

**UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES & LEADERSHIP**  
**TACTICAL OFFICER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**CIVILIANIZATION OF THE FACULTY: A CHANGE WHOSE TIME  
HAD COME?**

**BY**

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A look around the classrooms of West Point today reveals a far different picture than ten years ago. In 1991, civilian instructors made up only two percent of the entire faculty. Today, approximately twenty-one percent of the faculty is civilian professors. After a long history of having a predominantly military faculty, the striking difference in such a short time raises a few questions. This is especially so when considering the historically slow pace of change within the academy. The question of why change took place so rapidly leads the researcher to look for monetary or academic reasons. However, reviewing the events of the past twenty-five years, the reasoning is unclear other than that the Academy changed as a result of congressional mandate stemming from battles over political turf.

Since its inception, West Point has always maintained its mission of producing leaders for the Army and for the nation. Established in 1802, the Academy has also had a long history of civilian instructors although their numbers have been few. As Brigadier General (BG) Gerald E. Galloway, Dean of the Academic Board, noted in the *Assembly* in 1993:

West Point has had civilians on the faculty for quite some time. Almost since its birth, the Academy has had civilian foreign language instructors who have contributed much to that program.<sup>1</sup>

BG Galloway also noted their contributions in the Department of Physical Education (DPE) and the visiting professor program. However, civilian involvement did not traditionally extend to the rest of the curriculum.

During Sylvanus Thayer's tenure as the fifth superintendent of West Point he introduced a new system of teaching and installed a curriculum that stressed the practical sciences. To teach this program, Thayer assembled the best instructors in physics,

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<sup>1</sup> Galloway, Gerald E., "Civilian Faculty at West Point?" *Assembly* (January 1993): 39.

engineering, and mathematics. Most of these were Academy graduates and this assemblage dominated the scientific community. Almost every engineering school in the country looked to West Point graduates to fill their positions as professors or presidents.<sup>2</sup>

After the Franco-Prussian war in 1871, Germany replaced France as the leading military nation in the world. The Army sent its most promising officers abroad to study the German method of warfare and military education. This change of focus from the French method to the German method led some critics to call for changing the curriculum at West Point. In what had become typical West Point fashion, the Academy refused to budge. Even the Board of Visitors asked for more “variety in the methods of instruction” and suggested such changes to the curriculum as the inclusion of history, natural sciences and called for German to replace Spanish as the foreign language to be taught.<sup>3</sup>

However, West Point was reluctant to change and was never forced to. The Academy could always fall back on its graduates’ performance in the Civil War as its reason for staying with their curriculum. Superintendent George W. Cullum, upon hearing rumors that Congress might propose changes, wrote to Senator Henry Wilson (R-MA) and summarily described the Academy’s official position: “Leave well enough alone is a wise saying.”<sup>4</sup> Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century most professors remained Academy graduates who had been hand-picked to return after only three or four years. Occasionally, civilian professors heard of a vacancy at West Point and upon inquiry would receive a response similar to the one delivered by Superintendent John M. Wilson

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<sup>2</sup> Ambrose, Stephen E. *Duty, Honor, Country: A History of West Point* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), 90.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Board of Visitors of the United States Military Academy* (Wash, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1879), 9. The Board of Visitors report, which was traditionally friendly to the Academy, recommended changes to the Thayer system to “relieve the course from a wearisome monotony.”

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Superintendent George W. Cullum to Honorable Henry Wilson, 17 Jan 1866, Superintendent Letter Books, 305.

to Mr. Earle: "There is no ... vacancy in any Department which under the law could be filled by a civilian."<sup>5</sup>

There were some exceptions to this rule but they were few. Before his departure in 1906, Superintendent Mills recommended separating the teaching of history from the department of law. Major Hugh Lennox Scott, who succeeded Mills as superintendent, hired John C. Adams as provisional department head and asked Congress to appoint him as a professor and grant him a commission.<sup>6</sup> He stated his reason for departing from the tradition of bringing back graduates and hiring a civilian in the 1908 Report of the USMA Superintendent as "bring(ing) some new ideas into the academic board."<sup>7</sup>

