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THESIS

THE FULCRUM OF NECESSITY:
STRATEGIC PLANNING BEFORE PEARL HARBOR

by

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The Fulcrum of Necessity:
Strategic Planning Before Pearl Harbor

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a historical analysis of the evolution of strategic planning in the United States during the years 1919-1941. It examines the interwar genesis of U.S. strategic culture, and focuses on three aspects: structure, process, and products. Army, Navy, and joint planning agencies, as well as their interrelationships, are analyzed. Within the military, the planning process was limited throughout the interwar years by a lack of national policy guidance. Moreover, the joint planning process was hindered by a lack of executive authority and inattention to the production and incorporation of strategic intelligence information. The products of interwar planning efforts were increasingly sophisticated strategic plans and, more importantly, a corps of strategists who were subsequently able to craft the winning strategy for World War II. The study concludes that despite its ad hoc origins, the American planning structure produced successful strategic thinkers and concepts, and the interwar years provided the seminal impetus for the development of joint planning.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The 1898 marked a watershed in U.S. history. The country emerged from the Spanish-American War as a power to be reckoned with; possessing energy and vast power but lacking the foreign policy machinery to realize its national interest. Each ensuing war pushed the nation further along a new and undesired direction towards world leadership. After World War I, the U.S. sought to renounce its responsibility as the pre-eminent power by lapsing into an almost petulant isolationism and anti-militarism; as if war could be avoided simply by means of diplomacy without regard to military power.

The Japanese attack on December 7, 1941, left the pride of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet lying in the muck on the bottom of Pearl Harbor. The war which for so long the United States sought to avoid had come at last. Four and one-half years later it concluded and the U.S. emerged as the world leader *par excellence* and the sole possessor of the *dernier cri* in weaponry--the atomic bomb. But was this successful outcome the result of thorough planning or merely good fortune? Did we enter the war with a viable strategic plan? If so, how was it arrived at? More importantly for our purposes, what was the nature of the U.S. strategic planning process during the preceding interwar years? How does an era

which some would consider ancient history relate to the present? What follows is an explanation of the ad hoc administrative history the U.S. strategic planning process as it evolved in the twilight years between this century's two world wars and especially its search for a strategic coherence.

This study's hypothesis is that the interwar years provided the genesis of strategic planning as we know it today and that this influence is generally unrecognized today. Furthermore, a historical examination of the strategic planning process during those years can provide useful insight into the following questions:

- Is coordinated strategy planning a desireable goal? Why?
- Is the accuracy of strategic plans more important, or less important, than the process?
- What are the primary products, explicit or implicit, of the strategic planning process?
- What are essential elements which must be included in the process in order for it to be effective?

The interwar years are of interest to strategic planners for a number of reasons. First of all, the period from 1918-1941 marks a transitional era which followed World War I; the first major mobilization of the U.S. population for war. Additionally, it precedes World War II. A conflict which completed the transformation of the U.S. national security structure that was begun as a result of the Spanish American

War and was furthered by World War I. During this time, the nation struggled to resolve two opposing exigencies: traditional isolationism cum pacifism fueled by revulsion to the European political machinations which led to the war as well as the horrific casualties which ensued; and the military imperatives, driven by the nature of modern warfare, which promised to exact extreme penalties from those nations caught unprepared. It was a question of finding the balance between the nation's proclivity toward a militia-based military that was fundamentally dependent upon mobilization on the one hand and reliance upon a professional standing military on the other.

Second, the interwar years were a period of political fermentation. The map of Europe was once again redrawn, at the behest of the victors of World War I, to emasculate the offending losers. New countries were created. Nascent powers, such as Japan, waxed while others waned. An optimistic political experiment called the League of Nations was conceived, accepted by the world, and subsequently spurned by its motherl .id. Rabid nationalism in the form of communism, fascism, and Nazism were spawned in the husks of countries bled dry by World War I and the Great Depression. For strategic planners, this meant that the nature and direction of the threat were not always clear and the problems of long-term strategic planning were subsequently compounded.

Third, the interwar years were a period of rapid technological change. In particular, the military was grappling with the implications of new and rapidly evolving weapons such as the airplane, the submarine, and the tank. Accompanying and advocating these new weapons were heretical young officers such as Billy Mitchell, B.H. Liddell Hart, Heinz Guderian, and M.N. Tukhachevsky. These upstarts challenged established military doctrine and fueled the controversy over the future structure of the military; thus, further complicating the planner's calculus.

Fourth, a nation horrified by the excesses of the war in Europe and the "evils" of modern weapons embraced the burgeoning pacifist movement. Spurred by Wilsonian idealism, professions of peaceful intent and arms limitations were signed on an unprecedented scale. Battleships, the strategic weapons of the day, melted under the pens of signatories of the Washington Treaty in 1922. At Locarno, Italy in 1925, the primary belligerents of World War I met to renounce aggression as an instrument of policy. Voices of concern were drowned in the rising "peace tide".

Finally, the nation struggled with the problem of defining an integrated combined defense organization in an era of economic and political (i.e. as regards attitudes toward the military) austerity. The booming promise of the twenties soon gave way to the broken dreams of the thirties. A nation

struggling wearily in the throes of the Great Depression could barely provide for the basic needs of her people--let alone pay for military expenditures. Competition for the shrinking defense dollar did little to promote the interservice cooperation required for coherent coordinated strategic planning.

Clearly, there are a number of parallels with today. First, we are presently in the midst of a transitional stage in the evolution of our national security structure. The recent, apparent crumbling of "cold war" paradigms has prompted a reexamination of the defensive needs and strategic assumptions of our national security structure. While the Soviet Union remains our primary nuclear threat, the events of the past year have reduced the Warsaw Pact to an empty shell. Meanwhile, third world countries are increasingly gaining access to sophisticated weapons such as ballistic missiles and nuclear technology--without acquiring commensurate restraints to their use.

Second, the political landscape of the world is evolving from a traditional east-west bipolarity into multipolarity. The incredible changes occurring within the Soviet Union, the emancipation of Eastern Europe, the growth of the European Economic Community, and the resurgence of Japan as an economic juggernaut all signal the need to reassess our strategy.

Third, advances in computing, directed energy weapons, the Strategic Defense Initiative, stealth technology, and proliferation of nuclear weapons are all examples of the unparalleled technological changes occurring today. Many of today's weapons have never been used in combat. Much like the tank, the submarine, and the airplane of yesterday; the effects of modern weapons have yet to be fully integrated into the strategic calculus.

Fourth, arms control once again occupies center stage as the United States and Soviet Union play out their strategic duet. For the first time ever, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty has eliminated an entire category of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks and its successors hold the promise of vastly reduced strategic nuclear arsenals. As a result, the ultimate structure of our nuclear deterrent force is the subject of much debate--and few answers are forthcoming.

Finally, the United States is once again entering an era of economic austerity for the armed forces as the nation struggles to balance the costs of modern weaponry with the very real social welfare needs of her populace. It is increasingly difficult to justify the current U.S. force structure or the acquisition of new weapons when our foremost enemy has apparently renounced his "evil ways". Truly, it is commonly perceived that when "peace is breaking out" around

the world, military expenditures can be trimmed to support social expenditures. This, in turn, has a tendency to increase the competition or infighting amongst the services to retain their share of the shrinking defense budget or salvage their favored weapons program. Decisions made in this environment often have more to do with political expediencies than an overarching strategic framework.

This investigation will proceed by examining three facets of strategic planning during the interwar years: structure, process, and product. It will begin by looking at the evolution of the interwar strategic planning structure. What was its history i.e., how did the historical national security roles of each service impact the structure? What changes were brought about as a result of World War I? What were the principal strategic planning organizations? How did they relate to each other? What was the involvement of other, non-military government agencies? Was there any joint planning organization?

Next, It will look at how strategic planning between the wars in terms of process. What was the context (e.g. organizational culture, personnel) in which planning took place? What were the sources of planning guidance? How were the plans conceived, drafted, validated, and approved? How did planners accommodate change? Were war games and exercises employed?

The following chapter discusses the products, explicit and implicit, of the interwar strategic planning process. To what extent did the planning reflect U.S. foreign policy, national interests, and political morality? Was the planning coherent and realistic? How accurate were the plans? How did the plans evolve over time? Were there any missing elements?

Finally, it will conclude with some observations about Pearl Harbor and its aftermath. It will attempt to draw lessons regarding joint strategic planning as a process. In addition, it will identify structural pitfalls as well as strengths which hold promise for today's strategic planning efforts.

The concept of "jointness" is much in vogue among today's political and military leaders. While the idea of interservice coordination and cooperation may not be new, the strength of the current emphasis is. In part, this emphasis on joint planning, command, and operations is a reaction to the perceived inadequacies in the execution of military operations in the early 1980s (e.g.in Iran, Grenada, and Lebanon). As the services seemed unwilling or incapable of reform, Congress addressed the issue by passing the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 in an attempt to foster more coordination and cooperation amongst the services. The U.S. has been grappling with the problem of constructing a coherent national security policy planning structure for over 90 years

now. For the strategist, perhaps this examination of the joint planning process during the interwar years will provide some clues to the way ahead.

II. STRUCTURE

In order to understand the development of strategic planning within the defense establishment of the United States one must look at the genesis of the organizations which were responsible for this process. While the interwar years (i.e. 1918-1940) comprise the period of most significant change, many important lessons may otherwise be observed in the two decades before the First World War.

This chapter will be concerned with the structure of the defense planning establishment. What were the component organizations? What were their duties, responsibilities, and modes of interaction? What was the involvement of the other government agencies (e.g. State Department)? How successful were the planning efforts of the War and Navy Departments in developing joint strategic plans?

A. NAVY DEPARTMENT PLANNING AGENCIES

1. The General Board of the Navy

The General Board of the Navy was established by the Secretary of the Navy, John D. Long, with General Order No. 544 on March 13, 1900. Its raison d'etre was to act as the Secretary's principal advisor regarding naval policy matters-

-including planning for war.[1] To this end it directed the efforts of the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Naval War College as they related to the development of war plans. This ensured close cooperation between the three agencies during the planning process. One observer in 1913 went so far as to advocate that since "The Naval War College and the Office of Naval Intelligence are so closely related to the duties of the General Board that the three organizations should be housed under one roof..."[2] Once the war plans were finalized by the General Board, they were forwarded to the Secretary of the Navy for approval.

As a consultative body, and even though it possessed neither executive or administrative authority, the General Board served as the Navy's de facto general staff.[3] Indeed, its impetus can be traced back to Secretary Long's reasoning for establishing its immediate predecessor--the Naval War Board of 1898. "The Secretary lacking professional experience,

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[1]A.F. Carter, CDR, USN, "The Functions of the Office of Naval Operations," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 46, no. 2 (February 1920): 169.

[2]W.S. Crosley, CDR, USN, "The Naval War College, the General Staff, and the Office of Naval Intelligence," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 39, no. 3 (September 1913): 969.

