

TAPE 10M
INTERVIEW WITH
GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL

January 22, 1957

(1939-41)

Caution of President in 1940

Relations with the President

Passage of the Selective Service Act—Marshall's initial view

OHIO movement—public reaction to draft

Extension of service under draft—work with Midwest congressmen

Remaking regulations to make them simpler

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RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH
GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL

January 22, 1957

By Forrest C. Pogue

Sgt. Heffner ran the machine.

Q. 48. Even when the war began in Poland, the President was uneasy about the far-reaching effect of a state of emergency, because of the political opposition it might arouse, and conferred with General Marshall about an alternative to an executive order based on an emergency proclamation. This would indicate that the President proceeded with extreme caution in 1939 on preparedness matters even after war began in Europe. Did you feel that this was true?

A. This is a fact. He proceeded with great caution and it was very difficult to get action on the important military requirements of that day. I might here digress to state that I had early made up my mind that I, so far as possible, was going to operate as a member of a team, political and otherwise military. That while it would be difficult at times and would be strong pressures for me to appeal to the public, I thought it was far more important in the long run that I be well established as a member of the team and try to do my convincing within that team rather than to take action publicly contrary to the desires of the President and certain members of Congress. There was a certain group of senators at this time who were very intent on going ahead much more rapidly than the Administration was willing to do and their pressure on me at all times was very great. But I restrained my actions for the reason I foresaw that it was going to be very important for me to establish the fact that I would not run off to a public appeal but rather I would try my level best to deal within the team of which the President was the head.

I recall that during this period, particularly at the time of the Emergency Proclamation, the Attorney General was taking the lead. (He incidentally later became a member of the Supreme Court. He was the man who gained great prominence by his action while Governor of Michigan in connection with the sitdown strike. I can't recall his name now). But I got some action from him, which enlarged on the President's precise instructions to him and Mr. Roosevelt was rather resentful.

There are several things that happened here that are rather interesting. One refers to the Chiefs of Staff. It had proved almost impossible to arrange any setting with the Navy which would leave us with the Chief of the Air Corps. The Navy had its own air and was resentful of the Army's semi-independent air force. And the Army Air Force had a large number of young men in it who were going to Congress outside their authorized actions appealing to them. And they were getting great backing, because the Air Corps was a very photogenic affair and the actions of the German Air Corps were very spectacular in Europe though its great action in the invasion of France had not yet occurred.

Murphy was the attorney general's name I was trying to get. The secretary to the president [I believe we later established this was MacIntyre], who was a good friend of mine, called me over to look at the President's message which Murphy had drafted in connection with this emergency action. Mr. Roosevelt was reluctant to go the whole way in this emergency business and this was a much restricted line of action. In it he referred to the fact that these various portions of the armed force were being well led and mentioned me as Chief of Staff and Admiral King as head of the Navy. I got the secretary, he later died, to alter this and have him include General Arnold as Chief of the Air Corps. Of course, General Arnold was under me because the Air Corps was part of the Army and it would take Congressional legislation to

change. But when the President came out with this message in which he referred to his military leadership with myself as Chief of Staff and Admiral King as head of the Navy and General Arnold as head of the Air Corps—we had a separate air corps to all intents and purposes—and the matter was settled right then. Though the Air Corps remained under me, Arnold proceeded as a member of the Chiefs of Staff which had been opposed by the Navy.

The other matter was trying to increase the number of men. There was some current legislation that I have forgotten now which was coming into effect which would have given us a certain increase, but I was trying to go beyond that. They were unwilling to do so, because Mr. Roosevelt was very intent to hold this emergency action down. So while I got a slight increase in the affair I didn't at all get the general increase that I had hoped for. Mr. Roosevelt complained to Murphy about this draft because he said they were making it very embarrassing for him, Mr. Roosevelt, and moving into things they knew he was partially opposed to. I might say that trying to read into Mr. Roosevelt's mind what was going on was his feeling politically that the Middle West was so solidly against him that if he moved suddenly into a large military effort he would encounter such opposition from the Middle West that he wouldn't be able to manage the affair. This was later borne out by the fact that the *Ohio* movement—Over the Hill In Ohio [October]—took on such volume that it was only by one vote that the complete dissolution of the Army forces was avoided. So politically he was right and he was keeping very close touch on all the developments and the Middle West developments were very reluctant to anything that smacked of preparation for war. So you will find throughout this period, the President moving very carefully and in a very restrained manner. I would find myself before congressional committees, a few members of which, notably Senator [Cabot] Lodge, Senator Millard Tydings, and several others of that stripe, who wanted to go much faster and much

further, pressing me to do things which I would not do because I knew I would be going practically against the President's office.

I might say also that there was a factor that permeates all of this, particularly in the size of the Officer Candidate Schools, that is often lost sight of by those who just look at the figures and react from that. In 1918, 1917 rather, the officer candidate schools were started up without the authorization of Mr. Wilson. It was done largely on the enthusiastic backings of General Wood's friends in New York at the Plattsburg camps. Now that was a very brief period of instruction and that was all the officers got. Well, of course, that was a lot better than nothing. But by the standards we were going for into this new war, they were wholly unacceptable to us. But those who had figured decidedly in that Plattsburg movement now tried to take over and dictate exactly how we should do this thing. I remember their bringing up to Mr. Stimson once the fact that Australia was moving much more rapidly than we were in getting their officers schools started and commissioning young officers. Well later on we had a very difficult time with this Australian movement because of the poor training of the officers. We were determined that we should have well trained officers for a heavy fighting force. Mr. Grenville Clark who worked so hard in all these matters, Mr. Elihu Root, Jr. and Mr. Stimson were closely allied with them, Bill Donovan and all those men were pressing for action with which I was not at all in accord. And when Mr. Stimson came in as Secretary of War he was with them and his first action, the first thing he did when I went up to call on him, just before he formally accepted and came down to Washington, was to talk to them over the phone and to press me to move ahead in this very much more rapidly than I was, and which I was unwilling to do for the reasons I will give now. One thing that restrained me throughout this thing was we didn't have the instructors. We were so short of officers that we didn't have the men to train the others. One reason we were

