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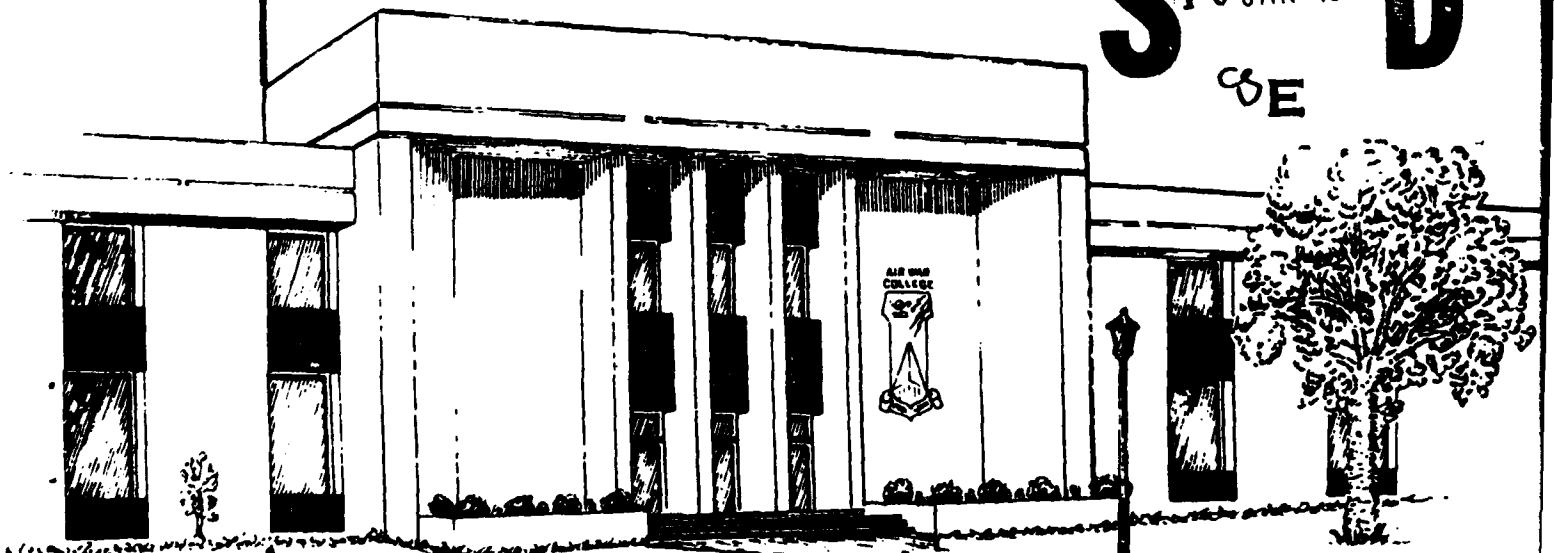
RESEARCH REPORT

THE UNITED STATES ARMY SIGNAL CORPS:
A CULTURALLY RICH ORGANIZATION

LT COL JOHN R. WILLIAMSON

1988

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THE UNITED STATES ARMY SIGNAL CORPS:
A CULTURALLY RICH ORGANIZATION

by

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A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH
REQUIREMENT

Research Advisor: Dr. Barton J. Michelson

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

May 1988

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AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: The United States Army Signal Corps: A Culturally Rich Organization.

AUTHOR: John R. Williamson, Lieutenant Colonel, USA

The purpose of this research project was to identify and describe the organizational and cultural dynamics of the United States Army Signal Corps. This was accomplished by examining organizational analysis techniques used by both Army organizations and contemporary organizational behaviorists and then applying them to analyze and describe the organizational "culture" of the Signal Corps.

The literature review was completed in late 1987 at the Air University Library, Maxwell AFB, Al., and the Conrad Technology Library, Fort Gordon, Ga. Numerous personal interviews with senior signal officers were conducted to identify current attitudes, values, and beliefs. A synoptic history of the Signal Corps was provided by the office of the Signal Corps historian at the United States Army Signal Center.

The final analysis and interpretation of the Signal Corps organization and its "culture" was accomplished through interviews and consultation with the current Director, Office of the Chief of Signal, and the Chief of Signal. However, the concepts presented as implications and conclusions represent the ideas and views of the author.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

LTC John R. Williamson (B.S. Mathematics/Physics, Washburn University 1963 and M.B.A./O.R.S.A., University of Kansas 1967) completed Artillery Officer Candidate School (OCS) and was commissioned in the United States Army Signal Corps in September 1969. He has served as an executive officer in the Republic of Viet Nam, company commander in Germany, Joint Security Area (JSA) Signal Officer in Korea and commanded the 67th Signal Battalion (Corps Area) USAFORSCOM at Fort Gordon, Georgia. He graduated from the U.S. Army Command and Staff College and received the Masters Of Military Arts and Science in 1980 (Thesis: The Effects of Soviet Communications Jamming on the AIM Division Signal Battalion). Other assignments include: Chief of the Command Control Communications and Computers Branch, U.S. Army Foreign Science and Technology Center; Department Director (Transmission Operations) U.S. Army Signal Center; and Deputy Training System Manager (TSM) for Mobile Subscriber Equipment (MSE). LTC Williamson is a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1988.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The United States Army Signal Corps is truly a culturally rich organization. It is a large combat support branch with a unique history. Since its founding in 1863, the Signal Corps has provided the technological foundation for numerous innovative changes in the U. S. military forces; i.e., the U.S. Weather Service and the Army Air Corps were both spawned from research and development conducted by the Signal Corps. Because of this unique heritage, the present day Signal Corps is an extremely proud organization that has developed a distinctive and symbolic culture. The purpose of this research project was to identify the cultural structure, symbols, and interworkings of the Signal Corps.

Research for this project included library resources from the Air University Library, Maxwell AFB, and Conrad Technical Library, Fort Gordon, Georgia, and personal interviews with numerous senior signal officers. The description of the concepts of organizational and corporate culture was limited to the terminology used by Deal and Kennedy in their book Corporate Cultures, The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life. Dr. Terry Deal spoke to the Air War College concerning "Managing Organizational Culture" on

19 August 1987. His presentation was both enlightening and entertaining and was the stimulus for this research project.

There are many other respected behavioral and organizational scientists studying and publishing on organizational and corporate culture. (10,20,21,24,31) Unfortunately, the terminology used to describe the "culture" of an organization and the roles that people play have not been standardized. Therefore, Dr. Deal's terminology was adopted to simplify the terminology and focus this study of the U.S. Army Signal Corps.

Chapters Three through Seven discuss the U.S. Army Signal Corps and present a cultural description of the organizational structure, its history, culture and the roles of the major characters. The data provided by the personal interviews were critical to the development of these chapters. Without the help of many dedicated senior signal officers, the concepts presented would not have been possible to identify.

Chapter Eight provides the summary and conclusions that have resulted from this study. It should be pointed out that the study of an organization's culture is a never ending process. Thus, the conclusions presented, herein, represent the beginning of this author's efforts to document the dynamics of his organizational culture.

CHAPTER TWO

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

National Characteristics

The rise of Japan as a leading industrial power has naturally caused American organizational theorists and managers to study the relationship between national and regional values and the productivity of the workforce.(21:111) Corporate leaders and managers, in attempts to improve productivity, have researched Japanese managerial techniques indepth. However, their attempts at applying Japanese leadership concepts to American organizations have not always met with the same success as in Japan.(20:14)

Since industrial organizations are predominatly product and profit oriented, it would seem that similiar management strategies should have similiar success. However, this has not neccessarily been proven to be true. Organizations are made up of the workers that normally live in that region of the world. These people have the values, knowledge, ideology, laws, and day-to-day rituals of their own culture.(21:112) "Western culture has its roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition. American culture was created by the values of freedom of speech, religion, and the press."(20.14) The concept that Japanese and American cultures have different values is quite easy to understand

when a comparison is made between the two countrys' history, geography, religion, etc. The more interesting characteristic is the carry over of both Japanese and American cultural values into their organizations of commerce.

