

**COMMAND AND COMMANDERS
IN
MODERN WARFARE**

**The Proceedings of the Second
Military History Symposium
U.S. Air Force Academy
2-3 May 1968**

Edited by

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PREFACE

The essays and commentaries which comprise this book resulted from the Second Annual Military History Symposium, held at the Air Force Academy on 2-3 May 1968. The Military History Symposium is an annual event sponsored jointly by the Department of History and the Association of Graduates, United States Air Force Academy. The theme of the first symposium, held on 4-5 May 1967 at the Air Force Academy, was "Current Concepts in Military History."

Several factors inspired the inauguration of the symposium series, the foremost being the expanding interest in the field of military history demonstrated at recent meetings of the American Historical Association and similar professional organizations. A professional meeting devoted solely to the subject of military history seemed appropriate. The Air Force Academy's Department of History has been particularly concerned with the history of military affairs and warfare since the founding of the institution. In fact, for a few years after the beginning of classes in 1954, the Academy could boast of perhaps the only separate Department of Military History in the United States. In 1959 the Department of History (now including the military historians) inaugurated the annual Harmon Memorial Lectures to foster interest and research in military history. The lectures are listed at the end of this Preface.

The general purpose of the symposium series is to provide a forum in which recognized scholars may present the results of their research in the history of military affairs. This will, hopefully, enhance interest in the subject among both civilian and military historians, while encouraging a continuing interest among members of the armed forces of the United States and the cadets of the United States Air Force Academy in the study of the history of their chosen profession. A basic objective of the annual symposium series is to create a closer link between the academic historian and the military professional designed to achieve a fuller appreciation and better evaluation of past military events. By including the

views of the men who participated in past events, the historical record should be enriched. This book, therefore, contains not only the papers and commentaries read at the Second Annual Military Symposium, but additional comments which the editor later solicited from military participants in the events described.

Not included is the Tenth Annual Harmon Memorial Lecture in Military History, which formed the closing session of the Second Military History Symposium. The lecture, delivered by Dr. Forrest C. Pogue, Director, Research Library, George C. Marshall Research Foundation, entitled "George C. Marshall: Global Commander," has been published separately.

The Department of History wishes to thank the four eminent historians who served as chairmen for the various symposium sessions and whose labors contributed greatly to the success of the symposium:

Professor Richard A. Preston, Duke University, chairman of the session, "The United States Army's Experience in the Early Twentieth Century."

Professor Gordon A. Craig, Stanford University, chairman of the session, "The End of the Prussian Military Tradition in Germany."

Captain Harry A. Cummings, USN, United States Naval Academy, chairman of the sessions, "British Naval Leaders in World War I" and "American Naval Leaders in World War II."

Professor James Lea Cate, University of Chicago, chairman of the session, "New Perspectives in Warfare."

We also wish to acknowledge the warm encouragement and active support that the former Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy, Lieutenant General Thomas S. Moorman, and the first Dean, Brigadier General Robert F. McDermott, gave in launching the symposium series. The financial support received from the Association of Graduates is gratefully acknowledged. The forty members of the Department of History took an active interest in the project and provided many helpful suggestions and editorial assistance. Mrs. Virginia Hill and Mrs. Grace Scott provided essential secretarial support.

To the numerous military contributors who so generously responded to the editor's request to share their experiences and reflections with respect to the events and personalities discussed in the symposium papers and commentaries, we wish to extend our deep appreciation. Their comments provide a most significant contribution to this book of essays.

The paper by Professor Potter, "The Command Personality: Some American Naval Leaders in World War II," has since appeared in the *United States Naval Institute Proceedings* (January 1969) and is reprinted by permission of the United States Naval Institute. The commentary by Professor O'Connor has since appeared under the title "Reflection on the Characteristics of a Commander" in the *Naval War College Review* (October 1968) and is reprinted here by permission of the United States Naval War College.

This edition contains two comments that were received too late for inclusion in the first edition, and minor errors have been corrected.

Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen, USAF

**The United States
Air Force Academy
Military History Symposium**

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4. William R. Emerson, *Operation Pointblank.* (1962)
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6. Maurice Matloff, *Mr. Roosevelt's Three Wars: FDR as War Leader.* (1964)
7. Gordon A. Craig, *Problems of Coalition Warfare: The Military Alliance against Napoleon, 1813-1814.* (1965)
8. Peter Paret, *Innovation and Reform in Warfare.* (1966)
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COMMAND AND COMMANDERS

IN

MODERN WARFARE

INTRODUCTION

Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen, USAF

The advent of nuclear weapons has drastically altered the nature of modern warfare. For this reason the military profession finds itself today in the throes of a "second" military revolution. Both the military professional and the civilian policy-maker seek to find familiar landmarks to guide them through the new environment of the nuclear age which, because of the vastly changed military technology and its political consequences, remains largely a "terra incognita." On the other hand, the character and the internal structure of today's military institutions have remained relatively unaffected by the impact and the changes brought about by the nuclear revolution, for present-day military institutions are the result of another "military" revolution, one which occurred at the beginning of the century and continued on into World War II. Primarily organizational in character, this revolution transformed the then existing military institutions into modern and professional organizations. Its focus was the infusion of the *staff* concept into the military organization under the aegis of the dual tenets of efficiency and expertise. The purpose of this revolution, which Walter Millis so appropriately named the managerial revolution, was the creation of a specially trained, elite nucleus, a collective brain, within the military hierarchy, capable of planning and executing large scale, total war.¹

The impact of this organizational revolution on the military profession was as great as, if not greater than, that of the nuclear revolution on the nature of warfare. For in order to produce a more

effective organizational structure, the managerial revolution had to create a new type of professional officer, the military manager, to replace the then dominant type of military professional, the hero-warrior type, the "great captain."² The military manager became the image of the new, transformed military institution. A specialist in the management of violence, he was a professional military man not just by definition or ascription but by (and because of) his special education and training. Expertise, corporate-ness, and professional responsibility became the hallmarks of the new military professionalism; individual glory was replaced by anonymity, individual brilliance by the collective brain, individual authority by the corporate structure of command responsibility. No longer did the individual leader shape the organization, the military command, by his individual personality, will, and ingenuity. On the contrary, the organization, the command, now put its imprint, its *raison d'être*, on the commander. Though the nuclear revolution has revolutionized the technological and political aspects of modern war, it has left the internal character and institutional structure of the military organization basically unchanged.

The papers and commentaries in this volume address various aspects of the military organizational revolution during the first half of the twentieth century and examine its effects within the context of the symposium theme, "Command and Commanders in Modern Warfare." Specifically four aspects of the general theme are looked at in greater detail: 1) the origin, purpose, and effect of the managerial revolution on a specific military establishment (the United States Army in the period 1900-1918); 2) the effects of the managerial revolution on military command and commanders within a specific command (British naval leaders in World War I and American naval leaders in World War II); 3) the problems of the military professional and the military organization in a society undergoing political change (the German Army High Command in the period 1933 to 1939); and 4) the impact of a new weapon system on command and commanders (the strategic bombing offensive against Germany in World War II).

In Part I Weigley discusses the introduction of the General Staff organization in the United States Army during the early 1900s within the broader context of the Root reforms and contends that these reforms were actually non-military oriented, receiving their impetus from the larger political-administrative reform movement

of the Progressive era. Viewing the military reforms as part of the general trend of the times in the United States, the "search for order," he equates the purpose, function, and organization of the General Staff to that of the other non-military, regulatory agencies arising during this period. Morton's commentary points out the rather hypothetical nature of Weigley's thesis as well as the complex and heterogeneous nature of the Progressive movement in general.

Coffman's paper deals with the results of the Root reforms by analyzing the role of the so-called "Leavenworth Clique" in the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in World War I. He traces the history of this small and select group of "new breed" military professionals, the military managers, and their impact on the professionalization of the United States Army before, during, and after World War I, focusing on their role in the AEF organization. Beaver's commentary takes issue with Coffman's thesis that *only* the Leavenworth group was representative of the new military professionalism in the United States Army and points out that other, non-Leavenworth-trained officers were equally representative of this new breed of officer. He questions whether the tenets of the new professionalism as practiced by the Leavenworth group were indeed as beneficial to the American military institution as is often believed. In order to further illuminate the role of the Leavenworth group in the AEF, the opinions and recollections of more than fifty graduates of the United States Military Academy (Classes 1912 through 1917), who had served in the AEF, were solicited. Their responses form the basis of the essay by Geffen and provide "a military view"; seven of the replies received are printed in full.

What is the relationship between the commander and his command? Marder's essay in Part II masterfully sketches the personalities of the two admirals who were in command of the Grand Fleet during World War I. Though they were almost opposite in character and personality, the mission and function of the Grand Fleet controlled and shaped their actions and behavior as commanders. Thus when Beatty took over from Jellicoe, Beatty followed closely in the footsteps of his predecessor, for it was the command, the Fleet, which governed his actions and determined his decisions. Schurman, in his commentary, emphasizes this point, namely that the command mission, the Grand Fleet and its deterrent function, as interpreted by Jellicoe (and accepted by Beatty),

formed the basis for the “command personalities” and command decisions of the two admirals. However, he also points out that in war, military actions should only be the means towards the end and that the end, the political guidance to the military commander, was sadly lacking during World War I with respect to the British Navy. The comments by six retired members of the Royal Navy, all of whom served either in the Grand Fleet or under the two admirals, provide a military opinion, an “inside view,” of the personalities of the two commanders and the command itself, the Grand Fleet.

The dilemma of the military professional and the military organization in a society alien to their professional values is the topic of Part III. Deutsch traces the history of the relationship between the German Army High Command and Hitler and the Nazi state from 1933 to 1939, focusing on the rise of the military opposition to Hitler. He shows how it developed through its various stages to the climactic days of November 1939 when the Army High Command was willing to stage a *coup d'état* to overthrow the Nazi regime. In broader terms Deutsch addresses the question of the dilemma of the professional military leader, caught between the obligations of his professional responsibility and the demands of his conscience. Luttichau's commentary discusses this conflict of individual versus professional conscience which engulfed not only the military but also other traditional leadership groups in Nazi Germany. He emphasizes that for those who lived through these fateful years in Germany, the decision to oppose the regime was not one which could be easily taken nor one which was easily discernible. Paret, in his commentary, addresses himself to a larger moral issue, one which had dominated German history since the rise of the Prussian state and one which confronted the military leadership during the Hitler period, namely the issue of aggressive (preventive) war, as advocated and later implemented by Hitler. Morally opposed to such a course of action, the generals found themselves torn between the requirements of their professional responsibility on the one hand and those of their moral standards on the other hand—a dilemma which they failed to face or solve. The comments by the six former German generals describe their attitudes and views concerning the military opposition to Hitler and their personal positions vis-à-vis the Nazi regime. All were members of the German military leadership corps during the fateful years from 1933 to 1945; therefore, their opinions provide a “view from the inside” into the events described by Deutsch's paper.

The command personality, as exemplified by American admirals in World War II, forms the subject of the papers in Part IV. Potter examines the different personalities of the leading naval commanders and their individual approaches to the problems and responsibilities of command. While Potter emphasizes the human, personal side of the naval commander, O'Connor's commentary attempts to delineate some common characteristics for the command personality, those strengths and attributes which are a requisite for the exercise of the function. In doing so, he points out that the predominant image of the American naval leaders in World War II was that of the military manager rather than that of the naval hero; Admiral Halsey was an exception rather than the rule. The comments by the three admirals, all of whom were commanders themselves and served under the naval leaders discussed by Potter and O'Connor, express the military view of the command personality by providing an insight into how the military profession looks upon the problem of command and commanders.

The last section covers the problems associated with the introduction of a new weapon system (the bomber) and its effect on both command and commanders and the military organization at large, namely the story of the Allied strategic bombing offensive against Germany in World War II. Frankland discusses the development of the strategy and the various aspects of its implementation and attempts to assess the lessons learned from it. Futrell, in his commentary, traces the historical development of American air power doctrine and strategy with particular reference to their employment in World War II and in the combined bomber offensive. Higham discusses British "Grand Strategy" during World War II and proposes that greater stress on political rather than military ends, on strategy rather than tactics, might have resulted in a different and much more effective employment of air power and strategic bombing during the earlier years of the war. The military assessment consists of the views and opinions of military leaders from Great Britain (Air Marshal Slessor and Air Vice-Marshal Kingston-McCloughry), the United States (General Eaker), and Germany (Field Marshal Milch and Generals Galland and Steinhoff), all of whom were associated with the Allied strategic bombing offensive during World War II. Their comments highlight the different and nationally divergent appreciations of the new element of air power and its strategic employment in war.

They also provide a valuable insight into the complex problems of weapons and strategy and their effect on both command and commanders, problems of utmost importance to both the military professional and the civilian policy-maker today.

NOTES

1. Walter Millis, *Arms and Men: A Study of American Military History* (New York: Mentor Books, 1958), Chapter III and especially pp. 182-188.
2. Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960), p. 21.

Part I

**THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S EXPERIENCE
IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY**

THE ELIHU ROOT REFORMS AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

Russell F. Weigley

For the ideas involved in the theme of our symposium, "Command and Commanders in Modern Military History," the years around the turn of the nineteenth into the twentieth century were a time of more than ordinary uncertainty and change. Mass armies and the complex logistics of the industrial and railroad age were rendering traditional notions of the nature of the highest military command more and more patently outmoded. So sharp a thinker as Elihu Root exhibited uncertainty, as he planned the United States Army's General Staff, whether he wanted the General Staff to "command" at all. In retrospect we see the difficulties of the period more clearly than even an Elihu Root did, as those of transition from "heroic leadership" to the "managerial" concept of military command. But there was also more to the trouble than that; the problems of military command at the turn of the century were part of a larger problem of rethinking the concepts of leadership, management, and control in every area of society, to fit the urban, industrial age, especially in the United States.

The problems of military command have not often been considered against that larger background, the turn of the century's general re-evaluation of what is involved in management and control. More specifically, Elihu Root's army reforms have rarely been approached in terms of the contemporary thinking of the Progressive era about governmental administration and management in general. Paul Y. Hammond has discussed the Root reforms in the light of Leonard D. White's idea that the Progressives were applying a "new Hamiltonianism," a new emphasis on executive leadership; but as Hammond's excellent exposition of the Root reforms makes apparent the formula of neo-Hamiltonianism barely begins

to encompass the complexities of the General Staff. Although Elihu Root was only in a very limited degree a Progressive, the climate in which the Root reforms were attempted was nevertheless that of the Progressive era, and Root's presidential sponsor during the completion of his reforms was the first Progressive president. To place the Root reforms into the general context of the Progressive era's ideas about government might well add something to our understanding of the beginnings of the modern army command system, especially the General Staff.¹

In his multivolume history of *The Ordeal of the Union*, Allan Nevins has aptly described the pre-Civil War, pre-industrial United States as the "invertebrate society."² The United States of that era was an amorphous, unstructured conglomeration of local marketing areas and political districts centering on various small cities and towns, without effective national direction or leadership in the economic or political or any other area—without a national skeletal structure to give the nation shape and form, as Nevins's metaphor suggests.

Following the clue offered by such a phrase as the "invertebrate society," recent studies of the American nation in a later era, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, have begun to suggest that a principal theme of the later period of transition from a rural, agrarian society to an urban, industrial one was the effort to transform the invertebrate into a vertebrate society. In the urban, industrial age, the argument runs, large economic and social forces demanded a more centralized organization and direction of national life. The new age brought huge, national industrial corporations, whose own organizational structures so much overshadowed those of the old small-town-centered America that they were bound to control the nation in their private interests, unless the nation rallied itself organizationally in order to control or at least to regulate them in the public interest. The giant corporations in combination with a national railroad network were already creating a national economy; but the national economy would hardly operate to national public advantage unless the nation acquired a political and social backbone to shape the economy in accordance with national public needs. Meanwhile the great cities of the new urban age were also outrunning the types of political and social control developed in an era of small cities and towns. The national crises of the late

nineteenth century—and labor and agrarian revolts made the time truly one of crisis—were fundamentally crises of economic and social forces running headlong out of control. The central national problem of the period was, as it is summed up in the title of Robert H. Wiebe's recent book about it, *The Search for Order*.³

Thus an increasing tendency in recent histories of the Progressive movement of national reform in the first decade and a half of the twentieth century has been to interpret the Progressives as reformers whose central purpose was less the pursuit of some transcendental moral ideal than the down-to-earth business of applying to public organization principles of leadership and direction developed in the giant new corporations, in order to bring the new social and economic forces and the corporations themselves under public control. This approach begins to return us to the military interests of this symposium. Significantly, Secretary of War Elihu Root described the application of business principles to military management and command as one of the principal purposes of his reforms. Of the traditional War Department bureaus concerned with supply, for example, he said:

Economical and business principles seem to justify the bringing together of these bureaus under a single chief, who will have general direction of all and who will be able to decide promptly and on business principles what shall be done by each particular bureau in the mobilization and concentration of troops.⁴

If the true central theme of the Progressive movement was the search for order, the effort to transform an invertebrate into a vertebrate society—and it is my conviction that this indeed was the central theme—then the turn-of-the-century reform of the army and especially the creation of the General Staff come to appear as efforts thoroughly appropriate to the Progressive era. It may seem at first incongruous to regard an army as a sub-species of an invertebrate society; but on closer examination the United States Army of the nineteenth century turns out to have been, to a degree remarkable in view of the contrary pull of military traditions and hierarchy, just that: an invertebrate sub-species of the larger American invertebrate society. As American society at large in the pre-industrial age was an amorphous bundle of markets and politics centering on a hundred small cities and towns, so the army of the nineteenth century was an amorphous bundle of scattered

garrisons, its supposed command system actually divided against itself and therefore effectively commanding very little. Just as the new urban, industrial age demanded that American society at large rally to organize itself, to subject economic and social forces to public control, so new national defense problems brought by the urban, industrial age—brought by increasingly efficient worldwide transport, increasingly businesslike military organization in other nations, and the imperial mission apparently awaiting an industrialized United States—demanded that the United States Army rally to organize itself so that it might function as a coordinated mechanism. The Progressive era was the time when nation and army alike took up in earnest the search for order.

Again, despite the special disciplines of military institutions, it is hardly overdrawing the picture to describe the United States Army of the nineteenth century as a miniature of the invertebrate society. Except in war, the fighting branches of the army were scattered in hundreds of one-company, three-company, or battalion-sized posts all over the Indian frontier, the seacoast, and, during Reconstruction, the South. The army of 1869, for example, with an authorized strength of 37,313, occupied 255 military posts. By 1896, with both Reconstruction and Indian fighting past, the number of posts had declined to 77; but the total was still excessive for an army of 28,000, and the number remained large, despite the close of the Indian wars, under the workings of local political pressures.⁵

Rarely in the nineteenth-century peacetime army did a whole regiment assemble, so that the colonel's command of his regiment was rarely an operational command and only tenuously an administrative one. Above the scattered companies and regiments stood the territorial department and district commands—eight of the latter and eleven of the former in 1879—and above them in the post-Civil War era the three great military divisions of the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Missouri. The army's equivalent of the various small-city and town centers of civilian society lay perhaps in the department and district commands; if there were effective control centers at all, tactical as well as administrative, they were here. But in a western department such as the Department of the Platte, whose boundaries at a given time might include all or parts of Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, and South Dakota, distances were so

great and communications so undependable that even the department commander's control over his troops and posts tended toward the nominal.⁶

Above the departments, districts, and military divisions stood the Commanding General of the Army. His impotence, however, is a familiar story. Plagued by the legal and constitutional ambiguities of the Commanding General's relationship with the Secretary of War and the President, two occupants of the post, Winfield Scott and William Tecumseh Sherman, fled the capital city for virtual retirement in New York and St. Louis respectively. Those Commanding Generals who remained in Washington to contend for the real command of the army accomplished little more. The Secretary of War, not the Commanding General, tended to provide such central direction as the army enjoyed. But the Secretary's power was undermined both by his usual lack of military knowledge and by his dependence on the War Department bureau chiefs. Those functionaries, the Adjutant General, the Quartermaster General, the Chief of Engineers, and the rest, presided over autonomous suzerainties which both fragmented the War Department itself and, through the control which each of them exerted over his own specialty throughout the army, undercut the powers of the department and district commanders as well.⁷

In civilian America it was crises such as the furor over the trusts, the great strikes at Homestead and Chicago in 1892 and 1894, and the Populist revolt that dramatized the need for better direction and control over the new urban, industrialized society. In the army it was the Spanish American War that accomplished the equivalent result, dramatizing the inadequacy of the invertebrate army for mobilization for war, especially for the type of overseas war that seemed implicit in industrialized America's world power.

It should be noted that in one important respect the parallel between invertebrate civilian America and the invertebrate army of the nineteenth century was not complete. The nineteenth-century army did possess at least one important approach towards a national skeletal structure of a type that civilian society lacked: the cohesion of the army's officer corps. The organizational weaknesses just outlined prevented that cohesion from being all that discipline and hierarchy might imply. But the officer corps nevertheless was

bound together, by mutual acquaintanceships created by frequent transfers of post within the army, and also by a shared sense of participation in a common profession.

One of the most conspicuous factors contributing to the amorphous, invertebrate quality of civilian American society in the pre-industrial era was its lack of communication and of a shared sense of professionalism even among equivalent occupational and seemingly professional groups from one small-city or town center to another. That is, physicians communicated remarkably little with other physicians from town to town, and lawyers surprisingly little with other lawyers. Whatever tendencies toward the creation of national professions had existed in the United States at the time of the founding of the Republic had been destroyed in the early nineteenth century by the sheer physical expansion of the country, with all the impediments to communication that it entailed, and by the Jacksonian era's suspicion of all professional standards. Jacksonian America believed that any intelligent American could perform any task without special education or training. Thus not only did the spoils system make party loyalty the principal criterion for government office, but also the states practically did away with special licensing qualifications and permitted almost anybody to practice medicine or law—which anybody so inclined then proceeded to do. Professor Wiebe has shown that one of the first steps in the search for order in urban, industrial America was to re-establish national professions. Restoring professional standards of practice in medicine, law, and teaching, a task assisted by improved communications, forged links that bound physicians, lawyers, educators, and college professors together from one city or town to another throughout the country and thus began creating a national organization of society.⁸

In the officer corps of the army, however, in contrast to civilian society, a national profession had existed long since. The army had resisted the exaggerated egalitarianism of the Jacksonian era to make its officers not mere craftsmen or technicians but members of a profession, at the very time when Jacksonian egalitarianism was destroying the beginnings of professionalism elsewhere in America. The work of creating an American military profession was largely the accomplishment of the United States Military Academy under Sylvanus Thayer and Dennis Hart Mahan. It included at least the

rudiments of all that modern professionalism implies in the cultivation of a body of theoretical and scientific knowledge and of a sense of corporate responsibility within the professional group. Running against the grain of Jacksonian America, the growth of military professionalism provoked a spate of congressional attacks upon the Military Academy and periodic threats to dismantle it, along with still more public suspicion of the standing army than had existed before. The officer corps resisted continuing, adverse pressures and went on to develop its professional qualities still further in the years immediately following the Civil War, with the establishment of the army's postgraduate school system and of professional societies for the advancement of professional knowledge, such as the Military Service Institution of the United States.⁹

Thus a shared sense of professionalism within the officer corps put the army in advance of civilian America in one of the elements out of which a more coherently organized society was to be built. Nevertheless, this deviation from the general American pattern was not decisive in overcoming the larger situation of an invertebrate army within an invertebrate society. Despite the cohesion of the officer corps, when the effort toward better army organization at last took place, the impetus for it came only secondarily from the officer corps, and primarily from civilians. The sense of professional unity within the officer corps was never enough to overcome the nineteenth-century army's larger incohesiveness. It was the civilian reformers, their interest precipitated by the Spanish War but sustained by the same search for order that generally characterized the Progressive era, who mainly supplied the initiative for army reform.¹⁰

Secretary of War Elihu Root, a man without military associations until he entered the War Department in 1899, was of course the most important of those civilian reformers; more accurately, he was *the* pre-eminent reformer, and his innovations are fairly called the Root reforms. He was aided at critical moments by President Theodore Roosevelt, whose military experience was limited to his exuberant participation in the brief Santiago campaign, but whose political role by now was that of the country's first Progressive president. Root early decided that the army and especially its command system must be reorganized drastically to reform it into a cohesive machine. Toward that goal he received

and accepted various suggestions from certain members of the officer corps, among whom professionalism had been generating an undercurrent—but never a decisive thrust—of sentiment for organizational reform for decades. The eventual shape of Root's organizational reforms, however, owed at least as much to the prevalent thinking of the American Progressive era as to the suggestions that Root's officer-advisers drew from their military thought and experience.

Root's professional advisers, the most influential of whom was probably Major William Harding Carter, responded to his desire to reform the army command system by calling to his attention the German system. They introduced him to the English military writer Spenser Wilkinson's *Brain of an Army*, which is an admiring description of the German General Staff. They introduced him to the writings of Emory Upton, who was the principal late-nineteenth-century exponent and exemplar of American military professionalism, and whose organizational ideas were influenced heavily by Germany. They introduced him to Brigadier General Theodore Schwan's *Report on the Organization of the German Army*. So much were Root's military advisers impressed by the German command system and so much did they persuade Root of their convictions that, as J. D. Hittle points out, the list of general staff duties incorporated into the act of Congress which created the American General Staff, and which Carter drafted, is drawn almost verbatim from Paul Bronsart von Schellendorff's *Duties of the [German] General Staff*.¹¹

Yet it is no novelty to observe that Root and his advisers did not altogether comprehend the German military system and on essential points drew only loosely from those parts which they did comprehend.¹² Among the problems of the American command system, the easiest to define, or at least to articulate, and one which especially captured Root's attention because he was a lawyer, was that of the constitutional relationship among the President, the Secretary of War, and the ranking professional soldier. The German staff system seemed to point a path out of this problem by way of the German relationship between a chief of staff and a formal commanding officer of troops, who was often an imperial or royal personage of uncertain military attainments.

In the German system, the chief of staff and the formal commanding officer joined in a partnership so close that it was almost a kind of intellectual marriage, which permitted formal authority to retain its proper place but which also permitted the brain of the staff officer to dominate the partnership's intellect. Just so, Root and his advisers decided, an American Chief of Staff of the Army might enter into partnership with the Secretary of War and, perhaps through the Secretary, with the President, and the old contest for authority between constitutional civilian power and the ranking professional soldier might be eliminated. With the coming of the Chief of Staff of the Army, the old office of Commanding General would disappear. Command would proceed constitutionally from the President through his deputy, the Secretary of War, to the army. But the partnership of Secretary of War and Chief of Staff would permit the Secretary to draw on the country's best military brains.

In fact, the analogy between the proposed partnership of Secretary of War and Chief of Staff of the Army and the partnership of German commander of troops with his chief of staff was imperfect, and the constitutional relationship of the Chief of the German General Staff with the German Emperor was too different to be relevant. Still, an analogy loosely drawn nevertheless seemed to offer too convenient a way out of the old constitutional problem of army command to be neglected.¹⁸

The effort to solve a constitutional dilemma by substituting an Army Chief of Staff for the old Commanding General, however, was only the most formal part of the Root reforms, and only the beginning of a solution to the search for order. The major issue was how to manage the army in such a way that the bureaus and the scattered detachments would function harmoniously. Notwithstanding Major Carter's borrowings from the German staff manual, German practice was neither well enough understood nor sufficiently relevant to be of much use in deciding how to co-ordinate the parts of the army. For this purpose, Root of course planned that the Chief of Staff should head a General Staff roughly modeled on the German prototype, and that the General Staff should serve as a collective brain and central nervous system for the army. But Root never made clear either by his pronouncements or by his procedure how such functions were to be pursued.

In part Root conceived of the General Staff as mainly an organization whose role was to think. Drawing on studies to be undertaken by the new Army War College, the General Staff was to plan and propose American military policy, so that the United States would never again find itself, as it had when the war with Spain began, without a military policy appropriate to the execution of its foreign policy. The General Staff would accomplish "the study of great questions, the consideration and formation of plans, comprehensive forethought against future contingencies. . . ." It would keep "all the separate agents advised of the part they are to play in the general scheme."¹⁴

Yet the General Staff would not be only a thinking organization. Root also described it as "a directing and explaining body."¹⁵ The War Department draft of a General Staff bill stated that the General Staff should "supervise" the military services, staff, and line. When an effort developed in Congress to substitute the word "command" or "control" for "supervise," the War Department rejected the idea. "Supervision," the department explained, "in the military sense . . . indicated the overseeing of affairs in the interest of superior authority."¹⁶ Yet Root nevertheless described the General Staff as "the new system of control."¹⁷ He also spoke of the General Staff as leading to a "well-managed and well-directed army."¹⁸ On the other hand, Root said that the General Staff was to be neither an executive body nor an administrative body, and he insisted that for it to involve itself in the details of military administration would vitiate his whole conception of a thinking organization. To use a word that later became fashionable in discussions of General Staff functions, Root insisted that the General Staff must not "operate." It must instead "supervise."¹⁹

It is little wonder that when John McAuley Palmer presently found himself assigned to the General Staff, he discovered that "None of us had any conception as to its true functions."²⁰ Historians have been at a loss to make out just what Root thought the General Staff should be ever since.

Root's apparently confused and certainly imprecise approach to the functions of the General Staff may have owed something to the German model, but the Germans had worked out the activities of their General Staff well enough that they cannot have provided the main source of perplexity. Rather, the imprecision of the early

designs for the General Staff suggests once more the larger context of the Progressive era's search for order.

In their effort to win direction and control over the hitherto invertebrate society, the Progressives were moving towards a new theory of public management and administration. Through the nineteenth century, most Americans had relied upon legislation to provide sovereign remedies for their public problems; when a problem arose, the usual nineteenth-century response was to have Congress or another appropriate legislature pass a law to remedy it. The Progressives were coming to realize, however, that most problems of the industrial, urban age were scarcely simple enough to be remedied in one stroke, by one piece of legislation. Rather, the problems of the new age, such as those of guarding the public interest against the trusts or keeping order in the great cities, were apt to be continuing problems, not susceptible to abrupt remedies, but requiring constant watchfulness and attention by alert public officials to guard the public interest. The model of the private corporation was of some relevance here. No one would have imagined that all its problems could be foreseen by some initial legislative type of fiat such as its corporate charter; obviously the corporation required constant day-to-day management and flexible managerial attitudes. So the Progressive era moved toward what has been called a bureaucratic approach to the handling of public problems. The suitable response to the difficulties of the urban, industrial age seemed to lie less in law-making than in constant, watchful attention and continuing remedial adjustments by public officials.

The evolution of the bureaucratic approach to public problems during the Progressive era was gradual and not without hesitation and confusion. Anything resembling a Progressive consensus on the matter developed only near the close of the period, on the eve of American entry into the First World War. The principal instrument developed by the Progressives to accomplish continuous watchfulness over public problems was a newly invented type of governmental commission. The first of these commissions on the federal level, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), had appeared as early as 1887, but its functions began to be clarified only during the Progressive era. In 1914 the Progressives created the similar Federal Trade Commission (FTC). When the United States entered the First World War, a federal administration still characterized

by Progressive thinking entrusted the management of much of the war effort to a covey of similar agencies, such as the War Industries Board, the Food Administration, and the Fuel Administration. Interestingly, a good deal of perplexity attended the Progressives' efforts to define the nature of these agencies. They were neither executive agencies, nor quite judicial bodies, nor quite administrative boards. They were intended to give supervision and oversight from outside to the activities within their jurisdiction, in defense of the public interest. When necessary they might not simply supervise or regulate but control; but direct control was a harsher expedient than they were expected to employ from day to day.²¹

In short, there is a noteworthy similarity between the imprecision of Elihu Root's efforts to define the functions of the General Staff and the Progressives' notions of how the new governmental commissions would proceed. The similarity obviously cannot be pushed too far, since the General Staff manifestly was not an agency to supervise the army from outside in the way in which the ICC and the FTC were to supervise railroads and industry from outside. Yet even in this regard a similarity can be found. Root stressed that the General Staff should be "a body of officers working together under the direction of a chief and entirely separate from and independent of the administrative staff of an army."²² Though part of the army, the General Staff was yet to be distinct from and somewhat outside it.

Not only were there similar difficulties in defining what the General Staff on the one hand and the ICC and FTC on the other were supposed to do, and a similar choice of terms when definitions were attempted. The similarities extend further into the experiences of the General Staff and the commissions. The notion that traditional administrative structures could be supervised or regulated from outside raised similar problems. Commissions such as the ICC and FTC early decided that to regulate railroads and industry they required expertise, and so they more and more called for guidance from inside the businesses they were presumed to be regulating. In the process of receiving guidance, however, they found themselves more and more deferring to the interests of those inside the supposedly regulated businesses. Many of the Progressive sponsors of the commissions were soon disappointed to find the commissions serving less to supervise industries in the public interest than to

manage and, through central planning, to rationalize those industries in behalf of the private interests of their corporate owners. So too a process of deferring to the expertise of the old War Department bureaus carried the General Staff to a position where, under the pressures of Adjutant General Fred C. Ainsworth, the General Staff seemed in a fair way to be becoming merely an instrument for the fuller rationalization and ordering of the old-line War Department bureaus' continued real control over the army.²³

The General Staff and the civilian commissions both found, on the other hand, that to try to maintain their independence through a dignified aloofness from the organizations they were presumed to be supervising tended to keep them so far away that they lost control. With the General Staff, "supervising" without getting involved in the day-to-day "operating" of the various segments of the army meant that the segments tended to operate for themselves. Both the General Staff and the civilian commissions found themselves with difficulties in "following through"—seeing to it that their instructions once issued were actually executed. For the General Staff, this problem of following through was to persist at least into the Second World War, as is emphasized in the army's official history of the fate of General Staff directives sent to Hawaii before December 7, 1941. But still again, for both the General Staff and the civilian commissions the sort of close involvement in the regulated organizations which might help ensure compliance with instructions would also tend toward the kind of involvement in detail which might jeopardize the independence of the supervising body.²⁴

Historians of the Progressive era have come to focus upon the administrative history of the era only relatively recently; and while there exists a considerable literature on the administrative commissions, it is only beginning to come within the ken of general historians to be assimilated into the history of the Progressive era. Military historians have long showed a special interest in the General Staff, but much of what has been written about it has not been strongly informed of related developments in civilian administrative history. As the new interest in the administrative history of the Progressive era develops, military historians will do well to follow it for its possible illumination of their own field. A lawyer such as Elihu Root did not approach army administration as though it were altogether different from other kinds of public

administration. My suggestion is that his army reforms were part of his era's general groping towards a satisfactory expression of the bureaucratic method of administration and control. And as Root made only a beginning towards a new order in military administration, I hope military historians will increasingly study the work of his successors as well within the larger context of the Progressive era.

NOTES

1. For "heroic leadership" versus the "managerial" concept of command, see Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960), especially pp. 21-22. For Paul Y. Hammond on "neo-Hamiltonianism," see his *Organizing for Defense: The American Military Establishment in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1961), p. 23.
2. Allan Nevins, *The War for the Union* (2 vols. to date; New York, 1959-), I, 241. Vol. I of this set is Vol. V of the larger *Ordeal of the Union*, 6 vols. to date. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967) uses the phrase "the distended society" to express much the same idea as Nevins's "the invertebrate society"; it is the title of Wiebe's second chapter.
3. Wiebe, *Search for Order*. On the problem of control in the large cities, see especially Seymour Mandlebaum, *Boss Tweed's New York* (New York, 1965). The search for order also forms part of the theme of Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914* (Chicago, 1957).
4. Letter from Root to the Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, March 3, 1902, quoted in Otto L. Nelson, Jr., *National Security and the General Staff* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1946), p. 52. On the Progressives' interest in efficiency and the application of business principles to government, see Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959); James Weinstein, "Organized Business and the City Commission and Manager Movements," *Journal of Southern History*, XXVIII (1962), 166-182; Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform: A Study of the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962).
5. William A. Ganoë, *History of the United States Army* (New York, 1936), pp. 331, 350; Nelson, *National Security*, p. 13; Report of the Secretary of War, 54th Congress, 1st session, House Documents, II, No. 2 (serial 3478), 1896, I, 5.
6. Ganoë, *History of the United States Army*, pp. 331, 350, 365, 370; Nelson, *National Security*, pp. 13-14.

7. Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York, 1967), pp. 170, 192-194, 284-290.

8. For a general discussion, see Wiebe, *Search for Order*, pp. 111-121. More specialized works on various professions include James G. Barrow, *AMA: Voice of American Medicine* (Baltimore, 1963); Donald Fleming, *William H. Welch and the Rise of Modern Medicine* (Boston, 1954); Roscoe Pound, *The Lawyer from Antiquity to Modern Times* (St. Paul, 1953); Alfred Z. Reed, *Training for the Public Profession of the Law* (New York: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Bulletin No. 15, 1921; also New York, 1921); Richard H. Shryock, *The Development of Modern Medicine: An Interpretation of the Social and Scientific Factors Involved* (New York, 1947), and *Medical Licensing in America, 1650-1965* (Baltimore, 1967).

9. As Samuel P. Huntington emphasizes, the rise of military professionalism in the United States was impeded by a strong element of mere technicism; *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Vintage Books edition; New York, 1964), pp. 195-203. Huntington offers the best discussion of military professionalism both in the United States and elsewhere. On modern professions in general, see A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford, 1933).

10. Hammond emphasizes the secondary importance of the officer corps in effecting the Root reforms, *Organizing for Defense*, pp. 12-13. My hypothesis connecting the Root reforms with the Progressive era will be seen to hinge largely upon this assertion of the primacy of the civilian reformers. While more investigation of the topic needs to be done, it is my belief that the most influential of Root's military advisers, Major William H. Carter, was less important than his own account, cited in the following note, suggests; and that Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin played a smaller role in shaping the reforms than has sometimes been thought.

11. William H. Carter, "Creation of the American General Staff: Personal Narrative of the General Staff System of the American Army . . .," 68:1 Senate Miscellaneous Documents, II (serial 8254), No. 119; Hammond, *Organizing for Defense*, pp. 10-12; J. D. Hittle, *The Military Staff, Its History and Development* (Harrisburg, 1949), p. 182; Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root* (2 vols.; New York, 1938), I, 240-262; Spenser Wilkinson, *The Brain of an Army* (London, 1913); Emory Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States from 1775* (Washington: G.P.O., 1904), especially p. 258; Theodore Schwan, *Report on the Organization of the German Army* (Washington: War Department, Adjutant General's Office, Military Information Division, No. 2, 1894).

12. Hammond, *Organizing for Defense*, pp. 12-17, 21-22.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22; Herbert Rosinski, *The German Army* (rev. ed.; Washington, 1944), pp. 118-120.
14. Reports of the Secretary of War, 57:1, House Docs., II, No. 2 (serial 4269), 1901, p. 25; 57:2 House Docs., IV, No. 2 (serial 4443), 1902, p. 46.
15. Report of the Secretary of War, 57:2, House Docs., IV, No. 2 (serial 4443), 1902, p. 44, quoting Theodore Schwan.
16. Carter, "Creation of the American General Staff," pp. 43-45; Nelson, *National Security*, p. 59.
17. Report of the Secretary of War, 58:2, House Docs., II, No. 2 (serial 4628), 1903, p. 7.
18. Report of the Secretary of War, 57:2, House Docs., IV, No. 2 (serial 4443), 1902, p. 44.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 46. For a discussion of the historic controversy over whether the General Staff should "operate" or "supervise," see Roy S. Cline, *Washington Command Post: The Operations Division. United States Army in World War II: The War Department*, (Washington: Department of the Army, 1950), p. 358.
20. John McAuley Palmer, *America in Arms: The Experience of the United States with Military Organization* (New Haven, Conn., 1941), p. 126.
21. For the development of the bureaucratic approach to government in the Progressive era, see Samuel Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920* (Chicago, 1964); Barry Dean Karl, *Executive Reorganization and Reform in the New Deal* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), which reaches back to the Progressive era; Dwight Waldo, *The Administrative State: A Study of the Political Theory of American Public Administration* (New York, 1948); Wiebe, *Search for Order*, pp. 145-163, 169-172, 182-185, 193-195, 221-223, 293-300.
22. Report of the Secretary of War, 57:2, House Docs., IV, No. 2 (serial 4443), 1902, p. 43.
23. Gabriel Kolko argues that the governmental commissions became so much the instruments of the industries they presumably regulated that the Progressive era proved to be not an era of reform but of the victory of corporate capitalism; see his *Railroads and Regulation, 1877-1916* (Princeton, 1965) and *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History* (New York, 1963). The literature on the new commissions includes Robert E. Cushman, *The Independent Regulatory Commissions* (New York, 1941); Pendleton Herring, *Federal Commissioners: A Study of Their Careers and Qualifications* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936); George Rublee, "The Original Plan and Early History of the Federal Trade Commission," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, XI (1926),

114-120; I. L. Sharfman, *The Interstate Commerce Commission* (5 vols.; New York, 1931-1937) and *Railway Regulations: An Analysis of the Underlying Problems in Railway Economics from the Standpoint of Government Regulation* (Chicago, 1915). The most recent account of the struggle between Adjutant General Ainsworth and the General Staff is Mabel E. Deutrich, *Struggle for Supremacy: The Career of Fred C. Ainsworth* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1962). On the early development of General Staff activities, see Allan R. Millett, "The General Staff and the Cuban Intervention of 1906," *Military Affairs*, XXXI (1967), 113-119.

24. For the General Staff's monitoring problem—the problem of "following through"—see especially Cline, *Washington Command Post*, pp. 77-79.

COMMENTARY

Louis Morton

I will limit my remarks to Dr. Weigley's provocative and original analysis of the origins of the general staff in the United States. The thesis of this paper can be simply stated. It is that the military reforms of Elihu Root at the beginning of the twentieth century were part of a general trend in American society to bring order into the chaos that resulted from the urbanization and industrialization of the nation between 1870 and 1900. This movement, known as the Progressive movement, so dominated American society during the first two decades of the century that the period has come to be known as the Progressive era.

Let me say at the outset that this is the kind of history that more of us really should be concerned with. What Mr. Weigley has attempted to do in viewing the Root reforms in the context of the Progressive era's ideas about government is to relate an important change in the army's structure and command to developments in the civilian side of American society. Though I may not accept his thesis in its entirety—and I won't—I would support and applaud his work wholeheartedly and enthusiastically. The hypothesis is reasonable and provocative and certainly merits serious attention. Only by doing so can we arrive at a better understanding of military institutions and their relationships to other changes in our government.

Military institutions in the armed forces do not exist in a vacuum. They reflect the society they are designed to protect and defend, and they can be understood only in relation to that society. What Mr. Weigley has done in relating military to civilian reforms, it seems to me, is done all too rarely. And this failure is one of the reasons, perhaps the chief reason, why military history is in such

poor repute among academicians. Battles and campaigns in military exploits are surely a necessary part of military history, but they are not the whole nor even the most important part of military affairs that the historian should be concerned with. What military historians should be doing more of is seeking the relationship between military institutions and activities and the broadest streams of history in an effort to enlarge our understanding of both. This, it seems to me, is the great merit of Mr. Weigley's study, and I hope that any reservations I might express about his thesis will not be construed as diminishing in any way my admiration for his work or discourage him from continuing along this very profitable line of inquiry.

The positive features of his paper far outweigh the specific criticisms I might make. But after all, the role of a critic is to criticize as well as praise; so let me raise several questions about this paper for the purpose of discussion and clarification. They are not the only questions I have but they will suffice, I think, to open up the subject. The first question I would raise, and it is central to Mr. Weigley's thesis, has to do with his conception of the term "progressive" and the men whom he identifies as Progressives. Traditionally, as he says, the term has been used to describe the political and social reforms of the period. But Mr. Weigley, drawing on recent writings on the subject, especially Robert Wiebe's *Search for Order*, finds the most salient characteristics of the movement not in the drive for reform but in the application of the organizational principles of leadership and direction "to bring the new social and economic forces under public control." The central problem of the period 1900 to 1920 he finds in Wiebe's title, *The Search for Order*, subordinating the reforms of this period, the efforts to better the lot of the working classes, to minor importance as "the pursuit of some transcendental moral idea." In Weigley's view, Root, one of the most conservative men of the period, becomes progressive together with such conservatives as Lodge, General Wood, and Captain Mahan.

Having defined progressivism in this manner Mr. Weigley then moves, much too easily, I think, to the assertion that if the true central theme was the search for order, then the Root reforms appear "thoroughly appropriate to the Progressive era." There are two very large conditions here represented by the "if" and the

“appear,” and the word “appropriate” is ambiguous at best. But Mr. Weigley proceeds thereafter as though he has demonstrated the validity of his supposition, when as a matter of fact—in my judgement—he has not. Somehow or other the “if” gets lost sight of.

Thus the central argument for me at least remains to be proved. It consists of two points: first, the nature of Progressivism and the identity of the Progressives; and second, the causal relationship between that movement and the Root reforms. The fact that they occur at the same time or are “thoroughly appropriate” does not *ipso facto* establish this relationship.

The symposium is probably not the most “appropriate,” if I may use that word, arena to discuss the meaning of Progressivism. It is a subject to which some of the leading American historians have devoted considerable attention with no general agreement on its meaning or its causes, or on the identity of the Progressives. What makes it difficult to define the Progressive movement is that it consisted of a number of different movements, some of them contradictory, and that the Progressives constituted a widely varying group whose conception of social justice and regulation differed greatly. Theodore Roosevelt, for example, whom Mr. Weigley described as the first Progressive president, thought big business inevitable and beneficial but was prepared to regulate monopolies and to expand the welfare function of the state. Wilson, who most certainly must be identified as a Progressive president, thought large corporations inefficient and a threat to society, and wished to break them up to return the economy to smaller competitive enterprises; yet both are Progressives. It doesn't help our understanding of this complex and contradictory movement, I think, to define it as narrowly as Mr. Weigley does and limit it to one aspect, that is to the rationalization of management. To do so, to lump Mahan, Root, Wilson, Smith, Robert Wagner, and Robert LaFollette together as Progressives, it seems to me, is to deprive the word of all meaning whatsoever. What the Progressives were trying to do was to work out a program of social change in a peaceful and orderly way. The search for order, in my own view, was only one part of the program.

My second difference with Mr. Weigley has to do with the way he has made the army of the nineteenth century fit the model he has created. This model is of an amorphous, unstructured, agrarian society, becoming transformed between 1865 and 1900 into an

industrial, urban society with an antiquated political and economic system, completely inadequate to deal with the problems of the new industrial society. The model is largely correct in describing what happened in the United States in the nineteenth century, but to apply it to the army is quite another thing. To do so requires comparing, as Mr. Weigley does, the nineteenth century army and its frontier garrisons to an amorphous bundle of markets and polities centering on one hundred small cities and towns. This army with its hundreds of military posts, he says, was a miniature of the invertebrate society. The department and district commands Weigley likened to the smaller centers of civilian population, while at the same time pointing out that a department might cover an area as large as several states.

I would submit that this picture is an exaggeration distorted to fit the model-army into Weigley's model of the United States in the nineteenth century. The army was a national institution and not a local institution—exactly what was lacking on the civilian side—and though operating in small units at widely separated posts, it was under centralized, federal control. Moreover, it seems to me, he exaggerates the scattered and isolated nature of the garrisons. Of the seventy-seven military posts in the United States in 1898, only six had a garrison of one company, twenty had eight or more companies, and about half were garrisoned by four or more companies. For an army of about twenty-five thousand men, that doesn't seem to me quite so great a "scatteration" as he suggests. Further, half of the infantry regiments and more than two-thirds of the cavalry of the entire army at that time were located in the plains and mountain states, and as he says, the reforms under Root did not materially affect this deployment of the forces of the United States Army.

Pursuing the analogy of the army and the amorphous society, Mr. Weigley asserts that just as the new industrial age demanded that American society organize itself to bring economic and social forces under public control, so did new national defense problems demand that the United States Army organize itself to function as a coordinated mechanism. Both parts of the statement are correct, but that does not necessarily establish a connection between the two parts, and I don't think Mr. Weigley establishes one. Moreover, he doesn't tell us what these new national defense problems were. It is

true that weapons development since 1865 called for changes in organization and tactics, and that the war with Spain had revealed weaknesses in command and planning; but these can hardly be attributed to urban and industrial development.

When Mr. Weigley compares the crisis at Homestead with the Spanish American War as events that crystalized opinion and led to change, he is on firmer ground. He is aware also that the parallel between invertebrate civilian America and the invertebrate army is not altogether accurate, that the army did possess at least one national skeletal feature, a professional officer corps. I would suggest that it contained other features that belie its seemingly amorphous character: a similarity in structure, in organization, and in method. Though its elements were deployed between some seventy or eighty posts for most of the period, they all followed the same rules and regulations, used the same weapons, had a common system of discipline and training, were subject to the same chain of command from the top, held to the same loyalties, customs, and traditions, and wore the same uniforms. To describe such a system as amorphous, lacking a skeleton, does seem to me to be stretching the point somewhat.

A third point I would like to comment on is Mr. Weigley's characterization and motivation of the army reformers. He notes correctly, though with somewhat more emphasis than I think is justified, that the impetus for reform came not from the officer corps but from civilians. These civilians, he says, were motivated largely by the same search for order that characterized civilian reform. Leonard White referred to these civilian leaders in his administrative history as "the new Hamiltonians," a term that Paul Hammond adopts in his own study of defense organization. But both, it should be noted, link the civilian interest in military reform not so much to the search for order as to civilian control of the military, which is to be achieved through the methods used in large scale business organizations. "The major premise of Root's reforms," says Hammond, "was the efficiency of clear lines of accountability and authority."

Moreover, it does not seem to me significant that civilians provided the impetus, if they did, to army reform. What is more significant are the ideas and outlook of the reformers, whether in uniform or not. The Neo-Hamiltonians—Roosevelt, Lodge, Root,

Mahan, Crowley—combined elements of military and civilian thought, and their political philosophy emphasized power and the primacy of the national interest. They supported and favored the emergence of the United States as a world power and thought the country should play a positive and strong role in international affairs. Like the military they viewed international politics as a struggle between independent nations with conflicting interests. Force, they believed, was the ultimate arbiter, and they supported the military in their effort to build larger forces and secure larger appropriations so that the United States could assert its power more effectively. Viewed in this way, the civilian reformers were scarcely distinct from the men in uniform and were motivated less by desire for reform than to project American power overseas.

And finally Secretary Root's reforms, Mr. Weigley tells us, owed at least as much to the prevalent thinking of the Progressives as to military thought and experience. "What Root wanted," he says, "was a body that would not only plan for the future, a 'think' organization, but would also control and supervise the bureaus." He found the answer, we are told, in the Progressives' discovery of a new theory of public management, the government commission, developed to keep a watchful eye and, if necessary, to supervise and regulate the trusts.

The evidence offered for this analysis, it seems to me, is pretty skimpy. Though Mr. Weigley keeps referring to the Federal Trade Commission, which was established in 1914, the only such commission or board that I know of created before 1903 was the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), which dated from 1887 and certainly was not noted for being an effective instrument at least up to that time. Surely this one example hardly offers convincing proof of the development of a new type of government control. Secondly, the connection between the General Staff and the civilian commission is tenuous and arguable at least. And third, there is no evidence of a causal relationship, at least not in this paper. Noting the resemblance between the Progressives' efforts to regulate the large trusts and the General Staff's attempts to supervise the bureaus of the War Department, Weigley asserts that both were the product of the same forces. He recognizes a weakness in the analogy, namely that the General Staff was not an outside regulating agency like the ICC, but he gets around this difficulty by the

fiction that the General Staff was somehow distinct and outside the army. The further argument that the efforts of the General Staff to supervise the bureaus were similar to the efforts of the ICC is not persuasive. Because both had difficulty in following through and both tended to draw on the expertise of the groups they were supposed to be supervising, points to some similarity of the two. But the differences between the two bodies seem to be much more significant than their superficial resemblances.

Having made these reservations about Mr. Weigley's paper, one must in justice note the solid virtues of his work. It is based on a thorough knowledge of the period and the historical literature dealing with it. It puts forth a provocative hypothesis which, if not conclusively demonstrated, does break new ground and point the way for further research. It argues the case persuasively and cogently and despite my differences with Mr. Weigley, I find his approach fresh and promising of rich rewards. Military historians have for too long neglected the relationship between their own area of interest and the broader aspects of society. Too often they have concerned themselves with wars, campaigns, battles, and the memoirs of military leaders, while other historians for a variety of reasons have tended to neglect military affairs. Neither is healthy, it seems to me. Military institutions, armed forces, and methods of warfare are important parts of any society and reflect its cultural values, economic system, and political organization. As Alfred Vagts wrote in his *History of Militarism*, "the task of the military historian is to show how the army of a state fits into the system of national or international division of labor, how armies are inter-related, by what means and interests they are kept up and how the manning and paying of armies affects society, finances and the national economy." How the thought of military man stands in relation to the thought of his own time: this is the kind of military history we need. This is what Mr. Weigley has tried to do and we should be grateful to him for pointing the way in this study of the origins of the American General Staff.

THE AMERICAN MILITARY GENERATION GAP IN WORLD WAR I: THE LEAVENWORTH CLIQUE IN THE AEF

Edward M. Coffman

Today, the generation gap excites sociologists, frightens most of the elders (anyone over thirty or twenty-five or wherever the current cut-off of youthful credibility is), and generally stimulates comment.

A generation gap within the army fifty years ago, of course, was not as widespread nor did it attract as much attention in the news media. Yet the veteran war correspondent, Frederick Palmer, who wrote so much about World War I, devoted a chapter in one of his books to it¹ and knowledgeable officers in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) were well aware of this new breed of professional officers who wielded such great power—the Leavenworth clique. Resented, if not hated, by some, respected by many, the relatively small group of graduates of the School of the Line and the Staff College of Fort Leavenworth held most of the key staff positions in the AEF. And they represented a break with the past.

Although there were schools in the army before those at Leavenworth began to flourish in the decade prior to World War I, they did not inspire the same *élan*, provide the training, or certainly did not graduate a group so specifically “calibrated”² for staff work as did Leavenworth. Founded in the days of what Douglas MacArthur called the “one-shot carbine, revolver, and saber Army”³ in 1881, the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry provided a rather elementary course which included instruction in penmanship, arithmetic, grammar, and little more until an imaginative teacher, Arthur L. Wagner, began to stir up professional interest in tactics. Shortly before the school closed because

of the Spanish American War, another teacher, Eben Swift, introduced the valuable technique of order forms so that graduates, hopefully, would be able to decrease misunderstanding by using a standard order form in a given situation. As John McAuley Palmer (School of the Line, 1909, Staff College, 1910) wrote: "A form for an attack is quite as convenient to a soldier as a form for a lease to a lawyer. It saves time. It prevents the forgetting of any small but important detail. It enables subordinates to relieve their principals of a mass of routine work."⁴

With the advent of the Root reforms and the reopening of the schools at Leavenworth in 1902, the level of professional training was also advanced. J. Franklin Bell, as commandant and later Chief of Staff, nourished this development; and John F. Morrison, another inspiring teacher, used map problems and indelibly impressed students with tactical principles.⁵

While most of their fellow officers wrestled with the routine of company administration, worried about the upcoming polo match, or studied a hand of cards during long afternoons at officers' clubs, the students at Leavenworth pored over translations of Griepenkerl's *Letters on Applied Tactics* and Albert Buddecke's *Tactical Decisions and Orders*, learned to use maps, and disciplined themselves in the study of their profession. The competition was fierce as they fought for class rank which would give some the opportunity for a second year of study in the Staff College.

At the War Department, officers pondered the adoption of a new saber or the color of the stripe on the uniform trousers⁶ while the Leavenworth students deployed imaginary armies and learned to handle the details of large scale war on maps. Others might be suspicious of this study and continue their daily round in what had become a "drill regulation Army,"⁷ but for Leavenworth men horizons broadened. George C. Marshall (School of the Line, 1907, Staff College, 1908) put it succinctly: "I learned how to learn."⁸

When the United States intervened in World War I, the Allies did not believe their new associate capable of providing commanders and staff for units in a large, separate army. There were logistical and diplomatic reasons as well for the British and French arguments against an independent American force, but their estimate of the professional capability of the American officer corps

was as clear as it was irritating to the Americans. To a great extent it would be up to the Leavenworth men to disprove this view as far as staff officers were concerned.

The commander of the AEF, John J. Pershing, was not a Leavenworth graduate, but he recognized the value of this professional training. Of the 12 officers who served on his staff as chief of staff, deputy chief of staff, and G-1 through G-5 during the course of the war, eight were graduates of both the School of the Line and the Staff College and another (James G. Harbord) was a graduate of the pre-Spanish War period. The time in which an officer attended the school made a difference, as Hugh A. Drum (School of the Line, 1911, Staff College, 1912), a member of the G-3 section, noted in his diary: "Harbord as chief of staff is an excellent man but lacks the training of Leavenworth."⁹ Harbord was also aware of this difference as he commented in *The American Army in 1917-1919*: "Our service schools at Fort Leavenworth, originally organized as schools of rather elementary application, had been reformed at the beginning of the century. . . ."¹⁰ All of the six officers who held the posts of G-3 (Operations), G-4 (Coordination), and G-5 (Training) during the war were Leavenworth men of post-Spanish War vintage, as was the deputy chief of staff, LeRoy Eltinge (School of the Line, 1908, Staff College, 1909), and the chief of staff, James W. McAndrew (School of the Line, 1911, Staff College, 1912), from May 6, 1918 throughout the remainder of the war.¹¹

Drum, who participated with his section chiefs, John M. Palmer and Fox Conner (Staff College, 1906), in much of the basic planning during the first months in France, commented on the Leavenworth background in a letter to his wife. On September 24, 1917, he wrote: "My Leavenworth training is standing me in good stead these days." And he added: "I am in the operations section. There are seven of us, all Leavenworth men who were at the school as instructors or students with me."¹²

In one respect these officers, while at Leavenworth, had prepared better for their specific task than anyone could have foreseen. When Conner, Palmer, and Drum visited the Western Front near Nancy, they looked over terrain which they virtually knew by heart from their map studies at Leavenworth. Since German topographi-

cal maps were better than American maps, they had worked out problems in Kansas on maps of the Moselle and Metz area.¹³

Since there were not enough Leavenworth graduates to staff the armies, corps, and divisions which Pershing envisioned, he decided to create his own version of Leavenworth in the General Staff College at Langres. Drum worked on a study for this school and McAndrew became its first director. For three months, regulars and citizen soldiers went through an abbreviated staff course. Would this indoctrination and training serve the purpose? After Belleau Wood and before Soissons, Drum wrote, on 7 July 1918: "Our school system is a big concern. Leavenworth is a drop in the bucket. Of course the Leavenworth teaching is the foundation of the whole system."¹⁴

Although Langres graduates would have to carry some of the staff burden, the Leavenworth men provided the leaven. Before the Armistice, Pershing had two field armies and seven corps in the AEF. The chiefs of staff of the two armies and nine of the ten officers who held the similar positions in the corps were Leavenworth graduates. Within the 26 divisions that saw combat in France, only three (30th, 89th, and 90th) did not have at one time or other a Leavenworth man as chief of staff.

The difference between the education of the commanders and their chiefs of staff marked the generation gap. Neither Pershing, the other two Army commanders (Hunter Liggett and Robert L. Bullard), nor any of the corps commanders had attended the post-Spanish War Leavenworth; and only seven of the 57 generals who commanded the divisions that actually fought had done so. Of those seven, two, Preston Brown (School of the Line, 1913, Staff College, 1914) and Hanson E. Ely (Infantry and Cavalry School, 1905, Staff College, 1906), had earlier served as division chiefs of staff.¹⁵

Some of the commanders, such as Pershing and Liggett, had studied Leavenworth course materials on their own. Others had attended a brief course at Leavenworth and many had been graduated from the Army War College, but they were not considered "Leavenworth men" by those who had spent the year or two years in intensive study at the Kansas post.

When it came to battle, what did the Leavenworth background mean? It meant that Leavenworth graduates shared a common outlook in tactics, standard forms for orders, and the same military vocabulary. Charles D. Herron (School of the Line, 1907, Staff College, 1908), who served as chief of staff of the 78th Division during the bitter fighting about Grandpré and in the pursuit phase of the Meuse-Argonne offensive, commented that if you talked with another Leavenworth man, "he understood what you said and you understood what he said."¹⁶ He added that he was not sure of this when he conferred with someone who did not have the Leavenworth training.

The relationship between commander and chief of staff required confidence in his chief of staff on the part of the commander and, in the case of the chief of staff, a sense of proportion and understanding of his proper role. Mutual loyalty was also essential. When Pershing described the course at Langres, he emphasized that officers were taught not only "a common doctrine" but also "a loyal sense of cooperation well accentuated."¹⁷ The chief of staff had to know that the commander would support him when he issued orders in the general's name. In turn, the general had to trust the judgment of the younger officer.

During a period in which there was a difference in training between the older and younger men, the personal element was even more important than it would be later in the twentieth century, when one could assume a general similarity in the professional education of commanders and staff officers. In the pre-World War era, the officer corps was small enough (ranging from 3500 to 5000 in round numbers between 1900 and 1916)¹⁸ so that an officer of long and varied service would know personally a fairly large percentage of all the regular officers. John J. Pershing remembered Malin Craig (Infantry and Cavalry School, 1904, Staff College, 1905, and Chief of Staff, I Corps) as a schoolboy on an army post, recognized Herron, whom he had not seen since he was his tactical officer at West Point in the 1890s, at Chaumont, and knew Drum from his staff work in the Southern Department in 1916 and early 1917. From his own class at West Point, there came eleven division commanders. As a tactical officer, he had occasion to know cadets who would be at the staff age of late thirties and early forties in World War I. Herron's Military Academy class of 1899 alone included 12 key staff officers.¹⁹ And there were many other oppor-

tunities for Pershing, who had a strong memory, to evaluate the personalities and performances of other officers. A similar observation could be made about Liggett, who had known personally his chief of staff, G-3, and G-4 in the "Old Army," and had learned about his G-1 through a mutual acquaintance when he formed the staff of the I Corps.²⁰

This acquaintance paid off for the older officers when they had to depend initially on their knowledge and judgment of men, trusting in their juniors rather than their own technical training. Later, of course, they could judge on the basis of results.

There were problems. Staff officers are never overly popular with line officers, and the difference in training perhaps exacerbated this hostility. Then, some of the Leavenworth men—Preston Brown and Alfred W. Bjornstad (School of the Line, 1909, Staff College, 1910) to name a couple—were too brusque or too domineering or even tried to take over the role of the commander. Nor was the Leavenworth training a prerequisite for success. Douglas MacArthur, a successful chief of staff, brigade and division commander of the 42th Division, was not a graduate; and the three divisions (30th, 89th, and 90th) which never did have Leavenworth-trained chiefs of staff made good records in battle. Nevertheless, the importance within the AEF of what Frederick Palmer called the "magic inner circle"²¹ was apparent to anyone acquainted with staff work in the expeditionary force.

One of the Leavenworth men, who had left GHQ in the summer of 1917 because of illness, was made particularly aware of this when he rejoined the AEF in the fall of 1918. Pershing's former G-3, John M. Palmer, reported to First Army headquarters at Souilly early in October. His subordinate of fifteen months before, Hugh Drum, was now Chief of Staff of First Army. When he accompanied Drum to a conference of chiefs of staff of the I, III, and V Corps, he found all three Leavenworth men. "Except for an ominous rumble to the north of us, I might have thought that we were back at Leavenworth," he recalled. "It seemed just like a Staff College conference between the phases of one of the old map maneuvers. The technique and the talk were just the same—except that Drum now spoke for General Pershing and not for General 'A'—and that the umpire this time was to be the God of Battles."²²

In a few weeks the war would be over. Even on Armistice Day, Drum thought of his school. He wrote his wife on 11 November: "All the hard hours of study at Leavenworth and those spent here have borne fruit and my reward is now at hand."²³ And the first chance he had to take some time off a few days later, he and another Leavenworth graduate toured "all the ground where Griepenkerl problems were laid."²⁴ A few months later, he returned to the United States to become the Director of the School of the Line.

Among the most impressive lessons of the war was the value of the schools. As General of the Army Omar N. Bradley said: "The greatest difference in the army before and after the war was the school system."²⁵ Officers worked harder and studied more in the army of the twenties and the thirties than most of their seniors had in the prewar army. When World War II came, there was a greater consistency in the training of command and staff officers than there had been in 1917.²⁶ The School of the Line had become the Command and General Staff School and the "magic inner circle" had expanded. The generation gap was bridged.

NOTES

1. Frederick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle (The Meuse-Argonne)* (New York, 1919), Chapter XXV.
2. John McAuley Palmer used this term in *Washington-Lincoln-Wilson: Three War Statesmen* (Garden City, N.Y., 1930), p. 298.
3. MacArthur interview, 12 December 1960.
4. John Palmer, p. 295.
5. Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Education of a General* (New York, 1963), pp. 94-96, 98-99.
6. George Van Horn Moseley, "One Soldier's Journey," two volume typescript memoir in the Moseley Papers, Library of Congress, I, 113-114.
7. Charles D. Herron interview, 7 November 1964.
8. As quoted in Pogue, p. 101.
9. Diary, combined entry for 9-31 August 1917, Hugh A. Drum Papers, in possession of the family.
10. James G. Harbord, *The American Army in France: 1917-1919* (Boston, 1936), p. 29.

11. For the names and dates of service of the staff officers, I depended upon *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War, American Expeditionary Forces: General Headquarters, Armies, Army Corps, Services of Supply, and Separate Forces* (Washington, D.C., 1937). I did not include acting or ad interim officers nor those who joined the staff after the Armistice. I used the *Official Army Registers* for 1918 and 1924 to determine the officers' educational background.
12. Drum to wife, 24 September 1917, Drum Papers.
13. John Palmer, p. 299.
14. Drum to wife, 7 July 1918, Drum Papers.
15. Again, I used the *Official Army Registers* for 1918 and 1924. I found the names of the commanders and the chiefs of staff in *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War, American Expeditionary Forces: Divisions* (Washington, D.C., 1931). As above, I did not include acting or ad interim officers nor those who assumed the position after the Armistice.
16. Herron interview, 7 November 1964.
17. John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War* (2 vols.; New York, 1931), I, 156.
18. Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York, 1967), p. 568.
19. I relied upon class rolls of 1886 and 1899 in the *Register of Graduates and Former Cadets: United States Military Academy* (New York, 1953). I also depended upon the Herron interview and interviews with Pershing's secretary, Ralph A. Curtin, 14 November 1958 and 10 November 1960.
20. Hunter Liggett, *A.E.F.: Ten Years Ago in France* (New York, 1928), pp. 306-311. Liggett commented on Leavenworth earlier on pages 286 and 288.
21. Frederick Palmer, p. 453.
22. John Palmer, p. 340.
23. Drum to wife, 11 November 1918, Drum Papers.
24. Drum to wife, 22 November 1918, Drum Papers. Laurence Halstead of the G-3 Section, First Army, accompanied Drum on this trip.
25. Bradley interview, 10 July 1961.
26. The consistency of the doctrine of command and staff methods is commented upon by Ray S. Cline in *Washington Command Post: The Operations Division* (Washington, D.C., 1951) in the multivolume series *United States Army in World War II*. Cline's comments are on pages 3

and 6. John W. Masland and Laurence I. Radway in *Soldiers and Scholars: Military Education and National Policy* (Princeton, 1957) discuss the importance of the Command and General Staff School in this period on pages 88-89.

