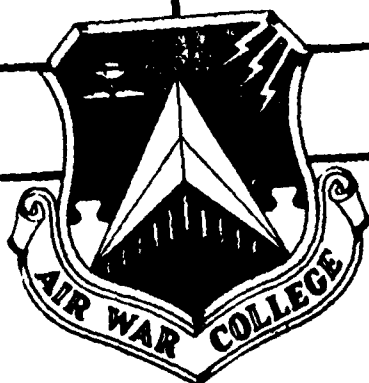


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AIR WAR COLLEGE

RESEARCH REPORT

LEADERSHIP IN WAR AND PEACE:
A HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT FOR TODAY

LT COL JOHN R. GREEN

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AIR UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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LEADERSHIP IN WAR AND IN PEACE: A HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT
FOR TODAY

by

John R. Green
Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM
REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Colonel Bryan D. Strickland

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

May 1989

DISCLAIMER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Leadership in War and in Peace--A Historical
Assessment for Today

AUTHOR: John R. Green, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

The paper addresses the question of applicability of peacetime leadership qualities in wartime leadership roles for senior officers. A detailed study of the leadership of five outstanding US military leaders is provided. Subjects are Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower, George S. Brown and Curtis E. Lemay, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and General George S. Patton, Jr. For each of the leaders, the study provides descriptions and examples of their key leadership attributes, an analysis of the probable origins of these traits, and an assessment of the contribution of these qualities to these leaders' success, both in war and in peace. The paper concludes by weighing the relevance of the findings of the historical study to today's senior officers.



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel John R. Green (B.S. Eng., Widener College, M.S.E.E., Air Force Institute of Technology, M.B.A., Marymount University, Air Command and Staff College) has essentially been in development and acquisition for the bulk of his career. His last assignment was as special assistant to the Director of Electronic Combat under the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Acquisition). He had previously completed a variety of development and acquisition tours in both the Air Force Systems Command and the Air Force Logistics Command, and as an exchange officer in the Canadian National Defense Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada. Lieutenant Colonel Green is a graduate of the Air War College, Class of 1989.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There is a great body of writing on the subject of combat leadership for senior officers. Hundreds of books on the subject have been written by those who have been in leadership positions during wartime. Also, each of the military services has introduced its most promising senior leadership candidates to the great breadth of this knowledge by exposing them to lecturers at war colleges and various symposia, speaking on outstanding wartime leaders. It would seem that virtually every conceivable aspect of the subject has been explored. What then is the reason for yet another lengthy discourse on combat leadership?

Rationale

The rationale for this study is that there is a need to attempt to fill two distinct voids left by authors and speakers who address the subject of wartime leadership of senior officers. Most of these experts seem to focus almost exclusively on merely describing, by example, the wartime leadership qualities of outstanding leaders. The first void this narrow approach creates is that these writers and lecturers rarely offer little direct insight into the origins of the leadership traits they describe. This shortcoming leaves unanswered a number of critical questions regarding

these leadership attributes. Were they a part of the character and environment in which the individual leaders were raised? Were they learned during the leaders' peacetime military service? Were they simply adopted out of the necessity imposed by wartime conditions?

A second void in our understanding is created because those addressing wartime senior leadership almost never explain why the leadership characteristics they describe are relevant to today's senior leaders. Understanding this relevance, or lack thereof, is of prime importance today. It has been nearly 15 years since the US has been involved in protracted combat. An increasing number of our current senior officers have never served in a wartime environment. Many of these senior leaders are heavily involved with the day-to-day bureaucratic tasks associated with running a peacetime military such as advocating new weapons programs, allocating resources and establishing requirements. Will this lack of wartime service and deep involvement in "non-warrior" tasks be detrimental to their effectiveness in future wars? What does history tell us with regard to this issue? We need answers to these questions.

The Approach

The study will address the questions mentioned above by using a historical framework based on the lives and careers of five outstanding wartime leaders: General of the

Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, General George S. Brown (USAF), General Curtis E. Lemay (USAF), Admiral of the Fleet Chester W. Nimitz, and General George S. Patton, Jr. (USA). The goal will be to identify and illustrate senior leadership traits that made these leaders successful during wartime, determine the origin of these qualities and assess what role they played in elevation of these individuals to positions of high rank and responsibility. The study then will explore the relevance of these attributes to today's senior leaders.

Limitations

To probe into the lives of outstanding leaders to the extent required by this analysis, military leaders covered by the study were selected for which there is well-documented material covering their entire lives. For this reason, only senior officers for which full-length, comprehensive biographies exist were used. Also, to maximize objectivity, biographies versus autobiographies were used wherever possible. These constraints essentially limited the study choices to a small number of well-known senior leaders who held flag rank during a substantial part of their wartime service.

The next chapter begins the discussion of the first of the five great leaders in the study, General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL OF THE ARMY DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

For two reasons, General Eisenhower is a very good model for study of wartime versus peacetime leadership. First, his life is well documented by a number of superb writers. Second, prior to World War Two (WWII), Eisenhower never held a combat command or even served in combat. This fact allows us to examine the origin of his leadership qualities prior to WWII, without the possible distortion that might occur by his having served as a combat leader in prior wars. Whatever leadership qualities he displayed prior to WWII were not gleaned from previous combat or wartime leadership experience.

Career Summary

Eisenhower was born in 1890 in Denison, Texas. His family later moved to Abilene, Kansas, where he spent the remainder of his life until he entered West Point in 1911. After West Point, despite attempts to get into combat in WWI, Eisenhower had a series of routine staff assignments in the US lasting until 1922. During this period, he became associated with then Colonel George S. Patton, Jr, who shared Eisenhower's belief that tanks would play a significant role in any future wars. In 1922, Eisenhower attended the Army Command and General Staff College and showed great

promise by graduating first in his class of 275. He then attended the Army War College at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. From 1930-1939, Eisenhower served as a staff officer under General Douglas MacArthur during MacArthur's tenure as Army Chief of Staff and later during MacArthur's assignment to the Philippines. After Pearl Harbor, Eisenhower was promoted to brigadier general and served as a war plans officer and special assistant under General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. He was promoted to major general in June 1942 and named commander of the European theater of operations for the Allies. During the war, he became the Supreme Allied Commander, reached five-star rank, directed the Normandy invasion and orchestrated the subsequent defeat of Germany on the Western front. Following the war, he served as the first NATO commander, Army Chief of Staff and was subsequently elected President of the US for two terms (1952-1960) (1:1-142).

Leadership Qualities

What leadership qualities did General Eisenhower demonstrate as a leader in WWII? The five qualities that seem to stand out are: ability to maintain focus, concern for people, decisiveness, personal courage and selflessness.

Eisenhower, on multiple occasions, demonstrated the first of these attributes, the ability to maintain focus on

an objective and produce quality results despite overpowering outside pressures and high personal disappointments. Nowhere was this quality more evident than in his dealings with Winston Churchill and Field Marshal Montgomery. Eisenhower had an ongoing day-to-day struggle with Churchill on the subject of allied strategy. Churchill wanted to focus on attacking Germany on the periphery--North Africa, Greece or Norway. Eisenhower believed that the quickest route to victory was through a direct amphibious assault on the French coast. The American military chiefs supported Eisenhower and would not yield to Churchill. Churchill finally went over their heads directly to President Roosevelt. Roosevelt agreed with Churchill, and Eisenhower was ordered to proceed with the invasion of North Africa (1:105).

Roosevelt's decision was very distasteful to Eisenhower because of all the wasted planning for the Normandy invasion, because it would result in delaying that invasion until sometime in 1944 and because of his strong personal belief that invasion in France was the correct approach. In this instance, Eisenhower had his professional military advice pushed aside by his own commander-in-chief, Roosevelt, based on the advice of a non-military leader of another country.

Under these conditions, an officer of lesser character than Eisenhower might have acted sluggishly or even resigned. However, Eisenhower kept the prime objective--defeat of the Germans--in focus. Probably the greatest evidence of this focus was his non-parochial approach toward the British. A British leader, Churchill, had resulted in Eisenhower's advice being overruled, yet Eisenhower never allowed his distaste for Churchill's efforts to interfere with his determination to build a winning US-British team to defeat the Germans. He would tolerate nothing which in any way threatened this concept of Anglo-American teamwork. On one occasion, he learned that an American general had boasted publically "he would show the British how to fight". He immediately relieved the general and sent him home. In another instance, he looked into an incident involving a British and American officer and confirmed that the American had called the British officer a "son-of-a-bitch". Eisenhower relieved the American, reduced him in rank and sent him home. The British officer involved protested to Eisenhower, saying that the British had come to understand American slang and that the term "son-of-a-bitch" was often even a statement of endearment. Eisenhower replied that the American had called the British officer "a British son-of-a-bitch", and that was an entirely a different matter (1:107).

The other chief test of Eisenhower's ability to maintain focus on the task at hand was his having to deal with General Montgomery. Montgomery wanted to execute a "breakthrough" strategy, where the Allies would concentrate and break through the German defenses. Eisenhower's plan was to attack all across the front until the Germans collapsed at some point (1:155). After the Normandy invasion, Montgomery continuously ignored Eisenhower's directives while assuring Eisenhower that he was really following his (Eisenhower's) orders (1:157). Montgomery even directly accused Eisenhower of incompetence. Every American and British officer on Eisenhower's staff urged him to go to Roosevelt and Churchill and have Montgomery fired. But Eisenhower, never losing sight of the objective of beating the Germans, saw the necessity of keeping him because Montgomery was an outstanding ground commander and would be needed in the drive to defeat the Germans after the Normandy invasion. Again, Eisenhower had refused to allow anything to interfere with the task at hand.

Another famous incident involved General Patton. Patton had visited a field hospital and noticed an unwounded soldier sitting in the hospital. Patton asked the soldier what was wrong with him and the soldier replied that it was his "nerves". Patton then struck the soldier and accused him of being a coward. When Eisenhower learned of the incident,

he ordered Patton to apologize to the soldier and to Patton's entire command, one organization at a time. Despite enormous political and media pressure to relieve Patton, court martial him and return him to the US, Eisenhower refused. Once again, he would not allow the objective to be short-changed. He knew that Patton, like Montgomery, would be needed for the drive into Germany (1:130-131).

A second key leadership quality demonstrated by Eisenhower was his genuine concern for people and the preservation of their dignity. He frequently visited with the troops in the field. He particularly enjoyed visiting and talking with ordinary soldiers and was deeply concerned about their well-being. In one memorable instance, he was visiting with 101st Airborne Division paratroops just prior to their drop into France on D-Day. His intelligence chief had briefed him that the paratroops would land in a heavily defended area and would sustain very heavy casualties. After Eisenhower finished his visit and had walked away from the troops, a reporter noticed that silent tears rolled down Eisenhower's cheeks. Eisenhower had been deeply moved by the prospect that many of the young men he had just talked to would not be returning alive (1:8).

Eisenhower again showed his concern for the common soldier after the invasion of Italy. He was being escorted around the Isle of Capri on a post-invasion inspection.

Aides pointed out some elegant harbor-side homes and told Eisenhower that these homes were being set aside for use by a number of allied general officers. Eisenhower then asked what general a particular home was reserved for and was told that it was reserved for him (Eisenhower). He then pointed to another home, asked the same question and was told that the home was for General Carl Spaatz, his senior American air officer. This time he went into a rage and stated that this was not a recreation area for the brass and that the homes were not to be claimed by himself, Spaatz or any other senior officer, but rather reserved for the troops who had been in front line combat during the invasion (1:136).

Another incident in North Africa shows the depth of Eisenhower's consideration for subordinates. His driver, a young sergeant, was taking Eisenhower to the scene of the Kasserine Pass battle and Eisenhower was asleep in the back seat of the jeep. Suddenly, Eisenhower was jolted awake and found himself out of the car and on the ground. Eisenhower noticed that his driver was pinned under the overturned jeep. Even though he was in considerable pain, Eisenhower's first concern was for his driver. He saw the young man pinned beneath the overturned jeep and asked him how badly he was hurt. The driver replied that he was not injured but could not get out from under the jeep. Eisenhower proceeded, despite his badly strained back, to rock the jeep enough

for the driver to get free. He and Eisenhower then turned the jeep upright. When the driver tried to apologize, saying that the accident was his fault because he had carelessly fallen asleep at the wheel, Eisenhower replied, "Don't worry about it boy, if I'd been driving I'd have done the same."
(2:163)

Eisenhower's concern for people was not limited to spontaneous incidents like the jeep accident. At each visit in the field with the troops, Eisenhower set aside time for probing the condition of the enlisted men. After his arrival at a unit, Eisenhower would randomly pick out a soldier standing in the ranks and ask him to go for a walk with him. Eisenhower's down-to-earth talk would soon set the soldier at ease. At that point, Eisenhower would ask, "What's bothering you son", and the young man would talk freely about whatever concerned him. Eisenhower would assure the man that if there was any way he (Eisenhower) could help, he would. These were not empty promises; Eisenhower had his staff take whatever action was warranted and he followed up. These kind of "field talks" were Eisenhower's way of keeping in contact with the common soldier (2:240).

Decisiveness was a third significant Eisenhower quality. There are two good examples of this attribute that occurred during WWII. The first concerns Eisenhower's decision to launch the invasion of Sicily. The weather

created heavy seas and threatened to postpone the invasion. His staff officers attempted to have Eisenhower delay the invasion. However, the weather officer predicted a lull in the weather by the evening of the day prior to the invasion. Eisenhower knew that delaying the invasion would have meant a minimum wait of three weeks and would have increased the probability of German defenses being strengthened. Going ahead as planned, risked heavy casualties and even failure and retreat. Eisenhower did not ask higher headquarters to make the decision or provide him guidance. He was on the scene, had the best information available and made the decision to proceed on his own (1:126, 3:353).

Probably the most famous and difficult decision Eisenhower made was that of launching the Normandy invasion. The situation was similar to that in Sicily. The weather was bad--high winds, driving rain, overcast skies and rough seas in the English channel. The stakes and risks were much higher than they had been in Sicily. The bad weather precluded the use of allied airpower--support that Eisenhower deemed essential to success. At risk were 39 divisions of Allied soldiers. The Germans had a potential defending force of some 59 divisions, and those in the vicinity of the Normandy beachhead were strongly entrenched (1:159).

To postpone the invasion again (it had already been delayed twice) would have forced delaying it for at least

three months so that the proper combination of low tides and full moonlight would be available. Low tide conditions were essential because the Germans had placed obstacles and mines to be just beneath the water at high and medium tides and the invasion forces needed to be able to see them. Moonlight was necessary for the glider pilots to see well enough to drop paratroops. Also, delaying for three months would increase the risk of failure because it would allow the Germans to strengthen fortifications (1:149-151, 3:356).

The weather officer told Eisenhower that a break in the weather was possible on the night of June 5. Weighing all of these factors, Eisenhower alone made the decision to go on June 6. The risk Eisenhower attached to the decision can be appreciated by the fact that he wrote the following potential press release before dawn on the day of the invasion:

Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops...my decision to attack at this time and place was based on the best information available. The troops, the air, the Navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone (1:152).

