PRIDE, PROGRESS, AND PROSPECTS

The Marine Corps' Efforts to Increase the Presence of African-American Officers (1970-1995)

HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

COVER: Pride, progress, and prospects in the form of four Marine general officers with a common heritage, if diverse Marine Corps backgrounds. They include, from left, BGen Clifford L. Stanley, MajGen Charles F. Bolden, Jr., BGen Leo V. Williams III, and BGen Arnold Fields. Their leadership positions mark a major milestone from the integration of the Marine Corps by African-Americans and the commissioning of 2dLt Frederick C. Branch in 1945.

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The Marine Corps' Efforts to Increase the Presence of African-American Officers (1970-1995)

by
Colonel Alphonse G. Davis
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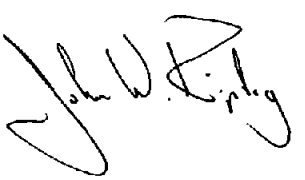
Foreword

In today's Marine Corps, African-Americans constitute almost 10 percent of the officer corps. The fact that this was not always the case deserves explanation, as do the Marine Corps' efforts to remedy this deficiency. This monograph presents a straightforward and personalized account of the Corps' efforts during the last three decades to increase the presence of African-Americans within its officer ranks.

Originally presented as an executive research project at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, the paper has been revised and illustrated for incorporation into the History and Museums Division's Occasional Papers series. Except for minor editorial and format changes, the words and opinions expressed are those of the author. In the interests of accuracy and objectivity, the author and the History and Museums Division welcome comments on this account from interested individuals.

Colonel Alphonse G. Davis most recently served on the Joint Staff as a J-7 division chief. He is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, who graduated from Southern University in 1972 with a bachelor of arts degree in marketing. He earned a master's degree in business administration from Averett College in 1992 and also was granted a master's degree by the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in 1998. Following Basic School, he was assigned to the 2d Marine Division and served as a rifle platoon commander and company executive officer with the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines. Additional assignments included legal officer; officer selection officer in Dallas, Texas; weapons company commander with the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines; and aide-de-camp to the commanding general, 1st Marine Division. Following an assignment as the 8th Marine Corps District's assistant for officer procurement, he reported to the 3d Force Service Support Group on Okinawa. Upon his return to the United States in 1989, he assumed the duties of head, Officer Procurement Branch, Headquarters Marine Corps. Assignments with the 2d Force Service Support Group, as advisor to the Commandant on equal opportunity matters, and as head, Equal Opportunity Branch, followed. With promotion to colonel in 1995, he assumed command of Officer Candidates School, Quantico, Virginia. Colonel Davis retired in July 1999 and is now Chief Executive Officer, New Orleans Public Schools, New Orleans, Louisiana.



JOHN W. RIPLEY
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)
Director of Marine Corps History and Museums

Preface

This has been a labor of love for me. Since my entry into the Marine Corps in July 1972, I have been blessed to be in the presence of Marine officers who looked like me. It started with my Officer Selection Officer, First Lieutenant Henry Ferrand. At Officer Candidates School, it continued with First Lieutenant Clifford L. Stanley and Major Clay Baker. At the Basic School, it was Captain Archie Joe Biggers. In my first assignment, as an infantry platoon leader in the Fleet Marine Force, it was my company commander, Captain Willie J. Oler. While I was a young captain and company commander with the 1st Marine Division, it was Lieutenant Colonel George Ford. As a major and company commander with the 3d Force Service Support Group on Okinawa, it was Colonel Fred Jones. While a lieutenant colonel and battalion commander in the 2d Force Service Support Group, it was my group commander, Brigadier General George Walls, Jr. As a colonel and commanding officer of Officer Candidates School, it was Brigadier General Clifford L. Stanley. To the casual observer, this may not be important; however, role models are important, because they provide hope to one's goals and aspirations and they add perspective and temperance to the views, visions, and impatience of untested youth.

The writing of this 25-year account of the Marine Corps' efforts to increase the presence of African-American officers was not as difficult as that experienced by Ralph W. Donnelly and Henry I. Shaw, Jr., when they undertook the task of compiling *Blacks in the Marine Corps*, in 1975. This is because there have been a number of significant initiatives, events, and achievements by African-American officers during the last three decades. With that said, however, I do not dare say this task was easy. There is an abundance of information regarding the Marine Corps' efforts in this area; the challenge was in locating it and compiling the information within a finite period of time, given that I undertook this project while assigned as a student at National Defense University's Industrial College of the Armed Forces. The challenge in completing this effort was somewhat eased as a result of my previous assignments as an officer recruiter at the local, district, and national levels. Also, my assignments at Headquarters Marine Corps in the Manpower Plans and Policy Division as the head of the Equal Opportunity Branch and as the Equal Opportunity Advisor to General Alfred M. Gray, Commandant of the Marine Corps, afforded me access to valuable corporate knowledge coupled with an insider's view of the various initiatives and events that shaped the Marine Corps' efforts to increase the presence of African-American officers. Lastly, the information and historical continuity provided by a number of retired Marines was of great value and assistance. Among them were Colonel Kenneth H. Berthoud, Jr., Mr. Frederick C. Branch, and Generals Frank E. Petersen, Jr., Jerome G. Cooper, and George H. Walls. Perhaps most importantly, the support provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center, the Marine Corps' Equal Opportunity Branch, the Officer Assignments Branch and the Marine Corps Recruiting Command provided the foundation and component parts of this document. Without their assistance, this record of the noteworthy accomplishments of a number of Marines and the Marine Corps would not exist.

I am certain that there are some Marines, and perhaps others, who may not agree with the facts of this account as presented. These disagreements are expected and healthy. History is always subject to the interpretations and opinions of many instead of the views of one. Accordingly, I alone take full responsibility for the facts as presented, subject to my interpretation and recall of the events as I have read, observed, and experienced them.

I could not have accomplished this task without the help of a number of people. First, I wish to thank Major General John S. Cowings, USA, Commandant of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, for accepting me into the Research Fellowship Program. Secondly, my appreciation goes to Dr. Joseph

Goldberg for his inspiration and professional advice. My advisor, Dr. Alan Gropman, kept me focused on the relevant pieces of information through his reviews of my drafts. Faculty members Dr. Nedra Huggins-Williams and Colonel Kenneth Dunn, USMC, provided timely guidance and suggestions. Ms. Judy Clark deserves a special thank you for her editorial suggestions and for teaching me the basics of typing. Also, Mrs. Iris Boon went above and beyond the call of duty in furthering my skills in word processing. This project was supported by a grant from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation.

There are a number of people at Headquarters Marine Corps assigned to recruiting, advertising, officer assignments, and equal opportunity who quickly responded to my phone calls for information and copies of documents; I thank all of you very much. Finally, to my more than supportive wife and daughters who shared me with the computer and the paperwork for 10 months—as usual, I owe you.

ALPHONSE G. DAVIS
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired

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Introduction

This narrative represents an account of the Marine Corps' efforts to increase the presence of African-Americans in its officer ranks during the period from 1970 to 1995. The word "presence" is used instead of the term "number" in the title of this effort because it transcends the singular focus of quantity. "Presence" underscores the relative importance of certain areas that contribute to the career progression of commissioned officers. Among those areas are accessions, military occupational specialties, assignments, and promotions. The primary focus will be on unrestricted and restricted commissioned officers (warrant officers are not included); however, I will briefly review the service of all ranks of African-Americans from colonial times to the Korean War.

Various race and ethnic terms are used when racial references are made. Terms such as "colored," "negro," "black," and "African-American" capture the relationship between time and racial references. The terms "black" and "African-American" are used interchangeably. Also, the term "minority" appears throughout encased in quotation marks. This represents my personal efforts to avoid its use when it is necessary to refer to an individual or group of individuals who are non-white, because the root meaning of the term connotes a value judgement of less than or not equal to. When it is necessary to make racial references, specific race and ethnic terms are used.

