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### **Research Report for the History Project of the Joint Center for History and Economics**

My dissertation, “Corporatizing Defense: Management Expertise and the Transformation of the Cold War U.S. Military,” recounts how defense leaders reorganized the U.S. military on the model of the private, for-profit business firm. With the Second World War, the U.S. defense establishment attained a scale and permanence it never had before. The new strategic landscape of the Cold War dictated constant readiness for military confrontation, but it was also clear that the country could not keep up wartime levels of total economic mobilization. Faced with the problem of managing this military behemoth, leaders in the defense bureaucracy looked to private industry for expertise to help them run the emerging national security state. The result was a remaking of defense administration in the image of the post-war corporation. My project explains how and why reformers placed their faith in business enterprise models, an approach that was neither self-evident nor readily accepted across the military leadership. In the decades after World War II, the reorganization of the defense bureaucracy around values of efficiency and productivity would shape U.S. military operations and affect the millions of people around the world swept up in them.

In concrete terms, my project tracks how managerial science changed the ways the military disciplined labor, kept accounts, trained officers, and handled government assets. In initial trips to the National Archives at College Park, Maryland, I worked in the records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (RG 330); the Office of the Secretary of the Army (RG 335); the Army Staff (RG 319); and Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force (RG 340). Within these vast collections I found records detailing department-wide management education and management improvement programs. Drawing analogies between military and business activities, defense establishment reformers embraced methods like Taylorist work measurement, which they used to control work ranging from filing to the production of massive weapons systems. In the realm of budgeting and finance, reformers set up transactions between units to imitate buyer-seller relationships, requiring officers to express their needs for supplies and labor in dollar terms. Borrowing directly from Harvard Business School’s Advanced Management Program, defense leaders established schools to train high-ranking military officers in the latest trends of business management.

Support from the History Project and the Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET) made possible the follow-up research trips that I needed to turn a mass of examples into an argument. At the National Archives, I explored the records of the U.S. Army Operational, Tactical, and Support Organizations (RG 338); the U.S. Forces in Southeast Asia (RG 472); the Army Materiel Command (RG 544); and the Defense Logistics Agency (RG 361). While business-inspired reforms gained traction in many parts of the military bureaucracy, I found they were not accepted without controversy. After the Vietnam War, many military leaders questioned the dominance of “managerialism” and denounced it in favor of traditional concepts of command and leadership. By this time, however, the language and values of management had become thoroughly embedded in the institutional structure of the military. I argue that the

reorganization of the defense bureaucracy in the image of the profit-seeking firm ultimately legitimated calls for privatizing many of the defense establishment's functions.

The other most important repository for my project has been the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. At USAHEC I got to look at records relating to the Army Management School (1954-1971), including copies of *Army Management Views*, collections of speeches delivered and instructional materials, and the proceedings of the Management Analysis Conference they hosted in 1963. Another category of sources that USAHEC holds is the personal papers of Army managers. Collections of interest include the papers of: Col. D.M. (Mike) Malone, a theorist of leadership and motivation in the Army; Gen. William G. T. Tuttle, Jr. commander of the Army Logistics Center and Army Materiel Command; John Slezak, industrialist and Undersecretary of the Army; BG John M. Kenderdine, commander of the Defense Industrial Supply Agency and the Defense Personnel Support Center; and the speeches of Herman R. Staudt, Martin Marietta employee, Undersecretary of the Army, and alumnus of MIT's Sloan School of Management. These personal papers—along with archived research papers of Army officers on topics of resources management, financial management, and management education—have given me access to the on-the ground implementation and experience of the large-scale policy changes documented in the official bureaucratic records held in the National Archives.

When I began my dissertation project I knew that contractors were a big part of the story of the military's transformation over the Cold War period. However, I limited my dissertation to management within the military bureaucracy as an immense and interesting institution in its own right that is not well understood compared to business or other branches of government. In fact, my research on management makes the case that it's necessary to understand the internal institutional dynamics of the military bureaucracy in order to explain the development of the extreme forms of privatization we see in the U.S. military's exploits around the world today.

While not focusing directly on contractors still makes sense, I realized that a significant and also growing part of the military's management capacity was dedicated to interfacing with private contractors. In the decades after World War II, contract management became an increasingly complicated and professionalized area of activity in the military. Defense officials encountered sticky problems dealing with their business partners on a huge range of projects from food to missiles to garbage services. From deciding the standards that would be used to estimate the cost of extremely complex projects, to negotiating complicated regulatory constraints and financing arrangements, and from mandating social labor policy addressing racial and gender discrimination, to stationing officers full time at contractor plants to oversee and intervene in the production processes of private businesses, contract management encompassed a wide range of intense activity and manpower that represented the development of business expertise but within a distinctly military context. As the main interface between the military and private business, contract management became a nexus of innovation: a meeting point where each side learned from the other. At the same time, contract management was a site of contention where private firms and military leaders exercised power over one another. Now that I'm finishing my study of the systems the military developed to control its *own* property and labor, I want to explore the ways the military controlled *private* property and labor, through its expansive contract management bureaucracy.