

*Alabama*  
*G. V. Strong*

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ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS

of the

WAR PLANS DIVISION, G.S.,

and the

JOINT ARMY AND NAVY BOARD.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY OF WAR  
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PLANNING BRANCH  
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Lecture by  
Major George V. Strong, U.S.

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*W. H. ...*

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A D D R E S S .

Gentlemen:

I have been asked to talk to you on the War Plans Division of the General Staff, its duties, and its relations with the other Divisions in regard to war planning, and also to touch briefly upon existing Joint Agencies, and their functions in regard to planning, particularly insofar as it may be influenced by limitations of production or shortage in munitions.

The War Plans Division of the War Department General Staff was created in 1921 with two main purposes in view. The first purpose was indicated by its name, that is, a war planning agency of the General Staff. The second purpose was, to have available a nucleus for the General Staff personnel required at G.H.Q. in the field in the event of mobilization.

It must be borne in mind that the functions of the War Plans Division are materially different from those of the other Divisions of the War Department General Staff. Both in peace and in war the G-1, G-2, G-3 and G-4 Divisions of the General Staff are concerned primarily with Zone of the Interior matters. The War Plans Division, however, both in peace and in war is concerned primarily with the Theater of Operations - either in planning or in the execution of plans.

The general duties of the War Plans Division are laid down in Paragraph 12 of A.R. 10-15. It is charged with those duties which relate to the formulation of plans for the use of the military forces in the theater of war, either separately or in conjunction with naval forces.

Specifically, the War Plans Division is charged with the preparation of plans and policies and the supervision of activities concerning:

1. Location and armament of coast and land fortifications.
2. Estimate of forces required and times at which they may be needed under the various possible conditions necessitating the use of troops in the national defense.

3. The initial strategical deployment (plans and orders for the movement of troops to execute the initial deployment being the duty of G-3).
4. Actual operations in the theater of war.
5. Consultation with G-3 and G-4 on major items of equipment.
6. Peace manouvers, terrain exercises, and staff rides involving units higher than a division, and Joint Army and Navy Exercises.

In general, in the preparation of war plans the dividing line between the field of the other War Department General Staff Divisions and that of the War Plans Division is the line which separates the Zone of the Interior from the Theater of Operations. In view of the fact that the War Plans Division is the nucleus of the G.H.Q. staff, its organization is along the lines on which it will function in war. In addition to its Chief and its Executive Officer, the Division consists of five Sections, known as the G-1, G-2, G-3, G-4, and Air Sections. This organization not only facilitates its transition from peace to war, but also is conveniently adapted to its peace time duties in the formulation of war plans for the Theater of Operations. The duties of the various Sections of the Division include all the duties prescribed for corresponding Divisions of the War Department General Staff insofar as they apply to or are included in the specific duties assigned to the War Plans Division.

Generally speaking, the G-1 Section of the War Plans Division is concerned with questions of the personnel in our overseas possessions in conjunction with G-1, War Department General Staff, and, in the preparation of war plans, with questions of personnel and administration in the overseas possessions and in the Theater of Operations. These questions cover replacements, military government, postal service, prisoners of war, and welfare activities.

The G-2 Section of the War Plans Division has no separate means of its own for obtaining information but maintains close liaison with G-2, War Department General Staff, and indicates to that Division the priority of information desired by the War Plans Division. Close liaison is also maintained with the State and Navy Departments and other Government agencies. This Section prepares estimates of situations for war plans and projects and also the G-2 part of war plans for the Theater of Operations.

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The G-3 Section of the War Plans Division does the basic work for all war plans of the War Department. Upon this foundation the war plans are developed for the Theater of Operations by the War Plans Division and for the Zone of the Interior by the other Divisions of the War Department General Staff. The major portion of the G-3 Section's activities pertains to the basic work in formulating war plans and in drafting defense projects, though it has other important work such as preparing terrain exercises involving frontier commands and Joint Army and Navy Exercises.

The G-4 Section of the War Plans Division is charged with the preparation of a plan of supply for each war plan, which consists of a statement of the supply policies pertaining to the plan and is accompanied by annexes giving the details, arrangements, and requirements of the supply and technical branches necessary to meet the strategical and tactical requirements of the operations laid down by the G-3 Section and necessary for coordination between the armies, the communication zone or zones, and the zone of the interior. It is also charged with supervising the execution of defense projects, and with budgetary matters which affect the duties of the Division.

