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**THE US MARINE CORPS
AND
DEFENSE UNIFICATION
1944-47**

THE POLITICS OF SURVIVAL

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THE US MARINE CORPS AND DEFENSE UNIFICATION 1944-47

THE POLITICS OF SURVIVAL

by

Gordon W. Keiser

1982

A National Defense University Military History

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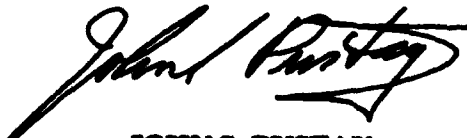
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FOREWORD

This National Defense University Military History examines the role of the US Marine Corps in the defense unification controversy of 1944-1947. World War II demanded the coordinated training, equipping, transporting, and employing of huge forces and soon exposed the organizational flaws of the prewar military establishment. Sentiment for unifying the US military effort predated World War II, but the war provided the impetus for a major reorganization. Long before the end of the war, there was a growing conviction in the War Department and Congress to establish a system to coordinate and unify the activities of the US Armed Forces.

The National Security Act established a more unified defense entity in 1947, but the Marine Corps—deftly practicing the “politics of survival”—emerged with its organizational identity and integrity essentially intact. The author, Colonel Gordon Keiser, USMC, relates the history of how the Corps managed to survive amidst the political maneuvering of the postwar era. Although focused on the Marine Corps, this book is more than an account of one Service’s struggle to endure. It contains interesting insights into the origins of the modern Department of Defense and the current defense policymaking process.

Although today’s circumstances are vastly changed, the Nation remains concerned about issues such as defense organization, the proper role of military lobbying, and the relationship of the Services to one another and to the Congress. We are pleased to publish this National War College student research effort with the hope that those concerned with national security policy will find some useful perspectives on classic questions of civil-military affairs.



JOHN S. PUSTAY
Lieutenant General, USAF
President, National Defense
University

THE AUTHOR

Gordon W. Keiser is a Colonel in the United States Marine Corps. He is currently a member of the Military Committee in the US Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Colonel Keiser completed this book as an Associate Research Fellow and National War College student at the National Defense University, Washington, DC. His recent military assignments include: Operations Officer, 17th Marine Amphibious Unit, Camp Pendleton, California; and Brigade Advisor, Marine Advisory Unit, Republic of Vietnam. Colonel Keiser has also served in Headquarters, USMC; as Aide to the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic; and as an ROTC instructor at Tufts University. Colonel Keiser holds a BA in history from Virginia Military Institute and an MA in political science from Tufts. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and the National War College.

PREFACE

→ An examination of the controversy surrounding defense organization in the period 1944-1947 is fitting in light of current events. Having passed through public disenchantment attendant to the Vietnam war (by no means our country's first unpopular fight), the US national security establishment is being promised a rebirth. With fresh designs for defense organization in the offing, it is worthwhile to study the heated policy conflict that ultimately resulted in a structure affecting virtually every aspect of civil-military relations in the United States.

The unification controversy reveals the spectrum of activities and maneuvers comprising the national policymaking process. Set against the backdrop of a power struggle between the executive and legislative branches were fractures within and between the military departments and services, open and covert advocacy by civilians and military officers alike, and bargaining at every turn. These procedures, routine to American government, were coupled with debate, thoughtfulness, and misconceptions to shape the National Security Act of 1947.

→ The Marine Corps' part in the conflict is a little-known chapter in American civil-military relations or, more precisely, the field of politico-military affairs. The purpose of this study is to analyze events leading to the enactment of the National Security Act, focusing on the Marine Corps as perhaps the most vocal and bitter military opponent of the concept of unification expressed by the War Department. From the Corps' standpoint, the campaign for a defense establishment within which it could survive was in many ways as arduous and crucial as its contribution to the Pacific battles of World War II. Although the emphasis here is on Marine activities and perceptions, I hope that it is not too brief regarding our comrades-in-arms or other elements involved.

→ The main themes of this study are: centralization versus decentralization in the defense structure, the role of military lobbying, and the relationship between the Marine Corps on one hand, and Congress and its constituency on the other. Unlike General Douglas MacArthur's old

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soldier, these problems refuse to "fade away." Neither will they be ameliorated by vague cursings of the so-called military-industrial complex, which, it should be recalled, was commonly referred to during the mid-forties as the "arsenal of democracy." The military was not a monolithic behemoth in 1944-1947, nor indeed is it today. Then as now, military thought and aims were fragmented and diverse. This study not only demonstrates such diversity, but suggests it as the means whereby statesmen and politicians can best resolve the vexing, ever-recurring problems of national security policy.

Gordon W. Keiser

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper consists essentially of my earlier work at Tufts University. I was able to continue work on this subject as a student at the National War College some 9 years later. It is, perforce, a collection of wide-ranging events, reflections, and theories. My methodology has been to extract the conclusions to be garnered from the opinion and fervor surrounding preparation for and conduct of extensive congressional hearings, as well as from the views of Marine and other participants and contemporary writers on American military affairs.

Dr. Demetrios Caraley's impressive work, *The Politics of Military Unification*, initially motivated me to pursue this subject. It is an enviable study of the unification conflict from the viewpoints of all major parties and is commended to those interested in a more purely "political science" approach as opposed to my more historical perspective. In some cases I relied on Dr. Caraley's evidence and broad conclusions, while exploring in greater detail the part played by the Marine Corps.

Several people granted me interviews or responded to my questionnaires. For this courtesy, I wish to thank former Assistant Secretary of the Navy James D. Hittle, Dr. Samuel P. Huntingdon, Brigadier General Edward H. Hurst, USMC (Ret.), Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.), General Gerald C. Thomas, USMC (Ret.), and General Merrill B. Twining, USMC (Ret.).

I am especially grateful to the late Professor Robert R. Robbins, my mentor at Tufts, and to the late Colonel Robert D. Heintz, Jr., USMC (Ret.), for their guidance and timely advice in my research and writing. Although both gentlemen disliked grandiloquent acknowledgments, suffice it to say I would have gotten nowhere without their friendship and professional assistance.

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I am indebted to the staff of the Research Directorate at the National Defense University for helping me prepare the study for publication. Colonel Fred T. Kiley, USAF, gave me superior editorial advice, and Mr. George Maerz accomplished the painstaking job of supervising proofreading, typing, and printing. My thanks also to Dr. I. B. Holley of Duke University who assessed the manuscript with a critical eye for historical accuracy and recommended useful editorial changes as well.

Gordon W. Keiser

I

BACKGROUND

My military education and experience in the First World War has all been based on roads, rivers, and railroads. During the last two years, however, I have been acquiring an education based on oceans and I've had to learn all over again. Prior to the present war I never heard of any landing-craft except a rubber boat. Now I think about little else.

General George C. Marshall, USA

George C. Marshall: Education of a General, 1943

The agitation for unification of the military services after World War I was a consequence of two different but related movements—one for comprehensive administrative reorganization within the executive branch and one for increased autonomy for the Army Air Service.¹ Supporters of centralization in the defense structure sought to promote economy and further efficiency. Both the War and Navy Departments had steadfastly opposed unification in the period between the two World Wars, even though the Navy generally enjoyed “most-favored nation” status in the allocation of appropriations.

Peacetime interdepartmental competition for funds, coupled with efforts by air power advocates to seek autonomy for the Air Service, undoubtedly made the Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, and others in the War Department reconsider policies opposing defense centralization that dated from 1921. These policies, which had cited “economy” as one reason for opposing unification, were reversed as early as 1941. By then, unification had become a device for dealing with the same problems. Air Corps independence seemed likely; thus unification would avoid or at least minimize competition for appropriations.² The division of responsibilities in handling joint command and staff problems as delineated by the Joint Army and Navy Board in 1935 was no longer the answer—only major reorganization would suffice.

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After World War I, air power in general, and Army air power in particular, gained an ever-increasing number of staunch supporters. While the Navy and Marine Corps had managed to integrate their aviation elements, Army air grew apart from its reluctant sponsor. The Morrow Board of the 1920s and the Baker Board of the 1930s had considered but rejected independence for the Air Corps. The famous court-martial of Brigadier General William "Billy" Mitchell, while designed to curb his deliberately insubordinate behavior, effectively made him the first martyr of the Army air arm. Although Mitchell's martyrdom and his considerable powers of persuasion blurred the central issues of air policy, his theories received wide acceptance in public as well as aviation sectors.

By the early days of World War II, it was not unusual to find an article such as one by the widely read John Steinbeck praising the performance of the Air Corps to the point where air power accrued exaggerated weight in the equation of warfare. Although Steinbeck's credentials as a military analyst or historian were vague, he nonetheless represented the popular wave of opinion as he related "facts" that suggested the inevitability of air autonomy. Because "long-range bombers" had been responsible for the Coral Sea and Midway victories, he saw obsolescence of capital ships as a distinct possibility. (In fact, carrier aircraft achieved those victories.) Steinbeck also believed that the modern Air Corps' lack of ties to the past allowed it greater freedom of action and, in an appealing bid for popular approval, he depicted bomber crews as truly "democratic organizations."³

In a related vein, the process of reorganization had become an administrative tradition in the War Department since the badly needed Root reforms early in the century.⁴ Together with this now-typical method of dealing with its problems, the Army had evolved a vertical system of civil-military relations. Samuel P. Huntington describes the vertical system of departmental organization as a sharing by the civilian and military chiefs of the responsibility for the major functions: professional military, administrative-fiscal, and policy-strategy. He notes that General Marshall, as an Army officer, leaned toward the vertical system, although by 1943, he had gained President Franklin D. Roosevelt's complete confidence and no intermediary between them was needed.⁵ Thus it was not unusual for the Army leadership to conceive of reorganization throughout the military establishment as the solution to the perplexing questions of unified command, cooperation, and mobilization that had appeared in 1940-1942.

Army-Marine Corps Relations

It is not necessary to dwell at length on pre-World War II disputes between the Navy Department's Marine Corps and the Army. Although Marines had traditionally displayed a certain arrogance toward their comrades-in-arms, this spirit of rivalry and pride hardly merited what Marines viewed as War Department measures to subdue the Corps. In 1916, for example, the Army General Staff sent to the Joint Army and Navy Board a proposal requiring that mixed contingents of Army and Marine troops be commanded only by a senior Army officer. It was based on the assumption that Marine officers were "ipso facto less fitted for high command" than Army officers. The proposal was temporarily shelved.⁶ Few Army officers at that time could themselves have had experience leading brigade and higher formations in the field, and it may well have been that the General Staff was merely attempting to establish interdepartmental parameters. It was difficult, however, for Marine officers to see the recommendation as other than a slur on their proficiency.

Upon American entry into World War I, the use of Marine units in the Army Expeditionary Forces (AEF) became a bone of contention, even though the President had been authorized by law since 1834 to order Marines to duty with the Army. The situation was exacerbated by what General Dwight D. Eisenhower was later to describe as the "one-sided publicity" surrounding the battle for Belleau Wood. (The reporting of war correspondent Floyd Gibbons conveyed the notion that the Marine brigade was carrying the fight for the AEF, an impression that raised the hackle of many a Doughboy.) Eisenhower held that Army fears relative to wartime expansion of the Marine Corps dated from that time.⁷

In the early 1930s, both Marine leaders and friends of the Corps in Congress had reason to believe that President Herbert Hoover, at General Douglas MacArthur's strong urging, was interested in abolishing the Marine Corps.⁸ During the ultra-lean interwar years, even a modest Corps (15,343 in 1933, building to 26,568 by mid-1940⁹) represented sharp competition for funds and manpower to an Army of approximately 100,000. Peacetime contests over scant resources were bound to taint War Department views of the Marines; indeed, Navy opinion had at times been similarly affected.

George Marshall, then a colonel, aired his personal views of service manpower recruitment at Fort Benning in 1931. He commented to First Lieutenant (later Lieutenant General) Lewis B. Puller, USMC, that the

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method of Marine recruiting for "professional soldiering" was unfair and undemocratic because it "doesn't give other services a chance." Marshall, a firm believer in the concept of the citizen soldier, hoped to change the situation "someday." ¹⁰

According to Thomas Buell, the most recent biographer of Fleet Admiral E. J. King, General Marshall became more explicit during World War II. Buell recounts a remark made by Marshall in the presence of King's senior Marine adviser that he was "going to see that the Marines never win another war," noting that Marshall often told King that he did not like the Marine Corps and wanted it kept "very small." ¹¹

As the Pacific campaigns of World War II progressed and the Marine Corps expanded to meet wartime needs, Army misgivings intensified. To envision the transformation of fleet Marines into immense land forces would have required hyperactive imagination. Nonetheless, a number of senior Army officers, including General Eisenhower, believed that the Marines were trying to become a second land army. ¹²

It was true that during the interwar years, the Marines had established themselves as specialists in amphibious warfare, and the doctrine they had developed remained basically unchanged during the war; "it was used repeatedly by all the principal Allied powers, except Russia." ¹³ Despite an exemplary combat record, the Corps' greatest contribution to modern warfare was "having perfected the doctrine and technique of amphibious warfare to such a degree as to be able to cross and secure a very energetically defended beach." ¹⁴ John F. C. Fuller, a perceptive and iconoclastic scholar of military history, observed that amphibious warfare was "revolutionized" in what was "in all probability . . . the most far-reaching tactical innovation of the war." ¹⁵

Aside from conducting amphibious assaults, Marines were, as in World War I, proving themselves highly competent in fighting on large land masses, and here lay many Army apprehensions pertaining to a second land army. In any event, early in the war, Lieutenant Colonel Merrill B. Twining, USMC, perceived that the Marines were headed for another survival fight of the sort that dotted the Corps' history. Twining visited his brother, Brigadier General Nathan F. Twining, USA, at Noumea, New Caledonia, on 11 December 1942. In a house shared by Army Generals Collins, Patch, and Sebree, with his brother and others, Twining was privy to "startling" revelations about Army attitudes with respect to military reorganization. He became so concerned for the future of the Marine Corps that the following day ". . . I reported in detail to

A.A.V. [Major General A. A. Vandegrift, USMC, then commanding US forces ashore at Guadalcanal] who in turn (I believe) discussed [the report] with Halsey." "Only some 4 months after the United States began its tenuous, first ground offensive, postwar military arrangements were at issue and the War Department had taken the initiative.

Marshall's Proposal to the JCS

Because the United States had no functioning interservice organization for coordinating high-level military operations in December 1941, the President established the US "Joint Chiefs of Staff" (JCS) shortly after our entry into World War II. It was made up as follows: The senior naval officer (Admiral W. D. Leahy, who also served as Chief of Staff for the President), Chief of Staff of the Army (General Marshall), Chief of Naval Operations (Admiral E. J. King), and, the senior Army Air Corps officer (Major General H. H. Arnold).¹⁷

In the wake of efforts by an ad hoc committee of the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC), a subordinate body to JCS, to prosecute the war more effectively by solving the problems of service roles and missions, General Marshall formally went on record in favor of unification. On 2 November 1942, he submitted a memorandum to the JCS "relating to the single department of war in the postwar period." Citing the need for economy and unity of command, he recommended a single department to be headed by a civilian secretary and composed of ground, naval, and air components, with a separate supply service, each under its own civilian under secretary and military chief of staff. There would be a chief of staff to the President, who, with the other four service chiefs, would constitute a "United States General Staff (joint)." Each Armed Force would retain "a small general staff." Marshall further recommended that the War Department "take a positive stand in favor of a single Department of War," and that the JCS appoint a commission to run a comprehensive survey of existing Army and Navy establishments and make detailed recommendations.¹⁸

The JCS agreed to send Marshall's proposal to the JSSC which, in turn, recommended a special committee. Admiral King, apparently sensing the opening volley in an organizational fight, insisted that the committee investigate the relative advantages and disadvantages of one department (War or Defense), two departments (War and Navy), and three departments (War, Navy, and Air). Marshall "reluctantly agreed." ¹⁹

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General Marshall's proposal illuminated one of his major objectives for postwar defense arrangements; namely, that the Army intended "unification" to provide for more effective execution of policies, the soundness of which would be assured by direct access to the President.²⁰ Marshall's preference for centralization obviously coincided with the views of Senator Harry S Truman. From his vantage point as Chairman of the War Investigating Committee in 1942, Truman had been "disgusted" by the "bogging down of the war effort in bureaucratic waste" and "overlapping jurisdictions."²¹ Congressional experience had taught him that the military will try to "hedge you in," especially in money matters. "Army and Navy professionals seldom had any idea of the value of money. . ."²² When Truman became President, he was firmly convinced that the "antiquated defense setup" had to be reorganized.²³

II

INITIAL SUBSTANTIVE MOVES

The raising of that flag on Suribachi means a Marine Corps for the next 500 years.

Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal
Iwo Jima, Volcano Islands, 23 February 1945

General Marshall's 2 November memorandum to the Joint Chiefs of Staff caused a flurry of activity confirming the intent of the War Department and its allies to resolve the problems of postwar defense structure before the end of the war by favoring Armed Forces merger. On 8 March 1944, the JSSC Committee on Reorganization of National Defense reported to the JCS that "every effort should be made toward attainment of the ideal of a single military service," although this goal "is probably impracticable" except in early training and high command. They recommended a further, more detailed study by yet another special committee.¹

A section of the JSSC report presented divergent Army-Navy views on transport services, engineers, naval aviation, and Army defense commands. The Army recommended restricting the Marine Corps to 399,000 officers and men; the Navy held that keeping the Corps at about 14 percent of total naval strength was not a wasteful duplication of Army ground forces, as charged. In fact, the Navy contended, such a ratio would materially assist in winning the war,² though victory was less the concern of the report than was postwar reorganization.

Less than 3 weeks after the JSSC report, Representative James W. Wadsworth introduced a House resolution calling for the establishment of a Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy; it was passed on 28 March. Chaired by Clifton A. Woodrum, the committee was made up of 23 representatives—7 each from the Military and Naval Affairs Commit-

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tees and 9 other members.³ Shortly before the hearings opened in late April, the War Department entertained doubts about pressing its proposals during the war. However, when Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox reportedly told "an astonished Stimson" (Henry Stimson, Secretary of War) that he favored a single defense department, the Army decided not to request that the hearings be postponed for purposes of "wartime unity."⁴

The Woodrum Committee Hearings

If Marshall's memorandum was the opening volley of the unification controversy, the Woodrum committee hearings were the first detailed expression of the Army's changing position on consolidation of the military services. The single department concept was heartily favored by every War Department representative who appeared. Prominent among other advocates were Josephus Daniels, former Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration, and Representative Jennings Randolph. As the hearings progressed, it was clear that Chairman Woodrum as well as Wadsworth supported War Department views. Representatives Walter Andrews, Carl Vinson, and Melvin Maas, a Marine reserve officer, were opposed.

The hearings began on 24 April 1944. Testimony by the director of the War Department's Special Planning Division established that post-war planning activities had been initiated in November 1942.⁵ Secretary of War Stimson credited "goodwill" and the personalities of the leaders—not the organizational framework—for the "good coordination" that had been achieved between the services. He stressed that organization should be approached from the standpoint of fundamentals; "details" could be resolved subsequently.⁶

Lieutenant General Joseph McNarney unveiled the War Department plan for reorganization on the second day (see the appendix). Except for an accompanying wiring diagram and a few changed titles, it was practically the same plan that Marshall had proposed to the JCS the previous November. McNarney specified its essentials: a single "Chief of Staff to the President" who would also head the JCS, and a "Secretary for the Armed Forces" to exercise overall military control, assisted by the under secretaries and military chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and the "Director of the Common Supplies Service." He felt that a law dealing with military organization must permit "accomplishment by evolutionary processes . . . a broad grant of power." Unimportant details

should be avoided so as not to "confuse or delay a settlement on the overriding issue."

Under questioning by Representative Maas on the place for a Marine Corps, General McNarney answered, "That is another detail of organization which I don't believe I care to comment on at this moment." He did feel that the Corps should not "become" a fourth service. The matter of consolidating all air resources under one component was "another detail, and I hesitate to discuss it."

McNarney stated his plan "would unify the budget," and that was undeniable. The chiefs of staff would have the statutory duty to make recommendations *directly* to the President regarding budgetary requirements as well as strategy; copies of these direct dealings would be furnished to the overall secretary. "Communications *in all other matters* would be channeled through and *would be subject to the direction* of the Secretary of the Armed Forces." ' (emphasis added)

In his plea for a separate air force (to include the Navy's land-based aircraft), Robert A. Lovett, Assistant Secretary of War for Air, stressed economic factors. Citing "substantial economy through consolidation," he presented the crux of the Army argument: "Unification of the services operating in three elements into a single department will improve combat effectiveness, promote efficiency, and thereby better enable the taxpayers of the country to support a modern establishment designed to insure national security." Lovett offered his opinion that Marine landing force operations were "a clear duplication of function, unless it can be proven to be so highly specialized as to require segregation," while confessing, however, that he had not given much thought to the matter. After a short but vigorous exchange with Maas, he retreated to the safety of ignorance on the subject.⁴

Brigadier General H. S. Hansell, Jr., an Army aviator, surprised no one by reiterating Air Corps advocacy of "the integration of our Nation's fighting forces into a single unified organization," including a separate air force. However, when pressed by Representative Vinson, his answers were both surprising and ironic. After the general said that unity achieved in a combat theater "is not, and never will be, sufficient by itself," Vinson asked if he thought unity could be attained by merging the War and Navy Departments:

HANSELL: No, sir; I do not.

VINSON: You think that unity can only be brought about by further division?

HANSELL: Yes, sir; I do.⁵

Testimony by Navy Department representatives was noncommittal, as if they had been numbed by the magnitude of the War Department offensive. On 28 April, Under Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal sounded their central points: The unification problem required detailed study; "Size is no guaranty of efficiency"; and many key officers who were busy fighting the war held opinions crucial to defense considerations. On the subject of duplication, he ventured, "Do you prevent those duplications by simply dumping into a larger basket all these functions? I do not know. Maybe you will. Maybe there are geni that can do that."¹⁰

Forrestal's point regarding the need for detailed study of defense problems was echoed time and again by Navy Department witnesses. Vice Admiral F. J. Horne cautioned Congress not to commit itself to any one organizational plan or form until the war was successfully ended,¹¹ a line of reasoning that eventually prevailed once President Roosevelt conveyed his agreement to the committee.

The Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant General A. A. Vandegrift, appeared on 11 May 1944. His testimony was an effective summation of the Corps' role in the development of amphibious operations and its part in the war up to that time. In an attempt to clear up confusion about the special Navy-Marine relationship within the Navy Department, Vandegrift described the Corps as a "component of the Naval Service" * rather than as a part of the Navy.

The general recounted the Marines' major contribution in the development of landing force doctrine between the wars, a period of both severe appropriations cutbacks and the dark shadow of the World War I amphibious disaster at Gallipoli. In testimony to its combat readiness, Vandegrift noted that the 1st Marine Division had carried out the first American land offensive in World War II to recover territory lost at Guadalcanal, and added that the Corps had the highest percentage of combat units engaged in active operations.

Before the main thrust of his testimony, the crucial province of amphibious warfare, Vandegrift described the importance of Marine avi-

*The status of the Marine Corps as a separate naval service within the Navy Department is only slightly less a source of confusion today. Along with congressmen and other witnesses during the unification hearings, most Navy flag officers were unaware that the Commandant of the Marine Corps had direct access to the Secretary of the Navy; i.e., he was not required to deal through the Chief of Naval Operations.

ation to a balanced force of arms, as well as the necessity for considering tradition and esprit de corps. He aimed two statements—"Amphibious operations are highly specialized," and one should carefully distinguish between "duplication of effort and parallel employment"—at critics who regarded the Corps as an anachronism. He further reminded everyone that the Marine Corps had trained five Army divisions for amphibious operations in the war, but, in spite of the proven importance of amphibious expertise in all theaters, the Marines had no representation on the JCS.¹²

The most effective Navy Department presentation was by Artemus L. Gates, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air. His statement and answers to questions suggest the more articulate and adamant Navy stance that developed later in the controversy. Gates opposed the seeming pressure to "arrive at some conclusions now," and felt that he must see the field commanders before making any decisions on a subject of such importance. In a direct attack on the McNarney proposal, the assistant secretary said it was a plan that, in an attempt to simplify and economize, starts at the top with four civilians instead of two, and three departments instead of two. He criticized the budgetary proposals of the plan and then discussed "duplication." Admitting to its existence in the Armed Forces, he pointed out that as in the case of Congress, much of it was not "unnecessary duplication. . . . Further centralization does not necessarily mean elimination of duplication, but may merely mean duplication in another form."

After Gates explained his views favoring task organization, including explicit support for Marine aviation as an integral part of the Corps, factions within the committee engaged one another. Ruffled by Gates' assertion that unification was being hastily pushed, Chairman Woodrum denied that the committee was rushing or submitting to pressure. Vinson defended Gates, saying that Army spokesmen had left the impression that "now is the psychological time to do it." In an unsuccessful attempt to elicit a positive response from Gates, Representative Andrews proposed that the Marine Corps be represented on the JCS. Representative Maas assured everyone that the committee had no intention of taking immediate action. Representative May, taking a neutral position, expressed his desire to see "scrapping" between the Army and Navy: "The more they do of that, the better it is for the committee." ¹³

On 17 May, Josephus Daniels testified that he had long envisioned a single "Department of National Defense" that would prevent much unnecessary duplication in the services. He cited the debacle at Pearl Har-

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bor, then related his World War I experience when a "well-trained and well-equipped" regiment of Marines was ready to sail for France but for the opposition of "some Army officers." There was, of course, not yet sufficient information to conclude that the major deficiencies in Hawaii were other than organizational. In addition, if a single military department had been in charge prior to World War I, it is unlikely that any useful force of Marines would have existed. Nevertheless, Secretary Daniels was a prominent, well-respected man whose views superficially coincided with those of the War Department. While his observations that the Army and Navy (and, by inference, the Marines) were too taken with tradition and not anxious to change may have caused some discomfort, they were softened by his praise of the virtues of professional officers.¹⁴

When Admiral H. E. Yarnell (Ret.) appeared the following day, he called for a degree of unification—but not until the war ended. He recommended interservice exchange tours for officers as a step toward better cooperation, favored retention of a Marine Corps to operate with sea forces, and differentiated between Army air autonomy and integrated naval aviation.¹⁵

It is of interest that the President of the National Guard Association sent a letter to the committee requesting deferment of the unification question until war's end. Having fought for existence in the past, the National Guard asked for its proper place in peacetime. The War Department was accused of snubbing Guard officers assigned to the General Staff and of never overlooking an opportunity "to destroy the National Guard." ¹⁶

On 19 May, Budget Director Smith said for the record that he favored the single department concept for "maximum effectiveness and economy," and stressed that reorganization should take place as soon as possible, without waiting until the war was ended.¹⁷

Representative Wadsworth's statement was "directed to" the professional officer corps, with a theme that was to loom over Government and the public until legislation was enacted in mid-1947. He reminded all that the "distressful experience" after the last war—severe economic cuts, lack of interest in military affairs, extreme demobilization—was likely to happen after World War II. Thus, to justify before Congress maintenance of an adequate military force, the services must cooperate in eliminating waste and duplication.¹⁸ Wadsworth implicitly expressed the belief that only through unification could economic savings be realized. At later hearings, this argument was coupled frequently with

the realities of Europe and Asia in disarray, and dire warnings of imminent nuclear war.

Representative Randolph's testimony reflected his legislative attempts to establish a single defense department in early 1943. Strongly advocating unification and "sufficient" emphasis on air power (i.e., a separate air force), he worried that even the slightest disagreement might creep in among the services. The War and Navy Departments could not settle their differences "since the personnel of each Department sincerely believe their own point of view is correct."¹⁹ The inference was clear: Service differences necessarily varied inversely with efficiency and effectiveness. Singleness of purpose was being confused with singleness of thought, word, and deed.

The Woodrum committee hearings ended on 19 May 1944. Meetings of committee and military officials led to an agreement that a full-scale "row" was not in the best interests of the war effort. The committee reported in mid-June that the time was inopportune for legislation and strongly urged the services to make further studies of the problem.²⁰

The expressed purpose of the committee, as Chairman Woodrum stated in his preface, was to study and report on military policy considerations in the postwar period. The effect, however, was to lay the groundwork for the concept of unification held by the War Department rather than the Navy Department, as borne out in a Forrestal letter of 2 September 1944. (Forrestal had become Secretary of the Navy in May.) He mentioned to Palmer Hoyt his remarks to "King, Nimitz and Company": the Navy had lost its case; either in Congress or in a public poll, the Army's viewpoint would prevail. And the new secretary was known for his keen sensitivity to public opinion.²¹

The value to the War Department of the Woodrum committee hearings should not be underrated. Boldly suggesting forward thinking, a "new look," the Army had provided food for thought by introducing its most important precepts, subsequently expanded upon but never deviated from:

- Allegations of substantial savings through merger.
- Emphasis on the unusual, but bureaucratically efficacious technique of building an organizational framework without examining the implications of compartmentalization and subordinate authority.
- Organization of combat forces by element rather than by combination of arms; i.e., assigning air, sea, and land forces to departments according to the element in which they operate.

14 INITIAL MOVES

- Preference for more direct, accessible executive political support and policy guidance.
- Desirability of a highly centralized military structure that would support the foregoing preference as well as minimize competition for resources.

Paul Y. Hammond notes the structural as well as political similarities between the McNarney proposal and existing War Department organization. The proposal was practically identical to the War Department's three administrative commands under the Chief of Staff. Hammond also believes that Army officials, both civilian and military, calculated that a "rational" military policy would benefit the Army, and that it could be achieved through centralization. In his view, enhancement of the executive branch would come at the expense of Congress in making policy.²²

The Richardson Committee Report

Even as the Woodrum committee hearings were proceeding, the JCS on 9 May 1944 directed a special committee to study national defense organization and make recommendations. The basic question was, What organization will provide the most effective employment of military resources in time of war and their most effective preparation for war in time of peace? The committee was made up of two Army and two Navy officers; the senior member was Admiral J. O. Richardson, USN (Ret.), former commander of the Pacific Fleet. They interviewed prominent commanders both at home and in the theaters of war, reporting to the JCS on 11 April 1945.

The Richardson committee found that, of those interviewed, the great majority of Army officers and almost half the Navy officers favored a single department, although there was much difference of opinion as to the details of the form it should take. Concluding that a single department was preferable to either two or three, the committee reported that the existing system was "less than wholly effective in time of war and would be much less effective in time of peace."²³ This was a curious observation in view of uniformly established unity of command in the field and the existing system's having never known peacetime.

The Richardson committee recommendations—more radical than the proposed measures of the McNarney plan—called for the following:

- A civilian secretary heading the single department.

- One military "Commander of the Armed Forces," complete with an Armed Forces staff, who would also act as "Chief of Staff to the President."
- A chiefs-of-staff organization composed of the service chiefs and the department secretary, who were to advise the President on "broad matters" of strategy and overall estimated expenditures.
- An air force coordinate with the Army and Navy.
- One under secretary charged with administration of department business.

The committee also suggested five areas where assistant secretaries could be appropriately appointed: personnel and procurement; legislative and liaison activities; public relations; internal security; and civil affairs. (See appendix.)

The implications were unsettling. There would be no civilian supervision of the individual services. The overall military commander, in his other role as Chief of Staff to the President, would be responsible to only the President on operational and strategic matters. In other areas, the commander would deal through a secretary who held substantially reduced authority.²⁴

An agreements section of the report fixed the position of service aviation and the Marine Corps, including its operating air-ground team, the Fleet Marine Force. There was, however, a notable catch. During the 10 years after enactment of legislation, "modifications" could be effected only through unanimous action by the Chiefs of Staff, with the approval of the President. Thereafter, the Armed Forces commander could modify the agreements with the approval of the single secretary.²⁵

Dissenting from his committee, Admiral Richardson submitted a minority report that has been called the Navy's first clear position.²⁶ The admiral felt that the lessons of the war had to be "thoroughly digested before they could be properly applied to postwar organizations." Many officers whose opinions should be of most value were so fully involved in war they could not devote sufficient attention to the problem. Unconvinced of the effectiveness of forces in the field under a single department, he believed that the interests and activities of the Army and Navy were "so divergent, so great in magnitude, and so distinct in mission" that a single department would inevitably hamper the full development of each.

Richardson challenged the economy argument, which frequently appeared in the report, criticized the concentration of power, and doubted the wisdom of a separate air force. He made several proposals, including

that the existing JCS system be continued by statute after the war; war-time organizational gains made possible by executive order and administrative action also be continued by statute; reorganization studies be continued in the light of war experience; and the value of a "Joint Secretaryship" for the JCS be fully explored.²⁷

Eighty officers were interviewed in Washington and overseas by the Richardson committee. All but three Navy officers were of general or flag rank. Three Marine generals were interviewed in the Pacific; none in Washington.²⁸

Unable to agree on the committee's recommendations, the JCS took no action until October 1945, when they forwarded them to President Truman with four sets of individual views: Generals Marshall and Arnold were in favor, Admirals Leahy and King opposed. This final disagreement prevented the JCS, as a body, from having major influence on the form of the organization eventually adopted.²⁹

The Eberstadt Report

The impact of the Woodrum hearings and the Richardson report stirred up the Marines and the civilian side of the Navy Department. During a visit to the Pacific in the spring of 1945, General Vandegrift observed that Rear Admiral Forrest Sherman, Chester Nimitz' chief of staff, seemed wholeheartedly in favor of unification and that Nimitz was in sympathy with many of his statements. "I could not believe that either had given much thought to this complex problem, but said nothing."³⁰

Vandegrift's trip reinforced the impressions he had developed by the end of the Woodrum hearings when "I was old enough to know that the pot would keep boiling. From this time on I never took my eyes from the brew."³¹ That same spring, Secretary Forrestal recorded that General Marshall was "unshakably committed" to a single secretary and single military chief of staff, and was continuing to express his fear of starvation of the Army in peacetime. Forrestal realized that the Navy Department must forge positive and constructive recommendations.³² As with the Army's reforms of 1903, when Elihu Root furnished the drive, the impetus for the Navy's stand on unification would come from its civilian leadership.

In mid-June 1945, Forrestal discussed the problem with President Truman, who, he related, had "definite views" on a plan for national se-

curity. (In an article in the 26 August 1944 issue of *Colliers*, Truman had favored a single department and a "unified" general staff.) The President agreed with Forrestal that the State Department should be an integral part of such a plan. The thesis that military and foreign policy should be integrated is expressed numerous times in *The Forrestal Diaries*, and it was undoubtedly the secretary's prime concern throughout the controversy. Regarding Truman's objectivity, Forrestal wrote, "My impression is that he is not closed-minded nor will he hold rigidly to his own views."

