CHAPTER VIII

Director of Military Training

Q: Sir, let's move to your job as the Director of Military Training with General Welibe. Before you start there, am I correct in saying that General Heubner's association with you on a closer-than-just-acquaintance basis actually began at the time of his inspection of the Engineer Amphibian Command, or of the 4th Brigade?

A: I don't think it practically began there. The first time I ever met General Heubner was when I was an instructor at Leavenworth, which would have been well over a year before when I was engaged in developing the tactics and techniques of the motorized division.

Q: The reason I ask is that I know General Heubner plays a very important part in much of the next decade of your career. Sir, let's start with General Walter Weible. Would you like to talk about him, his position, and then your relationship to him?

A: I enjoyed a very satisfying relationship with him. He was a Coast Artilleryman, a gentleman and a very able man, sensitive to many of the winds of change to which we were subjected during the war. I think he probably was an excellent counterpart to General Huebner in this regard, Huebner being more the tough-minded infantry soldier type. No one should ever underestimate General Heubner; he was a man of the keenest intellect, very objective, very astute. He is an example of the occasional man who, without the benefit of much formal education, really had the innate talents, together with the motivation and ability, to develop them into a really outstanding individual in every respect. In 1943, we were still fairly early in the war, of course. The Service Forces had a tremendous program on. General John C. H. Lee had been sent over to England as the top man in the logistics field. Either then or later he was assigned as Deputy Commander to Eisenhower for performing this function. He had recognized the need for tremendous logistic support; in other words, for all types of units to be provided by the technical and administrative services. Consequently, the program in the Army Service Forces for Europe was very large. In numbers it didn't equal -- but to some degree it approached -- the requirements for combat elements. It certainly was true as MacArthur said in the Pacific that this

was "an Engineers' war" or, to put it more broadly, a logistics war. This was found to be true in all theaters if we were going to give the kind of support necessary to the combat elements. We realized that in at least two checkpoints when we were pressed -- to a degree that probably delayed the termination of the war. One certainly was in connection with the shortage of fuel for Patton's army, the ability to push it forward fast enough. It was there, but the physical means of delivering it rapidly over a wide and deep front became extremely difficult and slowed us down at a critical point. The second one was the very great shortage of ammunition that developed toward the end of the war in Europe; to a point where it was being flown from production plants to ports in this country and sometimes to Europe to get it moving. This was not due to a mistake by the Service Forces. It was due to certain assumptions that had been made at the General Staff level which didn't materialize. There were seven technical services, and probably five administrative; I'm not quite sure.

One of our annoying problems semed to be constantly moving schools around -- depending on the availability of places -- or attempts to consolidate or reduce overhead. We had to some degree some of the less desirable training centers, although, looking across the board, they probably averaged out as well as those of the Ground Forces. The Air Force, while it was still the Army Air Corps, of course, had a great deal of freedom to do as they pleased. To all intents and purposes, they could have been separate although we still had a very considerable amount of technical support to provide for the Air Force in those days, more than we do now. This applied to Ordnance, Signal, and Engineers in particular.

We had the service school replacement training centers and also unit training centers. There were continuing changes in policies during these five years, and it was probably then that the first serious impact was felt with respect to the negro soldier. That concerned me very much at the time, and I directed and supervised the development and the preparation, not only of the curricula in Officer Candidate and other schools, but the preparation of the first text ever written in this regard, called "Leadership and the Negro Soldier." I happened to run into the man who was in charge of assembling that data a short time ago here in Washington.

Q: What was the problem with negro soldiers as you saw it then?

A: Well, by and large, their IQ's were many points lower than whites on the average. When you analyzed a negro unit, you found the majority with little or no education and with even less motivation. There was a great problem in training and great difficulty in getting many of them to accept responsibility. This was true even of the noncommissioned officers in those days. This is being overcome now, but there was no quick answer to this problem. There were some great pressures exerted in those days that, since Blacks were 10 percent of the population, they should have 10 percent of the officers and 10 percent of the noncom's slots. But even the leaders of the negro people themselves saw that this was not an appropriate answer. If this had occurred then -- if they were allocated 10 percent by grade -- they would fall so flat on their face that it would set their race back another 50 years. It is fortunate their own leaders realized this; I knew them well and I know what I'm talking about, but I don't think there would be anything gained by naming names in this connection. We've reached a higher plateau in solving this problem now.

Q: Is it true that you had a special training type unit developed?

