

RESTRICTED

777

THE NATURE AND PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP

13 November 1952

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION--Colonel B. S. Waterman, USA, Member of the Faculty, ICAF.....	53
SPEAKER--Dr. F. H. Sanford, Executive Secretary of the American Psychological Association.....	53

Publication No. L53-52

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Washington, D. C.

51

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

778

Dr. Fillmore H. Sanford, Executive Secretary of the American Psychological Association, was born in Chatham, Virginia, in 1914. He attended Hargrave Military Academy and the University of Richmond, Virginia. He received his M.A. degree from Harvard University in 1937 and his Ph.D. from that school in 1941. From 1941-1943 he taught at Harvard, after which he became an officer in the U. S. Navy. He had a terminal assignment as senior officer of the Aviation Psychology Section at the Naval Air Training Bases, Corpus Christi, Texas. He now holds the rank of lieutenant commander in the U. S. Naval Reserve. From 1946-1948 he taught at the University of Maryland in the Psychology Department and then became professor of Psychology at Haverford College. He wrote a book which is being used in a leadership course at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and one which is used as a text for chief petty officers of the Navy. He has also written a book entitled "Authoritarianism and Leadership" which was published by the Institute for Research in Human Relations, as well as various articles published in scientific publications. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa, honorary fraternities.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

779

THE NATURE AND PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP

13 November 1952

COLONEL WATERMAN: All through this Executive Skills Course we have been talking about one aspect of leadership or another. Most of our attention up to now has been centered on individual behavior. We have been digging into the effects which our actions as leaders are apt to have on followers or subordinates.

This morning we have an opportunity to examine the leadership problem from a slightly different angle. Military leaders and executives are not the only ones who are concerned with these matters of leadership. The psychologists, whose business it is to try to appraise human nature and human behavior in an objective way, have also made a good many studies of the leadership problem. I think they see a good many aspects of leadership which perhaps have not occurred to us in our daily operations.

Our speaker this morning is Executive Secretary of the American Psychological Association. He has done a great deal of research on leadership, both in and outside of the service, and is the author of the text which is now being used in the Leadership Course at the Naval Academy. He can give us, I think, some very interesting new insights into the subject of leadership.

It is a great pleasure to welcome back for the second successive year Dr. F. H. Sanford.

DR. SANFORD: I want to introduce my paper* by making some general statements about the importance of studying leadership. This introduction, which like many such may be more accurately described as a "misplaced interruption," is occasioned by the belief that such general statements, though characterized by both looseness of form and piety of air, can help locate the specific topic in a broad context.

*This paper is an adaptation of one originally prepared for the Working Group on Human Behavior Under Conditions of Military Service, an organization of the Research and Development Board of the Department of Defense. Parts of the paper were later presented at a research conference on October 4, 1951, sponsored by the Panel on Human Relations and Morale of the Committee on Human Resources of the Research and Development Board. It was formally published in "Psychology in the World Emergency," a book produced in 1952 by the University of Pittsburgh Press.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

780

I think a case can be made that a people's orientation to leadership and authority is a cardinal factor in determining the form and flavor of the social institutions evolved to serve that people. Our own democratic institutions are reflections, in large measure, of the basic American attitudes toward authority and of related American readiesses to respond to certain sorts of leadership. The future of our institutions will depend in significant degree upon the ways our attitudes toward authority develop--or regress--and upon the sort of social mechanisms we invent to implement these attitudes. If we wish to preserve and advance what we know as democracy--or if we merely wish to understand democratic society--we need to understand leadership phenomena. Further, we will need to establish some sort of intelligent control over this very crucial social process if social science is to contribute to the advancement of human and humanistic values.

At a less high-flown level, we can make an additional case that the study of leadership has significant consequences for the general effectiveness of a society in advancing any of its goals. A vast proportion of human effort is effort expended in group settings. The success of these efforts depends on such things as effective division of labor, effective organization, effective communication, effective group structure. The activities of the leader, whether appointed or chosen, whether formal or informal, bear directly on each of these aspects of group functioning and hence on the over-all effectiveness of the group. A society as well as each of its component organizations constantly faces the need to use human effort effectively. In times of national crisis, this need has more apparent urgency and the problems of selecting and training leaders become more acute. At other times, when the society is less frantically interested in tangible productivity, there still remains the problem of organizing group action in such a way that human desires can be advanced. In our society certain sorts of leaders are effective and others ineffective in advancing group goals--whether these goals are material productivity or softer purposes involving the advancement of the individual's security, maturity and integrity. If we find out enough about leaders and leadership, we can eventually insure that groups are better at achieving whatever it is they are constituted to achieve--whether greater production of guns for defense or greater production of leisure for living.

A third point worth mentioning is that the study of leadership has a significant potentiality for contributing to our general understanding of many events the social scientist concerns himself with. Anyone who has an interest in leadership phenomena, and who has suffered the inevitable confusion such an interest brings in its wake, is faced with the seemingly necessary conclusion that leadership events are not separable, except by the veriest of fiat, from the more general and inclusive phenomena of group functioning. There seems to be no reason, in the nature of things, why we cannot create a sound science of groups.

54

RESTRICTED

There seems, in the nature of things, good reason for believing that such a science, when we make it, will give man unprecedented control over his social environment. And few will doubt that leadership phenomena are crucial phenomena for such a science and that their understanding will contribute mightily to the advancement of this science.

Q. E. D. Leadership is important. It is important for any social organization, military, or otherwise. And both in the context of the cosmic things dealt with above and in the context of the present writer-reader situation it is time we got down to brass tacks in wrestling with it.

This paper focuses on military leadership. The form of the paper, however, is dictated by the conviction that military leadership is not different, except in relatively phenotypical ways, from any other sort of leadership, and by the belief that meaningful statements about leadership, when and if they are made, will contribute significantly to the effectiveness of military and all other groups in our society. The paper first talks about historical procedures for selecting, appraising, and training leaders. It then deals with some of the central and as yet unsolved problems confronted by the psychologist who wishes to make good and useful declarative sentences about military leadership. The paper then moves to a brief summary of research on the general psychology of leadership and goes on to deal with the rudiments of a conceptual scheme suggested by, and potentially inclusive of, specific research findings.

APPLIED RESEARCH ON MILITARY LEADERSHIP

In treating past research on military leadership the present paper will divide this general subject into three parts: (a) Selection of Military Leaders, (b) Appraisal of Military Officers, and (c) The Training of Military Leaders.

Selection of Military Leaders

Much effort, both scientific and otherwise, has been invested in the attempt to select young men who will turn out to be good military leaders. It is fair to say that, in contrast to the obvious success scored in recent years in the selection of people for various kinds of specific jobs, no one has yet devised a method, of proven validity, for selecting either military or nonmilitary leaders. There have been various attempts, of very probable utility, to select leaders by what we would regard as relatively scientific methods. And of course leaders are being selected every day through some sort of process and with some degree of success. Groups, military or otherwise, do continue to function. But we cannot clearly demonstrate in any precise and conclusive way that leaders selected by any known process function better than those not selected.

RESTRICTED

782

American Procedures in World War II

During World War II many civilians were directly commissioned by all branches of the military service. These procedures are well known. In the Army, for example, it was necessary only that a candidate for direct commissioning meet certain minimal standards of health and education and show paper evidence of qualification for an Army specialty. A selection and Review Board examined the applicant's papers and accepted or rejected him. The Navy followed a similar plan in selecting its specialists from civilian life. Neither Army nor Navy accumulated any evidence that selected candidates were better performers than those rejected.

In the Army during the war and in the Air Force since the war, candidates for officer training within the service had to meet the following requirements: (a) a minimum period of service as an enlisted person, (b) a minimum score on a test of general intellectual ability, and (c) recommendation from superior officers.

The peacetime procedures for selecting regular officers are equally well known and equally unvalidated. There are requirements for entering one of the academies and those officer candidates who demonstrate ability to absorb the formal and informal training at the academies become officers. There is no real evidence that candidates rejected from officer training will perform less well than those selected and there is no evidence that those who are judged favorably during their training also perform favorably as officers after commissioning. Throughout these selection processes, the best we have to rely on are the intuitive and often unreliable judgments of teachers and superior officers. That such judgments leave much to be desired is easy to demonstrate.

The selection of aviators during World War II was quite a different process and quite a different problem. Aviators were not selected primarily as leaders; they were selected as aviators. It has been clearly demonstrated that (a) the old-fashioned selection boards did not succeed better than flipped coins in predicting who would survive aviation training and that (b) scientifically devised psychological tests did succeed in making such predictions, at the saving of many millions of dollars and hours to the military.