COMMENTARY

Daniel R. Beaver

Professor Coffman's paper poses all sorts of questions and then, if I may say so, fails to answer most of them. Just what is a generation gap? It can be a simple matter of years and experience or it can be, as Professor Coffman suggests, a question of differing outlooks on issues that contain significant areas of conflict and antagonism. Was there in the American army that kind of a gap between the officers trained at Leavenworth and their seniors *not* trained at the staff school? Were those army officers not trained at the staff school and vegetating out in the Line as outmoded in their views as Professor Coffman has suggested? Were those army officers stationed in the Philippines between 1900 and 1914, who tended to make their way back to the United States from their Philippine posts through Russia, through Germany, through France, through England, and who compiled and filed at the War College voluminous intelligence reports of what they saw and of what they thought of various situations—were all these throwbacks of an earlier era? Did those American army officers who supervised the building of the Panama Canal have any less expertise than the War College and Leavenworth people who went to France in 1917? And what about those army officers who administered American affairs in Puerto Rico, in Cuba, and in certain areas of the Philippines? Were they really so out of touch with the realities of twentieth century military affairs? Was not connection still, as Professor Coffman has suggested, the most important thing in the American army in 1917? I remember going through the papers of Hugh Scott and coming upon a magnificent letter, I thought, from old Mrs. MacArthur, who reminded Hugh Scott of what her husband Arthur had done for him, and to see to it "that Douglas is not left behind when the first ships leave for France."

Frederick Palmer, whom Professor Coffman has cited as his authority, can be read in any number of ways on the so-called "Leavenworth clique." It may be that that terrible term was simply the frustrated line officers' name for anything that smacked of "Chaumont" or "staff." Most certainly Palmer can be interpreted that way. The higher command ranks in the AEF showed no indication that they considered these Leavenworth types to be "young Turks," or to be dangerous, or to be differently trained. Rather, what Pershing and his colleagues did was to absorb those men into the AEF. Pershing knew quite well how to handle them and take care of them and use the best capabilities of the "Leavenworth clique" to the advantage of the AEF. Rather than fighting or restricting them in any way, the AEF simply made them a part of the establishment, where they performed the missions laid out for them with very little protest or complaint. Certainly, if there was a generation gap it was not anywhere near so strong as that between the stockbroker supporting Hoover and his son supporting Franklin Roosevelt, or the Eisenhower Republican and his flower-child offspring.

Now I don't think the idea of a generation gap can be simply dismissed. Professor Coffman has shown there was a self-conscious group that conceived of themselves as Leavenworth men in the AEF. He is quite right to point this out and he does it very well. But how did the relationship between Leavenworth theory and AEF practice create a generation gap? What was taught at Leavenworth in the form of strategy and tactics that separated these "young Turks" from their older colleagues in the American army or from their British or French opposite numbers? Was it the spirit of the rifle? Was it the doctrine of open warfare preached by Pershing? Was it the artillery doctrine espoused by General Charles Summerall? Or possibly, was it the detachment of mind that caused General James Harbord to change his mind a little bit about Leavenworth and virtually to have apoplexy when Fox Conner, in far away Chaumont, denied Harbord's request for reinforcements at Belleau Wood on the ground that he (Conner) knew the conditions there were not very bad? Was it the courses taught at Leavenworth that led AEF planners to launch the Argonne offensive with daily objectives that were out of touch with reality? Was it the intensive map work at Leavenworth that explains why the 35th Division was ordered up the valley of the Aisne into a cul-de-sac where they were

decimated by German artillery and machine guns? Maybe Hugh Drum should have reconnoitered the Argonne area *before* the armistice rather than *after* the armistice. Finally, was it Leavenworth thinking that subjected the drafted armies to such rigorous Regular Army discipline after the armistice that troop morale was almost destroyed before it was stopped? Is it not possible that Professor Coffman's generation gap in the AEF did not concern the Leavenworth people at all, but developed between officers who still held to the gothic or romantic "hell-for-leather" style of military leadership, and those who conceived of war as more a grim business venture and who addressed themselves to organizational problems with the efficiency necessary to achieve success? How much did it really matter if such officers went to Leavenworth? I would not want to detract from the very real achievement of Pershing and his staff; but some, if not all, of the questions I have raised should be dealt with, before the impact of a possible generation gap can be properly assessed.

In addition to differences in styles of leadership that I have already suggested, there are two other areas in this early period where a generation gap, if there was one, might be found equal to, if not greater than, the one between the old army and the Leavenworth clique. The first gap might be the one so ably espoused by Russell Weigley in his paper on the Elihu Root reforms, the gap between the regular tradition of the Upton school and the citizen-soldier approach of officers like John McAuley Palmer. Certainly younger officers in the army, like George Marshall, seem to have learned much about the effectiveness and potential of amateur soldiers during the war, and their attitudes seem to have been much different from their elders' toward the troops and officers of the National Army and the National Guard. This area, I think, could be explored much more fully to locate possible generation gaps.

A second possible gap lies between an older generation of army leadership unable to understand the relationship between industrial or economic power, and a rising generation of exponents of total war. The French historian Raymond Aron has shown strikingly in his book, *The Century of Total War*, how the First World War fused military requirements and industrial production until military demands received absolute priority. As Aron put it, "the army industrialized itself, industry militarized itself, the army absorbed the nation and the nation modeled itself from the army."

It has been shown rather forcefully in the last decade that John Pershing had little appreciation of the effect of model and specification changes on production. Indeed, the evidence indicates that Pershing largely ignored production issues inherent in supplying his army from its power base in the United States. A comparison of the attitudes of old school officers like Pershing or Hugh Scott, or even George W. Goethals, and new school officers like Hugh Johnson toward industrial-military relations might reveal an important generation gap more significant than the one between the old army and the Leavenworth clique. I have enjoyed reading Professor Coffman's paper and again I want to thank him for leading us down a line of scholarly investigation that is rich indeed in possibilities for future work.

THE LEAVENWORTH CLIQUE IN WORLD WAR I: A MILITARY VIEW

Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen, USAF

In 1903 at the dinner marking the inauguration of the General Staff, Elihu Root delivered a speech in which he said:

This is a time for organization. Great results are produced only by that. Individual effort, individual brilliancy, individual heroism, accomplish little, except as it has an effect on masses of men. Effective and harmonious organization is the moving power of the world today. We have lagged behind in our army until now; and now, I believe and trust, we take our place in the front rank of the organizations which are to control the effective action of the future. . . .¹

The creation of the General Staff (and the Army War College) as well as the earlier rejuvenation of the army's educational system (the School of the Line and the General Command and Staff College in 1901) were both integral parts of Root's design to bring efficiency and expertise, administration and management, into the United States Army. This was the focus that provided the impetus for the changes which took place in the army prior to our entry into World War I, changes which made it possible to discard the Old Army and create the New Army in 1917.

The young officers attending the Leavenworth schools after 1902 became the disciples of Root's military philosophy. They worked hard to perfect themselves in these new professional skills, designed, in Root's words, to train them "in the movement of large bodies of troops."² Handpicked for attendance at Leavenworth because they had shown administrative ability, promise of growth potential, and natural leadership, they were, as a group, alert and vital, hard driving, ambitious and in touch with the world and the

changes which were taking place in military organization and management. This small group of Leavenworth graduates (by 1917 only 334 officers had gone through either school) were to be the apostles of Upton's visions and Root's design for the New Army of the future. They worked endless hours and months to familiarize themselves with large-scale military organizations, with divisions, corps and armies—albeit on paper, while their contemporaries out in the line were content to continue to exist on the lessons and experiences from the Spanish American War and the Philippine Insurrection, possessing a military horizon that did not try to venture beyond the small unit structure of the traditional regiment.

The Leavenworth group did indeed represent a "new breed" of officer, but they were not the only ones. As Professor Beaver has pointed out, there were other officers in the army who, although they had not gone to Leavenworth, also belonged, though perhaps in a different sense, to this group of "new breed" officers. To many John J. Pershing reflects the prototype of this "new breed," an officer type developed by the army in response to the demands of imperialism and world power status, a rationale certainly inherent in Root's philosophy.³ As the Leavenworth students prepared themselves in scholarly detachment for the day when the United States would have to enlarge its military establishment, Pershing was an active participant in the events of the day and played a role in the new tasks thrust upon the army by the increased power status and expanding responsibilities of the United States in the aftermath of the Spanish American War. His career certainly can serve as an example and a case history of the "new breed" officer group.

Only by stressing administrative efficiency was Pershing able to create a million-man military organization in such incredibly short time in 1917. His talents as a "military businessman," that of the "manager" rather than the "heroic warrior" type, were the key to his success with the AEF in France.⁴

It is, therefore, not surprising at all that Pershing turned (in fact, had to turn) to the Leavenworth group to assist him in the organization and administration of the AEF. They were the only available manpower resource in the army which, at least in theory, had acquired some expertise in the management of large scale military organizations and the required staff functions. As Fred-

erick Palmer put it, "a scholastic preparation . . . became the criterion for practice in organization. . . ." ⁵ Pershing considered the creation of "a well constituted general staff" as the first and most necessary step in organizing the AEF, a task which required highly trained officers who, in his opinion, "as a rule came from the Staff College at Fort Leavenworth and the Army War College. . . ." ⁶ While among the group which accompanied him to France in May 1917 there were only six Leavenworth graduates, he soon began to recruit others actively. ⁷ Some had arrived in France in late June with the 1st Division and found themselves quickly reassigned for duty at GHQ, AEF; others were requested by name from the United States. ⁸ In early July 1917 Pershing sent a cable to the War Department requesting that at least ten of twenty-seven individually named officers, whom he "considered especially fit for staff duties," be immediately sent to France; all twenty-seven were Leavenworth graduates. ⁹

As the AEF grew, the General Staff at GHQ expanded from the original group of three officers to over 200, and the Leavenworth group tended to dominate it, as Professor Coffman so vividly points out. When some Leavenworth men left to take over much coveted combat commands (for example, Paul B. Malone, Frank McCoy, William Connor), their places were invariably taken by other Leavenworth men. ¹⁰ Command of the AEF combat units, nevertheless, remained by and large in the hands of non-Leavenworth men, the regulars who, as Frederick Palmer put it, "stood together as regulars in the 'magic *outer* circle' against the 'magic *inner* circle'" of the Leavenworth group. ¹¹ To the regulars, set in the traditions of the Old Army, the Leavenworth men may well have seemed to be "ruthlessly progressive and ambitious . . . so sure of themselves and their capabilities . . .," but to others they represented the very soul and sinews of General Pershing's organization. ¹²

Was the Leavenworth dominance within the staff structure of the AEF one of design and prescription, one of chance, or simply one of necessity? Professor Coffman, Professor Beaver, and even Frederick Palmer tend to agree that it was a combination of all three factors. Pershing, by making the General Staff concept the cornerstone of his organization, certainly was responsible for establishing the preponderant role of the Leavenworth group within the

AEF. Chance likewise played a part for no one, including Pershing himself, had foreseen that the AEF would become as large a military organization as it did. Lastly, with respect to necessity, Frederick Palmer's comment is perhaps the best answer: "What should we have done without them in France?"¹³

In order to more fully illuminate the role of the Leavenworth group in the AEF, Professor Coffman's paper together with a questionnaire (see appendix below) was sent to approximately 100 graduates of the U. S. Military Academy (Classes 1911 thru 1917), who had served in the AEF.* None of the group had attended Leavenworth prior to 1917 and the majority served in lower unit combat echelons, i.e., company, battalion, regiment, in the AEF.

How did these junior regular officers, an important and integral part of the "magic outer circle," see and react to the Leavenworth group and the myth of the "black stripe"? Few, if any, of these officers had heard of Leavenworth during their West Point days, where their education and training was still being conducted on the basis of the Old Army concepts, i.e., "Indian fighting" and the "hell for leather" approach.¹⁴ Those graduating between 1911 and 1916 found themselves usually assigned to the traditional line regiments stationed in the western part of the United States and along the southwest border, where their commanders were veterans of the Spanish American War and the Philippine Insurrection and the tactical training they received reflected these experiences. On the other hand, it was here that the young lieutenants learned for the first time about the Leavenworth schools, as other officers of the regiment were sent away to attend it. Upon their return these officers participated in the instructions offered by the regimental (and garrison) schools and the young officers learned a great deal from them.¹⁵ At the same time, booklets and pamphlets prepared by Leavenworth found their way to the field and were subscribed to by many of the line officers. Leavenworth also furnished the map problems used for instructions in the garrison schools and graded these problems.¹⁶ In this fashion a fair share of Leavenworth teaching and training found its way into the army officer corps before World War I. Another related aspect was such

*Approximately fifty replies were received, seven of which are printed in full in the section entitled "Comments by Members of the AEF" (see below). The information contained in the others forms the basis for the following parts of this essay.

War Department publications as, for example, the *Field Service Regulations*, published by the General Staff of the Army, a Leavenworth—dominated agency. Every regular officer of the pre-1917 army (and presumably every National Guard Officer as well) was required to have studied this publication.¹⁷

By and large, the Leavenworth graduates were looked upon with envy and respect for their accomplishment in the Old Army, since not many of the 5,700 officers had an opportunity to go to Leavenworth. The dedication of those who did go served as an inspiration to others when they returned to their regiments.¹⁸ Thus, men like John Palmer and Harold B. Fiske were accorded prestige beyond their rank and age within their regiments.¹⁹ However, others, like Alfred Bjornstad and Allen J. Greer, detracted from this picture because of personal (and perhaps adverse) character traits.²⁰ Conversely, the Old Army attitudes toward the Leavenworth school and its concepts did not disappear and as one officer recalls (in his only positive memory of Leavenworth before World War I), when his unit, the 6th Infantry, in late 1915 was given a quota (of one) for Leavenworth, not one of the three eligibles cared to go.²¹ Yet it seems fair to say that the Leavenworth school and its graduates had already achieved a position of respect and “separateness” in the Regular Army before 1917.

The young West Point officers were quite unaware of any “Leavenworth Clique” in the AEF, but then most of them served at lower unit echelons. However, those who became aware of the Leavenworth group commented that Leavenworth graduates did not serve long at regimental levels in the AEF (an occurrence already manifest in the pre-1917 army), since they were apparently needed at higher echelons, and that other officers appeared to look up to the Leavenworth graduates.²² As one officer who went overseas with the 1st Division in June 1917 points out, almost immediately after arrival in France officers were ordered by name from the division to General Pershing’s staff and the few Leavenworth graduates who had come over with the division were soon lost. These in turn requisitioned many of the better experienced junior officers as their assistants, who in turn again requisitioned others.²³

This concentration of Leavenworth men on the staff level was not considered unusual, since Leavenworth graduates seemed (to some) to have a better grasp of command and operations. It seemed

only natural that they would be glad to work together and prefer other Leavenworth graduates for command and staff work, because they (probably) felt that these were the best qualified people to accomplish the tremendous task of staffing the rapidly expanding AEF and would get the best results. They spoke the same language and, in most instances, knew each other well. But above all, they shared a feeling of belonging as graduates of these highly competitive schools. As a group they did exhibit a sense of cohesiveness and corporateness which set them apart from the rest of their contemporaries, but this was only noticeable at the higher staff level echelons, certainly not below corps or army levels.²⁴

Generally speaking, the young West Point officers did not concern themselves too much at any time during the war with the question of who was or was not a Leavenworth graduate.²⁵ They seemed to have felt that the Leavenworth group represented a group of high class officers who had been selected for their positions regardless of whether or not they had gone to Leavenworth. As some pointed out, had it not been for the training that this small selected group of officers received at Leavenworth during the decade or so preceding World War I (and the later effective employment of most of these officers in the AEF), the United States contribution to the defeat of Germany in 1918 would have fallen far short of what it actually was.²⁶ To them, the Leavenworth men did indeed represent a break with the past, but they felt that this was to the benefit of the army and that the influence of Leavenworth on the conduct of the war was a vital factor in its successful conclusion. The desire of commanders, chiefs of staff and other commanding officers, saddled with the job of forming troop staffs, to acquire graduates of the staff college seemed only a natural one, since the Leavenworth men represented a select group of better educated officers.²⁷

At the lower staff echelons, usually at division levels, where many of the West Pointers served, they did not see evidence of a Leavenworth group or "clique." In many cases the chief of staff was the only Leavenworth man in the division and as one of them put it, "one man does not make a 'clique'."²⁸ Another, who had served as a battalion commander in the 90th Division, recalled that none of the staff there had been to Leavenworth, yet the staff work was outstanding; in fact, he did not see any better during World War II.²⁹ The same picture seems to have applied to the 7th Division, where again only the chief of staff was a Leavenworth man

(William W. Taylor, Jr.: *School of the Line*, 1914; *Staff College*, 1915), although the temporary division commander, Brigadier General Charles E. Barth, had been an instructor at the Leavenworth schools from 1903 to 1905.³⁰

It may be of passing interest to note some of the personal recollections the West Point group had of the Leavenworth men with whom they came into contact during World War I.

There seemed to be general agreement that Hanson E. Ely was a natural soldier who would have been good in the field as a commander even without Leavenworth training. In the opinion of many he excelled both at staff and line work. When he took command of the 5th Division in October 1918, he is said to have "electrified" the division by his leadership.³¹ Preston Brown, on the other hand, seems to have left an impression of being a better staff than combat officer. His work as chief of staff of the 2d Division received high praise from those who served under him. Brown himself seems to have been quite outspoken in his belief that it was the knowledge acquired at Leavenworth that made it possible for him to do his job as well as he did.³² Hugh Drum impressed those who knew him with his capabilities as a staff officer, by his energy and tireless work. He also seems to have been quite outspoken about the value of the Leavenworth training and attributed his success to it.³³ Alfred Bjornstad, as a combat commander, fared less kindly. As commander of the 13th Infantry, he seems to have been commonly regarded as a poor example of a troop leader, generally disliked by both his officers and men.³⁴

In retrospect most of the correspondents seemed to agree with the comment expressed by General James A. Van Fleet, USA (Ret.), Class of 1914: "Thank God for Leavenworth."³⁵ As one officer put it, "I came out of World War I realizing what Leavenworth *could* have meant to me and as a result I tried to go there later on. There I was greatly benefited by the Leavenworth Clique of World War I, for they were the instructors."³⁶ The role played by the Leavenworth group during World War I seems to have inspired these young regular officers, all West Point graduates, to later on go to the school, feeling that before they went there they merely had had a job, but after going through the course they had become military professionals.³⁷

APPENDIX

The "Leavenworth Clique"

1. Can you recollect any instance during service with the AEF in 1917-1918 which would support Professor Coffman's contention that there existed in fact a "Leavenworth Clique"; that is, did the graduates of the Leavenworth School feel or manifest a group cohesiveness or corporateness which set them apart from the other officers?
2. If this was so, where did it manifest itself mostly, on the staff, the command level, or perhaps the social level? Were there any specific forms by which this Leavenworth "spirit" became apparent?
3. Did the Leavenworth training show? For example, was it evident to junior officers in combat that the Leavenworth-trained officers had a better or perhaps deeper grasp of military command or tactical operations?
4. Can you recollect any instance which supports Charles Herron's statement "that only Leavenworth graduates understood each other because of their common training, same military vocabulary, and similar outlook in tactics"?
5. Did you have any connection with or intimate knowledge of the school at Langres, its training course, and the effect of this training on the conduct of operations?
6. Did you personally know any of the personalities mentioned by Professor Coffman in his paper (Hugh A. Drum, James Harbord, LeRoy Eltinge, James McAndrew, John Palmer, Fox Conner, Preston Brown, Hanson E. Ely, Charles D. Herron, Malin Craig)? Can you make an assessment of their personalities and capabilities, particularly with respect to their Leavenworth training?
7. Can you recall any specific mention of the Leavenworth School during your West Point days and what was the tenor of these remarks?
8. Did a "Leavenworth Clique" exist within the unit (staff) you served with in France and could you describe it in terms of the Coffman thesis? For example, who were these people, how did they differ from the rest of the officers (either staff or command), and what was their relationship with the non-Leavenworth officers?
9. What unit did you serve with in the AEF, during what period, and in what localities?
10. Were any of your commanding or superior officers Leavenworth graduates and what were their names and positions?

NOTES

1. Quoted in William Harding Carter, "Elihu Root—His Services as Secretary of War," *North American Review*, CLXXVII (1904), pp. 120-121.
2. Quoted in Walter Millis, *Arms and Men: A Study of American Military History* (New York, 1958), p. 158.
3. Frank E. Vandiver, *John J. Pershing and the Anatomy of Leadership* (Harmon Memorial Lectures in Military History No. 5, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado, 1963), p. 3.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20; see also Morris H. Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960), pp. 152-153.
5. Frederick Palmer, *Our Greatest Battle (The Meuse-Argonne)* (New York, 1924), p. 436.
6. John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War* (2 vols.; New York, 1931), I, p. 103.
7. James Harbord, *The American Army in France: 1917-1919* (Boston, 1936), pp. 68-70.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 97. Pershing lists the names of all twenty-seven officers in his memoirs, see I, p. 103 (footnote 1). Among those requested were: Frank McCoy, Van Horn Moseley, Malin Craig, Alfred Bjornstad, Harold Fiske, Allen Greer, Paul Malone, Edgar T. Collins, Preston Brown, LeRoy Etlinge, J. P. McAdams, Stuart Heintzelmann, Edward L. King. McAdams, Moseley, King, McCoy had served with (or under) Harbord before the war. Others were known to Drum from previous service (for example, he had served with Fiske in Mindanao and, of course, knew Bjornstad and Moseley from his service on the border in 1915-1916). Two who did not appear on the list, Lt. Col. Hanson E. Ely and Major George S. Simonds, were members of the so-called Baker Mission (as was Kirby Walker who stayed on in France); see Harbord, pp. 100-101, 171.
10. Harbord, pp. 97-98.
11. Palmer, p. 453.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 436.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 440.
14. Comment by Brigadier General Calvin Dewitt, Jr., USA (Ret.), Class of 1916: "I only knew about Leavenworth because my brother had attended it." Comments by Major General Louis E. Hibbs, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916: "I, as a new graduate of West Point, had never even heard of

Leavenworth—a vital error on the part of my military educators. I could recite the names of the commanders on the battlefield of Gettysburg without an error (but that was only for a good grade for the day); nobody taught me tactics! I could have profited during those many hours at West Point, if Leavenworth would have had *any* effect on the army before World War I. . . . Leavenworth could have taught West Point to look ahead to the next war and not the *last* one and teach me the principles of operations of large units, not the study of what happened in the small units of previous wars.”

15. Comment by Colonel Willis J. Tack, USA (Ret.), Class of 1914: “When I joined the 28th Infantry upon graduation from West Point, Harold B. Fiske, then a captain, was a company commander in the regiment. In those days he was regarded by most of his fellow officers as a member of the “brain trust” [of the regiment]. He was also, so I understood, the “leading light” of the regiment’s Garrison School Advanced Course. I did not have him as an instructor, since I took the basic course. Another Leavenworth graduate in the regiment was my first company commander, F. E. Bamford, who later went to France as battalion commander (major) in June 1917 and wound up as a major general and division commander in the AEF.” Colonel Thomas H. Monroe, USA (Ret.), Class of 1914, recalls that his regimental commander (6th Infantry Regiment) in 1915 was Colonel John F. Morrison (Class of 1881), who conducted a regimental school which he (Monroe) was privileged to attend. The writing of orders was one of the primary subjects taught.

16. Comment by Major General Franklin C. Sibert, USA (Ret.), Class of 1912, who served with Headquarters, 1st Division, in the AEF.

17. Comments by Lieutenant General William H. H. Morris, USA (Ret.), Class of 1911: “The *Field Service Regulations* was an excellent publication and our World War I methods did not depart too much from it. The *Staff Manual* covering staff procedures was also very good. It must also be remembered that we did learn a lot from the French about staff procedures. Finally, both minor tactics and grand strategy in World War I did represent quite a departure from those taught at Leavenworth prior to the war.” Similar comments were made by Colonel Tack.

18. Comment by Colonel Monroe: “The graduates of the Leavenworth schools were certainly looked upon with envy by some, disdain by others, but also with respect for their accomplishments.”

19. Comment by Lieutenant General Morris: “John Palmer, whom I knew well, was only a captain in my regiment in 1915 but he had a great deal of prestige, far above that associated with his rank and seniority.” See also comment by Colonel Tack, footnote 15 above.

20. Comment by Major Sidney C. Graves, USA (Ret.), Class of 1915,

whose father was General Graves, the Commander of the AEFS (American Expeditionary Force in Siberia) in 1918: "When I went into Mexico in 1916 with the 16th Infantry, we had two Leavenworth Honor Graduates in the regiment, Alfred Bjornstad and Thomas Greer. The jealousy between these two was rampant." A similar comment was made by Colonel Monroe: "Their personalities [speaking of Leavenworth graduates] often led to considerable acrimony."

21. Comment by Lieutenant General John W. Leonard, USA (Ret.), Class of 1915; also comment by Major Graves: "Personally I believe that General Graves was secretly relieved that he did not attend Leavenworth. He was in spirit a product of the Old Army: long service in a single regiment."

22. Comment by Colonel Tack: "Harold Fiske went to France as a major with the 28th Infantry, but left the regiment almost immediately after our arrival to become Executive Officer of the 2nd Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Robert L. Bullard. A short time later he was ordered to Chaumont where he served for the rest of the war."

23. Comment by Major General Sibert.

24. Comments by Major General Charles H. Corlett, USA (Ret.), Class of 1913; Major General Thomas D. Finley, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916; Major General William F. Tompkins, USA (Ret.), Class of 1915; Colonel A. M. Weyand, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916; and Colonel Robert K. Whitson, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916. Colonel Whitson was a member of Headquarters, 1st Division, after the Armistice (from January 1919 on) and states that he never heard any mention of either Leavenworth or Langres among the staff personnel. Major General S. E. Reinhart, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916, who served as aide to General Peyton C. March, comments: "I accompanied General March to France and served with him while he was Commanding General, 1st Division Artillery, and then Chief of Artillery, AEF. I never heard him express an opinion of any officer as being Leavenworth graduates. However, he had quite a low opinion of the famous first staff which General Pershing took with him to France. I recall that when General Pershing asked him to come to Chaumont to advise him concerning the operation of that staff his comments upon his return were to the effect that he had found everyone on the staff busy trying to boost his own stock and, if possible, at the expense of any of the others. General March was particularly irked by the activities of Paul B. Malone who wanted artillery aerial observers trained by sending them to Langres to do blackboard firing under P. D. Glassford, instead of allowing them to be trained in the artillery training camps under actual firing conditions with a French observation unit and instructors to train them. General March, with the aid of General Foulois, finally blocked Malone on that proposition."

25. Comment by Major General Albert E. Brown, USA (Ret.), Class of 1912: "As a young captain (and major) in the Infantry and a recent

graduate of West Point, my knowledge and interest in the Leavenworth group was practically non-existent during my service in the AEF. I had heard of the "Leavenworth Clique" (by hearsay) and believed that such a group existed." Lt. General Leonard commented that he did not recall at any time that any of his age and rank group ever gave the question any thought of who was or was not a graduate of Leavenworth. Lieutenant General Morris commented that during his service in the AEF "nobody paid much attention to where you had gone to school. If you did not make good on your job you were reclassified [that is sent to Blois]."

26. Comments by Lieutenant Generals Leonard and Morris and Major General Sibert.

27. Comments by General William H. Hoge, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916, Brigadier General Raymond G. Moses, USA (Ret.), Class of 1916 and Colonel Monroe. General Joseph T. McNarney, USA (Ret.), Class of 1915, comments: "I feel sure that Leavenworth trained officers had a better grasp of military command and staff work than other untrained officers. It only stands to reason that commanders would always be on the look-out for such officers." Major General Brown commented that in his opinion, based on his service as a brigade adjutant in the 4th Division, some of the non-Leavenworth trained officers were ignorant of the technique of preparing orders, of logistics, and of the tactical employment of large units. Brigadier General William H. Holcombe, USA (Ret.), Class of 1914, points out "that Leavenworth trained officers were generally respected as well as envied by junior officers during World War I." Major General Hibbs, who served as a company (battalion) commander in the 1st Division during most of his AEF tour, comments: "As a battalion commander, 1st Division, I was always conscious of the fact that our higher command did not know about things, but as the war progressed, and possibly (I would say probably) as Langres turned out a staff on the Leavenworth scale of knowledge, even I, then a thorough 'mud trained' and combat experienced 'do it yourself,' became aware of the increased efficiency in our high command. When later on I went to II Corps as chief of staff of artillery, I found a Leavenworth product in command (General George Simonds). Simonds had a plan of battle and I became, for the first time, cognizant of the fact that someone knew what had to be done. Someone was learning all about supply, organization, and what it takes to mount large operations."

28. Comment by Major General Jens A. Doe, USA (Ret.), Class of 1914, who served as a battalion commander in the 5th Division under Hanson E. Ely, Paul B. Malone, Walter A. Gordon (War College graduate) and Joseph E. Castner (War College graduate).

29. Comment by Lieutenant General Morris, who served as a battalion commander in the 90th Division.

30. Comment by Brigadier General Arthur H. Lane, USA (Ret.), Class

of 1905, who, though not a Leavenworth graduate, was a regular detailed member of the War Department General Staff (August 1917-June 1918). Later he served on the 7th Division staff. A similar comment was made by Colonel Weyand, who served as a battalion commander in the 34th Infantry, 7th Division, in the AEF.

31. Comment by Lieutenant General Leonard. Major General Hibbs commented that in his opinion Hanson Ely was "a splendid fighting man."

32. Comment by Major General Hibbs: "He was not a combat man." Colonel Whitson, who served under Brown when the latter became brigade commander in the 2d Division (after the Armistice), commented that Brown was a great believer in schools and that an officer school of some kind was usually in operation in his brigade.

33. Comment by Lieutenant General Brown; Colonel Weyand pictures Drum as "capable, energetic, hard-working but also vain."

34. Comment by Colonel Weyand: "The only Leavenworth trained officer with whom I came into contact during the period of hostilities was Brigadier General Alfred W. Bjornstad, commanding the 13th Infantry Brigade. He was a very poor example of a troop leader. I never heard any of his officers or enlisted men speak well of him. When he was nominated for permanent promotion his colonels, brigade adjutant, and others testified against him before the Senate committee. He got the promotion. Could this have been an example of the Leavenworth Clique working behind the scenes?"

35. General Van Fleet served as a battalion commander (major) in the 6th Division.

36. Comment by Major General Hibbs.

37. Major General William Ord Ryan, USAF (Ret.), Class of 1914, comments: "Due to my service assignment in the AEF (I was in charge of the AEF aerial gunnery schools in France from July 1918 on) I had no opportunity to compare the activities of graduates [of the Staff Schools] with that of non-graduates. However, reading the daily and weekly reports of the American ground actions I was impressed with the outstanding efficiency of the staff work, particularly logistics and supply, as well as the tactical successes of the combat troops. Such efficiency could not have been learned during a few short weeks of schooling. It was clear that those senior officers concerned were well schooled somewhere prior to the war and for me the answer was naturally the Leavenworth School. (During my cadet days at West Point most of us considered Leavenworth as the top service school we all hoped to attend at a later date.) In retrospect, I feel that much of my early military education was greatly influenced by Leavenworth graduates. The doctrines, forms, and language smoothed our work and made further learning and understanding easy. After graduation from the Com-

mand and General Staff School in 1927, I realized how very much my military training and knowledge had been directed by Leavenworth long before I had the opportunity to become one of its students." Brigadier General William Carraway, USA (Ret.), Class of 1923, who attended the Second Military History Symposium at the Air Force Academy, remarked after hearing Professor Coffman's paper that based on his experiences in the military, Leavenworth was the finest military educational school that he ever attended. He also recalled that the Assistant Commandant of Leavenworth (1930-1935) had perhaps phrased it best when he told him in the late 1930s that the course made "a professional man out of a military officer; before Leavenworth he merely had a job." However, Leavenworth could not do it all. This same Assistant Commandant told General Carraway that in the early 1930s, when students were assigned to the school based on their efficiency ratings, the first class to arrive after this momentous decision was composed of "aides, asses, and adjutants."

COMMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE AEF

MAJOR GENERAL HOWARD C. DAVIDSON, USAF (Ret.)

West Point, Class of 1913

Professor Edward M. Coffman in his paper entitled "The American Military Generation Gap in World War I," speaks of a "Leavenworth Clique," but I do not feel competent to comment on that observation. I attended Leavenworth 1933-35 and considered the time well spent, for it gave me the opportunity to "learn to know" four or five hundred officers that were deemed worthy of higher education by their branch chiefs. The officers so selected were those with the best efficiency reports and therefore were probably better qualified for command and staff duty than those not so selected. I do not believe it would take the operation of a "Leavenworth Clique" for a high commander to choose those Leavenworth graduates for his staff officers or unit commanders.

I entered West Point with the Class of 1913 on 1 March 1909. The military instruction was about the same as that given prior to the Spanish American War: mostly close order drill, parades, reviews, etc. While a cadet at West Point, I never heard anyone mention Leavenworth. However, this is not surprising since Leavenworth was not reopened until 1902 and most of the instructors at West Point during my third class year (1910) were too recently graduated to be selected for Leavenworth. If we assume the Tactical Department would be the logical one to mention Leavenworth, the average years of service for the thirteen instructors in that Department was nine years, and ten of the thirteen had an average of six years service. If we assume that the Department of English and History should tell about Leavenworth, the nine instructors of that Department had an average of five years of service by 1910. One of our history instructors, Captain Ora E. Hunt of the Class of 1894, made a conscientious effort to teach his class more than

was provided in the textbook. He would often tell us about information sent back from Tokyo by Joseph E. Kuhn, Class of 1885, who was an observer with the Japanese Army (1904-1905). On the other hand, I never heard Captain Hunt mention John F. Morrison, Class of 1881, who was also an observer with the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War.

After my graduation in 1913 I was assigned to the 22d Infantry stationed at Texas City, Texas. The United States was having a controversy with President Huerta of Mexico, and had concentrated the 2d Division at Texas City with instructions to be prepared to move into Mexico on short notice. The 22d Infantry was poorly trained for field service and the regimental and battalion commanders were either too old or too poorly trained for active duty to be of much use. I was assigned to "M" Company and had the good fortune to be under Captain Lorrain T. Richardson, Class of 1895. He had recently finished the School at Leavenworth and was full of praise for John F. Morrison. On Captain Richardson's recommendation I procured problems of either Griepenkerl or the Leavenworth School, with the German maps, and tried a "do it yourself" educational program in solving map problems.

After General Funston sailed for Vera Cruz, Mexico, with the 4th Brigade of the 2d Division, General J. Franklin Bell, Class of 1878, became the division commander. He had been Commandant of the General Staff School (1903-1906) and Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (1906-1910) and took an interest in training the 2d Division. The Director of Training was a brilliant officer, Captain Hugh A. Drum. He had recently graduated from Leavenworth and planned some extensive field maneuvers for the division. Texas City is on Galveston Bay and Captain Drum prepared targets of infantry silhouettes that would pop up at odd intervals and the designated units would have to fire on them for about five minutes. The country around Texas City is prairie, as flat as a man's hand, and with Galveston Bay as a background it was almost impossible to estimate the range of the targets. A company would deploy in extended order and march toward the area where the targets were located. When the targets popped up the company commander would announce the range and give the command to open fire. Almost all the company commanders were veterans of the Philippine Insurrection. Some of them had the idea that our present target practice routine was a waste of time since the army had no range finder the company

commanders could use. Many other company commanders were convinced that good marksmanship was an advantage, and took great pride in the fact that a large percentage of their company were expert riflemen. Captain Drum was of this leaning, while Captain Julian Dodge of "I" Company, 22d Infantry, was an advocate of the "Bolo" Man Company. Captain Dodge's company went through its firing exercise and Captain Drum asked Captain Dodge, "What order did you issue after your company began firing?" Dodge replied, "The only order I gave was to 'Fire Faster'." Captain Drum said, "The next company to fire has sixty percent expert riflemen and we shall soon be able to compare their results with Captain Dodge's company." Well, the commander of the expert riflemen must have estimated the range incorrectly and Captain Dodge's company of "Bolo" men obtained much better results than the company of experts.

In 1914 World War I had begun, and the Germans were getting wonderful results with their machine guns. The U.S. Army was armed with the Benet Mercie machine gun, an American copy of a French machine gun. At the regimental exercise Captain Drum would ask, "Colonel Fulano, what did you do with your machine guns?" Each regiment had a machine gun company carried on pack mules. The colonel, not knowing what to do with machine guns, would generally answer that he had put the machine guns in the reserve. This, according to Leavenworth, was the wrong thing to do and Captain Drum would so inform the regimental commander. I cite all this to illustrate how much a captain, with good Leavenworth training, could influence the field training of a division. If later on someone like General Pershing selected Hugh A. Drum to be his G-3, I think it would indicate good judgment on Pershing's part rather than an operation of a "Leavenworth Clique."

In January of 1916, I was assigned to the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps and sent to San Diego, California, for flying training. Upon completion of flying training I, with about twelve other recent graduates of the school, was sent to Columbus, New Mexico, to join the 1st Aero Squadron which was assigned to the Pershing Punitive Expedition. The main part of the 1st Aero Squadron was stationed at Colonia Dublan, which was General Pershing's Headquarters, and I was with a detachment of four airplanes stationed at El Valle about fifty miles south of Dublan.

Every time any of us landed at Dublan we had orders to report to General Pershing in person, to see if there were any dispatches he wanted us to carry. In that way the aviators got to know General Pershing and his staff fairly well. I saw many of those officers serving the General in France, and I imagine the Punitive Expedition gave Pershing information on the ability of officers that was useful to him a year later when he was sent to France with the AEF.

I was sent to France in October, 1917, and after spending a year running pilot schools, I was assigned as Corps Air Officer for the 7th Corps, which was commanded by General William G. Haan, Class of 1889. The 7th Corps consisted of the 89th Division (from Wisconsin) and the 90th Division (from Texas and Oklahoma). General Haan and his staff joined the divisions at Dun-Sur-Meuse and marched with them into Germany as a part of the Third Army. Our headquarters was at Witlich and the Corps Aviation spent its time in photographic work. I cannot recall ever noticing any Leavenworth Clique at Corps Headquarters; however, that is not surprising because Professor Coffman points out that the 89th and 90th Division staffs did not have any Leavenworth graduates.

My experience in two world wars should lead me to believe that officers are not selected for high command or staff posts because of their West Point class standing or their record in the Command and General Staff School. I believe they are selected largely on character and the reputation they have in the service.

As a general rule the classes with about twenty-six to thirty years of service are in an advantageous age group for promotion. In 1917 Pershing was fifty-seven years old; Joseph T. Dickman, Class of 1881, was sixty years old; and Robert Lee Bullard, Class of 1885, was fifty-six years old.

In World War II, the classes in the advantageous age group were 1911 through 1915. The ages of some of the high commanders were as follows: Douglas MacArthur, Class of 1903, was sixty-one; George S. Patton, Jr., Class of 1909, fifty-six; Jacob L. Devers, Class of 1909, fifty-four; William H. Simpson, Class of 1910 (he stood 101 in a class of 103), was fifty-three; Geoffrey Keys, Class of 1913, was fifty-three; Willis D. Crittenger of 1913, was fifty-one; Carl Spaatz of 1914 was fifty; Dwight D. Eisenhower of

1915 was fifty-one, and his classmates, Omar N. Bradley and Joseph T. McNarney, were forty-eight.

The following is data from the two world wars:

WORLD WAR I

Class	Generals from Class	Number Eligible	Percentage
1885	12	17	70
1886	27	40	67
1887	29	40	72
1888	23	31	74
1889	18	34	53

WORLD WAR II

1911	25	47	53
1912	32	61	51
1913	35	63	55
1914	27	68	40
1915	53	107	50

Of the World War I group there were fifty-eight generals from the first half of the classes and fifty-one from the second half. For the World War II group the figures were eighty-seven and eighty-four. This might indicate that in time of war the class standing of an individual plays a very small part in his being promoted to the rank of general.

Before World War II there was considerable competition among ground troop officers for assignment to Leavenworth. However, this was not generally true among Air Corps officers. After I finished Leavenworth in 1935, I was assigned as Executive Officer to the Chief of the Air Corps, General Oscar Westover, Class of 1906. His classmate, General Frank M. Andrews, was Commanding General of the GHQ Air Force and in 1936 sent a letter to the Chief of Air Corps recommending that no more Air Corps officers be sent to the Command and General Staff School at Leavenworth. I sent the letter to the various sections in the Office of the Chief of Air Corps asking for their recommendations. The staff was unanimous in recommending that we send no more officers to Leavenworth. However, General Westover had a soft spot in his heart for Leavenworth and he would not approve General Andrews' recommendation. General Andrews' reason for recommending that the

Air Corps send no more men to Leavenworth was that we could not afford to spare the officers.

I regret that my service did not put me in a position to observe a "clique," even if there was one in the army during World War I, since graduating in 1913 put the class in a disadvantageous age group—too young to command a regiment and too old to command a battalion. So far as I know only two of my Class were in actual combat: Francis K. Newcomer of the Engineers, who won a D.S.C., and Alexander M. Patch, who commanded a machine gun battalion.

At a recent class luncheon I asked classmates Lieutenant General Willis D. Crittenger, Brigadier General William C. Crane, and Colonel A. B. Johnson if they had been aware of a "Leavenworth Clique" during their service in World War I. They were unanimous in saying that they knew of no "clique" but thought the Leavenworth graduates had an advantage in communicating with one another since they spoke the same language. During the war, Oliver J. Spaulding had a similar conclusion and recommended to Pershing that the AEF give abbreviated staff instructions to selected officers at Langres. Apparently, Charles D. Herron phrased the idea better when he said, ". . . that only Leavenworth graduate understood each other because of their common training, same military vocabulary, and a similar outlook in tactics."

In closing I might cite an instance which is a reversal of the above. In my class at Leavenworth was an Air Corps officer, Harvey S. Burwell, who bordered on genius. When I arrived he put his arm around my shoulder and said, "Dave, don't let them suppress your individuality." A few months later Burwell received a notice to see the Deputy Director of the Class. This officer, in his lectures to the class, was prone to use ponderous phrases such as "the movement of the protected mass on the objective" and other Leavenworth "canned language." When Burwell entered the Deputy Director's office the latter said, "Harvey, we want to tell you we are not satisfied with your work and we want you to buck up." Harvey put his arm around his shoulder and said, "Those are the first words I have heard you speak that I could understand."

MAJOR WILLIAM A. RAFFERTY, USA (Ret.)

West Point, Class of 1913

I have read with great interest Professor Coffman's paper in reference to the Leavenworth Clique. While the events about which he writes are now fifty years old, and I did not keep any notes or diary, I did have an opportunity to observe the so-called clique at work at that time. I was personally acquainted with most of the Leavenworth men Professor Coffman mentioned and served with some of them. It has been interesting trying to recall the events of that time and the personalities involved, particularly since I have been totally disassociated from the service since my retirement in the early 1920s.

I was on duty at GHQ AEF in the summer and fall of 1917 when GHQ and the Lines of Communication (later called Services of Supply) were being organized. I was an aide to General R. M. Blatchford, the first Commanding General of the Lines of Communication, and was acting Adjutant General when the Headquarters of the Lines of Communication was organized. GHQ was small at this time and I knew personally nearly all of the officers at this Headquarters. The great cry was for more help, and I was frequently asked the names of promising young officers whom I knew, who were still in the United States, and who might be of some help; several were ordered to GHQ. At that time it became apparent that the army did not have enough officers trained for staff work, and in this sense I suppose you could say there was a gap. Leavenworth-trained men were scarce and much sought after. It was natural that the men Professor Coffman mentioned should fall into key positions. They were promising men of the right age, carefully selected before they went to Leavenworth, and were more or less marked men after they had completed their work there. In our small army at home these men had known each other, had worked together, and it was natural they would work closely in the AEF.

I attended many staff conferences at GHQ (as a very silent

aide-de-camp in the background) and later on I served in the G-4 section, Headquarters First Army (as acting G-4 part of the time during the active operations of that Army, August 1918 to April 1919). There was never any indication to me that a "clique" did exist.

I personally knew Generals Hugh Drum, Harbord, McAndrew, Fox Conner, W. D. Connor, Preston Brown, Hanson Ely (a former frequent tennis opponent in earlier days), Moseley, Malin Craig, and others. I would not care to make any assessment of these very outstanding men, particularly with respect to their Leavenworth training. This particular group would have been outstanding without Leavenworth training. While with the First Army I had dinner a couple of times with General Liggett and General Drum, both of whom had known me when I was a school boy. I was impressed with the apparent mutual confidence and respect between these men. General Drum was apparently very loyal to General Liggett. While the Leavenworth training did not particularly show, it was evident that many senior staff officers knew their jobs. Yet, I do not think other officers connected this in any way with Leavenworth training. I never recall that subject being discussed, though many of these Leavenworth men were my personal friends, and I had many opportunities to observe their work.

As a G-4 staff officer at Headquarters First Army Corps (and at Headquarters First Army) during most of their existence in operations in the AEF, I visited many corps and division headquarters and was acquainted with many of the staff members of those organizations. I never once heard any discussion which implied that only Leavenworth men understood each other, i.e., spoke a language of their own, nor did a Leavenworth Clique seem to exist at any of these Headquarters. As a member of the General Staff Corps, I don't recall that I ever gave any thought as to whether the men with whom I had to deal were Leavenworth men or not; and in many instances I never knew whether they were Leavenworth men or not. Generally the relationship with non-Leavenworth men was cordial.

I received my staff training as a student at the General Staff College at Langres and was graduated in its first class. The course was very good; several of the lectures by experienced French and British staff officers were excellent. Most of the students had no

experience with larger units and there is no question that the training received at Langres greatly broadened their outlook as well as increased their efficiency and "know-how." Before the war I had served with the 2d Division in Texas and as an inspector-instructor with a Provisional Division composed of National Guard regiments at San Antonio, Texas. For this reason, I was aware of what the school was attempting to accomplish. The course was very useful and many of the graduates of this short course did splendid jobs later on as staff officers because of this brief training.

MAJOR GENERAL CHARLES P. GROSS, USA (Ret.)

West Point, Class of 1914

I cannot recall any instance during my service with the AEF which would support Professor Coffman's contention. Indeed, since my entrance into the U.S. Military Academy on 1 March 1910, this is the first time I have heard the term "Leavenworth Clique." In 1917-18 Leavenworth graduates were spread too thin for them to dominate any command, and only at GHQ, AEF, could one refer to a "group" of them. They were, however, admired and respected. Except for the 2d Division on border duty before World War I, the army was made up of regiments. The Adjutant General's *Army Register* listed all officers by branch and by numbered regiments of infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Naturally the value of officers schooled in division and army tactics and orders would be recognized and appreciated by those whose loyalties for long periods of time had been given to their own regiments. It was a recognition of need in the expansion to a wartime organization embracing corps and armies. Non-graduates of the Regular Army were accordingly motivated to learn from the Leavenworth men and to emulate them. They had been selected from officers having excellent and superior efficiency reports. That system of selection has been maintained ever since.

Did the Leavenworth training show? Definitely yes. It was evident to junior officers in combat, of whom I was one, that the Leavenworth-trained officers had a better or perhaps deeper grasp of military command and tactical operations. They created the

motivation that led us juniors to seek to go to Leavenworth schools as early in our careers as possible. (I later sought to go and finally attended the school in 1926-1927).

I cannot recollect any instance which would give support to Charles Herron's statement "that only Leavenworth graduates understood each other because of their common training, same military vocabulary, and similar outlook in tactics." However, it is only natural that in an army that had been oriented toward the regiment, those schooled in the operation of divisions and armies would have greater facility and ease in understanding each other in the newly created situations.

None of my regimental superiors, with the exception of Colonel Joseph Beacham, Chief of Staff, 6th Division, (School of the Line, 1915; General Staff School, 1916) and the division commander, Major General Walker H. Gordon (Army War College, 1914) was a Leavenworth graduate. But one man does not make a "clique." Colonel Beacham did not set himself apart because of his schooling; he was well liked, respected, and admired. And why not, when you have an officer corps of men who try to excell and strive to do their best? The thought of envy, resentment, and hostility is just foreign to the real picture that obtained—no matter how enticing to a newsman, for whom it offered a subject that would readily capture attention.

I did not personally know any of the officers mentioned in Professor Coffman's paper during World War I. However, I later served under General Drum on the War Department General Staff (when he was deputy to General MacArthur) and under General Craig, when the latter followed General MacArthur as Chief of Staff. I also met and knew General Herron. All were superior officers and without doubt were aided by their Leavenworth training. I owe much to their example, for I had heard little about Leavenworth during my cadet days at West Point (1910-1914). It was World War I that put Leavenworth on the map!

GENERAL OF THE ARMY OMAR N. BRADLEY

West Point, Class of 1915

I consider that the establishment and organization of the General Staff by Secretary Root was a first step in bringing our army organization up to date. It permitted the development of our staff and command system to a state of efficiency where it would meet successfully the problems that faced it in this century. In fact, it is difficult to visualize the functioning of an army as large as we have today without the General Staff system. Of course the present system is the result of a gradual changing improvement of Mr. Root's plan, but it had to have a beginning; and we took a big step forward under Secretary Root's reorganization.

The "Leavenworth Clique" played an important part in our successful participation in World War I. Prior to 1917, the courses at Fort Leavenworth were the only ones of any significance in our army, and the number of graduates was relatively small. The number of officers who could effectively conduct even a regimental maneuver was very limited and was pretty much confined to those who were graduates of the Leavenworth courses.

I believe it was the effectiveness of the Leavenworth graduates in our Expeditionary Force that led General Pershing to establish a very complete army school system during his term as Chief of Staff immediately after the war.

With the increasing complexity of weapons, it was essential to have an agency that could develop the tactical doctrines for their employment. Our schools served as laboratories for these developments.

As a result of the training given in our school system in the interval between World Wars, most of our Regular officers and a large percentage of the officers in our Reserve components could conduct maneuver or training exercises of most any size unit. In addition, they spoke the same language, which not only made for

better efficiency within any unit, but it made it possible to transfer personnel, or sub-units, from one command to another with very little loss in effectiveness.

I have often stated that in my opinion our army school system was one of the largest contributors to our success in World War II, and there is considerable evidence to show that this school system was established because of the effectiveness of the so-called "Leavenworth Clique" in World War I.

MAJOR GENERAL LEROY H. WATSON, USA (Ret.)

West Point, Class of 1915

In general, graduates of the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth and the Army War College at Washington, D.C., were outstanding in their thinking and their actions because they were handpicked to be students at those schools on the basis of their superior records. They became, therefore, better educated and trained from a military standpoint than non-graduates. For example, when I graduated from West Point in 1915 and joined an Infantry regiment on the Mexican Border (at Douglas, Arizona), I found that its military training and performance was satisfactory only in company administration, close order drill, physical training of all kinds, discipline, military law, police work, loyalty, marksmanship, how to run a company and regimental mess, supply, medical and dental work—that was about it. From the standpoint of combat training they had advanced little, or not at all, since Civil War and Indian fighting days. I, and the soldiers in our rifle company, were taught to shoot and to march across the plains, mountains, and desert country around Douglas, Arizona, for twenty or twenty-five miles a day on a canteen of water, pitch camp, cook supper, and be ready to march again at daylight the next day. I started the march each day with a canteen of water and if, at the end of the march, I did not have at least a half a canteen of water left, the old First Sergeant would give me hell. He would say: "Lieutenant, some day you might get lost out here and have to go for several days on one canteen of water, so learn to do it now."

That was the old army, and it was a good one as far as it went. However, there was almost a complete void in modern combat knowledge and training. The only textbooks we had were the *Infantry Drill Regulations*, the *Field Service Regulations* (which had been copied in large measure from the Germans and was written in very broad, general terms), *The Manual for Courts Martial*, and instructions on marksmanship.

I wish to point out one strange and, to me, incomprehensible fact at this point. We had several graduates of the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College in the regiments stationed on the Mexican Border in 1915 but, to the best of my knowledge, they never tried to modernize our field training. We still deployed in one line as skirmishers, with the company and battalion officers a few paces to the rear, and commands were given by bugle, or by hand signal, or by runner. My own company commander was a graduate of the Command and General Staff School and the Army War College, and when the war broke out in Europe, he was Military Attaché in Berlin. He accompanied von Kluck's army through Belgium and Holland into France and was a military observer during the Battles of the Marne. He was then transferred to the Austrian Front, where he observed all of the fighting until von Mackensen arrived and took command of the Austrian forces. Von Mackensen did not like, or trust, Americans (he knew that eventually we would get into the war), and he sent all of the American observers home the day he arrived in Austria. Now, believe it or not, this man never made any attempt to teach me, or any of his enlisted men, anything he had learned at Leavenworth, or the Army War College, or while he was a military observer in Europe. Just think, in 1915 the war in Europe had been going on for two years, but no effort was made by anybody, so far as I know from General Pershing on down, to modernize our combat training.

After the United States entered the war, our combat training continued to be completely inadequate and remained so until we actually entered combat. The reasons for this were first of all, lack of "know-how" from the very top on down to the bottom. But also lack of supporting weapons that we were going to be given to use in combat (artillery pieces which we eventually borrowed from the French for use in actual combat, machine guns, 37mm guns, trench

mortars, grenades, etc.), lack of qualified instructors, and lack of adequate training areas. For example, the 5th and 6th Infantry Divisions, each 20,000 in strength, were organized at Fort Oglethorpe, where there were practically no training facilities, except for marches. We were also badly handicapped because the higher ranking officers were being promoted so fast that they did not stay in the regiment long enough to take hold and have an effect on the training. I was regimental adjutant at first, and these officers would tell me to just go ahead with the training as we were doing—they were not going to be there long enough to get involved. Also remember that at this time we had a pitifully small number of Regular Army officers in each regiment—the rest of the officers were from the National Guard and Reserve Officer Training Camps.

In 1915 there were many officers in the Regular Army who were not Leavenworth or War College graduates. Most of these were older officers whose records just were not good enough for them to be selected; others were younger officers who just hadn't been around long enough to be selected. I have shown that there was literally no modern training with troops to teach us what we had to know, so we had to learn the hard way—in combat. Bear in mind also that the vast bulk of officers who actually served in combat overseas were not Regular Army officers (of whom there were only a handful)—they were National Guard and Reserve officers. Now these officers were primarily businessmen and professional men; they had spent only a very small amount of time on military training. But even though their training had been identical with that being done in the Regular Army, they had much less of it. The Leavenworth and War College graduates had the advantage over the rest of us due to the fact that they were men who had been picked for their superior records to start with, and they had obtained superior training at those schools. This showed up in combat, particularly in staff work.

There was no such thing as a “Leavenworth Clique” in the sense implied in the question. In combat the urgency and demands of ability were the only guides for selection to office, no other. But the qualities and training of the Leavenworth and War College graduates weighed heavily in their favor, just as selected and hand-picked men are favored in the business world today. An applicant who is a graduate of a certain college or university, where he has

received special training along the lines the firm seeks, receives preferential treatment by the firm. In fact, firms go to these schools and use every device to find the most qualified personnel, and then offer them tempting contracts to go with that firm rather than to a competitor. Obviously this engenders envy and jealousy on the part of those not selected for preferential treatment. The same thing was true in the officer corps in World War I. Leavenworth and War College graduates who were selected for staff jobs and higher command were envied by the National Guard and Reserve Officers on active duty, which was ridiculous when you realize that these men were only part time soldiers, whose main job was in their business or profession, and the time that they spent on military training was more or less insignificant.

MAJOR GENERAL W. E. R. COVELL, USA (Ret.)

West Point, Class of 1915

There is no doubt that the graduates of the Leavenworth School who served in the AEF in World War I felt and manifested a group cohesiveness and a corporateness which set them apart from other officers. In my mind this was amply warranted. This "apartness" manifested itself both on the staff and the command level, but not on the social level. Leavenworth graduates had justifiable confidence in their training and it is remarkable how nearly they thought alike. To junior officers in staff positions, of whom I was one, it was clearly evident that the Leavenworth trained officers were far superior to the others, non-Leavenworth trained. I fully agree with Charles Herron's statement, cited by Professor Coffman, that only Leavenworth graduates understood each other because of their common training, same military vocabulary, and similar outlook in tactics.

I personally knew Hugh A. Drum and Fox Conner. I had high respect for both, but above all for George C. Marshall, who was my immediate superior, and for General Lejeune, the Commanding General of the 2d Division. Without exception all of these men felt and continually remarked that their Leavenworth training was invaluable to them. The G-3 Section of the First Army, of which I

was a member, consisted of twenty officers. Marshall was chief of the section and Ralph T. Ward was the head of the Operations Section; I was chief of the map section. The real work was done by Marshall and Ward, but Lewis H. Watkins, G-5 of Army Staff, who was not very busy, acted as an assistant to Ward. Both were West Point and Leavenworth graduates; Ward, Class of 1904, and Watkins, Class of 1907. I worked closely with both of them and they continually remarked how much it was like being back at Leavenworth. All the other officers of the section were junior in rank and generally younger; none was a Leavenworth graduate. This, however, did not disturb our working relationships or lead to discussions. They (the Leavenworth graduates) knew, and we knew that we did not know!

While at West Point from 1911 to 1915, I do not recall any mention of the Leavenworth School at all; I did not even know it existed. But when I joined the Corps of Engineers, my first company commander was an honor graduate of Leavenworth, and I heard a great deal about the school and the system used by the Corps to assure that its officers stood at the head of their classes at Leavenworth.

COLONEL HOWARD DONELLY, USA (Ret.)

West Point, Class of 1915

After graduating from West Point in 1915, I joined the 17th Infantry in Texas. Both the colonel and lieutenant colonel were Leavenworth graduates. Both had previous staff assignments in Washington, D.C., and their two-year tour with the regiment was to "purify" them for further staff duty. I learned then that quite a group of Leavenworth graduates had in the past remained on staff duty, especially in Washington, to avoid the humdrum life at regimental posts. This had led to the passage of the "Manchu" law, requiring two years of troop duty before becoming eligible for an additional staff tour. Both of these officers were able and competent men. The colonel became a major general in World War I, but because of age remained in the United States as a camp commander. The lieutenant colonel, George S. Duncan, also made two-

star rank and commanded the 82d Division in the AEF. Just before the 17th Infantry was ordered to join the Punitive Expedition in 1916, both were ordered back to Washington, and the regiment entered Mexico commanded by the senior major.

During my two years with the regiment, I learned a little about the subject of Professor Coffman's paper. The average age of the captains in the regiment was forty years and over. They were generally veterans of the Spanish American War, the Philippine Insurrection, or had served against the Moros in Mindanao. None, including the two majors of the regiment, had Leavenworth training. Among these varied types of background there was a general feeling of resentment and sarcasm toward Leavenworth; when referring to the "Leavenworth grad" they meant the Federal Penitentiary at that post. This feeling had arisen in the past and it probably was the reason why the "Manchu" law was passed. In later years I understood why these men developed this attitude, for not having gone (or being selected to go) to Leavenworth appeared to shut them off from higher command or more desired assignments. However, in the field in Mexico they all were competent, able, and commanded troops under very trying conditions, with that efficiency that comes from devoted troop duty.

In the AEF in 1918 (and the AFG [American Forces in Germany] in 1919), it was apparent why the Leavenworth staff training was recognized as very essential for staff and high command levels. In the 2d Division, the division commander, General Omar Bundy, was fortunate in having Colonel Preston Brown as his chief of staff. While Colonel Brown had a few adverse personality traits, he did know his job and how to handle the General Staff, something new in our combat troop echelons.

In summary, the officers who had had Leavenworth training spoke a common language and knew how to work together, so essential in the large AEF units where plans and decisions could only be handled by trained staff officers.

Part II

BRITISH NAVAL LEADERS IN WORLD WAR I

JELlicOE AND BEATTY AS COMMANDERS IN CHIEF, GRAND FLEET

Arthur J. Marder

The primary purpose of this paper is to demolish a legend—that the two most famous British naval commanders of the First World War were direct opposites in nearly every important respect.

Leadership and Administration

Admirals Sir John Jellicoe and Sir David Beatty were exceptional war leaders who got identical results in contrasting ways. Jellicoe possessed the unreserved confidence, trust, and love of the Grand Fleet, though more particularly of the main fleet at Scapa Flow. He had a remarkable gift for drawing loyal, wholehearted service from officers and men. One light-cruiser squadron proudly called itself “The Fourth John Jellicoe’s Own Light Cruiser Squadron.” Appearance and personality had nothing to do with Jellicoe’s hold over the fleet: he was unimpressive in appearance, being short (about five feet, six inches) and plain looking, and he was modest in manner. There is no charisma here. No, it is to Jellicoe’s personality and professional expertise that we must look for the answer. His extraordinary consideration for the officers and men and his nobility of character made a profound impression on them. “He was,” declared the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, in a eulogy in the House of Commons (12 December 1935),

a man of wonderful understanding of the human heart. He was kindly and thoughtful to everyone of every kind, in every rank, with whom he was brought into contact, and he had in full measure that gift of inspiring with affection all who worked with him, and for him, and with that, and an absolutely concomitant part of it, a flawless sincerity and complete selflessness.

His fundamental humanity never deserted him. One of his staff

officers, Roger Bellairs, never saw him “out of temper or anything but cheerful, and infusing everyone with the joy of carrying out the work in hand.”¹ Jellicoe’s mastery of his trade was held in the highest regard by nearly all his service contemporaries, certainly before Jutland, though largely after Jutland, too. His reputation was a deserved one. He possessed a high technical proficiency in his profession, and this included a sound, *for his time*, knowledge of strategy and tactics.

No man is perfect. Jellicoe’s leadership talents were flawed by a kindness of heart and loyalty to old friends that tended to blind him to the war-revealed limitations and failings of his brother officers (Burney, his second-in-command, is a good example here), or to stand by them even when he was aware of their serious deficiencies (Warrender, a battle-squadron commander, is an example). A still more serious weakness was his over-centralization. Lacking the ability to delegate authority, and having a tremendous capacity for work and power of concentration, as well as an exceptional knowledge of the technicalities of his profession, he was inclined to do too much himself, even to the petty details of fleet administration. “Paper work is my curse,” he wrote. “I can’t get away from it.”² The inevitable consequence was that, to quote Beatty, “the big questions got slurred over or overlooked altogether.”³

Beatty, Commander of the Battle Cruiser Fleet (an integral part of the Grand Fleet), relieved Jellicoe as Commander in Chief late in November 1916. His outstanding leadership was the product of a variety of traits and assets. There were, in the first place, his rather flamboyant appearance and personality. The handsome Beatty, a well-known figure in hunting circles and London society, had a cheerful and colorful personality featuring dash, a touch of swagger, and self-possession. A sartorial individualist, his six-buttoned monkey jacket (instead of the usual eight-buttoned one) and famous cap, tilted at a sharp angle over his eyes, captured the fleet, as well as the public, fancy. He had, then, charismatic gifts. (This, incidentally, was the most important of the many leadership traits that Nelson possessed.) This was far from all. He was exceptionally approachable, welcoming suggestions from all his officers and never resenting criticisms. His great breadth of view won him the admiration and loyalty of the more progressive officers in particular. One of his ablest captains, Herbert Richmond, noted:

“It is refreshing to find a naval officer who sees so much beyond his own arm.”⁴ Finally, and hardly least, was Beatty’s fighting spirit.

Admiral Goodenough, who served under Beatty throughout the war, singles out the last two factors as the most important explanation of Beatty’s greatness as a naval commander. After denying that his pre-eminence was due to “great brains” or to “great professional knowledge,” he says: “It was his spirit, combined with comprehension of really big issues. The gift of distinguishing between essentials and not wasting time on non-essentials.”⁵ Beatty’s officers and men had great admiration for, confidence in, and devotion to him. Missing only was the love that so many Grand Fleet officers and men had for Jellicoe.

Beatty shared one of Jellicoe’s weaknesses. His magnanimity and his desire to do nothing that would weaken fleet morale had the same result as Jellicoe’s kindness and loyalty: incompetents were retained even when proved failures. The best-known case is that of Beatty’s Flag-Lieutenant, Ralph Seymour, who, through inept handling of Battle Cruiser Fleet signals, grievously failed Beatty on three important occasions. Pakenham, Beatty’s battle-cruiser commander in 1917-18, was a sad disappointment to the Commander in Chief, yet was permitted to stay on. And there are other instances of softness. Beatty did not share Jellicoe’s other basic deficiency: he was not one to immerse himself in detail. He preferred to have his secretary handle this aspect of his job, leaving him, as he put it, “free for other things of greater importance.”

Outstanding war leaders are rare and are, I am convinced, *born*, not made. They are the result of inborn personality traits. (This is not to deny that a measure of leadership can be developed in most, or at least in many, officers.) Jellicoe and Beatty were too such born leaders; it was their *styles* that were different.

Strategy

There was no dearth of offensive projects submitted at the Admiralty and in the Grand Fleet in 1914-16. Thus, in the winter of 1914-15 there was high-level discussion of the capture of Borkum or Sylt by a bold *coup de main*. The use of one of these German islands in the Heligoland Bight as an advanced British naval base might (with other advantages), it was thought, force the

High Seas Fleet to offer battle. Fleet bombardment proposals were plentiful in 1915-16, such as that for a raid in the Bight to destroy the Heligoland dockyard and draw heavy ships from Cuxhaven or Wilhelmshaven to sea, to be dealt with. Another scheme that popped up now and then was to send a powerful battle squadron into the Baltic to contain the High Seas Fleet.

