



ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK

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No answer required
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be published.
HJ
12 July 1956

Office of the Chief of Staff, US Army
Pentagon
Washington 25, D. C.

Attention Colonel Howard M. Snyder, Jr.

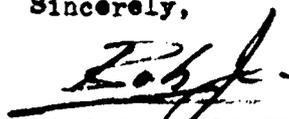
Dear Howard:

Inclosed herewith is a copy of General Taylor's address at the Alumni Luncheon held at Washington Hall on 4 June 1956. As you no doubt know, this is an edited transcription from a tape recording.

We would like very much to publish this address in the July issue of ASSEMBLY along with suitable pictures of the occasion. Please get General Taylor's approval and return these papers to me by 19 June, if possible.

Mary joins me in best regards to you and Loaine.

Sincerely,


ROBERT D. JOHNSTON
Colonel, Infantry
Secretary

Incl.

Original filed in R/R.

REMARKS OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF, U. S. ARMY
AT THE ALUMNI LUNCHEON, WASHINGTON HALL, UNITED STATES
MILITARY ACADEMY, WEST POINT, NEW YORK, JUNE 4, 1956

General Crittenberger, General Hodges, General Bryan and Fellow Graduates: I am very grateful to Critt for his overly kind introduction. I have been sitting in admiration watching the Crittenberger steam roller conduct this particular session; and it occurred to me that there was only one improvement I would suggest, ^{namely} that he should rise at this moment, and announce to you that if you want to know what the Chief of Staff has to say, to read the July ASSEMBLY.

I returned today not only with the joy of coming back to West Point but, with just a little trepidation because the word has reached me that I am in low repute with my old and very dear friends - the members of the Academic Board. This goes back to a rash statement which I made in the course of a speech at the Citadel, where Mark Clark had induced me to go. In some ill-advised paragraph, in discussing military leadership and military affairs, I referred to the fact that a small research project, which I had encouraged when I was Superintendent, had convinced me that there was ^{no} ~~comparatively little~~ ^{advantage} in being in the upper half of the class; -- that the immortal goat should produce just about as many big generals as the Engineers. The headlines of an article in the press stated, "Taylor says scholarship doesn't matter." This in due course came back to West Point. My contribution to the Corps of Cadets, who succeeded in getting turned back in Mathematics last year, wrote something as follows: "Dear Dad: We are certainly much encouraged by what you had to say at The Citadel. Personally, I am starting to taper off a little bit." Nor was the remark unnoticed among my friends on the Academic Board; and no one less than the Professor of Mathematics sent me a brochure carefully documented, with all of the data laid out so even I could read it, which proved very conclusively that Engineers really win in the long run. And so, I want to make my amends today to stand in front of you and eat my words. Engineers do matter, and I can only assume that my basis of data was inadequate, or the IBM machine just slipped back in 1945.

Gentlemen, I asked what the alumni might want to hear from me today and someone said, "Tell them what is cooking down in Washington". I wish I could summarize that but even the July issue of ASSEMBLY would hardly be adequate to contain a full statement in reply to that question. I do want to say a few serious words, however, because I know all of you gentlemen read with great interest the events in Washing-

ton, particularly as they effect defense matters. I have been deeply unhappy over the impression which has been conveyed nationwide in recent weeks that everyone in the Pentagon is carrying a tomahawk or a dagger, and that sounds of gunfire are heard up and down the corridors. That just isn't so. On the other hand I would be the first to state, as some of our authorized spokesmen have in recent days, that we have some awfully difficult problems in the area of defense. What is really important is not, as I am afraid some people think, the bickering of small men bent upon selfish advantage or the aggrandizement of some particular service. On the contrary, it is a very serious effort on the part of those of us responsible for National Military Policy to visualize the future course of events and to make wise provision therefor.