Fortunately, he never had to issue the release.

The Eisenhower ability to make tough decisions was closely tied to another of his qualities, selflessness. He simply was not worried about preserving his place in history or embellishing his accomplishments. One month after the war

in Europe ended, Eisenhower was giving a talk at a London function given to honor him. He said:

No man alone could have brought about this result (victory in Europe). Had I possessed the military skill of a Marlborough, the wisdom of Solomon, the understanding of Lincoln, I still would have been helpless without the loyalty, vision, and generosity of thousands of British and Americans (1:204).

Another example of Eisenhower's selfless disregard for his own career occurred while he worked as an assistant to General George Marshall in Washington in December of 1942. At the time, Eisenhower was a brigadier general working on war plans. One day, in Eisenhower's presence, Marshall launched into a tirade about how promotions would go to field commanders, and not to staff officers. Marshall said that although he knew that he (Eisenhower) had been recommended for division command and promotion, he (Eisenhower) was going to "stay right here and do your job." Eisenhower replied:

General, I'm interested in what you say, but I want you to know that I don't give a damn about your promotion plans as far as I'm concerned. I came into this office...and I am trying to do my duty. I expect to do so as long as you want me here. If that takes the rest of the war, so be it! (1:84-85)

Eisenhower also believed that selflessness was an important quality for subordinates. Once, just after D-Day, when he was visiting Eisenhower, Marshall asked Eisenhower to identify the most important quality that he looked for in choosing a senior commander. Eisenhower immediately replied, "Selflessness." (3:336)

Another example of Eisenhower's feeling about selflessness and the role of the commander was a comment he made years after WWII. Eisenhower had been criticized by a particular writer for not having been "more active" in the prosecution of WWII in Europe. In response, Eisenhower wrote:

I learned that there is a priority of procedure in preparing for and carrying forward great tasks that the leader ignores at his peril. People close to a respected or liked commander fear he is losing his stature and urge the "squelching" of a Montgomery or a Bradley or a Patton; the seizing of the limelight in order to personalize the campaign for the troops and the public. But obviously in the hurly burly of a military campaign--or a political effort--loyal, effective subordinates are mandatory. To tie them to the leader with unbreakable bonds one rule must always be observed--Take full responsibility, promptly for everything that remotely resembles failure--give extravagant public praise to all subordinates for every success. The method is slow--but its results endure! (4:139)

Certainly, Eisenhower possessed a number of obvious leadership characteristics but one which was not so obvious was personal courage. Although he was Supreme Allied Commander, he refused to run the war from his office and spent fully one-third of his time in the field. Eisenhower once got into the back of a P-51 fighter flown by Major General Elwood "Pete" Quesada and directed Quesada to fly him, at low level, over the front lines in France. They repeatedly flew back and forth over the battle raging below so that Eisenhower could observe the action (3:375-376).

When Eisenhower flew to visit field commanders and troops, it was often in hazardous weather. One on occasion, he was to be flown to Gibraltar. It was overcast and the airfield was muddy and rainsoaked. Eisenhower declined a recommendation to abort the flight and the plane took off. As the plane approached Gibraltar, the pilot could not climb above the weather nor get a ground fix, even though he dropped to within 500 feet of the Mediterranean. Strong head winds had slowed the aircraft's speed so that darkness had set in before they could reach Gibraltar. The pilot explained the situation to Eisenhower and asked Eisenhower if he wanted to proceed to Gibraltar under these trying conditions. Eisenhower then asked the pilot what he would do if he (Eisenhower) was not on board. The pilot replied, "I reckon I'd try it sir." "Then go ahead", Eisenhower said. As they approached Gibraltar, the pilot again told Eisenhower that they were "still in a fix" since they had virtually no visibility. Eisenhower calmly said, "Just do your best." The plane cleared a sheer rock wall and landed safely in a 40 knot quartering wind. An irate colonel came on board and started chewing out the pilot for not diverting to another airfield. Eisenhower interrupted and told the colonel that the pilot was obeying his (Eisenhower's) orders, and that the man flying the plane was a "helluva good pilot" (2:141-142).

Origins of Traits

How and when did Eisenhower develop these leadership qualities? Answering that question requires that we explore his life prior to his WWII service.

There is strong evidence that early-on, Eisenhower developed and demonstrated his outstanding ability to maintain focus on an objective even in the face of severe disappointment. As a young man in high school, Eisenhower's first interest was sports, particularly football. He developed an interest in going to the Naval Academy only because he saw it as an opportunity to play big-time college football and to get a college education which he could not otherwise afford (1:26). He studied, took extra courses and asked several important business and civic leaders to write to a Kansas senator on his behalf, requesting an appointment to the Naval Academy. He got the appointment and took the exams, only to find out that he was too old. Undaunted, he applied to West Point and was accepted. He worked very hard at increasing his strength, speed and endurance so that he could be assured of making the football team. He made the team and was on his way to being an all-American, when he suffered a leg injury in a game and reinjured the leg in a subsequent horseback riding accident. His athletic career was over. Although he was bitterly disappointed, he gladly accepted an additional duty of coaching younger players and

approached it with zeal. Unfortunately, as graduation neared, army doctors examined him and told him that he could not be commissioned because of his injury. He had now suffered two great disappointments--loss of an athletic career and the prospect that he had spent four hard academic years for nothing. Fortunately, the doctors relented, but he would never play football again (1:36-40).

Eisenhower again met severe disappointment when he could not get a combat assignment in WWI. His contemporaries were making promotion and earning medals in France, and he was relegated to becoming involved with tank training (1:50). In those days, tanks were looked on as novelties with little application to real war, and those who were involved with them were scoffed at. However, Eisenhower worked diligently to learn everything he could about tanks and their potential application. It was during this period that he met another tank enthusiast--Colonel George S. Patton, Jr (1:151).

Despite all of these disappointments throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, Eisenhower always worked feverishly, on the task at hand and gave his best effort at whatever he was given to do. His reputation for being a relentless worker and outstanding staff officer was beginning to be noticed, and it resulted in him being appointed to attend the Army Command and General Staff College. He spent months

preparing for the school--long hours of study and reading--because he saw the school as an opportunity and wanted to make the most of it. His efforts paid off; he finished first in a class of 275. He assumed that he would then get a field assignment with troops, but it was not to be. Instead, he was selected by Army Chief of Staff, General John J. Pershing, to write a description of US Army operations in WWI. Eisenhower, although disappointed in being given another staff job, pursued it with vigor and earned General Pershing's praise. Pershing then sent Eisenhower to the Army War College, a selection that destined Eisenhower for further advancement (1:158-159).

Unfortunately, the next decade would again find Eisenhower behind a desk at various staff jobs. However, he was undeterred, he simply maintained his focus on doing the best he could at every assignment--a fact that did not go unnoticed by MacArthur, whom he worked for almost ten years, or Marshall who would later groom him for top command in Europe during WWII.

What about Eisenhower's concern for people? Again, there's some evidence that fair play and concern about the dignity of individuals was present during his early years. His mother taught him about the debilitating effect that hate has on an individual and Eisenhower later recalled this lesson as one of the most meaningful of his life. From that

time on, he simply refrained from saying anything bad about a man--he either said something good, or he said nothing at all (1:19).

Later, at West Point, Eisenhower, in an incident involving a plebe cadet accidentally running into him, asked the plebe who he thought he was, "a barber or something" (vice a military man), to which the cadet replied that he in fact had been a barber prior to coming to West Point. Eisenhower later confided in a fellow cadet that he (Eisenhower) had made an unforgivable mistake--he had made a man ashamed of the work he did for a living (1:35).

In another incident, Eisenhower realized that some junior officers who had been the object of a practical joke played by Eisenhower and others, had taken the joke seriously. Eisenhower knew that if he revealed that it was a joke, the junior officers would be embarrassed so he kept silent (1:54).

What of Eisenhower's decisiveness and courage? Were they only the products of his WWII service? Clearly, both qualities were Eisenhower trademarks during his early years. This fact can be best be illustrated by recalling one particular incident. When he was thirteen years old, Eisenhower had scratched his knee in a minor accident. Initially, he ignored the pain but soon it became excruciating and the doctor was called in. The doctor

diagnosed the problem as blood poisoning and told young Eisenhower that an immediate amputation of his foot was needed to save his life. Eisenhower refused to allow it, saying he would rather die than live as a cripple for life. The pain became so bad that Eisenhower had his brother give him a metal fork to bite on and told him to stay by his bed to prevent any attempt to amputate in case he (Eisenhower) passed out or became delirious. Eisenhower stayed in almost unbearable pain for two days, but the leg recovered (5:78-79). Eisenhower had demonstrated the ultimate test of courage--risking his life. Also, by making that risky choice, he showed the kind of decisiveness for which he would become famous some 40 years later.

What were the sources of Eisenhower's decisiveness and courage? His decisiveness may have been as a natural result of the way Eisenhower was raised. It was always a given that he and the other Eisenhower children would work hard. Nothing less was tolerated so there was never any reason to debate over what had to be done, only an instant decision to get on with it (5:50-56). The other Eisenhower quality, courage, seems to be one that he may have learned from living with older brothers, one of which he fought with (and lost to) regularly. His older brother, Edgar may have served as a model for "courage" for Eisenhower, because Edgar was regularly in fights with other boys in Abilene. In

those days in Abilene, such encounters among boys were the norm. Later Eisenhower would follow in Edgar's footsteps as a scrapper. He was once challenged by an older boy who was the acknowledged toughest boy in town for his age. Eisenhower accepted and the boys fought for almost two hours. Eisenhower was beaten almost to the point of collapse but refused to "give". He finally inflicted a like punishment on the other boy and the two boys agreed to end the fight as a draw (5:73-78).

As with decisiveness and courage, Eisenhower showed himself to be a selfless individual throughout the period before his WWII service. Two good examples confirm this observation. The first occurred just after Eisenhower graduated from high school. Both Eisenhower and his brother, Edgar, wanted to go to college, but the family could barely afford to send one of the boys, let alone both of them. Eisenhower suggested that Edgar go to college first, and that he (Eisenhower) would stay out of college and work for the first year, sending Edgar his earnings. The following year, their roles could be reversed, Eisenhower could go to college and Edgar could work. Eisenhower kept his word. He worked at multiple jobs and sent Edgar virtually every bit of what he made, allowing himself only the luxury of a few dollars for shotgun shells (1:25).

The other example of Eisenhower's selfless attitude occurred during a discussion with his son. Asked by his son what plans for promotion and advancement he aspired to, Eisenhower replied, "I don't worry about promotion, the real satisfaction is for a man to do his best...my ambition is to make everybody I work for regretful when I was ordered to other duty." (1:76)

The source of Eisenhower's selflessness seems to have been the family life he was subjected to. His parents were strict, loving and imposed religious discipline on their children. Part of this discipline was the natural sharing of both work and material things that often is associated with large, closely-knit families such as Eisenhower's. It would have been virtually impossible to have been self-centered in Eisenhower's family. Selflessness was a quality that Eisenhower's parents demanded.

What Does the Eisenhower Case Show?

Eisenhower's attribute, the ability to maintain focus on the task at hand and to produce high quality work, irrespective of distracting pressures, was clearly in evidence in both his civilian and military life. This quality of maintaining focus seems to have been the characteristic that most significantly contributed to his success and consequently to his advancement in rank and responsibility. The discussion earlier in this chapter

shows that this attribute was recognized by those senior officers most responsible for Eisenhower's advancement--Pershing, MacArthur and Marshall. Also, this quality plainly was the key to his being able to build a winning British and American team in WWII, despite incredible pressures to the contrary.

Eisenhower's concern for people was also evident prior to WWII. Although there is no evidence that it was a factor in his pre-war advancement, it probably was a factor in building and maintaining the high morale of the common soldier under his command during WWII.

It seems less certain that decisiveness was a key to Eisenhower's success during his days as a staff officer. This quality was developed and used mostly as a result of his maturing as a leader in WW II. In his early army career, he was not in a position to make key decisions.

The other Eisenhower characteristics, personal courage and selflessness, indirectly contributed to his success by supporting his ability to maintain focus. Because he was selfless, the thing that mattered most to him was doing his very best at his current job, irrespective of personal risk.

In the next chapter we, shift from a great joint and combined force commander, Eisenhower, to a great air leader--George S. Brown, General, US Air Force.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL GEORGE S. BROWN

General George S. Brown served in leadership positions during World War Two (WWII), Korea, and Vietnam. He enjoyed a breadth of experience and success perhaps unmatched by any air officer of WWII or later service. In WWII, Brown rose to the rank of full colonel in less than four years. During his long career, he commanded or served in almost every kind of flying unit, ran the research and development arm of the Air Force, acted as military advisor to two secretaries of defense, was the Air Force Chief of Staff and served two terms as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was liked by virtually all who knew him and had a basic humility that was constant from the time of his youth to when he was a four-star general.

Career Summary

Brown was born in 1918 in Montclair, New Jersey. He was the son of a career army officer and spent his entire youth on army posts. He entered West Point in 1937, graduated just six months prior to Pearl Harbor, was commissioned into the infantry and subsequently transferred to the Air Corps. After flight training, he was assigned to instructor pilot duty in heavy bombers. From August 1942 until November 1944, he served in the European Theater

initially as a B-24 crew commander and later as a division-level operations officer. During this time, he participated in the famous Ploesti, Rumania, oil field raid and, as a consequence, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and promoted to full colonel with less than four years commissioned service. Between WWII and the Korean War, Brown served in the Army Air Force Training Command and in the Air Defense Command (ADC) headquarters at Mitchell Field, New York. During the Korean War, Brown initially continued to serve in ADC as a fighter-interceptor wing commander and later as 5th Air Force director of operations.

After Korea, Brown commanded a pilot training wing, attended the National War College and served as executive officer to Air Force Chief of Staff, General Thomas D. White. In 1959, he was promoted to brigadier general and became military assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Thomas Gates and later to Robert McNamara. Brown subsequently served as 21st Air Force commander in the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, commander of the 7th Air Force in Vietnam (August 1968-August 1970) and commander of the Air Force Systems Command (September 1970-July 1973). He became Air Force Chief of Staff in July 1973 and served two terms as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (July 1974-January 1978) (6:3-235).

Leadership Qualities

Brown repeatedly showed that he was a first-rate leader. He demonstrated virtually all of the classical leadership attributes such as integrity, hard work, attention to detail, and courage. However, the Brown qualities that stood out most vividly were concern for people, cool-headedness in terse situations, being a good listener and moral courage.

The first of these attributes, his concern for people, was probably Brown's most visible characteristic; he demonstrated it in every position he served in.

Two good examples of Brown's sensitivity toward his subordinates occurred during the Korean War while Brown was a group commander in the Military Airlift Command (MAC) at McChord AFB, Washington. When the Korean War broke out, all the MAC personnel who were home based at Kelly AFB, Texas, were assigned to temporary duty at McChord. All these men were quartered in old WWII style open-bay barracks--fifty men in one big room. Because of his WWII experience, Brown recognized how important seemingly small things were to the morale of men separated from their families. Brown harassed the base commander (who had been ignoring him over and over) until partitions were installed creating individual rooms for every officer and airman in the group (6:55).

