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SUMMARY OF ARMY ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES, 1900-1962

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18 February 1970

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The Spanish-American War demonstrated that the organization of the War Department was inadequate for even a small-scale modern war. Authority was shared by a Commanding General, responsible for military control and discipline, and a group of bureau chiefs directly under the Secretary of War, responsible for fiscal affairs and supply. Effective executive control was lacking at the top. Elihu Root, who became Secretary of War in 1899, sought to revamp the system so as to enable the United States to fight a major modern war without an agonizing reorganization. Under legislation obtained from Congress in 1903, Root replaced the Commanding General with a Chief of Staff who was to be the Secretary's principal military adviser and his agent in managing both the War Department bureaus and the line army. A General Staff was to assist the Chief in managing current operations and to perform strategic planning functions. The Army War College, established by Root, was initially an integral part of the General Staff.

Fundamental as Root's reforms were, his concept of tight executive control was imperfectly realized in the period between 1903 and 1918. The General Staff became immersed in administration at the expense of planning which was largely relegated to the Army War College. Its supervision of administration met resistance from the traditionalist bureaus headed by a resourceful Adjutant General, MG Fred C. Ainsworth, and in Congress where the whole General Staff concept was regarded with suspicion as a Prussian invention intended to subvert civilian control of the military. Ainsworth was forced to resign but the upshot of the affair

was that the National Defense Act of 1916 all but abolished the General Staff. The Act restricted the number of officers serving on the General Staff, forbade using the staff and students of the War College to perform General Staff duties, abolished certain divisions created when General Leonard Wood was Chief of Staff to manage the line Army, and forbade the General Staff from interfering with the administration of the bureaus. It granted statutory recognition to these bureaus and their chiefs and specified their functions in detail, giving them a Magna Carta to be cited in the future whenever their autonomy was threatened.

As a result the Secretary of War lacked any effective control apparatus when the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917. Congress permitted the enlargement of the General Staff, and it was reorganized into five functional committees to supervise the raising, training, and transporting of the new Army overseas. It exercised no effective authority over the bureaus and they engaged in a competitive scramble for supplies and facilities that led to a virtual breakdown of the whole machinery in December 1917.

Early in 1918, President Wilson reluctantly moved to establish tighter controls over the economy and obtained from Congress in the Overman Act of 20 May 1918 authority to reorganize the executive branch as he saw fit for the duration of the war. Meanwhile, Secretary of War Baker brought in a Cleveland industrialist, Benedict Crowell, as Assistant Secretary of War and later Director of Munitions to take charge of procurement, and recalled General Peyton C. March from France to replace MG Tasker H. Bliss as Chief of Staff.

Under the Overman Act, March and Baker reorganized the War Department.

As Chief of Staff, March became directly responsible to the Secretary for directing and coordinating the activities of the various War Department agencies. He proceeded to centralize authority over these agencies through a functional General Staff with an executive office directly under him to coordinate and expedite action. The principal divisions of the General Staff in August 1918 were: Military Intelligence; War Plans; Operations; and Purchase, Storage, and Traffic. The "Director" of each division was given executive authority to direct its activities as well as to plan and advise. Authority over the supply bureaus was placed under General George W. Goethals as Director of Purchase, Storage and Traffic. Although Goethals' agency was part of the General Staff, on procurement and industrial production he reported to Mr. Crowell as Director of Munitions. The staff directorates reorganized the activities under their control along functional lines and by the end of the war the traditional bureaus had ceased to exist as independent autonomous commands.

In providing a new statutory basis for Army organization in the National Defense Act amendments of 1920, Congress specifically rejected Baker and March's proposals to continue the tight wartime executive controls and restored much of the traditional autonomy of the bureaus, now variously identified as arms, services, or branches of the Army. It extended the bureau system by granting statutory recognition to the Chiefs of the Combat Arms -- Infantry, Cavalry, Field Artillery, and Coast Artillery; by retaining certain wartime agencies -- the Air Service, the Chemical Warfare Service, and the Finance Department; and by creating a Corps of Chaplains to make a total of 17 supply and service bureaus

whose Chiefs were collectively to be known as the War Department Special Staff.

