by black soldiers is shared by their white counterparts, one copy for every 10 soldiers is more than sufficient.

At the time of the researcher's visit, Fort C had recently received a new commanding general. The former commander had written (or permitted his by-line over) a column for each issue of the newspaper. In this "Commander's Column" he discussed topics of supposed interest to the command. Although several of these columns covered pertinent subjects, none of the gut issues, especially race relations topics, ever appeared in the issues of the paper reviewed by the writer.

No councils of any type existed at Fort C at the time of the survey. The former post commander had prohibited councils on the opinion that they "undermine the chain of command."¹ The new commander had not, at the time of the research, changed this policy.

Fort C did have an assigned, full-time racial relations officer. This was a young captain who was preparing to leave the service to attend law school. His office seemed to be the total effort at Fort C toward enhancement of minority group morale on the

¹Reported to the writer by the post information officer.
The racial relations officer had been sent from Fort C to a training course sponsored by the Department of Defense, then assigned to his position. He told the researcher that few of the senior officers on the post seemed to understand much about racial relations. Only nine men out of the 50 interviewed at Fort C were aware of the existence of the racial relations officer, and none of these seemed to have a clear concept of what his duties entailed.

Black troops at Fort C were interviewed in groups of seven to 10. The attitudes of the subjects were perceived by the researcher to be very similar to those encountered at Fort A. Though Fort C subjects were not so vocal as the Fort A men, comments following the completion of the survey form portrayed feelings of disappointment and dissatisfaction, and a lack of faith that things would ever get better. There was a uniform lack of knowledge about the efforts of the Army to improve the status of minority group soldiers, even though these efforts have been well publicized.

An interesting sidelight to the context of the study occurred at Fort C. Several units sent non-commissioned officers to take part in the survey, although the requirement for only first-term black soldiers was made well known to the post headquarters. Though none of the forms completed by the sergeants were used in the final results, the NCOs were permitted to complete
survey forms, with the instructions to score the survey the way they thought a young black soldier in their own battalion would score it. In almost every case, the surveys turned in by the black NCOs were many points higher in scoring than those scored by bona-fide first-term black soldiers. As a general trend, the higher the rank held by the NCO, the more optimistic his perception of the attitudes of young black soldiers toward the Army and their units. Though much additional research would be necessary to substantiate any conclusions from this minor Fort C experience, some interesting speculations are called forth. One of these is that senior black NCOs, having experienced great improvement in their status from the days when they were junior enlisted men, have no greater insight into the feelings of young black soldiers than do white leaders. Another is that due to their own ego-involvement with the Army, black sergeants are hesitant to admit the alienation they perceive among young black soldiers today. The final and most likely explanation for the increased scores rendered by NCOs is that the older and more mature an individual of any race becomes, the more tolerant he grows toward the "minor" irritants of life and the more appreciative of the good things his perseverance and hard work have brought him. If this latter speculation is true, it then becomes the task of the Army to blunt some of the sharp edges of resentment among young black
troops until age and maturity begins to work on the side of good Army leadership.

**Fort D**

Fort D is located near a very small town. In relation to proximity to larger population centers, it is the most isolated of the installations visited.

Attitudes of white civilians toward blacks was very difficult to judge, since there seemed to be little cause for black soldiers to go into the town proper. There are practically no non-military blacks in the town, and all of the business and entertainment places catering to soldiers seemed to be located along the highway leading into the post. This area was known to Fort D personnel as "The Strip."

Along "The Strip" were a few bars and clubs that appeared to cater to black soldiers. At these places, and everywhere else investigated by the writer, people were very guarded about their feelings toward blacks and toward soldiers in general. This may have been due to some serious investigations by civilian law enforcement officials regarding vice operations near the post, conducted not long before the researcher arrived at Fort D.

Fort D is also unique in the study in that there are no combat-oriented organizations located on the post. The mission of the post is to train new
soldiers, and practically every individual on Fort D is directly or indirectly involved in this mission.

One engineer battalion is quartered at Fort D, and 10 subjects surveyed were assigned to that battalion or units attached to the battalion. The remaining 40 subjects were permanent party personnel assigned to training brigades and battalions. Duty positions of these men were mostly as cooks, clerks, truck drivers or medical aidmen.

In consideration of results obtained by the survey at Fort D, the environment of an Army training center should be taken into account. The needs of the trainee are uppermost in the minds of most unit leaders. The enlisted position of highest prestige is that of the drill instructor. Schedules, activities, leadership attention, and often communication priorities are devoted toward producing a well trained and motivated new soldier. Under such circumstances, lower ranking permanent party personnel tend to be forgotten unless special efforts on their behalf are made by their leaders. Without even the esprit de corps of a combat unit to bolster sagging morale, motivation of permanent party personnel at a training center is a real challenge to leadership.

The information officer at Fort D is a lieutenant colonel who is on his first information assignment, but has extensive experience in other staff areas. His immediate office includes a lieutenant, two civil-
ians and a normal compliment of enlisted men and secretaries.

The Fort D paper is an authorized Army publication, edited by a trained Army specialist. A review of the newspaper for the previous six months revealed a sudden change in style and content, occurring about two months prior to the writer's visit. Issues published after that time contained many articles on race, alcoholism, drugs and other sensitive issues. Minority news was fairly well represented. Somewhat surprisingly for a training center paper, the orientation of the paper was not exclusively toward trainee interests. The front page of the paper was designed to catch the eye of the casual observer, and to this effort was devoted much space that could have been used for news copy. Although in the writer's opinion there was still excessive attention devoted to activities of dependents, "grip and grin" photographs, and "news" items of very little interest to troops, the Fort D paper seemed more in accord with the recommendations of the Army Chief of Information than any other paper observed during the study.