The other example of Brown's concern for his people at McChord was his handling of the morale problem of these men being away from their families back at Kelly AFB. Brown reworked flying schedules and improved maintenance turnaround to create more available aircraft. He then used these aircraft to set up a shuttle so that the men could visit their families at Kelly every two or three weeks (6:57).

A later incident, when Brown was a four-star general commanding the 7th Air Force in Vietnam, showed that high rank did not change his considerate attitude toward subordinates. He wanted to visit the Da Nang base exchange just to see if it was serving the troops well. He was greeted by the manager and Brown told him that he just wanted to look around. Brown moved around the store looking things over then told the manager and sales people that it looked like a good store. Brown then picked up a tube of toothpaste and went to the checkout counter to pay for it. There were six people ahead of him in the checkout line, three of them soldiers with mud up to their knees. Brown's executive officer scooted in front of those in line and told them that he had a general officer and that they would need to cut in front. General Brown told him not to bother the people in line, that he (General Brown) would just wait his turn (6:169).

General Brown continued to champion the cause of military people while he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He constantly advocated for adequate compensation for military members. He answered critics of military pay increases by pointing out that good people would only join and stay in the military if these people gained a sense of personal fulfillment and were afforded an adequate standard of living in relation to civilian peers. In a speech he gave near his retirement he said:

Intangible compensation comes from military leaders insuring that the soldier's time is spent on significant activities so that he or she can enjoy a measure of job satisfaction. Intangible rewards are important but they won't keep many good soldiers for long, unless there is also adequate tangible compensation (7:29).

Another impressive leadership attribute Brown showed throughout his career was cool-headedness in terse situations. The best example of Brown's calm leadership was undoubtedly his performance during the Ploesti raid on 1 August 1943. For his effort in this action, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (this was second in rank only to the Medal of Honor). Brown was deputy force commander for the 39 B-24s that were staged out of North Africa. Just as the attack force reached Ploesti, the force leader's aircraft was shot down and Brown had to take command on a moment's notice. Since the attacking aircraft swept over the target at 500 feet, they were not only exposed to heavy flak,

but to intense machine gun and rifle fire and exploding oil tank fragments as well. Brown led the force over the target and the oil fields were devastated. Despite the chaos associated with this deadly engagement, in which only 15 aircraft out of 34 in the original attack force survived, Brown reassembled his force and led them home (6:30-31).

Brown also demonstrated his cool-headedness in numerous terse situations other than those in combat. One of these was during the Pueblo incident in 1968, where the North Koreans seized a US intelligence ship. At the time, Brown was serving as an assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The Chairman gave Brown the responsibility to act as his focal point during the crisis. This assignment required Brown to interface with the Service Chiefs, the JCS, the executive branch, the Congress and the press. Despite the pressures of the President demanding instant answers, no-notice Congressional hearings and the Secretary of Defense constantly on the phone to him, Brown orchestrated it all and never lost his composure.

Major General William Shedd, who was on duty in the national military command center the night that the Pueblo was seized, characterized Brown's performance as follows:

That night was characterized by anger, impatience, and finally frustration on the part of the senior people in the White House and the Pentagon. General Brown, instead of succumbing to all of this, calmly discussed with me the steps to be taken in the future to insure no repeat of such an incident (6:159).

Brown had realized that there was no way to reverse what had happened, so he didn't waste time or thought on it, only on preventing it in the future--something he could influence.

A third distinctive leadership quality of General Brown's was that he was a good listener. One of his subordinates recalled this characteristic:

Brown was always attentive to the views and suggestions of others, regardless of rank. I never heard him raise his voice or get excited about someone challenging his views or those of his senior staff officers. In our staff meetings, there would be captains, lieutenants, and sergeants--Brown treated everybody with the same humane courtesy. If somebody had information or a comment he could speak up (6:60).

Another one of Brown's outstanding listening attributes was his ability to listen constructively to briefings. He could get to the crux long before the briefing was finished, but he would always hear the briefer out. He was once asked by another senior officer why he did this since it seemed like a waste of time. Brown stated that even though he may have already determined the key point of the briefing, he might learn something of value and most importantly, he didn't want to discourage or demean a subordinate officer who had worked hard to put the briefing together (6:55).

Certainly, being a good listener was a significant asset to Brown, but he possessed an even more useful attribute--moral courage. Nothing illustrates this better

than his performance as a military advisor to two Secretaries of Defense, Thomas Gates and Robert McNamara. In this position, Brown could have easily been trapped between his service loyalty (and possible future promotions) and his credibility with the Secretary of Defense.

One of the most controversial decisions that Secretary Gates had to make was the one that set up an Integrated Targeting Strategic Plan (forerunner of today's Single Integrated Operational Plan) under the Air Force's Strategic Air Command. There was great controversy over putting the plan under Air Force lead. The Navy protested Gates' decision all the way to the President. General Brown, newly promoted to brigadier general, was the daily advisor to Gates, accompanying him to high-level meetings and assisting Gates with sorting out the many complex issues leading up to Gates' decision. When Gates was asked if Brown, during the decision process, had shown any Air Force favoritism, Gates replied:

No, George was always objective, very objective; he was an unprejudiced officer...the whole process took several months. It was a weapons, targeting and command problem all rolled up together. George was of immeasurable help in its resolution...(6:113).

Brown also maintained the confidence of his Air Force superiors during his service to the Secretary of Defense. General Thomas D. White, Air Force Chief of Staff, wrote in Brown's evaluation:

General Brown retained the respect and full confidence of the Secretary (of Defense) by the objectivity of his views with relation to other services and at the same time was of inestimatable value to me and the Air Staff (6:114).

Another good example of Brown's moral courage occurred during the debates surrounding the decision on whether to procure the B-70 bomber. Robert McNamara was the Secretary of Defense and had decided to cancel the B-70 program. Even though McNamara's decision was supported by President Kennedy, General Curtis Lemay, then Air Force Chief of Staff, strongly supported the program. McNamara later recalled George Brown's moral courage during this period:

He illustrated his integrity by advising me...in taking certain positions contrary to those taken by the Air Force Chief of Staff. A specific example was the B-70; he believed that we were right in cancelling the program, whereas Chief of Staff Gen. Curtis E. Lemay was determined to go to the Congress in support of the plane, contrary to the President's decision. I was impressed with Brown's integrity time and again because in a very real sense promotion decisions to higher military rank were made in the services, not in my office. He had every reason to believe that taking positions contrary to his service Brown might adversely affect his promotion prospects. Yet he was willing to take positions because he believed in them and thought it his responsibility to the Constitution and to the President and me. I admired him immensely for it (6:115).

To Brown, this objectivity was consistent with what he saw as the role of military officers. In his retirement speech in August 1978, he said: "The role of officers is to advise leaders fully and frankly. Give civilian authorities facts as we see them and our judgements as we reach them..." (8:4).

The above examples show that Brown believed that integrity and moral courage were important unto themselves. He also believed that integrity and moral courage combined to equal credibility. Brown believed that credibility was essential to getting things done, particularly in Washington. This is why almost invariably, when he testified to Congress, he insisted on doing it without backup witnesses. This was a successful approach because it kept testimony properly confined to broad issues and not bogged down with minute details. Brown believed that this focus made Congress less inclined to micromanage (9:34-36).

Origins of Traits

Brown demonstrated the leadership qualities discussed earlier, throughout his life. There is evidence, for example, that early in his life, George Brown exhibited the kind of politeness, loyalty and unassuming good nature that made him friends then and formed the basis for his becoming a people-oriented leader years later. These "people" qualities resulted in Brown's ability to do well without arousing resentment. One boyhood friend described Brown as a teenager: "George, as a teenager, had solid personality traits which attracted people to him; everyone liked him even though he wasn't a super athlete or an intellectual." (6:6)

One particular incident shows Brown's early demonstration of sensitivity and loyalty to others. Brown and five or six other boys were playing on an Army post (where Brown's father, a colonel, was assigned) and managed to turn over a large tub of water, startling the commanding general who was riding by on his horse. All the boys ran off except Brown. The general demanded an explanation and Brown told him that the tub had been turned over just for the fun of it. The general was not satisfied, and insisted that Brown identify the other boys who had escaped. Brown politely refused and the general ordered Brown and his father to report to the general's office at four o'clock that afternoon. Brown's father defended George's actions and the general dropped the matter (6:5).

Brown continued to demonstrate his concern for people while at West Point. One classmate said of Brown:

When George gave an order, he never said, "Do this", or "Do that"; he would say, "Let's do this", or "Don't you think we should do that?" He always gave consideration to the views of others...(6:11).

The incidents discussed above not only show early evidence of Brown's sensitivity to people but also illustrate his moral courage and his being a good listener.

Being cool-headed in emergencies was also a George Brown characteristic even prior to WWII. When Brown was 13 years old, he and his brother were horseback riding on a

levee in Texas. Neither of the boys noticed that the ground was dangerously soft. Suddenly, George's brother's horse sank down to the horse's belly. Brown's brother was badly scared that both he and the horse would sink out of sight. George calmly got off his horse, took the bridle of his brother's horse, and led horse and rider out before they could sink any further (6:4).

There were other occasions, prior to WWII, where Brown exhibited mental coolness. He was promoted to adjutant at West Point. This duty required him to make all official announcements at all meals. These could be last-minute notes or word-of mouth messages from the commandant, the superintendent, or faculty. He often had to make these announcements and then introduce a senator or distinguished foreign visitor. The natural nervousness of most young men in this situation in front of 1800 cadets, day after day, would have been clearly visible. However, Brown never made an error nor once lost his composure (6:13).

There doesn't appear to be a clear, definitive beginning point in Brown's life for his leadership qualities. However, the fact that Brown was the son of a career army officer and was exposed for his entire youth to the disciplined life of a career soldier had a significant influence on his overall development as a leader. During those days, the army was essentially a closed community.

This environment allowed Brown to develop without exposure to the more laid-back civilian lifestyle. Aside from the inherent discipline this isolation produced in him, it also placed Brown well ahead of his contemporaries. When he entered West Point in 1937, a Spartan lifestyle was already second nature to him. When Brown himself was asked about the influence of West Point on his leadership development, he said:

The regimen that produces such men is far from natural. No weakling can stand it. The result of this life is likely to be an untalkative and self-controlled young man, intensely self-respecting and yet considerate of others, but partial to action and and results. West Point produces the kind of intolerance of errors that is the first law of a victorious army (6:285-286).

What Does the Brown Case Show?

The secret of Brown's success and subsequent advancement in rank and responsibility was his ability to repeatedly get outstanding results in one diverse job after another. Although originally a bomber pilot in WWII, he later was an outstanding commander in the Tactical Air Command, Military Airlift Command, Air Training Command, a senior advisor to the Secretary of Defense, and in an environment totally foreign to him, commander of the Air Force Systems Command.

Clearly, Brown used essentially the same key qualities to be successful in both wartime and peacetime leadership roles. He was carefully attuned to the one

constant among all environments--that the people that work in them all have aspirations, sensitivities, concerns, weaknesses and strengths. The four Brown qualities discussed earlier, cool-headedness, concern for people, the willingness to listen and moral courage were ideally suited to take this constant properly into account. These attributes allowed Brown to maximize the worth and utility of those under him, to establish credibility and to repeatedly get top results in every assignment.

Further, these qualities made Brown successful up the chain as well. This success was clearly evident during his service as a senior military assistant in the office of the Secretary of Defense--he was rated as an outstanding staff officer by two Secretaries of Defense and at the same time maintained his own credibility and standing with his Air Force superiors (6:xi-xii, 6:120-121). Although his superiors didn't promote Brown directly because of these people skills, they did promote him because of the consistently outstanding results that these qualities enabled him to get.

In the next chapter, we will analyze another one of the premier air leaders of WWII, Curtis E. Lemay, General, US Air Force.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL CURTIS E. LEMAY

By any standards, General Curtis E. Lemay was an outstanding combat leader. He demonstrated many of the same classical leadership attributes as Generals Eisenhower and Brown. However, in many ways, Lemay was very different than those two great leaders. He was not outwardly charismatic, seldom praised subordinates directly, was uncomfortable in speaking publicly, almost ruthless with subordinates who performed below their full potential and was almost always uncompromising in his opinion once he formed it. He never went to a service academy, never attended a senior service school, and was not part of the elite circle of rising World War II (WWII) stars such as Spaatz, Eaker and Doolittle. Yet, he became the youngest four-star general since U. S. Grant and ultimately made it to Chief of Staff of the Air Force. As a senior leader, Lemay was a man of few words, but one of innovation, burning focus and no-nonsense action.

Career Summary

Curtis Lemay was born in November 1906 in Columbus, Ohio, of poor working class parents. Lemay's father frequently changed jobs and the family moved often. Lemay spent his early life moving back and forth between Ohio,

Pennsylvania and Montana. He finished high school in Columbus in 1924 and entered Ohio State University. Prior to graduation, he was accepted by the Army Air Corps and was not able to earn his degree in civil engineering until 1932. He completed flight training at Kelly Field, Texas, in October 1929 and was assigned to the 1st Pursuit Group at Selfridge Field, Michigan. Subsequently, he was assigned to the Second Bomb Group at Langley Field. He attended the Air Corps Tactical School in 1939. In March 1941, he took command of a squadron in the 34th Bomb Group at Westover Air Base, Massachusetts, and later that same year commanded the 305th Bomb Group at Salt Lake City, Utah. In May of 1942 he deployed to England with the 305th and flew many combat missions over Germany in B-17s. He was promoted to brigadier general in September of 1943 and transferred to the Pacific Theater as commander of the 20th Bomber Command. During this period, he directed the B-29 strategic bombing campaign against the Japanese home islands.

He returned to the US in September 1945 as chief of staff for research and development. In October of 1947, he was promoted to lieutenant general and assumed command of US Air Forces in Europe. In October 1948, General Lemay took command of the newly formed Strategic Air Command (SAC). He held that position for almost nine years and presided over massive SAC upgrades involving the B-36, B-47 and B-52

strategic bombers. He served in that capacity until April 1957 when he was appointed as Air Force Chief of Staff. General Lemay concluded his career as Chief of Staff in February 1965 (10:185-244).

Leadership Qualities

Lemay was certainly effective as a combat leader. He achieved outstanding results in WWII in both the European and Pacific theaters. Also, by all accounts, he brought SAC from a "paper force" to the most potent, combat ready nuclear strike force in the world. How did he make all of this happen? What attributes did he have which contributed to these extraordinary achievements?

As with Eisenhower and Brown, Lemay exhibited multiple leadership qualities. The ones that stood out most vividly were the ability to maintain focus on objectives, concern for people, a willingness to listen to others, innovativeness and personal courage.

The first of those qualities, the ability to quickly identify key objectives and to maintain focus on them, was a key to Lemay's success. He was absolutely uncompromising in maintaining mission focus, irrespective of what others thought. The number one object of Lemay's focus was to build, maintain and employ combat capability to win. To him, the key element in war was preparation--training for war (10:17).

