



CLEAR THE WAY

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The Regiment Needs You!

UnCLE Sam wants YOU! I know that we all have seen at least one version of the ubiquitous posters of America's enduring symbol that implores us to serve our great Nation. The appeal of the gentleman in the red, white, and blue top hat and tails affects each individual's senses differently, but the message is clear to all—America is in need, and YOU can make a difference!

If we were to trace the history of the Army, the observation that the Army is in a perpetual state of transition would become glaringly evident. Whether the Army is transitioning from peace to war, or from this kind of structure to that, or going from unpreparedness to preparedness, the Regiment and its soldiers have always been needed. The Regiment has always made a difference. The Regiment has always responded to the call to serve.

Why do we serve? The reasons for service are well known and run the gamut from patriotism, to family tradition, to altruism, or maybe it's simply opportunity. Some view service in the military as an opportunity to achieve an ordered lifestyle, to attain higher education, or to have a second chance.

The Regiment and the Army are undergoing another period of transition. We're in the process of moving from Cold War force structure and mentality to the Chief of Staff of the Army's objective force through transformation. This transition (transformation) is occurring during an unparalleled period of economic growth, prosperity, and opportunity for civilian employment. Those of us in the Army continue to be pressed for service in all parts of the globe—whether it's conducting operational exercises or contingency operations or doing the work back in garrison for two and three of our contemporaries who are deployed.

Why do we continue to serve? We continue to serve for the same reasons we originally joined. For some we enjoy the lifestyle, the camaraderie, the pride in our work, and the contributions to our Nation and to the people around the world who have better lives because of our efforts. Additionally, how can we forget the countless souls we have protected from tyranny and oppression, or those we have provided an opportunity for a second chance?

Some are now saying to themselves, "So what! What has the Army done for me? My senior leaders have abandoned my family and me. The Army is no longer about warfighting, and the risks for my mistakes are too great. The 'PowerPoint® Rangers' have taken over the Army, and I've spent most of my career on repetitive deployments. Bottom line, the Army is not what I thought it was going to be, and the time has come for me to redirect my life."

I agree; it is time for all of us to redirect our lives. The time has come for all of us to join together—junior leaders, senior leaders, and new recruits alike. It is now time to rededicate ourselves to Uncle Sam's call to service, to renew our obligations to each other, to reconnect ourselves with our civilian communities, and to reaffirm our commitment to live up to the core Army values.

The Army's senior leaders are committed to their people. The Army is still about preparing for war and, if called upon, to fight and win. Yes, the Army is in transition. The Army is in a perpetual state of transition. As history has borne out, transition is good. As we continue to evolve, the Army, the Regiment, and the Nation will be that much stronger. I assure you that the Army's senior leaders are listening and are concerned about you and your family. As one of those

leaders, I give you my personal guarantee that, standing together as One Team, we will rise above these uncertain times and resolve your well-being and quality-of-life issues.

I have been around the world many times. I have been in combat and participated in numerous operational deployments. In my three-year tenure as the Commandant of the Engineer School, I have been up close and personal with the best-educated; best-trained; and best-motivated soldiers, NCOs, and officers at any time in my career. The Regiment has set and will continue to set the standard for excellence because of YOU and your phenomenal commitment to service. The Regiment is about its people, and I am convinced that the Regiment has what it takes to see this period through and continue to embody the Sapper Ethos in all that we do.

I encourage you to keep the faith in the Army. The Army has faith in you. If not you, who? If not now, when? The Regiment needs YOU!

Essays!