The motivation for undertaking this account lies in two legendary Marines; one enlisted and the other an officer. They are Sergeant Major Edgar R. Huff, USMC, now deceased, and former Lieutenant Frederick C. Branch, USMC. Both are African-Americans of the Montford Point Marine legacy.

CHAPTER 1

A Look at the Past

The representation of African-Americans in the officer ranks of the nation's Armed Forces emerged as a matter of national interest at the end of the Civil War. As early as 1866, there were efforts to admit African-Americans to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Prior to that period, a few individuals occasionally were admitted to the Naval Academy only to leave later on their own or as a result of the machinations of a racially biased system that reflected the nation's attitude and beliefs regarding race and racial equality.

Efforts during the 1970s and 1980s to increase the representation of African-Americans as officers in the military service were prompted by a number of interests pursuing the same end, but for different reasons. Militarily, there was a need for manpower. Socially, civil rights organizations saw the military as a means for pursuing one of the inherent rights of citizenship. Politically, presidential or other political aspirants garnered support in the form of backing and votes from civil rights organizations and their constituents.

The military was not alone in its practice of bias and discrimination. During the World War II era, racial discrimination was widely practiced in the federal and civilian sectors supporting the war effort. As a result, two presidential directives concerning equal opportunity and treatment in the federal government were issued. The first was Executive Order 8802, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in June 1941, which established the Fair Employment Practices Commission. This presidential directive was issued based on the premise that "it is the policy of the United States to encourage full participation in the national defense program by all citizens of the United States, regardless of race, color, or national origin." Specifically, Executive Order 8802 ordered: all departments and agencies of the government concerned with vocational training for defense production to take measures to ensure that the programs were administered without discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, or national origin; all contracting agencies of the government to include provisions in all defense contracts to prohibit discrimination against any worker because of race, color, creed, or national origin; and the establishment of a Committee on Fair Employment Practice in the Office of Production Management to receive and investigate complaints of discrimination.[1]

A second presidential directive concerned with equal treatment and opportunity in the federal workplace focused exclusively on the military. Executive Order 9981 was signed by President Harry S. Truman in July 1948, and directed the Armed Forces to provide equal treatment and opportunity for black servicemen. Based on the premise that "it is essential that there be maintained in the Armed Forces of the United States the highest standards of democracy, with equality of treatment and opportunity for all those who serve in our country's defense," Executive Order 9981 addressed six different areas:

- A policy of equal treatment and opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin, be implemented rapidly with due regard for the time it takes to effect changes without impairing efficiency or morale.
- The creation of a seven-member presidential advisory committee on equal treatment and opportunity in the Armed Services; members to be designated by the President.
- The presidential authority of the committee to examine rules, procedures, and practices of the Services for the purpose of recommending modifications to reflect the intent of the executive order.
- The requirement for all executive departments and agencies of the federal government to cooperate with the committee in its work, and to furnish such information and the services of such persons as may be

required in the performance of its duties.

- The requirement that persons in the Armed Services, the executive departments, and agencies of the federal government testify before the committee if requested and make available such documents and other information the committee may require.
- The existence of the committee, which can be terminated only by presidential executive order.[2]

Generally, the different branches of the Armed Services devised their own efforts to integrate their enlisted ranks, and responded to Truman's order in their own ways. Nonetheless, Executive Order 9981 was significant for several reasons: it represented presidential interest and action; it responded to the concerns of a segment of society; it addressed the strategic concern of manpower with the onset of the Cold War emanating at the end of World War II; and it expanded opportunities for Negroes serving in the military. Similarly, on 26 July 1948, Truman issued a presidential directive, Executive Order 9980, which dealt with equal treatment and opportunity in the Civil Service. The order was issued the same day he signed Executive Order 9981.

Off-base equal treatment and opportunity efforts in the 1940s dealt primarily with civilian problems related to housing and other off-base establishments. These problems reflected the segregationist policies and attitudes prevalent in the United States during that time. On-base efforts of equally important concern dealt with the location and integration of training facilities and the use of on-base facilities such as clubs and messes. In several instances, confrontations and riots took place between black servicemen attempting to integrate on-base facilities and white servicemen attempting to enforce segregation. During the early 1940s, several camps and bases located in California, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Texas were the sites of "riots of racial character," according to John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War and head of

Enlisted Marines broke the "color barrier" in the Marine Corps in World War II. Trained at segregated Montford Point, North Carolina, they were assigned to Fleet Marine Force units including the 1st Marine Division on the beach at Peleliu in September 1944.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 0285

the War Department's Advisory Committee on Racial Matters.[3] Similar scenarios of racial unrest took place at military bases during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The initiatives implemented to achieve the intent of Executive Order 9981 varied. All of the Services, however, were opposed to Negroes serving alongside white Americans in combat or peacetime. A number of unjustified and unsubstantiated rationalizations were advanced to support the widely held belief that the black man was not ready to serve beside his white counterpart, ranging from black intellectual inferiority to the lack of social development. The true reason was racism.

Military historians have more than adequately documented the issues and events that relate to the contemporary challenge of racial diversity within the officer ranks. This effort is based upon the work of a number of those historians and the verbal and written accounts of several African-Americans who served during the "Jim Crow" era and during the period following the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Collectively, their accounts provide the basis for recalling the Marine Corps' earlier initiatives to enlist African-Americans and ultimately integrate and broaden the opportunities for African-Americans, to satisfy manpower needs, and to meet the appeals of civil rights proponents and the intent of President Truman's Executive Order 9981.

Soldiers of the Sea

Among all the Services, the Marine Corps was the staunchest opponent of accepting blacks within its ranks. There is some evidence of several black men serving in the Continental Marines in 1776 and 1777. However, when a separate Marine Corps was created in July 1798, the first Commandant, Major William W. Burrows, issued explicit guidance barring the enlistment of blacks, mulattos, and Indians. This policy of exclusion continued until World War I. Immediately prior to World War II, the Secretary of the Navy directed the Navy to take steps to increase its enlistment of Negroes. This pronouncement also applied to the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard, as both were part of the Navy Department (the Coast Guard by virtue of a special requirement that it operate as part of the Navy during times of war).

Major General Thomas Holcomb, Commandant of the Marine Corps, was allowed to devise his own plan to satisfy the conceptual intent of the Secretary; however, he fell short in the numerical goals that were being pursued by the Navy and the Army. The Army used the representative percentage of blacks in the general population as a benchmark for increasing black representation, but Major General Holcomb proposed the "enlistment of

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 500043

On 10 November 1945, 2dLt Frederick C. Branch of Charlotte, North Carolina, had insignia of rank pinned on by his wife, Peggy. Lieutenant Branch became the first African-American commissioned officer after completing fully integrated training.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 173312

Enlisted Marines continued to pioneer integration during the Korean War, fighting on the front lines overseas as well as in the United States. A recoilless rifle gunner shifts location after firing his weapon on an enemy position at Taewi-dong in 1953.

1,000 Negroes because the inevitable replacement and redistribution of men in combat would prevent the maintenance of necessary segregation."[4] Despite the Marine Corps' eventual enlistment of Negroes, individual base commanders could refuse to accept Negro troops, if their presence were contrary to the wishes of the local populace.*

Pride ... The Beginnings

In June 1942, the first black Marine recruits reported for their initiation in the "best and toughest outfit going," according to Sergeant Major Edgar R. Huff. The entry of blacks into the Marine Corps was a result of President Roosevelt's directive to end racial discrimination. These pioneers would come to be known as "The Montford Point Marines."** Despite the resistance of Major General Holcomb, better judgement prevailed, as blacks, just as their white counterparts, would make significant contributions to the legacy of the Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps' plan for complying with the Secretary of the Navy's desire for a black battalion was to recruit approximately 1,000 Marine hopefuls, most of whom would come from the South. Segregated training would be conducted at a camp in North Carolina originally known as Mumford Point and later renamed Montford Point.