His career-long fixation on training was evident from his first sustained command job--commander of the 305th Bomb Group at Salt Lake City in June of 1942. WWII had started and Lemay knew that his group would be deployed imminently. He was concerned that survival of his men would be short-lived if they went to combat with no more training than they then had. However, he wondered how he could conduct the necessary training. He had only four aircraft, 48 pilots and an assortment of other untrained support people. His solution was 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week training in shifts. This round-the-clock training was an unheard of idea at the time and created anguish among aircrews (10:17). Whenever a plane landed and a crew got out, the next crew got in and took off, with Lemay or one of his two squadron commanders flying in every group and instructing (10:19).

Lemay continued his relentless pursuit of preparation when he took his group to Europe. After his group's first bombing mission over Germany in January of 1943, three bombers were shot down. In their defensive efforts, American gunners fired lengthy, wasteful bursts that seemed to hit friendly aircraft as often as they hit the German attackers. Lemay was so irritated that when the bombers returned to base and landed, he immediately sent them back up for formation flying training and gunnery practice (10:19-20).

These incidents show that Lemay was sharply focused
in his determination to increase combat capability and
survivability, irrespective of what others thought of him
(10:47). Lemay would not allow himself to be deterred. He knew that crew members were dismayed by his actions, but he risked their unspoken scorn and contempt to enhance their survivability. Soon, Lemay's reputation began to spread. There were even jokes around the 8th Air Force that the aircrews under Lemay were hoping to get shot down and land in a German prison camp because they needed a vacation from Lemay (10:56). Probably the best explanation of Lemay's rationale for ignoring scorn in order to focus on what had to be done was offered by General Ira Eaker, commander of the 8th Air Force. General Eaker went to inspect Lemay's command and gave this account of Lemay's own comment on his philosophy:

Between puffs of smoke of his cigar, Lemay said, "Yesterday, German fighters flew by my plane so close I could have hit them with a Colt .45. My gunners must have fired a thousand rounds, but most of the ME-109s escaped. If we don't shoot better than that tomorrow, we won't come back. These crews are great kids and I want to bring them back alive. So this evening, the gunners are down at the range learning how to hit a moving target, and some of the pilots who flew raggedly are now out practicing formation flying. I don't mind being called tough. In this racket it's the tough guys who lead the survivors." (10:59)

Lemay continued his focus on preparation when he transferred to the Pacific to take charge of the 20th Bomber

command. The command was getting the new B-29 for the final strategic assault on Japan. Lemay had been given command of the 20th by General "Hap" Arnold. Arnold wanted quick results with the B-29 and was so impatient that he had replaced the previous commander, the very competent Brigadier General Heywood Hansell, Jr. After taking command, Lemay quickly assessed the command's combat capability as poor and immediately started a rigorous training program. In order to avoid repeating what he considered the madness of sending unprepared men into combat (as in Europe), he grounded the entire command until it was properly retrained (10:115). As was usual with Lemay, grounding didn't mean no flying--just no combat flying (10:115-116).

Lemay had suspended operational flying, in spite of the risk of being fired by Arnold for want of quick results. This action again shows that Lemay remained focused on developing the means--combat effectiveness--to achieve the ultimate end, defeat of Japan. Lemay believed that nothing was worse than losing aircrews on an ineffective mission--to have men lost for little or no gain (10:119).

Lemay continued this obsession with maintaining focus during his tenure as commander of the Strategic Air Command (SAC). When he first arrived at SAC, he was briefed that the command was capable and ready. He didn't believe it. To prove his point, he set up an exercise. He ordered the

entire command to conduct a simulated bombing attack against Wright Field at Dayton, Ohio. Lemay made his point--not one SAC aircraft was able to complete the mission. Of course, the endless training for which Lemay had become well known inevitably followed at the rate of 12, 14, or 16 hours a day. General Timothy Darcy who was a major and an aircraft commander in SAC at the time later recalled the following example of what this training was like. "We'd go for twenty-four hours. Over to the Mediterranean, circle it and return to the US the next day with no intermediate landings." (10:321)

Much of General Lemay's characteristic of focusing on key issues, such as preparation for combat to enhance survivability, was indirectly a sign of one of his other leadership qualities, concern for people. Although, he is not popularly thought of as a "people" person, Lemay was in reality always sensitive to what people could do and how important they were. He once said:

I have always believed that you can really work a man until he drops if three factors exist: one, you have to be doing something important and everybody has to know that it is important. Two, you have to be making a little headway toward getting the job done. And three, you have to show a little appreciation once in awhile (10:293).

Lemay continues to be grossly misjudged as having had little concern for people. This misunderstanding is probably due to the facts that Lemay was very demanding of

subordinates and that his concern for people was often expressed in quiet, non-emotional ways. He was forever looking for ways to improve conditions for those under his command. For example, while in SAC, he set up hobby shops and aero clubs (10:293).

He also made major improvements in on-base living conditions for both single and married people. Single people at SAC headquarters were living in open-bay WWII type barracks. He couldn't persuade anyone in Washington to put funds in the budget for renovating the barracks and the local Army Corps of Engineers wanted what Lemay considered ludicrous funding to do the job. He sent his own people out to scrounge the materials and then built several roomed barracks, and he did it far more cheaply than the Corps of Engineers had proposed. The Corps of Engineers objected to Lemay's efforts and blocked further construction. To make matters worse, Lemay now also had a new a problem. Although SAC had built several of the new barracks, there were no funds available for furnishing them. Lemay called up the most influential man in Omaha and explained the problem. The man held a "high rollers" dinner and raised the needed funds. By now, the Army Corps of Engineers was so embarrassed that they gave in to Lemay's demands and built sufficient roomed barracks for all single people at SAC headquarters (10:295-296).

Later, Lemay was faced with Air Force comptroller resistance to a SAC proposed scheme to finance, through mortgages, inexpensive but comfortable married housing on SAC bases. The comptroller refused to allow the scheme and said it would take an act of Congress to get approval. Lemay immediately went to Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska who sponsored and got a bill passed enabling the houses to be built--this became the well-known Wherry Housing Act (10:296-297).

Lemay also worked hard to get deserving people rewarded. He sought and got approval for the SAC on-the-spot promotions for the top 15 per cent of SAC aircrews (10:294).

Lemay would often go to surprising lengths in showing his consideration for subordinates. On one occasion, just after the Japanese surrender, two of Lemay's pilots who were brothers, asked Lemay if they could borrow a B-29 and look for their father who had been a prisoner of war under the Japanese. The brothers knew that their father was imprisoned in China. Lemay not only gave his permission, but he had the words "AL-JACK" (the first names of the brothers) painted in huge letters on the underside of the B-29. The brothers found their father and flew him to freedom. Lemay later stated that he was not worried about what might happen to the B-29 because, most of the aircraft would be scrapped now that

the war was over. Lemay said, "I just put the brothers on R and R so they could enjoy a family reunion. Heard it was a lulu." (11:103)

A third and largely unknown characteristic of General Lemay was that, contrary to popular belief, he was a good listener. He was definitely open to the ideas of others. A good example of this quality occurred during Lemay's service in the 8th Air Force in Europe in WWII. After each bomber mission there was a debrief over which Lemay presided. Aircrews would gather at the enlisted men's mess hall, the doors would be closed and no one else allowed to enter. Lemay's rules were simple: what was said stayed in the room and everyone from privates to colonels could say anything they pleased about anyone's performance--including Lemay's! Lemay typically would open these meetings with words like, "We want to know what worked, what didn't and why. Everybody has his say--if think your group commander is a stupid son-of-a-bitch, now is the time to say so." (10:49) Other senior officers had held meetings where everyone was invited to "speak up" but were quickly put down if they said something the boss or someone else senior to them didn't like. Not so with Lemay. He allowed them to say what they pleased about anyone and anything and he didn't interrupt or argue with them (10:49).

Being a good listener contributed to another of Lemay's qualities, innovativeness. He did little talking and a lot of listening. This enabled him to gather information relative to a problem and, while others were talking, to formulate his idea for a solution. One of Lemay's major innovative contributions to strategic bombing was his WWII invention of the "Combat Box". During the early months of 8th Air Force daylight bombing in Europe, the bomber formations were suffering horrendous losses. Lemay decided that something must be done to reduce losses or operations could not continue. His solution was the "Combat Box", in which the bombers (B-17s) would fly in a staggered and stacked formation such that every aircraft was covered by the eleven .50-caliber guns of every other aircraft. This formation greatly increased the survivability of the bombers and it became a standard practice for all bomber missions in Europe throughout the rest of the war (11:102).

Another Lemay innovation was the "Lead Crew" concept. This idea consisted of organizing the best bombardiers, navigators and pilots into a few lead crews, who would then do the navigating and bomb aiming for an entire group. The lead crews spent much time studying potential targets in advance, so that they were well prepared to lead formations to effectively attack any target, even on a few hours notice (12:7).

Later, in the Pacific theater, Lemay again used his innovative powers to solve a serious problem. The high altitude bombing tactics that had proven successful in Europe were not working with the B-29 in the Pacific. Bombing accuracy was poor due to powerful high-altitude winds, and the high-altitude flying was overstraining the new B-29 engines, often resulting in engine fires. Lemay's solution was low-altitude incendiary bombing of the main Japanese cities. Much of the Japanese war effort was supported by "cottage industries" and the incendiary attacks were designed to destroy this source of war support. The B-29s were stripped of guns and other excess weight and bombed from 5000 feet. Lemay had aircraft drop leaflets to the Japanese people in target areas, urging them to evacuate and telling them that their leaders could not protect them. The firebombing from the B-29s virtually destroyed every Japanese city that was attacked. These attacks were so devastating that even before the first atomic bomb was dropped, the Japanese were making peace overtures (11:102-103).

In addition to innovation, personal courage was another Lemay trademark. This courage was not surprising since Lemay always believed that commanders must be willing to take the same risks as subordinates (10:395).

Lemay set the example by personally flying the lead aircraft in many of the most dangerous missions. During the

initial B-17 raids into Germany, losses were heavy and bombing accuracy was poor. These conditions were the result of pilots taking drastic evasive action whenever they encountered flak. The new Norden bombsight could not function effectively under these drastic maneuvers; an aircraft had to be held straight and level for the last few minutes of the bombing run. However, analysts stated that bombers could not fly straight and level for more than a few minutes without being hit by flak. Lemay made his own calculations and decided otherwise. To prove his point, Lemay led the next raid himself. He flew straight and level, disregarding the intense flak, and delivered his bombs squarely on target (11:103).

Probably the most memorable demonstration of Lemay's courage was his participation in the simultaneous attack on the Regensburg Messerschmitt fighter aircraft plant and the Schweinfurt ball-bearing facility on August 17, 1943. Lemay's group was to bomb the Messerschmitt plant and continue on to recovery bases in Tunisia. At this point in the war, US fighters did not yet have the range to escort bombers deep into Germany. This shortcoming meant that the bombers were subject to almost constant fighter attacks. On this particular day, in one of the most savage air battles ever fought, over 60 B-17s and 540 crewmen were lost in bombing Regensburg and Schweinfurt. For miles around the two

target areas, the sky was cluttered with burning airplanes, falling debris, smoke, flak bursts, parachutes and tumbling bodies. However, Lemay refused to turn back. His bombers battled dozens of enemy fighters for hours, but under Lemay's leadership, they flew on and destroyed the Messerschmitt plant. Lemay led his force on to Tunisia where they quickly recovered and flew back to England, attacking German targets along the way. For his courage and leadership on this round-trip mission, Lemay was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (11:102).

Origins of Traits

Where and how did Lemay acquire these leadership attributes? His ability to maintain focus during pressure, adversity or while under criticism is not surprising. Early in his life, Lemay learned to deal with hardships, setting goals and carrying out responsibilities under stress. Lemay's father jumped from job to job and the family moved often. As a newcomer in each of the new locations, young Curtis was often forced to establish himself with other boys by with fighting them. Also, from the time he was ten years old and had a paper route, he was always working hard at something. When he was 18 years old, he set a goal to go to college. For over three years he worked at a hot, exhausting job in a steel forging company, for ten hours a day, six days a week, from five pm until three am to pay for his education

at Ohio State. He went to classes during the day and worked at night. During the time Lemay was doing this, his father continued to job-hop out of town, and he frequently took Curtis' mother along. This left Curtis with the responsibility of working, going to school and simultaneously caring for his two younger brothers and two sisters until his parents returned (10:195). With this kind of background, it is not surprising that Lemay never had patience with anyone who did less than they were capable of.

At college, Lemay almost never had time for socializing and was often viewed as an "oddball" or antisocial by others. However, he always seemed to know exactly what he wanted and was not deterred by what others thought of him. He had entered Ohio State because he wanted to get into military flying via an ROTC commission. (10:199-200).

Lemay's concern for people may also have been a product of his forced responsibility and hardship during his early life. He had been poor, had seen poverty and could readily identify with hardship.

There does not seem to be any definitive origin for Lemay's penchant for being a good listener and a good learner. However, this quality is one that might be expected to develop in an individual with Lemay's no-nonsense, business-like approach to every endeavor. Lemay believed

that an individual should develop exhaustive knowledge of his profession. He thought that if you flew B-17's, you should learn all that you could about navigation, gunnery, maintenance, not just about piloting skills. He set the example by taking this approach himself. He would often tell maintenance people how to fix particularly sticky problems on B-17s. He also carried this learning into combat. He flew many missions in the lead aircraft, even after he was a group commander. In fact, he flew on missions as a brigadier general (10:384). Only direct orders from General Ira Eaker forced him to stop this practice. Lemay thought that it would be inconceivable for a commander to send people out to do something in combat that the commander had never done or was unwilling to do (10:395).

What of Lemay's capability to innovate? This quality seems to be just a natural product of his being a good listener and his refusal to be inhibited by what others thought. He simply gathered information by listening, ignored anything which did not contribute to solution of the problem at hand and formulated his own solution.

The origin of the last of the Lemay qualities discussed earlier, personal courage, is somewhat of a mystery. There was nothing in his youth which would indicate a propensity for personal courage. His courage may have been a natural result of his unique ability to focus on an

objective and to "tune out" distracting influences. This does not mean that he was not afraid, only that he had such a strong sense of focus and responsibility that he was not debilitated by fear.

What Does the Lemay Case Show?

Lemay's successes and promotions were the result of his ability to get the job done as a combat commander in two theaters of war and later as SAC commander. He produced results quickly where others could not or would not. A key to this consistently top performance was that Lemay never allowed himself any diversion from his primary focus, whether it was preparing for combat or working his way toward a college education. Lemay had the ability to see what was wrong and set about fixing it quickly--irrespective of what others thought. He listened, learned all he could, but once he had done this and decided on a solution, he was almost immovable.