The War Department General Staff was now to be composed of a Chief of Staff, four Assistant Chiefs of general officer rank, and 88 other officers not below the rank of captain. As shaped by General John J. Pershing, following a report of a board headed by MG James G. Harbord, the General Staff divisions, under the Chief and one Deputy, were to be G-1 (Personnel and Administration); G-2 (Military Intelligence); G-3 (Operations and Training); and G-4 (Supply), each under an Assistant Chief of Staff -- with a fifth section, the War Plans Division (WPD) under its own chief. This arrangement conformed to the pattern used in Pershing's theater staff in Europe. The General Staff was to make plans for recruiting, organizing, equipping, mobilizing, training, and demobilizing the Army, and for the use of military forces for national defense. On approval of these plans by the Secretary, the Chief of Staff was to act as his agent in carrying them out. The General Staff was not to engage in any administrative work pertaining to the regular bureaus which would interfere with their responsibilities, impair their efficiency, or duplicate their functions. It was to be a planning and advisory, not an operating, staff.

In recognition of wartime experience, the Act provided for an Assistant Secretary of War to be responsible for supervising procurement of military supplies and industrial mobilization planning. The Supply Arms and Services would report to the Chief of Staff through G-4 only on "military questions", while on "business and industrial questions" they would report to the Assistant Secretary.

The old geographical departments were supplanted by nine Corps Areas for purposes of "administration, training, and tactical control," to be grouped into Army areas if the President saw fit. The Harbord Board introduced the concept of a General Headquarters (GHQ) with a staff from WPD to be introduced in time of war. Through GHQ the Chief of Staff would take command of the field armies, with the Deputy Chief of Staff to replace him as head of the War Department General Staff.

Under the 1920 reorganization the Chief of Staff was again burdened with petty administration and the traditional coordination among General and Special staff agencies consumed an inordinate amount of time. The 1920 Act also failed to recognize the growing importance of the Air component, and in 1926 Congress created a separate Army Air Corps under its own Chief, provided for Air representation on the General Staff, and an additional Assistant Secretary of War for Air. Then, after some experimentation in command arrangements, in 1941 the War Department created the Army Air Force (AAF) as an independent command responsible directly to the Chief of Staff for air training and operations, finally separating the command of air and ground elements.

There were other adjustments in 1940-41 as the Army expanded rapidly. At the top level the position of Undersecretary of War was created and the statutory duties of the Assistant Secretary under the 1920 Act were transferred to him. General George C. Marshall, the Chief of Staff, added two deputies to assist in the burden of detail. Meanwhile, in keeping with the Harbord Board concept, GHQ was created in 1940 and it soon came into conflict with the AAF in its drive for autonomy.

After Pearl Harbor, Marshall found the War Department a "poor

command post." The Harbord Board's GHQ concept fitted neither the new role of air power nor a multi-front war requiring strong direction at the center. With President Roosevelt playing an active role as Commander-in-Chief, Marshall's most important function was to act as his military adviser (within the framework of the newly formed JCS and CCS organization) in planning military strategy and operations overseas. The Chief of Staff needed to delegate his time-consuming responsibilities as general manager of the War Department, speed up decision-making within that department, and set up a staff to assist him in his role as Presidential adviser.

The drastic reorganization of March 1942 met Marshall's needs. It was developed by a special committee, pushed through without normal staff coordination, and approved by the President under the First War Powers Act of 1941. It created three major zone of interior field commands -- Army Ground Forces (AGF), Army Air Forces (AAF), and the Services of Supply later renamed Army Service Forces (ASF). These three commands took over the bulk of the operating functions of the War Department General and Special Staffs. AGF became responsible for training ground troops. It absorbed the functions of the Chiefs of the Combat Arms, whose offices were abolished. AAF became responsible for training air troops and supplying them with items peculiar to the Air Force. It formed the nucleus of what was to become an independent Air Force. ASF was conceived as a catch-all for supply, service, and administrative functions not otherwise assigned. It established a central control over the supply bureaus (after 1942 known as Technical Services) including a newly established Transportation Corps, and over most of the administrative

bureaus. It brought together in one organization logistics functions formerly performed in the Undersecretary's Office and G-4. Under the ASF, nine service commands replaced the old corps areas in providing "housekeeping" services for all three major commands.

