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STUDY PROJECT

FACTORS AFFECTING SUCCESS IN COALITION COMMAND

BY

COLONEL RICHARD W. ANDERSCHAT, EN

31 MARCH 1986

US ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

FACTORS AFFECTING SUCCESS IN COALITION COMMAND

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Colonel Richard W. Anderschat, EN (Author)

Colonel Ralph Allen, ADA
Project Adviser

US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Richard W. Anderschat, COL, EN

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PREFACE

For some time during my military career I have been fascinated by the problems of coalition command. Readings of combined operations in the 20th Century whetted my appetite for this subject as did two tours of duty in West Germany, one of which included an assignment to Headquarters Central Army Group (CENTAG), a NATO major subordinate command. As a junior staff officer at CENTAG I watched in amazement at the constant push and shove, and give and take that occurred between national and alliance interests at an allied headquarters.

Nothing in my military training and education to include the Command and General Staff Officers Course prepared me for duty at a combined headquarters. As a student at the senior service school of the US Army, the War College, I again found no real attention focused on dealing with the problems of coalition command. Therefore, I decided that this would be an appropriate study area. Initial research indicated that my subject area was too broad so I altered my topic to "Factors Affecting Success in Coalition Command."

I am indebted to the following individuals for their assistance and guidance in this undertaking: Colonel Harold W. Nelson, DNS; and Dr. Richard J. Sommers, Mr. David Keough, and Mr. John Slonaker of the US Army Military History Institute.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

At first it had been the author's intention to study the role of General Dwight D. Eisenhower as a coalition commander. However, his efforts have been heavily researched and a considerable amount already published in this regard.[1] Since coalition forces fought throughout the European Theater of Operation (ETO) with some level of success, it was decided to look at the command experiences of some other senior US officers in that theater. Since this author had not done any historical research concerning the Mediterranean Theater it was decided to examine the command problems of General Mark W. Clark. First as deputy to Eisenhower for the Allied Invasion of North Africa, then as Commander of the Fifth Army, and finally as Commander of the Allied 15th Army Group, Clark had significant combined command experience in this theater.[2]

While performing initial research into Clark's role in the Mediterranean Theater, the role of General Jacob L. Devers who ultimately commanded the Allied 6th Army Group emerged. Therefore, it was decided to include him in this study as he had also been Commander of the US Army's European and North African Theaters of Operations.[3]

It was also felt that it would be desirable to look at combined command in another theater, since most studies point to the relative effectiveness of allied coalition commands in the ETO. It was thought that it would be illuminating to look at a theater where combined command was not entirely successful.[4] Therefore, the role of General Joseph W. Stilwell in the China-Burma-India Theater was chosen to complete the study.

By means of historical research, the backgrounds of all three commanders were studied to see if there were any factors in their education, training, and inter-war experiences that significantly contributed to their success as coalition commanders. Then their problems in command were analyzed to see what factors emerged that could be identified as to having contributed to their success or failure.

CHAPTER I

ENDNOTES

1. The subject of General Eisenhower as a coalition commander is covered extensively by Stephen E. Ambrose in The Supreme Commander, The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and by Forest C. Pogue in The Supreme Command, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II.

2. Martin Blumenson and James L. Stokesbury, Masters of the Art of Command, pp. 182-190.

3. Ibid, p. 173.

4. Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, Stilwell's Command Problems, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, pp. 471-472.

CHAPTER II

THE COMMANDERS

GENERAL JOSEPH W. STILWELL

The most colorful of the American coalition commanders selected for this study was General Joseph W. Stilwell. A 1904 graduate of West Point, he served two instructor tours at the Military Academy prior to duty in France in World War I. Stilwell's Philippine tours were with the 12th Infantry Regiment and those at West Point were with the Departments of Modern Languages, Tactics, and English and History. His second tour in the Philippines allowed him to visit China in 1911, and his instructor assignments saw him take summer leaves to visit Latin America and Mexico. Even at this early stage in his career, he had developed a reputation as a demanding perfectionist.[1]

During World War I he saw staff duty with both the British and French as a US Intelligence Officer. Upon his return to the United States in 1920, he volunteered to be a China language officer and thus was posted to China on the first of his three pre-World War II tours of duty there. On this tour of duty he was both a language student, road engineer, and intelligence agent. After a brief return to the United States for military schooling at Fort Benning and Fort Leavenworth, he returned to China in September 1926 for duty with the 15th Infantry Regiment at Tientsin.[2]

While serving with the 15th Infantry, Stilwell commanded one of its battalions, became Regimental Chief of Staff, and developed a strong personal and professional relationship with the 15th Regimental

Executive Officer, Lieutenant Colonel George C. Marshall. During this period, Stilwell traveled throughout China, continued his study of Chinese languages, and served as an observer of Chinese military affairs for the US Embassy.[3]

In 1929, Stilwell returned to the US for duty at Fort Benning where his mentor, George Marshall, was Assistant Commandant and Head of the Academic Department of the Infantry School. Marshall had thought so much of Stilwell from their time together at Tientsin that he had kept a position open for him as Head of the Tactics Department for almost a year. It was at Fort Benning that Stilwell acquired the nickname "Vinegar Joe" from an unhappy student who had suffered one of Stilwell's notorious tongue lashings. Marshall found him to be profane, intense, and intolerant, but a brilliant and energetic officer who was a consummate master of his trade. Marshall was attempting to reform the Infantry School, and he valued Stilwell for what he could do, and tolerated the vagaries of his personality.[4]

Stilwell set such strict standards for his subordinates at Fort Benning that General Marshall admitted in later years that he was asked at least three times by the Commandant at Fort Benning to relieve him. His puritanism regarding awards, promotions, and efficiency reports left patches of resentment behind him not only at Fort Benning but elsewhere in his future service.[5]

May 1933 saw Stilwell's Fort Benning tour come to an end with an assignment to Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) duty. He had not applied for attendance at the War College since Stilwell felt that it was a waste of time. CCC duty was followed by a 2-year assignment to the Organized Reserves where he was known as a "stiff task master but

an excellent instructor." Personally stifled in terms of career progression, Stilwell jumped at the chance to return to China in July 1935 when the position of Military Attache was offered to him. Newly promoted to Colonel, he returned to Peking in time to view some of the most vicious fighting of the Sino-Japanese War.[6]

