Research Report 1456

The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs

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Personnel Utilization Technical Area
Manpower and Personnel Research Laboratory

U. S. Army

Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

September 1987

U. S. ARMY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
FOR THE BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

A Field Operating Agency under the Jurisdiction of the

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE	READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER: ARI Research Report 1456	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.: ADA190587
3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER:	
4. TITLE (and Subtitle): THE ORIGINS OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR ARMY FAMILY PROGRAMS	5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED: Final Report January 1987-September 1987
	6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER: --
7. AUTHOR(s): D. Bruce Bell and Robert B. Iadeluca	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s): --
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 5001 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22333-5600	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS: 2Q263731A792, 2.4.2.H.1
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Washington, DC 20310	12. REPORT DATE: September 1987
	13. NUMBER OF PAGES: 26
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS(if different from Controlling Office): --	15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report): Unclassified
	15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE: --

16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)

Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)

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18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

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19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

Army families
Volunteers
Military history
Social service agencies
Volunteer movement
Military housing
Army Community Service

20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

The purpose of the report is to trace the history of volunteer participation in the Army's family support system within the larger context of volunteer activities in the United States as a whole. The report focuses particularly on the advent of the Army Community Service (ACS) in 1965 and how volunteers support its functions. The report shows that the relationship between the Army and its families has changed considerably over the years. During the Revolutionary War, Army families were essentially federal

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 SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

ARI Research Report 1456

20. Abstract (Continued)

employees who were paid for their services with government rations. During peacetime, most volunteer support has come from Army wives. During wartime, this effort is augmented by others. The ACS has increased the services to Army families but has been strained lately by the reduction in volunteer hours associated with the large-scale entry of married women into the labor force. The findings are intended for use by Army program managers, policy makers, and family researchers. KEYWORDS: MILITARY DEPENDENTS

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The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs

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Office, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel
Department of the Army

September 1987

Army Project Number
2Q263731A792

Personnel Utilization

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FOREWORD

Both the Army Chief of Staff's 1983 White Paper on the Army family and the Army Family Action Plan call for research to improve the "partnership" between the Army and its families. The Army Research Institute responded by starting in-house research on special families: single parents and dual military couples. It also laid the ground work for a multimillion dollar, multiyear effort to examine the role of family factors in soldier retention and individual and unit readiness.

During FY87, the in-house program also expanded and became more responsive to the needs of Army family program managers and policy makers. The current report, prepared by members of the Family Strength and Community Team of the Personnel Utilization Technical Area, was funded under Work Unit 2.4.2--Family-Based Soldier Retention and Readiness Programs.

This document has been reviewed in ARI Working Paper format by staff at the USA Community and Family Support Center and the USA Family Liaison Office. It was also briefed to the quarterly Community and Family Support Center's In-Progress Review held 27 October. As a result of this briefing and the earlier reviews, family program managers and policy makers have indicated that they will be better able to develop an accurate assessment of the trends leading to current programs, policies, practices, and concerns.

EDGAR M. JOHNSON
Technical Director

THE ORIGINS OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR ARMY FAMILY PROGRAMS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requirement:

Both the Army Chief of Staff's 1983 White Paper on the Army family and the Army Family Action Plan call for research to improve the "partnership" between the Army and its families. This paper addresses that requirement by tracing the history of one of the important ways families receive benefit from and, in return, contribute to the Army: volunteering.

Procedure:

This report is restricted to published and unpublished reports of volunteer activity in America and the changing history of the relationship between the Army and its families. The articles were then abstracted and combined into logical sections within major historical periods. Since the sources did not contain any numerical data, no statistical operations were performed.

Findings:

Industrialization in America brought a split between "men's" and "women's" work. Women's entry into the world outside the home was facilitated by the volunteer movement, which, in turn, was facilitated by the image of women, the American Civil War, and the creation of women's clubs and societies.

The relationship between the Army and its families has changed considerably since the Revolutionary War where the families were essentially employees of the government. Much of what was accomplished for the families was done through volunteers. During peacetime, such volunteers were mostly Army wives. During wartime, the wives were joined by a host of other volunteers. World War II saw a move to organize these civilian volunteers through such organizations as the American Red Cross, the USO, and Army Emergency Relief.

