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US Air Force Historical Study No. 11

PERSONNEL PROBLEMS
RELATING TO
**AAF COMMISSIONED
OFFICERS**

1939-1945

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Prepared by the USAF
Historical Division,
Air University
1951

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Aerospace Studies Institute
AFITN, Aerospace Branch
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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Air University, U.S. Air Force
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P O R T F O L I O

This monograph recounts in some detail the manifold personnel problems caused by the rapid mobilization and eventual demobilization of the largest officer force in our Air Force's history. Although limited to Air Force officers for the most part, this study of their procurement, training, promotion, reclassification, and separation has been integrated with the general problems facing Army personnel agents . It is at once supplemental to and inclusive of several other Air Historical Studies which treat more particular aspects of the over-all personnel problem. Some of those studies are Air Historical Studies No. 2, No. 15, No. 16, No. 21 and No. 39.

Dr. F. L. Jones, at Chief of the Personnel Section, Administrative History Branch, laid the ground work for this study in late 1944 and early 1945. Left largely in draft form, the monograph was revised and considerably expanded by Dr. Chauncey L. Senders, USAF, Historical Division, Air University.

This, like other Historical Division studies, is subject to revision and additional information, corrections, or suggestions are welcome.

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PLACEMENT OF U.S. RELATING TO AIF
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, 1939-1945

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Chapter I

PROCUREMENT OF AAF OFFICERS

In the program of the Air Corps for 1939, one of the difficulties was the procuring of officer personnel adequate in both quality and quantity. The number of officers authorized by Congress for the Air Corps in 1938 was 1,650--18 per cent of all commissioned Army personnel; but the War Department allotted only 1,430, explaining that the budgetary authorization for the entire Army was 3.2 per cent too low to provide the full number of officers authorized by law. Although the Army quota was thus reduced by 420 officers, the Air Corps allotment showed a disproportionate cut of 220, nearly 50 per cent of the entire Army reduction.¹ Nevertheless, the commissioned strength of the Air Corps showed a net gain during the fiscal year 1939 of 236 officers as compared with gains of 26 in 1938 and 49 in 1937. By an Act of Congress approved on 3 April 1939 the commissioned strength of the Corps was set at 3,203, a goal which was to be reached by 30 June 1939.² Procurement of these officers necessarily involved various procedures--and changes in procedure--from the Regular Army Air Corps to commissioning directly from civilian life. In the following pages each of these procedures will be analyzed with an eye toward their relative effectiveness in accomplishing the goal set by Congress.

Procurement of Officers for Regular Army Air Corps

An applicant for a commission in the Regular Army Air Corps in 1939

was required to have successfully completed the flying course at the Air Corps Training Center and to hold the aeronautical rating of airplane pilot. It was soon discovered that many former Naval Reserve officers might have been secured for duty in the Army Air Corps except for these restrictions, particularly the first. Therefore, General Yount, Commanding General, Flying Training Command, raised the question with the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, of revising paragraph 60 of AR 605-5 in such manner as to make graduation from the Naval Aviator Course (given at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida) acceptable evidence of flying proficiency. If this could be done, it would permit former Naval Reserve personnel to enter the Army Air Corps upon conditions that bore no presumption of studied insolence.³ It was recognized, however, that in view of the fact that amendments to the National Defense Act were being considered in Congress this issue might well be permitted to rest for the time being. It was apparently not revived after this and the passage of the law providing that all persons commissioned during the emergency were to be appointed in the Army of the United States (AUS) rendered the Army Regulation ineffective.⁴

Army Air Corps Reserve

To supply its need for officers, the Air Corps turned to its Reserve Corps, appointment in which was under the administrative jurisdiction of The Adjutant General. Initial reserve appointments were restricted to the grade of second lieutenant. An applicant for this commission had to have at least a high school education or its equivalent, be less than 35 years of age, and pass examinations in pertinent military subjects. In addition, an applicant must have had 300 hours of flying time to his credit,