However, hiring one civilian as a department head could not steer the academic board away from their priority of maintaining the Thayer system and all that it entailed. As a matter of fact, much of the stagnation of West Point throughout the nineteenth and the majority of the twentieth century can be attributed to the academic board. The academic board comprised the department heads, the Dean, the Commandant and the Superintendent. The superintendent held only one vote on the board and his position was a transient one. Most of the board members had been at the Academy a number of years and felt it was their duty to maintain the integrity of West Point as superintendents came and went. This composition had some advantages as the curriculum and methods of teaching could not be changed on the whim of a superintendent who would be in his position for only a few years. Unfortunately, the composition also led to resistance to any change as professors lost contact with the Army and gained comfort in their own

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<sup>5</sup> John M. Wilson letter to Mr. Willis Earle, Highland Military Institute, 17 Apr 1890, Superintendent's Letter Books, Archives, USMA, 496.

<sup>6</sup> Simons, William E., *Liberal Education in the Service Academies*, (Columbia University: Bureau of Publications, 1965), 93.

<sup>7</sup> *Report of the United States Military Academy Superintendent*, (West Point, 1908), 9.

methods. Even Superintendent Douglas MacArthur's proposal to bring in Regular Army officers who were not Academy graduates to teach was roundly defeated.<sup>8</sup> When BG MacArthur attempted to make other changes the academic board noted its hostility towards the Superintendent in the 1920 Report of the Superintendent. The board's portion of the report on the curriculum stated "The Military Academy is intended to impart a specialized training for a specialized purpose, and this purpose is not the same as that of any civilian institution."<sup>9</sup>

Particularly injurious was when the academic board and the Superintendent were in agreement on issues regarding faculty and curriculum. This led to inbreeding of the faculty and impenetrable resistance to change the courses the cadets were to take. However, it was hard to argue with the success of the Academy in producing leaders who excelled in their chosen profession and went on to serve the country with great distinction. The class of 1915 was a perfect example of this success as the class is commonly referred to as the "class the stars fell on." Although the class only numbered 164, fifty-nine became general officers, one became President of the United States, and the class led the largest American armies in World War II and the Korean War.<sup>10</sup> This separated the Military Academy from its civilian counterparts and the senior leaders of West Point realized that they could never replicate the quality of advanced education in scientific and liberal courses that a comparable civilian college could. As subtle changes were eventually made to the curriculum, Superintendent Maxwell Taylor noted the inevitable comparisons to other colleges by stating "we err if we measure West Point

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<sup>8</sup> Ambrose, 268.

<sup>9</sup> *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, (West Point, 1920), 20-22.

<sup>10</sup> 1974 Register of Graduates and Former Cadets of the United States Military Academy, (West Point, 1974), 330-333.

only by the yardstick of curriculum.”<sup>11</sup> During World War II, the Academy brought in civilians and reservists to replace military officers needed on the front and attempted to integrate them in much the same way Scott had integrated Professor Adams, by “putting (them) in uniform and granting them commissions.”<sup>12</sup> However, their lack of a West Point ring on their finger identified them as non-graduates and they were thus considered outsiders. Most of these replacements were in the English department and other faculty of the Academy subsequently marginalized that department’s importance to the curriculum of the cadets.<sup>13</sup> The use civilian faculty remained primarily in the department of foreign languages for the next two decades.

Beginning in the late 1960s, attitudes in society towards the armed services were changing and this led towards centralization of policy by government officials. The service academies became one of the main focuses because of their role in producing officers for the military and their high costs. The greatest change was the antimilitary sentiment felt throughout American society. This shift led senior military leaders to become defensive and they began to micromanage all aspects of the services. The academies also felt the effects of the growth in electronic media. Events that could have been handled locally within the services now commanded national attention. Such was the case with the silencing of Cadet John Pelosi who refused to resign from West Point even after having been found guilty of committing an honor violation. The New York Times and several television networks carried his story and also reported on a challenge to compulsory chapel attendance filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf

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<sup>11</sup> Taylor, Maxwell D., *West Point Looks Ahead* (West Point, 1946), 6-7.

