Bellwether of defense, the position of the United States Navy on unification and strategy between World War II and the Korean incident

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BELLWETHER OF DEFENSE

The Position of the United States Navy on Unification and Strategy between World War II and the Korean Incident

by

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PREFACE

The purpose of this monograph is to review critically the position taken by the United States Navy on the problems of military unification and strategy that faced the Nation between the end of World War II in 1945 and the Korean Incident of 1950.

In work on this study, the usual tools of academic research have been considerably tempered, modified, and supplemented by personal experience and observation. These additional aids, acquired during fourteen years of service in the armed forces, included duty with agencies of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1946 and 1947, a time of crisis at this focal point for interservice controversy over proposals for unification and strategy. In addition, experience with the military budget at the Engineer Research and Development Laboratories and at Fifth Army Headquarters from 1948 to 1950 provided an intimate knowledge of many source materials and events related to this subject that are still concealed from public view because of administrative or security restrictions.

The reader alone can judge whether this familiarity, beyond the public record of post-World War II military policy, has unduly influenced or preconditioned the opinions.
and conclusions expressed here. To some this account will undoubtedly appear highly personalized, brutally frank, and arbitrarily narrow in its selection and evaluation of significant evidence. In partial extenuation for any departure from the restraints imposed by scholarly traditions, a later historical verdict may reveal with more abundant clarity the present necessity for a harshly critical examination and precise diagnosis of the factors essential to continued national and individual survival.

Perhaps the contemporary record presented now, with its shallow hindsight supported by more valid historical lessons, may even make this apology of an uncertain prescience unnecessary. Such at least was the naive hope permeating this work, which, unfortunately, is not apologetic, but tactless to an extreme. Tact, however, is not necessarily a virtue, if in matters of life and death it leads to a dangerous form of self-deception. Address instead of tact may sometimes be demanded and is tried here in the sincere belief that skill and adroitness in the management of American military affairs are perhaps more appropriate to reality, even political reality, than approaching these problems from the point of view of what is merely fit, graceful, considerate, or expedient.

EDWARD G. COOK

Missoula, Montana
August, 1952
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Return to the thesis of collective guilt extenuates, without absolving, the failure of leaders to the led while some examples of the last half-century culled from Churchill, Root, and Kennan also indicate the difficulty and perhaps futility in resolving the democratic dilemma of creating psychological and military preparedness as essential factors for world leadership—a problem the Navy attempted originally to resolve in the national interest and later in the naval interest.

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In spite of MacArthurian opportunism in 1949, the Navy deserves a Churchillian accolade for its unique role among the American armed forces as an ardent advocate of the balanced forces that are required for the delicate nuances of military power appropriate to varying situations.

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CHAPTER I

YARDSTICK FOR NAVAL YARDARM

... the democratic purpose does not prosper when a man dies or a building collapses or an enemy force retreats. It may be hard for it to prosper unless these things happen, and in that lies the entire justification for the use of force at all as a weapon of national policy. ...—Ambassador George F. Kennan.

Among the elements of total power forged by the United States in the post-World War II period, military power has received more recognition than in the past as a necessary factor for continuing national strength. Particular emphasis has been given military power in the narrow sense—armed force immediately usable to supplement other instruments of policy in projecting the national interest on the world scene. Between the end of World War II in 1945 and the Korean incident in 1950, this supplemental instrument of policy, ready armed force, was subjected to searching and continuing examination by Congress, which displayed unusual interest and vigor, for a postwar period, in determining the organizational, material, and strategic means of the military available to the United States.

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1George F. Kennan, American Diplomacy 1900-1950, 89. Hereafter cited as Kennan.
Need for a yardstick. The purpose of this study is to review critically the position taken by the United States Navy on the problems of military unification and strategy that were facing the armed forces and the Nation during this time. First, however, some relevant factors correlating the environment, necessity, and role for force in the present world will be noted as a required framework for necessary reference in evaluating particular aspects of force, such as the one being studied. The grisly implications of these factors concerning physical coercion as an instrument of policy apply to the Western world as a whole, as well as to the United States, and must be understood unless specific security problems within the West are to be appraised without criteria in a meaningless vacuum. Certainly, this understanding is required in considering the problems presented by the Navy's position on defense between 1945 and 1950. As part of the scaffold needed to view more clearly this naval attitude, there looms large the basic cause for emphasis by the United States on military power in being during the post-World War II period.

The narrowing choice. In large measure, this reaction to power realities facing the United States is due to the significant narrowing of diplomatic and military choices imposed on the Western world, recognized by Kennan² as the

²Kennan, 3, 57, 74-75, 78-79, 93.
outstanding international development of the past fifty years. At last, even the United States, the strongest bulwark of the West, has acknowledged that the gap of allowable error in solving the problems related to security is closing to a dangerous degree in a polarizing world. No longer can past advantages of space, time, and power diffusion save "... those who hitherto had been half blind. . . ." from the perils of grossly ignoring any vital element of power required in the real world of today. This world unfortunately bears little relationship to a juristical nirvana where national armed forces have been multilaterally discarded as a needless supplement to rule by law enforced by international police power. Realistically, the United States has chosen since 1945 to maintain ready armed forces on a scale previously without parallel in American history except at the peak of physical conflict in the first two world wars. Even these forces of the world wars shrink when compared to forces augmented by the significant multiplier of atomic power in the post-1945 period. Sharp as well as latent tools of military power have become a necessary part of contemporary existence.

Criteria for coercion. Still to be determined is whether these sharp tools will be used by the United States with a surgeon's delicate skill only when the ills among

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the bodies politic of the world are so severe that unassisted treatment by other means fails to insure survival of the West. Although any other type of successful medication may be preferable, the surgery of force in necessary aid to otherwise failing medicine is better than certain destruction from the poison of abject appeasement. Abhorrent though this use of force may be, its intelligent application does present some hopeful aspects even in a world rapidly growing more capable of self-destruction. First, adequate force may by its own strength exclude the necessity for its active use and passively allow more rational elements of policy to prevail in an irrational world. Second, active employment of force occasionally can make a great contribution, at least temporarily as in the Korean incident, when:

... if used with forethought and circumspection and restraint, it may trade the lesser violence for the greater and impel the stream of human events into channels which will be more hopeful ones than it would otherwise have taken. . . .

Lastly, in the holocaust of an Armageddon, force, dominant as a tool of policy during the battle, may still, in nominal victory, stalemate, or even defeat, impose conditions more favorable to reason, moderation, and stability in the world than voluntarily choosing bondage as a substitute for sacrifice.

Less hopeful, but nevertheless real, is the dilemma, equally perplexing to both East and West, of inadvertently

4Kennan, 89.
carrying force as an instrument of policy to its ultimate possible peak of total human destruction. Although a worldwide cloud of radioactive cobalt dust\(^5\) might provide the maximum of stability in human affairs, it appears doubtful that any state will intentionally create such a condition. Fortunate, indeed, is the world that group action on a large scale, inspired by an inconceivable mass psychosis, is still required to exterminate all life willfully. However, with extortion by intimidation, backed by progressively growing increments of coercion and force, prevalent in the present world, recognition must be given to the risk at any time of being faced with the ultimate blackmail of destruction or surrender. Weapons capable of this threat against America may soon be in place off the Pacific shore of the United States, as Brown realistically anticipated.\(^6\) The only certain means of meeting such a threat, moreover, lies not in the dubious, yet desirable, attempt to induce a prior settlement obviating such a possibility, but in possessing and advertising to the world recognizable means of instant retaliation capable of carrying to any aggressor destruction at least equal to that threatened.

Nevertheless, negotiation for peaceful settlement guaranteeing coexistence should be pressed at every

\(^5\)Harrison Brown, "How Big Need a Bomb Be?" The American Scholar, XIX, Summer 1950, 269.

\(^6\)Ibid., 269-270.
opportunity with the utmost vigor of patient, skilled diplo-
macy. Backing this diplomacy must be the will and means to
counter successfully interspersed efforts at intimidation
and coercion adverse to vital interests of the West. Timely
and judicious ultimata backed by force, like the Atlantic
Pact, may reduce the opportunities for these ventures into
intimidation and limited use of force that offer such tempt-
ing delays for the East in arriving at a final decision and
choice between settlement and risking mass destruction. Even
then, the temptation to test these ultimata will still be
present if doubt of the ultimate will of the West exists.
Restrained application of force for specific limited objec-
tives may be attempted as a last resort in the hope that,
even if the ultimata stand up and are enforced, unrestrained
use of atomic power will be limited fortuitously on both
sides, as in World War II with poison gas and biological
weapons. The chance for survival of any life in such an
environment appears doubtful indeed. Only the hopelessness
of the dilemma and total lack of profit to anyone in such a
tenuous lease on life, if abundantly recognised on all sides,
may force the millenium of profound peace with workable uni-
versal safeguards. Fortune or reason might prevail at an
early date, but the road to the last slim hope seems long
and tortuous, dependent as it is on the courage of the West
to face continuously the possibility of death for all in
preference to total surrender.
Unless, however, the West has this stamina, any optimism is fatuous that the continued building of absolute and intermediate weapons of power will contribute to permanent world stability in which the West is a partner. More likely, wishful escape from the sacrifices of reality will prevent even the maintenance of sufficient military strength, in being. Yet, without these weapons in hand at present, not even a temporary uneasy stability is possible. Thus, both temporary stability and the hope for long range stability are dependent on the fortitude of the West within the framework of democratic domestic political realities. The changing winds of the East's skill and error in short term tactics and long range strategy, while not changing the basic realities of the West's unfortunate position, cause this vital factor of fortitude to ebb and flow like a frail reed in the tide of human events, not entirely uncontrolled, but of questionable reliability. Only successive warning signals from the East have kept the stamina of the West from disastrously ebbing beyond the point of no return. Withdrawal of these warning signals by the East, if possible internally over an appreciable period of time before a definitive settlement of outstanding East-West problems, might well be catastrophic to the West when the struggle is rejoined under the East's conditions. To depend on the mistakes of the East for continuation of the patient firmness of the West, backed by means, appears to be the greatest single political
and military weakness of the West.

This sombre background of the implications of force to the West as an element of policy has unfolded with increasing clarity since 1945. Any study of force, general or specific, without reference to this background would be meaningless. Especially is this true in examining critically any aspect of the post-World War II defense establishment of the United States, the cornerstone of the West in building a livable political and military balance in the world of today. Essential to understanding in this field is recognition that:

... Force, like peace, is not an abstraction; it cannot be understood or dealt with as a concept outside of the given framework of purpose and method. If this were better understood, there could be neither the sweeping moral rejection of international violence which bedevils so many Americans in times of peace nor the helpless abandonment to its compulsions and inner momentum which characterizes so many of us in times of war. 7

Therefore, the framework of justification, purpose, and method for using force in the present world has been described above solely as a necessary scaffold from which to hang the specific historical problem of this study. A sober analysis of the following problem would indeed be futile except as a depressing portion of the entire melancholy scene.

The historical problem. Between 1945 and 1950, both

7Kennan, 90.
the defense structure of the United States and the policy for utilizing this structure were subjected to a most searching and critical inquiry. Congress provided an open forum to hear and examine divergent opinions on the form and adequacy of the military establishment. Eagerly using this platform, qualified professional men from all the armed forces forthrightly expressed their views on all aspects of defense posture. In 1949, the fires of controversy finally raged unbridled in the hearings on the B-36 heavy bomber and on unification and strategy. The underlying cause of these last public hearings was the openly revealed dissatisfaction of many leaders of the United States Navy with the course being set by the Department of Defense in maintaining the armed forces. Not only were these leaders displeased with the implications of the Department of Defense action on the naval ready force, but they also saw the gravest dangers for the Nation present in the strategic policy being shaped by the limitations of available military means. If this naval opinion concerning serious deficiencies in strategic policy was correct, then the timing of the warning was peculiarly appropriate, coming as it did with the recognized loss of the Western atomic power monopoly and only a few short months before the Korean incident. This study will examine and evaluate the position on the problems of unification and strategy thus taken by the Navy between 1945 and 1950, with particular emphasis on the critical year, 1949. The frame-
work for using force in the present world, described earlier, provides a convenient template, or yardstick, for this evaluation. However, in order to join the Navy in orderly marshalled array as a bellwether of defense during unrecognized years for decision, the record must first review some prior developments of the national military establishment.
CHAPTER II

PLANTING SEEDS OF NAVAL DISCONTENT

... any step that is not good for the Navy is not good for the Nation. --Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King

Compartmentalized naval force unchallenged before World War II. Before World War II the Navy had cherished and sustained the confidence of the Nation as its primary force in being during time of peace. Due to the insular position and essentially defensive attitude of the United States with respect to other major power centers, this confidence was entirely warranted since only by sea could appreciable land, sea, or even air forces be deployed effectively against the homeland. The diffusion of power abroad, including a satisfactory naval balance, gave the Navy the capability of shielding the Nation during any mobilization of industry and the Army required for decisive major land operations.

An impotent ground Army wholeheartedly conceded to the Navy this primary role in defense and forced the concession on the prematurely ubiquitous Army Air Corps, dreaming

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1 Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, Hearings on S. 84, Department of Armed Forces, and S. 1482, Department of Military Security, 79 Cong., 1 sess., 124. Hereafter cited as Senate 1945 Unification Hearings.

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of not yet existing global range. As late as May of 1938, while Austria lay ravished and the peripheral disaffection in Czechoslovakia proceeded apace, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army reflected this official national and Army obliviousness to possible future change in defense concepts by the following brusque admonition to his logistic expert, correcting him for planning a long range bomber program:

(1) Our national policy contemplates preparation for defense, not aggression, (2) Defense of sea areas, other than within the coastal zone, is a function of the Navy, (3) The military superiority of . . . a B-17 over the two or three smaller planes that could be procured with the same funds remains to be established, in view of the vulnerability, air-base limitation and complexity in operation of the former type. . . . If the equipment to be provided for the Air Corps be that best adapted to carry out the specific functions appropriately assigned it under Joint Action . . . there would appear to be no need for a plane larger than the B-17.²

Even more restrictively, the Secretary of War warned the Chief of Air Corps less than three months later that his budget estimates for Fiscal Year 1940 would be confined to twin engine and smaller types.³ Fiscal Year 1940 was to end with the death throes of France. Fortunately, the relentless march of events finally imposed not only changes in the


strategic concept allowing such shortsighted military budget planning, but in actual appropriations as well. The twin blights of first, a purely passive defense, and second, the iron curtain dividing both surface and air defense responsibilities at the ocean coast, faded before bringing irrevocable disaster in World War II. Nevertheless, despite these later developments, the Navy in July of 1938, after 140 years as the primary shield of the Nation, still stood unchallenged in that role. Seven short years after, the Navy was fighting for bare survival as a recognized and effective coequal partner in forming total balanced armed forces for the United States under rational central control.

Need for top management in applying force. Without going into these seven hectic years of violent transition for the details of cause and effect that so radically changed American views on accepted methods of organizing and applying force, Nelson supplies an obvious answer as to the result of this period:

... That national defense or security has always been essentially a single over-all problem has been recognized from the beginning of our nation by the designation of the President as Commander in Chief. It is unfortunate that he has lacked in increasing measure, as war has become more and more complex, the top management facilities vital for intelligent decisions and able leadership. When defense problems were simple and divisible into well defined and non-overlapping areas and responsibilities, the Cabinet sufficed for counsel and the separate War and Navy Departments for operations. That this is no longer true has been amply demonstrated by the fact that wherever there was prolonged fighting in World War II, air, sea, and ground forces have been forced by circumstances
to operate under one command. What has not been advertised is that lack of organizational cohesion at the top in Washington has made unity of command in the field more complicated and difficult. . . . 4

Stating the need for top management facilities in the defense establishment was easy, but satisfying that need presented complex problems of organization, not readily apparent because of their deceptively simple superficial appearance.

The naval view on postwar organization of balanced forces. The Navy initially stood almost alone in its belief that all the deep-rooted implications of a reorganized defense structure should be thoroughly understood before adopting a solution. In the face of unilateral Army plans, the naval leaders felt from the outset of postwar unification clamor that the views of the Navy were doomed to subordinate status, or worse, within the armed forces unless the most stringent safeguards for protecting the Navy became a recognized part of the new organizational legislation being considered by Congress. With one voice the Navy began its fight for survival in October of 1945 before the Congress and continued its verbal warfare unabated until, reluctantly, the Army concede most of the Navy's limitations on overly concentrated control. At last, the Congress, convinced that the services would work together under a mutually agreed-on unification

plan, passed the necessary legislation which became law in July of 1947. The Navy had won a major victory by insuring itself parity in policy formulation within the defense establishment, but the battle had been long and arduous. The relative positions of the protagonists during this struggle have a direct bearing on the problem under consideration and will be discussed in some detail.

First, examination of the Navy's position toward unification legislation reveals marked consistency with its later stand on unification and strategy taken in 1949, when the naval misgivings were finally confirmed in spite of the legislative safeguards for the Navy and national security insisted upon earlier. Basically, the Navy's attitude on the composition of the post-World War II military establishment was not that of bureaucratic pride of place hesitant to fall, but rather of reluctance to have the Nation discard one concept of compartmentalized force, demonstrably inadequate for modern conditions, and substitute another with equally demonstrable fallacies. The danger existed that placing the armed forces in an organizational strait jacket immediately after the war would freeze progressive military thought instead of insuring the continued evolution of the powerful and flexible forces required to meet ever-changing military situations of the future. The proposed establishment of a separate Air Force as a coequal service divorced from both

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5 Senate 1945 Unification Hearings, 123-124.
Army and Navy, even when supposedly integrated with the operation of ground and sea forces by control from above, caused the Navy particular concern because of fear that undue emphasis on the most powerful single element of present day force might allow less powerful, but none the less essential, elements of military power to wither away. The historical example of Germany provided a stern warning of how the existing prejudices inherent in overly centralized control could prevent the realization of the full potentialities of all the services.

Above all, the Navy's proud record as the only branch of the armed services with long unified fighting experience in all physical environments, on, over, and under the sea, as well as in adjacent land and air areas, entitled the Navy to voice expert opinion in formulating legislation for effective coordination of all the armed forces. Only in strategic air operations and massive ground engagements was the Navy admittedly out of its element, which it quite properly conceded as an Army primary function. However, the necessity of separating strategic air or all combat air from the Army seemed an absurd division substituting widespread triplification for the close duality of Army and Navy operations evolved during World War II. The Navy's submarine forces were a strategic, global weapon of tremendous striking power
like strategic air, yet received the necessary autonomy within the naval establishment to develop maximum capabilities. Any further dispersal of responsibility for the training, supply, and operation of proved fighting teams would be dangerous and wasteful to a high degree. Air power, although the dominant element of modern war, as recognized by the Navy's policy that any important task force must have a flying officer as commander or vice-commander, was still part of the total balanced fighting team. Similar dominance of the Army by its airmen appeared to be the proper solution to the air problem. The Navy could recognize the possible desirability of a third major division of the armed forces only if the Army's past bungling in failing to recognize the potency of the air weapon had now not only alienated its own airmen, but also put the shoe on the other foot where the ground forces needed autonomy for self-preservation.

As far as the hiatus between sea and land operations was concerned, the Navy was adamant about full control of its Marines, both land and air, because the Navy alone could provide the trained teams required for full support of amphibious operations by integrated naval bombardment, carrier-based air, landing craft, and shore control parties. Obviously the Army would provide the masses required for large scale assaults, if sufficient dispersal could face the atomic era, but these Army troops would still be dependent, as in

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7 Ibid., 390-392.
8 Ibid., 511.
World War II, on the Navy and its Marine Corps for training in the specialized amphibious skills developed over many years.

Dominant throughout the naval testimony before Congress in 1945 was the recurring theme that naval air forces were an integral part of the living naval organism and without this lifeblood the Navy perished. These air forces included not only carrier-based aircraft, but also shore-based aircraft of long range for reconnaissance at sea and antisubmarine warfare. Development, supply, and training of the naval air was peculiarly a function of the Navy and could not be farmed out to a separate Air Force. The airmen for the Navy also had to be naval careerists and not on detail from another service because one master alone must be served with skills requiring a dedicated life of service. The tragic British experience of wiping out naval aviation and transferring air duty at sea as a grubby, dead-end detail to the British Royal Air Force following World War I remained as a beacon for all to see. In producing the beacon, Admiral Forrest Sherman stated:

... As a result, in the middle of a desperate struggle for existence, Great Britain had to reorganize her fighting forces to give the Navy control of naval aviation, and has since been engaged in the difficult task of attempting during a war to modernize its Navy and repair the damage which nearly caused the loss of an empire.