During the ensuring 4-year period he observed closely the Chinese people, the Chinese soldier, and his leaders. He formed many opinions about the people he would have to work with so closely during World War II. These opinions formed the basis for the reforms of the Chinese Nationalist Army which he later tried to undertake. One report of his, near the end of his tour as Military Attache read: "Suppose the Chinese soldier were well-fed, well-armed and equipped, well-cared for, and well-led . . ..?"[7]

As Stilwell and his family prepared to return to the US in May 1939, he faced the prospect of having to retire within a year as he had over 30 years service and would soon have 5 years in grade. However, shortly thereafter dramatic changes took place in the US Army's highest levels of leadership. In August 1939, George C. Marshall was appointed acting Chief of Staff of the US Army, and one of his first official acts was to recommend Stilwell for promotion to Brigadier General.[8]

The years immediately prior to World War II saw Stilwell serve in a number of successful positions. First as a Brigade and then as a Division Commander he excelled during the large-scale maneuvers of 1940 and 1941. Then in July 1941 he was appointed Commander of the III US Corps at Monterey, California. The out-going Corps Commander rated Stilwell as the best of the 47 serving Major Generals in the US Army. Shortly after Pear Harbor, he was called to Washington for an important

assignment. Initially chosen to lead a US invasion of North Africa, he was ultimately offered the position of Commander of the US Mission to China, Commander of US Army Forces in the China-Burma-India Theater, and Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-Shek in his role as Supreme Allied Commander for the China Theater. Stilwell served in these positions and then as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander for the Southeast Asia Command until his recall in October 1944.[9]

GENERAL MARK W. CLARK

Sixteen years younger than Stilwell, Mark Wayne Clark graduated from West Point in 1917 and was sent to France where he earned command of an infantry battalion, and served on the Staff of the First US Army. Upon his return to the US he reverted to the rank of Captain and spent a tour of duty in public relations. This was followed by an assignment to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War where he was the Director of Sales for property disposal. In his job he traveled extensively throughout the country acting more like a business executive than an Army Officer.[10]

In 1925, Clark attended the Infantry School, and then he received a much-coveted assignment to the 30th Infantry Regiment where he served as Aide de Camp to the Regimental Commander. This was followed in 1928 by an assignment as Executive Officer of the 4th Brigade at Fort Russell, Wyoming. However, a year later he was assigned as Senior Drill Instructor to the Indiana National Guard where he remained until 1933 when he was promoted to Major and returned again to troop duty. In 1935 he saw duty with the Civilian Conservation Corps, as did so many of his

Regular Army colleagues. Selected to attend the Army War College in 1936, he participated in a student study concerned with the proper formation of US Army tactical units, especially divisions.[11]

As a War College graduate Clark was detailed to the General Staff Corps, and sent to the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. As the Division G-2 and G-3, he worked closely with the recently promoted Commander of the 5th Brigade, Brigadier General George C. Marshall on several major training exercises. In the summer of 1940 Marshall called Clark to Washington to be an instructor at the War College. When classes were suspended due to the expansion of the Army, Clark was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and assigned as Assistant chief of Staff for Operations under the legendary General Leslie J. McNair at General Headquarter (GHQ). Less than a year later, Clark was promoted to Brigadier General (ahead of his friend Eisenhower) and assigned as Deputy to McNair who had taken over Army Ground Forces.[12]

As the master trainer of the Army, McNair's work (and Clark's) was often in Marshall's view. When Eisenhower was sent to England in the spring of 1942 to arrange for the reception and training of American troops, he took Clark with him. While on this mission, Eisenhower and Clark met Prime Minister Winston Churchill who took an immediate liking to both of the young generals and invited them often to his country house, CHEQUERS. When Eisenhower was named commander of the US Army European Theater of Operations, he selected Clark to accompany him, and command the II US Corps. Later, he became Eisenhower's deputy for the allied invasion of North Africa, code named TORCH.[13]

While Clark and the allied staff were planning feverishly for the invasion of North Africa they received word through political channels

that certain high-ranking members of the French Forces in North Africa were willing to meet with the allies to arrange the surrender of their forces. Clark traveled with a small party via airplane and submarine to carry out this dangerous mission. His negotiations led to the ultimate surrender of the French, but not without some political problems. In dealing with the French, Clark's political ability was not lost on Eisenhower, who recommended Clark's promotion, and appointment as Commander of the 5th US Army. The 5th Army was scheduled to participate in the invasion of Italy, and for the invasion consisted of one US and one British Corps. Later, he also had the French Expeditionary Corps attached to his command. Clark's ability to handle a multinational command was recognized by Churchill who recommended him for command of the Allied 15th Army Group which he held from December 1944 until the war's end, and which consisted of military forces from 16 different nations.[14]

GENERAL JACOB L. DEVERS

The least likely coalition commander was General Jacob L. Devers. Older than Clark and younger than Stilwell, he had been the former's math instructor and the latter's pupil at West Point. A 1909 graduate of the Military Academy, Devers had extensive troop experience in addition to West Point instructor duty prior to his assignment to France in 1919 at the war's end. After attending a French artillery school and serving in the Army of Occupation in Germany for several months, he returned to the United States for 5 more years of instructor duty at West Point. A distinguished graduate of the Command and General Staff

College in 1925, he then served in a variety of artillery positions at Fort Sill until July 1929 when he was posted to Washington, D.C. and duty in the office of the Chief of Field Artillery.[15]

August 1932 saw him report to the Army War College where amongst other duties he prepared a General Staff Memorandum recommending the restructuring of the light field artillery of the division. Only one comment in his memorandum stands out and that is one concerning the amount of overhead per gun in the field artillery brigade.[16] Later, as the 6th Army Group Commander, he was known for having a lean, mobile headquarters.[17] After the War College, Devers returned to field artillery duty only to be reassigned once again to West Point in 1936 where he served on the headquarters staff, and finally as Graduate Manager of Athletics.[18]

