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January 31 The G-3 division, W D General Staff, by
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The protective mobilization plan, by Col
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Lectures on file in ADC library

Discussion Following Lecture
"The Protective Mobilization Plan"
by
Colonel John H. Hester, G.S.C., G-3

The Army Industrial College
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Q. In the World War it took a certain amount of time to train a recruit so he could be called a qualified combat soldier. My question is this: Will it take the same amount of time in the next war to prepare this recruit for use as a combat soldier, or is it planned that this aim and result will be accomplished in less time than in the last war? That is for the individual soldier.

A. The individual soldier today is provided three months' training. I do not know whether that answers your question or not. Do you remember what it was in the World War?

Q. About three one-third months.

A. It has not been reduced much.

Q. I am not well posted on that figure.

A. In order to provide the filler replacements for those units that are mobilized at peace strength in the first month of mobilization, to have those filler replacements available at the time certain other inactive units will be available, we will have to take them out at the end of two months. In case the situation is so pressing that we have to go into these replacement centers and take men out before three months are up, the training is of such type that if you take them out at the end of one month they would be pretty

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well qualified; if you take them out at the end of two months they would be better qualified; and if you take them out at the end of three months they would be still better qualified.

Colonel Jordan: In connection with the corps area service commands, your first figure showed twenty-seven thousand; the next showed eighteen, and then in your subsequent mobilization you show whatever may be deemed necessary, as I remember the figures. Would you say something about these corps area service commands? Do they not need training? Are you going to take inexperienced men and put them in those corps area commands and expect to get anything out of them? Where are they going to be trained?

A. Some of those men will be taken out of these replacement centers. Those men are being trained. But those that start off --

Colonel Jordan: I am particularly interested in them.

A. We have got to do the best we can and get men in this three hundred thousand, pick them out. There is a certain percentage of the men who have had some military training. Their training may have been along certain other lines; their work in civil life may be such as to qualify them to be used as instructors.

Colonel Jordan: Concerning this reserve corps we have just asked Congress for, I wondered if you expected to get them out of that? I thought that perhaps would be your answer.

A. - If I had been thinking about that at the time I probably would have answered that way but I was thinking about my thoughts when we made this up, that we needed something like that. We could see the need of it, a very decided need of it. That matter was brought up

at the time and attention was called to the fact that we needed men not only for that but of course first and foremost we need them for units that have to go out and do the fighting; we have to have them for the service commands. As to those numbers you saw, those are nothing but estimates. You can not tell until the corps areas get their problems; then go through it very carefully and work it out, because it is their problem; they are the ones that have got to say how many they can get along with; we can not say here that that is all they can have. When this plan finally gets out, the problem of this corps area is going to be quite different from the problem of another corps area. For example, take the first corps area. Their problem will be relatively simple. Take the eighth and fourth corps areas, their problems may be much larger than they were in the '33 plan; not necessarily much larger but much greater than it would be in some of the northern corps areas, because the plan will provide for these National Guard divisions that I spoke of that come in on M-day. Their induction into the service takes a little time, too. We have had a test this past year on that point. We hope to send them to a training center, all the units of the division, to let them get a shaking together for a period of twenty days. They have got to absorb these large numbers of recruits that are going to come in.

Q. Will the change in the division affect this plan materially in delaying its ultimate approval? And then if it is approved, let us assume the Infantry division may be changed. Will there be a subsequent shaking up in the delay with the Cavalry division or other troops altered?

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A. As I see that, this plan will be issued quite a while before the new Infantry division is approved. After that it is the Cavalry division; after that the corps and army. Of course the whole thing has to be gone over, in my mind, after that is approved; not the basic policy but all these tables that have been gotten out will have to be written over.

Q. I take it then that all we actually have in the long run is a goal for Army mobilization equivalent of four million men. If there are a lot of changes, will we still use that as a goal?

