

Corps operations facing austerity

Excerpted from a speech by CMC at the General Officers Conference, HQMC, July 1973.

by Gen Robert E. Cushman, Jr.
Commandant of the Marine Corps

I don't intend to get into the "good-news/bad-news" routine with you this morning. There is some sobering news mixed in with the good, however . . . and I shall start with that.

To begin with, let me confirm your suspicions about a basic fact of life we must face this coming fiscal year:

After a couple of relatively good money years, FY 74 is going to be a tight one.

We are being squeezed between inflationary trends and an increasingly severe scrutiny by the Congress.

For example, the rising costs of raw materials, fuels, and utilities—as well as the requirements for the salaries of our civilian upgraded wage employees to keep pace with the private sector—have combined to generate some funding difficulties within two appropriations:

- Military Personnel Marine Corps (MPMC); and
- Operations and Maintenance Marine Corps (O&MMC).

And this has happened even since the submission of the President's Budget.

We may get some relief through Phase IV price stabilization measures. When it comes to price action in a post-Phase IV period, however, our crystal ball clouds over again.

Overseas, the problem of rising costs has been exacerbated by the devaluation of the dollar.

Back here in Washington, Defense appropriations are under constant, detailed scrutiny. The climate on Capital Hill dictates three things:

► Budget formulation and budget execution *must* receive major emphasis during FY 74 and the years.

► Fund justification *must* reflect the expressed desires of the Congress.

► Budget requests *must* meet the criterion of mission accomplishment.

To sum up the fiscal situation: We have asked for more FY 74 money than last year, but it is buying us less.

This situation has a heavy impact on our most costly commodity: manpower.

Just how "manpower intensive" we are can be seen through these statistics:

► The Marine Corps receives only 3.9 per cent of the total Department of Defense program; yet

► We supply 8.9 per cent of DoD's manpower.

We needn't go back to ancient history—when each of us joined the Corps—to find a dramatic comparison between manpower costs then and now. Ten years is enough.

Since FY 64, average officer pay has jumped 81 per cent and average enlisted pay has jumped 125 per cent.

Although pay increases do not account for the total rise in manpower costs, they account for a significant share. The efficient handling of pay and allowances, then, takes on added importance. We are at a critical time—right now—in the implementation phase of the Joint Uniform Military Pay System (JUMPS).

During the past year, the Manpower Management System (MMS) has been purified to the point where it can support JUMPS—thanks to excellent cooperation from the field. JUMPS has survived detailed tests in a live control environment by both the General Accounting Office and the Navy Audit Service, and has received their tacit approval for implementation. The system will not work, however, without timely and accurate input to both JUMPS and MMS. This is a command responsibility, which requires close monitoring at all levels. I expect forceful action wherever it is required.

I can think of no quicker way to shake up a Marine and his family than to foul up his pay.

Another area of particular concern to me in the management of our high-priced manpower is our absentee/deserter rate. We continue to lead the other Services in this.

Quit patently, this problem has no single cause . . . and no single solution.

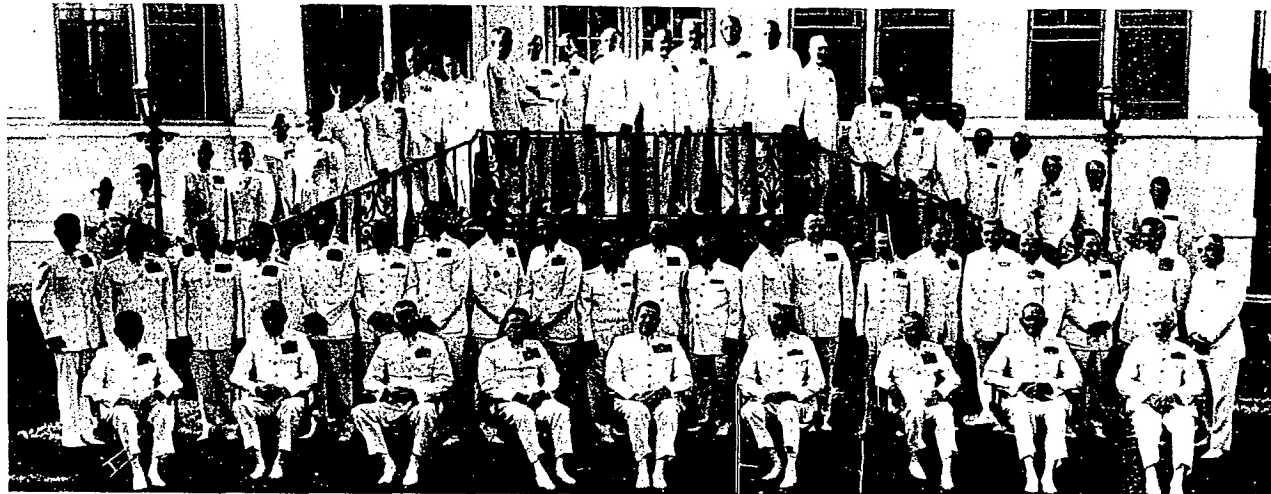
Your thoughtful and detailed responses to both my letter to CG's and CO's of last April and the follow-up correspondence from the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, have helped to sharpen the focus on the varied aspects of the problem.