The Army Community Service (ACS) was born in 1965. Its mission was to increase services to soldiers and their families through better coordination of services and better use of volunteer labor. Although ACS has improved family services, it is being strained by the decline of volunteer hours associated with the large-scale entry of married women into the labor force.

Utilization of Findings:

This document is intended for use by Army program managers and policy makers who need to be able to appreciate and document historical trends affecting their programs and policies. It will also be used by the Army Research

Institute in planning additional research on the Army family services system and the related role of volunteers.

This report was originally produced as an ARI Working Paper. Comments from Army program managers who reviewed the earlier draft indicate that this form of summary is useful as they develop instruments for implementing the Army Family Action Plan.

THE ORIGINS OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR ARMY FAMILY PROGRAMS

CONTENTS

THE ORIGINS OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR ARMY FAMILY PROGRAMS

This paper shows the evolving role of volunteers in the Army's family support "system." It starts with the nature and motivations of volunteers within the American civilian segment and then in the Army culture since much of what has happened in the Army has been a result of what has been happening in the larger civilian culture.

The second section traces the changing nature of the partnership between the Army and its families; what the Army is doing for its families and what the families, in turn, are doing to support the Army and its mission. The third section covers how the Army Community Service (ACS) came into being and how it utilizes volunteers.

HISTORY OF SOCIAL SERVICE VOLUNTEERISM IN AMERICA

The history of social service voluntary activity within the U.S. Army is a reflection of the larger history of volunteerism across a newly urbanized and industrialized nation. Prior to that era, pioneer men and women, in a primarily rural America, worked together at home. Their goal was not measured in dollars but rather was to provide for their families.

Influence of the Church.

Outside the family, the most vital institution in the early 1800s was the Church. Religion inspired service work. The most common forms of volunteering for women at that time were charity and church work. Church work contributed greatly to group consciousness and brought women together.

Religion and churches created a special sphere of activity for women. Clergymen promoted this relationship, believing that women had special gifts for religion and morality. They especially praised their "sensibility, vivacity, sprightly imagination, sympathy and tenderness toward distress and those in imminent danger of distress" (Degler, 1980, p. 299). As early as 1805, women's societies existed which supplied soup, sewing, and firewood to the poor.

Division of male/female responsibilities.

Over the course of the 19th Century, the industrial revolution and urbanization took "work" out of the home. Degler describes the concurrent development of what he calls the "Doctrine of the Separate Spheres," wherein the man's sphere lay in the new world of the factory and the shop and the responsibility for maintaining the home and rearing the children lay with the woman. Woman was said to be the moral guardian of the home and family -- the nurse, the educator of the "future man," the helpmeet to the present.

A new element entered, however. In order for women to be effective guardians of the home and its morality, they found it necessary to participate in the outside world so as to protect the home and preserve its morality.

Because there was a connection in the popular mind between women and morality, there was a strong justification for women's participation in organizations and activities outside the kitchen and the nursery. Married women became heavily involved in the work of the churches with ministers encouraging them to undertake tasks of benevolence within their town and cities.

Change in family life.

In the second half of the 19th Century, the number of children in families began to decline. The fertility of women in the United States fell 50% between 1800 and 1900 and the rate fell from 7.04 children per family in 1800 to 3.56 in 1900 (Degler, 1984, P. 181). These figures are for the white population, figures for the blacks not being tallied at that time. Women in settled areas not only married later, but also stopped having children earlier, thus reducing their number of child bearing years. Throughout the 19th Century, however, the ideological framework of a separate sphere for women continued. The popular belief was that women were by nature moral and benevolent.

In one of the many popular treatises on femininity published in the 1840s, a Mrs. A.J. Graves stated:

> "The religious zeal and patriotism of woman are most beneficially and powerfully exerted upon the members of her household when our husbands and sons go forth into the busy and turbulent world. Their hearts will be at home where their treasure is" (Kaminer, 1984, p. 22).

This did not reflect the urban working class women struggling to support themselves. Paid work at that time meant long hours, grueling low level jobs, very little and rarely equal pay.