Jellicoe's position never altered. He refused to be stampeded into any hazardous adventures; no risks must be run that would threaten the British command of the sea. Trying as it was for the fleet and the country, the policy of the Grand Fleet must be a waiting one. Jellicoe believed that the fleet should always seek a decisive victory at sea, but he always qualified it with two powerful considerations: (1) a recognition of the practical obstacles: the submarine and the mine danger was the principal deterrent; (2) the knowledge that, because a defeat would be catastrophic, they must ever be on their guard against being drawn into action under conditions favorable to the enemy and deliberately planned by him. Jellicoe stated his basic strategy most clearly in a memorandum of 12 April 1916 for the Admiralty:

The first axiom appears to me to be that it is the business of the Grand Fleet to nullify any hostile action on the part of the High Sea Fleet; secondly, to cover all surface vessels that are employed, either in protecting our own trade, or in stopping trade with the enemy; thirdly, to stop invasion, or landing raids. . . .

So long as the High Sea Fleet is confined to its harbours, the whole of these desiderata are obtained, and although, of course, the total destruction of the High Sea Fleet gives a greater sense of security, it is not, in my opinion, wise to risk unduly the heavy ships of the Grand Fleet, particularly if the risks come, not from the High Sea Fleet itself, but from such attributes as mines and submarines.

There is no doubt that, provided there is a chance of destroying some of the enemy's heavy ships, it is right and proper to run risks with our own heavy ships, but unless the chances are reasonably great, I do not think that such risks should be run, seeing that any disaster to our heavy ships lays the country open to invasion, and also gives the enemy the opportunity of passing commerce destroyers out of the North Sea.⁶

When Beatty succeeded Jellicoe, it was assumed in the country at large, and to some extent in the fleet, that the new Commander in Chief stood for a more provocative strategy. This was to misunderstand Beatty. His Flag-Captain, Chatfield, tells us why. "He was

no reckless and lighthearted swordsman, as he has sometimes been represented to be, but was always imbued by the need of a wise balancing of risks, realizing the responsibility of his valuable command.”⁷ Beatty’s strategic policy was as cautious as that of his predecessor. At no time as Commander in Chief, any more than when Commander of the Battle Cruiser Fleet, did he suggest any fundamental change in the naval strategy of the war. He was no more in favor of so-called offensive operations—an attack on Heligoland, etc.—than Jellicoe had been. He would not seek an engagement except in favorable circumstances. Favorable circumstances did not include a fleet action in the southern part of the North Sea; it was a very different matter north of the latitude of Horns Reef. This is not to say that ideas for offensive operations were absent from Beatty’s thinking, especially ideas for the use of naval air power to strike at the High Seas Fleet and its bases. Since the prevalent doctrine of the High Seas Fleet was that a large-scale battle, if fought at all, should be accepted only if it took place in waters comfortably close to German bases, the continued stalemate as regards the two fleets was assured.

The strategic outlook did not improve during 1918. The submarine was being mastered; but the campaign was imposing a considerable strain on Grand Fleet resources, specifically through: (1) the call for destroyers for convoy escort and other anti-submarine work; (2) the maintenance and efficiency of the British mined area in the Bight involved a constant activity by the light forces, which meant that the destroyers and light cruisers of the Grand Fleet might not always be available for fleet operations; (3) the attacks by surface raiders on the Scandinavian convoys in the autumn of 1917 made it evident that in the future, heavy ships must cover the convoys. For all practical purposes, this detachment, in Beatty’s view, had to be regarded as a permanent reduction in Grand Fleet capital-ship strength. The Jutland-revealed weaknesses in the protection of the battle cruisers and in the shell represented for the Commander in Chief further discounts in the real strength of the battle fleet. It was these factors that led to Beatty’s momentous recommendation of 9 January 1918, and which was accepted by the Admiralty and the War Cabinet that month, that the “correct strategy of the Grand Fleet is no longer to endeavour to bring the enemy to action at any cost, but rather to contain him in his bases [by intensified minelaying in their vicinity] until the general

situation becomes more favourable to us. This does not mean that action should be avoided if conditions favour us, or that our role should be passive and purely defensive.”⁸ Beatty’s position was not the radical departure it appeared to be to high authority. It had, in effect, been his strategy throughout the first year of his command. What was new was the clear spelling out of the whys and wherefores of Grand Fleet strategy and the endorsement by authority. The “new strategy” was basically identical to Jellicoe’s (if the considerations behind it were not quite the same), and this was testified to by Jellicoe’s brother-in-law, Admiral Madden, who was Beatty’s second-in-command: “When History is written, these papers [Beatty’s and the Admiralty’s, which closely followed Beatty’s main arguments: the War Cabinet had had both before them] will be a complete vindication of your policy, as Commander in Chief and as First Sea Lord.”⁹ The crux of the matter was Beatty’s conviction, as it had been Jellicoe’s, that there must be no gambling with the Navy. The whole Allied cause was based on the latent power of the Grand Fleet.

In one not unimportant respect, Beatty’s strategic outlook was broader than Jellicoe’s. Jellicoe never had much use for joint operations—when Comander in Chief, because they would only drain naval strength from where it mattered, the North Sea; when First Sea Lord, in 1917, because such operations would add to the Navy’s already excessive burdens in guarding the supply lines to the military forces overseas. Jellicoe accepted the situation that an offensive naval strategy was not possible in any direction. Beatty, on the other hand, chafed under the restrictions imposed by the passive naval strategy. It was more than a case of contrasting temperaments. Strongly influenced by the ideas of the leader of the “Young Turks” in the fleet, Captain Herbert Richmond, Beatty argued that an offensive strategy was possible, and was required, in the Mediterranean. There the Navy would be able to carry on its traditional amphibious strategy: assisting the military campaigns by threatening the enemy’s lines of communication and landing troops at vital points to tie up large numbers of Austrian or Turkish troops; and destroying the Austrian naval base at Pola and the Whitehead torpedo factory at Fiume, which would strike heavy blows at the submarine campaign in the Mediterranean. He got nowhere with Jellicoe, nor with his successor as First Sea Lord, Wemyss.

Tactics

Three main conceptions dominated Jellicoe's Grand Fleet Battle Orders: (1) a subordination of the offensive spirit to defensive precautions, especially against the torpedo; (2) the single line, parallel course, and long range of the plan of battle; (3) centralized command.¹⁰ As regards the first, Jellicoe was determined not to hazard his capital-ship superiority to the risk of underwater damage from torpedoes, mines, or submarine-and-mine traps. His respect for the torpedo, the mine, and the submarine, though full war experience was to prove it an exaggerated one, was shared by the whole navy. As between a turn-away or a turn-toward a massed destroyer torpedo attack, used with a smoke screen to cover the enemy's turn-away, Jellicoe had decided that the turn-away was the better of the methods to ensure the safety of the fleet. But his use of this maneuver at Jutland was one of the main complaints against his tactics. It had, his critics insisted, wrecked all chances of forcing an action on the enemy.

As regards (2), in particular fighting in single battle line, or line ahead, each ship following its next ahead: just as the great majority of senior officers accepted the turn-away, so they accepted the single line. The case for the single line included these arguments: the high speeds of modern ships and the smoke-filled battle areas now made it practically impossible for a Commander in Chief to retain control of independent squadrons, especially in a period when short range wireless and aircraft had not been developed very far; an independent squadron attempting a tactical concentration on a part of an enemy fleet would be severely hammered or overwhelmed if it came under the guns of a concentrated enemy battle fleet. The opposition to the single line became vociferous after Jutland, which proved to the critics the advantages of divisional or divided tactics; it was a way out of the tactical sterility allegedly inherent in one long single line of battle. The attempt to apply equal pressure all along the line, they maintained, usually produced indecisive results. A decision was best achieved by concentrating a superior force on part of the enemy's line, the defeat of which would lead to the collapse of the whole enemy line.

As regards (3), which was in part a derivative of the single-line conception: the line was worked entirely by the Commander in Chief from his flagship. "The system of signalling every move-

ment from the Fleet Flagship produced an acute form of tactical arthritis," Admiral Dewar has pointed out, "suppressing the initiative of Captains and divisional leaders who had merely to follow passively in the wake of the next ahead." It is a fact that Jellicoe's Battle Orders strictly limited independent action by divisional or squadron commanders, for example, to alterations of course to avoid an attack on the rear or an attempt to close for a torpedo attack.

Jellicoe's tactics were the subject of much controversy in the fleet after Jutland. His denigrators then and since have scored his "cautious handling" of the fleet, which, they say, robbed the Grand Fleet of a second Trafalgar.

In the months after Jutland, there were significant amendments in the Grand Fleet Battle Orders in the direction of decentralization and greater flexibility of the line; and as a counter to a massed torpedo attack by a retiring fleet, a turn-toward was made possible: "the appropriate counter would depend on circumstances."

Beatty's post-Jutland lament, "There is something wrong with our system," did not lead to a revolution in tactics when he became Commander in Chief.¹¹ He was not an impetuous fighter who would take needless risks. He saw no need to go far beyond the post-Jutland modifications in the Grand Fleet Orders as regards the three points which had given rise to so much discussion after the battle: decentralization of command versus centralization, divided tactics versus concentration of the battle fleet, and a fleet turn toward versus away from a massed torpedo attack. It is difficult to detect any significant difference between Jellicoe's views (post-Jutland, particularly) and Beatty's on how much scope ought to be allowed to individual initiative. Nor did their ideas on concentration differ noticeably. Beatty made it clear that he had no intention of employing divided tactics until the battle had reached an advanced stage—that is, in the words of Jellicoe's Flag-Captain, Dreyer, not "until he had knocked the stuffing out of the enemy." Beatty was no more willing than Jellicoe had been to accept the torpedo menace in order to be able to inflict serious punishment on the German line of battle. He was, however, prepared under certain conditions to have the fleet turn *toward* a destroyer torpedo attack. This is one instance of a new offensive spirit in the Battle

Orders that did much to sustain fleet morale. Other examples: a more aggressive use of torpedoes by all vessels (the post-Jutland Battle Orders had already gone some distance in this direction), the acceptance of a night action if necessary, and a full use of submarines and aircraft with the fleet. Let it be said here that Beatty was one of the comparatively few senior naval officers with a belief in the tremendous potential of naval aviation, above all, torpedo planes.

Assessment

Though very different as human beings, the two admirals had, as this paper has tried to bring out, a great deal in common. The contribution each made to the Grand Fleet's major share in the winning of the war was unique. Jellicoe made a fleet out of a heterogeneous collection of ships and squadrons, and this fleet established a moral ascendancy over the High Seas Fleet. He met the supreme test of a great battle commander by making quick, and on the whole sound, decisions in the unprecedented and fluid tactical situation at Jutland. And he demonstrated greatness as a fleet commander by capitalizing on the materiel, tactical, and other lessons of that battle.

As for Beatty, his most important achievement as Commander in Chief, Grand Fleet, is one that has gone unnoticed. Despite the boredom and war-weariness that gripped the fleet in the last two years of the war, as the possibilities of meeting the High Seas Fleet receded, morale remained remarkably high until the end of the war. This was to a large degree Beatty's doing. As Chatfield wrote,

The mainspring of the Fleet's spirit was that of its leader. It had confidence in him, that he was a fighter; that he would take the Fleet out whatever the circumstances of weather or other dangers, and that he would not let the enemy go once he was in contact. . . . It is to David Beatty's everlasting credit that during these monotonous and testing two years he maintained the spirit of the Grand Fleet, its efficiency, harmony and cheerfulness at the highest possible level and enthusiasm."¹²

To which I would add: Beatty's optimism that the High Seas Fleet would have to come out was infectious and did much to keep up the spirits of the Grand Fleet.

The Grand Fleet went through the war without fighting a

decisive battle, and yet it was the dominating factor all the time. For this achievement Jellicoe and Beatty were equally responsible.

NOTES

1. Arthur J. Marder, *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow: The Royal Navy in the Fisher Era, 1904-1919* (London, 1961-69, 4 vols.), II, 443.
2. Jellicoe to Admiral Sir Henry Jackson (First Sea Lord), 8 October 1916; Jackson MSS (Naval Library, Ministry of Defence).
3. Beatty to Lady Beatty, 5 December 1916; Beatty MSS (in the possession of the second Earl Beatty).
4. Arthur J. Marder, *Portrait of an Admiral: the Life and Papers of Sir Herbert Richmond* (London, 1952), p. 274.
5. Admiral Sir William Goodenough, *A Rough Record* (London, 1943), p. 91.
6. Jellicoe's Memorandum for the Admiralty, 12 April 1916; Beatty MSS.
7. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Ernle Chatfield's letter in *The Times*, 13 March 1936.
8. "Situation in the North Sea"; Admiralty MSS (Public Record Office).
9. Admiral Sir Charles Madden to Jellicoe, 28 January 1918; Jellicoe MSS (British Museum).
10. There is a full discussion of Jellicoe's pre-Jutland Grand Fleet Battle Orders in *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, III, 3-35, and of the post-Jutland amendments, *ibid.*, pp. 221-227.
11. Beatty's tactical ideas are discussed in detail in Chapter II of Vol. IV, *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*.
12. Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield, *The Navy and Defence* (London, 1942), p. 172.

COMMENTARY

Donald M. Schurman

In regard to Arthur Marder I wish to say the following. Military men and historians may agree or disagree with his interpretations and views, but now that he has written his books—he is not finished yet—on the Royal Navy, in the period 1880 to 1918, everything must be said in the light of this great work. Everyone here knows, as I do, that his paper is like an iceberg; only the tip of erudition and judgment is presented for our perusal—underneath lies the body of the detailed research; work, in my opinion, that would have occupied the lifetimes of four or five ordinary mortals. Enthusiasm has inspired him, diligence has marked him, judgment has grown upon him, and magnanimity has rustled the banners of his accomplishments.

Although assurance has marked Arthur Marder's publications, I do not think he suffers from undue vanity. He is enough like the subjects of his nordic sagas that he will be suspicious of too much flattery, and he is enough of the general historian to beware of Greeks "bearing gifts." So much for praise, but it is, as everybody here knows, merely his due.

Now, when the pungent historian of Fisher finally turned and dealt with the performance of the Royal Navy in World War I, naval historians and naval men waited with bated breath for the firm upsetting of all the previous judgments that had been made. "Now we will get the truth about the Grand Fleet and Jutland," they said. It was expected that the former heroes would be left to float listlessly on the salt water, and that, like Arthur Bryant's Alanbrooke, the real winner of the war would swim into focus. (Not that I think that Alanbrooke was the real winner of the war.) This has not happened, fortunately. Since I have a certain amount of

knowledge of Sir Julian Corbett, the official naval historian of the First World War at sea, I am sure Professor Marder will not take it as an insult when I say that he, Marder, has come perilously close to qualifying for the title of second "Official Historian of World War I at Sea" as practiced by the Royal Navy.

What this has meant for the subjects of this paper is that he has shown them to be both remarkable men, but not so different as might at first be expected. Not "men for all seasons" but eminently, as Corelli Barnett has pointed out in Jellicoe's case, solid men of their time. If Nelson did not come again, Howe and Kempfenfelt did! Wielding new weapons in a new era, they maintained British naval supremacy in the testing cauldron of war. Marder has seen, correctly in my view, that it was a perverted conception of the function of the Grand Fleet by the general public, many naval men, and some naval historians, that has led to overemphatic criticism of the handling of North Sea strategy at the personal level. Critics have looked generally for a facile explanation of failure. In fact, they ought, as Marder has, to have looked for the explanation of success. In the First World War the prime value of the Royal Navy *in the North Sea* lay in its power to control enemy sea power's ability to affect the course of the war in general, and to make the weight of sea power felt in the homes, factories, ports, and diplomatic offices of Germany—this it did.

But the misconceptions about the real nature of the Grand Fleet's role even affected the relationships of the two subjects of Marder's paper. Both Beatty and Jellicoe in fact knew what they had to do. What they were denied was the bonus of a second Trafalgar. When one considers the shooting powers of the High Seas Fleet this may have been just as well for the Royal Navy's reputation. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the British press, public, Admiralty, and naval command suffered from frustration. There was a dearth of opportunity for big battle, and when the opportunity came the result of the day was partly indecisive. Now as far as this indecision is concerned, I am surprised that writers, Marder included, have been disinclined to point out that a clean sweep fight such as Trafalgar was very much the exception in British naval history. With the exception of courage (as opposed to confidence) I do not suppose two fleets will ever meet in the history of the world that were so unevenly matched as those on 21 October 1805. Leadership, practice, seamanship, fighting skill have

seldom been so much on one side in a sea fight, at least since Tromp mastered Oquendo in the Downs in 1639. But the British were so nurtured on the Nelson myth that they would be content with nothing less than a repetition of his heroic career. What went wrong was that Scheer was not Villeneuve. However, when one looks at the stereotype of the girl that passed for ideal femininity at the time of the First World War, and then looks at Romney's reproductions of Emma, Lady Hamilton, one is reminded of Nelson's verdict: if there were more Emmas, there would be more Nelsons. By all accounts David Beatty might have profited from such a solid base, if I may use the phrase.

This frustration, not due to sex, but a lack of resounding victory, persisted throughout both the actual and the following "paper" wars concerning Grand Fleet tactics and strategy. Unfortunately it induced tensions in the fleet and between the commanders, both during the war and after. These tensions are really the occasion for Marder's paper. He has moderated the tensions in a way that has needed to be done for a very long time.

Nevertheless, the resulting frustration, understandable as it may be, had a direct effect, in my opinion, on both commanders. Now what I am about to say is not entirely my own but comes from a close reading of Julian Corbett's work for another purpose. Marder quotes Jellicoe, to the effect that it was wrong to risk the fleet because of the danger represented by possible invasion or by escaping commerce raiders. It seems to me that the frustration I have spoken of made the Grand Fleet commander hypersensitive to all word from London and that, in addition, he was so convinced of the primary role of the Grand Fleet that he conceived of himself as the formulator of strategic thought for the nation. I do not think Jellicoe would ever have been vain enough to put it in those words, but I think it gradually permeated his mind in that way. I do not mean that he was not successful in so imposing himself, but only mean that the effect of his strategic dominance was to distort his vision. This was not too dangerous with Churchill and Fisher both in Whitehall, but Admiral Henry Jackson and Sir Edward Carson were a different kettle of fish. Jellicoe more and more saw himself as the focal point for the whole war. This made him, I think, want to decide global priorities. When I think for instance of his interest, later on, in the Third Battle of Passchendaele and his rather pessi-

mistic views of that subject and its possible effect on events in the North Sea, and this is really the important point, *it made him want to be equally strong everywhere at once*. Now this may have been a proper view in a commander, but it, in turn, had the effect of making him want to have performance perfection instead of the usual wartime "ups and downs," which every military man it seems to me has to face. You can't win them all! Consequently, he remained in a constant state of what I would like to call apprehension. This was partly caused, as Marder has shown, by his strong fears of mines and submarines, but I do not think it was an asset in a leader. Hankey once said of Jellicoe that when he got to the Admiralty he expected a German to jump through the Admiralty window behind him and hit him a poke when he least expected it. Personally, I do not see how a naturally cautious, overcentralized, over-responsible, and overworked man could evade this defect. But I do think that it was a defect from which Jellicoe suffered. And all the time taunts by soldiers (for whom he seems to have had unwarranted respect), about the possibility of invasion, increased this natural posture of apprehension.

Now when Beatty came to power in the Grand Fleet, I think he inherited this sense of apprehension that had governed Jellicoe. I do not intend to develop this point, because I think Marder's paper has made it clear. In Beatty's case it was probably a good thing, for it restrained a certain propensity to behave in action as if he were the commander of a fleet destroyer. But Beatty had qualities besides those induced by North Sea frustrations, and these qualities helped to obviate the defect of an excess of "unthinking" battle ardour. I do not quarrel with the idea that Marder has put forth, for instance, that Beatty was "responsible" once he became Grand Fleet commander, but I think that there were times, earlier on, that one can question this. He was capable, as Marder has shown in his paper again, of taking advice; he was also capable of learning from his mistakes. Admiral Chalmers has described to me (as he no doubt has to Professor Marder who introduced me to him), how Beatty began to work out a staff system as soon as he took over command of the Grand Fleet, and how he began to delegate authority, and to discuss hypothetical battle situations with his fleet captains with some regularity. This was fortunate. At Jutland his preoccupation with fleet signaling was not overwhelming; at the Dogger Bank he was a communications disaster. I have read Marder's account of

the Dogger Bank with some care and it seems clear that Marder is aware that Beatty—and I perhaps lay myself open for great attack here—ought to bear a good deal of the responsibility for many of the errors in that action and not poor Admiral Moore, on whom both Beatty and Jellicoe placed the blame after the fight; not officially, mind you, they did not send in a bad report on him, but in correspondence between themselves they said Moore was not up to much. I say this, because Marder refers to it obliquely in the paper when he says that Beatty was failed three times by Ralph Seymour, his Flag Lieutenant in charge of battle cruiser fleet signals. Nevertheless, as Marder implies, Beatty himself was ultimately responsible for the fleet signalling under his command, and he was terribly wrong not to correct such a glaring weakness. Beatty was also wrong not to have consulted carefully about signal probability as he trained his squadron; he was also wrong to be “periscope-shy.” But he learned, as I say, from his mistakes. As a result of Beatty’s concentration on consultation in the Grand Fleet, a second Jutland might have had a better result, at least from the point of view of signals. One could make more of this and perhaps attack it from different points of view. Therefore, it is my opinion that one real problem with the Grand Fleet was, that the fleet itself in its position in the North Sea dominated Whitehall’s strategic thinking. This had reverberations that came back to the fleet, affecting its own performance; and this is true for more reasons than I have time to expound on here. In Jellicoe’s case the result was not entirely good. In Beatty’s it was helpfully corrective.

As to its effect on the overall impact on the war, much might be said. I perhaps should suggest two things. Professor Marder said that he thought Beatty was more interested in combined operations than Jellicoe was, and I think this is true. But I wonder if it had come to the “pinch” and they had begun to ask Beatty to send ships from the Grand Fleet to the Mediterranean to carry out some of these proposals that were put forward, whether one would have found him any less unyielding than Jellicoe had been. I am inclined to think that the answer to that would be “no.” This preoccupation with the Grand Fleet, you see, as it dominated Whitehall’s strategic thinking, had the unfortunate effect of making real, serious plans for combined operations in other parts of the globe virtually impossible. I have no intention to open the can of worms of the Dardanelles at this time, but one ought to note in

connection with the Dardanelles that people tended to evaluate it from the point of view of its effect on the naval operations of the Grand Fleet. And it was this, over-preoccupation with Jellicoe's Grand Fleet position, that caused a good deal of the difficulty in the spring and the summer of 1915.

Secondly, people writing a history of the First World War, especially those who are interested in the military side in some detail, seem to have a disinclination to mount the ladder of power in Whitehall, when they are dishing out responsibility for things that went wrong. I do not know why this is; I have never been able to quite understand it. Perhaps it is because the English Establishment hated David Lloyd George so much that anything he wrote about himself after the war—or the very thought of him, by the time his memoirs were beginning to appear—inhibited any judgment, or sort of “choked back” any assent that they might have been inclined to nod toward his judgment of what happened during the war. For when I think of the Dardanelles, and I think of the problems of the Grand Fleet, I consider that the man who must ultimately bear the responsibility in wartime for defects and difficulties is the Prime Minister. Lloyd George accepted this. Winston Churchill accepted it in the Second World War. In dealing with 1914, 1915, and 1916 the tendency is to talk about the responsibility of Whitehall admirals and First Sea Lords and forget that Herbert Henry Asquith, and that great wartime disaster Sir Edward Grey, ought to come in for their share of the blame as well. Wars are waged, ultimately, by politicians; and these two men had the capability of welding diplomacy and military power together. They failed their country as it has never been failed in war before or since.

What I have tried to do here then is to use Marder's paper to give a little different slant on Beatty's and Jellicoe's problems. In war “chickens come home to roost” on Prime Minister's shoulders, and the shade of Asquith has some days of white shoulders ahead of it yet. But Marder's paper has realistically taken us away from the old Jellicoe-Beatty “paper war,” I hope for good, and put us firmly back with the Grand Fleet in action facing real problems, and its relation with the home government. It makes it possible for us to raise important issues, I think, and discuss them to our mutual benefit. This after all, in my opinion, is what we quill-drivers are for.

**THE MILITARY VIEW:
COMMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL NAVY**

ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM JAMES, G. C. B.

Royal Navy (Ret.)

No battle ever aroused so much controversy as did Jutland, and never before has so much nonsense been written about a battle by critics eager to tell Jellicoe and Beatty what they should have done.

In my comments I shall endeavor to give the views of the officers who (like myself) served under Jellicoe and Beatty and who after the war saw the battle demonstrated at the Tactical School with models of all the ships on a large table. That demonstration, by the way, was staged after the German report of the Battle of Jutland was published.

In his book *The World Crisis*, Winston Churchill wrote of Lord Jellicoe: "He was the only man on either side who could lose the war in an afternoon." Churchill knew that if, through faulty tactics, the Grand Fleet suffered a heavy defeat, German ships on the morrow of their victory would be far afield seeking their prey—the Norwegian, North Sea, and Channel convoys, shipping plying between English and French Channel ports nourishing the British Army in France; and some ships striking at the weakly defended British ships on the Atlantic trade routes. He knew that were the German fleet free to operate in any seas within their radius of action, we could not survive for long. The British public did not understand this elemental fact of maritime war. They did not understand that the Grand Fleet stood between them and defeat.

They murmured, "What is the Grand Fleet, on which so much of the country's wealth was expended, doing, hiding somewhere in the northern mists?" It had always been the same. In the sailing era

when there was no news of the main fleet for months and often years the people murmured, "What is Hawke doing? Why is there no news from Nelson?"

Admirals were always a target for criticism by a public fretting for news of battle and not understanding the elements of sea warfare. What Churchill wrote about Jellicoe was equally true of Beatty. Professor Marder's admirable pen pictures of these two admirals show how widely they differed in character, but that revolutionary changes in battle tactics, which many people expected when Beatty became Commander in Chief, did not materialise.

When Beatty assumed command, I was Flag Commander to Admiral Sturdee, commanding the 4th Battle Squadron. Shortly after he hoisted his flag, Beatty convened a tactical committee to investigate new battle tactics which would introduce more flexibility.

My admiral was a member and I went with him to the meeting. Critics of Jellicoe's handling of the fleet at Jutland had ascribed two reasons for his failure to force action on the High Seas Fleet. One was the turn away when the German flotillas made their destroyer attack, the other was the rigid control exercised by the Commander in Chief which, as a corollary, did not allow squadron leaders to act on their own initiative.

That was the question put to the tactical committee.

After many sessions, investigating with ship models every facet of divided tactics, the committee came to the conclusion that a battle must be fought in single line until the enemy had been heavily defeated, and then, and only then, were divided tactics justified. If a squadron leader led his squadron out of the line in the early stages of a battle and the German Commander in Chief was quick to see his chance of bringing the fire of his whole fleet on a part of the enemy—the dream of a Commander in Chief commanding a weaker fleet—this attempt to use divided tactics would end in disaster.

So Beatty's battle orders do not differ very much from Jellicoe's battle orders. Professor Marder includes in the changes Beatty made "acceptance of a night action, if necessary."

Beatty would, like Nelson, take calculated risks as he did when he entered the Heligoland Bight in August 1914 but, aware as his predecessor was that an ill-judged tactical signal might lose the war in an afternoon, he would take no risk that could not be calculated. I do not think that Beatty ever contemplated night action. Admirals had never sought night battle for obvious reasons. After the first few salvos the Commander in Chief would lose control, because his signals by flashing light would not be seen; the gunlayers and trainers at the guns and the men working the searchlights would have the greatest difficulty in finding and holding their target; friend would be mistaken for foe, and there would be chaos.

Since the advent of the torpedo-boat destroyer, all navies had adopted the same pattern for sea battle. As the light failed the battle was broken off and the two fleets separated, and as soon as it was dark enough the destroyers were sent in to attack with torpedoes. Admiral Togo was the first exponent of this pattern at the Battle of Tsushima.

It was not until 1930 that a fleet was first trained for night battle. Admiral Chatfield on assuming command of the Mediterranean fleet decided the time had come to train the fleet because it was now possible to manoeuvre the fleet by wireless; the guns were now laid, trained, and fired from the foretop (the layers and trainers following pointers); the searchlights were manipulated by distant control, the gunnery and searchlight control officers being in the foretop above the smoke. Chatfield's initiative reaped its reward when Admiral Cunningham encountered the Italian fleet off Cape Matapan at night.

Half-begotten battles, as St. Vincent called them, have always roused controversy and often been followed by quarrels between the admirals. After the Battle of Ushant the quarrel between Keppel and his second-in-command Palliser reached the House of Commons and the London social world; ladies of fashion wore ribbons with the names of the admirals. But there was no quarrel between Jellicoe and Beatty; it was their friends and admirers who waged war in articles and the press. One camp said Jellicoe had been too cautious and lost a wonderful opportunity of inflicting a severe defeat on the High Seas Fleet; Beatty had been too rash, said the other camp.

But the criticism, which continued for years, was always destructive and never constructive. Professor Marder quotes Captain Dewar as saying: "The system of signaling every movement from the Fleet Flagship produced an acute form of tactical arthritis, suppressing the initiative of captains and divisional leaders who had merely to follow in the wake of the next ahead." This is quite meaningless but typical of much of the criticism. When the Grand Fleet put to sea Beatty or Jellicoe was in command of a huge armada: three battle squadrons each of eight dreadnoughts, stretching for seven miles, four cruiser squadrons and nearly 100 destroyers. The courses and speeds of this armada could only be ordered by the Commander in Chief; it was utterly ridiculous to suggest that captains and squadron leaders should be free to act on their own. When contact was obtained with the High Seas Fleet and the Commander in Chief had to decide on the vitally important deployment signal or after the fleet had deployed into line of battle, it was essential that the fleet should be in good order, battleships, cruisers, destroyers all in their appointed place in the battle diagrams. The independence suggested by Captain Dewar could have led to complete disorder. Over a hundred years before the Battle of Jutland, the following conversation took place between Lord St. Vincent and his secretary, which the latter recorded in his memoirs.

"Pray God, they'll come out soon," said the Commander in Chief fervently, "but I fear they'll not give battle and unless I get a chance shift of wind I cannot force 'em to it. I said the same in a letter home. Get it Mr. Tucker, the copy's in my drawer." The secretary did as directed and said, "Here it is, My Lord. It reads: 'I have often told you that two fleets of equal force can never produce decisive results unless they are equally determined to fight it out, or the Commander in Chief of one of them bitches it, so as to misconduct his line.'"

This was as true of the steam as of the sailing era.

Neither Jellicoe nor von Scheer "bitched" his line and so in the low visibility von Scheer was able to abide by his instructions and avoid battle with the Grand Fleet. The outcome would not have been very different if Beatty or any other admiral had been in command of the Grand Fleet; von Scheer had the necessary speed to avoid battle.

Professor Marder says the Grand Fleet went through the war without fighting a decisive battle, and yet it was the dominating factor all the time. But the Battle of Jutland, though half begotten, was a decisive battle because after the battle, the German High Command gave priority to submarine warfare. The High Seas Fleet did put to sea once after Jutland but had not advanced very far into the North Sea before altering course for its defended bases.

Though men of such different personality, Jellicoe and Beatty had one thing in common: they were superb leaders. Despite the boredom and waning hopes that there would ever be a battle between the main fleets, there was no war-weariness in the Grand Fleet. Efforts to improve efficiency and enthusiasm and complete confidence in the Commander in Chief, whether it was Jellicoe or Beatty, never waned from the day the fleet assembled in Scapa Flow to the day the Grand Fleet shepherded the surrendered High Seas Fleet into the Flow.

REAR ADMIRAL S. A. PEARS, C. B. E.

Royal Navy (Ret.)

I have been asked to comment on a paper by Professor Arthur Marder delivered at the United States Air Force Academy's Second Annual Military History Symposium in 1968.

Marder opens with the sentence, "The primary purpose of this paper is to demolish a legend—that the two most famous British naval commanders of the First World War were direct opposites in nearly every important respect." Since my primary purpose must be to demolish Marder's purpose and support the "legend," it may be well to start by stating my qualifications for thus disputing the view of such a well known naval historian.

1. As a very junior officer I served for a year in Jellicoe's flagship, H.M.S. *Hercules*, prior to the war. Dreyer and Bellairs served in the same ship at that time.

2. For the first two years of the war I served in the light

cruiser H.M.S. *Falmouth*, for most of that period based on Rosyth in Goodenough's squadron under Beatty.

3. At the time of Jutland, H.M.S. *Falmouth* was on temporary detachment to act as Napier's flagship in command of all light cruiser squadrons. I was Napier's Fleet Gunnery Officer and thus in an almost unique position to observe the development of the battle from the foretop of the centre ship of the light cruiser screen.

4. H.M.S. *Falmouth* was sunk by submarine in August 1916 and after a short period of leave and three months on temporary duty in escort destroyers, I was appointed to H.M.S. *Oak* (not *Royal Oak*), destroyer tender to the fleet flagship, *Queen Elizabeth*, and consequently continued *in medias res* until the end of the war.

5. Although only a lieutenant I can claim to have been personally known, both on and off duty, to Jellicoe, Beatty, Warrender, Napier, Goodenough (on whose staff I later served), Dreyer, Chatfield, and Bellairs, among others.

Before proceeding to "reminisce" about the above officers, some personal remarks are essential to indicate the point from which I viewed these men from 1911 onward.

When I first knew them, as I rose through the ranks of midshipman, sub-lieutenant, and lieutenant, Jellicoe and Beatty were already admirals and Dreyer was a commander. My association with Jellicoe and Dreyer arose from the fact that my primary service interest centred from the first upon the art of gunnery, which they were striving desperately to develop before the impending war broke out. Later I occupied the Admiralty post of Chief Inspector of Naval Ordnance which, unlike a post of the same nomenclature in the U.S. Navy, controlled not only the appointments and activities of some 100 naval officers specialised in the inspection of naval armaments during manufacture and at sea, but also research, design, and experimental work. This gave me a unique hindsight view of the history of naval gunnery from the start of the century.

In the much publicised book *The Swordbearers*, the author ascribes the low level of efficiency of naval armaments to the monopoly of senior naval appointments by an incompetent aristocracy. Such a suggestion arises from his socialistic bias and is

quite untrue. Jellicoe and Dreyer, with Fisher and Scott, formed the naval team in the armament field, except torpedoes, and none of them was an aristocrat. Their main trouble on the material side was that research, design, inspection, and supply in that field were controlled by the War Office. About 1908 they managed to plant a Naval Inspector of Steel at Sheffield, but results were naturally slow to materialise. Unfortunately no parallel moves were made with explosives and, consequently, some ships and thousands of men were blown up during the war without any enemy action.

I have not seen it anywhere adequately publicised that the shortcomings of naval ammunition at the start of the First World War were due to the "dead hand" of the War Office, with which the officers named above had to struggle. That this was so is proven by the fact that immediately after the war, naval specialists were infiltrated into the Research and Design Departments, while the navy acquired its own explosives factory and its own Inspection and Supply Departments for all ammunition as well as guns. In particular, extensive and expensive firings, for which I was the experimental firing officer, were carried out against the battleship *Baden* and other German ships.

The fire control side was a naval responsibility, and it was here that I had the honour of co-operating, albeit in a very humble capacity, with Jellicoe and Dreyer during 1911-12. Almost incredibly, I witnessed as late as early 1911 a "battle practice" by a heavy cruiser with six-inch guns at a range of about 4,000 yards with stationary targets in which almost the only "control" was the supply of opening range and deflection, after which individual gunlayers were effectively left to their own devices. The maximum elevation of the guns was 7-8 degrees. During the following year Jellicoe, commanding the Second Battle Squadron with Dreyer as his Flag Commander, used his *Orion* class battleships for the development of director, plotting table, and associated fire control communications systems. At this time, Jellicoe and Dreyer, together with the gunnery officers and staffs of the ships concerned, worked what sometimes seemed to be 24 hours a day, with the result that the Grand Fleet as a whole was fitted with some such systems in time for the war.

Nevertheless, Jellicoe found time to take a friendly interest in all his personnel and also to show himself to be a devoted family

man. His wife often "followed" the squadron, which was most unusual at that time; and I remember well, for instance, parties for her children ashore and afloat at Lamash, when the squadron was exercising off the Isle of Arran. I remember "J.J." himself as a little man, almost bird-like in appearance, free of any trace of pomposity. I should describe his expression as "interested" and ready to smile. I do not recall a single display of anger or, for that matter, any *display* at all. He has been criticised for overattention to detail (for a senior officer), but he never fussed or interfered with his staff. He showed confidence in them and they tried to justify it. I do not myself recollect any great interest of his outside the service, in particular outside naval gunnery, his men, and his family; but my memory may be at fault here. I know that I never served under an officer who commanded so much *universal* respect and affection.

Dreyer, as a commander, was of a contrasting type. Tall, with a large head and brain, he was intolerant of lesser men. He would "fly off the handle" not just over a mistake, which might be understandable, but over the slightest hesitation in carrying out an often complicated instruction. He seemed to expect nothing but idiocy from his junior staff and while we admired his ability and devotion to his task, we kept out of his way as much as we could. I remember being used as a "living" blast gauge before such things were invented. He had a wife and family but I do not recall any sight or sign of their existence during the year or more that I served in the same ship with him before the war. Later, my wife and I got to know them well, and we have been in contact with one or another until quite recently. Meanwhile I encountered a mellowed Dreyer from time to time; on the last occasion before his death we reminisced over the early days in the friendliest manner.

Warrender was quite a different type again. I served in his flagship, *King George V*, for almost two years and was a sub-lieutenant about two months before the war, when I moved to Gunnery School. I do not remember Warrender taking any interest in the technicalities of our armament, although we were the latest ship at sea. His service interests were what we called "salt-horse," manoeuvres, discipline, welfare, boat work, visual signals, etc.; woe betide the midshipman under sail who brought his boat alongside clumsily! He was a rich man who was generous and socially

inclined. For example, when the squadron paid a visit to Malta in 1914, he insisted that polo be substituted for the midshipmen's morning physical drill he paid for the hire of ponies. My personal contact with him arose from his fanatical enthusiasm for bridge. I happened to be gunroom champion and was constantly called to make up a four in the "cuddy" in the evenings, which was a profitable pastime; he played for high stakes and paid when he lost but "remitted" the losses of junior officers! It is said that in his last illness he had a four by his bedside daily until the day before he died. I never met him after the outbreak of war, except for a congratulatory drink on the return of my ship, *Falmouth*, from the Heligoland Bight, and would not like to comment on his own view of his performance at Jutland.

My relations with Beatty were of a much less personal nature than the above. In 1915 and 1916, I served under his flag but not in his ship. I listened to his speeches and I read his signals and orders, but my only personal contact with him was as Sports Secretary, Light Cruisers. For instance, I won his consent to a boxing tournament using as a ring the cover of No. 3 hold of a collier lying alongside the light cruiser *Nottingham*, with plank seating up to her funnels and over No. 4 hold; all had to be susceptible to demolition in three hours since we were at four hours' notice for sailing. Beatty attended himself as part of his unremitting effort to maintain the morale of his force. In this he was almost too successful, for our image of him was of a gallant commander who would, *if and when Jellicoe allowed him*, show his battle cruisers some enemy targets which he was supremely confident they would then destroy. I never knew Beatty to be disloyal to Jellicoe, but the implications of his dashing attitudes inevitably suggested an unduly cautious Jellicoe. Of course, his principle of reckless attack that paid off at short range against light cruisers in the mists of Heligoland Bight, was vitiated by technical inefficiency at Dogger Bank and finally shown up at Jutland. It could only succeed against an inefficient or otherwise feeble opponent—and the High Seas Fleet was neither inefficient nor feeble. In 1917 and 1918, I was closer to Beatty in the destroyer permanently attached to the fleet Flagship which he used frequently for a variety of solo tasks, such as the point-to-point, his own conveyance of himself and V.I.P.s—including *King George V*. Although I occasionally met Beatty and his wife socially, I would not say that there was any relationship be-

tween us off service. At that distance, however, from what he said at staff conferences and elsewhere, it seemed clear to me that Beatty, while still Beatty, had taken upon himself the mantle of Jellicoe. I would not wish the above to be taken as too critical of Beatty. I thought and still think that he was a magnificent leader for a battle cruiser force, but his confidence in the efficiency of his ships was misplaced, and he lacked the technical ability to see this. To what extent such overconfidence is a defect in a leader is an open question. He was not alone in this respect, as witness the suicidal action by Arbuthnot with his "armoured" cruisers.

It would be difficult to fault Marder's masterly initial assessment of the characters of the two admirals, except that at one point it seems that he has been misled by Beatty himself. I suggest that it is impossible to square Beatty's belief that under Jellicoe "the big questions got slurred over or overlooked altogether," with Jellicoe's clear statement of his basic strategy in his memo of 12 April 1916, which was adopted by Beatty himself when he took over the Grand Fleet. Furthermore, the allied criticism that Jellicoe failed to decentralise adequately, ignores the admiral's emphatic effort to do so by his issue of Orders and Instructions; Orders were irrefragable, but Instructions gave wide latitude to the discretion of Jellicoe's subordinates.

Also, in this section, I would have made specific mention of Beatty's outstanding gift of oratory which contributed so much to his maintenance of morale throughout the war.

What surprises me is that Marder, having established that the only similarity between his two subjects was their common and fully admitted softness towards incompetent subordinates, then goes on to conclude that they were not "opposites in nearly every important respect." In this he seems to have been misled by Chatfield's "he was no reckless and light-hearted swordsman. . . ." Chatfield was writing of Beatty as Commander in Chief, Grand Fleet, *after* his shattering experience at Jutland and *after* he had adopted wholesale the attitudes of Jellicoe. I saw the reckless swordsman light-heartedly attacking the High Seas Fleet, without even waiting for the powerful support of the four, fast, new battle-ships close at hand; and I saw his retreat with his remainder. Such action would have been impossible to Jellicoe, who was a gunnery specialist and knew about guns, shell, armour, etc. Incidentally, I

wonder to this day whether Beatty, whom I still admire, overrode his staff or whether they had failed to instruct their gallant but technically ignorant master of the facts of life.

Perhaps it would be worth recounting an incident trifling in itself but illuminating as showing that Beatty was basically Beatty even late in 1918. Almost immediately after the German Fleet had anchored in the approaches to the Firth of Forth, the *Oak* was ordered to embark the Commander in Chief from his flagship off Rosyth, to pick up a party of V.I.P.s at a point off Inchkeith below the Fourth Bridge, and to proceed to view the German ships. In the morning the harbour was enveloped in a dense blanket of fog but, as it was reported clear outside, Beatty confirmed the trip and I took him down the Firth, navigating buoy to buoy with nothing else in sight, at 30 knots to minimise effects of tide and current. On arrival and stopping at my estimated rendezvous Beatty waited a few minutes and then turned to my helmsman.

“Can’t see a damn thing—we can’t be close enough in—half-speed ahead both!”

The helmsman, correctly, turned to me, as being in command of the ship, and I gave an amended order.

“Slow ahead starboard only.”

The ship had hardly gathered way before the propeller was churning up mud and I ordered:

“Half astern both.”

The trip was successfully completed in due course without comment from Beatty, though he later told the story against himself.

“Can’t see a damn thing—half ahead both!”

In my close but admittedly worm’s-eye view of the two admirals, I can think of few attributes in which they were not direct opposites.

I do not want to be involved in the interminable discussions on tactics to which Jutland has given rise, but I cannot resist challeng-

ing the bald statement of some critics, to whom Marder refers, that Jellicoe's turn-away "wrecked all chance of forcing an action on the enemy." But for the lamentable failure of initiative and communications on the part of certain light forces during the night, the next day would have seen Jutland "Part II" with all day for its enactment.

REAR ADMIRAL C. M. BLACKMAN, D. S. O.

Royal Navy (Ret.)

I regret to say I have little I can add to these two admirable papers by Professors Marder and Schurman, and the following reasons may put my ignorance of the two great men into perspective:

First, I was on the China Station when the war broke out, having been in command of a destroyer for nearly a year and was only 24 years of age.

Secondly, it was not until the German China Squadron had been located that a relief was sent out to me, and I did not arrive in home waters until the end of 1915. My first appointment was then to a destroyer engaged on convoy escort work in the English Channel, and it was not until just after the Battle of Jutland that I joined the First Destroyer Flotilla attached to the Battle Cruiser Force in the Firth of Forth. Thus I missed the most exciting action in which they took part.

Thirdly, the Admiralty had directed that no diaries or such like were to be kept and I therefore have no records of my own. As you probably know, the Grand Fleet Battle Squadrons were mostly in the north at Scapa Flow, whereas the battle cruisers were farther south in the Firth of Forth. Consequently, I do not remember ever having seen Admiral Jellicoe, whereas Admiral Beatty, who had been my captain when I was a midshipman, was with us in person. I had always retained a great admiration for Admiral Beatty and was proud and gratified at serving under him again. His dash and charm, and what Professor Marder terms his "sartorial individualism," so exactly reflected the temperament of a destroyer

officer. We regarded ourselves as the *corps d'élite* of the Royal Navy, so you may imagine that to be attached to the battle cruisers as the spearhead of the Grand Fleet was a great source of pride, not only from the functional point of view but also to have the honour of serving under such a gallant and inspiring admiral as Beatty. We tended to follow his example in "sartorial" eccentricities, such as disregarding Admiralty instructions to wear the chevrons denoting years of war service (they were a sop to volunteers as opposed to conscripts) and wound stripes.

So much for personalities—heresay of one, personal though distant contact with the other.

Strategy

Looking back and trying to divorce myself from hindsight, I don't think that the matter of strategy concerned us young destroyer captains. We were certainly never admitted to the councils of the great, where such matters were argued and decisions made. If detailed, we got our sailing orders; if in company, we carried out the purport of such signals as were made to us. "Ours not to reason why, ours but to do and die," attitude! In those days we never had, or at least I was never called upon to attend, what is now called a "briefing."

My impression, so far as destroyers were concerned, was that the submarine menace was so serious that we were continually being detached to various other parts of the war area to combat that menace, thus departing from the previously held function of torpedo attack.

Tactics

The cruising order for the battle fleet to enable rapid deployment into line of battle was, I think, generally accepted; but so far as the destroyers were concerned (except for stationing flotillas in advantageous positions) the force of attack, when ordered, was rather *ad hoc* and somewhat "helter skelter" dash in, following the divisional commanders. At night our own big ships seemed to be so afraid of our own destroyers—rightly so, perhaps, with no means of rapid identification—that there was a strong disinclination to let us loose to attack the enemy.

As the war years rolled on, the waning of the unrestricted submarine warfare and the waning menace of the High Seas Fleet seemed to change the early function of a destroyer as an attacker with torpedoes to that of a screen against submarine attack, when in company with heavy ships; or when detached, as a seeker and destroyer of enemy submarines. It must have largely been due to the experience and appreciation of the two admirals under consideration that these functional changes took place.

I am sorry that I can contribute so little, but "old men forget," as Lord Norwich wrote, and I may add, get a bit blurred with World War II on top of World War I.

With regard to Professor Schurman's remark about the shooting powers of the High Seas Fleet, it was evident that the stereoscopic range-finder seemed more accurate than our prismatic type for the opening salvoes, but I seem to remember from sustained actions that this initial accuracy fell off to a very great extent under punishment from our own ships once they had the range.

CAPTAIN G. E. BANNISTER, C. B. E., Royal Navy (Ret.)

and

ADMIRAL SIR ANGUS CUNNINGHAME-GRAHAM

K. B. E., C. B. E., Royal Navy (Ret.)

I have asked Sir Angus Cunninghame-Graham to join me in preparing these comments because his knowledge is unique and far greater than my own. He served throughout the war in Grand Fleet battleships, excepting only a short period in 1917. In the latter part of the war as a flag lieutenant, his work gave him exceptional opportunities for meeting and knowing personally all the various flag officers.

Admiral Sir Angus Cunninghame-Graham considers that Professor Marder's paper defies criticism. The Royal Navy is indeed fortunate that, following Mahan, a second naval historian from your country should exercise such power and insight to evaluate our exploits in the twentieth century. Marder's volumes *From Dread-*

nought to Scapa Flow review the facts and opinions with impartiality and illuminate the lessons learned in a masterly way. Knowledgeable officers and writers who love our navy are looking forward eagerly toward the publication of his concluding volume.

Arguments and correspondence over Jutland still persist, but neither Admiral Cunninghame-Graham nor I wish to become personally involved in the controversy.

After fifty-two years, despite memory's known imperfections, Professor Marder's statements that Admiral Beatty's advent produced no significant change in the Grand Fleet's way of life is confirmed. Routine both at sea and in harbour went on as before. The Grand Fleet Battle Orders were unchanged, save for the incorporation of some lessons learned at Jutland.

Circumstances reduced the frequency of the sweeps by the whole fleet into Heligoland Bight. Instead battleships went to sea by squadrons or divisions to support convoy operations to and from Stavanger (Norway) and also the British and American minelayers employed on the Northern Barrage mining operations.

Professor Marder with clarity and perception has assessed accurately the character and influence of these two great leaders. The one failing common to both, but not remarked upon, was that neither had learned from Nelson the value of calling their captains onboard their flagships for consultations and discussions. This fault was perhaps less in Admiral Beatty's case.

Professor Schurman, while supporting Professor Marder's conclusions, raises certain other issues which scarcely bear on the paper read. He implies that the High Seas Fleet's gunnery was superior to that of the Grand Fleet. In fact, though the Germans usually started well (due to some technical advantages from stereoscopic range finders), the shooting soon fell off in bad weather and when being hit. The Grand Fleet had nothing to fear from them; it is believed that they scored 122 heavy hits against 55 received from the Germans. It is agreed that British shells were less effective against German ships than German shells against British ships. This, being a deficiency in design, could neither be corrected by the British Commander in Chief nor by the training and spirit

of the ships' companies. It only came to light afterwards and is hardly pertinent to these papers.

Though drawing attention to the infrequent but outstanding victories such as Trafalgar, Professor Schurman refers to the Nelson "myth." This word seems unfortunate. The fighting spirit and high morale maintained in the Grand Fleet during the long years operating from Scapa was no doubt inspired by the Nelson tradition with the hope of a second Trafalgar. Had the Germans studied the lessons taught by Nelson, they would not have made the same mistake in the two wars, i.e., keeping their "fleet-in-being" with its ships mostly in harbour. This resulted in the officers and men being denied the opportunity of becoming experienced seamen and increased their demoralization.

It is agreed with Professor Schurman that the victory at Jutland was fully established through time. In the short term the Grand Fleet knew that the Germans had been beaten and only saved themselves by escaping back to harbour. The British public, thirsty for spectacular success, had little but casualty lists to sustain their enthusiasm and this sparked the controversy. At Jutland, providence provided such low visibility that the movements of large numbers of vessels operating in relatively confined waters could in no way be co-ordinated. Critics, if restricted to the meager and misleading information available to commanders on the bridges of their ships at sea, with minutes to make vital decisions, would find right judgments less easy. These facts are of course well known. They are dealt with more adequately in *The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten*.

Suggestions that Admirals Jellicoe and Beatty (in turn) were unduly anxious in regard to the hazards from underwater attacks (submarines, mines, and torpedoes) are regarded as mistaken. Jellicoe was technically alive to the progress made with these devices and the lack of adequate antidotes. Even such men as Sir Maurice Hankey may make remarks that are not meant to be taken seriously or indeed repeated. It is relatively easy for subordinate commanders to advocate the disregard of both physical and mental risks over any course of action. The Commander in Chief, vested with the security of his country, must exercise a more responsible approach. When the security of the fleet base becomes less than

that of the high seas, flag officers who sleep badly in harbour are to be commended. The loss of the *Royal Oak* in more recent years comes easily to mind.

Both Marder and Schurman imply a misplaced loyalty to subordinates by these two great admirals. Rather should it be claimed that two such diverse characters shared the prerogative (or distinction) of the best leaders, i.e., standing between a subordinate and a higher authority demanding retribution for some infringement. By such acts of unexpected humanity and understanding, teams are inspired with loyalty and devotion which may achieve miracles.

Sir Winston Churchill, presiding over a meeting to establish full protection for the fleet at Scapa after the loss of the *Royal Oak*, closed by saying, "Gentlemen, should further casualties arise we shall all be hanged together." Not, as was expected, "You will all hang."

CAPTAIN R. H. F. DeSALIS, O. B. E., D. S. C.

Royal Navy (Ret.)

First, I think I should make clear what my own position is before I comment on the papers by Professor Marder and Professor Schurman.

My service in World War I was almost entirely connected with minelayers and minelaying, and I never served in the Grand Fleet. However, my connection with Lord Jellicoe commenced in 1911, when I was a sub-lieutenant in H.M.S. *Prince of Wales*, his flagship in the Atlantic Fleet, and continued, after I had been promoted to lieutenant, in H.M.S. *Hercules*, his flagship in the 2nd Battle Squadron. As staff officer to the Captain-in-Charge of Minelayers, I was several times sent up to the Commander in Chief and was interviewed both by Jellicoe and afterwards by Beatty. In 1919, I was on the staff of Jellicoe's Mission to India and the Dominions, in H.M.S. *New Zealand*, as Mining Staff Officer.

H.M.S. *Price of Wales* was newly commissioned, and when she joined the Atlantic Fleet she compared badly with her sister ships. After about a month, we had a most unpleasant week of "shaking up," and a very remarkable improvement took place, especially in morale. The Vice Admiral (Jellicoe) had no *apparent* connection with this improvement. I think this may illustrate Professor Marder's remarks on the "unreserved confidence, trust, and love" on the part of the lower deck.

There can, I think, be no question of his mastery of his trade.

As regards overcentralization, I agree with Professor Marder; but it must be remembered that the naval staff system was in its infancy and working with a staff was then largely "trial and error"—both on the part of the commander and his staff. It was really Jellicoe who made the staff system work when he came to the Admiralty in 1916. I have always felt, moreover, that Dreyer, on whom he relied heavily, was not a good influence in delegation. Nor can I refrain from noting the similarity between Jellicoe and Collingwood, especially after Trafalgar.

As regards Beatty, I really only saw him once, in 1918. I had attended the birth and trials of the new American mine in America. This mine had made rather a bad "debut" and I had been sent up to give the Commander in Chief information about it. I was thoroughly, but courteously, questioned and dismissed. As I got to the door I turned and, though a mere lieutenant, something made me go back and tell the Commander in Chief my personal opinion. He received this impertinence from an unknown junior most charmingly. I have never done such a thing before or since, and I still wonder why I did it then. Perhaps this illustrates his approachability, but there must have been something else as well—personal magnetism?

I can make no comments on the strategy or tactics of the Grand Fleet for I was not there, and my remarks can only be at second hand. But, from the naval outposts, I can say that we looked to the Grand Fleet, and that we never lost our confidence in either Commander in Chief. In fact, looking back, I feel now that these two men were far and away the most fitted for their post, and I can

think of no others with the same qualities and qualifications except perhaps Prince Louis, who was too old, and Tyrwhit, who had by then not enough experience.

Finally, it should be noted that both men were leaders and not drivers, and that both men kept themselves supremely fit physically.

Part III

**THE END OF THE PRUSSIAN MILITARY TRADITION
IN GERMANY**

THE RISE OF THE MILITARY OPPOSITION IN THE NAZI REICH

Harold C. Deutsch

The phenomenon of an army or, more accurately, the leadership of an army in a state to which it feels alien has been no rare experience in the 20th century. In lands of more conservative tradition it has counted among the abiding afflictions of both liberal republics and Fascist totalitarianism. In varying forms this fate was shared by the Third French Republic, the Spanish Republic of the 1930s, and the Weimar Republic of Germany. Perhaps the most interesting and unique example involves Hitler's Third Reich, if only because in this instance the issues raised came to a head during the Second World War and had some bearing on its course.

The interrelation of sword and swastika in the 12-year history of the Nazi regime has been scrutinized persistently from the moment of Hitler's rise to power. Many a reader has closed the latest treatise on the subject with the feeling that at last the final word must have been spoken. Yet the very fact that so much in the way of public and private records was lost after July 1944 and in the holocaust that consumed the Third Reich gives extra weight to each surviving fragment of evidence that comes to light. Within a few months the diaries and papers of one major military resistance figure, which should add materially to our knowledge, are scheduled for publication.¹ One other important diary is known to exist in private hands.² And, alluring as a pot of half-fabled gold at the end of a long research trail are the memoirs and papers of Colonel General Wilhelm Adam, head of the *Truppenamt* or camouflaged General Staff at the time of the 1933 takeover.³ In short, new insights do continue to become available and sources known to exist remain untapped.

The compass of this study does not contemplate analysis of the type and degree of responsibility of the *Reichswehr*, the army of the Weimar Republic, in the collapse of Germany's first experiment with democracy. Let it suffice to say that this role was substantial and that what came later for them was little more than those involved deserved. Like several other influential segments of German society and, for that matter, such heterodox elements as the Communists, the *Reichswehr* leadership could not bring itself to take Hitler entirely seriously. Those military figures more directly involved seem to have felt, with Franz von Papen, that they had "hired" the Nazi Führer to do a job for them and that, once he had served his turn, he could be "praised, complimented, and thrust aside."

On Nazism as such the officer corps in the first instance split horizontally. The subalterns, especially among the troop officers, were decoyed by its unmistakable national dynamic and its capacity for mobilizing the spiritual and material energies of the masses. They were too naive politically to comprehend the muddle-headedness and contradictions of the Nazi ideology. So it was easy to find satisfaction in those watchwords and slogans that happened to reflect their own dreams and prejudices.

Staff and general officers were less vulnerable. They were deeply grounded in aristocratic and conservative traditions; the snobbery of their caste sprang instinctively to arms against the vulgarians who manned even the top echelons of the party. They were repelled by the crudity, the disrespect for established law and good form, and indiscriminate brutality. On the other hand, they were attracted by the *Wehrfreudigkeit* (defense-mindedness) of the regime. The external goals announced to the world by Hitler at this stage seemed both reasonable and in the national interest, a view widely shared among foreign observers. The rearmament he launched, at first clandestinely, then in open repudiation of the Versailles Treaty, looked much the same to them.

Thus though only one general officer, the future Field Marshal Walter von Reichenau, had professed himself a Nazi before 1933, many of his fellows inclined to make allowances and to give Hitler the benefit of the doubt in questionable situations. Much that repelled them was allowed to pass because it was counted among the growing pains of a new political order. Even intrepid, blunt-

spoken General Adam, in a talk to high staff officers at Garmisch in the summer of 1933 in which he excoriated Nazi excesses, mitigated his censures with: "Revolutions still begin by bringing the dirt to the surface, but later it sinks to the bottom. So it is up to us to wait and hope."⁴

In this spirit the army leadership tried to look at the best side of things and seek in every cloud a silver lining. The elimination of Captain Ernst Roehm and of the aspirations to military power of the SA (Storm Troopers), for example, made it easier to swallow the coincident assassinations of General von Schleicher and Colonel von Bredow in the same hideous "Blood Purge" of 1934. The Schlieffen Society of former and active General Staff officers actually considered itself greatly daring in passing privately a resolution that their departed comrades had "died with honor on the field of honor."⁵ Meanwhile, the supposedly less rigidly anti-Nazi Werner von Fritsch and Ludwig Beck had succeeded Hammerstein-Equord and Adam as Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff respectively. It would seem rather anomalous that Fritsch, the central target of Nazi intrigue in 1938, and Beck, later the archetype of uncompromising military resister, were then regarded as lesser evils by those who sought a measure of accommodation between the army and the regime. Clearly, much water was to pass under the political and military bridges of Germany during the next five years.

The period 1934-1936 was the least troubled in the relations between the civil and military authorities of Nazi Germany. The *Wehrmacht* (armed forces) was intensively preoccupied with its progressive expansion. The sense of solid accomplishment coupled with vastly accelerated promotion gave satisfaction to the officer corps. Except for an adventurous fling in Austria in July 1934, Hitler maintained a posture of tolerable restraint in external affairs. The period was also one of comparative moderation in domestic activities.

A turning point in these as in most respects was the year 1936. To his intimate circle, Hitler was beginning to stress his anticipation of a major conflict when his arms programs should reach their peak in the early mid-forties. The aims he now enunciated far transcended those he had publicly proclaimed since 1933 and echoed *Lebensraum* (living space) goals he had formulated in

the 1920s. Both the pace and the scope of rearmament portended preparation for aggressive war; their economic implications, in particular, could not be reconciled with any other policy. It was, in fact, in this latter area that major challenges to the dictator's intentions first arose. At this time Hjalmar Schacht on the side of the civil government and General Georg Thomas on that of the Ministry of War began that persistent, though necessarily subdued, agitation that was to endure to the eve of war itself.

More particularly, 1936 saw the beginning of the parting of the ways between Hitler and the army chiefs, notably General Beck. The Rhineland occupation, the intervention in Spain, and the definitive shift from the support of China to that of a Japan launched on her own imperial road, in varying degree roused the opposition of the Chief of Staff; they meant so many steps toward his eventual junction with the conspiratorial forces that were beginning to coalesce on the civilian side.

Beck had shared in the widespread underestimate of Hitler and the Nazis. It gradually became clear that they could not just be used to promote rearmament and a more national policy. Beck seems also to have belonged to those, legion throughout the world, who had believed wishfully that Nazism would mellow and its more distasteful aspects wear away. His own favorite way of putting it had been that it would "grind itself to pieces on the flinty good qualities of the German people."⁶ Events unfortunately were to prove that either these qualities lacked the required degree of flintiness or the Nazi substance itself was of a temper that exceeded Beck's estimate.

Well before the Hossbach Conference of 5 November 1937,⁷ when Hitler revealed his aggressive intentions for 1938 to his service chiefs and thus, indirectly, to Beck, the Chief of Staff had formed a clear concept of the direction in which the regime was heading. However much he felt it imperative to restore Germany as a military power, he did not regard war itself as a primary function of the soldier. In his view, to quote John Wheeler-Bennett: "Germany should proceed toward but not exceed that measure of rearmament which would lessen rather than increase the danger of war by making it impossible for her to be attacked with impunity."⁸

In making this assessment, Beck felt that it was the business

of the General Staff to serve as "the conscience of the army." In effect, he ruled out aggressive war, the more so as he was in agreement with such leading civilian members of the opposition as Carl Goerdeler, who held that the existing European constellation offered Germany every opportunity to pursue her legitimate international aims by diplomatic means.

The final disenchantment of Beck, if any was still needed, was the Blomberg-Fritsch affair of early 1938, an incident that will always occupy a special niche in the history of the opposition. It furnished the essential vehicle through which a heretofore purely civilian conspiracy acquired its first substantial military base.

Werner von Blomberg had become Minister of War at the start of the Hitler regime and, wittingly or unwittingly, had been one of the cogs in the maneuvers which had brought the dictator to power. In the following half-decade he did much to extend Hitler's control over the *Wehrmacht*. At the same time he failed to provide any moderating influence for which military levers would have been at hand. At a time when many Germans looked despairingly to the army as a last resort for applying restraints, Blomberg took refuge in the legalistic alibi that in a totalitarian state there was no collective cabinet responsibility.⁹ He must also shoulder the blame for conniving with the Führer in the monstrous extension of the oath of obedience, which was sprung on the *Wehrmacht* when Hindenburg died and Hitler took over the command power.

Though Blomberg thus failed to serve as a mitigating agent in the face of Nazi tyranny, he also fell somewhat short of giving fullest satisfaction to his master. The same hesitations he showed in dealing with the Führer were reflected also in handling his army subordinates. Moreover, he shared some of their doubts about Hitler's increasingly adventurous policy. In the Hossbach Conference, the War Minister actually joined Fritsch when the latter insisted that the idea of war with the Western Powers should be eliminated from all calculations.

Much of importance about the ensuing Blomberg-Fritsch affair, particularly the exact role of Adolf Hitler, is likely to remain unclear. What matters most is that the essential target was the army leadership and that, if there had been no incident linking the fate of the two generals, there would almost certainly have been one

headed by the name of Fritsch alone. Hitler, as he later confessed privately,¹⁰ had determined that he could no longer work with Fritsch. In addition to the aforesaid, he entertained grievances against the Commander in Chief, in that the annual revised mobilization plans were all grounded in defensive concepts. Fritsch had also strenuously opposed building up an SS military force around the core of the *Leibstandarte* (Hitler's personal SS bodyguard unit) which would exist parallel to the army.¹¹ Small wonder, then, that Himmler too had singled him out as a target for his animosity and had been after his scalp for several years. A framed-up case for homosexuality had been ready to be sprung since 1936, but Hitler found so early a showdown with the army leadership inconvenient and supposedly had ordered the destruction of the "incriminating" documents.¹² After the Hossbach Conference the fever for "getting something" on Fritsch again mounted. He was carefully shadowed during a vacation he took in Egypt in the following weeks, and the "investigation" on the still unsprung morals charge resumed.¹³

These and other portents that something was brewing against Fritsch definitely precede the catalyst that was the case of Blomberg. Here the chief villain was undoubtedly Goering, who had first encouraged Blomberg to marry a woman with a more than questionable past and then maneuvered adroitly to make his position untenable.¹⁴ It is a safe assumption that Goering wanted the War Ministry, which would have nailed down dramatically his rank as second in the state. To clear the way for him, two heads would have to roll—that of Blomberg, who held the coveted post, and that of Fritsch, whose next claim to it as chief of the senior service was virtually incontestable unless some cause for personal disqualification could be discovered. Goering must have known enough about Hitler's feeling toward Fritsch to be certain that the Führer would turn a ready ear to revived accusations against him and would lend himself to whatever might eliminate him both from his present post and from claim on the greater one.

The course of the Blomberg-Fritsch affair demonstrates how much the officer corps had become exposed both to the splitting of its leadership and the corrupting influence of the professional fleshpots that had been set before it. Power had exercised its magnetic attraction on a much wider circle than that of the habitual opportunists. As early as January 1934, the French military attaché, General Renandeu, had written penetratingly: "The Party is

gaining the *Reichswehr*; it is conquering its top echelons and its foundations. The army is losing its neutral status.”¹⁵ The comment may have somewhat anticipated developments, but its prognosis was essentially accurate.