I urge you to continue to develop initiative within your commands to counteract the effects of lingering personnel turbulence and the shortage of experienced junior leaders.

I am hopeful that the recruit quality control measures which were introduced this past spring will soon begin to show a noticeable effect. A clear-cut assessment of cause-and-effect may take a while, however, because of at least two complicating factors:

► Accessions who entered the enlistment pool before the higher standards were instituted; and

► The summertime recruiting surge, in which quality normally accompanies quantity.



Marine Corps general officers flank CMC at the 1973 General Officers Conference.

As of 1 July, we are *officially* in the All Volunteer Force environment.

Any lingering doubts a draft-eligible young man has entertained over the past six months—about being called to serve—are surely gone by now. The next few months should tell us how many and how strong those lingering doubts may have been.

Over the past year, our recruiting service has responded magnificently to the pressures of a *de facto* All Volunteer climate. In FY 73, each district made its regular quota—for the first time since FY 67. I will be watching closely our consolidated recruiting efforts and the FY 74 nationwide balance of regular and reserve quotas, to see if we can maintain our Regular showing and improve our Reserve one. We will stand ready to re-distribute recruiting assets, as required.

In crossing over to the brighter side, I would like to touch on an area which is not yet a problem, but which could become a matter of increasing concern to the Marine Corps over the next few years. I refer to some of the newer policies and procedures relating to the weapons system acquisition process, outlined in DoD Directive 5000.1. In essence, these have stemmed from Congressional dissatisfaction with cost overruns, life cycle support costs, technical problems which occur after delivery to the user, and the like. We will have to do three basic things:

- First, to structure our own weapons system acquisition procedures to review each major program as it passes through each milestone of the acquisition process. We already have a start on this.

- Second, to monitor even more closely the programs of other Services in which we have special interest, assisting where feasible. If a developing service gets into trouble on a program or system we need—or have already procured—we find ourselves in the same boat.

- Finally, to commence early operational testing

and evaluation and to conduct follow-on operational testing and development—both independent from development T&E. This will mean added work for the FMF, although they can continue to count on the Development Center for operational test planning and some assistance in the actual conduct of the tests. The Development Center would also coordinate with the FMF for their early participation in development testing, including the coordination of test plans.

Still on the bright side of things, I see our greatest gains in the intangibles:

- Changing attitudes within the Corps;
- The prospect of more efficient Headquarters operations; and
- Greater awareness outside the Corps of our full range of capabilities.

Last year's symposium dealt extensively with the question of racial tension within the Marine Corps. In the interim, we have made a heavy investment in time, money, and manpower to get a handle on the problem of achieving harmony within the ranks. It is hard to tell whether we are getting a fair return on this investment, for—as in any deterrence situation—it is extremely hard to assign a cost value to a crisis which doesn't occur.

Even though some tension remains, I feel the human relations training program has generally begun to take hold, and has been worth that investment. In the long run, I expect us to come out ahead in this understanding, but it will take your continued command support and emphasis. It doesn't take much—a disparaging remark, perhaps, in front of a battalion or company formation—to undo a lot of hard, trust-building work. Leaders at all levels should understand this.