slowed up on the volunteers and the draft act was that we had nobody to train these men if we got them in and we just couldn't risk going into this thing in a slipshod manner. I remember Martin, the ex young president of the New York Stock Exchange, was being trained as a private by a corporal who had been in the Army about ten years and had never gotten promoted from a private to a corporal, until this big change came and they had to put him in as an instructor. Well, he was no good at all at that and yet he was training Martin who was a brilliant man and who is now head of the Federal Reserve. We had nobody else to use. I wanted to go ahead as fast as we were able to manage the thing; that was all ignored. They just wanted what I call numbers, the number racket, which I wouldn't accept at all. So we had a very hard time and particularly with Mr. Stimson at this time because he was against the way we were going. Everybody in the War Department was a unit in this matter. We were opposed to these large training camps they wanted to have because we had no instructors. And we couldn't tear what little we did have all to pieces in order to produce a half-baked organization. And this is a very difficult thing to do. And we were in Dutch with the Secretary of War right from the start on that. And it got to a very, very difficult point.

I did something at one stage which I think is very reprehensible on the part of a government official, the more so when he is a military official which is a long, enduring status. It came to a certain point in this matter where the pressure and the advice of the Secretary of War was coming entirely from New York. Judge Patterson had come down. He was a training camp man, but this thing was not in his bailiwick. He was on the supply side but he moved into this. Bill Donovan was into this. A member of the *New York Times* publishing house, a reserve general was in it. They finally got to the point where they were going to put this over. I then told Mr. Stimson, "Very well, Mr. Stimson, I have done my best and I have the entire staff with

me. They all see this thing alike to avoid this dilemma. Now it has arisen and it is going to take form apparently. I tell you now that I resign the day you do it.” As I say I think this a rather reprehensible attitude for a member of the government at a time like this, particularly when it is a military member, when he is a career man, but nothing else could stop the thing. So I decided I would just take that stand. If they were going to do it—and I considered it a colossal mistake—they would do it without me. But behind this all was the President’s unwillingness to go rapidly at this particular time.

Q. 49. On September 5, 1939, General Marshall said the President had authorized the expansion of the Army to National Defense strength that is to 280,000. But two days later, apparently doubting that he would get this much, the Chief of Staff argued for an immediate increase to 250,000 Regular Army and 320,000 National Guard. However, he got less than this from the President: 227,000 for the Regular Army and 235,000 for the National Guard. (The National Defense Act of 1920 assumed a Regular Army of 280,000 and a National Guard of 420,000).

Critics of the President picture him as trying after 1937 to get this country into war with Germany. Evidence like the above indicates that he was quite slow to arm. It may be, as his opponents say, that he was merely delaying until he was sure of re-election in 1940. Or it may be that he actually hoped we could stay out until the fall of France shocked him out of that belief. Do you have any comment on this?

A. Well, that is true. You must say Mr. Roosevelt’s reluctance was because the country wasn’t ready, the Middle West wasn’t ready, and would oppose it violently. On my side, the technical military side was the fact we didn’t have the people. We didn’t have the instructors at all to handle these people and train them properly. You see the Regular Army was very small, when

the war broke out in Europe, exceedingly small and it was going to be very hard to find the people to do the training. And the reserve training at that time was not sufficiently crystallized to use them at the start. It was quite a while before they were available to give satisfactory service in a training capacity.

I don't know that the President's action in any way involved a consideration that he was waiting for the fall of France. It shocked the world in disbelief. No one at that time thought France was going to fall. And it came as a great shock when the invasion of France occurred and the tanks went through on the French side and went into hiding in the forest and then came out and executed their real slaughters after that. That all came as a great surprise. I know it did to the President because I talked to him about it and he was consulting me as to what to expect from this sort action which came as a great surprise to him as well as it did to the world.

Q. 50. The Army in 1939-40 was sometimes criticized for not asking for all it needed. General Marshall was aware of the needs, but he avoided going over the heads of his superiors to Congress. I have heard so-called military experts say that you and your staff failed to show sufficient imagination concerning needs. Others have said that the Army played politics on the matter in order to play up to the President. Do you want to add any comment on this?

A. I don't think that is quite right. People have forgotten today what a difficult time we had raising an Army, how bitter was the opposition to raising it, how strong was the influence of the Middle West. And we began to get the Army of some sized in 1941 and it was almost dissolved and only saved by one single vote. And yet I find many intelligent men today who don't recall that at all. And yet it was a historic, almost fatal, point in our military history of the war. We had to move very cautiously. If I had ignored public opinion, if I had ignored the reaction of

Congress, we would literally have gotten nowhere, because everybody in the positions of authority knew what we needed. They were unwilling to go ahead. They were unwilling to give it support. I had to be very careful, I felt, and I still think, I have to be very careful not to create the feeling that I, leader of the military portion of affairs at that time, was trying to force the country into a lot of actions which it opposed. I was trying to get the Congress to do it and I was trying to get the public to do it. I was trying to have these ardent supporters of this action to take the field, not against me. I understood what we needed for better than they did. But the public turned on me because I was pressing all these things. It would be very destructive.

