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THE CHANGE FROM A MANDATORY TO A VOLUNTARY  
RESERVE OFFICER'S TRAINING CORPS PROGRAM AT  
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

by 45

ROBERT DONALD REMLINGER

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A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

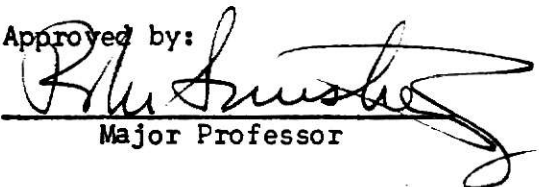
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Approved by:

  
Major Professor

## PREFACE

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the following people for their valuable assistance in granting me a personal interview. Without their assistance this paper could not have been completed. All of these people are associated with Kansas State University.

Mr. Max W. Milbourn  
Special Assistant to the President

Dr. William L. Stamey  
Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences

Colonel Ralph Wright, U.S.A.  
Professor of Military Science

Colonel Bertram L. Ruggles, U.S.A.F.  
Professor of Aerospace Studies

Much of the information contained in this paper is first hand experience. I was assigned to Kansas State University in June 1965 and actively participated in the transition from mandatory to voluntary ROTC.

Also I would thank Professor Rhae Swisher, who gave freely of his limited time to assist on technical points of the paper.

Lastly, I thank my wife, Gayle, and my children, without whose faith and understanding it would have been impossible to reach this point.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Not all colleges and universities have experienced a high rate of retention when moving from the mandatory to the voluntary Reserve Officer's Training Corps Program. No evaluation of procedures used by those schools which have changed from the mandatory to the voluntary Reserve Officer's Training Corps program has been made. The individual school's procedures have not been studied to see if any general procedures, that would apply in most situations, could be identified.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this paper to (1) trace the overall history of the Reserve Officer's Training Corps Program; (2) trace the history as it relates specifically to the State of Kansas and Kansas State University; (3) analyze the particular factors that brought about the successful transition at Kansas State University; (4) summarize the effectiveness of the change from a mandatory to a voluntary program; and (5) provide an organizational basis and management outline for other educational institutions to benefit from the experiences of Kansas State University's success.

Importance of the study. In changes from mandatory to voluntary Reserve Officer Training Corps Programs, maintaining high student enrollment has been a major problem. In the first semester following the

change, the retention at Kansas State University was 82.9% of all eligible male students while the retention rate average at twenty-four other colleges and universities that had undergone similar changes was 36%. This 36% figure was compiled from information obtained from each of the twenty-four schools individually. Questionnaires were sent to over thirty-five schools that had changed from a mandatory to a voluntary Reserve Officer's Training Corps program in the last five years. Thirty-one schools responded in writing. Of the thirty-one responses, only twenty-four contained enough detailed information on the transition to voluntary ROTC to be of primary value at Kansas State University.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Reserve Officer's Training Corps (R.O.T.C.). This was the organization created in order to fulfill a requirement of the Morrill Act of 1862.<sup>1</sup> The organization, divided by military service (Army, Navy and later Air Force), had as its goal to supply education and training in military tactics and to produce career-minded officers for the respective military services.

Mandatory program. This program requires that a portion of the ROTC curriculum be taken by each eligible male student (normally the first two years) as a prerequisite to receiving a degree.

Voluntary program. This program gives the option to all qualified male students either to take R.O.T.C. or not. Some schools give a choice of elective courses required for graduation, one of which is R.O.T.C.

Senior division. The Senior division refers to those R.O.T.C. programs conducted at the college or university level. This includes both the Two Year Program and the Four Year Program.

Junior division. The Junior division refers to those ROTC programs conducted below the college or university level, generally in high schools or equivalent Military Academies.

Basic R.O.T.C. Course. The Basic Course is the first two years (freshman and sophomore) in the R.O.T.C. program. This course is given only in the Senior Division.

Advanced R.O.T.C. Course. The Advanced Course is the last two years (junior and senior) in the ROTC program at the university level. The Advanced Course also comprises the entire academic requirement for the Two Year Program. All students in the Advanced Program receive no less than \$40.00 nor more than \$50.00 per month for a maximum of two years. If a student's overall Grade Point Average falls below 2.0 on a 4.0 scale for 2 consecutive semesters, he is dropped from the Advanced Program. In addition if a student is placed on probation for two consecutive semesters, he is also eligible for dismissal. A student on probation receives no subsistence. If he comes off probation after one semester and has a 2.0 or better overall Grade Point Average, he will receive a lump sum for the period of probation, equal to what he lost.

