CLIFFORD ALEXANDER

to over a million and a half military and civilian personnel

By Mary Brown

AS ONE approaches the Pentagon by car after crossing the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., the winding road slopes gently upward to the front of the massive building. My taxi takes the first turn-off exit for the public, marked by a green-and-white sign reading, "Mall Entrance."

The day is windy and cold but the sun shines brightly. As I walk up the dozen steps and onto a rubber mat extending a few feet from the visitor's entrance, the door automatically swings open—I am inside.

A building guard directs me to one of several phones on the receptionist's counter and I dial the phone number given me several weeks earlier for Secretary of the Army Clifford L. Alexander Jr.

Mistakenly, I use all the numbers instead of the insidebuilding extension and an operator answers mechanically, "this is a restricted line. Please use another phone."

Not to be intimidated, I speak with what authority I can muster and say, "I am here to see the secretary of the army. What number should I dial to reach his office, please?"

The operator's voice on the other end snaps to attention and she not once but twice carefully gives me the correct five-digit internal number to call

In no time a military attache arrives and escorts me to an escalator for the quick ride to the second floor. We walk briskly down a wide marble corridor and into the hushed ante-room of a suite of offices where a smiling receptionist ushers me to a comfortable sofa where I am to wait until my appointment begins.

The office lighting is subdued and the walls are
covered with a beige fabric.
Spaced evenly around the
walls are historic scenes
depicting early military encounters. At the far end of the
room I see a large framed
"Department of the Army
Staff Credo." I get up and
walk over for a closer look.

the U.S. Army is success in land combat. We stand as one



DURING A TOUR OF ACTIVITIES at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii, Secretary of the Army Clifford Alexander is given instruction in the use of the TOW missile system. The installation is at Wheeler Field, Hawaii.

team—military and civilians working together—to accomplish this mission." To the left of each succeeding paragraph is a large bold letter, which when read vertically, spells out "READINESS."

Men and women in uniform and in civilian clothes enter from the hallway and go in and out of the other doors smoothly and quietly. I am offered coffee but decline.

In exactly five minutes it will be time for my interview.

In exactly five minutes, the door to another reception area opens and I walk through it and pass into the spacious office of the secretary of the army.

Clifford L. Alexander, Jr. rises to all six-foot-three inches of his height and walks easily from behind his large mahogany desk to invite me to sit in a small but comfortable circle of sofa, chairs and two end tables.

He is handsome, athletically well-built and conservatively dressed in a dark blue suit. He towers over my five feet and is clearly at ease in his surroundings. After we exchange greetings, he speaks quietly to the aide who has accompanied me and we talk briefly about New York City, where we have both lived. He quickly puts his visitor at ease.

The DAWN photographer arrives and asks the secretary to pose for the

S at Schofield People in the Army, par-

people in the Army, particularly the problems facing the lowest paid. Efforts have begun, he said, to improve travel overseas, to expand community services, recreation, counseling and

cover photograph. While the

two men chat and the camera

clicks away, I examine a

large oil portrait behind the

It is identified as that of

Elihu Root, secretary of war,

1899-1904. The bronze plate at

the bottom of the picture

frame shows that Secretary

Root has served both the

McKinley and Roosevelt Ad-

To my right elbow on one of

the end-tables is a large

wooden gavel with a metal

tag which reads, "White

House Conference. To Fulfill

These Rights. Deputy Special

The photography session is

soon finished and we get down

to business. I ask the

secretary what goals he set

for himself when he was

sworn in on February 14,

Valentine's Day, 1977.

Counsel to the President."

sofa I am sitting on.

ministrations.

education.

His over-all management goals include streamlining the Pentagon Army staff by twenty-five percent or 1,000 people. This will be accom-

plished by transfers, consolidation of offices and attrition.

The entire department is seeking ways to eliminate ex-

seeking ways to eliminate excess work, trim down forms
used by the national guard
and getting military equipment up-to-date. The new
XM-1 main battle tank and
two new helicopters will
become standard equipment.

Asked if the all-volunteer Army concept is working, Secretary Alexander said it definitely was. He is impressed by the quality of the young people being brought in and has visited forty different units around the world to talk personally with both uniformed and civilian personnel.

On these trips the secretary is checking to see that while Army people are well trained, their needs are taken care of

OATH OF OFFICE—This was the scene on February 14, 1977, when Clifford Alexander Jr., was sworn in as secretary of the army. Administering the oath is Judge A. Leon Higginbotham

Jr., U.S. District Ct., Philadelphia. Mrs. Adele Alexander, his wife, holds the Bible, as Vice President Walter F. Mondale looks on.

AWOLS Down

One indicator of how well systems are working can be seen in the problem of those Absent Without Leave.

vere 108 per one thousand persons.

been reduced to 56 AWOLS

per thousand uniformed personnel.

Alexander added to this and other improved statistics, "The thing I am happiest about is the fact that my civilian and uniformed staffers are working in harmony."

and individuality is balanced with the discipline necessary to get the job done.

LARGEST DEPARTMENT

with the largest department of the federal government under his direct command, Alexander has responsibility and authority for the conduct of all affairs of the Department of the Army.

follows: 370,000 civilians, 780,000 active duty Army personnel, and 550,000 reserve and national guard units around the country. Or, more than a million and a half

Americans who cal Secretary Alexander, "Boss."

He is also chairman of the Board of Directors of the Panama Canal and reports directly to the president in this capacity. He has visited the Canal Zone twice since taking office and is an expert on the controversy surrounding discussion of the Canal Zone treaties.

Zone treaties.
We reflected on the steps which have led him to this job, one of which he is clearly proud and thoroughly versed

in handling.

Born September 21, 1933, in
New York City, Secretary

Alexander graduated cum laude from Harvard University in 1955 and received his law degree from Yale University in 1958.

After law school he enlisted in the New York National Guard and served on active duty for six months. He served in a variety of public offices in New York including assistant district attorney for New York County and executive director of Harlem Youth Opportunities.

called to the White House by President Kennedy to serve as foreign affairs officer of the National Security Council. He subsequently served as deputy special assistant to President Johnson, deputy special counsel to the president and chairman of EEOC from 1967 through 1969.

After his government service, Alexander engaged in private law practice in Washington and was a law professor at both Howard University Law School and Georgetown Law Center. He also found time to host a weekly Washington television program. In 1974 he ran a

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ARRIVING AT HICKHAM Air Force Base, Honolulu, Secretary Alexander, his wife Adele (wearing sun glasses) and their children, Elizabeth and Mark, receive the leis marking the official welcome to Hawaii.