Among the first recruits were former sailors and soldiers and college graduates who would form the first black Marine Corps unit upon completion of recruit training, the 51st Composite Defense Battalion. The battalion's primary mission was to

*Morris J. McGregor, Jr., in *Integration in the Armed Forces, 1940-1945* (Washington, D.C.: The Center of Military History, 1981), provides detailed documentation of the experiences of the Marine Corps and other services in the evolution of the integration issue.

**Ralph Donnelly and Henry I. Shaw, Jr., in *Blacks in the Marine Corps* (Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, 1975), provide an in-depth account of the assimilation of these Marines into a Corps accustomed to a heretofore exclusively white membership.

train additional black recruits. Later, a second defense battalion, the 52d Composite Defense Battalion, was formed. Both battalions were slated to become antiaircraft defense units. Although the units were designated combat units and were formed during World War II, to the disappointment of their Marines, neither experienced actual combat. Future manpower plans would call for the activation of a number of depot and ammunition companies. As indicated by their designations, plans for the employment of these units did not include combat; rather, they were intended for the laborious jobs of unloading ships and moving ammunition. However, because of their use in direct support of combat units, a number of the ammunition and depot companies did experience combat. The long-term plans for the military employment of all black Marines on active duty during World War II was to place them in reserve status at the end of the war.

Though the Korean War was fought after the 1948 Executive Order 9981, only two African-American officers served, including fighter pilot 2dLt Frank E. Petersen, Jr. Here he climbs from an aircraft while assigned to 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 01236360188

The Marines who initially challenged previously uncharted rough seas were those of the Montford Point legacy. In March of 1945, three Montford Point Marines entered Officer Candidates School (OCS) at Quantico, Virginia, but were unsuccessful in their quest to be commissioned Marine lieutenants. Not to be denied, however, was Frederick C. Branch, a member of the 51st Defense Battalion. A native of Hamlet, North Carolina, Branch entered OCS in the summer of 1945 and was commissioned on 10 November 1945, the 170th birthday of the Marine Corps. The commissioning of three others in 1946 followed Branch's groundbreaking accomplishment. As were the others who followed him, Lieutenant Branch was released to inactive duty after commissioning. He was recalled for duty during the Korean War and served at Camp Pendleton, California. As an infantry officer, he held billets as a platoon leader, company executive officer, and battery commander in an antiaircraft artillery battalion. Branch was a member of an integrated unit with four white officers under his command.[5]

The utilization of Negro Marines during the Korean War differed from that of World War II. While there are several accounts of individual Negro Marines in combat, tracing the evolution of the military use of the Negro Marine is difficult due to the absence of detailed records. What is certain, however, is that service in Korea included a tandem of "firsts." Lieutenant William K. Jenkins would lead Marines into combat and Lieutenant Frank E. Petersen would become the first Negro Marine aviator.

Following the commissioning of Branch and others, the door was partially opened for more blacks to pursue commissions within the Marine Corps. The remaining chapters of this account will address the Marine Corps' efforts to increase the presence of African-Americans in its officer ranks. It will focus on those who sought membership in an elite, exclusive military organization motivated and distinguished by "pride"; recall the various pivotal events that enhanced or impeded the "progress" of their efforts; and examine the future "prospects" of building an officer corps that reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of the nation it serves.

CHAPTER 2

The Efforts of the 1970s

The attitudes, progress, and intergroup relations which manifested themselves in the decade of the 1970s, from a racial perspective, were principally a result of the social and political events that took place in the 1960s:

- The 1962 review of the progress made by "minorities" in the Armed Forces since the implementation of President Truman's Executive Order 9981, 14 years earlier. The review was directed by President John F. Kennedy (believed by some blacks to be one of the most progressive presidents on the issue of racial equality).
- The protests, demonstrations, and sit-ins by black Americans as a sign of opposition to the segregationist policies in effect throughout the nation affecting employment, housing, and other civil issues.
- The 1963 March on Washington, D.C.
- The Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- The assassination of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Memphis, Tennessee, in March 1968.
- The riots in response to the assassination of Dr. King.
- The resurgence, growth, and symbols of "Black Power" in the neighborhoods, on college campuses, and in the literature, poetry, and music of black America.

During the 1960s, the Armed Forces faced a number of challenges that were not much different from those of society at large. Realizing that the military was a microcosm of the larger society from which it draws its members, the relevance of those mutual interests was understandable. Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson were interested in promoting better race relations among members of the Services and ensuring fairness and equality in promotions and assignments. The degree of difficulty encountered in addressing and solving these issues was driven by the attitudes of society at large, because every individual joining the military brings with him or her beliefs, biases, and prejudices to which the individual was exposed while a civilian. Further, the messages of racial superiority or inequity to which they were exposed played a role in how they viewed their fellow soldiers, individually and collectively. The Marine Corps faced problems similar to those of the other Services. However, the Marines believed they were different; there was a mystique to being a Marine. And the Corps enjoyed a special reverence from Americans. As such, its racial problems received intense scrutiny.

According to some Marines who served during the Vietnam era, the Vietnam War was a defining experience and period for the Marine Corps in the areas of race relations and increasing the number of black officers in its ranks. Saddled with the unintended second- and third-order effects of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's "Project 100,000," the returning veterans from Vietnam unveiled some issues that required innovative thinking and approaches.[1*] Among the issues were:

- The increasing occurrence of interpersonal confrontations and conflicts primarily between black and white Marines, to include assaults and gang attacks.
- The disproportionate number of nonjudicial punishments and courts martial

*The McNamara project called for the induction of 100,000 enlistees under revised enlistment standards. The downward revision qualified a sizeable number of individuals who previously failed to meet the original enlistment criteria; black enlistment failures dropped by 20 percent, while white failures fell by 11.7 percent. Between 1966 and 1968, 240,000 enlistees qualified under the new standards and 37 percent were assigned to combat arms specialties.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A372852

The Vietnam War achieved integration at all levels, but African-American enlisted Marines greatly outnumbered commissioned officers. GySgt Earl L. Jones, left, and 1stLt John R. Rabb, right, coordinate fire support for Company L, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines.

affecting black Marines (in the vast majority of cases by white commanding officers).

- The racial polarization of black and white Marines at on- and off-base facilities and establishments.
- The appearance and use of signs and symbols of black solidarity and pride, such as wrist bracelets, crosses fashioned of black boot laces worn in uniform, and the "DAP" handshake, ritually also known as "checking-in."
- The emergence of the "Afro" haircut and its challenge to the traditional Euro-centric orientation and interpretation of Marine Corps haircut regulations and grooming standards.

