

INFORMAL ORIENTATION TALK BY CAPTAIN S. F. HEIM, USN., AT
OPENING OF ARMY INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE SEPTEMBER 3, 1935.

I am very glad to be here this morning. I am grateful for the opportunity of expressing the Navy's appreciation of the excellent work that is being done in this institution and of the practical benefits which accrue to the Navy thereby. As Colonel Jordan has told you nearly all of the key positions in the Navy's system of procurement planning are filled by graduates of the Army Industrial College.

As a graduate of the College, I congratulate each of the members of this new class on your assignment to the School. But, particularly I wish to congratulate the Naval Officers and Marine Officers of the Class on the opportunity of making a systematized study of Industrial Mobilization problems and at the same time learning a great deal about the organization and problems of our Sister Service. The personal contacts with the Army, both official and social, that you make here will continue through the years.

We of the Navy have always been welcome here in the Army Industrial College, and I reiterate we appreciate it. In fact, the cooperative spirit has been so fine that we have grown to feel that this College is a united Service College. It is our School as much as an Army College.

I wish to say in behalf of the procurement planning branch of the Navy that we are willing and anxious to advise and assist the students of the College, whenever possible, in work on their problems. I pledge you continued support, cooperation and encouragement.

Sept. 3, 1935.

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COLONEL JORDAN AND GENTLEMEN:

My mission here today is to extend a welcome in the name of the Assistant Secretary of War. Unfortunately for us he is unable to be present. If he were here he would extend his welcome in a very gracious and pleasing way and would impress you with his sincere pleasure in having you as members of this class of the Army Industrial College. Mr. Woodring is very much interested in this institution and you may be assured that every problem of the school and every problem of the students will have his careful study and sympathetic consideration. If left to his own devices, I believe he would devote more time to the Industrial College than to any other one of his activities. I talked with him on Saturday. He expressed regret that circumstances would not permit him to be here and asked me to say that he hopes to come down from time to time during the course and that he is looking forward to making the acquaintance of each one of you.

Last June, Colonel Frank A. Scott delivered the graduation address at this college. Colonel Scott stands at about the top of the list of heroes here and you will hear of him again. When I read his address I was very much impressed by a number of ideas he presented but one in particular I felt was more appropriate to be given on the first day of school than on the last day of school. So I marked it to give to you at the earliest opportunity. Here it is:

"One danger created by our peace-time studies and peace-time plans should quite frankly be recognized by all of us that we may study to avoid it. It is this: All academic work tends toward dogmatism and rigidity. We begin to believe we must follow the rule, to believe we must not depart from accepted principles and preconceived programs. We become victims of a self-imposed inflexibility. That is a serious limitation."

In this paragraph Colonel Scott develops the thought that above all things we must retain our power of imagination; and it may be that Colonel Scott was father of the whole idea of freedom of thought and speech in regard to the conduct of conferences here. Certain it is that every encouragement is given to the student to do his own thinking, come to his own conclusion, and express himself fully and freely. You will find that there is no desire for indoctrination at this institution, and you will be encouraged to develop new lines of approach and new methods of solution.

The presence of Colonel Terry on this platform adds much to the occasion. It indicates the close bond and sympathetic attitude between G-4 and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War; and without such a bond, our office would have great difficulty in its operation. As already expressed, the General Staff sets up requirements and design and the Assistant Secretary's office procures the material. This differentiation of duties has been very clearly and concisely expressed by General Robert E. Callan, recently Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, as follows:

"The Act of June 4, 1920, marked a great change in supply matters for it assigned the whole question of procurement to The Assistant Secretary of War and the supply services. This is thoroughly sound, for procurement of both men and supplies is purely a civil function. Congress can set up any method it chooses for obtaining military supplies; it can turn the whole matter over to another department of the government, as in the days of Washington; it can establish a great purchasing bureau for all departments if it sees fit; what it has done is to set up a separate agency in the War Department, which in itself is a great civil bureau to procure all the supplies for the Army. This does not in any way infringe on the constitutional functions of the President, for he commands the Army composed of the men and materials which Congress provides in amounts and manner of its own choosing.

"In the above-mentioned act, Congress provided other functions concerning supplies. Their effect is that the War Department General Staff shall say what the Army needs; that is, it shall express the military demand for supplies in kind and numbers; after their procurement it shall control their distribution, storage, issue and the use to be made of them. This is all clear cut and understood by everybody."

In spite of the fact that this is all clear and easily understood by everyone, the fact remains that many border line cases have to be decided individually and on their merits, and without the sympathetic attitude on the part of G-4 great difficulties would be sure to ensue.

You have a very happy year ahead of you; I hope you thoroughly enjoy it; I hope you derive great benefit from it; and for the whole year I merely add, "Good Luck!"