

ARMY INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE
Washington, D.C.

(Course, 1926 - 1927)

OPENING EXERCISES

of the

ARMY INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE

September 2nd, 1926.

Address by
Major Gen. Edgar Jadwin,
Chief of Engineers.

Remarks by
Hon. F. T. Davison,
Assistant Secretary of Aviation,
and
Col. F. E. Ferguson,
Commandant, Army Industrial College.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS - COL. F. B. FERGUSON.

(Introducing Hon. F. T. Davison, Assistant Secretary of Aviation)

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Mr. Secretary and Gentlemen.

This marks the beginning of the first full year term of this College, we have completed five sessions of five months each. The purpose of this school is to assist in training officers of the Regular Army to carry on their part of procurement in case of war, in order that the men in combat may be supported promptly with the industrial strength of our country. That this is of importance to the Army should be universally recognized.

We are delighted today that the Chief of Staff has, during a very busy period, consented to come down to these brief exercises, also that the Commandant of the Army War College has attended this meeting. We are very glad that in this class we have a representative of the Navy and one of the Marine Corps. Last year officers of those branches assisted us materially in reaching a common understanding on many problems that we face in war.

That the Secretary of War, Hon. Dwight F. Davis, who initiated this school, proposes to support it we feel assured.

Recently Congress has again recognized the importance of procurement in following out, in general, the principles set down by the Morrow Board. There has been appointed an Assistant Secretary of Aviation. As you will no doubt recall, the Morrow Board stated that without question such an Assistant would be most helpful in problems of procurement. The Board also recommended that one assistant to the Chief of Air Service be placed in charge of procurement with a view to eventually separating it from operations, if practicable. Those are two very definite steps.

Today the Assistant Secretary for Aviation, who is also the Acting Secretary of War, has graciously come to these exercises and has consented to make a few remarks.

REMARKS OF HON. F. T. DAVISON.

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General Hines, Colonel Ferguson and Gentlemen

Yesterday I had the privilege of attending the Opening of the Army War College, and I appreciate very much the opportunity of coming to these exercises this morning. I am only sorry that Colonel MacNider himself cannot be here also because I know how tremendously interested he is in this work.

I cannot claim in any sense of the word to be a military expert but it does not take one to know the importance of the work of this organization and what it means to the War Department and the country as a whole. All that is necessary is a little general knowledge and to have lived through the days of the World War. That certainly was lesson enough. My one thought has always been that this work, following the experiences of the War, was an important if not more important than any other we could do from the standpoint of National Defense.

I have here a very short letter I want to read because it comes from a man who certainly ought to know the trials of the war period. It is addressed to Colonel MacNider and is as follows

"My dear Mr. Secretary.

I have just received the invitation extended by you and the faculty and student officers of The Army Industrial College to be present at the opening exercises Thursday, the second of September at eleven o'clock. I regret that it is not possible for me to be present but I wish the college success in proportion to its importance. Our experience in the World War justifies me in saying that nothing could be more vital to the Nation's national defense than the work which the Industrial College is doing.

Cordially yours,

NEWTON D. BAKER."

It is hardly necessary to add that any way in which I can be of assistance to the work of the College I want to be. I know that the Air Corps and General Gilmore are willing to do everything in their power to cooperate with this work.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OF COL. H. B. FERGUSON.

(Introducing Major Gen. Edgar Jadwin, Chief of Engineers)

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Those who have studied the procurement problem must become aware of the fact that it is so complex, enters every field of endeavor, that it cannot be carried out by dogma. There must be understanding and must be a common knowledge running throughout the Army so that we can, in fact, cooperate instead of each getting by with his own individual task without being fired.

The Corps of Engineers, for example, has learned that materials are very important parts of our problem, after the design is completed, the safety assured, the question of obtaining materials, purchasing supplies, is one of the most important problems.

The present Chief of Engineers, Major General Edgar Jadwin, through his experiences on the Panama Canal, other River and Harbor work, and also in France during the World War, is peculiarly aware of the importance of this problem. He has consented to say a few words to the class this morning.

ADDRESS BEFORE ARMY INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE,

By

MAJOR GENERAL E. JADWIN, CHIEF OF ENGINEERS.

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You are here with a serious purpose which I understand to be the commencement of your study of procurement as a branch of logistics. Why is this necessary and why have we established a special college for it? It is because procurement is the branch of logistics, and therefore of the art of war, which received from the country and the Army the least coordinated study before the World War.