I know apparently it will come up later in these discussions, but I was much criticized because I didn't take the lead in the Selective Service legislation. I very pointedly did not take the lead. I wanted it to come from others, it did come from Wadsworth and, I forgot who the other senator was who had been defeated and was going to retire in a few months. Then I could take the floor and do all the urging that was required in the case. But if I had led off with this urging, I would have defeated myself before I started and I was very conscious of that feeling. So if I could get civilians of great prominence to take the lead in urging these things then I could take up the cudgels and work it out. And that was very much the case, for example, in the Selective Service. No one had to tell me how much it was needed. I knew that years before, but the great question was how do you get it? Nobody had been able to get it except Mr. Wilson at the outbreak of the other war. Now it was being very violently opposed, again by the Middle West. The problem was how do we get this across. That was my reaction to it. To get it started by someone prominent in civil life. Then we could take it up and push it from that time out. It wasn't for me to establish a reputation because I asked for Selective Service. No one had to tell me it was needed. I knew that full well, many times better than the man in the street. You could

say the Army played politics in this period. That is a crude expression. Actually we had regard for politics. We had regard for the fact that the President did not feel assured he could get the backing of the people generally and the Middle West, in particular at the that time. We had to move with great caution.

I recall that when I was working on some of these things, in one case I talked to—I don't know how many Republican congressmen, enough to fill the private dining of the Army-Navy Club. And I talked with them in this issue where we only got one vote to save us. I talked to them from seven o'clock at night until two o'clock in the morning struggling with them. There I remember talking to one man who said: "That's all very well. You put the case very well, but I will be damned if I am going to go along with Mr. Roosevelt." My reply was, "You are going to let plain hatred of the personality dictate to you to do something that you realize is very harmful to the interests of the country." Of course, I did not say this publicly to anybody. I don't know that I have ever given out public expression to this meeting, but I had all the Republican congressmen in there and out of that I only got a few votes. As a matter of fact all those who did vote for it would have lost their places in Congress except for the fact the war came and everybody turned to. There was no question of it. I told them, "I realize if you vote for this thing now, (which was the prolongation of the draft act, retaining the National Guard in service—it wasn't the prolongation of the draft act— it was keeping those men in longer than stipulated period, entirely legal what was being done) I would personally do everything that I could in their campaign to support them and they could figure out how much effect that would be." They said it had no effect, that they would be defeated. A certain number of them said they would accept defeat as it was essential to the interest of the country; we will accept defeat, and I took notice of that so that I could go on the platform and use their names and explain

exactly what had happened. The war came along and then there was no necessity. People have forgotten entirely the hostility of that time. *Life* magazine played it up at great length, this OHIO movement (Over the Hill In October). It was very hard. Certain phases of democracy make it quite a struggle to raise any Army, probably should, I guess. But in the great tragedy the world was in at that time, it made it double hard. It kind of goes against the grain to find you are being criticized for being cautious in the way you handled this thing. I have no regrets. I think what I did was right. I think it was even more right as I look at it from the longer distance of the present time. I think those who would have plunged in would have wrecked the whole enterprise and delayed us until we were forced in under more serious circumstances. As it was when we were forced into the war we had the beginnings of a sizable Army.

Q. 51. Any comment on this matter of delay of personnel legislation?

A. I feel that, of course, there may have been excessive caution at that time by both the White House and the military. What we did was in accord with the White House. I did everything I could to stir the President's appreciation to the vastly critical military situation we had which we had to cure. And it was not a question of imagination; I had too much imagination around me. Members of the staff were terribly concerned and they spent their time trying to force me to take open action contrary to the Administration which I declined to do. And in the end that paid because all through I had the backing of the Administration in all these things and the backing of the conservative congress.

There is another factor that comes into all this. I was opposed to the too rapid reception of the men under the draft because we couldn't handle them. We did not have the instructors and if we did not do that part well we would submit ourselves to terrific criticism with the possibility

of losing control of the whole business because of the criticisms of the way we were doing it. Until the reservists became of age, you might say, until they were seasoned so that we could use them in the role of instructors for the very severe training camps we had—and that was at least a year—we had to move with a very careful appreciation of our limitations in instructors. I was under pressure because I did not do what Australia did. I was under pressure because we did not smear this up in order to keep it going. I was told the situation was grave and I should slur over this and slur over that and we heard that always. I feel we were right in what we did. I went beyond the staff in the size of the training camps and they had a terrible time getting appropriate instruction and I had to inspect these camps after time to make certain by superhuman effort they were curing it. It was all very difficult and we were determined to have well qualified officers which you could not get on short notice. Well-meaning reserve officers, and notably Clark and those fellows who did a superb job in 1917, exercised great pressure and they had the complete sympathy and support of the Secretary of War because he was of their tribe. He had gone to the Plattsburg camps and all that sort of thing. I just put it on the barrelhead. We had to do this thing right or I was not going to be involved in it.

We had almost the same experience with weapons. They wanted us to cut down the time of manufacturing. They wanted us to do like the British were doing in part in the matter of rifles, lowering the standards, the tolerances and things of that sort. The result was that these rifles which were fixed for British machine guns wouldn't work at high altitudes and we had to supply them out of our limited stock. But our Chief of Ordnance was being blistered because he wouldn't do them in this way and they said he was too conservative. Well you got all sorts, apparently anybody in the world. Maybe the Duke of Tasmania is doing it a little shorter than we were and he is right. But he's not right. He's all wrong.

Q. 52. In June 1940, General Marshall proposed increasing the Regular Army from 280,000 to 400,000 to avoid the necessity of mobilizing any part of the National Guard. Also suggested raising 120,000 men by the Civilian Volunteer Effort.

