LEVEL II

Research Problem Review 78-6

THE CORRELATES OF AWOL: 30 YEARS OF RESEARCH INTO THE PROBLEM OF AWOL IN THE U.S. ARMY

PERSONNEL ACCESSION AND UTILIZATION TECHNICAL AREA

U. S. Army
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Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel

JOSEPH ZEIDNER
Technical Director (Designate)

WILLIAM L. HAUSER
Colonel, US Army
Commander

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Personnel Systems and
Contemporary Problems

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Donna C. Angle

PERSONNEL ACCESSION AND UTILIZATION TECHNICAL AREA

Anthony E. Castelnovo, Work Unit Leader

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Submitted as complete and
technically accurate, by
Ralph R. Canter
Technical Area Chief

Approved by:

E. Ralph Dusek, Director
Individual Training and Performance
Research Laboratory

Joseph Zeidner
Technical Director (Designate)
U.S. Army Research Institute for
the Behavioral and Social Sciences

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FOREWORD

The Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) is interested in research dealing with the problem of AWOL to provide a basis for understanding AWOL in the context of today's all-volunteer Army. AWOL is a complex phenomenon reflecting the morale, discipline, and combat readiness of the U.S. Army at any time; it is important, then, that military leaders and policymakers have access to AWOL statistics and exploratory research in order to make quick and accurate decisions, with the goal of reducing the AWOL rate and insuring the readiness capability of the Army.

In response to the need for background information, this Research Problem Review summarizes research on the correlates of AWOL in the U.S. Army from 7 December 1941 and including the post-Vietnam era, which began in February 1974.

The research was conducted under Army Project 2Q762717A767, "Personnel Systems and Contemporary Problems."

JOSEPH ZEIDNER
Technical Director (Designate)

THE CORRELATES OF AWOL: 30 YEARS OF RESEARCH INTO THE PROBLEM OF AWOL IN THE U.S. ARMY

BRIEF

Requirement:

To summarize the results of research conducted on AWOL in the Army from World War II (7 December 1941) into the post-Vietnam period (beginning February 1974).

Procedure:

A literature search was conducted on research about AWOL in the Army from 1941 to 1975. Sources were official military and government documents and data, military-sponsored research, and civilian psychological and sociological research. The reports and data sources, published and unpublished, were identified; their findings were summarized in roughly chronological order.

Findings:

Theoretical research on correlates of AWOL parallels criminological theory in each period considered, but has not produced workable solutions to the AWOL problem.

Soldiers' personal characteristics and preservice background can be correlated to some extent with AWOL behavior, but not consistently enough that potential delinquents can be identified accurately. AWOL behavior does appear to be a function of the individual's response to a given situation--not of the military situation itself--and is likely to be repeated in spite of punishment. AWOL soldiers did not differ greatly over the period studied.

Utilization of Findings:

The findings seem to suggest that a number of component problems be pursued simultaneously. In that regard, increased attention should be given to the principles of deterrence, that is, the positive forces against AWOL.

Because recent findings reported in criminological literature have challenged some of the underlying assumptions used to explain crime and AWOL in the past, it is important that the Army conceptualize again the AWOL problem to broaden the base of inquiry. This review should enable researchers to delineate special study areas deserving fresh inquiry and suggest aspects of the AWOL problem that may be susceptible to a new and innovative approach.

In recognition of the importance of AWOL as an index of morale, discipline, and combat readiness, the Department of Defense will soon require all services to report their AWOL rates uniformly as a percentage of total strength and by sex.

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PROBLEM

This Research Problem Review deals with a recurrent problem affecting the morale, discipline, and combat readiness of the U.S. Army--soldiers who are absent without leave (AWOL) from their units, organizations, or places of duty. Although it may be argued that such behavior among military personnel during peacetime is no different from absenteeism among civilian workers, national security may be jeopardized if the Army's absent without leave (AWOL) rate becomes high enough to interfere with its ability to operate. Because of the nature of the military mission, the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) is exempt from the 13th amendment, which prohibits involuntary servitude except as punishment for a convicted criminal. Research and statistics on the various forms of AWOL can help military planners determine an AWOL rate the Army can reasonably tolerate under varying conditions of mobilization.

The Army began recording desertion (prolonged AWOL) rates by calendar year in 1944 and AWOL (absences of less than 30 days) rates by fiscal year in 1951 (see Figure 1 and Tables 1 and 2). Some rates are cumulative (which reflect number of incidents rather than number of individuals, that is, one soldier may have more than one AWOL in a reporting quarter), and others are average rates. One must be cautious, therefore, in making comparisons. However, making allowances for the distinction between AWOL and desertion, the differences in reporting by calendar and fiscal year, and the effects of reporting cumulative or average rates, one can approximate the extent of the AWOL/desertion problem on a comparison basis. For example, the data shown in Figure 1 and Tables 1 and 2 indicate that desertion rates for the Vietnam era were about double Korean era rates, but still below reported rates for World War II, whereas AWOL rates for the Vietnam era were only half of the Korean era rates. (Comparable figures for absences of less than 30 days for the World War II period are not available.) The data also indicate that the post-Vietnam AWOL rate has continuously declined.

AWOL can be considered a generic term covering a class of related behaviors described for the 30-year period covered in the U.S. Articles of War (1928) and subsequently in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ, 1951, 1968). Under military law, soldiers classified AWOL may be first or chronic offenders who intentionally or unintentionally overstayed leave or absented themselves anywhere from a few hours to years, either under combat or garrison conditions. Technically, a soldier is dropped from the rolls of his unit after 30 days and categorized administratively as a deserter. Intent to leave permanently,

