

Rostker Tackles Civilian Education

Quality Initiatives for the 21st Century — Continuing the Dialogue

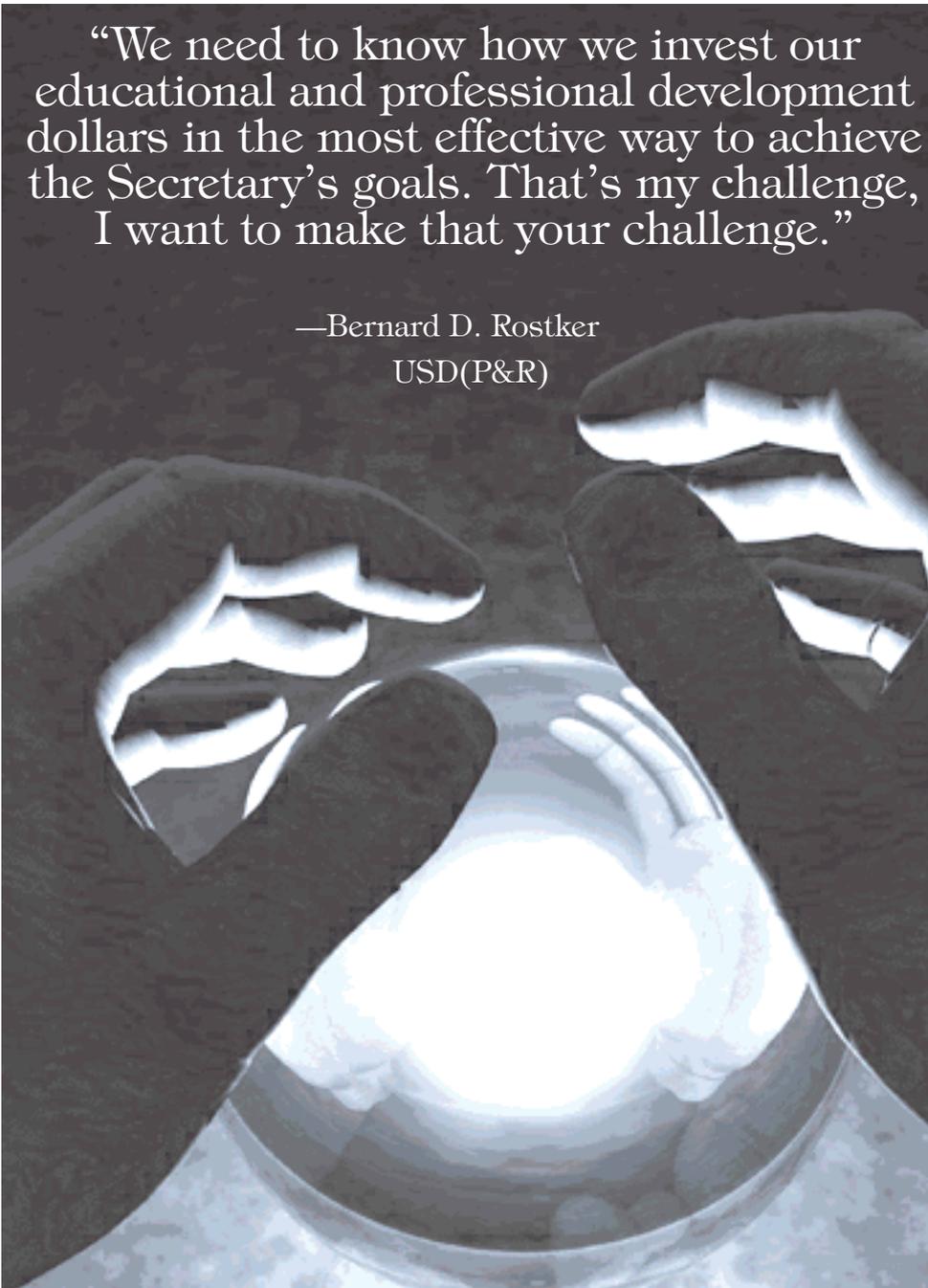
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In an ever-changing world where advanced technology is king, preparation is key. To survive in today's information-saturated society, one must not only compete, but also keep pace and excel. Such is certainly true for Department of Defense military and civilian employees. For military personnel, on-the-job training comes with the territory. The civilian workforce, however, does not share in the same opportunities.

Dr. Bernard D. Rostker, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in a recent speech at the Conference on Civilian Education and Professional Development at the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., addressed such differences and introduced new ways to “even the score,” allowing for training and progression in the civilian workforce.

“Part of the overall equation of improving and maintaining our defense civilian workforce is providing professional development and career management for the civilian workforce,” he told the large, diversified audience of military and civilian educators. According to a Defense Science Board report, a professional development program for the civilian workforce comparable to the training and education provided to DoD's military officers must be established. The contention is that DoD must develop and sharpen the civilian workforce for the future — and the time to start is today.

Rostker spoke on the comparative differences between civilian training and



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USD(P&R)

education compared to that of military officers. He observed that civilians are generally expected to bring with them their education and their training. And as a result, the Department has been slow in initiating requirements for in-Service education. The Department of Defense, however, is transforming itself, according to Rostker, "so that we can better focus on those areas as an investment in the future."

Profiles Within the Civilian Workforce

"We are changing radically the way we think about careers in the Civil Service," Rostker said. He recognized that in the past, older individuals would retain senior government jobs, whereas the younger individuals would retain jobs as contractors. But as time went on, when senior government jobs became available, it was the younger contractors who were competing for those jobs. This breaks the myth, he said, that people in government jobs all go out and become contractors. These were contractors that wanted to come in and be government employees. He contends that we have to understand these patterns as we move toward the future.