Blomberg's own conduct put the cap on that long chain of betrayals of his kind of which he had been guilty. The cynical insinuations of Goering convinced him that his dismissal was at the insistence of his fellow generals. His revenge was to eliminate them *en bloc* from the succession by advising Hitler to take the command of the *Wehrmacht* upon himself. He also suggested as Chief of Staff of a newly formed High Command of the Armed Forces (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*—OKW) Wilhelm Keitel, who is best characterized by the fashion in which he inherited (and qualified even better for) Blomberg's nickname of “the rubber lion.” It only served to clinch matters with Hitler when Keitel, in quarters that were dismayed at such an appointment, was described to the Führer as an unimaginative nonentity who knew only how to work hard and to obey. Supplemented as he was by the coldly ambitious Alfred Jodl as operations chief, and the progressively more alcoholic Rudolf Schmundt as *Wehrmacht-Adjutant* in place of the intrepid and independent-minded Hossbach, Keitel proved the perfect tool for making a sterile military bureau of the budding OKW.¹⁶ This served essentially the two functions of (1) a channel for imposing Hitler's will with a minimum of argument on the three services, and (2) cannibalizing their missions whenever it suited his purposes. Hitler can claim for himself the distinction of decapitator of the *Wehrmacht* as an autonomous organism; it was Keitel who followed and surpassed Blomberg as the digger of its grave.

The fate of the army command as it came out of the Blomberg-Fritsch affair runs in many ways parallel to this. That of Fritsch personally is the more amazing in that Hitler did fail in the end to make the fabricated charges stick. He had been obliged to place the “incriminating documents” in the hands of Minister of Justice Franz Gürtner, but had done so with the broad hint: “You will know at which end of the rope to pull.” Using exactly these words, but with a smile that spoke volumes, Gürtner had handed the file to Hans von Dohnanyi, a fiercely anti-Nazi member of his staff whom he had abetted for years in the systematic collection of criminal data against the Nazi Party and its leaders. Dohnanyi did

not need to go far in pursuit of clearing Fritsch before he encountered others who had set themselves the same mission.¹⁷

In fact, the rally of diverse anti-Nazi elements to the defense of the Commander in Chief constitutes the first significant conspiratorial enterprise of an amalgam of forces that was to hold ranks after some fashion to the critical days of July 1944. While the beleaguered general himself floundered and had only vague notions of what was undertaken on his behalf, links were formed that, for the next two years, also provided the vital conspiratorial center which twice was able to assemble enough backing to make a turnover conceivable.

The parties Dohnanyi discovered to be pulling at the same end of the rope with him were highly placed members of the military intelligence or *Abwehr*, soon after to be incorporated in the new OKW. Foremost among them was the *Abwehr's* Chief of Staff and head of its Central Division, Colonel Hans Oster. Already loathing Nazism with an intensity rare even among ardent opponents of the regime, Oster gained from the Fritsch affair an overwhelming sense of personal grievance and of mission. In a man whose sentiments were never measured by halves, the shock of the treatment of his revered former regimental chief sank deep. His purposeful and unremitting activity to prepare the ground for a *coup d'état* dates from this period when, as he later told his Security Service (SD) interrogators, he decided to "make Fritsch's case my own."¹⁸

With the uneasy tolerance of Admiral Canaris, the celebrated mystery figure who commanded the *Abwehr*, Oster had already used its resources to promote the beginnings of a domestic counter-intelligence service to combat the SD and the Gestapo. He had tentacles reaching to the Berlin Chief of Police as well as to Himmler's high SS entourage. Thus it was possible to discern and counter many moves of the latter camp. It did not suffice, however, to save Fritsch, with regard to whom the vital role was played by Hitler personally.

It is not within the compass of this study to trace the cynical maneuvers by which the Führer first suspended Fritsch "for reasons of health" and, not awaiting the completion of the investigation and court-martial, then dismissed and replaced him. Fritsch himself behaved like a man who did not quite know what was happening to him. If he had acted immediately against the demeaning treatment

and summoned the senior generals to his support, there is much to argue that they would have rallied to him. But, though entirely aware of a Nazi plot against him, he was paralyzed by uncertainty whether Hitler himself was a party to it. Once he allowed himself to become entangled in an effort "to clear himself," it was his finish as Commander in Chief, however much the endeavors of his known and unknown helpers secured his personal vindication.

The man who succeeded Fritsch was not the first whose name was raised in official consideration for the post. Hitler initially had made a gesture toward appointing Beck, probably in the cynical hope of separating him from his chief. Beck refused even to be considered, loyally insisting that there could be no thought of removing Fritsch until a military court had ruled in his case. Hitler had then put forward his real choice, his old favorite, Reichenau, whom he had already tried unsuccessfully to insert in place of Hammerstein in 1934, when old President Hindenburg had interposed his veto. When Hitler went through the form of consulting Rundstedt, senior of the *Generaloberste* (Colonels-General), the latter roundly rejected Reichenau on behalf of the entire army leadership corps. Even the complacent Keitel and Jodl thereupon counselled Hitler to desist.¹⁹ In this way the position finally fell to Colonel-General Walther von Brauchitsch, who accepted under conditions which were to compromise his entire term of office. At the Führer's direction, Keitel made clear to Brauchitsch that he would be expected "to bind the army closer to the Party and its ideology," as well as to choose, if necessary, a new chief of staff similarly willing to accommodate himself. Brauchitsch not only agreed to these terms, but further mortgaged his personal independence by mentioning to Goering that he needed help in ridding himself of one wife in order to take another. For this, a substantial settlement to pay off his current spouse would be required.²⁰ It is noteworthy that the matter was raised before Hitler made his final decision on Brauchitsch and it may well have contributed materially to this. The dictator was an expert in human weakness and how to buy men; by providing the sum needed, he put his new army commander under heavy personal obligation that was to pay the donor repeated dividends.

By the diabolical dexterity with which he had managed the Blomberg-Fritsch affair, Hitler effected a fantastic concentration of

military power in his own hands. In inverse proportion, he had won a deconcentration of authority on the military side. Instead of the single War Ministry, he now had immediately subordinate to him the three service chiefs and a completely supine Chief of the OKW. By fobbing off Goering with the baton of a Field Marshal, he kept him from adding the army to his military empire, but, in making him the ranking officer of the Wehrmacht, he detracted from the army's prestige as the senior service.

To sum up, Hitler was now the immediate master of a *Wehrmacht* command which had absorbed and was steadily to add to the powers and functions of the former War Ministry. He was seconded by a Chief of Staff who studied only how to remain in his good graces. The new army commander had allowed himself to be placed under severe mental and emotional handicaps in dealings with the Chief of State. To top all, the army leadership corps had been thrown into confusion and inoculated with an abiding insecurity.

To somewhat balance this, opponents of the regime could count as a positive result that the lines had been drawn with new clarity for many a figure in high military quarters. Hitler's handling of the *Anschluss* had confirmed the seriousness of his pronouncements of that previous November. A program of political adventurism with corresponding military implications loomed ahead. The true significance of the Blomberg-Fritsch affair had been the extent to which it had implemented Hitler's resolution to eliminate the army leadership as a restrictive influence. Most appalling to those who had seen behind the externals of the situation was the shamelessness of the methods he had employed. Here and there military figures of consequence had stood up to be counted—not to the extent of challenging Hitler outright but of committing themselves to back any action against him. The most lasting impact certainly lay in the crystallization of the group of ardent spirits around Oster and the more positive support afforded it thereafter by Canaris. Almost from the moment of his appointment to the command of the *Abwehr* in 1935, the admiral had pursued a personnel policy which packed its top ranks with enemies of the regime. Did he merely provide a refuge for kindred spirits or consciously set himself the mission of building an apparatus which in due time could be turned against the regime? Whatever the answer, by 1938 he had, whether in-

tionally or not, provided opposition forces with a made-to-order conspiratorial center.

It has been noted that, with many misgivings, Canaris had tolerated Oster's formation of an internal political information service that violated the division of functions between the *Abwehr* and the SD. During the Fritsch crisis the admiral had come to rely heavily on it and at the same time to regret that it was not yet sufficiently effective. Thereafter Oster could count on more active support from his chief in these efforts. From the Fritsch crisis also dates a new intimacy between Canaris and Beck. During the previous two years their relations had been cooled by Beck's annoyance with Canaris's active role in the German intervention on behalf of Franco.

For Beck himself, the Fritsch affair was finally decisive in more than just confirming the irreconcilability of the regime with either fundamental morality or the basic interests of the German nation. He had been guilty of a certain complacency in believing that the personal prestige of Fritsch and the supposed unassailability of the army guaranteed a final resort if Hitler's adventurism exceeded all bounds. This insurance policy, whether real or fancied, had now been cancelled. With such members of his immediate staff as his deputy, Franz Halder, Beck was henceforth committed to the plot to overthrow the regime. As Halder has testified,²¹ the Chief of Staff from this period on was in closest contact with Oster, who would be closeted with him for hours in his office. In the spring and summer months of 1938, the Beck-Oster group also interlinked with quarters of the civilian opposition sector. Dohnanyi, who at Bormann's demand had been forced from the Ministry of Justice for having pulled at "the wrong end of the rope," was now an intimate of Oster and a weekly caller with him at the home of Beck. Hitler himself had indirectly called Beck's unique role to Dohnanyi's attention by saying to Görtner during the crisis that here was the one general he thought capable of "undertaking something."²² In such ways the Blomberg-Fritsch affair had both materially added to and strengthened the front of the principal opponents of the Third Reich.

The vital issue on which a *coup d'état* depended now revolved about Hitler's evident intention to force matters with Czechoslovakia over the German minority in that country. Any remaining doubts

were dispelled by his speech to leaders of party and state in the Reich Chancellery on 28 May 1938. His line of thought conformed in essentials with what he had said in November. He ended with the injunction to utilize every resource to extend the *Westwall* fortifications and to be poised for a lightning thrust at Czechoslovakia by September.

Unwittingly the Führer had presented his opponents with a composite of auspicious factors of which their more determined spirits were resolved to take advantage. In opposing a war likely to assume continental proportions, they could count, in 1938, on the fullest accord, though not necessarily the unanimous adherence, of the heart of the military establishment, the *Generalität*. They could also expect the support of the masses, who were appalled by the prospect of a new world conflict. The basic requisite, however, was certitude that the stakes did indeed involve preventing a war of such magnitude.

This study can allude only to some of the controversial aspects of this first major round of conspiracy to overthrow the regime; of the various *Putsches* which were conceived against Hitler in the years from 1938 to 1944, the first was the most thoroughly blocked out. With Oster acting as the principal motor and Beck and Halder as final authorities in the matter of go-ahead, the key commanders in the Berlin area and at several other vital points had been won over. A select commando troop—chosen from officers, students, and young workers to give the coup a wider base—had been organized by Captain Heinz of the “Oster Circle.” It was to invade the Chancellery supposedly to capture Hitler for a prospective show trial or incarceration in a lunatic asylum. Actually its leaders had agreed with Oster to kill the dictator when, to employ the Nazi’s own sinister jargon, he would “resist arrest” or “attempt to escape.”²³ Most important, a stream of messages went to London to apprise the British of the plot and plead with them to publicly affirm the intention of the Western Powers to intervene if Hitler attacked Czechoslovakia. A communication by the German *chargé d'affaires* in London, Theo Kordt, to British Foreign Secretary Halifax in the night of 5 September 1938 was the most climactic among them.

The responsibility for the failure of the coup to materialize in September 1938 seems fated to remain a perennial subject of debate. The few opposition survivors who figured in that plot related that twice in September the button calling for action within twenty-four hours was pressed by Halder, only to have action countermanded when British gestures of appeasement undercut the foundations on which all hopes were based. To this, defendants of the British policy respond indignantly that such claims were no more than an alibi for those who lacked the resolution, pluck, and self-reliance to carry through as planned. The verdict of history will probably lie somewhere between these positions. No one who has devoted intensive study to the plot of September 1938 can seriously question the central aspect of the threat of a European war to all its hopes of success. On this assumption alone, the generals, except for Busch and Reichenau, had, at the beginning of August 1938, endorsed Beck's argument that a general war spelled disaster for Germany and, if Brauchitsch had found the courage to lead them, would have gone to Hitler in a body with an ultimatum. Even the faltering Brauchitsch had, on 28 September, appeared prepared to go along with a coup if Hitler persisted in his aggressive intentions. As noted, public support of a *Putsch* depended similarly on a clear demonstration that an attack on Czechoslovakia was equivalent to launching a wider conflagration.

On the other hand, it is easy to show that doubts and confusion persisted in opposition ranks through the critical days of September. The events of the following year tempt one to believe that the substitution of Halder for Beck was not immaterial in this. Beck's departure could hardly have been more badly timed insofar as the course of the conspiracy is concerned. His resignation followed Hitler's demand in mid-August for "unconditional obedience" and the end of all interference by the army in political decision-making. If made a month later, the Führer's ultimatum might well have provided the occasion for the anticipated showdown. Delivered when it was, it forced Beck's hand before the time was ripe for action. Not only was his departure too early, but it was kept too private to make the impact on developments that might have been hoped. Coming at the height of the international crisis a few weeks later in a framework of world publicity, it should have had a smashing effect and produced the best possible setting for a revolutionary situation in Germany. As it was, Beck allowed himself to

be persuaded by his Commander in Chief to make no immediate announcement and the public learned of his withdrawal only when officially informed in October 1938. For the last time, but perhaps fatally, he had allowed the traditions and habits of his caste to dominate what should have been a political decision. It was a choice which was never to be his to make again.

With Halder's accession to direction of the General Staff, one resister to Hitler's policies followed another. But the men themselves were stamped from very different molds. Under a purposeful superior, Halder probably would have shown many of the qualities of a brilliant second. He has stated, in fact, that as Beck's deputy it was he who had pushed the harder and who during the Fritsch crisis had urged immediate and drastic action.²⁴ In relating this, Halder wished to illustrate how much easier it is to demand strong measures when one is not in a position of ultimate responsibility. With much justice he reminds us that he and Beck had traded positions in this dual sense. At the same time, the contrast between the two men in their conduct at critical junctures and in the solidity and consistency of their commitment is a striking one.

In their first meeting, the new Chief of Staff was put on stark notice by Hitler that he would no longer tolerate what he was so often to denounce as the "Beck complex"—the thesis that the General Staff must have a conscience of its own to compel resistance when faced with irresponsible use of the armed forces. One of Hitler's initial remarks led to the following exchange:

Hitler: "You should take note of one thing from the start, that you will never discover my thought and intentions until I am giving my orders."

Halder: "We soldiers are accustomed to forming our ideas together."

Hitler: (smiling and with a negative wave of the hand): "No, things are done differently in politics. You will never learn what I am thinking, and those who boast most loudly that they know my thoughts, to such people I lie even more."²⁵

In principle Halder was usually ready to proceed with force against the detested regime, which he was accustomed to denounce in vituperative terms. This encouraged his associates to assume that

their only problem with him was to create the right circumstances for launching a coup. But there were seasons when he could not be moved at all and, most fateful, times when he seemed wholly committed but would shy off at the critical moment. This was the man who, from September 1938 until May 1940, sat at the central control board over whose wires the electric call to action would have to be flashed. As far as matters went in September 1938 he seems to have done well enough. There is, of course, no way of telling what he would have done if Hitler had rejected the "call to Munich" on 28 September and Brauchitsch, as was only too likely, had gone back on his half-commitment to proceed with a coup. What must be noted later about his conduct on 5 November 1939 is grist for the mill of those detractors of the September 1938 plot, who maintained that then too he would have drawn back.

In the years after Munich the circumstances for action against the Third Reich were never again in such happy conjunction. Except for the interval between the 1940 Western campaign and the end of that in Russia in 1941, the least propitious period was that of the twelve months between 28 September 1938 and Hitler's announcement to the generals of the Western offensive on 27 September 1939. True opponents of the regime were disheartened; more opportunistic elements were glad to go other ways. A reshuffle of military commands after Munich largely dispersed the key figures Beck had maneuvered into strategic positions. Most of the *Generalität*, now thoroughly aware of Hitler's hatred of Beck, shied away from its old chief and left him in that comparative isolation in which he lived his last six years. This had, however, a brighter side. If his house had become a center for military pilgrimages—a gathering place for general officers whenever they were in Berlin—it would surely not have escaped strict surveillance by the Gestapo and SD. As things were, he seemed so neglected and forgotten that no one took the trouble to keep concerted watch over him. Actually, those visitors who did come would have been worth careful scrutiny, for they were usually men who came on opposition business.

Since 1936 and to the very day of Munich, the center of resistance to Hitler's external program had been the Army High Command (OKH). Except for a few short weeks in October-November 1939, this was not again to be the case. Beck had worked with and through Fritsch to brake and thwart the dictator's more adventurous policies. Despite increasingly stormy scenes with

Brauchitsch, he had carried on in virtual defiance of his exasperated commander to gain and hold the adherence of the high *Generalität* to his positions. Halder lacked the strength, the unswerving purpose, and, it must be said, the uncompromising integrity of his predecessor. To do him justice, changes in circumstances made his path less clearly marked and the problems more complicated. Hitler's uninterrupted string of foreign successes had gone far to turn the heads of critics in all walks of life, and the generals were far from immune. It had begun to look as if the Western Powers were going to let him get away with almost anything in eastern Europe. Also, there was far greater unanimity on the issues that divided Germany and Poland than on the question of the Sudetenland. The Führer's published aims on Danzig and the Corridor seemed reasonable compared to his attitude in mid-September 1938 when, despite British willingness to meet him almost all the way, he seemed bent on trampling on Czechoslovakia. Moreover, quite apart from the prospect of Anglo-French intervention, the generals had not felt at ease about the military problem of dealing with Czechoslovakia, whereas in the case of Poland they felt sure of themselves and of their assignments.

So OKH, in marked contrast to 1938, had nothing to do with the renewed stream of messages that flowed to London in the spring and summer of 1939. These originated either with the Beck-Oster group or in various civilian quarters. London was repeatedly warned as the German-Soviet relationship moved from hostility to détente to entente. There were frank statements that this time there could be no promise that the generals would refuse to fight or that there were genuine prospects of overthrowing the regime in an effort to prevent war.

The more exact motives and intentions of these emissaries and those for whom they spoke are debatable. Certainly they expected—it proved to be wishful thinking—that the British would be induced to exert themselves to reach an understanding with the Kremlin that would forestall one between Stalin and the Reich Chancellery. If that could be prevented and the Western Powers themselves stood firm against an aggression toward Poland, Hitler might be stopped in his tracks.

In such efforts Halder had no share, and the more exact nature of his commitment to his associates of the 1938 plot during these

months remains unclear. Whatever its extent, in the last critical days of August we find him denying himself to friends and obdurately moving ahead in execution of Hitler's orders. So far Brauchitsch, he did not scruple to threaten the arrest of Schacht if he should appear at Army Headquarters to urge the unconstitutionality of Hitler's making war without the action of the *Reichstag*.

It would be incorrect to say that the generals entered the war light-heartedly. Though they had no doubts about being able to handle Poland, they continued skeptical of Hitler's assurances, notably in the famous speech at his mountain retreat on 22 August, that the deal with Moscow eliminated danger of Anglo-French intervention. But, in contrast to the backing Beck had from the *Generalität* a year earlier, they were resigned to submit to Hitler's will and make the campaign. Worse, over a week before it was launched, they had failed to protest against a project that offended every soldierly tradition. This was the sham attack by concentration camp inmates in Polish uniforms on the radio station at Gleiwitz. Despite the pleas of Canaris, who informed them of what he branded a "gangster trick," they could not be persuaded to intervene with Hitler. The bitterness of the admiral against OKH speaks out of his diary entry: "The [Army] chiefs have through their own fault robbed themselves of all influence."²⁶ Prophetically Canaris saw in this flight from responsibility a harbinger of how the *Wehrmacht* was progressively to mortgage its soul to the diabolical figure who so skillfully blended temptation and intimidation.

September 1939 was a month of surprises. The first victim of miscalculation was Adolf Hitler, who had been supremely confident that the Western Powers would lament and protest but leave Poland in the lurch. When undeceived, he expressed the hope that their declaration of war was no more than a face-saving gesture, and that they would resign themselves quickly to a deal over the prostrate body of Poland. The dazzling progress of the campaign, however, produced a dramatic change in his outlook. Early in the third week of September, when it was approaching its triumphant climax, the dictator determined to finish for once and all with what he conceived to be the Western saboteurs of his expansionist program in eastern Europe. On 27 September, in the Reich Chancellery, he expounded to the top military leaders his arguments for attacking in the West that autumn and, without permitting challenge or discussion, dismissed them with the injunction to effect the earliest regroupment there.²⁷

Those present on that fateful day seem to have left the Chancellery in a state of inner turmoil. What Hitler demanded looked to them akin to madness. The time of year alone was enough to make the project infeasible. To launch a campaign based on concepts of *Blitzkrieg* with every prospect of mired tanks and fog-bound airplanes impressed them as sheer lunacy. The defensive doctrine of the Fritsch-Beck school also continued to cast its spell. Just ten days before, Halder's deputy, General Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel, had concluded a detailed study with the categorical statement that no attack on the Maginot Line could succeed before the spring of 1942.

As, during the following weeks, the awareness of Hitler's intentions was disseminated downward through command channels, the staffs from OKW and OKH down to corps and divisional levels buzzed like hives of disturbed bees. The history of warfare can find few parallels for the unanimity with which the proposal for a late autumn offensive in the West was rejected. With the sole exception of Jodl, entranced with a Hitler who at this stage seemed to him to be cast in the Napoleonic mold, the *Generalität* predicted not only failure but disaster. One by one the three Western Army Group commanders, Leeb, Rundstedt, and Bock, besieged OKH with memoranda which detailed their objections. They could count on the solid backing of their army commanders, the depth of whose feeling is best illustrated by what has come to light recently about Reichenau.²⁸ "The Nazi general," Hitler's own favorite whom, for the second time, just a year before, he had tried to install as Commander in Chief of the Army, first learned of the dictator's intention when, on 10 October, he arrived in the West to take over an army command from General Curt Liebmann. As Liebmann reports it, Reichenau was "thunderstruck" on hearing that current preparations pointed unmistakably to an early attack through the Low Countries. Such a move he labelled "veritably criminal" and he would go to the Führer if necessary to prevent it.²⁹

In this frame of mind, Reichenau was fortified by Canaris, when the admiral toured the Western Army command centers shortly after to stir up the generals to oppose the offensive plans and, wherever possible, to promote an attack on the regime itself. It was easy to harvest expressions of indignation but quite another thing to move anyone to positive action. To the amazement of Canaris, the only one with the courage to confront Hitler directly

was Reichenau. The general was also among those most aroused by Canaris's account of atrocities in Poland.³⁰

During the next twenty days the metamorphosed general virtually placed Hitler under siege. He laid on his argumentation in a critical memorandum that went directly to the Chancellery, spoke up almost alone at a seven-hour meeting between Hitler and the army leaders on 25 October 1939, and on three occasions confronted the dictator personally with such determination that he was never forgiven. The last of these occasions was on 5 November, when Hitler persisted in issuing the orders for the attack on the 12th. Far from beaten, Reichenau thereupon determined on what was, in World War II, perhaps the most extraordinary, independent attempt to thwart the dictator. That story, however, is best related in another context.

This display of the courage of his convictions was to cost Reichenau command of the German Army. In established opposition quarters, such examples of high-level military support in warding off the offensive suggested the opportunity to combine this with the overturn of the regime. Notably the Beck-Oster circle went to work with new energy and purpose. Around the person of the implacably anti-Nazi Lieutenant Colonel Helmuth Groscurth, it had established a beachhead close to Halder in OKH. The function of this group was coup-planning and, especially, the stiffening of the resolution of the Chief of Staff. Another Oster move was to bring Hans von Dohnanyi into his staff with one major goal: the further preparation of the case against Hitler and his Nazi chieftains with *Abwehr* facilities. And it was Oster who took in hand the most promising of several efforts to arrive at an understanding with the British government.

No doubt the Western Powers for their own reasons were as eager as the German generals to forestall the offensive, which, once launched, would impose on them a vast commitment of human and material resources to the war. If peace could be restored without serious fighting and the aggressive regime in Germany disposed of at the same time, they would escape from the conflict cheaply and without damage to national honor. The challenge to the opposition was to persuade London both of its *bona fides* and of its ability to set afoot forces capable of accomplishing the necessary turnover. What was required in return were assurances that would convince

the generals that support of a coup did not mean delivery of Germany to the mercy of vengeful antagonists. This could only assume the form of an undertaking that there would be no Allied offensive to exploit the confusion or possible chaos of a takeover situation, as well as moderate peace terms for a successor government. To give the proper weight to the assurances on both sides, it was imperative to secure an intermediary of exceptional stature. The man chosen was no less a personage than Pope Pius XII. To explore the willingness of the Holy Father to accept such a role, Oster sent to Rome the Munich attorney Josef Müller, whose extensive relations with Church authorities assured him a hearing. The consent of Pope Pius to exchanges via the Vatican came in mid-October, that of the British shortly after. There followed a series of communications which were to come to a head three months later.

The ultimate focus of opposition efforts, of course, was on triggering action at OKH, the "central switchboard" of the army. The pivotal figure was unquestionably Halder, whose influence alone could conceivably sway Brauchitsch to throw in his lot with the conspiracy. But the chance of this was so minimal that the issue really revolved about whether the Chief of Staff could be induced to move by himself. Brauchitsch might be willing to declare himself neutral, permitting Halder at least to proceed without his interference. If he refused, there was the desperate expedient of confining him and issuing orders in his name. This was, in fact, urged by Halder's deputy, Stülpnagel, who offered to "lock him in his office and throw the key into the W.C."³¹ But would the orders, even if issued in Brauchitsch's name, be obeyed in the first instance at army group and army level?

Assuredly the top general officers were in a state of intense agitation that paralleled or exceeded that of the Fritsch crisis. Hitler's offensive plan, they feared, spelled disaster for Germany, shattering in the process the instrument they had devoted their lives to fashion. To make matters worse, he was inviting the execration of the world by repeating and extending to the Netherlands the violation of Lowland neutrality, which since World War I had been a burden on the German conscience. Bock, who was certainly not the most finicky of them, put it boldly in his diary: "It is noteworthy that together with the doubts expressed on military grounds, all the generals are moved by repugnance to violate the neutrality of two countries that has repeatedly been guaranteed [by Germany]."³²

Qualms of this kind were compounded by two other disturbing developments. There was Himmler's infamous *SS-Circular*, which sanctioned and indeed sanctified illegitimate births in wartime and seemed to offer his SS-Guards as breeding partners. And week by week reports multiplied about the bestialities perpetrated in Poland. Some of the military leaders transferred from the East had seen the beginnings of the systematic extermination of elite groups there. A special role was played by Canaris and the men of the Beck-Oster circle in disseminating such information into every military channel they could reach. As early as 12 September 1939, Canaris had fruitlessly protested to Keitel and shortly after was carrying his message to the West. *Abwehr* agents in Poland were instructed to gather evidence in every form. It should be borne in mind that the full compass of the genocide unleashed in that country became known to the *Generalität* only later, principally through the extended tour of Western command posts by Groscurth in December 1939.⁸³ But enough was known even in October to cause considerable ferment; it revived in many officers the conviction that they served a political leadership that was alien to all in which they took pride in the German military tradition.

This did not mean that the generals were prepared to back their chiefs in whatever they might undertake. Except in the case of Colonel-General Wilhelm von Leeb of Army Group C, who said it emphatically, there had been no hint of this in the memoranda of the group commanders. When Stülpnagel visited the various headquarters to test their readiness to back a coup, it was again only Leeb who said he would support Halder in whatever he undertook. Rundstedt, as always when sure of the people he talked with, had spewed every imaginable venom against the Führer, but the response that counted had been: "If I draw this sword, it will break in my hand."⁸⁴

Rundstedt had indeed touched on the point that claimed endless hours of discussion in opposition conventicles. Granted the unlikely assumption of a united front in the *Generalität*, no one could be sure of the reaction of the subalterns and the rank and file. Judging by the four captains who were his own sons-in-law, Halder had the gravest doubts. October 1939 was for him a long agony of indecision. Basically he was at one with his opposition friends that a desperate situation was at hand. At the same time, he was under-

standably appalled at the responsibility for launching a coup without the concurrence of his superior and the assured backing of only one of the three Army Group commanders.

By mid-October the Chief of Staff had concluded that he must be prepared for any eventuality. To Groscurth he issued a directive to reconstruct with all possible speed the *Putsch* plans of the previous year. He himself took the grave step of holding east of the Elbe two armored divisions which were in process of refitting.⁸⁵ He also began to carry a loaded revolver whenever he went to Hitler, a practice he was to repeat "dozens of times" in the following three years without ever summoning the resolution to use the weapon.⁸⁶

On 22 October 1939, Hitler tentatively set 12 November as the date of attack, designating 5 November as the day on which the definitive order would be issued. Brauchitsch and Halder were scheduled to visit the western command posts on 2 and 3 November. If Halder on 5 November was to be in a position to opt for action, a decision on fully alerting the *Putsch* apparatus, such as it was, would have to be made before his departure. In the course of a long discussion with Groscurth in the late afternoon of 31 October the die seemed to have been cast. Before leaving the next evening, Halder instructed Stülpnagel, Groscurth, and Colonel Eduard Wagner to put the final touches on their preparations and to notify such civilian figures as Goerdeler and Schacht to hold themselves in readiness. Back in Army Headquarters at Zossen on 4 November, the Chief of Staff seemed more than ever resolved to strike if Hitler persisted in his intentions. Perhaps most significant, he summoned Oster, whom he usually shunned as too importunate, and asked him to coordinate his own plans and preparations with those of Stülpnagel and Groscurth.⁸⁷

The events of 5 November were indeed to prove decisive. At noon Brauchitsch and Halder appeared in the Reich Chancellery, the former going in to Hitler to plead for putting off the offensive to a more suitable season. In presenting his arguments he unfortunately overdid things and touched the dictator "on the raw" by what seemed a slur on Nazi youth training. The upshot was a paroxysm of rage culminating in denunciations and threats that completely unnerved the Commander in Chief. More serious in its consequences was the impact on Halder as Brauchitsch stammered out the tale on the drive back to Zossen. From quoted remarks of

the Führer, the Chief of Staff concluded that the plot had been discovered and that Zossen was on the point of being inundated by "black uniforms." In blind panic he ordered the abandonment of all plans and the destruction of incriminating documents. Two or three days later the retained divisions were released to the front.³⁸ Though he continued to carry his concealed pistol into the tyrant's presence, never again did Franz Halder commit himself to take up arms with his comrades of the opposition.

For weeks and months the men of the Beck-Oster circle doggedly endeavored to change Halder's mind and kept working on his fellow generals from Army Group commanders downward. Here and there a ray of hope "flickered and as regularly died out." The information that continued to come from Poland created much ferment. General Johannes Blaskowitz, who commanded on the spot, wrote two eloquent memoranda of protest (the real author seems to have been Canaris) that were widely disseminated.³⁹ Blaskowitz received many an approving pat on the back from his fellow generals, but was to all intents and purposes abandoned to the mercies of the infuriated Himmler, who made a thorough wreck of his career.⁴⁰ Alone among the then colonels-general, he was never to receive the coveted Field Marshal's baton.

A central feature in the steady downward trend in opposition fortunes, insofar as the *Generalität* was concerned, was certainly the improved outlook for the offensive. As autumn became winter and winter moved toward spring, the certainty of doom changed to doubt and doubt gave way to confidence. The original fifty-two truly combat-worthy divisions were supplemented by one hundred others; tank forces roughly doubled. The constant alerts and movements into jumping-off positions, dictated by Hitler's twenty-nine successive directions for the postponements of the offensive, were unadulterated misery for the generals and a severe hardship for the troops. But they also produced a fine edge of preparedness that contrasted sharply with the state that resulted from the dull routines of military life "on the other side of the hill." In warding off the importunities of his opposition associates, Halder soon was saying that perhaps things were turning out for the best. Some kind of showdown with the Western Powers which were determined to fence-in Germany had become inevitable in any case. Once victory had been gained over the French and British, the army would be in a position of real strength in dealing with the dictator. Along such

lines then, Hitler's offensive plans were argued to be the opposition's opportunity, in a sense opposite to that originally conceived.

Under these circumstances even the sensational news that the Vatican exchanges had scored a complete success and secured from the British all that one had the right to expect fell flat. Much delayed by unfortunate complications, the information only reached Halder in the form of the so-called "X-Report" on 4 April 1940. In November or early December 1939, it might have decided matters favorably. By January 1940 it was perhaps already too late; by April it had no chance at all.

Thus it is hard to escape the conclusion that, after November 1939, there was never any possibility of a united rising of the *Generalität*. The plots and plans which can be called the third and fourth rounds of conspiratorial activity after 1941 belong to a very different category than those of the first and second in 1938 and 1939-1940. The latter had offered a real chance for the army, under its recognized chieftains, overturning the regime in the name of what was best in its own tradition and for the welfare of the German nation. What came after May 1940 was essentially the work of relatively isolated pockets of opposition die-hards in one headquarters or another, something that was still largely true of July 1944. The united front of the commanders in the West at the latter juncture probably came closest to the pattern of 1938 and 1939.

The degree to which the army leadership did regard the Nazi state as alien to itself is best illustrated by the manner in which, no matter how they otherwise reacted, the principal generals never considered reporting the treasonable proposals made to almost all of them. One had to be a notorious Nazi henchman of the breed of a Schoerner, a Model, or a Burgdorf never to have been sounded in this fashion. Only Fritz Fromm, who was to play so sorry a role on 20 July 1944, covered himself through the formality of notifying his official superior, Brauchitsch, when Halder tried to recruit him.⁴¹

Some had never been content to let the issue of thwarting Hitler's offensive plans rest on the chance of a political turnover in Germany. Reichenau, though probably ignorant of any wide flung conspiracy, knew enough about Goerdeler to make a shrewd guess

that he had “means of communication with the enemy.” On 6 November 1939, the day after his final failure to dissuade Hitler, the general met with Goerdeler in the home of former Berlin mayor Fritz Elsas. The Führer’s plans he called “absolutely crazy,” and he proposed that the Dutch and/or British be informed so that they might take visible countermeasures that would discourage the project. Warnings then did travel to London via Denmark and Switzerland.⁴²

Far more significant for the dilemma of the German soldier who saw the regime in its full colors was the role of Hans Oster. This mainspring of the *Abwehr* action group had learned to face fundamental realities like no other opposition figure. With the rapier logic of the man who deals in absolutes, he was prepared to meet squarely basic challenges from which more complicated and less courageous natures were apt to shy. His countrymen were accustomed to make a sharp distinction between high treason (*Hochverrat*) and national treason (*Landesverrat*). The former was susceptible to honorable and even heroic connotations. To “betray one’s country,” on the other hand, was regarded in Germany, as elsewhere, the deed of a dastard. No one could have agreed with this more than Oster. Where he and most of his comrades parted company was in willingness to break traditional codes and do what had to be done to promote true long-range national interests despite the appearance of injury to immediate German concerns. Thus, after intense soul-searching, he directly or indirectly warned Dutch, Belgians, Danes, Norwegians, British, and the Vatican of one or another of Hitler’s offensive plans. This undoubtedly meant jeopardizing the lives of German soldiers. Seen in its true colors, however, it was like the act of a commander who, with a heavy heart, sacrifices a specific company in order to avert far greater losses. If Oster had succeeded, he would have saved the lives of tens of millions, including millions of German lives. Both in the history of the opposition and in the debates about the fundamental human question, the issue he faced so courageously is known as the *Oster Problem*. Unfortunately, for most of his comrades it did not exist.

NOTES

1. These are the diaries and papers of Lieutenant Colonel Helmuth

Groscurth which have been edited by Helmut Krausnick, Director of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Munich) and the present writer and will be published shortly (in German) by Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart.

2. This is the diary of Captain Hermann Kaiser, a close associate of the Goerdeler circle.

3. These papers of General Adam are deposited in the monastery of Ettal (Germany) and are subject to restrictions as to the time of publication.

4. Affidavit of General Adam in Nuremberg, No. 2 Archives of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, *Zeugenschrifttum* No. 6.

5. From a copy of the original mimeographed resolution in the possession of the writer. Courtesy of the late General von Eisenhart-Rothe.

6. Hans Bernd Gisevius, *To the Bitter End* (Boston, 1947), p. 278.

7. The conference received its designation from the fact that Colonel Friedrich Hossbach, Hitler's *Wehrmacht* adjutant, kept the minutes. See Friedrich Hossbach, *Zwischen Wehrmacht und Hitler 1934-1938* (Wolfenbüttel, 1949).

8. John Wheeler-Bennett, *The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics*, 2nd ed. (London, 1964), p. 299.

9. As related to the writer by General Georg Thomas, who several times appealed to Blomberg to intervene in cases of Nazi extremism. Thomas interview, September 1945.

10. Gert Buchheit, *Soldatentum und Rebellion* (Rastatt, 1961), p. 107.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Hitler told Hossbach that he had not been able to spare Fritsch earlier because he was needed during the army's build-up period. Hossbach, p. 127.

13. Thus there was a secret Gestapo check of Fritsch's bank account in January 1938.

14. Buchheit, pp. 97, 99ff.

15. G. Castelan, "Journal du General Halder, chef d'état major général de l'armée allemande," *Revue d'Histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale*, (1953, No. 10/11), 432.

16. Blomberg himself had designated Keitel to Hitler as a "reliable office manager." Blomberg affidavit at Nuremberg, 7 November 1945.

17. Christine von Dohnanyi, "Aufzeichnung von Frau Christine von Dohnanyi, geb. Bonhoeffer," p. 2. Manuscript in the writer's possession. Also, interview with the same, 26 June 1958.

18. *Spiegelbild einer Verschwörung. Die Kaltenbrunner Berichte an Bor-*

mann und Hitler über das Attentat vom 20. Juli 1944. Geheime Dokumente aus dem ehemaligen Reichsicherheitshauptamt, ed. Karl Heinz Peter (Stuttgart, 1961), p. 430.

19. Wheeler-Bennett, p. 370.

20. Buchheit, p. 111.

21. Letter of Halder to General Hermann von Witzleben, 6 September 1952. Made available to the writer by the courtesy of the latter.

22. "Aufzeichnungen von Frau Christine von Dohnanyi," p. 3.

23. Heinz interview, 2 August 1958. Also quoted by Gerhard Ritter, *Carl Goerdeler und die deutsche Widerstandsbewegung* (Stuttgart, 1954), p. 189. The writer is indebted to Lieutenant Colonel Heinz for the use of an unpublished manuscript in which the preparations for takeover in 1938 are dealt with in some detail.

24. Halder interview, 9 August 1960.

25. Halder interview, 19 June 1958.

26. Entry of 25 August 1939 in the diary of Lieutenant Colonel Helmuth Groscurth.

27. See the detailed account in Harold C. Deutsch, *The Conspiracy against Hitler in the Twilight War* (Minneapolis, 1968), pp. 69-70.

28. For Reichenau's "one-man war" against the Western offensive see *ibid.*, pp. 71-77.

29. From a statement written by Liebmann in November 1939, "Persönliche Erlebnisse des Gen. d. Inf. Curt Liebmann aus den Jahren 1938-39," Archives of Institut für Zeitgeschichte.

30. Karl Heinz Abshagen, *Canaris, Patriot und Weltbürger* (Stuttgart, 1949), pp. 224-225.

31. Halder interview, 9 August 1960.

32. Fedor von Bock, "Diary Notations from May 1939 to 9 May 1940," entry of 15 November 1939. Copy in Archives of Institut für Zeitgeschichte.

33. Entries of 18, 19, 20, and 21 December 1939, Groscurth Diaries.

34. Halder interview, 9 August 1960.

35. There has been much dispute about the reality of Halder's reserve divisions. The clinching evidence is to be found in the testimony of the later General Kurt Haseloff, who in 1939 was Chief of Staff of the so-called Home Army under General Fritz Fromm. Haseloff, who had no connection with the opposition whatsoever, was with Fromm when on 31 October 1939 Halder tried to recruit him for participation in a coup, mentioning among

other preparations these two divisions. From Haseloff's account to the Colloquium of the Europäische Publikation; made available to the writer through the courtesy of General Hermann von Witzleben.

36. Far from boasting of his half-formed intentions to kill Hitler, Halder in the postwar years never mentioned them and indeed always spoke negatively on the whole assassination issue. It was only when confronted by the writer with the evidence in the form of notations in the Groscurth diaries that he acknowledged the facts as here given. Halder interview, 9 August 1960.

37. The events of these days are followed most closely, sometimes hour by hour, in the Groscurth Diaries. On Oster's summons to Zossen the principal source is Gisevius, pp. 385-386.

38. Halder's postwar claim that he did not release these troops until December is belied, among other evidence, by the testimony of Vincenz Müller, *Ich fand das wahre Vaterland*, ed. Klaus Mammach. (Leipzig, 1963), p. 375.

39. A major source on the role of Canaris in connection with the Blaskowitz memoranda is the Heinz Mss, see p. 116.

40. As related in detail by Blaskowitz to the writer in an interrogation of September 1945.

41. See above, note 35.

42. Deutsch, *Conspiracy against Hitler*, pp. 75-77.

COMMENTARY

CHARLES V. P. VON LUTTICHAU

Professor Deutsch's paper combined two topics of a number of other choices that would be available: the growth of the opposition against Hitler in the military establishment and the dilemma officers in the *Wehrmacht* had to face, a personal dilemma that was essentially a conflict of conscience. The first topic is historical in nature: the development and progress of the opposition in relation to the growth and power Hitler usurped step by step until 1938, at which time he had concentrated all power in his hands. Professor Deutsch's paper shows how Hitler's appointment as Chancellor set in motion a chain of events that inevitably led to total dictatorship. For those who lived through those years, both in Germany and abroad, the development and the final outcome did not appear as clear-cut as it does today. This was partly because each step along the way was viewed in isolation and, therefore, seemed more acceptable or at least understandable. It was also partly because foreign governments, opposition groups in Germany, and individuals, with few exceptions, were unwilling to face squarely the problem and the potentially dangerous consequences of Hitler. In short, it was always the hope that there might be a change for the better, a return to reason. It is far easier in retrospect to point to the logical fact that there could be no hope; that Hitler, and not his henchmen, was the motor, the driving force, and that any attempt to change the course of events would have to be directed first and foremost against the central person, the man who was the dictator. The alternative to that logical though unpleasant deduction was to accept the phenomenon of Hitler as a demonic manifestation that fate had wrought on the nation and that, as Goethe prophetically had written more than a century before: "All moral force united cannot prevail against demonic force and only nature itself can bring down what it has created."

I would like to dwell a little more on the second topic of Professor Deutsch's paper, because it concerns the moral predicament of responsible individuals caught up in events beyond their control. I would like to offer a few thoughts on this subject because the conflict of conscience lies at the very heart of the German resistance. The paper we just heard traces the historical acts of the drama, focusing on the principal actors, the leaders of the military establishment—the generals, the General Staff—who in the eyes of the German people and in the eyes of the world should have or could have acted to save Germany from the fate of destruction. Focusing on the principals, however, is a short cut, an oversimplification, even if one were to include the nonmilitary opposition groups—the men around the central figure of Carl Goerdeler, the opposition in the Catholic and Protestant churches, the trade union leaders, the professors, the students at the universities, the diplomats of the German Foreign Office. Although these leaders were prominent in their field they were not generally well known at the time. Indeed, the list of names publicized after the 20th of July 1944—with few exceptions—did not mean much to the general public. Conspirators, of course, do not advertise! One should not, however, overlook the many nameless men and women who, alone or in small groups, searched their souls in an attempt to understand what was happening, find ways to express their concern, and act, if possible, to halt a trend that could only lead to catastrophe. Among these nameless heroes were to be found the helpers of the movement of the “moment of need,” the grantors of shelter to the fugitive, the guides across the mine field on a border. These anonymous men and women from all walks of life shared with the generals, with the priests and the bishops, the politicians and the civil servants, and the soldiers the dilemma of conscience: the choice between loyalty to one's country and obedience to its laws, or to a higher transcending loyalty and responsibility before God and the nation. That choice could not be a collective act nor could it be made in the secrecy and protection of a voting booth. The decision had to be a personal one, a matter of one's conscience, an agonizing decision each individual had to make it his own heart and mind and live with, if necessary to the point of ultimate sacrifice.

The German resistance was thus not a movement or an organization but a gathering of individuals pursuing ways of action or retreating into an “inner emigration.” They shared a common

ground that Hans Rothfels rightfully called “the ethical and spiritual revolt against evil.” The German resistance was a moral force, not a political movement—political expression of the people’s will had been destroyed—nor a military revolt, even though the army was the only instrument left that had the organizational means, the logistics, and the potential power to overthrow the regime. In the last analysis even the generals stood alone, uncertain of the true feelings of at least some of their comrades and unsure of the following they could command if they issued orders to their subordinates that would go against Hitler and the Nazi government. Again and again the questions have been asked: “Why didn’t the army act?” “How could the generals and key figures of the resistance tolerate Hitler and his regime after the murders of the Roehm Affair in 1934, after the ignominious dismissal of the Commander in Chief of the Army, Fritsch, in 1938,” to name just two of the key dates? “Where was the much vaunted civil courage or plain ‘guts’ of the military, of the aristocracy, the Prussian spirit of old?” “Why didn’t somebody do something?”

Professor Deutsch described how the *Reichswehr* was formed after World War I. This 100,000-man force of volunteer professionals was trained by Seeckt to carry on the Prussian tradition, preserve the highest standard of the Imperial Army and embody the spirit of an “enduring Germany.” The *Reichswehr* was to serve as a support for the authority of the *Reich*, the state, not of any particular government. True, the *Reichswehr* thus became an elite, and like the Praetorian Guard a law unto itself. But in spite of all the efforts made by the instructors it was not a homogeneous corporate entity. While the rank and file, and that included a large majority of the officers, were indeed more or less unpolitical, the top leadership played “at politics,” if only to strengthen its hand in its dealings with changing civilian governments. The *Reichswehr* leadership used its “marriage of convenience” with a civilian executive to lay the groundwork for an armaments industry and for close relations, for example, with the Soviet Union and even with China. The goal was to break the shackles of the Versailles Treaty and its restrictions on German rearmament. These activities could proceed because of the intrinsic weakness of postwar German governments and because these governments needed the *Reichswehr* in case of serious internal disturbances. The *Reichswehr* leadership strove meticulously to maintain a stance of neutrality, one could

almost say an arrogant stance, between political parties. However, as time went on, the middle ground between the right wing and the left narrowed and the *Reichswehr* was at last forced to make a foray into politics.

The experimental thrust of General Schleicher and his group, which led Schleicher briefly to the position of Chancellor, ended in failure. But it is worth recalling that at the time Schleicher did not have the trust of his own confreres and even less support from the rank and file. Unavoidably the younger generation of the *Reichswehr*, tired of continued failure of the policy of mutual understanding that in their eyes produced nothing but empty promises, tended to gravitate toward Hitler and the dynamic movement he appeared to champion. It was during Bruening's administration in the late 1920s that the *Reichswehr* leadership got closest to its goal of an active policy-making force on a lofty plane above party politics, but it was Hitler who in those days also told the *Reichswehr* generals that the army was in the process of becoming a palace guard, a state police force, losing contact with the nationalist and patriotic elements of the dynamic German youth. The venture into the political arena led the army into a vacuum. To many an officer the lesson to be learned was to return to the safe haven of professional soldiering and leave dirty politics to the politicians.

Hitler was by then on his way to power. He had early realized that he would have to come to terms with the *Reichswehr*. He was also quite aware that he was not acceptable to the stuffy generals, with the exception of Reichenau, and he appeared to have made up his mind to use the generals while robbing them of their base, the young recruits, the young officers. If in addition, he could dilute the *Reichswehr* by expansion, the professional army eventually would be swallowed to become the People's Army, the army Hitler envisioned. Until that time Hitler needed the professionals to serve his cause "unpolitically"—and he could wait. Hitler believed he could use the generals for his purposes and he did so with resounding success. The generals in turn, as Professor Deutsch pointed out, believed they could use Hitler. Parts of the National Socialist program, such as the abolishment of the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty, the restoration of Germany as a world power, and the rebuilding of the armed forces, all were close to their own views. As Professor Deutsch pointed out, one believed Hitler could serve a useful purpose, supervised, guided, of course, by built-in safe-

guards such as von Papen and Blomberg, the new *Reichswehr* Minister of Hindenburg's choice. It was envisioned that Hitler, having served, could then be discarded.

It is very clear today that the *Reichswehr* leadership and Hindenburg himself seriously miscalculated Hitler's strength and his aims. They underestimated the man and his dynamic appeal to the masses. It is difficult to understand today the degree of naïveté in political matters displayed by the conservative soldiers and ex-soldiers. What Colonel Hossbach, Hitler's *Wehrmacht* Adjutant, said was true: "The army lived on an island of national pride under a self-made law." That island was far removed from the hard realities of political dynamics represented by Hitler. The army leadership in politics, at least, was hopelessly outclassed by the "Bohemian corporal," Hitler. That is one of the main reasons why the cabals, the plotting and planning, the conspiracies, and finally the coup of the 20th of July 1944 were doomed.

There must have been a realization of weakness in the military opposition that made the generals and their political allies look for assistance from abroad and made them depend increasingly on such assistance to bring off an overthrow of Hitler. Unquestionably Britain and France, by appeasing Hitler at Munich in 1938, played into his hands and frustrated the one attempt to overthrow the dictator that could have succeeded. But these historic facts also show that Hitler in those days was popular and had the support at least of the majority of the people, whereas the generals did not. It was unfortunate for the generals that they in their efforts to oppose Hitler chose a negative approach. It must have seemed strange to Hitler that the generals were the ones who warned him not to move against Czechoslovakia, to hear from them that the *Westwall* would not deter the French, to hear from the builders of the new *Wehrmacht* that it could not fight, only to be able to prove to them at each turn that all of their famed *Denkschriften* and estimates of the situation were wrong, and he, Hitler, the amateur strategist, was right. The army leadership thus lost face and lapsed into a state of negative criticism without the power and without the determination to act. No one was more aware of the state of affairs than Hitler himself. His growing contempt of the old line generals was as vociferous when he was among his own entourage as that of a von Rundstedt in his own "Generals' Mess." The only difference was that Hitler had the power, the generals did not.

Disenchantment with the generals, incidentally, was not confined to Hitler. Ambassador von Hassell's diary mirrors a despair experienced by the non-military opposition groups about the "temporizing" generals who kept making excuses. Undoubtedly the civilians had exaggerated expectations of what the generals could do, and their impatience was merely another sign of their own frustrations. I recall long and impassionate conversations with leading figures of the resistance and with some generals: they always ended on a note of helpless resignation. Certainly after the war broke out in 1939, the feeling was rather widespread that henceforth events must run their course. I believe it is only fair to point out that generals, and other officers for that matter, are not by nature conspirators, much less revolutionaries. But Lenin reportedly once said in reference to German workers and their bent for revolution that they were so disciplined that if one told them to storm a railroad station, they would first buy a ticket. This also held true to a very large extent for the army, which can only be understood after spending a lifetime in the traditions of duty, honor, loyalty, and discipline. The army could not abandon such precepts easily; revolution was not their trade. Contemplating high treason, the assassination of the head of state, and the overthrow of the established government to them meant lowering themselves to the level of Hitler and his men, and that had a distinct disadvantage. Hitler was not only an expert revolutionary, he also held in his hands the power of a police state. It therefore took exceptional people to be willing to act under such circumstances. Young, idealistic, dedicated officers such as Stauffenberg, Tresckow, and Oster were the action people, the doers; they were of necessity in the minority even in the resistance. The majority were thinkers and planners, and indeed philosophers; they were also the "doubting Thomases," the ones who cautioned the more energetic and impatient "hotheads."

The conflict between obedience and conscience then, between the oath to Hitler and the responsibility to the nation, became ever graver for each responsible individual as time went on. Before the death of the revered Field Marshal von Hindenburg, a decision *for* Germany and *against* Hitler would have weighed lighter than after Hindenburg's death and the swearing in of the *Reichswehr* to Hitler himself. And again this phase in retrospect was still less complicated than that which followed the discreditation of General von Fritsch. Yet after the war had begun, a move against the leadership

conducting the war would weigh even heavier on the soldier's conscience. The feelings of some of the best fighting men at the front were rather generally: "Let's win this war first, then we'll take care of the Nazis when we get home." The thinking soldiers pondered these nuances during the war phase, the difference between winning and losing. Who would dare raise his hand against a victorious captain, and still hope to find support among the people? Conversely, who would eliminate the helmsman during a period of defeat and brave the accusation of another "stab-in-the-back"? These points are raised here, not to offer an excuse for the relative ineffectiveness of the German military opposition and its ultimate failure, but because those who were fated to live through these agonizing years of decision, driven, as Churchill said, "by the restlessness of their consciences," tried to resolve their inner conflicts and establish, each for himself, his moral place in history.

There is a deep tragedy in the failure and defeat of idealism, tragedy in seemingly senseless sacrifice and in the victory of evil. But as long as there are men who will make the ultimate commitment for what they believe in, the battle is not in vain.

PETER PARET

I should first like to comment briefly on Professor Deutsch's paper, and then move on to German military history in general, and discuss in very broad terms one of its recurring themes—a force that can be traced through two centuries, and that still played a part in the 1930s, in the developing conflict between the army and Hitler.

Let me begin by saying a few words about the paper we have just heard. Historians, as you know, have the annoying habit of approaching their topic from the rear, of looking beyond it at the events that preceded it, in order to understand why and how things came about as they did. To people who are not professional historians, the most fascinating event in the course of the German resistance appears to be the attempt by certain officers and civilians, in July 1944, to kill Hitler and assume control of the government. The very real drama of this episode has certainly not been ignored

by scholars; but in the main they have found the events leading up to the attempted *coup d'état* more challenging to their powers of investigation and interpretation and, when you come down to it, also more important—that is to say, more decisive—than Stauffenberg's placing of the bomb in the *Wolfsschanze*, which wounded but did not kill Hitler; the attempt of the conspirators to take over Berlin, which failed; and the attempt of their comrades in France to take over Paris, which succeeded, but which had to be rescinded when the plot at the center, in the German capital, collapsed. The events between 1933 and 1944 do matter more than the climactic 20th July. And it is therefore no accident that Professor Deutsch has chosen to devote his attention to the background of the *coup d'état* rather than to the coup itself. By identifying certain features of the opposition, by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of some of its leaders, he has given us a better understanding not only of the history of the movement but also of the reasons for its eventual failure.

Some points in Professor Deutsch's paper seem to be of particular significance. He stressed the political and technical difficulties in the path of the opposition. A modern, highly organized society does not readily lend itself to violent political change. It contains too many control points—most of them, even in the Third Reich, administrative rather than ideological in nature—which can inhibit movement, the transmission of information, the concentration of force, and thus prevent co-ordinated action. Secondly, as Professor Deutsch indicated, international developments continuously affected events within Germany. In the short run, at least, Hitler's foreign policy proved surprisingly successful—at times far more rewarding than he himself had expected; and the expansion of German territorial power and political influence in central Europe undercut much of the appeal that opposition to the regime might otherwise have enjoyed. To these external obstacles which the resistance faced must be added certain internal handicaps. In Nazi Germany only revolutionaries who were tactically flexible had a chance of success. For the generals in the 1930s to insist on the creation of a united front as the basis for action guaranteed that nothing would be done. It is difficult to overthrow a government without possessing some degree of political instinct, and like most segments of German middle-class and upper-class society, the German military were critically short of political understanding.

In part this was, of course, the result of their impressive military achievements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which had made possible the creation and maintenance of an authoritarian empire in which few men could acquire political sophistication.

In another way, too, the soldiers were victims of a situation that they themselves had helped bring about. At the beginning of his paper, Professor Deutsch pointed out that the *Reichswehr* bore a considerable degree of responsibility for Hitler's coming to power. The army not only failed to support the Weimar Republic—its habitual posture of neutrality between the government and the anti-democratic forces of the radical right and left meant in effect that it opposed the government, or at least rendered it defenseless—but the army also perpetuated attitudes that could only prolong fatal divisions existing in German society, and that incidentally went against its own highest standards of soldierly honor, and thus contributed to their decline. A characteristic example was the refusal of the army to open the regimental associations and other veteran organizations under its sponsorship to Jewish servicemen, even when they had been wounded and decorated in the World War. After 1933 it became apparent that some of the army's tendencies and attitudes resembled in kind, if not in degree of intensity, policies that Hitler now pursued. To some extent this link seems to have been recognized or at least felt by most of the officers who came to oppose the new regime. It infused them with a sense of guilt, which could serve as a spur to action, but which at other times worked as a brake. In short, the dividing lines between army and regime were muddled, and to that extent made opposition to Hitler far more difficult. These are psychological and moral issues, to which I want to return in a moment in a different, wider context. Here let me simply conclude that it may help clarify the perspective in which we must see the resistance, if we recognize that increasingly during the 1930s and the Second World War normal standards of behavior, honor, and responsibility no longer applied in Germany. Some of the officers, whose ambivalence and hesitations Professor Deutsch has so well described, come off very badly indeed when we compare them with responsible and courageous Republicans of the Weimar period. They appear in far better light in comparison with the Nazi leaders. Circumstances alter cases; the same man may have a very different value in different situations; he may even have learned from experience and to some extent have

changed his fundamental views, which seems to have been the case with Stauffenberg.

I began my comment by suggesting how natural it was for Professor Deutsch to look at the events preceding the final attempt on Hitler's life; that is how historians function. By the same token, I suppose, it is proper for me to look at the background to the years he has just discussed. Or at least to look at a piece of that background. Let me therefore revert to the question of morality which I mentioned a moment ago, and connect it with an issue that has been part of German military thought and policy since the early years of the Prussian monarchy: the issue of preventive war.

The calculations that cause a state to resort to preventive war—or to reject its use—are obviously largely political and strategic in nature. In conjunction with these, preventive war does, nevertheless, raise certain moral questions, which it would be unwise simply to dismiss as abstract luxuries, of no concern to the practical statesman or soldier.

You will recall that a decisive incident in the development of Beck's opposition to Hitler was the meeting of 5 November 1937, at which Beck became convinced that Hitler wanted war, and wanted it sooner rather than later. In spite of his dislike of the new regime, Beck would have had few qualms about defending the nation, even though it was led by Hitler. Probably he would also have supported a cautious policy leading towards what most Germans would have felt to be justified frontier rectifications in the East, even if this might have involved limited offensive military action. What he could not support was Hitler's view of a dynamic Germany, threatened on all sides, whose only chance for survival lay in what Hitler called at this meeting "lightning strokes, unexpectedly executed at the propitious moment."¹

The long-range goal of Hitler's foreign policy can be summed up as the establishment of an intercontinental empire, stretching from the Urals to the Atlantic, secure against any other power on earth. This goal could be achieved, if at all, only by a series of aggressive and pre-emptive maneuvers. As it happened, the occupation of Austria, the destruction of Czechoslovakia, and the partition of Poland had partly preventive motives; the invasion of Norway can be considered as almost a textbook example of a preventive

stroke; and in the decision to attack Russia in 1941—at least two years earlier than Hitler had originally intended—the preventive element is very strong.

These few examples from the Second World War will indicate that it is rather difficult to define preventive war, and, in particular, to distinguish it clearly from aggressive war. The two are often related; but not always: consider the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967, in which the side that struck first did so to protect its independence, and possibly even its continued existence. In very general terms, we might say that it is a war initiated in order to prevent the probable sacrifice of some vital interest of the state, or to interrupt a course of events which can become only more damaging as time goes on.²

Nor does Western political and ethical theory agree on the justice or injustice of such wars. Here I can do no more than call your attention to a few salient features in the voluminous literature that has been devoted to this subject since the Renaissance. It probably doesn't stretch things too far to suggest that much of European and American thought on preventive war is polarized around two contradictory points of view.³ One can be conveniently personified by Machiavelli; the other by Luther. Machiavelli treated preventive war entirely from the point of view of state interest. In his eyes any political or military act that benefits the state is justified. It is immaterial that this act may transgress law, morality, alliances with other states, or historical tradition. In short, according to Machiavelli, preventive war poses no moral problem.

His argument, based wholly on the self-interest of each particular state rather than on the interests of the international community, was carried on and elaborated by such writers as Sir Thomas More (whose Utopian state is free to resort to any strategy, including that of preventive war, since it is a just state, and its enemies—by definition—are unjust) and Richelieu, who declared that preventive war is an inevitable evil, resort to which is justified when the state is faced with a self-evident threat that cannot be turned aside in any other way. A hundred years later Montesquieu judged the problem pretty much in the same vein.

The opposite point of view is expressed by Luther, who taught that the only just war is the strictly defensive war. Wars of aggression or preventive wars, however well motivated, are evil.⁴

These men did not develop their thoughts in a vacuum. They reflect the conditions in which they lived, and they address themselves to these conditions. Machiavelli, concerned with the creation of viable political authority in Italy, not unnaturally places the highest value on the effective use of power. Thomas More and Richelieu, representatives of vast monarchies which nevertheless have to contend with dangerous rivals, will not hesitate to use power ruthlessly for the greater good. Luther, on the other hand, lived in a politically fragmented society, made up of relatively small and weak states, uncertain about the extent of their sovereignty; a community whose members were to a considerable extent dependent on the tolerance and good will of their neighbors. To proclaim the justice of preventive war in this context would have been self-destructive.

Frederick the Great was still brought up on Luther's argument, which in this respect coincided with the views of the Reformed Church, that the only just war is a defensive war. His father had repeatedly amused the courts of Europe with his reluctance to take up arms even in defense of his vital interests. As a young man Frederick wrote a study opposing Machiavelli's view of international relations as permanent conflict devoid of any moral law except that of narrow self-interest. And yet, Frederick began his reign with a war of conquest, and later defended his newly acquired territories—and with them Prussia's new status as a major European power—by launching a preventive war against the alliance that was forming to thrust Prussia back into her old condition of feebleness and dependence.

In fact he had no choice: if he wished to exploit Prussia's political potential, he could do so only by resorting first to aggression and then to preventive war. But the new policies—the new concern for power and the willingness to use it—could not be easily reconciled with the Lutheran tradition. A dichotomy of power and ethics developed in Germany, in more acute form, it seems, than in other European societies, and despite all attempts at resolving it—by Hegel, for example—it grew in intensity throughout the nineteenth century. Under the pressures of nationalism and imperialism, yielding to what could be called apologetically the force of circumstances, most military and political leaders were able to repress this conflict, with greater or lesser ease. But in every generation soldiers

could be found who suffered from the role that Germany's position seemed to impose on them. In the essays on war that he wrote after his retirement, Beck summed up their problem in these words: "More than other powers, Germany (because of her geographic position) must expect that her very existence will be at stake in a major war."⁵ Any and all measures would thus appear to be justified—and yet, Beck warned, quoting words that Groener had written in 1919, "Germany cannot afford once more to begin a war on a weak moral basis."⁶ Beck reinforced this statement by arguing that aggression and total war were not only unethical and of doubtful value, but that they would brutalize the German people and destroy German civilization.⁷

We should not read too much into the issue of preventive war. It is only one factor among many; but its very ambiguities help clarify further the relationship between Hitler and the German generals. In the 1930s, as in the nineteenth century, Germany found herself in the classic position of the have-not, the late-comer, who feels compelled to take risks and resort to extreme measures in order to catch up. Other established powers could afford to insist on higher standards of political morality since these more nearly coincided with their own interests. The *Wehrmacht* generals' uneasiness about aggressive and preventive war was the product of three forces: their own moral standards, or at least doubts, their lack of confidence in Germany's military and economic strength, and their recognition of the effect such policies would have on other states. Hitler, of course, dismissed these considerations. In a talk to the division commanders who were about to launch the Ardennes counteroffensive, he said: "We are in a struggle that inevitably had to come, sooner or later. The only question is whether we chose the most favorable moment to strike. I have already explained why the argument that we should not have launched a preventive war must be completely rejected. Gentlemen, every successful war in the history of mankind has been a preventive war."⁸

This was not true, but, as the generals knew, it did have some validity in German history. Once again Hitler could appeal to a measure of agreement between himself and the soldiers. To repeat an earlier point: to the extent that this agreement existed, resistance to Hitler was made more difficult.

Let me conclude by summarizing in the very broadest terms

the position which the Resistance, and with it Germany, had reached in the late 1930s.

The re-establishment of Germany as a major European power, let alone world power, was possible only by very extensive use of violence, carrying with it the destruction of other states, enormous damage to their societies, and considerable change within Germany. These policies could not be brought into agreement with the moral standards that were part of the heritage of the middle and upper classes from which the traditional military elite was drawn. There were only two possible solutions to this conflict: either all considerations of morality were rejected as irrelevant, which was the position Hitler took, or Germany renounced her ambition to be the dominant power in central and eastern Europe—a development that was forcibly brought about by her defeat in the Second World War. Both solutions—total war, or the renunciation of a cherished political ideal—were extremely disagreeable, not to say unacceptable, to the German generals. Consequently they remained suspended between two opposite poles, largely inactive, almost completely ineffective, until both for them, and for Germany, time had run out.

NOTES

1. As reported by Hitler's *Wehrmacht* adjutant, who was present at the meeting. See Friedrich Hossbach, *Zwischen Wehrmacht und Hitler*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen, 1965), p. 188.
2. Robert W. Tucker, *The Just War* (Baltimore, 1960), p. 14.
3. This argument is brilliantly developed in Karl E. Jeismann, *Das Problem des Präventivkrieges* (Freiburg and Munich, 1957), see especially pp. 7-14, 26-31.
4. Martin Luther, "Ob Kriegsleut auch in seligem Stande sein können," cited in Jeismann, p. 27.
5. Ludwig Beck, *Studien*, ed. Hans Speidel (Stuttgart, 1955), p. 137. See also pp. 55-57, 60, 62, 123, and 251.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 252-258.
8. Adolf Heusinger, *Befehl im Widerstreit* (Tübingen and Stuttgart, 1950), p. 373.

THE MILITARY VIEW: COMMENTS BY SIX GERMAN GENERALS

GENERAL WALTER WARLIMONT

My comments concerning the events of October-November 1939, which Professor Deutsch describes at length in his most interesting paper, will have to be limited to such information as I obtained in the course of my duties as a member of the German Armed Forces High Command (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht-OKW*) during this period. I must admit at the outset that I was totally unaware of any plans among the senior officer corps—the commanding generals, the Commander in Chief of the Army, and the Chief of the *Generalstab*—to *overthrow* Hitler and the Nazi regime in the event the planned West offensive was to be executed in the fall of 1939. On the other hand, I was aware of opposition among the army leadership against the proposed initiation of an offensive on the Western front at this time (October-November 1939). This opposition was based on their assessment of the military situation which, in their opinion, militated against such a move. I have described these events in greater detail previously and feel that I can add little to it.¹

Turning to Professor Deutsch's paper, I would like to point out that before one attempts to pass judgment on the German military leaders involved in the events of October-November 1939, it is well to recognize that they did not represent a cohesive group, but rather various groupings with different motivations for their opposition to Hitler's war plans at this time. With the exception of Colonel Oster, none of the military personalities involved belonged to any of the civilian resistance groups already in existence, and what Professor Deutsch calls the "military opposition" to Hitler in October-November 1939 was mainly an attempt on the part of a

Translated and edited by Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen.

number of military leaders to defend the military interest and exercise their professional responsibilities in opposition to what they considered an adventurous military plan. Their "opposition" was primarily based on what they considered to be a sound military-professional "estimate of the situation," which differed greatly from that made by Hitler. The military leaders who argued against Hitler's plan to initiate hostilities in the West in the fall of 1939 did so because they viewed the plan as an adventurous undertaking, fraught with the dangers of possible defeat, because of the insufficient state of preparedness of the German armed forces at the time. It is possible that some of them may also have had second thoughts concerning the possible consequences of Hitler's over-all military (and foreign) policies and their ultimate effect on the German nation, yet only a few of the senior commanders, General Halder, for example, seem to have had any connection with or knowledge of the more far-reaching intentions of the civilian anti-Hitler resistance groups, i.e., the circles around Goerdeler and Beck. It is therefore possible to distinguish, among the military leaders who were opposing Hitler's military plan in the fall of 1939, at least three separate categories, each pursuing different aims and united only in their common opposition to any initiation of a general German offensive in the West at this time.