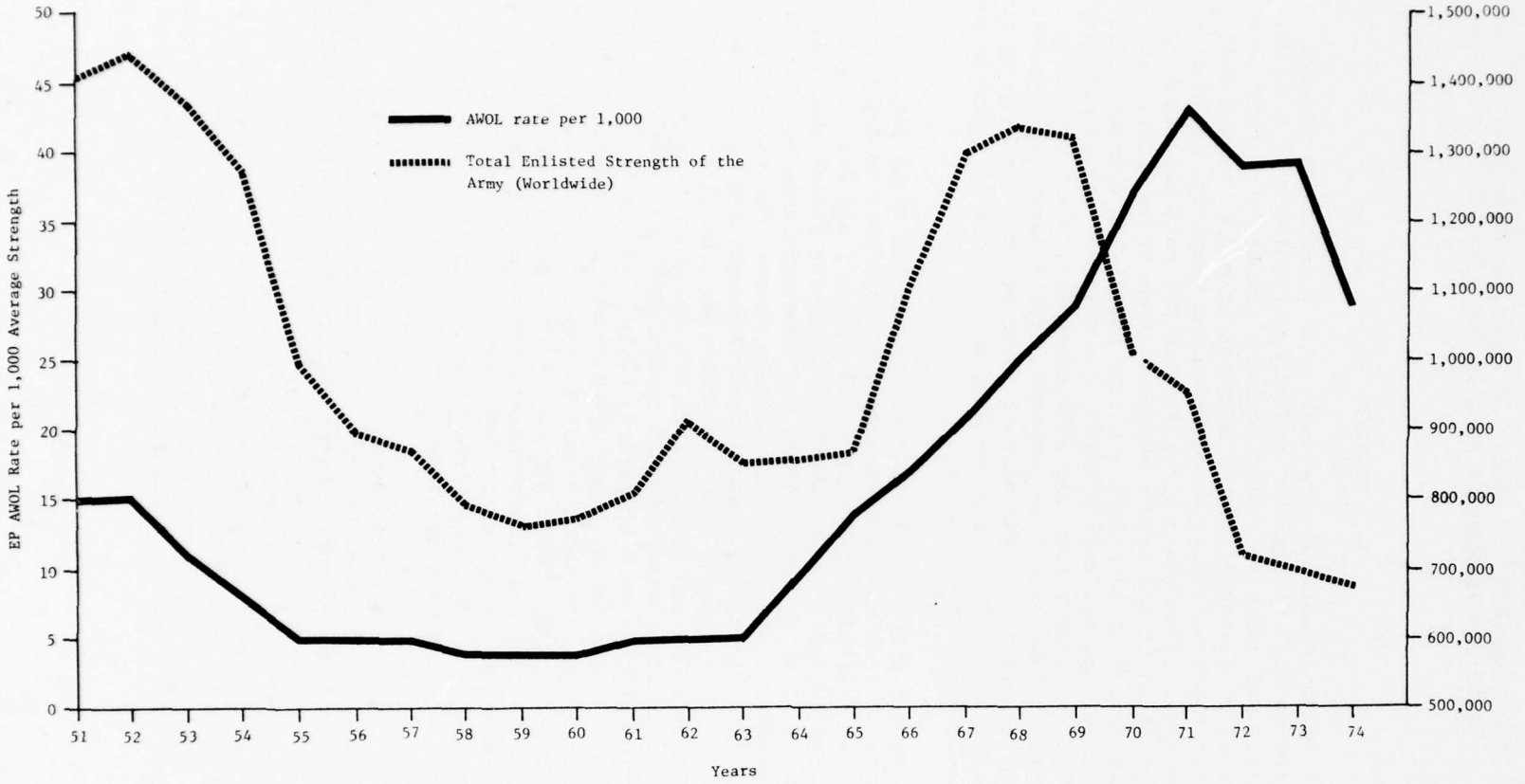

Figure 1. U.S. Army quarterly AWOL rates of enlisted personnel (EP) per 1,000. (Statistics for all years based on calendar year rather than fiscal year. From U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Military Personnel Center, Alexandria, Va. 22332, Strength of the Army Reports (U), Part II--Gains and Losses to Active Army, DCSPER-46).

Table 1

Absentee Incident Rates, All-Service Comparison, Vietnam, Korea, and World War II
(Per 1,000 average enlisted monthly end strength)

	Year		Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force[a]
World War II	Calendar[b]	1942	*	*	*	
		1943	*	*	*	
		1944	*	*	*	
		1945	*	*	*	
Korea	Fiscal[c]	1951	*	28.4	*	*
		1952	181.0	31.9	*	62.0
		1953	158.0	36.3	*	58.44
		1954	115.3	37.6	*	38.32
Vietnam	Fiscal[c]	1965	60.1	26.8	*	2.9
		1966	57.2	29.2	*	3.3
		1967	78.0	22.4	*	3.6
		1968	89.7	14.4	*	3.6
		1969	112.3	13.54	*	4.4
		1970	132.5	17.5	174.3	5.9
		1971	176.9	19.0	166.6	9.4
		1972	166.4	18.3	170.0	17.2
		1973	159.0	21.7	234.3	16.1
		1974	130.0	53.8	287.5	17.3
		1975	94.5	73.0	300.9	13.0

Note. Absentee incidents are of less than 30 days. Table source is U.S. Department of Defense, Manpower & Reserve Affairs.

*Data not available.

[a]Air Force became a separate service in 1947.

[b]1 January to 31 December.

[c]1 July to 30 June.

Table 2

Desertion Rates, All-Service Comparison, Vietnam, Korea, and World War II
(Per 1,000 average enlisted monthly end strength)

	Year		Army	Navy	Marine Corps		Air Force[a]
World War II	Calendar[b]	1942	*	5.5	1 Dec. 41 - 30 June 42	7.3	
		1943	*	3.1		8.8[c]	
		1944	63.0	3.0		6.9[c]	
		1945	45.2	3.5		5.4[c]	
Korea	Fiscal[c]	1951	14.3[b]	3.1		10.1	*
		1952	22.0	6.2		19.7	*
		1953	22.3	8.7		29.6	*
		1954	15.7	6.9	July 53	2.2	*
Vietnam	Fiscal[c]	1965	15.7	6.7		18.8	.39
		1966	14.7	9.1		16.1	.35
		1967	21.4	9.7		26.8	.42
		1968	29.1	8.5		30.7	.44
		1969	42.4	7.34		40.2	.63
		1970	52.3	9.9		59.6	.80
		1971	73.5	11.1		56.2	1.5
		1972	62.0	8.8		65.3	2.8
		1973	52.0	13.6		63.2	2.2
		1974	41.2	21.2		89.2	2.4
		1975	26.8	22.4		105.0	1.9

Note. The term desertion used herein has no legal significance. When an individual has been absent without authority for 30 days or more, he is administratively classified as a deserter. Only after an individual is convicted of the charge of desertion can the term "deserter" be applied in the full legal sense. Table source is U.S. Department of Defense, Manpower & Reserve Affairs.

*Data not available.

[a]Air Force became a separate service in 1947.

[b]1 January to 31 December.

[c]1 July to 30 June.

however, must be proved to convict an individual of desertion under Article 85, UCMJ. Proof of intent not to return is the distinguishing factor between desertion and AWOL (Article 86, UCMJ). Related to the crimes of AWOL and desertion is the crime of missing movement (Article 87, UCMJ), which covers those cases where the individual, through neglect or design, misses the movement of his unit. Thus, it is important to note if the terms AWOL and desertion are being used in an administrative or legal context.