A: We established special training centers for several reasons. In addition to operating as I did, General Somervell, for his own reasons, used me on several occasions for special missions and some of these were extremely interesting. One of the first ones was to North Africa. This was in connection with the poor use of replacements and in retraining of convalescents, men who had been wounded. We observed where and why a lot of men needed retraining, even back in the States. To some degree these were psychiatric cases; in other cases they were men whose physical capacity became limited for one reason or another. In the United States, we had the problem of the negro who may have had a low IQ and limited education. We had some problem with foreign-born people, or even others in our country who didn't have sufficient use of the English language to do a good job or understand English -- let's say some French-Canadians, maybe, from Maine, who had come over the border from Canada. Then, of course, we had others, white now, let's say from the South or the mountain

country in some of our states, where they had literally no education. The result was this: when you tried to put these people with the ordinary cross-section of men coming into a training center, two things happened. You had to either slow down the schedule so that these people could absorb it, or you set the schedule at a normal pace where they couldn't absorb it. They then suffered from frustration or physical inability to do things. It became apparent that there was a certain group of people who didn't have sufficient knowledge of the language, or the equivalent of a fourth-grade education, or for other reasons who needed to go into special training groups. At one time this had grown to a point where it involved 300,000 men -- maybe that was the total -- I've forgotten which, but 300,000 men were put through this training. By and large, in a period of eight weeks we salvaged 80 or 85 percent of them. Now when I use that term, I can only say that the commanders then felt that they could fit in with their contemporaries -- regular basic training and keep up, not too frustrated, not holding the others back, and having some degree of motivation. Whether you say we advanced 75 or 85 percent, I can't argue that point. I will only say one thing -- that of the negroes involved, their proportion of men who "graduated" (shall we say, for lack of a better term) was about the same as the white men and others who were there for other reasons, such as lack of previous education or inadequate understanding of the English language. We were also trying to salvage men who had neuro-psychiatric problems in Europe and were returned to this country. At first they were happy to get back, but most of them were merely seeking a discharge to get back to civilian life. We had been sending them home and letting them off the hook while somebody else was drafted. In many cases they were just malingerers and something had to be done about it. The answer in these . . . I don't know any answer, but it was interesting to me that we did not have equivalent problems in Korea, at least in the year that I had my division in combat. I visited a division in Italy during this trip, where the number of NP cases -- psychiatric cases, bug-outs if you want to call them -- was about the same in two regiments whose commanding officers operated under entirely different philosophies. One would let a man go back as easily as he pleased to the rear, just accepting the fact he was an NP case. Of course, at first, they let them go all the way back, and then they realized that the thing to do was to keep them as near the front as they

could, give them warm food, beds, blankets, sleep, and then get them back up front. Like somebody that's in a crash; the best thing to do is to get back in a plane and fly again. The regiment next to them was commanded by a very hard-nosed commander who wouldn't accept anybody leaving the area, but he had about the same problem when it came to combat because, while his men didn't bug out and go to the rear, they just stayed in their foxholes. These were two regiments in the same division.

There still is, thank God, some degree of pride and esprit left that if your comrades can do it, you can do it too. I wish I knew more personally about Vietnam. I have not been there since the fighting started in 1965, but I still have the feeling that the American soldier over there is a good soldier and can do a good job under good leadership. I think this is being badly exaggerated here in the reverse by the American press and it bothers me. I feel the press is doing us a very great disservice. You'd think everybody was being fragged and nobody was obeying their officers. This is ridiculous.

Q: General, I think we're talking about your trip to the Middle East and Africa. You referred to it when you were looking into the NP problem. You began this trip on 31 January 1944.

A: My primary mission, given to me initially by General Marshall, was to go to North Africa in connection with the reorganization of the 2d Cavalry Division, which was a negro division. This was a square division and about 20,000 other troops, a total of some 35,000 or 40,000 troops, and reorganize these units into service-type units for the Anvil Operation, which was to be the landing in Southern France. That was my first mission. The second function was to look into training, the operations of ports, and the handling of replacements. I've mentioned the replacement problem, so I don't know that I need to get into that much more, but let me say that it was being very poorly handled whether we're talking about replacements fresh from the States or those who, for one reason or another, were convalescing. As I wrote in my report to General Marshall, the bad name of Canestel would resound in the conventions of the American Legion for years. It has. People still mention that place with disdain. It just wasn't being handled well. There were hundreds of officers and thousands of men who were rushed from their station to the port to get over

to Africa for an important assignment. They had been sitting on their duff in a tent camp at Canestel for months with no action being taken: no assignment, no training, complete frustration. At the same time, they'd get a letter from their wives saying, "Don't worry; we're short of gasoline and we're short of this, but the kids and I are well taken care of."

Q: Let me try to trigger some thoughts on your trip. One point you marked in Dakar on 3 February said, "Looked around to see how my old plan of operations would have worked here. It looked okay."

A: Yes. I mentioned before that while I was at Leavenworth that one of the problems I tried to get approved was an amphibious operation against that particular area to seize the gold of the Bank of France which was stored at Kayes, up one of the rivers. I've forgotten whether it was the Senegal or which one. It gave me a chance to just take a quick look around. I even got the pilot to fly over a little bit of Gambia to see whether we might have made the landing on those beaches and come in from the flank in the manner I'd planned it.

Q: In Oran, you said that you'd talked with Larkin, Gillem, Albert, and you said, "My plan is the only thing they have," and you talked to Dan Noce at that time.

