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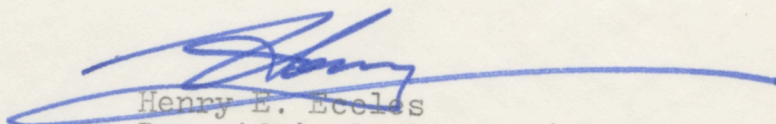
Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale, U.S.N.
President
The Naval War College
Newport, R.I. 02840

Dear Admiral Stockdale,

I enclose herewith my further comments on the
proposed elective in Morals and Ethics.

With best wishes for its successful development,

Sincerely,


Henry E. Eccles
Rear Admiral, U.S.N. (Retd.)

HEE:jg
enclosures

cc: Dr. Joseph G. Brennan

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NOTES ON MILITARY ETHICS

H.E. Eccles

Contradiction and paradox are inherent characteristics of human affairs and therefore the resolution of ethical questions will always be a highly personal and highly intuitive matter.

Nevertheless it is both appropriate and important to study military ethics in a military educational institution.

As a servant of the state, the military professional should see ethics both as public ethics, i.e. the ethics of the conduct of public affairs, and private ethics, i.e. the standards that govern one's personal outlook and decisions about one's own affairs. This, of course, raises the question as to what, if any, difference there is or there should be between the two.

In dealing with his "public affairs" the military professional must understand and deal with concepts of Government and Organization, Authority and Freedom, and Sovereignty. At the same time he must deal with concepts of Law, Justice and discipline. All the foregoing are closely involved with concepts and perceptions of values.

In my opinion the knowledge of military theory and principle is an important means of translating these abstractions to the practical conduct of public affairs.

In this connection, the blending of political and military factors in the modern era of limited war in an atmosphere of nuclear "balance of terror" presents great difficulties in the blending (or perhaps the separation) of "public affairs" ethics and "private" or personal ethics and morality, i.e. political ethics versus military ethics. Some of the issues arising in these areas are so

highly charged with emotion that they must be handled with skill, objectivity, and careful attention to semantic reactions.

Looking at this somewhat differently, I think that military ethics are fundamentally based on two elements; personal responsibility and professional competence - (of course personal responsibility is the heart of all concepts of ethics!)

But these two are especially important for the military commander, for he has no right to exercise military authority unless he is competent to do so.

This in turn requires consideration of what we mean by professional competence. And again, this brings us to the question of the place of military theory in military education.

All of which brings me full circle to what I have been trying to express in my books and manuscript on "MILITARY POWER IN A FREE SOCIETY."

Furthermore, since not all our officers are trained to deal in abstractions or to relate them to day-to-day work, I recommend that insofar as is possible, the discussions on ethics be illustrated by practical examples from both old and recent military history. In many of these, it should be clear how often the tough decisions of command must be made almost instantaneously. This shows the vital difference between the decisions of command and the decisions of management!

Finally, the subject of morals and ethics cuts across all elements and areas of military knowledge and technology, but culminates in the study of COMMAND rather than in any single War College Department.

SPECIFIC CASE HISTORIES

1965-66 MILITARY BUDGET DEFICIT
SECDEF's assistants

1961-62 Lt. General ENNIS, Head of W.E.S.E.G.
His directive from Secretary McNamara on analysis
of T.F.X. airplane

1917 Sir Douglas HAIG's Chief of Intelligence
Deception of Parliamentary Committee - Lloyd George
See Military concepts pp 282-283

1942 U.S.S. HELENA - Capt. HOOVER and rescue of survivors
of U.S.S. JUNEAU. Also U.S.S. WHIPPLE, Lt. Cdr. KARPE
and rescue of PECUS & LANGLEY Survivors.

Moral and ethical implications of Nuremburg trials.