In time of war, the punishment for desertion could be death, but in the case of AWOL it is not unusual for the Army to offer an Article 15 (company punishment) for absence of less than 30 days. Still, most courts-martial are for AWOL. AWOL up to 60 days is often referred for summary court-martial, and AWOL up to 14 months for special court-martial. General courts-martial usually are reserved only for recalcitrant cases of prolonged or repetitive AWOL. In addition, AWOL, as with other types of crimes, may be categorized as either expressive or instrumental, that is, the result of emotions residing in the individual, or as a means to an end (usually getting out of the Army). Despite legal sanctions, AWOL has consistently been the most frequent military offense with the greatest amount of recidivism among military offenses, and at times has reached alarming levels. For example, the average quarterly AWOL rate during 1971 for enlisted men in the U.S. Army rose to 43.15 per 1,000 (see Figure 1).

The Army has conducted numerous investigations over the past 30 years into the etiology of AWOL to reduce significantly and eliminate where possible such dysfunctional behavior. In each era, the problem has been interpreted in light of then-current criminological theories, none of which produced a solution.

This paper summarizes research findings, by wartime era, on the correlates of AWOL among U.S. Army enlisted personnel worldwide between 1941 and 1975. Discussion by wartime era reflects the extent of the AWOL problem during periods when military service carries real and dangerous risks, in contrast with the war games and "job" aspects of the peacetime Army.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

World War II Era

The research conducted during this period was based primarily on deferred psychiatric diagnoses of soldiers imprisoned for AWOL and other offenses. In general, investigators were searching for background variables, social adjustment indicators, and personality types that could be used to differentiate the potential AWOL from his nondelinquent counterpart and thereby aid wartime selection. Researchers were influenced in those efforts by the biological approach to

criminology represented by Sheldon's (1949) "constitutional psychology" and Glueck's (1956) "mental pathology."

In a retrospective study, Schneider, LaGrone, Glueck, and Glueck (1944) used the Glueck Prediction Scale (Glueck, S., & Glueck, E., 1943) to predict the military adjustment of 200 soldiers who had been delinquents or criminals in civilian life and were confined to a rehabilitation center for having committed a military offense (usually AWOL). The Glueck scale measured five factors: military adjustment, civilian delinquency, family background, educational/vocational background, and social background. On the basis of the Glueck prediction scores, 85% of the 200 soldiers studied would not have been expected to make a good adjustment to Army life and should not have been inducted into the Army.

Davis, Wolman, Berman, and Wright (1945) studied 100 cases of AWOL at the Richmond Army Air Base Hospital to investigate to what extent mental deficiency and mental disorder contributed to AWOL. Their findings showed not only that the reasons given for going AWOL (personal, domestic problems) often were not the real ones, but also that the real reasons most often were unrecognized by the men themselves. In fact, unsatisfactory working conditions, frequent AWOL, drunkenness and drug usage, and difficulty in the officer-soldier relationship in the Army appeared to reflect previous maladjustment in civilian life. Broken homes, substandard living conditions during maturing years, erratic work records, and antisocial traits were characteristic of this group before induction. Of the 100 AWOL's studied, 64 were chronic alcoholics and 24 had used drugs (usually marihuana). Psychometric evaluation based on the Wechsler-Bellevue Scale revealed 19 borderline and 25 mental defectives of varying degrees of severity. Half of the men were diagnosed as constitutional psychopaths and 4 as psychoneurotics. Most were 21 to 22 years old. In the 19 to 25 age group, there were 83 men with more than 1 AWOL, 58 with from 6 to 13 AWOL's, and 1 with 25 AWOL offenses. Thus, it was evident that a guardhouse sentence could hardly be considered an effective deterrent to AWOL.

In a psychiatric study of AWOL, Guttmacher and Stewart (1945) found that the sharpest point of difference between AWOL's and non-AWOL's was their mental health. The researchers felt that much preventive work can and should be done with mildly neurotic and subnormally intelligent AWOL's, but they expressed doubt that the large and difficult group of psychopathic AWOL's could ever be used in the military setting. The latter were identified as "bad actors who have made difficulty for themselves, their families, and their communities in civil life."

Rose (1951) analyzed data on white American combat infantrymen fighting against the Germans in Italy during World War II. He found that the objective combat experiences of AWOL's were mostly the same as those of non-AWOL's, but the AWOLs' psychological reactions were

more drastic in many instances because of a neurotic predisposition or lack of integration into the unit. Rose therefore recommended that the Army make a greater effort to keep units together through rotation of troops by company. Other studies have shown that lack of integration in the unit reduces the moral support soldiers get from their peers, one of the most significant sources of psychological strength in combat. See Shils and Janowitz (1948) for a more detailed discussion of the factors that strengthen and weaken unit morale in combat.

In a similar study, Manson and Grayson (1946) analyzed and classified statements of 2,276 American soldiers in the Mediterranean theater of operations who deserted, misbehaved before the enemy, or were AWOL. In the case of both AWOL and desertion, neuropsychiatric factors were found to play an exceedingly important role in the soldiers' attempts to analyze, rationalize, and present reasons for their actions.

Caldwell (1948) gave an overall picture of the effects of neuropsychiatric disorders on AWOL behavior in research conducted from 1940 to 1946. The most common reason for commitment to military penal institutions was AWOL, and prisoners with psychoneurotic disorders and chronic alcoholics were more likely than other prisoners to have gone AWOL. Also, they tended to score lower than average on the Army General Classification Test (AGCT). On 10 August 1946, War Department Circular 241 directed the discharge of soldiers with AGCT scores of less than 70 who showed lack of adaptability to the service; and, on 14 February 1947, Surgeon General Office Circular 23, quoting the Adjutant General's letter of 10 February 1947, prohibited the enlistment of men with an AGCT of less than 70.

Anderson (1948) recommended that AWOL not be blocked as a means of escape because it might result in other more serious manifestations. Anderson also found that a small number of men who went AWOL were openly trying for discharge, which he identified as a part of the AWOL recidivism problem.

Clark (1948) developed the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) AWOL Recidivist Scale, which consisted of 24 items from the MMPI that discriminated between AWOL recidivists and nonrecidivists. Clark (1949) used the AWOL Recidivist Scale to study 100 soldiers who had gone AWOL from a unit destined for overseas. Thirty-five were found to be within the normal range; 65 had one or more subtest scores of 70 or above. Of those classified abnormal on the basis of MMPI profiles, neurotics and psychotics were about equal in number. Clark (1949) also used the Altus Adjustment Test (Altus, 1945), a short, 36-item verbal test, on the same group of men. In addition to allowing a qualitative evaluation of the responses, the Altus Adjustment Test provides (a) a hypochondria-hysteria score based on 12 items concerned with general health and specific complaints and (b) an adjustment score, consisting of the number of maladjusted responses to the entire 36 items. On the basis of scores on the Altus

Adjustment Test, AWOL's were found to be "significantly more maladjusted than mild psychoneurotics."