In June 1939 he was transferred to the Panama Canal Department where he served as Chief of Staff, only to return in July 1940 to assume command of the Washington Provisional Brigade (a forerunner of today's Military District of Washington) and be promoted to Brigadier General. The year 1940 also saw him assigned as the senior US Army representative to the Devers-Greenslade Board which surveyed the Caribbean Basin, Bermuda, and Newfoundland for bases to be leased from the British in exchange for over-age destroyers.[19]

Devers' performance in the "bases for destroyers" negotiations had caught the eye of both President Roosevelt and Chief of Staff Marshall, so in October 1940 he was posted to Fort Bragg where he assumed command of the just-emerging 9th Infantry Division. This assignment proved him to be adept at both building a new post (Fort Bragg) and a new division (the 9th) at the same time. When Major General Adna Chafee, Head of the

Armored Force died unexpectedly in the summer of 1941, Marshall selected Devers to take over the Armored Force which at that time was almost a semi-autonomous command.[20]

As Head of the Armored Force, Devers proved to be a competent administrator and an exponent of the newly emerging combined arms (Infantry-Artillery-Armor-Close Air) doctrine.[21] With the untimely Death of General Frank Andrews in May 1943, he was chosen to be the US Army's Commander of the European Theater of Operations. In this position he was responsible for organizing and training US troops for the impending cross-channel invasion, and served as the War Department's representative in dealing with the British. In both of these responsibilities he demonstrated both administrative and diplomatic skills. When General Eisenhower returned to London in January 1944 to finalize preparations for the Normandy invasion, Devers was transferred to Algiers where he assumed command of the US Army's North Africa Theater of Operations, (NATOUSA) and was also deputy to General Wilson, the Supreme Allied Commander for the Mediterranean.[22]

As Commander of NATOUSA, Devers supervised the continued re-arming and re-equipping of the French Army and Air Force which had begun under Eisenhower. In this difficult position he earned the respect of the French leaders for his easy-going but fair attitude in dealing with them. Once again he served as the senior US military representative in a major theater of operations and won plaudits from the allied high command for his ability to deal effectively with the French.[23]

When the United States and British authorities finally agreed on an invasion of southern France to complement the landings in Normandy, the command was first offered to Clark. When Clark decided to stay in Italy

with the Fifth Army, Devers ultimately received command of the 6th Army Group which consisted of the US Seventh Army and the French First Army.[24]

CHAPTER II

ENDNOTES

1. Barbara W. Tuchman, Stilwell and the American Experience in China, pp. 15-43.

2. Ibid., pp. 49-50.

3. Ibid., pp. 101-117.

4. Forest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, Education of a General, p. 257.

5. Ibid., pp 257-258.

6. Tuchman, pp. 139-143.

7. Ibid., p. 197.

8. Ibid., p. 204.

9. "Joseph W. Stilwell" by John S. Sbrega, in the Dictionary of American Military Biography, ed. by Roger J. Spiller, pp. 1054-1057.

10. Martin Blumenson, Mark Clark, pp. 1-30.

11. Ibid., pp. 30-37.

12. "Mark Wayne Clark" by David Childress, in the Dictionary of American Military Biography, ed. by Roger J. Spiller, pp. 180-182.

13. Blumenson and Stokesbury, p. 185.

14. Ibid., pp. 186-189.

15. "Jacob Loucks Devers" by Alan Wilt, in the Dictionary of American Military Biography, ed. by Roger J. Spiller, pp. 257-260.

16. "The Nature and the Amount of Supplies and Equipment Required with the Light Field Artillery of the Division from the Battery to the Brigade For Which Organic Transportation Should be Provided," GSM by Major Jacob L. Devers, May 1933.

17. Russel K. Weigley, Eisenhower's Lieutenants, p. 345.

18. Blumenson and Stokesbury, p. 176.

19. Kent Roberts Greenfield, Robert I. Palmer, and Bell I. Wiley, Organisation of Ground Combat Troops, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, p. 130.

20. Blumenson and Stokesbury, p. 177.

21. Greenfield, Palmer, and Bell, pp. 260-265.

22. Blumenson and Stokesbury, p. 178.

23. Marcel Vigneras, Rearming the French, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, p. 153.

24. Forest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, Organizer of Victory, p. 428.

CHAPTER III

STILWELL'S COMMAND PROBLEMS

General Stilwell's command problems were many, not the least of which was the fact that he was not the first choice of either Secretary of War Stimson or of President Roosevelt. Stilwell's ultimate job was first offered to Lieutenant General Hugh A. Drum, Commander of the First US Army and former Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army under General Douglas MacArthur. Drum had been Stimson's choice to go to China as head of the US Military Mission and be Chiang Kai-Shek's Joint Chief of Staff, and the appointment had been approved by the President. When Drum and Marshall, who had been rivals for the position of Chief of Staff of the Army in 1939, had a heated discussion as to the importance of the mission and the alleged misuse of Drum's abilities, Stimson withdrew his support for Drum. As a result, Stilwell-who had supposedly been considered for the position but had been rejected because it was feared he would not have enough "face" with the Chinese officials who remembered him from the days as the US Military Attache--was offered the job.[1]

Records show that Stilwell did not ask for the position, but that Stimson was convinced after several long discussions with Stilwell that he was the right man for the job.[2] Marshall backed him fully, although in choosing him, he was aware of Stilwell's lack of diplomatic skill. However, in January 1942 it was essential to keep China in the war against Japan, and Stilwell had many other qualities that Marshall felt were important if he were to train troops and revive the "faltering

spirits of the Chinese. He was a skilled student of the art of war, a fine soldier, and the most knowledgeable senior officer in the US Army with regard to China.[2]

Although backed firmly by Marshall and Stimson, Stilwell did not have a strong personal relationship with President Roosevelt as Drum had, nor as Clark and Devers did. Stilwell was a conservative Republican and he regarded Roosevelt as a liberal Democrat. When Stilwell called on the President prior to departing on his mission, he was lectured to by FDR about the importance of China as a world power, and the need to keep her in the war. If Stilwell was not impressed by FDR, it appears that the feeling was mutual.[3]