9Ibid., 149-150.
10Ibid., 504.
Carrying his aptitude for analogy further, the Navy savant added later:

The very intensity of the present drive for the merger, and the destructively critical nature of many of the statements recently made about the Navy, strengthen the belief that the merger would make possible a recurrence of the conditions which led to the establishment of the Navy Department in 1798; namely, that the War Department of that time had not maintained an adequate Navy and a naval campaign was in immediate prospect. 11

Thus, in 1945, the cancelled aircraft carrier, United States, and unavailable moth ball carriers were already casting their shadows before them. How useful this close air support, fifty miles or less from the battle line, might have been in that classic example of naval co-operation with land forces, Korea, during the early stages of the North Korean advance in 1950! During this time the separate Air Force, denied Korean bases until later, struggled from maximum range in Japan to reach the front lines for a few minutes fighter-bomber contact. 12 Immortal as an expression of sound naval doctrine are Churchill's words of 1936 expressed in one of his foresighted, but fruitless, efforts to save Britain from future travail:

It is impossible to resist an admiral's claim that he must have complete control of, and confidence in,

11 Ibid., 507.
 Integration of force with other tools of policy.

This, then, briefly describes the view of the Navy on its own special skills in the art of war and the necessity for recognizing, protecting, and further developing these skills as a vital part of any future overall military establishment. However, the Navy case was not simply one of constructive opposition to merger of the War and Navy Departments. It was rather a comprehensive and dynamic program to strengthen national security in all its aspects. The Navy’s program contrasted markedly with the wishful and false hope of the Army that a military Oberkommando of the armed forces in Washington would automatically bring greater effectiveness to the field forces by ignorant meddling with the vital and specialized problems of each of the military departments. The greatest defect of the Army’s proposal was that it was purely an ill-conceived military solution and failed to provide adequate coordination in the top management of all agencies concerned with national security. Secretary of the Navy Forrestal stated the problem clearly:

The immediate integration necessary is that of the War, Navy, and State Departments. Beyond that, however, I wish to present to you my belief that there will be

required to meet our problems of the future the creation of a mechanism within the Government which will guarantee that this Nation shall be able to act as a unit in terms of its diplomacy, its military policy, its use of scientific knowledge, and finally, of course, in its moral and political leadership of the world—a leadership that shall rest on moral force first and on physical force so long as we shall need it.

Consequently, the Navy advocated that a really broad organization for national security be established, as follows:

(1) A permanent National Security Council with a permanent secretariat should be established as an integral part of our Government. It should consist of the President as Chairman, the Secretaries of State and the Military Departments, and the Chairman of the National Resources Board. The Security Council will coordinate all foreign and military policies and in time of war will advise the President as Commander in Chief. This Council will also review and determine the security program and budget for submission to Congress.

(2) There should be provided a permanent Joint Chiefs of Staff to consist of the Chief of Staff to the President, the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, and two officers of the Navy, one to be a naval aviator. Such Joint Chiefs of Staff will establish unified commands in peace and war and will originate the strategic military program. The subordinate agencies of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should be strengthened and established on a permanent full-time basis.

(3) The National Security Council should be assisted by (a) a central research agency, and (b) a central intelligence agency, both to serve all departments of the government.

(4) A permanent National Resources Board should be established to make policy decisions with respect to the mobilization of material resources, productive capacity, and manpower. A permanent Military Munitions

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14Senate 1945 Unification Hearings, 97.
Board (a joint agency), reporting to the National Resources Board, will be responsible for the elimination of duplications in procurement and supply.

(5) The Army Air Forces, with particular reference to their strategic functions, should be autonomous. Whether that can be accomplished only by splitting the War Department and establishing a separate department, is a matter for Congress to decide. A single Military Establishment should not be forced upon the country to establish autonomy for the Army Air Forces.

(6) The Navy must be continued as an integrated service not only with its own Air Forces (including such shore elements as are required for design, training, reconnaissance at sea, and antisubmarine warfare) but also with its Marine Corps and related amphibious components. This requires that the Navy Department continue to be represented in the Cabinet by a civilian secretary with direct access to the President.

This program deals with the basic elements of national security. It also preserves the integrity of each of the armed services and provides for the:
(a) Unified strategic direction of the Services, both in Washington and in the field; (b) effective coordination of procurement; and (c) for integration of budgets for national security.

The narrow view held by Army ground and air. In contrast with the Navy's carefully devised provision of a top management staff for advice on and execution of the security policies of the Commander in Chief, the Army proposed that the President abrogate most of his power over the military under the Constitution by delegating his responsibilities not on a staff basis, but on a deceptively simple straight line command basis. The Army proposal was general in character and left details of organization to be settled by executive action rather than by legislative authority. In

Ibid., 470.
spite of assurances that dissenters among those charged with control of the major components of the armed forces could still obtain a hearing from the President by going over the heads of their military and civilian superiors, there was no regular system provided for insuring careful consideration of all pertinent views before a decision was reached on military matters. However, the greatest deficiency was failure to coordinate and direct the military as a part of the total power of the Nation.

A comparison between the Navy’s plan and the Army’s plan, presented by General "Lightning Joe" Collins, shows the vast area of difference between the two opposing concepts. Instead of the closely knit Presidential staff on all security aspects provided by the National Security Council and the National Resources Board as advocated by the Navy, the Army proposed only a single adviser on military matters alone, a civilian Secretary of the Armed Forces. Although in nominal charge of the entire military establishment with the aid of other civilian assistant secretaries of the single department as a whole, the actual command of the armed forces was in the hands of the military in the person of a Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. The Army provided no civilian secretaries of the component branches to supervise their detailed operations. That was also left in the hands of military commanders. By contrast, the Navy retained the autonomous civilian

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16 Ibid., 156-162.
secretaries of each component. The Army plan usurped completely the strategic direction of unified field commands by the Joint Chiefs of Staff developed so effectively during World War II by the principal military advisory and operating agency of the President. The Navy proposed to retain this group with full powers to insure that preplanning of operations considered every pertinent factor, but the Army kept the Joint Chiefs in name only with limited powers of recommendation. Although these recommendations of all the principal component commanders would be forwarded to the President through the Secretary, the operating functions of the Joint Chiefs passed entirely into the grasp of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. The Army's plan provided for a considerable degree of autonomy for each service, yet major functions might be transferred between the components. The Navy, of course, required legislative safeguards to prevent such arbitrary and possible destructive action to proved fighting teams. Also very objectionable, in the Navy's view, was a Director of Common Supply and Hospitalization, directly under the Armed Forces Chief of Staff according to the Army's plan, with powers potentially capable of starving functions to death without more overt action. Under the Navy plan, its Cabinet level Secretary and equal voice in the joint staff agencies prevented any such sabotage by those unfamiliar with the special needs of sea power.

The fervor with which both the ground and air Army components advocated their cause was understandable, but not
necessarily in the best interests of the Nation. With air power recognized as dominant by all, the Army Air Forces felt that through additional autonomy within a single armed forces department their sledge hammer of power with emphasis on the atom would receive untrammeled development. Its advocates indicated little if any interest in lesser nuances of power, and apparently failed to realize that tack and claw hammers can sometimes repair structures better than a sledge hammer designed for destruction. On the other hand, the ground Army, while recognizing the value of its Frankenstein, but not being able to control it like the Navy, preferred to free the monster before it destroyed the foot soldier. Forrestal mentions the fears of both the President and the Secretary of War:

I said that Patterson and I both had some misgivings about the Ground Forces being extinguished by the efforts of the Navy and the Air Forces. The President concurred and said what he was really afraid of was that we would have a repetition of the situation in England. In other words, the Royal Air Force movement with all of its consequences. I told him that I thought if I were in his place I would in a week or ten days tell both Services it was time to call a halt to the propaganda discussion and lobbying, and I said the Navy would make this stick but I didn't think the Army could, particularly the Air Forces. He concurred and said that the Air Forces had no discipline. . . .

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\[17\]Walter Willis, ed., The Forrestal Diaries, 149. Hereafter cited as Forrestal.
CHAPTER III
ROCKY ROAD TO COMPROMISE

... Believe entirely fresh approach required... to avoid that cold, fishy look which lets you be quite aware... that you do not have the kind of support from the heart that you need in fighting. --Secretary of Defense Forrestal

Initial Presidential support of Army. In spite of his awareness of the Army’s pressure tactics, Harry S. Truman, Colonel, Artillery, Organized Reserve Corps, was not the Navy’s advocate. Rushing to reinforce the Army, which was sorely flailed by the Navy’s telling blows, the President sent a message to Congress on 19 December 1945 backing the Army’s position item for item except for four minor concessions to palliate a Congress increasingly favorable to the Navy. These points were, first, the Navy would retain its

1Committee on Naval Affairs, United States Senate, Hearings on S. 2044, Unification of the Armed Forces, 79 Cong., 2 sess., 10. Hereafter cited as Senate 1946 Unification Hearings.

2Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, Hearings on S. 756, National Defense Establishment, 80 Cong., 1 sess., 36. Hereafter cited as Senate 1947 Unification Hearings.

3Ibid., 9-10, citing Message to Congress from the President, December 19, 1945, in daily Congressional Record, pp, 12573-12577.
carrier and water-based aviation although land-based aircraft for reconnaissance were still to be manned by the Air Force; second, the Marine Corps would still be part of the Navy although its functions were disquietingly vague; third, additional Assistant Secretaries for each component would monitor the activities of the military commands although no Cabinet level representation or its equivalent was possible; and fourth, later legislation would attempt to meet the primary problem of more effective staff assistance on all security matters at the Presidential summit. Any reassurance that this might have been to a Congress dedicated to the principle of government by law instead of men was dampened, however, by a suggestion that details need not be specified, but should be left to executive order.

Congress and Navy frustrate President and Army.

Meanwhile, amid increasing cheers and support from the floor of Congress, the Navy had already successfully run the gantlet of a Senate Military Affairs Committee. Now the setting was to change during the 1946 session to the Senate Naval Affairs Committee, wearing bell-bottomed blue. Here the Navy found a most welcome relief from the 1945 experience before a khaki-tainted Military Affairs Committee. The Navy needed only to pass the ball to the Naval Affairs Committee without worrying about which goal line would be crossed.

Moreover, the Senate Naval Affairs Committee was suffering from an understandable pique at the rather arbitrary
way in which the Military Affairs Committee had pressed forward independently in favorable consideration of the Army's plan for unification during the 1945 session. At last, less than two weeks before reporting favorably to the Senate on a slightly modified version of the Army's plan,\(^4\) Senator Elbert Thomas, Democrat of Utah, Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, in stammering embarrassment quite divorced from his usual professorial manner, attempted to mollify the Naval Affairs Committee and its Chairman, who had determinedly begun their own hearing on the same proposed bill. Ungrammatically, Thomas apologized on 30 April 1946:

> My purpose, Senator Walsh—and I don't have to state the purpose to you, because I have worked with you from the first day I came to Washington, on some of the most controversial legislation, and you know the spirit in which I have undertaken all of my jobs, and one thing I hope I never will do is try to short-cut any consideration of any bill; and a bill of this kind should not be short-cut.\(^5\)

The Chairman, Senator David Walsh, Democrat of Massachusetts, and the rest of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee took Thomas at his word. Not only was the proposed legislation freed of any stigma of steamroller tactics used in promoting it, but this liberation killed the bill completely.

From the naval point of view, the bill recommended by Thomas\(^6\) contained all the previously objectionable provisions

\(^4\)Ibid., 6.
\(^5\)Senate 1946 Unification Hearings, 10.
\(^6\)Ibid., 1-9.
of the Army's plan, although the President's inadequate concessions were included. Equally unattractive to the Navy appeared the additional frosting of giving the Assistant Secretaries of Army, Navy, and Air Force the nominal title of full Secretary of their respective components, but with no change in their ineffectual, subordinate status. Also, a travesty of the Navy's top management plan for integrating all security matters had been added in an attempt to disarm naval advocates of this supreme need. The facsimile was excellent except that, when viewed in the whole context of the bill, the super-Secretary of Common Defense and his military Chief of Staff, the latter particularly, still held absolute rein on the military establishment. The component Secretaries were not even granted a place on the proposed Council of Common Defense, this bill's equivalent of the National Security Council recommended by the Navy.

This monstrous deviation from the principles of sound business management needled Charles E. "Electric" Wilson into an anguished cry before the Naval Affairs Committee:

... I am convinced that merely starting at the top and combining the two departments into one, with a concentration of administrative authority in the hard pattern of military authority, at the cost of devaluation of the importance and stature and independent thinking of the present separate departments, is an invitation to inefficiency, to authoritarianism, and to stultification.

What we need is less, not more, rigidity. We need more flexibility in order to make the liaison between industry and the armed forces work. We need a structure that will not suppress the thinking of specialists down the line, but will invite
or even compel their thinking to come out and be weighed and tested.\textsuperscript{7}

Speaking apologetically of the small, billion dollar, yearly business of his company, General Electric, as infinitesimal compared to the vast, diversified activities of the defense establishment, Wilson added, "Rejecting central authority, we found we had to go to the other route, not the one that according to my understanding is the route considered under this bill; we had to decentralize. . . ."\textsuperscript{8} The goal, as the Navy and its supporters had long realized, was to "... seek real unity of thought and action, not just a unification of organization which does nothing in itself to reduce the number and complexities of the problems involved."\textsuperscript{9}

\textbf{Presidential and Army retreat.} With growing recognition of the futility of his past arbitrary intervention in favor of the Army's proposed unification plan, the President sought finally on 13 May 1946 to inspire the Army and Navy to reach agreement on legislation that both could support. At this time, talking to Patterson and Forrestal, the Army and Navy Secretaries, the President admitted that one of the biggest stumbling blocks to agreement, the concept of the omnipotent super-Chief of Staff in military command of all the fighting forces, had been a dangerous mistake, sowing

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{7}Ibid., 149.
\item \textsuperscript{8}Ibid., 151.
\item \textsuperscript{9}Ibid., 150.
\end{itemize}
the seeds for a potential "man on horseback." He requested that the two Secretaries reach agreement by 31 May in the hope that a united front to Congress might allow passage of a unification law before the Seventy-ninth Congress ground to a close.

Increasing evidence had indicated that neither House of Congress would consider favorably the modified plan of the Army proposed by the Senate Military Affairs Committee, or any substitute plan, unless the services reached substantial agreement on the working details in such a manner as to warrant the concurrent support of those Congressmen who shared the Navy's misgivings. In a devastating indictment of the Army plan and with argument closely parroting the Navy, Senator David Walsh of Massachusetts and Representative Carl Vinson of Georgia, Democratic Chairmen, respectively, of the Senate and House Naval Affairs Committees, presented a letter to Forrestal on 15 May for use as ammunition in his conferences with Patterson during which both men tried to meet the President's request for a joint solution to the unification problem. The recommended agenda of Walsh and Vinson concerning the primary points at issue took the position that:

With respect to the points in disagreement we are of the opinion that the Congress of the United States after mature study and deliberation will not approve:

(a) A single Department of Common Defense

10Forrestal, 160-162.
with a single Secretary at its head.

(b) The placing of a single military officer in supreme command of all the armed forces.

c) Divesting the Marine Corps of its important function of maintaining a Fleet Marine Force to support fleet operations.

d) Transferring the vital functions of naval aviation to the Army Air Corps or to a separate Air Corps.

e) Removing from the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy the responsibility for initiating the budget of their respective Departments and supporting these budgets before the Congress.\(^{11}\)

Forrestal's strengthened position was clearly evident in the joint reply of the Secretaries to the President on 31 May.\(^{12}\) A realistic proposal for necessary coordination of all security matters at the highest level now included effective representation of each service Secretary. Reluctantly, but obedient to the President, Patterson had agreed to the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the highest military level of command in place of the single military Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. However, disagreement still existed concerning the single super-Secretary and the effectiveness of the service Secretaries as autonomous agents in directing their own departments under the over-all Secretary. The Navy also resisted as vigorously as before the continued efforts of the Army and Army Air Force to aggrandize the vital naval functions of land-based aviation for fleet reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, and protection of shipping.

\(^{11}\)Senate 1946 Unification Hearings, 351.

\(^{12}\)Ibid., 203–207.
Patterson also spelled out for the first time, publicly, the Army's view on the functions of the Marine Corps. Although Forrestal could agree with Patterson in the generality of a balanced force of Marines, including supporting air, for duty with the Navy, he would not grant the limiting of Marine capabilities and missions only to those situations where sustained land fighting was not required. The Navy obviously required staying power for its Marines if limited land warfare was required to prosecute successfully a naval campaign. Functionally, such a situation could not be soundly met by tortuous liaison and ineffective coordination with the Army unless the magnitude of the land operation clearly made the naval aspects subordinate. In amphibious warfare, usually the most vital element of such a sea-land campaign, the Army proposed limiting the Marines to primary responsibility for only waterborne developments in the tactics, techniques, and equipment of landing operations.

This absurd severance between sea and shore of functions required to blend in smooth-flowing unity was an invitation to dual command and responsibility for one of the most delicate and dangerous of all operations. Past experience had dictated that the tightest and most coordinated of command controls were vital for success. The contrast between Guadalcanal and Narvik was made apparent by Marine General Vandegrift in commenting on the disastrous effect on the Nation if Marine readiness were reduced:
... The results of such a situation may be exemplified by considering what would have be-fallen our Nation had there been no Marine Corps standing in readiness in the early days of the recent war. ... The operation against Guadalcanal could not have been launched when it was, because there were at that time no Army troops prepared to conduct amphibious assault operations. And had we been without a vigorous and effective Marine Corps at the onset of the war the United States would have found itself in the hapless po-sition of the British, who, for want of a small professional landing force, suffered a disastrous defeat in Norway. ... The Royal Marines, traditional troops of the British Navy, had been divested of their amphibious functions and were engaged in duties of lesser significance—such as operation of landing boats. By the time troops could be alerted for the task the fleeting opportunity was lost and German strength in northern Norway had reached such formidable proportions that an attack was no longer practicable.13

That tragedy of grievous error, Narvik, involved what the United States could ill afford to do in the future—"... putting in a substitute for a well-run team, a substitute who has not trained with the team and who does not know the signals. ..."14 Churchill's difficulty with the substi-tute, General Mackesy and his Army troops, at Narvik, and his efforts to forge a fighting team on the spot are well recorded.15 However, the saddest commentary of all about the deficiencies of the Royal Navy while in control of com-bined amphibious operations at Narvik, even after supreme command of the area was belatedly granted the Navy, is the

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13Ibid., 110.
14Ibid., 112.
admission of the First Lord that his "... naval officers, even when granted the fullest authority, are chary of giving orders to the Army about purely military matters..." 16

This defect contrasted markedly with the knowledgeable confidence of Admiral Nimitz and Marine General "Howling Mad" Smith in directing Army commanders detailed to them for duty during World War II in the Pacific Ocean area. Still Patterson did not get the point and looked at the Marines as rivals to the Army ground forces instead of as naval specialists with peculiar skills necessary for the conduct of most naval campaigns.

In spite of later remarks comparing Marine propaganda with that of Stalin, the President at this time opposed the injudicious conclusions about the Marines made by his Secretary of War. In his effort to close the Army and Navy ranks into a unified front to Congress, the President did not choose to leave the untenable Army position on the Marines as a wide gap for warranted Congressional attack. On 15 June, in his letters of conciliation to Patterson, Forrestal, and the chairmen of the Senate Military and Naval Affairs Committees, which attempted to reconcile the differences in the joint reply of the Secretaries of 31 May, the President stood firmly with the "leather-necks" and accepted the Navy's position verbatim on the functions and missions of

16 Ibid., 635.
the Marine Corps. 17

Another major Presidential concession was the de-
priving of the proposed Secretary of Common Defense of powers
and functional Assistant Secretaries in the fields of Research,
Intelligence, Procurement, and Training because of unwarrant-
ed and unnecessary usurpation and duplication of both the
policy guidance provided by the President's top management
staff agencies and the functions of internal administration
essential to the service secretaries. In the joint letter of
31 May from the Secretaries to the President, Forrestal, al-
though opposing the ubiquitous super-Secretary, had recognized
the advantages of a Presidential defense deputy to lessen the
burdens of the President's far flung and excessive govern-
mental span of control. According to Forrestal, this deputy
should have well defined powers of delegated authority from
the President for deciding issues at the Council of Common
Defense level. 18 At last, the Secretary of Common Defense
approached this concept at the military level, although For-
restal's scheme achieved more rationally the recognized prin-
ciples of organization by having this deputy mesh and coordi-
nate representatives on the Council in all security elements,
foreign affairs, and industry, as well as the military estab-
ishment.

Only in land-based aviation did the Navy receive no
additional help from the President. The decision here, in

17Senate 1946 Unification Hearings, 207-211.
18Ibid., 205.
the President's words, was that:

Land-based planes for naval reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare and protection of shipping can and should be manned by Air Force personnel. If the three services are to work as a team there must be close cooperation, with interchange of personnel and special training for specific duties.\textsuperscript{19}

Nevertheless, the Secretary of the Navy was at last prepared to admit that the President's objectives were feasible providing legislation properly construed these objectives. On 24 June, acknowledging the President's letter of 15 June, which had otherwise confirmed all previous concessions to naval air, Forrestal commented on the touchy subject of land-based air for sea reconnaissance:

... I am glad to note that the Navy is to have a continuing part in the future development of these operations, so that full advantage may be taken of its experience in this field and of the lessons learned in the late war. ...\textsuperscript{20}

Otherwise, Forrestal's letter completely supported the President's decisions. What reservations Forrestal may have had concerning the Air Force's ability to be the Navy's long range eyes were now at least protected as possible future protests. The inviolate preservation of naval integrity and autonomy at all levels, including the Council of Common Defense, allowed the Secretary the right of direct appeal to the President, which was nearly as effective as full Cabinet status. Also, Congress was standing careful guard over the Navy and blocking any legislative loopholes inimical to

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 208.
\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., 211.
naval interests.