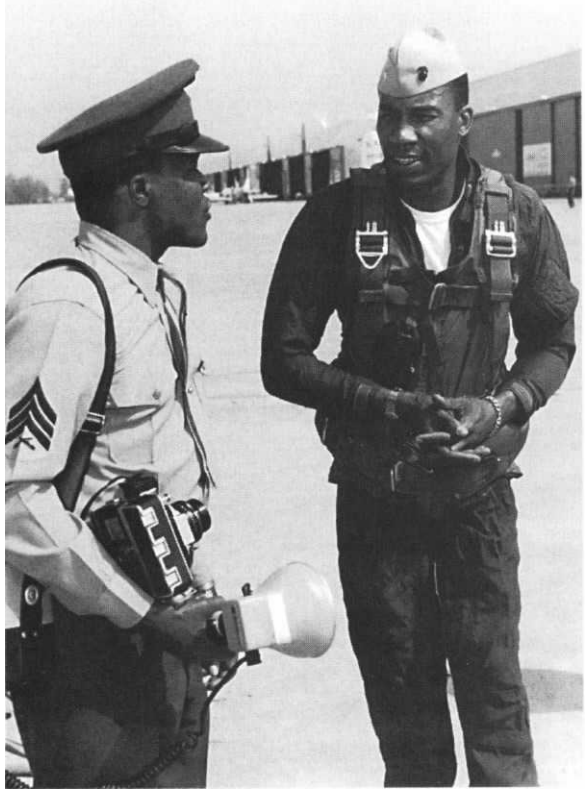
Bases and stations on the East and West Coasts had their share of incidents that were primarily the result of racial differences. John McGowan, a former enlisted Marine, officer, and infantry platoon leader with the 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment, located at Camp Pendleton, California, offered this observation:

> While the town of Oceanside and the surrounding areas didn't practice the discrimination the Marines on the East Coast endured from the town of Jacksonville, believe me, we had the same type of on-base problems, . . . the muggings, the fights, the unbelievable number of non-judicial punishments and courts martial awarded to black Marines, and McNamara's 100,000. . . . The problems we had on the West Coast were the same as those on the East Coast and overseas. Then we tried to fix it with the Human Relations Program.[2]

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 127NA419047

Above, Maj Hurdle L. Maxwell, the first black officer to command an infantry battalion, is shown in Vietnam in 1966 during a visit with Vietnamese villagers. Below, Frank E. Petersen, then a lieutenant colonel, commanded a fighter squadron during the Vietnam War. He is shown being interviewed by combat photographer Sgt Eddie L. Cole.

Deparment of Defense (USMC) Photo A416704



The response and reaction to these developments were mixed along racial, gender, age, and rank lines. The older and more senior black Marines, enlisted and officer, acknowledged that there were problems that needed to be remedied, but did not agree with the response to these issues chosen and implemented by the younger generation. The reaction and response of the senior white Marine officer and enlisted man characterized these occurrences as divisive to the Corps. They blamed the McNamara project and the civilian judiciary system, which tended to view the Marine Corps, and the other Services, as a viable means of "squaring away" many a wayward youth. In reality, the young black Marines viewed these two groups (their leadership) as parts of the problem rather than the solution.

Towards Progress—Solving the Problem

In response to the challenge presented by racial problems, a number of ideas and initiatives were explored at the local command level and at Headquarters Marine Corps. On the East Coast, where discriminatory off-base practices were as daunting and divisive as the on-base challenges, the

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A415451

MajGen Raymond G. Davis awards the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" to LtCol Kenneth H. Berthoud for Vietnam service. The presentation was made at Headquarters, Marine Corps. Berthoud was the first Special Advisor for Minority Officer Procurement.

Commanding General, 2d Marine Division, Major General Michael P. Ryan, launched an investigation in April 1969 to uncover the reasons for the racial problems and to formulate responses. A result was the publication of a division order and pamphlet on building unit pride and esprit de corps.[3] In less than one month after the initiative, Camp Lejeune experienced one of its more publicized racial incidents when a riot ensued between black and white Marines of the same battalion. The outcomes of that incident included the death of a white Marine, the courts martial of a number of black Marines, and the relief of the battalion commander—the first black Marine to command an infantry battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Hurdle L. Maxwell.

Following hearings held at Camp Lejeune by a House Armed Services Subcommittee, General Leonard F. Chapman, Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), took a number of steps to solve the racial problems and to eliminate discrimination from the Marine Corps. The assistant commandant and Chapman's successor, General Robert E. Cushman, would continue these changes.

Department of Defense Interest

During the late 1960s, the issue of Negro officer representation within the Marine Corps and the Navy became a matter of concern for the Department of Defense. In a May 1967 memorandum from Assistant Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance to Secretary of the Navy Paul H. Nitze, concern was expressed regarding "the distressingly low Negro officer content of the Marine Corps and the Navy." While acknowledging the increase in Negro enrollment at the Naval Academy and in Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps units, Vance suggested that "at a minimum, the Navy Depart-

ment should double the number of Negro officers, by pursuing the senior enlisted ranks and the establishing of NROTC units at predominantly Negro colleges." [4*]

Looking For A Few Good Men . . . and Women

As a result of the racial disorders that occurred, and outside interests, the Marine Corps pursued several major initiatives: a Human Relations Training Program; a Commandant's Advisory Committee on Minority Affairs, composed of prominent civilians of various races; an Equal Opportunity Staff Section; and an officer recruiting and retention strategy devised to increase the number of Negro officers. An advisory billet also was created to keep the Marine Corps' manpower chief, and the Commandant, abreast of the progress of these initiatives and related matters. Among the related matters were Negro officer recruiting, assignments, and retention. The advisory billet was initially named Special Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower) for Minority Officer Procurement and was occupied by a black officer. The first officer to occupy the special advisor position was Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth H. Berthoud, Jr., a former Navy corpsman.

Berthoud began his Marine Corps career as a combat arms officer in the tank military occupational specialty (MOS). He later changed his MOS to the supply occupational field. Berthoud became the third black officer to command at the battalion-level when he commanded the 9th Motor Transport Battalion for five months in the early 1970s.

The Marine Corps' strategy to improve the possibilities for advancement of Negro officers during General Chapman's tenure emphasized three areas: increasing the number of Negro officers; assigning Negro officers to high-visibility, career-enhancing billets; and improving the retention rate of Negro officers. One of the first initiatives implemented in 1968 was the Negro Officer Selection Officer (NOSO) concept; the title was later changed to Minority Officer Selection Officer (MOSO).[5*] Six black officers with the rank of captain were assigned to the six Marine Corps Recruiting Districts to assist white officer selection officers in recruiting black officer candidate applicants. The MOSOs were not precluded from recruiting whites, but their primary purpose and focus was black prospects. As Berthoud later stated:

> This strategy was to augment the number of black officer candidates we [the Marine Corps] were trying to get from the Enlisted Commissioning Programs (ECP) and the Broadened Opportunity for Officer Selection Training program (BOOST). Also, we needed to increase the visibility of black officers at the Naval Academy, The Marine Barracks at 8th & I, Naval ROTC units, and at Headquarters Marine Corps. At that time [1968], I was the only black officer assigned there. Despite the tendency to lower standards, the black officers who initially worked on this issue wanted to make sure the standards were the same as they were for the white officer applicants.[6]

The lowering of standards to attain numerical goals was implied in a June 1967 memorandum from Assistant Secretary of Defense Thomas D. Morris to the Undersecretary of the Navy. Recalling the intent of Vance's previous memorandum of May 1967 and a discussion with two members of his staff (of flag and general officer rank), Morris repeated that "it was indicated that the establishment of an NROTC unit at a predominantly Negro institution appeared feasible with possible alterations to present standards." [7**]