One of the most significant problems that Stilwell faced was that he had too many responsibilities. Initially he was to be Chief of Staff to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek in his role as Supreme Allied Commander for China. From this position evolved Stilwell's command of the Chinese forces in Burma. At one time the notion even existed that he would command all allied forces in Burma, but the British sent Field Marshall Wavell to Burma, and he out-ranked Stilwell so that position never materialized. Still, he was commanding General of the US Army Forces in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations, and thus responsible for administering the US Lend-Lease Program to China. He also served as the President's representative to the Chinese government, and later in the war, he was also named Deputy to Lord Louis Mountbatten when he was named Supreme Allied Commander for the South East Asia Command (SEAC).[4]

Just the physical distances between the places where he was required to be are staggering. As Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-Shek he was expected to be in Chungking; Headquarters for the CBI was in New Delhi, 2,300 miles away, while SEAC headquarters was at first in Calcutta then at Candy in Ceylon 1,200 miles further to the south. Mountbatten commented that Stilwell "really was a grand old warrior but only the Trinity could be in three places at once."[5]

In addition to physical separation, these multiple roles placed Stilwell in a difficult position with Chiang Kai-Shek. As Chief of Staff to the Generalissimo he was assistant to the only Allied Theater Commander who did not report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Chiang Kai-Shek was essentially a free agent whose concepts of China's interests did not necessarily coincide with those of the allies. When the United States and China agreed on a matter Stilwell was able to fulfill his multiple roles. When the US and China disagreed on a matter he was placed in a dilemma, uncertain whether to comply with the wishes of Chiang or of Washington. Most often Stilwell took the US point of view, due to his allegiance to Stimson and Marshall. As a result, Chiang never really thought of him as his Joint Chief of Staff, never organized a joint staff for him, and never trusted or confided in him in that regard.[6]

Another problem facing Stilwell was that of reconciling what Chiang wanted to accomplish with what he had been ordered to do. The War Department orders issued to Stilwell were "to increase the effectiveness of the United States assistance to the Chinese Government for the prosecution of the war and to assist in improving the combat efficiency of the Chinese Army." Stilwell concentrated on the latter with

Marshall's backing while Chiang Kai-Shek (with support initially from FDR) expected more results in the former area. This was especially evident after Burma fell, and Stilwell wanted to concentrate his efforts on reform of the Chinese Nationalist Army, while Chiang wanted him to build up both the US and Chinese Air Forces in the theater.[7]

In taking a stance against Chiang in this regard, Stilwell lost more influence with the Generalissimo. Chiang had come to accept the air power precepts espoused by Major General Claire L. Chennault who at first headed Chiang's mercenary air force and then the US 14th Air Force. Chennault had a magnetic personality which attracted Chiang, and he also convinced President Roosevelt to back a major air effort against Japan from China over both Stilwell's and Marshall's objections.[8]

In pushing for reform of Chiang's army in lieu of building a strong Air Force, Stilwell failed to realize that he was advocating reform of Chinese society. The Chinese Nationalist Army in 1942 was a coalition of armed factions and provincial levies whose loyalties were personal and local rather than national. Chiang was not about to strengthen the power of any one faction of his army so that it could possibly challenge him. It took Stilwell almost a year to realize Chiang's fear in this regard. He then convinced Chiang that reform of sixty Chinese Nationalist divisions "will assure the Central Government of obedience to its orders." Then and only and after Chennault's Air Program had failed, did Chiang begin to provide the troops for re-training and re-equipping.[9]

In attempting to deal with Chiang Kai-Shek, Stilwell wanted to use the provision of Lend-Lease as a negotiating tool. He wanted to establish a "quid pro quo." For example, if Chiang provided 50,000

troops to be re-trained, then the US would provide 50 airplanes. This was the only way that Stilwell felt that he could get any action out of the Chinese. President Roosevelt refused to establish any form of "quid pro quo" in his dealings with China until late in the war because he felt that such a policy would detract from Chiang's position as head of an emerging world power. Roosevelt wanted to keep China in the war![10]

Still another major problem facing Stilwell was his lack of command authority over Chinese forces. Chiang Kai-Shek had promised that Stilwell would have command of the Chinese Forces in Burma during the original top-level negotiation concerning Stilwell's position. Chiang verified this when Stilwell reported to him at Chungking. However, when he got to Burma and issued orders to the 5th and 6th Field Armies, their commanders told Stilwell that he was in command in name only. They still received their orders from Chiang. Stilwell flew back to Chungking and attempted to resolve the problem. The Generalissimo assured him that he truly had command of the 5th and 6th Armies, and purportedly issued an order to that extent. Although this improved matters somewhat, he still found it difficult to get results. Units moved slowly if at all, dug in when ordered to attack, and appeared to still be taking orders from Chungking. The few results he obtained in the first Burma campaign were more the results of his personal will, cajoling, and harassment than of command authority. Later, Stilwell discovered that he had never received the "Official Seal" on his orders or the "Chop" which gave him "true" command authority and the right to execute subordinates who disobeyed his orders.[11]

A problem overlooked by some was Stilwell's personality. A rebel by instinct, he walked the razor's edge of insubordination almost all

the time. He was contemptuous of both the British and the Chinese for what he saw to be a defeatist attitude. He did a poor job of disguising his feelings, and his obscene nicknames and euphemisms for Chiang Kai-Shek and his associates were known to them. Even Roosevelt complained to Marshall about Stilwell's "sarcastic telegrams." Stilwell held little regard for those Americans like Chennault who sided with Chiang Kai-Shek against him. He never once had dinner with any of the Chinese general officers at Ramgarh training base because "he never had time for it." He seldom spoke to Chennault, one of his air component commanders, because he disliked him.[12]

However, it was Stilwell's success in fighting the Japanese in Burma with his reluctant forces that led to his ultimate downfall. During the first campaign in Burma (1942) the 5th and 6th Field Armies incurred heavy casualties because of what Chiang thought were Stilwell's aggressive tendencies. At Pyinmana in the same campaign, Stilwell sent part of the Chinese forces under his command to assist British units that were being over run. When this occured, the remaining Chinese forces were routed. This incensed Chiang Kai-Shek because the 5th and 6th armies were supposedly two of his best, and he had counseled Stilwell to be conservative in their use. Stilwell failed to realize that to Chiang it was far more important to keep his military forces intact than it was to defeat the Japanese. The importance of the concept of conserving strength was a long time in coming to Stilwell and was one of the basic differences between him and the Generalissimo that was never bridged.[13]