I can assure you that I know of no crystal ball in Washington that gives anyone the right to say they have the full solution. I will say, however, that I am tremendously impressed by the fairminded men wearing the uniform of every service. They are intensely concerned with what the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines should look like in future years if they are to discharge their legitimate roles in National Defense. One of the greatest advantages which I have is the camaraderie which I enjoy with my fellow members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I have the highest personal regard and affection for them. I simply don't agree with them many times. What is the basic cause of disagreement? It is fundamentally a difficulty in conceiving the course and requirements of future wars. What should we prepare for and what will be the best weapons to meet the situation as we envisage it? By and large I would say that there are two concepts which compete for recognition, and in the long run for the greater part of our National resources. The first concept is what I would call the concept of a single battle. That the greatest menace with which we are faced is making provision for a surprise attack in which the enemy employing atomic weapons attacks our homeland, our troops overseas, our Allies, and the whole roof falls in on us at one time. The other school of thought I would call the school of flexible deterrence. The members of this school reason that there are many sides in this bi-polar world. That weapons of great destructiveness out-equal the capability to cope with them. That more and more there will be a policy of mutual deterrence in the world insofar as the deliberate initiation of atomic war is concerned. However, we cannot believe that the Communists are going to renounce aggression as an instrument of policy even under those conditions.

But rather than being tempted to wage total war and to stake everything on atomic warfare, that there will be a greater danger of erosion about the free world, that simple aggression will be practiced against the soft spots of the Soviet periphery. Hence, we must be prepared, not only to deter the big war by the visible strength of our retaliatory powers (no one questions the requirements for that); but we must also have flexible reaction, so that by using highly mobile reserve forces in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines, we can move promptly and quickly to any part of the world and put out the small war before it can spread to the big war.

These are generally the two views, and in between there are many great issues. If you really believe in a big war, you will spend your money, you will use your men, according to a certain pattern in anticipation of fighting that war. If, on the other hand, you believe in flexible deterrance, you will make adequate provision to convince the other fellow he cannot win the big war, but you will have other means to apply flexible military power proportionate to the requirements of the situation. And so it is between these two efforts, honestly believed, and firmly held by many able men, that the question as to how we develop our budgets, our military policy, our foreign policy, are being worked out. I lay the problem in front of you today without arguing the cause of either one. Although I will say to any and all that I believe in the second policy of flexible deterrance. I indicate, I believe, that there is room for misunderstanding or disagreement. And hence when you hear and realize that we are not all lined up in a single front in the Pentagon, don't be too disturbed about it. I know of no area of ~~man~~ ^{thought} in the world today in which strong men don't disagree. I find no unanimity in the Supreme Court, in business, in government, nor in politics.

Now, how is the Army doing in this atmosphere I have described. I think the Army is doing well. I have been asked repeatedly by Congressional Committees this year, "Is the Army big enough? Do you have all you want?" I answer, "No, I don't". If I were complacent and satisfied with the Army I should be fired at once. There is no room for complacency in this very serious business; but I do say to all of my people, as I say to you, that in this Army of a million men in uniform and almost a half million men and women in civilian clothes who are part of the Army, if these are all good people we can accomplish miracles. And upon that same word of quality, used by General Bryan, I would like to end my words today.

I believe that a smaller number of able people can do far better than a larger number of mediocre people, and so I ask all of you who have a part to play

~~to play~~ in insuring the quality of the United States Army to leave no stone un-
turned by your personal example, by your precept, and by exercising your own pre-
rogative, to see that every man and woman in the American Army really is a ^{Servant} ~~cause~~
of pride to that great institution. When I was Superintendent, I, as General
Bryan, was always on a soapbox talking about this need for quality, and I proposed
a slogan that I am repeating over and over as I go about the country. In these
serious times, let's make it a national slogan - "Let's put the best heads of
today in the Army caps of tomorrow". I know of no place that contributes more
to putting the right kind of head than West Point does. As long as a high propor-
tion of the Army caps of tomorrow are filled with the heads dominated and inspired
by West Point, stimulated and animated by great leaders such as General Bryan,
General Jones and the men who run this place, we have no need to fear. We have
the strength, whether there is a million men, or something less, or something great-
er, we will have the spirit of West Point to animate us. Thank you.