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Discussion Following Lecture by
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Q How do you define "simplicity", as you mentioned it in connection with English organization? Is it bound up considerably in mutual confidence which each Englishman has in his brother Englishman, or why do we have to be elaborate, in a sense, than the British, because we lack the willingness or the capacity for trusting one another in the same sense that the British trusts his fellow Britisher?

A I suppose a synonym of it would be directness. That is really what I meant. They are more direct. I think they do probably have a closer degree of contact with each other than we have. Their country isn't anything in size like ours, as you know. There is a directness and there is certainly a confidence among them. They all play ball apparently and certainly industry does.

Q My limited contacts give me no real basis for opinion, but I have been led to suspect from time to time that some of that is egotism. You go to a Britisher and he has a pretty prompt answer. He doesn't come down to subordinates and he doesn't look into details, and I am just wondering if that supreme confidence in their own ability gets them a long way in some respects. In other words, they pass up details which really in the American organization according to the American way would be handled more efficiently.

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A I think there is some truth in that. I wouldn't emphasize the egotism, but there is a sureness, right or wrong I think it is a definite part of what you must admit is the British or the English culture. That is what makes an Englishman an Englishman, and that is the way he is going to do it. Maybe he is going to go off the deep end but he is an Englishman and Englishmen go off the deep end occasionally just as Americans with all their efficiency and cocksureness go off the deep end also. So we come back to human equations and cultural background. One man and one group of men will do it their way and another group their way.

Q You have given us a very fine background to evaluate the relative administrative approach to this problem of production of munitions in war. I wonder if you would care to carry that a little further to compare the actual relative production ability of the British and ours when you come right down to turning the stuff out?

A My guess would be that we are still supreme when it comes to production. Some of the plants that I saw are extremely old-fashioned from our standpoint. They are perfectly magnificent workmen and perfectly fine engineers, but I don't think anybody I have ever seen can quite touch the American way of keeping up with the parade and putting in new machines and pushing ahead on production. We certainly have rates of production that would far outstrip the average English producing organization.

Q With reference to your remarks on the target contract, it

would lead me to believe that the Government has selected the facility with which they expect to place the contract. Apparently it is not done on a competitive basis. Would you care to comment on that with respect to the immediate methods we would have to use?

A In England it is not done on a competitive basis. They pick their contractor and place the contract with him. I said, "Won't you be criticized on the floor of the House of Commons if you pick a contractor in one constituency and pass up one in another?" This man said, "Yes, we are all criticized but that will be said today and forgotten tomorrow. We know we are getting our pounds' worth so we go on ahead." Of course there is no provision in law that makes competitive bidding compulsory for them. They have had their arms firms that they have been patronizing for years and years, and they can place a contract with one of those firms without going to others.

Q Does Great Britain propose to depend on her dominions in any way for any part of this effort?

A From what I have been reading, the dominions of course have their own programs and are going along. What they intend to do in an actual strategic way I don't know. Canada has its program, Australia its, and New Zealand its, and so on, so that each one is going its own way on the armament end. I wouldn't know about the strategy involved. They are very closely knit, I am sure.

Q We had a speaker the other day, Dr. Ezekiel from the Department

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of Agriculture, who expressed the fact that in the matter of price control, it is a very difficult thing to establish price control after war starts and that we should have machinery to do that in time of peace. I wonder if you would care to discuss the measures the British plan to use for price control during war, some of their general plan?

A My answer to that would be that I don't believe the British have a real plan worked out in time of peace. I think that they want to adjust whatever plan they adopt to the situation they meet when they meet it. Certainly there is nothing in any legislation that I know of or any of their planning work they told me about that would warrant them in projecting their viewpoint ahead a year. To use the term of one of them over there, they cross a bridge when they come to it. It may be that if they got into a big major emergency when the whole populace was so intent on depending itself and profit control was a very last thing that anybody would give any attention to - it is a case of saving ourselves first. I don't believe the English would worry about it. The thing used to be to control the profit if you lost or won, but that kind of peace-time absurdity is washed completely out. Now it is get the armament. Occasionally some armament maker is making a high profit over there now. Somebody says there ought to be an investigation, but nobody gets excited about it, because I think they have the faith in the government that they are trying to control it now and probably would try to control it in war. But as to how, I don't believe there is a soul over there who would hazard an opinion.