Was Lemay successful in other than combat and wartime leadership positions? Did his methods work equally well in both environments? The answer is twofold. Certainly, SAC could never have become such a capable force so quickly had it not been for Lemay's stern approach or if he had allowed himself to be inhibited by what others thought. He continued that focus after he became Air Force Chief of Staff and was very effective in getting funding for new strategic aircraft

such as the B-36, B-47, and B-52. However, focus is only effective as long as an officer's superiors agree with the direction in which it is aimed. Secretary of Defense McNamara and President Kennedy largely ignored Lemay's advice during the Cuban missile crisis, on Vietnam and on the decision of whether to produce the B-70 bomber, because they apparently considered him too dogmatic. Their view of Lemay was that he thought mainly in terms of strategic bombers and strategic bombing--that he was out of touch with the changing nature of war and politics (10:391-393, 365-370, 424).

Lemay mastered his profession by listening, innovating, studying and doing it. When he decided on an objective, he refused to be deterred from reaching it. The facts that he had a well-earned reputation for getting things done and was a respected combat leader resulted in his elevation to Chief of Staff at a time when his opinion of how war should be deterred and fought was not popular with his civilian bosses. That they respected his professionalism is borne out by the fact that he was extended for a second term as Air Force Chief of Staff.

In the following chapter, we turn to a great naval warfighter, Admiral of the Fleet Chester W. Nimitz.

CHAPTER V

ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET CHESTER W. NIMITZ

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz was a leader much in the mold of Eisenhower. Like Eisenhower, he came from a Texas family of modest means, cherished hard work and personal discipline, had the ability to analyze complex situations and quickly identify key make-or-break issues, refused to dwell on things he could not change and had a superb talent for blending people with diverse views into winning teams. He was not a flamboyant leader; he cared nothing for personal publicity. He respected the views and advice of subordinates and was, consequently, well liked by them. He served on practically every type of ship in the Navy and held many key positions including commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet during WWII and later, Chief of Naval Operations.

Career Summary

Chester W. Nimitz was born in Fredicksburg, Texas, (near San Antonio) in February of 1885. His parents were poor first generation descendents of German immigrants. His father was in poor health and died six months before Chester was born. After his father died, Nimitz and his mother were taken in by his grandfather, a German immigrant who owned a small hotel in Fredicksburg. Nimitz and his mother helped run the hotel for most of Nimitz's early boyhood. Nimitz

developed a keen interest in the sea because his grandfather had been a sailor in the German merchant marine and fascinated Nimitz with a plethora of sea stories.

Nimitz grew up in Fredricksburg and attended high school in nearby Kerrville, Texas. He became interested in a military career because of his exposure to young officers stationed at nearby San Antonio who frequently visited the hotel. He attempted to pursue this interest and gain an appointment to West Point but a Texas Senator offered to appoint him to the Naval Academy instead. He accepted and entered the academy in 1901. He graduated in 1905, seventh in overall class standing, and was given an initial assignment on the battleship, USS Ohio (at that time, commissions were not conferred immediately upon graduation from the academy). He was formally commissioned an ensign in 1907 and given command of the gunboat Panay and a small naval station in the Philippines. He commanded the destroyer USS Decatur in 1906 and subsequently was assigned as commander of the submarines Narwhal, Plunger and Snapper from 1910-1913. He was assigned to the Brooklyn Navy Yard in 1913 and promoted to lieutenant commander in 1915. In 1920, Nimitz was assigned to Pearl Harbor with the task of supervising the building of the first submarine base for the Pacific Fleet. He was promoted to commander in 1922 and attended the Naval War College in 1923. From 1924-1933, he held a number of

minor assignments, including setting up a naval ROTC program at the University of California. From 1934-1935, he commanded the heavy cruiser, USS Augusta. Nimitz was promoted to captain in 1935 and assigned to office of the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation in Washington, DC. He was promoted to rear Admiral in 1938 and took over this same Bureau. In 1941, just after Pearl Harbor, he was elevated over 28 more senior admirals to four-star rank and appointed as commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet. Later in 1944, he was elevated to the five-star rank, Admiral of the Fleet. After WWII, Nimitz served as Chief of Naval Operations until he reverted to inactive service in December of 1947 (13:1-139, 233-270; 14:26-30, 62).

Leadership Qualities

The great Naval historian, Rear Admiral (ret) Samuel E. Morison wrote of Nimitz:

He restored confidence to the defeated fleet. He had the patience to wait through the lean period of the war, the capacity to organize both a fleet and a vast theater, the tact to deal with sister services and Allied commands, the leadership to weld his own subordinates into a great fighting team, the courage to take necessary risks, and the wisdom to select, from a welter of intelligence and opinion, the strategy that defeated Japan (16:356).

What were the attributes that warranted such an assessment? Nimitz had four qualities which stood out: the ability to maintain focus on an objective in the face of overwhelming pressures, concern for people, the skill to

create teamwork out of divisiveness, and a willingness to listen to the views of others.

Probably one of the greatest challenges any combat leader can face is the situation where he must assume command of an organization just after it has been subjected to some demoralizing defeat. This is exactly the challenge that Nimitz faced when he was sent to relieve Admiral Kimmel as commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet right after the Pearl Harbor disaster. Virtually the entire US Pacific Fleet had been damaged or destroyed in the Japanese attack. The Pacific Fleet was the only US force capable of delivering an avenging counter blow against the Japanese but it would be some months before it would be in shape to do so.

Against the backdrop of these conditions, Nimitz demonstrated one of his most outstanding leadership characteristics--the ability to maintain focus on critical objectives in the face of overwhelming pressures. The Congress, the President, the US public, and Nimitz's own boss, the Chief of Naval Operations were all anxious for some action against the Japanese. Unfortunately, after the US losses at Pearl Harbor, the Japanese had twice as many battleships and carriers as the US. Nimitz was therefore forced to fight a defensive war until the fleet could be rebuilt (13:143). Newspapers were rife with headlines like, "Where is the Navy." Nimitz avoided any response. He would

not submit to interviews or press conferences. He preferred to ignore these pressures and continue to concentrate on rebuilding the fleet and planning for a counterstroke against the Japanese.

The Japanese continued to score impressive victories and Nimitz continued to be under fire to take action. Many advocated that he send out the US battleships in a concentrated raid. Nimitz resisted because such an action would have invited disaster since the battleships were not adequately armed, were short on fuel and the Navy didn't have sufficient crews to man them (13:143-145). Nimitz refused to place the remaining Pacific Fleet forces at risk against overwhelming odds because he knew that these forces would form the nucleus of the rebuilt fleet needed to inflict the ultimate defeat on the Japanese. Had he succumbed to the criticism, he could have left the entire west coast of the US open to Japanese attack and prolonged the war several years. He refused to allow this criticism of himself to cloud his focus on the real long-term objective--the defeat of Japan.

Another example of Nimitz's ability to maintain focus was in a situation involving his most senior subordinate, Vice Admiral Robert Ghormley. Ghormley had day-to-day command of the Pacific Fleet forces under Nimitz. The Marines had just landed on Guadalcanal with little initial opposition. However, on Guadalcanal the Japanese were being

reinforced nightly and subsequently launched a counterattack. The Marines, aided by the accompanying Navy assault fleet, held on. The Navy was then forced to withdraw due to a fuel shortage. This sequence of events created a critical situation because it left the Marines without reinforcements or supplies, facing a strengthening enemy.

Nimitz visited the combat zone and asked his staff for an on-the-scene assessment of the Marines' ability to hold on. Ghormley and the rest of his staff were pessimistic and said that the Marines probably could not withstand the repeated Japanese attacks. Nimitz then went ashore and met with General Vandergrift, the commander of the Marines. Vandergrift and his Marines showed enthusiasm and confidence. Nimitz returned to Pearl Harbor and decided that he must replace Ghormley. Relieving Ghormley was a painful decision for Nimitz because Ghormley was not only Nimitz's senior subordinate commander, but also an old a trusted personal friend for whom he had deep regard. Nimitz saw that Ghormley's negative attitude was infectious on others under him. The situation demanded a more aggressive commander so Nimitz relieved Ghormley and replaced him with Vice Admiral William F. (Bull) Halsey. Halsey immediately went on the offensive in several engagements, permitting reinforcement of the Marines. Guadalcanal was secured (13:173-177). Nimitz's action again clearly showed his ability to maintain strong

focus on the ultimate goal--defeat of the Japanese. He did not allow personal feelings to dilute that critical focus.

Another of Nimitz's qualities was his concern for people. Early-on, as a junior officer, Nimitz had demonstrated this concern by once jumping overboard to rescue a young sailor under his command. Both men were nearly swept out to sea (13:85, 15:92).

Probably the best example, though, of Nimitz's sensitivity and concern for those under him were his actions when he took over as commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, just after Pearl Harbor. Admiral Kimmel, who had been in command of the Pacific Fleet had been relieved and demoted from admiral to rear admiral. Although no action on Kimmel's part could have averted the Pearl Harbor situation, he felt great personal shame and a loss of confidence. His entire staff was demoralized. As soon as Nimitz arrived at Pearl Harbor, he met Kimmel, took him by the hand and said, "My friend, it could have happened to any of us. Stay here and help me, I need you now more than anyone else." (13:137)

Nimitz then called his first staff meeting. It was standard Navy practice for new senior admirals to bring in their own staffs, so those present at the meeting expected to be relieved immediately. Nimitz amazed all of them by his complete informality and by the fact that he expressed

confidence in each man and asked all of them to stay on. The result was an immediate boost in morale and self-respect of the entire staff (13:138, 14:21, 15:94).

Nimitz further demonstrated his concern for people by his willingness to put his own career on the line for subordinates. Early during in WWII, Nimitz and Admiral King, the Chief of Naval Operations, met in San Francisco every two months to review the military situation and to evaluate the performance of each admiral in the Pacific Fleet. Often at these sessions, King was hypercritical and wanted to relieve admirals over even minor issues. Nimitz defended his subordinate admirals by telling King that "If something is wrong with them, you'd better start looking at me." King would then retreat (13:183).

A third great Nimitz attribute was his ability to coalesce subordinates with diverse views into winning teams. He would often listen to heated arguments then interject a humorous story which would break the tension and get people working together again. Sometimes he would get the same result by having the belligerents take long walks to calm things down. He never used his rank to humiliate or coerce subordinates into abandoning a particular position (13:112, 15:98). He knew that those involved in the heated discussions were genuine, hard-working and wanted to win the war just as badly as he did.

Part of the reason for Nimitz's success in getting people to work together was another Nimitz quality; he was a good listener. Nimitz had two reasons for being a good listener. First, he wanted to learn all he could about whatever was being discussed. Second, he used this listening as an opportunity to learn about his subordinates; to understand how they thought, how they reacted to situations and on which ones he could rely.

Nimitz was not only a patient listener but carefully weighed the advice he received. This was clearly evident just after Nimitz had taken over in the Pacific. Nimitz favored raiding some of the Japanese bases in the Gilbert and Marshall Islands but the risk of doing so was significant due to the depleted condition of the US Pacific Fleet. Instead of simply imposing a decision on the rest of the staff, Nimitz insisted on a thorough preliminary study and discussion with all key people involved. His normal custom when formulating war plans was to invite any interested senior officers in the area to attend his general conferences. Nimitz would listen to all views and advice presented prior to making a decision (14:34).

Another particularly sensitive situation showed that Nimitz was prepared to listen and act promptly on sound advice, no matter what the situation involved. During the fight for Guadalcanal, Nimitz was faced with the question of

whether to relieve his senior subordinate commander, Vice Admiral Robert Ghormley. At issue was whether Ghormley was aggressive enough to meet the approaching challenge of blunting the Japanese attempt to defeat the US fleet that was supporting the embattled Marines on Guadalcanal. The issue was delicate and difficult for Nimitz. Ghormley was an old and trusted friend and a dedicated and intelligent officer. Despite the the sensitivity of this situation, Nimitz thought the decision too important to make without the benefit of the advice of the senior staff members. He called them together and asked them to provide their assessment of whether the existing arrangement (with Ghormley in command of Guadalcanal navy operations) was equal to the coming critical encounter with the Japanese forces trying to drive the Marines off Guadalcanal. They all said that the current command situation was not satisfactory. Nimitz then bluntly asked each officer, "Is it time for me to relieve Admiral Ghormley?" Every officer present replied with, "Yes." Nimitz thought the issue through overnight and the next morning sent the following message to Ghormley:

After carefully weighing all factors, have decided that talents and previous experience of Halsey can best be applied to the situation by having him take over duties of ComSoPac (Ghormley's command) as soon as practicable after his arrival Noumea 18th your date. I greatly appreciate your loyal and devoted efforts toward the accomplishment of a most difficult task...(14:196-197).

Origins of Traits

Nimitz demonstrated his strongest point, the ability to maintain focus, even prior to WW II. He was given a number of thankless assignments such as when he was placed in command of a fleet of decommissioned destroyers and later as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation (a notorious dead-end job for senior officers) as a rear admiral. Despite these and other mundane jobs, he always made the best of them. He preferred to be thinking ahead to future opportunities (13:99). This characteristic, focusing on the important and on things he could influence, seems likely to be one he inherited from his grandfather. His grandfather's philosophy is best explained by what he once told nine-year-old Chester, "You will need to learn the difference between things that will never change and things that time will take care of...Time will work on your side if you have the patience to let it take over."

As was shown earlier, Nimitz drew heavily on his patience and ability to focus during his ordeal as commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet (13:24). However, an incident earlier in Nimitz's career shows what a deep influence his grandfather's philosophy had on him. In July of 1908 when Nimitz was an ensign on the destroyer, USS Decatur, he was given responsibility for commanding the ship as it entered Manila harbor. Nimitz estimated this ship's position instead

of taking bearings and also failed to check to see if the tide was coming in or going out. Suddenly, the ship ran aground. All efforts to dislodge her failed. Nimitz was responsible and was guilty of pure carelessness. This situation could have ended his navy career--a consequence that might have panicked others of his junior rank. However, Nimitz realized that there was nothing he could do to free the ship until the morning of the next day so he relaxed and set up a cot on deck where he slept the rest of the night. The next morning, the Decatur was pulled free by a passing steamboat. Although no one except those on the ship would have ever known about the incident, Nimitz reported himself and was reprimanded (13:78-79).

How Nimitz developed his concern for people is not entirely clear. Young Nimitz was certainly in a position to see the courteous way his grandfather treated all of those who stayed at his hotel. It must have been evident to Nimitz that his grandfather's way of dealing with people was very successful because his grandfather was respected and well-liked by the many people who came to the hotel on a regular basis. Also, Nimitz may have been influenced by his mother who was a kind and gentle person.

Another Nimitz leadership characteristic, the ability to mold people of strong, diverse views into effective teams, seems to have been a product of his ability to focus and his

concern for people. The patience that allowed him to maintain focus and his sensitivity to the needs and feelings of people resulted in their wanting to put aside differences in favor of a higher calling--winning the war. It's not likely that Nimitz could have built the effective, winning teams that he did if he had tried to brow-beat squabbling subordinates into cooperating. In Nimitz, these people saw a man with the weight of the Pacific war on his shoulders, yet able to remain calm and tell amusing stories. This view of Nimitz by subordinates helped them see how unimportant their disagreements were compared to the overall war objective, and motivated them to raise their thinking to the level Nimitz wanted.