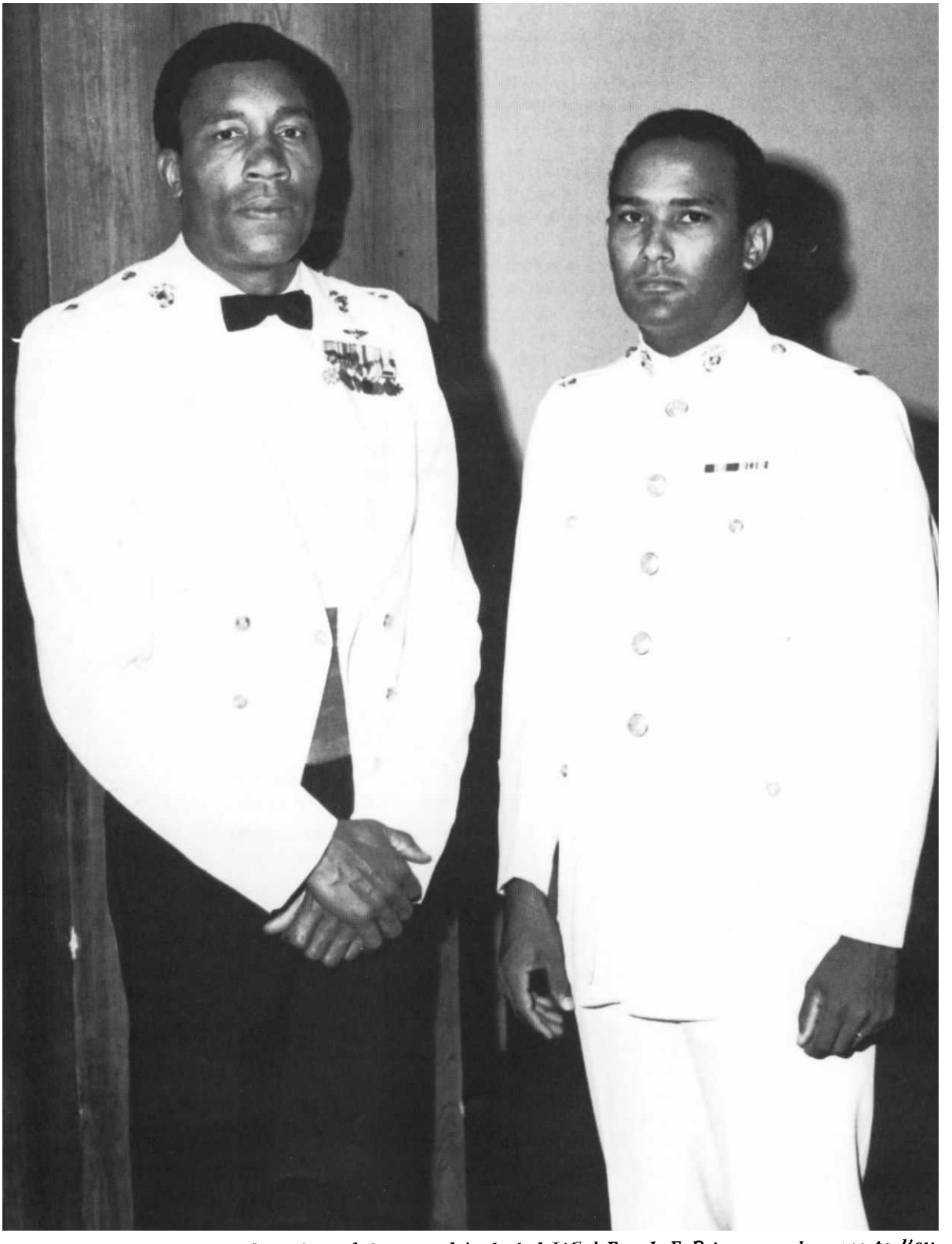
A Change of the Guard

In 1970, another pioneer, Lieutenant Colonel Frank E. Petersen, replaced Berthoud. A former

*In his memorandum, Vance extolled the efforts of the Navy Department regarding the increase in Naval Academy enrollment, but expressed concern over the number of Negro officers in the Marine Corps and the Navy compared to other Services, describing it as distressingly low. He suggested that a minimum numerical objective should be to double the number of Negro officers.

*George H. Walls, Jr., was one of the first African-American officers in the Marine Corps assigned to officer selection officer duty. He was assigned to the 4th Marine Corps District located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. One of his subsequent assignments was as a Marine officer instructor at North Carolina Central University.

**The memorandum was a follow-on to Vance's memorandum approximately one month earlier. Morris mentions a previous discussion on the subject with a major general and an admiral who suggested that establishing NROTC units at Negro institutions could be accomplished with possible alterations to present standards and procedures.



Leaders who marked the changing of the guard included LtCol Frank E. Peterson, who rose to lieutenant general before retirement. As Special Advisor, he instituted changes in the direction of acquiring African-American officers that were not being met by existing practices. He is shown with officer selection officer Capt Henry J. Ferrand.

Navy Seaman Apprentice, Petersen became the first black Marine to earn the wings of a naval aviator, the first black to command a tactical air squadron, and the first black to reach general officer rank. Petersen's initial assignment placed him under the staff cognizance of the Marine Corps personnel chief; shortly afterwards, he was assigned as the Special Assistant for Minority Affairs to the Commandant, General Robert E. Cushman. The continuation of energy, emphasis, and focus Petersen brought to the task at hand were the result of his thoughts regarding the direction the Marine Corps should take while a young captain studying at the Marine Corps' Amphibious Warfare School.[8*]

One of the first recommendations Petersen made was to expand the MOSO concept by assigning 11 additional black officers to recruit officer candidates in cities having sizeable populations of young black men and women attending college. The cities subsequently selected as MOSO sites were: Atlanta; Chicago; Kansas City; Los Angeles; New Orleans; New York City; Philadelphia; Raleigh; Richmond; San Francisco; and Washington, D.C.[9]

The officers assigned to these locations began their tours with the title of Minority Officer Selection Officers and were co-located with white officers designated as officer selection officers. In 1974, the title MOSO was abandoned and all officers assigned to the officer recruiting billets were designated as officer selection officers with no racial distinction attached to their title or duties. Also, one black officer was assigned to each Marine Corps District Headquarters to assist OSOs nationwide. According to Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Ambrewster, "two major concerns were establishing a common understanding that it was not our [black OSOs] sole responsibility to recruit more black officers. Also, we were concerned about the short-term, career-damaging impact of being assigned away from the Fleet Marine Force so early in our careers."[10**]

Petersen's successor was Major Edward L. Green, a communications officer turned infantryman. During Green's tenure, the Marine Corps began to expand its approach and emphasis on the black officer retention issue to include areas such as performance at The Basic School and command assignments.[11*] Among his many assignments prior to retirement in December 1980 were the Naval Academy, where he was instrumental in attracting a number of midshipmen to the Marine Corps, and the 3d Marine Division, where he became the second black Marine officer to command an infantry battalion. Green's successor, Major Solomon P. Hill, an infantry officer, was the last officer to occupy the special assistant billet until August 1993. Hill also served as the executive officer of the Corps' Officer Candidates School during the 1970s.

In addition to increasing the number of black officers working on college campuses and in communities as OSOs, emphasis was placed on assigning black officers to duties in the remaining two major Marine officer accession sources, the Naval Academy and the various NROTC units. In 1976, the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant of the Marine Corps executed a memorandum of agreement allocating the Marine Corps a 16 2/3 percent share of the NROTC scholarships.[12] A Navy and Marine Corps agreement consummated in July 1972 had allocated a similar share of the senior class at the Naval Academy.** The number, however, was not a guarantee. The Marine Corps had to "attract" its share of potential Marine officers. Accordingly, the Marine Corps assigned some of its best officers to these billets. The focus of the NROTC program assignments was the historically and predominantly black colleges and universities. This was in conjunction with the Navy's effort to increase its visibility on black college campuses and increase its black officer population (consistent with the Vance Memorandum of May 1967). Five black colleges and universities were selected for NROTC unit locations: Florida A&M University (activated in 1972); Prairie View

*Licutenant General Peterson later recalled that while a student at the Amphibious Warfare School he wrote a paper focusing on increasing the number of black officers. A number of the initiatives presented in the paper were implemented when he occupied the special advisory billet.

**Lieutenant Colonel Ambrewster was among the first black officers assigned to officer selection officer duty. He later cited a concern of among those officers regarding the promotional and career impact of being assigned out of their military occupational specialties and away from the Fleet Marine Force so early in their careers. According to Ambrewster those concerns were addressed satisfactorily hy Lieutenant Colonel Peterson while he was special advisor.