“That there was in this recommendation no suggestion of resorting, rather, to a draft of manpower, which could be obtained only by the passage of a selective service act, indicates how far from the Chief of Staff’s mind at this time was the idea of making immediate use of the draft. In May 1940, Grenville Clark pushed preparedness. At a dinner of May 22d, attended by Stimson, Patterson, Elihu Root, Jr., Donovan, and many others, it was decided to urge the War Department to call for draft legislation. General Palmer called General Marshall on May 25. “General Marshall was fully informed of the President’s unwillingness to espouse any such proposal at the time and hence was not free to do so himself.” He did, however, instruct three officers to aid the Military Training Camps Association in drafting a bill. The impression was strong that General Marshall contemplated selective service legislation which would be effective only after a declaration of war. Mr. Clark and Colonel Julius Adler now called on the Chief of Staff urging him to give immediate backing to draft legislation. “This General Marshall flatly refused to do.” Mr. Clark recalled that he was unwilling to break up trained units to find cadres, and that he was worried about the need of using intact units to defend South America. He also did not want to jeopardize appropriations then pending.

The selective service act “was designed and given its initial push, not by Army or Navy or White House, but by a mere handful of farsighted and energetic civilians.”

This is from an official Army history written in 1949 and based heavily, in this case, on the recollections of Grenville Clark. Do you have any additional information to give?

A. I don't know what the official history referred to here, but I do know that we deliberately did not take the lead in working for the draft act, but I went all out in the argument for its passage after it had been introduced. I might say that I went through a very difficult period here and it was very hard to keep my temper. I was being dictated to and I mean dictated to. I was being sent for by a conference of this important New York fellow and this other important New York fellow and they would call me in—the New York fellows and dictate to me what I should do. I tried to listen politely, but I didn't do.

In connection with the training program, methodical training, comment is made on General McNair's part in the matter. I put this under McNair. General Clark was his executive, so as to have it closely observed in all its workings throughout the country. Not just under the War Department in a general way. It was specifically under General McNair and he had a staff to do the inspecting and everything, that sort of thing. McNair was a very able officer, a conscientious officer and he had a good headquarters at the War College. And he is entitled to vast credit for the job he did in that. And General Clark played a very determining part in the matter. As a matter of fact, the method of raising these divisions, building them up, was largely worked out by General Clark. He would sit across the desk from me up in the Chief of Staff's office and we would work out the details. I selected General McNair personally for this. I selected him very hurriedly at an earlier date to get him control of Leavenworth which I thought was following a very antiquated attitude particularly in regard to the Air Corps. And I took General McNair away from his job with the new three regimental divisions which he was working on at San Antonio and brought him up to Leavenworth and put him in charge of the school there. I brought him up ahead of time in drafting the schedule before he became

superintendent. And then he came on and took charge later and Leavenworth became another place.

I might explain something that happened here in which I took some pride. Seemingly it was a small matter but it was a very large one. We had the drafts, I'm guessing as to numbers, of 152 manuals in accord with the then new concepts of training of this, that, and the other. It may have been 252 but I think it was 152. They had to be edited and worked out in full and published to the services. I remember so well in 1917 we didn't have anything and we had to borrow documents from the British and they had literally nothing. So I seized on Leavenworth and on the War College and I retained their instructors and I think at one or the other I retained part of the students. I am not certain about that. Anyway, I put them to work finishing all these manuals. Leavenworth had a great many to finish. I held them there for about four months after the class was graduated. I remember when I told the superintendent at Leavenworth that I wanted to hold them there to do this work; he gave me an estimate of a year and a half. I told him first I think three months. Later I changed it to four months and he said it could not be done. And I said, "You be very careful about that, to tell me this over the telephone, incidentally, that a thing can or cannot be done." He said, "No, it can't be done." I said, "I'm sorry then, you are relieved." So I relieved him and put somebody else in his place. Down at the War College, I think, we kept the student officers there. But anyway, we finished all these manuals so that we started with all of them finished, in the printer's hands, to issue to these new troops and new officers of this great Army we were rearming. We did it without mixing things up. We used the headquarters that were actually in existence, Leavenworth and the War College. Then afterwards the War College developed into the center of training of which McNair became the head. We took him from Leavenworth and we established another school there to which we

wanted to bring him ranking reserve officers to and others to get in touch with the general situation. I remember then to show what difficulties we had, we had no money for the school so I invited these various officers to come at their own expense, to leave their businesses and everything of that sort—they were all generally business men, New York particularly, Chicago, Detroit and so on—and take this course for three months so that they would learn what we were trying to do. Some achieved very important places in the Army then and later on. But we couldn't get a dime to pay their expenses and they had to pay their own, which limited us very decidedly in getting the men. However, it worked very well and it was a beginning. All these things had to be hewn out of new logs you might say and at your own expense because we didn't have the money to do it otherwise.

McNair seemed fated. Each time he went abroad he was struck. He went to Africa and was wounded there, fortunately not seriously but was wounded in the shoulder. Then went to Europe and was killed there by a bomb.

Q. 53. Will you comment on General McNair's personality and work? Had you known him well before 1939 and did you pick him for this training program?

A. Answered in Question 52.

Q. 54. In the fight to extend the selective service act in 1941, General Marshall was faced with considerable work with Congress. Part of his problem was taken up with the continuance of the National Guard in service beyond one year. For a time in the spring of 1941, he had plans made for letting them go home. There was some criticism that he waited until past mid-year before recommending that they be kept in service. He noted that there had been changes in the world situation in the meantime. Here is a case where some of your critics say that instead of taking a

firm stand, you used a political approach to the question. Do you feel that this is a legitimate criticism?