In early 1944 Stilwell abandoned his headquarters in Chungking and New Delhi in order to go to the field and lead his reluctant troops into

battle. At this time Roosevelt had seen the fallacy of Chennault's air power program and in fact had given Stilwell a modicum of negotiating power with Lend-Lease materials. When the British delayed and then cancelled plans for the re-invasion of Burma, the US acted unilaterally and ordered Stilwell to mount a campaign to retake Northern Burma. This was an ominous undertaking because it was contrary to the wishes of Mountbatten, the SEAC commander, and one of the few British besides General Slim with whom he got along.[14]

After 6 months of hard fighting, the Japanese were eliminated from North Burma, and the important land supply route to China from India via Burma was close to being a reality. However in defeating the Japanese, at Myitkyina and conquering North Burma he had lost the support of Mountbatten who felt that Stilwell had dragged the British into a land war in Burma that they wanted no part of. His Chinese forces although victorious sustained heavy casualties, and once again he incurred the wrath of Chiang Kai-Shek. Throughout his mission to China, Stilwell failed to realize that every action and decision of the Generalissimo had been molded by the principle of hoarding resources and conserving strength for the real battle--with the communists. From the viewpoint of Stilwell who was providing resources and believed in taking action, this was unacceptable and unjustified.[15]

Because of Stilwell's success in getting a portion of the Chinese Nationalist Army to fight, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff reasoned that China could be saved from Japanese advances in the East, only if Stilwell were given command of <u>all</u> Chinese forces. This was first presented as a recommendation to the Chinese, and then after several months of delay, as an ultimatum. Chiang Kai-Shek could not accept any

foreigner, much less Stilwell as the head of his armed forces, so he responded by requesting Stilwell's relief claiming that he had lost faith in his abilities. This was not Chiang's first attempt to have Stilwell recalled, but it was the first in which he had openly demanded it. President Roosevelt felt that he had no other choice, and brought General Stilwell home.[16]

The tragedy of Stilwell in China was that he accomplished what he was sent to do, and in so doing was placed in a position from which he could only fall.

CHAPTER III

ENDNOTES

1. Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, Stilwell's Mission to China, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, pp. 64-65.

2. Forest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, Ordeal and Triumph, pp. 356-362.

3. The Stilwell Papers, edited by Theodore White, p. 36.

4. Romanus and Sunderland, p. 74.

5. Romanus and Sunderland, Stilwell's Command Problems, p. 170.

6. Romanus and Sunderland, Stilwell's Mission to China, p.88.

7. Ibid, p. 283.

8. Ibid, p. 310.

9. Tuchman, p. 317.

10. Romanus and Sunderland, Stilwell's Mission to China, p. 186.

11. Stilwell Papers, p. 117.

12. Monograph, MG Haydon L. Boatner, 1971.

13. Tuchman, p. 490.

14. Romanus and Sunderland, Stilwell's Command Problems, p. 169.

15. Tuchman, p. 491.

16. Romanus and Sunderland, pp. 471-472.

CHAPTER IV

CLARK AND DEVERS' COMMAND PROBLEMS

Mark Clark and Jake Devers' problems as coalition commanders pale in significance when compared to Stilwell's but serve to illuminate some of the factors that made combined command both possible and successful in the European and Mediterranean Theaters.

General Clark's first significant problem in combined command occured in his role as deputy to General Eisenhower for the invasion of North Africa. Eisenhower's headquarters had been directed to send a party headed by a "senior US officer" to meet with representatives of the French Forces in North Africa who might assist in the landing of Allied Forces in their area. Clark (as a young Major General) was sent on this dangerous mission via B-17 bomber and submarine from London to the coast of North Africa. There he met with French military officers who were anxious to assist the allies. They warned that the Germans were going to move into Tunisia soon, and they provided badly needed intelligence information about minefields, obstacles, harbors, and air fields. Lastly, they provided the name of a senior French officer, "about whom all the French military in North Africa were expected to rally." This was General Henri Giraud.[1]

The significance of finding this "rallying figure" laid in the allies hope that this person would be able to convince the members of the French Forces in North Africa to lay down their arms and not resist the allied invasion. Unfortunately Giraud was in southern France, having escaped from a German prison. When Giraud was brought to

Gibraltar, where the invasion headquarters had been set up, he proved to be a difficult "rallying figure." Giraud had been lead to believe that he would be put in command of all allied forces. It was Clark's job to convince him that he could head all French Forces, but not all the allies. Then, when the allies found that Giraud was not the "rallying figure" that they had expected, Clark had to make an accomodation with Admiral Darlan who was the "de facto" deputy of Field Marshall Petain of the Vichy Government.

It fell to Clark to bring together the divergent French factions who essentially hated and distrusted each other. In getting Generals Giraud, and Juin, and Admiral Darlan to come together, Clark used congeniality, cunning, deceit, guile, and extreme forcefulness. At one time when negotiations were deadlocked, he left all the high-ranking officers locked in a villa surrounded by a company of US Infantry. When negotiations appeared totally hopeless he appealed to the pride of the Frenchman and pounded on the table.[3]

In the end he got the results he was sent after; the French quit fighting the allies. His handling of the French Officers involved was fair enough that they all later worked closely with him. General Juin in fact commanded the French Expeditionary Corps in Clark's Fifth Army. The biggest problem in dealing with the French according to Clark was the lack of policy from Washington, and the constant change of the little that there was. Therefore, he and Eisenhower felt comfortable in what they had done with Darlan even though there was a great political outcry because they had dealt with a "NAZI SYMPATHIZER"--Darlan.[4]

Another of Clark's problems was his relative youth. At 46 years of age (in 1942) he was younger than most of the British and French