Somewhat later in the summer, however, Forrestal did find that the President and Marshall were "in complete agreement" concerning unification, and that Truman favored the single department not so much because he believed it would provide greater efficiency in operations and procurement, but because of its relation to "education and Universal Military Training." Truman wanted to wrap all the issues into one package for Congress. Forrestal gathered that the President drew heavily upon his own Army experience during World War I and later in the National Guard. Truman seemed "to have a fixation about the political cliques that run the Army and Navy." ³³

On 19 June 1945, Secretary Forrestal commissioned Ferdinand Eberstadt, former Chairman of the Army-Navy Munitions Board and former Vice Chairman of the War Production Board (as well as a friend of long standing) to conduct an objective, independent examination and report on the central question, "What form of postwar organization should be established and maintained to enable the military services and other government departments and agencies most effectively to provide for and protect our national security?" ³⁴ Eberstadt finished his report in late September and Forrestal forwarded it to Senator David I. Walsh, Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, in mid-October. ³⁵

The 200-page report was well organized and much broader than any previous effort. Experienced persons from various fields had studied specific aspects of the problem; indeed, many of their recommendations were later to appear as provisions of the National Security Act of 1947. The report reached the following general conclusions:

- Under "present conditions," unification of the Army and Navy Departments would not improve national security.
- There were weaknesses within and between the services and gaps between military and foreign policy.
- The goal of postwar organization should be to bind together the many elements of the government in the most productive and harmonious way.

Specifically, the report recommended: organization of the military forces into three coordinate departments, "Air, Navy, and War," each headed by a secretary of cabinet rank (see appendix); continuation of the JCS; study and regrouping of existing joint committees; and encouragement of scientific research and development. It also proposed the creation of a battery of agencies, including a National Security Council (NSC), National Security Resources Board (NSRB), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and a board on military education and training. It recommended further the attainment of "maximum symmetry" in the administrative structures of the coordinated military departments, maintenance of close working relations with Congress, and, finally, the appointment of a commission to make an overall study of national security problems.³⁶

The Eberstadt report was of such enormous scope that many implications—and deficiencies—were not recognizable until projected by detailed examination and debate. Hammond accurately calls the National Security Council the "kingpin of Forrestal's hopes." However, when compared with Forrestal's later testimonies, his interpretation that Eberstadt's (and the Navy's) proposals accepted a single military establishment as necessary, but denied there had to be a Secretary of Defense, is misleading.³⁷ The proposed NSC, made up of the Secretary of State, chairman of the NSRB, and the secretaries of the three military departments, was described as a "policy forming and advisory body." It would be presided over by a chairman envisioned as a coordinator and correlator. Although the chairman's powers, as seen by the Navy Department, were diluted in comparison with those actually held by defense secretaries since 1949, his status and ready access to the President were intended to resolve differences, including those arising between the services.

While the Eberstadt concept of integrating foreign, military, and economic efforts implied a measure of military centralization, President Truman persisted in his assumption that the issue was simply a matter of the Army supporting "unification" and the Navy opposing it.³⁸ The Navy was not willing to allow top-level military policy to gravitate into the hands of one or two individuals, nor to agree with the War Department that detailed study of national security requirements should follow, not precede, legislation.

The Marine Corps welcomed the Eberstadt report. Its emphasis on collective policymaking, congressional relations, and "maximum symmetry" in the military departments promised the Corps a place as

specialists in amphibious warfare and lent hope of attaining representation on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Such "details" as the status of the Marines need not be settled by a single secretary and single chief of staff who, judging from the temper of the times, would be an Army officer. As General Vandegrift wrote, the Eberstadt plan "formed a much more reasonable approach to this vital matter." "

The Eberstadt report was well received elsewhere. Arthur Sulzberger, publisher of *The New York Times*, which strongly backed the Army plan for unification, said the report made "definite progress with the public in . . . dissipating the idea of [the Navy's] merely stubborn opposition to the merger and . . . succeeded in showing that it was a much deeper problem than simply the merger of the two Cabinet offices." "

By late October 1945, the lines of the unification conflict had been drawn, if only vaguely. War Department representatives advocated a centralized defense establishment focused on military policy and strategy. Navy Department officials favored less centralization in the defense structure but improved coordination among the executive agencies that had a hand, directly or indirectly, in determining the final shape of military policy and strategy.

Under these broader issues, the Marine Corps faced the task of enhancing, or at least maintaining, its status in the Navy Department. The Corps had struggled alongside the Army and Navy through the lean interwar years under similar budgetary pressure. Clearly, there was the same impulse as in the Army and Navy to fight cutbacks with all available resources. However, discounting bureaucratic politics, Marines had led in the development of doctrine that proved essential to the war effort and provided air-ground forces of up to corps size that bore the brunt of the Central Pacific campaign. Marine leaders believed their service had earned a more useful role and, therefore, representation at the highest military levels. They were certainly not prepared to stand benignly by and observe a sweeping reorganizational process that could reduce the Marine Corps to impotence.

III

ARMY AND NAVY PROPOSALS

I, for one, am unwilling to have the Chief of the Army Air Forces pass on the question of whether or not the Navy should have funds for building and maintaining a balanced fleet. One might just as well ask a committee composed of a Protestant, a Catholic, and a Jew to save our national souls by recommending a national church and creed.

Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., USN
Senate Hearings, 1945

Unification, in principle, is a hard thing to debate. . . .

Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, USMC
Senate Hearings, 1945

Senate Military Affairs Committee Hearings

The Senate Military Affairs Committee began hearings to consider two unification bills on 7 October 1945. Both bills, S. 84, introduced by Senator Lister Hill the previous January, and S. 1482, introduced 2 days before by Senators Edwin C. Johnson and Harley M. Kilgore, proposed a single military department and a separate air force, and gave broad authority to the President and the overall secretary. There were minor differences as to internal organization of the overall department.¹ Neither bill received significant attention during the hearings. The military departments mustered their most prestigious officers to testify before what was manifestly a sounding board for War Department views on defense structure.² The Military Affairs Committee was headed by Senator E. D. Thomas, but it was Senator Hill, third-ranking majority member of the committee and majority whip of the Senate, who led support of the Army before the largely sympathetic forum.

Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson and General Marshall were the first two witnesses. Patterson strongly endorsed the economy argument, advancing it as the "businesslike" way to conduct defense affairs. Unification would give Congress "the great advantage" of receiving a single, coordinated presentation of budgetary and other requirements. In mentioning that unification "would eliminate imbalance," Patterson revealed the Army's concern with appropriations cutbacks. According to him, a unified military establishment during the war would have saved "billions of dollars," much time, and many lives. In support of "organizational preparedness" under unification, he criticized "lack of teamwork" during the war, and he said that one man could handle the job as secretary of a single military department.

Patterson dismissed the idea that the nation would head toward militarism under a single department as "ridiculous," and mentioned, as an aside, that the Marine Corps "should be preserved." He felt that the essential elements of a single department were: complete merger into one executive department, headed by a civilian secretary with appropriate assistants; a single chief of staff of the Armed Forces; and three coordinate branches, comprised of air, ground, and naval forces to include the Marine Corps and the fleet air arm.³

General Marshall was critical of the organization of the JCS, stating that it "could not be genuinely effective in peacetime as a coordinating agency." He was clearly annoyed that Congress was "seriously considering" legislation on the postwar strengths of the Navy and Marine Corps without consulting or informing the War Department. Marshall emphasized that the "principle" of a single department should be quickly resolved; "details" could be dealt with later. He, too, stressed the need for "balance" in funding and attacked duplication and waste in the existing system. Marshall's advocacy of a single chief of staff was in part based on his belief that the issuance of directives by the JCS "would be offensive to our people. . . . I do not think it is required." He never clarified this point, but went on to state that the JCS would be much more effective "if limited purely to the submission of recommendations" on policy, strategy, and budgetary requirements to the President.⁴

In answering a question concerning the possibilities of unification during World War II, Marshall gave his opinion that "it is probable that we might have achieved victory at a little earlier date, but the main benefit would have come in the balanced development of the armed forces during that period that we were all struggling so desperately to create power." ⁵ Senator Johnson summed up the committee's reaction to the

general's views: "I think the most pertinent part of your testimony this morning is with regard to escaping from all the unnecessary details in this plan." "

Secretary Forrestal appeared on 22 October and immediately informed the committee that he was not there simply to oppose unification. He presented the Eberstadt report, terming it "comprehensive and dynamic," and called for the immediate integration of State, War, and Navy Department policy. He considered S. 84 and S. 1482 "an erroneous approach," and was, as to be expected, high in his praise of Eberstadt's proposed National Security Council.

Forrestal did not agree that the principal of "so-called unification" was already proved beyond any need for analysis or debate. In referring to a much-trumpeted public statement by General Douglas MacArthur that "victory was a triumph for the concept of the complete integration of the three dimensions of war—ground, sea, and air," the secretary noted: "General MacArthur obviously was referring to the victory which had just been achieved by the system which now exists. It cannot mean anything else. Certainly it does not mean that a glorious victory was achieved by a system which doesn't yet exist."

Forrestal opposed the concentration of power in the hands of a single secretary, seeing him "entirely in the hands" of his military advisers; he doubted that Congress could properly examine the composition of the Armed Forces under a single department. He was not yet convinced that there should be a separate air force—in spite of Eberstadt's proposal—and he indirectly struck at Air Corps autonomy by pointing out the degree of integration of air components in the Navy and extolling the virtues of competition that had permitted the Navy to develop the air-cooled aircraft engine (which the Army passed up), among other naval innovations. He felt that under the proposed bills, the services would lose the benefit of a variety of opinion. Forrestal saw group effort as better than "any one intuitive genius" and proposed "evolution rather than revolution" in reorganizing the national security framework.'

Admiral King testified the following day and, in a slightly jumbled statement, echoed Secretary Forrestal. He called a single commander of the Armed Forces a potential "man on horseback" and felt the "superior" general staff of the proposed system was suggestive of Germany's "Great General Staff." King was momentarily caught unaware when Senator Hill reminded him that S. 84 did not propose a supreme commander, but he regained his balance by criticizing the notion of accepting a principal without first working out the details.' The admiral, in an indi-

rect rebuttal to Marshall, proposed that the JCS be "made permanent" and reviewed the methods by which that body thrashed out decisions. He noted that the JCS only rarely failed to find a solution, a situation requiring that the problem be forwarded to the President. An answer was usually found; "sometimes it was a compromise." He made it clear that the Joint Chiefs did not decide "by vote" to take a certain course of action.⁹

On October 24, General Vandegrift made one of the Navy Department's more articulate and forceful presentations. He explained that he was "not on the same level" as the Secretary of the Navy and Chief of Naval Operations, and chided the "slogan-lovers" who advocated "unified national defense" without explaining exactly what they meant. He favored studying the broad question of national security before considering the "narrower issue" of service unification. In defining the JCS system, the commandant expressed what the Marine Corps would thereafter highlight continually: Substituting one supreme commander would result in projecting "the military hierarchy upward into fields which profoundly affect the political, economic, and social aspects of national security and national life. These are matters of broad and deliberative character which are not subject to solution by the autocratic military process."¹⁰

In arguing against those who maintained that details were clouding the issue, Vandegrift observed a basic truth: Congress and the people were being asked to accept "on blind faith" something that the unification proponents themselves did not entirely understand. He attempted to counter the Army's economy argument by reciting the degree of integration in Marine procurement¹¹ and criticizing "overorganization" that went to the point of diminishing returns. He held that the Army's limited contribution to amphibious warfare before the war and lack of interest in this important subject "cannot now be advanced as an argument for unification." Emphasizing congressional relations, he cautioned that dependence on the advice of a single individual could cause Congress to lose its intimate sense of association with military affairs.

Vandegrift then briefly recounted the Corps' early work in amphibious operations, describing it as "the key to World War II," and pointedly spelled out the 10-year clause in the Richardson report. He recommended: retaining the two military departments as separate organizations on a cabinet level; establishing the JCS as a permanent institution; passing necessary legislation so as to correct weaknesses in the existing system; and the integration and coordination of all the aspects of national security. When questioned about a separate air force, the general saw it as a matter for the Army to decide.¹²

The Collins Plan

Lieutenant General J. Lawton Collins presented the official War Department proposal on 30 October (see appendix). Collins was spokesman for a group of senior Army officers who had attempted to prepare a plan combining the views of Marshall and the majority on the Richardson committee.¹³ As he explained the plan, it was merely a reworked and more palatable version of what the War Department had been advocating since 1942. Collins stressed that it was not a "merger" proposal. Rather, the proposed integration would "still retain the Air, Army, and Navy (the latter with its Fleet Air Arm and Marine Corps), each with the maximum autonomy consistent with military efficiency and necessary economy." The principal military adviser and executive for the proposed cabinet-level "Secretary of the Armed Forces" would again be a single chief of staff. As recommended in the Richardson report, the services were not provided with any immediate civilian supervision, although an under secretary and three "functional" assistant secretaries would coordinate scientific research, procurement and mobilization, and legislative matters and public affairs.

The JCS (with the addition of a proposed Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and Chief of Staff of the Air Forces) was to be retained as an advisory body called the "US Chiefs of Staff." Its recommendations would be submitted without modification through the overall secretary, although comments would be attached. The chief of staff of each major component would have the right to present minority views to the President, which "should be ample guaranty that no one arm or service will swallow up another."¹⁴

While General Collins said that the Army's plan had "many advantages" over the Eberstadt report, he confessed later that he found the latter "rather confusing." In noting differences with the Richardson committee proposals, Collins said his plan did not provide for a "single commander" of the Armed Forces¹⁵—a point of questionable semantics when considering the accompanying chart and his own explanation of the nature of the proposed Chiefs of Staff. (The general did not testify in detail as to the chart.) When queried as to congressional control, Collins answered, "It is our approach that there should be a period during which this new Department should be set up subject to later revision by the Congress. After a period of a year or 2 years . . . the President would be required to submit to the Congress the details of this organization that had been worked out."¹⁶

Assistant Secretary of the Navy H. Struve Hensel, appearing 7 November, sharply criticized Collins' plan. He cited such undesirable features as concentration of power in the hands of military professionals, absence of direct civilian control of the services, and transfer of budget preparation from civilian to military supervision. Hensel also charged that the plan would be more expensive than the Eberstadt proposals. (This Navy version of economic saving would have been as difficult to substantiate as the Army's.) Hensel saw the Collins plan as paying lip service to civilian control while reducing the number of civilian Secretaries by 40 percent. In effect, it created an overall secretary, then took away practically all his authority and gave it to the military chiefs.¹⁷

The Commanding General of Army Ground Forces, General J. L. Devers, touched on amphibious operations in his testimony. He blamed "lack of cooperation" for the minimal amphibious training the Army received prior to the war.¹⁸ General Devers did not mention that, in addition to the unsatisfactory degree of interservice cooperation prevailing before the war, Britain's disastrous landing at Gallipoli in World War I had a dampening effect on US Army and Navy doctrine. Between the wars, US professional military and naval journals routinely cited the British example in contending that opposed landings on enemy shores were a military dead letter.

General Eisenhower, probably America's most popular military officer at the time, testified on 14 November. He emphasized the advantages of a single department, but disagreed with part of the Collins plan—perhaps as a result of Hensel's critique. Eisenhower would remove the "Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces" from the chain between the overall secretary and the chiefs of the services and have him perform the "legal and traditional duties and functions of a Chief of Staff." The service chiefs would thus be permitted to go directly to the single secretary. Although the general did not advocate direct civilian supervision of the services, when questioned by Senator Hill on the subject of civilian control, he quickly stated that he had no objections.¹⁹

In citing specific instances of inefficiency within the existing system, Eisenhower advanced the proposition that a single department would have "efficiently and quickly" accomplished the building and designing of landing craft in the early days of the war, when "it was hard to get anyone interested in the problem." During the general's testimony, Senator Johnson expressed the opinion that "in such matters as military policy, strategy, and budget requirements, the Secretary . . . is made absolutely and completely impotent under the Collins Plan." Eisenhower disagreed; reminding Johnson that "the President is the Commander in

Chief," he saw it as the Chief Executive's right to go directly to his military professionals "once a year." ²⁰

Admiral Nimitz devoted most of his testimony to revising the statement before the Richardson committee in which he had favored a single department concept. Conceding that events had denied him an opportunity for "adequate study" earlier and reflecting that the passage of time and "greater war experience" had since influenced him, he now believed that the single department was the best answer. He praised open competition between the services, opposed a separate air force, and expressed the fear that "merger" might endanger the preeminence of sea power.²¹ As *The Washington Post* editorialized on 18 November 1945, Nimitz' testimony was "weak" by contrast to Eisenhower's.

Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy appeared the following week to defend the Army position with regard to civilian control. He compared the virtually identical structures of the War Department and the proposed single department, continued to stress the idea of "general principles first, details later," and maintained that "unification" had been under study for at least 25 years. McCloy ominously predicted that "the Navy cannot insist on the same treatment it would be entitled to were it clearly our first line of defense as it has been in the days past," and referred to the Marines as "a full-fledged land army organized in divisions and fighting side by side in either amphibious or straight land operations with divisions of the United States Army." ²² (Along with two well-known editorialists, the assistant secretary apparently viewed the Navy Department as "for decades . . . the spoiled brat of the military." ²³ However feeble McCloy's defense of the Collins plan, his attack on the Navy's rejection of the Richardson committee proposals was vigorous and specific. He pointed out the confusion and backtracking of Forrestal, King, and Hensel concerning the Richardson report's fragmentary analysis and the usefulness of field commanders in reaching its conclusions. "In a word, the top echelon of the Navy does not approve the report, the men who produced it, or the overwhelming majority of generals and admirals whose opinions it represents." ²⁴

Assistant Secretary of the Navy Hensel returned on 29 November to present the Navy Department position, dated the day before, on national security. It was essentially the Eberstadt plan except that it left the problem of a separate air force up to Congress. The emphasis was directed toward establishment of the NSC, retention of the Navy as an integrated service that included naval air and the Marine Corps, and representation by a cabinet-level secretary.²⁵

Hensel challenged McCloy's arguments at length, finally causing Senator Hill to take up the War Department's defense. Over the question of "one-man decision," Hensel tried to explain the importance of staff and advisory channels. The dialogue was as follows:

HILL: . . . But the fundamental thing, to my mind, is that you, Secretary Forrestal, the Navy Department, Mr. Eberstadt, all give the final decision to one man.

HENSEL: That is right. If that is the all-important thing, to have the decision made by one man who doesn't definitely know all these things, then, for heaven's sake, just toss a coin. . . . If you want an intelligent setup and want to have a body that can get a grasp of all these things, don't rely on one man.

Characterizing himself as "the only impartial person here," Senator O'Mahoney stepped into the rapidly degenerating exchange. He termed the question of centralization versus decentralization as "very profound" and held that it "just cannot be settled yes or no, as you two gentlemen want, by taking one another by the back of the neck and saying, 'confess, you are wrong.' "

Rear Admiral Sherman's testimony the following day was ambivalent and repetitious. Like Admiral Nimitz, Sherman attempted to explain the change of heart among Navy officers since the Richardson committee had toured the theaters of war. According to Sherman, Navy commanders generally doubted the feasibility of a single department after appraising two major events: a JCS directive of April 1944 transferring all the Army resources in the Pacific, except air, to General MacArthur, and the establishment of the Twentieth Air Force in the Marianas, with its commander in the Pentagon, 8,600 miles away.

Although Admiral Sherman generally favored the official Navy position offered the day before, he stated early in his testimony that "operational command can be unified completely and adequately in Washington and in the field, in peace and in war, irrespective of the administrative organization of the national defense into one, two, or three departments." ²⁷ He volunteered that he had advocated "strategic air forces" for 20 years, but the problem was up to the War Department. Further questioning on the subject elicited a response to send tremors through the ranks of the Navy's surface and submarine officers: "I personally, if asked to give advice, from my naval background, would retain the War Department as one department, and let the air reach dominance in that department. That is what I have advocated in the Navy." ²⁸

A week later, Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces, Pacific, followed Admiral Halsey's appearance. The committee, which seemed annoyed by Halsey's strong statement and allegation that "even if the Army project had merit—which I fail to see—their method of trying to put it over is un-American, undemocratic, and dangerous,"²⁹ was in for an even livelier session. General Geiger, a distinguished wartime aviator and commander of an air-ground amphibious corps, was uniquely suited to the task of challenging the War Department position. The force and tone of his testimony reflected Marine Corps apprehensions.

Geiger expressed disappointment that the Army proposals were not "progressive and streamlined." The Army's plan was "nothing more than a pantographic enlargement of the present War Department organization . . . This manifestation of limited vision has nothing whatsoever to do with the real security needs of the Nation." He pointed out that the Army, especially the Air Corps, had opposed Navy-Marine Corps development of the aircraft carrier, dive bombers, and the doctrine of close air support in the prewar period. He then assailed Air Corps close support of ground troops during the war, backing his statements with pertinent quotes from an Army field manual on the subject.

The general produced an air forces evaluation of 1944 reporting that naval air was vastly superior in supporting the Army's Seventh Division; support rendered by Army aviation was "not effective . . . and may be detrimental." He also presented letters praising Marine air units from several Army commanding generals, including MacArthur, Krueger, and Eichelberger.

Geiger strongly opposed taking the Air Corps from the Army. In a phrase that would weigh heavily on the Army after mid-1950, he declared "To isolate them would be to strike a blow at the whole team." His recommendations pertaining to the overall issue of unification generally followed the Navy Department's formal position, except that he called for an outright rejection of the Army's "retrospective unification blueprint."³⁰ In a final discussion:

HILL: . . . I do not contemplate and would not contemplate taking the air arm of the fleet from the Navy, or the air arm of the Marine Corps from the Marines, and I do not see why they cannot go right ahead as autonomous units as they have in the past.

GEIGER: You don't contemplate that, but how many people do?

HILL: Well, I think it is possible to write this legislation so that it will not be done. I think it is possible to fix this thing so it will not be done, General.³¹

Secretary Forrestal returned on 13 December to present the Navy Department position personally. Reminding the committee how firm a "party line" can be, he suggested that the two departments "be invited to advise their officer personnel that any individual officer is free to express his opinion."³²

Forrestal was likely referring to a War Department release of 5 November that Hensel had touched on. The memorandum said, in part: "It is imperative that all officers of the Army be conversant with the War Department's views and statements regarding the establishment of a single Department of the Armed Forces and that the issue be not confused by the discussion of details or matters extraneous to this subject." Officers were permitted to address groups of civilians to inform them of the War Department position but not to present views that were "argumentative or of a crusading nature."

The War Department's major purposes were listed as: establishment of a single department; creation of a chief of staff required by law to submit to the President "at least yearly" recommendations on policy, strategy and budget matters; establishment of a coequal air force; and establishment of a director of common supply. The memorandum stated that enabling legislation to accomplish these four points was desired; then the President, through the overall secretary, would complete the detailed organization and report it to Congress for confirmation. Copies of the statements of Patterson, Marshall, Arnold, and Collins before the Military Affairs Committee were attached.³³

Forrestal gave a history of defects in the World War II security structure that reflected his desire for integration of foreign and military policy. He thought that the war experience had shown the need for decentralizing rather than conglomerating procurement, argued convincingly for retention of naval air, but did not specifically defend the Marine Corps.³⁴

Air Corps witnesses fully backed the Collins plan, but naturally concentrated on the importance of air power. They were well-supplied with leading questions from Senator Hill. General Arnold stated that "development and employment of primary and fundamental air power" must be carried out by a separate service having this as its major responsibility, although not all aircraft need be in this service. Because, for example, "some Marine force" is essential to the employment of sea power, "certain manifestations" of air power should continue as auxiliaries of land and sea power.³⁵

Borrowing from leatherneck cockiness and exaggerating the exploits of the Air Corps in World War II, the Army aviators hoped to implant the idea that air power had become America's "first line of defense." Lieutenant General James Doolittle reviewed Air Corps attempts to achieve complete autonomy between the wars and reported the extensive damage that air power brought to Germany and Japan. "The Navy had the transport to make the invasion of Japan possible; the Ground Forces had the power to make it successful; and the B-29 made it unnecessary." (Hill had the statement repeated for emphasis.) Doolittle wanted all land-based aircraft under one agency, allowing that carrier aircraft belonged to the Navy. He saw the carrier as "going into obsolescence" and felt that the battleship had been obsolete for the last 10 years. Led by Senator Hill, who raised the specter of another Pearl Harbor, the general replied:

... I feel that we should do nothing to postpone action on this ... We should move forward with the greatest possible speed in order to acquire a single department of National Defense and an autonomous Air Force on a parity with the Navy and with the ground Army.³⁶

General Carl Spaatz urged three imperative actions: unification as formulated by the War Department (without using the term); equality for the air forces; and "immediate legislative action." Spaatz said the distinction between strategic and tactical air forces was misleading; there were "no lines of cleavage." In perpetuation of Douhet's prophecies, he said, "The next war will be preponderantly an air war." And, with a less than complimentary glance at land and sea power and schemes of combined arms, he declared, "There can be only one defense: Invincible air supremacy in this hemisphere, along its air approaches."³⁷

Aftermath

The Senate Military Affairs Committee hearings ended on 17 December 1945. In advancing the Collins plan, the War Department had again successfully demonstrated the merits of the offensive. Despite its narrow scope, the plan was heralded as innovative; testimonies such as General Doolittle's were referred to as "historical." War Department precepts, as established in the Woodrum Committee hearings—economic savings, "merger now and organization later," elemental organization, and reliance on the executive branch—had been repeated by the most influential and popular officers in the Army.

Several questionable assumptions, however, underlay Army testimony, including that: unity of command in the field required "unification" in Washington; parallel development of equipment and doctrine were unnecessary duplications; and, in strategic matters, one-man decisions along clear lines of authority were superior to collective decision-making. Detailed research of the economic advantages of unification was inconsequential. Though an indispensable premise for general staff theory, Marshall's concept of "general principles first, details later"³⁸ was an incomplete and cursory foundation upon which to base the revision of national security policymaking procedures.

The testimonies of McCloy and Hensel revealed that each department was unsure how the other operated. Because each department favored an organization reflecting its own in terms of the level and extent of centralization, one department's argument was implicit criticism of the other's administrative structure. Hensel overemphasized the isolation of civilian administrators from the military in the War Department. McCloy, taking a portion of the Eberstadt report at face value, ascribed to the Navy a system more disconnected than the one in actual practice and also deemphasized the actual role of the civilian leaders in the War Department. Thus the early witnesses indicated that the unification controversy might proceed without either department understanding the administration of the other and, apparently, without the Army really understanding its own.³⁹

The Navy's Eberstadt Plan received little comment from Army advocates other than Senator Hill's questions relating to the powers of the chairman of the NSC and Secretary McCloy's criticisms of the "looseness" of the plan's administrative structure. Neither could be considered a serious challenge. War Department officials may have been so assured by the sympathetic reactions of the committee members that they found it unnecessary to press their opposition. The Marine Corps had established its case. General Vandegrift described the reactions of the committee to his testimony as "generally favorable," accompanied by "very good coverage" in the news media,⁴⁰ but it was the Forrestal-Hensel testimonies, rather than that of professional officers, that sustained the Eberstadt plan.

The Eberstadt report questioned three of the Collins plan's basic tenets: The net outcome of consolidating the services would be a gain; reorganization was something to be considered in principle without getting into the ramifications; and absence of the relationship between the military establishment and other Government agencies.⁴¹ By stressing these

questions and calling attention to the intricacies of civilian control, Forrestal and Hensel alerted Congress to the depth of the unification problem.

The statement of George Fielding Eliot was either buried in the sheer mass of testimony or passed over in boredom as the hearings wound down. The thrust of his argument, however, was not lost on the Marine Corps as the controversy progressed. A formidable military analyst and commentator, Eliot strongly favored Eberstadt's recommendations, noting that naval services have traditionally deteriorated when subordinated to land services. "This is the universal verdict of history. There are no exceptions." He favored a separate air force but condemned the proposed unification bills and the Collins plan, which he saw as forcing agreement on the Armed Forces. "In Germany the Army has always dominated military thought. The results speak for themselves." "

IV

THE BATTLE OF THE POTOMAC

One objection to a single department of defense as proposed seems to be a weakening of the civilian control of the administration of the national defense, which under our form of government does not to me appear desirable in time of peace. In time of war the President and Congress can give, as they have given in the past, as much authority to the military as is necessary or desirable. Decision to make such a change should be based on a necessity therefor.

Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy, USN
Senate Hearings, 1946

Marine Commandant Vandegrift had indeed kept his eyes on the "brew" since the Woodrum committee hearings of 1944. The fall following the hearings, there had been signs that a powerful American Legion official, Louis Johnson, was attempting to ram a strong unification resolution through the organization's convention. Accordingly, Brigadier General Gerald C. Thomas, Director of Plans and Policies at Headquarters, Marine Corps, and one of the commandant's most trusted advisers, was dispatched to Chicago to meet with members of the American Legion's National Defense Council. By virtue of his position at Marine Headquarters and his familiarity with the unification issue (he was present at most of the Woodrum committee hearings), General Thomas was among the earliest Marine participants in what was to become known as the "Battle of the Potomac." Thomas' efforts at the Chicago convention bore fruit, and opponents successfully blocked Johnson's unification resolution.¹

Unification problems, however, were complicated by matters within the Navy Department and reduced in priority by national commitments at war's end. In October 1944, Admiral King had conceived the idea of

reorganizing the Navy Department, a project that Vandegrift viewed warily. The Marine Corps operated in the Navy by means of a subtle mechanism. Unlike the various bureaus, it existed as a separate establishment, with the commandant enjoying direct access to the Secretary of the Navy. The commandant feared that King would seek to extend his jurisdiction over the Corps because the Admiral had shown himself to be a convinced believer in "separate but not necessarily equal facilities for Marines."² Vandegrift asked General Thomas to watch the proposal and also to work up a much-needed postwar personnel plan. "I had no intention of being absorbed by the Chief of Naval Operations."³

The sudden end of the war raised the critical challenge of occupying Japan and Northern China while demobilizing troops fast enough to satisfy the public and the press.⁴ The problems facing the Marines brought about remarkably diverse activities at Headquarters, including demobilization to answer public clamor, deployments to satisfy foreign policy, and staff studies to counter War Department unification plans.

Initial Marine Corps Activities

In the fall of 1945, at Secretary Forrestal's request, General Vandegrift and Vice Admiral A. W. Radford, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air, each drew up a secret paper embodying his view on unification. The papers "raised one hell of an uproar in the JCS," but neither officer relented. Vandegrift's opinions had formed the basis of his testimony before the Senate Military Affairs Committee. The commandant could wax emotional about War Department intentions for the Marine Corps. In a personal letter he wrote, "The Army is back on the job in full force trying to absorb the Navy and with it the Marine Corps."⁵

The Collins plan did not allay Vandegrift's fears, despite assurances of continued Marine Corps autonomy "consistent with military efficiency and necessary economy." Under the plan, the Corps would be denied direct access to a cabinet-level secretary and thus would have no effective voice in operational matters. Without Marine representation on the proposed US Chiefs of Staff, there would be no opportunity to present minority views to the President. Collins' "ample guaranty that no one arm or service will swallow up another" was manifestly less than ample: It simply did not apply to the Marine Corps.

The plan's implications with respect to congressional control of military policy were of equal concern. To Vandegrift, the Collins plan

was an attempt to replace the traditional authority of Congress in military affairs with that of the President and the single secretary.⁶ The most frustrating period of his commandancy was beginning.

Faced with War Department endeavors, which had been operational for some time, to mobilize public opinion and influence "key press and radio men,"⁷ General Vandegrift decided that the Corps must organize independent of Forrestal's SCOROR (Secretary's Committee on Research and Reorganization).⁸ When the Collins plan was made public, Colonel Merrill Twining was called to Washington by the commandant and "reminded of the Noumea affair" of late 1942, when Twining had discovered and then hastily relayed to Vandegrift information that Army postwar plans apparently did not include the Marine Corps. Vandegrift directed Twining, one of the Corps' most able and imaginative thinkers and a lawyer, to establish the "Marine Corps Board" at the nearby Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Va., to explore amphibious concepts and also, as an additional task, study service unification. When the unification conflict accelerated, the additional task grew to demand far greater attention, but with few exceptions, the Corps' unification efforts were on an informal, ad hoc basis, with General Thomas acting as the commandant's coordinator.⁹

Colonel Twining was instructed to watch unification developments, and make appropriate recommendations and reports to Thomas. At the outset, Twining was assigned one principal assistant, Lieutenant Colonel V. H. Krulak, chief of the Research Section at Marine Corps Schools.¹⁰ As the conflict progressed, more officers would join the effort, although the total number of active participants, most of whom were field grade officers, probably never exceeded 10 or 12.

Twining pursued the subject of unification on a broad basis, producing several well-publicized speeches and statements and organizing later lobbying efforts. As he put it, "I did whatever I could."¹¹ Lieutenant Colonel Krulak's tasks were equally varied. He investigated the statutory background of the Marine Corps developing stance on reorganization; worked on projects related to its achievements in World War II, including a book on Marine aviation; compiled statistics and facts related to the war; and researched earlier attempts to abolish the Corps. Twining and he worked closely on position papers and speeches, handling questions as they arose. Both officers answered directly to General Thomas, with the concurrence of the Commandant, Marine Corps Schools. "As we moved into 1946, the group broadened but our functions did not greatly change."¹²

General Vandegrift had some relief from unification quarrels for a brief time in the fall of 1945 as he turned to Headquarters personnel studies. He suggested 108,000 as the proper size for the peacetime Corps,¹³ although the recommendation had yet to pass Congress. Marine troop commitments to the Far East remained outstanding. More important, he was confident that Admiral King's replacement as Chief of Naval Operations, Chester Nimitz, would be much less inclined to attempt to reduce the Marine Corps to the status of a bureau in the Navy Department.¹⁴

But, by later November, Vandegrift seems to have experienced a change of heart regarding the effectiveness of his testimony at the Senate Military Affairs Committee hearings. He wrote in a letter that "things are not particularly encouraging."¹⁵ As General Thomas was to lament on numerous occasions, the whole unification problem resembled a box full of mercury; there was room for only a few to grab on, and the few had to rupture themselves.¹⁶

Truman Enters the Controversy

At a meeting on 21 November 1945, Senator Walsh and Representative Vinson, chairmen of the Senate and House Naval Affairs Committees, respectively, told President Truman they hoped he would not introduce unification legislation. By informing the President that such a bill would not pass "either this winter, next winter, or the winter after,"¹⁷ Vinson was plainly established in Truman's eyes as the sort that composed the "principal stumbling block" to unification.¹⁸ President Truman was not easily chastized, however, and he saw other considerations, not the least of which was the nation's foreign policy. He seemed eager to be rid of the problems of defense reorganization and universal military training in order to devote his attention to foreign affairs.