A. No, I do not. I doubt if any other procedure that than I followed could have been used. In other words, it was not a question at that moment of talking big. There was a deep animosity on the part of the Republicans towards Mr. Roosevelt and some few Democrats went along with the movement. And, of course, the parents played a very large part in the development of pressures on the Congress. The trouble was that we were undertaking very severe war measures and we were not at war. This situation changed instantly a few months later when we found ourselves at war. There was no trouble then and no doubt but there was great trouble at this time. It was a debate as though it were an ordinary Administration policy measure. The efforts we made were very pronounced. I think a little earlier I went on to describe taking the leading Republican critics in the House and talking to them until two in the morning at the Army and Navy Club. Those that I persuaded to vote in our favor did so stating that they knew this meant their defeat. Of course there was no time to measure their defeat because the outbreak of the war changed all that. But it was very rife at the moment and the man felt that he was giving away his position in Congress to go along with this unpopular measure which had been very heavily worked up in the Press and in the magazines. These boys were very fond of talking and the representatives of the magazines, particularly *Life*, would go from camp to camp. Of course a young man to be consulted, and results of consultation to be published, felt very much enlarged and important. And he talked freely and at length and of course was very vehement. All that made it quite hard to manage. Meantime, before the actual vote came in the last weeks, I had to go off with the President to Argentina in Newfoundland to the meeting with Mr. Churchill and his staff.

Q. 55. Did you have any talks with Mr. Truman at this time? Do you recall when you first met him?

A. I did not have any talks as I recall with Mr. Truman at this time. I don't even recall having met him at this time.

Q. 56. Officer Candidate Schools had been opened both as a means of getting new officers and as a quickener of trainee morale. The program was laid down in September 1940 but General Marshall and pushed through over the surprisingly strong objections of G-1, G-3, and Chief of Arms who felt that the Officers' Reserve Corps was already large enough to meet requirements for the visible future, and that additions to it would make officer eliminations unnecessarily difficult. General Marshall pointed to the high disciplinary value of training in the ranks, and to the certainty that commissioning from the ranks would increase the popularity of the Selective Service Act...Later General Marshall proposed that quotas be allotted to replacement training centers and to recruits of only four months' service instead of six. Did you ever have reason to regret your insistence on OCS?

A. No, I think it was very important. I think it proved highly satisfactory and made a great contribution to efficiency.

Q. 57. How do you rate the OCS officers of the war as contrasted to Reserve officers?

A. I think the officers in the lower grades who graduated from the candidate schools were better trained than the reserve officer who had never been to any such school. He lacked thoroughness and he lacked disciplinary training and instruction. Candidate schools produced a very high grade of discipline and of instruction.

Q. 58. It has been suggested in recent years that all officers should take some training in the ranks (it is assumed that cadet training certainly is similar to training in the ranks) before being commissioned. What is your view on this?

A. I think this is a very sound suggestion.

Q. 59. Did the idea of giving battlefield commissions originate with you? What was your reaction to the practice of giving direct commissions to experts in military government, finance, supply procurement and the like?

A. As nearly as I can recall the idea of battlefield commissions did originate with me. I felt that where very effective leadership was demonstrated on the battlefield, the quick recognition of that leadership was very important. If it was recognized at the time and became well known throughout the unit, it encouraged all the others to similar actions. Actually, I am not entirely certain of this, as I recall, we sent many of these men to officer training schools after they won their commissions on the battlefield.

My reaction to the giving of direct commissions to the experts in military government, finance, and supply department is that it should be conducted about the way we did it. Disciplinary training requirements are quite different from those of a combat graduate.

Q. 60. Before assuming the Chief of Staff's duties General Marshall made a tour of air stations and manufactories with General Andrews of the Air Corps learning much more of the air elements' needs than was commonly understood by ground officers. More receptive than his predecessors to the arguments of the Army aviators, General Marshall channeled the air spokesmen's abundant energies into programs that approximated aviation objectives and yet

were tolerable to the leaders of ground force opinion. Would you give some background material on this trip and on some of the things you learned from your tour?

A. I had not known General Andrews at all well and while I was head of the War Plans Division he called on me and said he was going around the country (he was then in command of the Tactical Division) and invited me to go with him and I accepted. As a matter of fact, there was some opposition to my going from the War Department. But I went ahead and took the trip and I found it tremendously informing. I went to all the various plants and met the heads of the plants, particularly their chief engineers, and I walked with one or the other through the plant while General Andrews was busy with the other fellow and learned a great deal about construction and the difficulties and problems. I got an insight into what went on. I think we went first to a plant in Seattle of which Johnson was the head and where B-17s were being made. We also went to all the principal air stations and at all of these I heard the comments of the officers. I heard their appeals to Andrews for better representation. I heard their appeals for things that they were being denied. I came to recognize a great many of the things as justified. When I got back to Washington, I looked into it and found out that they had almost no representation at all on the General Staff and I found the General Staff officers had little interest in the air, mostly antipathy, and it was quite marked. There were several things that came up you could take action on right away. For example, one of them was that when a man had three months or six months or whatever the special training was in connection with manufacture of aircraft they would almost immediately lose his services because he would buy his discharge and take a high paid position with some air manufacturing plant. I got the Chief of Staff to approve the proposition that before he took this special schooling he had to re-enlist for three years and sign an agreement not to purchase out until the finish of that three year period. However, when I finally became Deputy