The Air Section of the War Plans Division is charged generally with the consideration of all aeronautical questions affecting plans or projects and with current air matters which have a bearing upon the general or specific duties assigned to the War Plans Division.

From the foregoing statement of the organization of the War Plans Division it must not be assumed that these five Sections into which it is divided consist of watertight compartments. The Division is small, consisting of only twelve officers, but there is the greatest flexibility in its administration. This is due partly to necessity, because in the execution of its duties there must be the most intimate relations between the Sections concerned; it is also due partly to the fact that, aside from the general or specific duties charged to the War Plans Division, many special duties of a complicated character are assigned it by the Chief of Staff. These duties, which do not properly fall within the field assigned to the other General Staff Divisions, deal largely with the matters which may have a determining effect upon the broader aspects of the question of national defense, such as questions relating to treaties or to international conventions or to Government policies concerning other Departments equally with the War Department. The major part of the current work of the War Plans Division, outside of the periodic revision of plans, concerns the Projects for the

Defense of Overseas Possessions, and Budget estimates. The latter not only include overseas possessions, but also joint manouvers and coast and land fortifications.

The picture of the set-up of the War Plans Division cannot be complete without reference to the Joint Agencies which play an important part in the work of that Division. These Joint Agencies are of two classes - first, those which are more or less permanent in character and which have been established by agreement between the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, and second, Joint Boards or Interdepartmental Committees, usually temporary in character, and formed for the solution of some specific problem at the request of or by agreement between the heads of two or more Executive Departments. In the first category fall The Joint Army and Navy Board, the Joint Planning Committee, the Joint Aeronautical Board, the Army and Navy Munitions Board, and the local Joint Planning Committees, which consider local Corps Area and Naval District matters. In the second category fall the Interdepartmental Air Board - formed to consider the problem of international air mail and passenger lines in the Caribbean, the Committee on Traffic in Arms, and the Committee on instructions for the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. In this category falls, also, the Joint Helium Board, established by joint agreement between the War and Navy Departments and the Bureau of Mines, for the allocation and use of helium. On most of the Boards or Committees mentioned above, the War Department is or has been represented by one or more members of the War Plans Division.

The development of these Joint Agencies has been largely a matter of evolution. It must be remembered that for the first century and a quarter of our national existence, the Army and Navy existed as separate and distinct entities which had little in common in either the formulation of plans for, or in joint action in, maintaining our national defense. As the result of our broader knowledge, which came from our World War experience and our appreciation of changed conditions and situations, as well as the realization of the complexity of the war and the interdependence of all means of executing operations, the necessity of creating an agency competent to deal with the involved problem of national defense in its broader aspects became manifest. In consequence, the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, in July 1919, reorganized the old Joint Board which had been created by G.O. 107, War Department, 1903, and provided agencies for the detailed investigation, study, and development of policies, projects, and plans for the consideration of the Board, which was created to secure complete cooperation and coordination in matters involving joint action of the Army and Navy

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relative to the national defense. The membership of The Joint Board for the Army consists of the Chief of Staff, the Deputy Chief of Staff, and the Assistant Chief of Staff, War Plans Division. For the Navy it consists of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, and the Director of the War Plans Division. As an adjunct of The Joint Board, and as its working agency, a Joint Army and Navy Planning Committee was created; this consists of three or more members of the War Plans Division, General Staff, who are designated by the Chief of Staff, and three or more members of the War Plans Division of Naval Operations, who are designated by the Chief of the Bureau of Naval Operations.

In addition to The Joint Board and the Joint Planning Committee, certain technical boards have been provided for and function as technical adjuncts of The Joint Board. The Joint Aeronautical Board, as reorganized by G.O. 2, War Department, 1927, was established for the purpose of preventing duplication of effort and securing a more complete measure of cooperation and coordination in the development of the Army Air Corps and Naval Aviation. Its personnel consists of the Chief and Assistant Chief of the Army Air Corps and one member of the War Plans Division of the War Department General Staff, and of the Chief and Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics and one member of the War Plans Division of the Bureau of Naval Operations. Its duties are to investigate, study, and report upon all questions affecting jointly the development and employment of Army and Naval Aviation referred to it by the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, or The Joint Board.