Aside from this inclination of the President, there were political signs indicating progress. The War Department was successful in using Fabian tactics to pressurize the unification issue. In September 1945, the department's Bessell committee, which had been formed to estimate Army postwar needs, had reported that because of high-level guidance on political considerations and pending a decision on Army-Navy coordination, it was impossible to estimate manpower needs accurately. Approval of the Richardson report was heartily recommended.¹⁹

In addition, public opinion appeared to very much favor "unification" notwithstanding that, by the fall of 1945, the term had come to be used so slovenly as to render it meaningless. The results of a Gallup Poll conducted at the time are pertinent. Failing to distinguish between "unified command," which had been established in World War II, and "unification," the pollsters asked, "Will you tell me what your understanding is of the term 'unified command' for the armed forces of the United States?" Results showed "52 percent had a reasonably correct idea." Of those, 64 percent were approving; 23 percent, disapproving; and 13 percent had no opinion. Comparing the votes with educational levels, the Gallup agency concluded from its incorrectly framed poll that the "better educated and better informed" were in favor of "unification."²⁰

Lastly, as Forrestal had recognized, War Department proposals were welcomed by Truman because they largely coincided with his own views. General Marshall, the one person most responsible for initiating and promoting Army concepts of unification, "had the trust and respect of the President more than any other military figure, more perhaps than any high official"²¹—certainly, one can assume, more than Carl Vinson.

Postmaster General Robert E. Hannegan warned the President that he was unnecessarily risking his prestige in a battle he might lose. Truman was not to be swayed. Seeing it as his duty, he sent a message to Congress on 19 December 1945 calling for establishment of a Department of National Defense.²² The message set forth the economic advantages of a "unified command" and the integration aspects of the Eberstadt report without mentioning it. Treading the familiar path of "merge now—organize later," the President's message recommended the following:

- A single department headed by a cabinet-level secretary, to be assisted by an under secretary and "several" assistant secretaries.
- Three coordinated "branches" of the department—air, land, and naval—each under an assistant secretary. (The Navy should retain its own carrier, ship, and water-based aviation, and, "of course," the Marine Corps should be continued "as an integral part of the Navy.")
- "Ample authority" for the President and the proposed secretary to establish central coordinating and service organizations—both civilian and military—where found necessary.
- A chief of staff of the single department and commanders for each branch.

- The chief of staff and branch commanders would constitute an advisory body to the overall secretary and the President.²³

Truman further proposed that "key staff positions" in the department be filled with officers from all the Armed Forces so that thinking would not be dominated by "any one or two of the services." As an additional precaution, he deemed it wise to rotate the chief of staff post among the services and establish a short tenure of 2 or 3 years except in the time of a war emergency. "Once a unified department has been established, other steps necessary to the formulation of a comprehensive national security program can be taken with greater ease."²⁴

Having officially announced his intent to support what was, in effect, the War Department position tied to the supradepartmental coordinating bodies of the Eberstadt report, the President joined the controversy as an active participant. His message was clearly a defeat for Forrestal and the Navy Department. The extensive centralization and powerful chief of staff recommended by Truman would resolve the problems of "unnecessary duplications," presumably to include, in his words, the Navy's "own 'little Army that talks Navy' and is known as the Marine Corps."²⁵

The following day at a press conference, the President was asked if his message was intended to stifle "further discussion" of unification matters by naval officers. He answered that it was not his intention to "muzzle" anybody. He desired "free and frank discussion" and "honest opinion" to achieve the best results. "It will be necessary now, though, for all people who are in the services, to make a statement that they are expressing their personal views and not the views of the administration. I have expressed those views myself."²⁶ His answer went one step further than Forrestal's understanding with Clark Clifford, Truman's naval aide (and later special assistant) on the day of the message when Clifford had limited the expression of "personal opinions" to congressional committee hearings.²⁷ Secretary Forrestal and his Navy and Marine officers saw it as a concession; they fully intended to take the President at his word.

War Department Goals

By the winter of 1945-1946, the boundaries defining the unification conflict had become clear enough to identify the goals of the departments and their supporters. In summary, War Department goals were:

combat effectiveness; military control; adequate ground troops; establishment of a separate and coordinate air force; economy; and restriction of the Marine Corps. Army leaders proposed an organizational solution that featured one military budget controlled by the JCS. In addition to maximizing overall military appropriations, this would prevent the more glamorous Navy, as well as the proposed Air Force, from approaching Congress independently and getting a larger share than was justified from the overall military point of view. Predicting that the JCS would have difficulty agreeing on the distribution of funds among the services, the Army proposed the single chief of staff who would adjudicate differences among the JCS and wield a controlling influence over the military budget to ensure "balanced" and ready forces; i.e., combat effectiveness. The overall chief of staff ensured the allocation of available funds to provide adequately equipped and sizable ground troops within those forces.²⁸

The single budget and single chief of staff entailed a single military department headed by a cabinet-level secretary. In both the McNarney and Collins plans, however, the overall secretary was to be concerned with administrative matters and forbidden by law from effectively influencing matters of strategy and operations as well as appropriations; this lack of influence, of course, strengthened military control. Though not openly stated in the hearings, Army leaders also looked to the single chief of staff to impose their version of equitable allocations of personnel and equipment, and restrict the Marine Corps to functions that were strictly noncompetitive with those of Army ground forces.²⁹

As mentioned in Chapter I, the establishment of a separate air force was viewed as inevitable by the War Department. Army aviators merchandized their arm as America's "first line of defense," and the atomic bomb reinforced the argument that they had won World War II—in spite of Strategic Bombing Survey revelations that German factories had not only survived strategic bombing but had increased production at its height. In addition, they wanted to absorb all land-based aircraft, including those of the Navy and Marine Corps, and believed they should exert major influence over aircraft and missile development. As the *Time* issue of 5 March 1945 described General Arnold's announcement of Air Forces accomplishments up to that time: "There was no modesty in the report."

Marshall and the other Army ground force leaders felt safe in acquiescing to the aviators' desires because of their concept of the overall chief of staff; the aviators, in turn, supported unification as the best means of achieving independence. The situation, however, created

differing priorities within the War Department. The overriding goal of ground force leaders was "combat effectiveness," while air force leaders considered separation as their overriding goal.³⁰

The goal of economy was vague at best. There were sincere beliefs that Army unification plans would bring about savings, but they were not supported by other than the broadest generalizations of the advantages of consolidation. According to Demetrios Caraley, "It is probably significant that throughout the unification hearings no Army witness ever gave a single, concrete, relevant example of where savings would result."³¹

These goals derived directly from the precepts expressed by advocates of the War Department viewpoint since the early days of the war. The Marine Corps, for example, would be restricted by legislation that effected centralization of the services and made them rely on the executive branch, and which was based, in the first place, on the Army General Staff concept of general principles first, details later. Economy and organization by element were supplementary factors. The Corps was an unnecessary duplication that competed for Army ground force manpower and equipment; as a tri-elemental force, it was an anomaly in a single department where major components were organized according to the elements in which they operated.

The War Department's goals were generally shared and supported by the department's civilian leadership, the senior Army ground and air generals, President Truman, and the Army's congressional allies. The President, of course, had other interests beyond those he shared with the Army. He saw himself faced with more serious problems than coordinating two or three military departments and believed he should be able to rely upon a cabinet-level secretary for that coordination.³² Truman was also preoccupied with congressional obstacles to his programs, by no means an unusual predicament for the Chief Executive. To run the military establishment efficiently in the age of atomic warfare, he sought to maximize his own control relative to that of an often plodding Congress. "The Congress cannot perform its constitutional functions simply by paralyzing the operations of the government in an emergency."³³

Differences within the ranks of the War Department proponents were largely, and at their most acrimonious level, between ground and air officers over the question of a separate air force. These differences stemmed from mutual fears that the other would take the largest share of the military budget and become dominant within the single department.

However, a partnership was maintained because the factions also disagreed over the effects of the single chief of staff-single budget mechanism, thereby allowing each to expect that this mechanism could ultimately be used to protect its own goals at the expense of the other.³⁴

Navy Department Goals

In summary, Navy Department goals in the unification conflict were: combat effectiveness; organizational integrity; collective strategy development; civilian control; and economy. The priority was combat effectiveness along with its perceived "indispensable prerequisite"—a strong Navy with the wartime functions of naval aviation and the Marine Corps unimpaired. Navy leaders were not convinced that sea power had fallen back from America's "first line of defense." Because the existing organization did not present serious obstacles to the achievement of either combat effectiveness or a strong, unimpaired Navy, the department was disposed toward the status quo.³⁵

As in the Richardson committee interviews, initial favorable response to a single department arose from an inability to grasp the entire impact of War Department plans for unification. As we have seen, it was Secretary Forrestal and a handful of Marines who first sensed the implications, not the Navy hierarchy. Navy leaders began to oppose a single department when they evaluated the Army's single budget concept under the controlling influence of the chief of staff. They reasoned that the chief of staff was not likely to be sympathetic with or understanding of the Navy's needs; indeed, he could be positively hostile. Aside from budgetary considerations, the Navy Department opposed Army unification goals because they threatened to divest the Navy of its land-based aviation (and eventually, it was feared, all aviation) and severely restrict the combatant functions of the Marine Corps. Given the Navy's theory of organization by function rather than by element (i.e., task organizing various types of Navy and Marine forces), Army unification plans were also seen as an attempt to deprive the fleet of supporting units necessary to its task of controlling the seas.³⁶

In addition, the Navy insisted that the single chief of staff system was inferior to the JCS organization in strategic decision-making and was potentially dangerous in that it was more error-prone and could ultimately impose a party line on military thought and development. As World War II had demonstrated, unity of command in the field did not

require either a single department or a single chief of staff in Washington. A fundamental goal of the Navy Department, again conflicting with the Army's chief of staff concept, was civilian control of the military on the secretarial level of organization. Navy perceptions of civilian control required that the departmental secretary have all-inclusive authority over his department, particularly with respect to the budget, and that he have more than one formal line of communication and control to subordinate echelons. This precluded one single, responsible source of information as represented by the single chief of staff, a tradition favored though never fully realized by the War Department since 1903. The dominant tradition in the Navy Department since the turn of the century had been against such an officer.³⁷

Finally, the Navy denied that unification as perceived by the War Department was a necessary condition for increased savings in logistics and procurement matters. At the same time, it feared that the Army plan might, under the guise of economy, prevent the Navy Department from maintaining the separate facilities it considered necessary to carry out assigned tasks. In the past, independent research efforts had paid off in important doctrinal developments and weapons discoveries. "Wasteful duplications" were best eliminated on an ad hoc basis and did not require a single department.³⁸

Navy proponents were also opposed to the Army method for implementing unification. This view was often expressed during the Senate Military Affairs Committee hearings. Forrestal said: "I do not think anything that lasts or is soundly conceived is ever arrived at by any simple and easy cliché." Vandegrift: "Vagueness and generalizations are the order of the day." And Hensel remarked: "Methods do not exist apart from details."³⁹

The Navy Department's goals were generally shared and supported by its civilian leadership, the senior admirals, the Marines, and Navy Department congressional allies. All the proponents of one department did not share an equal interest in each goal or equally oppose each goal of the other department. For the purposes of this study, the key differences were those of methodology and goal priority that formed within the Navy Department between the Marine Corps on one hand, and the civilian leadership and senior admirals on the other.

From the start, General Vandegrift and many of his advisers were dissatisfied with the senior admirals' apparent somnambulism when confronted with War Department plans for unification. Obviously, the Marines were more keenly aware of encroachment as they had, since

1775, gained no small amount of experience in dealing with threats to their existence. At one time or another, the Army, the Navy, and the President had attempted to eliminate the Corps. And, while Secretary Forrestal had been alerted to Army aims early in the controversy, he would eventually part company with the Marines.

In the spring of 1945, Vandegrift had observed that Nimitz and Sherman seemed ready to support unification without having given much thought to the complexities of the problem. Later in the year, the commandant, disturbed by what he considered the Army's "vicious infighting," wrote:

I feel that our Navy friends have rested too long on their laurels and the belief that no harm could come to them. It is just within the last few weeks that they seem to realize the fact that Mr. Roosevelt is dead. [President Roosevelt had been an Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson Administration; he was considered as being pro-Navy and as having a special fondness for the Marine Corps] . . . I tried to impress [the Navy] . . . we have got to forget methods that we have used before . . . this is not the day when knighthood was in flower and it's more like a street brawl than a tilting joust.⁴⁰

Every Marine participant interviewed by me in the preparation of this study thought that, in the 1944-1945 period, the Navy was remiss in not devoting sufficient attention to unification issues. According to one respondent, Navy leaders—with the exception of a few naval aviators, notably Admiral Radford—reacted as if under carbon monoxide; they did not realize what was happening until organic changes had already occurred.

Apart from exasperation over bureaucratic tactics, there were also significant differences over the priority of Navy Department goals. The overriding goal of "a strong Navy with the wartime functions of naval aviation and the Marine Corps unimpaired" was viewed disparately. The Navy was naturally inclined to see the unimpaired survival of naval air as paramount; without denying the absolute requirement for naval aviation, the Marine Corps saw its own unimpaired survival as paramount. It has been suggested (and events in late 1946 to early 1947 seem to verify) that both Secretary Forrestal and Admiral Sherman, the Navy's key negotiator in the critical stages, believed that the Corps could be sacrificed as a make-weight to secure the position of naval aviation.⁴¹ The preservation of an effective Marine Corps (i.e., including its Fleet Marine Force complete with air elements) was not regarded as vital by the Navy's most influential senior officers.⁴² Therefore, that portion of the

organizational integrity goal pertaining to the Marines was overriding only to the Corps.

Navy-Marine relationships during the unification conflict became severely strained. Tensions grew apace—first with Navy Department inattentiveness, and later with its pragmatism. Having waited until mid-1945 to enter the fray, Navy officials would come to compromise Marine organizational integrity to preserve what they believed to be essential to maintaining command of the seas. Had the Navy been more thoughtful in the earlier stages and prepared for the battle,⁴³ there would have been no need to sacrifice any part of the naval service as a pawn in the bargaining.

Early 1947 would find the Corps without effective Navy support. By then, a Marine participant remarked, "The fat was in the fire." In a question that answered itself, he asked, "What Chief of Naval Operations wants to go down as an evangelist for the Marine Corps?"⁴⁴

The Marines were even more fixed than the Navy leadership on concepts of budgetary control and multiple lines of communication to subordinate echelons as practiced by the Secretary of the Navy. That system was reasonable assurance of interdepartmental autonomy among the various bureaus. Moreover, the Marine Corps viewed control in its broader perspectives, again more adamantly than the Navy. To Vandegrift and his advisers, the principle of civil supremacy in the immediate postwar period required that Congress reassert itself in the field of military affairs rather than prolong its wartime abstinence. Reactivated congressional control would ensure that no single service would be able to capture military thought and impose one-sided policy. Furthermore, based on past experience, the Corps would have a relatively impartial body deciding its fate when the need arose. This point was deep-rooted and traditional: To the Marines, civilian control meant not only access to a cabinet-level secretary, but also a strong congressional control.⁴⁵

The Marine Corps was in full accord with the goals of collective strategy-making, including Marine representation on the staff of the JCS, and economy as perceived by the Navy Department. During the unification controversy, collective strategy-making aligned with the Corps' overriding goals: (1) a defense organization conforming to that of the Eberstadt report (although there would be more explicit interpretations in 1947); and (2) statutory recognition of the Marine Corps' existence as an effective air-ground force residing within the Armed Forces as the specialists in amphibious warfare. These goals were virtually inseparable. A defense organization that favored collective strategy-making

and emphasized increased civilian control would objectively include the Marine Corps, and the Marines could not expect to exist as a modern combat force except as part of such an organization.⁴⁶

At this point it would be appropriate to review an issue that enjoyed popularity toward the end of the war and continues to travel in Army and Marine circles. Arising from what is known as the "Smith versus Smith" controversy, it has been judged an important factor in General Marshall's plans for the Marine Corps. The incident itself, best described as unfortunate, resulted from the relief of an Army division commander, Major General Ralph Smith, by the V Amphibious Corps commander, Lieutenant General H. M. Smith, USMC, during the battle for Saipan in 1944. Over several days of bitter fighting that brought heavy casualties, H. M. Smith had become increasingly dissatisfied with the performance of the Army commander. The senior Smith considered that he had repeatedly and adequately counseled his division commander; when he did not respond as expected, Smith found it necessary to relieve him of command. There immediately ensued a spate of investigations and accusations. The incident was especially unpleasant because the Smiths were friends, and the controversy stirred personal as well as interservice animosities.⁴⁷

Much undue publicity surrounded the affair, initially creating the impression that there were fundamental differences between Army and Marine tactics. Subsequently, the situation was given credit for firming Marshall's resolve to put the Marines in their place. Nothing was found to support either notion. Instead, the net effect was that the incident, which dragged on and on with the help of the press, created bruised feelings between Army and Marine officers. Marine unification participants questioned specifically about "Smith versus Smith" were of the opinion that the matter was merely an irritant in the "Battle of the Potomac."⁴⁸

As noted previously, the Army became seriously concerned about the Marine Corps as a competitor before World War I. By 1942, General Marshall's plans for the Corps were only part of a much broader military outlook. There is ample evidence that he was quite disturbed by the relief of an Army officer by a Marine general who had not unjustifiably earned the nickname "Howlin' Mad." Nevertheless, Marshall was not a man given to fits of meanness. It is impossible to envision him as being more agitated with H. M. Smith than he regularly was with one of his own generals in the European theater, the similarly dynamic and abrasive George S. Patton.

V

THE NAVY DEPARTMENT'S TACTICAL VICTORY

We have pride in ourselves and in our past but we do not rest our case on any presumed ground of gratitude owing us from the Nation. The bended knee is not a tradition of our corps. If the Marine as a fighting man has not made a case for himself after 170 years of service, he must go.

General A. A. Vandegrift, USMC
Senate Hearings, 1946

During the congressional Christmas recess in December 1945, Senator Elbert D. Thomas, Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, had worked on a "new" unification bill that took into account the information gathered in the fall hearings and the President's special message. Thomas then appointed a subcommittee composed of Senator Hill, Senator Warren B. Austin, ranking minority member of the full committee, and himself to work over the draft. Thomas also asked that the Secretaries of War and Navy each appoint an officer or member of his department to meet with the subcommittee and represent service views. The War Department designated Major General Lauris Norstad, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff for Plans and soon to be Chief of the General Staff's Operations and Plans Division. The Navy sent Vice Admiral Arthur Radford, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air).¹

The JCS 1478 Papers

While Thomas' subcommittee labored, the Joint Chiefs continued to study unification proposals and postwar personnel matters. By mid-

March 1946, as a result of War Department staff considerations, General Eisenhower, Army Chief of Staff, and General Spaatz, Commanding General, Army Air Forces, were prepared to recommend a program for the Marines that galvanized feeling at Headquarters, Marine Corps, and Quantico. In spite of public assurance to the contrary, the then highly classified JCS series 1478 papers (specifically, 10 and 11) made it clear that the Army intended to see the role of the Corps severely reduced. General Vandegrift had initially been warned of these proposals by the Marine Corps Liaison Officer to CNO, Brigadier General Merritt A. Edson.²

Eisenhower's memorandum explained the elemental concept: The Army belongs on the land and the Navy, aside from technical installations and bases, belongs on the sea. "The emergency development of the Marine forces during this war should not be viewed as assigning to the Navy a normal function of land warfare, fundamentally the primary role of the Army." He allowed there "is a real need" for one service to be charged with "bridging the gap" between the sailor on the ship and the soldier on land. "This seems to me properly a function of the Marine Corps." Eisenhower conceded the need for a force within the fleet to provide small, readily available, and lightly armed units to protect American interests ashore in foreign countries. Further, troops were required to guard naval ships and shore establishments. These functions would comprise the fundamental role of the Marine Corps. "When naval forces are involved in operations requiring land forces of combined arms, the task becomes a joint land-sea, and usually air force mission. Once Marine units attain such a size as to require the combining of arms to accomplish their missions, they are assuming and duplicating the functions of the Army and we have in effect two land armies."

Eisenhower recommended that:

- The Marine Corps be maintained solely as an adjunct of the fleet and participate "only in minor shore combat operations in which the Navy alone is interested."
- It be recognized that "the land aspect of major amphibious operations" would be undertaken by the Army; consequently, "the Marine forces will not be appreciably expanded in time of war."
- It be agreed that the Navy would not develop a land Army or a so-called amphibious Army. Marine units should be limited in size to "the equivalent of the regiment" and the total size of the Corps "therefore limited to some 50,000 or 60,000 men."

General Spaatz' memorandum echoed Eisenhower's proposals for the Corps' disposition in less detail. His emphasis was on Air Corps control of all land-based aviation.

These recommendations would have reduced the Marines to little more than a naval palace guard. Since the Marine Corps, which had topped 485,000 only a year before,⁴ was to be restricted from expanding in time of war, there would be no requirement for a reserve force or aviation and artillery. The service primarily responsible for developing amphibious doctrine, the "key to World War II," would serve as landing craft crewmen and beach labor parties.

Admiral Nimitz replied on 30 March, enclosing the views of General Vandegrift and Admiral Radford. The Eisenhower-Spaatz proposals would "eliminate the Marine Corps as an effective combat element, reducing it to the status of a naval police unit. . . . I agree with the Chief of Staff, United States Army, that further exchange of papers on the subject of the missions of the land, naval, and air forces will serve no useful purpose." ⁵ On this acrimonious note, the matter was temporarily closed. It is remarkable that the "highly classified" 1478 papers scarcely saw the light of congressional scrutiny until the last days of the controversy, over a year later.

Whatever his impressions of exaggerated Marine publicity, General Eisenhower's proposals to the JCS were influenced strongly by the Army facing once again the budgetary ax. In early March 1946, it was reported that a "squeeze on manpower" was forcing a downward revision of Army plans for a peacetime force. The original plans of 1,500,000 men were to be whittled to below 1,000,000 for 1947 and "probably" to 650,000 within a few years. Reasons given were drooping enlistments for the ground force, overaccelerated demobilization, and fear that the taxpayers would balk. (It was added that the Air Corps, Navy, and Marines were getting needed volunteers.) More emphasis was going to be placed on sea and air power, and Army ground and service forces could expect the biggest cuts.⁶

Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings

On 18 March 1946, Secretary Forrestal talked at length with President Truman about the bill that Senator Thomas' subcommittee was drafting. Having seen an early draft of the bill, Forrestal frankly told Truman it was "completely unworkable." He estimated that it might pass the Senate by a slight margin but was certain to fail in the House. Searching for a middle ground not apparent in the impending legislation, the secretary's position was less extreme than that of many admirals and the Marines. Truman remained unmoved. When the conversation drifted

to the "propaganda" and "lobbying" that was taking place, Forrestal suggested that the President call a halt to it: "I said the Navy would make this stick but I didn't think the Army could, particularly the Air Forces." Truman concurred, adding that the Army Air Corps "had no discipline." ⁷

On 9 April, the Thomas subcommittee introduced its bill, S. 2044. Navy Department representatives began to oppose it publicly as well as privately. After the President's message in December, the controversy had assumed a low profile in the press; now it was again front page news.⁸ Undisturbed at the War Department for doing his work, as it were, Truman was incensed by Navy opposition. The Navy barely had time to warm to its task when the President opened fire at his 11 April press conference. Ill temper prompted imprecision as he said that he had not authorized Navy officers to speak against unification; he had authorized them "to express their honest opinions." When the Commander in Chief sets out a policy, it "should be supported by the . . . War Department and by the Navy Department. That doesn't mean that the individuals are muzzled on their honest opinion." The official leaders would have to "get into line" or he might have to "alter the situation." ⁹

At a conference the same day, Truman expressed the wish that discussions of unification be confined to appearances before congressional committees. Of course, he was not "taking sides." Forrestal's conference notes indicate that the secretary was departing from Navy apprehensions about naval aviation and the Marine Corps.¹⁰ The President's threat to "alter the situation" had not fallen on deaf ears.

During a press conference a week later, Truman again blasted Navy lobbying. "Whatever a lobbyist usually does, that is what they were doing." He was "really stirred up" by the interview of an admiral in Hawaii. "I don't think he knew what he was talking about." Questioned about Army lobbying efforts (the reference was to Senator E. V. Robertson's long speech on the Senate floor documenting the pressure tactics of certain Army Air Forces commanders ¹¹), Truman answered, "I didn't know they were. I don't believe in lobbying by the departments." ¹²

Believing that the Senate Military Affairs Committee was "a highly prejudiced body," Forrestal was not shocked by S. 2044. He had already asked Senator Walsh in October 1945 to hold hearings to see that the Navy's case would be fully presented.¹³ And so it was: The Senate Naval Affairs Committee hearings brought the controversy to a fine blaze. War Department unification proponents were about to receive a painful demonstration of Navy Department influence in Congress.

General Vandegrift's anger over the JCS 1478 papers had been aggravated by the speeches of Army spokesmen. General Spaatz, for example, had launched an "off the record" tirade at an Aviation Writers' Association dinner in mid-March. The theme was: "Why should we have a Navy at all?" Needless to say, the Marines were part and parcel of the denunciations. The commandant made up his mind to "present the sordid facts as I saw them." ¹⁴

The Senate Naval Affairs Committee commenced hearings to consider S. 2044 on 30 April 1946. As it turned out, Senator Hill had forgotten his assurances to the Marine Corps' General Geiger the previous December. After nine drafts, the bill still did not provide that the Corps would "go right ahead" as an "autonomous" unit.

The bill called for a single department headed by a cabinet-level secretary, a single chief of staff, and a "Joint Staff of the Armed Forces" consisting of the chiefs of the Army, Navy, and proposed Air Force as well as the single chief of staff. This staff was to be an advisory body that submitted annual recommendations, including nonconcurring statements, to the President through the overall secretary. In explaining the rank of the chief of staff according to the service of the officer appointed, the bill provided that if he were a Marine officer, he would hold the title of "General of the Marines." There was no explanation as to how a Marine officer could ascend to such heights without being a member of the proposed Joint Staff.

The bill (S. 2044) would also establish the Army, Navy, and Air Force as "separate and coordinate arms." The War and Navy Departments were to be abolished, their functions transferred to a "Department of Common Defense"; the functions, powers, and duties of its civilian officials would be vested in the single secretary who could "delegate the same" as he saw fit. The single department and the three proposed services were declared to be "agencies," and the three services would consist of whatever components were assigned to them by future law or executive order.

The President, through the secretary, would "study and investigate" and make recommendations to Congress on such matters as economy measures, elimination of any "undesirable duplication," joint use of facilities, and uniformity in promotion and discipline. In an effort to satisfy the Navy, there were provisions for noncabinet secretaries for the Army, Navy, and Air Force to administer the three arms, and an under secretary and four assistant secretaries of the department. Finally, the bill would establish the coordinating bodies of the Eberstadt report: the

"Council of Common Defense" (Eberstadt's NSC), the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Resources Board. (The proposed Council of Common Defense, however, substituted the overall secretary for the three service secretaries of the Eberstadt plan.)¹⁵

Secretary Forrestal and his Navy-Marine subordinates admirably achieved their aims during the hearings. Only three persons favored S. 2044—Senators Thomas, Hill, and Austin, the bill's sponsors. All other witnesses supported the Navy Department position on unification.

Practically every Navy witness touched upon each of the department's goals. They emphasized the importance of unimpaired naval aviation and defended the Marines ably, if secondarily.

Forrestal called the bill "administratively illogical" and the proposed Secretary for the Navy a "zero." Expressing "great concern" about the future of both naval aviation and the Marine Corps, he stated the obvious: Negotiations with the Secretary of War had not brought forth a compromise.

Forrestal also gave his first (and last) forcible argument in behalf of the Corps. Citing the inadequacy of British amphibious forces early in World War II, he pointed out that the bill would permit outright abolishment of the Marines by executive act. "Even worse," if deprived of the Fleet Marine Forces, they would be reduced to complete ineffectiveness. Needless to say, the committee was in total agreement.¹⁶

Admiral Nimitz repeated the Navy arguments in detail, attacking the concentration of power in the proposed Secretary and Chief of Staff, restriction of access to the budget, and the devitalized Joint Chiefs. He saw S. 2044 as effectively eliminating the necessary elements of competition and individual incentive. In what amounted to a lecture on sea power, Nimitz noted that one of the essentials of command of the sea was "a properly balanced landing force." The Marines were trained for amphibious operations and the Army for sustained combat in major land campaigns; thus the two services complemented rather than duplicated one another. Without specifying the still-classified 1478 papers, Nimitz alluded to them in accusing the Army Air Forces of intending to "absorb naval aviation in its entirety."¹⁷

In a brief backup statement, Rear Admiral Thomas Robbins testified that the only aspect of the Navy Department that would not be "thrown into complete chaos" by S. 2044 was the management of the

operating forces. The proposed bill made "practically no change in the internal administration of the Army." 18

General Vandegrift appeared on 6 May. The commandant's statement, which owed much to the efforts of Colonel Twining and his subordinates, 19 was trenchant and, as Senator Walsh remarked, "very well prepared." He sharply criticized the War Department General Staff theory to be implemented in S. 2044 as advocating the extension of political-military control into fields of government that were essentially civilian in character. He believed the complexities of modern war called for broader participation and closer attention by the civilian elements of government, all coordinated by an authority with roots in Congress rather than the Pentagon.

Quickly narrowing to the specific effects the proposed bill would have on the Corps, he stated that it would "in all probability spell extinction. . . . The heart of the Marine Corps is in its Fleet Marine Force." He went on to reveal the 1478 papers by name, denouncing their "clear and unmistakable intentions," and made it plain (with suitable emphasis from Chairman Walsh) that the Marines had no member on the JCS. Pointing to development of amphibious warfare doctrine and techniques as the most significant corollary to the Corps' fighting functions, Vandegrift added that the Marine Corps had forecast the pattern of the coming war with Japan as early as 1921.

Describing the Corps as the Nation's primary "force in readiness," Vandegrift quoted a State Department publication that reported that in 51 operations to protect citizens in foreign countries prior to 1933, Marines had participated in all but 11. "Marines have had forces actually operating in the field for 49 of the last 50 years, and have engaged in actual combat in 27 of those same years." The very nature of the Army's duties required that it be "ponderous" and have "great staying power," which were not characteristics of a mobile amphibious force. Because of other, more vital concerns, "a great national Army cannot be a specialist Marine Corps—and still be an Army." In a remark capable of warming congressional hearts and prompting nods of agreement throughout the Corps, the commandant observed that "the Marine Corps has . . . maintained a reputation for utmost frugality, sometimes bordering on penury." 20

Vandegrift closed with a moving plea. Recalling that the Corps had been endangered on numerous occasions since 1829, and in each instance was perpetuated by the Congress alone, he said:

In placing its case in your hands the Marine Corps remembers that it was this same Congress which, in 1789, called it into a long and useful service to the Nation. The Marine Corps feels that the question of its continued existence is likewise a matter for determination by the Congress and not one to be resolved by departmental legerdemain or a quasi-legislative process enforced by the War Department General Staff.

The Marine Corps, then, believes that it has earned this right—to have its future decided by the legislative body which created it—nothing more. Sentiment is not a valid consideration in determining questions of national security. We have pride in ourselves and in our past but we do not rest our case on any presumed ground of gratitude owing us from the Nation. The bended knee is not a tradition of our corps. If the Marine as a fighting man has not made a case for himself after 170 years of service, he must go. But I think you will agree with me that he has earned the right to depart with dignity and honor, not by subjugation to the status of ~~uselessness~~ and servility planned for him by the War Department.²¹

The public reaction to General Vandegrift's speech was "instantaneous and favorable; that of the White House was equally instantaneous, but in the opposite direction."²² Although the widespread publicity accomplished what the commandant had hoped, it also made him a prime object of ever-increasing pressure from Forrestal and the President. Thereafter, his public statements would be more cautions. He had, however, laid a memorable foundation for the Corps' part in the unfolding controversy. Moreover, he had the utmost confidence in the initiative of those officers he had appointed to "watch unification developments and make appropriate recommendations."

Rear Admiral Oswald S. Colclough, Judge Advocate General of the Navy, followed with a statement the leading thrust of which was as important to the Marine Corps as any testimony offered during the controversy. Differentiating legally between an executive department and an agency, Colclough held that any agency then a part of the military or naval forces could be abolished under the provisions of S. 2044. The Army, Navy, and Air Force would become agencies and could not be abolished due to a saving clause, but they could be transferred wholly or in part. He continued: "The Marine Corps has been *held for years to be a separate service*, although it operates with the Navy and under the Secretary of the Navy. *It is, therefore, a part of the naval service.* It is, therefore, an agency, in my opinion, and could be abolished under the terms of this bill, or it could be consolidated with the Army" (emphasis added). Other "agencies" that could be transferred by the terms of the

proposed bill were naval aviation and the Navy's medical department and construction battalions. Any existing functions performed by the Navy Department could be effectively abolished through transfer so long as the Navy itself was not abolished.

Alluding to the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Admiral brought up the constitutional question of the delegation of congressional powers to the President. He cited the provisions of the Constitution that vested legislative and enabling powers in Congress, quoting Justice Hughes: "The Congress is not permitted to transfer to others the essential function with which it is thus vested." In other words, by adopting the language of the Reorganization Act of 1945, a special, short-term legislative act dealing with executive branch organization, S. 2044 would give continuing authority to make transfers even after the Reorganization Act powers had expired.

Colclough then outlined basic appropriations differences between the Constitution and the proposed bill. As he saw it, one lump-sum appropriation for certain aspects of the single department would create constitutional problems. Further, because S. 2044 allowed the transfer of funds then being used to support the functions of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, a particular function, such as "Marine training activities in the amphibious field," could be crippled by shifting the money under which the function was discharged. The proposed Department of Common Defense "could not create purposes for which money was to be expended, but, rather . . . could change who spends the money by transferring the function or transferring the money."²³

Fleet Admiral King, Charles E. Wilson, President of General Electric Company, and Mr. Eberstadt appeared on 7-9 May. Favoring the broader functional integration of the Eberstadt plan over "merger" of service functions, King concentrated on exposing the potential dangers of a single chief of staff and praising the collective approach of the wartime Joint Chiefs.²⁴ Wilson called S. 2044 "an invitation to inefficiency, to authoritarianism, and to stultification"; he asked for less, not more rigidity.²⁵ In Eberstadt's view, both departments favored unification in some respects and opposed it in others, but the services were not in need of "the radical measures appropriate to drastic reorganization of a defeated and discredited military force." Military policy, strategy, and the budget were matters, above all others, that needed unifying civilian decision, not just that of the "Supreme Chief of Staff." He supported the idea of a separate air force after cautioning that, "in military matters it is safer to bet across the board than to lay all your money on one horse to win."²⁶

Interim Compromise Efforts

At a meeting on 7 May, Clark Clifford, who had by then been given White House staff responsibility for the unification legislation, told General Norstad and Stuart Symington, newly appointed Assistant Secretary of War for Air, that he was "convinced that the Thomas Bill could not pass in the near future or, in fact, at any time"; they were "actually losing ground." Furthermore, he also shared some of the Navy's misgivings about the single chief of staff and had personally worked on the statement that Forrestal presented to the Naval Affairs Committee.