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one-third solo, one-third in a machine of 200 or more horsepower, and fifty of these hours must have been flown during the preceding twelve months.⁵ In cases involving re-appointment an applicant can not be commissioned in a grade higher than that previously held. Hence, a former National Guard officer, unless he held a Reserve commission in a higher grade, could be appointed in the Air Corps only as a second lieutenant. The age limit for appointment at this level was thirty years but it was subsequently raised to thirty-five until 30 June 1940. A former National Guard officer who was beyond that age limit, no matter how long he had served on active duty, could not be appointed without waiver of this restriction. To remedy this situation General Arnold recommended that the age limit for appointment in the Air Corps Reserve of former National Guard officers be waived upon recommendation of the Chief of Air Corps, provided application for appointment be made within one year after separation from the Guard. Further, in an attempt to eliminate red tape, he recommended that a commission in the National Guard be considered equivalent to a certificate of capacity for any grade formerly held; evidence of having attained such status would be accepted for purposes of promotion in the Reserve Corps in lieu of a certificate of capacity at any time within two years after termination of a National Guard commission.⁶

There were however other restrictions governing the appointment of officers in the Air Corps Reserve. Commissions could be granted only to former officers of the Army or National Guard and to graduates of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. But men who held commissions in the Army of the United States between 5 April 1917 and 30 June 1919 and former officers of the Regular Army were also eligible to be commissioned in the highest grade formerly held (or in any lower grade) if they could meet pre-

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scribed physical qualifications.

In times of peace, even under these discouraging conditions, there were more Reserve officers than could be profitably used, as well as the scores of newly commissioned reserve second lieutenants, products of ROTC units, who came annually from college and university graduating classes. As a result the Army tended to neglect its Reserve officers and to minimize their value. This situation was destined to change rapidly, however, for when the emergency developed, the Air Corps, along with every other component of the Army, found itself in dire need of experienced, qualified officers. The first shrill cry for help came from the Quartermaster Corps. In peacetime this service had been severely restricted in the number of Reserve officers it could employ, the limit being five per cent of the new reservists in each corps area. This was considered a generous limit since it was set not because of the need for Quartermaster Corps officers but to give encouragement to those in the ROTC who might wish to choose that branch of the service. The Air Corps with an equally limited peacetime quota found itself in 1940 with forty-one combat groups instead of twenty-five. This required the addition of 655 officers for administrative duty and it was the Reserve that was expected to supply this need.⁷

The War Department Reserve Pool

This posed a new and far reaching problem for the War Department. Many Reserve officers, including some who were most needed by the Air Corps, were filling important positions in industry; some were in key posts as civilian employees of the executive branch of the federal government. Soon the War Department was flooded with requests--frequently frantic appeals--on behalf of employees who were Reserve officers, but who were also essential to a firm engaged in producing strategic commodities for the war effort.⁸

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To prevent any dislocation of vital industry or governmental functions, Secretary of War Henry H. Woodring ordered all corps area and department commanders and all chiefs of arms and services to make a survey of all Reserve officers within their respective jurisdictions. They were to be classified as to the importance of the position each one held; those considered vital to the war effort were to be reported to The Adjutant General, who would place their names on a list designated as the War Department Reserve Pool.⁹ As industry and government indicated which of its Reserve officers were indispensable, they would be added to the pool. As long as their names remained on this list, they would not be considered available for mobilization assignment.¹⁰ Further, Reserve Pool officers could be called to active duty only when such action was authorized by the Secretary of War.

Thus Reserve officers were no longer the neglected guests in Army circles. On 27 August 1940 Congress authorized the President to order Reserve officers to active duty--with or without their consent--for a period of twelve consecutive months.¹¹ The Air Corps immediately followed up this legislation with a move to secure more reservists. General Arnold reminded the chiefs of all divisions that with the organization of additional units and the establishment of the contemplated new training schools it would obviously be necessary to decrease the number of Regular Army officers on duty at all posts, camps, stations, and establishments. To make up the loss it would be imperative that each division chief and commanders of every activity begin immediately to secure suitable Reserve officers on extended active duty to fill assignments for which qualified personnel was available or could be procured.¹²

In this quest for qualified Reserve officers the Air Corps had keen

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competition. On 18 October 1940 the War Department announced for the information of all agencies concerned that it had already made numerous allotments of Reserve officers, was then assigning an additional 8,128, and soon would need about 3,500 more, mainly in company grades, for duty at replacement centers and with units of the armed forces.¹³ The search for Reserve officer personnel was conducted in the midst of a shower of requests from industry that more and more employees, holding commissions in the Reserve, be transferred to the War Department pool. The reason usually given for such demands was the prevention of delays in fulfilling the rapidly growing volume of Army orders caused by the necessity of training new men for tasks that these individuals had long been performing, and, in some cases, were even then teaching others to perform.¹⁴