A: This had to do with the plan for reorganization and retraining these 40,000 negro troops. It was the 2d Cavalry Division square -- which was unhorsed, of course, by that time -- and about 15 or 20 anti-tank and anti-aircraft battalions, which had become supernumerary.

When I was called in by General Somervell and taken up to General Marshall, I was told -- very quietly, in order not to raise any problems here in the United States -- that 40,000 negro troops, combat-type troops, ground troops, were being sent to North Africa; that it was necessary to retrain them for the invasion of Southern France, the Anvil Operation; and that I was the officer selected to coordinate it. I was notified that there would be no release of information in the United States on this in order to avoid any clash with the negro press or the NAACP. I met the commanding general of the division, who was General Harry Johnson. Harry Johnson was a National Guard commander, or a Reserve officer -- probably

Reserve -- from Texas. He was a fine officer. He was a prominent businessman, a potential governor of Texas, and at that time he was a vice president of the Gulf Oil Company. But that meant nothing special to me, as I never knew I would go with Gulf Oil after I retired from the Army. In any event, he met me and said, "I understand you're going over there in connection with my training program for the invasion of France." I said, "Yes, that's right." "Well," he said, "What do you know? What special problems are there?" "Well" I said, "I'm not aware of any special problems at the moment, but probably we'll get more instructions when we report to General Devers in Algiers." So with that I said, "When are you going?" and he said, "Well, I think I'll go over on the first convoy of fast ships. [I think this was called a UGF] into Casablanca," and I said, "Fine, I'll see you there. I'm flying over." The way they routed me was down through Natal over by Ascension Island to Dakar, and up over the Atlas Mountains, eventually into Oran. This is where the remark about Dakar came in that you were mentioning. We were delayed a couple of days before crossing the South Atlantic at Natal or Recife. Then I was delayed again. We had a forced landing at Tindouf, which is a little French Foreign Legion post on the south side of the Atlas Mountains, and this was quite fascinating; we had to stay there a couple days.

This little French Legion place called Tindouf was out of this world. It's one of those settings that, if it hasn't been used in American movies, should be, because it was exactly what I had pictured of as being a French Foreign Legion post, and the troops were just as interesting, too. It was a real fascinating interlude that we spent there. We moved to Marrakech, then on to Oran, where I was the only one who was a full colonel, so I was entitled to the hotel for colonels and generals, but I didn't stay there because I wanted to keep my staff together. We went to, I guess, what must have been a third-rate hotel, but at least we were together and we got a lot of work done outside of business hours.

When I'd been there a couple of days and checked around, I decided that I'd better go up to Algiers and report to General Devers. General Noce was there, incidentally, my old commander, as G-3 for Devers. I went and was warmly welcomed by General Devers and General Noce. I stayed with Noce during my visit.

General Devers asked me about this mission of mine and, of course, I explained to him what my general plan was and he said that was fine. I not only knew what was ahead, I knew what he expected me to produce. I had a list of all the units, and naturally their tables of organization and equipment, and other data, and we were prepared to back that up, get in requisitions. I had men from most of the Technical Services, one from each of the major Technical Services at least, about seven or eight of them.

General Devers finally said to me, "Art, do you know this General Johnson?" and I said, "Yes, I met him, General, but I don't know him too well." He said, "When is he coming?", and I said, "Well, he told me he was coming over on the first fast convoy to Casa." He said, "Well, I want to see him as soon as he comes. Do you think he'd make a good mayor of Rome?" I said, "Well, I don't know, General, I don't know him well enough, but I do know that he's a well-established businessman in Texas. He's a major general in the Reserve, and apparently they thought well enough of him so that he's keeping this division. He's a vice-president of the Gulf Oil Corporation, and a prospective governor of Texas. It seems to me as though he would make a good mayor of Rome." "Well," he said, "I'll get in touch with him when he comes." I left with General Noce for the guest house.

There were maybe six or eight of us at lunch when who comes in that very day but General Harry Johnson with an aide. We were surprised to see each other, and I said, "How in the world did you get here this soon?" He said, "Well, you know I got anxious about my division and its training, so I decided I'd fly over, and they let me fly instead of by convoy. So here I am." I got right on the phone after we got up from the table and called General Devers's aide. I said, "Tell General Devers that General Johnson has just arrived by air and he's already here. Would the general like to see him this afternoon?" He called me right back and said, "Yes, General Devers said to tell him to come down at 2:30." I said to General Johnson, "General Devers would like to see you at 2:30. He didn't know you were coming in, but his aide says to come down at 2:30." He said, "Fine." He saw him, we had dinner that night, and I was there another day or two, but he never mentioned anything about what Devers said to him and, as a colonel, there certainly was no reason for me to ask him.