[3]Jarvis Butler, "The General Board of the Navy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 56, no. 8 (August 1930): 703.

and the Navy being without a General Staff, it was necessary that he should have the assistance of such a board."[4]

Originally, the General Board's members consisted of: The Admiral of the Navy, the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, the Chief Intelligence Officer and his principal assistant, the president of the Naval War College and his principal assistant, and three other officers as appointed by the Secretary.[5] When Congress revamped the Navy Department in 1915, the Office of Naval Operations was created and subsequently replaced the Bureau of Navigation as the "operational" representative on the board. With addition of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the composition of the General board ultimately stabilized at four ex officio members: the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Director of Naval Intelligence , and the President of the Naval War College. In addition, the Secretary of the Navy selected other officers to serve on the board as required.[6] Figure II-1 summarizes the General Board composition from 1900-1941.

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[4]John D. Long, quoted in Alfred T. Mahan, "The Work of the Naval War Board of 1898," Letters and Papers of Alfred Thayer Mahan, vol. 3, ed. Robert Seager II and Doris D. Maguire (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1975), 628. Emphasis added by Mahan.

[5]Richard Wainwright, RADM, USN, "The General Board," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 48, no. 2 (February 1922): 190.

[6]Butler, 705.

1900	1915+
Admiral of the Navy	Chief of Naval Operations
Chief, Bureau of Navigation	Director, Naval Intelligence
Chief Intelligence Officer	President, Naval War College
Asst. Intelligence Officer*	Commandant of the Marine Corps
President, Naval War College	Misc. discretionary appointees
Assistant President, Naval War College*	

Figure II-1. General Board Composition 1900-1941. Asterisks (*) denote members deleted in 1901.

The General Board was created to provide the Secretary of the Navy with coordinated and coherent advice regarding the perspective of the professional navy. Since its members were highly respected and experienced naval officers, its recommendations were well supported by the Navy in general and carried great weight with the Secretary of the Navy. As Jarvis Butler described it, "The General Board is the balance wheel and coordinating body which advises the Secretary of the Navy in maintaining a sound and progressive program for the development and strategic functioning of the United States Navy."[7]

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[7]Ibid., 700.

2. War Plans Division

The naval appropriation act of 1915 provided a statutory basis for the Office of Naval Operations as ostensibly the first among equals in the Navy Department's fragmented "bureau" system of management.[8] Its head, the Chief of Naval Operations, was specifically tasked, under the Secretary of the Navy's direction, with the operations of the fleet as well as with the preparation and readiness of plans for its use in war.[9] As a result, the War Plans Division of the Office of Naval Operations assumed the responsibility for drafting plans for mobilization and war from the General Board.

Even so, the General Board's role in war planning was not entirely discarded. Naval Regulations subsequently directed that "The General Board shall be furnished, for

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[8]The "bureau" system consisted of a number of all but independent fiefdoms ruled by various captains and admirals in the position of bureau chiefs. There was some amount of cooperation amongst the various bureaus. However, it was essentially management by committee with the Secretary of the Navy as the referee. This arrangement suited peacetime administration of the navy as well as "pork-barrel" politics, but was ill-suited to the exigencies of wartime operations. With the creation of the Office of Naval Operations in 1915, the beginnings of a more responsive and responsible operational management was established--although remnants of the bureau system remain part of the U.S. Navy today. See Elting E. Morison, LCDR, USNR, "Naval Administration in the United States," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 72, no. 10 (October 1946): 1303-1313.

[9]E.W. Eberle, ADM, USN, The Office of Naval Operations," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 53, no. 11 (November 1927): 1153.

information, with the approved war plans, including cooperation with the Army and employment of the elements of naval defense."[10] In other words, despite its truncated duties, the General Board remained an important consultative input to the Secretary of the Navy during the war planning process.

The head of the War Plans Division was the Director of Plans, a rear admiral.[11] Under the Director of Plans, War Plans Division was charged not only with the development of war plans but also their maintenance in a current status as conditions changed. Once approved by the Secretary of the Navy, war plans were intended to serve as a guide to coordinate the efforts of the Navy Department (including its bureaus and offices) in the justification, preparation, and upkeep of naval forces.[12]

3. Office of Naval Intelligence

The Office of Naval Intelligence was created in 1882 and subsequently subordinated to the Office of Naval Operations in 1915.[13] Under the direction of the Chief of Naval Operations, it was tasked with the collection of information

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[10]Butler, 703.

[11]Carter, 173.

[12]Eberle, 1153-1154.

[13]U.S. National Archives, Federal Records of World War II: Military Agencies, vol. 2 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), 577.

for the Navy Department, as well as publishing and disseminating it throughout the Navy and to cognizant government agencies.[14] From its inception, it was deeply involved in war planning. As such, it represented the Navy's "...first step in the direction of organized planning for war."[15]

Prior to the war with Spain, both the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Naval War College presented strategic studies to an intradepartmental defense planning board. Under the direction of the President, Office of Naval Intelligence went on to draw up plans for the war with Spain which were subsequently approved by this board.[16] Subsequent events outpaced the scope of these efforts. When the Naval War Board of 1898 was created, the Office of Naval Intelligence's efforts fell under its sway and under its direction provided intelligence support for its short-fused planning efforts. After the war, the General Board succeeded the Naval War Board as the source of planning guidance. Intimate coordination prevailed between these two agencies until 1915; when the Office of Naval Operations gained permanent authority over the Office of Naval Intelligence.

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[14]Eberle, 1154.

[15]Wainwright, 192.

[16]Ibid., 193.

Emerging from World War I, the Office of Naval Intelligence found itself caught in a perplexing dilemma: How to resolve the conflicting demands of its traditional role of providing strategic and technical data for war planners, and also provide security for the U.S. and its navy against internal and external threats--often by covert means. The wartime expansion of this security function created a stubborn, persistent and headstrong clandestine operations bureaucracy which successive Directors of Naval Intelligence found themselves unable to eliminate altogether. This in turn, sapped vital organizational capital from the support of the primary function of providing strategic intelligence.[17]

4. Naval War College

The Naval War College was established in 1884 under the direction of president Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce. Its mission was succinctly outlined by Admiral Luce as, "instruction in the art of war."[18] Like the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Naval War College also played a role in strategic planning from its earliest days. Prior to the establishment of the General Board, "U.S. naval war planning

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[17]Jeffery M. Dorwart, Conflict of Duty: The U.S. Navy's Intelligence Dilemma, 1919-1945, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1983), 7-8.

[18]W.V. Pratt, ADM, USN, "The Naval War College," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 53, no. 9 (September 1927): 937-938.

was confined to ad hoc work at the Naval War College."[19] Indeed, when the conflict with Spain ruptured in 1898, "the only plan for the war which the administration had was one worked out at this [Naval] War College in the summer of 1895, and as it was the only one, at all carefully digested, it was perforce the one which both the army and navy followed."[20]

Like the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Naval War College efforts in strategic planning fell under the direction of the General Board. Plans were periodically assigned to the War College for study and criticism. This practice grew during the early years of the school when the faculty was not fully occupied during the winter and summer sessions.[21] This convention continued, to a lesser extent, when the War College came under the Office of Naval Operations.[22]

As the Naval War College matured and the college developed into a full-time academic institution, work on the development of strategic plans was shifted to the newly formed War Plans Division in the Office of Naval Operations. Instead, the Naval War College devoted more effort to the development

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[19]Michael Vlahos, "The Naval War College and the Origins of War Planning Against Japan," Naval War College Review 33, no.4 (July-August 1980): 10.

[20]William L. Rodgers, CAPT, USN, "The Relations of the War College to the Navy Department," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 38, no. 3 (September 1912): 843.

[21]Wainwright, 199.

[22]Pratt, 939.

of war gaming; not only as an instructional tool, but also as a means of examining the Navy's strategic plans. In Michael Vlahos's analysis, "The [Naval War College] games not only encouraged an evolution in war plans during the interwar period, they came to drive the development of the 1930s version of a U.S. maritime strategy."[23]

Figure II-2 illustrates the relationships between the Navy's strategic planning agencies. For simplicity, the organizational level equivalents to the Chief of Naval Operations have not been shown.

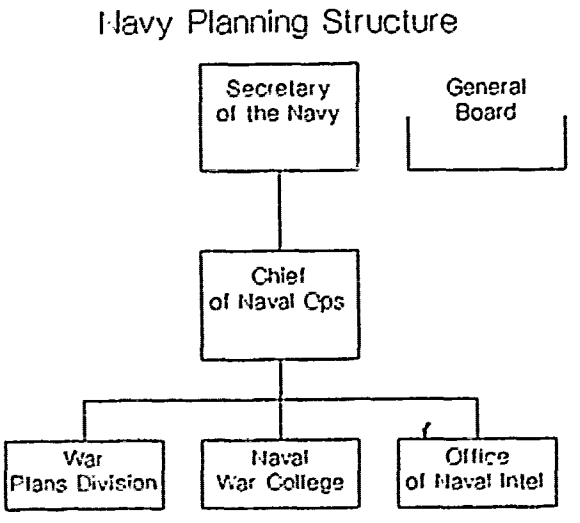

Figure II-2.

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[23]Michael Vlahos, "War Gaming, An Enforcer of Strategic Realism: 1919-1942," Naval War College Review 39, no. 2 (March-April 1986): 7.

B. WAR DEPARTMENT PLANNING AGENCIES

1. War Plans Division

The War Plans Division was constituted as the fifth division of the War Department General Staff in 1921. It owed its genesis to the recommendations of Generals Pershing and Harbord as incorporated in the National Defense Act of 1920. This act laid out the primary makeup of the War Department until the onset of World War II.[24] The General Staff divisions consisted of: Personnel (G-1), Military Intelligence (G-2), Operations and Training (G-3), Supply (G-4), and War Plans Division (WPD). All of the General Staff division heads held the title of Assistant Chief of Staff and were brigadier generals (with the exception of Military Intelligence Division).[25] In Army Regulations, War Plans Division was "charged in general with those duties of the War Department General Staff which relate to the formulation of plans for the use in the theater of war of the military forces, separately

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[24]Ray S. Cline, Washington Command Post: The Operations Division, The United States Army in World War II, The War Department, vol. 2 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), 19.

[25]Mark S. Watson, Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations, The United States Army in World War II, The War Department, vol. 1 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), 70.

or in conjunction with the naval forces, in the national defense."[26]

Ostensibly, War Plans Division was coequal with the other four General Staff divisions. Yet implicit in the nature of its duties was its position as the Chief of Staff's principal advisor and catalyst for strategic planning between the wars--as well as being earmarked to provide the core of his General Headquarters in the field at the outbreak of war.[27] The failing of this General Headquarters concept was that it assumed a major effort in a single theater or front.[28] In addition, successive Chiefs of Staff customarily referred many general as well as complex problems to the division for study--often in the area of national policy and foreign relations.[29]

War Plans Division was unique in that it was the sole staff agency which represented the Army in extradepartmental (i.e. joint) strategic planning. In this respect, War Plans Division's responsibilities as the designated planning agency were much broader than the other divisions of the General Staff.[30] It was concerned mainly with the broad strategic scope

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[26]Cline, 29.

[27]Watson, 74.

[28]Maurice Matloff, "The American Approach to War, 1919-1945," The Theory and Practice of War, ed. Michael Howard, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 224.