Such zeal was, instead, the ideal of white middle- and upper-class families, living in cities and towns. Not only did the pursuit of religion give these women a moral right to volunteer, but the evolving awareness of the importance of education furnished an additional route for women's activities to move outside the home. If women were the principal, if not the only, child rearers, and considered central to the family, then it followed that they needed to be sufficiently educated to assume that important role. To educate a woman was to secure the interests of a whole family.

Before the Revolution even the most rudimentary aspects of girls' education had lagged behind boys, the literacy of adult women being, as a result, considerably less than that of men. By 1859, over 87% of all white women in America over 20 years of age could read and write. Just prior to the advent of the Civil War, it was almost as likely for a white girl as a white boy to attend school, even in farming regions of the country.

Effect of the Civil War.

Then for a brief but traumatic period in our nation's history, civilian and military volunteer activities intermingled. Following the mandate given them by the Doctrine of Separate Spheres, women aiding the Civil War effort

moved to perform their mission in the world, to safeguard its morals and to care for its casualties. They performed relief work and nursed wounded soldiers, strengthening the social ideology that women were not only the rearers of children but the moral companions of men.

During the Civil War, religious involvement created a reservoir of female volunteerism on behalf of both soldiers and their families on both sides of the battlefield. Many women became familiar with public participation as a legitimate role for married women and, in so doing, gained experience in organizing themselves into groups. The closer a female activity was associated with moral and domestic responsibilities of women as prescribed by separate spheres, the more likely that such activity was to be condoned and fairly readily accepted by other women and society in general. In 1883 the Women Relief Corps was organized by the wives of members of Civil War veterans who had organized the Grand Army of the Republic. In the 1890s women organized the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Parent-Teachers Association.

Creation of common goals.

In the latter part of the 19th Century, club women volunteered their time toward civic improvement and municipal reforms. Many women's groups were literally forces for change, sometimes single-handedly bringing kindergartens, playgrounds, public laundries, public baths, parks and libraries to their communities. The "Cult of True Womanhood" (Degler, 1980) in the 19th Century made women a class unto themselves, a sisterhood, with common problems, goals, and sensibilities. By endowing them with all the moral virtues, they were given a mandate to venture forth outside the family. Thus there grew in the civilian community the same concept of self-help as was epitomized by the banding together of Army wives in times of need. In the civilian world, women gained "psychological and social space" by using religious groups and societies as alternatives to the home. Benevolent groups provided outlets for women's talents and interests that the home could not always satisfy. Social contacts and peer associations provided a sense of identity.

Women volunteers in the closing decades of the 19th Century were ambitious. They had a mission - to improve slum housing, health care and public education, to help turn prisons into penitentiaries devoted to rehabilitation, to elevate the moral tone of postwar life by ending child labor and prostitution.

Improved organization of volunteer efforts.

At the opening of the 20th Century, higher education for women was accepted. They formed social organizations not only as a reaction to urbanization or industrialization but also because they had been excluded from or ignored by men's groups. In addition, there was the steady and significant drop throughout the 19th Century in the number of children in white families.

Religious activities opened up new horizons without calling into question women's domestic duties or outlook. They carved out a domain that extended beyond the family. The club movement was a way for conventional women to become active outside the home. They founded public libraries and arts

societies. They worked to improve local school systems, juvenile courts, and human institutions. Volunteering helped all women to become something, to have a sense of usefulness (Kaminer, 1984).

The Doctrine of Separate Spheres continued. The association between women and the churches laid bases for the married women's movement out of the narrow sphere of the home. Although the moral character of these early benevolent societies encouraged women who worked in them to slip over into activities with a stronger aura of social reform, religious principles still lay at the root. The participation of many married women in these various activities reinforced the Doctrine. The idea of separate spheres legitimatized the activities. The early part of the 20th Century was a heady time for women active in civilian communities.

THE ORIGINS OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR ARMY FAMILY "PROGRAMS"

The relationship between the U.S. Army and the families in its midst has changed dramatically over the 212 years since the Army was brought into being. The Army has always had to care for its families but this was largely accomplished with heavy reliance on volunteers. Furthermore, much of what the Army has done historically through its pay, benefits, and personnel policies has been aimed at reducing the number of families -- particularly among the enlisted ranks. Even when the Army tried to promote family life and show a caring spirit, the status and care which was received by families - both commissioned and noncommissioned - varied from post to post, depending upon the environmental conditions in which the garrison found itself, the whims of the post commander, and the very few relevant regulations on the books.