British and German Procedure

Both the Germans and the British during World War II devised fairly elaborate procedures for selecting military officers. For the Germans (9)--numbers in parentheses indicate items in bibliography--the selection was done by a team of examiners consisting of an Army colonel, a medical officer, and three psychologists. The candidate was brought to a testing station, where for two full days he was put through his

RESTRICTED

paces. He was given a life history examination, intelligence tests, and something called an "expression analysis" in which his voice, appearance, gestures and facial expression were studied. Each candidate was also subjected to an "action analysis" which consisted of watching him carry out orders and observing how he took command of a group in performing a standard task. On the basis of these procedures and supplementary interviews, the candidate was accepted or rejected as officer material. This may have been a wonderfully successful program. But there is no evidence at all on its validity. We have no way of knowing whether the accepted candidates were better officers than those who were rejected. Somehow the Germans have never developed any interest in validity. Validity has been a very American sort of worry.

The British Army used a similar selection procedure (14). The psychological procedures they employed were not quite so wild, from the point of view of American psychology, as were the German devices, but the candidate was subjected to a similar regimen, with action analysis as a prime part of the whole show. The selection program was handled by a board consisting of a colonel, a military testing officer, and a commissioned psychologist. The candidates were handled in groups of approximately eight and for three days were given educational, vocational, personal, and medical questionnaires. They took a number of intelligence tests and a few personality tests. They were put into practical field situations and observed while actually performing certain individual and group functions of a military sort. Then came a series of interviews by specialists. A Board convened at the conclusion of the three days to meet the candidate and discuss his qualifications as an officer.

Assessment

The procedure of "assessment" used by the Office of Strategic Services during the war to select its operatives (21) has much in common with the German and British methods described above. The candidate was put through a relatively grueling series of actual tasks while the experts observed how he operated, both in individual and in group situations. He was given many paper and pencil tests and was also examined by the various diagnostic devices the clinical psychologist uses. And he was interviewed extensively in both relaxed and "stress" situations. At the end of this extensive program the staff collaborated in writing a characterization of the man, a characterization that was used in assigning him to duty.

The assessment program represents the first time in America that the normal person has been extensively studied by all the elaborate and expensive procedures usually reserved for the study of the clinical patient. It also represents a relatively new departure into what might

RESTRICTED

784

be called "selection by controlled intuition"--where the experts in personality and personnel calculatedly expose themselves to numerous and subtle aspects of the whole person, then pool their judgments to arrive at a characterization and at a prediction of what the individual is suited for. The program, like all other programs for selecting people for complicated, high-level jobs, suffers from the absence of clear evidence on validity. But it remains an interesting approach. At the moment, when we are unable to analyze a leader's functions into unitary and measurable factors, a program of expert and controlled intuition may be our best bet for the selection of leaders.

Procedures Based on Statistical Research

During the war the Adjutant General's Office devised a new procedure for selecting officers for positions in the postwar Army (3). The research upon which the procedure is based initially involved approximately 15,000 officers at 50 Army installations. These officers were brought together in groups of 15 to 30, with each member of each well enough acquainted with the other members to make judgments about their over-all value to the Army. Each officer made a list of those high and those low in value to the Army, and also designated those five officers in the group who were most nearly average. A final sample of 1,000 top, 1,000 middle, and 1,000 low officers were selected for intensive study, the selection being based on wide agreement among the rating officers.

The New Officer Evaluation Report was found to correlate well with these ratings (.60). The ratings by the New Interview Board correlated .39, a Biographical Inventory Blank .35, Previous Efficiency Report .45, and ratings by the traditional army board .09. An Officer Classification Test (a test of general intelligence) failed to correlate with the ratings. The same was true of a General Survey Test designed to measure educational achievement.

The conclusion we get from this study is that a combination of these correlating tests and procedures will predict which officers will succeed in getting themselves rated by their colleagues as valuable to the service. A combined Point Index, based on a weighting of the correlating factors, gives a correlation of .67 with the ratings.

This study of selection, like the others, and like the various selection procedures actually employed, still runs squarely into the problem of validity and the problem of the criterion used to determine validity. The above study does suggest that we can predict which officers will and will not get themselves rated high or low by their contemporaries. But for the prediction to be made, the person rated must have been in the Army long enough for his Officers' Evaluation Report to have been meaningfully completed, and we still do not know

RESTRICTED

that those who get themselves rated as valuable men will actually be valuable when they are required to perform actual jobs. Nor is value to the service the same thing as actual performance as a leader in an actual group situation.

The Human Resources Research Center of the Air Force Training Command is now conducting a study of officer qualities (32). The research psychologists have accumulated rating and test-score data from a large number of officer candidates and are now in the process of analyzing these data for the light they can throw on the selection of officers. Available for analysis are scores on the AGCT, the Officer Candidate Test, and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, data from two forms of a Biographical Inventory, general school grades, ratings on performance in a "practical application" course, efficiency ratings by tactical officers and mutual "buddy ratings" by the candidates themselves. The results of this study may lead to recommendations for improving procedures for selecting and evaluating officer candidates. Already the study has resulted in the adoption of an improved rating procedure for one facet of the officer training course.

The Nominating Technique

During World War II and after, much research use was made of the nominating technique in studies of leadership. The research conducted by Williams and Leavitt (31) will illustrate the technique and show the sort of evidence it yields. These two investigators worked with a large group of Marines shortly before the men attended OCS. The men were organized into platoons of 50 each, in which there was reasonably good opportunity for each man to know each other man. At the end of two weeks of training in the pre-OCS camp and again at the end of five weeks each man was asked, among other things, to name (a) the five men in his platoon most outstanding in all-around officer-like ability and (b) the five men least outstanding in this general attribute. At the end of five weeks and again at the end of 15 weeks, similar ratings were obtained from the second lieutenant and the sergeant of the platoon. From these data it was possible to construct for each candidate a "group opinion" with respect to his military worth and also a ranking by his leaders. At the end of OCS, it was possible to examine the relation between these two data on each man and his performance in school. Also for 100 of these men who got into combat there were available later ratings by combat leaders, so that it was possible to see how accurately (a) an officer's peers and (b) an officer's superiors can predict his later performance. These results are presented as follows:

RESTRICTED

786

Correlation between predictors and criteria of leadership

Predictor	<u>OCS success</u>	<u>Combat ratings</u>
Group opinion (2 weeks)	.33	.47
Group opinion (5 weeks)	.40	.43
Ratings by leaders (5 weeks)		.22
Ratings by leaders (15 weeks)		.36
GCT score	.37	.02
OCS Final Grade		.17

Since only 100 cases were involved in the checking of these predictions against combat performance, it is not possible to make general statements on these data; but there is at least a suggestion that a man's peers can predict with some success his later performance as a leader. And there is a hint that the judgment of his peers is a better predictor than (a) the judgment of his superiors, (b) his performance in school, or (c) his scores on a test of general intelligence. Such possibilities can be examined further only when we secure trustworthy ways to define and measure the performance we wish to predict.

Jenkins and Vaughn (18) also used the nominating technique in studies of leadership among naval aviators. Officers in actual combat situations were asked to name, in essence, the "good" and "poor" performers in chipsdown situations their squadron faced. The technique gives good evidence as to what individuals are good men to have on our side when guns are being fired in anger and hence furnish criteria against which we can validate our aviation selection procedures. The data from these studies have not been treated in such a way as to relate meaningfully to the problem of selection of leaders. It has become clear, however, that the same tests that predict success in aviation training do not predict with any degree of usefulness success in wartime aviation performance.

The Appraisal of Officers

In all branches of the military the promotion of officers is based on ratings by superior officers. The general problem is to secure valid estimates of an officer's present and potential worth to his service so that he can be given responsibility commensurate with his abilities. The procedures for securing these estimates are well known. Though the procedures themselves have been improved through the application of scientific knowledge to the design of rating techniques (for example, the forced-choice efficiency report in the Army) we still end up with ratings--ratings which leave much to be desired in the way of demonstrated validity.

RESTRICTED

The inherent difficulties with rating techniques, though sometimes reduced and controlled by the application of scientific procedures, are not entirely removed. Problems such as the halo effect, the failure to secure a spread of ratings, and differences in standards of judgment are ever present and must be controlled. These all frequently add up to the sad lack of reliability between raters and the sadder lack of valid agreement between ratings and objective indices of performance.

The American Institute of Research has completed a study designed to improve the process of appraising Air Force officers (22). This study first attempted to discover what were the critical requirements of an officer's job. Then the attempt was to secure reliable ratings by superior officers specifically focused on these critical requirements and the officer's behavior with respect to them. In the execution of the study, 640 Air Force officers of varied rank and functions were interviewed for the purpose of securing descriptions of "critical incidents in officer behavior." The interviewee was asked to focus carefully on one situation in which he had observed an officer and, through carefully phrased questions, was helped in the description of the specific behavior that was outstandingly effective or ineffective in the situation under consideration. This procedure yielded descriptions of 1,228 incidents of effective officer behavior and 1,801 incidents of ineffective behavior. These incidents were then classified into the following general areas of behavior:

1. Proficiency in handling administrative details.
2. Proficiency in supervising personnel.
3. Proficiency in planning and directing action.
4. Acceptance of organizational responsibility.
5. Acceptance of personal responsibility.
6. Proficiency in duty military specialty.