About two days later there was a demonstration of new weapons down at Oran. This had to do with a few tank killers, some special grenades, and items of this sort. General Devers and General Noce were going and he said, "I'll take you back on my plane. I want to see this demonstration of new weapons." As we got off the plane, I was walking alongside Noce and General Devers, when General Devers said, "You know, Art, you were right about Johnson. I think he'll make a good mayor of Rome." "Well," I said, "I'm delighted, General, because I didn't really know too much about him except what I told you, but he appeared to me to be the right type of man." Devers said, "Yes, everything you said to me was right, but I'll tell you the reason he'll make a good mayor of Rome. He's a 32d degree Mason, he's got a Catholic wife and four children." This is a tremendous story. Later he was made the mayor of Rome.

Well, of course, Johnson did keep pressing me as to what was going to happen to him and his division, but until Devers told him, it wasn't up to me to say. We kept the basic administrative structure of each of these units. The 1st sergeant, mess sergeant, and supply sergeant were still doing their jobs; so were the company clerk and noncoms, and so did the officers until I could shift a technically trained and better qualified officer to run it. In some cases we didn't even do that. For instance, they were very short of doctors, and I remember I had a damn good lieutenant colonel of infantry who knew something about medicine but he wasn't a doctor, but I left him in there. He did a great job starting that battalion, but the Medical Department almost fell apart with the idea of anybody but a medical officer commanding the battalion. This is understandable, I guess; this is branch pride, although this man was perfectly capable of commanding it as a battalion. He did well during this period until we could get a field-grade doctor. We had to shift other people, leaving as many as we could and placing the technical skills where they were needed. We then established regular training programs to raise the level. It was a fascinating project, really.

The division was entirely broken up in nine weeks into separate engineer battalions, truck companies, signal companies, and others for a total of 160 service-type units.

I went from Africa to England. I was asked by General Lee, General Eisenhower's deputy for logistics, to survey the amphibious preparations for the landing in France. I went to Casablanca, stopping at Rabat a couple of days to look at places. We had been working pretty hard, so we had a couple of days rest on the coast. I remember the night we got on a plane for Prestwick. We were delayed for a while, and then we found that they had to change crews. The pilot had been buzzed apparently by a German plane that approached him when he was over the Bay of Biscay on his way south from Scotland and he just wasn't about to take off that night. They put another crew on and we took off. As far as I know nothing untoward happened, but they were having to fly out farther over the Atlantic because German fighters were coming out to strafe them if they came close to the French coast at all as they went north over the Bay of Biscay. From Prestwick we flew to London; nothing untoward happened there. Mountbatten, of course, who had their commands set up before . . . combined operations had gone on to India. He came through the United States on his way to India in 1943 and I had occasion to spend some time with him. He was interested in invading the Andaman Islands and Burma; what we refer to as Southeast Asia today. He asked about some plans for converting certain types of landing craft, like the 105-foot LCT, and for the movement of horses and mules over into Burma. Incidentally, while our people in Italy thought they would never have to do that, they did use LSTs to haul mules from Sardinia. Of course, to the Navy, this was really sacrilegious to use what they considered at least a semi-combat type unit to fill it with mules -- and whatever mules left behind them -- but this had to be done. In any event, Brigadier Rockingham, who had been Mountbatten's chief of staff, was then running it. I went up to Inveraray with him where a lot of amphibious training was still being carried out -- at least by British troops and some Americans -- looked over those facilities, and witnessed a small demonstration. Then I attended the final rehearsals, the Fox and Tiger operations on the southeast coast at Slapton Sands. I went to call on General Heubner and he offered me a command. I was still a colonel, so he offered me command of the 16th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Division for the attack on Omaha Beach. I accepted with glee and even got General Lee, the Deputy Commander, to ask Somervell to release me so I could get the combat command, but Somervell wouldn't do it. This was in April 1944, two

months before the invasion. In any event, I had to come back. I couldn't get in on the cross-Channel operation.

It was quite an interesting visit to Inveraray. In addition to the amphibious training there, we had the pleasure of staying on the good ship Sister Anne. The Sister Anne is the yacht on which Edward met Wallis before they were married -- years ago -- and, of course, that brought back ideas; I can't say memories. Our host and the yacht's captain was a lieutenant commander in the Navy named Roland Teacher, the producer of Teacher's Highland Cream, so the ship was well stocked, as you can imagine. He was a personable chap and a noted sailor, so we didn't suffer any -- outside of duty hours, anyhow. That's about it; I got back to the United States about mid-April 1944.

Q: Let me ask you some questions concerning your job. In many of your folders you identified such activities with Officer Candidate School, Army Specialized Training Program, the Training Centers, and so forth. I'd like to talk about the Officers Candidate School. One point that comes out clearly is that you always faced the problem of some good students -- academically good -- who just didn't turn out to be good leaders. I don't know whether you solved the problem -- I'm not so sure we've solved the problem today. What was your feeling about that at the time?