The Revolutionary War to the Civil War.

At our nation's inception there was no legal provision made for a soldier's dependents either while he was on active duty or in the event he fell in battle or became disabled. It was assumed that each soldier would take care of all his family's present and anticipated needs prior to joining his regiment (Fisher, no date).

However, family members could receive half rations for wives and quarter rations for each child if they would march with the troops and provide needed services. The services which "camp followers" provided included: cooking and feeding soldiers; nursing them with home remedies; mending uniforms; sewing shirts; knitting stockings; assembling baskets of food, providing forage for horses; cleaning barracks; serving as medics, supervising field hospitals, copying correspondence; carrying water, powder, and shot; and loading and firing muskets or field pieces (De Pauw, 1975). Based on their activities, it would appear that the early Army wife was more like a modern female member of a combat service support unit or Army nurse than a housewife working in a voluntary capacity. The fact that the wives were "paid" employees was made quite clear by an incident which occurred in 1779. A group of women requested that they be able to draw rations and remain at West Point rather than accompany the Army on a dangerous expedition into Indian country. General Washington refused saying:

> This is a thing which I have never known to be allowed and which, if permitted in one instance, might be claimed by the families of the whole Army. (De Pauw, 1975, pp 182-183)

Most of these family members, like the solders themselves, were drawn from the lower classes. However, there were many officer wives including Martha Washington, Rebecca Biddle, Kitty Green, and Lucy Knox. These women also contributed although they were not required to do many of the more physical tasks asked of ordinary soldiers' wives. De Pauw (1975) went to great pains to show that camp followers for the American Army were legitimate wives and children.

Some of the women also became involved in combat. There was the legendary

"Molly Pitcher" who took over a cannon from her fallen husband and continued the battle. Women were also known to disguise their sex and to participate in the war as soldiers. When discovered, they were promptly discharged. However, one such soldier, Deborah Sampson Gannett, received a pension from both the state of Massachusetts and from the Federal Congress for her services as a solder. Finally, there were countless women who were in combat along the American frontier while defending their homes and loved ones (De Pauw, 1975).

Neither Fisher nor De Pauw discussed Revolutionary War "family programs" or voluntary activity within them. However, one may assume that the Army did provide more than rations and free transportation. We can also fairly safely assume that the families helped each other and that this was done in a voluntary manner.

The Army's first acknowledgement that it had a responsibility for soldiers' families as such came in the form of a provision of a cash payment to the widows and orphans of fallen commissioned officers (1794) and later the families of fallen NCOs (1802). Although the level of Army pay discouraged the enlisted soldiers from obtaining families, the policy of providing soldiers with "laundresses" in 1802 proved to be a boon. Accepting this position or working as a household servant for an officer family allowed many dual income NCO families to make it in the Army. However, even senior NCOs had to have the permission of the company commander to be married (Fisher, no date).

The Civil War.

Moore (1866) chronicles the deeds of patriotic Northern women civilians-- many of whom were the relatives of soldiers-- in keeping the Union Army in business during the American Civil War. Perhaps this story is best told by Moore, himself:

> Indeed, we may safely say that there is scarcely a loyal woman in the North who did not do something in aid of the cause - who did not contribute, of time, or labor, or money, to the comfort of our solders and the success of our arms. No town was too remote from the scene of war to have its society of relief; and while the women sewed and knit, and made delicacies for the sick, and gathered stores, little girls, scarce old enough to know what the charitable labor meant, went from house to house, collecting small sums of money, - the fruitful energy of all keeping the storehouses and treasury of the Sanitary commission full, and pouring a steady stream of beneficence down to our troops in the field.
>
> Everywhere there were humble and unknown laborers. But there were others, fine and adventurous spirits, whom the glowing fire of patriotism urged to more noticeable efforts. There are they who followed their husbands and brothers to the field of battle and to rebel prisons; who went down into the very edge of the fight, to rescue the wounded, and cheer and comfort the dying with gentle ministrations; who labored in field and city hospitals, and on the dreadful hospital boats, where the severely wounded were received; who penetrated the lines of the enemy on dangerous missions; who