At the General Staff level, the reorganization transformed WPD into a powerful Operations Division (OPD), Marshall's command post and something of a general staff in itself. Except for G-2, which commanded a large Military Intelligence Service, the other General Staff sections were shorn of their supervisory responsibilities, severely cut back in personnel, and restricted to policy planning and coordination.

AGF and AAF were fully integrated commands, but ASF remained a holding company since the offices of the Chiefs of the Technical and Administrative Services were not abolished. ASF's chief, General Brehon B. Somervell, functioned both as staff officer and commander, and in both roles he clashed with other agencies as he aggressively sought to rationalize his organization and extend its control -- with OPD over responsibility for strategic-logistical planning; with G-1, G-3, and G-4, whose functions ASF sought to absorb; with AAF which sought to establish its own completely independent supply and administrative system; and with the Technical Service Chiefs who sought to maintain their independence in the face of Somervell's efforts to reorganize the ASF along functional lines.

ASF won few of these battles. The position of both AAF and of G-4 on the General Staff was strengthened, the Technical Services remained intact, and new agencies were formed on the War Department Special Staff performing functions that might have been assigned ASF. These included

a Manpower Board, a Strength Accounting and Reporting Office, a Budget Division, a Civil Affairs Division, a New Developments Division, and finally a Special Planning Division to develop plans for demobilization and the post-war army, including one for the post-war organization of the War Department.

The Special Planning Division was replaced in August 1945 by a special board of officers headed by LTG Alexander M. Patch and, after his death, by LTG William H. Simpson. A reorganization, basically in accord with the Patch-Simpson Board recommendations and again carried out under the President's war powers, became effective 14 June 1946. It restored something closely resembling the pre-war organization. ASF was abolished, OPD lost its preeminence among General Staff sections, and the Technical and Administrative Services regained much of their autonomy.

The Chief of Staff was given broad power to "command" all components of the Army, something not provided for in any existing legislation. Under him the War Department General Staff would consist of six co-equal directorates -- Personnel and Administration (P & A); Intelligence; Organization and Training (O & T); Services, Supply, and Procurement (S, S, & P); Plans and Operations (P & O); and Research and Development (R & D), the last a recognition of the new importance of science in military affairs. As the designation of directorates indicated, these agencies were endowed with greater power to "plan, direct, coordinate, and supervise" than the pre-war G- sections and WPD had possessed. ASF's staff supervisory functions were parcelled out among the General Staff directorates, S, S, & P getting the lion's

share. The eight Technical Services were placed under the primary supervision of S, S, & P, and the five Administrative services under the primary supervision of P & A. However, all of them, along with 10 other Special Staff agencies retained direct access to the Chief of Staff, again overburdening him with detailed management functions.

AGF and AAF remained intact, the former as a ground force training command and the latter with increased autonomy in recognition of the impending separation of the Army and Air Force. Six ZI Armies were established to train individuals and units and to perform functions of the ASF's wartime service commands which were also abolished. The ZI armies had dual lines of responsibility -- to AGF for their training functions and to the War Department for their housekeeping functions. The latter included support services for Class II installations operated by the Technical and Administrative Services.

The 1946 reorganization, superimposing functional General Staff directorates over a structure of mixed staff and command agencies, was viewed at the time as a temporary measure pending unification of the military establishment under a single Department of Defense (DOD). Actually the principle established, that the Chief of Staff should manage the Army through the instrument of an "operating" War Department staff rather than a functional command structure, was to survive until 1962.