[29]Cline, 30.

[30]Ibid., 29-30.

of developing war plans while the other General Staff divisions were used to fill in the requisite detail.[31]

War Plans Division was seen as the cornerstone of General Staff strategic planning. It orchestrated the efforts of all the general Staff divisions in regard to their impact on war planning. Yet, because it was a co-equal, not a superior, of the other divisions, any disputes over the direction of planning had to be referred to the Chief of Staff for resolution.[32]

2. Military Intelligence

The Military Intelligence Division dated, in various forms, as a headquarters unit back to 1885.[33] Like War Plans Division, its duties were similarly broad in scope as it was tasked in general with the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of information regarding potential enemies or areas of military operations. Despite Military Intelligence Division's analysis function, War Plans Division normally exerted its prerogative for turning raw intelligence data

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[31]Dana G. Mead, "United States Strategic Planning, 1920-1941: The Color Plans to the Victory Program," (Ph.D. diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1967), 25.

[32]Cline, 36-38.

[33]David Kahn, "The United States Views Germany and Japan in 1941," Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars, ed. Ernest R. May (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1979), 487.

gathered by G-2 into finished propositions for incorporation into strategic plans.[34]

Military Intelligence Division's various staff duties included the supervision of military attaches and missions abroad, liaison with foreign attaches and missions in the U.S., counterintelligence, map making, photographic intelligence collection and interpretation, operating the translating service for the War Department, coordination of joint intelligence collection activities, and the supervision of War Department propaganda and psychological warfare activities[35]. Military Intelligence Division's most important sources of information were diplomatic reports, information from friendly nations, military attaches, signal intelligence, open press, and private citizens. Notice that covert sources were not included on the list. Covert sources (i.e. spies) were not employed by the U.S. as the interwar political culture obviated that option.[36]

3. Army War College

The Army War College was founded in 1903 through the efforts of War Department Secretary Elihu Root. Modeled on the Prussian Kriegsakademie, Root envisioned the War College as

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[34]Cline, 30.

[35]Federal Records, 101.

[36]Kahn, 479.

an adjunct to the General Staff and a pre-eminent facility to offer postgraduate education to supplement the lesser army schools. He charged it with providing instruction in he called the "science of war." In other words, the study of the complexities of national defense, of military science, and of responsible command. From its inception, the Army War College acted as a strategic planning adjunct of the General staff.[37]

From 1903 to 1917, the college functioned essentially and fairly successfully as a strategic planning agency for the General Staff. As an educational institution, it was less successful and unable to move beyond being a school of advanced tactics. In either case, its efforts were not adequate to the realities of the U.S. entry into World War I.[38]

After a short hiatus during World War I, the Army War College re-established itself with a more distinct separation from the General Staff, although it fell short of being divorced entirely from the war planning process. Instead, it concentrated its efforts on becoming the paramount professional military institution that was originally envisioned by Secretary Root.[39] There remained, however, a

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[37]Harry P. Ball, "A History of the U.S. Army War College: 1901-1940," (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1983), 130.

[38]Ibid., iii.

[39]Ibid., iii.

persistent dichotomy regarding the War College's role in two areas: First, whether the focus of instruction should be on the broad scope of national defense or on the narrower problem of military science i.e. on strategy or operations. Second, how much involvement there should be with the General Staff--especially with the War Plans Division.

In the joint arena, the Army War College established firm ties with its naval sibling in order to facilitate the study of joint operations and planning--including joint war games as well as faculty and student exchanges.[40] Figure II-3 shows the Army war planning organization during the interwar years.

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[40]Henry G. Gole, "War Planning at the Army War College in the Mid-1930s," Parameters 15, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 54-55; Kahn, 941.

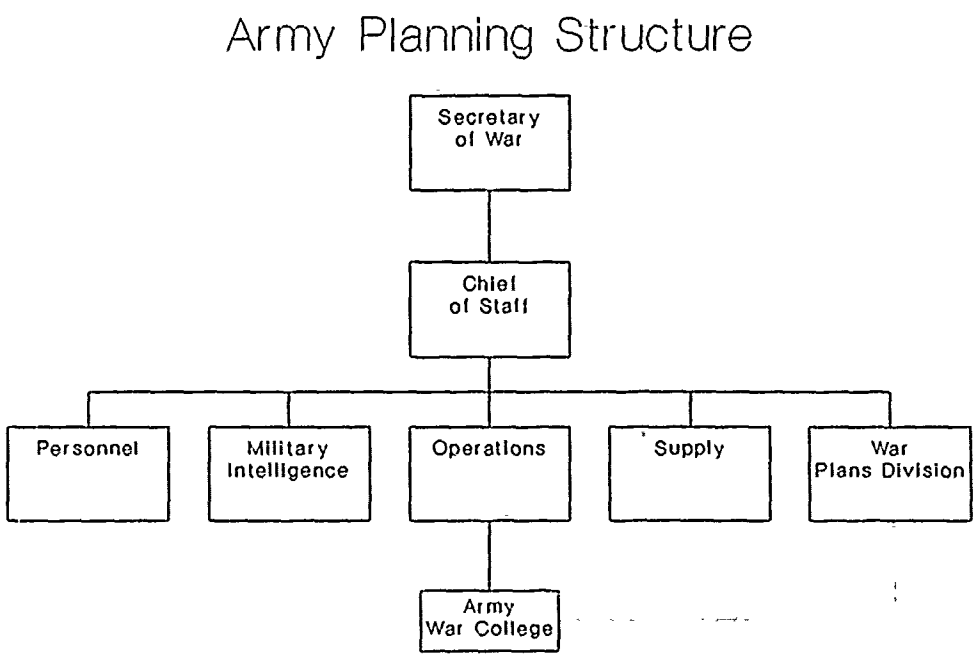

Figure II-3.

C. JOINT PLANNING AGENCIES

1. Joint Army and Navy Board

The Joint Army and Navy Board, or as it was more commonly known--the Joint Board, was established in July 1903 by the Secretaries of War and the Navy. Its purpose was to make recommendations to the secretaries regarding matters of mutual interest and cooperation between the two services such as war planning, training, and national security measures. The Joint Board's original membership consisted of four Army and four Navy officers selected personally by the Secretary.

Following World War I however, the membership was reduced to six, all designated by office: The Chief of Staff, the Director of Operations Division, the Director of War Plans Division, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Assistant Chief of Naval Operation, and the Director of the Navy's War Plans Division.[41]

In 1939, the Deputy Chief of Staff replaced the Director of Operations Division and the Joint Board was placed under the direction of President Roosevelt. Somewhat belatedly in July 1941, need for air representation was acknowledged with the inclusion of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Air (Army) and the Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics to the Joint Board (Navy). Figure II-4 provides a summary of changes to the Joint Board composition prior to World War II. The Joint Board had a number of subsidiary committees, only two of which will be discussed: The Joint Planning Committee, created in 1919, and the Joint Intelligence Committee which first met in December 1941.[42]

The Joint Board was still in its infancy in the years following World War I. In fact, it had yet to consider a joint strategic plan. The aftermath of the Washington Conference with its changed strategic situation in the Pacific prompted the Joint Board to task the Joint Planning Committee to begin

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[41]Federal Records, 37.

[42]Ibid., 37; Cline, 44-45.

drawing up the first joint Army and Navy war plans in the early 1920s. These were the "color" plans in which colors were used to designate various potential enemies. For example, Orange (Japan) was a principal concern to the Navy because of its proximity to China and the Philippines as well as the U.S. Pacific island territories. Whereas the Army was more concerned with defending the U.S. against an invasion by, oddly enough, Red (the British Empire) or even a possible Red-Orange coalition.[43]

1903	1919	1941
Army Officers (4)	**Army:**	**Army:**
Navy Officers (4)	Chief of Staff	Chief of Staff
	Director, Operations Division	Deputy Chief of Staff*
	Director, War Plans Division	Director, War Plans Division
		Deputy Chief of Staff (Air)
	Navy:	**Navy:**
	Chief of Naval Operations	Chief of Naval Operations
	Assistant Chief of Naval Ops.	Assistant Chief of Naval Ops.
	Director, War Plans Division	Director, War Plans Division
		Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics

Figure II-4. Joint Board Composition. Asterisk (*) denotes replacement for Director of Operations Division in 1939.

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[43]William R. Braistad, "On the American Red and Red-Orange Plans, 1919-1939," Naval Warfare in the Twentieth Century, 1900-1945: Essays in the Honor of Arthur Marder, ed. Gerald Jordan (London: Croon Helm, Ltd.), 172.

Once a plan was agreed upon by the Joint Board, it was forwarded to the service secretaries for final approval. The Board was mainly concerned with the co-ordination of policy and planning. To this end, it met only as required in order to consider problems of interest. Its purpose was to advise the service secretaries and, after 1939, the President--who held the real decision-making power as well as serve as the primary vehicle for planning coordination between the services.[44]

a. Joint Planning Committee

The Joint Planning Committee was formed in 1919 with the charter to investigate, study, and report on matters of interest to the Joint Board. In other words, it was the working group for the Joint Board and it met much more frequently than the Joint Board. Its members consisted of three officers from each service's War Plans Division including their respective directors.[45]

The majority of the committee's work consisted of preparing and briefing committee proposals and strategic plan drafts to the Joint Board for approval. Once approved, the matter was "closed" as a subject of current discussion by the board. Occasionally, the Joint Planning Committee acted as the

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[44]Watson,79; Mead, 37.

[45]Cline,46; Mead, 39-40.

formal initiating agency for one of the services when it desired to explore the other service's position on an issue without bringing it to the attention of the Joint Board prematurely. Issues which could not be resolved by the committee were referred to the Joint Board for action.[46]

b. Joint Intelligence Committee

The Joint Intelligence Committee was a latecomer to the interwar strategic planning structure. Subordinate to the Joint Board, it was created to coordinate the joint efforts of the Army and Navy intelligence organizations and, under the impetus of impending war, other non-military government agencies. Its original membership consisted of the directors of the services' intelligence agencies, State Department and Board of Economic Warfare representatives, the Coordinator of Information (later the Director of Strategic Services). Unfortunately, it was created much too late to influence prewar planning as its first session was held on December 3, 1941. It is mentioned here primarily to complete the picture of the interwar strategic planning structure on the eve of World War II.[47]

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[46]Watson,80; Mead, 40.

[47]Federal Records, 9; Cline, 45.

2. Standing Liaison Committee

The Standing Liaison Committee was an interdepartmental committee created in belated recognition of the need for coordination between the political and military components of the government i.e. the State, War, and Navy Departments. Formed in 1938, its advent was not as late as the Joint Intelligence Committee's. At the time it was created, it was the first and only formal mechanism for coordinating national foreign policy aims between the War, Navy, and State Departments during the interwar period.[48]

The Committee consisted of the Chief of Staff, Chief of Naval Operations, and Under Secretary of State. It was "...charged with the study of coordination and liaison both at home and abroad of the three departments concerned, and of the Foreign Service and two combatant services".[49] Matters of national policy involving the three departments were also topics of committee discussion. Despite its charter, the committee initially and primarily concerned itself with the safer arena of political-military relationships in the Western Hemisphere.[50]

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[48]Ernest R. May, "The Development of Political-Military Consultation in the United States," Political Science Quarterly 70, no. 2 (June 1955): 21; Watson, 89-91.

