



The Prince

A Newsletter for Civil Affairs Marines

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Here's Health to You and to Our Corps.

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About This Newsletter

The purpose of this newsletter is to increase awareness of people, issues, and events affecting the Marine Civil Affairs community. It is an informal publication, and it does not represent the policies and positions of the Marine Corps or the United States Government...etc, etc, etc.

The title references the work by Niccolo Machiavelli, as a continual reminder that civil-military operations are essentially political in nature: actions to influence or exploit relations with Civil Actors in order to accomplish the mission--not gratuitous, goodwill gestures to "win hearts and minds."

Short, useful submissions are highly encouraged--and pictures.

A New Goldwater-Nichols Act

by Col Gary W Montgomery



During the Q&A period that followed my panel's presentations at the Annual Civil Affairs Conference, someone asked whether we need a new Goldwater-Nichols Act for the rest of the Executive Branch in order to solve the Interagency problem. I touched on the following points but would like to flesh out my remarks into a more complete answer.

Slow progress on the Interagency front is commonly attributed to shortfalls in funding or the huge size of the federal government. I disagree.

In the first place, civil servants are notoriously adept at securing funding. They pursue tax money with the zeal of lance corporals in search of beer. If they lack funding, it's because deep in their souls they're allergic to the mission.

Government service tends to attract cautious people, just as the Marine Corps tends to attract adventurous people. That's not an adverse comment on civil servants. I don't want adventurous people running the government--I want cautious, conservative people who will husband the commonweal. But now these risk-averse people are being asked to voluntarily venture into hazardous environments. It's completely alien to everything in their experience, and it's a Forlorn Hope.

There are two possible solutions: hire new people and/or empower the Department and Agency directors to involuntarily deploy their subordinates. Without downplaying the first option, it should be noted that the second option corresponds to the Goldwater-Nichols principle of granting authority commensurate with responsibilities.

Who's Who

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Secondly, size alone is not an impediment to action. 2,500 years ago, Sun-Tzu noted that it's just as easy to command a large army as a small one-- it's all a matter of organization. Today that's reflected in the Rule of Three: whether you're commanding three divisions or three squads, the span of control is the same. However, the Government tends to favor a broader span of control, which gives more people a seat at the table. It's an inefficient way of directing and controlling concerted action, but it has probably improved lateral coordination and common situational awareness among stove-piped Departments and Agencies. Nevertheless, it still falls short of the desired end state due to a related problem: the disparity between form and function in the components.

Consider the US Government in World War II. At the beginning, the government was not large enough to wield and integrate the instruments of national power on a global scale. Therefore, as tasks were identified, structure was added. Form followed function, and the lines were clear.

By contrast, at the start of this war the US Government was the largest employer on the planet (even without the uniformed services). The organs of government were again given new tasks, but this time form and function were bent and cobbled together.

Six years into the war, it seems that the Interagency puzzle can only be solved by another Goldwater-Nichols Act: to delegate authority commensurate with responsibilities, to streamline the chain of command, and to restore a clear correlation between forms and functions.

Navy Civil Affairs School Open for Business



The doors are open at the new Navy Civil Affairs School in Little Creek, VA, under the aegis of Navy Expeditionary Combat Command. Several Marines have attended, and their reports were universally positive.

The Navy has taken the Army POI and broken it into modules: a student can attend the entire course or only a single module (e.g., "CA Operations & Analysis").

The staff consists of uniformed Navy and Marine Corps personnel and contracted Army Special Forces and Civil Affairs veterans.

Also, TECOM intends to use this school as the basis for Civil Affairs Qualification in the Marine Corps. The entire course is still too long for Reservists to attend (as is, the current Army course), so TECOM is considering options that include a combination of attendance at selected modules in conjunction with Distance Learning and/or Home Site instruction by Mobile Training Teams.

Maj Jennifer Anthis (SCETC in Quantico) was the Marine Corps POC for school seats. With her recent deployment to Iraq, the job passed to:

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Tip of the Day

When Arabs get wound up, they tend to exaggerate wildly. The American reaction is often dismissive: only a fool or a liar would talk like that, right? Actually, the Arab is just trying to get your attention because he has something important to tell you. So listen to him—and divide by ten.

Keys to a Successful KV Network

by Natasha Montgomery



Who doesn't want to know everything that's going on? And women are nosy by nature, so this is one of those rare times when you can put that nosiness to good purpose. What wife doesn't want to know all about what her husband is doing—*before he does*? That is the key to recruiting Key Volunteers.