What was the source of Nimitz's being a good listener? There were at least two strong factors driving Nimitz's development of this quality. First, Nimitz's main source of learning outside of school was listening to the great wealth of stories from his grandfather. This learning was greatly augmented by Nimitz's listening to the wide range of experiences of the many visitors to the hotel run by his grandfather. Nimitz thus discovered as a young boy, the learning value in listening to the experiences of others (13:43). A second factor in the development of Nimitz's propensity to be a good listener may have been that he was influenced by the characteristic discipline of the German

immigrant community of which he was a part. Part of life in that community was hard work and unquestioned assumption of responsibility. It was necessary to listen carefully to adults to learn these responsibilities and how to meet them.

Nimitz clearly developed his ability to listen early in his life and demonstrated his application of this skill even prior to WWII. A good example of this occurred in 1934. Nimitz was in command of the cruiser, Augusta. The Augusta had pulled alongside an oiler, the Pecos, in order to take on fuel. Nimitz himself had control of the ship. There was a strong wind and it suddenly shifted, causing the Augusta to swing into the Pecos, damaging the oiler's bridge and lifeboat davits. When the two ships had been separated, Nimitz sent for the acting first officer, a young lieutenant named Thompson. Nimitz asked the young officer what he (Nimitz) had done wrong. Thompson replied, "Well, sir, you were overconfident and misjudged the effect the wind would have on a ship riding lightly on the water." Nimitz said, "That's right." Nimitz then had Thompson tell him what should have been done. Thompson then described the correct procedure and Nimitz agreed with him (14:156-157).

What Does the Nimitz Case Show?

Nimitz, like Eisenhower, was successful in reaching flag rank because he was a top performer in even the thankless jobs he had. Why he was elevated from rear admiral

to commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet over 28 more senior admirals is somewhat of a mystery. He had a fairly low-key career, never sought publicity and lacked the flamboyance of a MacArthur (13:109).

What can be said about Nimitz's peacetime application of the skills he later demonstrated in wartime? Did they contribute to his success? It seems clear that his ability to focus on objectives and to not be diverted by things he couldn't control was a key factor in his ultimate success. This fact is evident from Nimitz's diligent handling of thankless, mundane assignments.

Nimitz's concern for people and his ability to listen were visible even prior to WWII, as was shown earlier in this chapter. Obviously, these qualities allowed Nimitz to motivate those under him to perform, even in less glamorous peacetime jobs, otherwise he would not have been successful in the overall tasks he was given to do. Also, these two attributes were the ones he used most often to foster teamwork among subordinates. This peacetime success formula was not lost on Nimitz because he carried this approach forward with great skill during his WWII service.

In the next chapter we move from leadership at sea to leadership on land; from an outstanding but very low-key leader in Admiral Nimitz, to a flamboyant and brilliant ground commander, General George S. Patton, Jr.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON, JR

General George S. Patton, Jr. is a name that is often considered synonymous with leadership. He was a leader with the flamboyance of MacArthur and the aggressiveness and "by example" styles of Generals Curtis Lemay and George Brown. His command of the US Third Army during the final drive to victory in Europe in World War II (WWII) has become a classic example of a successful commander in offensive warfare. He radiated confidence and overpowering determination, was an authority on military history and on the great military leaders of the past, and was an inspiring speaker.

Yet, by contrast, Patton suffered from dyslexia, a disorder which caused him to have strong feelings of inadequacy and insecurity throughout most of his life. He took 35 years to win his first star, was considered too military by many of his peers, believed in reincarnation, was infamous for his command of "barracks language" and came close to dismissal several times because of his candid comments on sensitive political issues. Patton was a truly controversial man. However, because of his remarkable ability to take ordinary men and motivate them beyond their perceptions of their own capabilities in war, any serious study of combat leadership should include him (17:11-16).

Career Summary

General Patton was born of upper middle class parents in Lake Vangard, California, (near Los Angeles) in November of 1885. Because of his affliction, dyslexia, he was tutored at home until he was twelve years old. He attended private schools from 1896 until 1903. In 1903 he earned an appointment to Virginia Military Institute and transferred to West Point in 1904. After being set back one year for substandard academic performance, he graduated in 1909 at the age of 24 and was assigned to a cavalry troop at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. He was transferred to Ft Meyer, Virginia, in 1912 and later that same year served a short tour as a temporary aide to both the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimpson, and Army Chief of Staff, General Leonard Wood. He was as an aide to General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing during Pershing's pursuit of Pancho Villa along the US-Mexican border in 1915-1917 and was promoted to first lieutenant that latter year. After the US entry into WWI in 1917, he was sent to France, serving initially on General Pershing's staff and later as director of the first US tank school in France and commander of a tank brigade. During his service in France in 1917 and 1918, he was promoted to captain, major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel. In 1919, Patton returned to the US and reverted to his peacetime grade of captain. He was quickly repromoted to major and given

command of a cavalry squadron at Ft Meyer, Virginia, in 1920. He attended the Command and General Staff College in 1924, graduating in the top 25 per cent of his class and was then assigned to the General Staff in Washington, as director of personnel. In late 1925, he was assigned to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, as director of intelligence. In 1928 he returned to the US and served in the office of the Chief of Cavalry in Washington. He attended the Army War College in 1931 and was subsequently assigned to duty as the executive officer of a cavalry regiment at Ft Meyer, Virginia. In 1935, Patton was reassigned to Hawaii as director of intelligence for the Army's Hawaiian Department at Ft Shafter. Returning to the US in 1938, Patton served on the faculty of the cavalry school at Ft Riley, Kansas, for one year and was then appointed commander of Ft Meyer. In 1940, he was promoted to brigadier general and became acting commander of the Second Armored Division at Ft Benning Georgia. He was promoted to major general in April of 1941 and commanded a corps during the invasion of North Africa in August of 1942. Later during the North African campaign, he was promoted to lieutenant general. He commanded the US Seventh Army during the Sicilian campaign and the US Third Army in its famous sweep across France and into Germany at the close of WWII in Europe. He was promoted to general in

April 1945. General Patton's career was cut short when he died as a result of an automobile accident in Germany in December of 1945 (17:15-17, 33-294).

Leadership Characteristics

What was the magic wielded by Patton that produced such extraordinary results with such ordinary men? Patton is a classic study in command and exhibited many strong leadership traits. Six of the most vivid Patton characteristics were: courage, concern for subordinates, preparation, loyalty, innovativeness and leadership by example.

The first of the above characteristics, personal courage, was one of Patton's most striking attributes. Like General Curtis Lemay, Patton was a firm believer that commanders should never direct men to do what they themselves were unwilling or afraid to do. Patton clearly demonstrated this belief on many occasions during both WWI and WWII. On one occasion, during WWI, American tanks, advancing on a French town, became bogged down on a bridge leading to the town because the artillery bombardment on the town and surrounding area was considered too intense to move through. Patton, on foot, led the tanks across the bridge into the town. His tanks advanced through the town and proceeded on to attack the next town. There Patton found American riflemen unwilling to enter the town because of the

withering fire, so he ordered his lead tank to enter the town. When he saw that the tank commander was reluctant, Patton climbed up and sat on the top of the tank to encourage the driver. Bullets were hitting the tank frequently, but Patton stayed on and the column advanced and took the town. After the town was secured, Patton jumped off the tank and into a shell hole. The tanks continued to advance but the infantry again would not budge. Patton then provided an example of personal courage and proper integration of tanks and infantry by walking behind the tanks to gain protection from the small arms fire (17:110-113).

Later, in WWI, Patton again showed his courage. Several tanks leading an attack were unable to cross some large trenches. Patton sent men to try and hurry the tankers across the obstacles but got no results. He came to the scene and personally started unstrapping shovels and picks from the tanks while ignoring the bullets that were spattering the hulls. He even hit one man over the head with a shovel to get him to work! The tanks were soon moving (17:113). After the tanks had passed, Patton then led the associated infantry to follow the tanks, but intense flanking machine gun fire whittled down men around him one by one until only Patton and an aide remained. When the aide then pointed out to Patton that they were the only ones left, Patton said, "Come on anyway." Patton was then wounded but

crawled into a shell hole and continued to give commands, directing fire at machine gun positions. He ordered that no one was to come forward to try and help him because of the probable risk to their life. When a stretcher team finally came and picked him up, Patton ordered them to take him to division headquarters so that he could make an accurate report of the engagement (17:112-114).

Later, in WWII, Patton continued to demonstrate his personal courage. During the North African campaign near Tunis, one of Patton's leading tank divisions was blocked by a mine field. Preceded by nothing more than a jeep and a scout car he rode through the mine field and led the tanks into the clear (17:188). Later, to emphasize the importance of leaders exhibiting personal courage, Patton ordered that at least one staff officer from each staff section had to visit the fighting organizations each day to enhance these officers' understanding of conditions at the front, and to make them visible to the soldiers there (17:217).

Another clear indication of Patton's courage occurred during the allied invasion of Sicily. Patton had himself transported to the invasion beach and began surveying wreckage from the fighting. Suddenly, shells began to hit some thirty yards away but Patton was unperturbed as he waited patiently for his command car to be de-waterproofed. He then drove off to review the situation further inland.

Shortly, Patton and his party encountered a fierce battle, where an Axis tank force was attacking US troops. Patton was excited by the prospect of being so close to the fighting and, with little regard for the danger, displayed himself prominently. He shouted to the nearby troops, "Kill every one of the goddamn bastards", then proceeded to help a party of soldiers set up their mortars. Patton's presence had stiffened the defense and the Axis tanks were driven back (17:198). Later, he fell under fire from German snipers and was subjected to counterfire from German 88 millimeter guns, which twice hit the house in which he was sheltering. He refused to retreat to safer ground (18:34).

Another of Patton's hallmarks was his understanding of and concern for his subordinates, particularly the common soldier. Like General Lemay, Patton is rarely given credit for this quality. Speaking about the importance of officers seeing to the well-being of their subordinates, Patton once said:

Officers are not only responsible for the conduct of their men in battle, but also for their health and contentment when not fighting. An officer must be the last man to take shelter from fire, and the first to move forward. He must be the last man to look after his own comfort at the close of a march. The officer must constantly interest himself in the welfare of his men and their rations. He should know his men so well that any sign of sickness or nervous strain will be apparent to him...He must anticipate change of weather and see that proper clothing and footgear are asked for and obtained. (19:24).

Patton put the above words into practice on a regular basis. In North Africa, he personally expedited the arrival of new equipment, clothing and mail, and he improved living conditions by insisting on better food and well-cooked meals (17:183). Later in Europe, he showed the same concern for the common soldiers. He drove throughout his command, addressing his troops and radiating optimism. He made sure that mail deliveries were fast and regular, that food was the best possible, attended to such details as ensuring that daily changes of socks were distributed to avert trench foot, and that hot showers and clean clothing were available. He rotated units and started a liberal leave policy so that the troops could visit nearby towns to relax (17:241).

Probably the thing most remembered about Patton was his aggressiveness and devotion to the offensive in war. However, a lesser known Patton leadership quality, preparation, contributed much to his success as an offensive commander. It was this preparation that frequently allowed him to exploit offensive opportunities. Patton demonstrated his penchant for preparation early-on. In August of 1918, during his WWI service in France, Patton was informed of a possible offensive using his tank command. He went to inspect the area where the offensive was to take place. In order to see whether the ground was firm enough to support the tanks, Patton accompanied a night patrol of French

infantrymen into no-man's-land. He then checked the area where the tanks were to be off-loaded from rail cars, plotted concealment routes to nearby woods, found paths for the tanks to take to the point of attack, wrote a terrain analysis and preliminary attack plan, arranged for artillery launched smoke to conceal the tanks and requested reserved road space for gasoline trucks. Before the offensive however, Patton was ordered to attack in a completely different area. He simply repeated the process--studying the new ground and writing a new attack plan. To compensate for the changed location, he established a forward dump of 10,000 gallons of gasoline (17:107).

Another memorable instance of Patton's preparation occurred in December of 1944, during the battle of the bulge. Prior to the German offensive which initiated the battle, Patton became concerned over the possibility of a German attack and had his staff work up several contingency options. While many other senior commanders discounted German capability for a large offensive, Patton (whose forces were not in the area of the German attack front) had all of his divisions mobilized and at a high state of readiness. When the Germans attacked, chaos resulted and Allied lines were thrown back--the Germans were succeeding. When General Bradley, Patton's immediate superior, asked Patton what he could do to stem the Germans, Patton instantly answered, "I

can send three divisions to the north, the first starting at midnight, the second at first light and the third within twenty four hours." Patton also indicated that he could move an entire corps north to help stop the Germans. The Patton plan was bold beyond comprehension. It would mean immediately halting the direction of movement of 50,000 men, hundreds of tanks and support gear, turning them in unison 90 degrees to the north and then repeating the same maneuver with a like force a few hours later. All of these men and this equipment would have to move on unknown, slippery, snow-covered roads and many of them would be moving at night (17:246).

Patton was then ordered to attend a high level meeting of Eisenhower, Bradley and their British counterparts to discuss a course of action. When Eisenhower asked Patton when he could attack, Patton immediately replied "On 22 December, with three divisions." Those in the room thought that this was impossible. No one could deploy such a large force so quickly. Eisenhower, unsure of Patton's ability to execute this plan, asked how it could be done so quickly. Patton replied that his staff had already prepared to move even before the meeting, and that all that was needed to start them rolling was for him (Patton) to telephone them with one of three prearranged code words (one for each of three attack plans). Eisenhower approved Patton's plan and

in three days the Germans were stopped and driven back. Patton's lead forces then relieved the surrounded Bastogne garrison (17:245-251).

A fourth Patton attribute was loyalty. He believed that loyalty was essential both up and down the chain of command. On the subject of loyalty, Patton once said:

Loyalty is frequently only considered as faithfulness from the bottom up. It has another and equally important application that is from the top down. One of the most frequently noted characteristics of the great who have remained great is unforgetfulness of loyalty to their subordinates. It is the characteristic which binds with hoops of iron their juniors to them. A man who is truly and unselfishly loyal to his superiors is of necessity so to his juniors and they to him (20:79).

Two specific situations illustrate Patton's downward loyalty. In the first instance, Eisenhower had ordered Patton to accept a general whom Patton thought was incompetent. Patton protested to Eisenhower, but to no avail. Later the general was proven to be as bad as Patton had predicted and Eisenhower told Patton to relieve the officer. Patton refused, saying: "Now he is one of my generals, I'll straighten him out myself." (20:80)

On one other occasion, Patton orally reprimanded an officer for what Patton thought was a serious shortcoming. Later, after the officer had left, Patton's chief of staff pointed out that the reprimanded officer was carrying out orders under guidance from two conflicting directives, one of which Patton had not rescinded. Patton immediately had the

officer brought back along with all others who had been present during the reprimand so that he (Patton) could publicly apologize to him (20:80).