[49]Watson, 89-90.

[50]Cline, 41-42.

Figure II-5 provides a visual summary of the joint planning organization as it existed during the interwar years. Notice that the Standing Liaison Committee and Joint Intelligence Committee were both late-comers to the process and therefore had minimal effectiveness.

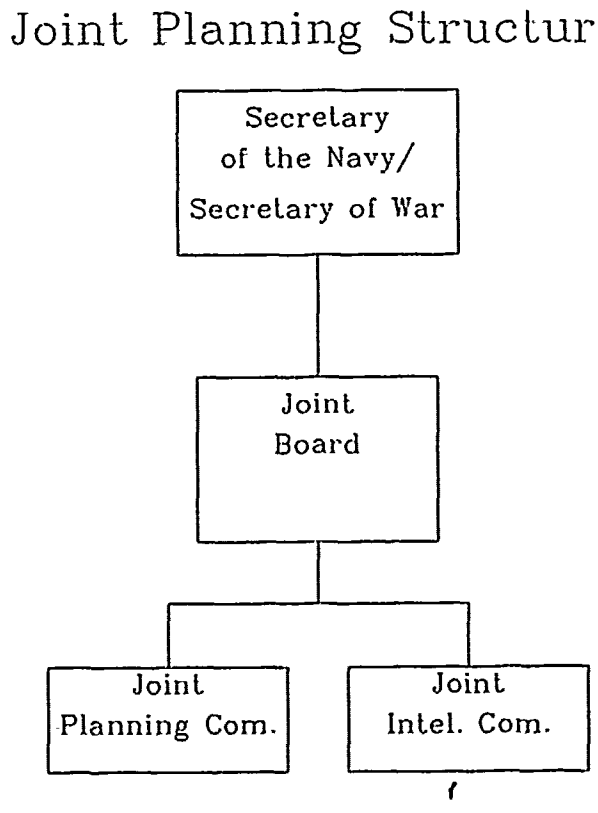

Figure II-5.

D. SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the genesis of the strategic planning structure in the American defense establishment from 1900 to 1941. The emphasis has been on identifying the

structure of the primary planning organizations as well as encapsulating their relationships to each other and to other government agencies. Figure II-6 summarizes these relationships. In the next chapter, the strategic planning process will be discussed.

INTERWAR STRATEGIC PLANNING STRUCTURE

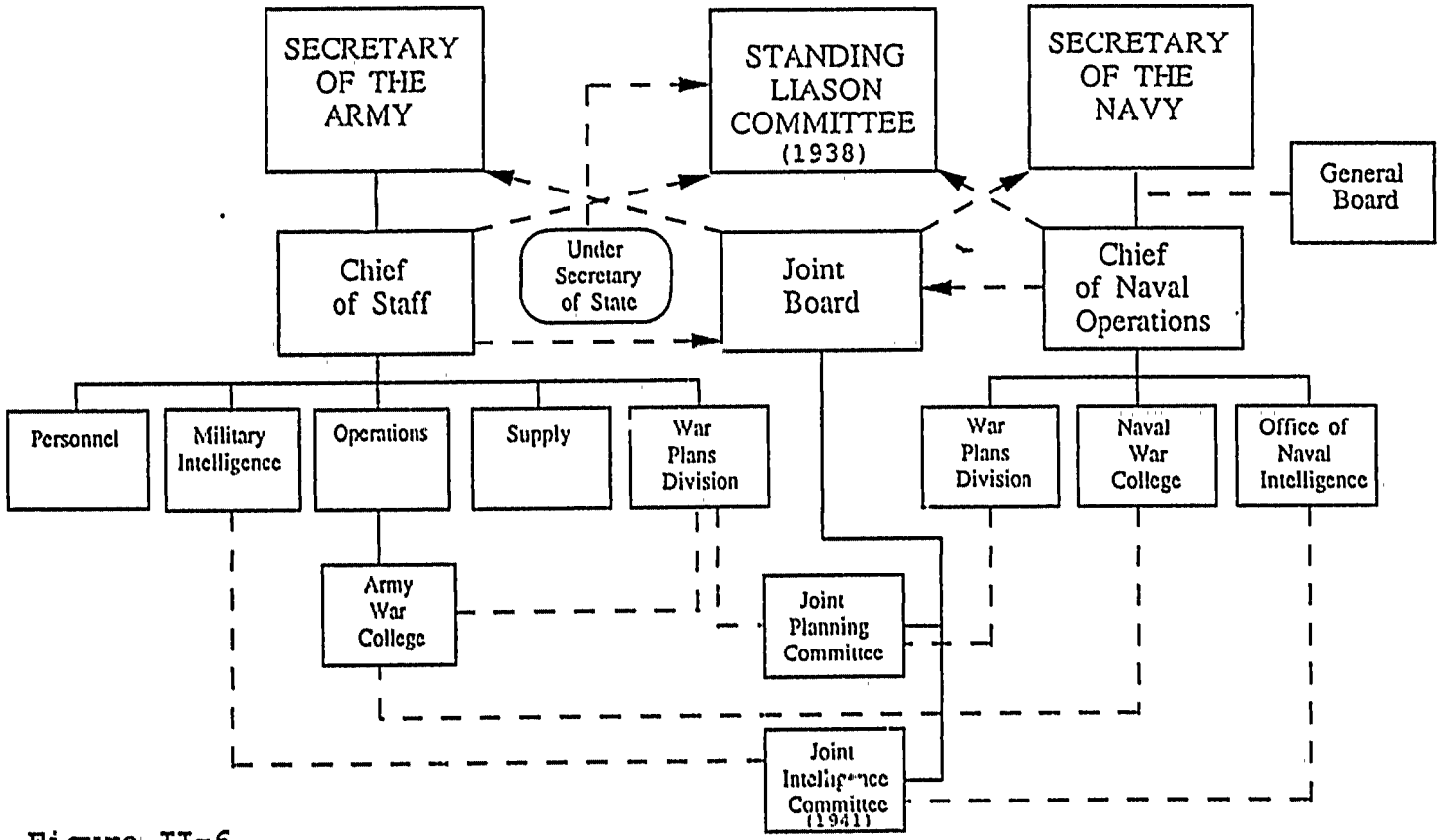

Figure II-6.

III. PROCESS

Building upon the preceding description of the U.S. strategic planning structure, this chapter will concentrate upon the planning process during the same period. More specific questions will address: How was strategic planning accomplished from beginning to end? Who or what provided the national security policy guidance used to determine the areas of strategic concern? Who developed tasking from that guidance? How were the plans conceived, drafted, validated, and approved? What roles did each service's planning apparatus play in comparison with the joint planning structure? Did any changes occur in the process over time? Finally, what elements were missing from the process? In order to give structure to these complex questions, the discussion will be divided in two parts: The first part will discuss the derivation of national policy guidance for strategists and the second section will discuss the strategic planning process itself.

A. GUIDANCE AND TASKING

Led by President Woodrow Wilson, the United States emerged from World War I as a world class power. Once his naval building program of 1916 was complete, the U.S. would possess

"a navy second to none".[51] During the immediate ante bellum period, as well as the brief U.S. participation in the war, political-military coordination among the State, War, and Navy Departments had matured somewhat. The exigencies of active neutrality and, ultimately, war preparations had forced consultation between these executive departments to expand beyond the previous practice. This had consisted of sophomoric exchanges of circumspect and carefully couched correspondence amongst the secretaries. This desultory style of communication had failed utterly as an effective means of policy coordination with the onset of World War I.[52]

In contrast, relations between the members of the early Wilson administration and the military departments were marked by studied indifference punctuated by periods of open hostility to the very idea of political-military coordination with regard to national security. For example, Wilson's secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, was livid that the Joint Army and Navy Board had the temerity to propose adjustments to the fleet's military posture in response to concerns about tensions with Japan. "He thundered out that army and navy officers could not be trusted to say what we should or should not do, till we actually got into war; that

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[51]Robert G. Albion, Makers of Naval Policy 1798-1948 (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980), 14.

[52]May, 163.

we were discussing not how to wage war, but how not to get into war."[53]

Bryan experienced a change of heart when war in Europe found the U.S. unsure as to how to protect her neutrality rights and a Joint State and Navy Neutrality Board was created to provide advice. By the time that Robert Lansing took over as Secretary of State in 1915, correspondence among the departments had increased three-fold. As war approached, Lansing met almost daily with General Board and General Staff members. Despite this new-found spirit of political-military cooperation at the secretarial/service chief level, Wilson kept his own counsel; often reaching decisions with little, if any, input from the departments, including the State Department.[54] In regards to strategic planning and national security policy, since little guidance was forthcoming from the President or the secretariat, the services were ultimately left to their own devices.

The post-war environment saw the unraveling of what little progress had been achieved in coordinating between political and military policy. As in previous wars, the U.S. was wont to rush its troops home, demobilize, disarm, and forget that such a thing as war ever existed. As Urs Schwarz noted, "The

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[53]William Jennings Bryan, quoted in Ernest R. May, "Political Military Consultation," 166.

[54]May, 166.

victory over Germany, that embodiment of militarism--the very prototype of a country with a standing army, a general staff, and extensive military establishment--by the American citizen army, created, as people liked to think, out of nothing, seemed to confirm the utter superiority of the American principle of unpreparedness [italics mine]."[55] The frenzied paroxysm of isolationism, pacifism, and anti-militarism which ensued effectively gutted any initiatives aimed at coherent political-military policy coordination.

Yet the idea of collaboration persisted. Recognizing the need, the services continued making periodic proposals for the creation of a joint body for the coordination of national and military policy. In his 1921 rejection of the latest of a series of proposals regarding State Department participation in the Joint Board from acting Navy Secretary Franklin D. Roosevelt, Hughes wrote, "This appears to me to be in substance a suggestion that at least provisionally matters of foreign policy be submitted to the Joint Board. I question the advisability of this."[56] When pressed further, Hughes conceded that if the Joint Board were to inform the State Department of meetings in which the board planned to touch upon foreign policy, he or a representative might be amenable to attending.

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[55]Urs Schwarz, American Strategy: A New Perspective, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966), 14.

[56]Charles Evans Hughes, quoted in Ernest R. May, 169.

Thus, Hughes provided the services with a sop to their concerns while signaling strong disinterest. His message was received and the Joint Board elected not to use this approach to policy coordination for thirteen years.[57]

The war had highlighted faults in all three departments which were subsequently addressed by various reform-minded legislation. As important as these reforms were to the maturation of the military command structure, they belied the idealism driving the real attitude of neglect towards the military which was about to be made manifest. With the Army reduced to its prewar state, the Navy became the focus of attention.

In preparation for the Washington Disarmament conference of 1921-22, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes was diligent in soliciting the advice of the General Board. Among other things, the General Board pressed for a minimum U.S. fleet equal to the combined British and Japanese fleets. Yet despite his apparent earnestness, Hughes rejected the General Board's advice categorically.[58] When the conference opened, he tabled a 5:5:3 ratio of capital ships for the three powers (i.e. U.S., Great Britain, and Japan, respectively) and sweetened the pot with an offer to scrap thirty U.S. capital

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[57]May, 169.

