

The Black Beret Is Impractical for Today's Soldiers

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There is a vast majority of soldiers in today's army that do not like the beret, and for good reasons. The black beret is not practical with the ACU uniform. No two soldiers seemingly wear the black beret in the same way. Therefore making the soldiers look sloppy.

The design of the beret is impractical due to the fact it has no brim. Without a brim soldiers have no protection from the elements. Therefore, putting them at a disadvantage depending on the weather conditions. They are hot in the summer, due to the fact that they are made out of wool. The black beret is cold in the winter leaving only one ear tip covered. The black beret has absolutely no sun or rain protection.

The black beret was originally designed in 1924 for the Combat Armor Crewmen. These soldiers first wore the black beret because it was brimless. A gunner could put his head on the sights without constraint and it was black to help hide grease stains.

When looking at the history of military headgear we see that the beret was a sign of distinction. Soldiers only were able to wear the beret if they were of the elite groups. In today's army all soldiers wear the black beret as the official headgear. With the exception of Airborne which wear maroon, Rangers who wear tan and Special Forces units who wear green.

Times are changing and the powers that be are setting in motion to change the entire army. The "Army of One". There no longer is an elite group that stands apart. Yes there are elite groups, but you must look hard to distinguish the differences. In times past military forces wore distinctive uniform items to create a psychological advantage and to boost their esprit de corps. However the beret is a recent phenomenon. One of which is very controversial to the soldiers of today's Army.

(Retired) General Eric Shinseki, former Army Chief of Staff believed that by changing to the black beret Army wide would cause unity. (Retired) General Shinseki settled his decision to make the black beret Army wide by stating that by doing this change we would make the Army -- quote” strategically responsive and dominant” end quote. The decision to reinstate the black beret Army wide makes our soldiers look ridiculous and sloppy at best, and causes the uniform standards to be lowered.

. The beret is impractical for the ACU. It should be used for class A’s or dress blues only. Soldiers constantly have to adjust the black beret. The black berets appear to be made differently. Some black berets have more material than others making them a thicker, stiffer design; therefore no two seemingly look alike.

The patrol cap is the most practical head gear and always will be. You do not have to carry around two different hats. By wearing the Patrol cap as the official head gear soldiers need not worry wear whether in garrison or field over which head gear to wear.

Our Army has changed its uniform style and design continually for many years. We need to be in a uniform that maintains the standard. The black beret stands out like a “tire in a punch-bowl”. If we are to be the best of the best in our world, we should at least wear a practical matching uniform, one that sets the standard and maintains discipline.

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