Thus there was no really vital change in the internal organization of the Army resulting from the National Security Acts of 1947 and 1949 unifying the armed services. The War Department became the Department of the Army (DA) responsible only for land forces, and a new Department

of the Air Force took over the already quasi-independent AAF. As the new DA sought a basis for permanent legislation governing its structure staff sections were reshuffled and a significant struggle developed between modernizers who wanted to functionalize the Army organization and traditionalists who sought to preserve the Technical Service commodity organization.

In December 1947, the R & D Directorate fell victim to diminished appropriations and the desire to unite all logistics functions under S, S, & P. In January 1948 a Comptroller was established on the Army Staff responsible for financial management, statistical controls and the improvement of management techniques in the department. In March 1948 AGF was abolished and an Office of the Chief of Army Field Forces (OCAFF) substituted as a "field operating agency" responsible for training all troops except those of the Technical and Administrative Services. The ZI Armies were made directly responsible to the Chief of Staff for training as well as "housekeeping" functions.

In 1948 two studies, one by the Comptroller's Management Division and another by the management consultant firm of Cresap, McCormick & Paget, recommended the creation of a logistics command, a move that would have functionalized the Technical Services out of existence. The views of the Technical Service Chiefs prevailed, however, and the management studies resulted only in staff reorganization at the top. The single Deputy Chief of Staff was replaced in 1948 by a Vice Chief and two Deputies, the first for Plans and Operations, the second for Administration. The Director of S, S, & P was renamed Director of Logistics and given "direction and control" over the Technical Services,

and the Director, P & A, was given similar "direction and control" over the Administrative Services. Then early in 1950 the deputy system was revamped to provide one for Plans and Programs (planning), and one for Operations and Administration (execution), with the Army Comptroller serving as a third deputy responsible for review of the efficiency of the Army's operations (control). The General Staff directorates were redesignated as four G- sections under Assistant Chiefs of Staff. The O & T Directorate was abolished, its personnel functions transferred to G-1 and its training functions to OCAFF.

These changes were ratified by the Army Organization Act of 1950. Its principal feature, however, was the authority and flexibility granted the Secretary of the Army, under the direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, to prescribe the organization of the department and to conduct all its affairs. By inference the "command" role of the Chief of Staff was dropped, except insofar as he exercised it as agent of the Secretary. The act prescribed that there should be one Undersecretary and two Assistant Secretaries, and an Army Staff to be composed of a Chief of Staff, a Vice-Chief of Staff, not to exceed three Deputy Chiefs of Staff, and not to exceed five Assistant Chiefs of Staff, and some thirteen heads of Technical and Administrative Services (by name but without a prescription of their duties). Certain duties prescribed by law in the past for the Chief of Staff, the Comptroller, the Inspector General, the Corps of Engineers and the National Guard Bureau were not to be changed. Otherwise the Secretary could organize the Army Staff as he saw fit.

The financial management of the department was to be carried out

in accordance with instructions from the DOD Comptroller as prescribed in the National Security Act Amendments of 1949. This led to "performance" budgets, cutting across Technical Service lines. But despite their loss of independent budgets and of legally prescribed functions, the Technical Services continued to be the central problem of Army organization in the 1950's as one of their functions, research and development, took on increasing importance.

Two major DOD reorganizations in 1953 and 1958 respectively resulted in increasing centralization of authority in the Secretary of Defense. The military departments were removed from the chain of command, leaving them responsible only for personnel, training, fiscal, and logistical functions. The Secretary of Defense was given a number of Assistant Secretaries, granted greater authority to shift functions among the services, and greater control over research and development exercised through a Director of Defense Research and Engineering. To parallel changes within OSD, the Secretary of the Army, was authorized four assistant secretaries -- one for civil military affairs, one for financial management, one for logistics, and one for manpower and reserve forces. In 1955 a Director of Research and Development was added with Assistant Secretary rank.