These general classifications, representing something of a job analysis of the Air Force officer's function, were used as the basis for designing a procedure for evaluating officers. The procedure, now adopted by the Air Force, secures ratings that focus (a) on the critical requirements of the job and (b) on the behavior rather than the general traits of the officer being rated. As long as we must use ratings, such a procedure would appear to use ratings at their best.

As an illustration of the sort of distrust that the usual rating procedures deserve, a study reported by Flanagan (10) is revealing. Between 300 and 400 Naval officers were given fitness ratings by two

RESTRICTED

788

successive commanding officers. The second rating was made six months after the first. Correlations between the first and second ratings ran no higher than .40. To test the hypothesis that there was a "reputation" factor entering into the second ratings (with the second commander being influenced by the reputations passed on to him by his staff), analysis was made of the portion of the group who had successive ratings on sea duty and shore duty. With the reputation factor removed almost entirely, the correlation between successive ratings was about .10. Which rating gets believed at time for promotion? They cannot both be right.

The Problem of a Criterion

Throughout the research on the selection and evaluation of officers, the absence of a defined and clear-cut notion of what a good leader is and does is a very major drawback. At the moment, the best we have in the way of a criterion is the agreement among officers that a given officer is a good officer. With such a criterion, if we can get reliable ratings to begin with, we can make some progress toward selecting officers. We at least can search for instruments which will accurately predict which young men are likely, at some future time, to win from their superior officers a favorable judgment. Making such a prediction may not be the same, however, as making the prediction that certain young men will perform well as military leaders. This is another way of saying that a favorable general judgment from an officer's superiors may not be the best of all possible criteria.

Ratings by superiors, besides being subject in some degree to the usual ills that ratings are heir to, may have additional and more subtle drawbacks. In the first place, such ratings, even in the face of attempts to keep them aimed at specific behaviors and specific functions, will still tend to be over-all ratings. They are based on the assumption that there is such a thing as general leadership ability, an assumption that may be very wrong. In terms of the Air Force list of "critical requirements," it may be in the nature of things that the officer who is excellent in handling administrative detail has a general personality make-up that prevents his gaining or demonstrating proficiency in supervising personnel. And perhaps the person who can supervise personnel with great skill is not at all the sort of person who accepts in high degree the organizational responsibility. In more concrete terms, the officer who is good behind an administrative desk may never be able to perform the functions of a combat leader. If our system of rating gives high marks to those individuals who score well on all these functions and low marks to those who are outstanding in one or two functions but very poor in others, we may, in the long run, find ourselves giving great military responsibility to individuals who are best characterized by versatile mediocrity, men who are jacks of all trades. If we are interested in securing leaders who are really

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

789

outstanding in the actual performance of leadership tasks, we had perhaps better think in terms not of "general worth to the service," but in terms of the fit between (a) the leader's abilities and (b) the concrete demands of actual military situations.

Another possible fault with ratings by superior officers is that they are by superior officers. As a general thing, it can be expected that (a) the superior officer is a human being and (b) that he rates under the influence of his own problems and perceptions. If I am commander of a military installation or operation I am very likely to rate highly those of my subordinate officers who solve my problems. And my problems are not those of the men in the ranks and they may not entirely coincide with the problems presented by either actual or official military requirements. I as an individual may have certain biases that get into my ratings. I may like order and neatness above all else and rate highly those officers who help me achieve order and neatness. I, as a superior officer, may have other biases. My superior has problems, too, and I must help meet these. I may rate highly those officers who help me solve the problem of winning a favorable judgment from my superior. Further, I, as a carrier of the culture of my military service, have certain attributes that enter into--and perhaps help invalidate--my ratings. Any culture exerts a certain amount of effort to preserve itself. It rewards those individuals who, through enthusiastic conformity, help preserve that culture. I may, in the interest of preserving and solidifying my culture, give high ratings to those individuals who conform most closely to the customs and traditions of my culture--but who are not necessarily the best functional performers in gun-shooting situations. (Many people observe that criminals and poolroom toughs--nonconformists in our culture--make the best fighting men. There may be something in the observation.) The study of "critical requirements" for an effective Air Force officer (22) revealed that the officers interviewed put considerable emphasis on compliance to organizational structure and demands--"compliance with organizational procedure," "showing loyalty," "subordinating personal interests," "cooperating with associates," "maintaining military appearance," "reporting for appointments," "adapting to associates," "conforming to civil standards," and so on. The officer who rates high on such things is a pleasant and cooperative individual to have around. He carries and preserves the culture. But it is a reasonable hypothesis that he is not the best officer to have on our side in a dirty fight or in situations where inventiveness, initiative, and guts are more functionally important than compliance. Any system that puts an excessive emphasis on compliance is likely to reward and give responsibility to complaint individuals--more responsibility than is functionally adaptive when problems arise other than those of culture-preservation. The fact of a low correlation between ratings (grades) in OCS and performance in combat may be relevant here. The OCS grade is, in a way, an index of compliance to institutional expectations. Performance in combat is quite another thing.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

790

Ratings by superior officers, then, though apparently the best criterion of military leadership we now have, should not, if we are going to seek to apply the best that science has to offer, be accepted as ultimate. We must seek for better criteria. When we find them, we will be able to make rapid and practical strides toward intelligent selection of military leaders.

What might we use as a criterion if we did not have ratings by superior officers? We have already seen that some utility resides in the procedure of securing ratings by an officer's peers. In the one study cited earlier (31), ratings by peers related more closely to combat performance (as rated by superiors) than did either officers' ratings in OCS or OCS grades. This one result suggests that there is some validity in the judgment of fellow officers of the same grade. But, on theoretical grounds, such ratings also have shortcomings. Again they are over-all ratings, based on the assumption of a generalized leadership ability. And again the ratings are based at least partially on the needs and problems peculiar to the raters. The man who relates well with his own peers and wins a favorable judgment from them is not at all necessarily the same man that will win favorable ratings from either his superiors or inferiors. From some points of view, however, we might expect from an officer's peers a more objective and valid rating than from those above or below him in the military structure. As an officer, my behavior in the presence of my peers is likely to be more "natural" than my behavior under the eyes of either my superiors or my inferiors. In either dominant or subordinate positions, I may be playing a "role" that I deem conducive to the winning of approval or to the fulfilling of a mission. I may have considerable knack for the subtle "buttering up" of my superiors and because my superiors see very little of me, I may succeed in impressing them very favorably. I may also turn on a "role" that will impress my followers. But in living day in and day out with my peers, with no clear-cut "role" to play, I am perceived with relative clarity.

Some case can be made, also, for the potential validity of ratings by the people who are led. The followers are the ones who do the ultimate performing and are the ones most in contact with the officer's concrete leadership behavior. If a leader's followers think he is a good leader, they can be expected to follow enthusiastically and to perform well. But there are bugs here too. The follower sees the leader against a background of a follower's limited perspective and a follower's own needs. If we can assume that the followers are reasonably informed of military requirements and are reasonably identified with the military culture, then ratings by these followers would seem to possess face validity. But followers in the military are not always informed as to what the goals are nor are they always highly identified with the military organization. Their most urgent need may be that of protecting themselves from organizational demands. If such is the case, the leader

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

791

they judge best would be judged an outlaw by his superiors. It might be argued, however, that most followers in the military are in both an intellectual and emotional position to make good judgments of their immediate superiors and that ratings by subordinates will have in some situations as much face validity as ratings by superiors or peers.

Perhaps it would be wise to use as a criterion of good military leadership a rating that combines the judgments of superiors, peers, and subordinates. Certainly we can believe that any officer who is reliably judged to be good by all three groups will be a very useful officer. And with equal certainty, the officer who is judged unfavorably by all three groups probably should not continue in the service. But what do we do with the officer who is "good" in the eyes of one group but "poor" in the eyes of another? It is a safe bet that any research into such triple ratings would reveal many such officers.

We perhaps can make future progress toward more reliable and more apparently valid rating procedures. We can bring better equipped judges into contact with more life-like performance and secure ratings on more significant variables. But is there any immediate hope of going beyond this? The answer seems to be no. But here is the great challenge to applied research in the leadership area. It may be possible in the future to measure leadership performance without having to use intricate human judgments in the application of measuring devices. But such a day seems now a long way off. It may be that we will have to approach leadership through an understanding of group phenomena. After all, it is generally the performance of a group that we are interested in advancing through the selection and training of leaders. If a group performs, and continues to perform in desired ways, its leader is a good leader. If it fails to perform, the leader has failed. It may be possible that we will be able to measure leadership through the measurement of group performance. Or, a little more subtly, maybe we can measure the effect a leader has on the cohesiveness, flexibility, and stability of a group--on the general "healthiness" of the group. The leader who has a "healthy" group--one whose potential performance is great--is a good leader. And the leader who produces dissension, rigidity, and disruption in the social entity he leads is a bad leader. Some progress has been made along this line of thinking (7), (8), (15), (16), but no very practical procedures have yet been invented.