Rostker believes effective management is key to working toward any goal. He explains that management techniques of succession and transition are the way to properly understand how to bring people into these roles and how to better develop employees. He also expressed the need to manage the transition of retirees and new personnel. "We'll have a very difficult situation over the next ten to fifteen years as this older workforce – the workforce we largely did not shape in the 1990s—starts retiring.

"It clearly is my intention to sponsor a DoD instruction that establishes academic quality standards for all of our educational institutions," Rostker continued. Standards for academic quality, he noted, will serve as a basis for communication between functional sponsors and the educational institutions that support them in developing and educating their workforce.



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"It remains clear," Rostker said, "that we need to improve communication between the functional sponsors and their institutions. Career structures are tied to the need to create institutions of higher learning within the Department and to make those quality institutions ... That's why we established the Office of [DoD Chancellor of Education]."

Rostker also spoke of the OSD-chartered Metrics of Excellence Task Force, which will measure DoD's progress toward improving civilian education. The Task Force, he said, will establish standards for academic quality and provide a basis for reporting on resources that will provide a common ground for understanding, measuring, and reporting the performance of institutions that are critical in the training and education of the workforce.

"Most of our DoD educational institutions that teach civilians (and some colleges from the professional military education system) have been participating in this task force," added Rostker. "We have conducted several studies to determine competencies that we need in the future, and several more themes have emerged. Our workforce will need to be better problem solvers. We'll need more advanced skills."

Defense Leadership and Management Program

"In 1997 we created the Defense Leadership and Management Program (DLAMP). This is our first systematic Department-wide approach to prepare our next generation of civilian leaders."

The DLAMP, Rostker explained, requires a one-year rotational assignment and three months of professional development in the senior military system. It also requires advanced graduate courses in subjects relating to defense leadership.

"DLAMP has heightened our awareness of the need for similar investments in other areas. The Defense Science Board has recommended that we build a program that would be a preview, where we stress courses and experiences in the GS-9 through -12 levels that would pre-

BERNARD D. ROSTKER, PH.D.

Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)



Bernard D. Rostker was sworn in as the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness on May 23, 2000. A Presidential appointee confirmed by the Senate, he is the Defense Secretary's senior policy advisor on recruitment, career development, pay and benefits for 1.4 million active duty military personnel, 1.3 million Guard and Reserve personnel, and 725,000 DoD civilians.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness oversees the \$15 billion Defense Health Program; Defense Commissaries and Exchanges with \$5 billion in annual sales; the Defense Education Activity, which supports over 100,000 students; and the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, the nation's largest equal opportunity training program. Rostker is responsible for developing policy guidance on and overseeing the state of our armed forces' military readiness.

Prior to his current position, Rostker served as the 25th Under Secretary of the Army where he focused on fulfilling the statutory responsibilities for recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, training, and mobilizing the Army and managing its \$64 billion annual budget and more than 1.3 million active duty, National Guard, Army Reserve, and civilian personnel.

For the four years prior to becoming Under Secretary, Rostker was Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. On Nov. 12, 1996, he was also named Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense for Gulf War Illnesses. He continues in this assignment and is responsible for coordinating all activities related to Department of Defense inquiries into the nature and causes of Gulf War illnesses.

Rostker received a Bachelor of Science degree from New York University in 1964 where he was a Distinguished Military Graduate of the ROTC Program and commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army Reserve. He also holds Master's and Doctorate degrees in Economics from Syracuse University. He began his professional career in 1968 as an economist in the Manpower Requirements Directorate of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis. He left government service in 1970 and moved to the RAND Corporation where he was a research economist and the Program Director of the Manpower Personnel and Training Program, a personnel studies program sponsored by the U.S. Air Force.

In 1977, Rostker returned to government service as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. In 1979, he became Director of Selective Service, where he formulated the Selective Service Revitalization Plan. Under his leadership, the first mass selective service registration since World War II was executed, and almost four million young men registered.

Rostker moved to the Center for Naval Analyses in 1981 as the Director for the Navy's Management Program, where he guided the development of a research and studies program examining major management issues within the Navy. In 1983, he joined Systems Research and Applications Corporation (SRA), a computer software development company, as the Director, Systems Management Division.

In December 1984, Rostker returned to RAND to help establish a new Army studies and analysis center — called The Arroyo Center — where he was Program Director of the Force Development and Employment Program and Associate Director of the Center. In January 1990, Rostker left the Arroyo Center and assumed the position of Director of the Defense Manpower Research Center in RAND's National Defense Research Institute. He held that position until he returned to government service in October 1994.

pare our people then for assignments at that level and for further advancement.”

Accreditation

Rostker believes that the DoD institutions that educate civilians, whether degree-granting or non-degree-granting, will benefit from development in the internal and external quality control process. He said his goal was that a hundred percent of institutions achieve accreditation through voluntary accreditations, whether regional accreditation or through the professional accreditation process.

Rostker challenged the DoD Chancellor to field a Web-based reporting system by next year to implement a system that is competitive through the Metrics of Excellence Task Force and the Working Group on Academic Resources. He wants the system to be less burdensome, and it should allow the collecting and sharing of data and information. His ideas on change cover four areas:

- To build into DoD's institutions and programs the ability to adapt to change as the nature of the Department's work changes. Not only will the workforce change over the next years, but the whole personnel system will also change.
- To serve the needs of DoD's managers.
- To serve the needs of DoD's personnel system.
- To be flexible.

In conclusion, Rostker noted, “Secretary Cohen has made it clear he wants the Department to have a world-class workforce. He expects us to deliver a world-class system of education, training, and professional development that will allow us to track and quickly retain the best workers — the best people — to help us achieve our goals in the twenty-first century.

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