Schneider and LaGrone (1945), in a statistical study of 500 rehabilitation center prisoners, found that AWOL was the military offense with the greatest recidivism. Continuing his earlier work, LaGrone (1947) reported a carryover of delinquency behavior patterns among AWOL's from civilian life into the military situation and noted that these behavior patterns appeared at an earlier age among AWOL recidivists.

Feldman and Maleski (1948) conducted a study at an Army Special Training Unit of illiterate inductees from small towns and farms in Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, and Kentucky to identify early and aid in the adjustment of the "probable AWOL," who was later called "the retreatist-prone individual" by Sullivan (1971) and given the status of a syndrome by Berbiglia (1971). Again, the results showed that AWOL's carried maladjustment patterns over from civilian life. The findings also indicated that AWOL's differed from non-AWOL's in that they fled from stressful situations, showed more aggression and hostility toward their environment, displayed more egocentric behavior, felt less responsibility in social relationships, and placed limitations on their full functioning with various somatic complaints and functional disturbances.

Korean Conflict Era

During this period, situational correlates of AWOL were given increased attention. This approach reflected work by investigators such as Schuessler and Cressey (1950) and Sutherland (see Vold, 1951) that suggested that situational factors had a greater impact on criminal behavior than did physiology or personality.

In 1953, Clark attempted to improve the original AWOL Recidivist Scale from the MMPI and found 10 of the original 24 items to be significantly valid.

Osburn, Brown, Chreitzberg, Hield, Seidel, and Watson (1954) examined possible factors influencing delinquency (especially AWOL). Causes of military delinquency were seen as "extremely complex," with no single predictive factor. Situational variables were emphasized, however. It was found, for example, that men in transition between assignments were more likely to go AWOL than those integrated into regular units. In addition, there was evidence that some soldiers went AWOL to avoid combat duty. These investigators also observed that soldiers who went AWOL had difficulty in effectively using official channels (especially the company commander) to solve problems.

Ryan (1958) investigated the relationship between social background factors and performance in the Army and advised caution in judging the importance of these variables. For example, although a statistically significant relation was demonstrated between Army performance and the Cornell Medical Index scores, 78% of those with high scores were later judged to be effective soldiers. (The Cornell Medical Index was a questionnaire designed primarily to elicit whatever physical or emotional complaints a subject may have considered worth mentioning at the time of induction into military service.) It may have been assumed that a multiplicity of complaints before starting military training could have a later effect on AWOL behavior. Despite the significance of the relation, however, the Cornell Medical Index was found not to predict AWOL. Although clinical appraisal of the worst soldiers led to the conclusion that they failed in the Army because they had failed in civilian life, it should be noted that most soldiers, even those with pathological social background histories, proved to be satisfactory soldiers.

Klieger, Dubuisson, and Sargent (1962) conducted research on disciplinary problems, including AWOL, in order to develop retention standards for the Army. Much of their work was done with samples of enlisted men included in AFQT Categories IV and V (lowest 30th percentile of the population) who were being accepted into the Army during 1952 and 1953. A combined criterion consisting of type of discharge and court-martial conviction was used as a basis for acceptability. Results showed that although men in AFQT Categories IV and V comprised only 33% of the total inducted subsample, they accounted for 59% of the cases in the unfavorable criterion category. In the volunteer subsample, 22% in AFQT Categories IV and V accounted for 57% of the unfavorable criterion category.

Using a longitudinal sample representative of Army input for the period 1960 to 1964, Dubuisson and Klieger (1964) and Dubuisson and Sargent (1965) validated predictors identified as promising in antecedent studies of discipline failure (including AWOL). Although several of the predictors investigated provided moderately effective and economical measures of discipline failure, the most useful were the Personal History Form, designed expressly to predict military delinquency (including AWOL), and the Army Personal Inventory (PT 2401), an MMPI-type personality test that includes information on the individual's personal history and his AFQT score.

Vietnam Era

Just before the 1965 military buildup in Vietnam, the AWOL rate began a rise to unprecedented levels (see Figure 1). The concurrent lowering of mental and physical standards for induction may have contributed to this increase. From 1967 to 1971, AWOL became an even more serious problem for the Army. AWOL statistics released by the

Office of the Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) showed the cumulative annual AWOL rate climbed from 78.5 men per 1,000 to 176.9 per 1,000 (Congressional Quarterly, 1972). Note that the Department of Defense reports cumulative annual AWOL rates rather than the average quarterly rates used by the Army.

Blackman, Goldstein, Mandell, and Collins (1966) focused on the position of the AWOL soldier in the psychosocial structure of the squad during basic combat training (BCT) and tried to relate that position to military deviance. Three types of basic training squads were investigated: 44 squads had an individual who had been AWOL for more than 72 hours; 30 squads had an individual referred to a Mental Hygiene Consultation Service (MHCS); and 44 control squads had an individual who had been hospitalized with an upper respiratory infection. In the case of the AWOL squads, the AWOL soldiers tended to report their AWOL in terms of events external to the military, such as a family problem, whereas their squad mates tended to perceive the AWOL as the result of a breakdown in interpersonal relationships with military superiors.

Bogard, McCubbin, and Connolly's (1969) Correctional Training Facility (CTF)-AWOL Study attempted to identify factors that influenced success or failure in the readjustment of AWOL's after CTF training. Results showed that certain installations were more successful than others in working with the rehabilitated AWOL. Differential results were tentatively attributed to (a) the reception, attitude, and treatment given the rehabilitated AWOL's, and (b) increased job satisfaction.

Sullivan (1971) hypothesized that as a result of the psychological failure mechanism (discussed in detail by Maltz, 1960), high-school dropouts were more likely than other soldiers to use retreatist-type behavior such as AWOL, desertion, passive disobedience, or narcotics use as means of rejecting military authority. Although the hypothesis was supported, Sullivan concluded that the education factor must be viewed in combination with four other important variables: ethnic group, marital status, age, and method of induction. His identification of the "retreatist-prone individual" may have been a prototype of what Berbiglia (1971) later called "the AWOL Syndrome."

Fuchs (1969) reported similar findings in a separate study on the personal characteristics of stockade prisoners (mostly AWOL's). Those who were high-school dropouts, young (17 and 18 years old), Black, volunteers, and in the lower quartile on the AFQT were twice as likely as other soldiers to be found in the prisoner population.