The problem of a criterion is still the paramount problem in research on military or any other sort of leadership.

The Training of Leaders

The training of military leaders, like the training of doctors, lawyers, philosophers, or linguists, has proceeded without any really scientific evidence regarding its effectiveness. Such evidence, of

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

792

course, is very difficult to uncover. Particularly is it difficult when we are in possession of no satisfactory criteria. But with enough intelligence, enough time, and enough money there is no inexorable reason why we cannot discover the most effective sorts of training for the production of the most effective sorts of leaders.

Research approaches to the effects of leadership training are rare. The Human Resources Research Center of the Air Force initiated a "practical problems course" in Officer Candidate School designed to go beyond the usual book-learning methods, but there is as yet no evidence bearing on the effectiveness of the course in producing improved leadership performance. The course has been installed as part of the OCS curriculum on the basis of its face validity, and grades in the course help determine the acceptance or rejection of an officer candidate. The Infantry School at Fort Benning has also recently installed a leadership training course.

At both the U. S. Naval Academy and the U. S. Military Academy since World War II, there have been curricular experiments with various sorts of training in leadership. At Annapolis a course in Naval Leadership is a regular part of the curriculum. One section of this course is devoted to the study of psychology and is based on a specially prepared text called "Psychology for Naval Leaders." This section of the course has been subjected to a research examination designed to find out what changes, if any, were produced in the midshipmen who were exposed to it (25). A sample of 100 midshipmen who spent eight classroom hours and an unknown number of "homework" hours on the psychology section of the course were given a variety of psychological tests before and after this brief exposure to psychology and their scores compared with those of a control group of 100 midshipmen who were not exposed to the course. The results show statistically significant changes on the part of the midshipment who took the course. The study ended with the following general conclusions:

1. After taking the course midshipment held ideas and opinions about human behavior which correspond more closely with those recognized as scientifically correct.
2. After taking the course midshipmen showed a greater tendency, when confronted with written leadership problems, to approve solutions which involved positive action based on consideration of human variables. They tended more often to reject solutions which were ego-defensive, dictatorial, inconsiderate, or indefinite.
3. After taking the course midshipmen were able to consider more critically the evidence necessary to reach conclusions from given information. Their scores on a Test of Logical Reasoning improved.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

793

4. After taking the course students tended to express less reactionary attitudes toward social problems.

There is no solid evidence that the course makes midshipmen better leaders. There is evidence, however, that the course does produce changes which many people would regard desirable. Though the Annapolis research runs directly into the problem of a criterion, it does suggest that it is possible to train people in the solution of the human problems the military officer encounters every day. We may not soon be able to demonstrate that any given course of training produces better or worse leaders, but we can experimentally examine courses and experiences for their effect on specific behaviors which are regarded, on the face of things, as generally desirable. And there probably is much useful progress to be made in arranging for leaders and leaders-to-be to have supervised direct experience with the problems and situations a military leader encounters. The potential fruitfulness of such procedures as psychodrama, for example, has not been thoroughly explored in the light of military significance.

Research on Noncommissioned Leadership

The plethora of problems in the area of noncommissioned leadership have been relatively untouched by research efforts. We have tended to proceed on the assumption that military leadership inheres only in military officers. This is a poor assumption if we are interested in the effectiveness of the whole military organization, for many of the leadership functions in any military establishment are either formally or informally fulfilled by noncommissioned men. If one looks about a bit in the military it is easy to get the impression that both the selection and training of noncommissioned leaders represent problems the research exploration of which can yield valuable results. Often it seems to be the case the promotion to positions of responsibility below the commissioned level is based almost entirely on a man's competence in the performance of a technical job. In the selection of any leader for any sort of situation, it is very illogical to infer from technical proficiency to proficiency in assuming responsibility and in supervising the activities of other human beings.

There are currently two research projects in progress that may give us ideas for improving noncommissioned leadership. One of these, sponsored by HRRG of the Air Force and being conducted by the Institute for Social Research, is exploring systematically into the behavior and functions of noncom leaders in the Air Force and is searching for personality variables which bear on proficiency of functioning. The other project, sponsored by the Army's Adjutant General's Office and carried out by the Institute for Research in Human Relations, is devoted to the study of small groups (squads in reconnaissance platoons), and aims to test certain hypotheses about leader-follower relations as

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

794

they bear on the measured proficiency of squads. There are going projects also, both in the Strategic Air Command and the Air Training Command of the Air Force, devoted to the intimate study of small groups. These projects can be expected to reveal a good deal about the role of the noncom leader in small military groups and about the sort of person who can play that role.

Research on Administrative Function

Under the direction of Carroll Shartle (26), the Personnel Research Board at Ohio State University has been conducting extensive studies in the leadership area with a focus on what may be described as the problem of administrative or executive function. The procedure was to investigate the actual behavior of executives in a variety of organizations, including military organizations, and to classify these behaviors under general functional headings. By using such a classification, it was possible to describe with considerable accuracy the pattern of activity characterizing any single executive or group of executives. The following figure presents the 14 kinds of executive activity and shows the "profile of actual functions of one executive."

By this sort of approach it is possible to find the work pattern that characterizes the individual executive. Then if we know the executive pattern demanded by a given organization, we can fit the individual to the demands of a job. If a given executive seems naturally to gravitate to public relations activity, we probably do not want to place him in an executive position demanding detailed technical supervision--or vice versa. A further utility in this approach is the possible selection of an administrative team for an organization. If the chief executive has one pattern of activity, it may be wise to select his subordinates so that they can supplement rather than compete with him. And an organization that has been going successfully under an executive with one pattern of activity may deserve a subsequent executive with essentially the same pattern.

A further facet of the Ohio state studies is the analysis of organizational structure. Through an adaptation of the sociometric technique, it is possible to determine for any organization who actually spends how much time with whom for the purpose of getting work done. A pattern of informal or actual working structure, developed in this way, can then be compared with the official organizational chart. Often, very great discrepancies occur. The charts of informal working relationships can be useful to the staff in understanding itself. And if the informal pattern of relationships deviates too far from the formal pattern, efficiency will probably suffer, for functions and titles are out of tune with one another.

Such analyses could be of considerable utility to military organizations. They could yield clearer pictures of what behavior characterizes

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

795

a military executive and of what behaviors the various types of military organizations demand. A knowledge of the organization plus a knowledge of work patterns of individual officers could be of great value in guiding the placement of top-level officers.

Research in Conference Leadership

An ONR research project directed by Harold Guetzkow at the University of Michigan (13) has studied intensively the various psychological factors involved in productive conferences. Since such a large proportion of the time of higher ranking military officers is spent in conferences, it is clear that any increase in the speed and effectiveness of conferences will be of tremendous value. One factor in the success of any conference is the leadership skill of the leader. It is very reasonable to expect that on the basis of this sort of research we will be able to both select and train conference leaders.

Summary Statement on Applied Research in Leadership

There does not seem to be any reason inherent in the nature of things why scientific psychological and personnel methods cannot eventually produce highly successful procedures for selecting and training military leaders--procedures as successful and as demonstrably successful as current procedures for selecting aviators or machinists. At the moment, however, our knowledge of leadership is simply not sufficiently complete to enable us to put into operation tomorrow many demonstrably sound procedures for either the selection, training, evaluation, or assignment of military officers.

Research efforts have taught us a great deal that is of practical value. We know how to procure reliable ratings, for example. Much progress can be made immediately by installing reliable rating procedures in dozens of places in the military where ratings now are little better than feminine intuition and are subject to all the ills (as well as to the brilliant insights) that characterize intuition. Our scientific understanding of leadership increases every year. And this understanding is being communicated to military people who profitably use it in making decisions about leaders. But much of our scientific knowledge is essentially negative. We know that many common-sense statements about leadership are either plainly untrue or considerably distorted. Such negative knowledge is very important--even essential--in the history of a research problem. The really positive knowledge, which cannot often be created until after we accumulate negative knowledge, has just begun to come in. It may be 5 years or 20 before we are really able to make precise and maximally practical statements about military leadership. But that such statements will eventually be made is beyond doubt. And when they are made, they will be worth--to both our society and our military--whatever time, money, and effort they entail.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

796

THE BASIC PSYCHOLOGY OF LEADERSHIP

We have dealt so far with the attempts to approach with practical directness some of the problems of military leadership. Though it is difficult, in this area of research, to draw a clear line between the applied and the basic approach, the present plan is now to look at some of the research developments that have no immediate bearing on military practicality but which may guide future research and may lead, in three or five years, to significant practical applications.