The first category—very few in number and consisting generally of lower ranking staff officers—had been associated with civilian resistance groups before 1939, and their members were now using their military positions in an attempt to enlarge the circle of anti-Hitler conspirators, particularly by trying to win over members of the higher, active-duty military leadership for their cause and its aims. The only officer known to me who belonged to this category was Colonel Oster; General Beck, at least at this time, cannot be considered as belonging to this category, even in a limited sense. The primary aim of men like Oster was the overthrow of Hitler and the Nazi regime, not just the prevention of the planned German fall offensive, for these men, more so than those belonging to the other categories, foresaw the dangers and the ultimate result that Hitler's plan and policies portended for the German nation.

The second category consisted of those military officers who, although not part of either the Oster Circle or the civilian resistance group, had contact with both groups and their leaders, as evidenced

by the association among Halder, Oster, and Beck. Members of the second group were among the top leaders of the army hierarchy and thus in a position to oppose openly both Hitler's war plans and policies as well as the planned fall offensive. Any secret political goals this group may have had (or wanted to pursue) were, in my opinion, purely secondary and in most instances not very clearly defined. General Halder can be seen as the prototype of this group, which also included Admiral Canaris and, although to a much lesser extent, General von Brauchitsch, the Commander in Chief of the Army.

The last, and by far the largest, category consisted of those generals and General Staff officers who opposed Hitler's immediate war plans based on purely military reasoning. On this basis alone, they were against the start of a German offensive in the West at this time. Some, though by no means all, were also personally concerned about the consequences that Hitler's proposed military plans would have for the German people and nation, since they believed Hitler's actions could lead to an unnecessary expansion of the existing military conflict and thereby to another World War. In my opinion, most of the commanding generals of the army, particularly those commanding the three Army Groups in the West, such as *Generaloberst* von Leeb, and many of the Army commanders, such as General von Reichenau, were included in this category. Even General Keitel, the Chief of the OKW, was opposed to the planned offensive. Colonel Jodl, on the other hand, did not take any position and remained silent, at least in the conversations I had with him on this matter. However, these generals did not view their open opposition to the Hitler-endorsed and OKW-planned fall offensive in the West as an act of opposition towards Hitler and the Nazi regime, but rather as an exercise of their prerogative as members of the military profession. That is they voiced their opinions, based on their professional expertise, in respect to a military situation affecting the nation's security. They considered it their right and duty to protest what they considered Hitler's interference with the functions of the military professionals by forcing them to accept decisions which they as professionals considered mistakes. However, at no time did they look upon their protests as part of a larger effort or plan to overthrow (or even oppose) Hitler and the Nazi government, that is the political and national leadership. In fact, it seems that most of them were completely unaware of such possible *coup*

d'état plans as contemplated by General Halder and those closely associated with him, in the event that Hitler insisted on the implementation and execution of the fall offensive. Their actions could be compared with similar actions taken by British military leaders during World War II against some of Churchill's military decisions. Unfortunately, these same generals, at least those who had not been sent into early retirement by Hitler in the early years of the war, later on made less and less use of their professional rights and duties in respect to Hitler's military decisions and the direction of the war, particularly at the time when the ultimate consequences of these policies for the German people and nation had become clearly apparent. In fact, with the sole exception of General von Stülpnagel, not one of the generals who participated in the events of October-November 1939 can be found among the ranks of the military opposition to Hitler *after* 1939 or among the participants of the abortive 20 July 1944 plot. For this reason, I cannot agree with Professor Deutsch's thesis that in the autumn of 1939 the military leadership was involved in a "conspiracy against Hitler" aimed at overthrowing him and the Nazi regime.

In another instance, Professor Deutsch compares the actions and attitudes of the German military leadership at the time of the Czechoslovakian crisis (1938) with those prior to the attack on Poland (1939), suggesting, in support of his thesis, that a military opposition to Hitler already existed in both instances. In my opinion, one cannot compare the two situations since they differ greatly. In the Czechoslovakian situation, the military leadership voiced caution and concern over a possible military conflict, based solely on military considerations, namely the state of readiness of the armed forces. Thus, they refused to follow Hitler's plans of action which in their opinion were based on an adventurous and dangerous national military and foreign policy. In the opinion of the military leadership, Czechoslovakia, particularly after the accomplishment of the Austrian *Anschluss*, no longer represented a strategic (military) threat to Germany, eliminating any need to solve the Czech Question by military means. On the other hand, Poland presented an entirely different situation, since she had always been regarded, particularly by the German military leadership, as Germany's main military threat and natural enemy from 1918 on. Polish hostility toward Germany, beginning in 1918, and her refusal to normalize relations between the two countries served to reinforce this antag-

onism among the military leadership. In addition, most of the officers had served at one time or another in the East Prussian Military District where the loss of Danzig and the Polish Corridor to Poland after World War I served as a most vivid reminder of German-Polish enmity. Any cautions and possible objections voiced on the part of the military toward Hitler's plan to attack Poland were based solely on the uncertainty over possible Soviet military reaction (removed by the August 1939 Russo-German treaty) and that of Poland's Western allies, France and England. No substantive objections were voiced by the military leadership against Hitler's decision to attack Poland, to force a revision of the Versailles Treaty, and to recover the lost territories. On the other hand, the military leadership did not at any time consider it absolutely necessary or even desirable that the Polish Question be solved by military means alone.

Lastly, I would like to comment briefly on one of the personalities involved in the October-November 1939 episode, namely General von Reichenau. I cannot agree with Professor Deutsch's portrayal of the general, which to me seems far too one-sided and tends to create a false image. Although I was never in close personal contact with Reichenau, I knew him for many years and served under him at various times. Already as a young Guards officer before World War I, he was regarded as unusual by his fellow officers, since he insisted in participating in such public sports as soccer, which at that time was considered an activity unsuitable for a member of the Imperial Officer Corps. Throughout his life Reichenau maintained this habit of doing things which were frowned upon by his fellow officers or considered by them as detrimental to the image of the military profession. His actions in this respect were not guided by any desire to attract attention, but rather represented a personal and individual effort to break down the social isolation of the German officer corps and imbue it with a more modern social philosophy (*Gesellschaftspolitik*), which would serve to integrate it more closely into society at large. This is not to say that Reichenau was less conservative or aristocratic than his fellow officers, but he recognized that by its self-enforced, extreme social isolation, the *Reichswehr* officer corps had removed itself from the mainstream of German society during the 1920s.

This same tendency to go his own way became equally ap-

parent in the conduct of his military duties. He refused to obey the many unwritten rules by which any military institution lives, and I suspect he often disregarded the written regulations as well. He went his own way, more concerned with infusing new ideas and innovations into the military system—often acting impulsively in this respect—rather than imitating the tried and true traditional methods of the past. The General Staff training exercises (*Generalstabsreisen*) which he conducted (and in which I participated) differed greatly from the usual type of such exercises because he used completely different and modern methods of instruction. These personal characteristics earned him a dubious reputation among his fellow officers. His superiors looked upon him with a high degree of suspicion as to his earnestness and professionalism, although clearly recognizing his outstanding military capabilities and qualifications. This, together with his early and openly announced endorsement of many of the ideas of the rising Nazi Party, accounted for the opposition of even such officers as General Keitel and Colonel Jodl to his proposed nomination as Commander in Chief of the Army by Hitler in January 1938, following the Blomberg-Fritsch crisis.

Yet I believe that exactly these traits of Reichenau, that is his opposition to the social isolation of the officer corps and its inherent traditionalism, were in large part responsible for his attraction to National Socialist ideology, particularly in its early forms. Later, when he began to recognize more clearly the nature and aim of the Nazi movement, he began to assume a more detached role, cautioning against some of the manifestations of the movement, particularly in his association with Field Marshal von Blomberg, his superior, who was also favorably inclined toward National Socialism.

What makes Reichenau as a person so fascinating to me—and, I am sure, also to others—is that if one views (with hindsight) the period of the 1930s in Germany, he seems to have been the only general officer among the military leadership who possessed a high degree of political awareness. He certainly seems to have been the only one among his fellow generals who would have been able to counter the intentions of the military and foreign policies of Hitler as well as Himmler—with whom he supposedly had a close personal relationship—and deal with them on equal terms. Hitler appreciated Reichenau's characteristics as long as they served his purpose,

namely to tie (and subordinate) the officer corps more closely to the Nazi state. However, I also believe that at the same time he was afraid of Reichenau because of the latter's political acumen and capabilities, which, for example, were illustrated during the Russian campaign when Reichenau demanded that Hitler institute an administration based on military rather than political aims in the German-occupied territories in the East. Reichenau's early connection with the Nazi Party, which began during the time of his assignment to the East Prussian Military District in the late 1920s, must also be viewed within the context of certain national military requirements. The need (by the military) to garner all possible resources for the defense of this exposed province, threatened by Polish intransigency and aggressive designs, may have led him to seek contact with the Nazi Party both in East Prussia and on a national level, in order to win new and needed support for this purpose. His outspoken opposition to Hitler's war plans in the autumn of 1939, particularly his condemnation of the intended border violation of Belgium and the Netherlands, an integral part of the planned offensive, was, in my opinion, based on purely political considerations. As his remarks during the 22 August 1939 Berghof Conference indicated, he opposed war as such, and if this could not be avoided, then he hoped at least to prevent the expansion of the conflict into a new World War. That Hitler was unwilling to accept such views even from Reichenau is clearly shown by the fact that their relationship began to cool soon thereafter, particularly after 1940, as Hitler began to dissociate himself more and more from him. On the other hand, none of the other generals would have been able even to voice such opposing views as Reichenau did in front of Hitler in autumn of 1939.

NOTES

1. Walter Warlimont, *Inside Hitler's Headquarters, 1939-1945*, translated by R. H. Barry (New York, 1964), pp. 41-65.

GENERAL LEO FREIHERR GEYR *von* SCHWEPPEBURG

I have read Professor Deutsch's detailed and extensive paper with great pleasure. However, after considerable study of the cited sources I have become convinced that his thesis suffers (and is bound to suffer) in its historical accuracy since historians are often unable to determine the truthfulness of the source materials. Even today, when younger members of the former German General Staff describe these historical events based on their own experiences, their knowledge and interpretation of the personalities who participated in the events and the motives prompting their action cannot be as close to the truth as those which come from contemporaries who were an integral part of the circle of leading military figures under discussion.

Turning specifically to Professor Deutsch's remarks concerning the October-November 1939 events, I must admit that I was not aware of any plans on the part of the military leadership to overthrow Hitler at that time. Although I myself was ill during this period, I had been informed that conferences were taking place among military leaders concerning proposals by the Armed Forces High Command (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*—OKW) with respect to offensive operations in the West, and I knew that a large part of the *Generalität* opposed these planned operations. However, upon my return to duty in December 1939, as Commanding General of the 3d Armored Division, I participated in a conference with other division commanders at Düsseldorf under the chairmanship of our Commanding General, General Höpner, who was executed in 1944 for participation in the 20th of July plot against Hitler. The purpose of this meeting seemed to be not to ascertain the attitudes of the division commanders toward the planned OKW offensive but rather their *political* attitude toward it and toward Hitler. I am convinced that General Höpner himself opposed Hitler's (and the OKW's) plan for an offensive in the West. However, since the German military leadership by this time was already divided into two groups, one which believed strongly in Hitler and his military

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genius and one which considered the planned West offensive politically as a mad undertaking, no one could trust his fellow officers with respect to their political attitudes and orientation.

I must admit that I never heard of any attempts on the part of General von Reichenau to stop Hitler's plans for an offensive in the West. Based on my intimate knowledge of Reichenau as a person, I cannot believe that he was seriously concerned with such an attempt, i.e., one of actual opposition to Hitler.

Both Generals von Reichenau and Heinrich von Stülpnagel were old acquaintances of mine. We had met as lieutenants and had been classmates at the War Academy (*Kriegsakademie*) from 1911 to 1914; Stülpnagel was actually my closest friend in my own age group on the General Staff. He and Reichenau belonged to the same seminar group at the War Academy, while I was assigned to a different group. Reichenau was already known at this time as an accomplished athlete, particularly in boxing, and he remained until his death a true fighter. Stülpnagel, on the other hand, was in my opinion one of the most outstanding military personalities, both in the *Reichswehr* and later on in the *Wehrmacht*. He served as Chief of the *Wehrmacht's* Foreign Liaison Division from 1933-1936 and was very conversant with British affairs, for which he had developed an interest during his studies at the War Academy before World War I. During the 1930s both he and General Ludwig Beck (and I, as their spokesman as German Military Attaché in London) fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the British General Staff to keep the peace in Europe, as long as Sir John Dill and Sir Bernard Paget were left in control.¹

Before General von Fritsch took over as Commander in Chief of the *Wehrmacht* in 1934, Reichenau had assumed control over the military attachés for a short period of time in 1933, based on his position as Chief of Staff to General von Blomberg. During a conference called by Reichenau in 1933, it became apparent that all the military attachés were more or less opposed to him, mainly because he was an avowed National Socialist sympathizer. As a military leader Reichenau showed energy and initiative; however, Stülpnagel was certainly his superior, both as a thinker and as a human being. Though he had only a limited knowledge of England, Reichenau thought himself an expert on that country, primarily

because he spoke English and had translated several of Liddell Hart's books during the early 1930s.

I do not believe in the validity of the statement that Reichenau protested very strongly against the planned West offensive in the autumn of 1939. On what evidence this statement is based, I do not know. However, I personally had a vehement argument with Reichenau only a few days before the outbreak of the war in August 1939. Since we had been fellow students at the War Academy, we were not in the habit of mincing words. General von Stülpnagel had already told me that he too had had repeated arguments with Reichenau over political issues which had progressed to the point where they faced each other with clenched fists. In my encounter with Reichenau, which took place approximately ten days before the outbreak of the war, Reichenau asked me: "Do you still believe that the British will fight?" I replied in the affirmative and gave him my reasons for this opinion. Reichenau then said: "You see, Geyr, you are the man who has indoctrinated (*aufoktroiert*) Fritsch and Beck with these opinions. You are responsible for the position the army finds itself in today vis-à-vis Hitler."²

A few days prior to this incident I had attended the meeting at which the Commander in Chief of the Army, General von Brauchitsch, announced the planned attack against Poland to all Commanding Generals; I represented the Commanding General of the XIV Armored Corps, who was on leave, at this occasion. During a garden party which took place afterwards, I was standing near Brauchitsch and Reichenau and heard the latter, who had just returned from London, where he had participated in a meeting of the International Olympic Committee, confirming von Brauchitsch's opinion that England most certainly would not fight.³

I also do not believe that Reichenau later on in October 1939 went to any great length to warn against the violation of Belgian and Dutch neutrality in connection with the planned OKW West offensive. After I again assumed command of my 3d Armored Division in December 1939, I was given my operational orders with respect to the Western offensive, which consisted of breaking through the Maastricht appendix into Belgium. Immediately after receiving these orders, I went to my higher headquarters, 6th Army, which was commanded by Reichenau. Unfortunately he was not present and I could only speak with the Chief of Staff, Paulus,

whom I knew well, and his Deputy Chief of Operations, General von Bechtolsheim, who had been my successor as military attaché in London. I made the following statement to them: "What I have been ordered to do is an abominable act (*Schweinerei*). For many years I had the official mission to win the confidence of the Belgians and to reassure the Dutch.⁴ Now you are asking that I, as the first one, shall invade their territories with my armored division, and as a soldier in war I have no choice but to obey!" Paulus, who was a very decent person, remained completely silent. However, another officer, who had been Deputy Chief of Staff at armored corps level, said only: "An English officer would not have such doubts." Shortly afterwards I was transferred to the command of an infantry corps in the southern and quiet part of the Western front.

Personally I considered any offensive action against the Western powers as a further step in the wrong direction for Germany, for I had returned from Great Britain in 1937 with the conviction, constantly reflected in my dispatches (ill-received in Berlin), that the United States would never stand by idly and see England defeated without intervening.⁵ (The files of my reports are still available today.) I remember telling my French colleague, General Voruz, in 1935 as we returned from the rather dull British fall maneuvers, that "Your Napoleon has taken a terrible revenge on Prussianism by inculcating it with the concept that battles won represent the only decisive element in war."

Later, after my return to Berlin, I proceeded immediately, based on my personal estimate of Anglo-Saxon air and naval power,⁶ to make such preparations for my family as I considered necessary in order to spare them from the results of what I expected to be a German defeat. My decision was not based on historical memories, but purely on the practical experiences and observations which I had gained during my years as military attaché in England.

It is my personal opinion that the planned *coup d'état* of General Halder and others could not have succeeded. Neither Halder nor Brauchitsch, just as Fritsch and Beck before them, could have used any part of the army to intervene in domestic affairs, particularly in the face of Hitler's steadily growing foreign policy successes from 1934 on. Had they attempted to do this the memories of the "Kapp-Lüttwitz *Putsch*" of 1920* would certainly have been reawakened among the great majority of the German people. The

result would not only have been a complete failure of such a coup, but also would have brought on a civil war due to the attitudes of the German people, the army, and the other services. This, in my opinion, would have been the outcome of any plans contemplated by General Halder and also reflects my own position with respect to them. Halder's plans were dreams, justified no doubt, but incapable of execution in reality. After the close of the Polish campaign, my good and faithful friend and colleague, General Heinrich von Stülpnagel, approached me once more and asked me to participate with my division in the elimination of Hitler and his association of gangsters. I knew the division I commanded only too well and therefore had no choice but to turn him down. My decision was greatly influenced by the fact that Hitler had personally visited the division during the Polish campaign on the terrible battlefield on the Vistula and thanked us for our accomplishments.⁷ Under these circumstances, I knew the division would not follow me into such an undertaking as a *coup d'état* against Hitler; my unit commanders, the regimental and battalion officers, would not have participated. The assumption, often voiced since, that they would have followed any order issued by the higher military leadership rests on a mistaken premise. Automatic subordination and obedience to an order issued by the higher command was no longer apparent nor predictable in the *Wehrmacht*. From my own experience I can say the following. After the catastrophic German defeat and the end of my imprisonment, I questioned a number of officers of my 3d Armored Division, who had survived war and imprisonment. All told I questioned twelve officers with ranks between major and colonel, who had served under me in the Polish and Russian campaigns, from Moscow to Baku and the Caspian Sea. They were all men with whom one "could have kidnaped the devil's grandmother right out of hell." I asked them specifically: "Would you have obeyed an order from me in 1939 to clean out the Reich Chancellery with Hitler in it?" Ten, without hesitation, replied, "No, Herr General, that we would not have done!" One, an excellent officer and Knight's Cross holder, stated that this would have

*In March 1920 Free Corps and military units stationed in and around Berlin, led by General von Lüttwitz, attempted to overthrow the civilian government of the Weimar Republic. Dr. Kapp, a right wing civil servant, was named President of the new government, proclaimed by the mutinous troops. [Ed. note]

put him into a conflict between his conscience and his military oath; only one of the twelve replied in the affirmative. Since I had known this officer and my division during two peacetime years before the outbreak of the war, I felt I could ask him the following question: "Would the commanding officer of the 5th Company of your battalion have followed such an order?" He replied in the negative.

Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, the former President of the *Reichsbank*, also approached me during this time (October 1939) to consider such an undertaking, since my division was stationed in Berlin.⁸ In my opinion, this would have been a hopeless endeavor then, especially since my first General Staff officer, my adjutant, as well as my immediate superior, General Guderian, and his Chief of Staff, Paulus, were all confirmed National Socialists. It must also be remembered that at this time the criminal nature of Hitler and his intentions were still unknown throughout the army. I was only aware of these, since I had not had to live within the "Chinese Propaganda Wall" of Germany during this time due to my long assignment in London. For this reason it would have been very doubtful to say how such military leaders as von Leeb, von Bock, and von Brauchitsch would have reacted to such a proposal. Furthermore, Field Marshal von Leeb, the most intelligent among them, had already been retired from the army in February 1938, at the time General von Fritsch was removed from the army. Only because he was such an outstanding general and military thinker had von Leeb been recalled in 1939. Later on in 1942, when he refused to condone Hitler's and the SS's criminal activities at the Leningrad front, he was removed from command again. In retrospect I believe that the mass of the German army would not have acted against Hitler—not to mention the air force, the navy, and the strong Prussian police units, which were under the complete control of Goering.

I was acquainted with General Halder due to my service on the General Staff. In rank he was approximately one year ahead of me. My personal judgment of his character is completely positive. His predecessor, General Beck, had been the perfect example of the "Moltke" type of General Staff officer, which the honest and eminently diligent Halder was not. The two most intelligent officers, according to my judgment, whom I met during 43 years of active

military service were General Ludwig Beck and Sir John Dill. Halder did not have the same ability to understand foreign policy issues as did Beck, but then Beck was a singular exception in this respect among the German military leadership. Beck's conceptions were global in nature and he even could be ranked in this respect above the otherwise outstanding Count von Schlieffen. Halder was extraordinarily religious. Being a Protestant he was less endangered in this respect by the hostile attitude towards religion of Hitler and the National Socialists than a Catholic would have been. Practicing Catholics, as for example Field Marshal von Leeb, General Dollmann, Commander of the 7th Army during the 1944 invasion, or myself, were only left in higher command positions in the armed forces if they were still needed and proved useful.

It should also be realized that within the officer corps of the *Wehrmacht* generation problems did exist. These of course will always be present within any officer corps of any nation, just as they exist today in the new West German Armed Forces, the *Bundeswehr*. However, I believe that with respect to the military opposition against Hitler they play an important role. The older generation of officers, those who had experienced the cleanliness of the Imperial Army and the *Reichswehr*, did not lightly overlook the criminal side of Hitler and the Nazi movement. This, however, was certainly not the case with most of the younger officers, and at the beginning of the Third Reich applied also to the younger generation of General Staff officers. The younger generation was blinded by Hitler's foreign policy successes until 1939 and particularly by the military victory over Poland. Another important aspect was the status of officer education after 1934, since it certainly had a decisive impact on the army and its attitudes. Both Generals Fritsch and Beck strongly opposed the too rapid expansion of the *Wehrmacht* after 1934, particularly in regard to the officer corps. They were concerned that a too rapid expansion would lead to the elimination of a planned and meaningful education of the officer corps with respect to what an officer—who, according to George Washington, should be a gentleman—must do and cannot do. After 1935 it became standard practice that as soon as a new group of officers had received their training, they were immediately assigned to newly formed line units. A thorough education of the officers in the duties of their profession was therefore not possible.

NOTES

1. See Leo Freiherr Geyr von Schweppenburg, *Erinnerungen eines Militärattachés, London 1933-1937* (Stuttgart, 1949), pp. 65-79, 92-111.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 126-146, 156-163.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-64.
7. Leo Freiherr Geyr von Schweppenburg, "Meetings with Hitler," *An Cosantoir*, XXVII (January, 1967), 10-11.
8. See my testimony at the denazification trial of Dr. Schacht, *Protokoll der Berufsverhandlung gegen Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, 2 August 1948-1 September 1948*, 2 vol. Mimeo. (Ludwigsburg, 1948), Vol. I, pp. 246-248.

GENERAL HASSO von MANTEUFFEL

At the outset I must admit that I never knew anything concerning a military opposition (or even a plot) against Hitler until the events of 20 July 1944 made this public knowledge. But then I was still a major in 1939 and thus had little opportunity of contact with the higher military leadership. It was not until the last years of World War II, when I was made Commanding General of the *Grossdeutschland* Division in January 1944, that I came into continuous and direct contact with the national leadership, both military and political, being given the right to report directly to Hitler any time I wished to do so. At the *Führerhauptquartier* I became exposed—willingly or unwillingly—to the implications of political events, their causes, background, and consequences, and their effect on the military situation. I also witnessed for the first time the conflicts which existed between the political and military advisors of Hitler.

Before addressing myself to Professor Deutsch's paper and the most interesting comments of Mr. von Lutichau, a few words about

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the attitudes toward politics and its role in the professional education of myself (and most of my fellow officers) may be appropriate since, at least in my opinion, this has a direct bearing on the subject matter. I also would like to point out that my comments on Professor Deutsch's paper are not based on hindsight or the knowledge I acquired after the war, when the archives were opened, about the true nature of events in Germany during the period 1933-1945. On the contrary, I have tried to describe my reaction to events as I saw and judged them at the time they were happening.

In the 100,000-man army of the Weimar Republic (1919-1932), regular career officers such as myself were kept completely "unpolitical" with respect to party politics in line with the educational policies of General von Seeckt. Because of this the *Reichswehr* and particularly its officer corps were isolated from the political environment of the rest of society. Personal political opinions or ideas that could possibly have led to discussion of such matters during officers' calls, meetings at the officers' mess, or at the dining-in's (*Herrenabende*) were unwelcome. General Groener's demand that officers stay away from any association with politics reinforced this situation. As officers we were neither informed of domestic or foreign policy events nor were the background and causes of these events discussed or explained to us by our senior officers or the commanders. One acquired knowledge of such matters, if interested at all, from reading the daily newspapers of the various political "colorations" or from discussions in the various associations and clubs to which one belonged, all of which, however, had one-sided political orientations. To have contact with so-called opposition circles, such as Social Democrats, was not considered proper for an officer. A political or civic education for the officer corps did not exist, certainly not in the regiments in which I served as a young officer during these years. At the mandatory officer's calls directed by the regimental commander, we heard no talks on politics by our superiors prior to 1932, although these officers' calls were designed to serve as a medium for the education and training of the officer corps.

I might mention in this context that during the 1920s I served first as regimental adjutant, later company (*Eskadron*) commander of a cavalry regiment stationed at Rathenow and from 1930 until 1933 as company commander in another cavalry regiment stationed

in Bamberg (Bavaria). In 1934 I was transferred to the 2d Tank Division at Eisenach as staff officer (major) to help organize and train this new division. At Eisenach we younger officers had neither the time nor the opportunity to inform ourselves of what was happening in the political arena, being kept fully occupied by our military duties. Only when I was transferred to the Tank Warfare School at Wuensdorf near Berlin in 1936, and particularly after being posted to the War Ministry (*Reichskriegsministerium*) in Berlin in 1937, did I hear more about political events, both during duty hours as well as during the course of social (off-duty) activities. In the small and distant garrison towns, such as Rathenow, Bamberg, or Eisenach, this had not been the case at all and one had little or no opportunity to see or speak with members of the higher military leadership (*Generalität*). In February 1939, I left the War Ministry and became commander of the academic staff at the Tank Warfare School No. 2 at Potsdam-Krampnitz, where I was responsible for the education and training of armored warfare officers. On 31 May 1941, I was transferred to the field army (*Feldarmee*).

Turning to the events of October-November 1939, I never knew that there was opposition among the higher military circles against the planned OKW West offensive. But then I was never assigned to the General Staff and had already left the War Ministry by this time. During my tour of duty at the Ministry, I had been assigned to the *Allgemeine Heeresamt*, which was then commanded by General Fromm. The *Allgemeine Heeresamt* was the equivalent of the former Imperial War Ministry, but organizationally (after 1938) it belonged to the Army High Command (*Oberkommando des Heeres—OKH*). My specific duties were that of a Branch Chief in the Division for Armored Warfare (*Inspektion für Panzertruppen*), where I was chiefly responsible for manpower and equipment requirements for the newly created motorized and armored units. While I had little or no occasion during my tour of duty to speak with any of the generals referred to by Professor Deutsch in his paper, these officers were all “known” to me since they had served in the *Reichswehr* and its 4,000-man officer corps. Some, such as Generals von Rundstedt, von Brauchitsch, Freiherr von Fritsch, and von Bock, had been my immediate superiors. However, if and when a junior officer like myself had an opportunity to talk to them, the conversation usually covered such topics as military

matters, sports, or personal affairs. Such "conversations" were not designed to give any indications of the political attitudes of the generals, particularly with respect to their feelings toward Hitler and the Nazi movement. I never talked with Generals von Reichenau, von Stülpnagel, or Ritter von Leeb, since there was no occasion for any official contact. General Halder I hardly saw at all during my two years at OKH; I never spoke to him. Any conversations I had with any of the other generals mentioned pertained only to specific military matters in connection with my assigned position. Mention of the political or military-political situation or contemplated military actions connected with General Halder's plans were never part of such conversations. Nor did I ever hear of such plans through other sources.

Personally I had the highest esteem for General Freiherr von Fritsch and General von Rundstedt, both in terms of their military leadership qualifications and as individuals. Within the army and the officer corps, both were regarded with a feeling of complete assurance and dependability, since their firm stand vis-à-vis Hitler and the increasingly evident machinations against the army emanating from the various Nazi party organizations and their ruling clique of "mediocre" personalities (*Minderwertigen*) was a known fact. On the other hand, Generals Keitel and Jodl were generally regarded within the officer corps as men who stood closer to Hitler than most of the other generals. Both seemed to be completely under Hitler's spell and followed his ideas and directions with respect to military-political questions; at least this seemed to be the opinion of most of the officers.

Although I am in no position to comment on Professor Deutsch's account with respect to any existing military opposition groups during the October-November 1939 period, based on personal knowledge or involvement, I can state with absolute certainty that General Halder was practically unknown within the army and among the line officers (who made up the bulk of the officer corps). Only among Bavarians and General Staff officers was his name known. In order to put his contemplated plans into effect, General Halder would have required first of all the support of the Commander in Chief of the Army as well as the numerous commanders of all ranks, for in 1938-1939 the line units were firmly under the control of their regimental and unit commanders. Thus, it would

have been necessary to thoroughly prepare all of the generals with respect to what he, Halder, and his group intended to do. One could not have expected the Commanding Generals and the army as a whole to have followed blindly the orders of the new "rulers" (*Machthabern*), which would have included the act of breaking their oath of loyalty. Without such preparation and enlightenment of the army, a *coup d'état* from above could never have succeeded. As I try to place myself into the situation as it existed in 1938 and 1939, I feel that a basic prerequisite for any coup would have been a clear realization on the part of both the army and the German people that their chosen leaders—Hitler and the Nazi Party—were not fulfilling their tasks properly but were instead misusing their mandate from the people by working toward the detriment of both people and nation. The existence of irrefutable proof would have been the only means to achieve this, since during 1938 and 1939 Hitler stood at the zenith of his power in the eyes of both people and army and had the unquestioned esteem and loyalty of the entire nation. On the other hand, within the officer corps confidence in the military leadership was beginning to erode, since it was generally felt that Hitler had been able to "streamroller" the *Generalität* in February 1938, at the time of the dismissal of General von Fritsch and a large number of other outstanding generals. Many of the officers, including myself, felt that Hitler, with the aid of Keitel and his informants in the army, was in a position to do with the army as he pleased. It must also be recognized that by 1938-1939 the bulk of the draftees and a large percentage of the recalled and newly commissioned officers of the line units had come out of the various Nazi Party organizations and the Hitler Youth. These people were not going to follow any *coup d'état* plans blindly under any circumstance. The Berlin-Potsdam garrisons, upon which General Halder "thought" he could depend, in case he were to put his plans into effect, represented only a very small part of the army. Any participation by the navy and the air force in Halder's plans was completely out of the question at this time. It is my belief that Halder's plans, as outlined by Professor Deutsch, indicated an overestimation of not only his own personal stature and his official position, but a miscalculation as well of the position and importance of "his" General Staff, since the latter did not possess any power of command (*Befehls und Kommandogewalt*) over any army unit. Furthermore, it was Hitler, not Halder, who could count on the

unquestioned loyalty of the bulk of the army and, more importantly, that of the German people.

I also feel that Halder's plans could not have been put into operation at the time, certainly not without the full agreement and cooperation of the Commander in Chief of the Army, General von Brauchitsch. But even if this had been the case, neither the army nor the officer corps would have been ready to assist their Commander in Chief in any *coup d'état* plans for he, and General Halder in his name, possessed command authority over the army only with respect to military matters. Both generals lacked the absolutely required political basis and popularity for such an action. In addition, the Commander in Chief of the Army represented (and commanded) only one branch of the military services. A revolutionary act on his part would have immediately destroyed the unity of the armed forces, since participation by the navy and the air force was out of the question. Lastly, it had been impossible since the events of February 1938 to effect a united stand among the generals. Under the prevailing circumstances it was impossible to obtain agreement by all, or for that matter even a majority, of the general officers for such an undertaking. The dismissal of Fritsch and the other highly qualified generals, many of whom had been well known within the army, had split the officer corps. Nor did the officer corps as a group possess the necessary insight to recognize that it had a duty to interpose itself against any unconstitutional actions by the political leadership. For example, it was not generally recognized or understood that the events of 30 June 1934 (the Roehm Affair) had in fact represented an unconstitutional act (*Rechtsbruch*) on the part of Hitler and the Party. The officer corps, as well as the public at large, viewed these events as unavoidable, legitimate actions by the government, since this was the official explanation given to both parliament (*Reichstag*) and the public. In my opinion, confidence in any general who was to lead the *coup d'état*, as for example Halder, was lacking. The army would not have believed that any one of the generals was honest in whatever he would have attempted to do, particularly since both the generals and the officer corps, due to Nazi propaganda and indoctrination, no longer possessed the high degree of popular prestige and confidence among the German people, which they had had prior to 1933. Neither would the vast majority of the population have endorsed such an attempt on the part of the military, but would in all probability—as far as

I am concerned, this is a certainty—have actively opposed such an attempt, particularly since the success of such an operation would have seemed rather doubtful in view of the strong and militant capability which existed within the para-military organizations of the Nazi Party, i.e., the S. A. (Storm Troops) and the S. S.

The so-called failure of the military leadership since 1933 (failure to protest against actions by Hitler and the Party at various critical moments after 1933) had brought forth a fear within the officer corps that Hitler was steadfastly pursuing his aim to strengthen his position vis-à-vis the military in order to “coordinate” (*gleichschalten*) the army, as he had done with all other national institutions. It was clear to us that the events of February 1938 marked the turning point in the relation between Hitler and the political leadership of the nation on the one hand, and the army on the other. This became even more evident as the leaders of the Nazi Party at all levels assumed an increasingly challenging attitude towards the officer corps. At the same time we were aware that the Nazi Party leadership, particularly at the lower levels, represented a ruling clique of inferior individuals who by pushing themselves into the foreground after 1933 had achieved their present position of leadership. Particularly in the smaller garrisons, everyone, including the members of the officer corps, was completely aware of who these people, the “little Hitlers,” were, their background and reputation. Their increasingly more open attempts to achieve greater “political coordination” of the army, i.e., bring the army into line with the aims of the Nazi Party, resulted in strong opposition by the officer corps which often led to open conflict between the local party and army leadership. All in all, this increased the continuing erosion of confidence in the military leadership. After February 1938 the army lacked a professional military leadership echelon that could represent its requirements and interests with sufficient authority vis-à-vis the Chief of State. Furthermore, as a result of the introduction of compulsory military service in 1935, the army was being inundated with officers, NCOs, and enlisted men, all of whom in civilian life had been members of the various political organizations of the Nazi Party. The vast majority of both enlisted men and NCOs was firmly wedded to the Hitler movement. Many of the younger officers were imbued with National Socialist philosophy, although the middle-aged group of officers (from the rank of captain on up and over 35 years) generally had

a critical, sometimes very critical, attitude toward the Nazi movement. On the other hand, the confidence of both enlisted men and NCOs in their officers remained firm, since it was based on the absolute and certain conviction that the officers would not order their men to do anything that would either be obviously criminal in nature or directed against the nation's welfare.

Although I never knew anything about General von Reichenau's plans (and his motives) to postpone the planned OKW West offensive, I personally thought that the army was neither ready nor capable at that time (autumn 1939) to effectively confront France and her allies, mainly because of the quick pace of German rearmament since 1935, and particularly the repeated reorganizations of the line units. I simply felt that Germany was not ready for war. My personal assessment of the military-political situation at this time was also influenced by memories of the First World War, since I was sure that any violation of neutral territory (Belgium or the Netherlands, or both) would bring England and in all probability the United States onto the scene. This in turn would mean the beginning of another world war. Lastly, I considered that the time was wrong for a military confrontation in 1939. I was strengthened in this assessment by my awareness from official documents that our raw material resources base was insufficient and that our allies were not at all prepared for war. General Thomas, Chief of the OKW War Economy and Armament Division (*Wehrwirtschafts-und Rüstungsstab*), whom I knew personally since he had been the senior General Staff officer of my division during World War I, had also told me on several occasions that we were unprepared to fight a major war.

The possibility that the war could expand gave rise to many discussions within the officer corps. Generally it was agreed that almost assuredly England would come to the assistance of France and that, insofar as we were able to judge the political situation, the United States would also come to the assistance of France, directly or indirectly. We had heard Roosevelt's speeches and felt that he would use the persecution of the Jews as a legitimate reason to follow up his previous "warnings" to Hitler with actual deeds. Whether American support would take the form of armament and raw materials aid or possibly even result in sending troops to France was a matter of lively discussion at the time.

Although my comments contain no new or startling information concerning the events described by Professor Deutsch, the views of a line officer may serve to shed some insight on the thinking that prevailed within the officer corps during that time. In this context it should be recognized that the vast majority of officers associated with the military opposition to Hitler, from 1938 to 1944, were either General Staff officers or had served on the General Staff; few, if any, line officers were among its participants.

FIELD MARSHAL ERICH von MANSTEIN

Professor Deutsch's paper contains, along with much that is correct, a number of biased judgements concerning the role of the German military leadership during the period 1933 to 1939, particularly with respect to some of the individuals involved. Moreover, he bases these largely on certain source materials, i.e., diaries, which are not available to me and whose trustworthiness as historical evidence seems, at least to me, questionable.

A *coup d'état* by the military, which would have had to include the removal of not only Hitler but also of Goering, Himmler, Goebbels, Ley, and the majority of the *Gauleiters* (provincial Nazi Party chiefs), never really had a chance of success during the period 1933 to 1939. In fact only during the final phase of the war, when at last parts of the population and the army had lost their confidence in Hitler, could such an undertaking have counted on at least a reasonable chance of success. Professor Deutsch speaks of the number of "missed opportunities" on the part of the generals to remove Hitler and thereby change the course of events in Germany between 1933 and 1939. Let me comment on some of these briefly.

On 30 June 1934, when Generals von Schleicher and von Bredow were murdered, a military *coup d'état* was impossible, because both the people and the army were relieved that Hitler by his action had prevented the danger of a "second" revolution, the threatened *Putsch* by the S.A. (Storm Troopers). Although Captain

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Roehm, Chief of the S.A., had not exactly planned to implement this revolution on the 30th of June, it was evident that it had to come, and soon, a realization which hung like a nightmare over the German people. At this time I was Chief of Staff of the Berlin Military District (*Wehrkreiskommando*) and received through my office a great deal of information, all of which indicated that a *Putsch* by the S.A. was definitely in the making.

After the murders of Generals von Schleicher and von Bredow, I personally asked my commanding general, the later Field Marshal von Witzleben, to demand an investigation of the case from General von Fritsch. Fritsch did in fact bring this matter up with the War Minister, General von Blomberg, who told him that Hitler had promised to furnish him documentary proof that Schleicher had been engaged in a conspiracy with the French ambassador. To my knowledge neither Blomberg nor Fritsch ever received such documents from Hitler. The declaration of honor which Field Marshal von Mackensen later enunciated for both generals before the Schlieffen Society was the only thing which could be achieved at the time. In this context it should be recognized that open rebellion by the army in this matter was impossible, particularly after Hindenburg, apparently falsely informed by Hitler, endorsed the latter's actions of 30 June 1934. Even more decisive at this time was the universal relief of both people and army that Hitler by his act of violence had thwarted the danger of a second revolution. Lastly, the oath of loyalty to the Commander in Chief bound the army to Hindenburg, who by endorsing Hitler's actions removed any possibility of military intervention after the events had taken place.

Turning to the next instance of "missed opportunities," it is my opinion that Hitler on 4 February 1938 took the commanding generals completely by surprise when he informed them of the so-called Fritsch affair. Due to the secrecy surrounding the entire affair up to this point, for which Fritsch himself was responsible since he had asked to have it kept quiet, only Hitler, Goering, General Beck, Colonel Hossbach, and naturally Himmler, were aware of what was going on. None of the generals had any knowledge of the accusations raised against Fritsch. Thus, when at the meeting of 4 February 1938 the charges and the so-called evidence against Fritsch were presented to them—the legal document was read in full—they were in no position, although none of them

believed the accusations, to immediately refute them. Unfortunately Fritsch had by this time already submitted his resignation and demanded an investigation of the charges against him. Should the generals have initiated a *coup d'état* in order to prevent the investigation? Had they done so, they would have found themselves immediately opposed by the people, the *Luftwaffe* and the S.S. In this connection it must also be borne in mind that after the introduction of universal military conscription, the army was no longer an absolutely dependable instrument in the hands of the military leadership, as it had been for instance during the *Reichswehr* period. The younger generation within the army was already a product of the schools of the Hitler Youth and the Nazi Party.

At this point I would like to insert a comment with respect to Professor Deutsch's statement that the vastly accelerated program of promotions after 1934 contributed to keeping the army satisfied, thereby allowing Hitler to pursue his domestic revolution. I myself was promoted to Colonel, Major General, and Lieutenant General during the period 1933 to 1939. These promotions did not come any faster than would have been the case during the *Reichswehr* period, and I would have been posted to the same positions in the army regardless of the events which occurred after 1933. My later promotions during the war to the rank of *Generaloberst* (Colonel-General) and Field Marshal were based on my battlefield record, a normal occurrence in any army. Perhaps my promotion to General of the Infantry in 1940 may have come a little faster than otherwise, but it was due partially to the wartime expansion of the army.

General Halder's plan in 1938 to arrest Hitler and possibly put him on trial should he insist on initiating an attack against Czechoslovakia was not known to me at the time. I only learned of it after the war during the Nuremberg Trials. It is possible that Halder obtained the consent and assistance for his plan of the commanding general in Berlin, General von Witzleben, as well as that of the commanders of the infantry division stationed near Berlin and other close-by armored divisions. I seriously doubt, however, that the troops would have followed their leaders should they have tried to implement the contemplated action. It is easy to imagine how Hitler would have defended himself before a tribunal and most certainly would have placed the guilt for having prevented a favor-

able (German) solution of the Sudeten Question on the army. Moreover, it seems somewhat absurd to expect soldiers to carry out a *coup d'état* in order not to have to fight! Actually the Munich Conference made any planned intervention illusory, but on the other hand, it immensely increased Hitler's prestige; and as a result it was generally assumed in 1939 that Hitler would be able to achieve his objectives in the Polish Question without having to go to war. This assumption was further strengthened among the military leadership by his cancellation of the order to attack during the last days of August 1939.

With respect to Professor Deutsch's account of the continuation of a military conspiracy during the winter of 1939-1940, I know nothing, although I was at that time Chief of Staff to General von Rundstedt. I am also unaware of any conversations which General von Stülpnagel is supposed to have had with the three Army Group commanders, namely von Rundstedt, von Bock, and von Leeb, during this time. If General Halder actually continued to pursue his plans for a *coup d'état* and attempted to get General von Brauchitsch to go along with it, the knowledge of such plans must have been confined to a most select group within the Army High Command (OKH). However, the position and attitudes of the younger members of the officer corps with respect to any such plans still remains in my opinion the largest question mark and the factor upon which the entire success of such an operation depended.

I cannot go along with Professor Deutsch's inference that the atrocities in Poland played a role in strengthening any military opposition to Hitler in the autumn of 1939, since these were not generally known among the leaders of the Western front. Within my own Army Group Command we had only learned that General Blaskowitz had taken steps against criminal acts of the SS in Poland and as a result had been removed from his position as Commander in Chief of the German occupation forces.

As far as the attitudes of the three commanding generals of the Western Army Groups toward a *coup d'état* are concerned, it should be realized that they and their troops were tied to their military positions facing French and British forces. Furthermore, in the event of a *coup d'état* there would not have been any need for them. For in my opinion, it would have been necessary to carry out such a plan with only a few, but dependable, divisions in Berlin,

while the task of the armies standing on the Western Front would have been to prevent any intervention by either the French or the British. Under such circumstances a successful *coup d'état* under the leadership of the Commander in Chief of the Army would not have jeopardized the unity of the armed forces. But the question still remains: could one have found dependable divisions for such an attempt?

The events during the winter of 1939-1940, which led to the conflict between Hitler and OKH, centered around the *timing* of the Western offensive. OKH was correct in its opinion, in which it was fully supported by the commanding generals of the three Army Groups and many of their subordinate army commanders, that an offensive during the late autumn period or during the winter months would not have a chance to succeed. The main trumps of the *Wehrmacht*, the armored units and the *Luftwaffe*, would have been unable to exert their full effect during this time of the year, while the newly formed divisions were still not sufficiently trained and built up to engage, in either autumn 1939 or winter 1940, in an offensive, the purpose of which was to achieve a military decision. It was this matter which led to the break between Hitler and Brauchitsch.¹ Fortunately the weather made sure that the offensive could not begin before the early spring months!

It can be assumed that both Brauchitsch and Halder hoped by a postponement of the offensive to create opportunities for a peace settlement. But while on the one hand Hitler was not ready to agree to an acceptable peace, England, on the other hand, would have demanded the complete restoration of Poland as a primary pre-condition for any peace negotiations, a condition which Hitler could not fulfill, since half of Poland was by this time already in Soviet hands.

Professor Deutsch relates that General Halder began to change his mind with respect to his previous plans to overthrow Hitler after November 1939. In this context I believe it is fair to say that neither the Army High Command nor Hitler anticipated the possibility of a quick defeat of France. For this reason the first operations plan had as its objective only the defeat of as many of the French-British forces in Belgium as possible and the conquest of part of the French northern coast as a basis for continued operations against England. Only the continually proposed (and later on

accepted) operations plan of Army Group A (von Rundstedt), which later became known under the nickname "Scythe Stroke," led to the complete defeat of France.²

One cannot speak of a deterioration in the relationship between the resistance groups and the *Generalität*, since such relations existed possibly with some generals but certainly not with the *Generalität* at large.

In this connection I find it hard to believe, as will anyone who knew General Beck, that he would ally himself with a man like Oster. Under no circumstances would General Beck have condoned an act of *Landesverrat* (national treason), which Oster committed by informing the enemy of the timetable for the planned Western offensive.

With reference to Hitler's remarks to General Halder at the time of their first meeting, as cited by Professor Deutsch, I feel that if these are true, General Halder should have immediately declared that under such conditions he would not be able to serve as Chief of the General Staff.

The alleged remark of General von Rundstedt, ("If I draw this sword, it will break in my hand"), seems to me to be improbable. Although General von Rundstedt had a habit of expressing himself often in a rather drastic manner, he never used this form of pathetic expression to convey his thoughts.

Let me conclude by saying that in my opinion the decisive factor remains, for reasons which I have tried to illuminate above, that the *Generalität* never had a chance to stage a successful *coup d'état*, except perhaps during the last few months of the war.

NOTES

1. See Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, *Lost Victories*, edited and translated by Anthony G. Powell (Chicago, 1958), pp. 75-79, 83-87.
2. For a more detailed account of the events surrounding the development of the final operations plan for the Western Offensive and the invasion of France, see *ibid.*, pp. 94-126.

GENERAL FRANZ HALDER

The theme of Professor Deutsch's paper is indeed one which tempts and stimulates great interest among the general public, mainly because of the secrets which still remain concerning many of the associations of the military resistance movement, just as this is the case with most questions concerning the operations of the German *Abwehr* before and during the war. But the subject remains one of the most difficult to investigate and describe. These difficulties, in my opinion, concern two major aspects of the topic. First of all, the active resistance of a military leader against the political power of the state is something quite shocking in German history and contrary to German military tradition. For this reason such a phenomenon could not receive a just evaluation from Germans, and certainly one cannot expect this to occur abroad. Anyone who himself participated in the resistance movement knows that it is impossible to approach such an analysis and description with only general conceptions concerning the social and political position of the officer corps during that time. The reasons which drove those individuals, who were the driving force in the military resistance, are so varied that one cannot progress with general catchwords but only with personal knowledge of those who decisively influenced the military resistance movement. This knowledge was not available to Professor Deutsch, nor can it be replaced by questioning "third persons."

Anyone who personally knew the leading or most active individuals of the military resistance does not need the ability to analyze them psychologically to know that the majority of them were certainly not what one would call normal or average. Aside from their military professional capabilities and accomplishments, these men were frequently avowed fanatics. The inner urge to oppose the authority of the state actively and thereby to intervene in the fate of the nation presupposed an inner high tension, which with some degenerated into an "idée fixe." Thus, they failed to see (or perhaps refused to see) the difficulties and dangers connected

Translated by Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen.

with the implementation of the final objective, not only with respect to the military actions but, more importantly, with respect to the nation as a whole. This had little to do with the courage to act and in many instances, which I still drastically recall, verged on the area of psychopathology. The second major aspect, one which the author acknowledges himself, is the lack of trustworthy sources and documentation. It lies in the nature of the subject, namely a conspiracy, that in a dictatorship such extremely dangerous thoughts are generally not made a matter of record; thus documents are lacking. Rather such thoughts were discussed verbally, at times even to the point of reaching binding agreements. But in such verbal discussion the danger of partial or even complete misunderstandings often occurs, which is magnified when the "spoken word" is passed on to third parties. This has been the case in the personal notes and diaries which have appeared since the war and which will probably appear in still larger quantities in the future.

In this context a difference which is based on the individual personality can be noticed. General Beck, the main figure of the resistance against Hitler, sought an exchange of ideas with like-minded persons, including those who did not belong to the military circles. Beck had the inner urge, possibly because of a need for his own clarification, to put his thoughts on paper. Due to his particular historical inclination, he was in the habit of recording for himself the content of the more important discussions and conferences, in order to show future historians the specific process of development. It is known that these collected notes by General Beck, together with letters and other materials, fell into the hands of the Gestapo at the time of his arrest. Beck's records of our conversations were read to me for hours, word for word, during my imprisonment by the Gestapo, and their existence did not exactly make my situation any easier. I do not know whether Beck's collection of records survived the collapse of the Third Reich or was destroyed by the Gestapo along with countless other documents. For this reason, I do not know whether these documents, entirely or in part, were available to the author. In any case they have found a response within the circle with whom Beck used to exchange his ideas, and in this manner they have found their way in varying degrees into the notes and records of others. Since then, they to some extent have become available to researchers and have been used in recent publications.

The other circle of the military resistance against Hitler, which had its focal point in my own person, avoided any written records. Only in such singular and urgent instances, as for example during the winter of 1939-40 when it became necessary to have written records for the implementation of practical actions, since these included several different forces, did I allow these to be made. For this reason, there is much less actual source material available from this circle of resistance; most of it consists more of "rumors" and assumptions.

This difference in available documentation cannot be without effect on the researcher. As a result, the information from sources associated with the Beck circle shows up much more clearly and distinctly in Professor Deutsch's paper than information concerning the small resistance group within the OKH, centered around myself. This difference will probably continue to exist in the future, and for this reason places the figure of General Beck into the foreground of any discussion concerning the military resistance to Hitler, in a manner which will assign greater personal influence to this outstanding individual than he, in my opinion, actually had. Similar circumstances pertain to Admiral Canaris, who knew how to surround himself always with a cloak of strictest secrecy and who used the less careful, and frequently even careless, General Oster as his tool.

Historiography can only overcome the difficulties with respect to the lack of information concerning the military resistance by the most thorough and critical analysis of the available source material. Perhaps the currently available sources are not sufficient for such an analysis. At any rate, I cannot help but feel that Professor Deutsch's paper has not reached the maximum in this respect and for this reason is much too much influenced by the more readily available source materials from the Beck circle. This explains why I, as a participant in the events described in the paper, regard it in part one-sided.

The second major area of difficulty which had to be taken into account in the opposition against Hitler lies in the mentality of the German soldierly spirit at that time in the *Reichswehr*. It lacked uniformity. Military discipline was considered the primary task within the *Reichswehr*, and military training was conducted in a most effective and successful manner. However, an alignment or

even coordination of political thinking was not possible within the *Reichswehr* because of the influence of General von Seeckt, who by necessity kept it away from politics. The German officer, as a member of German society at large, was certainly at all times interested in the political questions of the day; in his historical and ideological views he certainly was not removed from the influences of his social stratum. Furthermore, the German officer certainly had his own personal political ideas, although these were not openly discussed within the officer corps during Seeckt's tenure and, therefore, could not be discussed and refined within the officer corps. The *Reichswehr*, established by the former leadership of the Imperial Army, was generally conservative and tradition-bound in outlook. Individually, however, the officer corps' opinions about political questions varied greatly. This difference, which was often covered by the catchword "the officer corps," became predominant at that moment at which a purely personal decision "for" or "against" the ideas of Adolf Hitler had to be made by the individual officer. I might mention in passing that in this respect the differences in thinking between the North German and the South German contingents, which played a not insignificant role, have been largely left unnoticed.

The same pertains to the so very often misused and wrongly applied term of "the generals" (*Generalität*). Great wars have a tendency to level matters. The characteristic figures of the Prussian generals, so well known from history, had disappeared. The *Reichswehr*, with respect to its training accomplishment, was an admirable institution, in which, however, one could not notice any molding influence in political matters by the top military leadership. The officer corps, exposed to the external influences of the postwar period after 1918, was a professional community without a binding internal political core. Certainly the authority of the military superiors and discipline bound the officer corps together in such a manner that it was impossible from the outside to notice the internal differences. However, at the moment when the officer was faced with the idea of becoming actively engaged against the legal political leadership, an idea so contrary and shocking to his world of ideas, these differences emerged decisively. A unification of the officer corps, beyond the use of the drastic method of the command power, was not possible; this was clearly recognized by all army leaders, and for this reason they were extremely cautious

in their attempts to influence their troops against Hitler. Let me also mention in passing that the collective term of "the generals" (as used in the paper) combines a very large number of persons who did not exercise any power, but were in administrative positions and, therefore, unable to exercise any influence on the troops. Professor Deutsch's statement that with time the influence of Nationalist Socialist propaganda among the younger officers increased and even reached into the middle-range leadership echelon is correct. This became even more evident when, after the Polish campaign, general mobilization was implemented and the many newly formed divisions were filled up with young National Socialists.

For this reason one must be very careful in applying "common conceptions" to the generals as a group. It is my personal opinion that the traditional subordination of the military to the responsible commander-in-chief of the armed forces (Hitler) prohibited the generals from taking any steps which could have been considered as an open refusal on their part to obey his orders. This would have been the case, even if General von Brauchitsch himself would have asked them to do so, for through many generations, particularly under the monarchy, a firm bond of trust between the national leadership and the top military leadership had been established. The idea of a revolt by the commanding generals against the national leadership was absolutely unthinkable. This is particularly applicable to the period before World War II, since at this time any existing controversy or disagreement between the military and the civilian leaderships hardly pertained to military questions but concerned largely political matters; and politics had always been the responsibility of the national civilian leadership group!

In this context, I will admit that General von Brauchitsch was perhaps not a strong enough personality and therefore not capable of actually leading a generals' revolt. However, I personally fully understand why he, who was a very intelligent and sensitive individual and who knew Hitler and his demagogic capabilities, did not think that he had the strength to lead the generals into an open confrontation with the political leadership. In the past, Hitler had proved often enough that he could silence any opposition on the part of the generals through the power of his personality and his demagogy. Brauchitsch had to take this into consideration even had he been able to get together the majority of the commanding

generals for such a confrontation with Hitler, which I personally doubt.

Let me say a few words about Beck and his relationship with the generals after his resignation in 1938. The arguments, by this time well known, between Beck and von Brauchitsch undermined Beck's position among the generals' group. In these discussions with von Brauchitsch, Beck unfortunately did not always abide by the common forms of military conduct accorded to a superior, especially since he attacked von Brauchitsch, who was after all the commander of the army, in a rather tactless manner among larger circles of the *Generalität*. Thus, if after his resignation, his former colleagues did not make his home the center of any common efforts for the overthrow of Hitler, it was certainly not because of any cowardly fear of Hitler on their part, but rather the general feeling that Beck's method of opposing Hitler was without effect. In addition, they considered his methods decidedly detrimental to the reputation of the military leadership and the officer corps. Naturally Beck was being watched after his retirement, but apparently those who visited him were not taken seriously by the Gestapo—perhaps rightly so!

The author is apparently unaware that the psychological situation in Germany with respect to an armed conflict with Poland was entirely different from that prevailing in 1938 when Hitler threatened a military attack against Czechoslovakia. German national feelings toward Czechoslovakia were approximately the same as those toward Belgium and Denmark; a popular animosity against Czechoslovakia did not exist. The military action which Hitler threatened to take in 1938 would, if executed, have been regarded by most Germans as an act of wanton aggression. Since existing international military alliances would have brought about French military intervention in this case, the German people resolutely rejected any military action against Czechoslovakia.

Poland, however, was a different case. The conflict between Poland and Prussia is historically very old; contemporary national antagonisms also entered into this relationship. Above all, Prussia was unable to accept the loss of large and valuable pieces of territory, settled by Germans for many centuries, which it had been forced to cede to Poland under the Versailles Peace Treaty. Particularly in northeastern Germany animosity against Poland existed

openly and the idea of military revenge, while perhaps not exactly popular, was certainly not unsympathetic to large circles of the upper classes in Germany. Thus, while the German people would have opposed a German-initiated attack against Czechoslovakia, this did not hold true in the case of Poland.

With respect to Poland, any public opposition to war was largely shrouded by historical resentments. Since the officer corps, as part of the nation, mirrored its feelings, the idea of a war against Poland was not unpopular at all among the military leadership. An important role in such considerations was the feeling of certain military superiority over Poland.

The description of the events in the fall of 1939 is correct insofar as there was indeed a general rejection of any kind of war of aggression against the Western powers which would disregard the status of neutral nations. This was due to a number of reasons. As far as the field commanders were concerned, an important reason was the rather noticeable shortcoming in the structure and training of the army which had shown up during the Polish campaign. The military leadership, all of whom were veterans of World War I, became quite aware of the amount of work still required to have the army reach the same level of proficiency which they themselves had seen and experienced during World War I. To accomplish this, time was required. A fall offensive with the new divisions, which had been called up after the end of the Polish campaign and which were still in the process of being formed, seemed to them extremely risky. In addition, the divisions transferred from Poland to the Western front had shown in several instances some unpleasant signs of an antiwar attitude; these troops, who had returned sound and safe from Poland, had had enough war. The malicious catchword of "the generals' campaign" (for the planned West offensive) circulated throughout the army and became of considerable concern to all command agencies. In addition, a war of aggression against France and England was generally unpopular within the officer corps, which still remembered the events of World War I. In particular the officers were afraid that any German offensive would be stopped again half-way, thereby bringing once again the danger of a new trench war. These thoughts were shared by the commanders and staffs of the various Army Groups, and resulted in the memoranda sent to the OKH, as mentioned by the author, where their thoughts found general agreement.

For these reasons, and convinced that it was strategically more advantageous to let the Western powers initiate the attack and seek a German decision in a counteroffensive, Brauchitsch did his utmost to deter Hitler from initiating a fall offensive in 1939. The negative results of his attempts in this respect are known.

That during the resulting tensions between OKH and OKW, which lasted for several weeks in the fall of 1939, the ideas of an overthrow of the Hitler regime came to the fore again and were in fact intensified, is only to be expected. However, in contrast to those among the military resistance group who pressed relentlessly and without restraint for a decision (including the Major Grosscurth mentioned by the author), I had to consider not only all possibilities concerning the execution of such an undertaking but also its consequences. Perhaps it would have been possible to capture Hitler's headquarters with several armored divisions, but what next? Such an action, by the way, could only have been carried out within the narrow area of operational command assigned to OKH, and the troops to be used for this purpose would have had to be deceived as to the true purpose of their action. It was impossible to perceive what the consequences of such a deception would have had on the cohesion of the army. Most importantly, however, the field command agency (*Feld-Kommandostelle*) of the OKH, namely the General Staff, had hardly any influence over the vast German home territory which was under the control of the Home Army. Since this area had to be considered loyal to Hitler, due to the influence of the party, the SA, and the SS, the outbreak of civil war was therefore a foregone conclusion. It must also be realized that at this time the combined French and British armies had completely deployed and were stationed opposite our Western front ready to go into action at any time. In 1945, as a prisoner of war, I talked with leading Allied generals on this matter. I asked them what they would have done if a civil war had broken out in Germany in 1939. They smiled and replied, "You, as a professional soldier, can figure that out yourself. . . ."

Brauchitsch, whom I sounded out concerning my ideas for a possible overthrow of Hitler, shared my belief that the risk was too great and that we should try to delay the date for the West offensive, which Hitler was determined to initiate, at least until spring 1940. This was finally accomplished.

The idea (mentioned by the author) to eliminate Brauchitsch from the plans to overthrow Hitler and issue the necessary orders in his name, an action desired by those who were most active in the military resistance, I refused to condone. Decisive for this decision was the fact that my personal loyalty to General von Brauchitsch, my commander, appeared to exclude such a step for me. Another factor was that no one could force the Army Groups and army commanders to follow any orders issued by the Chief of the General Staff under his own authority. It was common knowledge that my office did not have any authority to issue such orders. Thus, it would have depended on the judgment of the troop commanders, if and how far they were going to follow such orders.

I personally have proof that my Bavarian origin would have caused at least a silent opposition among the commanders, who in many instances came from the old Prussian military families; and for this reason, it would have made doubtful the direct implementation of any orders issued by me.

Lastly, let me explain my conduct on November 5, 1939, during the argument between Hitler and Brauchitsch. Hitler threatened Brauchitsch during their private discussion that he would find means to eradicate the "spirit of Zossen." This remark to Brauchitsch underscored the warning which I had received several days before from my confidants in the OKW. They had told me that Hitler apparently had received information concerning the conspiracy plans in the Army High Command (OKH) and the individuals involved. Since I was aware that in the Third Reich "all walls had ears" and nothing could remain hidden from the dictator for very long, especially if it threatened his position, I took the threat Hitler made to Brauchitsch very seriously. Since I knew the resistance group in the OKH was feverishly working on plans to overthrow Hitler and I had been informed that written records were being kept, I ordered these immediately destroyed. This was not at all a "panic" reaction but just prudence! One of my closest associates retained copies of the most important of these papers. Some years later, when these were found by the Gestapo, nothing remained for him to do but to commit suicide. This may serve as proof of the danger which occurred when one kept written records and at the same time as justification of my order for their destruction.

All these relationships must be known in order to evaluate without prejudice the individual actions of the decisive personalities within the resistance movement against Hitler. I personally believe that the time for this has as yet not come, although I do not overlook the fact that lately, particularly in Germany, several beginnings have been made by research institutions. These have gone far deeper in their analysis of the subject than that achieved by previous authors.

In summary, it is my personal impression of Professor Deutsch's paper that it is marked by a limited penetration (in depth) of the subject. In addition, it shows personal sympathies and antipathies, which are at times surprisingly evident, which probably have their basis for the most part in the limitation and one-sidedness of the available source materials. Certainly it is the established right of the historian to express his judgments, based on the available sources, although he must count on the fact that more thorough research may not completely agree with his judgment. However, it is to be welcomed that a recognized historian has involved himself with these questions at all.

In conclusion, I would like to caution anyone against drawing conclusions and projections for the present from the existing and still incomplete pictures of the military resistance against Hitler. Our present time, which is moving away more and more from the Frederician tradition of absolute obedience, and the increasing imperilment of the concept of authority in all areas, will create in the future, if similar tensions between armed forces and political leadership arise, new conditions and its own norms, which only a clairvoyant leadership, united closely with its troops, will be able to withstand.

The responsibility for the information concerning General von Reichenau and his supposedly heroic fight against Hitler, I must leave to the author. I did not hear anything about it during the fall of 1939 or even later on.

GENERAL ADOLF HEUSINGER

Professor Deutsch has made an extremely worthwhile contribution to the difficult subject of the role of the military in Nazi Germany. I find myself in agreement with him concerning the major points of his thesis. Yet, in my opinion, it is almost impossible for others, particularly non-Germans, fully to understand the situation that existed in Germany during the period 1933 to 1939. Only those who were in Germany and lived through those times can actually understand all facets of the situation. For this reason I consider Dr. von Luttichau's commentary outstanding and most appropriate in every respect. In fact, I have not read anything that is better or more to the point concerning the problems of the military opposition and the position of the officer corps and other civilian resistance groups.

With respect to Professor Deutsch's detailed analysis of the role of the military under Hitler, I can only add a few remarks. First, I do not agree with his rather negative judgment of the role played by the *Reichswehr* during the Weimar Republic. In my opinion the cause for the aloofness of the *Reichswehr* during these years was the direct result of the inability of the political (civilian) leadership to establish a valid relationship to the military. This is particularly true of the leadership echelons of the Social Democratic Party. Kurt Schumacher, a member of the Social Democratic Party during the Weimar Republic and after 1945 the chairman of the party in West Germany, confirmed this to me on several occasions since 1945. Because of this lack of mutual confidence and trust, the *Reichswehr* was pushed into a position of isolation within society. At the same time, the military leaders were aware of the potential threat of Hitler and the Nazi movement and considered this in a much more serious vein than Professor Deutsch intimates. They warned against the threat of Hitler to the Republic as part of their responsibility for the internal security of the state. I am referring in his context specifically to the discussions between *Reichspraesident* Hindenburg and General von Hammerstein in January

Translated by Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen.

1933, in which the latter strongly advocated the official outlawing of the Nazi movement. On the other hand, I fully agree with Professor Deutsch's statement that the *Reichwehr* and its leadership hoped and believed that they would be able to control and contain Hitler.