Our military schools devoted most of their time to the study of strategy and tactics. Their study of logistics was confined largely to troop and supply movements in the theatre of operations. We all know that we took longer to get ready in the World War than would have been the case had our military system been as good as we would have liked. It is also alleged that even the German General Staff, with all its boasted preparation for war, had not properly visualized the problems of a whole nation at war as distinguished from an army at war. It is true that they had accumulated certain stores of strategic materials, but before the war had progressed for long, they found that even their great industrial organization had to be revamped, and problems of procurement arose that had not been properly anticipated. This country had not prepared as carefully and as far in advance as had Germany. Its defects of general preparation were, therefore, apparent earlier. They applied, however, as much if not more to organization and training of units of the combat troops than to procurement. Probably more of the delay in our readiness to enter the lines was due to time required for organization and training of troops, even though we had been studying those phases of the subject more in schools than we had procurement. Those defects, which were palliated in the World War by supplies received from our Allies, will be largely remedied by the National Defense Act providing for the three components of the Army, by the courses at the schools, and by war planning, provided we have legislation providing a system for filling the ranks promptly when the next war comes. As these defects of training and organization are in a fair way to be largely remedied, it is probable that the next war would, if we make no changes, show up more acutely the relative defects in procurement.

How are these defects to be remedied? We cannot expect civilians to devote sufficient time in peace to conclude such a study. The Army and Navy, whose primary function is the protection of the Nation by force, must lay the broad foundation for the guidance of the Nation at war. War time procurement is a part of our mission. We cannot perform that mission without the cooperation of industry. Efficient cooperation cannot be devised without knowing what the problems of industry were in the last war and what they are today. With this knowledge, and a knowledge of what the military forces will need in conflict, a logical solution can be reached. You must, however, think in round numbers and in terms of carloads rather than of cartons. To reach such a solution in unchangeable detail is a dangerous proceeding because no one can predict exactly what we shall need or the industrial condition of the Nation when the next war arises.

Your studies in strategy and tactics have taught you that most of their general principles remain fixed. The military system, as we know it today, is an evolution which has been several thousand years in reaching its present stage. Every war brings in one or more new applications or new elements of attack or defense. The advantage of new weapons has sometimes decided wars. At the same time, an analysis of the history of each war has shown that the same general principles of attack and defense hold and cannot be violated with impunity. You try, therefore, in our schools to get those salient principles well fixed in your mind and to learn how to apply them in the various situations which may arise. You also try to fix in your minds as many as you can of the present values of these elements, but you endeavor to keep this quantitative information separate from the principles as such information is changing from war to war and even from year to year.

Similarly in your procurement work it is hoped that you will keep your study and recommendations along broad lines and not attempt to solve the problems of all branches by studying the problems of only one or two. Every branch has its own particular problems. One of the principal practical problems is for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War, charged with the supervision of procurement, to maintain a system of supervision which will enable a supply branch to function to the best advantage with the industries from which it secures its supplies and without friction with other branches or activities. You cannot reach out in the air or rely on your own experience alone

with any assurance that the answer is going to be right. Many of you doubtless have had experience in the procurement of supplies or in dealing with industry. Even so, you can all get a better answer for your procurement problem if you examine the American experience in the War and find out not only where we made our mistakes but also what methods were successful. We, that is the United States and the Allies, won the war, even if some of our methods could have been improved with more time for careful planning. Too many good minds were intensively engaged on getting efficient and real results to discard their experience without examination. That we profit alone by avoiding the mistakes of others is not correct. As a practical matter, we profit more by following established precedents of what is good and has been successful. The most useful student is the one who is best able to analyze the experience of himself and others and pick out what is good and accept that as a basis from which to introduce such improvements as are possible.

It is vital that we should have our initial requirements for war listed and our initial organization lined up so that we can start our procurement at once and expand as needed.

It may be unfortunate and a reflection on our technique if we fail in the next war to correct all the minor errors made in the last war, but it will be a crime if we fail to duplicate action taken in that war which contributed directly to its success.

We cannot afford either to allow this experience to be forgotten nor to discontinue our efforts to find what improvements should be made. Industry at large is looking to the War Department for solutions, at least sufficiently definite to enable it to start its part promptly on the declaration of war and to enable it to avoid wasted effort. Pure theorizing on what should not have been done or what various and sundry solutions might prove to be right is often interesting but never conclusive. It is possible that we can make changes in our present system that may result in better allotment of tasks to various branches. These and other real questions are always going to arise.

The resources of the country for war are however ample. The main problem is to provide for the smooth transition of industry from a peace to a war basis - and back again when the war is over - so as to meet the needs of the field forces without needlessly disturbing the social and business life of the Nation.

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As a constructive agency in this work, the War Department has established this Industrial College under the Assistant Secretary of War. It should help directly in the solution of procurement problems and should help indirectly by training officers for assignment to study and planning of procurement work including the assurance of the procurement system best suited for American needs and temperament and, by training officers for assignment to the duty of carrying out such supervision and coordination as is necessary, to secure good team work.

The idea is an excellent one, the College is going to fill an important place in our military system. Somebody is entitled to credit for it. I do not know who it is, but imagine your Commandant, Colonel Ferguson, would give the credit to Secretary Davis, and that the Secretary would give the credit to Colonel Ferguson.

Looking at your faces this morning, and knowing something of your records, I am sure that you will approach the course with fair and open minds, and that at the end of your year we can expect that it will be evident from your work that it has been good for you to be here.

I thank you for your attention this morning and wish you every success in your course.