Fort D sponsors a human relations council at the post level and at every major subordinate command (brigades). The human relations council incorporates racial relations at each level. There is also a full-time human relations officer, a major, who coordinates
council activities and supervises the full-time racial relations officer, also a major. Both officers have direct access to the deputy post commander, a brigadier general.

All of the officers mentioned above displayed keen interest in the study, and in the results obtained at Fort D. Subordinate unit commanders did not evidence particular interest in the study, though all units contacted were cooperative.

Because of the scarcity of first-term black soldiers permanently assigned to Fort D, subjects were interviewed by brigade groups, rather than battalions. The sample of 50 represents a sizable portion of the black, permanent party enlisted soldiers serving their first term of service at Fort D.

Because of the isolation of Fort D in proximity to an area with a black population and the disadvantages of being a permanent party enlisted man at a training oriented post, it was a supposition of the writer that Fort D would probably be scored lowest of all posts, especially in the area of status satisfaction.

Survey Results

The results of the survey shown in Table 1 are presented in the form of mean scores awarded to each survey item at each of the four posts, along with standard deviations for each item, mean totals by post and standard deviations of the mean totals.
### TABLE 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Response Items by Black Soldiers at Installations Listed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part I</th>
<th>Fort A</th>
<th>Fort B</th>
<th>Fort C</th>
<th>Fort D</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>Fort A</th>
<th>Fort B</th>
<th>Fort C</th>
<th>Fort D</th>
<th>Standard Deviations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (keeping men informed)</td>
<td>2.36 2.72 1.50 2.56</td>
<td>1.48 1.35 1.49 1.59</td>
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<td>2. (leaders listening)</td>
<td>1.94 3.06 1.80 2.76</td>
<td>1.49 1.51 1.50 1.96</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. (blacks as well informed as whites)</td>
<td>2.78 3.22 2.28 3.02</td>
<td>2.76 1.57 1.55 1.87</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. (race relations councils)</td>
<td>4.36 4.46 4.20 3.49</td>
<td>1.88 0.95 1.52 1.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. (reading the post newspaper)</td>
<td>2.58 3.20 3.16 2.88</td>
<td>1.77 1.38 1.43 1.78</td>
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<td>6. (post paper having articles of interest for blacks)</td>
<td>1.30 2.32 1.78 2.20</td>
<td>1.88 1.95 1.55 1.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. (post paper telling the truth)</td>
<td>1.36 2.44 1.42 1.58</td>
<td>1.45 1.49 1.43 1.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. (Commander's Call)</td>
<td>1.58 1.92 1.72 1.52</td>
<td>1.51 1.54 1.51 1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. (white leaders talking to blacks without insult)</td>
<td>2.60 2.88 2.32 2.90</td>
<td>1.38 1.60 1.58 1.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. (commanders knowing how blacks feel)</td>
<td>2.00 2.58 2.50 2.10</td>
<td>1.79 2.52 1.84 2.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean Totals</td>
<td>22.86 28.80 22.68 25.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation of Mean Totals</td>
<td>7.14 7.55 8.60 8.71</td>
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</table>
TABLE 1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part II</th>
<th>Fort A</th>
<th>Fort B</th>
<th>Fort C</th>
<th>Fort D</th>
<th>Fort A</th>
<th>Fort B</th>
<th>Fort C</th>
<th>Fort D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (race relations compared to other posts)</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (blacks getting fair treatment)</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (staying in the Army)</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (black militants)</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (working for fair leaders of any race)</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (&quot;Uncle Toms&quot;)</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (white leaders realizing blacks' potential)</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. (Army trying to eliminate prejudice)</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. (going back to all-black units)</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. (future for blacks in the Army)</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Totals 24.00 30.20 24.00 26.10
Standard Deviation of Mean Totals 8.30 7.14 9.00 8.71
To provide a second means of comparing survey results among posts, the score of 30 points was selected as the minimum positive rating that could be given either part of the survey. Table 2 shows the number of soldiers at each post who rated communication, status satisfaction, or both at a score of 30 or higher.

**TABLE 2**

Number of Subjects at Each Post Who Awarded Scores of 30 or Above to either or Both Parts of the Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Part I</th>
<th>Part II</th>
<th>Both Parts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort A</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort B</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort C</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort D</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores of 30 or higher correspond to the mean scores in terms of ranking among posts, showing Fort B with the most "satisfied" soldiers, followed by Fort D, with Forts A and C almost exactly equal. Along with mean ratings, these figures signify a serious morale problem among new black soldiers. Only one post reflects that at least half of the subjects were marginally satisfied with their status, and none of the posts had even half of the subjects showing minimum satisfaction with their communicative environment.
Comparison of Results Among Posts

Although results at every post were much lower than expected, we observe that Fort B was scored significantly higher in almost every mean rating than the other posts, with Fort D surprisingly in second place. Ratings between Forts A and C were almost identical. The Tukey B test was applied for comparison of individual means, and showed that the Fort B mean differs significantly from the means of the other posts on both parts of the survey. Mean scores among the other posts do not differ significantly. The source tables for an independent groups analysis of variance (Table 3), when interpreted through the "Tables of F" compiled by Edward L. Wike, also show significant treatment effect. Considering the differences in mean total scores, this treatment can also be attributed to the higher ratings given at Fort B.

TABLE 3
Source Tables for the Independent Groups Analysis of Variance, and a Comparison of Mean Scores

For Part I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
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<td>410.33</td>
<td>6.34</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>196</td>
<td>64.70</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Fort D</td>
<td>25.64</td>
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It is again acknowledged that the many uncontrolled factors that could have influenced scores on either part of the survey render any statistical test applied to these scores somewhat suspect, and certainly not conclusive. Most of these factors, location, influence of individual commanders or black militants, attitudes encountered among white civilians, etc., have already been discussed.

In a practical consideration of results obtained on the different posts the questions that seem to the writer to warrant greatest attention are:

(1) Why were the scores at Fort B significantly higher than those of the other posts?