In treating the "basic psychology of leadership" the procedure will be to summarize with relative brevity past research and then to present a "way of thinking" about leadership problems which may lead to basically significant hypotheses and, eventually, to useful applications.

The Search for Leadership Traits

It is a fairly safe estimate that nine-tenths of all the research on leadership, and ten-tenths of all expert and inspirational writing on the subject, have been concerned directly and almost exclusively with the characteristics of the leader. Stogdill's (27) recent review of leadership research cites 124 separate research papers, almost all completed since 1933, dealing expressly with the traits and alleged traits of leaders. The general aim of this trait search is to find, by means of observation or rating scales or psychological tests, those traits which leaders have but which their followers do not. It is easy to see why this search for the leader's traits has been carried on for so long on so many fronts. In the first place, we have the tools and techniques for dealing with the characteristics of individuals. American psychology has been traditionally interested in the individual and his doings. In the second place, we have tended to look at leadership as a function only of the leader rather than of a social relation between leader and follower. And in the third place, it would be so very handy, for many purposes, if we could isolate leadership traits. If we can find out what the traits of the leader really are, then we can very directly select from among our candidates for leadership those who have the requisite traits and perhaps we could train our chosen leaders to develop the necessary traits in a higher degree.

But accomplishments of this sort of research are not something to get excited about. Let's take a few examples of the results of trait research. It is certainly a reasonable hypothesis, on the face of things, that leaders will be older than their followers. You can test this hypothesis by selecting a number of top executives and comparing their age with the age of not-so-top executives. Or you can compare a large number of college leaders with nonleaders with respect to age. Stogdill summarizes 18 separate studies of this sort: In six studies,

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

797

leaders are younger than their followers; in ten, leaders are older; and in two, there is no difference in age. The correlations between leadership and age in these 18 studies varies from $-.32$ to $+.67$. There is clearly no general tendency for all leaders in all kinds of groups to be older than their followers.

Take another trait. Many people would expect the leaders to be more dominant than their followers. Stogdill cites eleven studies in which this hypothesis is borne out. But four investigators present evidence that dominant people are rejected as leaders.

Try emotional control. There are eleven studies in which leaders were found to be more stable and emotionally controlled than their followers. But five studies find leaders less well controlled than their followers and three find no difference with respect to this variable.

All this is probably not so bad as it sounds. Each of the 124 researches Stogdill cites was done in a different situation. It cannot now be maintained, convenient though it would be, that there are basic traits possessed by all leaders in all situations. But the fact that outstanding executives are, on the average, 12.2 years older than lesser executives and the fact that student council members are younger than the average for the school population--these facts should not really surprise anybody. Such facts, among other things, simply point out that leadership is complicated. And they suggest it is not to be very successfully dealt with on the basis of simple, currently measurable traits of leaders.

But we should not sell traits short. There is good evidence that some traits, ill-defined and fuzzy though they are, seem to characterize a wide variety of leaders in a wide variety of situations. For example, verbal fluency is a factor differentiating between followers and leaders in a large number of situations. And something called "insight" is another widely found characteristic of leaders. And leaders generally tend to be more intelligent than their followers; though if the would-be leader is too much brighter than his followers, he will not be followed.

Throughout these researches for traits, the tendency has been to work with traits that are well-defined and relatively amenable to measurement. It may well be that if we set up more genotypical hypotheses about leadership and seek to define a different sort of trait, we will find some personal characteristics common to many leaders in many situations. And maybe we can measure such characteristics, can invent ways of selecting those people possessing them. At the moment, however, the status of knowledge of leadership traits is not conducive to optimism.

The studies of Carter and Nixon (6), under the sponsorship of the Office of Naval Research, will reveal the sort of problems that arise

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

798

when we experimentally examine for the existence of a generalized leadership ability. These investigators brought each of 100 high school boys into the laboratory and watched carefully, without the boys' knowing it, while each one worked in each of three leaderless group situations. Each boy was observed, scored, and phonographically recorded as he assumed or failed to assume leadership in doing an intellectual task, a clerical task, and a mechanical task. From these observations it was possible to obtain reliable indications of actual on-the-job leadership. Also for each boy the investigators obtained (a) an extensive record of leadership activities at school, (b) ratings on leadership by teachers and supervisors, and (c) ratings, through a nominating technique, by the boys' contemporaries.

The problem here bears immediately on the existence of leadership traits. Does the boy who leads in the intellectual task also lead in other tasks? Is leadership general or does it vary with the situation? Further, does the boy who has the traits leading to his nomination as a leader also have the traits leading to performance as a leader? The Carter-Nixon research cannot give final answers to such questions, but the results are suggestive of the general relation between traits and leadership performance. The boys who were observed to assume leadership in the intellectual situation also tended to assume leadership in the clerical situation. The correlation between leadership scores in the two situations was .64. But when put to work on a mechanical task, the intellectual and clerical leaders were very often displaced by others. The correlations here were +.40 between intellectual and mechanical leadership, +.30 between clerical and mechanical leadership. It is clear, then that leadership in these tasks is not very general. Who will lead whom depends on the situation as well as on the traits of the people involved.

Further results from this study show that the boys whom their supervisors rated high for one type of leadership are rated high for all types. Supervisors appear to fall into the well-known halo error. The boys' contemporaries, however, seem more discriminating. To a much greater degree they tend to pick different boys for different sorts of leadership jobs. But neither supervisors' ratings, nor nominations by contemporaries, nor leadership activities in school, though they all correlate with one another, correlates well with the scores on actual performance. We can say, roughly, that the boys who have the traits necessary to impress others with their leadership potential do not necessarily have the traits to perform as leaders in actual situations.

All this is somewhat discouraging. The many-sided search for leadership traits has not paid off very richly. But the research cannot be counted useless. At the very least, we now have empirical evidence to guide us away from the easy and erroneous assumption that we can construct a general list of leadership traits. And it remains true that

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

799

misses and near misses, if carefully observed, are often necessary for a truer setting of the sights. From a practical point of view, however, even near misses are disappointing.

From all these studies of the leader we can conclude, with reasonable certainty, that: (a) there are either no general leadership traits or, if they do exist, they are not to be described in any of our familiar psychological or common-sense terms and (b) in a specific situation, leaders do have traits which set them apart from followers, but what traits set what leaders apart from what followers will vary from situation to situation.

Research on the Situation as a Factor in Leadership

One logical conclusion from all the studies on leadership traits is that the behavior of leaders--and presumably the traits that are invented to lie behind behavior--varies widely from one leadership situation to another. We have already seen that the individuals who are judged leaders in OCS are not often judged good leaders in combat. And Naval officers who are given good efficiency ratings at sea are not always (nor even often, when the r is .10) given high efficiency ratings ashore. Some of the discrepancy between ratings in one situation and those in another is due to the raters. But it is clearly conceivable that the men are good leaders in the OCS or shore situation but are not good leaders in combat or at sea. As the situation changes, the demands on the leader change. If the leader cannot meet the changed demands, his proficiency as a leader will obviously suffer. It makes almost immediate sense that we should not expect the officer who excels in combat leadership to have the sort of keen insights and subtle abilities demanded by an intricate administrative job. And the industrial executive who succeeds in guiding his company through a wild and rapid expansion is probably not the one to be at the helm during a period of calm solidification of success. The behavior of leaders obviously changes as the situation changes. The demands on the leader also change as the situation changes.

All this means that it may be profitable to throw a research light on the situations in which leadership occurs.

It is clear that we now have few really adequate ways of dealing with situations--with groups--as entities. When we set out to describe a group, about all we can say is that it is large or small, that it is primary or secondary, that it has a certain name, or that it serves a certain alleged purpose. Or we can talk about military groups, church groups, young people's groups, college groups, political groups, or family groups. But such descriptions are neither precise nor complete. They are roughly equivalent to describing a man as a small, friendly, blonde colonel in the Air Force. Such accounts are all right so far

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

800

as they go, but they do not help much if we are interested in studying the intimate and subtle details of a leader's behavior as it relates to the group he is leading.

If we are going to get anywhere in studying the situation as it affects leadership, we need to discover or invent new ways of describing social groups. One interesting approach to this problem has been undertaken by Hemphill (15). This research project undertook the relatively ambitious job of finding basic dimensions that can be used in the precise and systematic description of groups. The research was based on the notion that it would be possible to take any group, give it a score on each of a number of dimensions, and come out with something of a "profile," like the profile on the psychograph of an individual who has taken a battery of psychological tests. If we could do something like this for a group, then we might really get somewhere in predicting what sort of behavior a leader will find adaptive in what sort of group.