In this type of training, quality—not quantity—counts. Real progress must be measured not only by what happens during the twenty formal training

hours, but by what happens the rest of the time, as well.

Something which should represent good news to many of you is my approval of a Headquarters Marine Corps reorganization plan, which commenced as a three-phase study last August:

► The first phase reviewed previous Headquarters reorganization efforts;

► The second phase consisted of an examination of other organizations within the Department of Defense; and

► The third phase included a comprehensive analysis of our own missions, functions, and organization.

- Get functional;
- End split responsibility;
- Eliminate excessive span of control where it existed; and
- Create identifiable points of contact.

The reorganization plan will provide some immediate personnel savings. We envision larger savings eventually after a shakedown period in the new set-up, however.

Finally, I find it most heartening to see a growth in general awareness of the utility of Marines and

amphibious forces in a wide range of missions.

This has come about, in part, through our heavy schedule of participation in amphibious exercises, particularly Joint and Combined exercises in the NATO arena.

A recent briefing by VAdm Miller, returning from his tour as Commander, Sixth Fleet, emphasized his reliance on these exercises, both to:

► Stimulate interest in Joint and Combined planning and staff work among commanders who had earlier thought more in terms of unilateral Sixth Fleet operations; and to

► Encourage participation by Allied navies and landing forces in "cross-deck" exercises, away from their own shores. In this respect, he voiced the highest regard for our deployed Marines as truly effective "Ambassadors in Green."

This growth recognition, at the highest levels, of potential Marine Corps contributions to the maritime aspects of our National Security Strategy is the product of a lot of hard work by a lot of Marines. It will take a lot more hard work, for us to:

- Continue to state our case effectively; and to
- Be able to *prove* it, if necessary.

These are ever-present tasks for each of us.

Reserve recruiting programs tested

The Marine Corps has begun a 90-day test of two Reserve recruiting programs that reduce the time enlistees must serve with an organized unit.

Two separate programs are being tested, each in specified areas of the United States. Purpose of the test is to determine if the reduced periods of active participation will increase the number of men entering the Reserve program.

The Reserve Optional Enlistment Program-3 is being offered in 16 states. Under this option an individual enlists for six years, and serves the initial three years in the Organized Marine Corps Reserve. The remaining three years, at his request, may be served as a member of the Class III Ready Reserve.

The second program being offered is the Reserve Optional Enlistment Program-4. This one is being tried in 12 states and the District of Columbia. Again the enlistment is for six years, with four being served in the Organized Marine Corps Reserve and the remaining two, at his request, in the Class III Ready Reserve.

Effective immediately all new Reserve Marines will be assigned to 130 days initial active duty for training.

Any enlisted under the two test programs will not be eligible to participate in any technical training or formal school that goes more than 24 weeks beyond recruit training. Neither will they be authorized to augment or be voluntarily assigned to active duty with the regular Marine Corps.

The standard enlistment program of six years service with the Organized Reserve remains in effect in those areas where the test is not being conducted. It also will be offered in the test areas, affording applicants the opportunity for special or technical training if qualified.

Ordnance association retitled

On July 1, 1973 the American Ordnance Association became the American Defense Preparedness Association.

The original aim and purpose of the Association, as established in 1919 remains unchanged: "To foster peace through preparedness for national defense." The change in name has been adapted to indicate the wider scope and increased service of the organization to the nation.

Beginning with its foundation in 1919 as the Army Ordnance Association the name was changed in 1948 with the establishment of the Department of Defense and all of the military services. The efforts and programs of the association now are concerned with other facets of national security in addition to armament.

The new name indicates this widened spectrum of defense preparedness activities.

61 SNCO's picked for degrees

A joint selection board that picked Marines to participate in the Marine Corps SNCO Degree Completion Program and the Marine Corps Associate Degree Completion Program has reported out at Headquarters.

Of the 96 SNCO's who applied for the Degree Completion Program, 61 were selected. The program allows SNCO's to finish up two years of resident college work for a baccalaureate degree.

Also selected were 175 enlisted Marines, from among 378 applicants, who will attend junior college under the Associate Degree Completion Program. The program allows Marines to attend college up to two years in pursuit of an associate arts degree.