A: I don't know that I can respond to that well. There certainly is a lot of difference between good leaders and good students, and they don't necessarily match. On the other hand, for the regular officer you need the man who is a fairly good student and is well educated if he's going on to a higher rank. Battlefield commissions are something else. They usually go to the man who has produced right there. Some of our schools were castigated and higher-ups wanted to change commanders because they wouldn't graduate a higher percentage. Of course, it costs you more, obviously, if you graduate only 60 percent of a class. I always stood up for school commandants if, after a careful survey by knowledgeable people, I found that they were only throwing out people who deserved to be thrown out. Of course, there was always a lot of skulduggery that went on behind the scenes, trying to get somebody's son into schools for which he was not really qualified, to get them commissioned and then stash them away in a place safe

from gunfire. We'll always live with that to some degree, and I always supported our commanders when they tried to clean house.

Q: I'm interested in the Army Specialized Training Program from a personal standpoint, because I entered World War II by going into the ASTP, and the only note that I could detect here was that two percent of the highest IQs went to the Navy and Army; the Air Corps was getting 98 percent.

A: Let me say this about the Army Specialized Training Program, and nothing I said about officers training before had anything to do with it. We were talking about Officer Candidate School and perhaps battlefield commissions. The ASTP was a very valuable program. No one knew how long the war was going to continue. We had to siphon off some of our best minds and upgrade them as officers. The Navy did a superb job on that. Maybe they overdid it, I'm not sure, but they started with a V-12 program at the very beginning of the war. They siphoned off the best and put them through what amounted to four years of civilian college. Later they compressed it to three years with a trimester setup. We were fortunate in the Army in the competence of the people that ran that program. It was a peculiar thing, but as it turned out -- particularly after I got my promotion in 1944 as a brigadier, but even as a colonel -- I was senior to both of the people who ran it. The officer in charge was Colonel Sandy Chilton, class of 1907 at West Point. He had been one of my English professors and a marvelous man; we couldn't have found a finer, more competent officer, and he and I always had the greatest rapport; we have had a long friendship since the war. His deputy was Herman Beukema, who was one of the outstanding professors at West Point, and a geopolitician of note who stood out for the accuracy of his predictions. Under them were several other fine officers named McCleod -- I've forgotten where the old Scotchman came from -- and another chap, whose name escapes me for the moment but later became the president of Georgia Tech after the war. Another, Major Andy Holt, later became president of the University of Tennessee. These were very competent men and we had a very fine program. If you were going to have a competent Officer Corps for the future and fight a war of unknown length, this was what we had to do -- instead of making the mistake the British did, by stripping their colleges in World War I, then having them all get out with a swagger stick in front

of their troops and have nobody left to lead the next generation. We didn't want to see that mistake made again. Frankly, we were very critical -- some of us -- of General Marshall in 1945. I can only assume that he knew much more than we did at the time. But, as I say, our Army, at least the planners, had underestimated the demands in Europe; they thought the war would terminate sooner. We not only started running out of artillery ammunition, as I mentioned, but we also started running out of infantry replacements. The problem got so serious that in either March or April of 1945, General Marshall took most, and perhaps all, of the 90,000 students out of the Army Specialized Training Program and sent them to Europe as Infantry replacements with about three weeks training. Thank God the war was about over, because if it had continued for a long time this group -- who were not the most expertly-trained infantry replacements -- would have suffered very high losses that we could have ill-afforded. That's a tough statement to make, but assuming the war had to be carried into Japan and we'd suffered the losses then expected under the Coronet and Olympic Operations, we would have been very hard pressed to supply really top grade officer personnel who combined the leadership as well as the mental properties for leading the Army for the next decade.

General Marshall, I think, must have counted on not only the war in Europe being over but, with the advent of the Manhattan Project (atom bomb), that there wasn't going to be too much more land war in the Pacific.

Q: How about the training program itself? That problem always exists with us. Do you have any philosophy you'd like to talk about on training?

A: Yes. The relative competence of our training officers was low in the early stages and what we needed was to bring back more battle-experienced officers from overseas after a reasonable period of time. Some of them stayed overseas for four or five years. I think more of them should have been brought back to supervise this training. We did have some, but we didn't have enough. On the other hand, the ambitious officer isn't going to want to return and capable officers aren't going to be released willingly by their commanders, so this is a hard one to evaluate. I don't know just how you'd do it. We made numerous changes to try and give better continuity to

training. We tried to use returned noncoms and officers wherever we could in our programs. We put a lot more accent on the readiness of our troop units than had been initially done. Of course this became easier as we had more time in which to train them and qualify them and get them ready to go; there's just a multitude of problems and details. We changed our replacement training system quite a bit as time warranted, but the years would prevent me from giving you the real pro's and con's of why we did it or what we thought we gained. Sometimes you don't gain as much as you estimated.