Chief of Staff I found this had never been put into effect. I found everything in the staff was very hostile to the Air. I found the young Air officers were dealing with Congress and stirring up everything and there was a general muddle. They had something to complain about because they were not getting recognition, and the Ground Staff at that time had little understanding of the Air. I know when I started sending them around in planes, they didn't want to fly; they declined to fly in many cases. They said it hurt their insurance. I believe it did. I think I had no insurance at all for some years there for Mrs. Marshall because of my flying. So I couldn't very well force these fellows into fly at the expense of their families, if any accident occurred. Flying was not as secure then as it was later on. So we had quite an issue there in the staff. I wanted to send people out to various places, which with our limited mileage account, we could do by air. Not many of them wanted to go but it got later to the point that if a fellow didn't want to fly I relieved him from the War Department staff. I did it quietly and didn't get a fuss stirred up. But I just dispensed with his services on the War Department staff. So if you came in there, you flew. So we gradually got this thing worked out. I was trying my best to do it with as little publicity as possible which I think I succeeded in doing then. It was almost like when I became Secretary of Defense, there had been such an active battle between Air and the Navy and later between all the military services and the State Department. I healed them all up in about two weeks and it never got into the press though it had been all the press had been writing about heretofore. I won't go into details of how I did it. Maybe it will come up later. But this air thing now that you were talking about was very marked. The truth was, as far as I can figure out, behind the thing, was the fact that under the law you couldn't be on the General Staff unless you graduated from the War College. Under the law you couldn't go to the War College unless you graduated from Leavenworth and the air fellows did not want to go to Leavenworth. In the first

place it was hard work, but more particularly they were afraid of endangering their flight pay. And only a few went there—General Arnold, Tooey Spaatz, and fellows like that. So that only a limited number were qualified by law to serve on the General Staff and the result was there was almost no representation on the General Staff at all. Frank Andrews was one of the first ones that I got into a commanding position on the staff and I made him the G-3 of the staff. And he was the supervisor of the first mobilization of the Army which involved about 176 new units and he followed it all through and got in close touch with the ground forces. He flew everywhere in a fast combat plane and did a splendid job of it. I had him on the General Staff. And later on I sent him down to the Caribbean and got him in command down there and gave him the experience of handling all the other services under him and also contact with the Navy. And then incidentally I moved him out to Cairo where he would come in contact with the English as well as his own development command, and then I finally moved him to England. So he was the first one I was able, you might say, to graduate for his job through the various holdings. There, unfortunately, he flew to Iceland and wrecked his plane on a mountain in a rain storm.

I learned a great deal on this trip, a very great deal. I learned most of what was the matter with the staff in regard to the air and what the air was doing to make it worse. I tried to get this changed and as a matter of fact the high ranking ground officers on the staff were so hostile that it was rather difficult to do. And it was not until I became Deputy Chief of Staff that I got into a position where I could bring pressure to bear. Then later, when I became Chief of Staff, I had Frank Andrews as my G-3 and I will describe later what happened there. Well, I might tell it here. I was going to be made a major general and Chief of Staff. As Chief of Staff I would be a full general. I didn't want to have my promotion to major general occur after I was announced as becoming Chief of Staff. I wanted to be appointed before that. I wanted the Chief of Staff,

the assistant Secretary of War and Secretary of War, the men concerned with the promotion, to appoint me. So I got them all together in the Secretary's office, who was Woodring, Louis Johnson was assistant secretary, and General Craig was Chief of Staff. Craig was a very dear friend of mine and Mr. Johnson and Mr. Woodring were both well disposed toward me, very strongly disposed toward me, but without regard to each other and they were not aware of the fact Craig was friendly to me. I got them together and took up the question of promoting Frank Andrews to a brigadier general—he had just become a colonel at the end of his tour as major general in the command of the GHQ Air Force. That was the only thing I ever knew them to be a unit on. They were all together against him because the Air's working with Congress behind the scenes. I don't know that Frank Andrews did it himself or not but these young men did do it. They were a unit on that and that was the only thing I ever knew them to be a unit on. I stipulated that they just had to do it. I didn't want it done after I was Chief of Staff because that would put me in the position of strongly favoring the Air Corps—it would all come out and make a newspaper mess of it. And we had a very, very stormy session. Finally I just said you must do it. If you are going to make me Chief of Staff you have just got to do it. And they finally agreed to it and made Frank Andrews a brigadier general and he came in and became G-3 of the War Department, the first time an airman had handled such an appointment.

I learned a great deal about difficulties regarding the various factors in the manufacture of airplanes, the difficulties of arriving at an acceptable pattern, and I got very clear ideas of the varying opinions of these fellows. At that time, there was great enthusiasm in the Air Corps for large bombers, and there was very great opposition in the other parts of the Army to the large bombers. They said there were no fields for them. They couldn't use them in the Philippines; they couldn't use them in this place and that place because there were no fields for them, and

they were all opposed to them. I took a different view but I didn't express it then. But as soon as I became Chief of Staff I went ahead with their program for large bombers.

There were many other things that came to my attention during this trip. I got quite an interest in various personnel factors of the Air Corps. I came to one conclusion at that time, promotions had been slow all around. They had had temporary promotions which hadn't been successful because it created too many jealousies. I found there was a very lamentable situation there regarding promotions. There was great hostility by the ground officers against these promotions and the great question was how to solve this problem. It sort of fought itself two or three ways from the start. I had a hard time resolving the matter into an acceptable pattern. I had to be very careful what I did because the newspapers were looking for interesting items and they would have stirred up a mess in about a minute, because that would have been news. And everybody likes to read about a mess and that is the one thing I wanted to avoid because that doesn't help morale. That just damns morale. However, I was just starting out as Chief of Staff and I was going to have a very hard time.

I don't think there is anything else I can talk about in connection with this trip. I came to know Andrews very well and a number of others.

Q. 61. The public and Congress early began talking of autonomy or possible separation of the Air Corps from the Army. In March 1941, General Marshall issued a simple directive saying in effect that the Chief of the Air Corps would thereafter prepare for final action all papers, studies, memoranda, and all other particulars on purely Air Corps matters, except those pertaining to war plans and intelligence; and that the Deputy Chief of Staff for Air would be responsible for coordination in air matters. Please discuss your difficulties in handling this demand for

autonomy. What problems did you have from air officers, from the Press, and from Congress in this matter?