Reserve Officers' Training Corps

The supply of Reserve officers was never very large, and under this concentrated demand it soon showed signs of disappearing entirely. The Reserve Officers' Training Corps, units which had been set up in land grant colleges and other institutions of higher learning throughout the United States, had long been the primary source of manpower upon which the ORC depended for recruits. When the World War II emergency arose the program consisted of a four-year curriculum divided into basic and advanced courses, each covering four academic semesters. The work of the basic course required 96 hours per school year, or three hours per week, sixty hours of which were devoted to physical exercise, and 36 to theoretical instruction in the classroom. The advanced course required five hours per week. The purpose of these courses was to teach the fundamentals of military tactics and, through disciplinary training, to develop organization and team work. Finally before a student could receive a commission in the Reserve he must have attended one summer camp, preferably--but not

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necessarily--at the end of his junior year. Students who successfully completed the four years of training, if they were twenty-one years of age or older, were given commissions in the Officers' Reserve Corps of the branch of the Army in which they had been trained.* ¹⁵

The Thomson Act of August, 1935, provided that 1000 ROTC graduates be taken into the Regular Army annually for one year's training, and at the end of the year, fifty were to be assigned as permanent second lieutenants. In 1939 this act was amended to permit the permanent appointment of up to 100, or 10 per cent of the 1,000 and not fewer than 50. Toward the end of 1940 permission was secured from The Adjutant General to canvass the colleges and universities at the earliest possible moment to discover those who were qualified and might be willing to accept commissions. To make certain that no prospect was overlooked teachers in the ROTC units were to be consulted as to those who might be interested. Anyone was to be offered a commission who had completed, by the time the appointment became effective, a course in accounting, animal husbandry, business administration, architecture, food chemistry, engineering, transportation, law, public utility management, or textile engineering. Practically any technical skill in which ROTC students could have received training was in demand.¹⁶

The Air Corps was persistent in its attempt to avail itself of this

* A student who was not yet twenty-one years old was given a certificate entitling him to a commission when he reached that age.

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source of Reserve officer material, and early in the spring of 1941, commanders seeking Air Corps Reserve officers qualified in technical specialties were authorized to recommend annually the appointment as second lieutenants, non-rated, of up to 10 per cent of the prospective ROTC graduates who were qualified for commissions. It was believed that from 800 to 1,000 officers must be secured annually from this source. Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the fact that the Air Corps vitally needed men for duty in connection with materiel procurement: graduates who had majored in engineering--aeronautical, mechanical, or electrical--and those with training or experience in business administration. Students finishing college in June 1941, who had already received or who might receive commissions in other branches, were to be interviewed and told that they could apply for transfer to the Air Corps Reserve immediately and, upon recommendation of the Chief of the Air Corps, be assigned to that section without a certificate of necessity.¹⁷

As the emergency increased in urgency, the need for qualified officer personnel increased proportionately. At length the War Department, prompted by the Air Corps and other services, realized or acknowledged that a pool of officer material existed in former ROTC graduates who had received the requisite training but for one reason or another had either not accepted commissions or had accepted and then let their commissions expire. These men had not been considered of sufficient value to the Army in peacetime to justify concern, but now their potential usefulness was obvious. To make their services available the War Department formulated a policy designed to cover the situation; on 21 June 1941 The Adjutant General's office published the plan in a circular letter addressed to the commanding generals

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of all armies: (1) application had to be made within five years of the date of graduation; (2) appointments would not be made in sections other than those in which training was received and would be limited to the lowest grade in that section; (3) applicants were to meet the non-military educational requirements of Army regulations governing appointments in the Officers' Reserve Corps at the time when application was made; (4) applicants were required to secure a certificate of capacity for the grade and section in which a commission was sought.¹⁸ Those meeting these requirements were to be appointed without regard to existing vacancies or announced suspension of appointments.