"The Japanese have always fostered culture as a nation and, amazingly, have inculcated their unique culture into their business organizations."(11:58) The cradle to grave employment, worker participation in setting standards, quality circles, and familylike loyalty values of the Japanese corporate culture (11:58) are different from those of American commerce. The American business world was founded on the ideals of free enterprise, free trade, and the notion that any individual could, with wit and work, attain wealth (20:14).

It is not difficult to understand that organizational values are a carry over from the national culture of the workforce.(21:117) It is also obvious that the national values of the workforce have a strong impact on the culture of the organization. However, this does not explain why different organizations within the same country or region may have differing cultural values. Thus, it can be concluded that organizations possess a culture that is a product of both the work and regional environment.(21:120)

Corporate Cultures

Contemporary researchers of corporate and organizational behavior have developed conceptual frameworks defining and describing organizational norms, values, and behaviors. These concepts have been identified as the "Corporate Culture" of an organization and are being given credit as a new area of organizational analysis to determine what really makes an organization tick.(4:6) It has been professed that successful performance within an organization is directly related to an understanding of the culture of that organization. (21:113)

Dr. Terence E. Deal and Mr. Allen A Kennedy in their book Corporate Cultures-The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life describe the "Culture" of an organization in terms of the values it represents. They explain that the values of a corporate culture are many times expressed as marketing slogans; however, it is the importance of the slogan to the workforce, rather than the customer, that causes it to have a impact on the company's values.(4:6) GE's slogan "Progress is our most important product" becomes culturally important when it becomes a superordinate goal of the workforce rather than just a marketing slogan.(4:6)

Deal and Kennedy further describe the successful leaders of a corporate culture as "heroes". The heroes of a culture personify the organizations values and provide role model behavior.(4:37) They show every employee what he/she

have to do to succeed within the organization.(4:37) They explain that heroes can be either "born" or "made" depending on their roles within the organization. The leader who is responsible for the founding of the organization, in its current context, is one that is identified as the "born" hero of that organization. Heroes that are purposely designated to exemplify desired behavior and establish that behavior as the norm are identified as "made".(4:37)

The social climate and behavioral norms are defined in terms of the "Rites and Rituals" of the organization. (4:62) Rites and rituals identify through social play actions and ceremonies the behaviors that are required for success within the organization.(4:63)

"Values" are defined as the basic concepts and beliefs of an organization that form the heart of the corporate culture.(4:21) They are the essence of the company's philosophy for achieving success. "Values provide a sense of common direction for all employees and guidelines for their day-to-day behavior."(4:21)

Characters

The means of communication within an organization is defined in terms of the "Cultural Network".(4:15) Deal and Kennedy use characters, such as, priests, whisperers, gossips, spies, storytellers, and cabals to describe the various players and their roles within the cultural communications network.(4:85) "This informal network is

actually the primary means of communication within the organization, it ties together all parts of the company without respect to positions and titles."(4:185)

Priests are the guardians of the culture's values.(4:88) They are concerned about the culture and ensuring that it survives. The position of priest is normally informally based and located somewhere near the top of the organization with direct access to the chief executive officer. Priests have enormous power that is usually invisible when assessed by their title or position within the organization.(4:90)

Whisperers are the powers behind the throne.(4:90) They are the shakers and movers of the organization but their source of power is through their boss's ear. They must be able to read their boss's mind, have a symbiotic relationship with him and, most importantly, be intensely loyal.(4:90) In order to be effective, whisperers must have a vast system of contacts throughout the organization and stay current with the network information flow.(4,:91)

"Gossips are the troubadours of the culture."(4:91) They keep track of the current details of trivial day-to-day happenings. The gossips true role in the organization is one of entertainment. They are expected to carry the news of the heroes' past feats and liven up the organizations latest accomplishments.(4:91) Gossips have no proximity to power; however, they are the ones who spread the "real

story" about official announcements in the lunch room and break areas.(4:91)

Storytellers tell stories to gain power and influence. They interpret what goes on in the organization to suit their own perceptions. Their stories are like the myths in a tribal setting and give meaning to the work environment.(4:87) Storytellers reveal what it takes to get ahead in the culture and are typically found in positions that provide access to large volumes of information.(4:88) The storytellers role is to provide insight into the organization.

Spies of the senior managers are used to keep a finger on the pulse of the organization. They provide data about what is going on. Some of the best spies are also storytellers but have access to the managers and provide accurate information without interpretation.(4:92) They are not threatening because they have normally already reached their terminal level within the company and know they will be kept around as long as they keep the communication channels open.(4:93)

Cabals are groups of two or more people who conspire for a common purpose.(4:94) They are everywhere within an organization and can vary greatly in size. Cabals represent strong subcultures within an organization and are useful in motivating groups toward common goals.(4:97)

Types of Cultures

Deal and Kennedy, after studying hundreds of corporations, have grouped corporate cultures into the following four general categories: (1) Tough-guy/Macho; (2) Work-Hard/Play-Hard; (3) Bet-Your-Company; and (4) Process Cultures.(4:107) It should be pointed out, that although Dr. Deal groups corporate cultures into four categories, he clearly stresses that most large organizations are normally comprised of a mixture of these cultures.(4:125) It is also possible for two or more culture types to be present in the same organization and be in competition with one another. Other organizations may shift from one type of culture to another depending on the needs of the marketplace.(4:126)

The tough-guy, macho culture is a high risk, quick feedback environment where fortunes or flops are made overnight. (4:108) Examples of organizations within this type of culture include police departments, construction, cosmetics, management consulting, venture capital, advertising, entertainment and other high stakes activities. "Tough-guy macho cultures tend to be young ones with a focus on speed, not endurance."(4:109) The heroes in this culture are gamblers who can tolerate all-or-nothing risks because they need instant feedback. It is the word of individuals or stars whose fame and fortune is made overnight and can parish just as quickly.(4:110) Chance plays a big role in this culture. Problem solving rituals that work become

superstitions and the formation of tight little cabals provide protection in this high risk environment.(4:111) Tough-guy cultures do what needs to be done in high-risk, quick-return environments. However, they have a short-term orientation that fosters high turnover and make the establishment of a long-term, strong and cohesive culture difficult.(4:111)

The work-hard/play-hard culture is the benign and hyperactive world of manufacturing and the sales organization. These cultures live in a world of small risks and quick, often intensive feedback.(4:113) Success comes with persistence and a high value is placed on customer satisfaction.(4:113) Work-hard heros measure their worth in activity volume, not high stakes. The value of team performance is paramount and the "best workers are friendly, carousing, hail-fellow-well-met kinds of people".(4:114) Rituals of this culture revolve on the play-hard energetic games; such as contests, meetings, promotions, and conventions.(4:114) Work-hard/play-hard cultures get a lot done and are ideal for active people who thrive on quick, tangible feedback. They must be careful not to displace quantity for quality and have a tendency to use quick fix solutions for problem solving.(4:115) This culture is often filled with young people looking to prove their worth and must retain some of its older people to save its most important lessons learned.(4:116)