> organized great charities, and pushed on our sanitary enterprises; who were angels of mercy in a thousand terrible situations. There are others who have illustrated, by their courage and address in times of danger, by their patience in suffering, and by adventures romantic and daring, some of the best qualities in our nature. Like the soldiers of the armies, they were from every rank in life, and they exhibited a like persistence, endurance, and faith. There are many hundreds of women whose shining deeds have honored their country, and, wherever they are known, the nation holds them in equal honor with its brave men. (Moore, 1866, p. iv - v)

This is an excellent example of what GEN Wickham refers to in his White Paper as the "partnership" which exists between the Army and its families (Army Chief of Staff, 1983). What is notably absent from Moore's report is any mention of what Army families wanted, needed, or were receiving. Likewise, there is no mention of what the Army could or ought to do about the needs of Army families. The character of the war may have induced an unusually high level of sacrifice from families. It is also possible that the typical families were less heroic then Moore paints them. After all, he is trying to describe the heroes, not do a social science based family needs assessment.

Elshtain (1987) points out that during wartime women often engage in tasks that they were formally prohibited from doing because they involve risks which society wishes to protect them from. She goes on to quote from a Civil War writer, Cady Staton, who commented on the changes in women's roles brought on by the War and the volunteers needed to support it.

> Think of the busy hands from the Atlantic to the Pacific, making garments, canning fruits and vegetables, packing boxes, preparing linen and bandages for soldiers at the front; think of the mothers, wives and daughters on the far off prairies, gathering in the harvests, that their fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons might fight the battles of freedom. Think of the multitude of delicate refined women, unused to care and toil, thrown suddenly on their own resources. (Elshtain, 1987,p.188)

Post Civil War to World War II.

Army policy continued to discourage marriage for enlisted soldiers. Married men were denied enlistment and those who had already enlisted were discouraged from getting married by such actions as denying the right to separate housing (1883), to free family transportation (1887) and discouraging the reenlistment of married soldiers (1901).

Nonetheless, the isolation of the frontier posts and the spirit of the people involved produced a sense of community and volunteerism which carries forward to today. There is the story of Elizabeth Custer accompanying the officers and NCOs as they moved from quarters to quarters to notify the wives of the soldiers who had been killed at the Battle of Little Big Horn. She offered solace and comfort to each despite the fact that as of the moment her husband died, she had lost all claim to government housing and had to vacate the premises as soon as possible. Even in less traumatic times the soldiers and their families rallied to make life better for all by presenting plays,

organizing dances, and tutoring the children of NCOs (Fisher, no date).

Family housing on the frontier was spartan, particularly for the NCO families.

> The quarters of married noncommissioned officers were generally well separated from those of commissioned officers as well as the barracks of the enlisted men. In many cases the married enlisted quarters were flimsy shacks, constructed of unfinished logs or boards and often lined with buffalo skins to keep out the winter cold or the summer dust. Toward the end of the nineteenth century at the larger posts married enlisted quarters improved considerably but were always quite modest even for those times. (Fisher, no date, p. 5)

Despite the reputation of Army posts as a poor place for married women and children, the NCO at the turn of the century seemed to have no difficulty getting wives. According to Fisher, company records show a high percentage of NCO marriages, particularly in units which were geographically stable.

After world War I, the Army returned to policies which restricted families. Between the two world wars enlistment was barred to men with wives and children under 21 years of age. The Army even discharged men who attempted to hide dependents. Congress got into the act by reducing the soldier pay and thus the ability to raise a family even when they were authorized.

World War II.

To the extent possible, America tried to fight World War II with single soldiers. They were the first to be drafted and the last to be released when the war was over. However, the sheer size of the effort made it impossible to exclude married soldiers or to begin to make provisions for their families. Despite this preference it was estimated that half of the soldiers were married at the time they were discharged (Campbell, 1984).