Generals that he worked with, and sometimes commanded. In fact two of his US Corps Commanders, Dawley and Lucas, were senior to him also. After the breakout from Salerno, Clark as Fifth Army Commander had ordered both his British and US Corps Commanders to attack simultaneously across the Volturno River on a wide front. The British Corps Commander, General McCreery did not like this plan and protested to Clark. Clark went to visit him and sensing that McCreery felt very strongly about this decision, suggested that they go for a walk, away from their staffs. Clark claims that McCreery said that he was "embarassed when a young American (General) gives us orders that we don't like." Clark let McCreery "get it off his chest" and then did the same. In closing he told McCreery "all units have their orders and they will carry them out, and I know you will. . . I know that you realise the difficult position I am in when I give you orders that you don't like."[5]

On still another occasion, one of Clark's decisions was challenged because of his youthfulness. During the heavy fighting in the vicinity of Monte Cassino, General Alexander had attached the New Zealand Corps to Clark. Commanded by Lieutenant General Sir Bernard Freyberg, a hero of the First World War, the New Zealanders had always been given certain prerogatives and handled delicately by the British. After initial ground attacks by his forces met heavy resistance in the vicinity of the Abbey at Monte Cassino, General Freyberg requested that the Abbey be bombed. Clark turned down Freyberg's request, but because of the protocol in effect, he was required to forward Freyberg's request up to General Alexander at Allied Forces Headquarters. This was necessary

because Freyberg was senior to Clark. Alexander overruled Clark, and the abbey was bombed.[6]

The other major problem Clark had was that once Eisenhower left the Mediterranean Theater, he was operating in essentially a British Theater of Operations. As commander of 5th Army he reported to General Alexander who commanded the 15th Army Group, which reported to General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, the Supreme Allied Commander for the Mediterranean Theater. As a consequence Clark felt that the British were always attempting to take more than their fair share of the glory for battles won by the 5th Army. Therefore, he zealously guarded his army's reputation and left no stone unturned when the opportunity came to take Rome ahead of the British. In this case he ignored a somewhat nebulous order of Alexander's that would have had the 5th Army hold outside of Rome, while the British 8th Army would have triumphantly entered the eternal city.[7]

As the Mediterranean became more and more of a British-dominated theater, Clark became caught in the middle (ala Stilwell) between conflicting US and British views as to its importance. This came to a head when Clark was ordered by Eisenhower to begin planning for the invasion of Southern France (Anvil) with troops from the Fifth and Seventh US Armies. The British were opposed to ANVIL, proposing instead to advance up through the Julian Alps, the Ljubljana Gap and into the mid-Danube and Vienna.[8] Clark's alliance with the British on this strategy had several results. Because of his desire to stay with the 5th Army, command of the invasion of Southern France, was given to Lieutenant General Jacob L. Devers, his US Theater Commander. To

replace Devers, General Marshall chose to send his deputy, Lieutenant General McNarney, who was "more acquainted with Washington's views."[9]

Conflict between US and British views brought to a head a personal conflict between Devers and Clark. Evidently they had clashed while Devers commanded the Armored Force and Clark was Chief of Staff at Army Ground Forces Headquarters.[10] After Devers replaced Eisenhower as commander of NATOUSA and became Deputy to General Wilson, Clark felt that he never got the administrative support (especially replacements) that he should get from Devers. When Devers was selected to command the invasion of Southern France, he chose which units he wanted from Clark's Fifth Army. Since Devers was now to report to Eisenhower, who strongly desired ANVIL, Devers selected the best units available in Fifth Army. It is not clear as to whether Devers took advantage of his position as US Theater Commander or not in this regard, but it is clear that after the ANVIL troops were removed, that 5th Army was a much less potent fighting force.[11]

After the decision was reached for the major US British effort to be in Northern France, the Mediterranean become a secondary theater. Alexander accepted this, and Clark did publicly. But privately, he always felt that it was a grievous mistake.[12] From mid-1944 on, Clark was never resourced at the level required to accomplish the mission as he saw it. However, in terms of the mission as seen by Washington and the JCS he was successful. As Fifth Army, and later 15th Army Group Commander, he kept large numbers of German forces tied up that could have been used as reinforcements on the Eastern or Western Fronts. The tragedy of Clark is similar to that of Stilwell: Because he was successful, he was denied the means to accomplish even greater feats.

General Devers' problems in combined command differed again from Clark's and Stilwell's. First it must be remembered that he actually held an operational combined command for only 9 months, from September 1944 through May 1945. As such he was a late-arriving member of the command team that Eisenhower had worked with since 1942. Devers was older than Eisenhower, and they had never served together during the inter-war years. From 1943 on, when Devers replaced General Frank Andrews as Commander of the US Army's European Theater of Operations (ETOUSA), they only worked together tangentially. In fact for some time Devers had been rumored to be the choice to command the cross-channel invasion, before Eisenhower was appointed to that position. As commander of ETOUSA, Devers had sided with the British and the US Army Air Corps when Eisenhower had tried to get control of the 8th Air Force's Strategic Bombers for tactical operations in Italy.[13]

In any case, when Eisenhower was selected to command the cross-channel invasion and returned to London in January 1944, Devers took his place in North Africa. While in Algiers, one of Devers primary duties was to continue the program of re-equipping and re-arming the French that had begun during Eisenhower's tenure as NATOUSA commander. This task called on him to constantly solve questions of conflicting priorities for re-armament between French Forces and other allied units. With little guidance from Washington and the War Department, Devers handled this situation with aplomb and success, once again catching Marshall's eye.[14]

While dealing with the problems of the cantankerous French, Devers developed a reputation for being firm but fair, and sensitive to the proud feelings of the French and their desire to redeem the "honor" they

had lost in 1940. He developed and maintained good personal relations with the French military authorities which held him in good stead when the First French Army under General de Lattre was assigned to his 6th Army Group. While in North Africa, he also came to know most of the French political figures, and even had a good working relationship with General De Gaulle.[15]