The bet-your-company culture is a diet of high risk but slow feedback. Sometimes feedback is years down the line.(4:116) Companies in this culture make large capital investments with long term returns; such as, off-shore oil drilling, developing a new aircraft or space shuttle, new computer designs, and the actuarial end of insurance companies.(4:117) The armed forces are included in this culture because they spend billions of dollars preparing for a war that may never be fought. However, a thorough analysis of the military services would indicate they contain elements of all four cultures. The bettors do not risk just their own careers with their decisions but risk the entire future of their organizations.(4:117) The values of this culture are focused on the future and place a high premium on accurate long-term decision making. Bettor heroes have a great deal of character and the confidence to carry them through long-term ambiguity with little or no feedback.(4:118) The respect for authority, shared technical competence, maturity, mutual dependence, and mentorship are all requirements for survival in the better culture. Bet-your-company cultures lead to high-quality inventions and major scientific breakthroughs but they also move with awesome slowness and are vulnerable to short-term economic fluctuations.(4:119)

The process culture is the low-risk, slow-feedback world of banks, insurance companies, financial-service

organizations, large elements of government, utilities and heavily regulated industries.(4:119) The stakes are low in this culture with little or no feedback, thus the work process becomes more important than outcomes. Technical perfection is a premium with a strong tendency for the magnification of the miniscule.(4:120) Protectiveness, caution, detailed procedure and having all bets covered are the natural behaviors in the process world. Survivors are orderly, punctual, attend to detail, and become successful bureaucrats with little regard for the outside world.(4:121) Heros often become functions or organizations instead of people. Rituals center on pattern and procedure with an inordinate attention to titles and formalities.(4:121) The process culture's strength is its ability to counter the negative aspects of the other cultures and provide the necessary environment for the stars, worker/ players, and the bettors to exist.(4:121) However, no one really likes the red tape of a bureaucracy and blames the process culture for all that is wrong with the modern world.(4:121)

Summary

It is Dr. Deal's belief that success is only possible when the manager has a through knowledge of the "Corporate Culture" of which he or she is a part. "A strong culture is a system of informal rules that spells out how people are to behave most of the time".(4:15) He explains that an executive who is successful in GE's slow-moving

culture may or may not be happy in Xerox's work hard and play hard culture, even if it means more money, bigger office, and greater responsibility.(4:16-17) Managers must understand clearly how the organizational culture works if he or she wants to accomplish their goals and objectives.(4:17) The knowledge of an organization's heroes, values, type of culture and subcultures, and its communication network characters provides a source of power for the upwardly mobile executive.

CHAPTER THREE

ALBERT J. MYER

FOUNDER OF THE SIGNAL CORPS

The United States Army Signal Corps was founded on 2 July 1860 as a direct result of the efforts of Dr. Albert James Myer, a medical officer. Doctor Myer entered the Army on 18 September 1854 as an assistant surgeon and was first assigned to duties at Fort Duncan, Texas.(1:8) He was characterized as a jack-of-all-trades with an intense curiosity and a strong interest in communication techniques. His doctoral thesis in 1851 had developed a system of hand communications for deaf mutes based on the Bain Telegraphic Alphabet.(1:10) During his tour of duty in Texas, Myer became fascinated with the Comanche Indians' ability to signal each other over great distances using smoke, lances, blankets, horses, and other means to telegraph large amounts of detailed information.(1:10)

The Army on the western frontier lacked the effective means to provide a reliable, flexible, and highly mobile system of communication at distances out of the range of their bugle calls. The frontier mission required the Army to travel rapidly and to operate in small units separated at distances many miles apart. Handsignals, bugle calls, voice commands, and the electric telegraph were the only means of command and control communications. These systems did not provide the necessary means of signaling when units were

widely dispersed and moved frequently. Dr Myer's observation of the signals used by the indians were the stimulus for his development of a single flag waving system of communications which later was termed "wig-wagging".(1:8)

Myer's wig-wagging system used a torch at night and a single flag during day light to transmit information between units. It required the knowledge of an established visual signal alphabet based on the Bain Telegraphic Alphabet and Myer's own hand-signal system for deaf mutes.(1:10) This system allowed units to signal back and forth rapidly over great distances as long as they maintained unobstructed line of sight. The use of hilltops, lofty perches atop trees and towers, log stands, houses and even balloons were used to achieve line of sight between units.(1:10)

Myer's invention of the wig-wag system was not well timed. The electronic telegraph was invented in the early 1820's and was widely used by the 1850's. Myer had even worked as a telegraph operator while he was in medical school.(1:11) The simplicity of the wig-wag system and its mobility were superior for military use but were hard to sell in the new age of electricity. "On 1 October 1856 Doc Myer wrote the Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis (who was later President of the Confederacy), and tried to sell his flag-and-torch signaling system to the Army."(1:11) Davis did not even reply to Myer's letter. The Navy also refused Myer's offer of his wig-wag system in 1858.(1:11) The use

of a simple system of waved flags and torches was not sellable in the "ultramodern" world of electronic telepathy.

Finally in 1859, the War Department responded to Myer's 1856 letter and appointed a board to determine if wig-wagging should be considered for Army use. Ltc Robert E. Lee was the chairman of the review board. He was impressed with the wig-wag system's mobility and could see its merit for use by the cavalry in the western frontier. Myer and his assistant, 2Lt Edward Porter Alexander, organized a group of two officers and sixteen soldiers and taught them wig-wag signaling. It was the Tenth Infantry's, stationed in Sante Fe, New Mexico, use of wig-wag signaling against the Navajo indians in 1860 that finally impressed the War Department of the value of Myer's system of communication.(1:12)

With the success of wig-wagging in New Mexico frontier, Myer approached the Military Affairs Committee of the United States Senate for the establishment of a Bureau of Army Signals with himself at its head. The chairman of the committee, the same Jefferson Davis who had earlier refused to answer Myer's 1856 letter, was a tough politician and did not view Myer's proposal with favor. Davis offered Myer a flat payment for his invention and a lucrative contract as a civilian instructor of military signalers.(1:12)

Myer persevered with his proposal and requested the rank of "Colonel" for the head of the Bureau of Signals. He fought hard for his proposal and actively sought the help of other senators on the committee. Such "politicking" put Dr. Myer at considerable risk, since he was an active duty military officer, but he finally won.(1:12) The committee voted in Myer's favor and established a newly authorized Signal Department.

On 2 July 1860 Albert J. Myer was commissioned as the Army's first signal officer with the grade of Major. At age thirty-two Major Myer became one of the youngest majors in the Army and, since he was the head of the Signal Department, automatically became a primary member of the Army staff.(1:13) The Signal Department was not originally established as a separate branch of service but, instead, was responsible for the training of other branches in the art of signaling. It was during the Civil War that the role of the signal soldier caused the Signal Corps to grow into a separate branch of service.

The beginning of the Civil War was a traumatic event for America and equally for the Signal Corps. Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, J. E. B. Stuart (who had sought vainly to train with Myer at Santa Fe), 2Lt Edward Porter Alexander (Myer's assistant), and many others knowledgeable of the Myer system all joined the Confederate Army.(1:13) Both the Confederate and Union signalers used Myer's wig-wag system

extensively. Each side was able read the other messages and used the collected data as intelligence on the others tactical situation.(1:14) After the war many of the signal soldiers from both sides were rejoined and made strong contributions for improved communications within the United States Army.