Clifford said that he had talked to "the Boss" about unification on two occasions and intended to raise the subject again, recommending that the President call the Secretaries of War and Navy with two or three of their military advisers to a conference and direct them to report to him within a specified time on their areas of agreement and specific points of disagreement. Truman called such a conference on 13 May and asked Forrestal and Patterson to make their report by the end of the month.²⁷

In the course of the 13 May meeting, President Truman surprisingly abandoned the notion of a single chief of staff. He had come to agree with Admiral Leahy, his Chief of Staff, that the idea was potentially dangerous; i.e., it smacked of the "man on horseback" philosophy. Patterson expressed his continued preference for the concept but admitted he was not prepared to "jump into the ditch and die for the idea." According to Walter Millis, Truman's decision against the single Chief of Staff was "a decisive victory" for Forrestal as it largely reversed the effects of the President's special message on unification.²⁸ However, it is difficult to see it as such in light of subsequent events.

That same day, the full Military Affairs Committee reported S. 2044 favorably to the Senate.²⁹ The vote was 13 to 2. Using many of the Navy Department arguments, Senators Styles Bridges and Thomas Hart, the latter a retired admiral who had entered the Senate, vigorously dissented.

Two days later, Secretary Forrestal received a joint letter from Senator Walsh and Congressman Vinson. They said that a preliminary analysis of testimony on S. 2044 revealed a number of defects, not the least of which were reduction of civilian and congressional control over the military and unwise delegations of congressional power to the President. They outlined the areas of agreement and disagreement between the Army and Navy Departments, concluding that Congress would not approve one department, a single secretary and single chief of staff, divestment of Marine and naval aviation functions, and removal of re-

sponsibility for initiating departmental budgets and supporting the same before Congress from the Secretaries of War and Navy. In effecting a compromise, the Navy Department "can well be guided by the views of the War Department with respect to the separation of the Army's strategic air arm. . . . Any compromise . . . which does not embody most of the views of those Members of Congress who have made a study of the importance of sea-air power . . . and which in general does not conform with the views expressed in this letter would not, in our opinion, be in the best interests of the United States." ³⁰

After a 14 May meeting with Patterson, Forrestal noted that only one major point of difference remained: the powers of the overall secretary. He had told Patterson that "we would never agree to administrative control over the Navy. . . . We might consider the word 'supervise' but that was as far as we could go." The departments exchanged feelers aimed at accommodation the following week. Symington, meeting with Forrestal, Eberstadt, and Patterson, asked if the Navy would support the proposed separate Air Force. Forrestal said there were two feasible positions—opposition or leaving it up to the War Department. At that point, Eberstadt asked whether, if the Navy acquiesced in the separate Air Force, the Army would accept the Navy's concept of the powers of the overall secretary. There was no definite answer. ³¹

On 31 May, Forrestal and Patterson reported in writing to President Truman. They were able to reach agreement on the requirement for a Council of Common Defense (NSC), an NSRB, a statutory continuation of the JCS, a Central Intelligence Agency, and agencies to coordinate supply, research, and military education and training. The War Department was willing to omit the feature of a single chief of staff.

Significant disagreement remained on the Army desire for a single department under a cabinet-level secretary. The Navy favored unification "in a less drastic and extreme form," seeing certain advantages in placing a "Presidential deputy" with clearly defined powers of decision at the head of the Council of Common Defense. There was also disagreement over the question of three coordinate branches; i.e., of separate status for the Air Corps. Forrestal stressed the need for a cabinet-level civilian as Secretary of the Navy, believing that "integration by the Army of its Air and Ground Forces would be in the best interest of our national security. However, if the alternatives were three military departments or one, the Navy would prefer three. . . ."

On the matter of aviation, the War Department wanted the proposed Air Force to assume responsibility for all Navy and Marine Corps

land-based air resources except for a minimal number of transport and training aircraft. "The Nation cannot afford the luxury of several completely self-sufficient services." The Navy wanted a certain number of land planes for "naval reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, and protection of shipping."

Lastly, there was disagreement over the functions of the Marine Corps. The War Department limited its agreement to the maintenance of "a balanced Fleet Marine Force including its supporting air component for (1) service with the fleet in the seizure of enemy positions not involving sustained land fighting and (2) to continue the development of tactics, techniques, and equipment relating to those phases of amphibious warfare which pertain to waterborne aspects of landing operations." Forrestal held out for an unimpaired Fleet Marine Force, including supporting air components; he viewed its functions as "(1) Service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advance naval bases or for the conduct of such limited land operations as are essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign, and (2) to continue the development of those aspects of amphibious operations which pertain to the tactics, techniques, and equipment employed by landing forces." Not surprisingly, the parties concurred fully in the Corps' shore and shipboard guard duties.³²

With the exception of the supradepartmental coordinating bodies originally recommended by the Navy, the War Department had moved only slightly from its goals. The Commander in Chief clearly had had his way on the question of a single chief of staff.

The secretaries and their military chiefs met with the President on 4 June to discuss the divided issues. After the arguments were presented, Patterson and Eisenhower emphasized that whatever Truman decided, they would accept it "cheerfully and loyally and do their best to support it." Nimitz immediately echoed these sentiments. Forrestal did so later, realizing that the Army's loyalty remarks flowed from the realization that Truman "was already pretty much on the Army's side of the case and they had nothing to risk in volunteering such a statement."³³

Two days later, the President responded to a question on his forthcoming announcement regarding unification with: "The directive will cover the instructions to the Army and Navy on what the President's policy is, and that they are expected to get behind it."³⁴ On 15 June, Truman sent a joint letter to the Secretaries of War and the Navy and substantially identical letters to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Military Affairs and Naval Affairs Committees. The eight areas of agree-

ment were recapitulated and Truman concurred with representatives of both departments that the four assistant secretaries provided in S. 2044 were unnecessary.³⁵

The President ostensibly resolved the four points of disagreement by upholding the War Department on three points: a single department headed by a cabinet-level secretary, although each service would be headed by a Secretary, not of cabinet rank, who would sit on the Council of Common Defense; three coordinate services; and aviation, although "within its proper sphere . . . naval aviation must not be restricted . . ." Anticipating an unfavorable reaction from Congress and the general public, Truman upheld the Navy Department on the question of Marine Corps functions as defined in the Forrestal-Patterson letter of 31 May, but without reference to statutory recognition. He later wrote in his memoirs, "If a Marine Corps were necessary, efforts to draw a hard and fast line as to the extent of its participation in amphibious operations and land fighting would be futile."³⁶

The letter concluded with a shock for the Navy. Truman was gratified that the secretaries and service chiefs had assured him of wholehearted support regardless of the decisions. "I know that I can count upon all of you for full assistance in obtaining passage in the Congress of a bill containing the 12 basic elements set forth above." The letters to the committee chairmen also stated that Patterson, Eisenhower, and Nimitz had assured him that "they will support such a plan."³⁷

Disturbed by the President's use of his formally given support, Forrestal met with Truman four days later and told him that the "twelve points" letter appeared to preclude expressions of opinion on any bill sent to Congress. Truman denied this, agreeing that Navy Department representatives should be free to express their views on any particular parts of any legislation as long as they kept within the framework of the twelve points. Strangely enough, when considering the explicit language, Truman confirmed Forrestal's view that the 15 June letter did not intend to convey a denial to the Navy of sufficient land-based aircraft for reconnaissance and "search and strike" purposes. Forrestal then shifted to the subject of the Army's "mass-play steam-roller" tactics. Truman acknowledged that there were "foundations" for the secretary's misgivings, but he intended to see that such tactics were not successful. Forrestal wrapped up the discussion by mentioning his concept of supporting the policies of his President up to the point of "sincere and major disagreement," at which time he would have to withdraw from the cabinet.³⁸

On 24 June, Secretary Forrestal tried his own hand at administrative maneuvering in a formal letter of acknowledgement to President Truman. It was his understanding from the 15 June letter and subsequent conversation that the President's major objectives were the creation of a single department under a civilian with "broad powers of over-all supervision and control, while leaving full administration of their respective services to the Secretaries for War, Navy, and Air," and with particular regard to the Navy, "the preservation of its integrity and autonomy . . ." Forrestal assured the President of his own and Nimitz' support and was "glad to note" that the Navy is to have a continuing part in the future development of land-based aircraft for reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, and protection of shipping.³⁹

Two days later, the Senate Military Affairs Committee reported a revised version of S. 2044 that was substituted for the bill on the Senate calendar. The revised bill eliminated the single chief of staff, placed the single department "under the control and supervision" of its secretary, changed the titles of the four assistant secretaries to "Directors," and added the proposed Secretaries for the Army, Navy, and Air Force to the Council of Common Defense.⁴⁰

Hearings Resumed

The Senate Naval Affairs Committee resumed hearings on 2 July 1946. Efforts toward a workable compromise having been unsuccessful, Senator Walsh's committee set out to bury the revised S. 2044 and insure that Secretary Forrestal was made aware of their displeasure at his concessions to the War Department.

As Forrestal was then on a trip to the Pacific (among other things observing the atomic tests at Bikini), Assistant Secretary of the Navy W. John Kenney led the Navy witnesses. Kenney was barely given time to start criticizing the revised bill when Chairman Walsh and Senators Byrd and Robertson made known the committee's feelings. They saw Forrestal's 24 June letter to the President as an agreement to remove the Secretary of the Navy from the cabinet.

The Navy Department had also gotten itself out on a limb by contending, as did Kenney (however correctly), that the revised bill did not attain the "expressed desires" of the President. Byrd asked, "Suppose the President should issue a statement that this bill of the Military Affairs Committee meets, in his judgment and in his opinion, his letter of

15 June. What would be the attitude of the Secretary of the Navy then?" The committee had intended a legislative showdown based on a stiff Navy position that was not forthcoming. When Kenney noted that "the protection of our autonomy and integrity is left to hang on an awfully slender reed in this bill," Senator Byrd replied drily, "I have great sympathy with the situation that you are confronted with." Later, Byrd was more pointed:

. . . the only way we can make a fight . . . is to show that the Secretary of the Navy did not agree with what is in this bill. We may as well be frank about it. That is the only way that those of us who are opposed to unification can make a fight on the floor of Congress.⁴¹

Admiral William F. Halsey and the remaining witnesses and statements were more openly negative. Halsey flatly opposed the overall secretary, called for Navy representation in the cabinet, and made an excellent case for Navy land-based aircraft. He also reminded the committee that, under the bill's provisions, the Marines could be reorganized into a "corporal's guard."⁴²

Ferdinand Eberstadt reappeared the following day. Summing it up as Assistant Secretary Kenney might well have, Eberstadt saw the vesting of power in the proposed Secretary of Common Defense as "not reconcilable with the views that the Secretary of the Navy has expressed, nor do I regard it as reconcilable with the maintenance of the integrity or the morale of the Navy Department." He then warned that Congress should view legislation dealing with the Marine Corps in the most scrutinizing way. ". . . I think there should be a careful specification of its functions."⁴³

In a letter to Chairman Walsh, General Vandegrift dwelt exclusively on statutory protection of the Corps. To accomplish this, he recommended the specification of Marine functions in provisos identical to those of Truman's "twelve point" letter, as well as an addendum forbidding the abolition of the Marine Corps as in the case of the named "agencies."⁴⁴

During the last few days of the hearings, the committee received testimony from famous wartime fleet and task force commanders. Viewing S. 2044 as a "blank check," Admiral John Towers stated his belief that aviation would become dominant in the services in any event, but he opposed "drastic, untried change" and saw the need for legislative safeguards to protect naval aviation and the Marines from emasculation by

the Army.⁴⁵ Admiral Raymond Spruance bluntly said, "The Navy is, and will continue to be, our first line of defense." He criticized the bill for failing to define service functions clearly and lay down the principle of functional organization.⁴⁶ Although these naval officers had given the Marine Corps its due, Admiral Richmond "Kelly" Turner was especially effective. Reiterating that the Corps was an integral part of the naval service, he thought troops used for seizing beachheads should be Marines in every case except when they are not available. He saw the Army, "never before World War II interested in amphibious operations," as now desiring to take over from the Corps the entire amphibious function, "lock, stock, and barrel."⁴⁷

On 11 July, the final day, Chairman Walsh and his committee got what they had so earnestly sought since the resumption of hearings. A telegram dated 5 July from Forrestal to Kenney called the amended bill "an administrative monstrosity." Convinced that it was utterly impossible to incorporate the President's plan into the Thomas bill and seeing that an "entirely fresh approach" was required, Forrestal suggested that the Naval Affairs Committee take up a new bill to which Army, Navy, and civilian witnesses could address themselves.⁴⁸

The Seventy-ninth Congress neared its final adjournment, and S. 2044 had been on the Senate calendar for almost three months without any attempt being made to call it up for consideration. As Postmaster Hannegan had predicted, President Truman was forced to give ground. He informed Senator Thomas through Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley that "on the advice of the legislative leadership," any request for further consideration of unification legislation would be put off until the next Congress.⁴⁹

The Senate Naval Affairs Committee hearings represented the high water mark of firm Navy Department support for the Marine Corps; thereafter, Navy-Marine relations turned increasingly sour. The Corps was unwilling to compromise on inclusion of its functions in any unification legislation, whereas Forrestal and the senior admirals would take a decidedly different viewpoint.

Among Marine Corps allies in the Senate, Robertson and Walsh had distinguished themselves during the hearings. The following leading questions, often called "homerun pitches," directed to General Vandegrift were typical:

WALSH: General, perhaps this is not the time to ask you the question, but are there documents or papers that have been drawn

up by Joint Chiefs of Staff which confirm your fears about the Marine Corps being rendered ineffective?

Whereupon, the commandant named the JCS 1478 papers and explained their effect.

In discussing the possibilities of replacing Marines with part of the Army as the amphibious troops of the fleet, the exchange went:

ROBERTSON: And if the Army was with the fleet, they would be subject to the direction of the Commander in Chief of the Army.?

VANDEGRIFT: No, sir. If a unit of the Army were put with the fleet, it would come under the task force commander; but the administration and all of that would continue to be under the Chief of the Army.

ROBERTSON: General, it seems to me from what you say that today, we have complete unification and collaboration between the Navy and the Marine Corps. . . . They are breaking up what is today a perfect collaboration and coordination.⁵⁰

Rear Admiral Colclough's explanation of the Marine Corps as a separate service by precedent, and his focus on the constitutional implications of the War Department unification plan, complemented General Vandegrift's well-publicized testimony. Although Colclough's statement had not attracted a great deal of attention, Marine theoreticians did not allow his technical evaluations to languish. By recalling that the Corps had long been deemed a distinct component of the naval service and suggesting that Congress was in danger of transferring certain of its "essential functions," the Navy's judge advocate general had opened a "Pandora's box." The Marines would not let it close.⁵¹

President Truman's "gagging" of the Navy over S. 2044—a policy that continued throughout the controversy—evidently derived first from his own convictions regarding unification and then from his equally strong views of the President as Commander in Chief. According to Wilber Hoare (later chief historian of the JCS), "Truman tried to run the executive branch much in accordance with school textbooks on government." ⁵² Walter Millis is correct: The charges of insubordination on one hand, and "gag rule" on the other, only exacerbated and clouded the fundamental issues. However, Millis' thesis that "propaganda" during the controversy "came in about equal proportions from all sides" ⁵³ is misleading. Although departmental propaganda may have been of equal proportions, it has been demonstrated that the War Department program for unification, which started early in World War II, was ongoing

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by the time Forrestal took the helm of the Navy Department in May 1944.

The President's denunciation of Navy transgressions in the spring of 1946 brought him unfavorable press comment even from newspapers that had previously supported his stand on unification.⁵⁴ As one article put it, what normally constituted free speech for professional officers on the issue was "to prevail for all but the Navy."⁵⁵ The Navy Department was following the Army's lead. If Truman stifled Army and Air Corps lobbying and propaganda, it was nowhere apparent.

VI

COMPROMISE

Almost all things have been found out, but some have been forgotten.

Aristotle

In late August 1946, Secretary Forrestal outlined for the benefit of Judge Patterson and General Thomas Handy, USA, those areas of military policy that required executive decision by someone other than the President. The designated areas—vague, though reflecting Forrestal's views in transition—were as follows: assignment and allocation of commands, which automatically involved the resolution of command disputes; missions and means; components of the several forces; cognizance over new weapons and their development; decisions on money; and common personnel policies.

Forrestal informed Patterson frankly that the Navy Department felt the Army wanted to "drag its feet" until their views were accepted, but the observation apparently had little effect. It was clear that the Army representatives had not surrendered any objectives. They brought up all their old points, including the one that Marines were an unnecessary duplication of Army units. However, as Forrestal recalled, "Patterson, recognizing . . . that attacking the Marines is politically unprofitable, was careful to say what high regard he had for the Marine Corps." With the President and the War Department still smarting from their July defeat and Forrestal having good reason to be concerned lest he had overplayed his hand at the naval affairs hearings, unification efforts proceeded.

The Forrestal-Patterson Agreement

At a White House conference with defense leaders on 10 September, President Truman, in a repetition of his erstwhile "directive" of the previous June, promptly stated that the purpose of the meeting was to consider plans for the introduction of merger legislation in the next Congress. He proposed to have Clark Clifford and Admiral Leahy draw up a bill in his office; it would then become "the doctrine of the administration." After it had been mulled over "by all interested parties," he would expect support for it before the Congress. Forrestal reiterated the points he felt designation of a single secretary could resolve, noting that such an official should be limited to decisions on "fundamentals" and not try to get down into the administration of each department. The secretary explained that he could not agree to support legislation that violated the principles he had outlined. He then repeated his "obey or resign" concept, moving Truman to reply that no such necessity need arise.²

After the White House conference, there were numerous meetings of Army, Air Corps, and Navy representatives in an attempt to iron out remaining differences. A number of the original lines of cleavage had been resolved, including the issues of JCS control over the budget and the single chief of staff. The scope of disagreement involved an exact definition of the single secretary's authority over the services and the problem of whether service functions, as agreed to by the services, were to be written into the legislation or remain a matter of executive determination.³ Fundamentally concerned with the powers of the single secretary as well as roles and missions, the Marine Corps leadership was provoked by Secretary Forrestal's accommodations. Thus the Navy Department and the Marines divided over both the form of defense organization and the measure of protection to be afforded the Corps.

A conference was held in Forrestal's home in early November to discuss the disputed issues. Attendees included Admiral Sherman, now Deputy CNO (Operations), Admiral Radford, General Norstad, and Assistant Secretary of War for Air, Symington. (Symington had started to concern himself with unification since the previous spring.) After much discussion, all accepted a compromise concept of three administrative departments under a secretary of defense with "full authority" to effectively coordinate the departments, but with a limited staff so as to insure that he could not undertake "any detailed administration." Symington and Norstad agreed to the Navy's definition of Marine Corps functions and the continuance of naval patrol, or land-plane, squadrons for anti-submarine warfare, while the Navy representatives agreed that the

Army—presumably meaning the proposed Air Force—could prepare to augment naval antisubmarine squadrons when needed. Symington and Norstad also offered an “agreed statement” on Marine and naval air functions but would not concur in their incorporation into legislation. “Forrestal appeared to accept this proposed arrangement, and Sherman and Norstad were then directed to ‘work up an agreement’ on this and the other points discussed.”⁴

At about this time, Admiral Sherman emerged as the Navy Department’s chief negotiator, which was cause for reversing General Vandegrift’s impression earlier in the fall that the Corps “seemed to be gaining in the merger battle.”⁵ The commandant had been disenchanted with Forrestal’s views on unification proposals in 1945 and Sherman was perceived by Marine unification workers to be, if not anti-Marine Corps, leaning heavily in that direction. Considered as being far too willing to compromise, particularly as regarded the Marines, they found it most inopportune that he had Nimitz’ ear.⁶ General Thomas asserts that his appointment as the Navy’s chief negotiator resulted from War Department dissatisfaction with the forceful and independent Admiral Radford, who was an old friend of the Corps. Secretary Patterson had told Forrestal that it was difficult working with Radford and he suggested new negotiators. Consequently, Admiral Sherman was chosen, although General Norstad remained as the War Department’s working-level representative.⁷

The relatively peaceful atmosphere of the November conference was short-lived. Sherman and Norstad met two or three times a week, sometimes with Forrestal, Symington, and others, and also discussed various aspects of unification over the phone “a number of times” a day. Arguments between Army and Navy representatives ranged from matters of form, such as consultative techniques and alleged wavering over provisions previously agreed on, to substantive issues such as the authority of the overall secretary.⁸ By early December, Forrestal had instituted some research on the Army’s attitude toward the Marine Corps; the results were not reassuring. For one thing, General Eisenhower could not see why Congress should fix the size of the Corps.⁹

General Norstad became so disturbed over events that he reported to Eisenhower as early as mid-November: “I no longer feel I can be a party to further discussions. . . . I no longer have confidence in the Navy on this particular subject.” Apparently the Navy made the required concession and negotiations continued.¹⁰

At a luncheon on 4 December with Symington, Norstad, Sherman, and Radford, the discussion became so heated that Forrestal got the impression that "we were farther away than ever from reaching an agreement." In an attempt to assess the legislative branch, Forrestal at the same time took steps to put his views before the Republican leaders who would organize the new Congress. He was fearful that Senator Chan Gurney, slated to be Chairman of the new Armed Services Committee, was committed to the Army view, but other congressional sources allayed these fears, convincing Forrestal that Gurney was reputedly "open-minded" on unification. The secretary was also worried about the progress of the Army's "publicity program." In a conversation with Senator Taft, he expressed his misgivings that "even the top command" of the Army had no true appreciation of sea power.¹¹

The Marine Corps was a good deal more worried about Army publicity. In a widely reported speech, an Army general officer declared the Corps to be "a small, fouled-up Army talking Navy lingo. We are going to put those Marines in the regular Army and make efficient soldiers out of them."¹² The statement may well have been delivered in a spirit of after-dinner levity; the timing, however, was such that it inflamed Marine suspicions and doubtlessly further stiffened the Corps' resolve to seek legislative protection.

In less than one month, according to Demetrios Caraley, the spirit of negotiations underwent such a remarkable change that it is impossible to rule out a personal intercession by President Truman. Alternatively, Caraley suggests, Secretary Patterson took an entirely different "key and tenor" after having grown disturbed over the bitterness and animosity arising between the services over the unification issue.¹³ The two possibilities, of course, were not mutually exclusive.

In any event, Sherman, Norstad, and Symington forwarded a joint Army-Navy agreement in the form of a letter from the two secretaries to the President on 16 January 1947. Forrestal and Patterson agreed to legislation incorporating the following points:

- A Council of Common Defense, NSRB, and CIA as previously agreed in May 1946.
- Three departments—Army; Navy, including the Marine Corps and naval aviation; and Air Force—each under a secretary and military chief, to be administered as individual units under the direction of the "Secretary of National Defense."
- A War Council consisting of the overall secretary as chairman (with power of decision), the service secretaries, and the service

chiefs, which would concern itself with "matters of broad policy" relating to the Armed Forces.

- A JCS consisting of the three military chiefs, including the Chief of Staff to the President if that office were to exist, subject to the authority and direction of the overall secretary and designed to provide for strategic planning and the direction of the military forces, assignment of logistics responsibilities, and integration of military requirements, and to advise, as directed, in the integration of the military budget.
- A full-time "Joint Staff" under a director, consisting at first of not more than 100 officers (to be provided in equal numbers by "the three services") to carry out the policies and directives of the JCS.
- The Secretary of National Defense "shall head the armed forces establishment, . . . vested with authority, under the President, to establish common policies and common programs for the integrated operation of the three departments, and shall exercise control over and direct their common efforts to discharge their responsibility for national security."

It was also agreed that, after first informing the overall secretary, the secretary of any of the three departments could at any time present to the President any report or recommendation relating to his department that he deemed necessary or desirable. There was no mention of cabinet membership.

"We are agreed," wrote the secretaries, "that the proper method of setting forth the functions (so-called roles and missions) of the armed forces is by issuance of an executive order concurrently with your approval of the appropriate legislation." An attached draft executive order defined service functions. The Navy retained naval aerial reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, and protection of shipping subject to the provisions that the "air aspects" would be coordinated with the new Air Force including procurement and development of aircraft and air installations located on shore, and that Air Force personnel, equipment, and facilities should be used in cases where economy and effectiveness would be increased. Navy functions included maintaining the Marine Corps, specifically outlined as follows:

- (a) To provide Marine forces together with supporting air components, for service with the Fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of limited land operations in connection therewith.

- (b) To develop in coordination with the Army and the Air Force those phases of amphibious operations which pertain to the tactics, technique, and equipment employed by landing forces.
- (c) To provide detachments and organizations for service on armed vessels of the Navy.
- (d) To provide security detachments for protection of naval property at naval stations and bases.
- (e) To provide, as directed by proper authority, such missions and detachments for service in foreign countries as may be required to support the national policies and interests of the United States.¹⁴

President Truman was "exceedingly pleased" that "full and complete agreement" had been reached; he released the Forrestal-Patterson letter to the press the same day.¹⁵ The following day, Truman sent identical letters to the President pro tempore of the Senate, Arthur Vandenberg, and to the Speaker of the House, Joseph W. Martin, officially advising them of the agreement. He also forwarded copies of relevant documents and told them that representatives of his office and of the services were engaged in drafting a bill "to be submitted to Congress for its consideration." Senator Robertson thought the agreement was "loosely drawn" and that it was going to be "very difficult to put into legislation." Senate Majority Leader Wallace White, Jr. felt that agreement by the three branches of the armed services on unification created "a substantial presumption in favor of the plan."¹⁶

The Edson-Thomas Board

General Vandegrift and his unification advisors were distraught over the Forrestal-Patterson agreement, to which the Marine Corps had not been a party, and were dubious about the negotiations that continued toward drafting legislation. Vandegrift was angered that a working charter for the Corps would not be spelled out in law. Mindful that Presidents Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, and Hoover had attempted to submerge the Corps, he did not welcome the thought that any hostile President or overall defense secretary might be able to change Marine roles and missions without reference to Congress. In a letter to General Allen Turnage, USMC, the commandant remarked that "the Navy sold out to the Army" by not insisting that the functions and duties of all the services be written into law.¹⁷

While Secretary Forrestal thought it "most important" that the drafting of the legislation be watched closely to prevent the Army from

imposing its conception of the single department and single chief of staff,¹⁸ his diary at this point is curiously silent about the powers of the overall secretary and the value, especially to the Marine Corps, of including service roles and missions in any proposed bill. Forrestal's silence and later dismissal of the functions controversy as inconsequential coincides with the information forwarded to the commandant by Colonel Twining that a "deal" was in the wind. A useful existence for the Marines, assessed by Forrestal the previous summer as "the balance of order in China,"¹⁹ was being sacrificed to guarantee the security of naval aviation. Twining charges that Admiral Sherman, principally, and Forrestal had aired the possibilities of such an agreement to War Department representatives. The Army ground forces were favorably inclined, but the Air Corps was unwilling to compromise its efforts to absorb land-based naval aviation. "This took some of the steam out of the drive."²⁰ The drastic change in the negotiations climate and careful study of the Forrestal-Patterson agreement—particularly the inexact definition of the powers of the Secretary of National Defense and the setting forth of functions by executive order—strengthen Twining's assertion.

At General Geiger's urging, the commandant had appointed a panel in January 1947 under Major General Lemuel Shepherd to find a solution to the far-reaching problem of conducting amphibious operations in the atomic age.²¹ Shortly thereafter, Vandegrift decided to expand and further refine unification activities by appointing a special advisory group. The group was officially called the "Board to Conduct Research and Prepare Material in Connection with Pending Legislation,"²² although it may be properly called the Edson-Thomas board.

Both the Shepherd panel and the Edson-Thomas board consisted of highly competent officers. As in the case of the older Marine Corps Board, there was a considerable overlap in duties and talent. Several of the Marine officers who had, since the fall of 1945, devoted much of their energy to the unification problem were members of both bodies.²³ Others worked on the periphery of the Edson-Thomas board but contributed much to its purposes. These officers acted as advisers, were used to "try out ideas and presentations on," and accomplished various administrative tasks as required. Prominent among them were Colonel R. E. Hogaboom, a member of the Shepherd panel, and Major Lyford Hutchins.²⁴

The central figures among the Marine participants were the officers formally appointed to the board:

*Brigadier General M. A. Edson
 *Brigadier General G. C. Thomas
 †Colonel M. B. Twining
 †Colonel E. C. Dyer
 †Lieutenant Colonel V. H. Krulak
 †Lieutenant Colonel S. R. Shaw
 *Lieutenant Colonel DeW. Schatzel
 †Lieutenant Colonel J. C. Murray
 †Lieutenant Colonel J. D. Hittle
 *Lieutenant Colonel E. H. Hurst
 *Lieutenant Colonel R. D. Heinl, Jr.
 *Major J. M. Platt ²⁵

Although the formal appointment of a "board" signified a further degree of coordination (and anxiety), the Edson-Thomas group was by no means a board in the sense of a formal, regularly convened body. For the most part, unification planning and other related activities such as lobbying continued on an informal, ad hoc basis. It was a matter of dropping in and out of the old selection boardroom at Headquarters, receiving assignments or delivering completed projects, exchanging information, and "get-togethers" of certain of the board members perhaps once or twice a week.²⁶ Increased coordination would take place in the latter stages of the legislative battle, but as one participant describes it, "Basically . . . it was largely an individual deal. Each [member] knew more of what he was doing than anyone else; yet all moved effectively toward the common goal."²⁷ Another said, "You did a piece of work and passed it up. It was expected to be right . . . God help you if it wasn't."²⁸

General Edson, a distinguished veteran of the Pacific campaigns, was the board's senior member. He was chosen for his abilities as a persistent and able officer and because he understood the problem that confronted the Marine Corps.²⁹ In 1946, for example, he had served as Marine Liaison Officer to CNO. Also, no doubt high on the commandant's list of reasons was the belief that personal courage was one of Edson's healthiest attributes.

As in earlier phases, the two elements of the board—Washington, primarily thought not exclusively acting as operators, and Quantico, primarily though not exclusively acting as planners—were coordinated by

*Officers stationed at Headquarters, Marine Corps, or in the Washington D.C. area. The remainder were based at Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia.

†Officers who also served on the Shepherd panel.

General Thomas until he left for China in mid-June 1947.³⁰ An ample spread of members covered most contingencies. In mid-1946, Lieutenant Colonel Krulak had been assigned in a liaison-advisory capacity to Admiral Radford, a senior member along with Sherman of the Navy Department Secretary's Committee on Research and Reorganization (SCOROR). Krulak had remained there for only a few months and then returned to his Quantico-based duties, which included being called upon from time to time to represent Marine views in discussions with the Navy and with individual members of Congress.³¹ Lieutenant Colonel Hurst, who had been involved in unification-related activities at Headquarters since late 1945, had been assigned to SCOROR as "Marine Corps Liaison Officer" and, as it turned out, the junior officer. He kept Generals Thomas and Edson (in his CNO liaison duties) informed of SCOROR events by daily memorandums and periodic reports until January 1947, when he was returned to Headquarters as Thomas' "special assistant." Hurst had a hand in selecting the members of the Edson-Thomas board and became, in effect, the "operations officer" of the board.³²

Colonel Twining continued to keep in touch with overall unification developments, judging their impact on the Corps and preparing almost daily estimates. Colonel Dyer, who was primarily involved in evaluating the military practicability of the helicopter, and Lieutenant Colonels Hittle, Murray, and Shaw initially devoted the bulk of their unification work to extensive research and the preparation of studies. Hittle was particularly well qualified for this kind of work; he had published a book in 1944 on the history of the military staff. However, as the legislation progressed through Congress, their duties broadened to include attendance at hearings, preparation of "cross examinations" for congressmen who leaned in the Corps' favor, and discussions of Corps positions with congressmen and others.³³

Lieutenant Colonels Heinl and Schatzel and Major Platt had previously been stationed at Headquarters, Marine Corps; appointment to the Edson-Thomas Board meant that their assigned duties would give way, though never entirely, to unification-related efforts. Heinl and Schatzel were chiefly concerned with the practical aspects of identifying and contacting individuals in various fields and of various persuasions, although principally those in Congress and the press, who could bring influence to bear on the issue at hand. Both spent much time culling ideas as well. Heinl, for example, immersed himself in JCS matters.³⁴ Platt, who had not been involved in unification activities before his appointment to the board, was the junior officer, so the duties of "administrative officer" fell to him. He assembled, smoothed, and distributed paper work, and

was required to perform a great deal of legwork for, as he described it, the "talented, brainy, lucid group."³⁵

Related Factors

"Public opinion" and the relationship between the President and Secretary Forrestal were significant elements in the outcome of the unification controversy. President Truman was at least as keenly aware of public opinion as his Secretary of the Navy. He had not risen to the Presidency by giving the public short shrift. Walter Millis observes that in the popular mind, as well as in the President's, the Navy Department seemed to be the recalcitrant in the controversy, objecting to an "efficient and economical modernization" of the military system for reasons of petty service ambition or prestige.³⁶ This view, while misshaped by emotion and imprecise terminology, nevertheless demonstrates the value of taking the offensive in well-publicized, bureaucratic campaigns. How is one to oppose the managerial icons, "modernization" and "economy," without appearing to be staid and uncompromising?

Regrettably, much of the press coverage was noneducational, reflecting the same exasperation over the conflict that Admiral Towers had described among service personnel in the Pacific at the time of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee hearings: They were "bewildered and distressed," seeing the dispute as a "spectacle in the cockpit with the audience, including some service individuals, cheering and jeering and using any handy medium as a sounding board to egg on the opponents."³⁷ Just as those in Washington, however, can lose contact with affairs in the field, so can those in the field lose touch with Washington. Having incorrectly perceived the complexities of a major alteration in national security policy, the press and the public were as bewildered as field personnel. The conflict involved far more than saving money and establishing harmonious, streamlined relationships, although these notions, anchored firmly since 1944, were to prevail even beyond enactment of unification legislation.