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Q We all realize the necessity for England maintaining trade in war. We all know that she blundered through with various orders during the war in trying to handle copper and bring economic pressure on the enemy. Does England have a definite plan and is there an agency set up now which will operate in war time to control trade?

A Not so far as I know. This is a guess, but I would imagine that this chairman of the board of trade would adopt, as conditions came along, the necessary steps to protect that trade right up to the hilt and if he did have some developed plan there would be no guarantee that they would use it in time of war. I think that they take the day's work as it comes and try to meet it. That is the reason, in all fairness, why you must say that England's industrial mobilization planning was pitifully weak compared with our own. I hope to know the picture fairly well from the Ordnance standpoint, the tremendous amount of planning activity we have done in surveying factories and allocations and all that fine planning. I should imagine that if any foreign country looked at things the way they did - our Industrial Mobilization Plan has been a fifteen cent document since 1933, or maybe 1930, and if I were so minded I would put fifteen cents into that and take it home. They haven't done anything like we have here, the great amount of surveying, the degree of contact, compared with the geographical layout. It just hadn't been done. Maybe that is another example of blundering through. I don't know, but certainly it is basic to cross the bridge when you come to it. I think it was the same way with protecting trade. On the other hand, they do have this finely knit organization to help

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Q Much of our difficulty seemed to revolve about deciding just what we want, the types and standards. Are we to infer that all these steps are centralized in this director of munitions production?

A That compares with out various chiefs of branches, arms and services and the approval of a type of materiel by a board They have something of the same procedure over there. What I meant to emphasize was that this new man, the director of munitions production, has an added degree of power in being able to go back to the user and say, "Here, you will have to make certain modification on this because we can't get production." They want to give the user all the say possible in the type, determining it, but this new man can setp in. Of course it is his responsibility if he changes and they don't get the results. He can demand that certain changes be made from a production standpoint. That still leaves the definition and the deciding of types exactly where they would be in our Army. If we had one in this country ne could go back to the chief of Field Artillery or whoever it might be, and say, "See here, you will have to sacrifice five hundred yards of range because to get any kind of a carriage like that we have to make this change from a production standpoint " After all, somebody has to take the responsibility. Production is the objective now, to build up the war reserve. Production is number one and that is what they are going after. That is the reason they give this man power.

Q As I understand from your talk, you have a director of procurement and a director of contracts who contract for not only the Army but for the

navy and the air force. That works around to something like a department of national defense, with one head to look out for production and contracts and the like. Would you care to contrast the apparent success over there of that type of thing and what might be expected under that type of thing in this country. In other words, should we think along that line?

A I am afraid that I didn't make it perfectly clear at the start. When I spoke of this director of production of munitions, I meant that he is under the secretary of state for war and he is purely a war office official. The Admiralty has identically the same type of person and organization under it and so also has the air force, so that this man is not planning and producing for the entire services.

To go further into your question, the British are terribly jealous of anything that looks like the sacrificing of any prerogative of any one of the fighting forces, so much so that when they realized that the Prime Minister could not sit in at this Committee for Imperial Defense as consistently as he should because of other great problems that he had to give his attention to they wanted to appoint an assistant to him, and it is a mistake of the first order in England if you refer to him as the Minister of Defense. He is the Minister for the Coordination of Defense, and it is his job to bring the three of them together; when it comes to industrial mobilization planning that is done in the war office. Contracts and production for aircraft are done under the air force, the same way for the Admiralty. Upon reading the debates about this Minister

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for the Coordination of Defense, it certainly doesn't seem to me that the British see any advantage whatever in any further degree of consolidation.

Q Colonel, I am from the Navy Department. We have charge of the preparation of plans for the employment of man power in industry. We have been very much interested in the new British register that you referred to, and I was surprised that you seem to think that it doesn't amount to very much. I have here a large report and also two pamphlets. One is called, "Schedule of Reserve Occupations", which details at great length the reserve occupations the British apparently have set aside to be volunteered for in time of peace. In addition to that, I understand that they have distributed twenty million copies of a thing called "National Service", which indicates what they want. It goes into great detail and ^{there} / must have been a great deal of thought put on it. I would like to ask if you have any information on that, whether it has been successful or not.