In an effort to predict AWOL and other disciplinary offenses, Kristiansen and Larson (1967) developed the Background and Opinion Questionnaire-1 (BOQ-1), based on civilian delinquency research (Quay and Peterson, undated) and previous ARI research, to identify individual and background characteristics of soldiers.

Larson and Kristiansen (1969) tested the BOQ-1 on 4,123 men who were in reception stations on a given week in 1967. In addition to data from the BOQ-1, background data were gathered on age at entry, race, level of education, mental ability as measured by the AFQT, and component of service. Results, evaluated at the end of both BCT and Advanced Individual Training (AIT), were disappointing in that the relation between the predictor variables on the BOQ-1 and the delinquency criteria was low. The authors suggested, however, that better prediction of AWOL might be possible in the future if the Army inducts or enlists large numbers of individuals who admit to being high-school dropouts, gang members, and erratic employees.

Watson (1969) studied an AWOL Prevention Program at the 5th Battalion, 67th Artillery, Fort Bliss, Tex., to investigate the factors contributing to AWOL. Twenty-seven men, all of whom had been AWOL from that battalion, were interviewed; seven major problems that may have contributed to a high AWOL rate were uncovered:

1. Lack of after-duty recreation facilities,
2. Malassignment,
3. Late return from leave or pass,
4. Personal problems,
5. Inability to adjust to military life,
6. Lack of unit-oriented activities, and
7. Lack of unit integrity.

Simonsen (1970) used a Likert-type instrument, the General Attitude Toward the Army Scale, and the CTF Evaluation Form to assess the effects of the CTF retraining program at Fort Riley, Kans., on subsequent attitudes toward the Army of rehabilitated AWOL and other offenders. Scores for men who went AWOL after reporting for duty assignments were not significantly different from those who did not go AWOL. Thus, it was assumed that little or no relation existed between attitudes toward the Army and AWOL or other delinquent behavior after completion of the CTF retraining program.

Attempts have been made to study the impact of the "counterculture" on military delinquency. Roszak (1969) characterized members of the counterculture as embracing a conscious rejection of the contemporary values of society. McCubbin and Fox (1970), however, rejected the counterculture theory and characterized the AWOL offender as struggling to find a niche in society that would satisfy his rather limited demands. It was felt that the typical AWOL did not possess the intellectual capacity, educational background, or sophistication to embrace the counterculture in a conscious rejection of contemporary values.

Instead, AWOL was thought to be more of an adaptive response--an avoidance pattern carried over from civilian life. Despite personal problems and frustrations, the AWOL soldier was seen as desiring to pursue traditional goals such as having a job, a car, and money in his pocket as opposed to the goals of the counterculture, which were more concerned with attempts to expand the consciousness of society.

McCubbin, Fox, and McGillen (1970) studied 406 soldiers returned to AIT (Advanced Individual Training) after graduating from a correctional training facility. There was wide variation in the AWOL rates reported by various AIT installations. Results showed that (a) of 243 men who went AWOL from the installation, 25% left without staying a full day and (b) 53% who went AWOL left within 3 days after reporting. These findings corroborated the conclusions of Bogard et al. (1969) that the quality of leadership and the soldiers' initial reception had an important influence on AWOL recidivism.

Fox, Sullivan, and McCubbin (1970) did a library search on military delinquency, with emphasis on AWOL studies. They pointed out that any such investigation should consider that AWOL rates are closely tied to the Army admissions standards, which are, in turn, dependent on national defense posture at a particular time.

Finley (1970) reported a case study of an AWOL Prevention Program that concentrated on the role of middle-level management and small-unit leadership in combating AWOL. Two recurrent problems were emphasized: the inability to get a pass or leave to solve personal problems and failure of the immediate commander to become sufficiently involved in solving problems.

McCubbin, Fox, Sullivan, Kloss, Fraas, Lauderdale, Price, Schenck, Starkey and Littlepage (1971) studied leadership and situational factors related to AWOL. They compared units with high and low AWOL rates and concluded that AWOL is the result of an interaction of three primary factors: the individual soldier, the specific situation in which he functions, and the leadership under which he serves.

McCubbin (1971) did a followup study of 200 CTF graduates returned to duty throughout CONUS. Responses to a questionnaire and interview were compared to identify distinguishing factors for those who were successfully restored to duty and those who became AWOL recidivists. McCubbin concluded that the rehabilitation of the AWOL offender is the responsibility of both the individual soldier and the military personnel with whom he comes into contact. Individualized attention and job satisfaction were crucial factors.

In 1971, a seemingly major breakthrough in explaining the AWOL phenomenon occurred. An Army chaplain (Berbiglia) counseling a group of stockade prisoners at Fort Bliss, Tex., noticed that prisoners confined for AWOL exhibited what appeared to be a distinctive pattern of

personality traits. In interviews, the AWOL offenders seemed to confirm Berbiglia's observations. They described themselves as nervous, depressed, quiet, inhibited, hostile, or impulsive. Berbiglia then administered the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis (TJTA), a test of personality traits that influence personal and social adjustment (developed by Taylor, Morrison, Morrison, and Romoser in 1968 for diagnostic, counseling, and research purposes). Berbiglia called the trait pattern that emerged as predictive of AWOL behavior the AWOL Syndrome (Berbiglia, 1971).

In pilot studies conducted by Berbiglia (1971) in a company and a battalion at Fort Polk, La., men identified as potential AWOL's on the TJTA were referred to their company commanders for interview and then to Berbiglia for counseling and referral where indicated. When such identification of a potential AWOL was followed up with personal counseling, the AWOL rate dropped to about half the rate of three battalions used as control groups.

Fraas and Fox (1972), however, were unable to find any evidence of an AWOL Syndrome in their work with 381 trainees at the Army CTF, Fort Riley, Kans. Trainees were divided into three groups: those guilty of AWOL only, those guilty of other offenses only, and those guilty of both. Results showed the TJTA to be less reliable for use with Army prisoners than for a sample drawn from Regular Army units. In the AWOL group, 21% met the AWOL Syndrome criteria; in the second group, 16.8%; and in the third group, 27%. Fraas (1972), in a separate study at the same facility, also found the TJTA did not predict AWOL recidivism in a group of 176 trainees. Failure to replicate Berbiglia's findings strongly suggested that the AWOL Syndrome is not a useful paradigm.

Bell, Bolin, Houston, and Kristiansen (1973) also found the TJTA not to be predictive of AWOL. Furthermore, their research showed that individuals identified and referred as AWOL prone by means of the TJTA were more likely to go AWOL than were their equally high-scoring counterparts in the control group who were not identified and referred. Thus, labeling a potential AWOL offender created a self-fulfilling prophecy.