I am unaware that Hitler already considered the possibility of an international conflict in 1936, particularly after the introduction of German rearmament. I would like to know the sources upon which Professor Deutsch bases this statement. I must disagree with Professor Deutsch's characterization of General Jodl as "a cold and ambitious individual" and Colonel Schmundt as "an alcoholic." These are very harsh generalizations, and as far as Jodl is concerned, incorrect. I personally knew Jodl since 1932 and am probably in a better position to judge him as a person. Schmundt was not an alcoholic; on the other hand, he was completely under the power of Hitler, whom he revered. I had my first disagreement with Schmundt on this subject in 1938, when he called Hitler the greatest military leader, one whom we, the military, did not want to acknowledge as such. Professor Deutsch's assertion that Hitler contemplated making General Beck Fritsch's successor in February 1938 is unknown to me. I don't believe that this is true. Equally new (and unbelievable) to me is Professor Deutsch's statement that Beck refused this appointment. I was one of Beck's closest associates during this time and would certainly have known about it.

With respect to the planned fall offensive (October 1939), the general nonconcurrence of the military leadership was primarily based on the fact that it did not consider the army sufficiently prepared at this time for such an offensive task. Another, although secondary, reason was the general concern among the military leadership over the anticipated weather conditions in the area of planned operations during the month of November. In this context, I might add that General Stülpnagel's study did not have as its basic premise an attack on the Maginot line; such an operational maneuver was not considered by anyone. Rather the study investigated the possibilities of an encirclement of the Maginot Line.¹

Reichenau's memorandum and his personal opposition toward the planned fall offensive are unknown to me. His activities in this respect, if true, were carried out without the knowledge of the

Army Supreme Command (OKH). I personally consider it doubtful that because of these actions he was later on not considered for the position of Chief of Staff. (In the spring of 1941, he was the commander of an army on the Russian front.) Reichenau was a strong leader but lacked special operational qualifications. Already in the 1920s he was favorably inclined toward Hitler and the National Socialist ideology. He later on recognized the dangers to the armed forces posed by the Nazi Party, but was unable to do anything about it.

It is my opinion that after the successful conclusion of the Polish campaign, it would have been impossible to initiate any attempt to overthrow Hitler. I doubt seriously that the vast mass of the officer corps would have gone along with Halder's plans. Only an extremely quick and decisive success of such a plan could have possibly brought the officer corps on his side, provided that Goering would have joined the undertaking. Among the military leaders discussed by Deutsch in this connection, I would think that General Ritter von Leeb would have joined only after the success of the plan would have become fairly obvious. However, neither would they have tried to prevent any of the steps planned by Halder; they merely would have waited to see the outcome of the attempted coup. Whether the military leadership could have expected the full support of the nation, seems questionable to me. Only if it had been possible to eliminate Goebbels's "propaganda machine" could this have been expected.

There is no doubt that a generation gap existed within the officer corps. The older officer generation remained skeptical of the ideology and the slogans of the Nazi Party as well as the speeches and utterances of the political leadership. However, the younger officers went along with these. It was the classic difference between the more cautious mood of the older generation and that of the younger generation, full of hopes. Many of my fellow officers and I myself thought and worried about the possible expansion of the war beyond the scope of the limited geographic areas and objectives before the start of the Polish campaign (August 1939). Despite the great and quick successes of the military operations both in Poland and France, such thoughts were only temporarily pushed into the back of our minds.

During the period October to December 1939 I had several

conversations with Generals Brauchitsch, Halder, Stülpnagel, and Jodl concerning the planned Western offensive. The theme of these discussions always centered on the same major points: the timing of the offensive and what was to be the main objective. With respect to the objectives, four possible solutions were considered. First, a main thrust through Belgium; secondly, a thrust across the Meuse River with a turning movement along the line Namur-Maubeuge in the direction of Antwerp; thirdly, a thrust in the general direction of Amiens and the Channel coast; lastly, variable points of thrust with a final decision to be made only after the infantry divisions had successfully crossed the Meuse River just north of Sedan. This last solution further depended upon the quickness with which the British Expeditionary Forces would advance into Belgium.² Another topic of discussion concerned the problems anticipated by the armored column in the planned offensive. In my discussions with Guderian, the latter voiced the most serious doubts about the contemplated crossing of the Meuse River.³ Jodl, on the other hand, characterized the contemplated crossing of the Meuse River along the Maginot line with these words: "If one chooses to go along such *Schleichweg* (covert means), one cannot afford to be caught . . .!"

Lastly, I wish to add a few remarks about the personalities of some of the military leaders whom Professor Deutsch has singled out as major actors in the events of 1938 and 1939, based on my continuous and close associations with them.

General von Brauchitsch was an individual without faults, but he had a "soft" nature. As a military leader he was most outstanding in questions concerning training; however, he was unsure of himself in operational matters and definitely inferior to Manstein as a strategist. Certainly not a convinced National Socialist, he came completely under the influence of the strong and unscrupulous personality of Hitler.

Halder was an individual of a soft nature with a variety of interests. As a military professional he was the perfect "Chief of Staff" type: extremely diligent and thorough, but "without the flair for operations (*ohne den operativen Funken*)."

From the beginning, he viewed the National Socialist movement with skepticism and soon rejected it. In operational matters he was unable, as Chief

of the General Staff, to achieve anything with Hitler, since the latter refused to accept Halder's attempts to "teach" him strategy. By the way, the statement that Halder carried a loaded pistol with him when he briefed Hitler must be a fairy tale. I would be interested to know the basis for this.

NOTES

1. Adolf Heusinger, *Befehl im Widerstreit; Schicksalsstunden der deutschen Armee 1923-1945* (Tübingen, 1950), pp. 72-76.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-86.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

Part IV

AMERICAN NAVAL LEADERS IN WORLD WAR II

THE COMMAND PERSONALITY: SOME AMERICAN NAVAL OFFICERS OF WORLD WAR II

E. B. Potter

The character and personality of the admiral and the general have always been of professional as well as popular interest. They are of professional interest because character and personality, as well as intellect and training, enter into leadership and decision-making. The way they enter differs somewhat as regards the tactical commander and the strategic commander. That is because the tactical commander, particularly at sea, must usually make his decisions without consultation, whereas in modern warfare the strategic commander nearly always makes his decisions in conference or as the result of conference. General Eisenhower went so far as to say: "It is my conviction that no commander could normally take an oath that a particular plan or conception originated within his own mind."¹

If the commander as a person is still worthy of professional attention in the study of warfare, it is important to point out that we may lose a clear understanding of our top World War II naval commanders, strategic and tactical, through lack of adequate, timely biographies, through lack or loss of biographic sources, and through misconceptions or stereotyping.

The longest biography of any American World War II naval leader is the 600,000-word *Fleet Admiral King*, "as told" by Chief of Naval Operations King to Walter Muir Whitehill. This book is subtitled "A Naval Record," and it is exactly that. Personalities scarcely emerge, least of all King's.

In the memory of naval officers who served in World War II, King was rough, tough, and brilliant; some would say mean, tough and brilliant. Ladislav Farago, in *The Tenth Fleet*, has described

this stereotype most strikingly: "Tall, gaunt and taut, with a high dome, piercing eyes, aquiline nose, and a firm jaw he looked somewhat like Hogarth's etching of Don Quixote but he had none of the old knight's fancy dreams. He was a supreme realist with the arrogance of genius. . . . He was a grim taskmaster, as hard on himself as others. He rarely cracked a smile and had neither time nor disposition for ephemeral pleasantries. He inspired respect but not love, and King wanted it that way."² Samuel Eliot Morison echoes that last point, saying that King "was more feared than loved."³

Of King's brilliance there can be no question. For a single example of his strategic insight, on 2 March 1942, when Americans were making a last stand on Bataan, when Java was about to fall, when the apparently invincible Japanese were on the march everywhere—at this grim period Admiral King laid before the startled Joint Chiefs of Staff a plan for an Allied offensive via the New Hebrides, the Solomons, and the Bismarcks. "In other words," says Morison, "he anticipated the entire course of the war in the South Pacific to the middle of 1944."⁴

As for the cold, harsh, aloof, and humorless stereotype of King, I accepted it without much thought, particularly since my own fleeting contacts with the admiral had tended to confirm it. Then, in 1967, I received from Ladislas Farago a letter in which he went into his wartime relationship with Admiral King. Wrote Farago: "I had every reason to love him with all the gratitude and devotion at my command." This is the Farago who stated that King "inspired respect but not love." Farago went on: "I found him more human, more accessible, and more intellectually competent than the starched man that emerges from his strange biography. I would like to see nothing more than a biography that does justice to him."⁵

On this hint I began questioning everybody I encountered who had been associated with Admiral King, particularly during World War II. My quest culminated with long taped interviews with two of King's wartime flag secretaries, retired Vice Admirals George L. Russell and George C. Dyer, U.S. Navy.

My researches have confirmed that King was indeed tough, that he had a low boiling point, and that he was intolerant of

stupidity, inefficiency, and laziness. He hated dishonesty and pretension, despised yes-men, and had no patience with Hamlet-types. And he could be ruthless. On one occasion, for example, he sent one of his aides, a commander, to relieve a rear admiral—with orders that the rear admiral be out of the Navy Department by three o'clock that afternoon.

I learned too that the supposedly monolithic King had a weakness. He was not at his best in judging men. As one of King's associates put it, "Every great man has a blind spot and his was personnel." Several cases may be cited of King's placing the wrong man in the wrong spot for the wrong reason.

I was convinced that in modern warfare a high-level decision-making body could not be run by fear. My investigation proved this theory to be correct. Once an officer gained King's confidence and respect, King in his dealings with him would drop his formal demeanor and could be delightfully informal. He was not witty, but he had a sense of humor, not subtle but hearty. His relations with those he admitted into his intimacy were warm and friendly.

"I notice," I said to Admiral Dyer, "that all able people who served with King wound up with affection for him."

"Oh, tremendous affection," said Dyer.⁶

Dyer's relationship with Admiral King began when the United States entered World War II. Dyer, then a commander, was in the Pacific as executive officer of the *Indianapolis*. Before the war was a month old, he was disgusted to receive orders to report to Washington for some unspecified "special duty." On arriving he was crestfallen to learn that he was to be Admiral King's flag secretary.

When Dyer reported to King for duty, the admiral sat looking him over. Finally he said, "You look unhappy."

"I am unhappy," replied Dyer. "I was executive officer of a fine cruiser in the war zone and I find myself ordered to shore duty in Washington. Why shouldn't I be unhappy?"

Another long pause.

"If I tell you why you're here," said King at last, "you may be just a little less unhappy. I was told by an officer for whose judgment I have great respect that if I wanted an officer who would spit in my eye when it was necessary to spit, I should send for you."⁷

King then arose, shook hands, and said, "There's lots of work to be done. Let's get to it."

"I had a wonderful year with him," says Dyer. "We had many terrible disputes in which he called me all kinds of names, but I never really had a problem. If you followed his strict rules, and if you produced, you had really no trouble."

Dyer's first job was to arrange for office space. Studying World War I records and finding that Admiral Sims had had a staff of 387, Dyer planned space for a staff of 400 for King. When he produced his report, King hit the overhead. He had, he said, run the Atlantic Fleet with a staff of 14, and he was damned if he was going to have a staff or more than 50 as Commander in Chief.

At the end of the year, in accordance with King's rotation policy, Dyer went back to sea. Wounded at Salerno, he spent four months in the naval hospital at Bethesda. On his arrival at Bethesda, Dyer, now a captain, received a note from King. When his wounds were nearly healed, he received another, in which King invited Dyer to pay him a call.

"Of course," says Dyer, "I was anxious to go down and see him. I was fond of him."

When he at length again entered King's office, the Admiral watched Dyer limp toward him, new medals on his chest. Finally King said with a small grin, "Ah, the returning war hero!"

"When I wrote you that invitation to call," continued King, "George Russell had just laid a piece of paper on my desk and I wanted you to see it."

Dyer took the piece of paper from King. It said that King's staff then numbered 416.

We now come to Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz. I believe that

Nimitz's personality as a wartime leader has also become a stereotype, though of a very different sort from that of Admiral King. The only biography of Nimitz that has appeared so far is my 15,000-word sketch in the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* of July 1966, which was written the week following his death.

It is a great pity that Admiral Nimitz did not write, or permit anyone else to write, his biography while he was alive. At one time he seemed inclined to let me do so, but when the Naval Institute in 1963 formally requested his assent and assistance in writing his biography, recommending me as author, Nimitz declined.

"I have long ago decided," he wrote, "that my biography should be written by my four children."⁸

The trouble was that neither Admiral Nimitz's son nor any of his daughters felt capable of writing the biography or, at any rate, the sort of biography they felt their father deserved. Moreover, Nimitz was opposed to the publishing of any narrative of his wartime experiences while he was alive. In 1965 he tentatively agreed to supply me with information for such an article in a World War II memorial edition of *Paris-Match*. Later, however, he telephoned me and canceled the agreement.

Nimitz's reluctance derived from what I can only call his obsessive discretion. He was annoyed by what he called the "rushing into print" of military and naval leaders, many reviving old controversies or starting new ones. Nimitz's discretion did not inhibit his private conversations with friends. He loved to reminisce about his wartime experiences and could be astonishingly frank.

When it came to making any sort of permanent record, however, Nimitz clammed up. He would commit nothing to tape and in his last years refused to speak on television or radio. Between 1956 and 1965 he wrote me 89 letters, nearly all by hand, some running several pages. Many of the letters of course concerned the book *Sea Power* he and I were working on, but others dealt with a variety of subjects. All are warm and friendly, but none are of any great historical importance, because whenever the letters touch on wartime or official matters they become very general, revealing no details.

Before he died, Nimitz turned his records over to the Division of Naval History. These, however, are mostly official papers, revealing little of Nimitz the man. Nimitz never heard a shot fired in anger in any war, he never engaged in public controversy, he was married once—happily. Might not a biography of Nimitz written chiefly from official records turn out to be a bland affair—as bland, say, as the Whitehill biography of King? Luckily, another source is still available in Nimitz's still-living friends and associates.

Still, I wonder if Nimitz's friends and associates are the most reliable of sources. It seems to me that the wartime Nimitz they are remembering is another stereotype. This is the Nimitz of later years, the sage of San Francisco Bay. To the shrine of this kindly old man, at Berkeley and later on Treasure Island, came large numbers of officers to pay homage and to talk Navy. Much of the early Nimitz was still there: the courtesy, the serenity, the exquisite balance of powers, the largeness of mind, and the natural gaiety of spirit that enabled him actually to enjoy his immense responsibility in World War II.

But Nimitz had ceased to reveal other characteristics that had marked him as a wartime leader. I refer particularly to his toughness and to his daring. "You know," Nimitz's driver of many years once said to me, "Admiral Nimitz used to be a lot more stern than he is now." Said Admiral George Russell: "Admiral Nimitz was a lot tougher than he's ever been given credit for."⁹

The truth of Admiral Russell's observation was demonstrated when the typescript of my Nimitz biography was submitted to several officers who had served closely with Admiral Nimitz in the war. I had ascribed on good authority several harsh remarks to Nimitz. His friends to a man insisted that these be deleted, saying, "This doesn't sound like Nimitz. I don't believe he said it." Significantly, Chester Nimitz, Jr., suggested no changes at all. Perhaps the son, more than others, remembered Daddy's hard side. The fact is that Nimitz was not explosive but he could, and did, make strong men wince with his measured words.

In thinking of the gentle old man of Nimitz's later years, we tend to forget also his extraordinary daring in World War II. On 28 May 1942, for example, when through cryptanalysis Nimitz knew that the entire Japanese Navy was heading for Midway and

the Aleutians with several times the strength he could muster in defense—at this dire moment Nimitz recommended landing marines in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi area. They could, he said, make good their position and build an airstrip before the enemy fleet, now all in the North and Central Pacific, could fight its battle and redeploy to the South. At that time, however, Guadalcanal was in General MacArthur's area of command, and MacArthur vetoed the proposal as too risky.¹⁰

A second example is Nimitz's plan for the invasion of the Marshall Islands in early 1944. After the shock of the heavy losses at Tarawa, Nimitz's commanders recommended a cautious plan for taking the Marshalls in two bites—outer islands first, then Kwajalein, the big Japanese headquarters at the center of the archipelago. To their shocked surprise Nimitz proposed bypassing the outer islands and assaulting Kwajalein alone—an operation which would leave the outer islands on the American line of communications. Admiral Nimitz called a conference in which he addressed each admiral and general by name and asked his opinion regarding what should be their first objective. The reply of each and every officer was, "Outer islands."

After a pause Nimitz announced quietly, "Well, gentlemen, our next target will be Kwajalein."¹¹

Afterwards, Nimitz's senior subordinates, Vice Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, and Marine Major General Holland M. Smith, came to Nimitz and protested his decision. Nimitz heard them out and then, without raising his voice, said, "Sitting behind desks in the United States are able officers who would give their right arms to be out here fighting the war. If you gentlemen can't bring yourselves to carry out my orders, I can arrange an exchange of duty with stateside officers who can. Make up your minds. You have five minutes."

This statement by Admiral Nimitz, which originally appeared in my typescript, drew such violent protests from the admiral's former associates that I finally deleted it in the interests of peace and harmony. Nevertheless, I had considerable confidence in the accuracy of the quotation, since my source was Admiral Nimitz himself.

It goes without saying that the protesting subordinates carried out the assault. As it turned out, the Japanese were thinking the way Nimitz's subordinates were. Convinced that the Americans would not dare drive for the central headquarters, they had left Kwajalein relatively undefended while strongly fortifying the outer islands. These, however, presented no serious problem, for first the carriers and then planes from Kwajalein and the Gilberts kept them safely pounded down.

Let us now examine the reputation of a couple of officers on the tactical level. On this level the most readily compared officers are Admiral Spruance and Admiral Halsey, who alternated in command of the Central Pacific Force—known as Fifth Fleet when commanded by Spruance, and Third Fleet when commanded by Halsey. Short, readable biographies of both admirals have appeared, but neither book is in any sense definitive.

Admirals Spruance and Halsey have been likened to Admirals Jellicoe and Beatty, successive commanders of Britain's Grand Fleet in World War I. Spruance was remote, austere, methodical, and intellectual, and was little known to the public. Halsey was dashing, colorful, somewhat slapdash, salty of tongue, a popular hero. In battle Spruance, like Jellicoe, twice turned away from the enemy and in the ensuing pursuit was never able to overtake him to inflict maximum damage—for which Spruance was sharply criticized. In battle Halsey, like Beatty, was tricked into pursuing a decoy fleet, for which he was sharply criticized.

Spruance's remoteness was intentional, and his explanation is simple, yet profound. Said he: "Personal publicity in a war can be a drawback because it may affect a man's thinking. A commander may not have sought it; it may have been forced upon him by zealous subordinates or imaginative war correspondents. Once started, however, it is hard to keep in check. In the early days of a war, when little about the various commanders is known to the public, and some general or admiral does a good and perhaps spectacular job, he gets a head start in publicity. Anything he does thereafter tends toward greater headline value than the same thing done by others, following the journalistic rule that 'Names make news.' Thus his reputation snowballs, and soon, probably against his will, he has become a colorful figure, credited with fabulous

characteristics over and above the competence in war command for which he has been conditioning himself all his life.

“His fame may not have gone to his head, but there is nevertheless danger of this. Should he get to identifying himself with the figure as publicized, he may subconsciously start thinking in terms of what his reputation calls for, rather than of how best to meet the actual problem confronting him. A man’s judgment is best when he can forget himself and any reputation he may have acquired, and can concentrate wholly on making the right decision.”¹²

Spruance thus explained why he refused to grant interviews and generally avoided journalists, “not through ungraciousness, but rather to keep his thinking impersonal and realistic.”

Spruance was also explaining, no doubt consciously, what happened to Admiral Halsey. For Halsey was very much a victim of his own publicity. In the dark early days of World War II, his carrier raids on Japanese bases, outrageously overrated by the press, made Halsey not only a national hero but, in the popular imagination, something of a superman. Halsey’s own bellicose statements couched in salty language delighted press and public and added to his bigger-than-life popular image. In newspapers he became “Bull Halsey,” nemesis of the Japanese.

When illness prevented Halsey from putting the capstone on his fame by commanding in the Battle of Midway, his determination to spectacularly sink the enemy was only increased. As he said to us not long afterward at the Naval Academy: “Missing the Battle of Midway was the greatest disappointment of my life—but I’ll sink those damned Jap carriers yet!”¹³ In the circumstances, given Halsey’s impulsive nature, it would be asking too much to expect him not to go dashing off from Leyte Gulf when he learned that there were enemy carriers to the north. When it was revealed that these carriers were merely planeless bait, sent specifically to draw Halsey away from the Leyte beachhead, one of the writers who had helped to create the super-Halsey now derided his action as “the Battle of Bull’s Run.”

Postwar revelations vindicated Spruance’s two turnaways. In the Battle of Midway, had he not turned east in the evening of 4 June 1942, he could hardly have avoided a night battle against

greatly superior forces. In the Battle of the Philippine Sea, had he advanced and attacked the Japanese carriers in the morning of 19 June 1944 no enemy force would have got between his fleet and the Saipan beachhead, as he feared. But the attack would have cost heavily in American planes, for the Japanese heavy surface ships were a hundred miles nearer than the Japanese big carriers. Our attacking planes would have passed going and coming through the intense antiaircraft fire of the surface vessels.

As it was, Spruance's fleet, in assuming a defensive posture, shot down 430 attacking Japanese planes while sustaining very minor damage. At this late period in the war, stripping Japanese carriers of planes was practically the equivalent of sinking the carriers themselves, for Japan had neither time nor fuel to train replacement aviators. Thereafter, the only use she made of her planeless carriers was bait to lure Admiral Halsey away from the Leyte Gulf beachhead the following October.

In short, in his second turnaway, Spruance did the right thing for what we now see to have been the wrong reason. In any case, his reputation is secure. One cannot help wondering, however, what his reputation would be if postwar revelations had shown that he achieved nothing by his turnaways, only missed golden opportunities.

An important reason for his caution is that Spruance was what in military jargon we call a "capabilities man." As Spruance himself says: "At the Naval War College in our Estimate of the Situation form we used to have: 'The enemy, his strength, disposition, and probable intentions.' Later, 'probable intentions' was changed to 'capabilities.' We found that there had been a tendency to decide what an enemy was *going* to do and lose sight of what he *could* do. I have seen just this happen in fleet problems at sea, and it is very dangerous."¹⁴ It goes without saying that a capabilities man with a vivid imagination can be paralyzed into a permanent defensive posture, but of course Spruance was much too intelligent to fall into that trap. "In making war," he said, "we try to minimize rather than to avoid danger."¹⁵

Admiral Halsey was a "probabilities man," that is, he tended to make up his mind what the enemy would probably do and acted accordingly. In this respect, as well as in his liking for publicity,

Halsey was in the Nelsonian tradition. When the French Mediterranean Fleet escaped out of Toulon in 1798, Nelson assumed that it was going by direct route to Egypt and sped thither. Finding no enemy there, he dashed off to the north just before the French, who had come by an indirect route, arrived off Alexandria. In 1805 when the French Mediterranean Fleet again escaped from Toulon, Nelson again dashed off eastward. At length realizing his mistake, he sped to the West Indies, whereupon the French fleet headed for the English Channel, its original objective. If Nelson had not been dealing with an incompetent and demoralized enemy, incapable of seizing opportunities, and if his wild-goose chases had not been followed by spectacular victories, one wonders what his reputation would be today. It was Halsey's misfortune to be dealing with a highly motivated, alert enemy.

Nelson's impulsiveness, unlike Halsey's, did not extend to day-by-day operations. Halsey's whimsical, often slapdash, methods of operating were the despair of his subordinates. I have never met a commander who did not much prefer serving under the methodical Spruance. Admiral Dyer, who commanded the light cruiser *Astoria* under both Halsey and Spruance, expresses their attitude this way: "My feeling was one of confidence when Spruance was there and one of concern when Halsey was there. . . . When you moved into Admiral Spruance's command from Admiral Halsey's . . . you moved from an area in which you never knew what you were going to do in the next five minutes or how you were going to do it, because the printed instructions were never up to date. . . . He never did things the same way twice. When you moved into Admiral Spruance's command, the printed instructions were up to date, and you did things in accordance with them.

"When you've got hundreds of ships under you, you've got to have some common ground to stand on, or when you're charging around at 25 or 30 knots in one of these great big ships, what you're going to do in the next two or three minutes is important, and what the other ships are going to do is important."¹⁶

But Admiral Halsey, despite his shortcomings, which were few compared to his virtues, was ever revered by the little men of his fleet and command. Always approachable, always solicitous, always daring, he operated not in the spirit of "Go!" but of "Let's go!" He asked no man to face dangers that he would not face himself. He

passed no bucks, he shirked no responsibilities. Always appreciative, he never left a command or ended a campaign without words of thanks or commendation. One remembers his opening words to his fleet on ending the Philippine campaign: "I am so proud of you that no words can express my feelings."¹⁷

Perhaps Admiral Nimitz has left us the best brief description of his top fleet commander: "Bill Halsey was a sailor's admiral and Spruance an admiral's admiral."¹⁸

NOTES

1. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, New York, 1952), p. 290.
2. Ladislav Farago, *The Tenth Fleet* (New York, 1962), pp. 91-92.
3. Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, Vol. I (Boston, 1948), p. 115.
4. Morison, IV (1949), 246.
5. Ladislav Farago to E. B. Potter, 14 September 1967.
6. From taped interview 5 March 1968. Admiral Dyer had prepared himself so well for the interview and expressed himself so clearly that I have made use of the details he furnished almost to the exclusion of those provided by others. Dyer's portrayal of the King personality, however, is fully supported by Admiral Russell and others.
7. George C. Dyer, "Learn to Say No to the Admiral," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, 89 (July, 1963), 26-35.
8. Fleet Admiral C. W. Nimitz to Commander R. T. E. Bowler, Jr., USN, 9 March 1963.
9. From taped interview 1 March 1968.
10. Morison, IV, 254.
11. E. B. Potter, "Chester William Nimitz," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, 92 (July, 1966), 47. Based on taped interview with Admiral Harry Hill, USN (Ret.), who was at the conference.
12. Vice Admiral Emmett P. Forrestel, USN (Ret.), *Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, USN: A Study in Command* (Washington, D.C., 1966), p. 62. This quotation, says Forrestel, is the "general tenor" of Spruance's remarks.
13. I have checked with others who were present, and all agree that this was at least the purport of Halsey's statement.
14. Admiral R. A. Spruance to E. B. Potter, 21 February 1959.
15. *Ibid.*

16. Taped interview with Admiral Dyer.
17. Morison, XIII (1959), 183.
18. Quoted in Vice Admiral George C. Dyer, USN (Ret.), *Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner* (not yet published).

COMMENTARY

RAYMOND G. O'CONNOR

Professor Potter is to be commended for tackling one of the more difficult problems facing the historian, namely, discerning the personal qualities and characteristics of selected senior naval officers and their bearing or performance in one of the world's greatest wars.

It would be difficult to imagine a more satisfactory pairing of examples, for the contrasts between certain of these leaders are more apparent than the similarities. In fact, one is tempted to conclude that there are no absolute qualifications necessary for successful leadership, no scientific formula, no universal criteria or statistical profile by which to measure an individual's potential or existing ability to exercise command. Those of us who have struggled with courses designed to train young men in the complexities of leadership are aware that the subject scarcely merits the designation of an "inexact science," and the simple enumeration of glib generalizations may be useful only as an exercise in demonstrating the exceptions. Nonetheless, all military personnel are constantly being evaluated by their superiors in terms of leadership qualities, and they are being judged by the men they command in terms of their effectiveness.

Professor Potter's paper is devoted primarily to an assessment of the personal characteristics of the four admirals discussed, but the essential factor of judgment is not ignored. The successful commander must be not only a good leader of men but he must make the right decisions in battle situations. A basic question concerns the way in which character and judgment are developed, and I am sure that Professor Potter is prepared to provide this sort of background if time were no object. Still, each of the officers mentioned in the paper possessed an image which had an impact

that was directly related to his success in command. King and Halsey gave the impression of boldness, aggressiveness, dash, dynamism, toughness, and flair. They had, in Madison Avenue parlance, style. Their physical appearance, including dress, visage, and physique, their speech and their mannerisms all contributed to the effect. On the other hand, Spruance and Nimitz were quiet, modest if not self-effacing, conventional in dress and conduct, each the very antithesis of flamboyance. Yet their cool exterior exuded confidence and they had that indefinable quality, presence. These two officers used their power quietly, and which of these stereotype groups was most effective in exercising leadership could well depend on the circumstances and the requirements of the particular job.

The more than casually curious person, seeking to discover how these people got that way, would surely find himself involved in the age-old argument over heredity and environment. Some authorities contend that leaders are born not made, although the services stress education, indoctrination, training, and experience. But in regard to the image, does the individual assiduously cultivate an exterior designed to project in a particular way, which he deliberately creates as suited to his personality, his aspirations, and his assessment of the qualities needed for success in his chosen profession? Probably most have some sort of model, a Nelson or a Lord Hornblower, to which he tries to conform; and evidently none of the men considered made strenuous efforts to disabuse others of their convictions in attributing to them distinctive qualities, however inaccurate. Halsey later could protest, "Now that I am sitting down to my autobiography it is Bill Halsey whom I want to get on paper, not the fake, flamboyant 'Bull.'" Yet it is clear that he came to take pride in the nickname, and he selected *El Toro* to be used as his TBS [talking between ships] code call. His boastful statements about a quick end to the war, dictating the peace in Tokyo, riding the Emperor's horse, and exhorting everyone to kill more Japs made headlines and contributed to his image. At the same time it helped restore the morale of a fleet reeling from a succession of defeats. In his thesis written as a student at the Naval War College, Halsey enumerated the characteristics he considered necessary in a fleet commander. Stressing what we would call the charismatic qualities or "star appeal," he felt the commander should inspire the men and insure that his will should permeate

and dominate the entire force. To continue briefly with the cultivation of an image, King protested about certain legends concerning his toughness, but in his autobiography he quotes with pride stories of his shaving with a blowtorch. King insisted that the slate-gray uniform replace the summer khaki, and while eventually it did not prevail, a number of us bought the damned things only to find that they were not permitted in the Pacific.

In contrast with King and Halsey, the other two leaders appeared uninterested in any type of unique or distinctive projection, with the possible exception of Nimitz's propensity for having his photograph taken pitching horseshoes with enlisted men. Nimitz could refer to Spruance as "this reserved and self-effacing man." As for temperament being part of the image, Professor Potter tells of King engaging in name calling with his subordinates; Halsey's rages were legion, and both of these men had acquired reputations for being harsh and outspoken in their criticism of shortcomings in their subordinates. Probably these outbursts were not contrived, but they contributed to the image and may have contributed to an efficiency of performance. Conversely, the "iron hand in the velvet glove" approach, as illustrated in the story which Nimitz related to Professor Potter, could have been just as effective. The relative merits of the carrot and the stick, the pat on the back rather than the kick in the posterior, are hotly debated. But it appears that none of these "types" had significant problems with morale, loyalty, dedication, or performance.

Still, one should resist the tendency to assume that the commander who wins has made no mistakes, or the other extreme, which one might conclude after reading a number of war books, that nothing that anyone did was right. Perhaps the most essential factor in exercising command is good judgment, and this dimension of leadership deserves a good deal more attention. Liddell Hart has concluded that "The most successful of the Allied commanders enjoyed such immense quantitative advantage that the qualitative value of their own performance cannot be gauged." But such was certainly not true during the early years in the Pacific, and, in any event, the commanders had to make a number of hard decisions which, for their forces and at times for the nation, were "moments of truth." There is a story about a wise man being asked how one avoids making mistakes, and he replied that one does so by exercising good judgment. When asked how one develops good judgment,

he replied "by making mistakes." Both Alfred P. Sloan and Henry Ford II have been quoted to the effect that a successful executive should be right at least half of the time, which may be satisfactory in the automobile business. But military leaders and physicians bury their mistakes, and a single major defeat can have catastrophic consequences.

C.P. Snow defines good judgment as "the ability to think of many matters at once, in their interdependence, their relative importance, and their consequences." Significantly, Spruance was referred to as the man with a computer brain, and we are all familiar with the current stress on systems analysis, which I define as a more efficient method for considering all the factors involved in making a decision. But without engaging in the controversy over "computers versus judgment," I would like to deal with this ultimate test of a commander's talents.

As to the process, it appears that judgment involves both logical, rational thought and intuition based upon imagination and experience. "The intuition process or factor," says Henry Eccles, "is the creative or artistic element of military thinking," and Justice Brandeis thought judgment involved "the almost instinctive correlation of a thousand imponderables." Mahan extolled "the intuitive ability which practice gives to size up a situation. The French call it *coup d'oeil*—at a glance." Spruance, in explaining why he had followed a particular course of action at Midway, called his reason "a feeling, an intuition perhaps." His biographer points out that the decision "was actually based upon sound logic [and a] thorough estimate of the situation and orderly thought." Spruance, "the thinking man's naval officer," has ever been aware of human fallibility, and recently he attributed much of his success at Midway to "luck." He is quoted as saying that "I am more than ever impressed with the part that good or bad fortune plays in tactical engagements. [We have been given] credit, where no credit is due. . . ." He would probably agree with Machiavelli, who surmised that human beings exercise control over about 50 percent of their activities (he was not so foolhardy as to specify which half). Spruance also has stressed the value of imagination, "tempered and guided by common sense and reason," which he thinks necessary to, as he puts it, "discipline the imagination." So the commander must consider a multiplicity of factors and weigh their significance, but

before deciding he must anticipate the outcome. Every decision is a prediction, and the operator is selecting from alternative courses of action that which is most likely to be successful in light of the objective. The situation is often such that a lengthy appraisal, "due deliberation," would be impracticable, in which case he must rely on an intuitive or "gut" reaction. While this area of investigation may more appropriately be the province of the psychologist, a bit of conjecture may provoke discussion if not dissension.

Freud maintained that the "unconscious mind" was more reliable in certain matters than the conscious mind, i.e., that intuition can be more effective than reason as a guide to action. We are reminded of the saying that women are wiser than men because they know less but understand more. Be that as it may, this intuitive ability which I have emphasized is developed by the individual in his own professional field through experience, both directly and vicariously. Mahan quoted Napoleon to the effect that on the field of battle the happiest inspiration—again *coup d'oeil*—is often only a recollection. And Mahan went on to observe that:

This is a testimony to the value of historical illustration, which is simply recorded experience; for, whether the recollection be of what some other man did, or whether it be of some incident one's self has seen and recalls, it draws upon the past and that, too, not in a general way, but by specific application to an instant emergency, comprehended at a glance, just because it is familiar.

Numerous military figures have commented on the value of history, not only for what to do but for what to avoid doing, and the only way to escape what Marx called the "dead hand of the past controlling the living" is to study history.

At this point I take the opportunity to introduce the role of the Naval War College. Nimitz remarked, "I regard the course I had here from 1922 to 1923, an eleven-months course, as the best training I could conceive of for command at sea," and of the Pacific war games, "the course was so complete that when the war in the Pacific actually started, nothing that happened surprised us at all except the kamikaze attacks." Being forewarned he was forearmed, and he recognized the contingencies as they arose. Spruance's biographer says the admiral "himself attributes his later successful war operations in large measure to the training received at the Naval War College," and Spruance says of the College "this is where I got my

education." Halsey learned strategy and tactics "with emphasis on the problems of logistics." But as noted earlier, he was required to deal with the knotty question of command qualities. "The duty," Halsey wrote, "was pleasant, stimulating because of the instruction, the exchange of ideas, the chance to test your pet theories on the game board, and the opportunity to read up on professional publications." King found the months at Newport "refreshing and valuable." "What he learned of Pacific strategy," he said, "proved its usefulness in due time," and his first thesis, "The Influence of the National Policy on the Strategy of a War," submitted on 7 November 1932, contained, in King's words, "passages that were to be confirmed by developments of nine years later."

Well, I'm not engaged in a public relations venture for my temporary institution, but these examples demonstrate one of the most effective means of developing judgment. King has observed that:

Any man facing a major decision acts, consciously or otherwise, upon the training and beliefs of a lifetime. This is no less true of a military commander than of a surgeon who, while operating, suddenly encounters an unsuspected complication. In both instances, the men must act immediately with little time for reflection, and if they are successful in dealing with the unexpected it is upon the basis of past experience and training.

No doubt a critic would feel that King is slighting what is called native ability, or that the opponent by his ineptitude might contribute more to victory than the superior decision-making of the victor. But the cumulative effect of exposure to situations, real or imaginary, actual or vicarious, cannot be discounted.

Of course there were a great many factors operating in the favor of the American naval leaders and some have been noted in passing. At the highest level, as Walter Millis observed, the war was not fought, it was administered. But administration has always constituted a large part of the commander's responsibilities, and successful administration demands the resources of a scientist and the talents of an artist. King often maintained—as he says only half in jest—"that he has never done anything for himself that he could get someone else to do for him." The delegation or decentralization of authority is almost a maxim among organizational theorists, but the man at the top can never absolve himself of overcentralization

in his Naval War College thesis. "A commander," he wrote, "may become so fascinated and engrossed in his planning, that he assumes the initiative rightfully belonging to his subordinate. His plans may become so complicated, so detailed, and so manifold, that it is a practical impossibility to follow him." Yet chaos must be avoided, and the successful commander usually adopts the adage of telling subordinates what to do but not how to do it, only to be faced with the prospect of losing control over the segments of his command, destroying essential cohesiveness of purpose, and creating a situation of virtual anarchy. Conversely, commanders sometimes have had a tendency to become absorbed in details, to devote their energies to the trees rather than the forest. Such a situation could be remedied, it seems, by a change in the commander's habits or interests and the selection of a competent staff in which he had confidence. In practice the former may be more difficult than the latter, and many a good staff officer has been wasted by serving under an over-conscientious commander. The problem is to provide leadership and guidance without stifling responsibility and initiative, and success in command is often directly related to the amount and caliber of work that can be secured from subordinates. The authoritarian personality has its place in a military organization, although persuasion and manipulation may prove more effective than arbitrary dictatorship.

Of the four naval leaders discussed by Professor Potter, only two faced actual battle situations. It is of some interest to note their reactions to emergencies and disappointments. Halsey tells us that after an operation had been launched he worried and fretted, smoked numerous cigarettes and drank quantities of coffee, read trashy magazines, and was completely miserable. On the other hand, we are told that after an operation had been set in motion, "Spruance relaxed. He had thought things through so thoroughly that his mind was free of unnecessary worry about improbable contingencies." As for disappointments, Halsey to the day of his death never stopped torturing himself about his absence at Midway and what he considered his "hardest and wrongest decision," namely, to turn away from his pursuit of the Japanese carrier force and heed Kinkaid's request to protect the ships in Leyte Gulf. Spruance, at one time notified that he had been denied an opportunity to engage a Japanese force because of a failure in radio

communications, replied quietly, "That's too bad, isn't it?" He gave no indication of wasting time in regrets or recriminations.

To pursue another tack in this impressionistic commentary, Professor Potter quotes Spruance on the significance of a change in war planning by stressing the enemy's capabilities rather than his intentions. Of course any commander in his estimate of the situation must consider both factors, but the order of priority is crucial. In the Pacific war the American leaders enjoyed a considerable advantage over their opponents because they could read the Japanese code and their ships were equipped with radar. This advantage could prove decisive, and Midway is the most notable, but far from the only example of the contribution made by intelligence to the outcome of a battle. Admiral Sherman, in his *Combat Command*, says with some exaggeration that at Leyte, "Unlike other battles in the Pacific, no previous radio interception had given any inkling of enemy intentions." This superior knowledge was usually available to the commander not only during the initial maneuvering and disposition of the fleets but to a significant degree after the engagement began. General Marshall has observed that battlefield decisions are made in an atmosphere of "chronic obscurity," but the American naval leaders enjoyed the benefit of many "eyes of the fleet." Still, it is frightening to consider the amount of incorrect information that was received by these commanders, and the armchair critic must often contemplate the relevance of the Tolstoyian view of warfare. Of course many participants find out what happened only after the event, and in trying to reconstruct the details of an engagement we might ask whether anyone would submit a battle report that contained information to warrant his court-martial. But the authenticity of documents is a matter not on the program for this symposium.

One writer has asserted that leading forces in battle is "possibly the most complete human activity, since it involves all the intellectual, physical, and moral power in a man." Modern war accentuates the intellectual dimension, for adapting technology to strategy, or the reverse, the awesome logistics problems, and the intricate command relationships in theaters of war covering thousands of miles of land, sea, and air, imposed demands which seemed almost impossible of human resolution. The Navy that these men represented, and the forces they led, were the product of the most highly industrialized society known to man. These leaders

embodied, and in action realized, many of the ideas and processes of thought which characterized the period. They should be viewed as both products and molders of their times, times characterized not only by mechanization but by a closer association of disparate nations. In the latter connection, one discerns qualities necessary to function with opposite numbers in coalition warfare, and from the Navy's point of view the situation in Washington required a leader who would not be dominated by the forceful personality of General Marshall, overwhelmed by the labyrinthian system, or intimidated by the British. Forrest Pogue has observed that King and Marshall "never succeeded in developing the warm affection Marshall and Stark had for each other," and they had what the Chief of Staff described as "one or two pretty mean fights, but each gained the other's respect and made honest efforts to reach agreement when it seemed that further controversy would interfere seriously with the conduct of the war." That each made significant contributions to the American position on strategy is indicated by Lord Alanbrooke's notes on 1 November 1943, after the Quebec Conference. "If only I had had sufficient force of character to swing those American Chiefs of Staff and make them see daylight." Of course some of us regret that the American strategy regarding Europe was not implemented at an earlier date, but the Joint Chiefs had a formidable antagonist in the British Prime Minister whose addiction to the indirect approach amounted to an obsession.

On the matter of interservice relationships, Louis Morton has related how the commanders in the Pacific argued among themselves over the role of their respective arms in contemplated operations, both on the strategic and tactical level. The alleged "military mind" was subdivided as the professional prism reflected air, land, and sea points of view. Admiral "Mary" Miles recently has described his frustrations in dealing not only with the army but with the sinister cloak and dagger OSS [Office of Strategic Services] representatives, from all of which we may reach the obvious conclusion that a commander should be able to get along with and handle people at all levels and in all dimensions of activity. The extent to which "getting along" involves concession and compromise is fundamental, and the successful commander must see that his views prevail a good part of the time. That he need not be a "personality boy" is apparent, although the complexities of modern warfare and

the need to deal with so many people outside the service environment seem to emphasize "operator" techniques.

One quality that appears common to these leaders is related to one of the generally accepted principles of war, namely concentration of force. But in their case it may more appropriately be called "concentration of purpose." Not that these men were necessarily monomaniacs, but they had a dedication and singleness of purpose which colored their outlook and channeled their energies in such a way that they brought to bear on their professional tasks a degree of cumulative and intensive effort unusual in human activity. The casual, part-time naval officer is seldom found in the annals of history.

Mahan, in analysing types of naval officers, found that they "by natural characteristics arranged themselves in pairs—presenting points of contrast, in deficiencies and excellencies, which group them together, not by similarity chiefly, but as complementary." This observation certainly applies to the four leaders treated in the paper.

But there is a desperate need for more analyses in depth of the command, leadership, administrative, and decision-making qualities which positions of authority have required, of the ways in which men have met specific challenges, of the extent to which individuals have controlled events, and of the common or unique characteristics which are most valuable. And we should try to understand how and why these men got that way, how they came to possess the personality, character, and ability to succeed in this ultimate test of human resources. Professor Potter's paper has made a contribution to such study.

**THE MILITARY VIEW:
COMMENTS BY THREE ADMIRALS**

ADMIRAL ARLEIGH BURKE

Professors Potter and O'Connor are eminent military historians, but I believe in this instance they have looked for differences among the successful American naval commanders rather than similarities. The differences between Admiral Halsey and Admiral Spruance were tremendous, particularly in their personality traits. Because personalities make news these traits have been overemphasized.

Instead of analyzing each individual mentioned in Professor Potter's paper, I would like to confine myself to generalities in connection with military command.

All of these commanders, and a great many others, had the basic requirements for success in any organization, but particularly for success in the military profession. They had character and integrity. Each had high personal standards, and they lived by those standards as best they could. They had honesty of purpose and a sense of justice, and many of the other virtues which a man requires to be respected among his peers in the military. All of these men were respected, and so the first requirement for a military man is character, as all of these commanders proved.

The second common denominator among these wonderful people was their belief in their cause. They believed in the United States. They believed in their Navy. They had convictions, and they carried out those convictions even though sometimes they turned out to be wrong. Their cause was above themselves. They never injected a personal gain over that of their cause. They fought for the good of their country, and you can find examples in each one of these men's experiences in high command where each took a course of action which was detrimental to himself but good for the United

States. They forget themselves in doing all they could for the best interests of their country. And this is the second requirement for a military commander.

All of these commanders had a great sense of responsibility which they accepted with full realization of all the implications that responsibility carries with it. They did not try to avoid difficult situations or "pass the buck up or down." They made decisions to the best of their ability. Also they all had self-reliance. They had trained themselves and they believed in themselves; and that belief was not misplaced, perhaps because of their character. They all had personal courage, not only courage in battle, but moral courage, which includes sometimes going against the advice of the staff or the senior subordinate commanders. This sense of accepting real responsibility, self-discipline, staunchness, selflessness, courage, and other similar characteristics is also common to all of these commanders and probably most successful commanders.

All of these commanders had great professional ability and were respected for their professional ability a long time before the war. They had knowledge which they acquired over years of study, not only in the War College but from the experience of operating in the fleets. They had skill in the use of their knowledge which again came from experience. They practiced. They thought of situations with which they might sometime be confronted, and they figured out possible solutions to those situations. They worked on plans, contingency plans, none of which was probably ever carried out but which left a lasting impression of what to do in some situations. They worked, and they all worked hard. As a result, when they ordered a tactic to be carried out in war, their subordinates knew that the commander had skill in what he was asking them to do, and so they relied on his judgment. They may have sometimes questioned some of the details, but they realized that the man who was giving the order was a man who had thought out the problem and had had experience upon which to build the proper solution. So the next group of qualities necessary in a commander, and which all of these friends of mine had, was professional ability.

The next requirement for high command which they all had in common was leadership ability, and it was in this ability that their differences in personality became evident. There are many different ways to lead military people. One of them is the flamboyant way of

Admiral Halsey or General Patton. Far removed from this method of leadership is the leadership of a Spruance. (I should be able to think of quiet, unassuming, wonderful Army or Air Force leaders, but I can't at the moment, although I know they had them.) But note that in spite of the differences in personality, all of these officers were known to have character, courage, self-discipline, and professional ability.

Even so there were quite a few leadership qualities which they all had. The first one is that they looked out for the good of their people or morale. They didn't baby their people by any means, but they made sure that their people were treated with justice. Each of them also had the ability to cooperate with people. Admiral Spruance had that ability to just as great a degree as did Admiral Halsey or Admiral Nimitz. They all had the ability to communicate, not only with their subordinates, but also with their seniors. They were able to persuade people. In large commands the ability to persuade is the essence of the ability to delegate authority, which they all did too. They had enthusiasm, each expressed in a different way, but each also could project that enthusiasm among his followers.

A great successful leader does not try to hide in the crowd. He does not try to achieve a consensus. Of course everybody wants to be liked, but he does not permit the desire to be liked or even loved to obscure his sense of duty, or to exercise the responsibilities which are his by reason of his position in the command structure. All of these people had the tenacity which is common to successful commanders too. They continued the fight sometimes when it looked as if they didn't have much of a chance of winning it, but by their tenacity, their skill and professional ability, and the faith their people had in them, they did win.

I am somewhat disappointed that Professor Potter left out one of the great wartime naval leaders, Admiral Mitscher, in his article, for he possessed the same general qualities as did the others.

If I have conveyed the impression that I believe these men were heroes of the first order—it is because I do believe that.

ADMIRAL HARRY W. HILL, USN (Ret.)

The character and leadership qualities of military commanders is a difficult subject to reduce to writing, and even a paper of the length of Professor Potter's is inadequate to convey much feeling of familiarity with the admirals discussed. I was fortunate in having known them all during a great portion of my naval career, and in having participated with them during the drive across the Pacific from Tarawa to Japan.

In recent years I have thought a great deal about the outstanding leaders our navy was blessed with during that war. Each of them proved to be "tailor-made" for his specific tasks. Individually, each was radically different from the others, but as a smooth working team, they were unbeatable.

I should like to start with a brief word about Admiral Leahy. As naval aide and close associate with President Roosevelt, he was indispensable. His calm, studious, well-balanced, and knowledgeable insight into the multitude of problems facing the president, particularly in his conferences with Stalin and Churchill, contributed a great stabilizing force to the impulsive and often erratic president. President Roosevelt admired Admiral Leahy and had great respect for his forthright opinions and knowledge of both military and international affairs. Few military men in our history have done more to guide national policy in such a critical period.

Admiral (then Lieutenant) King was my first battalion officer when I entered the Naval Academy in 1907. From the very first contact, we recognized in him a real leader. He knew what he wanted us to do, and told us in simple terms that he expected compliance. He was then an outstanding officer—capable, thorough, and strict. We came to realize that, in regard to anything he required us to do, he could do it better. As a leader, he was not of the inspirational type. He was cool, detached, and efficient. He demanded much of those under his command and accepted no excuse for failure. But he earned the respect and admiration of us all and set a high standard for us to try to emulate.

In the prewar days of 1940-41, Rear Admiral King was a member of the Navy General Board. I was a captain, in the War Plans Division, and one day was directed to attend a meeting in the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Office, of the General Board and other high ranking officers of the Navy Department, for a discussion of the ORANGE War Plan (Japan).

My task was to outline the details of the plan. The materiel weaknesses of the navy for war were very apparent in the plan, particularly in amphibious equipment, landing craft, etc., and these were emphasized as the discussion progressed. Many of those present expressed their opinion that in the event of war with Japan, no offensive action west of Hawaii was practical, and that the fleet would have to wait for deliveries of adequate equipment before starting to move westward. As a final speaker, Admiral King got to his feet. He was angry and exasperated at this “do nothing” attitude, and proceeded to tell them, in no uncertain terms, that they needed more aggressiveness and a positive attitude on how to find ways by which the ORANGE Plan could be effectively activated. He expounded then, for the first time to my knowledge, his often repeated adage of “Do your best with what you have.”

After he became Chief of Naval Operations and Commander in Chief U.S. Fleet, many people considered him ruthless in his choice of commanders afloat. It was interesting to note that none of those “do-nothing” exponents in the CNO Conference ever was given a sea assignment during the war. Admiral King wanted fighters with firm belief in the spirit—and advantages—of the offensive.

In my opinion, there was not another officer on the navy list who could have so forcefully fought the Navy’s battles in Washington with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Combined Chiefs of Staff, and in high-level conferences with Churchill and Stalin. Admiral King had a brilliant mind, an “elephant’s memory,” and the proven ability to present his opinions and recommendations in a brief but incisive style, which was very effective. It was he, aided by Admiral Leahy, who finally convinced the other U.S. and Allied leaders that they must divert an adequate flow of equipment and manpower to the Pacific so that a powerful offensive could be undertaken there also. It was a tough battle, but his insistence won out.

He had to be tough—and he was. Ruthless? Yes, but he always

acted for what he considered the best interests of the Navy and the United States. Regardless of what his critics say, most of his assignments to high command afloat were excellent, and the most important of these was that of Admiral Nimitz as Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet.

All I can say is—"Thank God for putting Admiral King at the helm during World War II!"

Like Admiral King, Admiral Nimitz was a square peg in a square hole. I know of no other naval officer who could have fulfilled that difficult assignment so adequately. He took command at Pearl Harbor during the navy's darkest hour, a truly rough assignment for any mortal. But his calm, imperturbable manner; his ability to listen and then act forcefully; his leadership qualities and ability to select qualified personnel for key assignments; his willingness to take calculated risks in order to assume the offensive—all these attributes, plus many more, within a few months had succeeded in lifting the navy out of its doldrums, and had gotten the offensive rolling.

As Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC) and Commander in Chief, Pacific Area (CINCPOA), he had many problems pertaining to the other services, some of which involved very complicated decisions on matters of interservice concern, and often of great rivalry. His associations with Lieutenant General Richardson and General MacArthur were at times very touchy, but proved him not only to be a very fair but a very firm commander for all matters within the geographical limits assigned him. He was a willing and effective collaborator with General MacArthur in matters of joint concern in the Philippine Theatre which had been approved by the Joint Chiefs.

His choice of key advisors was one of his strong points. In 1942, for Chief of Staff, he selected Admiral Spruance, who served in that capacity for a year before being made Commander, Fifth Fleet. Another was Admiral Forrest Sherman as head of his planning division and later Chief of Staff. Both of these officers had a tremendous impact on his strategic thinking. Admiral Sherman was an outstanding aviator and was his key advisor during the Battle of the Philippine Sea. That wise and daring decision shortened the Pacific war by at least three months, and probably more.

Admiral Nimitz had the complete confidence of Admiral King, who sought his counsel and advice on all matters pertaining to the Pacific. In every way, to a phenomenal degree, Admiral Nimitz was the right man in the right job.

I am surprised at Professor Potter's comment in regard to Admiral Spruance's conduct of the Battle of the Philippine Sea, that Spruance "did the right thing for what we now see to have been the wrong reason." At the time of that battle, as second in command of the Marianas operation, I was the Senior Naval Officer present at the Saipan beaches. Some 70,000 troops were ashore, engaged in a bloody battle, and the largest naval force of transports, supply vessels, etc., ever assembled in the Pacific war was busily engaged in supplying those forces across difficult beaches.

It was clearly expressed in Admiral Spruance's orders that the primary task of the Fifth Fleet was to protect that amphibious assault on Saipan. Spruance anticipated an attempted "end run" by the Japanese and so advised Admirals Lee and Mitscher, and post-war information shows this to have been the Japanese plan. So Admiral Spruance's action in that battle, which turned out so successfully, was for the only right reason. Later Admiral King wrote, "As the primary mission of the American forces in the area was to capture the Marianas, the Saipan amphibious operations had to be protected from enemy [fleet] interference at all costs."¹

Admiral Spruance was not the type who made mistakes. He had a brilliant mind and approached all problems with a thorough analysis which led to his decisions. These decisions had an uncanny way of always being correct. His planning was in broad terms; he wanted nothing to do with minor details of execution, which he left entirely to the discretion of his subordinates. His leadership was definitely of the inspirational quality, and on the numerous operations he commanded in the Pacific, every subordinate commander had complete confidence in the forthcoming victory.

Personally, he is a man of tremendous charm and vitality, quiet in manner, and modest to a marked degree. I think the best description of him was made by the well known military historian, Douglas Freeman, who told me in 1946 that after completing his *Life of Washington* he was planning a book on the "Military

Leaders of World War II." I asked him "who will be the 'Lee' of that study?" Without hesitation he said, "Admiral Spruance."

Admiral Halsey was an entirely different type of leader from any of those previously mentioned. He was the active, aggressive, outspoken, and ebullient type, who proved to be just the right carrier force commander at sea after Pearl Harbor. By his indomitable courage and his "Kill the Bastards" publicity, he was a tremendous factor in rebuilding the navy's offensive attitude, and he instilled in both the navy and the nation the spirit of the offensive and the will to victory. Like the other commanders already discussed, he alone, of all the senior officers I know, could have accomplished this in such a speedy and effective manner. Within a month after Pearl Harbor, he was at sea with his carrier force bombarding Japanese-held islands in the Marshall Group.

He was, as Nimitz said, "a sailor's admiral." His one desire was to be at sea on an offensive mission. He was not a planner, but a doer. He disliked all forms of paper work and administrative details. He was an impulsive, sometimes erratic, but always lovable leader, and he played a mighty part in the victory over Japan.

Under Halsey in the Carrier Forces of the Third Fleet were several very capable aviation commanders. The most outstanding of these was Admiral Mitscher. He was one of the navy's earliest aviators and had been flying since 1915. He was an extremely quiet, unassuming individual, never brilliant as a student, but cool and practical in his thinking, and aggressive in his action. He was "a flyer's admiral" and had learned the aviation problems the hard way. So when he spoke, it was gospel; and he quickly obtained, and richly deserved, the badge of extreme dependability. In the later stages of the war, Mitscher was a Vice Admiral and Commander Fast Carrier Forces Pacific, and directed the carrier strikes on the Marshalls, Truk, Marianas, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and Japan; and also in the battle of the Philippine Sea. The concluding high point of his career, and one illustrating the mutual confidence among our naval leaders, was the sinking of the Japanese battleship *Yamato* in April 1945.

One of Mitscher's search planes made contact. . . . The position and course indicated a possibility that the ships might be enroute to Sasebo or some other Kyushu port instead of Okinawa. Spruance

was determined that they must not escape, but was unsure of the exact position of Task Force 58 (Mitscher) and feared that the Japanese westward movement might have placed them beyond reach of carrier aircraft. He was greatly relieved when the contact report was followed immediately by a query from Mitscher, "Will you take them or shall I?" Spruance reached for a radio message blank and scribbled a battle order for Mitscher, "You take them".²

Mitscher "took them," putting nine torpedoes and five 1,000-pound bombs into *Yamato* before she sank, besides sinking a cruiser and four destroyers.

I consider that order, "You take them," one of the most interesting battle orders ever given, illustrating the complete understanding and trust between those two great commanders. Admiral Mitscher definitely deserves a place of honor on the list of great naval leaders of the war.

One very glaring omission in Professor Potter's paper is the name of Admiral Turner, who turned in one of the most outstanding performances of the Pacific war. There was definitely no one on the navy list who could have taken on the burden he carried and have accomplished so much. At Guadalcanal he had learned the hard way the problems of amphibious assault and our critical deficiencies in material and know-how.

In September 1943, when Admirals King and Nimitz had succeeded in convincing the Combined Chiefs of Staff of the necessity for taking the offensive across the Pacific, they picked Turner for the difficult amphibious command.

Turner had a brilliant mind and a tough, hard-boiled personality. He was a powerful leader, and like Admiral King, he would accept no excuse for failure. His estimates of the requirements of amphibious force proved to be fantastically accurate, but at the time they loomed so large that even Admiral Nimitz had difficulty in visualizing them. But he backed up Turner, and in a remarkably short time schools for naval gunfire support, air support, and underwater demolition teams were in operation; amphibious training was in full swing; and needed equipment was arriving at Pearl Harbor.

His organizational ability was outstanding, but as an operational commander, he was superb. He personally commanded the amphibious drive that drove the Japanese out of the Pacific islands, and when the war ended, he was busily engaged in preparing plans for the invasion of Japan.

As Turner's first amphibious group commander, ultimately relieving him at Okinawa as Commander Fifth Amphibious Force, I was intimately associated with him and his problems; and I could see the wisdom of his farsighted vision and relentless demands for more and better equipment. In my opinion, Turner was directly responsible for shortening the drive to Okinawa by at least six months, with the attendant saving of many lives. His name belongs high on any list of the navy's great commanders.

NOTES

1. Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record* (New York, 1952), p. 557.
2. Vice Admiral E. P. Forrestel, USN (Ret.), *Admiral Raymond A. Spruance; A Study in Command* (Washington, 1966), pp. 204-5.

ADMIRAL ROBERT B. CARNEY, USN (Ret.)

I have read Professor Potter's paper and Professor O'Connor's fine commentary dealing with "The Command Personality" with great interest.

There is little that I could say concerning Professor O'Connor's commentary other than to praise its insight; I found myself nodding in agreement as I read—for the most part, that is. On two points I would disagree.

Halsey always derided the nickname "Bull" with one exception: General MacArthur always called him "Bull" and Halsey rather liked it. He and MacArthur were *simpatico*, totally different though they were. Professor O'Connor's statement that "Halsey's rages were legion" does not wash; I should know, because I was with him constantly from July of 1943 until the early months of

1946. Only once did he "blow his top"; that was the occasion of the much-publicized CINCPAC dispatch received during the Leyte operation. He was no amateur at expressing disapproval when warranted, but his was a self-disciplined and friendly nature, and "rages" were not part of his make-up.

Professor Potter has done as well by Admiral Nimitz as seems possible at this time. He was truly a great man, a warm human being with a wonderful leaven of raucous humor.

Perhaps I can add a footnote or two on the subject of Admiral King. When he was Chairman of the General Board in 1939, I was on duty in the Office of the Secretary of the Navy. Charles Edison, the Secretary, was unimpressed by operating line officers and was openly partial to officers of the technical branches. However, he fell under the spell of Admiral King's intellect, logic, and unabashed advocacy of his conclusions. During this period I had my first contact with Admiral King and learned that while he was by no stretch of the imagination effusive, working with him and for him was not difficult if one paid attention to business and worked toward professional competence.

From mid-1941 until after VJ-Day, I had numerous contacts with Admiral King. At times he sent for me by name to confer or receive instructions. On one occasion, in connection with a U.S.-British-Canadian conference on allocation of ships for escort-of-convoy in the Atlantic, I was the U.S. representative and had been given a certain "number" for negotiation purposes. I finally signed an agreement (for optimum effort) which obligated two more U.S. ships than King had stipulated. His reaction, in the form of a verbal message to me, was to the effect that "he approved of your solution, but disapproves the method by which you arrived at it." Pure Kingiana. In manner, I always found him punctiliously correct, sparing of words, willing to listen to reasoned argument but impatient of excess verbiage and wasted time.

It was he who placed me with Admiral Halsey. Some time later, King asked me how I liked my assignment, and when I said that I did not wish to serve out the war in a staff job, he ended the discussion by saying, "You will stay with Halsey as long as he can fight." To me King was distant, but at times he sought and listened to my views. He approved a Distinguished Service Medal for me

while I was still a captain. His manner to me was as to a recognized professional.

In short, I was one of King's men, and one of King's "horses"—not by any designation of his, but by my own volition stemming from admiration, respect, and regard.

I shall only add two comments on the subject of Admiral Spruance, who is well delineated in Professor Potter's paper.

On the occasion of changes of command between Admirals Halsey and Spruance, it was noticeable that Admiral Spruance concerned himself with more detail than did Admiral Halsey. Aspects which Admiral Halsey delegated to me were not infrequently, in Admiral Spruance's staff structure, retained by the admiral himself. In turn, Admiral Spruance's chief of staff handled details which I passed down to lower echelons of our staff.

On the occasion of Halsey's taking over from Spruance off Okinawa, as over-all commander of the area, Halsey immediately went ashore and checked in with all of the army and marine commands ashore; it is my understanding that Admiral Spruance had not made similar rounds ashore. Here, again, a difference in their respective concepts of administering command. (It is interesting to note here, that while Admiral Spruance's staff showed signs of fatigue from repeated kamikaze attacks and alarms, Admiral Spruance, himself, was calm, fresh, unruffled, without a mark of fatigue or strain.)

On the light side, I once asked Admiral Spruance his opinion concerning a rather verbose pamphlet dealing with the subject of command decision. He hesitated a moment and then said, "I would suggest a different title: Common Sense Made Hard."

Professor Potter's vignette of Admiral Halsey does not set well with one who served under him as a cruiser skipper and thereafter, from the summer of 1943 until after VJ-Day, was constantly close to him as his Chief of Staff. The qualified encomiums in the penultimate paragraph do not, in my opinion, offset the greater space devoted to criticism of questionable merit.

For a starter, his preoccupation with Admiral Dyer's views is

odd in the light of his limited contact with Admiral Halsey, and some of the observations attributed to Admiral Dyer call for examination.

Regarding tactical control in the Central Pacific with the Third Fleet, it was Commander TF 38, or one of the Task Group commanders, who issued tactical orders, not Commander Third Fleet. Carrier operations called the tune.

I liked Admiral Dyer's observation that "he [Halsey] never did things the same way twice," although the observation as stated did not appear to have a favorable connotation. Halsey's constant purpose was to keep the enemy off balance and in the dark, and by avoiding fixed patterns of objectives, tactics, communications, etc., he achieved tactical surprise on many occasions. He was confident that his subordinates were professionally up to meeting the requirements of modified orders.

Descriptive expressions, such as "whimsical," "slapdash," and "probabilities man," have a slant potential of which presumably a professional writer would not be unaware. "Whimsical" I would buy, because it implies the saving grace of humor. "Slapdash" is defined by *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* as "in a slipshod manner": slipshod, in turn, is a way of saying "careless, slovenly," according to the same dictionary. "Slapdash" I do not buy.

Next, I would look at "probabilities man." Does Professor Potter imply here a fixed and general mentality and way of thinking? Without dwelling on that question, it might be helpful to say that early in the South Pacific campaign Admiral Halsey concluded that he could not penetrate the Oriental mind as to intentions—probabilities—and adopted, as a substitute, the device of disrupting enemy thinking and planning by sudden—and sometimes diversionary—thrusts. Throughout the war, he looked at enemy capabilities in terms of things important to our side in determining his own courses of action. In short, in the opinion of one who enjoyed an authentic vantage point, the title of "probabilities man" is a misnomer. As a matter of fact, in view of the on-the-offensive character of all of Halsey's operations after the tide was turned in the South Pacific, enemy "probabilities" were largely defensive in character—which would seem to weaken Professor Potter's case.

Professor Potter says that "it was Halsey's misfortune to be dealing with a highly motivated, alert enemy." I find it difficult to discern misfortune in the context of Admiral Halsey's over-all dealings with the enemy; his South Pacific campaign ended in total misfortune for Japan, and the two campaigns of the Third Fleet in the Central Pacific inflicted on the enemy losses of planes, warships, merchant ships, and installations, which added up to Japanese disaster. To what, then, is Professor Potter referring when he speaks of Halsey's misfortune? On that point, he is not specific. Perhaps he had Leyte in mind. If so, I would add nothing of substance to Admiral Halsey's own statements concerning his decisions, but I have long thought that it was a strategic and tactical misfortune that the vast array of U.S. seapower in the area was not under some one, over-all commander.

One last point. Aggressive fighting against a tough enemy, over a period of years, and along a road extending from the South Pacific to the Japanese homeland, inevitably included damage and casualties; but compared to the successes, the setbacks were few in number and manageable in magnitude; and the seasoned Old Pro took them in stride—not "impulsively," but with stamina and determination.

However, Professor Potter does do justice to those traits and attributes which inspire fierce loyalty on the part of Halsey's subordinates, but there is more that could be said by those who were really close to "Admiral Bill."

When success crowned one of his operations, he leaped to the housetops and gave all of the credit to subordinates involved; when—as will inevitably happen in war—something went wrong, he was just as quick to the housetops to assume his own full and personal responsibility.