<sup>12</sup> Lovell, John P., *Neither Athens Nor Sparta?* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 55.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

of nine midshipmen and two cadets.<sup>14</sup> The negative publicity received by the Military Academy raised questions about West Point's responsibilities and its administration of those functions. A result of the centralization can be seen in the formation of the Committee on Excellence in Education in 1973. Deputy Secretary of Defense William P. Clements, Jr. formed the committee to conduct oversight of the academies because of their high visibility. This committee was one of the first to note the civilian-military mix of faculty at the academies and began the comparison with the United States Naval Academy (USNA). The committee argued unsuccessfully that the Naval Academy's roughly fifty-fifty ratio of civilian-military faculty was not amenable to producing leaders for the service. Their observations led them to remark, "military officers were to be preferred to civilians as role models in constituting the facult(y)."<sup>15</sup>

This contention was attacked several times beginning in 1975. A General Accounting Office (GAO) report showed that the cost of the predominantly military faculty at the United States Military Academy (USMA) and the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) was significantly higher than the cost of the civilian-military mix at USNA.<sup>16</sup> Senator John Glenn (D-OH) led the second assault by including an amendment to the Defense Appropriations Authorization Act in May 1976. The amendment called for the Secretary of Defense to "conduct a study as to how greater utilization of civilian faculty may be accomplished in the service academies... This study shall recommend an equitable ratio between civilian and military faculty in general academic subjects."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 220-222

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 223

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Comptroller General, Financial Operations of the Five Service Academies. (Wash, D.C.: General Accounting Office) 6 Feb 1975. 19.

<sup>17</sup> Amendment No 1690 to HR12438. Congressional Record. 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2d session, 25 May 1976. S7960

The Borman Commission provided the third attack. This commission was formed in response to the Electrical Engineering 304 cheating scandal in 1976. After an investigation of the environment that led to the scandal, the Borman Commission released its findings. One of its recommendations was that "there should be an expansion of programs which bring outside viewpoints to the Academy."<sup>18</sup> The report cited the visiting professor's program at West Point and its support among cadets and faculty. At the time, visiting professors numbered two among the nine civilians on the faculty of 552. The commission asserted that an expansion of this program would benefit West Point but did not address the benefits attained nor did it specify the optimal level to provide any benefits.

Around the same time the Borman Commission issued its report, the Glenn amendment and the House and Senate Armed Services Committee directed the Department of Defense (DOD) to "determine whether greater utilization of civilian faculty may be desirable at the service academies."<sup>19</sup> DOD established the Defense Education Working Group, comprised of action officers in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and civilian consultants, to address this issue. To assess the desirability of increasing the civilian faculty the working group looked at several factors: cost, availability of quality faculty, flexibility, credibility, experience, continuity, military relevance, and civilian leavening. In their report, the group calculated that USMA would realize a cost savings of \$610,000 out of a budget of over \$19,000,000 by converting to a 75/25 mix of military-civilian faculty. Changing from the

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<sup>18</sup> *Report to the Secretary of the Army by the Special Commission on the United States Military Academy.* 15 Dec 1976, 22.

<sup>19</sup> Conference Report of the House and Senate Armed Services Committee, 1976, Sec 809.

current mix to a 95/5 percent ratio of military-civilian faculty would increase the costs by \$33,000. In spite of the difference in costs, the group recommended that the academy increase its percentage of civilian faculty to five percent.<sup>20</sup> What is more surprising with the recommendation for such a small change is that the group criticized the Academy in its report continuously for its oft-rotating military faculty. Citing Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, the group noted that schools in the highly competitive category have faculties comprised of 60-90% Ph. D.'s as opposed to USMA's fifteen percent. The report continued on to note how the rotation also affected the average teaching experience and the continuity of the faculty.

The two factors assessed to USMA's advantage were civilian leavening and military relevance. These two categories showed that the military professors proved to be an advantage in the Academy's mission of producing leaders of character. The group noted that, despite charges of insularity, the visiting professors program expansion would leaven the academic experience of the cadets. The Academy received its greatest response in the military relevance category. The group noted that the military faculty plays a tremendous role in motivating the cadets to pursue military careers. As stated above, despite the negative effects of having a rotating faculty with little experience and few Ph. D.'s and despite the cost involved, the group recommended that West Point increase its civilian faculty to only five percent.