In addition to joining the ETO command team late, Devers was not Eisenhower's choice to be part of that team. Clark had been Ike's original choice to lead ANVIL, when it was planned to occur simultaneously with the cross-channel invasion (OVERLORD). When fighting bogged down in Italy, and Clark indicated a desire to stay there until at least Rome was taken, Eisenhower proposed Patton for command of ANVIL. When Marshall countered that Patton was better suited for fighting on the open plains of Northern France than in the mountains to the south, Eisenhower accepted Devers for the ANVIL command. Clearly though, Devers was a "Marshall Man" and not Eisenhower's first or even second choice.[16]

Devers primary problem, other than being a somewhat unwanted commander, was that of controlling the French Forces under his command. Initially his control of the First French Army (FFA) was good. He assigned Major Henry Cabot Lodge who was fluent in French and had good political savvy to be his liaison officer to General de Lattre at FFA Headquarters. All orders were explained to de Lattre by Lodge, often with Devers present. Objectives for the FFA were selected with French sensitivities in mind and at least one French Division Commander, General Le Clerc was allowed to serve (at his request) under an American superior rather than de Lattre.[17]

This system worked well for Devers until late in 1944. During the height of the German winter offensive in the Ardennes in December 1944, Eisenhower ordered Devers to withdraw the First French Army from Strasbourg, which they had just liberated, in order to shorten his lines and give him the forces needed to eliminate the German 19th Army still in the "Colmar Pocket." Such a move left Strasbourg susceptible to German re-occupation and Devers was sensitive to the political implications of this action. Devers attempted to convince Eisenhower that he had sufficient forces to accomplish his mission without giving up Strasbourg. Eisenhower refused Devers' plea and ordered him to go ahead with the withdrawal. Devers issued orders to the FFA for the action and the French authorities immediately challenged the order. De Gaulle went to Eisenhower and argued the French case. When Eisenhower refused to change his mind, De Gaulle countered that as head of the French Provisional Government he would withdraw the French Forces from Eisenhower's control. Eisenhower needed the French and had no immediate leverage over De Gaulle, so he cancelled his order to withdraw.[18]

Another serious care of French intransigence with respect to Devers' control occurred late in April 1945, when the French Forces under de Lattre captured Stuttgart after it had been designated a US objective. Prior to its capture it had been within the French zone of operations, but one day prior to the scheduled attack, the army boundaries were changed and Stuttgart became a US Seventh Army objective. De Gaulle reasoned that objectives at this stage of the war needed to be determined by politics rather than military necessity, so he ordered de Lattre to seize Stuttgart, but to allow access to the Americans. Devers ordered the French to withdraw, and they refused. He

went to Stuttgart, and saw that the French had allowed the US forces to enter it, and that it was not a worthwhile military objective, so he remanded his withdrawal order. However, Devers had also reported this incident to Eisenhower at SHAEF who sent De Gaulle a strongly worded message which stated that "this action caused him (Eisenhower) to question the certainty with which he could count on the French forces in further operations."[19]

The most serious case of French insubordination followed shortly thereafter when the French First Army at de Lattre's direction pushed through the US 10th Armored Division to capture the city of Ulm. Ulm was significant to the French for it was the place where Napoleon had triumphed over the Austrians in 1805. It was also important to the French for it provided them the opportunity to establish forces along the Iller River from Ulm to the Austrian frontier. Actually Devers had been sensitive to the French desires in the latter regard and had given them what he thought would be an adequate land approach to Austria. When word of the French incursion into US lines reached Devers he sent his Liaison Officer, Lodge, to de Lattre demanding an immediate French withdrawal. De Lattre paid no head until the French, along with the elements of the US 10th Armored Division took Ulm. At this point in the war (late April 1945) the French appeared to be obeying Devers' and Eisenhower's orders only when they saw fit.[20]

However, unknown to Devers, Eisenhower had taken action after the "Stuttgart incident" to strengthen his hand in dealing with the French. On 23 April 1945, he advised the US Joint Chiefs of Staff that he agreed with their recent proposal to stop the shipment of any additional military equipment designated for the French. In addition, Eisenhower

unilaterally suspended the issue of equipment in theater that had been approved for issue to the French.[21]

When in early May, the French once again disobeyed an order from Devers to withdraw from a contested area along the Franco-Italian border, Eisenhower suspended the issuance of equipment that had just been renewed after resolution of the Stuttgart incident. Additionally he surfaced the problem of French insubordination through the Combined Chiefs of Staff to Washington. When President Truman learned of the situation he ordered a halt to the issue of all military equipment and munitions to the French. General Marshall further strengthened Eisenhower's hand by ordering the cessation of all Lend-Lease support to the French. Although the restriction was later modified slightly to allow the US to issue rations and gasoline to the French, the train that Eisenhower started rolling never stopped again with regard to the issuance of US supplies and equipment to other French units.[22] The "quid pro quo" that Stilwell had argued for vice the Chinese Nationalist Government was finally applied by the US Government, but in the wrong theater!

Devers' role as a combined commander ended quickly with victory in Europe. In June 1945 he was named commanding General of the Army Ground Forces, a position in which he excelled because of his strong administrative talents.[23]

CHAPTER IV

ENDNOTES

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4. Interview with GEN Mark W. Clark, by LTC Forest C. Rittgers JR, Section II, p. 35.

5. Mark Clark, Calculated Risk, pp. 222-224.

6. Ibid, p. 229.

7. Ernest F. Fisher Jr., Cassino to the Alps, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, pp. 541-542.

8. Forest C. Pogue, The Supreme Command, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, p. 218.

9. Forest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall, Organizer of Victor, p. 428.

10. Interview with MG Lyman Lemnitzer, 16 January 1948, by Stanley Matthews OCMH files.

11. Blumenson and Stokesbury, p. 130.

12. Clark, p. 368.

13. Charles B. McDonald, The Last Offensive part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, p. 17 and Bradley and Blair, A General's Life, p. 210.