It is also charged with the duty of originating consideration of such subjects when, in its judgment, it is necessary, and of recommending whatever it considers essential to establish sufficiency and efficiency of cooperation and coordination of effort between military and naval aviation.

The Army and Navy Munitions Board was established by G.O. 51, War Department, 1922, for the purpose of coordinating the planning for acquiring munitions and supplies needed for the Army and Navy Departments for war purposes or to meet the needs of any joint plans. The Board also is charged with the duty of evolving a suitable legislative program which will enable the Procurement Program to be put into effect. The Army and Navy Munitions Board consists of the Assistant Secretary of War and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. In order to assist the Board in carrying out its duties, the following committees were created -

- a. The Procurement Policy Committee
- b. The General Supply Committee
- c. The Ordnance Committee
- d. The Aircraft Committee
- e. The Medical Committee
- f. The Communication Appliances Committee
- g. The Chemical Warfare Committee
- h. The Public Works Committee
- i. The Power Plant Machinery and Machine Tool Committee
- j. The Marine Construction Committee.

The various committees designated above, whose duties are prescribed in G.O. 51, War Department, 1922, have purely advisory powers, which generally consist of recommendations relative to coordination of procurement plans. Their recommendations have no weight until approved by the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy.

It will be noted that insofar as the membership of the joint agencies discussed above is concerned, the designation of the personnel is by office and not by individuals. This method has been adopted in order to insure continuity of policy and operation without which the effectiveness of the work of the various agencies might be compromised to a serious degree.

These joint agencies have no statutory basis for their existence. They come into being and they function merely by agreement between the two Secretaries. They can cease to exist merely by disagreement of the Secretaries or by dictum of higher authority, as was the case when President Wilson suspended the operation of The Joint Board in 1914. The joint agencies mentioned have no powers other than that of making recommendations to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. These recommendations can become effective only at the pleasure of the Secretaries. There are no means in existence in the joint agencies themselves for composing a disagreement between the Army and Navy members thereof. Such a disagreement, if it exists, must be settled outside of the agency in question, either by agreement of the Secretaries or by a decision of the President. In spite of the fact that their organization leaves much to be desired, at least from a theoretical standpoint, the joint agencies in question have functioned in a surprisingly satisfactory manner and their advice in the solution of the problem of national defense has been of great value to the nation. In insuring coordination of planning, in preventing duplication of effort, and in the providing for unity in execution, The Joint Board and the Joint Planning Committee play a most important part in the formulation of war plans and of special plans.

A war plan consists of a series of documents - first the Joint Plan, containing basic decisions and general principles which are applicable to both the Army Strategical Plan and the Navy Strategical Plan. The Army Strategical Plan is basic for the War Department, but is supplemented by a Mobilization Plan.

In the actual mechanical formulation of a war plan, the initial directive for its preparation normally comes to the War Plans Division, either from the Chief of Staff or from The Joint Board, of which the Chief of Staff is the senior Army member. Since, in a military sense, we occupy an insular position, practically all our plans are joint plans, and in consequence each service in the first instance normally prepares a tentative strategical plan of its own, after an informal conference with the other service.

In consequence, the War Plans Division, having received a directive from the Chief of Staff to prepare a given plan, calls upon the G-2 Division of the War Department General Staff for estimates of the enemy situation. It also obtains from the other Divisions of the General Staff estimates of the availability of our own forces, and, through its representation on the Joint Planning Committee, an outline of the probable Naval plan. The War Plans Division then prepares a tentative Army Strategical Plan which is submitted to the other General Staff Divisions for comment or concurrence.

When differing views have been harmonized, the tentative plan is then submitted to the Chief of Staff for approval and for reference to the Joint Board. The Joint Board then refers the plan to the Joint Planning Committee for consideration. After due consideration the Joint Planning Committee prepares the draft of a joint plan which will set forth the main strategic decisions designating the principal missions for each service and prescribing the method to be followed to insure adequate coordination.