The Hemphill research on dimensions has not yet paid off in any very practical way. It has run into some bothersome methodological bugs and is, all in all, a very difficult sort of research to handle. We will not take the time here to give an account of how data were gotten from 500 assorted groups and then ground up in IBM equipment. We will simply list the dimensions that were tried out and illustrate how they can perhaps help in getting at leadership problems.

The 15 dimensions which were defined and applied to the descriptive analysis of 500 groups are listed below:

1. Size of the group.
2. Vicinity or the degree to which a group functions as a unit (togetherness).
3. Homogeneity of group members with respect to age, sex, background, and so on.
4. Flexibility of group relation.
5. Stability of the group with respect to frequency of major changes.
6. Permeability of the group to new members.
7. Polarization of the group with respect to its goals.
8. Autonomy of the group with respect to other groups.
9. Intimacy among group members.

RESTRICTED

10. Control or the degree to which the group regulates member behavior.
11. Participation of members in the group's activities.
12. Potency or importance of the group for members.
13. Hedonic Tone or the degree of satisfaction derived from group membership.
14. Position of a member within the group's status hierarchies.
15. Dependence of members upon the group.

Any given group, supposedly, can be given a more-or-less precise score on each of these dimensions. These scores will constitute something of a profile for that group. Such a profile should be considerably superior to the description of a group as "a bedraggled group in a P.O.W. camp" or a "large, low-morale group in the Army." Such a dimensional description may help enormously in dealing with leadership. It is not inconceivable, for example, that we can find "types" of profiles and that we will eventually be able to select or train our leaders so that their behaviors would "fit" the sort of group they are called on to lead.

These are all worthy ambitions and they still appear to be realizable. But the millenium is a long way off. Hemphill used these 15 dimensions in describing the 500 groups on which data were gathered, then made some progress in relating the group dimensions to leaders' behavior. The very definition of the dimensions, as a matter of fact, leads to the setting up of testable hypotheses about leadership. Take the dimension of dependence for example. Groups obviously vary with respect to the degree in which the followers must depend on the leader for the satisfaction of their needs. In one group the leader has the power of decision over hiring, firing, promotion, or even over life and death. In another group the leader may in fact be dependent on the followers; if they don't like him they may eliminate him. What effect would you expect this variable to have on the behavior of the leader? In order to lead well in a group where dependence is great, what must the leader do? You can set up a number of reasonable and testable hypotheses about leadership and its relation to dependence. For example, where dependence is high, the leader's perceived fairness in administering rewards and punishments is likely to become very crucial. Where dependence is high, the leader probably needs to be very clear about stating rules and regulations, but where dependence is low, this is not likely to matter much.

The dozens of hypotheses that spring from this dimensional thinking have not yet been thoroughly examined. But as an example of what happens when such analysis is made, Hemphill (7) and Westie (16) have studied in

RESTRICTED

802

some detail the relation between the leader's behavior and the size of the group. To make such analysis the procedure was, first, to separate the 500 groups on which data were available into "larger" and "smaller" categories, then see what specific behaviors on the part of the leader were observed by group members as occurring more or less frequently in the two groups of groups. Each group member who reported on a group was asked to check, for example, the frequency with which the leader "demonstrated physical courage." Each reporting member was also asked to judge whether this item of behavior applied to the group he observed. Such an analysis reveals that a large number of leader-behaviors occur more often in large groups and are more often applicable to large groups than to small groups. The following list gives examples of behaviors that apply to and occur in large groups more often than small groups.

1. Leader demonstrated physical courage.
2. Leader demonstrated "moral" courage.
3. Leader made rules and regulations clear.
4. Leader knew his job.
5. He allowed no exceptions to the rules.
6. He made people enthusiastic.
7. He coordinated different jobs.
8. He wisely delegated authority.
9. He could give orders pleasantly.

These and other data add up to the conclusion that large groups make more and different demands on the leader than do small groups. In large groups a larger portion of the leader's total behavior seems critical for his role as a leader. The leader of a small group is, in a way, a freer individual. Generally speaking, the leader in a large group plays the role of impersonal direction coupled with a firm and impartial enforcement of rules and regulations. In smaller groups the leader plays a more personal role. He can make exceptions to rules, listen to others, treat each member as an individual.

The attempts to deal with the group as an entity--to be described and measured much as we describe and measure a human individual or an amoeba or a molecule--may lead us to pay dirt in leadership research. The work of Hemphill and similar efforts on the part of Cattell and others deserve close consideration. It is very conceivable that a dimensional

RESTRICTED

approach to military leadership situations would yield immediately valuable insights having a bearing on both the selection and training of military leaders.

Studies of the Follower

The need to study the leader and the need to study the situation are both obvious. But what about the follower? Of course, when we look at the situation we are also looking, in at least an indirect way, at the followers. But perhaps a direct look at the led will help us make sense out of leadership. After all, it is the follower who accepts or rejects leadership, who often judges whether leadership is good, who works or loafs for the leader. We may well ask questions about the factors in the follower which bear on the sort of relation established between him and the leader. What about something we can call the "readiness for leadership" in the typical enlistee or draftee? What attitudes or traits or ideas does he have which prepare him to accept or reject various sorts of leadership? What sort of followers adapt most easily to military leadership?

There has been no research designed to get at such problems. But there is a Navy-sponsored project now going on at the Institute for Research in Human Relations, at Philadelphia, which promises to turn up some significant things about followship.

This project, through the use of field survey and other techniques, has delineated certain tentative personality traits, certain attitudes and certain "ideological" factors in followers and has examined the relation of these things to the "readiness for leadership." We need not here go deeply into the theory underlying the study but the questions the study should at least illuminate include such as the following: "Are there discoverable traits of the follower which move him to accept or reject strong-man leadership? Does the Personally insecure person seek out leadership and lean heavily upon it? What is the American attitude toward authority? Are we really, as the anthropologists tell us, an authority-rejecting people? What is the American 'ideology' of leadership, if any? Does the American individual have a set of standards by which he judges the adequacy of various sorts of leadership? What do the American people expect of their military leaders, and what do these expectations have to do with their reaction to a military leader when they meet up with one?" The answers to such questions can be expected to furnish useful knowledge about the background against which all leadership in America occurs, and will almost surely help define the general leader-follower relationship.

The data from this study (23) (24) show with reasonable clarity that factors in the follower do influence his attitudes about leaders and will, presumably, influence his choice of, or behavior in the presence

of, a leader. For example, the American people perceived Roosevelt primarily as (a) a man who warmly liked people, (b) a man who supported and "looked out for" the little man, and (c) a man of great personal strength. It is fairly safe to say that the American people had certain "needs" and that they perceived FDR as the man who met these needs, who solved their problems. Perhaps we can describe these needs as (a) a need for approval from above, (b) a need for material support, and (c) a need for a strong father-like figure to reassure them in time of stress. Such conceptualizations leave much to be desired, but it is clear that followers will follow a leader who meets their needs, who solves their problems. And thinking in terms of needs of followers may give us new insights into leadership.

TOWARD A THEORY OF LEADERSHIP

We are now in possession of many facts and insights concerning leadership, military and otherwise. Many of our facts are negative, but none-the-less sound, and our insights are partial, but still valuable. We also possess considerable knowledge about both individual motivation and group process, knowledge of direct relevance for the understanding of leadership phenomena. It does not appear too optimistic to hope that we can soon incorporate all existing facts into a systematic theory of leadership, a theory the formulation of which would guide toward additive significance our separate research attempts and which, if formulated, would hasten the arrival of demonstrably useful applications.

I wish now to spend a few minutes stating some general ideas about one possible road toward theory and then to take an exploratory walk down this road.

The first general point in this: It now looks as if any comprehensive theory of leadership will have to find a way of dealing, in terms of one consistent set of rubrics, with the three delineable facets of the leadership phenomenon--(1) the leader and his psychological attributes, (2) the follower with his problems, attitudes, and needs, and (3) the group situation in which followers and leaders relate with one another. To concentrate on any one of these three facets of the problem represents oversimplification of an intricate phenomenon. A focus on the leader alone will probably continue to yield positive but unexciting correlations. To concentrate on the follower alone will reveal relationships, but probably not very significant ones. A focus on the situation alone may carry us to a level of abstraction that obscures the dynamics of individual psychology and hence lessens the completeness of our understanding. A good theory must include, but somehow rise above, the facts we now have or may accumulate in all of these three limited areas of concern.

A second general idea I wish to express gets a little more down to earth and deals with one possible way of drawing a comprehensive theoretical picture at least crudely inclusive of what we now know about the leader, about the follower, and about the situation.

This general way of thinking involves the four following points:

1. There is a follower in every instance of leadership, a follower with certain problems, attitudes, expectancies, and needs.