On 3 March 1863 Congress established the United States Army Signal Corps as a separate branch of service with the dual role of both a combat arm and a technical service.(1:14) Major Myer continued his inventive pursuits, developing the field telegraph train and the cipher disk for the telegraph. Myer was appointed Chief Signal Officer on 18 September 1863 with the rank of Colonel but was relieved of his position and stripped of his rank on 10 November 1863 because of conflicts over the use of military telegraph with Secretary of War Edwin H. Stanton.(1:14)

It was Myer's contention that as Chief Signal Officer he should have authority over all communications within the Army's zone of operation.(1:14) This position placed him in direct conflict with the Military Telegraph Department, a civilian bureau with military officers in charge, and Secretary Stanton whose close friends ran the American Telegraph Company. Stanton was also a director in another telegraph company. Myer accused Stanton of having a "conflict of interest" at every opportunity and continued to expand Signal Corps efforts in telegraphy. Myer's conflict

with Stanton resulted in his being removed as Chief Signal Officer and being ordered to make a reconnaissance of the Mississippi River.(1:14)

Although relieved of his position and demoted in rank, Myer continued to persist and obtained an assignment as signal officer of the West Mississippi Division and participated in Civil War operations along the Mississippi River.(1:14) After the end of the Civil War, 12 April 1865, Myer began his efforts for reinstatement as Chief Signal Officer. Secretary Stanton was determined to block Myer's reinstatement and fought Myer every step of the way. Fortunately for Myer, Stanton became imbroiled in Reconstruction Era politics and found himself at odds with President Andrew Johnson.(1:14) With the help of many senior Army and Navy officers, including General-in-Chief Ulysses S. Grant, and a majority of the Senate, Myer was successful in being reappointed as Chief Signal Officer over the objections of Stanton.(1:14)

On 30 October 1866 Myer was restored as Chief Signal Officer with the rank of Colonel. Stanton's conflicts with President Johnson continued and he was replaced by Ulysses S. Grant as Secretary of War on 12 August 1867.(1:15) With Grant as Secretary of War, Myer was finally successful in his efforts to gain total control of military communications and was given sole authority over telegraphy in the combat

zone on 21 August 1867.(1:15) The position of Chief Signal Officer was finally firmly established.

"In the years following the civil war, the Signal Corps became nearly extinct from inactivity."(1:15) Albert J. Myer was recognized for his galant efforts during the war and was promoted to the rank of brevet(honorary) Brigadier General, a rank he held until two months before his death on 24 August 1880, when he was promoted to Brigadier General. Myer continued to expand the role of the Signal Corps throughout his tenure as Chief Signal Officer and established the United States Weather Bureau under his direction in February 1870.(22:-->) Myer supervised the Weather Bureau for the first ten years of its operation. His perseverance in this area led to establishment of a uniform international reporting system for meteorological observation.(22:-->)

The Signal Corps, as founded by Albert J. Myer, was established as an inventive, persistent, and professional organization that would not allow adversity stand in its way of improving military communications. Myer's contributions of wig-wag signaling, the use of balloons for observation, improved use of electric telegraphy and meteorological observation dramatically enhanced Army operations on the battle field. BG Myer's picture is proudly displayed at Fort Gordon, Georgia, the current "Home of the Signal". He is widely recognized as the "father" of the Signal Corps

and his ideals are taught to each young signal officer during their initial active duty training.(13) As a truly deserving great American soldier and innovative leader, Fort Myer, Virginia, is named after Albert J. Myer.(1:15)

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER

The position of Chief Signal Officer must be considered as the cultural hero of the Signal Corps. BG Myer, in his efforts to establish the Signal Department eventually created the position of Chief Signal Officer when the Corps was designated a separate branch of the Army. The importance of the position of Chief Signal Officer can not be underemphasized. BG Myer knew that in order to have effective power on the Army staff he needed to be recognized as the chief of his service. It was his position, more than his rank, that allowed him to represent the Signal Corps.

Each Chief Signal Officer after BG Myer from 1863 to 1964 was the recognized leader of the Corps. It was interesting to find, while doing research for this project, that the majority of Chief Signal Officers were identified as being responsible for innovative communication improvements. (22:--> Their selection as Chief Signal Officer may have been as a result of their previous success in the development of a new communication system or as a direct result of their authority as Chief Signal Officer to effect change. Either situation is probably partially correct but an accurate determination could not be concluded from the historical record. The selection of Army general officers varies with the needs of the service during that period of time and, in most cases, the specific reasons for

selection are not publicly articulated. It can be determined that from 1863 through 1964 the position of Chief Signal Officer was the single most powerful position within the Signal Corps.(22:--)

CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICERS

BG Albert James Myer	18 Sep 1863-10 Nov 1863
	30 Oct 1866-24 Aug 1880
Colonel Benjamin Fisher	26 Dec 1864-29 Oct 1866
BG William B. Hazen	15 Dec 1880-16 Jan 1887
BG Adolphus W. Greely	3 Mar 1887-10 Feb 1906
BG James Allen	10 Feb 1906-13 Feb 1913
BG George P. Scriven	5 Mar 1913-13 Feb 1917
MG George O. Squier	14 Feb 1917-31 Dec 1924
MG Charles McK. Saltzman	1 Jan 1924- 8 Jan 1928
MG George S. Gibbs	9 Jan 1928-30 Jun 1931
MG Irving J. Carr	1 Jul 1931-31 Dec 1934
MG James B. Allison	1 Jan 1935-30 Sep 1937
MG James O. Mauborgne	1 Oct 1937-30 Sep 1941
MG Dawson Olmstead	24 Oct 1941-30 Jul 1943
MG Harry C. Ingles	1 Jul 1943-31 Mar 1947
MG Spencer B. Akin	1 Apr 1947-31 Mar 1951
MG George I. Back	1 May 1951-30 Apr 1955
LTG James D. O'connell	1 May 1955-30 Apr 1959
MG Ralph T. Nelson	1 May 1959-30 Apr 1962
MG Earle F. Cook	1 Jul 1962-30 Jun 1963
MG David P. Gibbs	1 Jul 1963- 1 Mar 1964
Chief Signal Officer position vacant	1964-1986
MG Thurman (T. D.) Rodgers	3 June 1986
MG Bruce R. Harris	3 Jun 1986- 2 Jun 1988

(22:--)

The Signal Corps cultural "hero" was clearly the Chief Signal Officer until the demise of the position in 1964. The redesignation of the head of the Signal Corps as the Department of the Army Staff, Chief of Communications Electronics occurred simultaneously with a major Army reorganization.(27:--) This reorganization changed the technical services into branches and altered the Engineer

and Signal Corps ability to control the development in their respective areas of influence.(2:--) The Army was structured into Combat Arms (Infantry, Artillery, Air Defense Artillery, Armor), Combat Support Arms (Signal, Engineer, Chemical, Military Intelligence), and Combat Service Support Arms (Quartermaster, Adjutant General, Transportation, Ordnance, Medical, etc). The primary reason for the reorganization related to material management but it also had a long term effect on Signal Corps leadership.(2:--)

Triad of Authority

The current Signal Corps leadership is empowered in three positions. The Chief Signal Officer position was reinstated on 3 June 1986 as a direct result of the U. S. Army regimental program.(22:--) The commander of the U. S. Signal Center, the Army's school of signals, was designated the Chief of Signal, the "reborn" Chief Signal Officer. However, the new Chief of Signal does not have the same power as MG Gibbs did when the Chief Signal Officer position was down graded to a subordinate member of the Army staff. He must share power with the Director of Information Systems/C4 and the Commander of the Information Systems Command.(9) He is also under the watchful eye of all those Signal General Officers (retired and active duty) senior to him. He may be the new chief executive but there is certainly a Signal Corps Board of Directors that provide

oversight on all Signal Corps cultural matters.(9) (See figure 1)

SIGNAL CORPS CULTURE (MACRO)