I just responded to the professor of history at West Point, where they've got a committee on institutional research asking about history. They want to make history a career field. Every officer ought to be interested in history, and the best officers love history; they're highly motivated toward studying it. There should be specialists who teach history, but I don't believe that history should be a function like intelligence or logistics. To follow up on the point you just made, I tried for years to get the Army Center for Military History put at Carlisle, the Army War College, along with an Advanced Research Institute, because I consider this the focal point for Army development. They still want to keep them in Washington. Yet whenever they get a new problem for the General Staff, they think only of it as a new subject; but you could send somebody to research it at the History Center and they would find that there isn't much that's really new. We might save a hell of a lot of wheel-spinning, but some people would rather spin their wheels. I am glad to see that a Military History Institute has now been established at Carlisle. I bought the two books right behind you yesterday. These are what we need to keep alert. They are concerned strictly with military history, which they define as the art of war. Our knowledge of history today has to transcend that; we have to understand the social, economic, and philosophical aspects of international power contests as well; the past is prologue. If we don't understand the past, we can't have a really intelligent vision of what will probably happen in the future.

After I returned from Europe in 1944, General Weible was put on special duty, full time, with the Under Secretary of the Army, Bob Patterson, to develop a plan for universal military training. While I didn't

have the full title at that time, I was Acting Director of Military Training during the last year of the war.

Looking back on General Weible's efforts in those days makes me wonder how much further ahead we'd be if we'd had universal military training and established the principle then that every young man owes certain service to his country. I see it coming again when they talk, even though we have a volunteer Army. In good times, you'll largely get those who can't get better jobs -- or any job -- elsewhere. When the going gets a bit tough, they won't be volunteering; it gets just that simple. I have many reservations about the volunteer Army. I think a national service of some sort is needed. I think the universal military training program would have been excellent. I think now that a national service program, requiring perhaps 12 or 16 months in the military or 24 months elsewhere, would have merit at very modest pay rates; I'm not for competing with industry or our professional Army. This would give the young men of our country a lot that they are lacking today. Excessive permissiveness is only another word for lack of discipline, whether it's in the home, the church, the Army, the school, or wherever you see it today. This is the atmosphere in which we live. I don't know that it'll get better before it gets worse; sometimes I'm afraid it won't. I thought then that the Army's effort to establish universal military training was certainly worthwhile, but it was also quite obvious then -- and certainly more obvious in the hysteria that followed the end of World War II where everybody was to be demobilized overnight, and practically were -- that we were not a tough nation, and we were not going to take care of our security to that degree. When we see the way the Army was whittled down in the years immediately after the war -- all the services for that matter -- and the price we paid for it at the time of Korea, at the time of Czechoslovakia, and on other occasions -- it makes you wonder if we'll ever learn or not. Look at us today (February 1971).

I was sad but amused the other night; someone asked me, "Where are all these experienced units going that are coming back from Vietnam?" Well, hell, some of them were inactivated before leaving Vietnam, so I told them that they're going nowhere; we haven't got them. This is exactly the point, and that's exactly what will happen if liberals and do-gooders force us to reduce our forces in Europe or anywhere else. If

Congress decides to recall them, they are out; we're just that many shorter. There's nothing left. There's no strategic reserve that's worthy of the name now, and our training base has been whittled away to a point where no rapid mobilization is possible.

My next interesting mission was when it seemed apparent that the end of the war in Europe was in sight, about late February 1945. At that time I was again selected by General Marshall, based on General Somervell's recommendation, to go to Europe in connection with the planning for the redeployment of troops from Europe to the Pacific. I arrived in Paris on the 11th of April 1945. The reason why I remember it well is because it was the day that President Roosevelt died. The first thing I remember about Paris was going to Mass in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in honor of President Roosevelt. I remember how impressed I was to hear the "Star Spangled Banner" played on the great organ of Notre Dame. It was tremendous, very impressive. At that time, it appeared that the war was about over. The 6th Army Group, General Devers, was in Heidelberg where they were headquartered. The war wasn't quite over, of course; this was still April. Our offensive was still being pushed toward Czechoslovakia and into Leipzig. General Devers had already been given the job of planning for the redeployment of troops and also the establishment of whatever occupation forces were going to be set up in Germany. This was to be a very large force at that time. It seems to me General Devers was to head it, but I could be wrong.

I remember also that we were preparing the way to set up a military government in Berlin, and my friend, General Lucius Clay, arrived to head it. He was living in a chateau up near Paris, in Versailles. I remember having dinner and discussing with him and other mutual friends some of the problems he thought we would encounter when he eventually went to Berlin to take over, as well as some of the redeployment problems. These were the final days of the war, mid-April of 1945. I then went to Italy, where General Noce was still the G-3 in that theater, and the forces were under General Mark Clark.

I remember the final day of the war (We didn't realize it was the final day, but we knew it was close.) going up to Florence in a bomber with one of my friends, General Charlie Born, who was in command of the 15th Bomber Command or some part of it. We flew up over

the Po Valley, the Tyrol, and up over the Brenner Pass. We could see horse-drawn German artillery being taken back through the pass. South of there everything was flat from Milan to Venice. All of the industrial towns were absolutely flat. We came back and landed in Florence that afternoon and then flew back to Rome. That evening a few of us were sitting in King Emmanuel's box in the opera. Between the first and second parts of Aida, they came and announced that the armistice had been signed. That was the first official notice we had, although we saw it coming. I spent a great deal of time with General Noce talking about the redeployment of troops from that theater to the Pacific. The first division that reached Manila in July -- and I was standing on the shore of Manila Bay that day -- was either the 86th or 88th Division which had been in the Trieste area straddling the borders of Italy and Yugoslavia at war's end.