A. So far as General Arnold was concerned and some of the other leading air men I had no difficulty. They differed some in the character of proposals. I had great difficulty from outside, so called experts on the air. I remember one man particularly who occupies quite a prominent position and has a great deal to say and he ran a column, I think. He had two plants fail under his management, but he knew all about handling a larger plant in the Army. I didn't accept that. As a matter of fact, our great difficulty at that time was that we didn't have sufficient trained senior officers in the Air Corps. To express it baldly we had a great number of antiquated pilots. We lacked trained men like Spaatz and others of that stripe and Arnold of course. The trained staff was missing. As I explained before, they had failed to go to Leavenworth at one time or another for various reasons and then hadn't qualified for this staff training and they just didn't have it. I had very great difficulty with them.

Now what I am going to say right now is NOT FOR RELEASE, but it's merely to explain my own feelings about it. (I had a great deal of trouble about this and I told Arnold one day I was sick and tired of his god-damned high-school staff and get somebody back there that knew how he operated. He himself was all loyalty. Spaatz was loyal and the other fellows they had immediately around them were loyal. The great problem was to construct a going staff. After these young men had gone abroad and had vast experience and had grown up to command the largest Air Force the world had ever seen that was quite another matter. They knew then of their own experiences, these things which they had not known at all before. I took Vandenberg as an aide for me over to England. I took Craig on another trip over to England. I had two to three airmen I took along with me when I only had two officers I took with me going to various

meetings with the British. I saw them at close range. I knew pretty much what they knew and what they lacked in broad vision. The great difficulty, of course, was popular press pressure. The self-appointed air experts who knew nothing, just the broad statement of having immediate Air Corps equality, knew almost nothing what the difficulties would be of trying to staff manage such a thing. When we got these temporary staffs in, they were mainly concerned about promotion. They would add up the number of Judge Advocates and other such side issue officers and try to work into them when already they had very advance promotions. But they weren't working on the broad proportion of the air. They were working on how it affected the individual).

General Arnold was loyal throughout and my constant companion. I flew pretty much everywhere with him in the U. S. and he flew pretty much everywhere with me abroad. When I got the thing fixed as I described before in this speech to Congress by Mr. Roosevelt in which Arnold automatically became a member of Chiefs of Staff, which I couldn't arrange before because the Navy wanted their Air in it and there was no way of compromising the situation.

There were very strong advocates for the Air Corps in Congress. There were very strong advocates for the Air Corps in the press. And the Air Corps had been very much the underdog in most of these things, which added to the effectiveness of these pressures. But we had to have something that would work. To my mind it was utterly out of the question to organize a separate Air Corps in the course of the war. Arnold felt the same way I did. We just didn't have the trained staffs to function them.

PART 2

Q. 62. Was the solution completely satisfactory?

A. The solution was not entirely satisfactory, but it was a good working solution and we got along very well with it after we rid ourselves of the outside pressures. I know up in Judge Patterson's office they took a strong position in all these matters because the Judge had been a member of the Plattsburg camp and those fellows were moving in on it. But I managed to handle the thing. I might tell one amusing incident. I don't know whether this should ever be written up or not. But there came down from Judge Patterson's office, which was for supplies—he was the undersecretary—and hadn't anything to do with tactics and organization, but he came down as a sort of representative of the Air Corps. And in this he changed the general organization of the Air Corps in the War Department and very notably its organization under me, and showed it to Mr. Stimson and Mr. Stimson signed it, and it came in to me. Well that virtually deposed me as any controlling point here. Well the main point was I wasn't even consulted. I wasn't even notified. But an office that didn't pertain to this thing took charge of it and did this thing and then it was sent to me signed by the Secretary of War. Well, I handled that the way I did a good many things. Instead of getting mad, I just filed it in my desk—didn't turn it out at all. Well I suppose almost a year afterwards, certainly six months afterwards, when Mr. Stimson and I were having quite a battle over something we didn't agree about, Mr. Stimson said to me, "I would like for you to stop and think that we have gone along with you on everything you've put up. I don't think you can find anything on which you haven't had my cordial support, I assure you." I didn't say anything, and he said, "Is there anything that hasn't had my cordial support of you as Chief of Staff?" Well I reached into my desk and got this document which he had signed which in effect was prepared by the undersecretary who had nothing to do with that part of the Army.

Mr. Roosevelt by an executive order put me in charge of operations over and above the Secretary of War and organization. "Well, Mr. Secretary, here is a pretty good answer, and this is about six months old" (maybe it was longer than that). And I gave him this and he read it and came down to his signature. "Well," he said, "what is this?" I said, "You signed it there, you ought to know." "Well," he said, "what is it doing there?" I said, "I filed it in my desk here." He said, "You filed it." I said, "Well, you didn't consult me about. That deposed me. You were just talking about how you supported me in all these things. It hadn't anything to do with Judge Patterson's responsibility. Yet he takes the initiative and he writes the thing and you sign it and I'm out and I am not even spoken to. So I just put it in my drawer. That's a good place to solve these difficult questions." Mr. Stimson said, "I never saw anything like that." And I said, "I've never heard anything like that either. But it didn't go any further than my drawer." "Well," he said, "just give it to me." I said, "Just hold on here. I have an executive order from the President that I have the question of organization in my sole control. Now, are you going to take this out and start it all over again?" He said, "No, I am going to give it to Judge Patterson and tell him to tear it up." But that shows the lengths to which they got to in this matter.

Q. 63. Do you feel that a separate Department of Air would have been feasible during the war?

A. Think I answered 63 in which I said I didn't think it was possible to have a separate Air Corps during the war and General Arnold was in complete agreement with me on this question.

Q. 64. Do you feel that the Army was wise in insisting in recent months on its own air force and on its program of developing a long-range missile program?