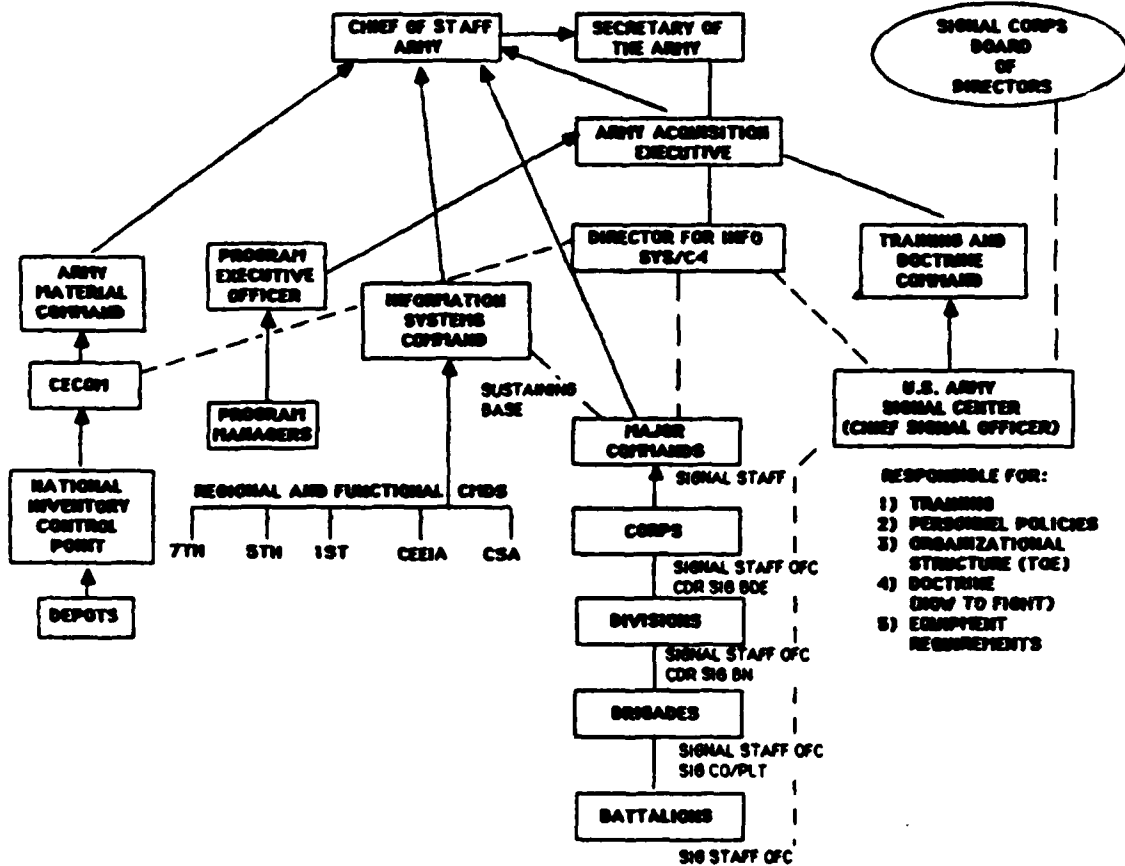


FIGURE 1

As commander of the TRADOC proponent command for Signal, the new Chief of Signal is responsible for the development of signal doctrine (How to Fight), the organization of tactical signal sections, companies, battalions, and brigades assigned to Army Corps and subordinate commands, the conduct and supervision of all

signal soldier and officer training, and the personnel policies related to job responsibilities.(16) He is responsible for the oversight of all cultural matters relating to signal, Army-wide, and provides inputs to the Department of Army acquisition agent for information management and command-control communications.(8) He reports to the Commander of TRADOC, who is not a Signal Officer, for the conduct of training and the management of the Fort Gordon installation. Normally combat arms officers are selected to command TRADOC because of the responsibility for development of the Army's battlefield doctrine.

The Director For Information Systems and Command-Control Communications and Computers(DISC4) is the senior signal general officer on the Army staff, currently with the rank of LTG. He is responsible for advising the Army Acquisition Executive on all matters relating to signal. His staff is responsible for managing those lines of the Army budget that pertain to the acquisition of signal equipment. He is the former commander of the U. S. Army Signal Center and holds the position of past Chief of Signal. In order for the Chief of Signal to succeed with a major proposal relating to the acquisition of signal equipment or doctrine, he must have, as a minimum, the informal concurrence of the DISC4.(9)

The commander of the Information Systems Command (ISC) is the senior US Army Signal Corps commander and has

the rank of LTG. He is responsible for the installation, operation, and maintenance for the Army's portion of the Defense Communication System (DCS) and Information Management within the Army. The information management portion of ISC's mission includes the management of installation computer systems, the development of Army doctrine relating to general purpose computers and software, the operation of data processing units throughout the Army, the operation of all Army printing plants and libraries and advising all Army installation commanders on matters relating to the management and transmission of data. ISC is one of the Army's largest major command and has one the largest budgets of any Army command. The Chief of Signal must have the ISC commander's concurrence on all those matters relating to information management and strategic communications.(9)

Although the Chief Signal Officer's position was resurrected in 1986, it does not possess the functional power that the position held up until 1964. He does represent the cultural head of the corps even though he shares functional power with the DISC4 and the ISC commander.(9) It his responsibility to maintain the health of the Signal Corps culture, record its history, and profess its values.(8) He is assisted in this effort by an informal board of directors consisting of those signal officers senior in rank to him, both retired and active duty. His

performance as cultural head of the signal corps will have a strong impact on his later selection for further promotion.

It is the Chief of Signal's job as commander of the US Army Signal Center that will result in his contribution to the Signal Corps history. He is the signal officer most involved in the development of new communication system concepts.(16) A role he shares with all those Chief Signal Officers before him.

CHAPTER FIVE

VALUES AND BELIEFS, "THE REAL TRUTHS"

The values of the Signal Corps culture are directly tied to its founder, BG Albert J. Myer. Myer's dogged persistence to produce innovative improvement in the Army's command and control communication systems is the strongest value in the Signal Corps. Every signal officer, from ISC commander to maneuver battalion signal officer, has a primary duty is to provide the very best communications support possible to his subscribers. Myer's development of the wig-wag system and improving military use of the telegraph are directly related to each signal officers desire to improve the communication systems provided and making them serve the customer better. The drive for invention and innovation within signal corps officers and non-commissioned officers has lead to the Signal Corps use of the wireless telegraph in Alaska, the airplane for observation and vacuum tube radios during World War I, radars to detect enemy aircraft and guide search lights during World War II, multichannel radios during the Korean conflict, massive troposcater systems in Viet Nam and many, many of the new communication techniques and equipments in use today.(22:--)

A good signal officer is never satisfied with the status quo. He must improve the system he is given.

It must be understood that not all great signal officers possess inventive genius. In fact, some of the brightest young signal officers do not succeed in the Signal Corps. The success of a signal officer is directly related to his focus on the unit or soldiers he supports.(16) The signal officer's role is to provide communications support. His job is to contribute to his subscriber's success. If he loses sight of his support role and becomes preoccupied with his own technical innovation, he will not be sensitive to the needs of those he supports.(16) Myer's success in developing and deploying the wig-wag system was not solely because of the system's capability, but because it could best support the needs of a mobile military force.

Persistence is a value that each signal officer must possess to be successful. Dr. Myer had a tough time selling his wig-wag system until he was able to convince the Army's leaders of the great need for the system. At great risk to his professional future, Myer persisted until he finally won. The same is true today. The development of a new system is not singularly sufficient to have it adopted. In an environment of strong competition for Department of Defense budget allocation, a new communication system must compete with the development of weapon systems. Only when a new communications system contribution exceeds that of a new weapon system does it stand a chance of adoption. The role of the Chief of Signal promoting new concepts can place him

at odds with other military leaders. He must persist in his argument even if it results in his personal risk. Col Myer was reduced to the rank of Major, but he eventually succeeded and was reinstated as Chief Signal Officer. The same challenge and risk is present today.

