



Moral Issues in Military Decision Making

By Anthony E. Hartle

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Much has changed in warfare in recent years, with America now dominant on the international scene and terrorism the new enemy. In light of these changes, the need for moral grounding in military actions is a more pressing concern than ever.

When it was originally published, *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making* reflected the concerns posed by nuclear stalemate and the lessons of Vietnam. In that highly-praised work, Anthony Hartle outlined the essential elements of the Professional Military Ethic created for American military forces. In this new edition, he reexamines the moral foundations for America's military leadership in the post-9/11 era.

Considering world affairs since the first edition—the Gulf War, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, 9/11, and the emergence of the United States as an unrivaled military power—Hartle explains how these events have raised ethical issues that differ dramatically from those of the Cold War. He assesses how moral, legal, and psychological concerns have been impacted by the war on terrorism, homeland defense, asymmetric warfare, the proliferation of American military interventions, and the UN's role in peacekeeping operations. Using meticulously analyzed case studies—twice as many as in the first edition—he considers such moral dilemmas as torture, challenging superior officers, use of overwhelming force, and responding to fire in the presence of civilian shields.

In this revision, Hartle examines further the status of professional military ethics in light of current affairs, changes in the articulation of military values, and recent research. In a new chapter on human rights, he relates moral principles directly to values embedded in the Constitution and argues that overwhelming American military power cannot succeed unless it is accompanied by the moral force of the values it seeks to protect. His discussion of global anti-terrorist operations focuses especially on the difficulties of applying conventional laws of war and human rights doctrine in military operations.

Hartle convincingly shows that national security is as much about the preservation of moral principles as it is about the protection of America's citizens and borders. His book demonstrates that the American military must continue to observe those principles in order to be effective in its primary mission.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A clear, concise, and cogent study of the professional military ethic in a time of great international turmoil. Hartle writes perceptively about the kinds of contemporary crises in which officers must provide both military and moral leadership. A valuable and illuminating study that deserves a wide audience. Warmly recommended!"—**James H. Toner**, author of *True Faith and Allegiance: The Burden of Military Ethics* "In an age much concerned with entitlements, it is refreshing to have Hartle's powerful meditation on obligations and responsibilities, selflessness and service to others, and the core values of the American military profession."—**Lewis Sorley**, author of *Honorable Warrior: General Harold K. Johnson and the Ethics of Command* "A splendid discussion of the basic justification for the role of the military in American society."—**David Johnson**, professor of philosophy at the U.S. Naval Academy and civilian member of the Executive Board of the Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Colonel Anthony E. Hartle is chair of the English Department at West Point and a long-time member of the Executive Board of the Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics.

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