A I have seen one of the publications, the one on "National Service", and I probably should qualify what I originally said this way. What I meant was not to detract at all from those studies, but I don't think that the average Englishman is taking the thing seriously enough to actually enlist in the army. He may want to do and help in every way he can in the ambulance driving and so on, but they still have a very small army numerically. The way that army is being gotten on the

continent is by a form of conscription, I believe. The question comes down to. Will the Englishman, regardless of all the studies made by the government, stand for conscription in time of peace, until his country is actually at war? Unless this scare of last fall (and of course I wasn't there) so impressed the average Englishman that that viewpoint has changed, I don't see how England is going to have a commensurate army without facing conscription, and conscription for democracy in time of peace. All the study that has been given to it will help splendidly, but an Englishman still realizes in his blood that the country hasn't been invaded for nearly a thousand years and he can't believe it is going to be invaded or might be invaded. I am not saying it will be invaded, but he can't believe it will happen until he actually sees it. In an effort to increase recruiting they changed some things while I was over there. Enlisted men may live at home, not in barracks. They can go home at night and come into their jobs in the morning -- anything to build up enlistments. They went up some, but I haven't heard that the British army has reached any real figures in size of man power or in the territorial force. Unless there is a great deal going on that I don't know about, I don't think they could do anything more than a protective mobilization force right now.

Q As I understand it, this is purely civilian. They are asking the civilians now to come forward and saw what they will do in time of war and they will allocate them to that particular duty for war service. It is entirely outside of any army or any military service.

I didn't mean to deprecate what you said at all. I just wondered whether this was successful or whether you had any information about its success. It was first started out to be compulsory, then they finally had to accept the voluntary condition. They were to survey this month, and then if it hadn't been successful they would make it compulsory and make everybody register

A I knew the registration was under way, but hadn't heard the outcome.

Q What is your impression of the will to produce of a British layman?

A From what I saw of them, they are a hard working people. Wherever you see them, whether it is in industry or in hotels or elsewhere, they do a good day's work, work long hours and apparently like to do their work. They are content. There was a fellow outside the hotel where I stayed, a man I should judge in his fifty's. He sold Scotch heather for six pence a little bunch, and we started to buy it from him every day or so. I struck up a conversation with him. He was the most contented man on the British Isles, just selling his Scotch heather. He wasn't envious of anybody, he wasn't complaining about anything. He just loved Scotch heather and liked selling it. He probably could have made more money doing something else, but he was content.

Q Maybe I didn't make my point. I have heard a number of industrialists who observed British labor in the fabricating industry,

for instance, say that they wouldn't be satisfied with that standard of output in this country at all, that if their workmen couldn't apply themselves more assiduously and turn out more per hour than the British they would be terribly disappointed.

A You mean in quantity and quality?

Q Quantity and quality.

A I think it relates back to the question we had. They certainly can't touch us in quantity in production methods. They are certainly a slower type. As to quality, I know they turn out some very beautiful things at low prices. Of course they don't have the production urge or philosophy the way that we have it.

Mr. Hawkes. I would like to say a word. I lived thirty years over on the other side and twenty years on this side, but I still don't understand the American psychology, and Americans don't understand the English psychology. They are totally different people.

With regard to the question of planning, let me give you a homely illustration. We had at Picatinny Arsenal an expert on pyrotechnics. He had a lifetime of experience behind him. He had his drawings and specifications but he turned out wonderful pyrotechnics. We have now a man who believes in making detailed drawings before he starts on his job. Now, while he from his experience could make rough sketches and be successful, the other man by his method would be successful. The British have well over a thousand years of experience behind them.

They brought me the problem, and they work it out as they go along. This country, of course, is somewhat different. I may sum it up by saying that in the United States you have a written constitution and Great Britain has no such thing.

Colonel Miles Mr. Hawkes' observations are very pertinent. Mr. Hawkes didn't tell you very much about himself, but he came over here during the World War to show us how to load shell, and he did a good job and has been with us ever since and is one of the real experts in the Ordnance Department on loading. I am glad Mr. Hawkes got up and said a word because that added greatly to our common understanding.

You know, the people in this country are supposed to be first cousins and yet we seem to be quite different, and perhaps some of those differences will in the future be rather compensatory for one another, and we look forward into the years.

I want to thank Colonel Codd for the insight he has given us into the efforts the British have been making. I also want to take this opportunity to urge you all to read the Army Ordnance whenever you can because there are some splendid editorials in it and they are almost exclusively written by the speaker this morning.