Flexibility is also a value requirement in today's Signal Corps. Dr Myer's jack-of-all-trades insight gave him the ability to adapt his ideas and mold them into functional innovation. Today's signal officer must understand his customers objectives. He must see the needs of the combat, combat support, and combat service support arms in order to be able to provide effective command-control communications. In order to be successful, he must have an indepth knowledge of tactics, weapons, and logistical systems. Only then will he be able to provide rapid, reliable, and flexible communications support.

Today's signal officer must also be accepted as an equal military partner in today's modern action Army. He must be a soldier first and technician second. He must maintain the same level of physical and tactical fitness as those with whom he serves. Many signal units are deployed to isolated positions and must provide their own site defense. Thus, the signal soldiers knowledge of site defense and the use weapons are critical to their survival. It is the signal officers primary duty to train and lead his unit in combat. Signal units can not support their

subscribers if they do not have the capability to survive on the battlefield.

Mentorship

The concept of mentorship is the primary means used to pass the cultural values of the Signal Corps from generation to generation.(32) The senior signal officer at each installation, Corps, Division, etc., is responsible for ensuring his subordinates are trained in the art of signals. The senior signal officer's leadership and his role as Dr Myer's disciple make him in charge of the signal culture at his location. His use of officer calls to pass on the historical events of the corps and reinforcing the values of inventiveness, innovation, flexibility, persistence, physical and tactical proficiency, and identity as soldiers are his primary mission.(32) He must do these cultural tasks well if he is to be a true candidate for future selection as the Chief Signal Officer.

CHAPTER SIX

SUBCULTURES

There are three distinctive major subcultures within the Signal Corps culture. Three main functional skill areas, tactical, strategic, and information management, account for the development of subcultures within the corps. The difference between these subcultures is the priority placed on the earlier presented cultural values. All three have the same values but must place them in a different order of priority to satisfy their primary customers.

Tactical

The tactical signal officer must place a high priority on being a soldier first and technician second. His world is in the mobile environment of the armored, infantry, and mechanized infantry units. The key to survival in this world is mobility.(13) Rapid movement prevents major units from becoming targets. Thus, the signal officer, whose job it is to provide communications support to major units, must be extremely innovative to get the most out of his soldiers and his equipment. He has little or no time to invent new equipment, but is forced to constantly improve the equipment he is issued.

He must also be persistent. It is his responsibility to ensure that his customer does not exceed the capability of his communications equipment. If the maneuver commander's plan exceeds his capability to maintain command

and control then it becomes the signal officers responsibility to advise him of the weakness in his concept of maneuver.(13) This is not an easy task! It takes real persistence to convince a steely-eyed warrior he can not successfully complete his battleplan, because his communications can not support him. This scenario represents many a signal officer's Waterloo. He must persist to prevent his commander from taking an unnecessary tactical risk; however, such persistent will, in many circumstances, result in his own professional risk. It is easy to relate this scenario back to BG Myer's conflict with Secretary Stanton.(1:14) When a signal officer knows he is right, he must present his case adamantly until he succeeds in his argument. An early retirement is more honorable than failure or unnecessary casualties on the battlefield. The tactical signal officers environment parallels that of Dr. Deals work hard/play hard culture except for the concept of risk. There is considerable near term professional risk in this subculture.

Tactical signal officers also serve in Special Forces and Airborne units. The values in this portion of the tactical signal subculture are the same as mentioned above with a greater emphasis on physical fitness and mobility.(32) The priority of being a soldier first and technician second is even more important in these highly mobile units.(6) Physical confidence and the self-belief of

being capable of accomplishing the most difficult task is the key to success in these special purpose units.(18) The Special Forces and Airborne unit tactical signal officers do not live in a different culture. Their environment has the same values, but the pace is much more intense!

Strategic

Non-tactical or strategic signal officers live in the highly technical world of the defense communications system. Large, complex and immobile communications systems that never move are the equipments in this world of high technology. This subculture within the corps places a higher priority on technical competence and innovation than it does physical fitness and mobility. These signal officers rarely interface with the warriors from the battlefield on a personal basis. Theirs is the battle of high technology. Although the buildings that house the communications equipment never move, high speed data circles the globe in less than a second. Survival in this world requires an indepth knowledge of communication-electronics. This is the environment of being a technician first and a soldier second. In fact, many signal officers work for or supervise civilian technicians.

Persistence is an important value in this subculture but it is not as time sensitive as in the environment of the tactical signal officer. The nontactical signal officer manages large amounts of equipment and numbers of people.

He must make detailed decisions concerning future communication projects and make budget recommendations far into the future. Dr Deal describes this type of environment as the bet-your-company culture.(4:118) The risk is high for the organization but feedback is slow. Thus, the merit of the decisions made by the non-tactical signal officer are, in many cases, not apparent until he has moved on to another position. Since military officers change locations on an average of every three years, it is difficult to assess the true merit of the non-tactical signal officers performance in just one or two duty assignments. It is his long term track record that establishes his reputation.

Information Managers

The information manager is new to the Signal Corps. The development of military automated data processing (ADP) in the nineteen sixty's created many new administrative jobs in the Army. Since the early data processing centers were used to improve administration and data management, the Adjutant General Corps was given the responsibility of supervising the training of ADP officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers. The Signal Corps initial responsibility was limited to computer repair. The growth of specialized battlefield computers and the integration of computers and communication systems eventually resulted in the management of all information systems being tranfered

from the Adjutant General Corps to the Signal Corps in the mid-nineteen eightys.

At the time of the transfer of responsibility, there were a large number of both Signal and Adjutant General officers who indentified their primary or secondary duty function as being in the computer field. The Army had given these officers the speciality identifier of 53. However, the officers with this identifier were not classed as a separate branch of the Army and looked to their primary branch for career management. The separation of branch identity and functional speciality hindered the development of strong and distinctive cultural values for the early information managers. They were considered different. In many cases, some of the brightest young officers sought out the speciality area because of its rapid rise of importance in both civilian and military communities. Unfortunately, success in the Army is measured primarily on the strength of an officers branch related success, and not how well he does in his speciality area. Thus, many early information managers did not enjoy satisfactory upward mobility within the military and sought their success in the civilian world.

Dr. Deal pointed out that the success of a culture will be directly affected by the strength of the values within the culture.(4:33) The cultural values of the information manager have been hindered in their development by the division of the culture among other strong branch

cultures within the Army. The information management area is one of the most difficult new missions the Signal Corps has been assigned. One of the main difficulties is the previous lack of cultural leadership. Members of the information management subculture did not have distinctive identities. The values of the culture never enjoyed a central proponent and; therefore, have never grown strong. The information management area is certainly a new subculture within the Signal Corps that will develop distinctive cultural values in time. The development of strong cultural values for this subculture will determine its success or failure within the Signal Corps.

Unit Orientation as a Subculture

The establishment of close personal and professional relationships is very normal among the members of military units. The shared risk and close working environment causes soldiers to develop lifelong friendships. These friendships have the possibility of becoming powerful liaisons as the individuals progress through their careers. Deal described the development of small groups who conspire for a common purpose as a cabal.(4:94) He explained they represent very strong subcultures and are everywhere within an organization. Such cabals occur frequently within the Signal Corps.