[58]May, 170.

ships. The Navy and its supporters were stunned. In the terms of one lecturer at the Naval War College decades later:

> This was indeed the greatest naval encounter ever on record. In fifteen minutes Charles Evans Hughes, Secretary of State, had managed to sink more warships than all the admirals in the world had sunk in a cycle of centuries.[59]

Bad blood over the Washington and subsequent disarmament conferences continued to stalk political-military relations for the next two decades.

During the years that followed, the national policy was a reflection of the popular belief that the U.S. should not maintain military forces with offensive capability or enter into alliances. Instead, the country "put its hopes in its geographic barriers, in international agreements to outlaw war and limit naval armaments, in diplomatic and economic sanctions to discourage aggression and in legislation to keep the United States out of foreign wars."[60] A pacifistic and economy-minded Congress refused to build even the navy allowed by treaty. Paradoxically, while the military forces were being emasculated, our political commitments expanded in relative terms. American commitments to free trade, the Philippines, and the Open Door policy in China clashed with her reduced military capability to respond--especially when coupled with

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[59]Gordon B. Turner, "An [sic] Historical Review of Foreign Policy, 1784-1944," Naval War College Review 10, no. 3 (November 1957): 41-42.

[60]Matloff, "American Approach...," 217-218.

the free hand which Japan had been given as the dominant power in the Far East by the Washington Treaty.[61]

As the schism between the policy-makers and the defense departments expanded, military strategists were left to their own devices. While the country sought to isolate itself from exterior entanglements, a similar isolation was imposed upon its military planners. This administrative policy of isolation, confirmed by successive administrations, together with the absence of any permanent policy coordination vehicle prevented the services from providing effective counsel with regard to the military-strategic aspects of foreign policy initiatives. Rightly so, the services viewed their position as subordinate to the civilian government. They felt their mission was to help make policy effective; not to advocate policy.[62] The traditional American distrust of a professional military combined with the constitutional principle of civilian control to foster an almost "monastic divorce" within the services from politics and policy-making--to the point where they were effectively hampered by internal as well as

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[61]J.B. Burks, CDR, USN, "The Foreign Policies of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. and their Effect on the Future World Situation," U.S. Naval War College Information Service for Officers 4, no. 8 (April 1952): 14.

[62]Fred Greene, "The Military View of American National Policy, 1904-1940," American Historical Review 66, no. 2 (January 1961): 355-357.

external attitudes in making their case for defense expenditures and strategic concerns.[63]

On the other hand, the lack of dialogue and policy guidance forced the services to develop their own policy simulacrum. Army and Navy planners alike were uncomfortable with this situation. They recognized that, in the ideal course of events, statesmen determine and prioritize policy, the armed forces provide advice as to the force levels strategies required, and Congress appropriates the funds necessary to support a particular policy.[64] For this process to be effective, a continual and open dialogue on a formal as well as informal basis was needed between the military and political representatives.[65] Yet this failed to occur--despite the best efforts of the services to the contrary. Fred Greene described the situation during the interwar years as follows:

> The absence of over-all directives and the failure to establish a formal coordinating agency during this time [i.e. 1904-1940] compelled the military planners to fall back on their own resources in defining our national policy, national interests, and position in international affairs. This they felt compelled to do in order to plan for the country's military security within a meaningful frame of reference.... They then shaped plans and programs

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[63]Russell F. Weigley, "Military Strategy and Civilian Leadership," Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems, ed. Klaus Knorr, (Lawrence,: University of Kansas Press, 1976): 63-64.

[64]J.S. McKean, CAPT, USN, "War and Policy," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 40, no. 1 (January-February 1914): 9.

[65]C.C.Gill, CDR, USN, "Policy--Its Relation to War and Its Bearing upon Preparation for War," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 46, no. 10 (October 1920): 1615.

> in accordance with the position of the United States as they understood it.... In this manner the services developed their interpretations of national policy over several decades. When confronted with a new problem at any given point, they tended, perhaps unconsciously, to consider these views as the position of the United States.[66]

The services were thus forced to derive their views on national policy second-hand from indicators such as Presidential or State Department pronouncements, international agreements and treaties, Congressional appropriations, and their reading of the public sentiment--rather than by direct consultation. Depending upon the source (i.e. the Army or Navy), the policy analyses varied somewhat on the margins. For example, the Navy was more interested in the Pacific and Far East while the Army occupied itself with continental defense.[67] However, all versions identified certain core tenets which were to persist throughout the inter bellum years:[68]

- Support of the Monroe Doctrine
- Support of Far Eastern policy, specifically:
  - -- The "Open Door" policy with China
  - -- The defense of the Philippines
- The right to open trade access

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[66]Ibid., 354-355.

[67]Stetson Conn and Byron Fairchild, The Framework of Hemisphere Defense, United States Army in World War II, The Western Hemisphere, vol. 1 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960), 3.

[68]Greene, 362, 368, 370-375 passim.

- Public sentiment for naval arms control and against alliances

These derivative policies, together with the recent experience of World War I, provided the policy bedrock upon which the interwar strategic plans were built.

However, this derivative policy, in conjunction with the experiences and aftermath of the last war, limited the scope of military thought and preparation to that of defense of the continent in one theater.[69] Action in Congress similarly reflected this bent toward homeland defense. The National Defense Act of 1920 was primarily intended to make the country's mobilization regimes more effective in support of continental defense. Furthermore, in light of the nation's isolationist sentiments, Congress consistently under-funded Army and, to a lesser extent, Navy appropriations throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. Army personnel strength plummeted from 201,918 (officers and enlisted) to a low of 134,024 in 1932. Similarly, persistent under-funding of the Navy reduced its strength relatively to almost third place behind the British and the Japanese.[70]

The schism between policy and planning finally began to close in the late 1930s as America came to the realization

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[69]Greene, 358; Matloff, 228; Schwarz, 18.

[70]Gerald E. Wheeler, "National Policy Planning Between the Wars: Conflict Between Means and Ends," Naval War College Review 21, no. 11 (February 1969): 58-60.

that policies backed only by ideals were failing to perform up to expectation. Previously, there had been some episodal contacts of an informal nature. During the 1920s, Foreign Service officers had attended the Army and Navy War Colleges and had given lectures to the classes. However, even these limited initiatives had died out by the end of the decade.[71]

The tide began to turn in 1935 when President Roosevelt's Secretary of State Cordell Hull took a full naval contingent, including the Chief of Naval Operations, with him to the London Naval Conference.[72] Later that year Hull appointed a State Department representative to the Joint Planning Committee for its Far Eastern strategy review. This was followed in 1938 with his proposal for the formation of the Standing Liaison Committee. However, the achievements of this committee were limited by its lack of executive authority and propensity to avoid controversial issues. Finally, the President's decision in July 1939 to have the Joint Board

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[71]May, 171; Mead, 41, footnote 25.

[72]There were naval "observers" at the 1921 Washington Conference and the Chief of Naval Operations, ADM W.V. Pratt, accompanied the 1930 delegation as the sole U.S. Naval representative to the London Conference. According to Ernest May, the reason Admiral Pratt was allowed to attend was that he agreed with the administration's position. In addition, the U.S. delegation to the unsuccessful 1927 Geneva Disarmament Conference included three rear admirals. Frederick Moore, America's Naval Challenge (New York: Macmillan Company, 1929), 125; May, 171.

Then there was the military mindset which anticipated primarily solitary threats in only one theater against U.S. forces alone. Subscribing to an economic determinist point of view, military strategists postulated that the principle threats would arise from nations capable of rivaling the U.S. economically. In the post-war environment, that meant Great Britain and Japan. A portfolio of strategic plans was drawn up over the next decade. These war plans or "Color Plans", as they came to be known, encompassed quite a few hypothetical threats.[74] While they may have met the classic military planning ideal of being prepared to deal with any contingency, anywhere; many of these plans addressed threats which were peripheral at best to U.S. interests.[75] Despite this plan cornucopia, both the Army and Navy preferred to concentrate their planning efforts along service lines against a select few of their "pet" threats. The few joint plans which were approved involved areas in which there was enough overlap of strategic concerns between the services to encourage collaboration.

Finally, there was the problem of the integration of intelligence information into the planning process. For most of the interwar years, there was no joint coordinating agency

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[74]See Chapter IV for summaries of the various interwar strategic plans.

[75]Mead, 189.

for military intelligence. Nor was there any collaboration with the State Department since as Henry Stimson proclaimed, "Gentlemen do not read each other's mail." Instead, the services depended upon an ad hoc liaison between the Office of Naval Intelligence and Military Intelligence Division which proved to be of limited value. The result was a dearth of national level intelligence as both agencies preferred to concentrate their efforts on service related intelligence activities in the absence of any joint guidance. Moreover, due to a Congressional limit on the number of general officers assigned to the General Staff, the head of Military Intelligence Division was a colonel and thus inferior in rank to his naval counterpart. The result was that, "Intelligence had little to do with American assessments of Germany and Japan before December 1941."[76]

As a consequence, strategists made little use of military intelligence and often failed to even consider it when developing basic strategy. Instead, plans and estimates were largely based on geography and the overall military-political environment. Both the political and military leadership tended to neglect the use of intelligence information. Indeed, as David Kahn points out, "The omission

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[76]Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), 188; Mark M. Lowenthal, "U.S. Intelligence: Evolution and Anatomy," The Washington Papers 12, no. 105 (New York: Praeger Publishers), 6-8; Watson, 70; Kahn, 476-478.

of intelligence data from all these discussions of high policy shows how subsidiary intelligence was."[77]

The planning process itself was fairly adaptable in terms of how it was begun and carried out. It was flexible in that it received and incorporated inputs from a number of sources; not only the operational community, but also the Army and Naval War Colleges as well as the attenuated intelligence input. Tasking for strategists came from either the Joint Board or via the intraservice chain of command. To some extent, this flexibility was possible because the same personnel who performed planning in the respective War Plans Divisions were members of the corresponding joint planning structure.

Finally, planners in the interwar years faced a number of constraints. The primary ones being political and economic. Strategists continually had to confront the problem of how to support a presumed national policy given constraints such as treaty limitations and meager appropriations which failed to support even those limits--all in the light of very real threats. The search for this elusive balance between national policy and military capability consumed the better part of two decades. Ultimately, it took the intervention of a world war to resolve.

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[77]Kahn, 478.

2. Beginnings

The first step to be addressed in the strategic planning process is the source of tasking. During the interwar years, impetus for the drafting and the ensuing revisions of war plans came from several sources. The first source of tasking was in-house i.e. within the respective service's command structure; in particular, the General Staff and the Office of Naval Operations. The origination of strategic studies was well within the charter of the Army and Navy War Plans Divisions.[78] Some of the more promising of these studies were subsequently transformed into war plans, either at the instruction of the division director or his superiors.

The second source of tasking was via the joint planning structure. In this instance, the Joint Board would direct its Joint Planning Committee to make strategic studies and plans as the requirements arose.[79] In either case, the planning requirements were cast against the policy background discussed in section III-A above.