2. In any group the motivational pattern of the single follower, and of the followers in aggregate, will depend on characteristics of specific situations. In one situation, long-standing individual motivations will hold sway. In other situations motivations specifically and focally connected with an explicit group goal will be the salient motivations. For example, a hypothetical need for approval from above will be important in many situations but will give way in emergency situations to more specific and situationally determined patterns of motivation.

3. In any situation, the pattern of follower motivations will put demands on the leader, demands the leader must meet if followers are, both psychologically and physically, to stay in the group. In some situations, for example, the leader must be strong enough to meet salient dependency needs while in another he must be able to encourage and implement the followers' need for autonomy and responsible participation.

4. Whether or not the leader meets the demands upon him will depend both on his abilities and on some deep-lying personality attributes. If the group seeks a concrete goal, the leader is under pressure to give the technical assistance necessary for the reaching of that goal. If the group is in a state of insecurity and needs a strong leader upon whom to lean, the leader's basic orientation to his own authority must allow him to assume a strong, father-like role. If the situation is such that the follower's need for ego-income is great, the leader must be able to deny directive authority and play a role in which nondirective procedures are paramount.

Here, then, is the bare outline of a way of thinking about leadership. The outline will need much filling in and perhaps serious renovation before it becomes anything approximating a systematic theoretical picture. But in its present form it gives some promise of including a large number of known facts and it leads to some potentially profitable hypotheses. It may deserve some present elaboration.

Let's look for a moment at the things a follower brings with him into a leadership situation and then we can focus, for purposes of

RESTRICTED

806

illustration, on one important follower need as it varies with the situation and as it makes demands on the leader.

Any follower who comes into a group brings his individual personality with him. He is, in large degree, a product of his social environment, a bearer of the motives and inclinations common among those who have been exposed to the same society he has made peace with. He also brings, of course, his own unique orientation to life.

Many of his existing needs and attitudes have a great deal to do with his readiness to respond to the leader of the group. He has, perhaps, a strong need for fatherly approval. Or he may have a need to lean dependently on a strong leader who will do his thinking for him. Or he may have a hidden desire to kick all authority in the teeth. Perhaps he brings with him a learned bias against big men or men with red hair. Perhaps he carries a picture in his head of what a "real leader" is like. He brings his readiness to respond to various bearers of social status such as the wealthy or the educated. In the presence of any leader, all his learned ways of reacting to figures of authority come into play.

Of course the follower reacts to more than the leader in a group situation. The other members of the group are also potential sources of psychological income or of frustration. And the goal the group seeks is a very significant element in his motivational pattern. His general willingness to stay in the group, to contribute to it, is a function of his hypotheses about the psychological income to be derived from all these sources.

Now let's take one motivational element that seems crucial in many groups and examine it as it relates to changes in the situation and to the behavior of the leader. Our Philadelphia studies strongly suggested that followers in very many situations have a need for approval, for a feeling of belonging, of usefulness, of being respected and liked as individuals. Our data suggested that such a need leads to the seeking of leaders characterized by warmth and humanity, leaders who "like people." It is perhaps both adaptive and justifiable, at this juncture, to broaden this "need for approval" and to follow Likert (19) in referring to a more inclusive motivational syndrome that can be called ego-needs. This syndrome has often been referred to in psychological literature without ever having been defined with optimal precision, but for present purposes we can use the term to refer to the individual's desire to be recognized, to feel useful, to be approved, to feel integral and responsible. And we can set down some loose-jointed hypotheses about the way ego-needs vary with changes in the situation and the way such variations give rise to changing demands on the leader.

RESTRICTED

Any American follower brings his ego-needs with him when he comes into any group, whether the group is an infantry squad, a bomber crew, a PTA organization, or a road construction gang. Unless the over-all group situation satisfies these needs, there will be an increase in the individual's inclination to withdraw from the group or to pursue only passively the group's goals. The leader of the group, both in terms of the follower's perception and in terms of objective reality, has a good deal to do with the satisfaction of these needs. The strength or saliency of such needs will vary but seldom are the needs completely dormant.

One very general hypothesis concerning the relation between the strength or saliency of ego-needs on one hand, and the characteristics of the situation on the other, is as follows:

The need for ego satisfactions on the part of followers will increase as the potency of the group goal decreases. This hypothesis says, in effect, that a group of hungry men will follow a leader who can help them get food no matter how much of an S. O. B is the leader. It also says that the West End Knit and Chat Club, have no psychologically potent goal to pursue, will soon disintegrate or will soon reorganize itself, if its leader blocks the followers' attempts to satisfy their ego-needs. In military groups, where there is a life and death emergency, it does not matter if the leader is poor at arranging smooth interpersonal relations. If he can get us out alive, he is acceptable and he will be followed. In many groups, the "popular" person, the sociometric hot shot, is the one who is perceived as the best leader. He makes everybody feel like somebody. (At least this is one theory of popularity.) But if the group with a popular leader suddenly faces an emergency, the demands on the leader come in a different form and it is not enough that the leader be a "nice guy." The group goal becomes more potent and the nice guy is traded in for a new leader who can help solve the problem. The experiments of Carter and Nixon (6) illustrate that the leader who can win nominations from his followers and from his teachers is not necessarily the leader who is followed when a real group goal emerges.

We can further state two secondary hypotheses about the relation between ego-needs and the group's relation to its goal.

1. As the group goal becomes more clearly defined, there will be more emphasis, other things being equal, on the leader's ability to help the group reach that goal, and less emphasis on his ability to satisfy ego-needs.

2. As progress toward the group goal becomes more visible, there will be increased emphasis on the leader's goal-relevant skills and less on his ability to satisfy ego-needs.

RESTRICTED

808

These hypotheses say that in such settings as bureaucratic organizations, where the goal is not clearly defined and progress toward it is not clearly visible, the "nice guy" leader can stay in office for years without having to demonstrate any technical ability. He needs only certain skills in human relations. In a submarine on patrol, by contrast, where the goal is clearly defined and where every member of the group knows whether the hit is scored or whether the boat surfaces when it should, the skipper has a technical function. His ability to perform this function, in a functionally organized group, assumes great importance.

It is possible to set down a number of additional hypotheses about the variations of the strength and form of ego-needs with variations in other dimensions of groups. The following will be illustrative.

1. Follower's ego-needs decrease in strength as the polarization of the group increases. A group that is busy pursuing a goal will not take time out to worry about whether everybody is somebody. Perhaps a group cannot often get itself polarized unless ego-needs are already satisfied, but once vigorous action is in progress the important thing is to reach the goal. All else is secondary.
2. As the size of the group increases, ego-needs are less likely to be satisfied. This hypothesis raises the old question about the optimal size of a committee. The larger the group, the more difficult it is for every individual in it to be individually recognized. Ego-needs are likely to be better satisfied in small and informal groups, when interpersonal contact is maximal. Perhaps people will generally identify more strongly with small than with large groups. At least it seems clear that in large groups the leader cannot do the same things he does in small groups to satisfy ego-needs. The data of Hemphill and Westie (16) show that he does not. In large groups the leader's general appearance of warmth and humanity probably becomes more important, with respect to ego-needs, than what he actually does in his interpersonal relations.

Follower's ego-needs, in strength and manner of operation, vary as the characteristics of the group change; but these needs are present in a large variety of groups and they are often so important that they must be satisfied if the follower is to remain in and contribute even minimally to the group. Likert (19) has shown that industrial groups with "employee-centered" supervisors have higher productivity than similar groups with "company-centered" leaders. There is a good deal of evidence that military leaders who are "for their men" are the ones most enthusiastically followed. The superiority of democratic over autocratic groups in many situations is probably due to the fact that democratic procedures give followers more ego-income. We cannot deny the importance of ego-needs. And we cannot doubt that the leader in

RESTRICTED

any group has a significant hand in determining whether or not followers feel wanted, approved, and recognized. This is one important way in which the leader determines the follower's psychological income, and hence the productivity of the group.

All this leads us now to ask questions about the leader's personality. What sort of leaders are able to meet the demands, in the various forms, for ego-satisfactions? Such a question is probably not now answerable in terms of available conceptual or technical tools, and hence it is a very troublesome question. But wrestling with it may still be worth the trouble it entails.

It seems reasonable to believe that the leader who, other things being equal, can best satisfy the follower's need for acceptance and approval is the leader who genuinely likes people, who works on the general hypothesis that people are good, and that the whole human enterprise is worth while.

It is not hard to believe that most of us, in our relations with people, act in consistent accordance with a learned general hypothesis about the goodness of human beings. Some people act in apparent consistency with an optimistic adience toward any human being that comes along. They exude an air of acceptance and approval. Some, at the other extreme, are at least initially abient to any other person and appear to be continually seeking evidence to document the belief expressed in Steig's well-known cartoon, that "people are no damn good." This abience may take the form of paranoid suspicion or of scorn, depending on whether the individual perceives himself as above or below his fellows. But whatever its form, such a general readiness to respond to people may have a good deal to do with an individual's performance when placed in a leadership role. If followers need to be liked, their relations with a leader who basically likes no one can be counted on to be mutually unsatisfactory and conducive to unproductive group morale.