As was true for the other eras, research in the late Vietnam and post-Vietnam periods reflected the state of the art in the criminological literature; that is, the approach is more interactive.

Goffard, DeGracie, and Vineberg (1972), in their Attitudinal Studies in the Volunteer Army (VOLAR) Experiment of men in training in 1971, found the relation between attitudes and AWOL to be complex. Data collected during BCT (Basic Combat Training) and AIT at Fort Ord and Fort Jackson were analyzed to compare AWOL rates of men with different personal characteristics. Results showed that as attitudes toward the Army became more positive, the AWOL rate declined, but only to a certain point; beyond that, as attitudes became more favorable,

the AWOL rate again increased. The fact that soldiers who recently became 17 years of age were particularly likely to go AWOL suggested that the age factor should be studied more carefully. It was also found that AWOL decreased among soldiers who had stayed in school at least until the beginning of the seventh grade. A difference in AWOL rate by race was also reported: 3.23 per 100 men for white soldiers compared to a rate of 5.11 per 100 men for Black soldiers.

Drucker and Schwartz (1973) found the following factors to be related to AWOL: personality, career orientation, age, years of education, intelligence, aptitude, and Army component. These factors, on the other hand,were found not to be related: race, physical status, and attitude toward the Army. Other findings included:

1. The same variables related to AWOL were related negatively to acquisition of military skills and leadership potential. Those with high leadership potential had the more socially desirable personality traits and were older, better educated, more intelligent, and had higher aptitude scores. The consistent differences between AWOL's and non-AWOL's on this dimension suggested that personality may be an important factor in predicting AWOL.

2. A significant difference in career orientation was found during BCT between AWOL and non-AWOL soldiers for those who were 19 or older. Older soldiers who planned to make the Army their career were more likely to go AWOL during BCT than during AIT or later.

3. During both BCT and initial unit assignment, soldiers who went AWOL had fewer years of education and were in the lower mental categories on the AFQT.

4. Volunteers had a greater tendency to go AWOL than draftees. Thus, it was hypothesized that an increase in the AWOL rate would occur when the Army moved to an all-volunteer force.

Littlepage and Rappoport (1974) compared situational factors influencing AWOL decisions among 39 AWOL offenders awaiting court-martial and a matched control group. Results showed that the type of unit a soldier was assigned to was irrelevant to AWOL decisions. On the average, the problems experienced by AWOL's were no more severe than those of nonoffenders, but AWOL's were judged to be less proficient in social skills (not defined) and less able or willing to use various means available for effectively dealing with problems. Their decisions to go AWOL were believed to be influenced more by personal characteristics and characteristics of the environment--job satisfaction, leadership, etc.

Bauer, Stout, and Holz (1976) used an interactive approach to study discipline failure (including AWOL). They looked at certain individuals and social background factors that were shown in previous research to be predictive of adjustment to the Army, such as major preservice delinquency, civilian arrests, and school expulsions. It was felt, however, that because environmental and organizational characteristics are more readily subject to change by the Army, it might be more practical to take the investigation into the realm of human resources management in the military setting. In-depth interviews were conducted with unit-level noncommissioned officers (NCO's) who were in a position to be aware of behavior patterns and trends that might result in AWOL. Analysis of data suggested that the most useful measures of AWOL might be based on positive indicators of behavior that support Army organizational goals, for example, esprit de corps, satisfaction with the quality of Army life, and the military work role.

In continuation of their earlier work, Bell, Bolin, and Houston (1974) reported results of research using the TJTA and BOQ-72 to identify high risks for AWOL or other offenses at two posts where men were in BCT. Criteria were disciplinary infractions or adverse ratings by cadre at the end of BCT. Results showed that labeling a man "AWOL prone" or "high risk" tended to lead, in many cases, to scapegoating by military superiors and a self-fulfilling prophecy on the part of the soldier concerned, that is, a soldier perceived as a troublemaker fulfilled the expectations, deliberately or not, by going AWOL or acting in ways contrary to military standards of soldier behavior. These counterproductive results were attributed to the fact that company commanders had little or no training in counseling, tended to perceive the TJTA and BOQ-72 as infallible predictive instruments rather than tools; and, where AWOL or other discipline failure occurred, tended to dissociate themselves from the event and to blame the man.

Bell, Kristiansen, and Seeley (1974) discussed the development of the Early Experience Questionnaire (EEQ), a short, multiple-choice instrument to screen out (at the point of entry) men who have a high probability of getting in trouble (including AWOL). The EEQ is based on previous research that showed that preservice delinquency is the best single predictor of discipline failure in the first tour of duty. Data were collected from a sample of 1,235 men in reception stations at four different Army posts. Analysis indicated that the EEQ is a better predictor of delinquency (including AWOL) than the BOQ-72, but that neither instrument should be used in isolation. On 1 August 1975, the EEQ became operational and Army recruiters now use it to help identify potential problem soldiers.

The Demographic Questionnaire (DQ) is a 91-item, true-false instrument similar to the TJTA and BOQ-72 in many ways and designed to predict potential AWOL and other discipline problems. It was used as part of a Fort Leonard Wood AWOL and Desertion Study reported by

Rollier (1972). Data from one BCT brigade (N = 3,878) showed that the DQ had low validity against an AWOL criterion. Further research on the DQ was done by Bell concurrently with experimental work he was doing on the EEQ. Bell administered the DQ to 444 nonprior service trainees before the start of BCT at Fort Leonard Wood in March 1974. Disciplinary criteria analyzed at the end of BCT indicated that some items in the DQ are predictive of discipline failure (including AWOL) (Bell, in preparation).

Shoemaker, Drucker, and Kriner (1974) hypothesized that the fact that some soldiers go AWOL while others do not, even when faced with similar situations, strongly suggests that background, attitude, and personality factors predispose soldiers to go AWOL. The study attributed the lack of success in predicting AWOL, using those variables, to the disparity between the number of delinquent and nondelinquent soldiers in the Army at a given time.