3. Plan Development

Similar to the sources of tasking, the development of plans followed two basic schemes. One method was to develop and approve a plan within a single service and then forward

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[78]Watson, 74; Eberle, 1153-1154.

[79]Watson, 79-80.

it to the Joint Board for consideration. Once it reached the Joint Board, the sponsoring service had to do a certain amount of selling or "horse-trading" in order to encourage the other service to take interest in or approve its favored plan. The second regime for plan development would begin with the Joint Planning Committee developing a plan at the Joint Board's behest and forwarding it for approval. In either case, the Joint Board was responsible for setting the planning priorities (i.e. which threats were most important).[80] Following approval by the Joint Board, a plan was next forwarded to the Army and Navy Secretaries for approval before being returned to the Army and Navy for implementation.

Once the joint plans were approved, each service then had to construct a service specific basic war plan as a counterpart. The coordination required between the Joint Board and each service's War Plans Division was facilitated by the fact that most of the members of the Joint Board and Joint Planning Committee were drawn from the War Plans Divisions. Within each War Plans Division, specific war plans were then constructed for the service's operating forces. For example, from the Joint War Plan Orange, the Navy would draft its Basic War Plan Orange, and from this basic war plan, the

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[80]Braisted, 172-174.

corresponding navy operational force's Orange War Plans would be constructed.[81]

This development process was flexible enough to allow the services to follow their proclivities in planning while providing firm guidance as needed to get the job done. It also accommodated varying reasons for drafting a war plan. For example, the Navy preferred to consider plan Orange because, in addition to addressing a likely threat, it contemplated a primarily naval war. Conversely, Orange did not provide much of a planning challenge to the Army. Instead, the Army preferred to consider a plan involving a Red-Orange coalition; which had the strongest requirements for land forces. Admittedly, the Red-Orange plan was an unlikely scenario. However, Acting Secretary of War Dwight D. Davis allowed that "since an Orange Plan would not give the Army [i.e. strategic planners] enough to do, his service would push ahead with its... requirements for a Red-Orange war."[82] Thus, in addition to its strategic function, the planning process was used to provide a modicum of training to the planning staffs.

Because of the lack of executive authority, the primary responsibility for bringing a given plan to fruition rested within each service's chain of command. This was

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[81]James O. Richardson, ADM, USN, and George C. Dyer, VADM, USN, On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 256.

[82]Braisted, 172.

because the Joint Board had no executive authority and it could only register approval of an action by means of a unanimous vote.[83] Furthermore, each service had equal representation on the board--including the service chiefs. If a particular issue was controversial, there was no method for the Joint Board to resolve the crisis except continued discussion. Ultimately, this meant that the hard questions were often avoided and that joint plans were a product of a process of compromise.[84]

Revisions to plans were originally intended to occur on a yearly basis. In practice, however, it fell to one of the war Plans Divisions to initiate an in-house update as appropriate and route it to the Joint Board. If it merited attention, the other service would provide comments and a joint revision would be worked out. Thus, revisions usually occurred at the behest of the individual War Plans Divisions rather than by Joint Board request.[85]

Additional inputs into the planning process came from a variety of sources, some in direct coordination with the war planners; while others were basically unsolicited (though welcomed) comments from the operational community as they struggled with the ramifications of a particular strategic

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[83]Watson, 79.

[84]Matloff, 228-229.

[85]Mead, 195.

plan. On the naval side of the house, even though the General Board had lost its responsibility to direct planning it still provided an influential and respected review body for naval strategic plans.

The War Colleges played an important role, not only in the training of planners and study of strategic problems, but also in their use of war gaming to examine and critique plans, and as a source of innovative thinking. As war games evolved during the interwar years, they were used to explore the effects of the naval treaties, test war plans, examine logistic requirements, and study joint operations; all of which had implications for strategic planners.[86] Army War Plans Division, in particular, made extensive use of the Army War College by assigning a yearly strategic problem for the faculty and students to study. Often the results of these studies were used to help prepare war plans. Additionally, strong ties between the Army and Navy War Colleges enhanced the efforts of the armed forces to conduct joint planning. Finally, students at the Army War College studies and drafted joint strategic plans involving warfare between two opposing coalitions as early as 1927, and had raised the specter of a two-ocean war by 1935; long before the Joint Planning Committee considered its first coalition plan.[87]

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[86]Vlahos, "Wargaming," 10-12.

[87]Gole, 55-59.

A close cousin of war gaming, operational exercises afforded the armed forces an additional means of testing strategy, planning assumptions, and especially the effects of new weapons technology. For example, in 1929 during United States Fleet Problem IX, planes from U.S.S. Lexington successfully conducted a surprise air attack on the Panama Canal--presaging the Japanese Pearl Harbor attack some twelve years later.[88] As Admiral Richardson commented, "Fleet problems were expensive in time, money, and effort, but they led to the great advances in strategical and tactical thinking which marked our naval development during this period."[89]

C. SUMMARY

This chapter discussed two facets of strategic planning in the interwar years. First, planners had to contend with a lack of guidance with regard to national policy and interests. As the civilian political leaders were either unwilling or unable to provide this guidance, the armed forces were forced to construct their own substitute by means of observation. This expedient had the potential of creating a mismatch between the service's construct and the policy the government would actually follow; in addition to wasting the efforts of planners on questionable scenarios. This policy vacuum had a

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[88]Braisted, 178.

[89]Richardson and Dyer, 236.

profound effect upon the ability of planners to create realistic strategic plans.

Finally, the strategic planning process itself was discussed. Though hampered by a national policy vacuum, a fairly effective planning structure evolved over time. It was effective in that it could take a strategic problem, frame it, identify the principle issues, and construct a plausible war plan. The main stumbling block to successful planning efforts was the lack of political guidance to and support for the military. This era of fiscal austerity (i.e. Spartan defense budgets) narrowed the strategist's vision and prevented the serious consideration of more realistic and probable coalition scenarios. Additionally, the joint planning structure was limited by the lack of a central authority which could adjudicate disputes between the Army and Navy approaches to planning. Despite these handicaps, the interwar planning structure was flexible both in the generation of plans as well as the utilization of sources of ideas and criticism.

IV. PRODUCT

This discussion of interwar strategic planning has thus far focused on structure and process. It is now time to consider their result. In other words, what was this structure and process intended to achieve? Or, more specifically, what were its products? How were they employed--if used at all? Were they successful? In what way were they successful?

Strategic planning efforts between the wars spawned two basic products. One of the products was explicit in that it was the intended result of the planning operation. The other was implicit or a sort of by-product of the process. The explicit product was, of course, the strategic plans themselves. The implicit product was the generation of strategists who gained invaluable training while contributing to the production of the plans themselves. These two products then, war plans and strategic thinkers, are the subjects of this chapter. The discussion will begin by examining the evolution of war plans during the interwar years before taking up the subject of strategists.

A. STRATEGIC PLANS

1. Color Plans

The Color Plans were the basis for joint strategic planning for almost twenty years following World War I. Each

color designated a potential enemy or strategic area as shown in Figure IV-1.[90]

Plan Color	Country/ Contingency
Orange	Japan
Red	British Empire
Crimson	Canada
Red-Orange	British Empire and Japan
Green	Mexico
Brown	Philippine Islands
Tan	Cuba
Yellow	China
Purple/Gray	Latin America
Violet	Central America
Blue	United States (external threat)
White	United States (internal threat)
Carnation	Manchukuo
Pink	Russia

Figure IV-1. The Color Plans, 1919-1941.[91]

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[90]Curiously enough, the Joint Board developed no Color plan during the interwar years against Germany (Black). Matloff, 219.

[91]Mead, 198-198; Gole, 56.

The Color plans were war plans in the classic sense of contingency planning i.e. abstract exercises in preparation for any conceivable emergency--without regard to their probability. Virtually ignoring the recent experience of coalition warfare in Europe, the military strategists' vision narrowed, almost without exception, to the consideration of solitary threats on a single axis or front and strictly in the defense of the continental U.S. or its possessions. This defensive focus represented a nostalgic throwback to that twilight era before World War I and the nation's undesired thrust into the maelstrom of international politics. In that light, the Color Plans represented what Maurice Matloff called a "retreat from reality."[92]

As implausible as the Color Plans were, the post-war environment in the U.S. frustrated attempts to achieve reality. The atmosphere of fiscal austerity, antimilitarism, disarmament, and isolationism as well as the lack of any immediate threat proved deadening. The Army was pared to a skeletal cadre force while the Navy barely had the strength to support combat operations in one theater. In response, strategic planners concentrated their efforts on the types of scenarios they believed Congress and the public might support. They also shaped their plans by the availability of forces instead of realistic war-fighting requirements. Even the

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[92]Mead, 189; Matloff, 217-218.

senior military leaders all but abandoned hope of obtaining realistic appropriations as they struggled with the problem of aligning presumed political commitments with military capabilities.[93] As it was, even the most modest plans considered probably would have stretched the available military resources.[94]

Of the dozen or so Color Plans developed between the wars, most were not true strategic plans. Instead, they could be more properly considered operational or campaign plans bearing "...little relation to contemporary political and military alignments."[95] After the Washington Conference in 1921, only two nations were strong enough to pose threats to the U.S.--Great Britain (Red) and Japan (Orange). Following their proclivities, the Army and Navy pursued planning along individual service lines. Only three plans called for a general mobilization of the nation and major land-based combat: Blue--an undefined national emergency, Red--an invasion by Great Britain, and the Red-Orange coalition plan. The Army took the lead on all of these plans while the Navy

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[93]Greene, 355; Watson, 36-37. Mark Watson clearly documents this pervasive atmosphere using an exchange between General Marshall and a member of the House Committee on Appropriations in April 1941.

[94]Matloff, 218; Cline, 35.

[95]Matloff, 218.

concentrated its efforts upon the naval war contemplated by the Orange plan.[96]

The mobilization plans (i.e. Blue, Red, Red-Orange) held the most interest for the Army since it was incapable of prosecuting any but the most limited conflicts without a general mobilization. Interestingly enough, Blue received the most attention from Army War Plan Division staffers prior to 1939 and while Red was the only plan of the three to be approved by the Joint Board.[97] The Army had trouble interesting its sister service in either the Red or Red-Orange plans since the Navy viewed Japan as the more likely threat. In fact, the Navy War Plans Division dropped Great Britain from its list of potential enemies altogether in 1929--prior to the approval of the Red plan by the Joint Board in May 1930. However, the Army persisted with its planning against Red/Red-Orange until 1936 when the Joint Board also concluded that a war with Red was improbable. Even so the Army's efforts with Red-Orange coalition plan were useful in establishing the principle of defeating an Atlantic-based enemy first while fighting a defensive war in the Pacific.[98] Ultimately, the actual strategic scenario had little bearing on the real fruits of the Army's efforts i.e. the lessons derived over the years

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[96]Braisted, 172; Cline 36; Morton 7.

[97]Cline, 36; Braisted, 173-174.

