



## Saddle Up... Tonight We Ride

**“Survey says...”** According to my most recent survey, soldiers are getting sick and tired of being surveyed and reading survey results about why good people leave the service and why we’re having trouble recruiting their replacements.

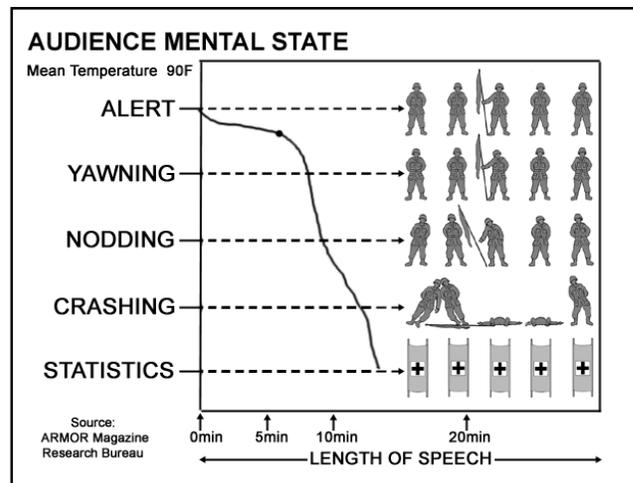
I wonder if we might conserve all the effort of these prestigious institutes and polling organizations with a simple one-question test. Ask those in uniform if they would encourage their sons or daughters to join the military. If a majority answers with a resounding “No!,” then a tough recruiting mission is about to get a lot tougher down the road. This would not bode well for a mounted force requiring more crewman and scouts with the advent of Brigade Combat Teams, not to mention that we are also a force that places a premium on crew cohesion and retainability.

My father, an old tanker, sent two sons to the Army, one to the Air Force and another to the Navy. Ask those around you in uniform why they joined the Army and I’ll wager a veteran father, uncle, or friend played a pivotal role in the decision. And yet, we may be losing this most precious recruiting resource. Increasingly veterans are feeling betrayed on the issue of health care. “In south Mississippi alone, I’ve got 14,000 military retirees who, on a daily basis, are telling kids not to join the service because they feel like they have been given the short stick when it comes to their health care,” said Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss. During and appearance on Capitol Hill, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Henry H. Shelton echoed these sentiments in regard to fully paid health care for retirees: “It’s not just the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do, because it sends a very strong signal, not only to those serving today, but also those considering a career in our armed forces. And it keeps faith and keeps the commitment to those that have served and retired.” We at **ARMOR** know well that retired tankers and cavalrymen do not go gently into that good night. We hear from them daily; they remain engaged and are a force to be reckoned with. It’s my hope

that those with the power to help veterans will do so, so that they will continue to take care of us.

**Hot Air** - The season of speeches is upon us. Have you ever wondered, as I do, why some generals and potentates begin a speech with the acknowledgement, “Soldiers, you look great out there! I know it’s hot today, so I’ll keep this speech short,” then proceed to speak for 25 minutes or ‘til a bunch of soldiers hit the ground? There ought to be a rule somewhere that says if it is 90 degrees or hotter, speech-makers must curtail their words of wisdom at the 10-minute mark. Trust me, no one is listening to the speech after 10 minutes or so because they are too busy thinking, “When is this guy gonna stop talking?” or “Damn, it’s hot!”.

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

ERIC K. SHINSEKI  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

Official:

*Joel B. Hudson*  
JOEL B. HUDSON  
Administrative Assistant to the  
Secretary of the Army

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