Four-Year Program. This program provides for the progression of a student through four years of R.O.T.C. The student completes four semesters of Basic ROTC in his first two years of college.



nor does he receive any pay. In his last two years of college, if the student applies and is accepted, he will complete four semesters of Advanced ROTC. Prior to this entry, he must conclude a written agreement with his specific service by which the student incurs an active duty commitment, the length of which varies with military service and job. In addition, during the last two years of the R.O.T.C. program, the student receives no less than \$40.00 nor more than \$50.00 per month subsistence pay, for 10 months a year.

Two-Year Program. This program was created by the ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964.<sup>2</sup> It is composed of the Advanced Program or Course preceded by a six-week summer camp. Prior to beginning the Advanced Course and after completion of summer camp, the student enters into a written agreement with his particular branch of the military service. This agreement obligates the student to an active duty commitment after he is graduated and receives his commission. This commitment varies with military service and particular military job. During the junior and senior years the student receives no less than \$40.00, nor more than \$50.00 per month subsistence pay, for 10 months a year, for no more than two years.

Summer camp - Field Training Unit (F.T.U.). This is training established by the 1916 National Defense Act.<sup>3</sup> This Act directs that the student will spend a period of time, not to exceed six weeks, on an active military installation of his particular military service. This normally follows the third year of the Four Year program. In the Two Year program the camp is a prerequisite to entering the Advanced

Program. The actual lengths of the camps differ among the military services from three to six weeks.

Financial Assistance Grant (F.A.G.). This is a program whereby qualified students receive federal aid for one, two, three, or four years if they meet the qualifications for commissioning in their respective service. To be eligible a student must be physically qualified as certified by a military physician or designated appointee, have successfully completed an Officer Aptitude or Qualifying Test, and have a 2.5 Grade Point Average or better on a 4.0 scale. After qualification the student must agree, in writing, to serve an active duty commitment upon the completion of the ROTC program and the receipt of his degree. The Grant or scholarship includes full tuition, fees, \$75.00 per year for books and \$50.00 per month for 10 months of the year. If a grant recipient falls below a C average for 2 successive semesters he will lose his grant and be dismissed from the program. If he falls below 2.5 overall he will have one semester to get back to 2.5 or have his grant reviewed by his service's ROTC headquarters with possible action being the removal of the grant.

Active duty commitment. This is the period of active service agreed on by the student, prior to his enrolling in the Advanced ROTC Program or accepting a Financial Assistance Grant.

Flight Instruction Program (F.I.P.). The Flight Instruction Program is designed to determine the aptitude of a fully qualified student actually to fly. The military service pays for 36 1/2 hours of flying training plus associated classroom instruction, to determine

that the student, in fact, desires to fly. Part of the flying time is dual and part solo. This program also identifies those students who do not show that they have the ability to fly. These students are counseled and if they cannot successfully complete the program they are dropped from a flying category, but may still remain in the ROTC Program and receive their commission. The F.I.P. program is conducted within one year of the student's probable entry into active duty.

### III. SYNOPSIS OF THE PAPER

Chapter I states the purpose for and the importance of this paper, as well as giving pertinent definitions of terms to be used throughout the paper.

Chapter II is limited in scope to general federal legislative history and Department of Defense policy which directly relates to ROTC. These Acts include the Morrill Act of 1862, the National Defense Act of 1916, and the ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964.

Chapter III places emphasis on Kansas legislation of 1931 and 1965 directly relating to ROTC.

Chapter IV brings the background outlined in Chapters II and III to bear on the problem at Kansas State University. This chapter covers in detail the manner in which the change was proposed, the mechanics of the change, and the planning leading to its successful implementation. This should allow other schools contemplating this change to approach, or increase the high retention rate experienced at Kansas State University.

## IV. FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

- <sup>1</sup> 12 Stat. 503, July 2, 1862 (Morrill Act). Also United States Laws, Statutes, etc., Public Lands Statutes, United States Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 1931, page 642, Section 4. Henry S. Brunner, Act of July 2, 1862 (First Morrill Act) Land-Grant Colleges and Universities 1862-1962, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1962, page 55, Section 3.
- <sup>2</sup> 78 Stat. 1063, 10 U.S.C. 2101-2111, (Supp., 1967).
- <sup>3</sup> 39 (Pt. 1) Stat. 191-195, 197.