Retreat ends in debacle. Following the President's letters of 15 June, which stated the objectives unification legislation should now accomplish, the Senate Naval Affairs Committee was happy to let the onerous chore of redrafting suitable legislation go unchallenged to a hapless Senator Thomas, whose bill, approved by his Military Affairs Committee, remained on the Senate calendar. Thomas vainly attempted to do this the hard way by amendments to the original bill. The resultant confusions in the text left the super-Secretary far more power than Forrestal intended to agree with in his letter of 24 June to the President, which had supported the Presidential objectives. Therefore, the Navy was forced to complain that the President's intent was not fulfilled by the revised proposal.21

In spite of this, Thomas's revision bore the caption, "Printed with the amendments of the Senate carrying out the recommendations of the President in his letter to Senator Thomas of Utah of June 15."22 The Naval Affairs Committee feared that the rug might be pulled out from under the Navy by the President if he stated that this new Military Affairs Committee bill met the objectives with which the Navy had expressed agreement.23 These valiant supporters of the Navy

21Ibid., 215.
22Ibid., 214.
23Ibid., 217-218.
held the line with forbidding mien and prevented any further attempt at Presidential or Army incursions until Forrestal welded shut the gap he had inadvertently left in the naval armor. With rivets added for good measure, the staccato tone of Forrestal's telegram from Bikini on 5 July to Kenney, his deputy, found its way into the hearings of the Naval Affairs Committee. There it proved an effective accompaniment to these winners of the Navy "E" for 1946 while they sang a spirited "Anchors Aweigh" in requiem over the lifeless Army merger bill. Forrestal's musical note read:

I have studied amendments to Thomas bill. As I read them they fall completely short of correcting numerous basic defects of organization originally proposed which was and still continues to be an administrative monstrosity. Am convinced it is utterly impossible to incorporate directives of President's plan into framework of Thomas bill. Believe entirely fresh approach required. . . . I feel strongly that Senate Naval Affairs Committee should be given opportunity for participation in development of legislation equal to that already had by Senate Military Affairs Committee. Please transmit this message to Senator Walsh and leave to his discretion decision as to public release.24

Walsh was exceedingly discreet from the Navy's point of view. Succinctly, a Congressional summary states, in part, "but opposition continuing, the President requested that the measure be dropped."25 Thus, ignominiously, the violent pressure tactics of the Army ground and air ended. The next move was Forrestal's "fresh approach."

24Ibid., 348.
25Senate 1947 Unification Hearings, 7.
Grand Compromise of 1947. In setting the stage for the Eightieth Congress, President Truman made every effort to avoid the past stigma of arbitrary executive action in formulating unification legislation. The Navy was recognized as a coequal partner in every step of the process. To counter-balance the past dominance of the Army and Army air in his counsels, the President now set up in his own office a steering committee for drafting new legislation. This group could hardly be charged with Army bias because Admiral Leahy, Chief of Staff to the President, and Clark Clifford, recently transformed from naval aide to civilian assistant in the Executive Office, were the two principal members.26

Because of the need of the Presidential drafters for close liaison with the War and Navy Departments, Admiral Sherman and General Norstad, top flight aviators and planners, were designated by Forrestal and Symington, Assistant Secretary of War for Air, to assist at the departmental level in keeping everyone in mutually agreed channels.27 Starting at Forrestal's suggestion to Symington in early November, these military statesmen made phenomenal progress. By mid-December, a critically needed directive on unified command in seven potential theaters of operation was prepared, approved, and implemented following their recommendation to the Joint

26Forrestal, 203-204.

27Senate 1947 Unification Hearings, 154.
Chiefs of Staff. This necessary preliminary of good faith in assigning strategic responsibilities and missions fostered rapid agreement on the broader aspects of unification. On 16 January 1947, the complete concurrence of Sherman and Norstad on the substance of the new unification legislation found fruition in another joint letter of Patterson and Forrestal to the President. This letter, although framed "... within the scope and spirit. ..." of the President’s decisions in June of 1946, showed far more political as well as military realism than the interchange of views the previous spring. Everything was well pinned down including, above all, retention by the Navy of full control of its own land-based aircraft for reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, and protection of shipping.

The same team of Norstad and Sherman, assisted by the White House steering committee, quickly drafted a truly united front of recommended legislation. The President transmitted the proposed bill to Congress on 26 February 1947. With comparatively little sniping at a Democratic bill by a Republican Congress, who found faint support for their antics from a military at last speaking with almost

28Ibid., 7, 164.
29Ibid., 103-106, 164.
30Ibid., 103.
31Ibid., 105.
32Ibid., 1, 164-167.
One voice in support of the legislation, unification finally became law on 26 July 1947 and Forrestal was confirmed as Secretary of Defense the next day. A large measure of the credit for final passage must go to the Army and Army Air Force, who belatedly had recognized that joining the victors is necessary to be successful in a campaign where unassisted conquest is impossible. On the other hand, Forrestal and the Navy, in proper humility, prided themselves only for a cooperative venture preserving balanced forces as versatile instruments of national policy. No longer, as Forrestal put it, did the Navy fear being forced into the disloyal position where:

... men can say, "Aye, aye, sir," but they can still give you that cold, fishy look which lets you be quite aware of the fact that they do not agree with you, that you do not have the kind of support from the heart that you need in fighting.34

The new unification law resembled closely Forrestal's statesmanlike vision of top-level security management expressed so forcibly in 1945.35 Included in the National Security Act of 1947 were Forrestal's original key concepts of a Presidential staff, the National Security Council for

33Forrestal, 295, 297.

34Senate 1947 Unification Hearings, 36.

Integrating domestic, foreign, and military policy and the National Security Resources Board for coordinating military, industrial, and civilian mobilization. Assisting the National Security Council was the Central Intelligence Agency as previously contemplated. In view of other agencies coordinating broad applications of science, Forrestal's central research agency became a Research and Development Board reporting to the Secretary of Defense on scientific techniques of military value. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, now aided by a statutory joint staff equally representing the separate services, had been preserved intact as the principal military advisers to the President and to his deputy on military matters, the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary now reduced the President's burden of excessive span of control by delegated authority over the autonomous departments properly conveyed by law, a marked change from the 1945 Army concept of blanket powers over the merged services arbitrarily ordained by executive order. Subject to the general supervision of the Secretary of Defense in matters affecting the National Military Establishment as a whole, the Secretaries of Army, Navy, and Air Force had full administrative control of autonomous executive departments as well as the right of appeal to the President concerning decisions affecting their departments. Their role as special advisers in their fields was enjoined by statute in a War Council to the Secretary of Defense, and above all, as representatives of their services.
on the National Security Council. Although their place on the Presidential succession list was lost, the President was expected to use the Secretaries in his cabinet as needed. The Munitions Board, as in the case of the Research and Development Board, reported to the Secretary of Defense instead of to the National Security Council, but its functions were the same as Forrestal forecast, primarily coordination of procurement and supply within the National Military Establishment.

Within the separate departments, the role and mission of the three components of the armed forces had not only been adequately defined in general terms in the new statute, but the detailed Executive Order implementing the statute preserved completely the primary functions of each service that they were best fit by experience and tradition to perform. The view of the Navy had prevailed in all respects concerning the inviolability of the Marine Corps and naval aviation, including the necessary land-based air, as essential tools of the naval trade.

Dormant seeds of naval discontent. In spite of this justified deference to the naval position, the deep wounds to the Navy, cut by the Army and Army Air Force in attempting to sever vital functions from an operating element with which they were grossly unfamiliar, continued to fester. Naval

36Senate 1947 Unification Hearings, 29.
37Ibid., 3-5.
confidence in the judgment of Army and Air Force leaders was bound to suffer as a consequence, particularly at the higher levels where intelligent joint planning and direction were required in forging integrated task forces from the specialist units provided from all branches. By contrast, the Navy at no time had depreciated the role and importance of the other services. Instead, helpful naval suggestions had emphasized the necessity for autonomous strategic air forces, not as a panacea, but as an essential element within the framework of total military power with all its shades of useful application. The Navy had also expressed some misgivings about organizational obstacles, self-imposed within the Army, that might endanger the training, control, and effectiveness of ground-air teams by separating all combat air from the ground forces. However, the Navy made no protest about the final conclusion to transform these teams into a two-headed Hydra under joint control of those presumed best qualified to make that operational decision. Nevertheless, the Navy had challenged effectively the consistency of this unproved solution as a justification for the aggrandizement by the Air Force of all the military resources of the Nation.

As has been seen, most of Forrestal's original position of 1945 was realized in the compromise legislation of 1947. Concessions had been made only in the means of reducing to manageable proportions the President's span of control over the agencies concerned with national security. Here,
although the concept of a top Presidential staff was retained for the whole field of security in order to relieve the President of the details of planning, coordination, and supervision of approved policy, Forrestal's recommendation to have a Presidential deputy at this level with specific delegated powers of decision would have reduced the number of agency heads reporting to the President far more effectively by unified control of a single functional area than by simply having such a deputy preside only over the three armed services. Nevertheless, the greater deputy, a Chairman of the National Security Council other than the President, was sacrificed for the lesser, a Secretary of Defense, presiding over the National Military Establishment. The latter position would have no doubt evolved eventually in any event due to its theoretical logic in tidying up the cluttered organizational chart of the Executive Branch, but less tangible obstacles, most already partially revealed by the Navy, hid behind the theory that prettying up the chart would automatically provide greater military effectiveness. Time alone could test the compromise of 1947.
... it is very difficult to get a correct expression from the military authorities so long as the expression is controlled politically before it is rendered.-- General of the Army George C. Marshall

Magnitude of unification problems. Forrestal, the principal architect of the new National Military Establishment, presided over the initial crucible, a critical period of painful trial and error in attempting to bind together powerful subsidiaries into a mammoth corporation. The problem essentially was to harmonize the contribution of each subsidiary to the total military power in being of the Nation in such a manner that the sum of these contributions would provide the Nation, to the maximum extent possible, with more power than the subsidiaries had produced for comparable diversions of the national effort before unification. Obviously, the solution was an art, not a science, because only empirical methods could provide a dubious answer due to the infinite intangibles involved. Cremating potential in atomic thermal units might be forecast accurately, but

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the questions of targets, percentage of potential effective on target, and means of delivery were just a few complicating factors affecting even the simplest and crudest of approaches to evaluating military strength. Furthermore, if force were to meet the criteria developed in Chapter I for its hopeful employment as a deterrent of wars and in limiting wars, short of mass and possibly total destruction, probably the national interest might best be pursued with more balanced forces than those merely capable of incineration. Coordination of the three services to obtain a more effective total military team with greater power, yet at the same time flexible enough to meet varying contingencies imposed by the changing needs of foreign and military policy, required a dangerously delicate adjustment and compromise of conflicting demands. Right answers were well nigh impossible to develop with any degree of assurance. Wrong answers could have fatal results to the Nation. Forrestal's new job, fraught with overwhelming difficulties and dangers, assumed the greatest significance amid the narrowing choices facing the United States on the world scene.

_Futility in allotting defense deficits._ These difficult problems facing the National Military Establishment had been further complicated by an arbitrary ceiling on defense costs imposed by the President and the Congress long before Forrestal became Secretary of Defense. On 13 May 1946, the President established his policy of limiting defense
appropriation requests to not more than one third of the budget after meeting carrying charges on the national debt.2

As a result, Forrestal, who had actually taken his oath of office on 17 September 1947 after six weeks spent organizing for business following his confirmation by the Senate, found his establishment in the fiscal year ending 30 June 1948 with the going rate of expenditure on the military forces already well established at under fifteen billion dollars annually.3 Congress, needless to say, particularly the usually hostile Eightieth, had cooperated with the President by showing even greater zeal than he for across-the-board economy emphasizing cuts in non-pork military expenditures. Appearing nearly oblivious to the stringent injunctions of Section 8, Article I, of the Constitution "... to raise and support armies..." and "... to provide and maintain a navy ...", powers that cannot be delegated, Congress joyously accepted the parochial view of the President as a measure of its own responsibility also. Perhaps the relentless march of events would demonstrate that the visible capabilities and intentions of other powers might have been a better yardstick for estimating our defense needs.

Even the Communist defenestration of Czechoslovakia into the waiting clutch of the Soviet Union and the blockade of Berlin had little impact on the President and Congress

2Forrestal, 160.
3Ibid., 314, 351-353.
in establishing better criteria for judging defense needs. As late as 15 October 1948, Forrestal was attempting to plan a budget within the President's limit of fifteen billion for the fiscal year that was to end one week after the Korean incident of 1950. The services had estimated their needs, within the strictest interpretations of calculated risk and minimum pork, at a modest figure of approximately thirty billion dollars. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, feeling perhaps that as individual military heads of their forces they had not been harsh enough in rending lard from their various arms and bureaus, had finally been pushed and goaded by a knife-wielding McNarney Board, established by Forrestal as defense management experts in men and materials, into an absolute minimum figure of nearly twenty-four billion. This annual carrying charge on insurance, so the Joint Chiefs thought, might keep the Nation out of war and give a reasonable mobilization base with sufficiently secured strategic air and ground-heads to insure possible victory in the event war came. The fifteen billion dollar limitation could only promise the holding of the Eurasian off-shore islands and a limited air offensive from England while the offensive power of the Navy and Army was forced to wither away in order to make even this capability effective. The extreme absurdity of the predicament that the fifteen billion dollar annual limit placed on the security planners of the Nation, unless they trusted Stalin as the reincarnated world Messiah, was pointed out by General Gruenther, Secretary of the Joint Staff,
whom Forrestal records as saying there was no answer to the dilemma unless, "... you are willing to gamble..." on an air offensive alone. Under these conditions, balanced forces were impossible to achieve. Although the sledge hammer of power, the atomic, biological, and chemical air offensive, was a capability required as a deterrent to widespread, overt Soviet aggression and as a tool in unlimited war with the Soviet Union, the crying need was for immediately employable ground forces, supported by tactical air and naval power, sufficient to prevent or limit Soviet attempts to whittle away at the protective Eurasian periphery, the vital area of long-range decision for both East and West.

This quandary had no answer except Gruenther's gamble, skeptically received even by the Air Force, which found that Forrestal's views included collateral support from naval air for diversionary strategic strikes to assist the prime mission of the Air Force and make up for its probable shortage of nearby bases to the primary targets. Also, the continuing budget support of a supercarrier, capable of supplementing atomic deliveries, intruded on what the Air Force hoped to make its unique field. The Navy, in its turn, took a jaundiced view of continuing Air Force efforts to reduce it to the same supine, helpless status as the ground

4 Ibid., 505.
5 Ibid., 374, 502-505.
6 Ibid., 466-467, 513-514.
Army, which had loyal accepted that role in favor of the immediate retaliatory power of the Air Force and the Navy, supposedly bound together as mutually supporting striking teams by the Key West and Newport agreements.  

Although Forrestal made remarkable progress in less controversial areas of unification such as common air transport, personnel and pay policies, joint schooling, unified overseas commands, and military justice, as Marx Leva, assistant to the Defense Secretary, pointed out, strategic decisions on missions and means could not be worked out as cooperative planning ventures by mutual agreement and compromise. Budget restrictions posed such impossible obstacles in the way of balanced forces that the harmonious, considered determination of what was best for the Nation, as Forrestal had envisaged his job as Secretary of Defense, had degenerated into hopeless efforts to resolve the bickering between the Navy and Air Force on what measures would be least harmful to the Nation. Power of decision was required after all, even though that decision along with insufficient means might mean catastrophe. An attempt had to be made in determining what would hurt the military posture least. As Forrestal phrased it during his last appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 24 March 1947, four days before leaving office, the bitter experience of eighteen months had

7 Ibid., 389-394, 475-478.
8 Senate 1949 Unification Hearings, 256-261.
gradually changed his opinions concerning the dangers of strong powers for the Secretary of Defense until:

... I am also convinced that a failure to endow this official with sufficient authority to control effectively the conduct of our military affairs will force upon us far greater security risks than will be the case if singleness of control and responsibility are achieved.9

The Hoover design for strength through weakness. Thus, with the passing of the compromiser, also began the first of the severe trials for the Navy in 1949, the spectacle of a Congress blindly following the recommendations of the Hoover Commission and bent upon giving the Secretary of Defense increased power to knock heads together in the military establishment. As some of the heads might be naval, the portents of the amendments to the 1947 act being considered by Congress were not favorable. The proposal included many radical changes.10 Increased authority for the Secretary of Defense to direct and control was aided by changing the loose amalgamation of the National Military Establishment into a single executive Department of Defense. The superior Cabinet status of the Secretary of Defense was further embellished by reducing the Army, Navy, and Air Force from autonomous executive departments to mere military departments without even representation on the National Security Council to supplement their dubious Cabinet representation,

9Ibid., 9.

10Ibid., 265-274.
now fully denied. A Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff presided over the Joint Chiefs solely as an expeditor and coordinator of their business, yet with prestige, if not power, that was only too reminiscent of the bugaboo military dictator, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, so dearly beloved by the Wehrmacht and the Army. A vast hierarchy also stood at the summit with a Deputy Secretary of Defense and Assistant Secretaries, delving and prying into the myriad operations of the military departments, with powers, but not necessarily the knowledge, to rationalize budget, accounting, supply, and personnel procedures as recommended by the Hoover Commission.

All in all, the proposed legislation was dangerous to the Navy and the Nation if Congress insisted on a subterfuge to hide the basic defect of the military establishment, a lack of means that no amount of reorganization could cure with puerile economy. Forrestal had left his office as a beaten and broken man, shattered by the overwhelming burden of distributing deficits in national security. Now, a legislative screen was proposed to conceal these deficits from the entire Nation. Former President Hoover disclosed the fragile character of the proposed palliative by promising that a 10 per cent savings of one and one half billion dollars annually in the military burden would still attain "... the same ends for less expenditures. ..." Nothing was advocated,

11 Ibid., 130-131.
even by more globally minded and professionally qualified men than the former President, to close the gap, ten times larger than the promised savings, between means and the ends required, which obviously were not the "same ends" as the Hoover concept, if the military establishment were to measure up to the criteria of force demanded by the treacherous world environment.

Even Kenneth Royall, who had replaced Patterson as Secretary of the Army, but who shared his prejudices for straight line command, found that the despicable methods of the Hoover Commission in crucifying the military on a cross of waste forced him into mild rebuttal of the innuendo and falsehoods used to promote corrective legislation. Deliberate misstatements of fact, such as, "Under projects for fiscal year 1950 the Army asked for funds to modernize 102 more tanks than it possessed," had to be answered, in this case by:

When the original budget estimates were made in July 1948, the Army had in its possession the exact number of tanks budgeted for. In September 1948, 102 tanks were transferred to the Marine Corps. The budget was adjusted accordingly at that time. To a similar accusation that a clerical error had added thirty million dollars to the Army budget estimate, Royall proved that the figure appeared only as a partially eradicated stencil correction, was not included in any totals,

\[12\text{Ibid.}, 175.\]
\[13\text{Loc. cit.}\]
and, further, was forwarded correctly in clean copy to the Bureau of the Budget. Royall requested the Great Engineer, in a personal letter on 7 March 1949, to refute ten of these flagrant falsehoods, widely publicized by one of Hoover's subcommittees, but the official subcommittee report was not changed, even in the case of more glaring allegations, equally false, such as misplacing nine thousand tanks and failing to account for over seventy divisional sets of equipment. Still, over a month later, the Secretary of the Army, testifying in favor of the proposed amendments to the unification act, was careful to salve the delicate sensibilities of the Republicans, now again a minority on the Senate Armed Services Committee, with the following remark:

I am sure that Mr. Hoover personally, with his many responsibilities, has not had an opportunity to take this letter and compare it with the report, and I do not infer there was any intention on his part at all to misrepresent the facts or permit erroneous inferences to be drawn. He is a great supporter of national defense and a fair and high-principled American citizen.

If this rather dubious tribute is accepted at its face value, then it can only be concluded that Hoover, by losing control over his Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, set a rather poor example of what his recommendations were intended to effect, namely, more efficient direction through improved governmental organization.

14 Ibid., 177.
15 Ibid., 174-178, 180.
16 Ibid., 174.
Notwithstanding, the arguments of the Hoover proposals had much merit. Yet, as testimony leading to the original unification act of 1947 had indicated, simple charts and blanket authority were no substitutes for the dynamic personal equation of superior leadership, armed with unsuppressed advice, in solving security problems. Since these problems had been made insolvable by limits in appropriations for defense, the new legislation appeared to be no panacea for military ills, particularly when much of the evidence favoring the legislation had been fraudulently manufactured.