A. That is the goal, yes. In other words, it has been our idea for quite a while that for the maximum effort for which we might be called upon that is what we would need. Actually the units that would be mobilized are altogether dependant upon the war plan, and you can hardly conceive of a mobilization which will have a war plan that will require the mobilization of everything which we have set down. The situation possibly at the time of the World War was such a thing but we haven't a war plan for that.

Q. Colonel Hester, the statement has been made that the force we can turn out right now is not a balanced force. I presume that G-3 establishes the priorities necessary to make that a balanced force. Here is the question, sir, with respect to procurement. Of course we know the decisive element in the procurement of materials in war is time for production and in peace is money cost for said items. Assuming that we will not have made available to us by Congress appropriations for at once making the force that we now have a balanced

force, what is the basis for establishing priorities with respect to the expenditure that Congress allows us? Shall we attempt to procure those units equipped with material that takes the greatest time to produce, antiaircraft plan; or shall we take the sum of money that Congress allots us, which might be five million dollars or ten, and spend it so as to procure the greatest number of units, working toward this balanced force? I am just wondering how G-3 establishes that priority in view of our peace time limitation of a definitely fixed and rather minor sum, working toward this balanced force that we need and trying to bear in mind all the time making it compatible with the fact that if we were looking toward the war and we would immediately seek to procure those items that take the greatest time to produce. That may not be compatible with the thought of taking, say, only five million dollars and using it right now. Perhaps G-3 looks at it from some other angle, and I wonder what the viewpoint is.

A. Relative to that matter, G-3 is concerned but G-4 is probably more concerned; also the War Plans Division is concerned. G-4 has worked up, I suppose you are familiar with it, a war reserve plan, and if I am not mistaken they base that on this balanced force that we want to get, but some of the units are thrown out of balance because the equipment for those units is harder to get than equipment for some of the others; therefore, they overbalance it by putting more than the balance in. Take the antiaircraft regiment, for example. In that war reserve plan they have the number of antiaircraft regiments that would be required for instead of one corps for nine corps and

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instead of for one army for two armies, and a good many more in the G.H.Q.. All were included in the G.H.Q. for initial mobilization. That shows you that they are planning to get the essential items for those regiments over and above the balance. So far as some of the technical key details of some of the other items are concerned, I do not know that I am qualified to talk to you about them. When you take the number of divisions we have today, there is not perfect balance. There are supposed to be three divisions in the corps; four corps would be twelve divisions that we have; eighteen plus four is twenty-two; and then these other five that we hope to get later. You see the balance is not perfect there but we did not want to try to bite off too much and try to adapt our corps troops to this big outlay of divisions. Of course you can answer that as well as I can. The question has been asked: why don't you get rid of some of these divisions? We can not very well do that.

Q. Colonel Hester, in case of an orange war, would the organization of the fourth army take priority?

A. Under this old plan we spoke about, the fourth army, there were certain army troops that belonged to that army. Under this plan we do not have any such thing. Under an orange plan the troops required by the orange plan will be mobilized irrespective of what army area they are in. In other words, we are trying to distribute the mobilization equally throughout the United States. Under that old plan, if we were going to try to mobilize the fourth army those states out there would be fighting the whole war, the remainder of us back here

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in the east would not be doing anything. If this plan were taken, those that could be made ready early would be taken, and they come from all over. Of course we do plan that each corps will raise corps troops for one corps but they do not do it all at once and if we want to build up a four corps initially, as we do, we pick them from where they would be first available, and the plan shows that. The only thing you have seen here is the outline, the tables themselves show when the various units will begin their mobilization and when they will be considered as available for use; that is, how long they are going to take for training.

Q. In providing for the organization with the last increase in National Guard strength, was thought given to balancing this force under the initial protective plan or had that progressed far enough at the time that increase was made?

A. I will have to go back in reference to that. You know that the organization of the National Guard was based upon the study made by a committee back in '23, before that, and that established the policy and the organization of the National Guard which has been followed. Before that can be changed it has to be restudied. Another committee will have to take it in hand, go into it, and determine how that will be done. It is a matter of law, if I am not mistaken, that the committee to determine that organization should be regular Army officers. That should be done. That is what the National Guard has been following ever since that policy was prepared by this committee, and it is still following it. It is being studied now.