## CHAPTER II

### FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE POLICY RELATING TO THE RESERVE OFFICER'S TRAINING CORPS

#### I. THE CIVIL WAR TO WORLD WAR II

Shortly after the start of the Civil War, the Union found itself short of trained military men on which to call. Working swiftly, Congress passed and Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act, or the Land-Grant Act of 1862. This Act required, among other things, that a course in military tactics be taught in all Land-Grant colleges and universities.<sup>1</sup>

The ROTC traces its beginning to the Morrill Act of 1862 which stated, "The leading objectives shall be, without excluding the other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . ."2

The purpose of certain provisions of the Act was the training of reserve soldiers who could, after a short period of military active duty service, return to civilian life and provide a ready pool of trained manpower capable of being mobilized on very short notice. The hard core for military mobilization in time of national need would be provided for from this pool of previously trained men.

This requirement for a course was not standard at all schools. Program sizes varied and a majority of the training was left to the discretion of the military officer in charge.<sup>3</sup>

As all students who begin college do not finish, all students who began courses in military tactics did not complete the course. Those who, for some reason, did not complete the course, could join the reserves as an enlisted man, and still utilize the training they had received.

From the 1860's until 1916 there was no major change in the requirement for a military tactics course. It should be noted that the Morrill Act made inclusion of a course in military tactics in a school's curriculum mandatory, but participation in this course by every eligible male student attending the school was never made mandatory by any federal law.<sup>4</sup>

In 1916 the National Defense Act was passed to provide more direction for the military preparedness of the United States. This Act brought about major changes to the program for teaching military tactics. Section 40 of this Act reads, "The President is hereby authorized to establish and maintain in civil educational institutions a Reserve Officer's Training Corps, . . . including State universities . . . that are required to provide instruction . . . under the provisions of the Act of Congress of July second, eighteen hundred and sixty-two . . . ." <sup>5</sup>

Section 43 of this same Act establishes a four year military tactics program called the Senior Division, to be administered at the individual college or university level. The first two years were to be general in nature, and after acceptance into the last two years of

ROTC the student was to be eligible to receive compensation for his service. The student, upon successful completion of the course, was to be tendered a military commission at the same time he received his college degree.

The National Defense Act was amended in June, 1920, to set up specific programs for medical, dental, and veterinary medical students. Summer camps were limited in length to no more than six weeks in any one year period.<sup>6</sup>

The decision of choosing a mandatory or a voluntary ROTC program was left by the federal government to the discretion of the legislatures of the individual states. The guidance given by the 1916 Act applied to both mandatory and voluntary ROTC programs.

## II. WORLD WAR II

The large reserve pool, swiftly utilized in World War II with excellent effect, seemed to bear out the ideas of the ROTC program's original planners. A large, trained reserve pool was available and employed to buy time in 1941 and 1942. This allowed the United States to mobilize to defeat the Axis powers.

## III. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE POLICY IN THE 1950'S AND THE EARLY 1960'S

During the early 1950's, fifty-one of the fifty-two Land-Grant colleges and universities required, either by state law or Regents'

ruling, military training of all able-bodied male students. The Air Force ROTC came into being after the Air Force was made a separate service in 1947. The Air Force joined the Army and Navy ROTC programs as a required course at schools sponsoring mandatory ROTC. The only voluntary program among the schools specified as Land-Grant institutions was at the University of Minnesota.<sup>7</sup> According to information supplied by the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, to Mr. Max Milbourn, Assistant to the President of Kansas State University, the feeling of the Department of Defense in the early and middle 1950's was, "that the Department of Defense (and the Bureau of the Budget) did not regard required ROTC as important or essential to the success of the ROTC program."<sup>8</sup>

In 1958, a board of distinguished men, headed by Dr. John A. Hannah, President of Michigan State University, and representing the Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, requested an audience with the Armed Forces Policy Board. This Board acted as a spokesman in limited areas for the Department of Defense, and was composed of the highest ranking officers, civilian and military, in the Defense Department. The Board, representing the Colleges' Association, asked the Armed Forces Policy Board for a definitive statement by the Department of Defense, as to its attitude concerning mandatory ROTC. The Department of Defense replied that it did "not regard required military training as essential--as compared with voluntary ROTC--to the production of regular and reserve officers and therefore to the defense of the country."<sup>9</sup>



Further, the Department of Defense, under the Bureau of the Budget's pressure, considered on several occasions limiting the enrollment at the freshman level.<sup>10</sup> "This would have wrecked the mandatory ROTC program," according to Russell I. Thackery, Executive Secretary of the Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.<sup>11</sup> This guidance put the mandatory-voluntary Basic ROTC Program decision in the hands of the state legislators on one hand, or the Board of Regents and the schools on the other.