**Naval impotence against Hoover normalcy.** Nevertheless, the Navy had no defense against the proposed amendments because the purse strings binding the military establishment had to be unraveled by some new means. Political and allegedly economic circumstances prevented a defense effort sufficient for any credible answer that the assigned missions under existing unification law and agreements, which required balanced forces, could be accomplished by the three services, collectively or separately. Therefore, the power to improvise some sort of answer to the defense quandary had to be devised for the Secretary of Defense. This was inevitable, and the Navy did not choose to fight a losing battle against the overwhelming odds supporting the organizational changes. The array of opposition was indeed formidable, composed of a powerful triumvirate that included
first, a President, who, after his re-election victory was flushed, confident, and muzzling dissidents opposing his legislation; second, a Congress, economy-minded as usual in areas of no concern to voting constituents; and last, but certainly not least, the Hoover Commission, transformed inadvertently from a 1948 stalking-horse for Republican sabotage of the Democratic Executive to a 1949 Presidential and Congressional demonstration of nonpartisanship in oiling the creaking wheels of government. Besides, the only legitimate ground for such a naval fight was advocacy of more money for defense as a substitute for the organizational changes designed to force quietus, although not correctness, on interservice wrangling. However, even those armed components with less political finesse than the Navy recognized the futility of allegedly proposing to strangle an economy that was and is a vital ingredient for long-term victory. The Navy saved its consummate skill for the politically possible, which in this case certainly could not include the correct answer, further curtailment of economic normalcy in conspicuous civilian consumption.

Collective guilt frustrates solution of defense quandary. Unfortunately, obtaining a correct answer to this economic and political dilemma was the paramount requirement for security because the power of the economy for military use, which alone could provide the sinews necessary to save

\[\text{Ibid., } 1.\]
the total economy, and much else of more importance besides, is not measured merely in terms of over-all existing or potential capacity. Militarily usable economic power in an era of powerful weapons capable of quick decision is measured primarily in terms of long-lead time items already possessed in advanced designs, not common to civilian use. This is true regardless of whether these economic tools of war are jigs, hydraulic presses, and armament factories capable of sustained military production, are a vital military inventory of jets, plutonium activated hydrogen bombs, and other weapons, or are essential cadres of trained individuals and units for armament, civil defense, and military organizations.

By contrast, conspicuous production and consumption of deep-freezers, television sets, and automobiles, while perhaps educational as exercises in industrial management and civilian mores, are of no value to the military power potential unless an improbable conversion period is inexplicably allowed by fortuitous events, abnormally purveyed by an aggressor's premature and witless disclosure of frightful intentions and capabilities. Even defenestrated Czechoslovakia, blockaded Berlin, subverted Greece, and the later divulgence of Soviet atomic capabilities failed to qualify as fortuitous events for the West and the United States, except in the most limited sense, because these incidents provided inadequate, even though great, stimulants for a proper defense posture. On 21 October 1949, a month after the
President's disclosure of a Soviet atomic explosion, General George Marshall, in somewhat surprised optimism, noted that the Nation's defenses had remained as well afloat as they did in the post-World War II period largely due to overt Soviet pressure. However, only the Korean incident, eight months after Marshall cited obvious external incentives for defense, possibly qualifies as a fortuitous and fortunate event allowing an improbable period of partial conversion from a civilian to a military economy commensurate with the needs of the Nation since 1945. More dismally, even this happy picture may fade because the probability appears large that this partial conversion will be discontinued explicity by unfortunate events, such as temporary Soviet passivity, which will assist a wishful return to normalcy, impossible for this Nation to deny.

This awareness of the Navy and the other armed forces about the political impossibility of demanding the necessary sacrifices for a correct economic approach to the problem of defense, except with the help of a fortune not bestowed indigenously, was perhaps buttressed by the fact that some historical evidence exists to indicate the psychological unpreparedness of the United States for the sacrifices required of a world leader. Power came to the Nation too easily and too quickly without a necessary leavening of "blood, sweat, and tears." The people of the United States

18 House 1949 Strategy Hearings, 600.
and its leaders have never been forced to demonstrate stamina for continued sacrifice except in the most perfunctory fashion during rare and short periods of unusual stress, more than obvious to all, which even at their worst have still tested only small segments of the collective will. This idyllic state of affairs, historically unique among the great powers, has failed to provide the events, tradition, or, more rationally, indoctrination necessary in preconditioning the individual and collective wills of the Nation for sustained sacrifice. Cheap lessons of temporary trial have been soon forgotten. This forgetfulness bodes ill for maintaining the predominant position of the United States when faced with the costly, lengthy ordeal of uneasy, partial peace required to prevent, or to meet, successfully the supreme test of total war with the Soviet Union. As was intimated previously in the criteria of Chapter I, all elements of ultimate power are worthless without the will to match the final ends with the necessary intermediate means. Without other elements, will alone may not prevail, yet without will, other elements of power wither and waste away.

A profound critic, General George Marshall, has blamed this frail reed of the Nation's collective will as the culprit responsible for the insolvable problems of security, of which the internal dissensions of the Department of Defense were only a partial manifestation. After speaking of the Nation's will inspired by the adrenalin of war in contrast to the sad decline of public opinion toward necessary defense
in time of peace, Marshall explained why this decay of will was the primary reason for strong, centralized control by the Secretary of Defense, which frustrated differences unamenable to austere placation, rather than for a better organization based on the intelligent compromises possible with adequate means. In reminiscences on the evolution of the military establishment since 1945, which were designed to ausuage the wounds of the Navy and the Department of Defense caused by the heat of controversy in 1949, Marshall pinpointed the basic issue, the collective will or public opinion, as follows:

... So I have always felt that the organization should be built to meet that issue more than merely what is the best organization, when you go to war, because you can find your compromises then under the great outpouring of patriotic effort on the part of everybody.

I felt all along there hadn't been enough emphasis given to that phase of the matter. I felt particularly here in the past two or three years that we have been misled as to the workability of what we are doing in some respects by the fact that we have a great stimulant toward military appropriations which I hope in due time will be completely lacking—that is our feelings regarding the Soviet Union. When that lapses and we do get to a better accord, then, immediately the military forces are in great difficulties to maintain themselves at a reasonable state of efficiency and a reasonable state to provide for prompt expansion.

... my associates who differed with me did so, I felt, largely on the ground that they thought America had learned its lesson. When it comes to appropriations in piping times of peace, I don't think America will ever learn its lesson, because the political pressures are tremendous. In the next place, my associates haven't lived through the education I had had in the '20's and the immediate problems I had inherited in 1938, 1939, and 1940,
when our degree of poverty was very trying. I could well understand that. They just thought I underestimated public opinion in the United States. Well, I am a great respecter of public opinion, but, on the other hand, I am also a great respecter of the tremendous political influence of the budget and the fact that it almost gets beyond control when it relates to things that do not produce immediate results like good roads, agriculture matters, and such."

Following this veiled tribute to the gluttony of political pork in contrast to the starvation of Tommy Atkins at the Congressional banquet table, Marshall continued:

"So I was all the more interested in seeing some form of unification adopted which would work. And that, of course, as you all well know better than I do because you have been sitting in with it and I have not—I hunt for peaceful quarters these days— is a very difficult thing.

All of this resolves itself, in my mind, to this: What we are striving for is the security of our country, the security of its influence in the world, because we can't evade the fact that at the present time it is the leading nation of the world. What we have to consider along with that is how we manage to meet the situation without financial tribulations resulting from it. That means several things. It means, I think, in the first place, that we have to, out of the cleverness of somebody's mind or the vision of somebody's mind, find more economical ways of doing some of these things that must be done. It also means very definitely that the money that we are given must be spent with great discretion. There you have the root of your trouble. How is that to be managed?"

Hoover had previously answered this question with his remedy for curing an alleged 10 per cent operational waste in the military establishment, an estimate rendered suspect, at least in part, by either fraudulent, dubious, or, at

19 Ibid., 600-602.
20 Loc. cit.
best, insufficient evidence. Was that the answer George Marshall sought? He did not choose to say directly because, by the time he spoke, the tools for head-knocking economy had not only been provided, but head-knocking hands had twisted the helm of the military establishment even earlier. Nevertheless, Marshall stood almost alone in fearlessly facing the dilemma of whether America would ever have the will to deny political pressures in assuming a defense posture worthy of survival. Moreover, Marshall, without a fruitless clarion call, simply invited attention to the hopelessness of the military position within the inevitable political milieu.

As Chief of Staff of the Army in World War II, Marshall had been duly grateful that military appropriations had not hamstrung victorious war operations, in spite of the fact that the initial "degree of poverty was very trying." As a postwar diplomat and Secretary of State, Marshall did not appear surprised, in view of his previous experiences between the World Wars, that the price of force required in support of diplomacy, even allegedly poor diplomacy, was grievously ignored in sustaining and evaluating his efforts, especially in China, where, in return for fifty billion dollars annually, an American Army of two million men, and half a million casualties, the United States, at best, would still be policing and fighting with no reward in sight. Instead, probably more
severe penalties would already be imposed due to complete helplessness elsewhere. Obviously, such a price was and is not worth paying in China, contrary to the sense of certain elements of the Eightieth Congress and its holdovers, who appeared and appear to want presumably more savory, but impossible, results at no appreciable cost. Nevertheless, in spite of the "hunt for peaceful quarters," Marshall was yet to wear another thorny hat, that of Secretary of Defense, during the Korean incident, also "when our degree of poverty was very trying."

Still, Marshall, like Pershing and many others in the armed forces, could still bear his cross with loyal honor and confine his pent feelings, while still in the pay of the government as a General of the Army, to a mere aside, brought out under Congressional questioning, which, in its alarm during the month after disclosure of presumed Soviet atomic capabilities, inquired about the dubious Executive budget restrictions. In reply, Marshall said:

The best comment I think I could make on that is that my original conception of the working of this unity was that it was desirable that the Congress, in the law, require once a year a report by the Chiefs of Staff on the requirements for the national defense.

Mr. Stimson and I had long discussions on that because I felt that that should be made entirely outside of, we will say, civilian control. It is only a statement and nothing more. Now the
minute such a statement is made it would then pass into, we will say, the control of the civil powers of the Government. . . .

After more of his tactful evasion of nasty words, perhaps more appropriate than the ones qualified by "we will say," Marshall finally came to the point where he had no choice without obscuring his meaning:

There was quite a bit of difference between Mr. Stimson and myself. He was such a wise chap that I was very hesitant about opposing his views. But what I was after was that period in time of peace when it is very difficult to get a correct expression from the military authorities so long as the expression is controlled politically before it is rendered.

Speaking very intimately, I saw General Pershing in the position where his views didn't count at all. He could never get them up for consideration. And yet he was a man of great prestige in this country. But the cuts and cuts and cuts came despite what he felt. The main reason for this was that he had no opportunity to give public expression without being in the position of disloyalty. Of course, he never would have done that.

This effort by Marshall, to raise the political curtain concealing realistic defense estimates had, of course, never been realized nor was it to be. Also, doubt exists as to whether the unveiling of reality would have had any significant result since the fundamental cause of

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20 Ibid., 604
21 Italics not in original.
22 House 1949 Strategy Hearings, 604.
defense deficiencies, what the traffic of public opinion would bear in the way of sacrifice without the existence of overwhelming emotional pressures not readily produced rationally and indigenously in the United States, would still have thwarted even the most reasoned approach to mass education on defense necessities. Nevertheless, Marshall had produced the most honest and convincing picture of 1949 about the defense dilemma.
CHAPTER V

THE NAVY RUNS AMOK

... We of greater age, and, we hope, more mature judgment are fearful that the country is being, if it has not already been, sold a false bill of goods.—Vice Admiral Gerald Bogan

The seeds of naval discontent sprout into MacArthurian opportunism. In contrast to Marshall, the Navy played a low, MacArthurian role in that fateful year. The Navy, with loud trumpeting, evaded the basic problems so ably stated by Marshall and deviously compounded confusion by willful disregard for constituted authority backed by legislative sanction. The naval maneuvers of 1949 cast grave discredit on the Navy and contrasted markedly with its previously meritorious efforts to prevent damage to the Nation by Executive fiat that usurped prerogatives which only Congress could assign by law. With the door closed to politically tenable methods for further constructive assistance to the Congress in discharging its unique responsibility "to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces," as demanded in part by Section 8, Article I, of the Constitu-

1Letter from Admiral Bogan to Secretary Matthews, 20 September 1949, cited in full by Army and Navy Journal, 8 October 1949.
tion, the Navy was forced to let this front fall by default, while the constrictive recommendations of the Hoover Commission were ultimately passed by Congress without appreciable change and became law on 10 August 1949. However, with adroit political opportunism, the Navy used other events in 1949 for dramatizing its own impoverished role in national defense, but selfishly neglected or disparaged the vital functions performed separately or as a team by its associate armed forces, which had also been cut to the bone, and flagrantly flaunted the rule of the armed forces by law that the Navy had previously so ably helped Congress establish in order to rationalize control of the military establishment.

Because the budgetary and appropriation restrictions had forced the Nation's armed forces into unbalanced weakness that was politically irredeemable without the most grotesque and inadvertent collaboration of the Soviet Union or the uncontrolled blundering of a Soviet satellite, the Navy now chose to impose its own unilateral conception of grand strategy on the Nation in opposition to legal authority in such a manner as to reconcile the defense unbalance with continued strength for the Navy. With the passing of Forrestal, the political opportunity for presenting the potentially more disastrous alternative of the Navy was soon in coming.

The die for emphasis on the sledge hammer of power,

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2News item in the Army and Navy Journal, 13 August 1949.
strategic air, in contrast to balanced forces, had, of course, already been cast.\(^3\) The President, perhaps impressed by the air tonnages being flown to Berlin and the deceptive quiet elsewhere except for the China morass, which he correctly did not choose to get bogged down in, remained adamant for a ceiling of fifteen billion dollars a year, presumably a new level of defense expenditure brought about by the crisis of Czechoslovakia and Berlin earlier in 1945, but this in actuality failed even to replace depreciated and obsolescent inventory carry-overs in equipment from World War II that had previously strengthened deficiencies of the armed forces in appropriations. On 9 December 1948, the quandary the Joint Chiefs of Staff had faced in not being able to meet their assigned missions was presented to the President with no avail. At that time Forrestal had begged for two billion more in contrast to the rock-bottom estimate of nine billion additional the Joint Chiefs had required after slicing their best service experts from a fifteen billion increase. Forrestal, at last, saw that strategic air power and the atom had to be the sole reliance of the Nation, supported only by the minimum aid from the other armed services necessary for the limited air offensive from England. With the Air Force taking cuts from its minimum estimate of seventy groups to forty-eight even to meet this reduced defense objective and with the tenability of England doubtful due to the forfeit

\(^3\) Supra, 50-52.
of the European peninsula assured by limited American capabilities, Forrestal demonstrated increasing sympathy for the one offensive arm remaining. On 20 December, he pleaded again with the President for seven hundred million dollars for the weapon of last resort, the intercontinental bomber, which might be the only damaging weapon left in the event of all-out war. Instead of this requested increase, the defense budget was further dented by another three hundred million dollar cut when the President transmitted it to Congress on 10 January 1949.4

Head-knocking hands at the helm. The tragic repercussions to defense deficiencies fell with fury on the capable and strong shoulders of Louis Johnson, who succeeded Forrestal as Secretary of Defense. Head-knocking was the only choice he had in bringing some order out of the chaos created by his Commander in Chief, and head-knocking he loyally did without quarter or equivocation. Because of the upward fluctuation in defense spending at the start of Fiscal Year 1949, caused by the temporary panic of the President and the Congress as a result of the Czech and Berlin crises, Johnson now had to cut this rate of expenditure in order to enter Fiscal Year 1950, beginning in July 1949, in systematic fashion, if the rate imposed by the President for the new year, ending with the Korean incident, were to be met. Also Johnson had his sights set on Hoover's goal of approximately thirteen billion

4Forrestal, 510, 535-538.
dollars annually, which was receiving universal acclaim on Capitol Hill as the reward for favoring the proposed amendments to the unification act of 1947.5

A juicy, fat plum, waiting to be plucked, was the Navy's supercarrier, now only a keel, but soon to require a steady replenishments of jets and medium bombers, purportedly competing with instead of complementing the Air Force. Less than a month after taking office, on 23 April 1949, Johnson directed cancellation of the carrier's construction. Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan, whom Forrestal had left capably defending naval interests since 1947, had already chosen to resign on 24 March after Johnson's threat that the entering Secretary of Defense would be forced to have him removed for disloyalty. Now, still in office on 26 April due to a replacement lag, Sullivan fancifully postdated his original letter, which was to remain concealed in the President's files for six more months, by bringing it fictitiously current in a supplementary letter of resignation to Johnson, publically blasting him for administrative defiance of the will of the President, the Congress, and the Navy.6 Was this the political opportunity the Navy was waiting for to press their new strategic theories? Any naval optimism for a Congressional investigation was shattered that same day when

6Ibid., 622-623.
Representative Carl Vinson, Democrat of Georgia, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, and valiant ally of the Navy for many years as former head of the old Naval Affairs Committee, showed that even he had been hypnotized by Hoover's siren song for economy. In an impassioned burst of Georgian eloquence, Vinson declaimed on the House floor:

Mr. Speaker, last Saturday the Honorable Louis Johnson, Secretary of Defense, made a courageous and a momentous decision. He ordered the termination of the construction of the 65,000 ton so-called supercarrier.

In years past I helped build a two-ocean Navy. I am proud to think that was correct for we need a two-ocean Navy to fight any war that comes.

Now we know that if war should ever come again it will be a struggle with a land power.

It is simply a matter of the proper allocation of war missions between the Navy and the Air Force. It is the business of the Air Force to use long-range bombers in time of war. And yet, this carrier was to accommodate such long-range bombers.

We cannot afford the luxury of two strategic air forces. We cannot afford an experimental vessel that, even without its aircraft, costs as much as 60 B-36 bombers.

We should reserve strategic air warfare to the Air Force.

And we should reserve to the Navy its historic role of controlling the seas. I do not now—and I never will—advocate depreciation of our Navy.

Secretary Johnson is to be commended for the nature of his decision and for moving promptly to resolve this important matter.7

The door had slammed again. However, Vinson, in a previous statement to the press, attempting to free Johnson of the sniping of quasi-official professional journals and unauthorized press releases, left one despicable ingress to the former welcoming legislative font. This dubious

7Ibid., 621.
invitation read:

The Armed Services Committee want it clearly understood that if persons in the armed services or in their employ continue to pass statements to the press which are calculated to depreciate the activities of a sister service and which, at the same time, jeopardize the national security, the committee will step in with a full-scale investigation. We will not tolerate the continuance of this practice.

An opportunist qualifies for naval opportunism. At least one person in the employ of the Navy seemed to welcome Vinson's encouraging word about the happy result to be expected from increased propaganda production. Rapidly, the Navy Department appeared to overtake and perhaps even to excel the Air Force in the leaking of security information mixed with falsehoods and innuendo. At this time, the only active sieve, according to later investigation, was Cedric Worth, an ably qualified man for this particular task. His experience included a wide range of facile penmanship. He had supplemented a generation of itinerant newspaper experience, self-training of a high quality in all but ethics, with even more versatile writing of movie scenarios and mystery books, including The Trail of the Serpent and The Corpse That Knew Everybody. However, his paramount journalistic jewel was won as a ghost writer for "Alf" Landon, even though his authorship of "Out of the Rocks with Landon and Knox" was not substantiated.

In spite of Worth's indubitable talent as a civilian

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Ibid., 612.
journalist, Fate had been most unkind to him, in keeping him from the summit of his profession, until the Navy, in marked contrast to the blindness of civilian contemporaries, boosted him rapidly during World War II from a humble lieutenant, writing ship-sinking obituaries for naval public relations in New York City, to the exalted rank of commander on Constitution Avenue, Washington. There, one of his primary duties was to translate the security-hampered and brass-bound strategic decisions and naval tactics of the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral King, into acceptable form for release to an eagerly awaiting public.

A fitting reward for his consummate skill in this duty quickly followed his separation from active naval service when, in November of 1946, that apogee of power in civil service, the anonymous role of special assistant to political appointees, was thrust upon him by a grateful Navy. However, only a pitiful pittance of eighty-five hundred dollars annually as monetary incentive was included. Nevertheless, the power potential of his new position, unpretentiously titled Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air, should have impressed Worth and unquestionably did, because special assistants at this level in the executive departments wield tremendous influence, particularly when they can carry weak Presidential appointees on their shoulders. In any event, special assistants serve a very important and necessary function, which, to paraphrase a
crude expression of naval humor, is primarily to keep the naked ignorance of their superiors from indecent official or public display. Cedric Worth, in a more refined understatement, intimated that he had been recruited as a naval civilian employee because a new, unindoctrinated, Assistant Secretary "... was very badly in need of someone who understood Navy procedures and administration. ..."9

By the time Vinson had promised his investigation if leaks continued to the press, Worth had climbed another rung of the bureaucratic ladder, and was then an executive assistant to the Under Secretary of the Navy, Dan Kimball, another new appointee in the kaleidoscope of transitory faces in the Department of Defense. Kimball was also impressed by Worth's capabilities in providing painless recruit training in naval lore. In this position, as earlier with the Assistant Secretary for Air, Worth had duties that required an intimate knowledge of the top security data of national defense, including controversial aircraft performance characteristics and other items bouncing around the Department of Defense in the Navy-Air Force feud.10

The alleged nefarious conspiracy. Combining his newly acquired technical knowledge with his previous skill in


10Ibid., 525, 514, 554, 557.
imaginative writing, Worth fabricated an anonymous document of half-truths and lies, the gist of which was the allegation that a nefarious conspiracy existed between Secretary of Defense Johnson, Secretary of the Air Force Symington, and Floyd Odlum, of Consolidated Aircraft and Atlas Corporations, to take over control of the Defense Department and pour the major part of the American defense effort into an obsolescent heavy bomber, the B-36. This detailed and redundant compilation of purported facts supporting Worth's main thesis was introduced by the following preamble, which set the tenor of the whole document:

The questions raised by this compilation of information are not directed at air power. The discussion of machines is incidental, and is included only to illuminate the conduct of men who have at their disposal immense sums of public moneys.