Contrary to expectation, Shoemaker et al. (1974) found those who received high scores on the Neurotic Delinquency Scale of the Personal Opinion Questionnaire (Quay & Peterson, undated)--incorporated as part of the BOQ-1--were less apt to go AWOL after 8 months than those who received low scores. The relationship between the soldier and his parents was also found to be particularly important. AWOL's tended to report that their fathers or mothers tried to control them and everything they did. Disruption of the parents' marriage either by death or separation appeared to have an adverse effect on soldiers who went AWOL. Specifically, there was more AWOL and other delinquent behavior during BCT among soldiers whose fathers had died. After 8 months, however, AWOL occurred more frequently among soldiers whose parents were separated. Demographic variables also were found useful in differentiating AWOL or delinquent soldiers from their nondelinquent counterparts. Shoemaker et al. (1974) suggested that AWOL soldiers can be identified in advance and that identification can be improved as more variables are added given the recent increases in the Army's AWOL and delinquency rates (threefold increase between 1967 and 1971). However, Shoemaker et al. (1974) were able to identify correctly only 18% of the AWOL's during BCT and 35% of the AWOL's after 8 months. Conversely, Army AWOL statistics have not confirmed their prediction of a continued increase in AWOL (see Figure 1). The AWOL rate has gone down continuously since the institution of the All-Volunteer Army on 1 July 1973.

Hartnagel (1974) used data collected on prisoners in a military stockade to explore several possible explanations of AWOL drawn from the deviance literature. Results showed that AWOL does not represent a form of rebellion or nonconforming deviance (see Merton, 1957), but that a large percentage of AWOL could be explained as a form of innovative deviance--a rejection of institutionalized means and the substitution of illegitimate means--to reach a goal under conditions where legitimate means are not available to the actor. It was suggested that

for some categories of soldiers, given the absence of constraints inhibiting such behavior, AWOL may be a technique for getting out of the Army.

Lemert (1951) reported changes over time in the processes involved in AWOL behavior and presented evidence of secondary deviation. He defined secondary deviation as "When a person employs his deviant behavior or a role based upon it as a means of defense, attack, or adjustment to the overt and covert problems created by the consequent societal reaction to him, his deviation is secondary."

Bell and Houston (1976) studied the characteristics of unconvicted Vietnam-era Army deserters participating in the Presidential Clemency Program established by Executive Order on 16 September 1974. The data base was constructed from personnel files of the deserters, written reports of structured psychosocial interviews, and other data generated by the program. Individuals who turned themselves in voluntarily as deserters were compared with those who had been apprehended by civil or military authorities and were under military control at the time they entered the program. These two subgroups, which made up the sample of participants, were then compared with a nonparticipant sample of known Vietnam-era deserters who were eligible for the clemency program but did not apply. In general, the typical Vietnam-era deserter resembled deserters from World War II, the Korean conflict, and the typical prolonged AWOL described by Hartnagel (1974): He was likely young, a volunteer, had low mental ability, was a high-school dropout, gave "family problems" as reason for the absence, was a trainee or in transit from one assignment to another, and was free from guilt about the AWOL. It is interesting that 73% of Hartnagel's sample felt that receiving a bad discharge would not make it difficult to secure a civilian job. Bell and Houston's finding that 85% of the deserters worked steadily during their absence seems to lend some validity to their belief.

The Bell and Houston report has special value in the investigation of the problem of prolonged AWOL. Of the men incarcerated by the Army during the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, 86% had gone AWOL, and 44% of clemency program participants were repeat AWOL offenders who eventually stayed away altogether. Of the clemency program participants 60% had been absent for more than 3 years, and 15% had been gone for more than 5 years. Bell and Houston reported that the reasons the men gave for leaving had to do with crisis management, for example, personal, family, or financial problems. Unfortunately, the Joint Alternate Service Board did not determine if the reasons for continued absence were the same as or different from those given for the initial AWOL. Participants in the program were interviewed by mental health personnel who rated the severity of AWOL-related problems on a scale of mild, moderate, or severe. Although the interviewers judged that the majority of men (68%) had some adverse reactions to being AWOL, most of the men (64%) reported no problems that they

attributed to their status as AWOL's/deserters. Among those who did report AWOL-related difficulties, the most frequently mentioned were employment (13%) and family-marital problems (12%). It is now generally recognized, based on both Army research and experience, that the decision to go AWOL initially may be motivated by factors other than the decision to repeat an AWOL offense or remain in a prolonged AWOL status.

DISCUSSION

Article 86, UCMJ, is a military law, but it also is an instrument of education and persuasion used to inculcate new recruits with the military norm of discipline and to deter AWOL. The researcher's task is to discover where, why, to what extent, and when the system is most likely to break down; and to prevent that breakdown, where possible, by building a stronger bridge between people and procedure. Although some investigators have found some degree of consistency in the correlates of AWOL over time, it would be misleading to profess that a consensus exists. Many investigators reported changes over time in the processes involved in AWOL. When the research is viewed historically, the variables that contribute most to explaining AWOL appear to change entirely or shift position for BCT, AIT, periods between assignments, and combat or garrison conditions during wartime or peacetime. Thus, remedies that worked in one situation may not be effective in another.

In retrospect, many of the previous studies seem deficient in the specification of the model to be tested; the absence of a rigorous, logical, underlying theory; and the failure to include important variables. Implicit in the many efforts that sought to develop an instrument to screen out potential AWOL's on the basis of psychological, social adjustment, and background characteristics was the belief that the best estimate of an individual's behavior in the future is what he has done in the past. That theory has not stood up under empirical testing. The "black spot hypothesis" of looking for a defect in the individual who has gone, or is likely to go, AWOL has distorted the whole problem by focusing on only one aspect of it. Interpretation of objective reality also depends on the situation, the characteristics of the organization, the behavior of others in the environment, the type of group, the age and educational status of the individuals, and the responses of people in positions of authority.

Once the complexity of the AWOL problem is understood, we can appreciate that there is no such thing as a single solution to the overall problem. Rather, the resolution of a number of component problems must be pursued simultaneously. The present research should provide a satisfactory point of departure for delineating special study areas. We need answers to important questions such as how AWOL versus non-AWOL outcomes are linked to accessions, training, leadership, the military mission, the economy, rehabilitation; whether "troublemaking"

in the form of AWOL may simply be a symptom of defects in the system at many different levels that can and should be changed; what differences exist in the attitudes, values, motivations, and coping mechanisms of those who go AWOL in contrast with those who do not.

We need to know more than we do about the factors that inhibit or facilitate compliance or noncompliance with military means of social control. Alternative courses of action are open to the individual faced with conflict or crisis, and he alone must judge the appropriate mode of behavior for him in a given situation. If we know how the individual typically responds and what he responds to, it would greatly facilitate understanding AWOL. Wilson (1975) reported that prison populations tended to take more risks and had low thresholds for turbulence in their environments. Shoemaker et al. (1974) showed that a high proportion of soldiers who stated they probably would go AWOL eventually did. Delinquents (other than AWOL), on the other hand, tended to indicate they would never go AWOL. Development and use of an "impulsivity index" may therefore be useful to the Army in identifying those who are likely to go AWOL. For a detailed discussion of the application of an impulsivity index to the problem of juvenile delinquency, see Offer, Ostrov, and Marohn (1972).