(2) Why did Fort D subjects, with their disadvantaged location and potential for low morale among permanent party black personnel rate their satisfaction with communication and their status in the Army higher than did subjects at Forts A and C.

(3) To what extent did organizational communication
influence the ratings at each post?

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the presentation of the writer's consideration of each of these questions.

Why Were the Scores at Fort B Significantly Higher?

The most powerful rival influence acknowledged by the writer is that of location. It is a definite detriment to the convenience of this study that the best command information program encountered happened to be located on the post with the most favorable off-post environment. Were black troops at Fort B more satisfied with their status in the Army because of the better organizational communication practiced at Fort B, or because during off-duty time they had more places to go, more things to do and more black people with whom to associate?

To avoid charges of naivete, the writer will acknowledge that the off-post environment at Fort B probably influenced the scores of the survey there to some degree. That degree, however, is considered fairly slight for the following reasons:

(1) The survey statements were composed to solicit judgments on situations dealing exclusively with the on-post aspects of a black soldier's life.

(2) A very negative off-post environment can cause a soldier to resent being stationed at his particular
installation. However, it does not necessarily follow that a favorable off-post social climate will cause a soldier to approve of his on-post status. Pleasant off-post conditions can make duty hours seem more dreary by comparison, and friendly, hospitable civilians can cause stern sergeants to appear even more disagreeable than might otherwise be true.

(3) Although the writer judged attitudes of white civilians around Fort B to be generally tolerant, most of the young blacks questioned who were in the same status as the soldiers surveyed, perceived civilian attitudes to be essentially mercenary. Though the Fort B locality offered a greater and more diverse choice of types and places of entertainment, most of the young Negroes observed in the city by the writer were congregated into an area scarcely larger than the "black sections" of the towns near the other posts.

Except for its proximity to a larger population center and its superior CI program, the writer finds little to distinguish Fort B from Forts A and C. All of the subjects from each post were assigned to infantry, armor or artillery battalions. Their duties were very similar regardless of their location. Most of the "Volar Concepts" were in effect on all three posts, and none of the subjects were required to perform kitchen police, mow lawns, pick up trash, stand regular reveille formations, or any of the other common military irritants.
Except for newer barracks for some troops, the on-post facilities were not significantly better at Fort B. Service clubs, exchanges, medical facilities and other facilities that can influence troop morale were very similar at each post, with Fort A having a slight advantage in numbers and size. Except for the leadership abilities of individual commanders, which the writer could not judge, the advantages possessed by Fort B that could most be expected to influence status satisfaction of black soldiers were:

(1) a post radio station, featuring programs and music selected for their appeal to young soldiers, to include lots of "soul music."

(2) a post newspaper that gave some (more than Forts A and C) attention to news of special interest to blacks.

(3) a special information newsletter designed primarily for black interests.

(4) racial harmony councils at every brigade and many in individual battalions.

Finally, the most powerful reason to conclude that organizational communication and command information were at least partly responsible for improved status satisfaction of black troops at Fort B is that 50 black soldiers, through their response to the survey, said so. The increase in approval of organizational communication at Fort B over Forts A, C and D as reflected in survey scores is in almost exactly equal proportions to the
difference in status satisfaction shown by the subjects of each post. This close proportion with which parts of the survey scores fluctuated in accord with each other is held to be significant. At no installation was the proportionate change in mean ratings between parts of the survey greater than 1.0 when compared with any other post. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that had the mean score at Fort B been lower for either part of the survey, the other part would have also been lower. The writer then concludes that, among all the possible reasons why Fort B subjects rated their status satisfaction higher than subjects of other posts, superior organizational communication and a more effective command information program must be counted.

Considerations of Fort D

The disadvantages faced by leaders at Fort D in establishing an environment conducive to high morale among black, permanent party soldiers has already been stressed. Even though differences among the mean scores of Forts A, C and D were not statistically significant, the relative ranking of Fort D in comparison of results among posts is considered situationally quite significant. The explanation of why black soldiers performing the least interesting duty at the most isolated post should score their status satisfaction higher than that of subjects at two more advantaged posts is difficult to
ascribe, unless attribution can be partially made to the influence of communication.

The Fort D command information program was considered by the writer to be the second best of the four posts visited. The post newspaper was judged as the most progressive of the four publications reviewed. However, it is too easy and too unrealistic to conclude that the relative standing of Fort D in the survey was due entirely to a more viable program of communication than those sponsored by Forts A or C. That organizational communication had some influence is indicated by the higher mean ratings given to both parts of the survey at Fort D. It is the writer's judgment, however, that the activities of the racial relations councils, the human relations and racial relations officers, all strongly supported by the deputy post commander, had more relative influence at Fort D than did those similar activities at any other post, including Fort B. Though subject approval of racial relations councils at Fort D was not quite so high as at other posts (possibly because of the trainee orientation of these councils) the influence of racial relations activities appeared recognizable at the post. One of the areas in which Fort D rated much better than Forts A or C was in the perception of subjects of how well their leaders kept the men informed, and another was in the (relative) belief that blacks were as well informed as whites. Another indicative area, one in which Fort D
was rated highest of any post, was in relation to the belief of subjects that white NCOs and officers were "able to talk to a black without insulting him." This perception, signified by Statement 9 of Part I on the survey form, is complimentary to the individual leaders at Fort D, but also indicates some success on the part of the various racial relations councils on the post to improve understanding between races.

Without conflicting evidence of some other reason why Fort D subjects rated their post slightly higher than did soldiers at Forts A or C, the writer concludes that at least part of the reason is the existence of a better communication program at Fort D, supported by an aggressive human relations activity that bears influence on the morale of black soldiers beyond the contribution of these activities (human and racial relations) to the enhancement of organizational communications at the post.