I flew back to Germany and reported to General Devers again. He suggested that I go over to visit one of his frontline divisions, which I very much wanted to do, so it didn't take any arm-twisting. I went to Pilsen to see General Heubner, who then had the V Corps. He welcomed me warmly and I spent most of two days with him talking about the problems. We went over to "no-man's land" between the Russian zone and ours; the barrier was located in a little village about ten miles east of Pilsen. I remember the Americans were being blamed for the lack of milk in Pilsen, which was due to the fact that the Russians had slaughtered all the cattle for meat, but we were picking up the blame already. There were tremendous camps for refugees; some coming through from the East who were allowed to pass on. Most of these were Poles or Czechoslovakians, and I remember meeting with some people from Warsaw that night. At the same time, we had a camp right near the boundary with tens of thousands of Russian prisoners who, by agreement, unfortunately, we were forcing back into Russian hands. They wanted no part of going back to Russia, and Heubner wanted no part of sending them back to Russia, but he had no alternative. They were penned in a fairly large area; some of them hanged themselves rather than go back; suicide was not uncommon at all, but somebody said that they're Russians and the Russians wanted them back. Well, all they wanted them back for was to kill them or torture them, but we were stupid enough to send them back. Who made that decision?

The problem of food was severe because the Germans had no food themselves. The entire population, other than our troops, were limited to one can of C-rations per day. There just was no food; it was almost exhausted. Blown-up highways and bridges were being repaired behind our troops, but there was still a terrific logistics and transport problem in trying to feed people. Those who were being fed -- and of course this went on for a long time among the German population, for the next year or two -- were down to about 1,100 calories a day. It was the best we could do at the time.

I went back to Paris, and by that time they had determined that they were going to have a Redeployment Command. This was established at Rheims, and it was under the command of Major General Roy Lord. Lord was a man of many capabilities and proclivities. He was an able man, but he had irritated some people in Paris at our headquarters in the Majestic Hotel. Those were the days when we established the great cantonments on the Channel coast, most of them named after cigarettes: Old Gold, Lucky Strike, etc. Our combat divisions were sent there and filled up with men who had low point scores (short overseas service) to go to the Pacific. The others with long overseas service were put in other outfits that were to go back to the United States for inactivation and disbandment. I was in Europe from April until the 25th of May. The program seemed to be working, but it had changed materially from what they had intended to do in the European theater.

Q: Let me go back to that point. On the 30th of April 1945 at the Hotel Majestic, General Jonathan Seaman was one of the representatives of the 6th Army Group who attended a conference which you chaired. General Shephard was the 6th Army Group representative.

A: Yes, he was the Deputy Chief of Staff for General Devers, and I think was assigned responsibility for coordinating this task force.

Q: I'd like to tell you what General Seaman said and have your reaction. General Seaman said, "I was in the G-3 section of the 6th Army Group and General Devers was the commander. Along about March of 1945, I was asked to plan for the return of certain units to the States for demobilization upon the end of the war, deployment of certain units from ETO to the Pacific Theater and so on. I happened to be a member of this task force

which was sent to Paris to do this and it was headed by Brigadier General Shephard, a very capable officer who later was the Assistant Commandant down at Fort Benning. One of the other members -- it was then a very small group -- was then Colonel Russell Vittrup. There were only about six or eight of us, and we made very, very detailed plans to move. About that time they sent a task force over from Washington headed by Brigadier General Arthur Trudeau. All plans that we'd made were thrown out the window to a large extent, and a much more hasty return to the States occurred for certain units; some to stage in the States for trans-shipment to the Pacific, and others to go directly from a port in the Mediterranean, directly to the Pacific. In any event, I'm not completely familiar with General Trudeau's plan, and I'm sure that you can dig it up someplace. The 6th Army Group was disbanded and General Devers returned as commanding general of Army Field Forces, and General Barr, who had been chief of staff of 6th Army Group, was designated as the G-1. I have worked very closely with General Barr on many occasions." I'd be interested to get your reaction now to what General Seaman said.

A: Well, I certainly had something to do with changing their plan, but Washington was also aware of their plans and considered them too grandiose as far as the continuing occupation of Germany was concerned, and not sufficiently realistic about the problems in the Pacific and the need to get troops over there very fast. It should be recalled that Coronet, the invasion of Kyushu (the southern island), was scheduled for November 1945, six months away; and that Olympic, the invasion of the Tokyo beaches, was scheduled for six months later. These were truly major operations and all these troops, particularly blooded troops, were needed from Europe. Many of these divisions were going to be degraded to some extent by the fact that the high-point men, decorated for heroism and with long service, were going home. But they were still better than any we had in the United States. The need for many of those "blooded" divisions together with Corps and Army headquarters to go to the Pacific was fully recognized in Washington. It's entirely possible that these plans hadn't been disclosed to the people in the European Command. The idea over there of an occupation -- the number of troops, and the number of senior headquarters that were going to be retained -- was greater than I was given to understand it should be.