Press coverage during negotiations in the fall of 1946 showed this underlying frustration. The services were loudly criticized for intransigence—as if unification could be resolved by simple administrative adjustments. *Newsweek* listed some of the more ludicrous Army and Navy news releases and saw the Army "scoring heavily on the latest round of an interservice public relations battle." The conflict had degenerated to a "can you top this" public information struggle because Truman warned

against "open warfare." ³⁸ Tris Coffin, in a classically paranoid article, accused professional officers of carrying on a "behind the scenes campaign" to dominate Washington. Officers were allegedly leading the President around by the nose, Admiral Leahy was "getting everything past him," and the "military-minded" Ferdinand Eberstadt was exerting undue influence. ³⁹ Despite sensationalism and oversimplification, such articles did echo public opinion. The controversy was reduced to its narrowest perspective: a partisan conflict over petty interests.

Demetrios Caraley explains the elusive concept of public opinion during the controversy:

. . . we can infer that the public was large and almost unanimous in the opinion that 'unification' was desirable but very small and divided on the preferred form of putting it into effect. . . . 'Unification,' however, had no clear empirical referent for more than the handful of people directly involved in the conflict and was generally identified by the public with the most current proposal of the War Department coalition. ⁴⁰

With the exception of General Vandegrift's "bended knee" speech at the Naval Affairs Committee hearings, which, in itself, created a flood of news coverage largely favorable to the Corps, the Marines had been relatively passive in the public relations battle. Contrary to President Truman's later charge that the "Navy's police force" maintained a vast propaganda machine, ⁴¹ Marine Corps public relations offices were not swollen with personnel. As in the war, when a Corps of 485,000 assigned 256 officers and men to public relations in 1945, ⁴² Marine publicity efforts were conducted on a small scale. After early 1947, the plight of the Marine Corps attracted increasing attention. The reasons can only be surmised: Public sympathy for the Corps cause was probably attached to the Corps' favorable World War II record, and former Marines who returned to all walks of civilian life played a part. In addition, once Vandegrift and his unification advisers resolved to personally involve themselves, public relations activities became far more selective and penetrating.

The commandant was the hero of Guadalcanal, and a highly respected military figure and chief of his service. Moreover, he was especially newsworthy since the "bended knee" speech. Reporters breathlessly awaited another such blockbuster. Vandegrift was not unaware of the advantages of the situation. In the spring of 1947, his themes were to write service roles and missions into law and provide for Marine repre-

sensation on the proposed Joint Staff of the JCS; they were spilled "willingly to any listening ear." ⁴³

Other effective lines of access to the lords of the press either existed or were developed. David Lawrence of *US News* was a friend of Lieutenant Colonel Heintz's father. Lawrence and his secretary, Iva Holland, were already strongly pro-Navy Department, but the contact was an extremely valuable source of information as well as an outlet for Marine grievances. Heintz also dealt with the Block papers, the formidable Hearst press, and Don Minifie of *The New York Herald Tribune*. In addition to his close acquaintance with Forrestal insiders through former membership on SCOROR, Lieutenant Colonel Hurst maintained contact with the popular syndicated columnist, Ralph McGill. Last, but not least, many former Marine combat correspondents had gravitated to the press. Most considered themselves positive alumni of the Corps and were more than willing to contribute information and provide a pro-Marine forum.⁴⁴ The Marines exercised every opportunity to publicize their views through a number of influential organs of the press, thus nurturing public support in spite of widespread public desire for "unification" and identification of the concept with Army proposals.

Unlike the public information battle waged by the services, in which no quarter was asked or given, the Truman-Forrestal relationship during the unification conflict was characterized by caution and compromise. As was seemingly the rule on almost everything, Truman also had solid ideas about the proper role of a cabinet member. These views may have prompted his desire to reduce the number of cabinet-level military officials to a single secretary, thereby simplifying the operation of the cabinet and, he hoped, reducing friction. Truman believed that cabinet members should be obedient, loyal, and responsive assistants. "When the President outlined his policies to the Cabinet it was their business to carry out his directions." ⁴⁵ While Truman was capable of dealing with the frequent strains that occur between dynamic seniors and energetic subordinates, it is safe to say, without detracting from his considerable political skill, that he could be monumentally unbending.

Forrestal was known for his energy, success, scrupulous fairness, and political tact. He was among the ablest of Truman's lieutenants, but he was never considered to be within the intimate, inner circle of advisors.⁴⁶ Apparently the President and the Secretary had a healthy mutual respect, even a wariness, for each other. Truman could obviously not afford to fire his Secretary of the Navy in the midst of so heated a controversy; nor could he, in deference to his political instincts, forfeit

Forrestal's admirable list of political contacts even if inclined to do so. Above all, Forrestal and Truman were in agreement on issues that Truman ranked higher than unification. In the military field, these were universal military training and the extension of selective service.⁴⁷ And since mid-1945, both were in accord on the integration of foreign and military policy, a matter to which Forrestal attached more importance than any other.

We have seen that Forrestal felt that he should withdraw from the cabinet if he encountered "sincere and major disagreement" with the President. However, both he and Truman displayed flexibility in their respective concepts of cabinet decorum. The President went out of his way to defend the Secretary's testimony before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee. "Mr. Forrestal submitted his testimony to me before . . . he gave it. And he has a perfect right to say what he did, and I authorized him to do it." "The President had conceded on the issue of a single chief of staff, although owing probably as much to practical politics as to influence. To realize his goal of a largely unimpaired Navy, Forrestal had revised his own view of the single secretary, a major concession on his part, probably made in response to Truman's influence.

Of the two, Forrestal was more given to accommodation, to searching for the middle ground. This was one of his personal traits that matched well with the reality of a subordinate-to-senior relationship. Forrestal was a devoted public servant and man of honor. Government service in a high post had become a central part of his life; separation from it would have been a painful experience.⁴⁹ With his business and administrative background, Forrestal often believed that intricate problems could be solved by taking them "out of politics." As he would idealistically, not to say naively, assess the roles and missions controversy later in the spring: "There were very few occasions that I could recall where the language of the mortgage had made the bonds good."⁵⁰

President Truman realized that government is politics; issues could not be readily sifted apart and freed from political consequences. He was willing to give way enough to retain the services of a talented assistant and important Democratic Party ally. Subject only to executive branch pressures, however, Truman was unwilling to compromise on matters he perceived as fundamentally affecting his powers vis-a-vis the legislative branch. Any sacrifices here would have to result from Congress asserting itself.

While it can be argued that Forrestal's flexibility was the most logical approach to Navy unification goals department-wide, the effects were

detrimental to the spirit of sincere cooperation and agreement he so earnestly sought. Ferdinand Eberstadt, his trusted friend and adviser, had publicly articulated the need for vigilance over Marine functions. Aware of War Department intentions from the start and conversant with the JCS 1478 papers, Forrestal could not have been insensitive to the intense feelings at Headquarters, Marine Corps on the question of legislative protection.

Weighing these related factors together with the rapidly arrived-at agreement between Patterson and Forrestal and the abortive "deal" to secure naval aviation at the Marines' expense, one must conclude that Forrestal underestimated the Corps' worth to the naval service. In coming around to the President's position, he grew to see the Marines as by no means indispensable to the Navy.

Even discounting the attempted deal and assuming, less skeptically, that Forrestal felt compelled to assign the Marines a low priority in the whole scheme of things and then hope for the best, it is certain he seriously miscalculated the support that could be rallied to their side. Marine Corps advocates in Congress could join with others of varying motivations to block the entire unification package, including those matters vital to Forrestal. By reverting to the professed Army view that roles and missions were "details" and by wavering on the question of the single secretary's authority, Forrestal risked an indefinite delay in the creation of the National Security Council. Support for the Marine Corps proved to be the prime factor in preventing legislative enactment of the Forrestal-Patterson agreement, which, as shall be seen, was no agreement at all.

VII

DEFEAT IN THE SENATE

I think everyone has agreed to the basic functions of the Marine Corps.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, USA
Senate Hearings, 1947

. . . ever since I first got into uniform, there has been an effort now and then to abolish and absorb and swallow the Marines. Sometimes the Navy itself has been for it . . . But in the minds of the Army it is there, it is ingrained, it is a tradition now.

Admiral Thomas C. Hart, USN (Ret.)
Senate Hearings, 1947

Negotiations and work on a draft bill continued until late February 1947, with presidential assistants Charles Murphy and Clark Clifford meeting periodically with Norstad and Sherman at various critical stages of the proceedings. The State Department and the Budget Bureau were also consulted occasionally,¹ and at one point it was necessary for Budget Director James Webb to intercede. Norstad and Sherman, in exploiting an area of common agreement, had provided for features affecting the Munitions Board, NSRB, and NSC, which together would have given the JCS dominating prominence in the executive branch. Webb advised the President against that draft, as did Secretary of State George Marshall, and the White House began to devote more attention to the project.²

Norstad and Sherman "remained in complete agreement throughout," clarifying the authority of proposed agencies and, at the insistence of the presidential representatives, strengthening the language specifying the authority of the overall secretary to give him "the residual power that

he must have if he is, in effect, going to coordinate and supervise and bring together the efforts of the various agencies in the National Defense Establishment." Complete agreement was reached among the negotiators after eight drafts. On 26 February, Truman sent the draft unification bill to Congress, heartily recommending its enactment.³

The bill adhered closely to the Forrestal-Patterson agreement. It proposed a "National Defense Establishment"; set up the NSC, NSRB, and CIA as coordinating bodies for national security; and spelled out miscellaneous matters pertaining to advisory committees and saving provisions. The Secretary of National Defense was given "direction, authority, and control" over the military departments and agencies, including final determination of budget estimates. The three departments, Army, Navy, and Air Force, were to be "administered as individual units by their respective secretaries." The JCS were given no budgetary responsibilities; their primary duties involved the strategic direction of the military forces and related planning activities as the President's "principal military advisers." They were assigned a Joint Staff, not to exceed 100 officers, under a director.

The status of the Marine Corps was ambiguous. The Department of the Navy was construed to include Headquarters, Marine Corps and the "entire operating forces," including reserve components. The saving provisions held, however, that, notwithstanding previous internal reorganizations by executive order, the existing War and Navy Department organizations and the assignment of functions to organizational units within each "*may, to the extent determined by the Secretary of National Defense [emphasis added], continue in force . . .*" Because the extent of the secretary's authority was obscure, there was ample cause for alarm. Further, the bill failed to include Marine officers among the "approximately equal numbers" of Army, Air Force, and Navy officers on the Joint Staff of the JCS.⁴

Toward the Enactment of Legislation

With the convening of the Eightieth Congress in January 1947 and as a result of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 that was to take effect in 1947, the Military and Naval Affairs Committees in each House were merged into new Armed Services Committees. Congress then, as well as the President, wanted to be able to deal with the military establishments as a whole, while preserving the option to deal with its parts.⁵

Early in December 1946, Representative Sterling Cole, then senior Republican on the House Naval Affairs Committee, had commenced a series of attempts to block the impending merger of the House military committees. A vocal naval supporter, Cole felt that committee merger should take place only if a consolidation of the military departments was first decided on. He suspected that War Department unification proponents would use the existence of a single military committee as an argument in favor of a single military department. So as not to be accused of self-seeking, Cole said that if the committees remained separate he would not take the chairmanship of the Naval Affairs Committee to which he would otherwise be entitled in the Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress. Cole's efforts, however, ran afoul of the House Republican leadership. Representative Wadsworth, a leading advocate of unification, waged a successful fight for committee merger because both party leaderships were committed to the precepts of the Reorganization Act.

Although similar friction did not occur in the Senate, difficulties over committee jurisdiction had not been satisfactorily resolved by the Reorganization Act. The Senate Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Department's unanimously submitted that it should have cognizance over the unification bill, while Senate President pro tempore Vandenberg held that a bill having to do with the "entire fundamental structure of the Army and the Navy" should be referred to the new Armed Services Committee. On 3 March, a floor fight ensued over Vandenberg's ruling. Chairman George Aiken of the Expenditures committee and a number of his committee colleagues, including Senator Joseph McCarthy, made it clear that in addition to protecting their committee's jurisdiction, they were opposed to the unification bill as written. They reasoned that those who opposed its measures would have a better chance to testify against it if the bill were sent to the Expenditures committee. Chairman Chan Gurney of the Armed Services Committee and Aiken argued strenuously, but the issue was never much in doubt. The Senate upheld Vandenberg by voice vote. Immediately thereafter, Senator Gurney introduced the draft unification bill as S. 758 and Vandenberg referred it to the Armed Services Committee.⁶

Apparently almost everyone desired some form of unification. The President, Congress, military officials, civilian and officer, and even the most hidebound Marines and naval aviators were convinced that coordination could and should be improved, whether through vertical centralization or supradepartmental agencies. General Vandegrift had been favorably impressed by the Eberstadt plan in the fall of 1945, along with many of the War Department unification proponents. In mid-April

1946, Forrestal wrote, "Speaking personally, I am for unification." ⁷ Consensus, hard in coming, was reached in most instances, and a broad organizational framework had been isolated.

The complex problems of assigning forces and functions remained, however, as well as determining the extent of the single secretary's authority within that framework. These issues, superficially discussed but not resolved, were now the focal point of the unification conflict. The roles and missions dispute was obvious to all familiar with the Marine position; the nagging question of the overall secretary's power was submerged, its implications more confusing and unpredictable. Both problems dragged beyond passage of the National Security Act and continue today, having been consistently salved but never cured.

With agreement among all major parties in the executive branch on the form that unification should take, there was reason to believe that S. 758 would go smoothly through Congress. This was decidedly not the case in either house. The President's unification planners had failed to appreciate the resolve of the doubters, primarily the Marines, and the extent of their support. Moreover, executive-legislative liaison was lacking. There was considerable apprehension on Capitol Hill over the bill's vague definition of the single secretary's authority. In addition, substantive constitutional questions lay behind administrative power-plays: Influential congressmen feared that the World War II role of Congress acting as rubberstamp to military programs, however essential at the time, was to be perpetuated. These were eminently foreseeable inadequacies. As it turned out, their negative effects were worsened by the testimonies of some of the War Department's representatives in the rush to reach "agreement," thereby enlivening old suspicions as to Army intentions.

To further complicate the upcoming hearings, Marine and Navy officers remained officially bound by naval regulations in their communications to Congress. The situation grated on the Marines. Unrepresented during the negotiations, they faced the loyalty-testing dilemma of the executive branch agency opposed to the President's program.

When the Army-Navy agreement of 16 January was reached, Secretary Forrestal publicly endorsed it in an "all hands" message, ALNAV 21, to the Navy Department. While not forbidding the expression of frank and honest opinion to members of Congress, ALNAV 21 made it clear, as President Truman had put it the previous September, that support before Congress was expected. The message was interpreted by the Marines as a gag measure.⁸ In truth, it was none too effective. Articles 94

and 95, US Navy Regulations, which forbade Navy and Marine officers to communicate with members of Congress except through the Navy Department, remained in effect until congressional pressure caused Forrestal to lift the restraints with ALNAV 139 of 23 June, just 4 days from the end of hearings before the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments.⁹

Meanwhile, the War Department continued to make the most of its advantages in this respect. Its publicity and lobbying, which had reached full intensity by the fall of 1945, were maintained up to the enactment of legislation. Like the Marines, the Army—and especially the Air Corps—actively cultivated their press contacts. When William Bradford Huie, reportedly a confidant of the War Department, published his provocative book, *The Case Against The Admirals*, in late 1946, “the Army sent a copy to each congressman and congressman-elect under the guise that it came directly from the author, using letterhead paper that Huie had supplied for the purpose.” At one point, the Air Corps “organized a direct letter-writing campaign in favor of unification to members of Congress themselves.” This less-than-subtle effort took place at Hamilton Field, California, early in 1946 and was directed to the officers. It included sample letters and other mimeographed material to be sent home to friends, newspapers, and congressmen. Note the operative phrases in one of the sample forms to be sent to Congress:

Honorable _____: You can save us taxpayers a lot of needless taxes if you will promote and vote for the proposed bill for unification. . . . I want to hear your statement as to your position regarding the plan. If you're for it, we're for you.¹⁰

Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings

Chairman Gurney's committee opened hearings to consider S. 758 on 18 March. The bill's major opponents—Senators Robertson, Bridges, and, less emphatically, Byrd—made certain that the bill would face an uphill struggle. Robertson was a devoted Marine Corps ally who, through his administrative assistant, maintained close contact with the Edson-Thomas board's Lieutenant Colonel Hurst.¹¹ His preference on unification appears to have sprung initially from an earlier distrust of the Army's concept of unification, later supplemented by information and advice provided by the Marine Corps. In early January 1947, Robertson had sent a draft resolution to all American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars posts opposing “immediate action” on unification and urging

further detailed study.¹² He maintained this attitude to the end, fighting S. 758 at hearings and on the floor until, much to his displeasure, the bill passed the Senate.

Secretary Forrestal was the first witness to appear. Although he felt that nothing in any plan for unification should destroy the "morale and autonomy of the Navy," his first priority was, as expected, establishment of the supradepartmental coordinating agencies. Calling S. 758 "a fair compromise," he expressed hope that "this bill becomes law." When Senator Bridges asked if the "super de luxe Secretary" could put the Marine Corps "out of business," Forrestal answered, "I do not want to be flippant in my answer, but I would have to take into account, in my answer, the extraordinary tenacity of the Marines, and my answer would be that he could not." However, later in his testimony he admitted that the President as well as the overall secretary could abolish the Corps. ". . . I think you run the same human risks in either case."

When Senator Byrd questioned Forrestal about the authority of the single secretary and that of the department secretaries, Byrd noted that, "We are passing a law . . . not adopting your personal views or mine." Forrestal then reemphasized the "broad covering language" concerning administration. In a letter to Chairman Gurney the following day, Forrestal said the Marines were "adequately protected" by S. 758 and identified the specific parts that purportedly did so. He added his belief that an executive order was sufficient for spelling out service roles and missions.¹³

Secretary Patterson fully concurred with Forrestal and gave his "unqualified support" to the bill. Disturbed by the tremendous power in the hands of one man when weighed against the "frailties of human nature," Bridges followed that line in his questioning. Patterson's answers conformed to established War Department positions, accompanied by a more benevolent view of human nature than that held by Bridges. He felt that service functions should not be covered in the legislation; the executive order was more flexible and perfect. "Nobody ought to be treated as immune from any change." After Byrd told Patterson that he favored any measures improving efficiency, "but I am not in favor of subjugation," the Senator joined in attacking the "supreme authority" of the Secretary of National Defense. Here, Patterson's views fit with those of Forrestal: The overall secretary would exercise general direction while the department secretaries handled the detailed administrative workings of their respective organizations.¹⁴

A major windfall for the Corps occurred when General Eisenhower testified on 25 March and was repeatedly drawn into deep water. Many of his answers served to relight the fires of the controversy. At first, he saw no objection to establishing service functions in the bill as long as they were "basic," but he was forced to backtrack on specifics. He agreed that "the Navy needs a Marine Corps . . . But there can be many questions as to size, composition, method of training . . . equipment, that are not basic. They are what I call operational and organizational details." Shortly thereafter, in a passage where the general envisaged his wartime position as being, "in effect, the Secretary of National Defense in Europe," he said:

Now, distinguishing my personal conviction as opposed to what I now believe we should recommend, I did recommend and I believed in the single professional Chief of Staff. But in my own defense I must say that I recommended also that the first one should be a naval officer, because I believed in it from a matter of principle.

But I have come to the conclusion that it is one of those argumentative points that should be eliminated from the bill, as not being of great importance. Time may bring it about, and it may show that this is a better system.

Eisenhower's views of the overall secretary's powers were also revealed; namely, "the problem of national defense should always be presented in the rounded form from one brain." The man for the job would be "above all these uniformed people who have their own treasured traditions and jealousies." The "central man" should not be visualized as just a mere coordinator, but should have "a highly developed authority . . . I think that more and more there is going to come about, as the Army, Navy, and Air work together under this Secretary all the time, an increasing degree of centralization in direction of the whole thing.

Senator Bridges pursued the matter of economic savings, eliciting the usual answer (" . . . I could expect as the years go on . . . real and definite economies that you can see and appreciate and understand"), then veered back to the subject of one-man decisionmaking:

BRIDGES: You feel that it is of advantage to get a decision, even if it is a wrong decision?

EISENHOWER: The whole history of warfare proves that point. And every man who comes here wearing a uniform will testify identically . . . In warfare, any decision is better than none."

Fleet Admiral Nimitz' testimony closely followed the official line. The bill was a "workable compromise" and the delineation of roles and

missions by executive order was "satisfactory." Nimitz understood though "that the Marines may feel differently about that, and that they might recommend that it be incorporated in the legislation." "6

Chairman Gurney entered in the record the American Legion resolution adopted at the organization's national convention the previous fall. It called for a "Single Department of National Security." Actually, the resolution was noncommittal about the key issues, thus indicating that General Thomas' trip to Chicago in 1944 had had lasting benefits for the Marine Corps. Without going into any detail, emphasis was on a separate and equal air force, "the principle of unified command," and a single department.¹⁷

Vice Admiral Sherman appeared on 1 April. He was well prepared and calm in spite of Bridges' attempts to force an admission that the bill was nothing more than a White House production. Sherman parried requests to answer "yes or no," firmly holding that the bill was not the same as the draft he and Norstad had agreed upon initially. "In substance, it incorporates the same principles, and this particular draft was agreed to by the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy." It was not a departure from, but an evolution of, principles.

Bridges finally withdrew, but Sherman continued, explaining in some detail the negotiation procedures. Along with Nimitz, he saw "no objections" to writing in the functions of the various services "if it were done briefly, and adhering only to the basic functions."

Sherman also revealed that at one stage he and Eisenhower did not share the same concept of the Marine Corps' status and purpose. "I do not regard the basic functions of naval aviation as a detail, or those of the Marine Corps." Senator Byrd and Robertson swiftly said that they did not intend to support any bill that did not protect both forces.

Admiral Sherman was more explicit about roles and missions when a discussion of unified command gave Robertson and Bridges another opening later in his testimony. Reversing the Navy position expressed at the 1945 Senate Military Affairs Committee hearings, Sherman substantially denied Navy dissatisfaction or apprehensions over the 1944 command setup of the Pacific Army Air Forces, following with the opinion that the legislation being considered would "provide sufficient balance" to avoid predominance by one service. Under questioning by Robertson, Sherman agreed that service functions should be defined in the bill if it would not operate to "freeze" the type of establishment in existence. An executive order would be "more quickly and often revised, it has a greater measure of flexibility." "18

"Full and complete agreement" on S. 758, however, contained a proviso not alluded to in the course of the hearings. One of the Navy's organizational safety devices, which would wholly or in part compensate for the roles and missions concession, provided that the proposed director of the Joint Staff be a Navy officer. According to Lieutenant Colonel Shaw, an Edson-Thomas board member, it was "known in Washington" that the Navy had chosen Admiral Sherman to fill the billet."

On 9 April, after Assistant Secretary of the Navy Kenney stated that "the sanctity of the Marine Corps is preserved in the bill," Senator Robertson placed in the record a recent David Lawrence article demonstrating that Edson-Thomas board activities were on the upswing. Calling S. 758 a "program of legislative sabotage," Lawrence had struck at the "utter vagueness" of the bill and noted that Marine officers were excluded from serving on the Joint Staff or, indeed, on any of the joint bodies proposed in the bill. (Lawrence and his Marine prompters were technically correct, although Admiral Nimitz had testified that the Navy quota of the Joint Staff would include "officers of the Marine Corps and the various Staff Corps.")²⁰ The President's "clear and satisfactory definition" of Corps functions had been omitted; more significantly, it was pointed out that the commandant had not been included on the list of witnesses in connection with the hearings, "though individual members insisted on calling him for next week." Lawrence finished by stating the intent of the JCS 1478 papers without naming them and predicted that "publication of these will be forced."²¹

On 15 April, Under Secretary of War Kenneth Royall appeared and confirmed the suspicions General Eisenhower had planted 3 weeks earlier: Patterson's immediate subordinates either did not share or completely misinterpreted the Forrestal-Patterson agreement. In Royall's view, the bill did not freeze the specific duties of each department because the overall secretary or the President could change them as they saw fit. He differed "radically" with Mr. Kenney as to the authority of the Secretary of National Defense and opposed "committeefication" as compromise. Arguing for a strong single Secretary, he implicitly compared the Marine Corps to the cavalry and the coast artillery.

The image of total Army-Navy agreement was further damaged as he continued to emphasize the need for vesting broad and extensive power in the Secretary of National Defense, admitting at one point that his position was much stronger than the previous witnesses. Chairman Gurney attempted to guide his interpretations back to the shaky groundwork laid by the Secretary of War, but Royall did not follow. Indeed,

speaking of roles and missions, he said, "I am confident it is in line with Judge Patterson's and General Eisenhower's." To aggravate what had become a bad turn of events for S. 758 supporters, Royall made it clear that, in his opinion, the bill provided precisely those measures he had emphasized. His final plea was embellished by a quote from Alexander Hamilton calling for the direction of war through the "exercise of power by a single hand." ²²

Forrestal wrote in his diary that the statements by General Eisenhower and Under Secretary of War Royall had thrown naval opinion into a "state of alarm." Talking with committee member, Senator Tydings the next day, he discussed the fears of the Marines and naval aviators, but still did not feel that protective clauses were necessary. Forrestal was somewhat shaken by the "recurring evidence of the Army's intransigence" and the notion that "by writing a chart and drafting a law you could get discipline." Nevertheless, he maintained that the roles and missions dispute was inconsequential. He noted that the Marines believed their functions should be included in the bill and the White House felt they should not.

At a luncheon with several parties concerned, Clark Clifford complained of General Vandegrift's attitude and was unable to understand the opposition after "agreement" was reached. Forrestal enlightened him as to the Eisenhower and Royall testimonies, but Clifford maintained that it was of great importance that the law have loose language pertaining to service missions. There seemed to be agreement when Forrestal stated that, although S. 758 may get through the Senate, it "might have hard going in the House." Tydings took a cynical view—the dispute was "not a matter of logic, but of emotion and all that would be necessary, particularly in the House, would be for someone to get up on his feet . . . and say that logical arguments were all very well, but . . . these young men, thanks to their traditions and their fighting history, were the troops that we needed to take Mount Suribachi." ²³

The subject of White House attention and not a little pressure, General Vandegrift appeared on 22 April. His testimony was the stiffest opposition by an active duty officer thus far; it was termed "Vandegrift's insurgency" by *The New York Herald Tribune*, but several of the Edson-Thomas board members did not think he went far enough. ²⁴

Forrestal had gone over the commandant's prepared statement before it was delivered and remarked that "we had better discuss it with the President." Later, in reviewing the matter with Truman, General Vande-

grift noted that he had not deviated from the President's own "twelve point" letter of June 1946. Truman read the statement, looked at Vandegrift sharply, and asked, "You don't trust anybody, do you?" The general replied that although he trusted the President, "... you are not going to be here forever. . . It is very much easier to get an executive order changed than it is an act of Congress. That is why I would like our role and missions spelled out by law, and that is what I have asked for." Truman had no objection and ended the meeting.²³

Vandegrift began his testimony by expressing his concern over the comments of Eisenhower and Royall, which implied the "danger of lessening the degree of civilian, including congressional, control" over the military by concentrating "great powers" in the single secretary. He described S. 758 as allowing his service to be reduced to "military impotence" and specified the bill's defects with respect to the Corps as failing to affirm its existence legislatively by spelling out its roles and missions and "completely" excluding Marine officers from participation in the proposed joint bodies and agencies. Reviewing amphibious capabilities and requirements, he hammered away at the need for an "unmistakable legislative statement" of the Corps' functions. He recalled that neither Eisenhower nor Nimitz had voiced objections to including "basic" functions in the bill and submitted proposed amendments that would accomplish just that for the Marine Corps.

Tydings took issue with the suggested amendments, and it was finally necessary for Vandegrift to attempt to clear up the Senator's confusion over unified command in the field, primary service functions, and the meaning of "as the President may direct." Tydings, a War Department advocate, understandably continued to appear convinced that the commandant's proposals failed to "hit the target" and that S. 758 as written was far safer from the Corps' standpoint.²⁴ At this stage, Senator Robertson interceded by reading into the record the commandant's references to the JCS 1478 papers before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee the year before and, without involving Vandegrift directly, requested that Chairman Gurney ask Forrestal to produce the papers. Robertson then asked Vandegrift if he knew of the Army and Air Corps "secret plans" known as "Lutes No. 2." Vandegrift denied knowledge of them and referred the Senator to other Navy Department officials, whereupon, Robertson requested that Gurney also obtain those papers for the committee.²⁵ Although Robertson made repeated requests, neither set of papers ever arrived.

When Senator Bridges asked about the "very fundamental change" in his position on service "merger," Vandegrift replied that he had al-

ways been for unification and always opposed to merger. His testimony ended with further appropriate references to divergence of opinion over the powers of the overall secretary. According to him, the secretary "should be the President's representative" who ties the departments together, irons out their thinking, and presents the results to him for decision. Tydings agreed that the bill needed to be more "clear-cut" and suggested a short preamble that scarcely fulfilled Marine hopes but did indicate a softening in attitude.²⁹

Attacks on the bill continued. Melvin Maas, President of the Marine Corps Reserve officer's Association (and a former congressman), and retired Fleet Admirals King and Halsey appeared in opposition to S. 758. In a statement difficult to follow, Maas asked that the commandant be appointed to the JCS, made it clear that his association did not intend to support a regular Marine Corps of "orderlies and policemen," and requested legislative protection be provided the Corps from all quarters, including the Navy.³⁰ King favored defining the functions of the Corps and naval aviation, but was "satisfied" with the executive order and "not taken" with the phraseology of Vandegrift's suggested amendments. He was concerned about the "great power" in the hands of one man, the overall secretary.³¹ Halsey was at his forceful best. He pointed out the varying interpretations of the bill to show that the status of naval aviation was not clearly defined and that the Marine Corps should be "very properly safeguarded." Further, he was still not convinced that a separate air force was necessary.³²

Senators Robertson and Bridges were not entirely satisfied with the degree of Vandegrift's opposition to S. 758. Accordingly, Robertson called Brigadier General Edson; on 7 May, the bemedaled veteran of more than 3 years in the Pacific appeared. After carefully explaining that his views were strictly his own and that he was not representing the Navy Department or the Marine Corps, Edson provided the committee's doubters with a rousing critique. He compared the theories of elemental organization and concentration of power, on the one hand, to functional organization with balanced forces and increased civilian control on the other. S. 758 was attempting the impossible because these two divergent theories of total war "cannot be compromised . . . in the realm of the military, nor can they be compromised in the realm of overall national defense."

The general opposed the single secretary "in any form or under any name" and reiterated the point made earlier by the commandant: The President should have a "completely impartial" deputy who would not

serve as a spokesman for the military, but instead act as a coordinator or "conciliator" of the service secretaries. Aided by Senators Robertson and McCarthy, the latter sitting in on the hearing, Edson proceeded to attack the tendencies toward a "dictatorship" he saw implicit in a centralized defense structure. He felt the membership of the proposed NSC should be broadened to dilute military representation. The 100-man Joint Staff of the JCS as provided in S. 758 was "in effect, a national general staff" going in the direction of the German model. The JCS should instead be given a "secretariat," an idea mentioned by Admiral Richardson in his dissent to the Richardson report (and since developed by Lieutenant Colonel Heintz). Seeing establishment of the NSC, NSRB, and CIA as the first steps to genuine unification, Edson asked that "Congress itself" solve the problem of service functions."

According to a pro-Marine source, writer Richard Tregaskis, General Edson had requested retirement before his appearance so he could express his personal views freely. For whatever reason, Vandegrift refused.¹⁴ In any case, it is certain that regardless of the strength of Edson's testimony, the hour was too late.

Ferdinand Eberstadt was the final witness against S. 758. On the last day of hearings, 9 May, he focused on the vague delineation of the overall secretary's powers. The bill gave him authority to "roam all over the Department" and "to indulge in, for example, impairment of the Marines or impairment of naval air." He agreed with McCarthy that the legislation could well be termed "dangerous" in its existing form; however, it was Eberstadt's opinion that if the defects of the overall secretary's power were eliminated, it would not be necessary to specify service roles and missions."

The Armed Services Committee began meeting in executive session on 20 May to review testimony and consider action on the pending bill. Members consulted with representatives of the War and Navy Departments and the President, soliciting their opinions about various changes. To limit the role of the Secretary of National Defense, a declaration of policy was added as a preamble that expressly denied any intent to "merge" the three military departments. Further, the word "general" was inserted before the various clauses specifying the secretary's authority. The phrase requiring the administration of the department as individual units to be "under the direction of the Secretary of National Defense" was eliminated. Also, the service secretaries were given the statutory right of access to the Bureau of the Budget as well as to the President. The overall secretary retained control of the military budget,

although the committee required that the annual budget submitted to Congress show the amounts originally requested by each service and the subsequent changes. Finally, a clause was added stipulating that all powers and duties not specifically conferred on the overall secretary were to be retained by the service secretaries.

To provide "safeguards" for the Corps and naval aviation, the following clause was added: "The provisions of this act shall not authorize the alteration or diminution of the existing relative status of the Marine Corps (including the fleet marine forces) or of naval aviation." After "long and serious deliberation," the committee decided against a detailed specification of service functions on the grounds that such a step would impair military "flexibility" and violate the principle of separation of executive and legislative authority. Furthermore, the safeguards had the concurrence of the Commandant of the Marine Corps.⁴ Evidently, the President had informed General Vandegrift that functions were not to be spelled out in the bill. The decision was final and the general had acquiesced, not unwisely.

On 5 June, the amended bill was favorably reported by a vote of 12 to 0, with some committee members, notably Robertson, reserving the right to propose further amendments on the floor. There was not much real debate over the bill because the commandant's agreement to the protective clause had deprived the bill's opponents of a suitable platform. Chairman Gurney reminded the Senate that Vandegrift had agreed to the revised bill, so the die-hard efforts of Robertson and McCarthy to add protective amendments for the Corps were easily defeated. Senator Lodge launched into a lengthy atomic-bomb, absolute-war "scare" speech in favoring the bill, and Senator Hill remarked that the Armed Services Committee gave more time to the Marines' provision than perhaps any other. McCarthy, a slugger not a boxer, had already established himself as more a hindrance than a help from the Corps' standpoint. He said that Vandegrift's having been "sold a bill of goods" did not make the provision right. On 9 July, S. 758 passed by voice vote.⁵

General Vandegrift, nicknamed "Sunny Jim" for his southern grace and easy disposition, was the hapless man-in-the-middle. This disturbing affair was not of his choosing. Nor, most assuredly, was it the environment in which he was at all comfortable. It seemed he could not satisfy anyone. To him, the fight for Guadalcanal was surely preferable; there, backed by his ragged band of Marines and soldiers, he was faced with only the Japanese and few contrary Navy admirals. Here, assurances, criticism, recriminations, and unsolicited advice came at him from every-

where; his was the difficult and precarious task of making responsible decisions. He had to react aggressively enough to achieve Marine Corps objectives without giving Forrestal and the President sufficient cause to relieve him, thereby removing any active influence he could exert over the form of unification. These frustrating circumstances called for a refined "sixth sense" that he and his subordinates were able to muster and use skillfully: Shortly after Vandegrift's testimony before the Senate Committee, they decided that priority must now be shifted to the House, where the situation looked more promising.