Many officers serving in battalion and brigade units develop close relationships that last for many years after

they leave the unit. The identification with a particularly successful signal unit and its commander has been used positively by many ambitious officers. The regimental system in the Army reinforces the development of these cabals because it encourages the repetitive assignment to the same unit. Thus, the association with a good unit and a successful commander, who later achieves senior rank, becomes a very powerful subculture. The values within these subcultures do not differ from the larger Signal Corps values but the respective priority of particular values will fluctuate from unit to unit. These cabals have a tendency to develop into power groups when successive commanders of a specific unit continue to achieve the most senior positions within the Signal Corps.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CULTURE BUILDING

The loss of the position of Chief Signal Officer caused the temporary loss of a cultural center for the Signal Corps. Those Signal General Officers serving in senior positions at the Department of Army and the Signal training centers realized the need for a cultural "home". Successive commanders at the Signal Training Center at Fort Gordon made numerous attempts to reestablish a "home" of the Signal Corps.(12)

There were two signal training centers in the nineteen sixty's. One at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and the Southeastern Signal School, at Fort Gordon, Ga. Fort Monmouth was a signal installation because all of its major tenant units were associated with communications and electronics. Fort Gordon, however, was commanded by a Military Police General Officer because of the location of the Military Police School. Following the same Army reorganization that eliminated the Chief Signal Officer title in 1964, the Military Police School was moved to Fort McClellan, Alabama and Fort Gordon became a signal installation. This paved the way for the development of a single cultural "home" for the Signal Corps.

The Southeastern Signal School at Fort Gordon, Georgia, was renamed the United States Army Signal Center in 1974.(22:--) During the time period between 1964 and 1986,

the installation grew dramatically. Almost all Army signal training was consolidated at Fort Gordon. Massive construction resulted in the building of the largest communication training facilities centrally located within the Department of Defense.(7) The Signal Corps museum was moved from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and numerous additional facilities are either under construction or have been approved.(8) The effort to build a "home" for the Signal Corps realized a substantial success on 6 June 1986 when, under the Army's regimental program, Fort Gordon was designated the regimental home of the Signal Corps, and its commander was identified as the "reborn" Chief Signal Officer.(8)

Signal Corps Regiment

The Signal Corps Regiment under the whole branch concept was formally established at United States Army Signal Center, Fort Gordon, Georgia, on 6 June 1986. It established the primary positions of Chief of Signal (new Chief Signal Officer), Director, Office of the Chief of Signal (Regimental Adjutant), Sergeant Major of the Regiment, Regimental Operations NCO, Editor-in-Chief of the Army Communicator periodical, Curator of the Signal Corps Museum, Signal Corps Command Historian, Honorary Colonel (Retiree), Honorary Sergeant Major (Retiree) and Distinguished Members of the Corps.(28:3-4) The

establishment of these active duty and retired positions created the formal framework of the Signal Corps culture.

In addition to the establishment of the regimental structure, the formation of the Signal Corps Regiment fostered the development of a Hall of Fame, a Lineage and Honors Book, the restoration of the Albert J. Myer Mausoleum, and a plan for the regimental designation of all active duty, reserve, and national guard signal units. It also developed the distinctive unit insignia (DUI), worn by all members of the Signal Corps Regiment, and created an Regimental Awards Program for on-the-spot recognition of outstanding performance or achievement in support of the Signal Corps (Regiment) culture.(28:3-4)

The birth of the Signal Corps Regiment and the rebirth of the Chief Signal Officer position are the most significant cultural events to occur since Major Myer became the first Chief Signal Officer. The Signal Corps culture had suffered from the lack of an identified leader during twenty-two year death of its cultural "hero". The functional power of the new Chief of Signal does not parallel that of the original Chief Signal Officer. However, the emergence of the Army's regimental system may provide him with even greater cultural power in the future.

The birth of the Signal Corps Regiment establishes an identifiable regimental adjutant that serves as the keeper of the culture. As the adjutant of the regiment, this new

position has functional responsibilities in the personnel area.(8) These responsibilities provide the staff who have the capability to maintain a watchful eye on the health of the culture. He is involved in the job title and duty description of all members of the Signal Corps. He maintains a "hotline" to all members of the Signal Corps, Army wide, to facilitate feedback and solve problems.(28:3) He has become the "Priest" of the Signal Corps culture, in that, he supervises the operation of the Signal Corps museum and advises the Chief Signal Officer on matters pertaining to the regiment. One of his most important duties is to act as the secretary and informal leader of the Signal Corps Association.

Signal Corps Association

The Signal Corps Association was established in the late nineteen-seventy's to develop support of the establishment of a National Science Center for military communications and electronics at Fort Gordon, Georgia.(8) The leadership at the Signal Center was very concerned about the quantity and quality of high school graduates. Numerous studies indicated that American high school students were not receiving adequate mathematic and physical science instruction resulting in a quantitative reduction of the college graduates in science and engineering.

The US Army Signal Center, as one of the largest Department of Defense communications school, felt it could

make a positive contribution to enhancing the quality of high school graduates. It formulated the development of a National Science Center for communications and electronics, that would serve as both a historical center of military communications and provide an instructional support center for the advancement of communications and electronics training. This effort has received considerable Congressional and industrial support and will hold its first ground breaking ceremony in 1988. The Signal Corps Association has played a major role in fund raising and establishing widespread support throughout the Signal Corps and the Army for the National Science Center.

With the establishment of the Signal Corps Regiment at Fort Gordon in 1986, the Signal Corps Association refocused its attention on the establishment of a strong Signal Corps culture. It has rewritten its constitution and by-laws to reflect efforts to build a strong cultural heritage and promote the formal recognition of its members. The Signal Corps Association is currently designed to enhance and reinforce the goals and values of the Signal Corps culture and ensure that the lessons of history are not forgotten.(28:9) It provides a world-wide cultural communications network through a Members-at-Large Program and established the awards of the Silver and Bronze Order of Mercury and the Brevet Colonel to recognize outstanding contributions to the Signal Corps (Regiment).(28:9) The

primary mission of the Signal Corps Association has become the enhancement of the Signal Corps culture and strengthening its cultural values.

Rites and Rituals

One of the most significant activities within the Signal Corps culture are the rites and rituals that signify the acceptance of its new members. This is specially true in tactical signal units. Members of units with tactical and mobile missions are not fully accepted until they have completed a minimum number of field training exercises.(16) For instance, in airborne units, a specific number of parachute jumps, plus field exercises fulfill these requirements.(18) Young soldiers must go to the "field" to demonstrate their job skill proficiency. Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) must demonstrate their leadership in a field environment before they are accepted as members of the units cadre.(23) Young officers have to demonstrate that, although they lack experience, they possess the knowledge and self-confidence to develop into leaders worthy of the "trust and confidence" of their subordinates.(13) New company and battalion commanders can not be fully supported by their soldiers and cadre until they have demonstrated a stronger loyalty to the goals and values of the unit than their own success.(23) Commanders who are perceived as self-serving are never fully accepted into the unit culture.

Advanced individual training for all soldiers in the US Army climaxes with the award of their military occupational speciality (MOS). When soldiers complete training in a branch speciality he or she will be awarded the insignia of that branch. The branch insignia is worn on the left collar of the dress uniform and signifies his or her membership. All signal soldiers from the rank of private to command sergeant-major wear a bronze disc with crossed wig-wag flags on their left collar. This is their label of membership in the Signal Corps culture.