The Marine Corps tries to treat Marine families like Marines—like they are interchangeable. But, they are just normal people, and you can't treat them all the same. It takes a lot of time and effort, and one KV for every 8-10 families does not work. You need double that (1:4-6).

Even though everyone is different, if you observe people you can see some trends and at least form a basis for a treatment manual.

For example, Marines have an extraordinary tendency to marry difficult women. This is the Big Mouth / Phony Nails type. She thinks the Marine Corps needs to be fixed, but she doesn't understand how anything works. To her, the facts are irrelevant--all she cares about is her own opinion and how she feels. In the worst cases, she is angry at her husband (and the Marine Corps) because she is afraid he might get killed before she gets a chance to tell him what she *really* thinks of him. No one wants to deal with her, but if you listen while she gets it out of her system, her problem will go away as soon as she feels like she has been heard and understood.

The Veteran Wife. She rarely needs help for herself because she has been married to a Marine forever: seen everything, done everything, and volunteering just comes with the territory. She enjoys seeing the young wives learning the ropes (at least she has trouble hiding her amusement, but it is probably because she sees herself in them). She is always good for a pat on the shoulder and a "This too shall pass" comment. She knows the Marine Corps solves problems in its own way and on its own schedule. She could be a lot more helpful, but most of the young wives don't listen--they think the Gulf War was a million years ago. Arrange for her to be around the young wives in a way that she can mentor them inconspicuously.

The Church and Home-schooling type. She will rarely volunteer because she has her hands full at home. You won't hear from her very often because she takes her problems to the church first. She is very self-reliant. If she brings you a problem, you better pay attention—because it is going to be serious.

The Parents. They make some of the best KVs, because they are doing it out of pure love. Girlfriends come and go. Sometimes wives do, too. But blood is permanent, and he will be their son forever. And they are mature. They have dealt with all of Life's problems already, so whatever happens is just the same crap in a different wrapper. Parents genuinely want to help, but they are afraid they will mess up something, so they always suggest things nicely.

Natasha Montgomery built the 4th Civil Affairs Group KV network into the largest KV group in the Marine Corps Reserve--while caring for three small children.

A native of Bosnia-Herzegovina, she was a nursing student during the Bosnian War and assisted in treating combat casualties.

After the war, she worked as an Interpreter for the NATO IFOR/SFOR and the UN International Police Task Force.

She married a Marine Reservist employed on the Train and Equip program, became an American citizen, and served as the 4th CAG KV Coordinator during two OIF deployments.

She is often described as an "Erin Brockovich" type.

The Individual. There are also people who don't fit in any category because they don't operate like anyone else. My husband is one of these. You just have to figure out how they tick, one at a time.

KVs need to be people persons. That's especially true of the KV Coordinator. She needs to be able to talk to a general's wife or a lance corporal's wife and make them both feel at ease. This seems to be a personality trait, and I doubt if it can be learned on the job.

KVs are taught to set aside certain hours for KV business, and make sure there are no interruptions and no background noise. But that is exactly the wrong approach. Misery loves company. When people hear a baby crying or children quarreling in the background, they know you have the same problems they do. And you have to take calls when they come, day or night, there are no office hours.

Also, people want familiarity. They want to put a face on the voice and know who they are talking to. They don't want to take their problems to a stranger on a phone list. During a deployment, people you would never expect to be friends, become friends. It's because they are facing the same fears and problems--just as their Marines are.

Marine wives need to realize that they don't wear their husband's rank. Good ideas can come from anyone, but they can not be used if they are not heard. Enlisted wives need to be encouraged to speak up and senior officer wives need to listen to them and trust in their judgment and ability. My personal belief is that if the Marines can trust each other with their lives in the trenches, then the wives can trust and rely on each other, too.

The biggest obstacle to a successful Key Volunteer network is that too many people join for the wrong reason--either to make a name for themselves or to help a husband's career. You are supposed to be taking care of the Marine by taking care of his family. But how can you do the right thing, if you join for the wrong reason?

56th Annual Civil Affairs Conference

On 2-4 Nov 07, the 56th Annual Civil Affairs Conference convened in Arlington, Virginia. It was jointly sponsored by the Civil Affairs Association, the Reserve Officers Association, and George Mason University.

The agenda, presentations, and issue papers are available on the GMU Peace Operations Policy Program web site at:

http://popp.gmu.edu/CA_Program.htm

The Reserve Officers Association web site also has videos of LtGen Dennis McCarthy (Executive Director, ROA) and MG Dave Morris (CG, USACAPOC), speaking at the Conference. The URL is:

http://www.roa.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ca_seminar_110207

Quote of the Day

Opportunities multiply as they are seized. ~ Sun-Tzu