A sad lesson of history is that whenever money in such quantities is available, there appear men of a certain kind determined to obtain it by any means. It is nearly but not quite possible to cover all tracks in pursuit of this end. As the course of events becomes evident, honest men are afflicted with shame, and are reluctant to push the mess into light. There is a tendency to draw back, to hope that change will occur without scandal. However, there arrives a recognizable moment when unscrupulous men become overconfident and create circumstances that are intolerable. They may then be eliminated. That moment is close at hand with relation to the efforts of the Atlas Corp. to take over the National Defense Establishment.

Many of the important facts in this story have been published. But the reference of these facts to each other has been obscured by a cloud of confusion skilfully induced through fanciful and fascinating tub-thumping in the name of air power. This brief compilation is not evidence. It brings the picture into focus and indicates matters ripe for investigation. It is not complete. Any
At last, the Navy regained the interest of Congress. Worth circulated his document to numerous figures on Capitol Hill, including Representative Van Zandt, Republican from Pennsylvania, Captain in the Naval Reserve, and Past National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. This recipient, triply fit as an exponent of national defense, particularly the naval view, viciously paraphrased Worth's document in a speech to the House of Representatives on 26 May 1949. Full scale, formal hearings on the allegations, with the assistance of well-qualified legal counsel, specially hired, were assigned by the House to the Committee on Armed Services early in June. After an assiduous period of preliminary investigation, the hearings began on 9 August 1949.12

Fraud exposed. But, alas, the Navy, even yet, was not invited to give its unilateral view on grand strategy. Instead the Department of Defense and the Air Force succeeded in getting the falsehoods corrected with the help of nearly all the major aircraft producers competing with Odlum of Consolidated, except a disgruntled Glenn Martin. He had apparently collaborated in a juicy tidbit to the Worth document. This alleged that the Emerson Electric Company of Symington, prior to Symington's severance from industry to enter govern-

11Ibid., 15-20.
12Ibid., 1-15.
ment service, had attempted with Air Force connivance to take over Martin's contract for turrets during World War II. In contrast to the splendid performance of its enemies, the Navy was limited to two tragic characters. Worth's chastened student, Navy Under Secretary Kimball, indicated with chagrin that confidence in his capable tutor had been "painfully changed." In extenuation of his own deplorable conduct, Cedric Worth could only say, on 24 August:

I was greatly concerned. As the document indicates, it appears to me that the defenses of the country are going in the wrong direction and are being materially weakened by propaganda which is not true.

However, Worth manfully agreed the next day with the question of the committee counsel:

And you realize that at least the United States Government is fortunate in having forthright and honorable men in charge of its procurement of aircraft and in the operation of the air force?

Chairman Vinson irrevocably closed this particular phase of the naval tragedy with unanimous expression of the sentiment of his committee:

There has not been, in my judgment, and I am satisfied in the judgment of the entire committee, one iota, not one scintilla of evidence offered thus far in these hearings that would support charges that collusion, fraud, corruption, influence, or favoritism played any part whatsoever in the procurement of the B-36 bomber. There has been very substantial and compelling evidence that the Air Force selected this bomber,

13Ibid., 17, 615.
14Ibid., 614.
15Ibid., 527.
16Ibid., 653.
procured this bomber solely on the ground that this is the best aircraft for its purpose available to the Nation today.

At this time I feel that the Nation should know that the Secretary of the Air, Mr. Symington, and the leaders of the Air Force, the Secretary of Defense, have come through this inquiry without the slightest blemish and that these men continue to merit the complete confidence of the American people in their past action and in the future.17

Another naval martyr. The Congressional door previously left ajar by Vinson was slowly closing again on the Navy. Would another martyr in the naval cause appear? Although Cedric Worth’s direct charges had all been found false, there still remained a bone for biased contention and judgment on the subject of the strategic policy dictated by limited military appropriations. While Vinson’s Committee suspended hearings from 25 August to 5 October and a naval court of inquiry sat, both were confirming Cedric’s desire for final formal walking papers from his meteoric naval career.18 The time for an even more spectacular martyrdom had definitely arrived if this placid interlude were to be tempestously stirred into the Navy’s last chance for an effective hearing on its unique strategic theories. The burden of this sacrifice was voluntarily assumed by a top-flight naval aviator, Captain John Crommelin, imminently due for an assured promotion to rear admiral. Crommelin released a long, involved statement to the press in violation of defense

17Ibid., 654-655.
18Ibid., 659.
information rules in mid-September. His statement had been originally prepared for the B-36 inquiry, but he now feared that this press release was the only way to save his cogent remarks for posterity since the Congressional hearings had cooled to a simmer. Crommelin finally brought the naval grievances over the recently passed amendments to the unification act, called the Tydings Bill, into the open with fulsome praise of Worth's objectives, regardless of his methods, which drooled, in part:

It is my firm conviction that Cedric Worth was prompted by the highest motives of patriotism and selflessness in whatever action he took to help point out the dangers of the original Tydings Bill.  

Crommelin, a member of the Joint Staff to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had probably assisted Worth by furnishing raw information, but Worth's unique pride of authorship and dissemination of his scurrilous defamation remained unchallenged. Nevertheless, Crommelin had discussed the memorandum with Worth and been an accessory before the fact in suggesting that Worth's research might be of value, if released to the press, in getting a B-36 inquiry started on Capitol Hill in what Crommelin hoped would be an entering wedge for explanation of the Navy's opposition to additional concentration of power in the Department of Defense.  

Fleet Admiral "Bull" Halsey and a couple of low-

20 *loc. cit.*
ranking rear admirals still on active service jumped into
the fray at once, with the "Bull" bellowing:

Having read Captain Crommelin's statements
and comments, I feel very strongly that he is
attempting to do something good for the country
and that he has shown wonderful courage in
jeopardizing his career by doing this. I feel
that he deserves the help and respect of all
naval officers.21

Control of the rowboat lost. The tide was rolling
in, but Secretary of Navy Matthews, of possibly apocryphal
"rowboat" fame, who had succeeded Sullivan, vainly tried to
stem it into channels by encouraging both the proper subordi-
nation and the free expression of naval misgivings. In a
dispatch to all naval commanders following Crommelin's defec-
tion, they and their subordinates were encouraged to transmit
their views to Matthews, who promised, "The views so trans-
mitted will I assure you be used in support of the integrity
and efficiency of the Naval service."22 Matthews was being
greatly embarrassed by those undisciplined sailors traducing
the Air Force and the Department of Defense in full public
view.

Crommelin had been transferred to what Matthews
thought was a less sensitive position than the Joint Staff,
to directly under his thumb in the Office of the Chief of
Naval Operations. The command dispatch of Matthews now set

21Loc. cit.
22Ibid., 24 September 1949.
Crommelin up for a wishful *coup de grâce* for the whole wicked world of intrigue against his beloved Navy. Apparently Crommelin scrutinized the Secretary's mail, at least that portion which passed through the office of Admiral Denfield, Chief of Naval Operations, the top naval job under the civilian hierarchy. In compliance with the directive of Matthews to *keep embarrassing views in official naval channels*, Vice Admiral Gerald Bogan, commander of a principal unit of the Pacific Fleet, made a well-disciplined and sailorly effort to put his civilian chief straight on what was wrong with defense and the Navy.23

How proud Crommelin must have been to read these extracts from Bogan's letter, written on 20 September 1949, three days before the President's Soviet atomic disclosure:

> At the beginning it is proper for me to state that in no manner have I, to date, endorsed or condemned Captain Crommelin's statement because no one has asked me to do so. Had such been the case honest necessity and conscience would have required hearty and complete agreement with the affirmations made in his release to or interview with the press.

> The creation of three departments or sub departments where formerly there were but two is not unification. Under the present law it can be made to and does operate effectively in the field. But it would be sheer balderdash to assume that there has been anything approaching it among the Secretariat, the Joint Staff, or the high command of all three services. Knowing that honest differences of opinion must constantly be present, bickering is still the rule; unanimity is non-existent.

> The morale of the Navy is lower today than at any time since I entered the commissioned ranks in 1916. Lowered morale, to some degree, may be expected to follow any war during the readjustment

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to the organization for peace. In my opinion this descent, almost to despondency, stems from complete confusion as to the future role of the Navy and its advantages or disadvantages as a permanent career.

Optimistic letters and plans issue from Washington. And concurrently the situation deteriorates with each press release. The younger men are necessarily concerned with their future security. We of greater age, and, we hope, more mature judgment are fearful that the country is being, if it has not already been, sold a false bill of goods.

Junior officers in large numbers, whose confidence I enjoy, have come to see me asking advice on their future course of action. I have invariably encouraged them to enhance their professional ability against the day when the troublesome questions now paramount would be equably resolved. It is becoming increasingly difficult for me to do this honestly.

Thus far, all his comrades in arms from every fighting service, including the civilian reserve, could rally around Bogan and cry, "Amen!" with an added prayer that their countrymen would shed their collective guilt and provide the means to proper ends. But now Bogan cited the paradox of defense without weapons, strength without sacrifice, and miracles without money, which had baffled the best. Furthermore, he supinely accepted the dilemma while implying that the Navy and the Navy alone could produce a miracle. This paradox was resolved thus:

If the adequate military or defense establishment could be achieved without a navy and naval aviation, I would gladly advocate using funds now expended to maintain that service, on the procurement of the best other necessary weapons and equipment. Not even the United States can support

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24 loc. cit.
indefinitely, during peace, the tragically large military budgets we are devouring.25

Balderdash, indeed! Was this the first announcement of the Navy's new strategic theory of adequate force unbalanced in favor of the Navy? In a more statesmanlike way, Bogan lashed out at the sledge hammer of power, the strategic air force, which did look rather silly in the tool kit with no supplements:

There is no cheap quick victory possible between any two nations or groups of nations each having strong even if relatively unequal power. Yet at a time as potentially critical as ever existed during our history, the public has been lured into complacency by irresponsible speeches by advocates of this theory. The result could be a great national and world-wide catastrophe.26

This masterful understatement was fine, but that tool kit was going to look even sillier if the Navy ever succeeded in replacing the sledge hammer with supplemental naval tools, thus leaving an even greater gap in our arsenal.

Perhaps now the only way to reconcile the Navy was to transfer the Air Force to the Navy and the Army to the Navy's Marine Corps. Apparently, a severe neurosis, ripened by increasing deficits since World War II and acutely defined by the shock of carrier loss, had afflicted a large portion of the Navy. Unquestionably, this disease required urgent diagnosis and treatment by the Congress, beneficent healer. The organizational strait jacket was killing instead of curing,

25Loc. cit.
26Loc. cit.
but the only better remedy, soothing balm from an open Congressional purse, would kill the doctors. Perhaps psychiatry was the answer. Would a long, soothing talk bring order to the Navy's chaotic state of mind?

The purloined letter. One of the "doctors," Chairman Vinson, thought this latter treatment mandatory, when his House Armed Services Committee reconvened, because Crommelin had publicly advertised, for the first time in an official Navy document, the sad mental and physical condition of the Navy. The naval flyer passed Bogan's letter to the press on 4 October 1949, a superlative piece of timing, one day before the advertised date of resuming, and probably concluding, the B-36 investigation. The purloined copies of the letter were classified confidential, but Crommelin did not mind the unauthorized disclosure of this damaging information to the entire world as long as the Navy could possibly take over the grand strategy of the Nation. His words included:

I consider my release of the letter of Vice Admiral Bogan with the endorsements of Admirals Radford and Denfield necessary to the interests of national security.27

Indeed, both the Commander of the Pacific Fleet and the Chief of Naval Operations had also confirmed in substance the views of Bogan, adding increased prestige to Crommelin's coup. The aviator continued, "My action in this vital matter may

27News item in Ibid., 8 October 1949.
have been a technical violation of a regulation, but it had to be done."\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{28}Loc. cit.
... the public hearing of the grievances of a few officers ... and charges as to our poor ... preparedness, have done infinite harm to our national defense, our position of leadership in world affairs, the position of our national policy, and the confidence of the people in our government. --General of the Army Omar N. Bradley

Congress fans the embers. The B-36 investigation was closed all right, just as the Navy had feared it would be, before the Navy had its day in court. Nevertheless, Crommelin had blown a hole in the door of Congress through which not only the Navy, but the entire Defense Department poured. On 5 October, after closing the investigation of the false charges of Worth and Van Zandt, Vinson obtained approval from his committee to broaden new hearings into a scrutiny of all aspects of unification and strategy within the Department of Defense. Crommelin’s hole, as described in part by Vinson, was indeed huge, because Vinson promised:

to ascertain the views of representatives of the Navy and, if necessary, the other services, on those developments in the Department and on such of the items of the original agenda to which they may care to refer.

1 House 1949 Strategy Hearings, 536-537.
2 House 1949 B-36 Investigation, 660-661.
The next day, 6 October 1949, Chairman Vinson opened the hearings on unification and strategy with a clear statement of the ultimate responsibility of Congress and the House Armed Services Committee for the deplorable conditions in the Department of Defense. In unequivocal language he described how the Nation's abscess of collective guilt for this situation came to a festering head in Congress:

Under the Constitution, the Congress is given the responsibility for providing and maintaining a navy and for raising and supporting an army.

This responsibility cannot be delegated by the Congress. So until and unless the Constitution is amended otherwise, the Congress of the United States cannot divorce itself of responsibility for providing for the armed strength of the Nation.

Now, members of the committee, under the rules of the House, as you all know, this Committee on Armed Services is charged, among other things with the following matters: (1) Common defense generally; (2) the War Department and the Military Establishment generally; (3) the Navy Department and the Naval Establishment generally; (4) size and composition of the Army and the Navy; (5) forts, arsenals, military reservations, and navy yards.

Over two years had passed since Congress had made this wording obsolete, but presumably the Department of Defense and the United States Air Force were born from this conglomeration and were also subject to the purview of the committee.

Vinson continued:

The House Rules go on to say as follows:

... each standing committee of the Senate and House of Representatives shall exercise continuous watchfulness of the execution by the administrative agency concerned of any laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of such committee...

So this committee has the responsibility which cannot be delegated to maintain legislative oversight.

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3 House 1949 Strategy Hearings, 1.
of the military departments in order to see that the responsibilities imposed upon the Congress by the Constitution are properly carried out."

After this fine start, Vinson lost his footing and fell into rather soft ground by scoffing at the effect of the Crommelin incident on his end the committee's action. In Vinson's words:

For these reasons this committee determined 4 months ago to conduct the inquiry commencing this morning. The committee felt last June, and recent events have confirmed that view, that there have been sufficient concern and so much obvious disagreement within the Department of Defense, and that these disagreements involve such basic subjects affecting the national defense, that this committee could not properly ignore the situation.

So this hearing this morning is pursuant to the committee's decision of 4 months ago, not—as the morning press might indicate—the results of events occurring within the last day or so or the last few weeks."

While technically correct, because the original agenda for the B-36 investigation had included many collateral matters, Vinson's committee had dragged its feet for four, long, critical months, on the minor diversion of the Van Zandt and Worth charges of criminal acts in high circles, without displaying further interest in basic causes for dissension in the military establishment. Certainly, Crommelin's action was one of last resort to inspire further interest in hearings that were about to fold up. Under the

\[4\] Loc. cit.

\[5\] Ibid., 1-2.
original House resolution authorizing a formal inquiry, only two pertinent items had been on the agenda. These were:

1. To establish the truth or falsity of all charges made by Mr. Van Zandt and by all others the committee may find or develop in the investigation.
2. Locate and identify the source from which the charges, rumors, and innuendoes have come.6

The other six collateral matters on the agenda were ones that, Vinson was now admitting, had always been subject to the "continuous watchfulness" of his committee, which obviously had fallen down on its job except for sporadic periods. Now, belatedly, the House Armed Services Committee was to do its regular job of routine surveillance, which in this case required a follow up of the previous agenda in order to:

3. Examine the performance characteristics of the B-36 bomber to determine whether it is a satisfactory weapon.
4. Examine the roles and missions of the Air Force and the Navy (especially the Navy aviation and Marine aviation) to determine whether or not the decision to cancel the construction of the aircraft carrier United States was sound.
5. Establish whether or not the Air Force is concentrating upon strategic bombing to such an extent as to be injurious to tactical aviation and the development of adequate fighter aircraft and fighter aircraft techniques.
6. Consider the procedures followed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the development of weapons to be used by the respective services to determine whether or not it is proposed that two of the three services will be permitted to pass on the weapons of the third.
7. Study the effectiveness of strategic bombing to determine whether the Nation is sound in following this concept to its present extent.
8. Consider all other matters pertinent to the above that may be developed during the course of the investigation.7

6House 1949 B-36 Investigation, 657.
7Ibid., 660.
Also, if the undisciplined conduct of Crommelin had not exposed the private thoughts of the majority of naval officers on unification and strategy, it would be fatuous to assume that the Navy would have been able to do better in a continued investigation chaperoned by official Department of Defense policy than it did under similar restrictions during this same year when a legitimate opportunity for presenting the naval views occurred during the hearings on the Tydings amendments to the 1947 unification act. After all, Congress ordinarily does not invite criticism of the law of the land unless extremely cogent reasons are presented for its open defiance. Vinson illustrated the changed atmosphere of the unification and strategy hearings, brought about by Crommelin's decisive stroke, in comparison to previous hearings of 1949 on defense matters, which were already in substance the will of Congress, by issuing this invitation for free and frank speech:

I would like to say on behalf of the committee, although I believe the comment is probably unnecessary, that it is the intent of the committee that all testimony given shall be frankly and freely given and be given without reprisals in the Department of Defense against any individual presenting testimony during the course of these hearings.

This committee will not permit nor tolerate any reprisal against any witness in these hearings, nor will we permit nor tolerate any shepherding of the testimony being presented. We want these witnesses to speak what is in their minds, to put their cards on the table, and to do so without hesitation or personal concern. We are going to the bottom of this unrest and concern in the Navy. And the committee expects full cooperation in this effort from the
Department of Defense. When the testimony is all in, the committee will try to reach a decision as to what action is indicated in the interests of national defense. Vinson had no criticism to make later about the freedom and frankness of the testimony although he and others became somewhat confused after the hearings were over, about the subtle distinction between reprisals and mere administrative action within the Navy for more loyal organizational support of unification. Even the mild remonstrance of Secretary Matthews was ignored by Vinson, when Matthews made this complaint about being too free and frank in open hearings:

I think that a statement made here can be harmful to the security of the country even though it doesn't contain what might be considered technically classified material. I think that the whole statement, the nature of the statement, the effect that it has upon the National Defense Department and upon the administration of the Military Establishment of the country, and so far as it might disclose serious differences of policy and procedure, can well give to a foreseeable enemy something which, in my humble judgment, ought not to be disclosed. That is my position.

Speaking of Admiral Radford, who was to be master of ceremonies and set the tenor for the unique naval strategy to bring more money into the naval coffers, Vinson replied to Matthew's plea:

Of course, Mr. Secretary, we are not hunting headlines. We are trying to do a job. We are trying to find out what is the cause of all this unrest that is talked about daily in the newspapers. We want to know what there is to it. And we are charged by the rules of the House to find out how the laws that we have sponsored and passed are being administered. Now, when we get to Admiral Radford, it may be, in

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9. *Ibid., 3.*
the interest of being cautious, that we may determine to have the admiral present it to us in executive session. Then, if we determine that it is not classified information in our judgment, we will release it to the public so the public can know what is going on.

The country supports the Nation's defense. The country should be cognizant all the time of every phase of the defense that can be publicly discussed. That is one of the reasons for this investigation.¹⁰

After hearing Admiral Radford behind closed doors the first day of the hearing, the majority of the committee decided that his statement should be repeated in open session for public consumption, which he did on 7 October 1949, the following day.¹¹ Never have so few permitted so much to be revealed to so many against the national interest.