[98]Braisted, 177,181-182.

from having repeatedly addressed and reviewed the problems associated with a national mobilization.[99]

The Navy in contrast, occupied itself with what was essentially an operational plan for fighting the Japanese. It contemplated a mainly naval war in which Orange threatened U.S. interests in the Far East and with the Army playing a supporting role by holding out in the Philippines until relieved by the advancing U.S. fleet. With these joint combat roles in mind, in March 1924, Orange became the first Color plan to be approved by the Joint Board. Work on Orange constituted the bulk of Joint Board's planning efforts and officially underwent five revisions between 1924 and 1938.[100]

Even though it represented the most realistic scenario of the entire Color plan portfolio, from its inception planners recognized the impossibility of its implementation considering the interwar U.S. force posture.[101] Furthermore, whether or not the Philippines could hold out against the Japanese onslaught was problematic in the face of a national policy vacuum which refused to change its apparent policies or provide the forces to carry them out. Consequently,

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[99]Although Red-Orange did raise the possibility of having to fight a two-ocean war. Braisted, 177-178.

[100]Grace P. Hayes, The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in World War II: The War Against Japan, (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1982), 4-7; see also Matloff, 220; Morton, 6.

[101]Braisted, 172.

critical strategic questions were left begging by a political leadership which declined to state its policy goals in the Far East--or decide if the Philippines were worth retaining in the event of a conflict with Japan. Later versions of Orange implicitly wrote-off the colony. Their recovery could only come as a result of several years of mobilization effort at home accompanied by a hard fought naval campaign which spanned the Pacific Ocean. By 1938, the Orange plan "...was less a plan than a description of what would happen when the Japanese decided it was time for war [emphasis added]."[102]

The Orange series of plans can be faulted for their focus on a single enemy in a single theater (i.e. Japan in the Pacific Ocean) and being more of an operational than strategic plan. But despite these flaws, the Orange planning efforts produced many positive results. First and foremost, they served to highlight the contradictions between national policy (or lack thereof) and strategy.[103] As the plans developed, a retreat ensued from the bold assertions of the early Orange plans which anticipated relief forces arriving in the Philippines within 60 days gave way to the tacit acknowledgement by 1938 that the Philippines were a "write-off." Secondly, they helped to identify the defense of the

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[102]Wheeler, 64-65.

[103]Louis Morton, "War Plan Orange: Evolution of a Strategy," World Politics 11, no. 2 (January 1959): 244; Greene, 369-72.

U.S. and the Western Hemisphere as the primary strategic objective.[104] The Navy's proclivity for forward defense was slowly but surely tempered by succeeding versions of Orange which drove home the costs of overextending naval forces in the pursuit of peripheral strategic goals while leaving the homeland vulnerable. Thirdly, the Orange plans demonstrated the necessity for a slow, methodical amphibious campaign advancing through the Pacific Islands combined with attacks on vital sea lines of communication in order to defeat the Japanese.[105] Reluctantly, the fantastic visions of a classic apocalyptic battle in the Mahan tradition in which lumbering fleets of battleships "slugged it out" were replaced by a long and hard-fought naval campaign spanning several years. Finally, the Orange plans, in conjunction with naval arms limitation efforts, spurred the development of innovative doctrine, weapons, and equipment.[106] Carriers, aircraft, amphibious doctrine, landing craft, and strategic bombers all were important outgrowths of this labor.

2. Rainbow Plans

By late 1938, events in Europe crystallized the possibility of German or Italian (i.e. Axis) threats to the

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[104]Conn and Fairchild, 7-9; Watson, 88-89.

[105]Matloff, 220-221.

[106]Ibid., 222, 229.

U.S. hemispheric interests. For strategists the idea of a one threat, one front war like that envisioned by the Orange plans had become less and less viable. Abandoning the Color plans, the Joint Board tasked the Joint Planning Committee to study how the U.S. might protect itself and Latin America from Axis threats while simultaneously fending off Japanese incursions in the Far East.[107] The committee report of January 1939 was significant for its assumptions and conclusions. The first assumption was built on the Red-Orange planning experience and held that, because of the primacy of Atlantic interests, the U.S. would not reinforce the Philippines; nor was it desireable to do so. More importantly, the Joint Planning Committee assumed that the U.S. would probably be one member of a coalition of democratic powers (e.g. Great Britain and/or France) in opposition to an enemy coalition. The committee report concluded that the problem of coalition warfare needed to be addressed in future strategic planning by the Joint Board. Additionally, it pointed out the urgency of immediately beginning to redress readiness deficiencies among the armed forces.[108]

Work commenced at once on a new series of plans called, aptly enough, the Rainbow plans. Instead of detailed operational plans like those produced by the Color series, the

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[107]Wheeler, 65.

[108]Watson, 97-99; Wheeler, 65-66.

Rainbow plans were more conceptual. Each embraced the basic objective of defending the Western Hemisphere against Axis aggression. Initially, the planners were to assume that the U.S. would stand alone against a coalition of Axis powers. Additionally, each plan was to identify the cooperation required from potential allies in order to be fully effective. Louis Morton detailed the basic scenarios of the five Rainbow plans as follows:

> Rainbow 1 assumed the United States to be at war without major allies. United States forces would act jointly to prevent the violation of the Monroe Doctrine by protecting the territory of the Western Hemisphere north of 10 degrees South Latitude, from which the vital interests of the United States might be threatened. The joint tasks of the Army and Navy included protection of the United States, its possessions, and its sea-borne trade. A strategic defensive was to be maintained in the Pacific, from behind the line Alaska-Hawaii-Panama, until developments in the Atlantic permitted concentration of the fleet in mid-Pacific for offensive action against Japan.
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> Rainbow 2 assumed that the United States, Great Britain, and France would be acting in concert, with limited participation of U.S. forces in Continental Europe and in the Atlantic. The United States could, therefore, undertake immediate offensive operations in the Pacific to sustain the interests of democratic powers by the defeat of enemy forces.
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> Rainbow 3 assumed the United States to be at war without major allies. Hemisphere defense as to be assured, as in Rainbow 1, but with early projection of U.S. forces from Hawaii into the western Pacific.
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> Rainbow 4 assumed the United States to be at war without major allies, employing its forces in defense of the whole of the Western Hemisphere, but also with provision for United States Army forces to be sent to the southern part of South America, and to be used in joint operations in eastern Atlantic areas. A strategic defensive, as in Rainbow 1, was to be maintained in the Pacific until the

situation in the Atlantic permitted transfer of major naval forces for an offensive against Japan.

> Rainbow 5 assumed the United States, Great Britain, and France to be acting in concert; hemisphere defense was to be assured as in Rainbow 1, with early projection of U.S. forces to the eastern Atlantic, and to either or both the African and European continents; offensive operations were to be conducted, in concert with British and allied forces, to effect the defeat of Germany and Italy. A strategic defensive was to be maintained in the Pacific until success against the European Axis Powers permitted transfer of major forces to the Pacific for an offensive against Japan.[109]

The embodiment of coalition warfare in the Rainbow plans was the culmination of a half-decade of flirtation with the concept. The Army War College played an important role in shift of focus from the Pacific to Europe and what ultimately became a "Germany first" strategy. It began studying coalition warfare as early as 1927 with a war plan "Rainbow" which pitted the U.S., in alliance with the League of Nations, against a hostile coalition. Another study in 1934 projected Orange and Carnation (Manchukuo) provoking a war with Pink (Russia [sic]). Eventually Pink is joined by Yellow, Red (plus its dependencies), and Blue. Student planning the following year postulated an allied coalition of France, Italy, Great Britain, and the U.S. against a "Nazi Confederation" of Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia.[110] Similarly in 1932, the Naval War College "...recommended that, when

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[109]Morton, "Germany First," 15.

[110]Gole, 53, 56-57.

considering possible coalition wars, the services should study war between a Red-Blue (Anglo-American) coalition and a hostile coalition including Orange."[111] The early spadework done by the War Colleges on coalition warfare percolated upwards through their close ties with the War Plans Divisions and eventually emerged into the joint structure through the Rainbow series.[112]

From 1939 on, work on the Rainbow plans progressed in parallel with world events. Concentration shifted from one Rainbow plan to another depending upon the strategic outlook before finally settling upon Rainbow 5 as war approached. Early on, Rainbow 2 seemed to be the most likely case. However, the collapse of France in June 1940 brought Rainbow 4 to the fore; a plan which a month earlier had been given last priority. Great Britain's survival under the German onslaught proved to be the deciding factor in the eventual selection of Rainbow 5 as the strategic template upon which the American war effort would be built.[113]

The years 1939-1941 were a period of feverish activity for planners as they struggled to pin down the most promising

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[111]Braisted, 180.

[112]Maurice Matloff, in his writing about war planning from 1939-1941, credits harried strategic planners racing against the clock with evolving the critical coalition concepts and ignores the important contributions made earlier by the War Colleges. Gole, 53; Matloff, 213-243.

[113]Morton, "Germany First," 18-20; Matloff, 233.

strategic plan and establish ties with future allies while the country completed the transition to a war-time footing. The character of planning efforts similarly transitioned from the earlier progression along parochial service lines in the development of what were essentially operational plans to true joint planning on a global scale--including the first tentative steps at coordination with the U.S. political leadership cataloged in Chapter 3 above.[114]

However, Rainbow 5 seemingly had a glaring omission in that it failed to mention the Pacific. However, Dana Mead points out that, "Rainbow 5 reflected the high level strategic decision, already taken, that the European war had priority and must first be fought and won, and if Japan attacked in the Pacific the United States would fight a deliberate holding action there pending the defeat of its greater threat in the Atlantic."[115] Thus Rainbow 5's most important contribution was its over-arching strategic framework. Subordinate commands were left to fill in the details. Conveniently, some of the Color plans such as Orange were coopted into the operational fabric of Rainbow 5.[116] Rainbow 5 and its allied doppleganger,

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[114]Matloff, 229-231; Mead, 201-204.

[115]Mead, 201-202.

[116]Ibid. 203-4.

ABC-1,[117] were subsequently incorporated into the framework of the American Victory program for the general mobilization of the entire nation. Ultimately, Rainbow 5 provided the strategy which determined the Victory program's personnel and war materiel requirements.[118]

The Rainbow plans were significant because, instead of addressing hypothetical contingencies, they focused upon current and realistic strategic issues. They were the first attempts by the Joint Board/Joint Planning Committee to grapple with the problems of coalition warfare--though the groundwork had been laid at the War Colleges earlier in the decade. Consequently, they compelled an unparalleled expansion in the coordination of strategy with policy. Ultimately, not only did the U.S. political leadership have to be consulted, but also potential allies such as Great Britain.[119]

B. STRATEGISTS

Strategists were also an important product of the strategic planning process. As a result, the U.S. arrived on the doorstep of World War II with a trained cadre of strategic thinkers. This outcome was not necessarily by design, however, since the Army and Navy characteristically "groomed" their

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[117]The first report of the American-British (staff) Conversations held in March 1941. Wheeler, 66.

[118]Mead, 204-205.