In response to this report, the Military Academy drafted a position paper on the topic and the academic board approved the response in February of 1979. USMA cited its own studies on the issue of civilianization and noted that DOD's study concluded,

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<sup>20</sup> Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), *Review of the Faculty Mix at the U.S. Service Academies and the Senior and Intermediate Service Colleges*, March 1977.

“cost factors alone would not serve as the major determinant in any recommendation to change the faculty composition.”<sup>21</sup> Taking into account its unique mission the Academy “urge(d) that USMA not be subjected to an arbitrary quota” and asked the Department of the Army to seek authority for term appointments so that USMA would be able to meet the 5% level.<sup>22</sup> The fact that the study was completed in 1977 and the Manpower and Reserve Affairs letter to the Superintendent was not sent until late 1978 did not escape Congress. In the Appropriations Committee report on the 1979 DOD appropriation bill, the committee stated that

What is most disconcerting to the Committee is that many of the deficiencies which are apparent in the fiscal year 1979 program are areas in which this Committee made specific recommendations three years ago. It is the belief of this Committee that the Department of Defense has disregarded the guidance which has been provided by the Congress on improving the management of professional development and education within the Department of Defense, and that a considerable degree of inefficiency ... pervades the program.<sup>23</sup>

The Committee then directed that DOD submit a plan to increase the civilian faculty at the academies noting that this move would reduce the number of officers who need to obtain an advanced degree.

USMA's report to the Dean of the academic board was issued in 1980. Again, officials reiterated West Point's unique mission of instilling in the cadets a sense of duty and noted the military faculty's extensive participation in extracurricular activities that may not be expected from civilian professors. The report also stated that a strength of the military versus civilian instructors was their devotion to teaching rather than to research

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Memorandum for the Dean of the Academic Board, USMA, 19 Dec 78, Subj: Civilianization of Faculty.

<sup>23</sup> Department of Defense Appropriation Bill, 1979, Report of the Committee on Appropriations. 95<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2d session, 27 July 1978, 29.

and publication. USMA continuously refers to previous studies and accreditation reports that have been overwhelmingly positive for the military faculty but always raise the issue of civilian faculty. The rationale for the civilian faculty was never a rejection of the military faculty but was always a vague statement that the faculty quality would be improved enough to justify the costs. To this end, West Point again addresses the issue of visiting professors and notes that this program is in its second year of having one visiting professor in each department. After stating that the program is still too young to assess its strengths, the report notes that

USMA cannot reasonably aspire ... to bring in a still-active Nobel laureate who applauds everything he or she sees, including teaching at seven a.m. on a Saturday morning.<sup>24</sup>

West Point buttresses its arguments again by noting that bringing in junior civilian faculty would not be attractive for either the Academy or the professors. The junior professors would be inclined to research and publish lest this appointment be considered a dead-end job. As a result, the military faculty would lose time to do research and bear the brunt of making up for the civilian lost time. "We believe it is possible to have the best of both worlds by using outstanding soldier-scholars, rather than some soldiers and some scholars."<sup>25</sup>

Despite the pressure from Congress to raise the number of civilian faculty and the tenuous reasons brought up by many about the advantages cadets would gain from such exposure, the Academy maintained its focus on a predominantly military faculty throughout the 1980s and the topic no longer garnered much attention. Documents produced by USMA for internal and external consumption continued to extol the virtues

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<sup>24</sup> Memorandum for Dean of the Academic Board, 22 Sep 80, Subj: Report of Committee to Study Civilianization of Faculty, 16.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 22.

of the military faculty and focused on the academic success of the cadets as proof of the validity for their rationale.<sup>26</sup> The Academy took steps to increase the visiting professors program and raised the percentage of the civilian faculty to about three percent of the entire faculty. All seemed well at the Academy with them retaining their predominantly military faculty and continuing to produce distinguished graduates and leaders of character for the nation.<sup>27</sup> That is, until the end of the Cold War in 1989.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union brought about new challenges for the Armed Forces. The general atmosphere suggested that large standing armies were no longer needed and many, in search of the 'peace dividend', proposed cutting the services. There was also a renewed interest in defense spending and the services had to become good stewards of the taxpayers' money. The defense budget decreased by almost seventeen percent between the last Reagan budget in 1989 and the last Bush budget for 1993. USMA was not immune in this time of decreased spending and increased oversight and Congress attempted to assert more control over West Point and the officer corps. Leading the charge were Senators John Glenn (D-OH) and Sam Nunn (D-GA). Both had become vocal critics of the Academy and questioned the manner in which it conducted business.