Comparison of Fort A and Fort C

To explain the almost identical rating between Fort A, which had some command information effort directed at black soldiers, and Fort C, which had almost none, one must only conclude that the efforts at Fort A were so totally unsuccessful as to be hardly better than no effort at all. What CI advantages Fort A possessed were most obviously wasted so far as Negro soldiers were concerned.
The post information officer was trained and experienced, but had no idea how his information program was being received by black troops (or any other troops). The post newspaper included some minority news, but black soldiers did not read the newspaper, so the space that was allocated to items of interest to blacks was essentially wasted. The post sponsored a racial relations council, but black soldiers were either unaware of its existence or considered it to be operating at too high a level to be of any advantage to themselves. Finally, the personal assumption of the role of racial relations officer by the commanding general of Fort A is viewed as a noble but poorly considered gesture on the part of that officer. Commanders, particularly commanding generals, have little time to devote to any single activity, including race relations.

What happens to a young black private who has a complaint to make to the racial relations officer? In the unlikely event that he makes it past the myriad of military and civilian people whose duty it is to see that the commander is not bothered by "routine" matters, and gains an audience with the two-star racial relations officer, chances are he will be too awe-struck or too terrified to articulate his complaint. The same problems apply in lesser degree to subordinate commands in which the commander personally assumes the duties of racial relations officer. In his anxiety to prove his personal interest in racial relations, the Fort A commander may have effectively
neutralized his racial relations program, and denied himself a source of feedback from black soldiers that a full-time, trained, interested, lower-ranking racial relations officer could provide.

In retrospect, it is not surprising that Fort A fared no better on the survey than did Fort C. The low ratings at both posts indicate a definite need for improved communication with black soldiers. The failure of subjects at Fort A to appreciate the valid activities of the post directed toward improving their morale is held by the writer to be a function of their being essentially uninformed of these activities, at least to the point of being impressed with their significance.

The survey instrument was designed to attract a certain minimum score unless completed by an individual totally hostile to everything about the Army. The minimum score anticipated by the writer was several points higher than that achieved by either Fort A or Fort C. The writer must conclude that whatever effect organizational communication may have had on subjects at these two posts was negative.

Subject Ratings of Command Information Media

In order to observe if approval of command information media was related to status satisfaction among black soldiers, the mean totals awarded to Statements 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of Part I of the survey were extracted from
the total results of Part I of the survey and arranged according to their relationship with high or low scores on Part II. Table 4 shows how those men at each post who scored status satisfaction at 30 or higher rated the Part I "media statements," compared to men who rated status satisfaction below 30.

**TABLE 4**

Mean Totals of Statements 1, 5, 6, 7, 8.

<table>
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<th>Awarded by Subjects</th>
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<td>Rating Part II at 30 or Higher</td>
<td>Rating Part II below 30</td>
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<td>Fort A</td>
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<td>Fort B</td>
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<td>Fort C</td>
<td>14.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort D</td>
<td>12.81</td>
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Table 4 indicates, first, that as a group, none of the subjects were very approving of command information media. In every case, black soldiers who indicated higher satisfaction with their personal status as soldiers granted greater approval to their command information media. This was especially true at Fort C, where "satisfied" black soldiers gave CI media the highest ratings of all, while "dissatisfied" subjects gave the lowest. These comparisons may be taken to mean (optimistically) that recognition and approval of command information media and the messages carried by them have
positive influence upon the status satisfaction of black soldiers, or (more likely) that black soldiers who are generally satisfied with their status as soldiers are more tolerant of poorly directed command information efforts.

The Influence of Black Leadership

The comparison of results would not be complete without some reference to the influence a black leader may have on the status satisfaction of black troops. This influence may come through the personal qualities of the leader or simply from the satisfaction the soldier may derive from viewing one of his own race in a position of military leadership. The relatively healthy rating of a mean 3.51 given by all subjects on Statement 6 of Part II regarding "Uncle Toms," indicates some respect on the part of black soldiers for those of their race who have achieved leadership positions. (Even though very few of the subjects signified any desire to emulate them.)

At every post visited, the percentage of black non-commissioned officers assigned to the post was considerably higher than the percentage of the total black military population of the post. No black soldier was required to search very far to find a member of his race who had achieved success in the enlisted ranks. Black junior officers were considerably more scarce, and the recruitment of qualified black men to serve as officers
in the Army is presently a major personnel project. 3

Four of the sixteen battalions providing subjects for this study were commanded by black lieutenant colonels. Although detailed comparisons of ratings between battalions at a given post were not made, it was noted that survey forms scored by black soldiers serving under black battalion commanders were not appreciably higher than those of blacks from other battalions. At no post did the compiled scores rendered by troops under a black battalion commander average highest of the battalions surveyed on the installation. Thus the writer feels justified in concluding that the presence or absence of senior black officers and NCOs did not exert measurable influence on this study.

Conclusions Based on Comparison of Results Among Posts

Because of the consistently low mean ratings given to both parts of the survey at all of the posts studied, and the lack of a significant statistical correlation between scores at each post, the writer cannot firmly conclude that organizational communication bears measurably

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3 Department of the Army Pamphlet 360-811, "Command Information Program for 2d Quarter, FY 1973," cites recently started actions to "Increase minority group participation in the Army's officer producing programs --the U.S. Military academy, ROTC, and Officer Candidates School Program." However, due to recent Congressional cutbacks in Army budgets and manpower authorization, most of these programs are producing far fewer officers than they have over the past few years.
strong influence on the status satisfaction of black American Soldiers. There remains, however, an intuitive assumption that such an influence exists. The following information offered by the results of this study is presented in support of this assumption, for whatever inference the reader may wish to make.

(1) The mean ratings between Parts I and II of the survey were very similar, ranging in difference from a low of 0.64 at Fort D to a high of 1.40 at Fort B. Because of the general attitudes of subjects who participated in the study, it must be considered that surveys examining any two aspects of Army life, when scored by angry, disenchanted black soldiers, are likely to be rated very low, and thus similar in mean ratings.