Patton often felt that his superiors' plans were clearly inferior to his own but his upward loyalty was unwavering. After the initial landings in North Africa, the British commander, General Alexander, who was in overall charge of armies commanded by Patton and Montgomery, was undecided about what action to take next. Patton pleaded with Alexander to give his (Patton's) command a larger role. Alexander was about to approve a plan to satisfy Patton's request but he (Alexander) succumbed to intimidation from Montgomery and the plan was dropped. British Admiral Cunningham, in charge of the naval portion of the North African landings, suggested to Patton and others that they protest the operation, but Patton replied, "No goddamnit, I've been in this army thirty years and when my superior gives me an order, I say, 'Yes Sir' and then do my goddamndest to carry it out." (18:30-31)

Another of Patton's qualities was innovativeness. Although he was well-read in the history of war and spent many years serving in the horse cavalry, he never allowed himself to be stifled by overreliance on the past.

One area in which Patton was particularly innovative was in the use of light aircraft to support ground combat.

While he was in command of the Second Armored Division at Ft Benning, Georgia, in early 1941, he began experimenting with light planes. He found them valuable for many purposes--to carry messages and information, to locate and identify units, to transport commanders and staff members and to serve as eyes for the artillery. The work Patton did with light aircraft led to Army-wide use of these types of aircraft as adjuncts to ground forces (17:152-153). Later, while commanding the Second Armored Division during desert training in California, Patton expanded his innovative use of light aircraft by becoming the first ground commander to direct units from the air by voice radio (17:161).

Later, in France, Patton teamed up with General Otto P. Weyland, commander of the 19th Tactical Air Command to set a standard for joint ground-air operations. Weyland's fighters protected Patton's flanks and impeded enemy armor and troop movements as Patton's forces moved rapidly forward, constantly engaging the Germans. Patton was initially not a strong advocate of offensive air power, but demonstrated his innovativeness and adaptability by his willingness to work hand-in-hand with Weyland to develop an effective approach to the use of tactical air power to support ground forces. Patton and Weyland integrated their respective staffs to the extent that most air missions did not even have to be formally requested by Patton's forces. Also, Patton or his

chief of staff normally attended all of Weyland's planning conferences. Patton said of the joint air-ground combat operations:

...Whenever armor and air can work this way together, the results are sure to be excellent. Armor can move fast enough to prevent the enemy having time to deploy off the roads, and so long as he stays on the roads the fighter-bomber is one of his most deadly opponents (20:126-128).

Another Patton innovation was his repeated use of tactical amphibious operations during the fighting for Sicily. Despite being told by everyone that it was too risky and probably couldn't succeed, Patton launched an amphibious assault on retreating German and Italian units on August 10, 1942, and nearly trapped the entire enemy force. The Germans and Italians were forced to speed up their retreat (17:203). Patton later explained his rationale for these operations:

People are unduly scared of amphibious operations. No large-scale amphibious operations I can remember off-hand ever did fail in the whole of history. Except, that is, the landing of the Athenians at Syracuse in 413 B.C. That was a failure for a lot of reasons. It was not a failure of the Athenian soldiery (20:108).

General James Gavin, who served in Patton's command during the operations in Sicily, thought that the Patton's use of tactical amphibious landings was highly significant because it gave Churchill the idea for an amphibious landing at Anzio, in Italy, and because it demonstrated that Patton's capacity for innovation in war was beyond the capability of any other high-ranking commander, except MacArthur (20:109).

Of course, the best known Patton innovations were associated with his use of tanks in offensive warfare. Patton became familiar with tanks and their potential during his service as a tank battalion commander with the American forces in France in WWI and those lessons were not lost on him later. During large scale army maneuvers in Tennessee in June of 1941, Patton applied the "blitzkrieg" tactics of German generals, Guderian and Rommel (Patton had read books written by both) and made a shambles of the opposing forces. His tanks cut behind "enemy" lines, captured command posts and disrupted supply lines. The maneuver umpires were ordered to restrain Patton, but despite many rulings going against him, he continued to dominate opposing maneuver forces. Later, in even larger scale wargames in Louisiana, Patton repeated his Tennessee performance, demonstrating the speed and mobility of tanks. In these maneuvers, Patton's forces "captured" the city of Shreveport, forcing the exercise to be terminated a full day early (20:35).

Patton again applied these armored offensive techniques in France in WWII. After the breakout from the Normandy beachhead, Patton's tanks raced across France with such speed and daring that the Germans were never able to mount an effective counterattack on his forces. Unlike other ground commanders who placed the infantry in the lead during an offensive, Patton led with tanks lined up on a narrow, deep front and the infantry followed them. This exploited

the shock effect of the tank to breakup and demoralize enemy forces, making it easier and less costly in terms of casualties for the infantry who trailed the tanks. His armored forces moved with such speed and created such chaos among enemy forces that the advance of his tanks was often limited only by the availability of gasoline (20:112).

Probably the best assessment of Patton's ability to innovate was provided by his enemies, the Germans. A captured German high command document said of Patton:

General Patton is clearly the number one. He is the most modern and the only master of offensive. Patton is the most dangerous general on all fronts. The tactics of other generals are well known and countermeasures can be effected against them. Patton's tactics are daring and unpredictable. He fights not only the troops but the German Reich (20:112-113).

What can be said of the other great Patton quality, his penchant for "up-front" leadership? This was perhaps Patton's most visible quality and he felt strongly about its importance in effective leadership. Patton thought that it was absolutely essential for leaders to be highly visible to subordinates and to show that the leader is willing to take the same risks that he asks subordinates to take. During WWII, Patton traveled constantly, visiting all forward areas. He was always immaculately dressed and rode in an open jeep so that his men could see him. The jeep was highly polished and his aide manned a .50-calibre machine gun mounted in the rear. The jeep's upholstery was bright red

and oversize general's stars were mounted on the front and rear. As Patton sped along, his driver would announce the approach of the jeep by sounding a loud siren (19:14).

When a town had been captured, Patton was always among the first to enter it, ignoring the danger of sniper bullets and delayed fuze bombs. After amphibious landings, Patton would leap into the surf before the landing craft had stopped, wade ashore while disregarding zinging bullets, artillery shells and mortar fire, and shout directions and encouragement to his men (19:14).

There are numerous specific examples of Patton's up-front leadership style. One occurred on a cold rainy day during WWII. Patton was touring a forward area and came upon a group of men repairing a tank that had been damaged by enemy fire. Patton jumped out of his jeep, went over to the tank and crawled through the mud to get under it. The mechanics working on the tank were astonished to see a three-star general in the mud. Patton stayed under the tank for almost 30 minutes. When Patton returned to his jeep, he was covered with mud and grease. His aide asked him what was wrong and Patton replied, "I don't know, but I am sure that the word will spread throughout the division that I was on my belly in the mud repairing the tank (19:15)."

Another memorable Patton demonstration of personal leadership occurred in November of 1942, during a Patton

inspection trip to the landing beach at Fedhola, North Africa. Patton was observing the unloading of supplies for his army. The beach was being constantly strafed by French aircraft. Boats were coming in with supplies, but were not being pushed off the beach so they could return for reloading. Every time an aircraft came in to strafe, the men all took cover. The supply situation was critical since a major battle was being waged only 1500 yards inland. Patton observed this situation for a few minutes, then jumped out of his jeep, ignored the strafing aircraft and began working with the men on the beach to push the boats off. Patton later commented on this incident saying:

By remaining on the beach and personally helping to push off boats and by not taking cover when the enemy planes flew over, I believe I had considerable influence in quieting the nerves of the troops and on making the initial landing a success. I stayed on the beach for over 18 hours and was wet all over all of that time. People say that army commanders should not indulge in such practices. My theory is that an army commander does whatever is necessary to accomplish his mission, and that nearly eighty percent of his mission is to arouse morale in his men (3:259-260).

Patton believed that this personal leadership was necessary, regardless of the risk to the leader. When Patton took command of an organization, he ordered every officer to have his rank painted on the front of his helmet. This was very unpopular among officers because they thought it made them targets for snipers. One colonel, after Patton took over the II Corps in North Africa, protested Patton's order

to paint on the insignia. He told Patton, "I am up on the battle line frequently; and if I am killed, I am of no further use to you or to my unit." Patton, at the time, wore his rank in large stars on his helmet, on each shoulder, on both collars and on his two pistols. Patton led the colonel to his jeep and drove to the front lines. Men stopped, saluted and cheered as they recognized Patton. Patton turned to the colonel and said:

Those men are looking to you for leadership. But without the insignia of your rank, you are nothing to them. Or to me. A leader should be up ahead leading, even if he gets killed. And his men have to know he is their leader. Put your insignia on (19:19-20).

Origins of Traits

What were the sources of Patton's key leadership characteristics of courage, concern for people, preparation, loyalty, innovativeness and leadership by example? Probably the easiest of these qualities to trace is courage. Patton believed that courage was a quality his ancestors would have expected of him. Patton held these "ghosts" and others in his early life in great reverence and it would have been inconceivable to him to have even considered violating their legacy of courage and daring. Patton actually believed that these heroic influences were "watching from above" (17:21). His own words confirm the strong sense of obligation he felt to carry on along the honorable lines established by his ancestors. He recalled, years after WWI, the time in WWI

when he was wounded during an advance on German positions:

I looked upon myself during the charge as if I were a small detached figure on the battlefield watched all the time from a cloud by my Confederate kinsman and my Virginia grandfather (18:17).

The Patton military lineage stretched clear back to the American Revolutionary war, when his great-great grandfather, a brigadier general, was mortally wounded fighting in Washington's army at Princeton. Patton's grandfather was a graduate of Virginia Military Institute (VMI), a colonel in the confederate army and was killed while leading at the head of his troops at the battle of Cedar Creek in 1864. A Patton great uncle, also a VMI graduate, was killed while leading the 7th Virginia Regiment in Pickett's charge at Gettysburg in 1863. Still another great uncle, while enrolled at VMI, participated in the great "charge of cadets" at the battle of New Market, Virginia, late in the civil war. Also, many of Patton's cousins held senior rank in the Civil War (17:21). Another source of influence on Patton was the regular visits to his boyhood home by famous civil war veterans such as confederate guerilla leader, Colonel John Singleton Mosby (the "Gray Ghost"). These visits and all of the many reminiscences of his step-grandfather (a civil war veteran) made strong impressions on Patton. These influences motivated Patton to pursue a military career and to dedicate himself to a stern life of courage, loyalty and self-discipline (17:30-31).

What about the origin of Patton's concern for people? The clearest explanation for this quality seems to be a twofold one. First, the qualities Patton so strongly believed in--honor, loyalty, courage were simultaneously considered as the traits of a "gentleman". A gentleman in the "old south" mold of many of Patton's heroic ancestors always had respect for the power of accomplishment and the importance of the individual. A second Patton motive may have been tied to his other obsession--achieving his perceived destiny for personal greatness. He knew that he could never reach those aims without a conscious concern for the pride and the welfare of those that would do the actual fighting.

The third of Patton's qualities discussed earlier, preparation, was probably driven by his feelings of inadequacy and insecurity. Patton suffered from a disorder called dyslexia. Symptoms of the disorder are feelings of inadequacy, a frustration with books and studies, a limited span of concentration, an impairment of the learning process, and the strong need to compensate for these deficiencies by outstanding achievement in other areas (17:17). The scope of Patton's difficulty in the academic environment was significant. Reading and writing were always a struggle for him and his schoolmates often made fun of him because of his demonstrated shortcomings at the blackboard (17:34).

As part of his self-improvement effort, Patton became an avid student of history and became well-versed on all of the great leaders of the past. He paid close attention to the struggles many of these leaders went through to gain recognition and its associated advancement. A key, in Patton's mind, was that it was not sufficient just to excel; this excellence had to be recognized by others. Patton's goal became one of preparing for high position and simultaneously attempting to ensure that those that mattered were impressed with his preparation for those positions (17:34).

Patton often expressed doubts about his ability. When at West Point, he had great difficulty with academic work. Others of lesser ability (according to Patton) did better than he even though he worked much harder than they did. In one instance, in a letter to his future wife, he characterized himself as "a characterless, lazy, stupid yet ambitious dreamer." (17:52) In many of his letters he expressed an attitude of "overpowering sense of my own worthlessness." (17:52) His frustrations were compounded when he failed French in his first year at West point and was turned back to repeat the entire year. He attempted to compensate for his lack of academic skill with bearing, discipline and other military skills and was well thought of for his efforts by the faculty at West Point (17:53).

Although Patton was clearly aware of the importance of being noticed, he also considered preparation a key part of being an outstanding commander. In his last year at West Point, he wrote:

In order for a man to become a great soldier...it is necessary for him to be so thoroughly conversant with all sorts of military possibilities that whenever an occasion arises he has at hand without effort on his part a parallel (17:59).

What was the source of Patton's strong belief in loyalty? As with personal courage, loyalty was clearly one of the attributes of chivalrous southern gentlemen and warriors such as those Patton tried to closely emulate. Another likely influence on Patton's loyalty to subordinates was his belief that his being loyal to them would, in turn, make them loyal to him. He once said:

A sense of duty will compel soldiers to defend a position with dignity and courage. But a burning desire for glory and undying loyalty will make them storm the gates of hell without question (20:79).

It is also very likely that Patton's extensive study of military history showed him that loyalty was a virtue of many of the great commanders like Robert E. Lee and Napoleon.

What about Patton's upward loyalty? Certainly, he had to be loyal to his superiors. However, his sensitivity to the necessity for this loyalty was probably more acute than normal. Patton was, as was shown earlier, constantly

obsessed with calling his superiors' attention to his capabilities. He was extremely careful to always present the best image possible to seniors; his was particularly true prior to WWII. A lack of upward loyalty would have placed his career at risk before he could have made the impression he wanted to. He was far too smart to have made such errors.

Where did Patton develop his innovative spirit?

There seems to have been two probable sources. First, Patton saw from his experience in WWI, that combat was an unpredictable environment, with a dangerous implications for overreliance on fixed plans, tactics and procedures. During WWI, Patton dealt with great uncertainty as a commander of tanks. The machines were primitive and broke down frequently and he had no precedent for armored tactics. These conditions forced Patton to innovate and undoubtedly gave him confidence in his ability to do so later in WWII. Patton clearly understood the need for flexibility and innovation. He once told a young lieutenant, who had failed to execute a maneuver because it was not consistent with army regulations:

Relax, Lieutenant! What you did was exactly right according to Army Regulations. But let me tell you something, if you want to be a Napoleon, think of the mission first! Forget about Army Regulations. Army Regulations are written by those who have never been in battle. They write about what they have been told by others. Our only mission is to win. If we don't win, you can forget everything... battles are won by soldiers who do not spend a split second trying to remember what Army Regulations had to say about what you should do when you are being shot at! (21:47)

Patton's attribute, leadership by example, was the summation of his personal courage, loyalty and concern for people. He simply could not have practiced these three qualities any other way but by personal example. Patton, like Lemay, thought that it would be inconceivable for a commander to be afraid or unwilling to do the things he expected of his subordinates; the commander must therefore set the example. Patton also had a psychological basis for his belief in "by example" leadership. In a 1927 paper Patton wrote titled, "Why Men Fight", he said:

Soldiers, all men in fact, are natural hero worshipers. Officers with a flair for command realize this and emphasize in their conduct, dress and deportment the qualities they seek to produce in their men. When I was a second lieutenant I had a captain who was very sloppy and usually late, yet he got after the men for just those faults; he was a failure.