VIII

REPRIEVE

As far as Vandegrift and the reinspired Congressional foes of the unification bill were concerned, Patterson and Forrestal could tell it to the Marines.

Newsweek, 5 May 1947

With the inception of the Edson-Thomas board in mid-March, Marine Corps efforts to influence unification legislation had been intensified. As the conflict reached its critical stages, the search for supporters became increasingly frantic. The Marines saw themselves as beleaguered in their opposition to the pending bill. The Edson-Thomas members, in the words of Colonel Heintz, "were like a bunch of volunteer firemen when the town hall was burning down," rushing about and doing their best without time for elaborate preparations.¹

In addition to contacts with members of the press and Congress, a working liaison had been established with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), whose legislative officer, John W. Williamson, was a Marine reserve officer and friend of the board's Lieutenant Colonel Hittle. Thus Marine influence in Congress was increased as VFW representatives lobbied consistently throughout the spring and into the summer against the unification bill and in support of specific legislative protection for the Corps.² So numerous were the questions and cross-examinations planted on behalf of the Corps that Secretary of War Patterson blurted in a moment of frustration: "Marines, Marines! That's all I hear. They're not treated any differently in this bill than any of the other branches."³ By mid-May, Eberstadt had evaluated the prospects for Forrestal: The bill would fail to pass unless there were specific saving clauses for the Marines and naval aviation, as well as a definition of the powers of the overall secretary.⁴

The Edson-Thomas board had shifted priority to the House of Representatives after General Vandegrift's appearance before the Senate Armed Service Committee. The unification bill would not experience nearly as smooth a ride through the House as in the Senate, primarily because of a serious miscalculation. The House Armed Services Committee chairman, Representative Walter Andrews, saw the problem of "setting up housekeeping" after merging two large committees into one as having caused apparently insurmountable "difficulties."⁵ Consequently, the bill was referred to the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. Remembering Representative Cole's strenuous attempts to prevent merger of the House military committees, "housekeeping" problems may well have been one reason it was referred to the Expenditures Committee—but there was another important and less visible reason.

Many War Department supporters believed that the Expenditures Committee would prove an easier route because the Chairman, Clare Hoffman, was known as an isolationist—perhaps an extreme isolationist—and was therefore considered to not be interested in, and uninformed about, military affairs. As he was deeply involved with other pending matters, specifically labor questions, it was also assumed that Hoffman would probably shuttle the unification bill to a subcommittee; it was hoped this subcommittee would be headed by Representative Wadsworth, the influential War Department advocate.⁶ This arrangement was fortunate for the Marines, and proved much less so for those they suspected of having thus arranged the bill's itinerary.

Hoffman introduced S. 758 as H.R. 2319 on 28 February, and the bill was referred to his committee.⁷ Few outside the circle of Edson-Thomas participants could have known that Lieutenant Colonel Hittle was well acquainted with Chairman Hoffman and, as a result, was able to work closely with him until enactment of legislation. As the legislation progressed, Hittle's tasks became more detailed, requiring daily trips to Washington. (He was a member of the board's Quantico element.) His work eventually achieved official status when the commandant formally approved his duties with Hoffman.⁸ Hittle also introduced another board member, Lieutenant Colonel Schatzel, to the chairman. Schatzel, who was stationed in Washington, functioned chiefly as an "idea man," sometimes spending long and late hours with Hoffman discussing various aspects of military policy.⁹ The efforts were not in vain. Chairman Hoffman soon decided against dealing the bill to a subcommittee; instead, he took it up with the full committee, setting aside other matters until legislation was finally enacted.

Hoffman's contributions on behalf of the Marine Corps cannot be overestimated. An experienced politician who rarely shied away from a good legislative brawl, he was eager to cope with the question of defense structure, an area supposedly outside his scope of expertise. By the time the National Security Act was passed, the chairman was more knowledgeable about military policy than many of the congressional guardians of unification.¹⁰ Quite unknowingly, the bill's advocates had selected an aggressive and tough-minded adversary.

House Expenditures Committee Hearings

On 2 April, four weeks after the start of Senate hearings on S. 758, Hoffman's committee convened to consider H.R. 2319. As in the Senate, two issues dominated the proceedings: the authority to be vested in the Secretary of National Defense and the status of the Marine Corps. Naval aviation was an important concern as well. For the most part, the War and Navy Departments did not revise the positions they had presented to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Their spokesmen, however, were subjected to more trying examinations and, in many cases, outright badgering by committee members.

The handling of the first witness, Secretary Patterson, established that the bill was in trouble. Patterson attempted to separate the major issues by maintaining that the reduction or expansion of the Marine Corps was "strictly" under the control of Congress, but Representative Latham properly tied the issues together by observing: "If the Secretary of National Defense came to the Congress and said that we only wanted 200,000 marines instead of 500,000, it is not likely that Congress would say, 'No, you have to take the 500,000.' " Patterson saw the Corps' "fears and suspicions" as having no reasonable ground, although, in a revealing snapshot of the War Department's compartmentalized structure, he allowed that he did not know of the 1478 papers because they were a JCS matter: "You had better ask General Eisenhower that question."

When hearings resumed some three weeks later and Patterson was again asked to appear, Representative Clarence Brown summed up the prevalent feelings of the committee: "The Marine Corps has a spot in the hearts of America that is rather large and rather warm. . . . I do not think the Marine Corps is a detail in a matter of national defense. . . . I have always questioned, in my mind, the Constitutional authority, and validity of the theory that the President can legislate by Executive Order,

which he has done in many instances." Asked about Army efforts to influence opinion on unification, Patterson answered that the War Department "had no business using press or intensive effort to get legislation passed that we think would be beneficial." ¹¹

Secretary Forrestal followed Patterson. By now he was admitting the "broad and deep authority" of the overall secretary; however, he saw checks vested in the President, in the service secretaries' right to direct access to the President, and in Congress. He viewed the whole matter of service functions as "a matter of confidence in the good faith of the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, General Eisenhower, of Admiral Nimitz, of General Spaatz of the Air Forces, and of their respective intentions to carry out the letter and the spirit of the executive order as agreed upon between us and as approved by the President." ¹² The Marine Corps was not so worried about the good faith of these individuals as it was about the letter and spirit of the executive order by President Truman.

On 25 April, Captain Lalor, USN, of the JCS staff asserted that he was "unable to produce" the JCS Series 1478 papers of his own volition because the JCS was required to obtain permission from the President. Chairman Hoffman, not to be put off as had Senator Robertson, began to press for the mysteriously unavailable papers at every opportunity. And rightly so. If, as the War Department maintained, it was no longer interested in restricting the Marine Corps, why would the executive branch try to keep relevant JCS memoranda from the responsible congressional committee? That same day, Forrestal told the Senate Armed Services Committee, "I do not think that view represents an objective on the part of the Army today." On 29 April, Hoffman commented that he would "never be able to make up his mind" about the bill until he saw the papers. Within a week, he announced that they were available for members to look at in the committee's office. ¹³

Admiral Sherman and General Norstad closely followed Forrestal and Patterson in attempting to sidestep the controversial issues. Sherman conceded that the bill should have said "the military services" when referring to officers on the various joint bodies and agencies. In a phrase implying that the naval opponents of H.R. 2319 were mere obstructionists, he said, "Now, there are many individuals in the naval service who feel that there should be something done to safeguard naval aviation, safeguard the Marine Corps, and so forth. But the responsible people in the Navy feel that there must be effective coordination of the Navy Department and the other military departments." ¹⁴

Admiral Sherman reserved judgment on Hoffman's proposed amendments, which specified the Corps' functions (including serving as the "principal agency" for amphibious development), set its strength at not less than 20 percent of the Navy, provided for Marine participation on the joint bodies, and clarified justificational matters between the commandant and Chief of Naval Operations. In a letter to Hoffman, he concurred only in the sections pertaining to Marine participation on the joint bodies. Sherman reasoned that if Corps functions were spelled out, the legislation would have to do the same for all services; such a procedure would have the undesirable effect of "making static" the roles and missions of the Armed Forces. Norstad's argument was identical: Service functions should not be frozen because no service was being "lowered or reduced" by H.R. 2319. The General also supported Eisenhower's recommendations as outlined in the 1478 papers, claiming that those proposals would "preserve" the Marine Corps.¹⁵

Both Norstad and Sherman saw the proposed Secretary of National Defense as holding broad, extensive authority.¹⁶ Nobody had thus far made a clear definition of the authority and modus operandi of that office because, quite obviously, there was none. As Congressman Carter Manasco observed wryly, "Some people say he is a czar; some people say he is just a figurehead."¹⁷

General Vandegrift appeared on 6 May and prefaced his statement by noting "with gratification" the interest the committee had shown for the potential that H.R. 2319 held for the Corps. His testimony was similar to his Senate presentation the week before. "I maintain that in carrying out the basic functions of the Marine Corps from 1776 until 1947, we have not hampered anyone in their functions, nor have we made the defense of America rigid or inflexible." While opposed to the bill, Vandegrift was not sufficiently zealous in his criticism to satisfy some of his unification advisors. In his reply to the questionnaire, Twining was especially adamant in this regard.

Wadsworth interjected that including roles and missions in the bill would bind the Corps—which had always been free to operate and develop efficiently—in a "legislative strait jacket." When Representative J. Edgar Chenoweth went to the crux of the matter and asked, "General, what is this all about, anyway? What are they trying to do to the Marine Corps," Vandegrift evaded. He did say, however, that the Corps had been involved in a "survival controversy" since 1776. He again asked that protection for the Marine Corps be written into the bill so that his service could "put its entire effort on trying to do its job in the defense of

its country rather than putting a lot of its effort in the job of fighting for its existence."

Committee members demonstrated their sympathy with the commandant's awkward and now untenable position as both a subordinate to the Chief Executive and the leader of opposition in the executive branch. When a question arose over the "absent treatment" given Marine officers in H.R. 2319, the exchange went as follows:

VANDEGRIFT: I would say on that, sir, that it was not absent treatment. I think it was an oversight.

HOFFMAN: Inadvertently they forgot you?

VANDEGRIFT: In drawing the bill.

WILSON: That is a nice way to say it, General, anyhow.

As Vandegrift neared the end of his testimony, Representative George Bender assessed the opinion of "our constituents" as "grave apprehension . . . that whoever wrote this bill is giving the Marine Corps the 'bum's rush.' " " "

As in the Senate, General Eisenhower inadvertently became one of the Corps' best witnesses. Testifying the next day, he said he could not understand the suspicions that had been aroused. "I am nonplussed to find out why I have been considered an enemy of the Marines or why the Army should want them in the Army." When Hoffman asked if the general had "at any time" recommended a reduction in the size or functions of the Marine Corps, Eisenhower answered in the negative, adding, however, that he was opposed to a "second land army."

Apparently he realized at this point that Hoffman had the JCS 1478 papers, or pertinent extracts, before him. Two Marine officers present described it as a noticeably "shattering discovery . . . as if General Eisenhower had found himself in the middle of a minefield . . . He virtually walked on water in order to avoid damage." " Eisenhower escaped temporarily by saying it was not until after the 1478 memorandum that he had found that the Navy, not the Marines, manned landing craft.²⁰ Curiously, the commander of the landing at Normandy, the largest amphibious operation in modern history, had thought that the boats were run by the troops of his publicized World War I *bete noire*.

Vandegrift's meeting with Eisenhower a few weeks before had obviously accomplished little. In what Vandegrift called a "mild rapprochement," the two had discussed the problem of Army-Marine relations. Eisenhower frankly expressed his fears with respect to expansion of the

Corps; he could not understand such "aspirations." Vandegrift denied any, other than serving as amphibious troops, "preferably in naval campaigns." Vandegrift had read Eisenhower, point by point, what the Corps wanted in the pending bill; they amounted to Hoffman's proposed amendments, and Eisenhower "had no objections." He agreed that if Vandegrift were to testify "to any congressional committee" that Marines should be organized primarily to perform amphibious tasks in addition to shipboard and shore security duties, Eisenhower would approve writing the functions of the Marine Corps into the bill.²¹

General Eisenhower's third appearance before the committee resulted in further deterioration of War Department credibility. Having said that he was personally against including service functions in the bill, he was again questioned at length as to the intent of his JCS 1478 memorandum. Hoffman noted that the papers had created the opinion among "certain officers" that the Army wanted to eliminate the Corps as an effective combat element by reducing it to a combination police force-beach labor party.

EISENHOWER: It may have.

HOFFMAN: It did. Do you not know that to be a fact?

EISENHOWER: They said that was the reason they were fearful? I suppose they said that, but I cannot see how any man can read those statements and think that I have any thought of eliminating the Marines; therefore, I do not see why they should be fearful about me.

The committee opponents to H.R. 2319 picked at Eisenhower so avidly about legislative safeguards for the Marines that the general testily, and with refreshing candor, replied to Representative Hardy: "Let me tell you, Mr. Congressman, the ground forces are not entirely stupid. When you put us in the same family with the glamour boys, the Navy and the Air Forces, where are we going to come out? We take the losses and win the war."²²

General Spaatz, who followed Eisenhower on 13 May, was not pressed about his contributions to the 1478 papers. According to him, the Navy would not be deprived of its essential aviation and the Marine Corps would not be disestablished by the pending bill. There was no discussion about the key words "essential" and "disestablished." When questioned about economic savings, specifically about the cost of a logistics turnover if a separate air force was created, Spaatz predicted that the new service would continue to depend on the Army Quartermaster Corps, Ordnance Department, and Signal Corps.²³

Fleet Admiral Nimitz also adhered to the official support for H.R. 2319. He stressed the importance of collective effort at the highest strategic level and did not object to the inclusion of service functions, although he believed the legislation and the executive order were adequate safeguards. When Hoffman alluded to suspicions that the War Department had not abandoned its desires to restrict the Marines unduly, Nimitz said, "It is for that reason that I said that I personally would not ask for additional safeguards to be written into the proposed law, but that I would offer no objection if the Congress felt that it was essential to write them in." ²⁴

Interim Developments

The House Expenditures Committee held no hearings between 16 May and 9 June. Previously, on 17 April, Forrestal had recognized that the whole unification issue was again in difficulty. Clark Clifford was said to have been disturbed by the pro-Marine sentiments of Hoffman's committee, where Representative John McCormack had warned that something must be put into the bill "that will preserve, beyond doubt, the Marine Corps." ²⁵ Clifford called Norstad and Sherman and admitted that the issue was becoming a focal point of controversy. "Unless some concession was given to the Marine Corps, the whole thing was liable to blow up in their faces in the House." ²⁶ Apparently, Norstad and Sherman began working immediately on the lone protective clause that the Senate Armed Services Committee was to adopt later.

The Edson-Thomas board had not gone unnoticed in the meantime. Because the board members were normally in uniform, their presence in and around congressional offices and gathering places could hardly be concealed. Manifestly unhappy with the Corps' lobbying efforts, both the official and the covert, President Truman transmitted his displeasure directly to General Vandegrift. Consequently, the board was formally dissolved on 6 May. Though the authorized body ceased to exist as such, the individual officers continued their planning and lobbying, if less extensively. ²⁷ There is no evidence that President Truman took measures to restrain the Army's "special legislative section," which was conducting the same kind of activities. ²⁸

General Vandegrift's unenviable dilemma was becoming more difficult as the first session of the Eighteenth Congress neared adjournment with no clear solution to unification in sight. Truman was highly critical of both him and the CNO. Forrestal, who defended Nimitz, was plainly

irritated with Vandegrift.²⁹ By early June, the general's satisfaction with the Senate committee's single protective clause had become common knowledge. Senator Byrd had assured Vandegrift that all would be well, and the latter had written a friend that "things are coming along alright." But some Marines felt the commandant's opposition to the pending bill was lukewarm and he "was not playing an aggressive hand in the Congressional poker game."³⁰ On the other hand, Vandegrift did not receive advice only from his unification workers. There were other Marine officers who, unaware of the intricacies of the situation, thought that the Edson-Thomas efforts were unseemly and, moreover, unnecessary. Most of these officers were simply too proud to believe that the Corps was in danger or that, even if it were, a lobbying campaign was warranted.³¹

Between 24 April and 15 May, toward the end of the second phase of House Expenditures Committee hearings, Claire Hoffman asked Lieutenant Colonel Hittle to help prepare a comparative analysis of the pending House and Senate unification bills. The analysis, which Hoffman later had printed for committee use during executive sessions, "did not misstate any facts but needless to say the phrasing of the analytic notes was not detrimental to the Marine Corps or the Naval Service and national security." Hoffman also asked Hittle to help write up a clear bill; Hittle did so after Hoffman secured official permission from the commandant for him to serve as the committee's "special advisor" on the National Security Act. The statement of Marine Corps functions, contained in the proposed executive order and recommended by Generals Vandegrift and Edson for inclusion in legislation, had been composed at Quantico by Colonel Twining and his subordinates "long before" the pending bill was drafted.³² The possibility that these functions and some clearer explanation of the overall secretary's authority would be part of the bill remained much in doubt.

Hearings Resumed

Chairman Hoffman's committee continued hearings on 10 June. Secretary Forrestal was recalled and questioned at length about Articles 94 and 95 of Navy Regulations and their effect in muffling dissent against the pending bills. Representative Hardy noted that "about the only opposition" up to that time had come from the Marines. Forrestal, who had by then been forced to the merge-now, organize-later stance, replied, "We do not want members of the Navy harassing Congress."

Hardy appreciated the Secretary's concern but found it unusual that, "Every time we turned here, we have been confronted with an absolute dead end. There is no opposition whatever." When Representative Bender asked if he was aware that naval officers were expressing a general feeling of dislike for the bill, Forrestal contended that the term "merger" had stuck in peoples' minds and was apt to stay there. His own doubts were revealed subsequently: "I think the important thing is to get something reasonably satisfactory to all hands and then go ahead and make it work." "

Melvin Maas, President of the Marine Corps Reserve Officers' Association, appeared the following day and severely criticized H.R. 2319 as a "series of expedient compromises." When Maas called for statutory protection for the Corps as well as what was, effectively, total consolidation of the services, the focal points of friction within the committee surfaced:

HOFFMAN: I think the committee has agreed practically that the Marine Corps will be protected, and as to the language, we will be glad to hear you on that any time. . . .

WADSWORTH: I would never consent to writing into the statute the roles and missions of any branch of the armed services . . . Until such time as there is genuine merger and unification of the military services, we believe that there is an essential need for marines.

Maas accused the President of "gagging" the Navy Department, saying that he alone had discussed unification with 75 to 100 flag officers; all but one or two opposed the bill. When pressed for names, Maas at first refused, for obvious reasons, but then relented. "Give me a Navy Register, and I will cross off the few names of those who are for the bill." "

Despite the sympathy shown them by Hoffman's committee and their risky extracurricular activities on Capitol Hill, members of the defunct Edson-Thomas board feared that unless there was a spectacular public denunciation of the pending bill, all efforts to prevent its unamended passage would prove inadequate. It now remained for someone to step forward and censure the unification bill as General Vandegrift was no longer able to do. As he did in the Senate, Brigadier General Edson chose to deliver the blow. Unification had become a personal issue for him because the Truman Administration would not permit active officers to evaluate the concept openly. Thus, as one of the Corps' highly regarded leaders with much to lose, Edson again decided to retire; " this time the commandant approved his request.

Believing that his subdued testimony in the Senate had not gone far enough, Edson appeared before Hoffman's committee on 17 June with the force—and in some instances, hyperbole—of a crusader. His argument was not in opposition to unification “in principle” but was based on the premise that any alteration in national defense must be under positive civilian control at the highest level. There was no such control under H.R. 2319, which “has meant all things to all men,” with the Secretary of National Defense seen at will as either an ordinary umpire or an all-powerful director. Reminding the committee that the bill was drafted by military men, Edson noted that it extended well beyond “merely military” matters and reached into almost every field of government. Under its provisions, over one third of the national budget was put in the hands of the overall secretary, who was a spokesman for the military; the CIA was put under military leadership, thereby creating a “potential gestapo”; and a permanent national general staff was established in the form of the Joint Staff of the JCS. His thrust was that the bill set up military domination of the proposed agencies, which he saw as practical implementation of the theory that the military should control the nation in time of war.

Edson's recommendations and criticisms were the result of countless hours of research and discussion performed primarily by the officers of the Edson-Thomas board; it represented the most comprehensive expression of the Marine Corps position on military policy to that time. Mr. Bender observed precisely that Edson had “tossed an atom bomb into the works.” In both the pending legislation and the National Security Act of 1947, Edson's arguments were not to go unheeded. His proposals, which went beyond the two principal areas of conflict, were as follows:

- Allow the military establishment to remain essentially as it existed, to be supervised by a presidential deputy rather than the spokesman-chief envisioned in the office of overall secretary.
- Purge the NSC of the “overwhelming military character” proposed in the bill.
- Establish the Director of the CIA firmly as a civilian and closely delineate and circumscribe that organization's powers and duties.
- Broaden the powers of the civilian-oriented NSRB.
- Spell out carefully the powers and functions of the JCS and its Joint Staff, effectively rendering the latter a secretariat; limit the tenure of membership on these and related bodies and provide for equal rotation of the proposed Director of the Joint Staff.
- Eliminate the needless War Council.

- Include service functions in the bill primarily because the Marine Corps and naval aviation operate in "marginal areas."
- Establish a separate air force, if necessary, consisting only of the strategic bomber and fighter defense commands and antiaircraft artillery, because close air support was as vital to the Army as artillery and armor.

Questioning by the committee established that General Edson had not become an advocate of democratic armed services. He said that the military should be supreme in the military sphere and not subject to civilian meddling, though only the President could decide national strategy. "You cannot delegate that." Edson steadfastly countered Maas' notion of "total" merger. When Representative Latham pointed out that Edson opposed the bill in part because it was a merger, and that Maas opposed it because it was not, Edson replied: "That is one of the dangerous features about the bill, sir." 36

The following day, Edson submitted a letter to Hoffman expanding on the different relationships to the Armed Forces between an overall secretary who was head of a single military department and one who acted as assistant to the President for national security matters. He drew an analogy to the practice of law. As established in H.R. 2319, the secretary was the "senior partner" and advocate of his firm, assisted by his "partners," the service secretaries. His professional advisers would be the JCS, and the military services would be his "client." Unless the secretary supports the case of his client before the "courts"—the President, Congress, and the people—he "will not perform the job for which he is appointed nor the duty which Congress expects of him in setting up his office." If, however, the secretary acts as a presidential assistant, he "will be, in fact, the judge sitting on the bench. . . . In case of disagreement between the Army, the Navy, and Air Force, or any other element of our security structure, he should hear the arguments bearing on the case, and speaking for the President and the people, render an impartial decision in the interest of the Nation as a whole." In the first instance, the single secretary was an advocate; in the second, and impartial arbiter.

Edson closed by noting that, in the past, Congress had been able to call before it service representatives to present their divergent opinions and thus "throw a penetrating light" on pending legislation. He warned that if H.R. 2319 were enacted, the services would have reached an agreement in future measures before Congress and each witness would testify in their favor. "This bill in effect will create a coalition of the armed services. I cannot too strongly stress the fact that there can be a monop-

oly within the military field, just as there can be a monopoly within the industrial or commercial field, and with the same suppressive effects." 37

General Edson's severely critical judgments had their part in gathering congressional opinion to the Corps' side. They also no doubt blunted the effects of War Department efforts (including the major address by General Collins, the Army's Chief of Public Information, in support of the pending bill 38) to influence public opinion.

In less than a week, Secretary Forrestal issued ALNAV 139, suspending Articles 94 and 95 of Navy Regulations and opening up free discussion of the unification matters under consideration.39 This cleared the way for latent Navy opposition, most of which came from the ranks of naval aviation. The belated nature of Forrestal's willingness to open the gates was illuminated two days later when, on 25 June, the Secretary was told that Wadsworth had succeeded in "forcing Clare Hoffman's hand," causing him to cut short hearings on the unification bill. Forrestal was able to report that retired Fleet Admiral King was "now ready to endorse the [amended] Senate bill"; Wadsworth surmised this might have been the reason Hoffman decided not to call King before the committee.40

Except for Dr. Vannevar Bush, the remaining witnesses stood against both H.R. 2319 and the amended Senate version. Most were naval aviators such as Admirals Radford, Ostfie, and Towers, who not only decried the unification bill as dangerous to their arm as well as the Marines, but opened naval aviation's assault on the Army Air Corps theory of strategic bombardment. Congressman Cole also appeared as an opposition witness, registering amazement that hearings were to be ended so quickly after Forrestal had issued ALNAV 139.41

Resolution

Soon after the end of House hearings on 1 July, Chairman Hoffman designated a subcommittee to draw up a clean bill. Its members were Hoffman; Representatives Bender, Latham, and Wadsworth from the majority side; and McCormack, Manasco, and Holifield from the minority. The same two broad questions were before the subcommittee: (1) the overall secretary's powers under the Senate compromise bill, where his grant of authority included "direction and control" and the right to formulate the military budget, as opposed to the strictly supervisory powers granted in H.R. 3979 that emanated from Marine Corps

sources and were introduced by Hoffman in late June; and (2) the adoption of the Senate's single "protective" clause as opposed to incorporation of full service functions.⁴²

The Marines recognized that their insistence on the inclusion of the Corps' roles and missions could conceivably backfire at this point. As Admiral Sherman had stated in his letter to Hoffman, the other services could clamor for equal treatment and thus present an insoluble legislative drafting problem. However, this ploy failed.⁴³

Hoffman, Bender, and Latham were sympathetic with the Marine Corps position; Wadsworth, his assignment to the subcommittee having attested to his influence and prestige as an expert in military affairs, was firmly opposed. Hence the balance of power was held by the three Democrats who were generally committed to their President to bring out "a" unification bill. The Marines adjusted their lobbying measures accordingly. Unofficial representatives concentrated on McCormack. Marine officers had been in contact with McCormack on numerous occasions throughout the hearings and had also visited with newspaper editors on his Boston home ground, where two papers had that spring editorialized in favor of increased protection for the Marines.⁴⁴ VFW representatives devoted attention to Manasco and Holifield, who had both worked closely with that organization.

The subcommittee voted 5 to 1 in favor of specifying service functions in the bill, using the language the Marines preferred. Wadsworth was the lone opponent. The Democrats refused, however, to substitute the concept behind H.R. 3979 for the compromise bill generally and, with Wadsworth's vote, reportedly carried that point of view narrowly. The full committee adopted the bill prepared by the subcommittee without significant change.⁴⁵

On 16 July, the House Expenditures Committee reported out a clean bill, H.R. 4214, which Hoffman introduced that day. It contained practically all the Senate changes and incorporated the language of the proposed executive order in spelling out service functions. The Secretary of National Defense was not given the authority to formulate and finally determine military budget estimates, but was given the right to "take appropriate steps" to eliminate unnecessary duplication in various logistics and support fields. The bill specifically prohibited any person who had ever held a regular military commission from becoming the overall secretary and called for the military departments to be administered as "individual executive departments" rather than as "individual units."

Hoffman remained dissatisfied with the bill but saw legislation as "inevitable" and H.R. 4214 as "the best bill that was obtainable." He attached to the committee report a lengthy list of his own "additional views" and a copy of the proposed report that McCormack and Wadsworth had been instrumental in overriding. He reiterated his conviction that representatives of the Navy Department had been hampered in presenting their opinion by "Executive gag" and printed ALNAV 139 in full. Pertinent excerpts from the 1478 papers were included, as well as a list of 26 witnesses who desired to testify but could not be called because the hearings had closed. Hoffman's rejected report also contained language recognizing the Marine Corps as a separate and distinct Armed Force within the naval service.⁴³

The movement of H.R. 4214 to the Committee of the Whole House on 19 July was delayed by Mr. Cole's unsuccessful attempts to invoke parliamentary technicalities. Floor debate brought forth no new arguments from either side of the controversy. Hoffman, who was nominally in charge of the bill on the floor, finished off the general debate with a long speech that stated his fears about the emergence of a military dictatorship, questioned congressional abdication of its responsibility over the Armed Forces, and ridiculed the claims made for economy. The bill, with seven insignificant amendments, was passed by voice vote. Immediately thereafter, Hoffman called up S. 758, proceeded to have the House strike out "all after the enacting clause," substituted the provisions of H.R. 4214 as just passed, and sent the bill back to the Senate requesting a conference. Two days later, the Senate disagreed with the House amendment to S. 758 and acceded to the request for a conference.⁴⁴

At this stage, Marine Corps hopes relating to the authority of the Secretary of National Defense were unfulfilled. Even on the issue of roles and missions, the Corps was far from out of the woods. The commandant had gone on record as being satisfied with the Senate's single protective clause, a matter that the Senate committee had labored long over. Just before the first meeting of the Senate-House conference, Lieutenant Colonel Schatzel of the Edson-Thomas board notified Vandegrift that Senator Byrd, a conferee, was willing to send a letter asking the commandant whether he preferred the House or Senate version of the bill. Byrd soon sent the letter. Vandegrift, of course, answered by choosing the House version because "it better defined our position."⁴⁵

Also prior to the first conference meeting, Claire Hoffman had asked Lieutenant Colonel Hittle to prepare a three-stage compromise bill in the event it became necessary to make concessions to the Senate. Hittle

then marked up the House bill in different ways so as to indicate language that, from the Marine and Navy point of view, was either: absolutely essential; desirable but not essential; or included for "bargaining purposes." "With impressive support inside the conference room for the Corps' aim of statutory protection, the series of five meetings began.

On 24 July, the conference committee reported a compromise version of S. 758 that substantially adopted the House amendment to the bill. However, the prohibition against the appointment of a former regular officer as Secretary of National Defense was amended to exclude from eligibility only those who had "within ten years been on active duty." Some of Cole's language with respect to Navy functions, added as an amendment on the House floor, was deleted; finally, the Senate-passed provision allowing the overall secretary to "formulate and determine the budget estimates" for submission to the Budget Bureau was reinstated.⁴⁸

Even as Marine influence was being exerted inside the conference room by way of Hittle's compromise draft, Army officers, including General Norstad, were outside the conference room "busily putting in a good word with passing members" and attempting to influence them in favor of the Senate version of the bill.⁴⁹ Senator Byrd, however, read Vandegrift's letter pointing out the advantages of the House bill at a "critical stage of the proceedings," breaking the resistance of the majority of the Senate conferees to including service functions. When the conference version of the bill emerged, the marked-up concessions bill provided by the Marines had yielded only slightly on the matter of roles and missions.⁵⁰

The Senate and House quickly passed the bill. It reached the President on 26 July 1947, and was signed into law as the National Security Act of 1947 (see appendix). Immediately thereafter, Truman issued Executive Order 9877, "Functions of the Armed Forces," and nominated James Forrestal as first Secretary of Defense.⁵¹

After three years of friction, the unification controversy was over, but only temporarily. As Generals Vandegrift and Edson had testified, the bill was essentially an impossible compromise; much still remained to be done. Secretary Forrestal was faced with the riddle of filling a post for which there was no suitable definition of authority. His assessment of the roles and missions dispute as inconsequential, resulting from his perception that the "language of the mortgage" rarely made the bonds good, would return to plague him. As Walter Millis notes, there would be more than one occasion when the "language of the mortgage" was to prove an

inadequate answer to the intricate problems bound up in service missions.⁵¹

An overall secretary had been established, but he was to head the "National Military Establishment" rather than a department. The US Air Force was created and the Army willingly ceded all but its low-performance aircraft to that service. The World War II JCS was perpetuated by statute, although the Secretary of Defense obstructed independent access to the President. The Marine Corps was not specifically recognized as a separate service and its commandant was excluded from membership on the JCS.⁵²

From the viewpoint of the Marines and other War Department opponents, there were also many positive accomplishments. The most significant was defeat of the concept of the single chief of staff. Naval aviation was adequately protected from the more radical single management schemes, and the Marine Corps emerged with its modern combatant functions set forth in statutory language, thereby rendering executive emasculation of the Corps considerably more difficult.

The Marine Corps was to be organized to provide "fleet marine forces of combined arms, together with supporting air components, for service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign." Primary responsibility for development of amphibious warfare "tactics, techniques, and equipment employed by landing forces" was implicitly conferred on the Corps, and the act further provided that it carry out the undisputed shipboard and shore guard tasks and "such other duties as the President may direct." The Marine Corps Reserve was inferentially maintained by the requirement that the Corps be capable of expansion in time of war. Finally, provisions for Marine representation on the Joint Staff and participation in other joint duties, such as military aide to the Secretary of Defense, were afforded by the language of the act assigning "officers of the three armed services" or "officers of the armed services."⁵³

IX

CONCLUSIONS

It is true that there are deep-rooted interservice differences that break out occasionally in seemingly bitter exchanges. But they are the product of honest convictions by honorable men of broad experience and lifetime service, each of his own arm, and manifestations of a deeply justified pride in all that their respective services have contributed to the growth and security of the country.

Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, USA
The Korean War

Where the civilians fail to comprehend and guide military policies, the true military men, as distinguished from the militarists, are also imperiled.

Alfred Vagts
A History of Militarism

By the time the unification issue culminated in the National Security Act of 1947, the controversy had come full circle from the initial, general questions about organization to the complex questions on the status of the Navy Department that had initially stimulated War Department unification initiatives early in World War II. Overriding every issue was the theme of centralization versus decentralization. The relative merits of each view had theoretical, practical, and profoundly political implications.

In the broadest sense, the Army favored a concentration of power in the military element of the Nation's security structure. War Department goals did not include agencies for the coordination and integration of foreign, military, and economic policies until the Navy Department and the President pressed for them in late 1945. The Navy, also in the broadest sense, wanted military power to remain diffused and had no special aims with respect to supradepartmental coordinating bodies until For-

restal furnished the impetus, deriving his conclusions from extensive business and government experience. The National Security Act of 1947 was a compromise solution: The military establishment was centralized more than the Navy wanted it to be; within that structure, the overall secretary was given more authority than the Army wanted him to have.