*Lieutenant Colonel Green was a former aide-de-camp to Assistant Commandant, General Samuel Jaskilka, and also special advisor, where he played a pivotal role in the Marine Corps' early efforts to increase the presence of black officers.

**On 15 July 1972, the Chief of Naval Personnel and the Marine Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) executed the original agreement covering the accession of Naval Academy graduates into the Marine Corps. A follow-on memorandum of 22 April 1983 modified the initial agreement capping the accessions at one-sixth of the graduating class. Also several other provisions of the original agreement were revised and/or clarified.

A group portrait of the recruiting pioneers in the officer selection effort includes future senior Marine Corps leaders. Little did they know that their actions would result in success in facing the accessions challenge.

A&M University (activated in 1968); North Carolina Central University (activated in 1972); Savannah State University (activated in 1971); and Southern University (activated in 1971).*

Two additional areas of focus for assignments having to do with the accession of new lieutenants were Officer Candidates School and The Basic School. In 1972, two black officers were assigned to duties in those areas, Major Clay Baker to Officer Candidates School as executive officer and Captain Archie Joe Biggers to The Basic School as an instructor. Both Marines were infantry officers and veterans of the Vietnam War, when Biggers was awarded the Silver Star.

Passing the Word

Consistent with its need to get the word out and to develop target markets in communities and on college campuses, the Marine Corps initiated discussions with various community, social, and professional organizations. The National Association for the Advancement Colored People (NAACP), the National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Montfort Point Marine Association were among the organizations contacted.[13]

Relationships of this nature would later prove to be critical elements in the Marine Corps' attempts to publicize its efforts, generate interest and applicants, and receive valuable "grass roots" response as to the effectiveness of its strategy. Years later this idea would be expanded, producing varying degrees of success.

*A Chief of Naval Education and Training Command information paper discusses the history behind the establishment of NROTC units at black colleges. The paper cites the Vance Memorandum of May 1967 as the precedent setter. In 1970, the CNO set a goal that 10 percent of all units would be on HBCU campuses by 1975. In addition to the five original units, two additional units were opened as consortiums in 1982 and 1987; the units were Norfolk State University and Morehouse College, respectively. Norfolk State formed a consortium with Old Dominion called the Hampton Roads Consortium. Morehouse worked closely with Georgia Technical University to form the Atlanta Consortium.

Capt Henry J. Ferrand, as New Orleans NOSO, adminsters the oath of office to a newly commissioned second lieutenant early in the 1970s. The directed grass-roots effort was successful in attracting new qualified officers from previously overlooked sources.

Assessing the Results

Logically, the effectiveness of the Marine Corps' new initiatives had to be assessed. How effective were these initiatives in attracting new black officers? The Marine Corps' progress can be viewed with respect to two areas, accessions and composition.

In 1970, the initial goals for the recruitment and accession of black officers were established in a CMC memorandum, which prescribed "minority" accession goals for the five-year period, 1972 through 1976. Accessions is defined as the number of second lieutenants commissioned each year as a result of fulfilling pre-commissioning training and/or educational requirements. Prior to 1972, there were no black officer recruiting and accession goals established as targets or measures of success. However, in 1971 the Marine Corps did access 48 black officers. Table 2.1 portrays the accession results from 1972 through 1976. It reveals that the Marine Corps was successful in meeting its black officer accession goals from 1972 through 1976; however, a number of subsequent developments affected future attainment prospects.

In October 1976, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) levied a formal requirement for yearly "minority" officer accession goals. In 1977, the Department of Defense authorized the Marine Corps to include Hispanic accessions in its total minority accession goal calculations.[14] The Marine Corps' "minority" officer accession figures for 1977 through 1979 (Table 2.2) reveal that the Corps failed to reach its combined black and Hispanic accession goals for the remainder of the decade.

In 1970, blacks comprised 1.3 percent of the

Table 2.1 Black Officer Accessions (1972- 1976)[15]*

Fiscal Year	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Total Accession Goal	1,924	2,325	1,900	2,275	2,175
Black Goal	100	100	100	100	100
Percent of Accession Goal	5.2	4.3	5.3	4.4	4.6
Total Accessions	1,763	2,262	1,927	2,367	2,193
Total Black Accessions	103	101	152	138	141
Percent of Total Accessions	5.8	4.5	7.9	5.8	6.4

*Minority accessions prior to fiscal year 1977 included blacks only; however, when referring to blacks, the term "minority" was used.

Marine Corps' officer population in the grades of second lieutenant (O-1) through general (O-10).[16] That percentage reflected about 300 officers in an officer corps of approximately 23,000. In 1971, the total number of officers was reduced to 19,905; with the reduction, black representation decreased to approximately 1.2 percent. Among a total of 234 black officers, the highest grade represented was lieutenant colonel. Five black women were also among that number; their highest rank was captain. Table 2.3 contains black officer demographics as of 30 June 1971.

As the Marine Corps progressed through the 1970s, post-Vietnam War manpower reductions

Table 2.2 Minority Officer Accessions (1977-1979)[17]*

Fiscal Year	1977	1978	1979
Total Accession Goal	2,312	1,850	1,903
Minority Goal	185	174	174
Percent of Accession Goal	8.0	9.4	9.1
Total Accessions	2,022	1,873	1,919
Total Minority Accessions	145	143	126
Percent of Total Accessions	7.2	7.6	6.6

*Minority numbers reflect black and Hispanic accessions and there is no information available for determining minority goals.

Table 2.3 Black Officer Population (As of 30 June 1971)[18]

Rank	Total (all Races)	Total Black	Percentage of Total	Black Females
O- 10	2	0	0.0	-
O-9	9	0	0.0	-
O-8	25	0	0.0	-
O-7	38	0	0.0	-
O-6	742	0	0.0	-
O-5	1,638	3	0.2	-
O-4	3,328	11	0.3	-
O-3	5,609	59	1.1	1
O-2	6,039	121	2.0	2
O-1	2,485	40	1.6	2
Total	19,915	234	1.2	5

reflected a decrease in its officer corps strength of approximately 3,000 officers during the period June 1971 to June 1979. Despite this reduction in total officer strength, the black officer population grew in percentage and in actual numbers. Overall, black officer composition rose from 1.3 percent in 1970 to 3.7 percent in September 1979.[19] This percentage increase reflected modest gains in the total number of black female officers and increases in the number of black male officers in the field-grade ranks (O-4 to O-6). Conversely, only one black female was in the field grade rank structure. That distinction belonged to Major Gloria Smith, a supply officer.

Although the Marine Corps was showing signs of progress, it still lagged behind the Army (6.9 percent) and the Air Force (4.3 percent). Only the Navy's black officer composition (2.2 percent) was lower.[20] Table 2.4 contains the black officer population as of 30 September 1979.