Non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in the ranks of sergeant to sergeant-major are considered "professional" soldiers.(19) Young troops call them "lifers" but the term "professional" is more accurate. The NCO corps has a formal creed that professes high values, morals, loyalty to NCO corps ideals, and allegiance to the commander-in-chief and the officers appointed over them. Strong NCO cultures require that each young soldier eligible for promotion to the rank of sergeant memorize the NCO creed prior to their promotion. It is also common practice, in units with a strong NCO cadre, to present each new sergeant with his own copy of the NCO creed.(23) Non-commissioned officers who live up to the standards of their creed are extremely successful.(19)

Young signal officers participate in a formal "rite-of-passage" as a part of their Signal Officer Basic

Course. The Chief of Signal or his representative, usually the regimental adjutant (Priest of the Signal Corps Culture), preside over the ceremony.(8) The regimental colors are passed to each new signal officer as they profess loyalty to corps. Prior to the "rite-of-passage", each young signal officer has successfully completed numerous intellectual and physical tests to prove his or her worthiness of wearing the Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI) of the regiment and the Crossed Flags of the Signal Corps.(13) One of these rituals requires climbing to the top of an one-hundred foot forestry tower.

Ceremonies

Senior signal officers at every installation or region throughout the world are responsible for hosting an annual birthday ball to honor the founding of the Signal Corps.(16) These lavish affairs are the largest celebration of the year for members of the Signal Corps culture. Albert J. Myer is always honored as the cultural "hero" and founder of the corps. Awards of (honorary) Brevet Colonel and Orders of Mercury (Silver and Bronze) are bestowed to deserving members of the culture.(8) New friendships are made and old ones renewed. The primary purpose of these world-wide birthday balls is to promote cultural comradeship and reinforce the values of the regiment.

The United States Army Signal Center at Fort Gordon, Georgia, the cultural "home" of the Signal Corps, hosts an

annual conference each December. The conference addresses functional issues that affect the missions of the Signal Corps. Leaders of signal units from all over the world gather in Augusta, Georgia, to reflect on the health of the regiment. Signal officers and NCOs discuss solutions to problems, retell the latest happenings, make predictions on future promotions, and hustle for their next assignment. The cultural strength of the Signal Corps reaches its annual peak at this ceremonial "gathering of the clan".(8)

Signal General Officers began to hold periodic symposiums to discuss tough issues in 1986 to insure that the senior leadership of the corps spoke with one voice.(9) These officers are in the most powerful signal leadership positions throughout the Army. They represent the Signal Corps at all major commands, congressional hearings, and at every level within the Department of Defense. It is extremely important for the Signal General Officers to concur on issues that have a corps wide impact. The Chief of Signal acts as the informal host for each symposium but they may be held at the request of another prominent member of the corps.(9) All participants present their views but, once a consensus is reached, all are expected to support the agreed upon position. Those who object to the position must do so at the symposium. Later public objection would be viewed as self-serving.(9) The Signal Corps ability to

present a united position on tough issues has increased its cultural strength.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The United States Army Signal Corps history provides more than adequate detail of BG Albert J. Myer's struggle to found the Signal Corps as a separate branch. His efforts and the values displayed during those efforts easily identify him as the original cultural hero of the Signal Corps. The continuation of the position of Chief Signal Officer for one hundred years is further evidence that it was the position of the cultural leader. The lack of an identifiable cultural leader from 1964 to 1986 provides some explanation for Signal Corps difficulties during that period of time. The rebirth of the Signal Corps cultural hero with the establishment of the Signal Corps Regiment on 6 June 1986 was certainly a huge cultural event. Unfortunately, the new position of Chief of Signal does not possess the same functional strength of the previous position of Chief Signal Officer; however, the formation of the Signal Corps Regiment under the whole branch concept may provide the new Chief of Signal even greater cultural power than his predecessors.

The values of the Signal Corps culture were certainly established by BG Myer in his efforts to found the corps and have been reinforced by senior signal officers for over one hundred twenty-eight years. Each new member of the corps is

taught that he must; be a soldier first and technician second, provide innovation and inventiveness to improve communications support, be persistent in providing advice and ensuring that his customers receive the best support possible, be self-sacrificing to ensure that the Signal Corps mission does not fail (even at his own professional risk), never forget his primary mission is to support his subscribers and become preoccupied with his own inventive pursuits. Those members of the Signal Corps culture who live up to the ideals and values established by BG Myer enjoy consistent success in the Signal Corps.

The Signal Corps has three subcultures and numerous cabals. The subcultures of tactical and strategic signal have the same values but differ in their respective order of priority. The information manager subculture has had more difficulty identifying cultural values and priorities because of its earlier lack of a cultural center. The success of the information management area mission will depend upon the development of strong cultural values for this subculture. The establishment of cabals among soldiers serving in successful signal battalions and brigades is common practice. These cabals and the Army's regimental program provide the mechanism for the development of powerful, long-term liaisons among members of successful units whose commanders later rise to senior positions within the Signal Corps.

The United States Army Signal Center has been successful in establishing the cultural home of the Signal Corps at Fort Gordon, Georgia. The Signal Corps Regiment and Association provide the organizational structure for continued culture building. The annual Signal Corps Birthday Ball, the annual December conference, and the Signal General Officer Symposia all provide the ceremonial opportunity to strengthen the cultural values of the Signal Corps.

Conclusions

The purpose of this research project was to identify the cultural structure, symbols, and interworkings of the United States Army Signal Corps. The primary objective of the research was to conduct a cultural analysis of a military organization and define it using the corporate culture terminology. Both the original purpose and the primary objective were accomplished; however, the complexity of such an undertaking was grossly underestimated by the author. The development of significant findings was possible in the research time allowed but the completion of an exhaustive study will require continued effort on the part of the author.

Since this project was a study of the author's own organizational culture, further research will be pursued. The primary area of future research will be to identify the

cultural communications network and the its characters; i.e., the whisperers, gossips, storytellers, and spies.

The literature research on organizational and corporate culture provided some difficulty for the author. This field is relatively new and the lack of standardization of concepts and terminology caused considerable frustration. In order to describe the organizational culture of the Signal Corps, the author selected the terminology used by Dr. Terry Deal. Deal's concepts and terminology were chosen solely because of his presentation of them at the Air War College. The authors choice does not indicate his preference for Dr. Deal's concepts over those of others in the field.

Once the selection of concepts and terminology was accomplished the analysis of the Signal Corps culture was begun. The use of personal interviews as the primary research procedure proved to be more difficult than anticipated. The majority of senior officers interviewed were not at all familiar with the concepts of organizational or corporate culture. A great deal of time was spent, in almost all interviews, explaining the concept and how the author was attempting to apply them to the Signal Corps. Some officers did not take the research seriously because they could not relate it to their own experiences. In all cases, the data provided was directly related to the

author's objectives and was capable of being used for the analysis and subsequent findings of the research.

The United States Army Signal Corps culture was not difficult to describe. The historical accounts of Dr. Myer's attempts to found the corps and his trials and tribulations provided more than enough data to identify him as the Signal Corps "cultural hero". The values and present day structure of the culture were also easily identified. The Signal Corps suffered a severe cultural and functional setback when the Chief Signal Officer's position was done away with in 1964. The Chief Signal Officer, until his demise, enjoyed both the command and staff leadership position within the Signal Corps. The division of the staff and command responsibilities have made life difficult for the Signal Corps culture.

The Army's Regimental program gave the Signal Corps the opportunity to rebuild its cultural center. The Signal Center at Fort Gordon, Georgia, had enjoyed considerable expansion and provided the perfect place to build the new home of the Signal Corps. Many previous commanders had taken positive steps to prepare Fort Gordon for its formal recognition. The establishment of the Signal Corps Regiment on 6 June 1986 has become the second most important date in Signal Corps history. The first, of course, is 2 July 1860 when Dr. Albert J. Myer was commissioned as the first signal officer in the U.S. Army.

The Signal Corps' leadership is firmly committed to the advancement of its culture and is training its youth on the ideals and values professed by Dr. Myer. The Signal Corps Regiment and Association are hard at work building the strength of its culture. The United States Army Signal Corps is truly a culturally rich organization.

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