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<sup>26</sup> The documents I looked at for this were the Dean's short and long-range plan and the self-study produced for the accreditation board. The Dean's plan used "predominantly military faculty" as an assumption and the self-study again referred to the faculty's function as role models for the cadets in terms of a military career as reasons for the current mix. Short and Long Range Development Plan Fiscal Years 1985-1991. Office of the Dean. West Point, New York. March 1985. United States Military Academy Institutional Self-Study. 1988-1989. West Point, New York. July 1989.

<sup>27</sup> As reported on the self-study, West Point had produced six Rhodes Scholars, four Marshall Foundation Scholars, fourteen Hertz Foundation scholars, six National Science Foundation Scholars, twenty-one honorable mentions for the National Science Foundation Scholarships and three Phi Kappa Phi scholars. Cadets also earned recognition in the 1988 national math competition and the National Model United Nations competitions in 1985 and 1986. Ibid. 35.

Senator Glenn fired the first shot across the bow of the military academies when he attached an amendment onto the National Defense Authorization to increase the Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) from its current five years to eight years. His rationale was that the Academies "had trouble obtaining volunteers from their graduates to enter aviation, nuclear" and other fields which required additional training.<sup>28</sup> This additional training obligated the newly graduated cadet to incur a service obligation beyond the five years mandated by Congress. Senator Glenn alleged that this was the reason that so few chose these fields. Senator Glenn's contention was that by increasing the ADSO for all Academy graduates the decision would be easier to enter these specialized fields. During these proceedings Senator Glenn also focused his attention on the cost of the academies noting, "What we are doing is spending a lot of taxpayer money to get career military officers."<sup>29</sup> While his arguments may have been based on the ADSO, Senator Glenn expounded upon his reasoning by ridiculing the 18-year olds who may not be ready to make a commitment that would last until they turned 30. He derided their "dilettante" attitude and professed his lack of concern for the morale-boosting Academy sports teams.<sup>30</sup>

Shortly thereafter in 1990 the GAO testified before Congress on the preliminary results of its investigation into the service academies. The investigation into the academies' financial reporting, academic programs, performance and retention of graduates and the effectiveness of external oversight was performed in response to a request from Senators Nunn and Glenn. The report identified that the schools had met

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<sup>28</sup> Continuation of Senate proceedings of August 1, 1989, 101<sup>st</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 2 August 1989, S9429.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

the minimum faculty requirements and had been accredited but also noted the repeated concerns about the lack of civilian instructors. These concerns were from the accreditation boards and the visiting professors but still lacked any real cost-benefit rationale. GAO echoed the Middle States Association in its concern for the continuity of the academic programs and recommended that the Academy “consider increasing its civilian faculty, particularly in fields... such as the humanities.”<sup>31</sup> Along with that recommendation came the visiting professors report in 1989 that stated that juniors and seniors in civilian colleges are normally taught by doctoral faculty as opposed to the faculty at USMA with master’s degrees. The report did show that Academy graduates tended to remain in the service longer and earn promotions faster than ROTC graduates. Graduates remained in the Army at the 15-year mark at a 46% rate as opposed to the 28% rate for officers from other commissioning sources. It also noted that although Academy graduates constituted only fourteen percent of the officer corps, “they comprised 31 percent of the officers selected for general officer rank in 1988.”<sup>32</sup> However, the report concluded these observations with the warning that the statistics may be deceiving as graduates receive Regular commissions upon graduation thereby affecting their eligibility for reduction-in-force initiatives. Another major factor in the decisions about the Academies was their high cost. The GAO put these figures at \$224,000 per West Point graduate.<sup>33</sup>