Although the Marine Corps does not promote its officers based on occupational requirements, it is a widely held belief that the maximum opportunities for command assignments and promotions reside within the combat arms occupational fields (aviation, infantry, artillery, and armor), as opposed to combat support and combat service support fields. The latter two occupational fields include

Table 2.4 Black Officer Population (As of 30 September 1979)[21]

Rank	Total (All Races)	Total Black	Percentage of Total	Black Females
O-10	2	0	0.0	-
O-09	7	0	0.0	-
O-08	23	0	0.0	-
O-07	33	0	0.0	-
O-06	576	1	0.2	-
O-05	1,495	7	0.5	-
O-04	2,668	36	1.3	1
O-03	4,722	195	4.1	3
O-02	4,446	259	5.8	8
O-01	2,962	135	4.6	3
Total	16,934	633	3.7	15

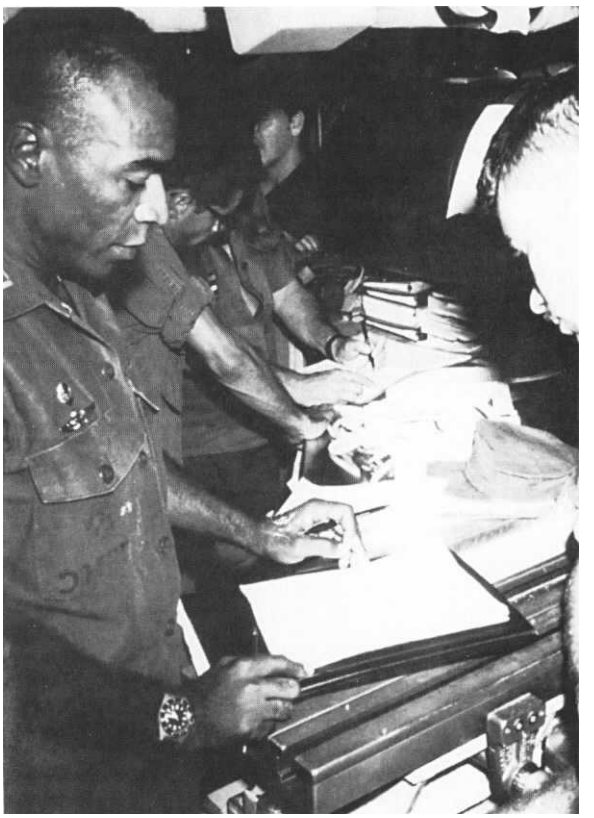
specialties such as communications, combat engineer, supply, maintenance, motor transport, and logistics. A review of September 1979 occupational field data reveals that more than one-third (approximately 36 percent) of the black officers on active duty were in combat arms occupational fields, against more than one-half (approximately 54 percent) of the white officers. The combat service support occupational fields contained about 18 percent of the black officer strength against 15 percent for white officers. The combat support occupational fields comprised the remaining 46 percent of blacks, against 31 percent for white officers. The occupational fields absorbing the bulk of the combat arms disparities were aviation, infantry, artillery and armor.[22]

Highlights of the Decade

The 1970s can best be characterized as the beginning of monumental change in the racial composition of the Marine Corps' officer corps. Nearly 15 years after the integration of its ranks and 22 years after the commissioning of the first black Marine officer, the Marine Corps began to reap modest benefits from the various officer recruiting and accession implemented 10 years earlier. Black officers were beginning to be assigned to billets previously assigned to white officers, such as officer selection officers in predominantly white populated areas, The Basic School, naval test pilot, and command at the battalion and squadron levels. The most significant historical highlight of the era was the selection of Colonel Frank E. Petersen as the first black Marine to attain the rank of brigadier general in February 1979, 204 years after the birth of the Marine Corps. This event represented a significant first for the Marine Corps.

In November 1973, Lieutenant Colonel Clarence L. Davis assumed command of VMA-214, the famed "Black Sheep" squadron. As an alumnus of Texas Southern University, Davis became the second black officer to command a tactical aviation unit.

While seasoned veterans made their presence felt, a young lieutenant and graduate of Hampton University made history in the area of marksmanship. In May 1974, First Lieutenant Charles H. Thorton, Jr., became the first black officer to earn the Distinguished Marksman Badge. In 1978, he added to his noteworthy accomplishments when he achieved another first by earning the Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge. Young black



Marine Corps Historical Collection

A noted leader and role model, Maj James Capers, Jr., was commissioned on the battlefield in Vietnam and commanded a Marine Guard Detachment and Force Reconnaissance Company. This picture was on board a submarine whose crew was coordinating the underwater landing and recovery of recon teams at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the 1970s.

Marine officers were also establishing their presence in international athletic competition. First Lieutenants Lloyd Keaser and Bert Freeman represented the United States as Olympic athletes during the decade, Keaser as a wrestler and Freeman as a fencer. Freeman was the first black athlete to compete in fencing competition on the Olympic level. Both were graduates of the Naval Academy.

Quality Begets Quality

Those assigned to the various "groundbreaking" officer accessions programs during the 1970s were proven performers with excellent records. Among them were Major George Walls, Major Clay Baker, Major Clifford Stanley, Major James May, Major Edward Green, Captain Del Costin, Captain Fred Jones, Captain Charles Bolden, Captain Ramon

Johnson, Captain Jim Allen, Captain Solomon Hill, Captain Archie Joe Biggers, Captain Bill Jones, Captain Dave Saddler, Captain Gill Robinson, Captain Al Whittaker, Captain Clarence Willie, Captain Tony Ambrewster, First Lieutenant Hank Ferrand, First Lieutenant Chris Baker, First Lieutenant Al Davis, and many others. All of these officers, as well as a number of others, went on to have highly successful careers in the Marine Corps and in the civilian sector. Among them are active duty and retired generals, colonels, lieutenant colonels, astronauts, educators, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, and corporate officers. The point to be made is two-fold: the quality of officers entering the Corps who were selected to pioneer change and the demonstrated level of commitment of the Marine Corps to assign some its finest officers to challenging assignments.

CHAPTER 3

The Efforts of the 1980s

Following a decade characterized by a host of initiatives that were catalysts for significant change in the officer corps, at a cursory glance the 1980s seemed to pale in comparison to the 1970s. After making considerable progress in improving the racial diversity of an officer corps which now looked different from that of the late 1960s and 1970s, the Marine Corps' officer recruiting and accessions focus expanded, encompassing other challenging areas such as replenishing the inventory of lawyers and pilots. These requirements broadened the focus of the officer recruiting strategy, but diluted the concentrated efforts to increase the number of black officers and officers from other under-represented racial and ethnic groups. Several of the initiatives that were implemented to enhance racial understanding and race relations and to improve the racial diversity of the officer corps were discontinued as a result of an improved racial climate. Among these initiatives were: the Human Relations Training program; the Special Advisor for Minority Affairs billet; the Minority Officer Selection Officer concept; and the Commandant's Advisory Committee on Minority Affairs.

Fortunately for the Corps, the racial climate improved significantly. The enhanced state of race relations could rightfully be attributed to a number of factors, among which were enlightened leadership and an increase in understanding and tolerance among Marines of different races. Also, a more racially diverse officer corps contributed to that state of affairs. Despite this progress, the issue of black officer recruiting and accessions continued to be a challenge to the leadership and commitment of the Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps entered the new decade with less than optimal results from its officer recruiting and accessions strategy. During the 1977-1979 period, the Marine Corps failed to attain its expanded "minority" (e.g., black, Hispanic, and other racial and ethnic groups) officer accession goal. The early 1980s were characterized by this same lack of success in the area of "minority" accessions. Although the total numerical officer accession requirements for the period 1980 through 1982 were accomplished each year (at times exceeding 100 percent), the race and ethnic accession goals for the same period were not attained. The total number of black and Hispanic officers accessed in each of those years ranged from approximately 60 to 70 percent of the yearly goals.[1] Perhaps indicating a reversal of the trend, accession statistics for fiscal year 1983 reveal that 121 (6.4 percent) of the 1,890 lieutenants accessed that year were black; for black officer accessions, this represented a goal attainment in excess of 125 percent.[2]

In addition to the continued emphasis on black officer accessions, the Marine Corps expanded its focus to include career development and progression. Areas such as military occupational field selection, Basic School performance, assignments, promotions, and performance evaluations were added to the many issues requiring examination and analysis. This was to ensure those black officers, and other under-represented groups, received the same opportunities for advancement.[3] For example, in 1986 the Marine Corps completed the first phase of the Black Officer Career Development Plan. This plan focused on a number of professional development areas that were stressed in the 1970s and the eventual objects of repeated emphasis in the years ahead. Among those areas were Basic School performance, increasing the number of role models in the entry-level screening and training programs, and increasing the number of black lieutenants in combat arms occupational fields.[4]

Forging a Consensus

The accessing of new officers is the foundation for increasing racial diversity in the officer corps.