(2) The proportionate rise and fall of mean ratings between parts of the survey was never greater than 1.0.

(3) The ratings given statements regarding approval of command information media were significantly higher among black subjects who indicated status satisfaction above the minimum level considered by the survey.

(4) Subjects from the installation regarded as having the best command information program submitted the highest average scores on both parts of the survey.

(5) Subjects from the installation regarded as having the second best command information program submitted the second highest scores on both parts of the survey, despite disadvantages of the post in location
and duty assignments of personnel surveyed.

(6) Subjects from the two installations regarded as having the poorest command information programs submitted the lowest scores on both parts of the survey.

(7) An independent groups analysis of variance and a comparison of individual means showed significant treatment effect influencing scores at Fort B, and this treatment can logically be attributed to a superior communication (to include race relations) program.

A general conclusion, much more emphatically supported by the results of the survey, is that, whatever its potential for influence, organizational communication in the Army is presently failing in its application to black soldiers. This conclusion will be expanded in the following chapter, and concepts for improvement of organizational techniques will be advanced by the writer.
CHAPTER IV

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCEPTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In the previous chapter, comparisons were made between posts, which required comments that certain aspects of this survey were scored "better" on one post than on another, and various elements of the command information programs were "more effective" than others. These positive comments apply only to comparisons between posts, and between elements of generally bad command information programs and policies. When attitudes displayed by subjects at all posts are recalled, and total scores for the survey are averaged and reviewed, very little of a positive nature can be discussed. Organizational communication in the Army is failing in its application to the black soldier, and failing most drastically in the area of command information.

Early in this chapter, the influences of the general attitudes of black soldiers on their response to this study must be examined. Except in rare individual cases, these attitudes were perceived by the writer as very unfavorable toward the Army. In many cases, this general hostility, low morale and disenchanted with Army life was obviously displayed in the survey scores. The scores thus influenced may reflect not so much a failure of organizational communication in a specific unit as the refusal of the subject to admit that there
can be anything about the Army of which he approves. An indication of this tendency to perceive the worst is demonstrated by subjects' response to Statement 1 of Part II of the survey, evaluating race relations on their present post as compared to other installations on which they have served. Few of the 200 subjects surveyed had served on more than two posts in the United States. For most, the installation on which they participated in the survey was their first assignment after basic training. Yet the "other posts" were always rated as having better race relations than the one they were then on, and even the relatively satisfied troops at Fort B downgraded their installation in relation to the unspecified "other posts." This indicates that (1) black soldiers uniformly perceive race relations during basic training as superior to race relations in their eventual unit of assignment, or (2) black soldiers are very hesitant to say anything positive about race relations anywhere. Department of the Army Pamphlet 360-805, in the section entitled, "Better Communications, Better Race Relations," advises,¹

> Young black soldiers are angry, impatient, sensitive to discrimination and proud of being black.

These emotions no doubt blinded some of the soldiers surveyed to the truth of the survey items as they applied to their particular unit. Other men may have deliberately downgraded their scores in hope that signs of serious dissatisfaction would hasten efforts to bring

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about general improvements in their status as soldiers. Thus the reader must judge whether the very low scores reflected in the results of this study are due entirely to communication failures, or whether they are merely indicative of the disappointment, resentment and suspicion with which many young blacks regard most of white society today.

From the point of view of improving morale among black soldiers, the Army can hardly take the attitude that, "things can't really be that bad," because things may really be that bad. Whether the perceptions held by black soldiers are valid or distorted, whether they are genuine or only signified out of anger, it becomes the task of Army communicators to change them if they can be changed, or lose many potential career soldiers as soon as their first term of service expires.

The writer will take the viewpoint that though many of the perceptions of organizational communication in the Army that were reflected on the survey are distorted and formed by men hyper-sensitive to anything that may appear even remotely discriminatory, they are genuine, and influential to the men who hold them. Black soldiers feel that they are not adequately informed, and generally perceive that white soldiers are kept better informed than they. Black troops doubt that their leaders are willing to listen to them when they have problems. Command information programs on their instal-
lations hold little interest for them. The media of command information are either ignored or considered not applicable to themselves. Most black troops believe their leaders have little knowledge of the feelings of blacks about their units. These are the perceptions of organizational communication by Negro soldiers that were developed by this survey. It is not the objective of the writer to prove their validity, but to develop ways of changing them.

Any program of communication designed to appeal to black troops is obviously going to have to take cognizance of the desire among most black soldiers to be considered as Black soldiers. The "All wear the same Uniform" philosophy of communication holds little value for them because they feel that all who wear the same uniform are not always treated equally.

Concepts for Improvement

The ideas presented below as concepts of means to improve communication between the Army and black soldiers are taken from the writer's training as an information specialist, his knowledge of communication acquired as a graduate student at the University of Kansas, and the experience of 15 years of working with and around soldiers of all races. Few of these ideas are totally new, though techniques of application may be here-to-fore untried. Some of them are recommendations for serious
implementation of proven information techniques that were
developed by Army information specialists long before the
writer ever became interested in the field of communica-
tion. Others have evolved as a function of this study.

Listening

The doubts of black soldiers surveyed that their
leaders are willing to listen to them when they have prob-
lems (ideas, suggestions) is held by the writer to be one
of the more serious aspects of low morale among blacks
troops that was considered by this study. A real or per-
ceived situation in which all communication is one-way
can only be detrimental to any organization.