However frustrating to its opponents, Marine Corps obtuseness regarding Forrestal's concessions and the resulting departmental position demonstrated the benefits of diverse opinion and thought in the field of military policy. In retrospect, the original Navy Department position of 1945-1946, substantially adhered to by the Marines until enactment of the 1947 legislation, was fundamentally sound for the times. It should be noted that the Corps' arguments flowed from experience within the functionally balanced, if bewildering structure of the Navy Department and attached to a traditional reliance on Congress. The Marines were not opposed to unification; Vandegrift, after all, appraised the Eberstadt plan as "excellent." Neither were they opposed to centralization at the proper level. Their major concern stemmed from grave misgivings as to the level at which centralization was to be invoked; it was inseparable from the practical matter of organizational survival.

The Marines played well upon fears of a thinly veiled German general staff in Washington. Although their argument served the purpose of survival and lost light in the heat of the controversy, it was nonetheless coherent and well-founded. Brigadier General S. R. Shaw, one of the Corps' unification specialists during and after the conflict, held that throughout the 1944-1947 period, the Marines recognized the War Department was extolling the theoretical virtues of a structure modeled after one that had just contributed in no small way to the defeat of Germany.¹ Paul Y. Hammond believes that in Secretary Elihu Root's reforms, Root was more influenced by the application of American large-scale business organization to government than by German military doctrine. In short, the charge of "prussianization" was overdrawn.

Hammond concedes, however, that Root minimized the problem of civilian control and misunderstood the German institutions from which certain elements of Army general staff theory were borrowed.² The list of specific general staff duties prescribed by section 2 of the 1903 law was virtually a copy of the general staff functions enumerated by Schellendorff in his *Duties of the General Staff*. Further, both Hittle and Hammond cite a letter to Spenser Wilkinson, a British student of Prussian staff theory, in which Root acknowledged the "great part" that Wilkinson's *The Brain of an Army* had in the 1903 reforms.³ Thus, regardless

of whether Root was struck most by new Hamiltonianism or German ideas, it would be difficult to deny the influence of the Prussian system on Army general staff doctrine.

The Edson-Thomas board members did not perceive the Root reforms as having prussianized the Army. On the contrary, Hittle wrote of Root's "undeniable wisdom"; in referring to the attempts of George Washington and Baron von Steuben to build a centralized command and staff system within the Army, he said, "It is lamentable that the country did not accept their advice." "But the Marine Corps was unwilling to accept a general staff organization, with variations, at the highest national policy level. Hammond established convincingly that the War Department was unclear as to its own organization during the unification fight. Not unreasonably then, the Navy Department held that the Army misunderstood the implications of transfusing its chief of staff-general staff concept, a continental military development, to the United States, a maritime power.

Aside from a questionable ability to fit within the constraints of American government, German high command concepts failed because war and science outgrew them. As Marine unification workers viewed the situation in the 1940s, ". . . No one man alone is capable of solving the problems of modern global war . . . Top level national strategic planning is no place for arbitrary one-man decisions." They preferred a formalized, less powerful version of World War II's JCS system that would take advantage of the corporate mind of the service chiefs in strategic planning and advising responsible civilian leadership. Not only did the Joint Chiefs have the authority to both plan and effect those plans, but they were responsible to the Congress as well as the President. In military planning, "it is not a question of whether the land, sea or air should prevail. Rather it is utterly necessary that each of the fundamental philosophies of strategic thought must have a full participatory role in the formulation of our nation's strategy." "Suppression of the German navy—and, frequently the air force—within Hitler's army-dominated OKW staff was not entirely the realm of professional historians.

In the McNarney and Collins plans, the Army had sought to sustain in peacetime the civil-military imbalance that had developed during the war. Many civilian supporters of the War Department believed that political-military cross-fertilization within a unified national security establishment would strengthen civilian control of the Armed Forces and relieve civil-military tensions. At the same time, the Army envisioned a military united front that would, under shelter of the executive branch,

provide relief in the race for appropriations and enhance strategy-making in the atomic age.

The Marines were the most vocal of the Navy Department spokesmen denying these dissonant tenets. Vandegrift and Edson rejected the extension of military control into civilian fields of government. They called for the military to return to its area of professional competence, assisted and supervised by increased civilian control. Edson criticized the House unification bill as a reorganization of government itself, not a technical military matter; ⁶ Vandegrift charged that Army unification proponents were urging bureaucratization without providing specifics and proposing the dilution of civil supremacy "when it is evident that more civilian control than ever before is needed." ⁷ They saw the process of sorting out and weighing political and military factors as a constant, evolutionary process that would not end with the building of an attractive organizational facade around civil-military tensions.

A related and fascinating aspect of the unification controversy noticed by Marine participants was the degree to which the War Department outlook seemingly reflected an intolerance of difference. No doubt owing much to funding deprivation between the wars, the department's support of unification was a messianic plea for all-embracing harmony, as if cooperation could be willed by means of an organizational wiring diagram. The inference was obvious. Those who opposed Army unification proposals were blocking the sole path to smooth-working relations within the defense establishment. General Eisenhower expressed it this way: "You must in advance develop a groundwork of friendship. We can do that as kids. Then when we come here to Washington we deal as friends and advise our common chiefs as friends. . . . We do not have the energy to struggle against each other." ⁸ Although developing a groundwork of sincere cooperation is a useful, even admirable means, the resolve to do so indiscriminately can detract from the primary objective: achieving a synthesis of conflicting viewpoints to arrive at the best possible solution.

An analysis of differing patterns of civil-military relations—foreign policy and strategy on the one hand, and economic mobilization on the other—in World War II offers an interesting contrast. Briefly, the situation in the foreign field was characterized by harmony, yet the great mistakes of the war were strategic. On the domestic front, there was conflict and acrimony over war production, yet economic mobilization was ultimately a brilliant success. Once the United States entered the war, the JCS, in a spirit of cooperation and agreement, became wrapped up in the

achievement of the political goals of the moment rather than the continuing problem of military security. The comparison suggests that less harmony would have produced better strategy.'

Congress and the Marine Corps

Marine Corps relations with Congress in 1944-1947 were based on the premise that the Corps' existence as a balanced force of arms (i.e., air and ground) depended upon recognition of the need for diverse military forces and military innovation. Traditionally, this recognition had come from Congress; the seeds of the relationship were planted early in the nation's history and were related to an unspecified, yet real principle of public support. The principle, which became an integral part of the Corps' philosophy, was described succinctly by General Thomas: "We have to have the people on our side."¹⁰

In 1830, the Navy and President Andrew Jackson had called for abolition of the Marine Corps after a five-year period of controversy and confusion over the Corps' ambiguous status. With Marine Commandant Archibald Henderson active in the background and forcible pro-Marine expressions made by such respected Navy officers as William Bainbridge, the Senate Naval Affairs Committee refused to act against the Marines. In the House, Jackson's recommendation went to the Military Affairs Committee, which "did not think it proper to interfere with the status of the Marine Corps" and passed the proposal to the Naval Affairs Committee, where it died. The Secretary of the Navy continued his efforts, however, until 1834, when Congress temporarily resolved the matter of the Corps' status by making it a part of the naval establishment, rejecting attempts to merge it with the Navy proper and abolish the office of commandant. The law established the relationship between the Navy and Marine Corps that exists to this day,¹¹ as does the affinity between Congress and the Corps.

When President Theodore Roosevelt attempted to merge the Marines with the Army ("and no vestige of their organization should be allowed to remain") and President Taft spoke threateningly of "plans for this Corps," congressional reactions were similarly protective. Repeated charges of Marine Corps "influence" in Congress were not unfounded (of course, the Army and Navy also enjoyed congressional support), but apparently the Corps' detractors never conceived that a credible combat record, notable economy, and a reputation as ready expedi-

tionary troops exerted a different "influence" on the attitude of Congress toward what had become, in a sense, their Marine Corps.¹²

By World War II, Marines were familiar with the terms "anachronistic" and "anomalous"; the White House, the War and Navy Departments, efficiency experts, and budgeteers had officially applied these adjectives to the Corps on a rough average of once every 11 years since 1829. While Truman and Forrestal may have been confounded over General Vandegrift's suspicions of the proposal to have roles and missions delineated by executive order, the commandant's alarm was natural. Whenever necessary, Congress had acted to preserve the Marine Corps,¹³ and the Marines were loath to alter their mutual trust—least of all by submitting to the tender mercies of the executive branch, where every attempt to do away with them had started.

Samuel Huntington has held that the Congress does not have fixed and definite views on national strategy and, as a whole, is not basically pro-Army, pro-Navy, pro-Air Force—or even pro-Marine Corps. "It is simply pro-Congress. Its sympathies and policies change with the needs of the times and against the desires of the executive." In support of this argument, he cites congressional behavior toward each service in the postwar decade.¹⁴ Another view holds that Congress has long been the mooring point of the Marine Corps; it has been a consistent protector before, during, and after the unification conflict for a variety of reasons, ranging from its "powerful influence" to efficient performance of duty. But the two theories are not mutually exclusive.¹⁵ Pleas for "responsiveness to Congress and the people," as Vandegrift frequently put it, were central to Marine positions throughout the 1944–1947 controversy. The Marine Corps was pro-Congress and so remains. Historically, the interests of the Corps and Congress with respect to military policy have only rarely failed to coincide.

The constitutional provisions for the separation of powers create a struggle that represents the issue of centralization versus decentralization on a national scale. Issues may vary, but the fundamental concern remains constant: the distribution of power between the executive and legislative branches. By establishing the separation of powers, the Constitution has mixed political and military functions and complicated civilian control of the military. The President directs the Armed Forces; the Congress maintains them. The process is often confusing, but it is the essence of the American system of government. Even if fundamental constitutional change were to alter the separation doctrine, any improvement might not be worth the price.¹⁶

The executive-legislative power struggle was amply illuminated in the 1944-1947 controversy. President Truman alluded to congressional "stumbling blocks," and congressmen expressed their pique at executive "legislating." Recognizing that the pluralistic nature of Congress prevents it from determining long-term policy, Truman identified civilian control of the military with presidential control. Concerned lest the President fall captive to a limited number of military advisers, Congress identified civilian control of the military with congressional control.¹⁷ Truman saw the President as the vigilant combatant of legislative lethargy: "When Congress fails to act or is unable to act in a crisis, the President . . . must use his powers to safeguard the nation."¹⁸ Congress moved to curb what it regarded as an impetuous policy that encroached on its prerogatives. Congressman Hoffman, in discussing legislation generally, said, "If we are going to fix anything we had better do it now before we turn over any blanket authority to anyone because we never can get any back. . . ."¹⁹ The surface issue was defense policy, but as Morris Janowitz points out, Congress asserted itself against War Department goals because "it felt that excessive unification would weaken the balance between the Executive and Legislative Branches of government."²⁰

The alignment of the interests of Congress with those of the Marine Corps, and the Navy officers who also clung to the 1945-1946 hard line, becomes more apparent when considering the effects separation of powers has on national strategy. Strategic pluralism, which calls for a wide variety of military forces (or services) and weapons to meet a diversity of potential threats, is fostered in the United States by such separation. Because the broad and diverse composition of Congress includes supporters of virtually every military concept, program, or service, aggrieved parties can normally find sympathetic backing when the executive branch appears to emphasize one military interest. The clash of special interests, hawks and doves, and those who are simply partisan or out to enhance the powers of Congress results in a strong trend toward strategic pluralism.²¹ The Marine Corps' embrace of the pluralistic concept was readily identifiable in its preoccupation with balanced forces, the dangers of one-service domination, and related denunciations of the supreme general staff concept.

At the opposite pole is strategic monism, which places primary reliance upon a single strategic concept, weapons system, or military service. Among other things, this policy displays a reluctance to "cover all bets" or "play it safe." It presupposes an ability to predict and control the actions of possible enemies and usually accepts a lower level of total mili-

tary expenditures.²² During the unification conflict, the Army Air Corps moved toward strategic monism consciously, and the Army ground forces moved toward it unknowingly, although their perception of balanced forces was much different from those of the Marine Corps. The President and many of the War Department's congressional supporters were swayed by arguments of economy and efficiency.

A multitude of factors influence congressional perspective and actions toward the military; the most prominent are committee experience, military installations in the legislator's constituency, and service identification. Janowitz favors the latter, maintaining that prior military experience is the prime factor.²³ Caraley found that the factor most consistently associated with active pro-War Department or pro-Navy Department positions in the 1944-1947 unification controversy was service on the Military or Naval Affairs Committees.²⁴ With this in mind, it is interesting to trace the congressional avenues open to the Marines as the controversy reached its height.

Senator Robertson and Congressman Hoffman became the Corps' most positive, faithful supporters by the spring of 1947, turning from established norms to reinforce the Corps' view of Congress as accessible in spite of "unanimity" among other executive agencies. Hoffman had no military experience; Robertson had served in the British Army during the Boer War. Hoffman's constituency had no military installations; Robertson's had one Air Corps base. Hoffman had never served on a military or naval committee or military appropriations subcommittee; Robertson had served on the Senate Naval Affairs Committee, but only for 2 years. Both were able to bring great pressure to bear in favor of the Marine Corps, yet neither could be identified even remotely as a Carl Vinson, who was routinely called "Mr. Navy." When Senator Byrd, with years of Naval Affairs Committee experience, a major naval base complex in his state (Virginia), and a brother in the regular Navy,²⁵ fell in line with Forrestal's concessions, Robertson and Hoffman continued to fight for the Marines. No one would have expected either to become so involved in unification.

The main congressional efforts to review military policy take place in the various committees charged with cognizance. They provide an invaluable flow of information on military affairs to the media and the public. However, as the Hoffman-Robertson performance shows, members of Congress do not always follow recognized patterns. They need not rely on committee subject-matter experts nor limit their response to the direct and immediate pressures of constituents or general public opinion.

The constitutional powers of Congress to "raise and support armies" and to "provide and maintain a navy" are not confined to establishing personnel ceilings. Congress is the final authority on the size and composition of the military services, and its bodies may delve into the most detailed aspects of the military policy. At the same time, because the pluralistic nature of Congress prevents it from setting long-term programs, the determination and direction of military policy rest in the executive branch. Congress may exert influence by detailed investigation and express approval or disapproval by vote, but it can rarely initiate military policy. Executive efforts to establish programs may be curbed or forced back to the drawing board, but the locus of control remains in the executive branch. This became more evident as unification progressed after 1947.

The loose defense structure prescribed in the National Security Act of 1947 was designed to prevent domination over military affairs by any one or two services and to restore the congressional restraints over military policy that had weakened in the course of World War II. Congressional unwillingness to permit the restriction or elimination of the Marine Corps was a pointed reminder of the congressional authority to determine composition of the Armed Forces. Statutory protection for the Corps did not entail a "freezing" of military doctrine and perceptions as many argued in the last year of hearings. It was a check insuring that the Marine Corps would not be suppressed without recourse to Congress.

Military Lobbying

The examination of the Marine Corps' part in the unification conflict of 1944-1947 must include an analysis of techniques used to influence political events. Intense official and unofficial lobbying by all the Armed Forces was not a new phenomenon brought to Washington by the great changes in power and policy that occurred during World War II. Active military lobbying had played its part in the determination of American weapons and forces, from evolution of the militia concept to professionalism, sail to steam, cavalry to mechanization. However, the extent to which each service went in attempting to influence key participants and the public was unrivalled to that time.

The controversy stimulated extensive, blanket lobbying because the stakes were considerably higher than ever before. The resulting National Security Act was, after all, the first major renovation of the entire U.S.

defense establishment. Increasing centralization has refined military lobbying procedures since the day when General Vandegrift was told by President Truman to "get those lieutenant colonels off the Hill and keep them off,"²⁶ and it is no longer practicable to deliver the commandant's speech to the White House some five minutes before delivery to Congress, as did Major Platt in the spring of 1947.²⁷ Controls are now tighter and regulations clearer; in addition, the services have normally shown greater restraint and been more subtle in their lobbying activities.

As Graham Wootton observes, "From Boston to Baton Rouge . . . 'lobbying' is as derogatory an epithet as one can think of; certainly no less so than 'pressure group.'"²⁸ One constantly infers from media accounts and everyday conversation that ordinary lobbying is suspect and "military lobbying," or the efforts of "military pressure/interest groups," is somehow nefarious. This commonly accepted view leads to the supposition that such activities ought not—or worse, do not—exist, thereby barring realistic conclusions about the advantages and disadvantages of military lobbying.

The image of the service chiefs resolving questions of national military policy in a sterile, nonpolitical atmosphere is as erroneous as the illusion promoted by civilian lobbyists when their interests clash with those of the services: the military are running amuck and the Republic is in danger. If anything, the unification fight proved that the military are not a unified elite. "Since the profession has no unified perspective toward military strategy . . . or national security, and since internal differences over doctrine reflect civilian dilemmas, the political system is geared for an active role for the military in policymaking."²⁹ Thus, the military services acted as classic interest groups; each attempted to influence national lawmakers and others on legislation that vitally concerned their major interest—national security.

Marine Corps lobbying activities were, as shown, better planned after the fall of 1945, when Colonel Twining was summoned to Washington and directed to "watch unification developments." Of Wootton's "interest-group endowments," three were particularly applicable to the Corps; bureaucratic organization, control of a supply of expert knowledge, and prestige,³⁰ the latter of which would include public support and the Marines' unique relationship with Congress.

These activities were never strictly centralized. From 1944 through 1946, the entire effort was conducted "in fits and starts," although the advent of the formal Edson-Thomas board substantially increased the degree of coordination.³¹ The organizational looseness can be accounted

for by the risks involved. Moreover, the personalities, initiative, and intellects of the Marine participants were not best suited to a strictly supervised, closely knit operation.³² The commandant fully intended for unification matters to be handled by exceptionally competent officers of independent mind. Finally, the activities themselves were soon so diverse and fragmented that a high level of centralization would have been virtually impossible to impose and would probably have yielded diminishing returns. Very little lobbying or related planning was conducted by Marines other than those officers listed as members of the Edson-Thomas board.

Examples of Marine "direct lobbying"—i.e., lobbying conducted in the absence of any intervening agency or instrumentality³³—include the following: General Vandegrift's long, close friendship and influence with Senator Byrd (both were Virginians and Byrd had long experience on the Naval Affairs Committee); Lieutenant Colonel Hurst's work with Senator Robertson; Lieutenant Colonel Heintz's limited contacts with Senator George Smathers;³⁴ and the detailed work of Lieutenant Colonels Hittle and Schatzel with Representative Clare Hoffman.

Examples of "indirect lobbying"—i.e., where there is some agency or instrumentality intervening (alternatively called "propagandizing" or "winning adherents")³⁵—are as follows: Heintz's contact with the widely read David Lawrence and other press functionaries and news chains; Hurst's association with respected editor Ralph McGill; Hittle's work with the VFW which, in turn, put its lobbying muscle behind the Marines; and General Thomas' efforts to prevent the American Legion from taking an influential stand.

These were not the only lobbying activities, but they were the major and most effective points of access. Colonel Twining and Lieutenant Colonels Krulak, Shaw, and Murray were involved in some direct lobbying, but their major contribution was to formulate the intellectual thrust of the Marine Corps argument; this became especially important when the rest of the Navy Department withdrew to a less rigid position in early 1947.

Subsidiary activities and other affiliations, such as Hurst's membership on SCOROR, gave the Marines indicators of the opinions and plans of Navy leaders and civilian officials. These kinds of associations were invaluable because the Corps was not a party to the Forrestal-Patterson agreement or other high-level proceedings. Several participants kept unofficial, necessarily less informative contacts with Army friends, and General Edson maintained friendly relations with the National Rifle As-

sociation (he had a long career as a marksman) and the National Guard Association, two powerful lobbying organizations. In addition, Edson's retirement—in effect, the sacrifice of a promising career—gave the Marines a forceful testimony by a general officer at a critical point in the legislative process.

Not least was the underlying basis for all the apprehension and uproar over the status of the Marines: the popularity they enjoyed both in Congress and with the general public. The mystique surrounding the Marine Corps was controversial years before unification was envisioned. Arguments over the image and reality flow back and forth, but opinion normally prevails. Marines have their own ideas on the matter. It was apparent that the groundswell of congressional and public emotion in favor of "doing something for the Marines" was a source of irritation for the supporters of the Norstad-Sherman bill. At one point during the House Expenditures committee hearings, Secretary Patterson referred acidly to all the "talk of the Marine Corps and the Marines," maintaining that the Corps was not being "discriminated against in any way." During the same hearings, Admiral Sherman remarked that there had been "a good deal of discussion about the security of the Marine Corps. . . . I think the future of naval aviation and the security of naval aviation under the bill deserve equal attention and equal emphasis. . . ." ³⁶

Every Marine participant interviewed held that the Corps' goal of statutory recognition would not have been realized without unofficial lobbying. However, merely reviewing the substantive gains evades the issue of whether military officers should involve themselves in politics. When do the means subvert the end? Huntington set out a useful description of the professional military ethic in *The Soldier and the State*. With regard to military political involvement, the ethic holds that "politics is beyond the scope of military competence . . . The military officer must remain neutral politically." The responsibilities of the officer to the government, or state, are to: (1) represent the claims of military security within the state machinery; (2) analyze and report on the implications of alternative courses of state action from the military point of view; and (3) implement state decisions with respect to military security even if the decision runs violently counter to his military judgment. "The supreme military virtue is obedience." ³⁷

There is sufficient evidence that in the main, politics is beyond the competence of the professional military man. Of the American regular officers who have tried their hand in active politics, almost all have been notably unsuccessful. But during the 1944-1947 unification conflict, the

central, overriding issue was national security policy, to which military policy is integral. The questions were clearly within the scope of military competence; the services were properly representing the claims of military security." Huntington's challenging point deserves to be underscored: If the admirals and generals do not represent the military viewpoint, who will? Hence the commandant and his unification subordinates were the spokesmen for a separate service, representing that service's views and stressing "those military needs and forces with which . . . [they were] particularly familiar." " In its advisory role, the Corps was analyzing and reporting the strengths and deficiencies of the various unification proposals.

Marine Corps lobbying functioned entirely along nonpartisan political lines. As Colonel Heintz noted, "We got help wherever we could." " Party politics did not enter into the Corps' designs nor, according to those interviewed, would it have under the direst circumstances. Hittle was absolute in this regard: "Partisan politics on the part of a man in uniform is wrong, without exception." " Indeed, partisanship was not even a major factor of the outcome in Congress. "The party leaderships' influence on the substantive positions taken by voting majorities was not as determinative as the committees' and it was much more indirect." " Congressmen Hoffman (anti-unification, pro-Marine) and Wadsworth (pro-unification, pro-Army) were both Republicans, as were Senators Robertson (anti-unification, pro-Marine) and Gurney (pro-unification, pro-Army). Senator Byrd (anti-unification, pro-Marine) was a Democrat.

The matter of the military's implementing state decisions, even those that run violently counter to military judgment, is a great deal more complex than the questions of subject matter and political non-partisanship. If the military are to be actively involved, as they must be, in policymaking, and the political system is geared to accommodate an active role, how does the professional avoid the clash between executive directives and his professional judgment? In short, how does he avoid being disloyal to the Commander in Chief or his service Secretary? The answer is, he cannot avoid the clash. "The separation of powers is a perpetual invitation, if not an irresistible force, drawing military leaders into political conflicts." " It is regrettable but true that "disloyalty" is a term of notoriously varying interpretations. Now, as during the unification controversy, the military officer who represents his service has the professional duty to speak frankly to both the President and Congress.

A primary link, of course, between the military and Congress is the testimony of military leaders and official representatives before congress-

sional committees. When the unification conflict intensified, the Truman Administration sought actively to obstruct such activity. Congress insists that the military have direct access to Capitol Hill, including the right to dissent from executive policy.⁴⁴ The military services support this insistence, none so heartily as the Marines. According to Huntington, a reasonable solution in 1946-1947 would have allowed both departments to continue their lobbying or caused both to cease.⁴⁵

Relations between the services and Congress are not limited to official hearings or investigations. The Marines who actively lobbied in 1944-1947 felt no compunction about pursuing their efforts in the face of executive opposition, especially as the President and Secretary Forrestal were less than evenhanded. While Navy Department dissent was suppressed, the War Department was allowed to carry on lobbying of every description. The Marines were not averse to telling "a Senator what the Marines are, what they face, what it means for the security of the USA," and "putting the truth in the hands of the Congress. That is what they want."⁴⁶

Toward the end of World War II and thereafter, Congress took on an increased involvement in national security affairs. If it were to play its part in guiding military policy, its members required the same independent professional advice the President received. The resulting dilemma for the professional officer has been an often unpleasant, albeit enduring, experience. There is no easy way out. Above all, the situation requires the "mutual restraint and conscious cooperation of military man, legislator, and executive." The President must not punish military officers for presenting their professional opinions to Congress, congressmen must not use military officers to embarrass the administration, and military officers must not stray fecklessly from their field of expertise into politics and diplomacy.⁴⁷ Pertinent examples are Truman's firing of Admiral Denfeld, Senator Fulbright's frequent use of prominent retired officers as witnesses during the Vietnam war, and, more recently, the public forays of Major General Singlaub into politics.

In 1946-1947, mutual restraint was not in abundance. As a result, military lobbying may be safely said to have exceeded its bounds. Presidential action produced reaction, most visibly in the Marine Corps, where Shaw remarked that individuals were occasionally "out of line" in their endeavors.⁴⁸ Presumably, Army and Navy officers were out of line as well.

The military as an interest group—if its activities are responsible, circumscribed, and responsive to civil authority—is a part of the deci-

sionmaking process in a political democracy.⁴⁹ The lobbying activities of the military services must be governed largely by self-imposed restraints. Frequently, however, political involvement by military professionals crosses an unmarked, unregulated line and enters a hazy zone; here, the times and circumstances determine whether the military is found guilty or acquitted of political meddling. The extent of political involvement by the military is based on the temper and the sense of the executive and legislative branches at any given time.

Subsequent Events

Passage of the National Security Act only temporarily quieted the advocates of centralization. In October 1947, General Spaatz was still contending that it was wrong to differentiate between tactical and strategic aircraft. On retirement in early 1948, General Eisenhower sent Secretary of Defense Forrestal a memorandum of "grave implications" that included his views on the proper role of the Marine Corps; he was extremely concerned over the Army manpower shortage.⁵⁰ At Forrestal's urging, the 1949 amendments to the National Security Act gave the Secretary of Defense more closely defined and extensive authority, added a Chairman of the JCS, and increased the Joint Staff from 100 to 210. Significantly, however, the amendment also provided new and stronger protective clauses concerning departmental administration and the major combatant functions of the services.⁵¹

In July 1950, General Spaatz, then retired, called for "More Men, Carriers, Planes—Now!" in citing the serious deficiencies in our military strength revealed by the newborn Korean War. His assessment of urgent needs included "two or three Marine Divisions, stationed at strategic locations, ready for quick movement to any part of the world."⁵² Unfortunately, by this time the Corps' strength had fallen to below 80,000, which was close to the "some 50,000 or 60,000 men" recommended in the JCS Series 1478 papers that Spaatz had supported. Then, in 1952, Congress passed the "Marine Corps Bill," which granted the commandant a seat on the JCS in matters relating to the Corps and set at three the standing level of Marine divisions and air wings. Department of Defense officials, the JCS, and President Truman all opposed the bill. Interestingly enough, the principal opposition spokesman was Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Forrest Sherman, who insisted that the CNO commanded the Marine Corps.⁵³

Reorganization Plan Number 6 of 1953 abolished certain joint agencies (replacing them with Assistant Secretaries of Defense), gave the Chairman of the JCS the responsibility for the organization and management of the Joint Staff, and made the selection and tenure of the Director and members subject to the Chairman's approval.

In 1958, the Defense Reorganization Act changed the 1949 requirement that the departments be separately organized by their respective secretaries and eliminated the 1949 absolute prohibition against transfers, reassignments, abolitions, or consolidations of the services' combatant functions. It permitted unlimited temporary changes during hostilities or a presidential finding of imminent threat of same, but restricted permanent changes to those that were not disapproved by a simple majority of either house of Congress within a limit of 70 days after submission to the two Armed Services Committees.

The act also increased the Joint Staff to 400 so an operational section for a new chain of command could be manned directly through the JCS to the unified field commands. The Chairman's authority was reduced somewhat by collectivizing the management of the Joint Staff and the selection of its Director. The members of the JCS retained the right to make recommendations to Congress "on their own initiative."¹⁴

In the 1944-1947 conflict, the Marines had feared that centralization would snuff out military diversity, ultimately leaving no place for the Corps. Since then, certain of their fears have been substantiated; others have not. The latent disadvantages of a centralized military establishment came forth during Robert McNamara's tenure as Secretary of Defense in the 1960s, by which time that position had been placed in the military chain of command. When they had focused on the single chief of staff in 1944-1947, the Marines had steadfastly condemned the concentration of power in the hands of any one man other than the President. The Army had banked its hopes on the single chief of staff, envisioning in the McNarney and Collins plans a substantially restrained overall secretary.

Ironically, the capture of military policy by civilians was unforeseen. Edson, who railed against "civilian meddling" as well as centralization, would have been stupefied under the tutelage of Secretary McNamara. By 1965, students of defense affairs expressed uneasiness over the Secretary of Defense as a potential "civilian on horseback," and termed as "ludicrous" the attribution of overwhelming shrewdness to military professionals when dealing with civilians. "The acknowledged excellence of a McNamara should not divert us from traditional precau-

tions against centralized authority outside the White House, whether exercised by a man in uniform or civilian clothes." "One can plead convincingly that the Secretary of Defense has become the single chief of staff, albeit in mufti.

Myriad studies on defense organization have been conducted. Among them, the Fitzhugh Blue Ribbon Defense Panel Report of July 1970 recommended reduction of the several unified commands to three "new major commands" under the responsibility of a "Deputy Secretary of Defense for Operations" and assignment of JCS responsibilities to a single senior military officer "as determined by the President and the Secretary of Defense." In keeping with the ongoing intrusion of the business mind into military matters, the panel noted there was too much emphasis on command experience in senior officers' promotions; adequate weight was not given to "executive management talent." "While other reports, such as Richard Steadman's *Report to the Secretary of Defense on the National Military Command Structure* in 1978, have been more carefully thought out, both point to an apparent irreversible trend in the defense structure toward centralization and away from practical, collective strategy-making.

In describing "the new civil-military relations" of the 1960s, Gene M. Lyons saw the military as continuing to put defense policy to the test of political accountability by exposing the bases for decisions to congressional and public inquiry. However, he concluded that centralization was "probably inevitable" due to increasing defense costs." Politicians, defense organizers, and military professionals continue to praise the benefits of conglomeration; those who question new centralist arrangements are considered wed to the past or, worse yet, wasteful. Clearly, rising costs and rapidly advancing technology require centralized control mechanisms. However, in pondering the lessons of Korea, Vietnam, and smaller campaigns, there is doubt as to whether the economic gains, if any, are worth the deleterious side effects; namely, the erosion of command prerogative.

In the mid-1950s, Huntington criticized the fusionist theory of political-military thought that encouraged political thinking by military officers and the assumption of political responsibilities by professional military institutions, specifically, the JCS. Although recognizing there was no purely military decision at the JCS level, he expressed the need for some "secure fount of impartial professional judgment." Huntington saw the fusionist theory as waning," though, here again, there is reason for doubt. If the professional influence of the JCS in the overall

civil-military balance counts for anything, the pendulum set swinging away from military control in 1947 has yet to reach the end of its arc. Once controversial because they were too powerful, the JCS are now criticized because they are too "political" and, above all, ineffectual.

The circumstances, times, and the JCS system itself have changed. Even its ardent defenders cannot deny that the influence of the JCS, as a body, has been diffused and supplanted by that of other agencies, most prominently, the NSC and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). Within this bureaucratic reality, which could not have been forecast in 1947, the military chiefs do not—indeed, could not—possess the independent stature of their predecessors, Marshall, King, et al. The Joint Staff can only clumsily provide input to the national security policymaking process, where it is outmaneuvered frequently by the smaller, more responsive staffs of other executive and legislative agencies. Having started with 100 officers, the Joint Staff now has 400. More precisely, it is authorized 400, a misleading figure because the entire Organization of the JCS (OJCS) totals over 1200 personnel—officers, enlisted, and civilians. To say the least, the JCS concept has not met the cherished hopes of the Marines and its other proponents in 1944–1947.

In a recent dissection of the present JCS and Joint Staff system, John Kester, a former Army and defense official, views it as a victim of compromise, tardy and low-quality work, and committee-type negotiations, all resulting from overexertion of individual service interests. Describing their contributions to the policymaking process as "slow, unimaginative, unhelpful, and indecisive," he suggests a multiservice "Defense General Staff" headed by a single officer with senior military assistants.⁹

Alas, there is much to be said for Kester's critique. It is exasperating that the highest military staff in the land, made up of excellent, proven leaders and personnel, has devolved to an organization constantly in search of institutional proceduralism and the lowest common denominator. In its halls, the simplest task is made complex. The present chairman, General David Jones, is reputedly prone to using ad hoc working groups drawn from the Joint Staff, leading one to conclude that he is less than taken with the efficiency of regular channels.

It remains to be seen whether the JCS system is as ineffective as charged. Kester's argument is incomplete. He brushes aside the congressional role, which accords with the best style of the executive branch, and, in a stance reminiscent of the 1944–47 Army position, is inspecific as to the details involved in implementing a defense general staff con-

cept. Most debatable is his advocacy of the participation of the chairman of the JCS in the planning, programming, and budgeting system (PPBS). Numerous questions obtain: Should the military advisor be separated from the responsibility to carry out that which he recommends? Who will answer to Congress, the service chief or the chiefs of the defense general staff? Which agency does the planning for longer term contingencies while the defense general staff and service chiefs are locked in resource allocation battles within the PPBS? How will officers be properly assigned to a true joint staff, as opposed to the present Joint Staff? The list begs for answers that are not readily apparent; nor are they visibly the subject of in-depth government study.

It is doubly ironic that the single chief of staff-general staff concept, the military united front that the Marine Corps so bitterly opposed in 1944-47, may now be the only feasible way to redress the present civil-military imbalance where civilians make military decisions and officers make civilian ones. Given the ebb and flow of our form of government, the JCS system may be the best that can be offered. If so, there is room for improvement. John Kester noted that the clock continues to move. So it does—much as it has since 1775.

Each operational deficiency, cost overrun, and error in judgment brings demands for further centralization. But decentralization may well be what is required. Although technological advances have forced increased specialization within each service, many benefits, if not cost-effectiveness, have derived from interservice competition, especially in the field of aircraft development. In doctrinal areas, extreme friction among air, land, and sea propositions—though often blindered—has radiated an appreciation of the magnitude of combined arms warfare in the officer corps at large. Military thought has not conformed to the desires of unification advocates, or will it in the foreseeable future; vital concepts cannot be allowed to dissipate while we seek to produce defense visionaries.