In response to the GAO’s testimony, Lieutenant General (LTG) Dave Palmer noted that the dollar figures were deceiving. While the report took the costs of the

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<sup>31</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Review of the Cost and Operations of DOD’s Service Academies*, 101<sup>st</sup> Cong., 2d Sess., April 4, 1990. (Emphasis added).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Academy and divided them by the number of cadets, ROTC costs are simply totaled as the amount paid for ROTC rather than accounting for the fact that "America's tax structure pays about 80-85% of the cost of higher education."<sup>34</sup> Senator Glenn dismissed that testimony and stated his concern that "we are turning out an inferior product one place as compared to somewhere else" when comparing cost benefits.<sup>35</sup> While Senator Glenn repeatedly states that he is an enormous supporter of the Academies, he says many things that contradict this. Besides ignoring the true cost of tuition, Glenn broaches the subject of commissions and wonders whether graduates should receive Reserve commissions and compete for Regular commission alongside ROTC graduates. As noted earlier, the GAO report suggested that USMA retains 44% of its graduates to the fifteenth year and reasons that this number may be higher than the 28% of ROTC graduates is because Academy graduates receive Regular commissions. LTG Palmer's response to the civilian faculty issue again reiterated West Point's unique role in training "people to take positions of leadership in the combat role in our Nation" and the multiple roles that military instructors hold along with being an instructor.<sup>36</sup> LTG Hamm, Superintendent of the Air Force Academy (USAFA), also addressed the composition of the faculty. USAFA's mix was similar to USMA's and, in addition to the military instructors serving as role models, he criticized the comparison with civilian colleges having Ph. D.'s teaching juniors and seniors. He stated that the comparison was unfair as that Ph. D.'s were often researching or publishing while a graduate assistant with an undergraduate

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

degree was left with the teaching responsibilities whereas all of the Academy instructors had Master's degrees.<sup>37</sup>

The testimony concluded with Senator Glenn remaining unconvinced at the Academies' arguments and stating, "it is clear (that) there are opportunities for DOD to improve the efficiency as well as (the) academic vitality of these institutions."<sup>38</sup> He also maintained that the Academies were "long overdue" for more Congressional oversight.

In questions submitted to the Academy and service representatives after the hearing, Senator Glenn again attacked the topic of increasing civilians at the Academy and suggested that a critical review should be undertaken. G. Kim Wincup, the Assistant Secretary for the Manpower and Reserve Affairs office noted bluntly:

This issue has been reviewed routinely over the years. It was an important item of consideration in GAO audits, accreditation studies, the latest Middle States Accreditation Report in 1989, Board of Visitors sessions, and miscellaneous reviews (e.g., Visiting Professor reports, West Point Study Group Report, etc.) All previous reports have reached the conclusion that our military faculty best serves the purpose and mission of the USMA. There is no reason to expect that another review would result in a different conclusion.<sup>39</sup>

LTG Palmer goes on to clarify that the accreditation reports were overall extremely positive and praised the junior military faculty and further states that the recommendation to civilianize was targeted at a few specific departments where the Army was lacking officers with expertise. "It was clearly not a recommendation aimed at converting to a civilian faculty."<sup>40</sup>

While academicians and the GAO maintained their position that adding civilian instructors would improve the quality of education, the Academy pointed to its record of

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

distinguished leaders and its fourth place ranking in the nation in number of Rhodes and Hertz scholars. LTG Palmer summed up the Academy position:

Absent clear evidence of cost savings, changes in missions, or changes in the expectations from West Point's product, why experiment with an established system which provides proven leaders of character to our Nation?<sup>41</sup>

Ultimately, in 1992, the 1993 defense authorization bill contained language that would require the USMA to adopt a 50-50 mix of civilian-military faculty.<sup>42</sup> The bill also stipulated that the Academy should only have one flag officer, all newly commissioned graduates would receive Reserve commissions, and the Academy band should be reassigned. LTG Howard Graves, who succeeded LTG Palmer as Superintendent, speculated the bill was a "counter attack" and the goal was "to try to put as many onerous provisions as (Senate Armed Services Committee Staff Director Punaro) could in there that would get everybody's attention."<sup>43</sup> He felt that the bill and the increased interest in the Academy was a result of a "conviction ... in the mind of (Nunn) and (Glenn)... that we were 'stiffing' them" and Nunn, in particular, felt the "the playing field wasn't even" with concern to other officers.<sup>44</sup>