Applicable only to ROTC graduates who had failed to accept their appointments, the terms of this plan might justly be regarded as somewhat punitive, although they were probably not so intended. The stringency of the rules, however, killed whatever hopes the Air Corps--and other branches as well--may have had of getting much help from this source. The realities of the case had escaped the War Department. Former ROTC graduates did not crowd recruiting stations seeking commissions as second lieutenants; they found places as civilian employees of the government or made satisfactory connections in private industry. In such capacities they were able not only to render valuable service to the war effort but at the same time to earn good salaries while laying the foundations for successful life-time careers. When the expected demand for appointments failed to materialize, the War Department quickly realized that a further change of policy was necessary if this reservoir of trained and qualified men was to be utilized by the Army. Thus, on 15 September 1941 a revised set of instructions governing the commissioning of ROTC graduates was published.¹⁹

The lack of a realistic view of the situation in previous policy was thus tacitly, but not expressly, admitted by The Adjutant General's office.

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That the ROTC was not providing a sufficient number of officers, particularly in certain of the arms and services, was realized, and although Officer Candidate Schools would correct this deficiency eventually, for the present a flow of officer material would have to be sought from more immediate sources. Thus, in view of the fact that an admittedly splendid supply existed in uncommissioned ROTC graduates it could not be neglected or ignored during the emergency. The method of approach chosen was to liberalize policy, ease restrictions upon requirements, and make entrance upon graded service more attractive. Corps area commanders were consequently authorized to recommend annually senior unit ROTC graduates and prospective graduates for commissions in the arms and services in which they had had training but had not necessarily done major work. The Air Corps quota in this program was limited to 10 per cent of the ROTC graduates.²⁰

The War Department may not have been aware originally, of all the details of the problem, but it was now prepared to take all steps necessary to remedy the situation. The essential steps in the procedure were described minutely as follows: (1) application was to be made in the usual manner on WD, AGO Form 170, indicating the special qualifications of the applicant as well as other data; (2) in case the applicant had not been recommended by the Professor of Military Science and Tactics or the head of the institution in which he had been trained, the application would not be forwarded but the man would be given an opportunity to apply to the section in which ROTC training had been received; (3) applications were to be processed and forwarded to The Adjutant General's office as prescribed in paragraph 83, AR 145-10; and (4) the necessary papers were to be forwarded by The Adjutant General to the chief of the arm or service in which appointment was sought. In the event action taken was unfavorable, the

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applicant, if otherwise qualified, was to be tendered an appointment in the section in which he had specialized as a student in ROTC.²¹ To further expedite the procurement of ROTC graduates by reducing the flow of these officers into the Reserve Corps, Congress in September 1941 came forth with Public Law 252. This provided that all persons commissioned as officers during the emergency would be appointed not in the Reserve Corps but in the Army of the United States,²² and thereby lessened to some extent the difficulties experienced by the War Department in dealing with the problem.

Despite the new law, however, policies governing the appointment of ROTC graduates were still confused and tended to slow down the war effort. If the Air Corps was to be allowed only 10 per cent of the graduates in each corps area, in their urgent search for engineers they could conceivably exhaust their quota in a corps area which happened to have a large number of engineering students without getting all of the students from that area with the kind of training for which the Air Corps had most need. Conversely, in a corps area with few engineering students it might be necessary to fill out the Air Corps quota with relatively unsuitable officers. To make matters worse, The Adjutant General's existing policy prevented the Air Corps from taking ROTC students who had taken Military Science in Ordnance, Engineering, Signal Corps, Quartermaster, or Chemical Warfare; and a glance at the programs of ROTC units in engineering schools showed that all had ordnance and engineering courses, with a large percentage of those enrolled in ROTC taking majors in these branches.²³

The Adjutant General's office questioned neither the interpretation nor the logic of policy. It did, however, offer an explanation for the facts by citing a hypothetical case:

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"Assume a corps area estimates that there will be 800 graduates of the ROTC who will receive commissions. Of this number 200 are in branches restricted by paragraph 6, D Letter of 15 September 1941. The corps area commander is authorized to recommend a total of 80 of the remaining 600 prospective senior ROTC graduates for commission in the Air Corps (non-rated). The same method of determination of number to be commissioned in branches other than those in which trained will apply to each corps area." 24

The "explanation" merely underlines the War Department's basic failure to provide adequately the needs of the various services.