Government provision for male soldiers' families began even before the war. In 1940 Congress began to provide government quarters for E4s and above with dependents and four or more years of service. By 1942 the Army was providing a family allowance of $50 per month for a wife and $20 per month for each child. Although these amounts may seem generous by historical standards, it should be remembered that families whose bread winner was not in the armed forces were doing much better (Campbell, 1984). Thus the 8% of wives with husbands in the armed forces were making a greater sacrifice than the 92% of wives married to civilians. The Army was less generous in its provisions for the families of its female soldiers and nurses. Married females were not only not drafted, they were barred from enlisting. Likewise, both pregnancy and marriage were grounds for discharge (Holm, 1982).

To fight the war and increase the war production, the United States made a conscious effort to reduce the quantity of civilian goods and service available. Housing, appliance, medical care, laundry, clothing, and food were all in short supply. Housing was particularly critical around newly established war industries and military installations. To be near their husbands, military

wives lived in abandoned gas stations, chicken coops, tents, cellars, unfinished houses, and makeshift shelters. The use of trailer parks near some of these installations improved life somewhat but many of these parks lacked water, sewage, laundry services, and playgrounds (Campbell, 1984).

Yet the women came. Forty percent of one sample of military wives said that they had become "camp followers" -- moving from installation to installation until their husbands were shipped overseas. An additional third had to save up for visits. Thus only a fourth remained at home. In addition to the lack of housing, these wives also encountered difficulties in landing good jobs to help support themselves while following their husbands. The work tended to be low in pay. Furthermore, there was a great deal of discrimination against military wives by local employers because of their presumed nomadic lifestyles.

The biggest complaint from the military wives was the constant loneliness of being without their husbands. Other "symptoms" reported included: nervousness, irritability, restlessness, insomnia, loss of interest, feeling subdued, or feeling older (Campbell, 1984).

Although they attempted to resolve this problem by entering social activities, wives found that it was not always comfortable to go out with civilian couples. Instead they found solace in neighbors, extended families, and other military wives. In fact, many founded "waiting wives" clubs (an early voluntary self-help effort) so that they could be with others in the same situation. Adjustment to being a waiting wife was related to social class. Those who had higher status --and thus more education-- adjusted better.

Some military wives found that both their psychological and financial status were improved by entering into paid employment. Being childless or having relatives to care for the children greatly increased the probability that these wives would seek employment outside the home. It should be noted here that government and industry attempted to provide child care in order to increase the number of workers available. However, on the whole the women rejected it:

> ...most mothers, employed or not, saw child care as their major responsibility, enjoyed it, and thought preservation of the American family was the purpose of the war. Those who did get child care used relatives....The day care experiment in World War II was ultimately a failure...." (Campbell, 1984, p.14)

Others (approximately 25% of all women) found outlets for their energies in volunteer work. The degree of participation in this form of national service was related to life-cycle stage, social class, and race. Participation was highest among housewives in their 30s and 40s. Wives with college educations and husbands in white collar jobs were also quite likely to enter volunteer positions. Women who were hispanic, black, or who had young children, or paid jobs outside the home were unlikely to volunteer. Gender was also important in determining what kinds of jobs one volunteered for. Fire fighting and air raid warden were popular with men whereas jobs involving nursing, sewing, first

aids, nutrition, child care, and entertainment of troops were more popular with women.

Two of the agencies which provided direct services to soldiers were particularly popular among women. They were the United Service Organization (USO) and The American National Red Cross. The USO, founded by the major religious welfare groups in 1941, relied on women to staff recreation centers, serve as hostesses, and as dance partners for troops. These centers, located near bases, large cities, and transportation points, served as meeting places for service wives. The American Red Cross served as a quasi-governmental agency which handled emergency and welfare needs of soldiers. It served as the link between soldiers and their families to arrange for emergency visits to alleviate family crises and tragedies. Its use of volunteers seems to have been more on the home front in educational and fund raising capacities.

Army families also benefited from the services of Salvation Army and Traveler's Aide in providing emergency cash for stranded families or helping to arrange emergency furloughs and discharges for some soldiers undergoing unusual hardship. Some enlisted wives also had financial assistance from the Emergency Maternity and Infant Care Program (EMIC) which was started in 1943 by the federal government as a wartime effort. Neither service females nor officer wives were eligible.