#### IV. THE ROTC VITALIZATION ACT OF 1964

With the change of Administration in 1960, the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities again asked the Department of Defense for a definitive statement of policy concerning its attitude toward mandatory ROTC. The Department of Defense's response was the same as in 1958.

With this current clarification by the Department of Defense, the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force set about comparing the mandatory and voluntary ROTC programs on various campuses. The sequence of events was as follows:

- A. In August 1960, the Secretaries of the various military services proposed general areas of study to the ROTC commanders. The ROTC commanders were directed to submit a workable plan, as soon as possible, to their respective Service Secretaries. Those plans were to include the following points:

1. A proposal for a Two Year Program to replace the Four Year Program.
  2. Implementation by all military of a Financial Assistance Grant Program.
  3. Increase in Field Training Unit (Summer Camp) pay.
  4. Reduction in number of contact academic hours so as to bring them in line with the credit hours offered.
  5. Major updating of the curriculum since, prior to this time, there had been no regular reviews and revisions of the ROTC curriculum.<sup>12</sup>
- B. In December 1960, an Air Force ROTC Advisory Panel was formed at Headquarters, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. This panel was composed of civilian and military educational experts and was directly responsible to the Commander of Air University. By January 1961, this panel, as were their counterparts in the other military services, was studying a draft of proposed legislation to accomplish the aforementioned points.
- C. From July to December, 1961 the original suggestions of the military services' advisory panels were developed in light of cost, manning, and time phasing by representatives of the respective military services. Very broad parameters were established and the finished recommendations were forwarded to the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

- D. Throughout 1962 the suggested ROTC programs were involved in minor changes made to the individual military service proposals, and the coordination among the three services. By March 1963, a single Armed Services proposal was sent to the Department of Defense.
- E. The military services, in 1963, attempted to put forward a strong workable compromise. This plan included the Two Year Program with Financial Assistance Grants for qualified students.
- F. In November 1963, the House of Representatives received the recommendations from the Department of Defense and combined the recommendations into a bill, H. R. 9124. Also in this bill was included the Congressional view of ROTC.

Sec. 101(a) The Congress hereby affirms its conviction that the primary source of commissioned officer personnel for the reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps shall continue to be the Senior Reserve Officer's Training Corps program. Therefore, this Act is designed to continue in effect the four year Senior Reserve Officer's Training Corps program with modifications (i.e., the two year program) that will make the program responsive to the requirements of our students, our civilian educational institution(s), our Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and our national security.<sup>13</sup>

This statement clearly gives the Congressional point of view and it can easily be compared with the Department of Defense's stated policy.

- G. On June twenty-third 1964 the Senate-House of Representatives compromise was passed by unanimous vote and became known as

the "ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964." It was then forwarded to the Senate, and subjected to further committee study.

H. A House-Senate agreement was reached and the bill was passed October 13, 1964 and became known as the "Reserve Officer's Training Corps Vitalization Act of 1964." The most pertinent provisions of this Act are:

1. The Financial Assistance Grant program was instituted. This program made provision for federally subsidized scholarships available to students in the ROTC programs of all the military services.
2. A new, accelerated officer's training program concentrated in the junior and senior years only, included a six-week summer camp preceding the junior year of enrollment. This program eliminated the need for a required two-year basic program prior to the advanced program in order to produce commissioned officers.
3. A Junior ROTC Program at the high school level was established. The ROTC Vitalization Act further refined some high school ROTC programs then in existence.
4. The Army, Navy, and Air Force were authorized to have in force, at any one time, 5,500 Financial Assistance Grants. The Army and the Air Force were not to exceed 1,000 the first year, and were authorized gradually to build to their maximum number after the first year

(the Navy had been giving scholarships for a number of years and therefore was not so limited).

5. The Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force were granted permission to designate applicants to participate in aerial flights in military airlift. The law authorized subsistence, quarters, and medical care for cadets going to military bases for examination or for visits of observation.
6. The Act further provides, "Advanced training shall be provided to eligible members of the program . . . who have two academic years remaining at such educational institution." This has been interpreted by the military service Secretaries to mean a student can take Advanced ROTC training even though he has a baccalaureate degree.
7. While the Act permits a student who fails to complete the program or accept a commission to be called to active duty in the Reserves, it also provides that a cadet released from the Advanced ROTC program in the interests of the service may be discharged without prejudice.<sup>14</sup>

That federal legislation and Department of Defense policy has shaped the ROTC program on a national level has been shown. Now let us see how the State of Kansas reacted to the authority it was granted.