The leaky naval bellows. Already the previous B-36 investigation had disclosed that the detailed performance characteristics of this weapon with the atomic bomb were superior to other comparable choices immediately available for production as intercontinental war deterrents and retaliatory weapons. The Air Force had been forced to reveal officially all aspects entering into its best professional judgment for choosing the B-36 in order to prove that this airplane had been honestly procured. The Committee on Armed Services, as previously noted, had been compelled to conclude from this presentation that:

¹⁰Loc. cit.
¹¹Ibid., 39.
There has been very substantial and compelling evidence that the Air Force selected this bomber, procured this bomber solely on the ground that this is the best aircraft for its purpose available to the Nation today.\textsuperscript{12}

Now, however, the Navy proceeded to indicate, in spite of this finding of fact by the committee of the B-36 being "the best aircraft for its purpose," that it still did not meet the requirements of modern war when viewed in the light of the first item of the new agenda adopted by the committee, namely, to "examine the performance characteristics of the B-36 bomber to determine whether it is a satisfactory weapon."\textsuperscript{13} Radford's conclusion, supported by the entire staff of naval experts accompanying him, was summed up as follows:

Are we as a nation to have "bomber generals" fighting to preserve the obsolete heavy bomber—the battleship of the air? Like its surface counterpart, its day is largely past.\textsuperscript{14}

But that day was not quite past, and no substitute sledge hammer was available if overseas land bases were denied, even if supercarriers grew overnight.

Instead, the Navy had come to its unilateral concept of grand military strategy in which not only the B-36 was ridiculed as a weapon, but the bizarre theory was advanced that strategic air warfare, crippling an enemy's war

\textsuperscript{12} House 1949 B-36 Investigation, 655. Italics not in original.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 660.

\textsuperscript{14} House 1949 Strategy Hearings, 47.
potential at the source, although useful in the later stages of a war, was an unwarranted and uneconomic expense in time of peace because it did not contribute to minimum defense essentials. The committee could only conclude, in summarizing the Navy's position, that:

It was the Navy contention that in time of peace, because of severe limitations on national defense funds, the Nation can afford to maintain only those armed forces which will contribute directly to—

1. The defense of the United States against air and sea attack.
2. The defense of western Europe against land, sea, and air attack.
3. The defense and seizure of bases needed for the initial and later stages of the war.
4. Attack on forces invading western Europe.
5. Command of the seas.

The Navy considered an unsupportable luxury all military weapons and activities which fail in time of peace to contribute the most to the attainment of these "first needs."\[^{15}\]

After thus limiting the initial offensive capabilities of the Nation to a bloodletting in western Europe, the Navy explained the futility of strategic bombing capabilities in meeting these objectives:

Strategic bombing . . . will not serve any of these requirements, for the giant, high-altitude bomber cannot defend the United States, seize or hold advance bases, defend western Europe, effectively attack advancing troops in western Europe, or maintain control of the seas. . . . Tactical air power rather than strategic air power, plus ground troops and sea power, are the only military instrumentalities that can meet these

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elementary requirements. . . . The Nation is unwisely investing, in time of peace, substantial sums of limited defense appropriations for strategic bombing.

The ripping of the bellows. Quite naturally, General Vandenberg, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, was somewhat appalled by this rather extraordinary thesis of the Navy. Taking the sledge hammer of power out of the defense tool kit and leaving the Nation only with lesser nuances of power, desirable though the tack and claw hammers were and are, did not appear to appeal to him at all. After quoting Winston Churchill as a somewhat qualified authority on the deterrent effect of the atomic bomb in contrast to the glib and positive young naval commander who had loosely correlated his facts as part of the naval effort to belittle atomic capabilities, Vandenberg listed some of the logical consequences of the drastic change in strategic planning proposed by the Navy:

First, we would give up the deterrent value of this country's atomic weapons and we would place ourselves in disagreement with all of those people, on both sides of the ocean, who believe that Soviet aggression is, in fact, now being deterred.

Second, we would inform the Russians that they need now take no defensive measures against a possible atomic attack on their heartland. Much has been said here about an enemy capability of stopping bomber attacks. . . . The people who have said these things seem not to realize that the B-36's, B-47's, and B-50's, by merely existing, can, and do, force the Soviet Union to channel its industrial power, technological skill, manpower, and money into purely defensive measures and thus cut down resources which could otherwise be devoted to offensive purposes.

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16 Loc. cit.
Third, if war is forced upon us, this proposal deprives us of the opportunity of choking off enemy war-making power at its source. It brings it about that the enemy's weapons have to be met and destroyed by our soldiers and tactical airmen while these weapons are shooting at them. It eliminates the possibility of destroying these weapons in the production stage before they can shoot.

Mr. Chairman, this alternative is militarily unsound. A prime objective of this country must be to find a counterbalance to the potential enemy's masses of ground troops other than equal masses of American and Allied ground troops. No such balancing factor exists other than strategic bombing, including the atomic bomb. Only by that method can those masses of ground troops be weakened at the source of hostile military power.

Lest this statement be again tortured into a declaration that strategic bombardment can win a war alone, let me restate my belief that if a future war comes ultimately it must be concluded on the ground, like most wars of the past. But it is the objective of the strategic bombardment program—an objective that has been proved in battle—so to weaken the sustaining sources of enemy troops that they can be defeated in less time at less cost.

The question of filling the defense tool kit was certainly not solved by Vandenberg's remarks, but the naval strategy did appear the weaker of the two concepts, providing balanced forces, tailor-made for best maintaining world stability, could not be provided. Perhaps General Bradley, the doughboy and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had a better concept of what should be the goal of team play among all the armed forces when he warned:

There is a Sunday afternoon within the memory of all of us when this country was without the means of striking back from a devastating blow. Nothing stood between us and fiendish foe but an entirely

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inadequate Air Force, a mere handful of Regular soldiers plus a few civilian components called into Federal service a year before, and the remnants of what we had considered to be a powerful Navy.

Never again should this Nation face such a catastrophe.

Nor must we allow those friendly nations relying upon us for support to place their confidence in vain.

Americans must never forget the lessons we learned on that Sunday afternoon.

We would have welcomed then the power to strike back in retaliation. Had we been capable of retaliating in kind, we could have saved the lives of many American youth. It would have made no difference to us then which of the armed forces was capable of carrying out this job.

Probably complete understanding, cooperation, and mutual trust could have avoided that fatal day. But it, and the subsequent lessons we learned, day by day, until September 1945, should have taught all military men that our military forces are one team—in the game to win regardless of who carries the ball. This is no time for "fancy dans" who won't hit the line with all they have on every play, unless they can call the signals. Each player on this team—whether he shines in the spotlight of the backfield or eats dirt in the line—must be an all-American.18

This splendid picture of the objectives unification could not attain with the means provided, was dimmed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, when he added, in rightful indignation of the MacArthurian conduct of the Navy:

I believe that the public hearing of the grievances of a few officers who will not accept the decisions of the authorities established by law, and charges as to our poor state of preparedness, have done infinite harm to our national defense, our position of leadership in world affairs, the position of our national policy, and the confidence of the people in their Government.

In my opinion, the armed forces all have a very big job to do, and we should get on with it.19

18 Ibid., 536.
19 Ibid., 536-537. Italics not in original.
Possibly Bradley was trying to fool the Soviet Union as to the deplorable state of the Nation's defenses, which had been nakedly exposed by the hearings, but along with either this naive estimate of Soviet intelligence capabilities or loyalty to his civilian superiors, who were doing their best to confirm the desire of Congress for the Hoover concept of economy, he also apparently convinced Chairman Vinson that Congress was fulfilling its responsibilities to the Nation in supporting adequate defenses. In a well-deserved tribute to Bradley, Vinson repeated the assurance that all was well:

General Bradley, in my opinion you have again rendered great service to your Nation. This is a forceful document—a powerful document. I am satisfied that it will help this committee to clear up the atmosphere—to get the chaff out of the wheat, and to reach a right and proper decision. I think you have lifted much of the mist over this serious situation and have let the country know that we do have a strong and powerful defense organization, manned by qualified and competent people. I thank you.  

Tarnished evidence compounded by the Great Engineer.

Except for Marshall's veiled remarks, cited earlier, about the futility of balanced military forces due to the collective guilt of the American people of expecting strength without sacrifice, the hearings were completely devoid of a constructive facing of the two brutal facts that first, within the limits of Congressional appropriations for defense, none of the armed forces could do its minimum job as part of

20 Ibid., 537.
a single team in assisting world stability, and second, even
the prime deterrent, air power, had not only grievous limi-
tations but had also been hamstrung in effectiveness due to
limited means, even with proper emphasis on its stellar role
in the air age.

Nevertheless, these hearings during two fateful
weeks of October, 1949, little over half a year from a minor
test of the Nation's total defenses against aggression,
Korea, provided all the evidence available to the Joint Chiefs
of Staff and Forrestal a year earlier. The dilemma was
equally clear now. Perhaps Congress, having the basic
responsibility for the quandary, could now produce the
miracle, strength without sacrifice. Or then again, perhaps
Congress could only do what the best professional experts
could do in the past and what Representative Lansdale
Sasser, Democrat of Maryland, had dimly foreseen before the
October hearings got under way. Among other things, particu-
larly his constituents, Sasser was worried about what
Congress was doing in providing armed forces like:

... a football team developing a strong quarter-
back who takes shoes away from the halfback and
pants off the blocking back, and the whole basic
thing is out of line. ... 21

For some rather human reason, probably the same one that
made the Army the only strong post-World War II advocate of
Universal Military Training, and American youth desire either

21 House 1949 B-36 Investigation, 664.
to serve in safety or to die with glamour, the Congressman showed proper solicitude for the Air Force, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, but his short-handed backfield also looked unusual and lonesome without a line.

Fruitlessly, the hearings, with their gruesome portents of disaster, droned to a close on 21 October 1949 with a happy note of cheer, beloved by all Congressmen. Herbert Hoover concluded the hearings with his usual stirring call for trenchant action, like pulling the covers over his head, and forcefully demanded economy as the fighting edge of the Nation's armed forces. In praising Secretary Johnson's vigorous scalpel on the inevitable fat, which unfortunately, in this case had little muscle under it, Hoover defended administrative cuts of defense monies already appropriated by Congress. Absurdly, in some instances, such as providing for impotently pilotless planes that would become obsolete due to other fund limitations before pilot cadres could be trained to fly them in an emergency, Congress had laid itself wide open to this accusation by Hoover:

One phase of this economy problem is the idea which has been advanced that administrative officers should spend the full appropriations of the Congress. This may well apply to some special desire of the Congress, but it should not be a general rule. Otherwise the whole purpose of congressional legislation for economy, such as arose from our committee, of which I was chairman, would fall to the ground as absolutely futile, so that in my view Secretary Johnson has outlined to you the proper organization to be set up on the economy front. It is, in itself, evidence of his resolution to bring about these economies; and, as your committee well knows, making economies in government receives very little
praise from the great majority that benefit. They do evoke great disharmonies from those who are directly affected; and, for this determination and the Secretary's willingness to take this punishment, he is doing a real public service.

I would like to add one more thought, and that is to emphasize the pressures which now exist upon our economy. It is costing us, in one direction or another, almost 24 billion dollars annually to carry on the cold war. Already we have a budget deficit in sight of 5 or 6 billion dollars for this fiscal year and perhaps more next year. That can mean, if it continues, only one thing, and that is inflation, which will damage every worker and every farmer in the United States. In my view our productive economy is already so heavily taxed as to slow up progress in its improvement of methods and the necessary expansion to meet the needs and demands of our increasing population. We cannot continue such burdens forever, and the first service is economy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 22

To which the gallant gentleman from Georgia, Carl Vinson, Southern Democrat, nostalgic for the happy deflationary days of less than two decades before, replied with joyous courtesy at this answer to all of his committee's problems:

Thank you, Mr. President. Your statement will be of great value to the committee. I am particularly anxious to have you give to the committee your views, for in writing our report I wanted your sound judgment to be a guide to assist us.

It is a pleasure, Mr. President, to have you here. I hope our request hasn't unduly inconvenienced you. 23

Not to be outdone in compliments, and in fitting display of just the right degree of modesty to a well-deserved tribute, the sage of Palo Alto and the Waldorf Towers (where at that time he dwelled in solitary grandeur without the complementing glory of the military henchman of his administration,

22House 1949 Strategy Hearings, 638.
23Ibid. cit.
Douglas MacArthur) could only reply, amid a standing ovation, "It is a great pleasure to have been of help, and it is the duty of every citizen to come when the committee asks."\(^{24}\)

Indeed, all the evidence was now in, and, as the applause slowly faded away for the elder statesman, the courtly Georgian, as usual having the last word, repeated, "Thank you, Mr. President."\(^{25}\) Then, with all the problems of our troubulous modern world miraculously washed away, with all sense of urgency completely vanished, and with the ratio of American atomic superiority diminishing, Vinson continued:

Members of the committee, that finishes all of the witnesses scheduled by the committee to be heard. Now I think the proper thing for us to do is to take all this testimony that has been delivered and read it, study it, evaluate it, go home and rest, take a little vacation, get in touch with our constituency, come back here in January, and try to reach a decision as to what the course of action we think is important. I want to say before we leave that Mr. Johnson, the Secretary of Defense, as stated by President Hoover, deserves the full support of the committee and the country in his difficult task. I think as I suggested a moment ago, when we know each other a little bit better—that is, the Congress and the Defense Department and the various services—a great many of our difficulties will fade away. Members of the committee, we will take a recess until the 3d day of January. God bless you all.

\(^{24}\) Loc. cit.
\(^{25}\) Loc. cit.
\(^{26}\) Ibid., 638-639.
CHAPTER VII

THE BIASED JUDGMENT

We are tailoring our defense to fit today's situation. We are converting fat to muscle.--Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson¹

The naval purge puts emotion above reason. This concluding statement of confidence in Louis Johnson by the House Committee on Armed Services, after substituting for the National Security Council and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in pondering the Nation's military problems, might have been expected to irrevocably bar the Navy from further major importance in security consultations. The half-baked design of the Navy to take over an unwarranted share of the Nation's meager defense establishment had been shot full of holes, not only by preponderant military evidence, but by the even more pressing political necessity for short-sighted economy.

Still the door, which the Navy had feared was closing on it for over a year, opened wide again in less than a week after the end of the committee hearings. Instead of approaching an impossible solution to the defense problems based solely on the evidence of testimony, the committee added the

element of violent partisan emotion and sympathy for the Navy caused by the removal of Admiral Denfield as Chief of Naval Operations on 27 October 1949. His relief occurred on Navy Day, formerly a happy naval holiday, but now officially abandoned due to an earlier edict by Louis Johnson. This poorly timed action was a necessary administrative and personnel change for the best interests of harmony, efficiency, and sound judgment in the top military councils of the Nation, and not a reprisal for Denfield's partisan naval testimony before the House Committee on Armed Services. However, obviously, as in the case of the later MacArthur incident, Congress did not unanimously support this view.

The relief of Admiral Denfield, which included the offer to him of any other four star billet in the Navy, received every shade of opinion in the Congress. Representative Edward Hebert, Democrat from Louisiana, indicated that Chairman Vinson had been insulted. Senator Kenneth Wherry, Republican of Nebraska, thought the action necessary to restore order. Representative Paul Kilday from Texas felt the move restored civilian control of the armed forces and another Democrat, Representative Carl Durham of North Carolina, stated that the removal was justified for maintaining cooperation in the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In full recognition of the political significance of


3Loc. cit.
the ouster, the Navy was jubilant. Crowds of bluejackets thronged around Louis Denfield's home on Observatory Hill and cried, "Denfield for President," and "Hurrah for Uncle Louie." Louie, in his cloak of martyrdom, was alleged to reply:

The Navy is bigger than anything else or any individual. The Navy will carry on and I will do my part to help the Navy and the country. I will step down if it will do that.5

However, the crux of this controversy between the Executive branch and the majority of Carl Vinson's committee was expressed by the opposing opinions of Johnson and the Georgian. The Secretary of Defense insisted that he had upheld the previous commitments made to Vinson about no reprisals, but:

This is not to say, of course, that there will not be some changes in assignments within the Department of Defense. Such changes will occur continuously, whenever any individuals show themselves to lack the qualifications for jobs to which they have been assigned, and as other individuals show themselves to possess the necessary qualifications.6

In rebuttal, the strong man from the South replied, in part:

Admiral Denfield has been made to walk the plank for having testified before the Armed Services Committee that the Navy is not being consulted as to its functions, that the Navy's roles and missions are being altered, that the Naval air arm is being forced into a state of weakness and that the Navy is not accepted in the full partnership in the national defense structure.

4Loc. cit.
5Loc. cit.
6Ibid., 5 November 1949.
The security of the nation demands that responsible military men at all times be free to give to the Congress and the country the true state of affairs as they see it in the armed services, even though their views run counter to that of the civilian heads and in consequence of having done so there should be no reprisals.

Secretary Matthews at the very outset of the hearing publicly stated that all naval witnesses were free to state their views and now Admiral Denfield is made to pay the price for having done so.

The Congress nor the committee cannot sit quietly by and permit reprisal against witnesses who have testified before it.

Suffice it to say that this reprisal against Admiral Denfield for having painted the picture as he sees it in the Navy will be dealt with in the committee's report and on the floor of the House in January.7

Vinson's eulogy of Secretary Johnson on the concluding day of the unification and strategy hearings had become dim indeed in the minds of a majority of the committee members.

Congressional quandary substituted for military dilemma. Without proper cognizance of the restrictions of economy, which had created all this chaos in the military establishment, the House Armed Services Committee, of course, had no better success than Forrestal and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Johnson regime, in resolving the dilemma--strength without sacrifice. Now, with an emotional bias added, the confusion could be only compounded. Fruitless, indeed, as a further effort to evaluate the position of the Navy on defense, would be a detailed critique and analysis

7Loc. cit.
of the final report of the committee concerning unification and strategy. This report was finally released to the public in early March 1950, less than four months before the Korean incident provided a minor test of the defense machinery and means so ill-provided by the Congress. However, if allowance is made for the bias caused by the alleged Executive affront of the Denfield removal to the delicate sensibilities of the Congress, the findings of the committee, as listed in the report, do provide a useful summary and commentary on how the vision of the previous statesmanlike military position of the Navy had degenerated in 1949 during the naval quest for a bigger slice of limited defense funds.

For this purpose, therefore, certain findings of the report, applicable to the position of the Navy between World War II and the Korean incident of 1950, have been extracted, with further examination and comment interpolated. Among the committee findings were, first:

In view of the terrible destructiveness of modern weapons, the Nation can no longer afford lackadaisical planning or complacency as to its defenses. For an indefinite time, the Nation must maintain sound, modern, alert defensive forces capable of anticipating and dealing with a sudden enemy attack.9

This is an adequate statement of a rather negative end for the use of force, but nowhere in the committee report, 8House 1950 Unification and Strategy Report. 9Loc. cit.
as might be expected, were the necessary means to even this limited end recommended. Acceptance in advance of the reverse cutting edge of the Hoover concept of economy had, of course, doomed any real solution to the defense problem. The Navy did not at any time endanger its numerous friendships on Capitol Hill, by advocating more total means, and, in 1949, advocated only more naval means.

Another committee finding was:

Intercontinental strategic bombing is not synonymous with the Nation's military air power. Military air power consists of Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps air power, and of this, strategic bombing is but one phase. The national air power consists of the military air power of the various services plus commercial aviation plus the national industrial and manpower resources pertaining to aviation.

Navy leaders are not opposed to "strategic air warfare" but do oppose "strategic bombing" if, by the term "strategic bombing," is meant mass aerial bombardment of urban areas.

Difficulties between the Air Force and the naval air arm will continue because of fundamental professional disagreements on the art of warfare. Service prejudices, jealousies, and thirst for power and recognition have had only a bare minimum of influence on this controversy.10

Originally, the Navy had made most commendable efforts to put air power into proper focus and perspective as part of the total power of the Nation, in contrast to the Air Force with their vociferous protagonists of the wishful propaganda of cheap, easy military security. The Navy had quite properly held that only balanced forces could apply

10 Loc. cit.
the proper degree of military coercion required by specific situations, which would permit a maximum of stability in human affairs before, during, and after the requirement for physical restraint arose. Nevertheless, contrary to the committee opinion, in 1949, during an avaricious attempt to get adequate naval means instead of adequate, or at least the best, total means, the Navy abused its objective of balanced forces into an unbalance requiring an unwarranted depreciation of the sledge hammer of power—the atomic, biological, and chemical air offensive.

Strangely, although the Army had quietly, and the Marine Corps had vociferously, mentioned the ground soldier as a part of the total fighting team of the Nation, the committee, even at this late date, noted land forces only by indirection, the citing of the doughboy's most powerful weapon, tactical aircraft, almost as an aside:

A closer relationship should be established between Marine Corps aviators, the Army Field Forces, and the Air Force for the development of sound close air support tactics and techniques. The Secretary of Defense should require the prompt establishment of a joint training center for this purpose. There should be joint training activities between tactical aircraft of the Air Force and Navy to resolve questions of relative performance of these aircraft.11

In this field the Navy had never let its eye off the ball, for which the Nation can be duly grateful.

Almost forgetful of the Cedric Worth case and

11 Loc. cit.
oblivious of the futility in attempting to resolve the numerous intangibles of opinion on the relative merit of offensive and defensive weapons without a real enemy using radar, antiaircraft guns, and fighters with ball ammunition instead of cameras, the committee blithely said of the touchiest Navy-Air Force mental joust:

There is no justification whatsoever for barring naval aviation personnel from Strategic Air Command activities of the Air Force. This is not in the spirit of unification, despite the provocations that may have occurred in the past to produce this situation.