Campbell (1984) concludes that American communities mostly neglected the needs of service families. The best support offered was by their parents and in-laws who generously took them into their homes and provided for them in countless other ways.

Post World War II to 1965.

Adequate housing for service families remained a problem long after World War II. In 1953 President Eisenhower appointed a committee headed by Admiral J. P. Womble, Jr. to look into the "disgraceful housing conditions for married enlisted men that existed in the vicinity of many military posts (Fisher, no date, p. 18)." The committee report resulted in the start of military family policies to correct not only the housing but also the problems of educating children and of insurance for families in the event of the death or disablement of the soldier. The next big change was the introduction of the Army Community Service (ACS) in 1965.

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE AS A FORM OF ORGANIZED VOLUNTEERISM

The birth of the Army Community Service Agency (ACS) in 1965 was the result of three factors: (1) A large increase in the number of married soldiers, (2) the inability of the existing system to handle the resulting flood of family problems, and (3) a realization by the Army that family problems were having a negative impact on soldier performance overseas (e.g., the Dominican Republic and Vietnam).

The demographic shift.

Historically the Army had been largely single. Army policies (e.g., low pay, bans against marriage for enlisted, and lack of family services) had insured this. However, the need for a large standing army during peacetime made it impossible to revert to the policies which had held down the number of married personnel. By 1960 the number of family members out numbered service members (Army Chief of Staff, 1983). With this increase came an increase in the number of "family problems" which had to be coped with by commanders and the Army's family "system."

The existing system.

Patton (1980) described the family services system of the early 1960's as consisting of the "good Samaritan" wife-volunteer and a simplistic trio of "answer men": the medic, the Chaplain, and the JAG (Legal officer).

Rooney (no date), was more generous in his description of what was available. He saw the "program" as consisting not only of medical, moral, and legal guidance/assistance but also housing, medical services, and financial aid from two quasi-military agencies: Army Emergency Relief and the American Red Cross. He also listed commanding officers and the Provost Marshal as being part of the system.

After listing a host of problems not being addressed (e.g., assistance with adoption procedures, temporary care for children, family breakdowns, juvenile delinquency and the management of severely handicapped children), Rooney goes on to show that some progress was being made: (1) civilian and federal agencies were becoming increasingly active and (2) local commanders were attempting to deal with local issues.

The majority of what Rooney had to say, however, was devoted to the shortcoming of the system and its resulting strains. For example, the Army was growing increasingly aware of the need for consolidated and coordinated services at the post and unit level along with the need to coordinate the work of the various public and private agencies. He also notes a need for professional leadership within the Army's helping professions to create the centralized planning and coordination which was needed.

Keel (1983) also comments on the shortcomings of the system, particularly the large burden that the Army families overseas were placing on U.S. State Department resources. Keel credits part of the ACS creation to a study of Army welfare needs conducted by Elizabeth Wickenden in 1952.

Effects on soldier performance.

Fisher (no date), remarked that one of the pressures on the Army to establish the ACS was its realization that unmet family needs were having adverse impacts on the soldiers being deployed to the Dominican Republic and Vietnam. Although there is ample documentation that family difficulties can have adverse effects (Hunter, 1982; Military Family Resource Center, 1984; and Segal, 1986), Fisher does not elaborate on exactly what these family difficulties were or how they affected the troops. He did comment on the public relations difficulties which the Army was experiencing and that these family problems would only add to them.

The founding of ACS.

LTG J. L. Richardson, who was the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER), is credited with actually putting the ACS concept in motion. Early in 1963 he formed a task force consisting of LTC Emma Baird from the Women's Army Corps (WAC), LTC William Rooney from the Medical Service Corps (MSC) of the Surgeon General's Corps and Richardson, himself. As they saw it what was needed was:

> a sound, professionally oriented organization for the initial development and implementation of an effective Army-wide community services program in support of command efforts; to develop methods of achieving close coordination of existing military and civilian resources offering assistance in the resolution of personal and family problems. (Rooney, no date, p. 6)

According to Patton (1980), ACS was to include the following features:

- o A centralized point of referral for needed services.
- o Provision of both general information and referrals.
- o Ability to make referrals to off- (as well as on-) post agencies and services.
- o Provision of services for both off- and on-post families.
- o Use of volunteers (backed by trained and certified MSWs) to provide the services.