A. Answer omitted.

Q. 65. How seriously were we handicapped by shipments to the British and the French? The Chicago Tribune insists that but for the things sent to Britain we could have prevented the disaster at Pearl Harbor.

A. I don't recall any shortages except in patrol aircraft and some fighter aircraft that would have changed the situation at Pearl Harbor. We didn't have enough bombers to use as reconnaissance vessels to carry the reconnaissance around the complete circle and far out to sea.

Q. 66. Please discuss the arrangement by which surplus arms were transferred to the British after Dunkirk. Did this transfer hurt our training program?

A. At this time by a recent law of Congress anything of a military character that was to be given to Great Britain had to have the approval of the Chief of Staff. I think I referred to this to you before. I think the law was unconstitutional. I think the commander-in-chief was the one and they might forbid him. I was under the commander in chief. Nevertheless it was put up to me. Now at this time the problem was how essential was the partial rearmament of the British from our then available old war stocks to the defense of the United States. I took the position that any measure then to prevent the complete collapse of Great Britain was of importance to the United States, because it would put the war on a different front, very threatening to us, and would permit easy transfer to this side of the ocean and threaten the Panama Canal. Under that term, so explained, I arranged for, I think, about a million rifles and I have forgotten how many automatic rifles and machine guns of the First World War stock and I think five hundred 75 mm. guns to be transferred to the British. The tragedy of the matter was that when they issued these rifles they could only give them ten rounds of ammunition and they went to the people of Great Britain to defend their towns and all when a German invasion was very much threatened and it was

presumed to be inevitable. But we hadn't any ammunition in excess of that to give them. So we did give them ten rounds per gun. So they couldn't train for it, but they at least would have a rifle and they, at least, would have ten shots. Because they were stripped to nothing at this time and the only hope was that the civilians could arm themselves for a partial defense. This distribution of World War weapons didn't hurt our training program. Because there were enough left of the World War weapons for such training as we might want to use them for and we were beginning to get deliveries on modern weapons.

Q. 67. Isolationists say that with the passage of the Lend-Lease Act we, to all intents and purposes, declared war. Do you feel this is true?

A. In regard to Lend-Lease. I think the passage of the Lend-Lease Act plainly declared our intimate relationship with Great Britain and our friendship with them. It didn't necessarily indicate we were going to war with them, but it made it a probability better than a possibility.

Q. 68. Do you believe that Britain and Russia could have held out without Lend-Lease?

A. I don't know what the result would have been if we had not had Lend-Lease as to the British and Russians surviving. I think it would have been exceedingly difficult for Great Britain, maybe not quite so difficult for Russia, though they were seriously lacking in many, many things.

Q. 69. Did the Lend-Lease program interfere vitally with your military preparation program?

A. The Lend-Lease plan, at first, presented difficulties rather in the slowdown of the armament of our newly organized troops. But one which we felt at the time was plainly justified.

Q. 70. Do you feel that for the most part the Lend-Lease program was well handled?

A. As far as I know the Lend-Lease program was fairly well handled. Everybody could give you different reasons how the thing could be managed but I think they did it pretty well.

Q. 71. What changes would you suggest in such a program in case of another conflict?

A. I have no suggestions in regard to changes.

Q. 72. During the congressional hearings of the late 1940s, one or two witnesses indicated that the Army's efforts to prevent critical items from going to Russia were overridden by Mr. Hopkins. Any comment on this?

A. I don't remember just what the reaction was in these hearings in relation to giving items to Russia. Hopkins' job with the President was to represent the Russian interest. My job was to represent the American interest and I was opposed to any, what I called undue generosity which might endanger our security. I thought we gave too much at times and Hopkins thought we gave too little, which would always be the case.

Q. 73. Did you feel that the administration was over-generous with the Soviet government?

A. Have answered that question just now.

Q. 74. Did you feel that the administration failed to deal properly with Russian complaints?

A. I thought the Administration dealt very generously with the Russian complaints. The Russians demanded everything, criticized everything. The point was they were fighting and they were fighting hard. And we needed their fighting to keep the enemy engaged as much as possible. But their complaints were continuous and always have been. No matter how much you gave them, they didn't hesitate at all to complain bitterly about the whole thing.

Q. 75. Isolationists in November 1941 said that the Army was preparing an expeditionary force for duty in Africa. General Marshall affirmed categorically: "There is no foundation whatsoever for the allegation or rumor that we are preparing troops for a possible expedition to Africa or other critical area outside this hemisphere." Three weeks later, without preliminaries, certain newspapers printed an article questioning the accuracy of General Marshall's denial, and recording in some detail the Army's formulation of a program for American participation in the war on Germany. (This was *Chicago Tribune* and Washington Times-Herald release in December 1941). Did you ever get any idea of how these got into the hands of the newspapers?

A. I had no idea how the *Tribune* and *Times-Herald* gained access to the information they publicized.

Q. 76. Did the newspapers ever indicate privately any regret for having made these plans public on the eve of war?

A. I don't know of any regrets the papers expressed privately. It didn't come to my attention if they did.

Q. 77. Is there any way that a government agency can guard against release of papers by officials who feel that it is their duty to make public information which they feel the public should know? This was back of the feeding of information from secret files in State and Army to McCarthy, and back of present day leaks from the Defense Department.

A. I do not know how to answer this question. It is extremely difficult to go ahead with war plans under conditions which then existed. And yet we were fighting to prevent that sort of thing that was going on in Germany at that time. Surprise is one of the greatest factors of success in war. And we were being deprived of surprise all the way through. You would get before a

military committee of Congress and some representative there, hostile to the Administration, would ask you a question which it would be fatal to answer. More particularly if you refused to answer, you almost answered the question. So it was a very difficult matter there to meet these questions at that time under the circumstances. All one could do was the best they could.