There are several ways in which leaders can listen
to soldiers, in terms of receiving feedback about atti-
tudes, ideas, complaints, etc. Commanders must be cer-
tain that these feedback methods do not leave the im-
pression that an individual soldier can bypass his immed-
iate supervisor and go directly to the company or bat-
talion commander each time he dislikes what he is told
to do. All commanders have the obligation to maintain
the prestige of their subordinate leaders and make their
support of these leaders well known. Commanders must also
be sure that bona-fide complaints and other information
generated in the lower ranks reaches them in a timely
and undistorted fashion. Some of the presently used
methods of establishing these delicate but necessary
channels of feedback include: (1) representative councils, (2) "rap sessions," (3) "open door policies," and (4) face to face conversations with individuals or groups of soldiers.

At an Army-wide race relations conference held at Fort Monroe, Virginia, in November 1970, General William C. Westmoreland, then Chief of Staff of the Army, said,\(^2\)

> Communications between commanders and their soldiers must be improved -- and this most certainly is a command responsibility. Commanders must take advantage of conferences, seminars, councils, Command Information, personal contact and every other means at their disposal.

The writer is firmly convinced that commanders who do not take time to listen to their men are soon in a position of commanding troops about whom they know nothing. With more effective listening on the part of commanders, many of the individual complaints made to the researcher by subjects surveyed might never have been voiced.

**Race Relations Councils**

The most positive expression of black troops to be established by this study is their uniform approval of race relations councils. It seems interesting that troops at Forts A and C, where councils either did not exist or were unknown to the men surveyed, scored Statement 4 of Part I of the survey as positively as did soldiers at

Forts B and D, where councils were active at brigade and battalion level. This indicates that the approval of racial councils indicated by the survey comes from both personal concepts of the good councils can do for the black soldier if they are established, and perceptions of the value of councils based on actual observation of their operation. The high ratings on the council statement also indicate the desire of black soldiers to "talk things out," which at least gives the hope that improved communication may affect their perceptions of the Army.

This consistently high approval of race relations councils indicates that councils should probably be established in every active battalion in the Army, if for no other reason than as a morale booster to minority group personnel. Black soldiers may feel that council representation is the way they can communicate most directly with their commanders on problems of racial context. The existence of a council in the battalion may help to convince young blacks that their commanders care about their welfare.

Racial councils should be chaired by the commander or his second in command. There should also be an intelligent co-chairman of low enlisted rank. In instances when the commander feels his rank may be inhibiting some council members from expressing themselves, he can turn the meeting over to the co-chairman, with
whom the lower ranking members may feel more at ease. The co-chairman can report directly to the commander any complaints or questions brought up in his absence.

Officers assuming the position of chairman of a race relations council must realize that council meetings will not have the efficiency of a staff conference, and that there will be senseless and trying questions and complaints put forth. Council members must recognize the council as an advisory group to assist the commander in making decisions, and not in itself a decision-making body.

"Rap Sessions"

Unit meetings in which any member of the unit is invited to ask a question or make a complaint directly to the commander are becoming popular as a communication device at the company and lower levels. Any larger assembly of troops becomes unwieldy as a two-way communication exchange. Rap sessions are especially useful in airing topics that could cause misunderstanding if not discussed. For instance, several subjects complained to the researcher that certain "black unity" symbols are misinterpreted by white leaders as signs of militancy. Troops at Fort A spoke of blacks in some battalions being denied permission to exchange the "dap," a popular style of hand-shaking among blacks. Department of the Army Pamphlet 360-805 explains,³

They (blacks) see the afro haircut and clenchd fist black power salute as symbols of racial solidarity and pride, while white soldiers see them as symbols of revolt and militancy.

More about rap sessions will be included in the discussion of ideas pertaining to Commander's Call.

Open Door Policies

Despite the human relations appeal of the concept of a soldier being able to walk into his company or battalion commander's office at any time and discuss a problem, few commanders have the time to truly follow such a policy. Most of them, particularly battalion commanders, require that a soldier who wishes an audience make an appointment through the adjutant or sergeant major, and that he have permission from his company to visit battalion headquarters in the first place. This both prevents interruptions in the commander's business of running his organization, and ensures that the soldier arrives at a time when he can receive the attention he deserves. These requirements, however, may discourage more timid troops from ever trying to get their communications past their most immediate supervisors. General Westmoreland, later in his address to the conference at Fort Monroe, said,

I firmly believe that the best open door policy is one where the commander walks through the barracks, visits the places frequented by the troops off-duty and sees for himself first-hand what is going on among his troops and talks to them informally.

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Command Information Media

The very low scores awarded the statements involving command information media, even by those subjects who reflected relatively high status satisfaction, shows the need for emphatic attention to the appeal of Army CI media to minority group personnel. The following ideas for increasing this appeal are presented for consideration by Army officials concerned with this activity who may have occasion to read this study.

The Post Newspaper

Commanders and editors of Army newspapers must acknowledge that their primary target is not the readership of the sergeant, the officer or the post wives' club, but the junior enlisted man. Until more papers start publishing with the objective of gaining and holding soldier interest, few soldiers of any race are going to spend much time reading post newspapers. Every Army post is a small city, usually supporting a population of from 7,000 to 20,000 people. (Several of the larger posts far exceed the 20,000 figure.) Any editor of a commercial city paper who published with the editorial philosophy of most Army papers would shortly lose either his job or his paper. Officers', NCOs' and dependents' interests should not be ignored by the post paper, but neither should they be paramount.

To be an effective news vehicle, most post papers require a larger staff than they usually have. Depending
upon untrained and vaguely interested "stringers" in the units to provide usable news copy, places an unfair burden upon the editor of the paper. Several reporters, photographers and an art man are necessary. Too many Army newspapers are operated with the same support appropriate to a very-small-town weekly. Few posts in the U. S would qualify for comparison to a very small town.

To increase the readership of black soldiers, Army newspapers need to print more news about black soldiers, and this should go beyond the publication of a picture of a black scoring a goal at the post-league basketball game. One idea would be to do a series of features on black soldiers who have won combat decorations, and who are now stationed on the post. Another suggestion is a racial awareness column, in which readers are invited to publish complaints, observations, or -- best of all -- ideas about how people of different races can better get along together.