## V. FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

- <sup>1</sup> 12 Stat. 503, 7 U.S.C.A. 304.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Personal interview by author with Colonel Ralph Wright, Professor of Military Science, Kansas State University, June 17, 1968.
- <sup>4</sup> Morrill Act, op. cit.
- <sup>5</sup> 39 (Part 1) Stat. 191-195, 197.
- <sup>6</sup> 41 Stat. 776-779, The Code of the Laws of the United States of America of a General and Permanent Character in Force December 7, 1925 and Appendix with Laws to December 6, 1926 (44 [Part 1/ Stat. 182-4, 185).
- <sup>7</sup> Personal letter to Mr. Max Milbourn from Russell I. Thackery, Executive Secretary of the Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, October 13, 1964.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Briefing at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama by Major Sam Maddux, Screening and Selection Branch, Admissions Division, Directorate of Operations, Headquarters Air University, August 5, 1964.
- <sup>13</sup> 78 Stat. 1063, 10 U.S.C. 2101-2111 Supp., 1967.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### ROTC IN THE STATE OF KANSAS

#### I. THE PROBLEM CONFRONTING KANSAS

The mandatory versus voluntary problem in Kansas was greatly intensified as a result of State legislative action.

Recounted briefly, military tactics first came to Kansas State University, then known as Bluemont College, in 1867. The head of the program was military but Kansas State has had both civilian and military ROTC instructors.<sup>1</sup> Both the faculty of Bluemont College and of Kansas State College, the predecessors of Kansas State University, required the Basic Program.

After the 1916 National Defense Act, all ROTC programs were required to have 100 students in order to remain in existence. It was feared that schools with small enrollments might not be able to support an ROTC unit. In spite of its small enrollment, Kansas State University's predecessors maintained an adequate enrollment which allowed retention of the military program.<sup>2</sup>

#### II. THE LEGISLATIVE CHANGE OF 1931

In 1931 the State Legislature passed a Statute, 76-436, which reinforced the federal Morrill Act of 1862, and further stated, ". . . One of such courses (military training) shall be compulsory and be required of every regularly enrolled male student of such university or

college during the freshman and sophomore years."<sup>3</sup> The statute went on to give certain exceptions which were physical condition, age, religious belief, citizenship, or prior military service.<sup>4</sup> Thus from 1931 to 1965 ROTC was mandatory at Kansas State University. In 1952 an Air Force ROTC was added to the original Army program.

In 1961 Kansas State University requested permission to conduct a voluntary ROTC program for both Army and Air Force. The Regents approved this request and forwarded it to the State Legislature for action, but the request was defeated by a strong veteran's lobby. Dr. William Stamey, Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Kansas State University, in commenting on the failure of the request for voluntary ROTC for Kansas State University, said he "felt the measure would have passed in 1961 had more time been spent informing the state legislators and other interested parties of the actual content of the request."<sup>5</sup> Mr. Milbourn added that "The actual way the university and the Board of Regents planned to use the authority they requested was not made clear to the legislators."<sup>6</sup>

### III. REPEAL OF THE 1931 STATE LAW

In 1965 Kansas State University again secured the Regents' approval to request that the 1931 state law be amended and that Kansas State University be allowed to change from a mandatory to a voluntary ROTC program. This is recorded in the general minutes of the State Board of Regents under the date of May 22, 1965.



On June 29, 1965 Senate Bill 94 was passed, to become effective on July 1, 1965. This Senate bill amended the Kansas Statutes Annotated 76-436 relating to the teaching of ROTC courses by providing that " . . . One of such courses may be required of each male student of such university or college during the freshman and sophomore years, in accordance with policies established by the state board of regents."<sup>7</sup>

With both Federal and State statutes as a background, the problem at Kansas State University was within the grasp of University officials. The next chapter will discuss in detail how the transition was made.

## IV. FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

- <sup>1</sup> Personal interview by author with Colonel Ralph Wright, Professor of Military Science, Kansas State University, June 17, 1968.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Kansas Statutes Annotated, 1965, 76-436.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Personal interview by author with Dr. William Stamey, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Kansas State University, June 18, 1968.
- <sup>6</sup> Personal interview by author with Mr. Max Milbourn, Assistant to the President, Kansas State University, June 18, 1968.
- <sup>7</sup> Kansas Statutes Annotated, 1967, Supp., 76-436.