So we whittled at that, and in doing so, I guess we changed a few plans that existed in the Shephard task force. The planned assault on Kyushu involved risks and difficulties quite comparable with the Normandy operation as far as the land battle was concerned.

That was the point in sending someone over from Washington who was briefed on the intercontinental aspects of the war. I don't think anybody suffered by it. More people may have gotten home earlier, perhaps.

Q: Well, apparently you moved things much faster than they had planned.

A: We did. We moved them plenty fast. As a matter of fact, I left there on the 25th of May. Remember, the armistice was on the 8th of May. We had these discussions between the armistice and the 25th of May. I returned to the United States and left for the Pacific, which is my next story, about the 4th of July. I was on the beaches of Manila Bay when we welcomed the first division from Europe, which was probably the 15th of July. Things were moving. We were able to do it in those days. We had the greatest military force the world's ever seen, and we could move; we could operate, we could fight.

Q: Well, before you go back to the States, a couple of notes that I picked up from your diary. One was the stop that you made at Omaha Beach where you visited the 538th QM Battalion, a representative or a portion of the 6th Brigade. You wrote down at this time (I'd like to state what you wrote): "So many of us lived to make that landing possible, and so many brave men died in doing it. They did what we planned. Never have I felt the real accomplishment of the Engineer Amphibian Command as keenly as when I walked those sands. It could have been Martha's Vineyard all over again."

A: Did I?

Q: Apparently you were certainly moved by the experience of going back to Omaha and looking at it.

A: That's right. Remember, it was the place about which Weary Wilson and I had written that Leavenworth problem in 1941.

Q: What type of conversation did you have with General Lucius Clay? What were some of the problems that he anticipated?

A: Well, the major problem that he foresaw was trying to deal with the Russians; he knew how intransigent they were. He was never deluded -- like some still are, that they're really a bunch of fellows who want to get along and have no sinister intentions about us of any sort. He knew exactly what he was going to run into and he was prepared for it. It's a fortunate thing that we had a man as tough minded as Clay at the time. He succeeded General McNarney in Berlin, and General McNarney was an excellent man. McNarney was a man who had Marshall's complete confidence, but undoubtedly Clay did too or he wouldn't have had that job. Clay also had the confidence of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Hill, and the President. He was an excellent choice for that very important assignment.

I don't have anything more, in particular. I remember one little aside that might be interesting. I was in Rheims, which was Eisenhower's headquarters, and not too far from Bastogne. It was there that I found that the initial troops that were in Bastogne were not the 101st Airborne Division at all. I'm not taking any glory away from the 101st Airborne Division -- later they had to hold it -- but when the Germans were about to pass freely through Bastogne, the first troops that slowed them down in order to give the 101st and other troops a chance to get there were some Quartermaster units that had been shot up there from Rheims or that vicinity. I remember meeting this unit, including their commander, and being told about this by people on General Eisenhower's staff.

We stayed that night with Count Guy de Polignac. This is an amusing story about him. He undoubtedly was a collaborator. He was one of these fellows who could always get along and compromise. There are a lot of them who can do that -- and maybe they shouldn't be called collaborators -- but, in any event, he provided certain aid and comfort to the Germans in the way of Clicquot champagne. De Polyniac owns the Clicquot champagne vineyards and they produce one of the finest French champagnes. When the American forces arrived they came upon warehouse after warehouse of champagne, bottled and labeled, "Bottled expressly for the Wehrmacht, 125 francs" and 125 of those francs weren't worth too much. When the Americans came in they

revalued the franc quite a bit. De Polignac talked our military government people out of seizing this material because he said that, while it had been bottled for the Germans, the Germans didn't own it and hadn't paid him for it; consequently, it was his property. Our civil government was very good-hearted, of course, so they let him off the hook completely. Whereupon he proceeded to have all of the labels washed off the bottles, immediately relabeled them for 150 francs, and sold them to the Americans. I don't know what the moral to the story is -- you can draw it to suit yourself -- but again it shows some of our soft-headedness. That's about the end of the story. I visited these various camps up in the Le Havre area -- I don't remember whether there was one at Cherbourg or not -- also down at Marseilles as some of them were coming out to the Mediterranean. All in all it was a very satisfying and informative mission. I hope we got a few things accomplished.

Q: When you came back, or shortly thereafter, you received another set of orders. Before you move from this position, do you recall any basic changes in your thinking as a result of being involved in this type of activity or your several special missions?

A: No, it's just a further outgrowth from having trained a platoon, company, battalion, brigade, and planning and executing the training program for the Amphibian Command and the entire Army Service Forces. Just an outgrowth of them, application of the same principles: organization, decentralization, strengthening of policy, procedures. It was very satisfying except that I didn't want to be serving in Washington. I wanted to be in other places.