LTG Graves' further dealings with the two Senators and their staff led him to believe that much of the attack was personal. On a visit with his fellow superintendents to see Senator Glenn, LTG Palmer was brought into Arnold Punaro's office and Glenn "lectured to us for the entire period and then got up and walked out."<sup>45</sup> Senator Nunn's committee staff director Punaro "just screamed at (MG Jerry Harrison, Director of

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Maze, Rick, "Bill Would Cut Status, Officer Staff at Academies," *Air Force Times*, Vol. 53, number 11, 19 Oct 1992, 24.

<sup>43</sup> Graves, Howard, interviewed by Stephen Grove, second session conducted on 5 June 1996, just before he retired, 30.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

Legislative Liaison) for about an hour and ...ranted about the Academies.”<sup>46</sup> The feeling was that the bill was sent forward to “show you guys who’s in charge.”<sup>47</sup> The Academy attempted to develop a compromise that would be acceptable only to find that Punaro’s standpoint was the “we don’t even have a conversation going if you’re going to continue to resist (the issue of reserve commissions for all new second lieutenants).”<sup>48</sup>

Issues as heated as the proposal for the eight year ADSO and radical changes to West Point often invoked the ire of Academy graduates who are a very vocal group. They began to “pepper the Senate and the Congress with letters ... insulting the Senators, particularly Senator Nunn.”<sup>49</sup> Academy graduates also wrote to the Superintendent to express their opinions and offer their help in thwarting change. However, their efforts did more to exacerbate matters because, while they are “great individuals ... they’re not a political action committee.”<sup>50</sup>

Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney expressed to officials that he would not support the Academy’s position on the issue of reserve versus regular commissions. Because the Academy did not have the support of the DOD, they attempted to compromise on the other points of the bill. At that point, Punaro was willing to discuss their proposals. This reinforced the notion that “they wanted us to know they were in charge” and when the Academy acquiesced on the RA issues “they were willing to communicate.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 31.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

West Point's compromise included an increase of civilian faculty to 25% and a decrease in the size of the band. The primary mission in offering these concessions was so that the decisions for these issues and ones involving flag officers at USMA would reside with the Secretary of the Army. Congress agreed and changed the wording of the bill to read:

The Secretary of the Army may employ as many civilians as professors, instructors, and lecturers at the Academy as the secretary considers necessary.<sup>52</sup>

The Secretary could now decide on the appropriate mix and USAFA and USMA began to compose their input to the Blend of Excellence.

The Blend of Excellence is the product that was published by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to officially propose their plans for attaining 25% civilian faculty. The paper extolled the virtues of an integrated faculty and noted that the outcome will be a faculty where "military and civilian members play synergistic roles."<sup>53</sup> It also highlighted the plan for phasing in the civilians from 7% to 25% by 2002. It is important to note that the final product did not match USMA's input and the Dean, Brigadier General (BG) Galloway composed a letter for Lieutenant Colonel McCowan, Jr. at the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel stating that West Point felt strongly about some of the content that was omitted. The memo stated that the paragraph describing the background of the issue did not adequately present the reasons for conversion to civilian faculty. The paragraph in question read:

For some time, many have expressed a desire to increase the civilian component of the faculties of USMA and USAFA in order to provide the cadets with greater diversity of experience in the classroom. While the

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<sup>52</sup> Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, 102d Congress, 2d session, 1 Oct 1992, H10210.

<sup>53</sup> *Blend of Excellence: Military-Civilian Mix at the Service Academies*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 1993, 2.