Although AWOL has been studied primarily from the criminological viewpoint, it is not a crime in any other segment of the national work force. Whether the U.S. Army should change its laws and traditions pertaining to AWOL, and to what extent, is problematical. It would be possible to have a separate military justice system in which AWOL is treated as a crime only during time of war. At other times it would be handled through administrative procedures such as voluntary withdrawal without penalty during training (as in the Reserve Officer Training Corps Basic Camp and the U.S. Military Academy); option to break one's contract with the Army by giving notice of intent to terminate for good cause; or, as a last resort, administrative discharge for AWOL, in absentia. Many no doubt feel that the present system of military justice is already flexible enough to permit administrative handling of AWOL. In any event, the Congress and the Supreme Court have repeatedly recognized and upheld the laws and traditions governing discipline in the military (see, e.g., U.S. Supreme Court Decisions, Schlesinger v. Councilman, 1975).

For a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the post-Vietnam inquiry into various reforms in the military justice system, see Bishop (1974) and Moyer (1972). Debate centers on whether the primary objective of the system is discipline or justice and whether it is possible or desirable to design a system that can provide both. Bishop's analysis is based on seeing the system at work as an officer during World War II and as General Counsel of the Army during 1952 and 1953. He views military justice as a tool that procures discipline and enables the military to carry out its mission, and he concludes that no changes are necessary. Moyer, in contrast, is not an advocate, but sets forth both sides. The traditional military justice position

asserts that it is fairer and more efficient to treat uniquely military crimes (e.g., AWOL, desertion) as an internal military affair. Critics see a danger of exploitation and abuse; they question the implications, especially under all-volunteer conditions, of giving even a military employer criminal sanctions to enforce the employment contract against absenteeism. They assert that as long as military justice is considered a servant of military discipline, justice may be compromised. Both of the books mentioned are important references because together they constitute a current, comprehensive source of information and knowledge of the military justice system and will no doubt help to form the basis for changes in the way the Army views and manages the AWOL problem under varying conditions in the future.

Military training with emphasis on building esprit de corps and discipline may pay off in a lower AWOL rate. Leadership training for company commanders and NCO's--especially in the areas of counseling (e.g., positive discipline coaching), communications, and handling social problems--may also act as an indirect deterrent to AWOL. Comparison studies of the AWOL rates of other military institutions may point up the feasibility of experimenting with organizational changes, such as moving to a regimental system, as another force against AWOL.

Many criminological studies show that as the certainty of punishment rises, the incidence of that crime goes down (see Wilson, 1975). Nonetheless, in the case of AWOL, punishment does not appear to act as a deterrent. Moskos (1975) stated, on the basis of experiential evidence, that a new volunteer is not deterred from going AWOL by the expectation of an Article 15 or even a less-than-honorable discharge. See Bell and Houston (1976) for a detailed discussion of experiences of prolonged AWOL's/deserters applying for clemency.

With regard to rehabilitation, many criminologists now feel that it has no effect whatever on recidivism (see Wilson, 1975). The Army's research and experience have shown that despite continued efforts at rehabilitation, recidivism continues to be high among AWOL's (see Davis et al., 1945; Fox, Sullivan, & McCubbin, 1970; McCubbin, Fox, & McGillin, 1970 for a detailed discussion). Some have deplored the use of criminal law (and UCMJ) to punish social failures and feel that rehabilitation has not worked because of the intensive use of negative treatments of stigma and extrusion and the failure to develop positive rites of return and reinstatement of offenders into full membership in the community (see Cipes, 1968). Many investigators have found leadership to be an important factor in differentiating units with high and low AWOL recidivism rates. Unless the law is changed to permit soldiers to "quit their jobs in the Army" voluntarily, increased attention will be needed in the rehabilitation of AWOL's. (For a detailed discussion see Osburn et al., 1954; Watson, 1969; McCubbin, 1971; McCubbin et al., 1971; Department of the Army, 1972; Littlepage & Rappoport, 1974; and Hartnagel, 1974.)

A recurrent observation with regard to AWOL and crime in general is that both are highly correlated with age. Civil courts have recognized this in "The Young Offender Law," and the Army, through widespread use of Article 15.

It seems important, therefore, for the Army to investigate to what degree the perceptions, attitudes, and values of young people who enter the Army may differ from those who abide by and seek to transmit the established norms of discipline in the Army. Such knowledge should help military leaders to do a better job of helping young people make the transition from civil to military life without going AWOL.

One of the more consistent findings with regard to AWOL is that the offense is highly correlated with AFQT scores or other measures of intelligence. However, Wilson (1975) reported there is no clinical evidence that prison populations are any less intelligent than the average population.

Tests to screen out those who are high risks for AWOL have not proved cost effective and changes in the law are not imminent; it seems feasible in the short run, then, to throw the weight of our research efforts into reducing the AWOL rate by giving more attention to principles of deterrence and investigating new and innovative approaches to the rehabilitation of AWOL's.

An area of AWOL recidivism that merits further attention is the time between the rehabilitation experience and the reappearance of the problem, for the operation of many other contingencies may adversely affect whatever impact the AWOL rehabilitation program has. One way to circumvent the contaminating effect of those intervening experiences would be to use the more immediate and measurable criteria of attitude and behavior change over the rehabilitation period as judged by the soldier, his or her peers, or staff members just before release from the rehabilitation program. For guidance in defining criteria for goal achievement, the reader is referred to the essay by Twain (1975) on "Developing and Implementing a Research Strategy."

AWOL is a complex and constantly changing phenomenon that is part of the Army's human resources management responsibilities. As such, two overriding concerns are of paramount importance in AWOL: (a) the national security mission of the U.S. Army and (b) how high an AWOL rate the Army can reasonably tolerate under varying conditions of mobilization. The condition for successful diplomatic solutions to major world problems will be enhanced if backed by a strong, disciplined, combat-ready force. Because a high AWOL rate will lead to diminished capabilities, the AWOL index and related studies are of continuing interest to military policymakers and planners who may need to ascertain the morale, discipline, and combat readiness of the Army on a moment's notice.

Recently, professional criminologists have been questioning some assumptions traditionally made about the sources of deviant behavior. Likewise, researchers in the Army should reject old models that have not proved effective and adopt new perspectives for the study of AWOL and other military offenses. It is hoped that this review will stimulate new and innovative approaches to reducing AWOL as a dysfunctional behavior that interferes with the ultimate mission of the United States Army.

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