The publication of a separate medium for minority group interests, as is practiced at Fort B, is considered by the writer to be somewhat counterproductive. Commanders and information officers want troops to read the post newspaper because it contains information that soldiers need to know. To provide minority group soldiers the option of reading a publication composed exclusively for their interest would seem to reinforce their present inclination to ignore the regular post newspaper. As an
alternative to separate publications, reservation of a section of the post paper for the same type articles that would appear in the minority group publication is recommended. This might enhance readership of the post paper by minority group soldiers, while drawing their attention to the general information articles they might otherwise not read. If a separate publication is considered absolutely necessary, it should be distributed as an insert to the post newspaper.

Part of the poor readership rating of post papers given by subjects in this study is probably due to the distribution allocations and techniques presently practiced by many Army papers. A criteria of one copy for every 10 enlisted men hardly anticipates serious readership on the part of enlisted men. The normal habit of placing a few copies of the post newspaper in the unit day room of a company, where it competes for attention with television, pool and ping-pong games, popular commercial publications and interesting bull sessions, is another good method of guaranteeing low readership.

To the horror of many neatness-oriented commanders and first sergeants, the writer will suggest that copies of the post newspaper should be placed on tables in the unit mess hall, in racks provided in troop sleeping areas and latrines, as well as in the more traditional areas such as day rooms, P.X. coffee shops, etc. Some of the copies will no doubt be left on the floors, in
military vehicles or other inappropriate places where someone will have to pick them up. This will at least indicate an improvement in readership of the post paper.

Sensitive issues, and occurrences of sensitive nature that take place on the post should be handled by the post newspaper as they should be handled by any responsible news medium -- factually and impartially, without condemnation, evasion or excuse. Fights between soldiers, black or white, if they are serious enough to warrant arrest by the military police, should be reported. Other military police activity (a very sensitive issue in its interracial context) should be dealt with as any fair newspaper deals with regular police reports. If drugs are discovered in use on the post, the incident should draw the same attention that a commercial paper serving a city the size of the post would accord it. Attempts to ignore or cover up incidents that might bring discredit to the post almost invariably result in the origination of rumors and half-truths that eventually bring even greater discredit, and cause troops to doubt if their leaders are telling them the truth.

Some of these recommendations may cause shudders among long-time information officers and the commanders they serve, but the Army must revitalize its newspapers. For a post newspaper to publish with the assumption that the news of greatest interest to enlisted men concerns the results of the squad training tests in the Second
Brigade, or the ceramics class sponsored by the officers' wives club, is to seek readership ratings similar to those obtained by this survey.

**Commander's Call**

To the extent that unit Commander's Call periods held meaning and interest to the subjects of this survey, the periods could have been eliminated altogether, as no doubt many of them were. Company commanders at the posts visited obviously saw little need for putting much effort into their primary medium of command information. In speculation, if many companies of subjects included in this survey held Commander's Call at all, it was likely with the "do it and get it over with because we have to" attitude described in Chapter II. As noted, the many other demands on a commander's time can easily cause programs of this nature to be slighted. Battalion commanders, even busier, fail to check on their subordinates' CI activities, and leaders at both levels end up in command of men who consider themselves uninformed and their leaders lacking in communication effectiveness.

With emphasis on local topics, it should take no great amount of time for a commander to select a subject for Commander's Call that will interest most of the men in his unit and give them the opportunity to participate in a discussion. One idea would be to devote occasional Commander's Call periods to "rap sessions" about race relations in the unit. Allow a black soldier to explain
to the entire unit that to blacks, the black handshake and salute mean only recognition of another of his race. Permit a white soldier to tell the things he does not understand about blacks. Explain the present policies of equal opportunity in the unit and on the post, or have members of the unit identify civilian establishments where they have received or observed discriminatory treatment. Use packaged materials sparingly, and select, as often as possible, topics that enhance participation by a maximum number of men in the unit.

Post information officers must devote greater attention to their obligation to provide assistance and advice to commanders of subordinate units on the post. If a program is to be prepackaged, to take the burden of preparation away from the unit commander, the packaging should be done at post level. Department of the Army materials and suggestions may be included as the post IO deems appropriate. It should require no great amount of ingenuity for an information office to provide several scenarios that a company size unit can use for a Commander's Call meeting, and some of these scenarios should provide for discussion of racial relations within the unit. Although two of the information officers interviewed reported having provided information and materials for special Commander's Call meetings covering specific mandatory subjects in the past, the general impression of the writer was that IOs were unfamiliar with and
disinterested in this part of the CI program. One IO declared himself not at all involved in Commander's Call activities, while another was unsure if the units on his post were required to hold Commander's Call or not.

As with any other military activity, for Commander's Call to be successful at the company level, it must have the support of higher commanders throughout the organization. Some re-evaluation of the importance of the many things a company commander is required by his superiors to do might reveal that many of them have lesser long-range importance than the establishment of good communications with his troops.

**Post Radio Stations**

Fort B, with its own radio station, obviously held a significant CI advantage over the other posts surveyed. At Fort D, several black soldiers complained that there was only one receivable commercial station that played anything but country-western music, and that station went off the air at 5 p.m. daily. Though it will require a change in existing regulations, the writer strongly urges the establishment of low-output radio stations at every major Army installation in the United States. Even if this station should broadcast only after normal duty hours, say 4:30 p.m. until midnight, it would be almost certain to attract a greater audience than that of any other CI medium presently in use. Mixed in with
the music and programs selected for troop entertain-
ment, serious command information announcements would
reach more men and be likely to have greater effect.
Soldiers would, of course, have the option of tuning
their radios to commercial stations, but a well-operated
post station, featuring programming of special appeal to
young soldiers and announcements concerning the post audi-
ence, would give serious competition to any commercial
station in its attraction to soldier listeners.