A related matter that emerged as a major point of discussion in the effort to attract more black officers was the selection of a suitable benchmark upon which the black officer accession goals should be based. There were a number of divergent views. Among the factors considered were:

- The black enlisted Marine composition percentage (approximately 20 percent in 1985).[5]

- The percentage of minority males possessing a bachelor's degree (based on the 1980 U.S. Census, approximately 12.1 percent).[6]

- The percentage of blacks in the national population (based on the 1980 U.S. Census, approximately 8.5 percent).[7]

- The percentage of new accessions required to achieve black officer strength equal to 12 percent of the total officer corps in 1992 (factoring in historical black officer retention rates).

From 1983 to 1989, the Marine Corps employed a modified version of two of the factors as a basis for establishing racial and ethnic accession goals. As a starting point, black officer accession goals were based on the percentage of black males possessing a bachelor's degree; that figure was adjusted to consider retention rates for each group. The ultimate goal was to build an officer corps wherein the total of blacks, Hispanics, and other racial and ethnic groups comprised 11 percent of the total number of unrestricted officers by the beginning of fiscal year 1992.[8] That methodology for determining accession goals resulted in "minority" officer accessions equaling 11 percent of the total yearly accessions–six percent blacks, three percent Hispanics, and two percent for other racial and ethnic groups.

Department of the Navy Interest

During the 1983-1985 period, the Department of the Navy developed a heightened interest in the racial composition of the officer rank structures of the Navy and the Marine Corps. That interest gen-

Efforts to involve national groups included close liaison with community leaders, with such meetings as that of BGen Clifford L. Stanley and Julian Bond, center left and right. The occasion was the annual NAACP conference and community recognition program.

Photo courtesy of Joe Geezer III

Photo courtesy of Joe Geezer III

BGen Leo V. Williams III meets with Congressman Kweisi Mfume, the present head of the NAACP, one of the oldest civil rights organizations in the United States.

erated the assignment of two officers to the staff of the Secretary of the Navy for the purpose of tracking the efforts of the Naval Services.[9] The Marine Corps assigned Lieutenant Colonel Clifford L. Stanley to the billet. Stanley's official title was Marine Corps Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) and Special Assistant for Officer Programs. As a result of the Marine Corps' efforts to attract black midshipmen, Stanley was assigned to the Naval Academy in the mid-1970s to teach leadership and psychology.

Implementing New Strategies

Intent on increasing the number of black officers and regenerating the momentum of the early 1970s, the Marine Corps, under the leadership of three successive Commandants, Generals Robert R. Barrow, Paul X. Kelly, and Alfred M. Gray, implemented two major initiatives: the addition of "minority" officer recruiting billets in the 6th and 8th Marine Corps Recruiting Districts; and the assignment of racial and ethnic category recruiting and accession goals. Both initiatives revived the long-term focus and emphasis on the black officer recruiting and accessions effort.

The "minority" officer-recruiting billet was officially designated the Assistant for Minority Officer Procurement (AMOP) and was occupied by a black captain. Two recruiting districts were selected and designated as sites for the AMOP billets, the 6th Marine Corps District headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, and the 8th Marine Corps District headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana. These districts were selected based upon their black college student populations. The job of the Assistant for Minority Officer Procurement was to assist officer selection officers throughout the district primarily in their black officer recruiting efforts. Through this initiative, the Marine Corps began to target and canvass black churches, fraternities, and sororities to assist in getting the word out regarding commissioning opportunities and for potential applicants. The first two officers to serve in the billet were Captain David Jones, a supply officer (Atlanta), and Captain W. Clyde Lemon, a combat engineer (New Orleans). Lemon developed a minority recruiting action plan that provided guidance and ideas for accessing and developing the target markets. The plan is still in use today by officer selection officers nationwide. The results achieved as a result of the Assistant for Minority Officer Procurement initiative were directly related to the support and leadership provided by the commands and the intended utilization and employment of the AMOP. The encouraging results achieved in the 8th District were a direct result of the support rendered by Brigadier General Jarvis D. Lynch, Jr., the district director, and Colonel John F. Juul, the assistant director for personnel procurement. The AMOP concept was utilized from 1983 through 1989.

The second major initiative that positively affected the black officer recruiting efforts of the 1980s was the implementation of racial and ethnic category recruiting goals. Colonel Robert C. Lewis generated this idea. Lewis was the director of the 9th Marine Corps District, headquartered in Kansas City, Kansas. The concept involved the assignment of officer recruiting "quotas" (a generic recruiting term with no racial connotation) to each recruiting district for black, Hispanic, and "other" ethnic groups (e.g., Asian-Americans), based upon the demographics of each district's college population and other qualitative and quantitative factors.

The method of allocating numerical black recruiting quota allocations to each district was developed by the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) and encompassed the following factors: historical black accessions data by Service; local recruiting conditions; the geographic distribution of college entrance examination test scores; and estimates of

the available qualified population, based upon tests scores of 1,000 and higher on the SAT and 45 and higher on the ACT.[10] This method of computing officer candidate recruiting quotas was implemented in November 1989; prior to that time, officer recruiting quotas were assigned on the basis of white and "minority applicants." The CNA study allocated the largest black percentage share, 28.6 percent, to the 6th Marine Corps District (Atlanta, Georgia). The district's territory included the states of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and North and South Carolina. The second highest allocation, 21.6 percent, was assigned to the 4th Marine Corps District, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Its area included the states of Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The smallest share was allocated to the 12th Marine Corps District headquartered in San Francisco, California. The south and southwest regions of the country reflected a 13.1 percent share assigned to the 8th Marine Corps District, headquartered in New Orleans; Louisiana and Texas were among its areas of responsibility.

The impact of this change caused the officer selection officers to work harder at canvassing, prospecting, and qualifying potential applicants, but this method of "quota" assignment intensified the focus on black officer recruiting and increased the number of black officer program applicants. In addition to these major initiatives several other concepts were implemented to augment the general " minority" recruiting effort.

Some examples were:

- The assignment of newly Basic School-trained black and Hispanic lieutenants to temporary Officer Selection Officer (OSO) duties for 14-day increments to assist permanently assigned OSOs in their prospecting efforts for "minority" candidates.

- The development of officer program advertisements featuring black officers.

- The targeting of press releases towards minority campuses and communities highlighting the accomplishments of minority officers.[11]

Underlying the various initiatives, two general officers, Carl E. Mundy, Jr., and Jerome G. Cooper, provided critical leadership and guidance to the black officer recruiting effort. Mundy, a former officer selection officer and future Commandant, as the Director of the Marine Corps Personnel Procurement Division, provided top-level attention and support to the black officer recruiting and accessions issue in the form of personnel and resources. The Assistant for Minority Officer Procurement concept was implemented while he headed the Personnel Procurement Division. Cooper, a pioneer in his own right, a reservist and future Director of the Personnel Procurement Division, consistently and vocally brought black officer recruiting and accessions inequities to the attention of several Commandants.

Table 3.1 Black Officer Accessions (1983-1989)

Fiscal Year	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Total Accession Goal	1,890	1,544	1,443	1,563	1,364	1,542	1,458
Black Goal	95	93	87	94	82	93	87
Percent of Accession Goal	5.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Total Accessions	1,890	1,544	1,443	1,563	1,364	1,542	1,458
Total Black Accessions	121	103	91	80	77	88	90
Percent of Total Accessions	6.4	6.7	6.3	5.1	5.6	5.7	6.2