Admiral Halsey was completely devoid of pretense, and he had disdain for alibi. He enjoyed informal relationships with his trusted subordinates (and they enjoyed it, too). He was intensely loyal to those trusted subordinates, and he had a genuine and deep compassion for those of his people who faced great danger. I saw him weep when he signed a dispatch ordering an air attack which was necessary, but which was likely to sustain awful casualties. (Fortunately, our fliers achieved surprise, delivered a heavy attack,

and withdrew virtually unscathed.) The stereotype of the hard-boiled "Bull" Halsey amused those of us who really knew him; he was a softie as far as people were concerned.

He did not fit the pattern of the student, but he was a wide reader, he had an elephantine memory, and his mind short-cut voluminous pros and cons to reach logical conclusion. There were times when he said to me, "Your reasoning sounds right, but we will do it my way." Almost always his way proved to be right.

When the British conferred on him the Order of Knight of the British Empire (K.B.E.), his senior staff officers, at times of relaxation, differentially addressed him as "Sir Bill" or "Sir Butch" —until those bushy eyebrows contracted a bit. We knew when to stop.

It is regrettable that so much of Professor Potter's Halsey text is taken up with the quoted observations of Admiral Dyer, who had little or no opportunity for contact with Admiral Halsey, and no opportunity to hear or understand his thinking, during the war. There were others who could have contributed more knowledgeable pertinent fact and insight.

REPLY TO ADMIRAL CARNEY

E. B. Potter

From my limited wartime experience as a naval reserve officer, I would not venture to express disagreement with Admiral Carney concerning Admiral Halsey's handling of the U.S. Third Fleet. In justice to Admiral Dyer, however, I should explain that whenever I have encountered an officer who commanded a ship of the Central Pacific Force (alternately Third and Fifth Fleet), I have inquired into his comparative impressions when serving under Admiral Spruance and under Admiral Halsey. All have been in substantial agreement with Admiral Dyer, whom alone I quoted because I

happened to have his words on tape and his permission to publish them.

It is certainly true, as Admiral Carney notes, that in the Central Pacific the task force and task group commanders, rather than the fleet commander, were supposed to originate the tactical commands. Yet in practice the dividing line between tactics and strategy was hazy, and there was always a certain amount of overlap.

When Admiral Spruance joined TF 58 on the eve of the Battle of the Philippine Sea, June 1944, Admiral Mitscher, CTF 58, rather anxiously inquired who was then in tactical command—to which Spruance replied: “I shall issue general directives when necessary and leave details to you and Admiral Lee.”¹

Still, when Mitscher decided in the early hours of June 18 to advance westward and attack the approaching enemy, he felt constrained to check with Spruance by TBS: “We propose to come to a westerly course at 0130 in order to commence treatment of enemy at 0500.” After mulling over this proposal for an hour, Spruance sent back his reply: “The change proposed in your message does not seem desirable.”² If this decision of Spruance, to keep the carrier force in a covering position off the Saipan beachhead, was not tactical, it certainly shaped the tactics of the whole two-day battle that followed—and is still the subject of controversy.

The line dividing commands was still hazier the following October because all the warships of the Third Fleet except those of Task Force 38, Mitscher’s carrier force, had been loaned to General MacArthur to beef up his Southwest Pacific forces, including the Seventh Fleet, for the Leyte invasion. Hence Admiral Halsey and Admiral Mitscher were commanding the same vessels. Who was Officer in Tactical Command? In *Sea Power: A Naval History*, I wrote, “Because as a combat force Third Fleet and TF 38 were now identical, Halsey exercised direct tactical command, bypassing Mitscher.” When Admiral Halsey read that line in typescript, he wrote me:

I did not bypass Mitscher. I always assigned targets to hit, leaving details to group and task force commanders. I would certainly have

been derelict in my duty as Fleet Commander if I did not assign targets for them to strike, and would have been a fifth wheel if I exercised no control or command over elements of my fleet. I always did this, and in doing it never felt that I was bypassing any junior echelon in the command. I have seen this statement made many times, presumably by people who did not understand the difference between strategical and tactical command. I always felt free to assume tactical command, if I thought the conditions warranted it.⁸

In a letter to me dated 31 July 1959, Admiral Carney commented on the same passage as follows:

Admiral Halsey has commented on your statement that he “exercised direct tactical command, bypassing Mitscher.” This is an important point, and you could do history and the subject of naval science a service by putting this point in perspective and pointing out to your prospective student audience the difference between strategic direction and tactical command. In Admiral Halsey’s position as Commander Third Fleet, he would have been derelict in his duty had he not prescribed strategic dispositions and objectives; this he did but left the actual tactical operations to subordinates. At no time was Mitscher “bypassed”; but he was not responsible for the operations of the Third Fleet and there was no reason to delegate that responsibility to him.

With these statements in mind, it is a little confusing to read Admiral Halsey’s famous dispatch of 1512 hours 24 October, a dispatch which has never before been published in its entirety:

Battle Plan. Batdiv 7 *Miami Vincennes Biloxi* DESRON 52 less *Stephen Potter* from Task Group 38.2 and *Washington Alabama Wichita New Orleans* DESDIV 100 *Patterson Bagley* from Task 38.4 will be formed as Task Force 34 under VAdm Lee Commander Battle Line. Task Force 34 engage decisively at long ranges. CTG 38.4 conduct carriers of Task Group 38.2 and Task Group 38.4 clear of surface fighting. Instructions for Task Group 38.3 and Task Group 38.1 later. Halsey OTC in *New Jersey*.⁴

Halsey, Officer in Tactical Command, in *New Jersey!* Here Admiral Halsey is not only giving tactical commands but assuming Mitscher’s title. Theodore Taylor in *The Magnificent Mitscher* describes Mitscher’s reaction to the 1512 dispatch, of which Mitscher was not an addressee:

At this point, Admiral Mitscher felt he had been relieved of tactical command of Task Force 38. While Halsey had not formally taken tactical command, his order, in the light of naval command structure, could not be construed otherwise. Definitely, it was felt, Admiral Halsey was going to determine the tactics of this particular fight. Admiral Mitscher retired for the night, saying, "Admiral Halsey is in command now." There could not be two tactical commanders. It was apparent that Mitscher was not happy over the situation.⁵

If Admiral Mitscher was displeased with the 1512 dispatch, Admiral Kinkaid, Commander Seventh Fleet, was delighted with it. Early that morning [24 October 1944] U.S. aircraft had sighted two Japanese surface forces threading through the southern and central Philippines, evidently intent upon attacking the Seventh Fleet shipping in Leyte Gulf. Kinkaid believed that his shore bombardment vessels could handle the smaller force, heading to come up from the south via Surigao Strait. The Central Force, including the 18-inch battleships *Musashi* and *Yamato*, were something else again. Only Halsey had the brawn to take care of those ships.

Now Halsey was providing the means. According to the dispatch, out of the three carrier task groups off the Philippines (Task Group 38.1 had been sent to Ulithi), he planned to pull out four battleships—*Washington* and *Alabama* and Batdiv 7's *New Jersey* and *Iowa*—together with cruisers and destroyers and form them into Task Force 34 under Admiral Lee, Commander Battleships, to block San Bernardino Strait, through which the Central Force would have to come to reach Leyte Gulf.

Kinkaid was not an addressee of the 1512 dispatch, but his communicators had intercepted and decoded it, a common practice. He was not concerned that he never saw an execute of the plan. It might have been sent in a code his communicators could not read. "It was inconceivable," said he, "that Halsey could have scrapped a perfect battle plan."⁶

"This dispatch, which played a critical part in the next day's battle," said Halsey, "I intended merely as a warning to the ships concerned that if a surface engagement offered, I would detach them from TF 38, form them into TF 34, and send them ahead as a battle line."⁷

Halsey did not form Task Force 34, at least not on 24 October. In the late afternoon, he received a report that there were Japanese carriers to the north. On these he now focused his entire attention, dismissing the Central Force as too damaged by air strikes to present any serious threat to Kinkaid's ships—an utterly false assumption. Just before 2000 hours he went into Flag Plot, put his finger on the charted position of the enemy carriers, and said to Admiral Carney, "Here's where we're going. Mick, start them north."⁸

According to Samuel Eliot Morison, it was at this point that Admiral Mitscher retired to his cabin—which seems logical. Says Morison in volume XII of his *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*:

CTF 38, Vice Admiral Mitscher in *Lexington*, bypassed for days by Admiral Halsey in issuing orders, had become little better than a passenger in his beloved Fast Carrier Forces Pacific Fleet. When, at 2029, he received Commander Third Fleet's order to turn north, he inferred that Halsey intended to assume the tactical command in the following day's battle, and decided to turn in.⁹

After orders had gone out to the carrier group commanders, Commander Third Fleet notified Commander Seventh Fleet. Said Halsey later:

I believed that my dispatch to Kinkaid "Am proceeding north with three groups to attack enemy carrier force at dawn" fully complied with my obligations to keep him—Kinkaid—informed of my force movements. I did not know he had intercepted my Battle Plan message, which had never been executed.¹⁰

Did his dispatch to Kinkaid in fact fully comply with his obligations to keep Kinkaid informed? "Proceeding north with three groups." Three groups of what? Kinkaid assumed that these were the three carrier groups from which Task Force 34 had supposedly been extracted that afternoon. He further assumed that Task Force 34 was waiting off the Pacific Ocean end of San Bernardino Strait, toward the opposite end of which the Japanese Central Force was speeding—as everybody knew, including Halsey. Should not Admiral Halsey have made sure that Admiral Kinkaid knew that his Seventh Fleet now had to defend itself against both the Southern and the Central Forces? Should not he have ascertained whether the Seventh Fleet had the power so to defend itself,

with its shipping, before carrying all of Task Force 38 north—leaving San Bernardino Strait wide open?

Should not Admiral Halsey further have assumed that Admiral Kinkaid had seen his 1512 dispatch? With battle imminent, communicators were intercepting—“eavesdropping,” they called it—everything they could decode in order to give their commanding officers as clear a picture as possible of what was going on. A study of the message files shows that there was plenty of eavesdropping going on in Task Force 38.

Perhaps it is such failures to cover all bases and to take all possibilities into account that has given the Halsey command the reputation of being a bit slapdash.

The events of 25 October 1944 are well known. Seventh Fleet ships repulsed the Southern Force in Surigao Strait. The Central Force came unopposed through San Bernardino Strait and attacked a small Seventh Fleet escort carrier unit. Halsey's carriers, far to the north, attacked and sank four Japanese carriers. Worried about the threat to the Seventh Fleet, Admiral King paced and swore in Washington; Admiral Nimitz sat grimly at Pearl Harbor, finally sent Halsey a prod: “Where is Task Force 34?” At that, Halsey turned Task Force 34 around and with this and one of the three available carrier groups of Task Force 38 headed back south. As a result, a considerable part of Halsey's force, including all six battleships, spent the day of battle steaming fruitlessly 300 miles north, then 300 miles back south without making contact with the enemy north or south—while at both ends of “Bull's Run” American forces were left in contact with superior enemy forces.

Of course, the seeds of confusion were planted in the CINCPAC order (No. 8-44) issued to Halsey for this operation. He is directed to “cover and support forces of the Southwest Pacific,” including Seventh Fleet. Then between #1 and #2 of the detailed instructions is inserted a sentence—unnumbered, unattached, apparently an insertion, written in strange English:

In case opportunity for destruction of major portion of the enemy fleet offer or can be created, such destruction becomes the primary task.¹¹

Who inserted that curious sentence? Why? Was it someone who

disapproved Spruance's covering the beachhead in the Battle of the Philippine Sea, someone who wanted to make sure that Halsey in the coming operation would be free to uncover anything at all in order to take off after a "major portion of the enemy fleet"? Whoever the writer and whatever his purpose, the sentence proved, as Morison has said, the tail that wagged the dog, for the Northern Force that Halsey went after was a mere decoy, sent down by the Japanese specifically to draw him away from the path of the Central Force.

NOTES

1. Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, VIII (Boston, 1953), 243.
2. Theodore Taylor, *The Magnificent Mitscher* (New York, 1954), pp. 221-22.
3. Undated memorandum to E. B. Potter. Signed "W. F. Halsey."
4. Third Fleet Message File, 240612. This and message referred to in note 10 below are verbatim.
5. Taylor, p. 261.
6. Letter to E. B. Potter, 15 August 1959. Quoted in E. B. Potter and Chester W. Nimitz (eds.), *Sea Power: A Naval History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1960), p. 783.
7. Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., USN (Ret.), "The Battle for Leyte Gulf," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, 79 (May, 1952), 488. Quoted in Potter and Nimitz, p. 783.
8. Halsey, "Battle for Leyte Gulf," p. 490. Quoted in Potter and Nimitz, p. 784.
9. Morison, XII (Boston, 1958), 196.
10. Halsey memo. Dispatch quoted from Potter and Nimitz, p. 784.
11. CINCPOA Operation Plan No. 8-44, dated 27 September 1944.

Part V

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN WARFARE

**THE COMBINED BOMBER OFFENSIVE:
CLASSICAL AND REVOLUTIONARY, COMBINED
AND DIVIDED, PLANNED AND FORTUITOUS**

Noble Frankland

Perhaps you will allow me to introduce my subject by making a few general observations about the combined bomber offensive and its place in history. There are, after all, very special reasons for studying this campaign. In the first place the combined bomber offensive, though descended from some primitive attempts in the First World War and related in principle to the naval instrument of blockade, was the first major expression of that kind of warfare in the history of war. This gives it an undoubted and singular historic interest.

Secondly, the idea of strategic bombing, allied to the scientific and technological developments which the combined bomber offensive at least partly inspired, have given birth to the most powerful current expression of military power, the nuclear armed missile.

Thirdly, bombing has throughout its history evoked a powerful emotional response and about it, as I have said elsewhere, people have tended to prefer to feel than to know. There is thus a particularly fertile field for objective historical analysis, for there is an unusually large literature and popular impression inspired by emotion as opposed to reason.

Fourthly, there is an apparent simplicity about air power by comparison with military and naval power. For some reason, people have long imagined themselves competent to direct and to criticise air strategy while they have hesitated to involve themselves in the intricacies of the military and naval professions. Thus, there is scope for showing people by careful historical analysis not only

that air power is no less complicated than land and sea power, but that, in essential principles, it is the same.

And there is a fifth reason. Air forces are, relative to other services, young; and those who have had the vision, drive, and persistence to bring them into being have tended to emphasize the potentialities and achievements of air power. Had they not done so, their endeavors would perhaps have been denied fulfillment. But were we now to accept without a full and historical reappraisal the legends which have thus come down to us, we would be in danger of forfeiting the lessons of experience and the wisdom of history.

I suggest to you, then, that the subject of your symposium is singularly well chosen. There is as yet huge scope for discovery and explanation in the field offered by the history of the strategic air offensive, and there is substantial reason to believe that the fruits of such discovery and explanation may be relevant as well as interesting in the context of the problems confronting the world today.

You will see from the sub-titles which I have given to my paper that the combined bomber offensive seems to me to offer us a series of contradictions. I do indeed believe it does and I think it important that we should try to identify these contradictions and analyse them. It is important because, as historians, we naturally wish to understand what happened, why it happened, and what were the consequences in this very significant allied campaign. It is also important because, as citizens of the United States and subjects of the United Kingdom, as past allies and, who knows, perhaps as future ones, we naturally hope to learn from experience.

The first of these motives, the unadulterated curiosity of a historian, is pure. The second, the practical requirement of those who wish to survive this age of peril, is an applied one. And, though I freely confess that I subscribe wholeheartedly to the second motive, I believe, as an historian and not a planner, that the best contribution historians can make to its realization is to forget it and to act independently and ruthlessly.

May I briefly expand upon this to ensure that the context of my paper is clearly understood at the outset?

I believe that the art of applied history is a very dangerous

one. The art of applied history where the subject contains contradictions is still more dangerous. The art of applied history where the subject contains contradictions and concerns high explosives could be fatal on a large scale; and the same art applied in the nuclear age could, of course, be comprehensively fatal.

Let us then search for historical understanding without considering while we search what may be the consequences of our work and of what we say. If occasionally the results are uncomfortable or even offensive, let us remember that glossing over, or worse still, twisting, may be fatal.

I now come back to my three sub-titles—Classical and Revolutionary, Combined and Divided, Planned and Fortuitous.

Since the inception of air power and, in particular, the expression of it which concerns bombing, there has been a strong tendency to regard it as revolutionary—revolutionary not only in the sense that it increased the scope of existing established methods of warfare such as, for example, the submarine did for war at sea or the tank for the land battle, but revolutionary in the sense that it added a radically new dimension to warfare and, by doing that, overturned the established principles of war. This the prophets, Douhet, Smuts, Seversky, Mitchell, Trenchard, and the rest advised.

The key to this revolutionary theory lay in the feeling that air power, because it could express itself without regard to mountain, river, or sea barriers, could also express itself without regard to the condition and activity of the opposing armed forces, including air forces. A simpler way of expressing the revolutionary theory was the phrase used, on Air Staff advice, by the then British Prime Minister, Baldwin—"The bomber will always get through." The Trenchard doctrine did indeed lay it down that there was no defense against bombing save in a counter and more effective bombing offensive. The side which could drive the other to defensive measures would win. Thus the conception of the air battle was that it was, at best, irrelevant, and, at worst, defeatist. Fighter aircraft were a sop to civilians. The decisive thing was the strategic target. Air power was basically a question of correct target selection and transportation of bomb loads. Thus, heavy bombers, ignoring the deployment of armies and the manoeuvres of fleets, would proceed directly, evading, or otherwise brushing off, the opposing air de-

fences, to the strategic core of the enemy's war economy. This might be his civil morale, his oil production or his transportation system. Whatever it was, so the theory indicated, his only real hope of survival lay in getting in first and more effectively in the same way against his enemy. Unlike an army which could occupy enemy territory effectively only after dealing with the enemy army, unlike a navy which could only impose an effective blockade after defeating the enemy navy, unlike these old services, the new one could seek victory directly and immediately. The air, though this was not the phrase used, would be the scene of a *guerre de course* made good.

Not everyone, of course, believed that this would be so. If Trenchard did, Beatty did not. If Arnold did, Marshall did not. But the revolutionaries had on their side the suggestion that they were the progressives, adaptable and alert to the new conditions while their opponents appeared to be, and of course often were, reactionaries surveying the future from obstinately retained cavalry saddles or wooden quarter decks. And indeed in the interwar years it would have been hard to foretell that Mahan's writings contained the clue and not Douhet's.

What a caution it is to realise this and its implications. Progress indeed depends as much and perhaps more upon reactionaries than progressives. Air power proved, of course, to be revolutionary only in the sense that its vehicles passed not on the land or the sea, but in the air. Up there, the operations which they conducted proved to be subject to the classical concepts of war, just as had those of the equally new-fangled tanks and nearly as new-fangled submarines.

The key to the use of air power, and of course, the key to the combined bomber offensive, proved to be the command of the air. This was not a question of bomb deliveries, nor of target systems: it was a question of dominance over and defeat of the opposing air force in actions not far removed from dog fighting. In the struggle for the command of the air the function of the bombers proved to be only the guarantee that the enemy air force could be brought to action. Without bombing, the Luftwaffe need not have risen to defend its homeland: it need not have, so to speak, offered itself for defeat. But once it had and once its defeat had been engineered, then the bombers were free to develop and exploit their destructive

power. Then, and then only, the combined bomber offensive became a question of bomb delivery and target selection.

The earlier belief characterised by the British night offensive of 1940 to 1944, that they could proceed directly to their strategic objective while evading the opposing air defences, was shown to be a new *guerre de course* and not a revolution in warfare. The idea characterised by the U.S. day offensive that the bombers could do this by driving off the opposing air force through concentrated firepower from heavily armed, tightly disciplined formations and cripple the opposing air power by precise attacks upon it and its components in production was also shown to be illusory.

In neither case could the scale and rate of effective destruction outpace the casualty rate which the German defences could impose upon the British and American bombers. The Luftwaffe-in-being, neglected and confused as it was, proved wholly capable of defending the German war economy in general and armament production in particular. This indeed is one of the rare occasions when a general historical assertion can be substantially proved by statistical evidence.

We owe it perhaps to the revolutionaries that when the crisis became unavoidably evident—for the Americans over Schweinfurt in October 1943 and for the British in the Battle of Berlin between November 1943 and March 1944—there was no prepared means of applying a classical solution. There was no available means of engaging the German fighter force in the decisive areas: namely, at the required bombing range. In short, there were no long-range fighters. But it may be worth adding, at this point, that the Germans probably owed it to the reactionaries that they had no effective long-range air force of any kind and, apart from gimmicks, therefore lacked the means even of disturbing the base from which their approaching defeat was about to be directed. A reactionary indeed may be as dangerous as a revolutionary.

I have sometimes been accused of advancing the theory that the combined bomber offensive was a failure and you will no doubt now have some appreciation of why this charge has been levelled at me. I say “charge,” because I believe that to suggest that the combined bomber offensive was a failure would be greatly to distort history. It did, in fact, produce a sweeping victory which exerted a

decisive effect upon the total air, naval, and military defeat which eventually engulfed Germany from the West and even more so from the East. I hope that any apparent contradiction will be cleared up when I come to the third phase of my paper under the heading "Planned and Fortuitous."

Meanwhile, I want to turn to my second subtitle, "Combined and Divided."

It is sometimes argued by the revolutionaries that it was not the theory of bombers proceeding directly to their strategic objectives which proved to be wrong, but the intent to, and the manner in, which the theory was put into practice. Insufficient concentration of effort and not incorrect strategic appraisal was the explanation, so it is said. Specious as this argument proves to be when subjected to complete analysis, it does nevertheless rest upon the substance that the combined bomber offensive failed to combine to anything like the extent which is often claimed and which is suggested by the high sounding if slightly vapid phrases of Casablanca and Quebec or the popular slogan of "round the clock bombing."

This division in the combined bomber offensive is worth examination not only because it has given some substance to otherwise exposed revolutionary arguments, but because it also provided several of the key fortuitous circumstances to which I shall be coming in a few minutes.

Before the war, such differences as existed between the bombing doctrines of Britain and the United States were not of any great importance. Both countries saw the need for advanced, long-range, heavy bombers. Neither country adequately realised the accompanying need for advanced long-range fighters. But there were differences in the interpretation of the opening gambits of the air war which were of critical importance. These differences are characterised in the difference between the British Lancaster and the American B-17 Flying Fortress. The Lancaster with a crew of seven and lightly armed with 303 Browning machine guns had a substantially heavier bomb load than the more numerous crewed, much more heavily armed, high flying B-17. And these aircraft were the revised versions of heavy bombers which reflected two different views of how the Wellingtons, Whitleys, Hampdens, Heinkels, and Dorniers had functioned in 1939 and 1940. The main difference

was of course that the Lancaster was essentially a night bomber and the B-17 essentially a day bomber.

Before the war, the British Air Staff had assumed that a day bombing offensive would be possible, but in the early months of actual experience they rapidly changed their minds. The best heavy bombers of the day, the Wellingtons, convincingly failed to defend themselves against German fighters even over fringe targets in daylight, and the lighter bombers, notably the Blenheims, conspicuously lacked the performance either to carry worthwhile loads or to escape their pursuers. Thus, the British turned for major purposes to night bombing and so, presently, for much the same reasons, did the Germans.

The Americans, however, not yet engaged but closely observing, obstinately refused to read what seemed to be the obvious lessons of experience. They persisted with the doctrine of day bombing undeterred by the unanimous verdict of the principal belligerents. This curious decision greatly disturbed the British. It seemed to make it likely that the great potential of American air power would be denied any effective strategic expression. When the United States entered the war, the British prospect of securing for the Royal Air Force great numbers of American-built aircraft was much reduced. These aircraft would now be needed for American crews. But if these crews were committed to a day offensive, then little more than severe American disasters could be expected, so it seemed. By the time the Americans learnt the lesson and converted to a night doctrine, it would be too late to produce and train a night force. To get that result in 1944 would, the British Chief of the Air Staff calculated, need a decision in 1942.

Though in 1942 the British launched thousand-bomber attacks at German targets and seemed to be making real progress in their night offensive, and though the Americans could then only launch daylight pinpricks short of the German frontier, the decision to change was not taken. On the contrary, so determined was the American resolve to adhere to day bombing, that the British decided to abandon both persuasion and criticism for fear of weakening the air position in the general strategic debate within the grand alliance. Thus, the cracks were papered over at the Casablanca Conference and elsewhere with the bromides of strategic diplomacy—complementary attacks, round the clock bombing, and so on. In

fact before it could be combined, the bomber offensive had to be divided.

Why did this happen? Why did the Americans turn such an obstinately blind eye to the glaring lesson of experience that the self-defending bomber formation was simply not a viable form of existence?

Three reasons seem to have been operative. First, the Americans were determined to fight in an American way and, as far as possible, under American command. There could be no question of reinforcing the Royal Air Force: there was going to be an American Air Force even if so far it was still an Army Air Force. Secondly, American opinion was distinctly unimpressed by the products of night bombing. American diplomats, business men, and other travellers had witnessed the beginning of Bomber Command's night attack on Germany. Their reports tended to be unhopeful; successful results it seemed would depend upon day precision bombing. Thirdly, the B-17 appeared to be unsuitable for night operations both on the ground of its general characteristics and on the evidence of trials given to it by Bomber Command. On the other hand, the same characteristics seemed to offer it a chance of successful day-light formation tactics.

This reasoning, in which the United States seemed to be consulting her traditions and neglecting her interests and thus asserting her national independence to an extent which her national power had by now made unnecessary, in which her intelligence appreciation was swamped by hasty judgements formed on slender evidence at too early a stage, and in which her expectation of operational performance continued to be based upon theoretical prognostication when actual battle experience was available, was of course almost wholly fallacious.

Day precision bombing would only be more effective than night area bombing if it could be carried out precisely. Self-defending formations would be an effective tactic of war only if the formations proved to be self-defending. In practice, of course, day bombing proved to be no more accurate, in fact probably on balance less so, than night bombing. Even worse, in practice, self-defending formations of B-17 and B-24 bombers had no greater relative capacity for self defence than Bomber Command's somewhat imperfectly equipped and under-rehearsed Wellingtons of 1939.

Thus, the division of the combined bomber offensive prevented the Americans from playing any part at all in the strategic air offensive against Germany in the course of 1942. Nor did it result in any worthwhile contribution from the distinctively American offensive in the course of 1943. The hope that the massive destruction caused by the mounting RAF night area attacks against the Ruhr, Hamburg, Berlin, and the other great industrial complexes of Germany would unite with American precision attacks upon key points such as ball bearing production, and together fatally undermine the German military, industrial, and economic system was disappointed.

The Germans could absorb the general destruction without allowing it to impinge to any marked extent upon their war effort. Equally they could absorb the so-called precision attacks upon key targets, which were often not very precise, could not be sustained, and frequently were not really key targets. Moreover, as the first year of the combined bomber offensive in action, that is 1943, drew to an end, both the British Bomber Command and the American Eighth Air Force seemed to be near defeat. America's "Waterloo" was at Schweinfurt in October 1943; Britain's was in the Battle of Berlin between November 1943 and March 1944.

If the war, through other action, had ended there, history would have passed a harsh verdict on strategic bombing, its planning, and its allied application. The American Air Staff would have been vulnerable to the accusation that it had declined to join in an established offensive and had failed to make good a separate one.

But of course the war did not end there and the succeeding events produced a transformation of the first magnitude which carried the combined bomber offensive to triumphs almost on the scale of those envisaged by the prophets before the war.

In this transformation, some have seen the reward of persistence, the justification of painful policies bravely maintained, the cumulative dividend on capital saved from extravagant hands reaching from shipboard and military theatres. Elements of truth exist in all these air-minded thoughts, but the principal factors of the transformation were fortuitous, and it is this consideration which brings me to my final subtitle "Planned and Fortuitous."

When, some twenty years ago now, I first embarked upon detailed research into the subject of strategic bombing, I soon began to develop the impression that the key relationship was that between, on the one hand, planning as influenced by supposed results, or if you prefer the military term, intelligence; and, on the other hand, actual results which, of course, were not available to the planners at the time and which were indeed hard enough to discover afterwards with the aid of the German sources. Indeed, the thesis which I presented at Oxford for my doctorate was essentially concerned with this relationship. I do not regret the choice, but I have now come to think that the study of that particular relationship is less instructive than another, namely, that between the planned and the fortuitous. I really think this is a key factor and it is my impression that a great part of what is written about the strategic air offensive both historically and journalistically is wrong because this relationship has been inadequately analysed or, often enough, not analysed at all. This failure, I suggest, accounts for a range of misinterpretation or misunderstanding extending from the misguided attacks levelled almost annually at the British and American Air Staffs for having bombed Dresden in February 1945 to the equally misguided loyalist plea that the strategic air offensive was sound from the word go and was delayed in its victory only by inadequate priority or naval and military interference or political faint-heartedness.

In fact, the strategic air offensive offered a prospect which was taken by many of those directing it to be revolutionary in scope but which, in action, proved to be classical. It was an offensive which offered a glittering prospect for the very closest cooperation and even integration between Britain and the United States and which, in action, failed to combine to anything like that extent. It was, indeed, an offensive where the defects of the planning and doctrine seemed to be their most prominent characteristics and in which the response to the lessons of experience seemed to be, to put it mildly, rather slow. The British blinded themselves at the outset with the comforting belief that their force was inadequate in size, equipment, and experience. The feeling that where the early attempts had failed, the later ones would succeed, tended to obscure the possibility that the strategy and plans were wrong. The Americans, in turn, deluded themselves by fostering confidence in the theory that to be different from the British was to be right. Yet, and this is the startling point, the combined bomber offensive produced ultimately a major Anglo-American victory.

The truth is that the very points at which the development of proper military logic and framing of realistic plans broke down tended to coalesce and produce what it is no exaggeration to describe as the breakthrough in the air between March and August 1944. This breakthrough was produced by the combined action of heavy bombers, of which the most effective were the British Lancasters, and of long-range fighters, among which the American P-51 Mustang was the outstanding machine. Both these aircraft were the product of strange and fortuitous sagas. The Lancaster lurched into being on the basis of the Avro Manchester, an ill-fated machine which was certainly the least successful of the trio produced in answer to the British long-range bomber specification: the Stirling, Halifax, and Manchester. The Mustang had an even stranger and yet more chancy genealogy. Originally produced in answer to a British specification, it failed to attract an American order and more or less failed in service with the RAF until it was re-engined with a Rolls-Royce Merlin. This made it a first-class machine and as such, the British allocated it to photographic reconnaissance: the same role, incidentally, as they had originally given to another aircraft of fortuitous origin and surprising fulfillment, the Mosquito. From there it found its way back to American hands. With long-range drop tanks, it produced the decisive solution to the problem of how to extend fighter performance to bomber range. This condensation of two of the most remarkable production stories in the history of aircraft design and construction is, I hope, sufficient to show that the Lancaster had a somewhat fortuitous origin and the Mustang, as a long-range fighter, a wholly fortuitous one.

These factors were not, however, the most extraordinary nor were they perhaps the most fortuitous in this situation. Remember, the Mustangs were not introduced as long-range fighters to support the Lancasters. Their introduction was the direct outcome of the day bombing crisis which arose at Schweinfurt and which seemed to have little connection with the night activities of the Lancasters. Moreover, the critical phase of Mustang operations was between December 1943 and March 1944. In these four or five months they swept into action with the U.S. Eighth Fighter Command. Their tactics developed, their range increased. By April 1944 their mastery was evident. The daylight air over Germany was turning American. But not the night air, for this was the very period of bitterest setback for the Lancasters, which in those same four or five

months were struggling and suffering in the Battle of Berlin and heading for the Nuremberg crisis at the end of March.

The decisive period for the Lancaster came after June 1944 when the heaviest and most accurate devastation, of which they alone were capable, became the key to the success of the major plans, and especially those against the oil and transport systems. Yet these were the same Lancasters that had failed to produce decisive results earlier. The difference lay a little in improved bombs, such as the 12,000-lb. Tallboy and the 22,000-lb. Grand-slam special earthquake bombs, and in other connected factors. It lay principally in the possession of command of the air, in which the three main components were the B-17 Flying Fortress, the P-51 Mustang, and General Carl Spaatz, the great, though still but little recognized, commander of the United States Strategic Air Force in Europe.

It must here suffice for me to remind your briefly of the sequence of developments. The B-17s posed the daylight threat which compelled the German air defences to operate. The Mustangs provided the means of engaging and overcoming those defences, not only by their own efforts but by validating the efforts of shorter-range aircraft as well. Thus, in the spring of 1944 the Germans began to lose daylight air superiority and almost everything began to roll in favour of the Allies. But the American bombers lacked the hitting power to produce the full exploitation, and so the opportunity for the Lancasters arose.

For a time they found it safer to operate by day than night, for the long-range fighter cover never extended effectively beyond the daylight hours. But gradually, through a series of connected developments, ranging from loss of territory containing early warning installations to loss of training hours through lack of fuel, the Germans lost air superiority at night too. By August 1944, the command of the air was Anglo-American, and the Lancasters could no longer be prevented from driving home their full potential both in daylight and at night when their accuracy of bombing was the greater.

These strange twists of chance and the way in which they fortuitously combined to secure the success of the combined bomber offensive are historically identifiable by the ordinary processes of

research. They do not depend for their establishment upon controversial interpretations or upon hypothetical speculations. There are, however, I suggest, two hypothetical possibilities which I will submit to you because I think they tend to illuminate—but of course not to establish—the realities.

Here then are the two hypothetical suggestions. If the British Air Staff had read the lessons of their early experience between 1939 and 1941 in the American way, they would have gone in for high-level daylight bombing—heavy armament, heavy armour, high altitude, and relatively light bombs. If they had read the lessons in a coolly logical manner, they would presumably have abandoned the offensive altogether. In either event, the accuracy to hit and the power to destroy the really vital targets in the last year of the war would almost certainly not have been generated.

Now, if the Americans had read the same lessons with real strategic insight, they would at any early stage have placed a much higher priority upon the development and production of long-range fighters. If they had done that, would the Mustang have got into British hands? Would it have got a Merlin engine? Would the P-51B Mustang ever have taken the air? Where would the Eighth Air Force have gone from Schweinfurt? If on the other hand the Americans had followed the advice of their more experienced and older friends, the British, they would have turned to night attack and, as we can now see, there is no reason to suppose the German air defences would ever have been breached.

Such then, is the indication of the extent to which, in my view, fortuitous circumstances came to the rescue of the so-called combined bomber offensive, made it an effective combination, and secured its eventual decisive success. These circumstances were, I suggest, far more important than the great and famous Casablanca and POINTBLANK directives to which so much attention has been given and about which so many words have been written and which, incidentally, the commanders at the time found so thoroughly confusing and impracticable.

But there is now a strong caution which I hope to lodge in your minds before I conclude. It is, in a sense, the counter to the argument I have presented. In another sense it is the explanation of it.

No fortuitous circumstances came to the aid of the Russian, German, Japanese, French, or Italian strategic air offensives, because, curiously enough, none of these countries evolved any worthwhile strategic bombing doctrine or plan and failed almost wholly to generate any worthwhile strategic bombing attack. Britain and America, independently and alone, were the only powers which did plan strategic air offensives and which, before they were engulfed in all the urgencies and priorities of actual warfare, produced detailed plans of operation. Britain and America were the only countries which produced formidable bomber commands and Britain and America were the only countries able to reap the rich harvest of military advantage which fortuitous circumstances heaped upon them through the agency of the combined bomber offensive.

If there is a moral in all this, it is surely that strategic thought and strategic planning in peacetime are necessary and productive processes, provided the realization is ever present that peacetime plans especially for the employment of new weapons will not, in war, work out in accordance with expectation.

I hope it may be useful to you if I now attempt briefly to summarise the thesis which I have tried to present to you. The combined bomber offensive, though it had revolutionary characteristics, was predominantly a classical expression of warfare. It was revolutionary in the sense that it was in the air, a relatively new medium of warfare. It was classical in the sense that it was subject to the principles of war as enunciated by the past masters and notably by Mahan. In particular, strategic bombing could find effective expression only in the condition of command of the air, and command of the air was found to be a product of victorious battle against the opposing air force. It is safe to conclude then that the prime function of an air force was to seek the destruction of the opposing air force in being and that then, and then only, could it proceed to the effective implementation of the strategic aim. In this basic respect then, air power was similar to military and naval power. In that respect then, Mahan was a better guide to the understanding of air power than Douhet. That is what I mean by the suggestion that the combined bomber offensive was essentially classical.

The combined bomber offensive, though it was a simultaneous offensive mounted by the two closest of the Allies in the Grand

Alliance against a common enemy, was not strategically integrated nor even related in a common design or an operational standard procedure. It was more of a bombing competition than a bombing combination. The general, night, area offensive of Bomber Command and the key point, day, precision offensive of the Eighth Air Force proved to be virtually and mutually incompatible; and though they imposed a terrible penalty upon Germany through the death and destruction wrought between 1940 and early 1944, they incurred themselves, relatively speaking, an even more severe penalty in the casualties suffered. Moreover, the ratios between the rate of destruction of the targets in Germany, the rate at which the Germans could repair or otherwise overcome that destruction, and the rate of bomber casualties eventually became unbalanced to the disadvantage of the bombers. Thus, in the manner of its planning and the nature of its incidence, the combined bomber offensive was not only up to this stage, that is the beginning of 1944, somewhat unsuccessful but considerably divided.

Yet, in the final phase, the two forces, still divided by aim and operational procedure, not only complemented each other, but produced, the one the key and the other the lever, which brought down the German war economy in ruins and ensured the final victory of the Grand Alliance. This extraordinary combination, symbolized by the activities of the Mustang and the Lancaster, was, however, the product much more of fortuitous circumstances and opportunities than of farsighted planning.

Nor should it be assumed that these distinctions are simply philosophical and academic observations. They seem to me to offer what I may perhaps be allowed to claim is the grammar of the subject. The understanding of this grammar should surely be useful to those who from emotive or academic reasons wish to pursue the further investigation of this complex and, in the view of many, controversial subject.

COMMENTARY

ROBIN HIGHAM

I think I should preface my remarks by saying that I am going to take a sort of a British view of Dr. Frankland's paper and use it as a springboard. Personally, I have long been an admirer and a user of Sir Charles Webster and Dr. Noble Frankland's *Strategic Air Offensive against Germany*, and have read with profit the Director of the Imperial War Museum's *Bombing Offensive against Germany: Outlines and Perspectives*, which were his 1963 Lees Knowles Lectures. In these and in his paper today, Dr. Frankland has opened up what I think is rich and fertile ground. He has correctly pointed to the need for the study of the past in order to know what should be practiced and what should be avoided in the future. He has shown that war is full of parallels and contradictions, and that there is a great need for those directing it to have a broad fund of historical knowledge, to be able to see, for instance, that the oceanic ideas of a Mahan may be more applicable than the peninsular ones of a Douhet. Because, however, I find myself so much in agreement with what he has said, I hope that both he and you will pardon me if I confine most of my remarks to wondering about other aspects of command than the "classical and revolutionary, combined and divided, planned and fortuitous." So, if you will bear with me, my comments will be aimed at raising some suggestions about these.

Now Dr. Frankland's presentation stayed strictly off commanders and their personalities. Yet a number of major characters, their education, training, previous service, friendships, and outlook are deserving, I think, of someone's attention. Of the commanders of Bomber Command omitting Ludlow Hewitt, whose service terminated early, we have in the Second World War, Marshal of the RAF Viscount Portal and Marshal of the RAF Sir Arthur Harris.

Portal's posting as AOC-in-C of Bomber Command was cut short when he was recalled to the Air Ministry to replace Sir Cyril Newell as Chief of the Air Staff. We are still awaiting his memoirs in full, but we cannot but be aware of several facts about him. He was a graduate of Winchester and Oxford and follows thus much more in the pattern of British permanent civil servants than of the Air Force or the other services. And he was, so far, the only Chief of the Air Staff to have these attributes. We know, moreover, that he got along well with Churchill, and that he was no stranger to high places, having spent about half of his years in the RAF up to 1940 at the Air Ministry. Portal was able, quiet, and shrewd.

In contrast there is Sir Arthur Harris, who, it is true, also spent some time at the Air Ministry. He was there in Plans when the department was forced to abandon its full concentration upon attacking the navy and the army and to devote some of its time to a possible war with Germany. Harris had the guts and the determination of Haig without, I think, the innovative abilities to run the bomber campaign, as it turned out. He did not have—and this is not simply his own fault; this was, I think, a problem with the service for all those who came in at that early stage—the education nor the historical training to understand that the classical principles of warfare applied equally to the campaign in the air. Harris had never, as far as I know, except for service schooling, passed beyond the secondary school stage on the educational ladder. Now this comment, of course, being a comment coming from a professional scholar, may perhaps be somewhat unfair.

One other person who can be noted as having an important effect upon the campaign—a man like Harris—one who has written his memoirs, is Lord Tedder. Like Portal he was a well-educated man, being a graduate of Cambridge and the author of a prize-winning study on the navy of the Restoration. It was Tedder who forced Bomber Command in 1944 into a strategic role to aid the D-day landings.

I think there is room for much more study of these people. Apart from the relationships between them and their subordinates, attention must also be called to the rather extraordinary way, at least for Britain, in which this campaign was conducted. Here was an offensive operation whose headquarters were located within easy driving distance of the Prime Minister's weekend lodge, at a

time when the Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, had an exceptional interest in the outcome (not to mention the means, for a former naval person who had a subaltern's love of weapons and gadgets). With the possible exception of General Sir Frederick Pile of Anti-Aircraft Command, no other high field commander in British history was in such a unique position to bypass the chain of command and take his own case to the higher direction as was Sir Arthur Harris. So far as I know, no commander of the air defense of Great Britain under its various names was ever in quite the same position.

Then too, there is a need to explore more thoroughly the handling of technical innovations which played such an extraordinary part in this campaign and in the battle of the Atlantic. Sir Charles Webster and Dr. Noble Frankland have quite correctly noted that the DeHaviland Mosquito was a far better weapon than either the Lancaster or the Halifax, not to mention the Stirling. Constance Babbington Smith has recorded the great reluctance of Headquarters Bomber Command to accept the scientific evidence from cameras. But Air Vice Marshal D.C.T. Bennett has spoken of the hostility with which pathfinder operation was at first greeted. Again for proof, we are much indebted to that which A.J.P. Taylor has just recently called the most honest and ruthless official history ever written. In this respect, it may be noticed in passing that in overseas theaters, where material was much less plentiful and the home bureaucracies' negativism less influential, innovation was, because it had to be, much more rapid. Dr. Frankland has rightly mentioned the Mustang. Given the long colonial role of the Royal Air Force, it is surprising that long-range aircraft and even long-range drop tanks were not introduced earlier. I believe the only operational attempt was with a Vickers-Wellesley which was designed strictly for colonial operations. In the Far East, both the Japanese Zeros and the Flying Tigers' P-40s were fitted with long-range tanks, while in the Middle East the crude drop tanks (technically auxiliary tanks) fitted to Hurricanes for the ferrying flights from West Africa to the Middle East were of necessity used on operations, because desert distances were considerably greater than those in Europe, even though in so doing the Hurricane's performance was considerably damaged.

At this point, let us then look at the campaign, first in theory,

then in fact, and finally, within the context of the war the British fought. The theory behind the bomber offensive went back, as Dr. Frankland and I have shown elsewhere, to the First World War and even before it; though by no means to Douhet alone. In Britain, it did not originate with Field Marshal Jan Christian Smuts but with F. W. Lanchester, whose ideas were passed to Smuts by Sir David Henderson, the London-based head of the Royal Flying Corps in the summer of 1917. Lord Trenchard was a tactical man and did not accept the idea of strategic bombing until late 1921 or early 1922. And then, like many converts, he embraced it too wholeheartedly, though he never provided the equipment with which to implement it. When the retaliatory independent bomber attack on Germany was proposed in 1917, Churchill, as Minister of Munitions, quite correctly opposed it, for he saw that not only could this kind of attack be mastered but it did exactly what was not desired. It strengthened the will of the home front which, if left untouched, was more likely to become discouraged and devisive. Moreover, as Allen Dulles has recently pointed out, bombing civilians places them in the hands of the government. There were in fact several lessons to be drawn from the use of air power in the First World War, which because of the—and I am sorry to have to say this—lack of intellectual and historical interest on the part of the bulk of the older air force officers, at least in Britain, were not sketched out. One might say that almost the sole British exception to this generalization was the work of Wing Commander, as he then was, Sir John Slessor in his *Air Power and Armies* in 1936. But that book had small impact because he was attached to what was to become Army Cooperation Command, perhaps the least respected of the RAF flying branches. Two of these neglected lessons from the First World War must be mentioned. The first is that the defense always rose to meet and defeat the offense if given time; and secondly, that man has a much greater tolerance to pain than suspected, especially when intensity is escalated slowly. In other words, it seems to me, that for an attack on the will of the people to be effective, it must, as must most successful wars, be short, sharp, and devastatingly effective.

At this point it must be noted that if tactical air power on the Western Front was not particularly effective, it was because none of the tactics used there worked well until the Germans overreached their supply system as the aftermath of the March 1918 offensive.

Tactical air power was a decided asset when combined with good generalship, as under Allenby at Megiddo, a place to which I shall return later. As for the independent air force, note simply in passing that it was so named for political reasons. It is fair to suggest, I think, that its fate very quickly would have become that of the Gothas raiding London had it attempted to attack Berlin. The legacy of these lessons of the First World War became entwined with a number of postwar myths, created to preserve the Royal Air Force as a separate service as a result of warfare between the services, as to who could more cheaply and effectively defend Britain. Out of the Sykes-Grove Memorandum of June 1918, came in 1922 the deterrent strike force concept. It was primarily aimed at France, but little equipment was ordered to implement it, despite the proposed "52 squadron" home defense air force, composed two-thirds of bombers. Even worse than this, as Webster and Frankland have shown, neither training nor planning was undertaken, nor specifications issued, nor intelligence gathered, nor assessments made, to assure that the deterrent would work. The result of this was only becoming apparent during the Munich crisis when the leisurely evaluation ordered in 1936 of the ability to intimidate Hitler began to become available. Thus, the British deterrent failed miserably in 1939 because it simply was not credible.

If this is understood, then the long failure of the Bomber Offensive against Germany is not surprising. It only really became effective in 1944 for a variety of reasons, into which I think I need not go, because Dr. Frankland has already made them plain. What does need to be asked is the question, "If the deterrent fails, what course of action do you take?" And surely this is one of the most important of all command decisions which faces the higher direction. The bombing offensive against Germany remained, despite the declaration of war, a part of the grand strategy. In fact, it is not too much to suggest that many of its problems arose from the term "strategic," which had become by the Second World War as ambiguous as the word "military." After Britain had mercifully, as Captain Roskill has remarked, been thrown off the continent, the grand strategic picture was clarified; but even in 1939, I would suggest, it was not that cloudy. It was correctly recognized that since Bomber Command was not in position to be a retaliatory force, as its daylight operation was speedily discovered to be impossible, as Dr. Frankland has noted, that the best it could do was to use leaflet

dropping as a form of training. In this respect, the May 1940 attack on Berlin was a failure for it overlooked the lesson the Royal Naval Air Service learned as it emerged from its shelters on the 20th of May 1916: Don't start something against which you yourself are not protected. In the period between the beginning of the war and the fall of France, the air defense of Great Britain needed to be strengthened and *Blitzkrieg* studied, so that the immediate problems of the day could be solved, and the island base made a secure arsenal. Upon the fall of France it was possible to divide grand strategic necessities and choices into a very few concrete issues, all concerned with answering the question, "How, and in what order?"

These, I think, are first the defense of the United Kingdom, which meant concentrating primarily upon Fighter Command, naval and military defenses. As General Sir Frederick Morgan has shown, however, invasion was not a real danger after the end of the "daylight" period, the successful defensive Battle of Britain in September. Much more dangerous were the attacks on the ports, which would have succeeded if the Germans had continued to bomb them in the spring of 1941, in what was properly a grand strategic air offensive.

Secondly, there was a need to place the island arsenal into full production. This involved the allocation of manpower and the security of the lines of communications overseas, both for incoming raw materials and for outward-bound expeditionary forces and their logistical support. For this traditional aspect of British grand strategy the First World War had already proved the lessons, the combined air and sea offensive-defensives. But owing to the low rating given to both antisubmarine warfare and RAF Coastal Command in the interwar years, the vital forces were in extremely short supply, and in the vast reaches of the ocean numbers rather than size counted.

Third was the cleaning up of overseas wars, to which I will return in a few minutes.

Fourth, it was necessary to neutralize the neutrals, the important diplomatic aspect, by making them believe that Britain was capable of winning the war and that Germany was not. This demanded victories in the field, invisible support of sufficient dimensions to enable them to withstand German or Italian pressures,

or, at the very least, the sense to understand that neutrality might actually be the best course, both for them and for Britain.

Fifth was containment of Germany with all that that implied in the whole area from the Balkans to Norway. You do not have to be told that all of these grand strategic problems were interlocked and that, in the words of Field Marshal Earl Wavell, "War is an option of difficulties." While we do have today much more knowledge and much more sophisticated machinery both for the collection and the interpretation of intelligence and for decision-making, it can be suggested nevertheless that there was available sufficient evidence and enough historical precedent in 1940-1941 to have made a different allocation of resources and create different priorities from those adopted. It is true that the fall of France was an unanticipated event with vast consequences, and that in the Battle of Britain the British were fighting for national existence, but by October 1940 it should have been possible to re-examine grand strategy. Unfortunately the Prime Minister forgot at this juncture what he had said earlier in his career about the Middle East, that it was the "belt buckle of the Empire," just as he later forgot his wise memorandum of October 1917, and, just as he had earlier, he became enamored with the Balkans, but at this time with far less resources available. The result was that Britain lost both prestige and its best theater commander.

Except for the night bombing of Britain and U-boat warfare, once Hitler had determined to attack Russia he was not a direct threat to the British Isles. Conversely there was no direct way in which Britain could attack Germany; for Bomber Command could not, as Dr. Frankland assured me, in fact be more than a nuisance.

If the key was command of the air, did the bomber offensive contribute to this until 1944? Dr. Frankland has pointed out that the Germans could defend themselves and that casualties exceeded results. This is an argument, it seems to me then, for a reappraisal of strategy or even grand strategy. The classical solution need not have been sought in fighters in 1943 but in a new direction in 1940 or 1941, in which the bombers who were not being effective against Germany might have been used strategically in another way. At the risk then of being called a "Monday morning quarterback," let me suggest that quite a different allocation of resources might have had worthwhile results. Instead of a bomber offensive against Germany,

harassment of the Third Reich should have been undertaken upon an air-guerrilla basis, using, when they were available, the Mosquitos. These excellent aircraft were inexpensive to manufacture and placed less strain upon raw material resources and production facilities than did the Stirling, Lancaster, and Halifax, while, as Webster and Frankland have so properly noted, they required smaller crews, fewer engines, enjoyed far smaller casualties, and were far more accurate in striking targets. Their use in fact might have enabled employment of a military targets attack. Moreover, their tactics made them extremely hard to pinpoint for enemy counterinsurgency action. In the face of the very light German attacks, for instance, on Britain in 1944, the air defense of Great Britain still deployed 43 squadrons of fighters, as opposed to 55 at the height of the Battle of Britain and not counting 92 squadrons of the tactical air force. Some of the effort thus saved should have been allocated, it seems to me, to Coastal Command, especially in terms of developing very-long-range aircraft such as the modification of the Lancaster, or very-long-range Sunderland flying boats, which were really a much more comfortable type of machine for these patrols. This reallocation, when coupled to intensive construction of emergency port facilities and railways as well as accelerated development of night fighters, would have taken care of the grand strategic points, which I mentioned above, except those concerned with overseas wars and neutrals.

It may be suggested that the consequences of victory in the field far outstripped those of the defeat, and that policy makers worry too much about the latter and not enough about the former. The way to have impressed and reassured neutrals, including the United States which in late 1940 was contemplating lend-lease, was to win a resounding victory. The Battle of Britain was a defensive one, and its usefulness was certainly played to the hilt. But in the Middle East the British had a chance to pull off a string of victories which would have, in all probability, brought them invaluable advantages, especially when at the end of 1941 war in the Far East also became a reality. In Wavell, the British had in 1940 the ablest area and field commander of the day. With extremely thin resources, as compared to what was available at home, he was handling diverse campaigns with enviable success. Unfortunately Churchill had not for some strange reason ever met Wavell before he called him home for consultation in 1940. They didn't see "eye-

to-eye" in spite of the fact that of all military men of his generation Wavell was more conscious of political necessities than anyone else at that moment, and this was to be his undoing. Wavell did so much with what can fairly be described as "ridiculous" resources that it is not impossible to suggest that had he been supplied with a relatively small increase in air power from the United Kingdom, he could have beaten the Italians not only in East Africa, which he did of course do, but more importantly in North Africa, thus preventing Rommel from landing in Tripoli and possibly also pulling off the Italian attack from Greece. An additional benefit of this victory would have been the security of Malta and the possibility of swinging French North Africa over, thus providing the British with a relatively safe line of communications through the Mediterranean to the Middle East and eventually to the Far East. In addition, neither Syria nor Iraq would have been as prepared to create trouble; Turkey would have been more warmly neutral; and Crete might even have been used as a flank guard instead of as a German air base. A realistic assessment of the Greek and Yugoslav situations would have recognized that they could not be protected, if for no other reason than that the Greek armed forces were equipped with Czech, Polish, and French arms, for which the only logistical solution was complete re-equipment, a project which, of course, was completely out of the question. Just as a small number of modern squadrons enabled Allenby to win a decisive victory at Megiddo and the complete destruction of Turkey in the First World War, so a similar infusion of modern air materiel would have enabled Wavell to employ both strategic and tactical air power, in conjunction with his ground and naval forces, to achieve a signal victory in a decisive theater.

Let me then suggest that the grand strategic air offensive against Germany before 1944 was neither grand nor correct strategy, but a violation of the principles of war. It left the lines of communication unsecured, it failed to concentrate decisive force at the decisive place at the right time, and it was not economic in its use of force. Far from being revolutionary, therefore, it was simply had "classical" grand strategy.

I cannot end, of course, without paying tribute again to the work which Sir Charles Webster and Dr. Noble Frankland have done and to the very interesting paper which Dr. Frankland has

presented. I hope that he will accept my apologies for using his paper as a springboard.

ROBERT F. FUTRELL

One of the problems of the podium as opposed to the pen is to stimulate an audience which may be more receptive to generalizations than to exact details. To emphasize his message a speaker tends to make his blacks a bit blacker and his whites a little whiter. Let me hasten to say that Dr. Frankland's paper is intended to inform rather than to titillate, but I believe that he has in some instances used fluorescent rhetoric where a drab grey of tedious evaluation might have been more appropriate. I agree with his apparent belief that we can understand history only when we can arrange often diverse facts into categories of meanings, but I suggest that these categories ought to be very seriously considered in order to insure that they do not do too much violence to exact fact.

When Dr. Frankland speaks of the "classical and revolutionary" backgrounds of the Combined Bomber Offensive, it seems to me that he follows the usual interpretation and assumes that the doctrines of the British and American proponents of strategic air power were very much the same. In an earlier address he has defined "classical warfare" as "the clash of offence and defence, or, in yet another word, the battle." In terms of this definition, Brigadier General "Billy" Mitchell could better be described as a "classical innovator" than as a "revolutionary," since he emphasized the need to control the air by air battle as well as his new theory of making war by strategic air bombardment against an enemy's will and capability to wage war. In later years, Major Alexander P. de Seversky has observed that, as a former Russian naval air officer, he was always strongly influenced by the sea power lessons of Mahan. Close reading of Seversky's *Victory through Airpower* (1942) will reveal more of the classical Mahan than of the revolutionary Douhet.

It is doubtful that American strategic air power advocates considered that aviation had "overturned the established principles

of war.” At the Air Corps Tactical School, such men were a little dubious about Major General J. F. C. Fuller’s principles of war (objective, mass, offensive, economy, movement, surprise, simplicity, security, and cooperation) because the principles had generally been written about as if they pertained only to the conduct of operations on or near a ground battlefield. But Mitchell had learned the importance of applying these principles to aviation from General Trenchard in 1917, and in 1936 the Air Corps Tactical School was teaching: “Air operations, like other military operations, are governed by the same fundamental principles that have governed warfare in the past.”

The revolutionary theory of strategic bombing came into the U.S. Army Air Corps during the 1920s both from independent thinking and from Douhet. The influence of Douhet came first through Mitchell (as Colonel Hurley shows in his biography)¹ and then directly from a study of Douhet’s writings. The real breakthrough in strategic air thought occurred during the Ohio maneuvers of 1929, when interceptor aircraft gave little difficulty to penetrating bombers. In reporting the maneuvers on 26 May 1929, Major Walter H. Frank, the Tactical School’s assistant commandant, expressed agreement with Douhet’s position “that an air force is principally an offensive weapon rather than a defensive one.”² In the classrooms at Langley Field in 1930, Lieutenant Kenneth Walker stated the bomber credo: “A well organized, well planned, and well flown air force attack will constitute an offensive that cannot be stopped.”³ Following their move to Maxwell Field, Tactical School bombardment instructors worked out their industrial fabric theory of national power. As the key economic targets surfaced in AWPD-1⁴ in August 1941, they were judged to be electric power, transportation, oil, and petroleum. And by 1935 the full-blown theory of high-level, daylight, precision bombing of pinpoint targets was being taught.

At the same time that the strategic bombing doctrine was maturing, circumstances made U.S. Army Air Corps thinking more pragmatic than dogmatic. Long-range bombers had to be justified for coastal defense—to repel hostile naval forces approaching Vancouver and Nova Scotia under the RED-ORANGE plan. As established in 1935, the GHQ (General Headquarters) Air Force was expected to commence battle before friendly ground armies made contact with invasion forces, but when the surface battle was

joined all aviation—including long-range bombers—would support the friendly ground armies. Air Corps bomber, pursuit, and attack groups were assigned to the GHQ Air Force rather than to separate bomber, fighter, and army-cooperation commands. At the Air Corps Tactical School the “bombardment invincibility” doctrine was at its zenith between 1934 and 1936, but pursuit instruction was restored to equal emphasis in the curriculum after 1936.

In the late 1930s American strategic air enthusiasts remained confident that the bomber could penetrate and destroy, but they indicated that they would like the added assurance of long-range escort fighters—provided they could be developed, which appeared unlikely. Spurred on by the nagging doubts of General H. H. Arnold that a bomber could penetrate without fighter escort, the Air Corps and Army Air Forces devoted an extraordinary amount of attention to the development of a long-range pursuit aircraft. The search for such a plane, which the Air Board of 1939 described as a “pursuit fighter” designed “for the accompaniment and protection of bombardment aviation when engaged on missions exposed to effective attack by hostile pursuit,” brought forward a progression of large, twin-engine, turret equipped “X” and “Y” model aircraft.⁵ The most notable were the Bell YFM-1A Airacuda, the Lockheed XP-58, and the Northrop XP-61. Of these planes only the P-61 became operational and it turned out to be a night fighter rather than a bomber escort. The efforts to develop a special escort fighter failed, and it was also true that Arnold’s periodic demands for increased bomber protection usually ended in new studies looking toward increased bomber firepower and better defensive formations. But I think that it is pertinent that the Army Air Forces kept a long-range fighter development project always warm—even if only on a back burner.

When the great Army Air Forces planners—Hal George, O. A. Anderson, Walker, Hansell, Vandenberg, Kuter—prepared AWPD-1 in August 1941, they were careful to keep a number of options open. Three lines of U.S. air action were possible against an already strained German economy and society. The first required destruction of Germany’s electric power and transportation systems, oil and petroleum resources, and the undermining of morale by attacks against civilian concentrations. The second line of action—representing intermediate objectives that might be essential to accomplish the principal effect—required neutralization of the Luft-

waffe by attacks against its bases, aircraft factories, and aluminum and magnesium production. The third line of action—which might have to be undertaken to safeguard operating air bases—included attacks against submarine bases, surface seacraft, and invasion ports. The planners advocated a concentration of daylight, precision attacks against specific targets. They did not favor attacks against cities unless their inhabitants were known to be low in morale, either because of suffering or deprivation, or because of a recognition that their armed forces could not win a favorable decision. The planners believed that by relying on speed, massed formations, high altitude, defensive firepower, armor, and simultaneous penetrations at many places, heavy bombers could make deep penetrations of German defenses in daylight hours. But they urged that it would be well to develop a large, heavily armed, escort fighter. The planners suggested that a transcendent six-month air offensive against Germany might eliminate the need for a surface invasion, but if the invasion proved necessary for exploitation of the air victory, it should not be undertaken until the air campaign had been completed.

Where American air doctrine in some measure visualized a unity of air power and permitted optional employments, it seems to me that British air doctrine—as manifest in organization and equipment—was somewhat less flexible. I am led to believe that the Royal Air Force's Bomber and Fighter Commands were quite separate organizations. Where American bombers could make a fight for air superiority, the British bombers could not and possibly were never intended to do so. Witness Air Marshal Sir John Slessor's statement made in 1936: "Air superiority is only a means to an end. But it happens that to go straight for the end is best, in fact the only sure way of achieving the ends."⁶ While the Spitfire was a remarkable interceptor, it seems to have been designed for a very specific need and with little potential for growth into a long-range fighter. In this regard a statement made by Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding in January 1941 may be applicable: "The primary objective of the fighter airplane," he said, "is the interception and destruction of the enemy bomber. The fighter should remember that the attack on the enemy fighter is only incidental to the main objective."⁷ Unable to attempt to establish command of the air, RAF Bomber Command would be compelled to follow late World War I and pre-Douhet tactics of attempts to evade German defenses

and to attack area targets under cover of darkness. If Dr. Frankland wishes to describe RAF Bomber Command's conceptual input into the Combined Bomber Offensive strategy as being "revolutionary," I believe that we should note that American strategic air thinking can best be described as being both "classical" and "revolutionary."

In order to save time, I will waive remarks about our speaker's second subtitle: Combined and Divided. I should observe, however, that I long ago enlisted—and have several times renewed my membership—in the corps of those who accept the "specious" argument that if sustained strategic air attacks had been mounted with substantial bomber forces against the decisive target systems named in AWPD-1, Germany's economy could and should have been destroyed before—instead of after—the Normandy invasion. While the British were disappointed that the American bombers did not tack on to their night formations, I do not believe that it can be rightly said that the division of the Combined Bomber Offensive into night and day operations prevented the Americans from making worthwhile contributions to the bombing effort against Germany in 1942-43. The essential problem in this period was that the Eighth Air Force was too small, even before many of its units were diverted to support the Allied surface operation in North Africa. And the targets handed down to it (especially the almost invulnerable submarine pens) were little calculated to accomplish any great decision. As far as target destruction was concerned, I will agree that the major part of the U.S. Army Air Forces operations in the European Theater from 17 August 1942 to June 1943 was wasted effort (except for training and experience), but my reasons are different from those advanced by Dr. Frankland. I believe we should notice, however, that the early air attacks against continental Europe caused a pull-back of Luftwaffe units from the Mediterranean and Eastern Fronts, thus hastening German defeats in those areas.

If we accept my earlier proposition that American strategic air doctrine was more pragmatic than that of the Royal Air Force, we can deal rather shortly with some of the "fortuitous developments" discussed under the heading, "Planned and Fortuitous." The thesis that hidebound American strategic air officers, following a blind dogma of bomber invincibility, brought the Eighth Air Force to

“America’s Waterloo” at Schweinfurt in 1943 simply cannot be sustained, although it seems to be suggested by our speaker and was stated in almost so many words by a Harmon Memorial lecturer in 1962.⁸ And I do not think that we should accept the melodramatic story of the P-51 Mustang—how it was developed by chance and arrived in the European Theater of Operations just in time to win air superiority—without closer scrutiny. Parenthetically, the really interesting story regarding the long-range fighter has to do with auxiliary fuel tanks which had long been used for ferrying purposes, but which high-ranking Air Corps officers rejected for tactical usage in 1939 because they were believed to be a fire hazard and mistrusted in 1941 because their fittings added “unnecessary weight and operational complexities that are incompatible with the mission of pursuit.”⁹ Where the extended-range P-51 served with distinction in Europe, the P-47N flew even longer-range bomber support missions in the Pacific.

I am certain that the establishment of Allied air superiority over Europe in the winter of 1943-44 was attributable to far more factors than the fortunate arrival of the Mustang fighter on the scene. Germany’s oil and petroleum fuel situation was critically weak from the war’s beginning, and shortages of aviation fuel seriously hindered the training of replacement pilots. When experienced Luftwaffe flyers were killed, they had to be replaced by trainee pilots whose flying time had been cut short by the scarcity of aviation gasoline. By robbing their Eastern and Mediterranean fronts, the Germans almost doubled their single-engine fighter strength on the Western front during 1943, but during the winter of 1943-44 the number of U.S. bombers on the Western front quadrupled while Luftwaffe strength in units increased very little. For example, in the fall of 1943, 300 U.S. bombers and 200 escort fighters were opposed by 200 or more enemy fighters. In May 1944 comparative figures show 1,000 bombers and 900 escort fighters opposed by some 300 enemy interceptors. The establishment of the U.S. Strategic Air Forces under General Carl A. Spaatz on 1 January 1944 further augmented the mass of coordinated American bombing effort against Germany and diluted Luftwaffe interception capabilities.

Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering’s mistakes also contributed to the Allied air victory. In December 1943 Goering issued orders to Luftwaffe pilots to concentrate their attacks on Allied bombers

and to avoid combat with Allied escorts. This order ignored a basic fact of air fighting: that when aircraft of roughly equal performance meet, the one who seeks to avoid combat is at an almost certainly fatal disadvantage. Noting Goering's mistake, Major General Jimmy Doolittle on 4 January 1944 ordered Eighth Air Force fighters to take the offensive—"to pursue the Hun until he is destroyed"—rather than provide position defense to friendly bombers.¹⁰ In this same season, Luftwaffe fighters were being retrofitted with rockets, which were effective against bombers but were relatively ineffective against fighters. Goering's mistakes—which were indeed "fortuitous" and could hardly be preprogrammed in American plans—had a lot to do with the Allied air victory. Seen in this light, it may have been well that the Casablanca and POINTBLANK directives were not too specific, since their vagueness permitted air commanders to make needed on-the-spot professional decisions.