The task force's preliminary proposal was presented in March of 1964 and called for pilot testing at six installations each using a three person team headed by an Army Social Work Officer. The pilot programs were to develop assistance to handicapped dependents, provide child care, and establish emergency family services. Each program would rely for much of its support on volunteers who would be trained by the professional staff (Baird, 1986).

Even though the recommendations were disapproved by the CSA, the staff visits and continued efforts to refine the concepts resulted in local installations requesting information about the proposed program so that they could implement it within their own resources. The early planning for local implementation at Fort Bragg, Fort Lewis, and the U. S. Army in Hawaii proved invaluable in light of later events. Richardson's ideas were examined and

expanded upon by then Vice Chief of Staff Creighton W. Abrams between June 1964 and July 1965 when the program became a recognized Army program.

In 1965 the 82nd Airborne Division was sent to the Dominican Republic. The resulting family disruptions and difficulties led to the immediate establishment of "Family Assistance Centers" which were supervised by military personnel and supported by large numbers of hastily recruited volunteers.

The transfer to Vietnam of the 173rd Airborne Brigade from Okinawa and the 25th Infantry Division from Hawaii led to the Army-wide distribution of "family assistance" instructions by the Department of the Army. The movement of the Army families from Okinawa and Hawaii to the U. S. mainland was greatly assisted by U. S. Air Force Family Service volunteers.

General Harold K. Johnson, CSA, dispatched a letter on the 25th of July, 1965 to all major commanders announcing the establishment of the ACS program. This announcement caused some confusion in that some in the Army did not realize that the ACS and the "family assistance" program announced earlier were one and the same. This confusion was cleared up with the November publication of AR 608-1 (Baird, 1986). In his message to the field, GEN Johnson stressed the theme of the program which would later become its motto: Self-help, Service and Stability. The regulation, itself, spelled out the services which were to be included:

(1) Provision of information, referral to Army and non-Army agencies, and follow up services for soldiers and their families.
(2) Financial planning and assistance.
(3) Relocation services (e.g., household items in a lending closet for emergency use and orientation/welcome packets)
(4) Help with handicapped children
(5) Child Advocacy programs
(6) Child support services.

Some posts also added more services such as: personal affairs counseling, "hotline" counseling, baby sitting lists, volunteer foreign language translators, emergency child care, and emergency food supplies (Patton, 1980).

The ACS continues to evolve (reflecting the volunteer movement within the larger society) as it meets the challenges of serving the changing Army family. Today there are 166 ACS Centers around the world serving single soldiers, married soldiers, and family members. All of them use volunteers in some capacity.

The role of the volunteer in the ACS.

Both Rooney's concept paper and the original regulation stressed the centrality of volunteer participation to the success of the ACS program. It was assumed that organized volunteer groups of dependents (e.g., wives and other adult dependents) would provide the majority of the needed personnel support. In fact, Rooney (no date) said: "Organization and training of volunteer staff will be a major responsibility of (the) professional staff."

Fortunately for the Army, this volunteer help came pouring out. In 1980, the year of the first Army Family Symposium, there were 5,600 volunteers in ACS. The program has continued to benefit from volunteers. Over 773,502 ACS volunteer hours were recorded in FY79 (Patton, 1980) representing major savings to the Army. Not only did the Army avoid the cost of having to pay for these hours but it also avoided the disruptive consequences of soldier and family problems.

Starting in 1980 the percent of Army wives who were in paid employment became the same as in the civilian sector: 50%. With this change in work habits came an increase in the difficulty of finding and holding volunteers (Army Chief of Staff, 1983)

The mission of ACS is reflected in its motto, "Self-help, Service and Stability," and logo: a heart superimposed upon a gyroscope. Whether the ACS will continue to manifest the Army's tradition of "taking care of its own" - first seen on the American frontier - depends, in large part, upon whether the Army can continue to recruit, train, and inspire volunteers.

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