The Chief of Staff had to devote much time to JCS duties, and delegated many of his functions as general manager of the department to the Vice Chief. The General Staff was again reorganized between 1954 and 1956 as a result of another study by outside experts, the Davies Committee. The committee recommended a logistics command, but instead the position Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DCSLOG) was

created out of G-4 with "command" over the Technical Services. When a Chief of Research and Development (CRD) was added to the General Staff with deputy rank, it made five deputies and three assistant chiefs of staff -- an obvious imbalance. To remedy it, G-1 and G-3 were abolished, and their functions and personnel combined with those of the DCS for Operations and Administration and the DCS for Plans to form two new offices of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER) and for Operations (DCSOPS) respectively. G-2's title was changed to that of Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (ACSI), and a new Assistant Chief for Reserve Components (ACSRC) named. Most of the Special Staff sections other than the Technical Services were grouped under DCSPER or DCSOPS. To fill the need for an agency at the top responsible for coordinating the work of the entire Army Staff, the Secretariat of the General Staff was expanded and reorganized.

In another development, the U.S. Continental Army Command (USCONARC) was created in 1955 replacing OCAFF and was made responsible for training and developing combat doctrine. USCONARC was given greater direct control over the CONUS Armies, while the Technical Services took over from the Armies the housekeeping functions for their Class II installations.

Meanwhile, the establishment of single managers for common supplies and services for the entire DOD, beginning in 1956, had a considerable impact on Technical Service functions. By 1960 the Secretary of the Army had been designated single manager for clothing, subsistence, land transportation, automotive supplies, and construction supplies, and had assigned the operating functions, in each case, to the Technical Service Chief in whose area it fell, affecting most significantly the functions

of the Quartermaster-General.

In 1961 a new Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, initiated the first major reorganization of the Department of the Army since 1946. Its basic principles were developed by an internal Army committee headed by the Deputy Comptroller, Mr. Leonard Holscher, and it was carried out, like the reorganization of 1942, without extensive staff coordination. The reorganization involved the practical abolition of the headquarters of the Technical Services -- the Offices of the Surgeon General and the Chief of Engineers excepted -- and the parcelling out of their functions, personnel, and installations among several new agencies. The newly created Defense Supply Agency centralized control of common supply and service functions, including the single managerships, taking the functions and associated personnel out of the Army entirely. The departmental reorganization provided for two new major CONUS commands on the same level with CONARC, the Army Materiel Command (AMC) and the Combat Developments Command (CDC). AMC was made responsible for research and development, production, and supply operations in the United States, CDC for development of combat doctrine, and all individual and unit training was consolidated under CONARC. The Technical Services thus lost their materiel functions to AMC, their training functions to CONARC, and their functions in the formulation of doctrine to CDC. A new centralized Office of Personnel Operations (OPO) was established under DCSPER to take over military personnel functions transferred from the Adjutant General and the Technical Services.

The field commands and activities of the Technical Services were regrouped into five commodity type commands and two functional commands

under AMC. The commodity commands - for weapons, munitions, mobility, missiles, and electronics carried out research and development, production and procurement, and exercised integrated commodity management within their respective spheres. A Supply and Maintenance Command managed wholesale supply, maintenance, and distribution activities for the Army, and a Test and Evaluation Command combined testing and evaluation functions formerly performed by both the Technical Services and CONARC boards.

One of the goals of the reorganization was to divorce the Army Staff from operations. Identifiable operating functions, mostly in DCSLOG and OCRD, were transferred to the new commands, and the staff reduced correspondingly. In addition, DCSOPS was split and staff supervision over the raising and training of the Army transferred to an Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development (ACSFOR). A Chief of Reserve Components, with greater directive authority, replaced ACSRC. Residual Quartermaster functions, not transferred to DSA, were entrusted to a Chief of Support Services. While some of the Technical Service Chiefs continued as Special Staff officers for a time, by 1965 all had disappeared except the Surgeon General and the Chief of Engineers.

The 1962 reorganization represented a victory for the modernists over the traditionalists and indeed resembled in principle, if not in detail, proposals advanced by General Somervell in 1943 for functionalizing the Technical Services.