There should be an augmentation of interservice war games to resolve such questions as the Banshee versus the B-36 in order to eliminate or at least reduce the tensions between the services, as well as contributing to their combat readiness.\textsuperscript{12}

The Navy provocation had indeed been great, but the Air Force provocation had probably been even greater over a longer period of time. However, this heart balm to the Navy was not followed by the physical ointment of money, in spite of the committee's tender words of sympathy:

The committee deplores the manner of cancellation of the construction of the aircraft carrier USS United States, but, because of the pressure of other shipbuilding programs at the present time and the existing budgetary limitations on the Navy Department, will withhold further action— for the present— as regards the construction of this vessel. The committee consider it sound policy, however, for the Nation to follow the advice of its professional leaders in regard to this subject in the same manner as has been heretofore done in respect to the B-36 bomber. In the committee's view, the Nation's leaders in respect to naval weapons are the leaders

\textsuperscript{12}loc. cit.
of the United States Navy.\textsuperscript{13}

There it was, big and bold at last, the question of money. Nevertheless, the committee, in spite of its kind solicitude for the Navy, had properly, for the time being, left the Navy naked of offensive air weapons of advanced design, whereas the Air Force did have its B-36, albeit in small numbers. Even the element of sympathy, leaving the door open to the Navy in the legislative halls, brought only words, not weapons, and the promises of corrective legislation, not yet realized, to restore the ego of the naval establishment. This further hope for the Navy, still being pushed by Navy and Marine idolaters on Capitol Hill, was demonstrated by:

The Joint Chiefs of Staff structure, as now constituted, does not insure at all times adequate consideration for the views of all services. The committee will sponsor legislation to require rotation of the position of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff among the services after a 2-year term, and to add the Commandant of the Marine Corps to the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a member thereof.\textsuperscript{14}

On this conclusion, the committee departed from reality with its hope that irreconcilable differences could be resolved by four service representatives better than with three, even with the rotating neutrality of their chairman assured. However, no one could find fault with the following succinct comment on post-World War II unification progress: "All

\textsuperscript{13}Loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{14}Loc. cit."
services have been at fault at one time or another in the unification effort. There are no unification Puritans in the Pentagon.  

Nevertheless, the House Committee on Armed Services had done fully as well as Secretary of Defense Forrestal, his successor, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff in solving the quandary of strength without sacrifice. With unjustified modesty, the committee summarized the goal of defense without citing the means necessary:

A political body cannot of itself reach, through deliberative processes, final answers on professional military questions but must depend upon and encourage a continuation of the process of exploration, study, and coordination among our officers of the several services to preserve a satisfactory doctrine of defense, to have ready applicable plans, and to devise units, suitably equipped, to meet the most probable circumstances of any emergency. The significant thing is to insure that the national defense structure insures adequate consideration of all professional views, especially during these early days of unification.

Here again was vindication of the view, held by the Navy from the start of unification clamor, that the role of the senior military specialists from each service, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, should be confined to staff planning and recommendations, with minority views fully expressed, if the civilian Commander in Chief, the President, and his deputy in defense matters, the Secretary of Defense, were to use this advice properly in preserving civilian control of the

15 *Loc. cit.*

16 *Loc. cit.*
final complex decisions required in the military establishment. The fact that the Armed Services Committee itself could not provide these decisions and answers "to meet the most probable circumstances of any emergency" certainly required no apology because the best civilian and military experts in the Defense Department had also failed due to insuperable limitations on military spending. If the Navy, as well as the other services, had been able to perform adequately the missions assigned to them under unification, the quarrel over how best to meet future emergencies would not have arisen. Only this can provide any extenuation for the deplorable flaunting of constituted civilian authority that the Navy demonstrated by going directly to Congress over the heads of its civil superiors.

Two weeks after the House Committee on Armed Services released its findings, General Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Appropriations Committee in closed session a little more about the basic dilemma. On 15 March 1950, in testimony defending the Fiscal Year 1951 appropriations request of the Department of Defense for thirteen billion dollars, the Hoover spending goal now reached by Secretary Johnson, Bradley hinted at the difference between means and requirements when he noted that a thirty or forty billion dollar defense budget would be excessive due to the danger of spoiling the American industrial potential through economic collapse. However, he added that, if the United States could spend three hundred billion dollars in winning
World War II, he would not gag at spending on a lesser scale in trying to win the peace. This veiled warning had an unpleasant monetary ring. Secretary Johnson was more musical to the Congressional ears when he said, in part, "We are tailoring our defense to fit today's situation. We are converting fat to muscle." These sinews of war, just described by Secretary of Defense Johnson in March 1950 before the closed Senate hearing, were exposed in the same glowing terms under an ominous date line for public release, 17 June 1950, one week before the Korean incident.

18Loc. cit.
CHAPTER VIII

AFTERMATH AND RETROSPECT

... we still have with us, in what is obviously a very acute form, the problem of the machinery for decision-making and for the implementation of policy in our government. ...—Ambassador George F. Kennan

Afterlight sheds no new evidence. Shortly, these allegedly tailored defense needs did not seem to quite fit the American defense posture required by purportedly changing times. Two years after the period covered by this study, in May 1952, Bradley testified before the same Senate Committee. He now begged the Senate to restore the rate of spending from forty-six billion dollars imposed by the House of Representatives to the fifty-two billion dollars already committed in firm contracts and troop basis by the Department of Defense for Fiscal Year 1953 from previously approved Congressional appropriations. The power of the Congressional purse over the defense sword was still apparent, yet for some reason the goals of each had multiplied since 1950. Correctly, however, Bradley did not attribute the need for this increased level of preparedness to the minor diversion of Korea, which was only directly devouring one tenth of the defense budget,

1Kennan, 94.
but rather to palpable facts of actual and foreseeable relative military power that had been obvious since September 1949, and accurately estimated before then, dependent on the Soviet Union's proved initial atomic disclosure. If Bradley's facts, known in 1949, were still correct in 1952, then the rate of defense expenditure planned for the early period of the Korean War and the actual rate occurring during this war should have been approximately equal.

As before Korea, 1954 remained the approximate date for the greatest danger of Soviet willingness to risk total war. Still, Bradley alleged the rate of spending to be too low in spite of the added incentive given American armament by emotional disturbance over a minor incident on the Soviet periphery. This affair was little more disturbing than the older Asian incidents of Indo-China and Malaya, or even Greece, except that for the first time the alleged spontaneity of indigenous uprisings was dimmed by American blood and the more overt preplanning, training, and employment of rebels and their volunteer supporters as regular troop units based and formed on areas within Soviet control. The American exaggeration of reality in Korea reached proper proportions when compared to the greedy maw of the automobile, as many discovered long before a purported Presidential blunder depreciating the value of battlefield compared to accidental carnage. Both types of bloodshed were deplorable, but even more despicable was the self-imposition of conditions for
future slaughter or slavery so openly extended by the United States and the West before the Korean War.

Even after two years of corrective action spent presumably in withdrawing this invitation of weakness, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had to call attention to obvious deficiencies in the sacrifice of Americans, who were still ignoring in 1952, as Bradley indicated, in part, the realities of 1949 in their forecasts for 1954, or earlier:

If you would like a relative timetable, consider our own atomic capabilities between 1945, when we held the first test explosion in the New Mexico desert, and five years later in 1950. With all the knowledge that she has gained, Soviet progress should be faster than our own progress in our first five year period.²

This dwindling ratio of American atomic superiority, which was clearly declining from a presumed infinity in 1949 to a ratio approaching the relative rates of production, would soon provide only an inconsequential differential due to greater American vulnerability in atomic targets and also due to total destruction once accomplished not being worth multiplying. With even less encouragement, Bradley and other defense officials testified in May 1952 about continuing Soviet superiority in most other fields of post-World War II military capabilities, including military stockpiling and arms production. Even qualitative air superiority was following the loss of quantitative supremacy. Only in surface fleets and their accompanying aircraft did America temporarily

predominate in spite of submarine threats.\textsuperscript{3}

Here, at least, was one weapon the Soviets could not match as yet, in spite of previous efforts on the part of elements within the American military establishment to rid the Nation of one clear-cut advantage of the sea-turtle over the land-tortoise, namely, intercontinental mobility of masses, which air power alone probably can never provide. Mahan might have died, and the similar unilateral concept of power rewritten by Douhet might also be dead, but as Millis, their sage destroyer implies, unitary military power may well live forever, at least so long as there is life, and now appears to be the one last hope of life, barring an unexpected millennium of reason. In the perhaps wishful thought that some may read the lesson, Millis writes:

Korea wrote the lesson plain. The policy of containment requires, for success, a military arm; that arm must be based on ground troops, available to control the actual (rather than the future hypothetical) situations which Communist expansion is constantly creating. In a context which is global, these ground troops must have the mobility which can be conferred only by control of the sea routes; they must also have the fullest possible support of tactical aviation, as well as whatever assistance may be lent, under specific conditions, by longer-range, "strategic" air war. The whole must be operated as a team, making optimum use of each available element in accordance with the circumstances presented. . . . In actual warfare, missions are dictated, not by service politics, but by combat conditions.\textsuperscript{4}

The price of containment came high and demanded a

\textsuperscript{3}Loc. cit.

ready, full tool kit from the sledge hammer of strategic air power to the military policeman's blackjack, just as the Navy had originally insisted before the Nation's overweening emphasis on strategic air power and strength without sacrifice had warped the naval judgment. Bradley also fully agreed at this late date in May 1952, when a politically tenable position on defense by his civilian superiors now permitted a stand for the expense of balanced forces. In his concluding remarks to the Senate Appropriations Committee, Bradley begged again for the money to help buy back the lost years before 1949 when Soviet ascendancy in versatile military force had been gained:

In the realm of national security, there is one precious commodity on sale today, especially for the United States, because we have the price to buy it: "time." Next year and in succeeding years the price will be higher and there will be less "time" we can purchase. If we are allowed any time for preparedness after the next two or three years, I think we will be lucky. If we make proper use of the time that is allowed us to strengthen our forces, we can build a deterrent that the Soviet Union may respect, and we may avoid having a war at all. As an American citizen I believe it is very foolish for us not to make the best use of the time we have.5

Even this cheery bit of optimism was colored by a more pessimistic current estimate that Bradley made, a pertinent portion of which was, "In fact, today's estimates give the Soviet Union a capability which she may well consider as adequate to warrant the risk of a major aggression now."6

6Loc. cit.
Bradley did not state what the relative power position of the United States would have been if it were not for the Korean incentive to sacrifice, nor did he account for the lost years before Korea. This explanation could not be made in good taste by an Executive spokesman as an official remark pointing, as it must, to the collective guilt of the American people, which General Marshall had discreetly indicated some three years before in 1949, as the supreme deterrent to an adequate defensive posture of the United States in peacetime.

In spite of the futility of informed voices crying from the depths of the American wilderness to place reality above visions of normalcy, political and military leaders still have responsibility for informing the led. The Navy, however, did not stand alone among the professional military in failing to produce leaders with the strength of character to advocate paying the price required for balanced forces, instead of merely paying lip service to the price that the traffic of public opinion would bear. Such leaders of stature rarely occur in a democracy, but, when they do, they should gladly forfeit power and position in order to be heard without the stigma of disloyalty. The effort might be fruitless, but nevertheless should be made. Unfortunately, the example of the MacArthurs, Denfields, and Crommelins leaves little of the heroic to emulate because these insurgents, right or wrong, debased even the improbable validity of their positions under the tawdry tarnish of disloyalty before their
severance from their masters.

**Historical lessons ignored.** Politics is the art of the possible, and political life is short, but political leaders are in a far better position than the professional military to be heard on defense matters, even if divergence from public opinion brings temporary or permanent electoral defeat, because their motives are not suspected of professional bias and bureaucratic aggrandizement for the armed forces. Although the record in the United States after World War II will probably never be made so frankly and devastatingly clear, an apparent analogy exists in British experience, during the period of German rearmament before World War II, of comparable trials in leading a democracy into sacrifice. Unfortunately, the United States has yet to produce an effective conscience and professionally qualified inquisitor like Churchill and the self-damning frankness of Baldwin, confidently arrogant with overwhelming executive and legislative power, to bring the harsh light of day on political realities. An interchange between Churchill and Baldwin on 12 November 1936, however, serves to bring the basic dilemma of the United States after World War II into sharper focus. Churchill reports himself as castigating Baldwin in the House of Commons, for failing to keep his pledge, made before the general election of October 1935, to maintain British air parity with Germany, with these excerpts:
The Government simply cannot make up their minds, or they cannot get the Prime Minister to make up his mind. So they go on in strange paradox, decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute, adamant for drift, solid for fluidity, all-powerful to be impotent. So we go on preparing more months and years—precious, perhaps vital to the greatness of Britain—for the locusts to eat.

With frighteningly honest candor Baldwin replied in part, with emphasis added by Churchill's later italics:

I would remind the House that not once but on many occasions in speeches and in various places, when I have been speaking and advocating as far as I am able the democratic principle, I have stated that a democracy is always two years behind the dictator. I believe that to be true. It has been true in this case. You will remember the election at Fulham in the autumn of 1933, when a seat which the National Government held was lost by about seven thousand votes on no issue but the pacifist. My position as the leader of a great party was not altogether a comfortable one. I asked myself what chance was there—when that feeling that was given expression to in Fulham was common throughout the country—what chance was there within the next year or two of that feeling being so changed that the country would give a mandate for rearmament? Supposing I had gone to the country and said that Germany was rearming, and that we must rearm, does anybody think that this specific democracy would have rallied to that cry at that moment? I cannot think of anything that would have made the loss of the election from my point of view more certain.

As a loyal member of the Conservative party, Churchill tried to put Baldwin's actions into the most favorable light possible, when viewed against the background of Socialist opposition. Still, Churchill could only conclude:

This was indeed appalling frankness. It carried naked truth about his motives into indecency. That a Prime Minister should avow that he had not done

7The Gathering Storm, 215.
8Ibid., 216.
his duty in regard to national safety because he was afraid of losing the election was an incident without parallel in our parliamentary history. Mr. Baldwin was, of course, not moved by any ignoble wish to remain in office. He was in fact in 1936 earnestly desirous of retiring. His policy was dictated by the fear that if the Socialists came into power, even less would be done than his Government intended. All their declarations and votes against the defense measures are upon the record. But this was no complete defense, and less than justice to the spirit of the British people. . . . 9

Never has the negative power of the opposition party in a democracy been more clearly indicated than in this tragedy of the 1930's portrayed by Churchill, and perhaps this power has only been equalled by the Republican Party of the American post-World War II period, a time even more fraught with disaster. Only minor transposition of appropriate dates, places, and names, particularly the substitution of "economy" and "slothful ease" for the "pacifism" described, is required above to indicate accurately the political milieu of America in the period covered by this study.

Churchill apparently felt, at least under the British parliamentary system with undivided concentration of both executive and legislative responsibility, unequivocally placed at the summit, that the leader of the party in power had a unique duty which could not be shirked. In contrast, the American system with its extreme diffusion of political power makes the responsibility of the leaders to the led less clear-cut. However, an excerpt from the Munich Times, which

9Ibid., p. 216-217.
also caught Churchill's eye in early 1936, takes a more charitable view of the responsibility of leaders for the basic dilemma of a democracy in preparedness. It would be extremely naive to assume that Soviet intelligence has not, with at least equal perception, identified the dilemma of the United States. Churchill cites the German estimate of the British, in part, as follows:

The English like a comfortable life compared with our German standards. This does not indeed mean that they are incapable of sustained efforts, but they avoid them so far as they can, without impairing their personal and national security. They also control means and wealth which have enabled them, in contrast with us, for a century or so, to increase their capital more or less automatically. After the war, in which the English after some preliminary hesitation showed certainly an amazing energy, the British masters of the world thought they had at last earned a little rest. They disarmed along the whole line—in civil life even more than on land and sea. For the land and air defence forces England needs above all men, not merely money, but also the lives of her citizens for Empire defence. Mr. Baldwin himself said a short time ago that he had no intention of changing the system of recruiting by the introduction of conscription.

A policy which seeks to achieve success by postponing decisions can today hardly hope to resist the whirlwind which is shaking Europe and indeed the whole world. Few are the men who, upon national and not upon party grounds, rage against the spinelessness and ambiguous attitude of the Government, and hold them responsible for the dangers into which the Empire is being driven all unaware. The masses seem to agree with the Government that the situation will improve by marking time, and that by means of small adjustments and carefully thought-out manoeuvres the balance can once again be rectified. But neither the power nor the courage to use force is at hand.10

To this Churchill could only add, "All this was only too

10Ibid., 186-187, citing Meunchener Zeitung, 16 May 1936.
true.\textsuperscript{11} An American today can make the same statement with justice about the United States before Korea and perhaps even now.

This conclusion, however, leads us again to the thesis of collective guilt for such deliberate mischances in a democracy, particularly in the United States, where leadership diffusion is a hallowed fetish. Elihu Root, in discussing the requirements of a democracy in open participation of its people in foreign and military affairs, insists on this view of collective responsibility and places a tremendous portion of the accountability on the educational system, a system which, also due to collective guilt, has palpably failed in its mission. As Root looked at the problem, some of his conclusions were:

The controlling democracy must acquire a knowledge of the fundamental and essential facts and principles upon which the relations of nations depend. Without such a knowledge there can be no intelligent discussion and consideration of foreign policy and diplomatic conduct. Misrepresentation will have a clear field and ignorance and error will make wild work with foreign relations. This is a point to which sincere people who are holding meetings and issuing publications in opposition to war in general may well direct their attention if they wish to treat the cause of disease rather than the effects. That way is to furnish the whole people, as a part of their ordinary education, with correct information about their relations to other peoples, about the limitations upon their own rights, about their duties to respect the rights of others, about what has happened and is happening in international affairs, and about the effects upon national life of the things that are done or refused as between nations;

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, 187.
so that the people themselves will have the means to test misinformation and appeals to prejudice and passion based upon error.\textsuperscript{12}

Root, among the last of a waning race from an earlier era of towering Republican statesmen, thought this good advice in 1922. Standing in the afterlight, the stature of his thought becomes even more imposing after the tarnish of years of neglect is buffed away.

Earlier, Root had been even more foresighted in his demand for education on a broad basis for training our youth in all the responsibilities, duties, and privileges of free men. Root had positive views on complying with the second amendment of the Constitution, ratified in 1791, which states, "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." For carrying out this Constitutional mandate to reduce the influence of professional military men in political and economic affairs, Root suggested the simple and obvious device of returning military knowledge and power to the people—the only possible way, as the Swiss know, to reduce the burden of standing armed forces on the tax structure and on the democratic way of life by providing an air and ground militia ready to fight overnight.\textsuperscript{13} With the

\textsuperscript{12}Elihu Root, "A Requisite for Popular Diplomacy," \textit{Foreign Affairs}, I, 15 September 1922, 4-5.

possible exceptions of his well-trained protege, Henry Stimson, and the Wilsonian, Newton Baker, former Secretary of War Root was the last civilian within the military establishment who capably dominated his professional helpers without damaging the armed forces. Therefore, with considerable authority Root wrote to a star-encrusted bit of brass, his former Chief of Staff, the simple answer to improving further the fine American system of public, compulsory education:

Everyone who is fit to be a citizen of a free country ought to be willing to serve the country when called upon, in accordance with his ability. The young men who are physically fit for military duty should hold themselves ready to fight for their country if need be, and if they are not ready when the need comes they will not long have any country, and they will not deserve to have any. The vast change in the way of carrying on war which has occurred within a few years has created a situation in which it is perfectly plain that no country can be ready to defend her independence against foreign aggression except by universal military training and a resulting universal readiness for military service.14

Root might have added "civil defense," but then this was 1916, when the military choices facing the United States had not so significantly narrowed. Only the Kaiser looked potentially ominous then. In 1952, Congress was still wondering if Stalin looked ominous, while the means for a ready militia remained shelved on Capitol Hill.

The Navy could well join in the collective guilt of the Nation by failing to recognize adequately the significance

of this early solution of the Constitution, rediscovered by Root, to the problem of equal sacrifice in the post-World War II period. As a glamour service, the Navy, like the Air Force, has been notoriously derelict in her greedy skimming of the cream of volunteers and in a passive attitude about the universal training required for an effective ready militia and civil defense teams.

Root also deserved a Churchillian accolade for prescience at an even earlier date, over four decades before the naval squabbling of 1949. Here, too, the Navy, as well as the other components, should blush with shame on hearing these extracts from a speech delivered in 1908:

Settle your military questions within the limits of the military establishment. Never permit a controversy of any description to pass beyond the doors of the War Department. It is you who are brought together to settle military questions. The people are generous to the army and proud of it. Don't go to them with quarrels and expect them to settle them. Thrash these questions out, and then let the proper representative of the army, the Secretary of War, go to Congress with the results.

Never forget your duty of coordination with the other branches of the service—the naval, marine, and militia. This is the time to learn to serve together without friction.