Q. I wonder if you could straighten me out on different forces that have been mentioned? You have mentioned this morning an initial mobilization under the P.M.P.; you have also mentioned an initial protective force. Apparently the supply arms are figuring a war reserve for a million men. I do not believe that this war reserve for a million men has anything to do with either of the two forces I have mentioned but I am not sure. I wonder if you could straighten me out as to what the initial protective force is, how many men it has, and how long a period of time it covers?

A. Initial mobilization, as I said, covers army troops of two armies and corps troops for nine corps. The G.H.Q. reserve troops would go with that. That is what we call initial mobilization. The initial protective force is only those parts of that force that have now, or can have by M-day, the strength in organization, etc., that will make them available for use on 30-M. This war reserve is based on a force of one army and four corps. It is a million men. If it were based on the entire initial mobilization it would be about a million and a half. Does that clear it up?

Q. I gather now that the initial mobilization is a million and a half men; the war reserve is for a million men. How much is the initial protective force and how long would it take you to organize the entire initial protective force?

A. By 30-M.

Q. And how many men does that take?

A. That amounts to four hundred thousand, that we assume

will be ready for use by 30-M. There are a few inactive units in there.

Q. I gathered that from your sketch. I noticed that you had notations on the side that went up to as high as 90-M and 120-M for the I.P.F.s and I could not understand how they were all there at the end of thirty days.

A. That slide showed the I.P.F. separate and distinct from those others that would be available for 30-M. Everything under the I.P.F. was shown on the slide as ready for 30-M. Those that came below were not included in the I.P.F., the initial protective force. We might forget that initial protective force. That has no significance. It is just that force that we think of as ready very early.

Q. I would like to repeat a question that I have asked here in a previous conference. As I understand it, this I.P.F. is to be recruited by securing volunteers?

A. Yes sir.

Q. The volunteer soldier will present himself for recruitment. When he presents himself for recruitment he will be required to sign a paper of enlistment. Would that enlistment be for a prescribed period of time or for an indefinite period, such as duration of war?

A. I think you have me there. That is entirely a G-1 matter but I should have thought about it. I can tell you what it ought to be and what I think it will be, but I am not sure that it is the question of law. It should be for duration of war.

Q. I ask that question based on some arguments I had in 1919.

I thought this about it: If you are going to depend upon that medium I do not see where you are going to have any results. If the potential soldier comes in and finds out that he is required to enlist for three years, he will say "Oh, no, oh, no - sixty days now. They can come and get me for the duration." And if that recruit is the kind you want he will go over right away.

A. He would not enlist for three years?

Q. Not unless he is very enthusiastic.

A. He would rather enlist for the duration?

Q. Yes sir, he would rather take the chance.

Major McPike: Colonel Hester, you contemplate putting out some troop basis tables with this plan as you did with the 1933 plan within a few months and in talking with the supply arms and services I have gotten the distinct impression that the troop basis tables as they are now afford a maximum of difficulty in figuring supply requirements. That is, it is a terrible job for the supply arms and services to get this thing out to where they can handle it. I wondered if G-3 had considered putting these out in any different form?

A. Yes, we have, and we expect to do it. In preparing these tables we endeavor to put them in the form that will satisfy the most people. We talked with representatives from the corps areas about it; we talked with the War Plans Division about it, to G-4, and to G-1, and we thought we had the form of tables that were most satisfactory to all concerned. When it came to some of the supply services that you mentioned, we did not have any form that was satisfactory

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to them, so one of them said: "This is just as good as any other, the form that you propose", but we did expect to make it up so it would just exactly suit the supply arms and services when we could get to it. In other words, a form similar to the one that was sent out with the '33 plan, if you remember that one.

Q. Yes sir.

A. Is that the form you had in mind?

Q. Yes sir.

Colonel Jordan: Colonel Hester, I want to express the appreciation of the College, sir, for your very illuminating address. Thank you very much for coming down.