14. Marcel Vigneras, Rearming the French, part of the official history series, US Army in World War II, pp. 362-366

15. Ibid, p. 366.

16. Pogue, pp. 375-376.

17. Thomas E. Griess, BG, letter to author, 6 January 1986.

18. Weigley, Eisenhower's Lieutenants, p. 710.

19. McDonald, pp. 427-430.

20. Ibid, pp. 430-432.

21. Vigneras, pp. 362-366.

22. Ibid, pp. 367-372.

23. Blumenson and Stokesbury, p. 181.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A considerable number of factors emerged from this study which can be seen as contributing to the success or failure of the study subjects as coalition commanders. Although there were general similarities in their backgrounds, there is nothing in their education or training which appears to have especially prepared them for combined command. All three were West Point graduates. Devers and Stilwell each returned to the academy several times as instructors; Clark never returned in any capacity. Stilwell was gifted in foreign languages, Devers commented after the War that he had "almost been found" in French.[1] Clark and Devers had tours of duty at the War Department during the interwar years, but Stilwell shunned that type of duty, preferring to serve overseas in China. None commanded at the Regimental or Brigade level until shortly before World War II began. All three attended the Command and General Staff Officers Course, but only Clark and Devers attended the War College. In their pre-World War II assignments, only one common thread appears: Their performance in a difficult task caught the eye of Chief of Staff Marshall, who then assigned them to increasingly more difficult and responsible positions.

The factors which emerged from the study of their combined or coalition combined experiences are numberable. First of all a successful commander of combined forces has to be a consummate professional. He must be experienced and knowledgeable of the art of war and must understand the capabilities and application of the other

component (i.e., Naval and Air) forces supporting him. Clark and Devers were good in this regard. Stilwell understood ground forces as well as anyone, but because of his personal and policy disputes with Chennault, never made maximum use of the air power available to him. This commander also has to have ingenuity for he will face problems for which no military school or text will prepare him. Devers and Stilwell demonstrated this with the system of liaison officers which they used to control their allied forces.

The consummate military professional mentioned above also has to be able to think on the political and strategic levels, in addition to the purely military level. In order to do this he must understand not only the policy of the alliance, and also the policy of his own country, but also the national policy of each of the other members of the coalition. In addition, he has to then be sensitive to their views, which may differ from his. Clark did well in this regard and was even considered "too British" in his views, later in the war. However, he took heavy criticism for negotiating the "Darlan deal" which although militarily and politically expedient was counter to an emerging US anti-NAZI Policy which extended to sympathizers or collaborators like Darlan. Devers was sensitive to the French, and sometimes was criticized by Eisenhower for being overly so. Stilwell thought that he understood the US policy toward China as articulated to him by Stimson and Marshall. Unfortunately, President Roosevelt was the primary architect of the US's China Policy, and only FDR knew what it was at any one time. Stilwell understood the British policy towards South East Asia, did not

sympathize with it, and showed his contempt for it openly. In spite of his years of experience in China, he did not understand China's policy towards the war until late in his tenure.

Another factor which emerged is the need for the coalition commander to have some form of leverage or "bargaining power" with the other elements of the alliance. Devers had control over the French through LEND-LEASE; at the time of ANVIL they still had a large number of units that they wanted to re-equip. Because the British needed the US in the Mediterranean, Clark had the influence that he needed. The same applied to Clark's relations with the French. As pointed out earlier, the President's policy toward China and Chiang Kai-Shek put Stilwell at a great disadvantage when it came to trying to convince the Chinese to adopt an unpopular course of action.

Coupled with leverage or influence is the need for the coalition commander to be a good persuader. Clark demonstrated this in his dealings with Alexander, Churchill and Marshall but even more importantly with his subordinates like the recalcitrant McCreery. Devers was not especially strong in this area, but he usually persuaded the French to do what he wanted them to do. Stilwell was strong in pushing persuasion down to the lower level. His success in North Burma was mostly because of what he convinced his subordinates that they could do. However, he was ineffective in applying persuasion upward--to Chiang Kai-Shek, and for a long time with President Roosevelt.

Legitimacy of position or primacy of power is also essential. Devers had to fight for the respect and authority due him as the 6th Army Group Commander because he had not been Eisenhower's choice for the job. Clark did not have as difficult problem in this regard, but he was

challenged by both British and American officers more senior to him because of his relative youth. Stilwell had the most difficulties in this area: First, because Chiang Kai-Shek never did want to delegate to him true command authority over some, much less all of his forces. Second, because Chiang never did want him to be his Joint Chief of Staff, and proved this by never setting up a joint staff. Only when he was given leverage through the "quid pro quo" via the release of LEND-LEASE materiel was he able to get command of the Chinese Army in India for the North Burma Campaign.

Staying power or backing is also important to the coalition commander. Stilwell had such strong backing from Stimson and Marshall that he was able to overcome at least three attempts by the Chinese government to have him recalled. Devers had Marshall's backing, which neither Clark nor Eisenhower could dent. Clark also had strong backing, originally from McNair and Marshall, then from Eisenhower, and also from Roosevelt and Churchill.

However, the most important factor that emerged from this study is that of personality. Strong interpersonal skills are absolutely essential to the success of a coalition commander. Clark had a likeable personality that won him McNair and Marshall's backing, and then the rest. In spite of his harsh treatment of Generals Giraud and Juin during the Darlan negotiations, both of these French officers worked closely with Clark afterwards. Devers had a similiar ability with both the British and the French. Stilwell was the weakest of the three in this factor. Naturally reticent, but profane and intolerant, he drove his subordinates much less his allies almost to the point of mutiny. He never wanted to take the time to do the diplomatic things needed to

cement a relationship together. Chiang Kai-Shek thought that Stilwell had a "superiority complex" and always talked down to him. In a post-war interview General Marshall stated that Stilwell's lack of tact and outspokeness were his two greatest enemies.[2]

Therefore, in concluding it can be seen from this study that many factors emerged that are essential to the success of a coalition or combined forces commander: professional skill, ingenuity, capacity for broad thought, knowledge of alliance and national policies, sensitivity to national views, diplomacy and tact, staying power, leverage or influence, and primacy of position. Lastly it was determined that personality was a key factor, for as General Dwight D. Eisenhower the leader of the greatest coalition army in World War II once stated, "Personality is everything in War!"[3]

Recommendation:

That part of the Army War College curriculum be devoted to the study of the art of coalition warfare and the means whereby it has been successfully accomplished in the past.

CHAPTER V

ENDNOTES

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