The joint plan as thus prepared is submitted to The Joint Board and in the form ultimately approved by The Joint Board is submitted to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. When approved by both Secretaries it becomes the basic plan for both services. The War Plans Division then drafts a final strategical Army plan, in consultation with other Divisions of the General Staff and in conformity to the principles laid down in the basic plan.

This strategical plan when approved by the Chief of Staff is furnished the other Divisions of the General Staff and becomes the basis for the supporting mobilization plan, and for the various annexes and appendices which are necessary to complete the plan.

I have been asked to touch upon the relations of The Joint Army and Navy Board to the Army and Navy Munitions Board, particularly along the line of protection of shipping lanes for essential raw materials. As yet a major war plan has not been developed in its entirety, and in consequence I can give you no statement of facts as to the practical application of the theoretical principles which at present govern the relations of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War to the other war planning agencies. Theoretically, in the formulation of a major war plan, the Assistant Secretary of War, who, under the provisions of Section 5-a of the National Defense Act, is charged with the supervision of procurement and with making adequate provision for industrial mobilization essential to wartime needs, and the War Council created under the provisions of Section 5-b of the Act to consider policies affecting both the military and munitions problems of the War Department, will play an important part. As you know the War Department Mobilization Plan sets up a broad objective for the mobilization of manpower and establishes a target for procurement as a result of industrial mobilization. In any given War Plan the production rate required is determined generally by the mobilization rate. But the mobilization rate is in turn limited by the maximum production rate as modified by the War Reserves of materiel actually on hand.

Up to the present time the industrial mobilization work of the Assistant Secretary's office has been premised upon the General Mobilization Plan - and to a large extent has been general in character. It has probably been broader in character than will ever be required but if an error has been made it has been on the side of conservatism and safety. Until the work already done has been applied to a specific war plan involving a major effort and later to one involving a maximum effort we cannot say definitely and exactly where we stand, nor can we judge the requirements and fix the limitations under a specific major war plan. There is under consideration at this time a war plan involving a major effort, and preliminary steps have been taken to draft one involving a maximum effort. The former is the more advanced and will be the first test of our plans for industrial mobilization under a specific war plan.

In the formulation of a major war plan the Assistant Secretary in carrying out his industrial mobilization functions, will furnish an Army estimate for The Joint Board for consideration in drafting the Joint Plan. This estimate would cover shortages in the procurement program, the situation regarding essential raw materials of foreign origin, the status of industries essential to war needs, a statement

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of probable shortages in essential war materials, a statement of strategical industrial areas requiring protection in our own territory, and recommendations for the establishment of an Industrial Mobilization Board.

After the approval of the Joint Plan and in the formulation of the Army Strategical Plan, the Assistant Secretary will furnish information showing the strategical industrial areas and the effect upon the supply program of the loss of such areas, and provide for alternative plans for opening up new supply sources.

After the approval of the Army Strategical Plan, the Assistant Secretary should furnish a detailed statement for the Supplemental Mobilization Plan giving detailed shortages in essential items month by month as compared with probable requirements under the Supplemental Mobilization Plan and also indicating possible substitutes to meet these shortages. It is probable that ultimately the Assistant Secretary of War will furnish a contributory plan for procurement somewhat similar to the Supplemental Mobilization Plan and containing the allocation of means to the Army and Navy for the execution of the major plan in question, but the solution, which is now in a theoretical state, must ultimately be worked out by means of practical application. In any event the recommendations of the Assistant Secretary of War, furnished as indicated above for a major plan, will have the same determining effect upon a major war plan as the recommendations now submitted by G-4 in regard to the supply problem have had upon the formulation of the special plans which are now in existence.

Since a major war plan has not yet been developed in its entirety, and since the theoretical relations which exist between the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War and the other war planning agencies have undergone no practical test in the formulation of war plans, it would appear that the study of these relations is one of the most important subjects which can be handled either at the Army War College or at the Army Industrial College. I do not wish to be understood as stating that the whole subject of industrial mobilization or procurement is still in the academic stage. That is not so, because aside from steps taken under the General Mobilization Plan, there are certain matters in connection with plans for industrial preparedness which more or less indicate the relations existing between the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War and The Joint Board. For instance, on March 22, 1927, the Assistant Secretary of War asked The Joint Board to what extent it could be depended upon in planning for the importation of manganese whether the sea lanes from the United States