The establishment of post radio stations would
have to be accomplished over the protests of these local
commercial station owners, many of whom can now sell
advertising time to local merchants on the grounds that
theirs is the only station in the locality reaching the
post audience. However, the evidence in this study of the
low appeal of the Army's present CI media indicates that
concern for the information reception of soldiers should
take precedence over the ever-present anxiety concerning
the possible alienation of any part of the civilian
society.

Troop Orientations

Although orientations of newly-arriving person-
nel are a definite and necessary part of any command in-
formation program, they were not initially considered in
this study. The "one-time" nature of an orientation sep-
arates this element of command information from the con-
tinuing procedures that provide the primary parts of a
CI effort. However, the lack of knowledge displayed by many subjects regarding the existence of programs and activities that might have influenced the attitudes of black soldiers had they been aware of them, convinced the researcher that greater attention is required.

Initial orientations frequently come during a soldier's in-processing after arrival at a post. At this time, the orientation competes for attention with concerns about keeping up with his gear, getting paid, learning his assignment to a unit and locating the latrine. Troops sitting through initial orientations during in-processing are frequently tired, hungry, uncomfortable and impatient.

Realizing the disadvantages of orientation during in-processing, some posts skip the procedure and permit the units of eventual assignment to orient new troops, at a time when the men are more settled and would be receiving a welcome to their new units anyway. This sometimes results in the orientation being very unit-centered, with activities and facilities of the post receiving only cursory attention. This may be especially true of those post activities whose functions are of major interest only to minority group personnel.

Initial orientations probably should take place within the unit, but adequate attention must be given to activities taking place above the unit level. Representatives of human relations or racial relations councils,
equal opportunity offices, etc. must be sure their agencies receive mention in all orientations for new personnel.

An additional orientation for minority group soldiers is recommended. This orientation could be held quarterly, at post level, addressing all the new soldiers of minority group races who have arrived on the post during the previous three months. Post policies promoting non-discrimination on and off the post could be explained, and the offices and officers concerned with enforcing these policies identified. Facts and data supporting the practice of equal opportunity on the post could be presented. Such presentations should include data on the number of promotions going to minority group soldiers, percentages of minority group officers and NCOs on the post, and examples of past enforcement of equal opportunity policies. Properly handled, such orientations might serve to dilute the feeling of anticipated discrimination that many black soldiers seem to carry with them to each new assignment.

Multi-racial Considerations

It would have added depth and reliability to this study to have examined the perceptions of a corresponding group of white soldiers regarding their communicative environment and status satisfaction. Unfortunately, such an expansion of scope was not within the limitations of time restricting this research. However, the writer's
examination of the communication programs operated at the posts concerned stimulate a conviction that a large portion of the Army's present communication effort has little more appeal to young white soldiers than to the black subjects surveyed. The editorially sterile post newspapers, dull or non-existent Commander's Call, the lack of strong command interest in CI activities, all tend to negate the effectiveness of information programs in their appeal to soldiers of any race. Several concerned commanders, when appraised of the results of the survey among troops of their command, asked, "Are these low ratings peculiar to black troops?" Without concrete evidence upon which to base a reply, the writer could only answer, "Probably not."

General Considerations

Leadership

It was established early in this study that organizational communication includes command information, and command information is a tool of leadership. Successful military leadership does not require variation of principles according to the ethnic background of troops commanded. A study of soldier satisfaction with leadership in the Army, recently conducted by staff and students of the U.S. Army War College, revealed, 5

(The) Degree of satisfaction with Army leadership varies significantly by grade level, (higher grade, higher satisfaction), varies only slightly between combat and non-combat conditions, and does not vary by racial group.

Application of good leadership principles includes consideration of the special needs of each individual soldier. If a man is untrained or inexperienced, he is dealt with as an untrained, inexperienced soldier until he learns his job and becomes an integrated member of his unit. If he possesses special qualifications and training, he is considered in light of these special aspects when his leaders talk to him and give him jobs to do. Any number of experiencial, environmental or functional factors can cause a soldier or group of soldiers to be considered differently from others. It does not then appear to be expanding or distorting any principle of leadership to suggest that black soldiers must be dealt with, at least partially, in terms of the ethnic and cultural differences affecting their motivation, morale and attitudes.

Adjustment of Black Soldiers to the Army

One of the black battalion commanders whose soldiers participated in this study made a remark to the writer that was considered worth reporting verbatim. He said,

"Any man coming into the Army has a big adjustment to make, but black kids, coming out of the ghetto or from the farms and small towns of the South have a double adjustment. They must adjust to the Army and they must adjust to being out of the ghetto for the first time in their whole lives. This big second
adjustment would have to take place no matter where they went after leaving home, but because it happens in the Army, the Army gets blamed for many of the difficulties involved."

Acknowledgement of this special adjustment a black soldier must make on the way to becoming a thoroughly integrated member of his unit, could ease this process of integration for the soldier, his immediate leaders and the entire Army. Accomplishing this may involve different -- not preferential, but different -- treatment for black troops.

Remarks in Conclusion

The black soldier has many times proved his capability as a fighting man. Military history is filled with incidents of dedication and heroism by black soldiers, as individuals and as units. The development of a modern, professional all-volunteer United States Army involves a dependence upon a representative portion of American Negroes to serve at all grade levels. To perform at their maximum potential, these men must establish and maintain positive attitudes toward the Army, their installations of assignment, and their individual units.

The results of this research show a definitive need for more attention to organizational communication procedures as they apply to first-term black soldiers.

With the conclusion of the Army's commitment to
the Vietnam War, the cutbacks in numbers and the increase in personnel stability, there appears to be no more important objective for the United States Army to accomplish than to achieve racial harmony within its ranks, to bring soldier satisfaction to the highest possible level, and to eliminate as much personal dissension as possible before the next crisis occurs.
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