As for the charge that American air commanders may have been deficient in judgment in not having abandoned daylight strategic bombing, Major General Haywood S. Hansell has written: "There is a thin line between stubborn and stupid adherence to a preconceived idea on the one hand, and courageous persistence in the face of apparent reverses on the other. The commander who correctly gauges the proper line of action, who remembers that his enemy is also being hurt, and who is driven by a relentless will to win—generally does win."¹¹ While the usual interpretation is that heavy losses forced American air leaders to make a reassessment of strategic bombing in the autumn of 1943, a close reading of their correspondence of the time reveals their confidence that strategic bombers, employed in force, could still perform their mission over Germany. But they were concerned because an early attainment of Allied control of the air was necessary if the OVERLORD and ANVIL invasions on the coasts of France were to succeed in mid-1944. General Arnold was addressing this situation when he issued orders to the commanders of the Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces on 27 December 1943, for his message read: "It is a conceded fact that OVERLORD and ANVIL will not be possible unless the German Air Force is destroyed. Therefore, my personal message to you—this is a MUST—is to, 'Destroy the Enemy Air Force wherever you find them, in the air, on the ground and in the factories.'" ¹²

Dr. Frankland's reference to the Royal Air Force's develop-

ment and use of very large conventional bombs is well taken, since large bombs also proved very useful in the Korean air interdiction campaigns. While his time and focus did not permit it, I wish that he might have been able to elaborate on the intelligence problem of targeting a strategic air campaign, which he briefly mentions. In this regard it seems to me that these points ought to be noted: the critical importance of identification and selection of really significant bombing targets, the waste of costly air resources that can come from improper selection of objectives; the need to make rapid, repetitive strikes against targets selected for destruction, thus accomplishing the desired end before the enemy can devise countermeasures.

As you have no doubt surmised, I do not entirely agree with our speaker's view that "fortuitous circumstances came to the rescue of the so-called 'Combined Bomber Offensive.'" And I regret that we are not in agreement. Because World War II provided air power with its first opportunity to show that it could do something more than support surface campaigns, I think that it is unfortunate the historians have been unable to agree upon precisely calculated value judgments in regard to the conflict. While some purists seem to believe that historians ought to record what happened and not seek to highlight useful information, I note with pleasure that Dr. Frankland believes that "the fruits of . . . discovery and explanation may be relevant as well as interesting in the context of the problems confronting the world today."

Before we close, I think that we ought to try to look at some of the reasons why different meanings can be drawn from the history of the Combined Bomber Offensive. Some of the thoughts that come to my mind here spring from studies being made at the Air University by the CORONA HARVEST project, which is charged with evaluation of the employment of air power in the current war in Southeast Asia. One of the surprising things learned early in this project was that no one had ever attempted to establish any measurable criteria for judging the successful accomplishment of an aerial mission. Although bombing surveys and evaluation boards—and historians, in train—made exhaustive surveys in World War II, these evaluators lacked essential standards for judging accomplishment, a deeply comprehensive data base for making quantitative evaluations, and the techniques for exploiting comprehensive data if it had been available. Unable to handle quantified data, evalua-

tors and historians tended to fall back upon the slippery facts of experiential history and to base many of their judgments upon the intensely personal experiences and views of the participants in the conflict. These varied views and experiences have permitted different interpretations. As Major General Orvil Anderson once remarked: "If you will let experience be your teacher, you can have any damn lesson you want."¹⁸

On the basis of experience, I would agree that at the end of World War II most participants accepted the conclusion that "strategic bombing could find effective expression only in the command of the air and command of the air was found to be a product of victorious battle against the opposing air force." The U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey drew the summary lesson that establishment of control of the air in Europe had been essential not only for surface operations but for the effective prosecution of the strategic air campaign. Even in the dark days of Schweinfurt and Regensburg, however, Major General Ira C. Eaker, the Eighth Air Force commander, did not lose faith in the effectiveness of massed heavy bomber operations. After the war's end, Eaker speculated that the bombers probably would have been able to defeat the German Air Force without fighter escort, but that the loss in bombers might have been ten per cent instead of two per cent. Yet another postwar assessment emphasized the importance of offensive fighter employment and suggested that the Eighth Air Force fighters would have contributed more to the air victory if they had been used as fighter-bombers against German fighter bases. Thinking in terms of poor bombing accuracy and the limited potential of iron bombs, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg pointed out in 1949 that the Eighth Air Force might have been willing to accept its 1943 loss rates if it could have accomplished an assured destruction of significant targets.

While we can portray the history of the Combined Bomber Offensive largely on the basis of the personal beliefs of the men who participated in it, I submit that we cannot establish absolute historical truths in regard to it without making a most exhaustive investigation and analysis of the exact importance of each of the factors that played a part in the history. We cannot safely assign value judgments to particular actions, unless we have first tested alternative actions that might have been pursued. In short, I think that there is merit to the arguments of the new econometrics school,

which demonstrates that historians can profitably use historical data to prepare models that will permit them to test and evaluate counter-factual conditional propositions of the past. Only by testing a full range of alternate possibilities would it be feasible to make a final judgment as to whether the “revolutionaries” were wrong when they thought that bombers could perform a decisive mission without a prior establishment of air superiority. There are those who say that Schweinfurt and Regensburg were an adequate test, but here again we are depending upon opinion rather than exact factual analysis.

In conclusion, let me say that Dr. Frankland has done us a service by giving us some meanings as well as the facts about the Combined Bomber Offensive. I have quarrelled with some of his meanings, often going far afield for the sake of making points. More in order to clarify my own thought than to correct Dr. Frankland, I have attempted to demonstrate that valid meanings should be based upon more detailed analyses than we historians have been wont to practice in the past. Despite all this, I point out that his major purpose—to demonstrate that a proper study of the past can in fact be interesting and relevant to the present—has been eminently successful.

NOTES

1. Alfred F. Hurley, *Billy Mitchell, Crusader for Air Power* (New York, 1964), p. 75.
2. Report, Maj. W. H. Frank, Assistant Commandant Air Corps Tactical School, to Brig. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois, Director of Air Corps Maneuvers, subj. Report on Maneuvers, 30 August 1929, inclosing: Critique, Air-Ground Maneuvers Fifth Corps Area, May 1929; Address by Major Frank in Auditorium at Wright Field, Ohio, 26 May 1929.
3. Air Corps Tactical School, *The Air Force*, February 1931, p. 56; conversations with Maj. Gen. H. S. Hansell (USAF-Ret.) regarding the contributions of Brig. Gen. Kenneth Walker to strategic bombing doctrine.
4. Document prepared by Air War Plans Division (AWPD).
5. Report, The Adjutant General, War Department, to Chiefs of All Arms and Services *et al.*, subj: Air Board Report, 15 September 1939; see data on “fighter-multiplace” in James C. Fahey, *U.S. Army Aircraft (Heavier than Air), 1908-1946* (New York: Ships and Aircraft, 1946), p. 28, and

Air Materiel Command case histories of the XP-58 and XP-75 airplane projects.

6. Wing Commander J. C. Slessor, *Air Power and Armies* (London, 1936), p. 10.

7. Memorandum of a talk presented by Air Vice Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding in Washington on 11 January 1941 by Lt. T. N. Charles, Plans Division, Office, Chief of Air Corps (OCAC).

8. William R. Emerson, *Operation Pointblank, A Tale of Bombers and Fighters* (U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado: The Harmon Memorial Lectures in Military History, No. 4, 1962), *passim*.

9. Burdette S. Wright, Vice President and General Manager, Aeroplane Division, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, to Maj. Gen. H. H. Arnold, Chief of Air Corps, 21 May 1940; Office of Chief of Air Corps, draft memorandum for Mr. Donald Nelson, Director of Production Management, subj: Approval of Change Order, n.d. and routing and record sheets attached thereto recommending disapproval; Maj. H. S. Vandenberg to General Spaatz, 4 March 1941, and Brig. Gen. Carl Spaatz, Chief, Plans Division, Office, Chief of Air Corps (OCAC), to Executive OCAC, 10 March 1941; see also Air Technical Service Command, "Case History of the Droppable Fuel Tank," February 1945.

10. Eighth Air Force, "Tactical Development," August 1942–May 1945, pp. 50-51.

11. Maj. Gen. H. S. Hansell, manuscript history "American Air Power in World War II," Chap. V, pp. 38-39.

12. W. F. Craven and J. L. Cate, eds., *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, Vol. III: *Europe: Argument to V-E Day* (Chicago, 1951), p. 8.

13. Maj. Gen. Orvil A. Anderson (USAF-Ret.), "Development of U.S. Strategic Air Doctrine, ETO World War II," Lecture to Air War College, 20 September 1951, p. 28.

SOME MILITARY VIEWS:

THE COMBINED BOMBER OFFENSIVE: A BRITISH COMMENT

Marshal of the Royal Air Force *SIR JOHN SLESSOR*

I don't think that I can add much in a way of comment on these very interesting papers to what I wrote in my book *The Central Blue* more than twelve years ago.¹

One thing I would perhaps say. Mr. Futrell in his paper quotes a sentence from a book by me in 1936.² Nothing I have done, or seen, or heard, or read since that date shakes that belief. Out of perhaps millions of words I have written and spoken about air strategy, nothing remains more true than those two lines. Air superiority is only a means to an end—and the end (or the aim or the object or the intention or whatever staff jargon you select to describe it) is to impose upon the enemy the utterly disastrous situation which no unprejudiced critic can deny that ultimately the British and U. S. Bomber Offensive imposed upon the Germans. The aim, object, or what not of the bomber is not to destroy enemy aircraft in the air—though that is a useful by-product; it is to drop sufficient bombs sufficiently accurately to destroy the enemy's capacity to wage war effectively—whether by drying up his oil supply, disrupting his war production, or paralyzing his armies' capacity to move—as the attack on transportation before and in the early stages of OVERLORD did with such unexaggerable importance to the success of our invasion of the continent.

It is by doing that, in the course of which you force him onto the defensive in the widest sense, that you win the fight for air superiority. In fact, "going straight for the end is the best, in fact the only sure, way of achieving the means."³

Of course, you have got to have the resources to enable you effectively to pursue that end. As I have repeatedly admitted, we grossly underestimated the numbers and technological efficiency of aircraft and their equipment necessary for that purpose. We made the mistake also in imagining that day bombers could do it unescorted; we thought that even if the necessary range could be built into fighters, when the bombers and their escort met enemy fighter opposition the latter would have to turn and fight, leaving the bombers to go on unescorted to bump into the next wave of enemy fighters. And we did not believe the range could be built in—curiously enough even with the Merlin Mustang we did not at first appreciate the immense capacity for range that could be built into it. (Incidentally Frankland's account of the birth of the Merlin Mustang is accurate—I was very closely associated with it at the time.) In fact among our many mistakes—and remember this was the first air war, to all practical purposes—we thought the bomber could get through with the help of its own guns. We found it could only get through with the help of guns in escort fighters. But the whole object of the exercise was to enable the bomber to get through. And it was that which led to air superiority—not the other way around.

I'm afraid I am not much interested in academic arguments about 'classical strategy'—much though I admire Admiral Mahan (you may be surprised to hear I have never read Douhet!) In my view, the defeat of enemy forces, whether on land, at sea, or in the air, is always the means, not the end. Armies don't defeat armies as an end in itself—they do it to enable them to occupy enemy territory (or prevent their own territory from being occupied). As far as I know, no responsible airman has ever suggested that strategic bombing could achieve its end without having air superiority to enable it to do so. But, given the necessary priorities and resources, they could do so without the massive land battles of 1914-18 or even 1939-45.

This leads me to the only other comment, which I think of any real importance, that I'd like to make on the papers by Frankland, Higham, and Futrell. Trenchard used to say "all war is muddle and confusion and mistakes, and the chap who wins, is he who makes fewer muddles and confusions and mistakes than the other fellow." Our ultimate victory in the air owed much to Goering and Hitler—

they were our 'secret weapons' all right! But a thing that struck me as very strange is that not one of these papers—including Frankland's—pointed out that our persistence in the Bomber Offensive, however amateur and ineffective in the early years, had the effect of making the Germans build fighters instead of bombers. Futrell notes in his paper that in about eight months, over the winter 1943-44, the number of U. S. bombers increased by more than three times and that of escort fighters by four and one-half times. On the other hand, the German fighters opposing them increased by only 50%, and there is no mention of German bombers because by that time their relative numbers and efficiency were negligible. Thank God the Germans took this cockeyed view of air defence and did not follow up their extraordinary initiative in developing heavy bombers that Fredette described so well in his book on the First Battle of Britain in 1917-18.⁴ I wonder what would have been the result if, instead of building more and more fighters to be shot down by the Mustangs and Thunderbolts and by the Spitfires in the Tactical Air Force, Speer had been allowed to concentrate a far higher proportion of the German production effort on building really good bombers—lineal descendants of the Gothas and Giants of 1917-18. I shudder to think of the effect on our British centres of population, ports, war industry, and crowded airfields. I believe at least that OVERLORD would have been impossible.

However, that's all mere speculation and not very profitable. Actually all this, in this age of nuclear missiles, is of no more than academic historical interest. Still—it is interesting and perhaps not altogether a waste of time. But do let us get our facts and premises right.

There are a few more unimportant holes I could pick in these three very good papers. I will content myself with two.

Higham states in his paper that it was Tedder "who forced Bomber Command into a strategic role to aid the D-Day landings"—(incidentally here is another example of the dangers of this loose use of the word "strategic"). It was not Tedder, for he had no authority to do any such thing. As was his natural duty, he brought what pressure he could to bear in order to get full support of Bomber Command for OVERLORD. But except for some opposition by Churchill to the railway bombing plan on the grounds of casualties to French civilians, I am aware of no other except from Harris,

who though a great commander in his way was a difficult chap and lacked any real strategic sense. It was the Chiefs of Staff—including and by no means least Portal—who insisted that all our resources should be put into ensuring the success of OVERLORD. And if Tedder or anyone else suggests that he “forced” Bomber Command into that role, it is quite simply not true.

As a matter of interest, in the first Chiefs of Staff paper on the reorganization of the RAF for the invasion (which I personally wrote in the summer of 1942), the Air Staff proposed that Bomber Command should be put under the orders of the Supreme Commander. In the event, the Command only acted in support of the invasion, under the direction of the Chiefs of Staff. But this may help to convince people that there was no question of the Air Ministry hanging back in this context; the Chiefs of Staff certainly did not.

The only other point is that I agree with Mr. Futrell that if we had given the necessary priority to the bombers and their equipment, Germany’s economy (and hence ability to sustain the war) could have been destroyed before the Normandy invasion. The armies would have had subsequently to go in to restore order and occupy enemy territory till a peace settlement, but on a much smaller scale and without a massive operation like OVERLORD. I am on record as saying that repeatedly at the time.⁵

NOTES

1. Sir John Slessor, *The Central Blue: The Autobiography of Sir John Slessor, Marshal of the Royal Air Force* (New York, 1957). See especially Chapter XIV, “1941-1942: Bomber Group Commander,” and pp. 203-207, 211-212, 231-233, 429-432.
2. John Slessor, *Air Power and Armies* (London, 1936), p. 10.
3. Slessor, *The Central Blue*, p. 390.
4. Raymond H. Fredette, *The Sky on Fire: The First Battle of Britain 1917-1918 and the Birth of the Royal Air Force* (New York, 1966), *passim*.
5. Slessor, *The Central Blue*, pp. 434-435.

THE ALLIED COMBINED BOMBER OFFENSIVE: TWO GERMAN VIEWS

FIELD MARSHALL ERHARD MILCH

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Having read Dr. Frankland's paper and the commentaries by Dr. Futrell and Professor Higham, I shall endeavor to present very briefly the German viewpoint of the Allied Combined Bomber Offensive during World War II. However, I shall not concern myself with the deeper and underlying considerations, often of a more philosophical nature, to which Dr. Frankland and some of the other commentators address themselves in their papers.

The subtitles of Dr. Frankland's paper, "classical and revolutionary, combined and divided, planned and fortuitous," seem to me to express most clearly, through the use of the small word "and," what is most necessary in order to achieve the greatest effect in any operation. It is the task of the higher military leadership always to find at the right moment and in proper dimensions the best solution among the two alternatives expressed by Dr. Frankland. This solution, however, can never be a one-sided one, that is choosing one of the alternatives over the other, for it must, more often than not, be one which is based on a mix of the two alternatives available. To make the most successful decision in each case is a task which requires military genius!

German Mistakes

In every military conflict each side must evaluate the power potential of the opponent. In the case of Germany and World War II, the following had a decisive effect on the German conduct of the war:

Translated and edited by Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen.

1. In the fall of 1939 the German Air Force was still in the process of building and expansion. It was as yet not ready to engage in large-scale military operations; this was equally true of the army and navy.

2. A comparison of German war potential with that of the Allies showed a drastic inferiority on the part of Germany, particularly in respect to such factors as population, geographical area, raw materials, industrial potential, and a trained leadership elite. For this reason, the German military leadership was unable to understand how (and why) the political leadership could and did embark on a course of military action. The most pressing handicap on the German side was the completely insufficient source of petroleum.

3. In the case of the German Air Force one must add a series of mistakes made by the military leadership, some of which occurred before the outbreak of war and some immediately thereafter, which in addition raised serious doubts as to any German hopes of victory. The following stand out:

a. From 1937 on, the German Air Force operated under a completely incorrect top echelon organizational structure.

b. The series production of the four-engine bombers, the Ju-89 and Do-18, was cancelled before the war.

c. The range of the fighter-escort force was limited and insufficient for wartime operations. Although drop tanks were available, their poor design and manufacture led to a refusal by the fighter pilots to use them.

d. Between 1937 and 1941 Germany could have produced between 40,000 to 50,000 additional front-line aircraft (based on the production figures achieved after 1941). Production capability, raw materials, and a skilled labor force were available but were not used to maximum capacity.

e. Shortly after the outbreak of the war, pilot training centers were allocated less than 25% of their basic fuel requirements. This in turn resulted in a considerable shortage of good pilots as early as the end of 1942.

f. The Me-262, the first jet fighter aircraft, was ready for the start of large-scale series production in the summer of 1943,

when Hitler prohibited the employment of the aircraft as a fighter and ordered it rebuilt as a *Blitzbomber*. Redesigning the aircraft for this purpose, adding provisions for a bombardier, bombsight, and bombcarrying capability, resulted in an interruption of the series production and a delay of more than a year.

World War II Bombing Operations

Tactics developed prior to the war for the employment of the German bomber force had been on the basis of daylight raids with accompanying fighter escorts for protection. Until the Battle of Britain this remained the basic Luftwaffe doctrine in terms of planning, training, and actual operations. However, the short radius of action of the German fighter escorts, which could not be extended beyond the vicinity of London, as well as their numerical insufficiency for the required bomber escort operations, necessitated a change in tactics. Thus, because of the large loss rate sustained by the bomber force as a result of the above, daylight bombing operations against England were changed to night operations. Yet, no completely satisfactory tactical doctrine for night bombing operations evolved on the German side, in contrast to the later British night bombing tactics based on large numbers of aircraft attacking in continuous waves.

Thus the German bomber force during night operations could attack only area targets successfully, not pinpoint targets. For this reason, although not consciously planning to do so, night bombing operations had to turn into terror attacks, with the civilian population suffering increased losses. British night bombing operations must be judged by the same standard, while recognizing that here the effect of "terrorizing" the civilian population served not as the unwanted by-product but rather as the main purpose of such operations. (See for example Churchill's order in this respect.)

The American daylight attacks, just as the earlier German attacks prior to the Battle of Britain, cannot be criticized from a military point of view. A more concentrated and numerically larger employment of the B-17s was possible only after the introduction of the Mustang provided the required and outstanding fighter escort. The American attacks were then able to hit the majority of their assigned targets in an outstanding manner. The excellent tactical employment system of the bomber-fighter force used by the Ameri-

cans contributed perhaps even more to the success. It was only natural that a certain percentage of the bombs dropped during daylight operations did fall on civilian targets and population centers, but this was only a fraction when compared with that of the night bombing operations.

The military successes of the American daylight operations were considerably more productive than those of British night flying operations, but the "combined" method of American daylight operations and British night flying operations successfully complemented each other to achieve the ultimate success. The greater volume of bombs dropped by the Lancasters and other British aircraft was compensated for by the lesser number of target hits and by the, at least 30%, decrease in finding the assigned targets during night operations. It is my opinion that British losses both in terms of pilots and aircraft during night flying operations were no less than that of the Americans.

The German fighter (interceptor) air force had been developed and trained for daylight operations only prior to and in the beginning of the war, but by the end of 1940 it was divided by the creation of a night-fighter interceptor force. The surprisingly successful results of this new force were made possible by the introduction of excellent radar equipment designed for such operations.

The Effect of the Allied Combined Bomber Offensive on Germany

Despite the fact that the Allies possessed excellent crews, aircraft, and tactics, an outside observer had difficulty in understanding why the effects of their day and night operations had not achieved the decisive (and desired) result, the capitulation of Germany by 1944. In respect to the British night bombing operations one aspect, probably not considered by the Allies in their planning, played an important role, namely the more than heroic resistance of the German people. This was strengthened rather than diminished by the night "terror" bombing attacks. It represented primarily an expression of faith and trust on the part of the German people in their leadership, particularly in Hitler himself. (However, in future wars it would be unwise to count on these same higher influences prevailing and operating again.)

The Americans also made what I consider a cardinal error in their assessment of the effects of daylight bombing operations on Germany, for until the middle of 1944 they continued to attack such targets which according to established doctrine had been considered as decisive, but which in practice were not so at all. American attacks against aircraft factories, aircraft engine factories, tank factories, etc., did not result in a noticeable or continuing decrease in production. To cite just one example. During the winter of 1943, on a day when the temperature was a freezing eight degrees Centigrade, a large-scale American bombing raid was carried out against a Junkers aircraft factory in central Germany which had been producing fifty Ju-88s per month. All buildings, including the factory heating installation, were totally destroyed. The aircraft, although in part totally destroyed, were to a large extent still repairable, but most of the factory equipment was inoperative. When I landed at the factory approximately 30 minutes after the attack had taken place, I found one third of the work force engaged in extinguishing the fires, one third engaged in removing the debris, and the last third repairing the damaged aircraft. The entire sight was catastrophic and I asked the assembled workers how long, in their estimation, it would take until all the damage had been repaired. Their answer was: at the latest within a month! Actually on the tenth day of the following month the factory delivered the 50 aircraft scheduled for delivery during the previous month (when the attack had occurred); the 50 aircraft scheduled for delivery during the current month were also delivered before the end of that month.

The Allies had hoped that their attacks on the ball-bearing factories (such as Schweinfurt) would have a decisive effect on the duration of the war. However, despite the heavy destruction caused by these attacks, their effect on air force production was almost nil, because, first of all, large reserves of ball-bearings had been stored elsewhere, and secondly, the need to use ball-bearings was not in each case of vital necessity and could be (in fact, was) compensated for by changes in model construction and by using substitutes. Only in 1944 were long-standing German fears turned into reality, when the Allies began their systematic destruction of the oil and petroleum product refineries. As soon as the repair of a damaged refinery seemed to near completion, the Allies launched a new attack on the installation, destroying it again. These Allied successes were

mainly due to daylight operations. They, in fact, delivered the real, decisive, death blow to Germany. Naturally, attacks against other targets, particularly those concentrating on the transportation system, did their part in destroying the German military potential, but were only of secondary importance. Destruction of these targets only became a catastrophe for Germany when the Allied armies of both West and East began their advances toward Germany proper, where they finally met in the center of Germany. These advances made by Allied ground forces were a direct result of the constant lack of available petroleum products as well as the diminishing fighting capability of the air force, which again is directly related to the lack of petroleum products in its effect on pilot training.

In conclusion I would like to state that the Allies would have been able to end the war sooner had they started their attacks against the German petroleum refineries earlier; in fact they would have shortened the war by the exact number of months (or weeks) it would have taken (and took) to carry out these attacks effectively. I fully realize that my brief remarks have dealt rather summarily with the most complex subject, but it has been my intention to accentuate the decisive elements of the Combined Bomber Offensive and its effect on Germany, as I saw it during World War II. From my remarks it is evident that I for one believe that the course of events could have taken a different turn, if . . . ! But it is always this "if" in life that makes the difference; a poor excuse as it is! However, we on the German side, at least in my opinion, made—unfortunately I may add—the greater and more important mistakes, as I tried to point out above.

How a strategic bombing war will be conducted in the future depends on many more imponderables than those which made World War II operations so difficult. Theoretically one can exterminate whole nations by conducting a nuclear war. The atomic bomb was used against Japan, but in Vietnam neither side has dared to use it yet, probably because of the fear of reciprocity. That one always can count on such fear of reciprocity in the future seems doubtful. What happens if the Soviets launch an attack against NATO? What happens under such circumstances to the European nations immediately concerned, regardless of whether the attack is launched with or without the use of nuclear weapons? Although it is the task of the political leadership to make the decision as to whether to use or not to use nuclear weapons, I believe

that the soldiers should prepare such decisions much more thoroughly from a military point of view than seems to have been the case to date.

One can only congratulate the United States Air Force Academy for having concerned itself so intimately with the questions and problems of the strategic bombing war, even though this type of war in the future will be able to achieve the same results through the employment of missiles rather than masses of aircraft.

World War II was only a scheme! Every new war will create new schemes! However, one must master the historical experiences, if one intends to apply them (with whatever necessary modifications) in the future.

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An analysis of the Allied Bomber Offensive against Germany is undoubtedly a useful endeavor, one which does not require any justification. However, Dr. Frankland's fine paper does raise some doubts in my mind, particularly with respect to his method of analysis. First, the conceptual framework of Frankland's inquiry appears to contribute little toward a better understanding of the strategic development and execution of the Allied Bombing Offensive and therefore also little toward the use of the experiences gained by it. Secondly, it is my belief that an isolated investigation of the event—isolated from the rest of the war and from the counteractions of the opponent—can only insufficiently illuminate the nature of the air war and cannot possibly enable an observer to derive valid rules from it. For this reason, I would like to begin my comments by using the comparatively more simple scheme of pure military analysis and then make an attempt to fit Frankland's concepts into such an investigation in order to ascertain their validity (*Ordnungsgehalt*).

Any military analysis (within certain modifications) must ask

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itself three questions: (1) What is the nature of the specific military task to be investigated within the context of the total overall military mission; (2) How could the specific mission best be accomplished within the limits of the means available; (3) What means and opportunities did the opponent possess to thwart one's own intentions?

It is assumed that while the total military mission of the Allies, i.e., to bring about the unconditional surrender of Germany, was sufficiently articulated, the specific task for the conduct of the air war was not clearly spelled out. In principle, three possible solutions were available for the execution of the latter task:

1. To conduct operations against the enemy air force with the goal of achieving air supremacy in order thus to open the road to total victory for the ground forces.

2. To weaken the opponent by destruction of his "nerve" system and his production centers. This would paralyze his resistance and create a situation whereby he would be unable to resist a follow-on occupation by the ground forces.

3. To defeat the enemy forces in closest cooperation with the ground forces, to pursue them into the homeland and annihilate them there.

Since at the beginning of the Bombing Offensive the employment of ground forces in Western Europe was neither possible nor contemplated, the third possible solution suggested above could be disregarded by Allied strategists at that time, but held in abeyance for later use.

That no decision was reached in regard to either (1) or (2) above and that the adoption, as an alternative, of the not too clearly conceived concept of "round-the-clock bombing" was possible only because of the almost inexhaustible power potential and reserves which the Allies possessed, coupled with the concurrent and continuous decrease in German power potential. Thus, it was actually possible for the Allies to pursue simultaneously solutions (1) and (2), in accordance with this rather vague concept ("round-the-clock bombing"), leaving the option open which of the two solutions would finally be adopted as the primary method, insofar as such a decision was still required.

Since the specific mission was vague in nature, its execution could not be anything else but vague too. For the mission of "round-the-clock bombing" was in reality not the result of a concept, but rather a result of the difference in equipment and training of the two Allied air forces. The question of how the specific air war mission could best be carried out with the means available had already been answered beforehand. Mission execution was made to fit the quality of the existing means, rather than to employ these means toward the achievement of a specifically defined strategic goal.

The weakness of the Allied method did not at all lie in its division of operational activity between day and night, for it was exactly this division of labor which forced the German air defense to engage in a "round-the-clock" state of readiness. Even more importantly, it forced Germany into the extremely difficult and expensive step of maintaining two defense systems, which at this time at least were still in many respects entirely different systems. On the contrary, the weakness of the Allied method was, as I see it, due rather to the lack of coordination concerning the strategic goal to be achieved. That this did not result in greater disadvantages for the Allies was primarily a result of the continuously changing military capabilities between the opposing air forces, which became more and more disadvantageous to the German side. In addition, a number of mistaken decisions on the part of the German leadership, some of catastrophic dimensions, added to it.

The only option available to the German side to defend themselves against the Allied air attacks, particularly when one considers that Germany was engaged in a war on many fronts which she could neither stop nor disengage herself from and which required the allocation of diminishing resources, was a concentration of all available strength for air defense. To arrive at this decision would have been very easy for Germany, particularly since wartime experiences and lessons learned in this respect were available from the Battle of Britain.

I believe that this point requires some further consideration. The German Air Force attained its reputation as a strategic air force in the quick wars of 1939 and 1940, particularly those against Poland and France. In reality this was a false reputation, for in all those instances where the Luftwaffe achieved unquestion-

able success it was used as a tactical weapon. It achieved its reputation of invincibility, of being the best air force, as paradoxically as this may sound, because of the army, for the Luftwaffe was really never required in those early wars to annihilate completely the opposing air force. It was sufficient if the enemy air force was temporarily paralyzed, sometimes only for a few days. The ground organization and logistic system of the enemy air forces, which although damaged but nevertheless repairable, was then overrun by the German armor columns and finally occupied by the pursuing infantry. Conversely the Luftwaffe played its part in the successes which the rapid movement of the army achieved, since it enabled the fast armor columns to drive forward under air force protection without worrying about enemy flank penetrations or the need to wait for contact with the much slower infantry, which followed in its path.

At the moment when this concept was abandoned, as for example during the Battle of Britain, the weakness of the Luftwaffe became apparent. This weakness was not only a result of the lack of range in the German fighter arm, but rather the comparative numbers and capabilities of both the RAF and the Luftwaffe. Numerically this has often been expressed in a ratio of one to four or even one to five in favor of the Luftwaffe. This, however, is based on an erroneous calculation. For the determining ratio is that of fighter to fighter, and this was hardly ever much better than one to one for the German side. A one to one ratio, however, is insufficient in view of the much higher attrition rate sustained by the attacker, a lesson which was to be validated later during the Allied Bombing Offensive. Herein lies the chance for the defender, a chance not to be overlooked.

In spite of the continuous "round-the-clock" efforts of the Allied Bombing Offensive, the German armament industry was able to produce until the end of the war approximately 1,400 Me-262 jet aircraft. Notwithstanding the concentrated Allied attacks against both oil refineries and the transportation network, Germany was able during the late summer and autumn of 1944 to provide 3,700 fighter aircraft for a large air defense effort, a number which the Luftwaffe had not been able to have in operation at any time before this. If, and I hope I may be permitted to make a hypothesis at this point, all of these existing capabilities had continually been used for the task of air defense instead of misusing them in the rather

senseless air attacks against enemy targets, the Allied Bombing Offensive would undoubtedly have come to a different end, although this probably would not have changed the final result of the war. If such large numbers of aircraft had been made available for air defense, it would have been impossible even for the United States Air Force to maintain a ratio of fighter aircraft of a least two to one, particularly when one considers the qualitative superiority of the Me-262. In this respect the complete victory of the Allied Bombing Offensive was indeed "fortuitous," that is to say based on a mistake by the German leadership which certainly was not and could not have been "planned."

Viewed in this light, the attrition of the RAF in the air battle over Berlin becomes even less understandable, since the first jet aircraft had already become operational during the late autumn months of 1943.* If the Allies had given proper consideration to the "means and opportunities the opponent possessed to thwart one's own intentions," they would immediately have concentrated their attacks on the German aircraft industry, engine and aluminum factories, and oil refineries. This decision should have been an easy one to make, since the questionable effect of terror raids, i.e., city bombing, had already been recognized on both sides by this time. Moreover, Berlin did no longer play the central role within the German "nerve system" which London still occupied within the British "nerve system."

After these comments, based on a German view of the Allied Bombing Offensive, I would like to concern myself with Dr. Frankland's conceptual framework and to investigate its content.

Classical and Revolutionary

The weakness of this pairing seems to me to rest upon the fact that it does not contain any real alternative. Thus, its use is primarily a matter of taste. For example, was the appearance of the first tank revolutionary? Hardly so, since the opponent soon learned how to cope with it with conventional means. Was the appearance of the aircraft as a military weapon revolutionary? Not at all, although it considerably expanded the possibilities of long range reconnaissance. The chivalrous air battles in which the fighter pilots

*The first flight of a Me-262 took place on 18 July 1942 from 0840 to 0852 hours at Leipheim Air Force Base (near Ulm, Germany). [Ed. note]

on both sides engaged in the First World War contributed as little toward the military decision of the war as did the rather small interdiction efforts of the air arm in the ground battle. At the start of the Second World War both weapon categories, the airplane and the tank, were already considered classical weapons. Nevertheless, the concept of the air-supported armored breakthrough was revolutionary since it brought about a change in strategy by replacing the attrition strategy (*Ermattungs- und Abnützungsstrategie*) of the First World War with a lightning strategy of mobility. At the same time this new strategy almost completely invalidated a principle of warfare heretofore considered as indispensable, namely that of the far superior strength required by the offense over the defense.

Measured against this rather decisive change in strategy the revolutionary content of Douhet's theory and that of other related theories seems comparatively small, since basically it meant nothing more than a rejuvenation of the "material battle" principle of the First World War, although with the help of a new weapon medium with expanded dimension and with increased destruction capabilities. But a wrong strategic concept does not become a more correct one just because one continues it by a constant increase in the means used. This point can be recognized today in the complete strategic irrationality of the "pat" situation toward which the atomic arms race has led. Some characteristics of this situation can also be ascribed to the Allied Bombing Offensive.

In view of what I have said above, one must doubt whether its strategic principle was indeed revolutionary. That the modification of the concept by the employment of long-range fighters and a concentration on selected war-essential target systems shows characteristics of a classical strategy is evident. But the fact that the Allied Bombing Offensive finally achieved its goal—and in such a total manner—is not so much due to either its revolutionary or classical ingredients or a combination of both, but rather due to the lack of a revolutionary spark on the part of the opponent. The German leadership, instead of doing what the British leadership had done two years earlier (1941), namely to grasp the revolutionary concept of opposing the Allied Bombing Offensive with all available means in the air, attempted desperately, in a classical-conservative manner, to retain a piece of Douhet's pseudo-revolutionary mantle in its hands. The German leadership used up its last air reserves in senseless and scattered offensive actions, thereby

giving up its only chance to force the enemy to revise his attrition strategy. Thus it seems, at least to me, quite apparent that the concepts "classical and revolutionary" are interchangeable, depending on the argumentation one uses.

Combined and Divided

It seems to me that Frankland in analysing this alternative overlooks that the task division between the British and the American air forces represented from the start an almost ideal solution for the Allies and at the same time a catastrophic one for the German air defense. The solution was ideal, not only because time was working for the Allies but also because the division made possible the most efficient use of the existing weapon systems. At the same time, it tied down a much greater portion of the German air defense capability, both active and passive, than a combined offensive would probably have been able to do. This turned out to be catastrophic for the Germans, primarily because the necessary manpower allocation and the rather noticeable decrease in army weapons production paralyzed the defensive struggle against the Soviet Union. But with a combined action the objective of the Allied Bombing Offensive, which though never clearly defined was nevertheless almost automatically apparent, namely the achievement of air supremacy *and* the destruction of the enemy's production centers, could not have been achieved, certainly not to the extent it did succeed. Above all, a noticeable Allied reversal which one must at least consider within the realm of possibility if an all-out concentrated German air defense effort (as suggested above) had occurred, would have placed the continuation of the Allied bombing operations much more seriously in question than did the "dispersed" German efforts which actually took place. As the Allies continued to develop both of their methods under the existing division of labor, they finally achieved, each in his own way, a high degree of perfection as well as freedom of action in the air, which made possible the completion of the strategy during the combined phase of the bombing operations.

Whether or not this strategy would have been equally successful with more limited resources and with greater time pressure, even in the face of a consequent concentration on air defense on the part of the German leadership, must remain an open question.

Planned and Fortuitous

Since, as already discussed above, it is not clear what really had been planned, it is not easy to decide what was fortuitous. It is certainly difficult to follow Frankland's thoughts and to arrive at his conclusion that the origins of the Lancaster and the Mustang were fortuitous. According to this concept almost every follow-on development of a prototype air weapon would have to be fortuitous. If those actions, which one can only reconstruct subsequently, had been planned from the beginning, then one would be forced to conclude that the (revolutionary) British intention to force the capitulation of the opponent by the sole use of the strategic air offensive did fail and probably would have failed even if the Americans had participated in it. On the other hand, the (classical) American intention to achieve air supremacy in order to pave the way for the ground forces did succeed, although the additional effect of the British participation must be included here.

Whether a more goal-oriented and common Allied planning process in the beginning of the war would have brought about a much quicker end result with decreased losses, or possibly would even have justified the British theory, must remain unanswered. Conversely, the question of whether the Allied Bombing Offensive could have achieved its successful end result had German air defense efforts been properly concentrated, is also debatable.

Conclusion

All discussions concerning the Allied Strategic Bombing Offensive must start from the premise that only after Germany had already lost the war did it reach its full effect. The German loss of initiative on the Eastern Front by the defeat at Stalingrad, the loss of the Mediterranean, and the Allied invasion of Italy showed the unrelenting swing of the pendulum moving toward the Allied side. In the same proportion as Allied capabilities increased, German capabilities began to decrease.

Since it still took two years until the strategic air offensive achieved its full success the following conclusion can be made with a fair degree of accuracy:

1. In contrast to the combined air-land offensive, a strategic air offensive requires a degree of material and numerical superi-

ority which normally will not be achieved between adversaries whose power potential is nearly equivalent.

2. Air superiority is primarily attained in the battle of fighter against fighter, in which instance the aggressor will have to cope with a much higher attrition rate. In the starting phase of a strategic air offensive the superiority of the fighter arm must have first priority, while it is the mission of the bomber force, in addition to supporting the ground operations by interdiction, to force the opponent into a defensive posture.

3. The superiority of the defender against the aggressor is much greater in air than it is in ground operations. Therefore, the side which concentrates its air efforts in the beginning on defense and uses its offensive capabilities at a later point, has a better chance.

4. A strategic air offensive with conventional weapons alone cannot, without a planned and timely ground attack, achieve the decision in war.

It should be recognized that the foregoing comments have been limited to a discussion of conventional air war; no consideration has been given to the effect a missile defense system would have on the war in the air. Despite some experiences gained in Vietnam, the theorist still faces a largely undiscovered area in this respect. Lastly, it is highly doubtful, at least in my opinion, that the new weapons of destruction can be placed within a framework of a rational strategy, despite the existence of relevant theories which attempt to do so.

COMMENTS ON HIGHAM'S COMMENTARY

AIR VICE-MARSHAL E. J. KINGSTON—McCLOUGHRY
RAF (Ret.)

I hope that it may not seem churlish to suggest that Professor Robin Higham's commentary on Noble Frankland's paper *The Combined Bomber Offensive* shows distinctly the academic advantage of hindsight. No such impression is intended, especially as Professor Higham outlines with great skill and in a surprisingly short space the salient features of a situation which was very far from being quite so precise in 1940-43, and subsequently.

As he rightly suggests, the bombing policy of those years was not something which had just evolved. It was the central tenet of air power and was elevated into a dogma; but what was not a dogma, nor should have resembled a dogma, were the methods used and the target systems attacked. The real effectiveness of bomber forces necessarily had to evolve, though the process was long and perforce painful. For three years the inability of bomber forces to hit precision targets was ignored by those in command and those who should have been prepared to adjust their strategic concepts.

Yet to understand anything of the temper of the time one should be quite clear that the bombing policy was the outcome of a genuine belief on the part of our bomber commanders that their efforts would result in the collapse of Germany. It was also perhaps logical for them to suppose that only they could bring about this desirable conclusion to the war.

Thanks to the efforts of Sir Charles Webster and Dr. Noble Frankland, the deficiencies of the bombing policy and strategy are no longer in dispute.¹ Professor Higham has concerned himself with background but goes further. He visualizes with considerable penetration what he thinks could have been a feasible development of grand strategy from 1940 onwards. What he does not altogether

seem to appreciate is that the same features militated against such an enlightened view of grand strategy as were to vitiate strategic thinking, at the most crucial point of the whole war, in the invasion of Normandy. The prime defect of service mentality, which virtually ran on tramlines, permeated almost every aspect of the military machine from the organization and allocation of resources to the command structures, both national and allied.

Grand strategy, as Professor Higham sees it, was just not possible in the years 1940-43 because of the imbedded character of the service mind. Even Churchill, for all his mercurial shifts of emphasis, could not escape this imputation of being on tramlines. His tramlines may have been broader than most, but they had a certain rigidity and tended to produce rigidity in others.

To the non-service mind, the adjustment that was necessary was possible but infinitely difficult because not all the military implications were thoroughly understood. But in the service mind there was a fatal inhibition, or even prohibition, to thinking outside the demands of the particular service to which one belonged. Only an inter-service mind could make the transition to a new kind of thinking; and a thoroughly inter-service view at that time was only possible, though not inevitably so, within a non-national, inter-Allied organization such as Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) or Allied Expeditionary Air Force(s) (AEAF). There was, unfortunately, no way in which those of us in AEAF Headquarters could have any prescience of all those features of the situation that have become all too evident in the decades since.

I came to Norfolk House [SHAEF Headquarters in London] with an inter-service mind, having qualified at Andover [RAF Staff College] and Camberley [Army Staff College] and served 5 years in India, but with no real insight into the inter-service rivalries that were to bedevil much of the planning, and some of the operations, in the ensuing months. I was appointed chief air operations planner for the air force to be engaged in the invasion, and as this was an appointment of no little importance I felt greatly privileged.

The COSSAC [Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander] organization, under the direction of Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Morgan, had been in existence since January 1943 [estab-

lished at Casablanca, actually organized April 1943] so that not only was the invasion of the continent an accepted proposition, but a mechanism of a kind was already in being to be evolved or stepped up if required. It was evident, however, that there was a vast amount of work in front of everyone and that things were in a considerable state of flux.

The need, after the successful campaigns of North Africa and Italy, to carry the war to the enemy brought with it a question on the efficacy of the policy of area bombing as pursued by Bomber Command. It was plain that the policy of bringing Germany to her knees was not having the desired effect, but many in the highest places were reluctant to pursue the next logical step which was to rationalize the bombing policy yet further and to load the enemy productive potential and mobility to the utmost.

Within SHAEF there was an odd air of belonging to a rather special club: that is, if you had already been through the North African Campaign then you were really part of the outfit. Fortunately, the Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO) at AEAH Headquarters was Air Marshal Sir Philip Wigglesworth, whose experience in the Mediterranean, both in the air war and in personalities, made his support invaluable in the days that were to come.

The difficulties of planning the use of Allied air forces became apparent at once. The 21st Army Group² plan called for the bombing of a specific number of targets in France to isolate some 50 miles in radius within 24 hours of the actual H-hour of the invasion. When this was put to me, I could see that what they had in mind was quite impracticable. It was far from being a realistic plan in the context in which it was drawn up. At this juncture Solly Zuckerman arrived at Norfolk House to help with scientific advice in the planning. His knowledge of bomb damage gathered in North Africa and Italy was unique and was occasionally to confuse those who imagined that they alone could know anything of bomb damage. Solly Zuckerman and I then began work very intensively on a plan for the use of Allied air forces prior to and during the invasion that was to become known as the Transportation Plan.

Professor Higham's remarks on personalities in command are very apposite and could be developed with some advantage, but what was also very striking at that time was the command structure

or hierarchy, and the physical separateness of the various headquarters located sometimes as much as two hours travel time apart. The distribution and position of the various headquarters illustrated how difficult, and indeed how absurd, it is to endeavour to run a supreme command system dependent on road communications.

We found ourselves within a mesh of constant pressures in which not only was the bombing policy at variance with the course of national and Allied strategy, but even the most responsible figures, Churchill and Lord Cherwell or the bomber "barons," for example, were not enthusiastic initially about the invasion and had hoped that the bombing of Berlin and other cities in Germany would make it unnecessary.

We had innumerable meetings where a whole gamut of chicanery and compromise was exhibited. At one of the earliest of these meetings, General Eisenhower was present and remarked that he hoped that no one was going to ask for the heavy bombers until just prior to the actual invasion. A little to Air Marshal Leigh Mallory's surprise, though not displeasure, I had the temerity to say that we required the heavy bombers a good deal earlier than that because otherwise we could not hope to neutralize the rail centers we had in mind. This plain statement of fact startled Eisenhower, but he was quick to realize that here was a practical strategical requirement which simply had to be met, though it was evident that he had already been got at by the bomber barons.

As time progressed, the picture became clearer and Tedder improved our plan by adding to it other rail and air centers inside Germany. He made it very plain that the bomber sorties called for in the plan were absolutely essential and he carried Eisenhower with him. Opposition dies hard: it continued until the somewhat ambiguous scruples of Churchill about the bombing of French civilians were overcome. All kinds of reasons were given by Bomber Command for not bombing the targets we wanted bombed, and it was not until the effects of precision bombing with the aid of Oboe⁸ (with range limited to the Rhine) were shown that the Commander in Chief, Bomber Command, gave his wholehearted support. Thereafter he was inclined to provide more effort than was strictly required.

Another illustration of what we were up against was the later

opposition to the use of heavy bombers in order to get the armies moving beyond Caen. It was not until Montgomery made a direct request for them to Churchill that they were provided. Many may have wondered how the operation was laid on so quickly, but the bombers were only made available so quickly because the plan for them was already in readiness, having been rejected some months before.

It is now perhaps all too easy to see the defects and essential wrongness of the Combined Bombing Offensive. There are few people who did not live through the pre-planning period and the pre-invasion command situation who could altogether understand or appreciate the implications and difficulties of what was a very complex strategic problem. In addition there were the manifold problems of personalities at the centre of it all. German cities were being destroyed with unswerving devotion, but German vital centres of potential and production remained mostly untouched because they were largely not in the city centres. At the end of hostilities German fighter aircraft production was higher than that of the Allies, which should not have been possible in view of the bombing effort we expended.

All that was clear enough, but what was not clear was how, if ever, the policy could be altered; and remember we were fighting a total war, the day-to-day exigencies of which in higher quarters called on energies, physical, nervous, and mental, which no doubt encouraged a kind of purblindness disguised as a determination to pursue the war with all the vigour possible. There is also no doubt that those very exigencies of war brought about the change in action and in purpose, however reluctant and painful it might have been.

In brief, if one were asked to propound the lessons of the war as they culminated in OVERLORD, these might be summarized as questions: first, of priorities; secondly, of personalities; thirdly, of the remarkable autonomy of the separate services, which had little relevance to the prosecution of the war at that time.

Given that the bombing policy was wrong and should have been seen earlier to be wrong by those best qualified to judge, that is, the political leadership and the bomber commanders, the emergence of other urgent roles for the bomber forces should have been seen in a more realistic light. Even the Battle of the Atlantic was hazardous,

as Professor Higham observed, because of the foreshortened attitude of the bomber commanders who seemed hypnotized by the possibility of knocking Germany out on her home front, to the neglect of other needs.

Fortunately for us, to a significant extent, this dogma of air power was shared by the Luftwaffe, who made the same mistake of attaching too much importance to area and terror bombing and not enough to our airfields, ports, and assembly points.

NOTES

1. See Sir Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive against Germany 1939-1945*. 4 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1961).
2. For administration, planning, and execution of the initial OVERLORD assault, all allied ground forces were placed under Field Marshal Montgomery, C-in-C, 21st Army Group. In August 1944, when SHAEF Hq moved to the continent, Eisenhower took direct control and split the 21st Army Group into the Central Group of Armies (Bradley) and the Northern Group of Armies (Montgomery).
3. Oboe was a blind bombing radar device; described in Webster and Frankland, IV, 7-11.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL IRA C. EAKER *USAF (Ret.)*

I have enjoyed very much this historical review of incidents in 1942-45 with which I was intimately connected. I have talked about this more than once with General Spaatz, most recently when we learned about the historical review of the Combined Bomber Offensive which was planned here at the Air Force Academy. We both feel very strongly that the Combined Bomber Offensive was a very fortuitous operation. However, there are two or three items which have been scarcely mentioned here which I think should be brought to your attention. One of them is that there were no German aircraft opposing Eisenhower's crossing of the Channel on 6 June 1944. Most of the people who crossed the Channel that day and in subsequent days never saw a German plane. The reason for that

was the Combined Bomber Offensive. Additionally, when Professor Higham says that the Combined Bomber Offensive did accomplish a result in 1944 but was futile in earlier times he is stating an incorrect premise. His thesis that we should not have bombed in 1942 and 1943 but should have waited until 1944 forgets that if we had not operated in 1942 and 1943, we would not have been effective in 1944. If we had not started in 1942 and continued in 1943, we would not have had the trained combat leaders, the trained combat crews, the communications, and tremendous logistics support, including airdrome complexes, to conduct the vast effort which he grudgingly admired in 1944.

Such statements as, "Bombing was not very effective in World War II," or "The vast resources devoted to bombing could have been employed more effectively elsewhere," are historical inaccuracies. Repeated either through ignorance or prejudice, they must not be allowed to go unchallenged since they can affect the strategy and the composition of our defense forces in the future. Indeed these misconceptions, this denigration of the effectiveness of bombing in World War II, may, in my judgment, be largely responsible for the failure of our political leaders to permit the employment of our air power with full effectiveness in Vietnam.

A fair appraisal of the roles of the Combined Bomber Offensive in World War II will accord it the principal responsibility for the destruction of the Nazi Luftwaffe, making the invasion of Europe possible and greatly reducing casualties in our sea and ground forces in the subsequent campaigns. It greatly reduced munitions production and distribution. It ultimately reduced the flow of oil to Panzer divisions and fighter squadrons well below operational requirements. When our Eighth Air Force had but 200 bombers operating out of England in 1943, there were more than a million Germans standing at the anti-aircraft and fighter defenses on the West Wall to defend against them. And another million Germans were fire wardens, or engaged in bomb damage repair.

Whenever our little bomber force crossed the Channel, the air raid sirens moaned in every munitions plant in the Ruhr and the skilled workers took to the cellars and bunkers. The weapons production loss was tremendous. The same thing occurred at night when the RAF bomber raids struck the industrial centers. But for these bombers, these millions of Germans would have been turning

out more tanks and planes, guns and bombs, or they would have comprised another 60 divisions for employment on the Eastern Front. Those 200 American bombers were crewed by 2,000 gallant men. Never before in the whole history of warfare have 2,000 warriors exercised such a profound and far-reaching effect on the war-making potential of an enemy.

Strangely the critics of the Combined Bomber Offensive neglect to report what the German war leaders have said about the effectiveness of our bombing. The fact is that all of them without exception who have since written or spoken on their war experiences have ascribed to our bombing a prime reason for their defeat. After Albert Speer, who was Hitler's Minister for War Production, got out of prison last year (1967), he said, "I was surprised during the war years that the Americans and the British did not follow up on the destruction of our industry. If they had done that, the war would have been over a year earlier." What Albert Speer did not know is that we were fighting to the limit of our resources. Had we had more resources, we would have done what Speer now wonders why we did not do then.

General Spaatz asked Hermann Goering, soon after his capture, when he first realized that the Nazis were defeated. Goering replied, "When I saw your bombers over Berlin protected by your long-range fighters, I knew then that the Luftwaffe would be unable to stop your bombers. Our weapons plants would be destroyed; our defeat was inevitable."

REPLY TO GENERAL EAKER

ROBIN HIGHAM

A very brief rebuttal is in order because General Eaker has raised a number of issues which need clarifying.

In the first place, let me say that I have nothing but admiration for the gallantry of the crews concerned. However, the issue before us was not that of personal bravery but of command. Any assessment of this factor must be coloured by the outlook of those involved. General Eaker was directly involved at a time when I was still coming through the training pipeline. Since then he has retired while I have gone on to be a professional historian. This gives us a different point of view.

My argument is not that the crews should not have been trained by operations, nor that the equipment should not have been developed; it is that this work could more effectively have been done elsewhere with greater effect on behalf of the overall war effort. Moreover, I have gone further and suggested, as did Webster and Frankland, that Mosquitoes could have been used for guerrilla warfare with equal effect against German home defences and at a much smaller price. Beyond this, it will no doubt remain a point of argument whether the slow and ineffective development of the Allied air attack on Germany before 1944 did not in fact stimulate rather than depress German war production.

I would fully agree with General Eaker that if we are going to employ our air power to the best advantage in the future, we must understand how it operated in the past and what were its limitations—military, political, diplomatic, economic, social, and ideological. Just as General Eaker strove honestly as a commander to exercise the command of air power as he felt it should be used, so we professional historians try after careful study and much reflec-

tion to examine, explain, and judge its use in the past in such a way that those gallant men who fought our wars in the past shall not have died in vain.

THE GERMAN FIGHTER BATTLE AGAINST THE AMERICAN BOMBERS

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHANNES STEINHOFF

Inspector General, German Air Force

I have read both Dr. Frankland's paper on the operations of the "Combined Bomber Offensive" and Dr. Futrell's commentary with great interest. While I do not want to create the impression that what I have to say is in the nature of a critique of Dr. Frankland's paper—which I do not feel called upon to do—I must nevertheless admit that I was less impressed by his remarks than by those of Dr. Futrell. Thus, my remarks will be principally directed toward what Dr. Futrell had to say.

First, I would like to make a few basic observations concerning the German Air Force prior to and during World War II. In the 1930s Germany had developed an air force which was not suitable for extended military operations both in terms of organization and structure as well as number. The bomber force was strategically impotent and in Germany it was not referred to as either a strategic or tactical bomber force, but simply as an "operational" force. Those who to this day continue to insist that the development of a German strategic long-range bomber force would have changed the course of World War II overlook the fact that the resources and power potential of Germany were insufficient to accomplish such a goal.

The United States and Great Britain, on the other hand, developed their strategic bomber force with a more or less clearly delineated goal in mind. Based on my knowledge of the history of the development of the Allied bomber forces, it seems to me that

Translated and edited by Lieutenant Colonel William Geffen.

the course chosen by the United States was a more sound one than that of Great Britain. However, I am ready to admit at this point that the Lancasters (used for night flying operations) and the Liberators and Fortresses (used for daylight operations) complemented each other admirably in the fulfillment of their assigned missions.

However, I do believe that Dr. Futrell's criticism concerning the work of the Strategic Bombing Survey is fully justified. But then, we are all much wiser today than we were in 1943! Had the Allies, from the start of the Combined Bombing Offensive, concentrated their attacks directly and exclusively toward the destruction of the German energy (fuel and electricity) resources system—and I exclude here even the fuel production and distribution facilities—instead of switching back and forth to other target systems (such as air force bases and installations and the transportation network), the consequences for Germany would have been catastrophic. However, how easily one can make mistakes and do things the wrong way had already been demonstrated by Goering during the Battle of Britain.

What part such fortuitous, unexpected mistakes and faulty planning can play in war, by giving the enemy an advantage, is most clearly shown by the development of the German fighter (tactical) force during World War II. The German tactical air force did not keep pace with the parallel development of the Allied bomber force. It was primarily a fair-weather air force in 1940, and it remained such throughout the war. Since the Messerschmitt 110 (a two-engine plane with a crew of two, pilot and radio/navigator) was used for daylight attacks during the Battle of Britain, the German Air Force in 1940 did not possess the capacity to carry out sustained night flying operations, at least not flying under IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) only. Later on during the war, when the Allied bomber forces began to penetrate the borders of the German homeland in daylight operations, the Luftwaffe, because of the lack of all-weather training, was unable to deploy its fighter-interceptor force since the frequently prevailing heavy and thick cloud cover prevented the interceptors from getting to the required attack altitude against the Allied bomber fleets.

Furthermore, if the development and employment of the first jet fighter, the Messerschmitt 262, had been forcefully and pur-

posely pursued, damage to the American bomber forces during their daylight raids in 1944 would have far exceeded that achieved by the German air defenses during the Schweinfurt raid in 1943. But here again, lack of proper planning and improper direction and dispersement of the available operational jet fighter force by the political leadership denied the Luftwaffe the success it could have achieved.

With these brief introductory remarks, I would like to turn now to a discussion of German fighter-interceptor operations against the United States bomber force, based on my own personal experiences during World War II.

I purposely entitled my comments "The German Fighter Battle against the American Bombers," because the appearance of these bombers in 1943 was the turning point in World War II aerial warfare. At this time one of my best friends—he fell at the end of the war—was Commander of Fighter Forces. In one of the best books ever written on aerial warfare, entitled *The Last Squadron (Die sterbende Jagd)*, the author described a briefing of the pilots of a fighter wing by this commander, in which he tells them that the chivalrous duel in the air is a thing of the past.

The acrobatics are over, no more hide and seek, no more holding back and picking and choosing your target. That's all a thing of the past. It's mass we're up against now, and the mass flying in the enemy planes are not airmen; they're gunners strapped in their turrets, infantry of the air. So we too must create mass.¹

And this is how it was in fact. From one day to another the era of sportsmanlike, chivalrous hunting had ended. The air space over Europe had turned into a battleground with fortresses and trenches—and it was our duty to storm those fortifications and break through.

Now, it is not true by any means that all the previous phases of aerial warfare had been child's play. The Battle of Britain, for instance, will go down in military history as a classic example of merciless battle between individual fighter pilots. But the result of our first fighter attack against Flying Fortresses was terrible for us indeed. We did not shoot down a single bomber but lost a considerable number of our own fighters. This occurred during the American attack on Rouen on 17 August 1942.

My friend Fips Priller, who was immortalized by Darryl F. Zanuck in the movie *The Longest Day* as a German Wing Commander during the Normandy Invasion, immediately beat the alarm.² The same reaction came from the Commanding General of Fighter Forces, General Galland, who told Goering:

Unless we immediately reinforce our fighter units, unless we are given better and more effective armament and develop new tactics for the attack, these birds one day will fly all the way to Berlin.³

While the fighter forces received little reinforcement, the weapons were improved, and aerial tactics for "storming" these fortresses were developed.

It was in April 1943 that I first came in contact with the "four-engine jobs," as we called the B-17s. At that time the battle for North Africa was already lost, and we were defending, with little success, the beachhead of Cape Bon, that spit of land northeast of Tunis where the bulk of the Afrika-Korps and the Italian Army were later taken prisoners by the Allied forces.

After a dogfight with Spitfires we were prepared for landing, when a glittering armada of bombers, of a type we had never seen before, moved above us in the bright midday sun. It was too late for attack then, but I should soon have an opportunity to see these giant birds close-up.

This occurred after we had regrouped fragments of our air force wings in Sicily and were bringing them back to operational status. The Commanding General of the Fighter Forces had showered us with pamphlets, all concentrating on one subject: "How to attack a close-up formation of four-engine bombers."

The finer points of the doctrine for attacking these bombers had not yet been worked out in the air, but a few principles had nevertheless already been established. These were:

1. Attempt to break up the formation; single planes are easy to shoot down.

2. If you succeed in leading your concentrated fighter force, in frontal attack on collision course, right into the bomber formation, you will be sure to break it up.

3. Maintain your fighter force in the closest formation possible and do not open fire except at shortest range, but then "fire from all buttonholes," as we used to say.

In the meantime the Twelfth U.S. Air Force had been deployed into North Africa, and Sicily had been softened up for an invasion by continuous bomber attacks. On 25 June 1943 our radar stations reported an enemy bomber formation approaching from the Mediterranean about halfway between Sardinia and Sicily, heading for Naples. I might explain at this point that after losing the Battle of Britain primarily because of the lack of electronic devices, we had concentrated on developing much more effective radar equipment than we had possessed at the beginning of the war.

During the preceding days we had drilled in the new tactics, and I had attempted to prepare the two operational wings, comprising about 120 aircraft, for their first encounter with the four-engine bombers. After we had received take-off orders it was determined that the bombers had not, as expected, attacked the Naples port installation but had instead bombed the ferry traffic between Messina and the Italian mainland. At this point the bomber formation was already flying in the direction of North Africa, returning to base, and it was almost impossible to make them out on the radar screens because they had gone down to low altitude. My formation was able to take off with about 100 aircraft and was directed to proceed to the area between Sardinia and Sicily. As we were approaching the area I was advised that the enemy had disappeared from the radar screens and was probably proceeding at almost surface altitude. Visibility was restricted due to strong haze, but just at the moment when I had decided to return to base because of fuel shortage, the armada appeared below me. The Fortresses were flying in a wide front, only a few yards above the sea, in a formation so huge you could hardly see from one end to the other. It seemed virtually impossible to launch a well coordinated attack; we had never practiced attacking bombers near the surface. The result was terrible. There was not a single kill, and the entire German formation went into panic, because the majority of the pilots had to be directed to base by radar and were short of fuel. Altogether, we lost six aircraft.

The same evening we received orders from Goering that were typical of the methods that the German High Command used on us.

They stated that one pilot from each fighter unit participating in the action against the bombers off Africa was to be court-martialled for cowardice in the face of the enemy. The unit commanders all volunteered for court-martial, and only through this decision could a completely ridiculous trial before a military court be avoided.

This first taste of fighting four-engine bombers was completely sufficient for us. We started intensive training and were soon to have an opportunity to practice what we had learned. In the meantime, a variety of methods for defense had been tested in Germany. One unit commander had succeeded in breaking up a four-engine bomber formation with a 1,000-pound bomb, and now the other units were beginning to train the same way, but without any success. Under these tactics, a few aircraft were armed with single 1,000-pound bombs with time fuses, but in order to succeed the attacking aircraft had to climb above the bomber formation and measure the range in height accurately enough to ensure sufficient blast effect from the bomb. To the best of my knowledge, there was only one instance where a bomber formation was broken up through these tactics.

We had considerably more success with an army weapon, a bazooka type of rocket launcher, mounted underneath each wing of either the Messerschmitt 109 or the Focke Wulf 190. The rocket caliber was 220 millimeters. The trajectory of this weapon was terrible. In order to fire at a range of 1,000 meters, the rocket launcher had to be 150 meters above the target. If, however, we succeeded in maneuvering the rocket-carrying aircraft to the right altitude and as close as 1,000 meters to the bomber formation, the detonations usually succeeded in breaking up the Fortresses or Liberators. As single planes they could then, as I explained before, be killed off fairly easily. The problem with this type of rocket operation was, however, to get the extremely slow climbing, rocket-carrying aircraft up to the altitude of the enemy formation, for the weight of the rockets was considerable and it took a great deal of patience to bring these aircraft up to attack altitude.

The fighter escort accompanying the American bomber formations—and very soon after we had prepared methods for attack, they began to have fighter escorts—usually reacted very promptly to our tactics, forcing us constantly to develop new methods for attack. One of the most interesting, and at the same time the most danger-

ous, method was the employment of ramming tactics by our fighters. In 1943 we began to provide strong armor plate for the Focke Wulf and deployed these aircraft to units whose mission it was to approach the bombers as close as possible and, if weapons did not succeed, to ram the enemy aircraft. Indeed, the bombers were rammed frequently, and the surprising thing is that in most cases the pilots of the ramming fighters were able to bail out after ramming. Again, however, there was the problem of getting these aircraft up to attack altitude, since the heavy additional armorplating reduced the rate of climb.

The best success was finally achieved with air-to-air missiles that had been specifically developed for attacking aircraft. After I had been almost exclusively employed against four-engine bombers from 1943 until the end of 1944, I was able to activate the first jet fighter wing equipped with the Messerschmitt 262 jet fighter, and we began to arm our aircraft with air-to-air missiles, designated R4M with a caliber of 50 millimeters. Underneath each wing, we mounted 24 of these missiles and fired them in a salvo of 48 missiles from a distance of 1,000 meters. The results were exceptionally good, for when firing at close enemy formations one kill was usually certain. However, these air-to-air missiles were not used by conventional aircraft, but only by jet fighters.

In the course of this defensive battle against the four-engine enemy bombers the number of German fighter pilots remaining, most of whom were not very experienced anyway, was enormously depleted. With the battle going on, morale continued to go down. This was aggravated, of course, by the hopelessness of the overall situation, which began to become more and more obvious. A bad problem facing each pilot was the return to base after a mission. Very frequently fighting took place over long distances above cloud cover, and the completely disoriented fighters had to go below the deck and attempt to land wherever they could. Together with insufficient navigational aids, this resulted in many additional losses and a wide scattering of our aircraft. Here we had to adopt a procedure to put up new fighter formations, formed from these elements. We organized the next attack on the bomber formations or the attack on the next enemy penetration, if it occurred the same day, by authorizing the senior officer present on a base where a number of fighters had landed to assume command and to lead them

back into battle immediately after refuelling and rearming. I need not point out that such a procedure was not very effective.

Toward the end of 1944 the situation of the German fighter forces was such that, while we still had a limited cadre of experienced pilots, the majority of the fighter pilots were very young and inexperienced. Between late 1944 and early 1945, the average young pilot flew only two missions before he was killed—that is what the statistics say. On the other hand, the aircraft situation was excellent. We were virtually drowning in aircraft. For instance, during October of 1944 alone, 4,300 fighter aircraft were built. However, the fuel situation was hopeless; for training purposes almost no fuel was released any more.

It is well known that jet fighters in larger numbers were not released for interceptor missions until very late during the war, namely early in 1945. Hitler never recognized their value, and it has been said of him that he simply did not have a conception of battle in the air. But even if all available jet fighters had been deployed for attack on the bombers, I do not believe that the fortunes of war would have changed.

Of those who took part in the great aerial battles against the bombers, not many are still alive. The survivors agree with me that attacking these fortresses was not a pleasure. Those who like myself have flown these attacks and have maneuvered through the stream of innumerable bombers will never be able to forget this picture, and I am sure there is not one who could claim that he did not feel relieved when he had landed back home in one piece.

I hope that through my reminiscences I have succeeded in describing a phase of World War II that, in my opinion, was the most important and most decisive of the entire struggle.

NOTES

1. Gerd Gaiser, *The Last Squadron*, trans. Paul Findlay (New York, 1956), p. 207.
2. For more details see Josef Priller, *Geschichte eines Jagdgeschwaders. Das JG 26 (Schlageter) 1937-1945*, ed. Hans Otto Boehm (Neckargemund, 1962).
3. Adolf Galland, *The First and the Last. The Rise and Fall of the German Fighter Forces, 1938-1945*, trans. Mervyn Savill (New York, 1954), pp. 115, 169-170.

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