

George Henry Decker

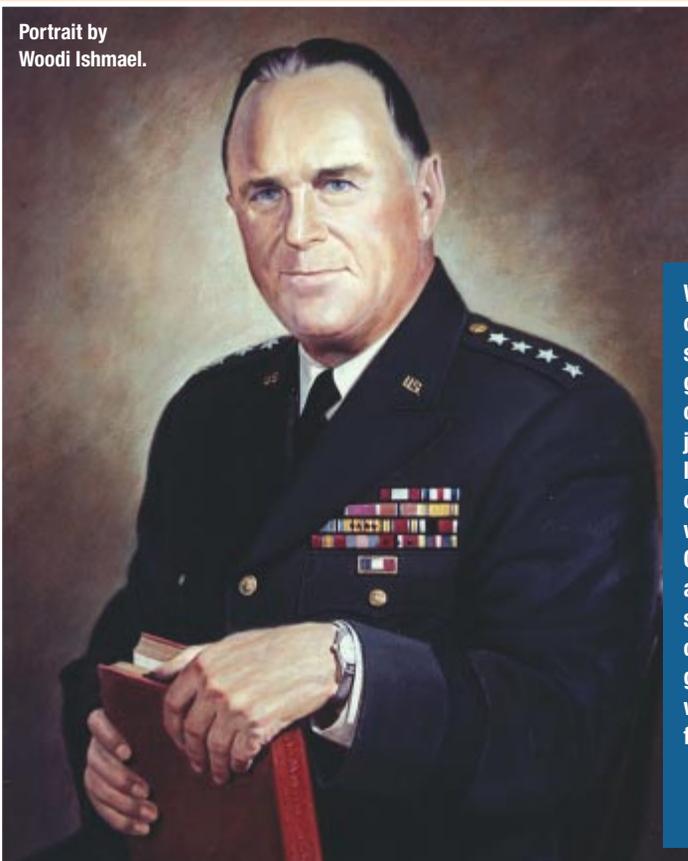
(1902-1980)

Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

VITA

Born in Catskill, New York; graduated from Lafayette College (1924); served with 26th Infantry at Plattsburg Barracks (1924–28); served with 35th Infantry, Hawaii (1928–31); graduated from Infantry School at Fort Benning (1932); served with 29th Infantry at Fort Benning (1932–35) and 7th Infantry at Fort Vancouver (1935–36); graduated from Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth (1937); served with 10th Infantry at Forts Thomas and McClellan and 9th Infantry at Fort Bragg (1937–40); established and commanded Headquarters Company, I Corps, at Fort Jackson and was assistant supply and logistics officer (1940–41); served on the War Department General Staff in the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Supply (1941–42); was deputy chief of staff of Third Army, Fort Sam Houston (1942–44); served in the Southwest Pacific as deputy chief of staff (1943–44) and chief of staff (1944–46) of Sixth Army and participated in Pacific operations and in the early occupation of Japan; served in Washington in Army Ground Forces and Army Service Forces headquarters (1946); was deputy commander in chief of staff of United States Forces, Middle Pacific, Hawaii (1946–48); commanded 5th Infantry Division at Fort Jackson (1948–50); served in the Office of the Comptroller of the Army as chief of Budget Division (1950–52); comptroller of the Army (1952–55); commanded VII Corps at Stuttgart (1955–56); deputy commander in chief of the United States European Command, France (1956–57); concurrently commander in chief, United Nations Command, and commander of Eighth Army, Korea (1957–59); served as Vice Chief (1959–60); and Chief of Staff of the Army (1960–62); died in Washington, D.C.

Portrait by
Woodi Ishmael.



When it comes to shaping the structure of the military forces . . . the chief of each service has the responsibility for the organization and structure of his own particular service. And in this he, of course, is governed by his own civilian superior, the secretary of the service concerned and also the Secretary of Defense. So in this, each of the joint chiefs operating as the chief of his own particular service has a large influence, but, of course, the whole thing depends on what he can get in the way of resources to do what he wants to do. This is where the conflict occurs between the chiefs as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—it's in this fight for resources that disagreements arise. Some of the chiefs have been accused from time to time of "you scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours." I don't think this is a valid criticism of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Each one does what he thinks in good conscience is right for his own service, and he uses the same way of assessing what's necessary in the other services when he is free to express an opinion on it.

—George H. Decker, Senior Officers Debriefing Program,
U.S. Army Military History Research Collection

2002 CJCS Essay Competition

The 21st annual Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Strategy Essay Competition was held on May 16–17, 2002, in Washington. This event was established by General David Jones, USAF, the 9th Chairman, to challenge students at the intermediate and senior colleges to write original essays on significant aspects of national security strategy.

FIRST PLACE ESSAY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALAN J. STEVENSON, CF

(Air War College)

“Shades of Gray: Gradual Escalation and Coercive Diplomacy”

SECOND PLACE ESSAY

MAJOR BRIAN L. THOMPSON, USA

(College of Naval Command and Staff)

“Surrogate Armies: Redefining the Ground Force”

THIRD PLACE ESSAYS

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES L. BOLING, USA

(U.S. Army War College)

**“Rapid Decisive Operations: The Emperor’s
New Clothes of Modern Warfare”**

and

COMMANDER JAMES HOWE, USCG

(Marine Corps War College)

**“The Fifth Side of the Pentagon: Moving the Coast Guard
to the Department of Defense”**