

NYT 4/1/74

## Character

By John W. Dean 3d



Deep-seated in every individual is the desire to be held in high esteem by his fellow-men. What appeals to our fellows is our character—our honesty, our industriousness, our considerateness, the life we live, the way we tackle problems. Men see more of us than we like to admit. Building character is a life-long process in which the foundations are laid in our youth.

Here at SMA we are in a position to examine ourselves and to get to know what the weak points of our character are. Once realizing these weak points we can begin to make corrections. We can do this on our own, away from our old environment, among the new friends we have made here at SMA. This is the opportunity to grow from youth into manhood, to build strong character.

Temptations are great here at SMA; in fact, our lives are being tested constantly. We must decide between what is right and what is wrong, and which we will follow. Strong character does not try to evade the issue or to compromise with evil. It faces up to the situation. A real test of character that comes to all of us is the temptation to do the thing that seems to be popular, even though we know it is wrong. When we can overcome this we are really building up our defenses against temptation and a foundation of a strong character. Use your head. Be wise.

J.W.D.

*John W. Dean 3d, former counsel to President Nixon and a principal witness in the Senate Watergate hearings, as a high-school student wrote this editorial for the Nov. 16, 1956, issue of "The Kablegram" of Staunton Military Academy in Virginia. A senior, he was one of two editors in chief of the school paper at that point in time.*