In 1950, General Omar Bradley pronounced the amphibious operation dead on arrival at the era of nuclear strategy. Scarcely half a year later, General MacArthur called for the Marines to land at Inchon, Korea, because no other effective amphibious force was ready and available. The military use of the helicopter, which the Army has since improved, was being pioneered by the Marine Corps when the unification conflict reached its peak. The burden of military innovation, made ponderous by scientific advances, becomes unbearable if saddled with overcentralization.

Just as skillful compromise is essential to democratic government, workable arrangements between centralization and decentralization are essential to government organizers. The framework of national security policy is rife with functional areas that can be appropriately decentralized; to do so would enrich military professionalism and civilian control without neglecting the exacting requirements of modernity. For example:

- Return more administrative responsibility to the civilian leaders of the military departments. This would (1) weaken connotations that the positions are honorific and strengthen their worthwhile role as adjudicator of OSD-service and interservice disagreement, and (2) relieve the Secretary of Defense of burdensome details, thereby enabling him to turn to broader policy matters.⁶⁰
- In an effort to redeem the JCS system, replace the chairman of the JCS in the chain of command and reduce the size of the OJCS. Within organizational reductions, give the chairman a larger personal staff and authority over the Joint Staff. Further, the Secretary of Defense should withdraw the chairman from PPBS deliberations and, at the same time, move to arrest the tendency of service programs to drive joint plans.
- Raise defense systems acquisition review thresholds to permit the military departments to function more freely and competitively in program development without undue interference from OSD.

The Marine Corps has always viewed centralization with foreboding, although the transitions have been less painful than anticipated. The "cat with more than nine lives," as Heintz was fond of describing the Corps, has survived comfortably. There was, of course, no other choice. Since 1952, there have been no major tests of the Corps' strength in Congress and among the general public to equal the 1944-1947 row and its immediate aftermath. In time of need, the Marine Corps will again look to Congress, notwithstanding tendencies toward centralism. Following the Vietnam War, Congress again reenergized its responsibilities for guiding military policy; unless the US opts for a single service defense system, as in Canada, the Corps will likely continue as the nation's force-in-readiness within one unified framework or another.

Today there is renewed, long-neglected interest in sea power to encourage the Navy-Marine partnership. The Vietnam War stirred only limited controversy over the use of Marines as a "second land army," when it was in fact as close as the Marine Corps has come over a sustained period to matching that specter. The military were too preoccupied to instigate a major interservice fight in the postwar wake of defense expenditure cuts, abolition of the draft, and large-scale disenchantment

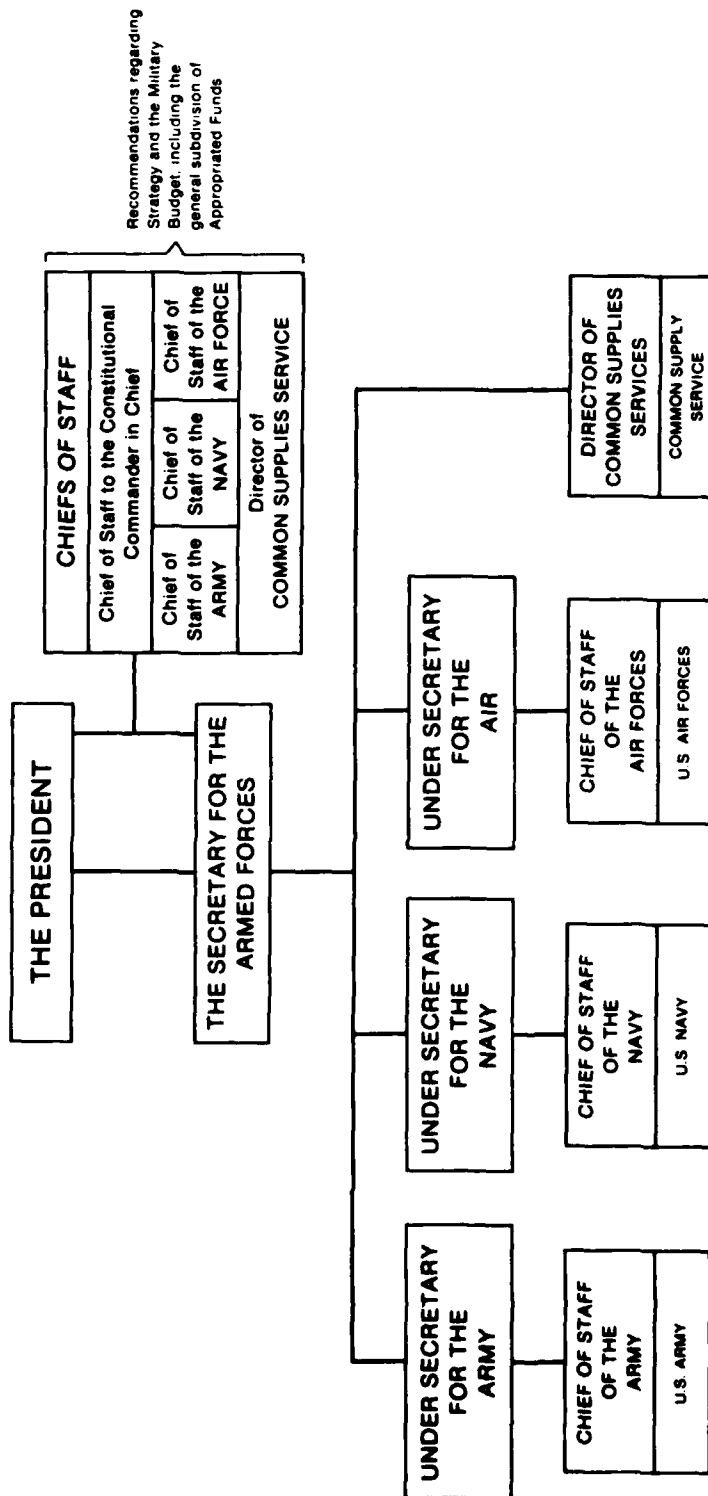
over the war. As in the convulsive post-Civil War period, the services looked inward for salvation. Tensions were so relaxed that, in 1978, the Commandant of the Marine Corps was legally and quietly ordained a full-fledged member of the JCS.

Even so (as General Thomas pointed out seven years earlier), Marines are well advised to "keep their powder dry." Their survival fights have been invaluable in one respect: The doubt, apprehension, and sheer exertion have served to keep the Corps introspective, organizationally lean, and rooted in traditional military values. So long as that outlook is maintained, the Marines will continue as an effective military force. To paraphrase General Vandegrift, the Marine Corps cannot rest its case on any presumed ground of gratitude owing it from the nation—if the Marine cannot make a case for himself, he must go.

APPENDIX: DEFENSE UNIFICATION PLANS

- **The McNarney Plan**
- **The Richardson Committee Plan**
- **The Eberstadt Plan**
- **The Collins Plan**
- **The National Security Act of 1947**

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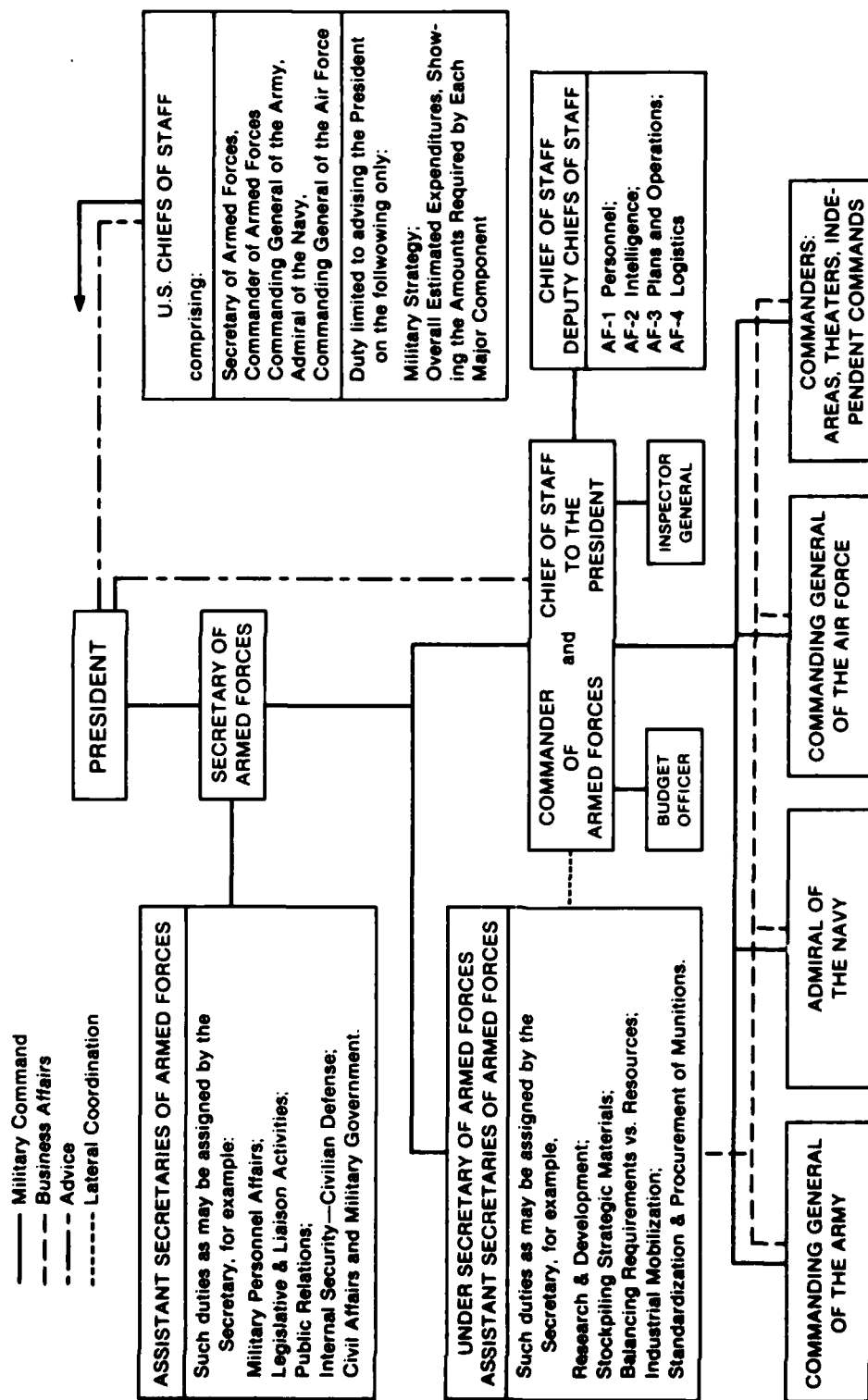


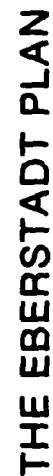
NOTE

Under the proposed reorganization the Chiefs of Staff would have the statutory duty to make recommendations direct to the President in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief regarding matters pertaining to strategy and the budgetary requirements involved, as indicated on the chart. The Chiefs of Staff would obtain the information regarding budgetary requirements by request to the Secretary of the Armed Forces and they would be required to furnish him with copies of their recommendations to the President in order that he may be prepared to exercise his duty as adviser to the President. Communications in all other matters would be channeled through and would be subject to the direction of the Secretary of the Armed Forces.

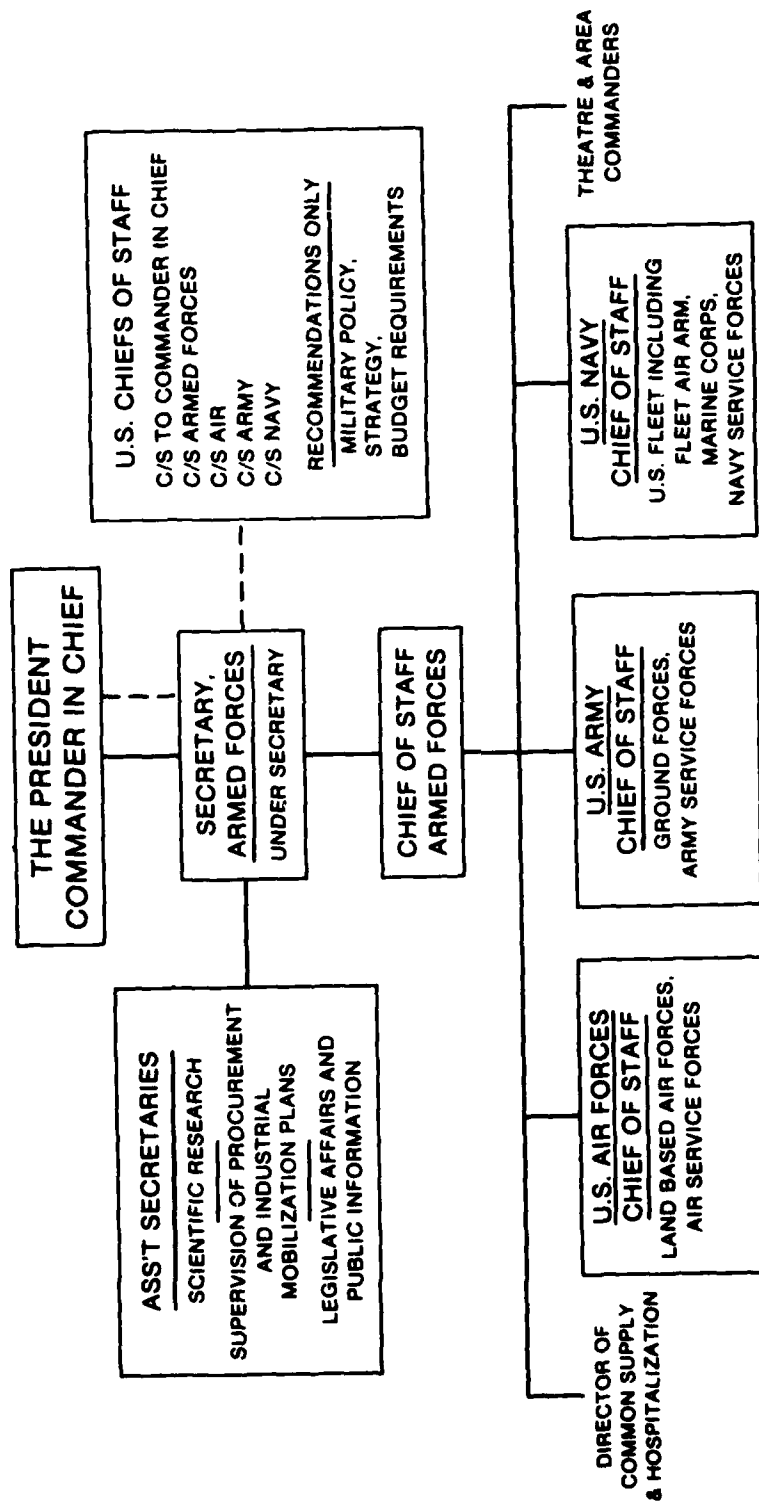
"By 'strategy' is meant the military posture and preparations of the United States in times of peace.

THE MCNARNEY PLAN

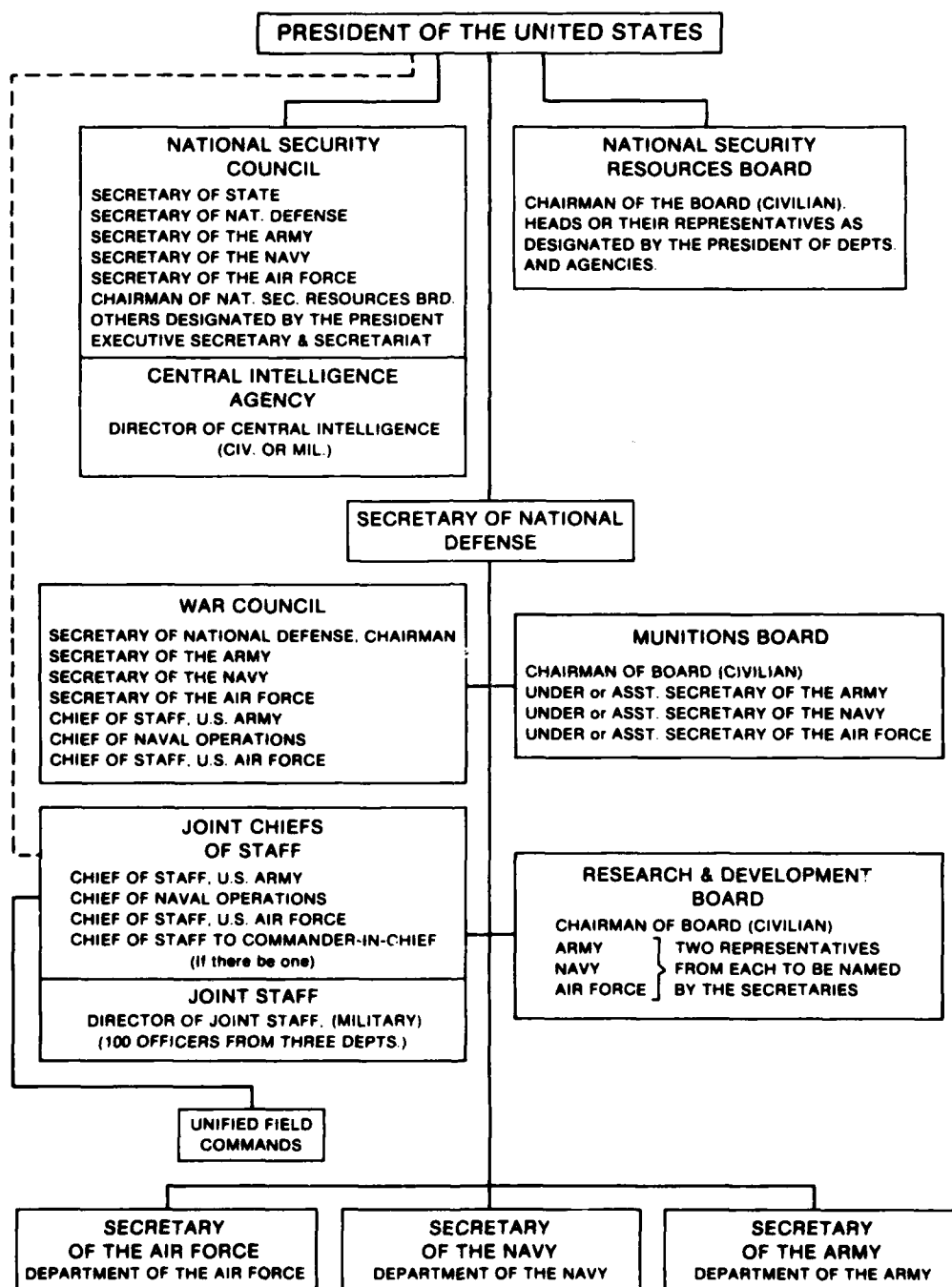




THE EBERSTADT PLAN



THE COLLINS PLAN



THE NATIONAL SECURITY ACT OF 1947

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8. Set up in the fall of 1945 as a unification think-tank and organ to sell the Navy program through press, radio, and speaking engagements, SCOROR was actually an extension of Forrestal's special "task force" idea, conceived but not implemented in May 1944. See Ibid., p. 219. In a personal letter, Colonel Heinl identified SCOROR as "much more than a selling, PIO-like organization," although the agency's activities were eventually impeded by reluctant leadership.
9. Questionnaire, Twining; interviews, Heinl and Thomas.
10. Questionnaire, Twining; questionnaire, Lt. Gen. Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.), September 1970.

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31. *Ibid.*, pp. 70–71.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

33. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 473.

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35. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 98–104.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 106–109.

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40. Vandegrift and Asprey, p. 307.

41. Questionnaire, Twining.

42. Interview, Thomas; interviews with Brig. Gen. Samuel R. Shaw, USMC (Ret.), and Maj. Gen. James M. Platt, USMC (Ret.); August 1970; question-

naire, Krulak. In this regard, Krulak felt "some" Navy officers (such as Admirals Radford and Ostfie) did believe that an effective Marine Corps was vital to the naval service.

43. Vandegrift and Asprey, p. 304.

44. Interview, Shaw.

45. Interviews, Thomas and Shaw.

46. Interviews, Thomas, Heint, and Shaw; questionnaires, Krulak and Twining.

47. For details, see Heint's *Soldiers of the Sea*, pp. 439-48, and Phillip A. Crowl's *Campaign in the Marianas* (Washington: Department of the Army, 1959), pp. 191-202.

48. Interviews, Thomas and Heint.

Chapter V

1. Caraley, *The Politics of Military Unification*, pp. 126-27.

2. Interview, Heint.

3. US, Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, H. Rept. 961 (National Security Act of 1947), 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, *House Miscellaneous Reports* 5:13-14.

4. Heint, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 515.

5. H. Rept. 961 (National Security Act of 1947), *House Miscellaneous Reports*, 5:13.

6. "Planning Smaller Land Army," *The United States News*, 8 March 1946, p. 16.

7. Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, pp. 115-16, 149.

8. Caraley, p. 129.

9. *Harry S Truman—Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, January 1 to December 31, 1946* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 194-95.

10. Millis, pp. 151-52.

11. Caraley, p. 130.

12. *Harry S Truman—Public Papers of the Presidents, 1946*, pp. 202-4.

13. Millis, pp. 118-21.

14. Vandegrift and Asprey, *Once A Marine*, pp. 312-13.

15. US, Congress, Senate, Committee on Naval Affairs, *Hearings on S. 2044 (a bill to unify departments and agencies relating to the Common Defense)*, 79th Cong., 2d sess., 1946, pp. 1-9. (hereafter cited as *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*).

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-55.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-104.

18. *Ibid.*, 104.

19. Interview, Heint; questionnaires, Krulak and Twining.

20. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 105-17.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 118-19.
22. Heintz, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 517.
23. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 120-25.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 127-46.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 165-88.
27. Caraley, p. 131.
28. Millis, pp. 161-62.
29. US, Congress, Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on S. 758 (National Security Act of 1947)*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, p. 6 (hereafter cited as *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*).
30. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 348-51.
31. Millis, pp. 163-65.
32. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 203-7.
33. Millis, p. 166.
34. *Harry S Truman—Public Papers of the Presidents, 1946*, p. 288.
35. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 207-8.
36. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2:51.
37. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 208-9.
38. Millis, pp. 169-70.
39. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, p. 211.
40. Caraley, p. 140.
41. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 211-19, 227.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 228-33.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 239-48.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 258-59.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 277-80.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 285-86.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 313-14.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 348.
49. Caraley, p. 143.
50. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearing*, pp. 107, 111-12.
51. Interview, Heintz.
52. Hoare, "Truman," in *The Ultimate Decision*, pp. 184-85.
53. Millis, p. 152-53.
54. Caraley, pp. 145-46.
55. David Lawrence, "Why Punish the Navy?" *The United States News*, 19 April 1946, pp. 32-33.

Chapter VI

1. Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, pp. 201-2.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 204-5.

3. Caraley, *The Politics of Military Unification*, p. 148.
4. Ibid., p. 150.
5. Vandegrift and Asprey, *Once A Marine*, p. 318.
6. Interviews, Thomas, Shaw, Heint, and Platt; questionnaires, Twining and Krulak.
7. Interview, Thomas; letter, Heint.
8. Caraley, pp. 151-52.
9. Millis, p. 224.
10. Caraley, p. 152.
11. Millis, pp. 225-27.
12. Heint, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 516.
13. Caraley, p. 152.
14. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 2-4.
15. *Harry S Truman—Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, January 1 to December 31, 1947* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 99.
16. Caraley, pp. 154-55.
17. Vandegrift and Asprey, *Once A Marine*, pp. 321-22.
18. Millis, pp. 230-31.
19. Ibid., p. 179.
20. Questionnaire, Twining. It should be noted that General Twining is an extremely valuable source as regards Air Corps goals and activities. His brother, Nathan F. Twining, was at the time an Air Corps general officer and later Chief of Staff of the Air Force.
21. Heint, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 512.
22. Interview, Platt. The general called Headquarters, Marine Corps, and checked his Officer's Qualification Record to verify the title, dates, and members of the Edson-Thomas board from the appointment order.
23. Heint, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 512-13.
24. Interview, Shaw; questionnaires, Twining and Krulak. Generals Twining and Krulak credit Hutchins with a major contribution to the project; he was not mentioned by those interviewed in August 1970, and time did not permit a followup on his efforts.
25. Interview, Platt (appointment order in his Officer's Qualification Record).
26. Interviews, Thomas, Heint, Shaw, and Platt.
27. Questionnaire, Krulak.
28. Interview, Shaw.
29. Questionnaire, Krulak.
30. Interviews, Heint and Thomas.
31. Questionnaire, Krulak.
32. Interview with Brig. Gen. Edward H. Hurst, USMC (Ret.), August 1970; bibliographic information, Historical Division, Headquarters, Marine Corps.
33. Interview, Shaw; interview with Brig. Gen. James D. Hittle, USMC (Ret.), August 1970; letter from Brig. Gen. E. C. Dyer, USMC (Ret.), October 1970.

34. Interview, Heint.
35. Interview, Platt.
36. Millis, pp. 152-53.
37. *1946 Senate Naval Affairs Committee Hearings*, p. 277.
38. "Brass vs. Braid," *Newsweek*, 21 October 1946, p. 41.
39. Tris Coffin, "Nobody's Damn Business," *The Nation*, 19 October 1946, pp. 425-27.
40. Caraley, p. 236.
41. Letter, Harry S Truman to Gen. C. B. Cates, USMC, 6 September 1950. The President apologized for a letter he had sent to a congressman the week before, in which the Marines were described as the "Navy's police force" with a propaganda network "equal to Stalin's."
42. Heint, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 507.
43. Vandegrift and Asprey, p. 323.
44. Interviews, Heint, Hurst, Shaw, and Thomas. Heint also worked with the influential pundit, Mark Sullivan, who was, however, finally persuaded to a pro-War Department position by Patterson, McCloy, and Eisenhower.
45. Truman, *Memoirs*, 1: 328-30.
46. Millis, p. xviii.
47. Caraley, p. 144.
48. *Harry S. Truman—Public Papers of the Presidents, 1946*, p. 226.
49. Caraley, p. 147.
50. Millis, pp. 218, 294.

Chapter VII

1. Caraley, *The Politics of Military Unification*, p. 155.
2. Hammond, *Organizing for Defense*, pp. 221-22. Hammond holds that thereafter the White House drafted the bill; however, according to the Marine participants and testimony at later hearings, the bill remained essentially a Norstad-Sherman creation. Budget Director Webb was a Marine Reservist (letter, Heint).
3. Caraley, p. 155.
4. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 12-21.
5. Hammond, p. 228.
6. Caraley, pp. 156-60.
7. Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, p. 152.
8. Heint, *Soldiers of the Sea*, p. 517.
9. US, Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, *Hearings on H.R. 2519 (National Security Act of 1947)*, 80th Cong., 1st sess. 1947, pp. 635, 655-66 (hereafter cited as *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*).
10. Caraley, pp. 220-24.

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11. Interview, Heint.
12. Senator E. V. Robertson, *Draft of Resolution to American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts*, 11 January 1947.
13. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 21-53.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-76.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-101, 114-15.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 129-36.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-77, 191-95.
19. Interview, Shaw.
20. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, p. 131.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 296-97.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 347-57, 362, 374.
23. Millis, pp. 269-272.
24. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, p. 582; interview, Hittle.
25. Vandegrift and Asprey, *Once A Marine*, pp. 323-24.
26. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 420-31, 582.
27. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 434-35; Interview, Shaw. At the time, Edson-Thomas Board members, specifically Shaw and Twining who had predicted them before they were "leaked" to the *New York Times*, were studying the Lutes 2 proposals. These concerned a number of single procurement and transportation measures and were "top secret," although Shaw notes that they deserved no classification whatsoever. The proposals were based on the typically attractive notion that great economic benefits would result from centralization. By the time the Marines reacted to the "leak," Lutes 1 had its desired effect as solid evidence that "unification" was essential.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 440-43.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 447-51.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 565, 568-71.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 583-89.
32. Interview, Heint.
33. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 599-608, 618-20, 627-29.
34. Richard Tregaskis, "The Marine Corps Fights for Its Life," *Saturday Evening Post*, 5 February 1948, p. 105.
35. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, pp. 676-77, 681-94.
36. Caraley, pp. 167-68.
37. US, Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 3-19 July 1947, 93, pt. 7:8295-98, 8302-6, 8524, 8527.

Chapter VIII

1. Interview, Heint.
2. Interviews, Hittle and Shaw.
3. "Merger: Tell It to the Marines," *Newsweek*, 5 May 1947, p. 26.
4. Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, p. 273.
5. *1947 Senate Armed Services Committee Hearings*, p. 590.
6. Interviews, Hittle and Shaw.
7. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, p. 1.
8. Interviews, Hittle and Shaw.
9. Interview, Heint.
10. Interview, Hittle.
11. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 45-48, 86-87, 91-92.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-6, 108, 129, 192.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-39, 191, 202, 215.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 192, 204.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 193.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 245-53, 259, 264.
19. Interviews, Heint and Shaw.
20. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 273-75.
21. Vandegrift and Asprey, *Once A Marine*, pp. 324-25.
22. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 280, 320, 325.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 330-31.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 348, 355.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
26. Caraley, p. 230.
27. Interviews, Heint and Shaw. Platt's Officer's Qualification Record lists board dates as 14 March-6 May 1947.
28. Tregaskis, "The Marine Corps Fights for Its Life," p. 21.
29. Millis, p. 295.
30. Interview, Heint; Vandegrift and Asprey, p. 326; Tregaskis, p. 104; questionnaire, Twining.
31. Interviews, Heint and Shaw; questionnaire, Krulak.
32. Caraley, p. 231; questionnaire, Twining.
33. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 365-66, 368, 376.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 382-85, 387.
35. Interviews, Hittle and Platt.
36. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 453-59, 463-65, 468-74.
37. *Ibid.*, 482-83.
38. J. Lawton Collins, "National Security: The Military Viewpoint," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 1 June 1947, pp. 488-92. This speech was delivered to the National Councillors of the Chamber of Commerce in late April 1947. Collins

called the "current legislation" sound and denied any attempts to do away with the Corps—"We . . . have never advocated such a thing."

39. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, p. 635.
40. Millis, pp. 292.
41. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 665-66.
42. Caraley, pp. 231-32.
43. Questionnaire, Twining.
44. Caraley, p. 232.
45. H. Rept. 961 (National Security Act of 1947), *House Miscellaneous Reports*, 5:2-5, 7-15.
46. Caraley, pp. 179-81.
47. Letter, Heinl; Vandegraft and Asprey, p. 326.
48. Caraley, pp. 180-81, 233 and US, Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, H. Rept. 1051 (National Security Act of 1947), 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, *House Miscellaneous Reports*, 5:7-8.
49. Tregaskis, p. 106 and Caraley, p. 233.
50. *Harry S Truman—Public Papers of the Presidents, 1947*, pp. 359-61, and Millis, pp. 294-96. Forrestal noted that Judge Patterson was Truman's first choice but was intent on retiring to private life.
51. Millis, p. 294.
52. H. Rept. 1051 (National Security of 1947), *House Miscellaneous Reports*, pp. 2-13.
53. Ibid.

Chapter IX

1. Interview, Shaw.
2. Hammond, *Organizing for Defense*, pp. 23-24.
3. Ibid., p. 12; also, James D. Hittle, *The Military Staff*, 3d ed., (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Company, 1961), pp. 203-6.
4. Hittle, *The Military Staff*, p. 214.
5. Brig. Gen. James D. Hittle, USMC (Ret.), *Address on Defense Organization*, presented at 8th Annual Dinner of the Naval Reserve Intelligence Officers, New York, 7 December 1960.
6. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, p. 455.
7. *1945 Senate Military Affairs Committee Hearings*, pp. 147-50.
8. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, p. 310.
9. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, pp. 342-44.
10. Interview, Thomas.
11. Heinl, *Soldiers of the Sea*, pp. 38-40.
12. Ibid., pp. 153-59.
13. Robert D. Heinl, Jr., "The Cat with More Than Nine Lives," *US Naval Institute Proceedings* 80, no. 6 (June 1954): 659, 671.

14. Huntington, pp. 420-21.
15. Interview with Dr. Samuel P. Huntington, October 1970. Huntington felt that the mutual exclusivity of the two theories was "reasonable."
16. Huntington, p. 191.
17. Ibid., p. 81.
18. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2:478.
19. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, p. 122.
20. Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), p. 356.
21. Huntington, pp. 418-21.
22. Ibid.
23. Janowitz, p. 358.
24. Caraley, *The Politics of Military Unification*, pp. 186-87.
25. Ibid.
26. Interview, Shaw.
27. Interview, Platt.
28. Graham Wootton, *Interest Groups* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 17.
29. Janowitz, p. 343.
30. Wootton, p. 83.
31. Interview, Thomas; questionnaire, Twining.
32. Interview, Platt.
33. Wootton, p. 19.
34. Interview, Heini.
35. Wootton, p. 19.
36. *1947 House Expenditures Committee Hearings*, pp. 95, 188.
37. Huntington, pp. 70-74.
38. Interview, Huntington.
39. Huntington, p. 67.
40. Interview, Heini.
41. Interview, Hittle.
42. Caraley, p. 210.
43. Huntington, p. 177.
44. Janowitz, p. 359.
45. Interview, Huntington.
46. Questionnaire, Krulak.
47. Huntington, pp. 417-18.
48. Interview, Shaw.
49. Janowitz, p. 343.
50. Millis, *The Forrestal Diaries*, pp. 333, 369-70.
51. Caraley, pp. 280-81.
52. Carl Spaatz, "More Men, Carriers, Planes—Now!" *Newsweek*, 17 July 1950, p. 19.
53. Heini, *Soldiers of the Sea*, pp. 580-82.
54. Caraley, pp. 281-82.

55. Jack Raymond, "The McNamara Monarchy," in *American Defense Policy*, ed. Mark E. Smith III and Claude J. Johns, Jr. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), pp. 405-14.

56. US, Department of Defense, *Report to the President and the Secretary of Defense on the Department of Defense by the Blue Ribbon Defense Panel* (Washington, 1 July 1970), pp. 55-57, 139-41.

57. Gene M. Lyons, "The New Civil-Military Relations," in *American Defense Policy*, ed. Smith and Johns, pp. 392-405.

58. Huntington, pp. 350-354, pp. 459-60.

59. John G. Kester, "The Future of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," *AEI Foreign Policy and Defense Review*, 2, no. 1 (February 1980): 2-23.

60. Richard J. Dakeski, in *Defense Management in the 1980s: The Role of the Service Secretaries*, National Security Affairs Monograph 80-8 (Washington, DC: NDU Press, 1980), presents interesting case studies that support this thesis.

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