Remember always that the highest duty of a soldier is self-abnegation. Campaigns have been lost for no other cause than the lack of that essential quality. Keep dissension and jealousy out of the United States Army. Officers, you have no rights to rank and position incompatible with the best interests of the service.

Do not cease to be citizens of the United States. The conditions of army life are such as to narrow your views. Strive to broaden your sympathies by mingling with those outside of the service and learning from them the things they can teach you. As you are good soldiers, be good citizens. Let our army be never one of aggression, but devoted to the
interests of justice and peace.\textsuperscript{15}

Although the Spanish and Aguinaldo might not have been in wholehearted accord with the last statement of Root, nevertheless, these views appear to have much merit in their application to the post-World War II position of the Navy on unification and strategy, if only by contrast.

In another speech, now almost a half-century old, Root seemed to have anticipated unification in its most desirable form, one in which the Navy could also take much pride due to its post-World War II efforts under Forrestal's tutelage. After a most tragic display of how not to fight a war in 1898, the Army had finally been forced into a modicum of unification by Root's inauguration of an infant, and somewhat powerless, general staff in 1903. With a sad reminder of the evils of too much compartmentalization, but with a realistic approach to the gradualness for which Forrestal later fought to assure a complete appreciation of all views among the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Root joined the great compromiser across the years in saying:

Many another officer has studied and striven and written and appealed in vain for improvements in the military service, and has passed away, and he and his work have been forgotten. The helplessness of the single individual who seeks to improve a system has settled into hopelessness. The wisdom in each officer's experience has been buried with him. Only an institution perpetual but always changing in its individual elements, in which by conference and discussion a concensus of matured

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 128-129, citing address at the dedication of the Army War College, Washington, D.C., 9 November 1908.
opinion can be reached, can perpetuate the results of individual effort, secure continuity of military policy, and command for its authorized, conclusive expression of military judgment upon military questions the respect and effectiveness to which that judgment is entitled.

I am sure that I speak truly when I say that Presidents and Congresses and Secretaries of War invariably desire such aid in the performance of their duties, and for this I look with hope and confidence to the General Staff of the Army and its great adjunct, the War College, which we are now establishing.16

This hope of the father of the Army General Staff for immediately salutary results seem perhaps a little premature, since the staff was not completely shaken down into an effective management instrument until the regime of Pershing after World War I. Staff modernization is, of course, a continuing evolutionary process. The power of the nearly autonomous bureaus and services of the Army resisted incursions and control by the General Staff for many years.17

For those unification addicts who expected that a law today would have already proved itself completely effective yesterday, it might have been more reassuring if they had realized that not the least of the problems of the Departments of Defense and Army, even now, is to curb the intransigence of the Corps of Engineers in resisting Army, or other, control of its civil works. There, due to the tender nursing care of a pork-eager Congress, the Chief of Engineers rules

16 Ibid., 126, citing address at the laying of the cornerstone of the Army War College, 21 February 1903.

17 The best account is Otto L. Nelson, Jr., National Security and the General Staff.
supreme, allegedly training, but to a considerable degree also diverting, his Corps from its prime mission of military engineering. Even the baleful glare of the Hoover Commission has not cured this festering sore, among many Root started to cure a half-century before.

Time, however, at the half-century, fifty years after Root's greeting at the General Staff debut, was more at a premium, and for this reason, if for no other, violently disturbing cataclysms of the military establishment should have been avoided, even when theoretically more perfect organizationally. As Forrestal rightfully contended, workability was the watchword, with specialists operating in their own element, as much as possible, instead of arbitrarily subjecting themselves to the false omnipotence of ignorant jacks of all trades.

Examination of the application of Forrestal's concept for top level management facilities and staff guidance at the summit of governmental power, comparable to the British or Canadian defense cabinets, is futile on two counts, considering the American environment to which it was applied. First, an incompetent President could not be converted from a sow's ear to a silk purse solely by a cape of ermine, and second, the diffusion of real political power in the United States can only cause us to moan, with Kennan, as he surveyed the ruins of the MacArthur debacle of 1951, that:

... we still have with us, in what is obviously
a very acute form, the problem of the machinery for decision-making and for the implementation of policy in our government. Whatever else may be said about these facilities to date, it can hardly be said that they are distinguished by such things as privacy, deliberateness, or the long-term approach. The difficulties we encounter here are so plain to all of you at this moment that I shall not attempt to adumbrate them. The subject of their correction is an extremely complex one, involving many facets of governmental organization and method. There are those who feel that these difficulties can be satisfactorily disposed of within our present constitutional framework and that they are simply a question of proper personal leadership in government. There are others who doubt that the problem is soluble without constitutional reform—reform which would give us a parliamentary system more nearly like that which exists in England and most other parliamentary countries, a system in which a government fails if it loses the confidence of its parliament, and in which there is opportunity to consult the people on the great issues and at the crucial moments and to adjust governmental responsibilities in accordance with the people’s decision.

I must say that if I had any doubts before as to whether it is this that our country requires, those doubts have been pretty well resolved in my mind by the events of the past weeks and months. I find it hard to see how we can live up to our responsibilities as a great power unless we are able to resolve, in a manner better than we have done recently, the great challenges to the soundness of governmental policy and to the claim of an administration to speak for the mass of the people in foreign affairs.18

Obviously, Kennan’s audience at the University of Chicago in the spring of 1951 was more receptive to and informed by these remarks than the recently returned resident of the Waldorf Towers and his helpers from Republican ranks, who, for selfish political gain, had been endangering the vitals of the Nation with misguided criticism of Korean military operations and other Far East policy.

18Kennan, 94-95.
Even more dangerous to the Nation than MacArthur was his mentor in political opportunism, his former Commander in Chief, Hoover, who, aided by satellites like Taber, Taft, Malone, and Martin, held primary responsibility for verifying, within the context of collective guilt, the post-World War II shibboleth of false economy in defense. Without a sufficiency of the vital military tools of policy, even the best of top management at the summit in American foreign and military affairs would have failed in more effectively stabilizing the position of the United States, the West, and the world after 1945. Had it not been for this insistence that the Nation was economically unable to provide the necessary means for defense beyond the fifteen billion dollar annual defense criterion inadvertently established by the President, but indelibly stamped by the Eightieth Congress and the Hoover Commission, the validity of the original naval concept of unification and strategy would not have been debased in 1949 by the tragic groveling of a Navy begging crumbs from the Congressional banquet table at the expense of her comrades in arms from the other armed forces.

The spectacle of a Nation with at least three times the productive capacity of the Soviet Union and her satellites being outbuilt militarily was rather difficult to extenuate on economic grounds. The only actual answer was the American inability to sacrifice the habits of slothful ease and mechanical materialism, which have become too much a way of American
life when they cloud the awareness of reality required to place these habits in their proper perspective. Here again is the return to the thesis of collective guilt. Schwartz placed this guilt in realistic focus by citing it as a necessary factor for comparing Soviet and American economic power. In 1947, Schwartz warned:

Balancing strength and weakness, it seems likely that the Soviet Union is economically stronger today than ever before in its history, having available more developed internal resources, as well as the wealth of much of Europe which lies in its sphere of influence. Power is relative, of course, and in the next decade or so the Soviet Union, economically, will be weaker than the United States. Here again, however, the extent of this weakness should not be overestimated. To measure the relative strength of both countries, it is inadequate to compare such crude indices as production of particular commodities. If the United States produces four or five times as much steel as the USSR, this does not mean that it is four or five times as strong. Much of American production consists of consumer goods, from automobiles and motorboats to golf clubs. Also much of American production goes into maintenance and repair of our vast productive plant and our great stock of consumer durable goods. When these factors are taken into account it may be realized that the American economic superiority is narrower than suggested by crude production comparisons alone, though that superiority is substantial. In the years to come, this margin of superiority will probably narrow.19

Unfortunately, golf clubs are not a dual purpose weapon for both the jousts of peace and war.

Perhaps the curtain of the Nation's collective guilt, a wishful desire for normalcy and strength without sacrifice, has already cast enough of a concealing shadow over the more complex implications of the naval position on unification

and strategy. Ultimate responsibility, even among the military of a democracy, will probably continue to be clouded by this factor, which makes both the credit and blame for action and inaction difficult to analyze, assign, and award.

The naval right to Valhalla. In conclusion, however, there is only one choice. The criteria of physical coercion in the modern world, previously established, make balanced forces mandatory if the delicate nuances of military power appropriate to varying situations are to be applied. Only these balanced forces provide any hope for a maximum of stability in the affairs of the United States, the West, and the world, before, during, and after the need for physical coercion exists. The Navy, and the Navy alone, among the diverse military, economic, and political elements that make up the total power of the Nation, insisted on all these shades of force in being as essential to defense in the period between World War II and the Korean incident. The lustre of the naval position was only slightly dimmed in 1949 by the depreciation of strategic air power in favor of lesser shades of force. After all, only these lesser shades of force had been required before the Korean War, and even in 1952, the atomic, biological, and chemical air offensive remains, as yet, an unused, but necessary, weapon for either potential blackmail or reprisal as a deterrent to blackmail and uncontrolled total aggression. The Nation owes a debt of gratitude to the Navy for emphasis on balanced forces,
tailor-made for maximum adaptability to any given military situation by quickly merging proper increments of power. Korea has also pointed the way in support of the naval position. The unanswered and dubious question is whether the Nation will follow. Until more evidence is in, the answer to this question is probably "No." However, the Navy could be right and the Nation wrong, so perhaps the Navy can yet join Bernard Baruch on his pedestal, purportedly glorified by Germanic praise after World War I, where, in exclusive Valhalla, members can point to each other in mutual admiration, saying, "You too know war."

Whether mortal observers will long view the denial of reason, which both makes wars possible and their waging increasingly less amenable to restraint in delicately limiting objectives short of the crudest atomic obliteration, also is an open question, perhaps to be answered shortly. For those who find the grim suspense unpalatable and the tragic errors of the United States and the West unbearable, a grateful and welcome relief is provided by considering the painful mistakes of the East, which may yet save the Nation not only from the machinations of the Kremlin, but from its own fatness and folly as well. On this auspicious omen, wishfully presented in June 1952, the curtain of another election year falls temporarily over this sombre and melancholy scene, revealed in all its essentials by the position of the United States Navy on unification and strategy between World War II and Korea.
1. GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Committee on Armed Services, United States House of Representa­
tives, Hearings on H. Res. 234, Investigation of
the B-36 Bomber Program, 81 Cong., 1 sess., Government

Committee on Armed Services, United States House of Repre­
sentatives, Hearings on The National Defense Program--
Unification and Strategy, 81 Cong., 1 sess., Govern­

Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, Hearings
on S. 1269 and S. 1843, National Security Act Amendments
of 1949, 81 Cong., 1 sess., Government Printing Office,

Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, Hearings
on S. 758, National Defense Establishment, 80 Cong., 1

Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate, Hearings
on S. 84, Department of Armed Forces, and S. 1482, De­
partment of Military Security, 79 Cong., 1 sess., Govern­

Committee on Naval Affairs, United States Senate, Hearings on
S. 2044, Unification of the Armed Forces, 79 Cong., 2

Watson, Mark S., Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Prepara­
tions, unnumbered volume, 1950. Kent Roberts Greenfield,
ed., United States Army in World War II, Historical Divi­
sion, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1949--.

A fertile field indeed exists for future researchers
who might at some later and more auspicious date attempt
definitive histories or biographies concerning the cause and
effect of detailed actions related to the post-World War II
unification and strategy squabbles. Certainly, no dearth of
materials prevails. A complete listing of published govern­
ment documents relating to the subject in hand might easily
run to twice the length of this study. In addition, unpub­
lished materials, such as those from closed sessions of Con­
gressional committee hearings and the records and minutes
concealed in the executive departments because of arbitrary
fiat or legitimate security reasons, will later find the
light of day. A shudder passes over the novice in contem­
plating the many cubic feet of bibliographic cataloging required.

Meanwhile, many of the written sources still in purdah are already overflowing into document storage warehouses where they are brutally scrambled by untrained archivists. This tragic picture becomes even more bleak when one realizes that the incinerator is an even more accessible and secure device for bureaucratic frustration of the historian. Even if the written record were kept intact, unrecorded conferences, telephone calls, and the mystic words, "the boss says," have already faded from historical accuracy along with the unrecognized deviations of omission and commission flowing from the written and spoken word. The discs and tapes of recorded verbal transactions, too sensitive for later stenographic transcription, have long since been shaved or destroyed, thus granting future memoirs immunity from the consequences of faulty memory and rationalization.

Political science, a misnamed art, fortunately grants more leeway to its writers than history does to historians. Possibly because life is short and due to a sense of duty to their contemporaries, these political writers do not wait until the last scrap of evidence is in, but try to use their own best judgment in collecting, collating, analyzing, and evaluating the best available information at hand that will still allow a timely finished product. Such has been the case in this study.

Nevertheless, the Congressional references cited above are believed to contain the most reliable primary evidence that has, or can be expected to come to light, even for the absolute historical record, in weighing the position of the Navy on unification and strategy between World War II and the Korean incident. In two of these committee hearings, particularly, the administrative cloak of darkness was completely removed as an obstacle to penetration into the innermost recesses of individual thought and organizational policy within the Navy Department. Even those still beholden to executive direction were not officially under wraps. What little, if any, guessing these witnesses attempted, as to how best to fit into the future party line of the naval establishment, was more than rectified by retired personnel, members of civilian reserve components, and other naval enthusiasts, all of whom were more than happy to fill any gaps in the record through sincere collaboration with the particular brand of naval thought they espoused. The united front displayed was most remarkable. The Senate Military Affairs Committee of 1945 and the House Armed Services Committee of 1949, in the latter phase of the so-called Navy Mutiny, successfully provided unchaperoned forums for this free naval expression. The other hearings on defense organization from 1946 through 1949 progressively became less productive of actuality in reflecting the true rather than the officially enforced naval viewpoint. The sad spectacle
of an embarrassed Admiral Denfield reluctantly repeating a
distasteful Executive policy to the Senate Committee in 1949
on the Tydings Bill, while General Gates, Marine Corps Com-
mandant, grumbled unhappily in the background with unaccus-
tomed leather-neck reserve, provided a marked contrast with
the testimony that the same Chief of Naval Operations was to
give in unintentional valedictory to the House Committee a
few weeks later during the wide-open arguments on unification
and strategy. Evidence in the other hearings after 1945 must
be treated with a more jaundiced eye and is buttressed in
this study by personal knowledge and a discriminating use of
the lonesome and tragic views of a troubled mind, James
Forrestal's, whose record has been considerably qualified by
censorship and editing.

For the most part, however, all of these hearings
are naked and unadorned in comparison with the literary and
personal embellishments, not always conducive to unvarnished
truth, that the published departmental reports from the Exec-
utive Branch convey during this same period in their treat-
ment of naval views and later defection. Omission of these
reports has been made, therefore, largely on the grounds of
lack of credibility or because of duplication of evidence.
Similarly, House hearings and reports have been omitted,
while the Senate carried the ball on defense organization,
because of the close collaboration between the respective
committee chairmen and the duplication of witnesses and evi-
dence. Later, in contrast, during the 1949 Mutiny, the House
Committee stole the limelight due to the intransigent sympa-
thy for the Navy by some irresponsible House members, largely
of Republican extraction. Also, during this period, the
Senate Committee was wrapped up in the Tydings changes of
the defense organization, while Tydings, himself, as chair-
man of the committee, was more than happy to pass the respon-
sibility for this investigation to the House in order to
devote more time to his vain effort to survive politically
under McCarthyism.

The last item in this section, Watson's Chief of
Staff: Preward Plans and Preparations, although technically
a government publication, is nevertheless a splendid defini-
tive history of the command post of the army, with emphasis
on the Chief of Staff's role of cooperation with the Navy and
State Departments, and also relates his duties as a principal
military adviser to the President and Congress during
the period between the first two World Wars. As a history,
internally prepared in the Pentagon, it has the advantage of
impressive documentation, fairly used, if the chips falling
without favor from President to office help are any indica-
tion. No one is spared, even the grand "Old Man," Marshall
himself, nor should they be as this book accomplishes its
objective of making the pre-World War II record clear for all
to see. The Navy's rightful and predominant position before
World War II is unequivocally conceded throughout the text.
Coming from an outside source, this book provides an unbiased insight of the Navy's superior experience and training over many years in defense leadership.

2. NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICAL ARTICLES

**Army-Navy-Air Force Journal** (Washington). Formerly **Army and Navy Journal**.

Brown, Harrison, "How Big Need a Bomb Be?" *The American Scholar*, XII, Summer, 1950.


The **Army-Navy-Air Force Journal**, the preeminent gazette of the armed forces since 1863, has never let its readers down in its precise weekly coverage of military and foreign affairs with all their executive and legislative domestic ramifications. Generally scooping the best dailies, including the *New York Times*, because of its unbiased on-the-spot coverage that grants it precedence on delayed releases, and without fear or favor, the Journal is far superior to the *Times*, impregnated as it is with Hanson Baldwin, USNA, '24, in unemotionally considering the events recorded in this study, both in news items and editorially. However, only news items have been used here to review recent and as yet unpublished Congressional hearings, to capture some flavor of the hectic events of 1949 and 1950, and to substitute for a published House Committee Report, not distributed to this location, which the Journal quoted in full.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the periodicals cited, which along with others over the years may have contributed to the opinions expressed in this study, but, as in the case of remittances to Webster, all debts cannot be paid. The specific articles are cited only as they came in hand through recollection or emerged later in the afterlight as partial support of previously held views. These views, it is to be hoped, have not unduly preconditioned honest expression of fact and opinion.
3. BIOGRAPHIES, MEMOIRS, AND WRITINGS OF PUBLIC MEN


Here, both for authors and subjects, words alone cannot express proper affection and respect for the sublime. The conflict between Root and his youthful Boswell only deepens devotion to both. By now, Jessup, in spite of McCarthy to the contrary, is well on the way to uproot Root. Both of these men are products of their times, but no apparent irrevocable cleavage between them exists in the means they have devoted to the national interest. Jessup's biography of Root was indispensable in evaluating Root's selected papers and addresses so thoughtfully prepared as a campaign document for him in 1916 by Bacon and Scott. The remaining material in this section passes the critical tests of both fore and hindsight and, except for the qualification on Forrestal cited in section 1 of this Bibliography, should be accepted as authoritative in the fields of fact and opinion.

4. SPECIAL MONOGRAPHS


Nelson is a rather unique character in that he carried more people on his shoulders than any other junior army officer in the last war and did it in such a likable self-effac-
ing way that his merit was recognized by four Distinguished Service Medals and promotions from Captain to Major General in four years. Renowned as the foremost management expert of the Army, in spite of the kudos falling deservedly on capable four-star McNarney, his boss, Nelson at the age of forty-four resigned his commission in 1946, overpaid his debt to the Nation by bringing his Harvard doctoral dissertation up to date in the book cited above, and is now making quite a comfortable living as Vice President of the New York Life Insurance Company. He risked the rigors of civilian life armed only with a Major's retirement pay, but, in less than two years, fluidity in retirement laws jumped him again to the grade of Major General without the onus of remounting the promotion ladder rung by rung. Unfortunately, his book, after laboriously following Root's General Staff concept through over forty years of painful trial and error for the Army, jumps to the conclusion that an identical system can be rammed down the Nation's throat overnight as a means of integrating all the armed forces. The book in its entirety, however, is the strongest possible supporting evidence for the Navy's recommendations on evolutionary development in defense organization.

Husar demonstrates considerable knowledge of the relations of the armed forces and the Bureau of the Budget with Congress. Also, his book provides useful background material for judiciously analyzing the motivations of Congressmen, who, from the nature of the electoral process, place constituents, district, state, and perhaps party, especially if in a minority, above the needs of the Nation. Despite numerous examples confirming this thesis, Husar fails to recognize this basic premise and also ignores the fundamental Constitutional defect of authority without responsibility given to Congress while the Executive suffers responsibility without authority, a fundamental management defect that only a parliamentary system can cure. Nevertheless, this scholarly piece of work by a former Bureau of the Budget employee, dwelling in his ivory tower at Cornell, shows sublime confidence that the Bureau of the Budget and Congress are perfectly capable of running the defences of the Nation without adequate professional advice. One reviewer intimates that his chortle of joy over the hamstringing of Tommy Atkins, Davey Jones, and the wild-blue-yonder boys changed to a death-rattle, possibly induced by the shock of Korea. Husar's dubious nugget was suggested as a reference by the Director of the Budget. The book proved a poor consolation prize in return for valiant, but fruitless, efforts to penetrate the curtain still hanging over the documented Executive portion of the melancholy scene herewith described.

Schwars provides an early and realistic estimate of Soviet recovery potential from the aftermath of war. Described somewhat vaguely as a post-doctoral fellowship project, his independent study of the few open Soviet sources
available gains stature by coming to the same conclusions as the Army General Staff did during the same period with the aid of British covert sources. Only one obvious finding is considered indisputable, namely, that golf clubs, yearly Cadillacs, and other conspicuous civilian consumption, when subtracted from fantastic American production indices relative to those of the Soviet orbit, reduce the apparent superior economic power of the United States as a usable instrument of policy in terms of immediate military effectiveness.