Can we define and measure such a variable? There seems to be no real reason why we cannot. We could now probably do a fairly reliable job of rating our acquaintances on a continuum from like-people-in-general to dislike-people-in-general. If we could do this, and if we could also determine for any given situation, the strength of the follower's need for Ego income, we could state and test some relatively neat hypotehsis about what sort of leaders will win what sort of acceptance and promote what sort of group effort. At a very general level, we can state the hypothesis that over a period of time and throughout a variety of situations, the industrial or military leader who likes people, who is "people centered," will, other things being equal, achieve better group productivity and better subjective group morale than will the leader who is possessed of a deep distrust of people.

RESTRICTED

This analysis of the follower's need for approval, its variations with changes in the situation and the implications for the personality of the leader gives an example of the sort of hypotheses growing out of the approach here advocated. Though presently our definitions are fuzzy and our concepts lacking in neatness, the approach may prove productively provocative to somebody and may lead to some solid experimental investigations.

We can make the same sort of analyses for other follower needs. Take the follower's need for strength from above, a need the Philadelphia study indicated to be important. Probably this need increases with the potency of the group goal and the general insecurity of followers. What sort of leaders or potential leaders have the ability to assume great responsibility for the welfare of others? Some people seem basically incapable of making decisions for others. They cannot play the role of a strong father. Maybe their need to be loved by their followers is too extreme to let them run that risk of disapproval that resides in the assumption of responsibility. Other people must assume responsibility for others--they need power and a dominant role. Still others can assume power or they can leave it alone, as the occasion demands. A significant aspect of the leader's personality, this reasoning goes, is his attitude toward his own authority. Perhaps this attitude, too, can be incisively defined and its relation to group performance systematically studied.

The follower's hypothetical need for structure leads to further hypotheses. This need will vary from situation to situation but its presence anywhere leads to questions about the leader's interest in giving structure and about his ability to do it. Research results show that in many situations leaders are characterized by both more intelligence and more verbal fluency than are the followers. These facts may be tied together under the general heading of the ability of the leader first to see what the problem is and then to communicate it to his followers. In addition to the ability to see and to communicate structure, the leader must want to give structure. Some leaders (for example, some teachers) appear more interested in letting the followers know that the leader knows about everything than in letting the followers see the problem for themselves. This sort of factor in the leader's personality might well be investigated further.

There are other follower needs we might think about with profit, but demands from followers are not the only source of pressure on the leader. Many leaders themselves have leaders. They work in an official hierarchy with official goals to achieve. In many instances the leader's success is judged in terms of the group's performance in advancing a goal imposed from outside itself. This sort of arrangement raises fascinating problems in leadership and in morale. We will not take time here to do an essay on this problem, but it may be worth while to set down one general hypothesis about the leader's orientation to "official missions."

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

811

The general hypothesis says that individuals differ widely in the proclivity for accepting "missions from above." Some people are chronic "company men." They accept any goal that is handed down from authoritative sources. They pursue it vigorously and will do almost anything to make their followers pursue it. Others are unable to accept any mission from above; in any organization, they are constitutional outlaws. Still other individuals can accept some missions from above and can, with skill and rationality, persuade followers to pursue them. The leader's orientation to official missions is probably a consistent aspect of his personality. It probably can be defined and dealt with in relatively objective terms. It probably has a lot to do with morale and effectiveness of the groups he leads.

Summary

In a number of ways, psychological research has contributed usefully to the solution of practical leadership problems. It seems fair to conclude that in the military and in other settings we can now select and train leaders better than we could 25 years ago. Through psychological research we can now select potential leaders who are in known possession of certain attributes (for example, intelligence) widely believed to be necessary for successful leadership. We have invented ways to increase the reliability of judgment about the effectiveness of leaders, thus eliminating a good deal of adventitiousness from the processes of selection and promotion. Our knowledge of group processes is increasing, and may yield valuable insights into problems of leadership. We still have not solved the problem of a criterion of effective leadership, but this problem is not necessarily insoluble. Good hints come to us from those who work on the characteristics of groups and on criteria of group effectiveness. Research now in progress is based on a keener insight than was the research of five years ago. We now at least know something about which alleys are blind.

We can, with a right good will, continue our efforts to understand leadership, for even though practical results are slow to come, the potential social benefits in even a minute improvement in leadership are indeed tremendous. Our chances of achieving such benefits, if our opportunity to do our research is not restricted, appear to be excellent.

(4 Mar 1953--500)S/epn

RESTRICTED

812

RESTRICTED

813

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D. J., and Sanford, R. N. The Authoritarian Personality. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1950.
2. Baier, D. B. Note on "A Review of Leadership Studies with Particular Reference to Military Problems." Psychological Bulletin, 1947. 44, 466-467.
3. Bellows, R. M. Evaluating Officer Performance. Report presented at joint Army-Navy O.S.R.D. Conference, 16 Aug 1945. (Mimeographed)
4. Carter, L. F. An investigation of the relationship between four criteria of leadership ability for three different tasks. Journal of Psychology, 1949. 27, 245-261.
5. -- Haythorn, W., and Howell, M. A further investigation of the criteria of leadership. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1950. 45, 350-358.
6. -- and Nixon, M. Ability, perceptual, personality, and interest factors associated with different criteria of leadership. Journal of Psychology, 1949. 27, 377-388.
7. Cattell, R. B. Concepts and methods in the measurement of group syntality. Psychological Review, 1948. 55, 48-63.
8. -- and Wispe, L. Dimensions of syntality in small groups. Journal of Social Psychology, 1948. No. 28, 57-78.
9. Farago, L., ed. German Psychological Warfare. New York, Committee for National Morale, 1941.
10. Flanagan, J. C. Critical requirements: a new approach to employee evaluation. Personnel Psychology, 1949. 2, 419-425.
11. Gibb, C. A. The principles and traits of leadership. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1947. 42, 267-284.
12. Gouldner, A. W. Studies in Leadership. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1950.
13. Guetzkow, H. Groups, Leadership and Men. Pittsburgh, Carnegie Press, 1951.

RESTRICTED

14. Harris, H. The Group Approach to Leadership Testing. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1948.
15. Hemphill, J. Situational Factors in Leadership. Columbus, Ohio State University Bureau of Educational Research Monograph 32, 1949.
16. -- and Westie, C. M. The measurement of group dimensions. Journal of Psychology, 1950. 29, 325-342.
17. Jenkins, W. O. A review of leadership studies with particular reference to military problems. Psychological Bulletin, 1947. 44, 54-79.
18. Jenkins, J. G. and Vaughan, C. The Nominating Technique in New Ways in Applied Psychology. (Kelley C., ed.) University of Maryland. College Park, 1947.
19. Likert, R. Motivational Dimensions of Administration. Paper prepared for Institute on Manpower Utilization and Government Personnel. Stanford University, 1951.
20. Matthews, J. Research on the Development of Valid Situational Tests of Leadership: Survey of the Literature. Pittsburgh: American Institute for Research, 1951. PRS Report No. 912.
21. O.S.S. Assessment Staff. Assessment of Men. New York, Rinehart, 1948.
22. Preston, H. O. The Development of a Procedure for Evaluating Officers in the U. S. Air Force. Pittsburgh, American Institute for Research, 1948.
23. Sanford, F. H. Authoritarianism and Leadership. Philadelphia, Institute for Research in Human Relations, 1950.
24. -- Public orientation to Roosevelt. Public Opinion Quarterly, 1951. 15, 189-216.
25. -- and Hemphill, J. Effects of a brief course in psychology at the U. S. Naval Academy. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1952. (In press.)
26. Shartle, C. L. Leadership and executive performance. Personnel, 1949. 25, 370-380.
27. Stogdill, R. M. Personal factors associated with leadership: a survey of the literature. Journal of Psychology, 1948. 25, 35-71.

RESTRICTED

815

28. Stogdill, R. M. Leadership, membership and organization. Psychological Bulletin, 1940. 47, 1-14.
29. -- and Shartle, C. L. Methods of determining patterns of leadership behavior in relation to organization structure and objectives. Journal of Applied Psychology, 1948. 32, 286-291.
30. United States Air Force Check List of Critical Requirements. Pittsburgh, American Institute for Research, AIR A-2, 4M, 1 Feb 1948.
31. Williams, S. B. and Leavitt, H. J. Group opinion as a predictor of military leadership. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1947, 11, 283-291.
32. Development of evaluative and predictive measures in the Air Force Officer Candidate School. Human Resources Research Center Bulletin 47-1, Oct 1947.

RESTRICTED