[119]Ibid., 199

strategists by employing different methods. The Navy favored using the operating environment to inculcate strategic concepts in its officers. This was because, even though it felt the effects of interwar austerity, it was still able to hold fleet exercises as well as maintain a modest presence overseas which afforded a measure of experience.[120]

The Naval War College provided another useful source of strategists. The service typically sent some of its more promising officers there for training. At the War College, extensive war gaming was employed as a means of teaching strategy and tactics as well as being "The major agency in evolving strategic as well as narrow operational plans...."[121] The War College provided a welcomed respite from the day to day grind of the operational navy. The officers who attended the school valued the time they were afforded to read and reflect upon strategy and foreign policy. Admirals Nimitz and Spruance were both appreciative of their War College experience. Nimitz wrote, "I credit the Naval War College for such success I achieved in strategy and tactics both in peace and war." While Spruance commented, "I consider that what I learned during those years was of the utmost value to me, in the opportunity it gave me to broaden my knowledge of

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[120]Ibid., 20.

[121]Vlahos, "Wargaming," 8.

international affairs and of naval history and strategy."[122] Alumni and faculty who distinguished themselves later in World War II included: Ernest J. King, Chester Nimitz, Royal Ingersoll, Raymond Spruance, Forrest Sherman, Harold R. Stark, Richmond K. Turner, and Carl Moore.[123]

In contrast, however, the Army lacked the wherewithal to hold exercises on anything approaching the scale of the Navy's. In the absence of operational opportunities, it was forced to rely almost exclusively upon academic training and General Staff experience in order to develop its corps of strategists. To do so, attendance at the Army War College became de rigueur for most aspiring Army officers during the interwar years. Indeed, virtually all of the major general officers in the Army in World War II attended with the notable exceptions of MacArthur and Marshall.[124]

After attendance at the War College, where war planning was an integral part of the curriculum, many of the graduates were recommended for duty on the General Staff including War

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[122]Nimitz and Spruance as quoted in Buell, "Spruance: Part I," 33.

[123]Thomas B. Buell, LCDR, USN, "Admiral Raymond A. Spruance and the Naval War College: Part I--Preparing for World War II," Naval War College Review 23, no. 7 (March 1971):36; idem, "Admiral Raymond A. Spruance and the Naval War College: Part II--From Student to Warrior," Naval War College Review 23, no. 8 (April 1971): 41-42; Michael Vlahos, The Blue Sword: The Naval War College and the American Mission 1919-1941 (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1980), 201-202.

[124]Ball, 414.

were recommended for duty on the General Staff including War Plans Division.[125] Later on, after successful operational tours, many of these same officers returned to War Plans Division as the division chief, or to the War College as commander. This practice served to strengthen the maturation of strategists. Moreover duty with the General Staff (including War Plans Division) and the War College faculty was coveted since it was considered to aid promotions as well as help in obtaining choice postings.[126] In general, the Army approach achieved its aim, as Harry Ball put it, of producing "...competent, if not necessarily brilliant, leadership that could prepare the Army for war and fight a war successfully if it came."[127]

C. SUMMARY

This chapter illustrated the development of the two most important products of the interwar planning process i.e. strategic plans and strategists. War plans evolved over the years from simple one threat, one theater operational plans into global, coalition warfare of grand strategic scale. The

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[125]Among the Army War College's distinguished graduates were Dwight Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, William Halsey, Mark Clark, George Patton, Walter B. Smith, Hoyt Vandenburg, Matthew Ridgeway, and Maxwell D. Taylor. Gole, 64 (note 38); Ball, 397-398, 414.

[126]Gole, 56.

[127]Ball, 414.

evolution of these plans was abetted by a corresponding maturation of a corps of military strategists and abetted by the efforts of the Army and Navy War Colleges--particularly in the areas of coalition warfare and war gaming.

V. CONCLUSION

A survey of the contemporary literature on strategic planning during the interwar years generally leads to the conclusion that it either did not exist, or that if it did; it was so ad hoc that it did not work. In other words, the conventional wisdom is that integrated strategic planning, for all intents and purposes, did not exist prior to World War II. While there is a certain element of truth in each of these assertions, the question is more complex and requires greater scrutiny. That the planning organizations were fledgling--true. That the structure was incomplete--true. That the process was flawed--true. That the products (i.e. strategic plans) were deficient--true. On a superficial level, all of the statements are correct. This is indeed the perception when attention is concentrated at the micro-level.

However, once the focus is shifted to the macro-level, a quite different picture appears. Instead of a process so ad hoc that it was dysfunctional, one can observe the emergence of an adolescent strategic culture. Of course, this culture made mistakes as adolescents are wont to do; but it also learned and evolved. Moreover, despite its incomplete structure, its flawed process, its deficient products, this adolescent arrived on the doorstep of World War II with fairly

clear idea of what needed to be done. More importantly, strategists knew what pieces of the puzzle were missing and what needed to be done in order to ferret them out. In other words, the U.S. had a systematic, if imperfect, planning structure and process; and it had spent the previous two decades training a cadre of strategists.

While the ad hoc political culture of the United States and decentralized planning structure has been criticized, one must recognize that it was able to give rise to effective strategists who produced coherent plans during World War II. The interwar plans themselves may have been flawed. However, as war approached this experienced corps of strategists was able to take those imperfect plans and meld them into a blueprint for victory. Ultimately, despite an understandable and youthful apprehension, the U.S. strategic planning organization was sufficiently, if not optimally, ready to guide a country at war.

In terms of structure, the immediate post-World War I and pre-World War II eras were of primary importance. World War I provided legitimacy for both the fledgling General Staff and Office of Naval Operations organizations as well as the impetus for creating their respective War Plans Divisions. The creation and acceptance of these organizations within the Army and Navy was an essential precondition to the development of effective strategic planning from an organizational culture

standpoint. In addition, the War Plans Divisions, in conjunction with the War Colleges, created the necessary pool of officers experienced in strategic thinking. Without this trained pool of strategists, planning on anything other than an ad hoc basis would have been impossible.

The fact that the joint planning structure was created concurrently with the services' planning structure could explain its weakness. The government had no previous experience in fostering strategic culture. It was attempting to build an effective joint planning organization on an a priori basis without the benefit of previous experience and simultaneously with the creation of the only organizations that could provide that experience in an authoritative manner. In other words, is it reasonable to expect that when constructing a strategic culture for what was essentially the first time, that it would function perfectly?

The missing structural elements were identified in the early interwar years as the planning organizations became more accomplished. The primary deficiency was the lack of policy input to the planning process while secondary concerns were the integration of intelligence and the Joint Board's lack of authority commensurate with its responsibility. The failure to effectively address these defects could be attributed fundamentally to the prevailing lack of urgency that the nation felt with respect to strategic threats for the bulk of

the interwar years. This assertion is reinforced by the initiation of increasingly constructive reform such as the creation of the Standing Liaison and Joint Intelligence Committees, intended to correct these problems as the threat of war loomed ever larger in the late 1930s. Though their usefulness was limited, as newly created organizations often are, they prepared the way for more effective successors.

The interwar strategic planning structure furnished the basis for the resulting process. Within the services there were established procedures for the development of plans. Similarly, when the services agreed on a particular threat, they were able to construct joint war plans. As with structure, planners soon recognized the missing components of the planning process in the post-war years. They realized early on that a national policy input was required in order to accomplish effective strategic planning. Since none was forthcoming from the political leadership, they proceeded to construct their own facsimile. The near total lack of national policy input was the most glaring hindrance strategists had to contend with.

There were also other minor problems with the process. Plans were developed to support non-existent policies. A form of strategic tunnel-vision led strategists to assume one threat, one front wars. The Army and the Navy often "marched to different drummers." However, the planning process was

flexible enough to identify and correct errors and it continued to mature throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

The War Colleges augmented the process by providing an effective training establishment, their war gaming facilities afforded a means of testing plans, and the collegial environment provided fertile ground for innovation and the exploration of strategic alternatives. As Henry Gole demonstrated, the War Colleges were considering warfare between coalitions as early as 1927; long before the Joint Board began to address the problem. Moreover, the many of the officers who worked in the War Plans Divisions and attended the War Colleges during the 1920s and 1930s rose to become the principle admirals, generals, and strategists of World War II.

The plans which were developed between the wars were far from perfect. However, they do show a clear progression in terms of increasing sophistication and realism. Two decades of strategic planning experience were embodied in the Rainbow plans. Even so, they were not quite perfect. However, Rainbow 5 was close enough to establish our wartime trajectory and provide a basis for necessary adjustments.

When all is said and done, the real product of the interwar strategic planning process was not the war plans themselves or whether they were "joint" or not. The real product was the strategists who were trained by working on war

plans during the interwar years. The plans were imperfect; as plans will be, given the conditions under which they were developed. Moreover, the traditional emphasis on the accuracy of the plans has served to obscure the contributions of the strategists. After all, it is all but impossible, under the best of conditions, to construct a strategic plan in the present which will perfectly match the conditions of a unknown future. What is achievable, however, is to develop general plans which can subsequently be tailored to the precise conditions of the future situation. To accomplish this, seasoned strategists are required or the results will be truly ad hoc. An experienced strategist can take a less than optimal plan and improve it to fit the task. The ability of the inexperienced person to do the same is doubtful at best.

The interwar strategic planning process produced men who knew how to think strategically. These men were trained by a systematic process which equipped them with the conceptual tools and experience necessary to successfully identify strategy defects and institute the required changes. These men were trained in an era in which strategy had been decoupled from national policy and in which intelligence information had a peripheral role to the process at best. Yet they were able to identify and rise above these shortcomings. Ultimately, the essence of American strategic planning between the wars was that it was a de facto plan built around the capacity to plan.

As Urs Schwarz points out, the "American principle of unpreparedness" was the nation's traditional approach to warfare. The Spanish-American War provided a foretaste, World War I a relatively gentle prod, and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor a firm boot in the derriere to a nation reluctant to shed its comfortable old introspective habits and replace them with the discomfiting responsibilities inherent in being the foremost power in the world. The American strategic culture has continued to evolve throughout this century.

Perhaps one of the components of the evolution of the strategic planning process is the ideas which are transmitted from one generation of strategists to another. As rendered by this discussion, the ideas transmitted from the interwar years may be briefly stated as follows: First, the country must consciously attend to the training of strategists in order to be capable of developing effective strategy. Conversely, dependence on natural selection as a means of producing strategists is the road to defeat. Secondly, the accuracy of plans is a secondary issue. Trained strategists can make plans more accurate as threats become more immediate.[128] Finally, while national policy and intelligence lacunae can be

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[128]One discontinuity between the interwar years and today must be noted here. That is the time component. The technology of the era enabled the strategists to plan for a lengthy period of mobilization and adjustment both prior to and after commencement of hostilities. Today's strategists are not afforded this luxury due to the immense reach and destructiveness of modern weapons.

surmounted by capable strategists, truly effective "joint" planning must structurally and procedurally include these components. This leads inevitably to the conclusion that the present emphasis on "joint" strategic planning, with its focus on the military only, is misplaced and ignores the critical importance of the political component of strategy. While the roles and missions controversy is still a major problem for defense management as witnessed by Goldwater Nichols, the fact is that the aftermath of Pearl Harbor was much better than would have otherwise been the case had the interwar years not produced skilled strategists who possessed the joint planning orientation that they did.

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