USMA and USAFA frequently have relied on outside lecturers, the use of visiting professors, and the broad-based academic backgrounds of the military faculty to achieve this diversity, the United States Naval Academy (USNA) has relied on a faculty structure with a greater number of civilians.<sup>54</sup>

The problem with this statement was that while the GAO was critical of the faculty, most studies and accreditation have not been. The proposal for this background paragraph with major discrepancies highlighted read:

**For some time members of Congress and staff members of the Office of the Secretary of Defense have expressed a desire to increase the civilian component of the faculty of the United States Military Academy (USMA) and the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) in order to provide the cadets a greater diversity of experience in the classroom. While the USMA and USAFA have relied heavily on outside lecturers, the use of visiting professors, and the broad-based academic backgrounds of the military faculty to achieve this exposure to diversity, the United States Naval Academy (USNA) has chosen to rely on a faculty structure with greater numbers of civilians. Civilian faculty members have long been a part of all service academies. Because of the high demand for advanced education for officers in the Army and Air Force, the USMA and USAFA have also used assignment of military to their faculties as a part of professional development of junior officers.**<sup>55</sup>

Also, in the first draft sent to USMA, the background included a statement that “studies by the US GAO have been critical of faculty turnover, and the low proportion of terminal degrees” among the teaching staffs when compared to other top colleges. West Point insisted that this be followed by noting, “objective measures indicate that graduates from all three service academies compare most favorably with each other and with graduates of highly select civilian colleges and universities.”<sup>56</sup> As a result, any mention of the GAO report as the impetus for change was omitted. It is obvious that West Point still held strongly to the belief that their predominantly military faculty was appropriate and

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Memorandum for Lieutenant Colonel William H. McCowan, Jr., ODCSPER, 17 May 1993, Subj: Response to a Blend of Excellence Document.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

that it was Congress who was forcing the change. After these recommendations were not heeded, USMA promptly moved out with their marching orders and proceeded with the task of hiring civilian faculty.

In the May 1993 issue of the Assembly, LTG Graves addressed the issue for the graduates and proclaimed, "By all indications, we expect to get excellent educators who will uphold our standards and who will serve as mentors as well as teachers."<sup>57</sup> Five years later, the Academy prepared its self-study in preparation for the decennial Middle States Accreditation.<sup>58</sup> It noted that the hiring of civilians was frozen at 21% due to budgetary constraints but that the overall effects of the program were positive. The 1997 ABET accreditation identified the work that USMA had done in hiring civilian faculty and remarked, "The increased dependency on civilian faculty ... appears to be adding to the quality of all programs."<sup>59</sup> LTG Graves also assessed the effects of the civilian hiring by saying that presence of the civilians was "very positive" and that West Point had "been able to choose people who have values and are concurring in the purpose of the Academy."<sup>60</sup> The final approval came from the Middle States accreditation report that noted that the "faculty which includes senior military, rotating military, and civilians is an appropriate model for the Academy."<sup>61</sup> The report also congratulated the Academy

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<sup>57</sup> Graves, Howard, D., "Letter to Graduates and Friends of USMA," *Assembly*, (May 1993): 1.

<sup>58</sup> *United States Military Academy Interim Report of the Middle States Accreditation Self-Study Steering Committee*, Volume VII, (November 1998): 1.

<sup>59</sup> "United States Military Academy, Final Statement, 1996-97 Visit," Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, 5 Sep 97, 7.

<sup>60</sup> Graves, Howard, interviewed by Stephen Grove, third session conducted on 5 June 1996, just before he retired, 39.

<sup>61</sup> Report to the Faculty, Administration and Corps of Cadets of the United States Military Academy, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3 November 1999, 12.

“on being willing to look at long-standing practices and modify them when justified by changing circumstances.”<sup>62</sup>

The overall effect of the civilianization of the United States Military has been positive in the eyes of the academic world and the leaders of the Academy although “the true basis (was) not completely clear.”<sup>63</sup> However, when comparing the civilianization of the USMA with the civilian faculty of USNA, LTG Graves warned:

We don't want our departments to become like civilian organizations. We want them to retain their military nature. We also want civilians here who don't necessarily want to run the Academy. We're bringing them in to teach and to be academics. I think, if we don't watch it, we could, in fact, evolve into that and I would hate to see it.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>63</sup> Graves, Howard D. Letter to Major George Rhynedance, 28 Jan 93.

<sup>64</sup> Graves, Howard, interviewed by Stephen Grove, third session conducted on 5 June 1996, just before he retired, 40.