The troops I have commanded have always been well dressed, been smart saluters, been prompt and bold in action because I have personally set the example in those qualities. The influence one man can have on thousands is a never-ending source of wonder to me (22:10A).

Another reason for Patton's personal leadership style was undoubtedly related to his life-long feeling of inadequacy (17:17). To deal with this feeling, he constantly worked to gain attention and recognition, both from subordinates and superiors. By leading personally, he was able to gain this adulation he so fervently sought.

What Does the Patton Case Show?

The one outstanding feature of Patton's advancement in rank and responsibility was his consistently outstanding performance. It is true that he, more than any other American commander of his day, projected a self-made image of discipline, toughness and anxiousness to get into combat with only one objective--to win. But he like all of the other four great commanders discussed in this paper, could never have reached high position had he not done far more than project a winning image. However, Patton was forever in doubt of himself and did not believe that he would ever get a chance to prove his worth without consciously attempting to call attention to himself. His attempt to prove himself was a lifelong effort. Even during WWII, he continued to worry that the war might be over before he could get a field command in Europe after the Normandy invasion (17:223).

By contrast, the other great flag officers studied seemed content to do whatever job came their way. The secret of their success was just doing their very best, at even the thankless, mundane tasks. Like Patton, they all worked hard at preparing for rank and position, but the difference is that they hoped that those rewards would come and did not make a lifelong effort to call attention to their capabilities as did Patton. Patton simply had a different philosophy of the best way to get ahead.

Patton was always more capable than he himself supposed--a result which was largely caused by his setting almost impossible standards for himself and then engaging in self-doubt when he fell short. It seems likely that his effort to call attention to himself may have helped him reach general officer rank just before WWII. It seems equally probable that his outstanding capabilities as a combat commander would have naturally revealed themselves during the course of the war, resulting in his reaching high rank prior to the war's conclusion. Patton, unlike others, was unwilling to wait and take that chance.

Did Patton's qualities make him successful during his peacetime service? During the period between WWI and WWII, Patton clearly demonstrated all of the six leadership attributes discussed earlier. However, Patton's thoughts in exercising these qualities seemed to be slanted toward either providing him opportunities for further achievement or as personal tests to remove the continual self-doubts he had. Certainly, Patton impressed his superiors, especially General Marshall, with his ability to develop tough, disciplined troops and innovative tactics for armored forces. Marshall was convinced that the US entry into WWII was imminent and that commanders like Patton would be critical to US war efforts.

Patton's exercise of the six attributes discussed
earlier made him an outstanding leader, even in peacetime--a
conclusion he could never quite come to. Patton saw war as
only the place to demonstrate real leadership. He never
attached great utility to peacetime accomplishment other than
what it might contribute directly and immediately toward
preparation for combat or in calling attention to one's
talents.

With this discussion of Patton, we bring to a close
the detailed analysis of the five great leaders in the
study. In the following final chapter, we will discuss the
relevance of the attributes of the five leaders to today's
senior officers and the peacetime environment in which they
currently must operate.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

What Were We Trying to Do?

The aim of this paper was to explore the question of whether skills being developed by senior leaders (and prospective senior leaders) in the current peacetime environment will also have applicability during future wartime service. The paper used a historical perspective to address the question. An in-depth study was done of a cross-service selection of five well-known and highly successful senior leaders to explore the origin of their wartime success qualities, to determine whether these traits contributed to their success during both war and peace and to assess the relevance of these findings to current and future senior leaders.

What Did History Tell Us?

The analysis of the five senior leaders revealed a number of key points:

All demonstrated leadership qualities in peacetime that contributed to their success later on in wartime. Even in peacetime, their superiors tagged each of the five as officers who could "get things done". The study clearly shows that their ability to maintain focus on the right

issues and to maximize subordinates' capabilities were major contributors to this success.

There was no evidence that any of the five were "born leaders". The qualities that allowed each of them to be outstanding wartime leaders were developed through a combination of early family life influences, many years of dedicated academic study and application of lessons learned from failures and successes during practical experiences.

All five leaders, with the exception of Patton who died in an auto accident in 1945, went on to achieve great success after WWII, each eventually becoming chief of his respective service.

The two most common attributes these top leaders demonstrated (in one form or another) were 1) the ability to identify the limited number of critical factors needed to achieve an objective and to maintain focus on these and, 2) concern for subordinates.

The single most mitigating factor in their advancement in rank and responsibility was demonstrated outstanding performance over a long period of time and in a number of different jobs.

Each of the five had a significant number of mundane, low visibility jobs during their careers. All five, however, pursued these jobs with the same level of professionalism that they exercised in their more glamorous assignments.

Combat experience in prior wars does not seem to have been a significant factor in their advancement to positions of senior leadership in WWII. Only Patton had actual combat experience in WWI, and his experience was very limited.

Eisenhower and Nimitz had staff jobs during WWI and neither Brown nor Lemay were old enough to have served in WWI.

Each of the five suffered at least one major career-threatening situation not associated with their wartime service.

What is the Relevance Today?

What are the value and applicability of these historical findings to today's military? Certainly, a study of five outstanding leaders from the past could not provide a conclusive data base sufficient to fully answer this question. However, there is no assurance that if the number of leaders studied was increased to ten or twenty it would provide an irrefutable answer. However, two factors do enhance the value and validity of the study.

First, the scope of the study is broader than is first evident from the numbers of individuals studied alone. The study covers a total of almost 200 years of combined US military experience in three military services, includes assignments from cavalry to strategic nuclear bombers, spans a period of 75 continuous years and includes four major wars

and a multitude of lesser engagements. Equally important, it covers periods of extended peace such as the 23 years between the two world wars and the 12 years between the end of the Korean War and the beginning of heavy US involvement in Vietnam.

Second, by showing clear exceptions in the careers of outstanding leaders, some often heard generalizations such as "leaders are born", "you can't get promoted if you make a mistake", "the best combat leaders are ones with prior combat experience", "skills needed to be effective in wartime are substantially different from those that can be developed and used effectively during peacetime", are shown to be unfounded.

What Kind of War?

To more fully show the relevance of the study to today, we need to examine some of the criticism currently leveled at senior leaders. Probably the most often heard is the concern that since the US has not been in a major war in over 15 years and because American senior leaders are so bogged down with the day-to-day bureaucratic process of running a peacetime military, they may be ill-prepared to lead effectively in future wars. An answer to this criticism must be couched in terms of what kind of future wars are being considered.

Obviously, the relevance of the classical concepts of senior leadership would be questionable in a strategic nuclear war environment. Fortunately, there is no historical precedent that can be used to address the issue. Certainly traits like courage and decisiveness could be critical in a war where senior leaders would be called on to direct actions which they know will destroy, in a matter of minutes, a substantial portion of an enemy's society. At the same time, since the enemy may have already destroyed major segments of the friendly population, it might be very difficult for a senior leader to maintain focus on an objective like "terminate the conflict on terms favorable to the US". It is doubtful that any form of experience could fully prepare a senior leader for a strategic nuclear war environment.

What about conventional conflicts? The assessment must be made in terms of what kinds of "non-warrior", bureaucratic tasks senior leaders are engrossed in today. Two of the most frequently cited by critics are the resource allocation and the weapon system acquisition processes. Are these tasks precluding leaders from developing and using the kinds of leadership skills identified with the senior leaders in the study?

Consider the key attribute so prevalent among the five top leaders studied--identifying and maintaining focus

on key issues. As was the case historically, senior officers today must be masters of this quality. Now more than ever before, senior leaders are faced with an almost continuous stream of issues that threaten to divert their attention from the key task of preparing for the next war. There are a far greater number of defense critics outside of government than was the case in the past and Congressional interest in defense issues is more widespread. In the past, Congressional involvement was limited to attempted manipulations by a few powerful individuals on armed services committees. Today, dozens of Congressional members and hundreds of their staff members probe, challenge and test every budget and force structure decision. Senior officers are the ones who must offer on-the-spot defenses. Hence, many senior officers who have reached flag rank today must have necessarily been successful in maintaining focus under an array of pressures that didn't often exist during the peacetime careers of their counterparts in the pre-Vietnam era. In the future, resource allocation pressures and the setting of acquisition priorities will become even more acute because of growing constraints on US military budgets. These budget realities mean that to make flag rank in the years ahead, senior officers will probably have to be even more skilled at maintaining focus.

One other perspective on this criticism of today's senior officers is that critics must realize that acquiring sufficient and appropriate means to conduct war is an integral part of preparing for war. From that standpoint, these tasks are no less important than training, developing tactics or devising strategies. Senior military leaders didn't invent the resources "game", but they must play in it in a credible and professional way. One author, John H. Garrison summarizes this fundamental reality as follows:

...expert advice must be made available to those officials in both the Executive and Legislative branches responsible for determining the allocation of resources, and this advice must be effectively supported and defended. Once again, since military professionals are the only real source of a particular type of expert advice needed--that concerning the development and application of military force--it stands to reason that military professionals must be involved in the political process of resource allocation (23:766).

The peacetime mission of every service, and hence that of its senior leadership, is to train, organize and equip forces for combat. Senior leaders must now be able to articulate resource requirements to a wide range of critics. They must be successful in maintaining focus on combat capability as the first rationale for resource allocation decisions. If not, these decisions will, by default, simply be deferred to others who are far less equipped to make them or who have motives other than that of developing improved combat capability.

Patton, Eisenhower, and Nimitz had a multitude of "pure" staff jobs in the twenty-three-year period between the world wars. Both Lemay and Brown served in the post-Korean War period and both had staff jobs with heavy involvement in the budget and acquisition process between wars. Did these jobs detract from their subsequent wartime leadership performance? There is no evidence that it did. All of them, except Patton who died in an auto accident in 1945, went on to become the chiefs of their respective services. Also, as the study showed, all of these top leaders exhibited growth in leadership skills prior to WWII and between the wars and used these skills with great success during WWII, and in the case of George Brown, all the way up through the Vietnam period and beyond.

What about the other leadership traits such as concern for people? Are the bureaucratic pressures and lack of combat in 15 years resulting in a lack of this quality in senior leaders? The study shows that all five of the outstanding senior leaders, even prior to their wartime service, demonstrated an abiding concern for people under them. Even tough commanders like Lemay and Patton, who are not popularly considered people-oriented, exercised this attribute. Also, all of these leaders did well at virtually every assignment they had, even the mundane ones. We can directly conclude that such consistently top performance

would not have been possible had the these leaders not enjoyed the consistent support of subordinates. They simply could not have personally completed every sub-task, the sum of which made their overall performance repeatedly outstanding. That their subordinates did these things so well is an indication of the respect these people had for these top leaders. This respect would had to have been the result of these leaders' concern for those subordinates.

Time has not changed the necessity for that respect. It is highly unlikely that an officer can get to flag rank even in today's bureaucratic environment without being considerate and supportive of deserving subordinates. This observation may even more true today than ever because of the number of technical specialists that senior leaders must rely on to help them articulate expensive and sophisticated weapons systems.

Finally, in answering critics of today's senior officer corps, it needs to be remembered that the five great leaders in the study all achieved high rank and responsibility because of their continuous outstanding performance in a great variety of jobs. With the length of service and number of assignments most senior leaders have accumulated when they are considered for flag rank today, they must, in most cases, similarly have built a solid record of top performance in a wide range of assignments.

Is today's senior officer corps being unjustifiably and irrationally degraded by its peacetime service? History seems to suggest that the answer is no. Is advocating weapons programs in the Pentagon and in Congress the same as commanding an armored division in Europe? Certainly not. However, it is unlikely that an officer could have reached the level of rank and responsibility associated with commanding an armored division without having demonstrated key leadership qualities in both command and staff jobs. Certainly, none of the five leaders in the study could have made it to the top without this same kind of broad-based demonstration of their leadership capabilities.

A key question that critics must be asked regarding senior leaders serving in "non-warrior" assignments is, "who would we have be the primary advocate for the resources for new tanks for the armored division mentioned above?" Hopefully, it would be a senior officer who has the breadth and depth of experience necessary to project credibility and convince others of the worth and necessity of what the military needs to do its job. To have it otherwise would result in what surely must be a critical failure of senior leadership--sending others out to fight and die without doing everything possible to provide them with the means to win. Eisenhower, Brown, Lemay, Nimitz and Patton worked tirelessly to preclude that situation.

Captains or Careerists?

Some modern critics suggest that serving in "non-warrior" assignments is synonymous with careerism--"ticket punching" (24:27). Some propose, as a possible solution, that we create a situation where officers serving in operational positions continue to spend virtually their entire careers in operational assignments (25:58). The result of such a situation would be that the close, day-to-day operational expertise so vital to senior decisionmakers would not be available to them--it would remain with the operators in the field alone. Can there be any more certain method of ensuring that the warfighters get something other than what they need or that civilian superiors receive less than prudent, professional advice on military matters?

What if Brown and Lemay had been kept perpetually in operational positions? Would there have been a George Brown giving credible and critically needed advice to the Secretary of Defense, or a Curtis Lemay convincing Congress to buy the B-47s and B-52s that made the Strategic Air Command the most potent strike force in the world? Should Nimitz and Eisenhower have been denied advancement because they had held a substantive number of staff jobs and lacked any combat experience? Would today's critics have labeled Nimitz as a non-warrior because of his long tour at Berkley to set up a

naval reserve officers training program, or because of his assignment, as a senior officer, to a mundane staff job in the Bureau of Navigation? How would today's critics have viewed Eisenhower's promotion to brigadier general without his ever having a substantive operational assignment or served in combat? What about Patton? Surely with his lifelong pursuit of attempting to call attention to his capabilities, he would be branded a careerist today.

Certainly, on 8 December 1941, senior leaders had little trouble in getting Congress and the American public to eagerly invest in the men and machines the military needed. However, between WWI and WWII they enjoyed no such dramatic support. In 1939, the strength of the entire US Army was less than 140,000 men and some guard and reserve units practiced with wooden rifles. This challenge is precisely the one challenge facing today's senior leaders--how to maintain public and Congressional support for a capable military in a period of protracted absence of major wars. Meeting this challenge will be particularly difficult now with the advent of the intermediate range nuclear forces agreement and the widespread hyper-euphoria over recent Soviet disarmament measures. Senior leaders cannot make the case for maintaining necessary military strength by an occasional trip to Washington. Those unknowing powers who are ready to revise downward the requirement for military

strength are always there. There can be no substitute for maintaining a rotating cadre of knowledgeable, credible and professional senior officers in these kind of "non-warrior" assignments.

But where will we get the Eisenhowers, the Browns, the Lemays, the Nimitzs, and the Pattons in the next war? In thinking about this question, it's wise to remember that prior to WWII, none of these five great leaders was known at all outside limited circles in their own respective services.

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