Meanwhile, officer procurement had shifted into high gear--except among ROTC graduates. At last, in an effort to speed up commissioning in this category, a move was made to simplify procedure. The Adjutant General requested Professors of Military Science and Tactics to forward to his office a list of those expected to graduate. Each of these men was then sent a letter from The Adjutant General's office saying in part, "By direction of the President you are temporarily appointed in the Army of the United States, effective this date, in the grade and section shown in the address above. Your serial number and length of service in your present or any higher grade are shown after A and B respectively." This commission was to remain in effect for the duration of the emergency and six months thereafter unless ordered differently by the President. A form for taking the oath of office was enclosed, the execution and return of which constituted an acceptance of appointment. Nothing further was required. 25

The letter of appointment, sent four weeks before graduation, to the institute where the candidate was enrolled in ROTC, was not to be delivered prior to the effective date of commissioning. Likewise it was not to be delivered to anyone whom the Professor of Military Science and Tactics considered unfit, professionally or otherwise, for appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps. This policy was to be observed even in case the

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student had earlier been named as a prospective eligible. Unless these requirements were fulfilled in detail, the letters were to be returned to The Adjutant General through the corps area commander, accompanied by a detailed report of reasons for non-delivery. If a student had satisfactorily completed the prescribed course and left the institution before receiving his letter of appointment, the letter and form of oath were to be forwarded to him with an official return envelope addressed to the Professor of Military Science and Tactics. If a student received his letter and left the institution without executing the oath of office, a statement of the facts, with a report of action taken to repossess the letter was to be sent to The Adjutant General. If a student declined to accept an appointment, a letter so stating was to be secured from him and forwarded, together with his letter of appointment, to The Adjutant General.

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The War Department's handling of ROTC graduates came in for an increasing amount of criticism late in 1941. A requirement that a student must have received his college degree before he could be appointed to commissioned grade was a special target for those adept at sarcasm. This requirement had been established long before war was either imminent or threatened; under the prevailing circumstances, it had now come to appear unnecessarily prohibitive. Hence, in January, 1942, the old rule was changed: an ROTC student who met all other requirements for appointment and was recommended by his Professor of Military Science and Tactics, as well as by the chief of the branch in which he sought a commission, might receive the appointment without having a college degree.

Since there was some flexibility in policy as applied to the ROTC, the Air Corps, in need of young men, asked in February 1942 that the War Department establish an Air Corps ROTC in each of several selected educational institutions. If the setting up of new units were considered too costly

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in time and material, it was suggested the Air Corps be given a share in the existing programs at institutions having large basic ROTC courses. One large land grant institution indicated that training in aviation could be given during three months at the beginning of the school year and three months at the end. Following such training, men could go to regular government airports for final training in actual flying.²⁷ In the AAF this idea found general favor, but it was recognized that early 1942 was not the time to initiate action. The reasons given were as follows: (1) most of the students who would be interested and would make desirable candidates for Air Corps ROTC were eligible to become Aviation Cadets, and strenuous efforts were being made to procure them in that capacity; (2) in view of the state of the war effort, the enlisted and officer personnel that would be required as instructors in the proposed ROTC units could not be spared from more immediately important duties; (3) airplanes, engines, parts, and other necessary equipment and facilities were not available; and (4) the Civil Aeronautics Authority, through the Civilian Pilot Training Program, was at the time engaged in doing the equivalent of what was proposed for the Air Corps ROTC, and doing it without Army expense or supervision.²⁸ The proposal accordingly appears to have received no further consideration.

Despite continued talk, recommendations, and analyses the ROTC policy of the War Department continued vague and unsatisfactory. Thus in the spring of 1942 it was finally decided to rework the entire program, although this was recognized as a task of some magnitude. Pending the required revisions of AR 605-7, a new War Department Circular announced a policy of commissioning all ROTC graduates in the branch of service in which they took major training.²⁹ About this time, however, the terms of

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the Selective Service Act were made to apply to boys of 18 years of age and the War Department was relieved of the ROTC problem--at least for the duration of the war and six months thereafter. Revision of AR 605-7, however, proceeded. The scope of the task was reduced so that it now covered only appointments to the Regular Army of ROTC graduates. Under the revised regulation honor graduates of the senior division of the ROTC were beginning in 1942 to be commissioned as second lieutenants in the Regular Army, their number to be determined by the Secretary of War. Those seeking a commission in a particular arm or service were to attend the school designated by that branch. Appointments were to be divided among "the arms and services in proportion to the number of advanced senior division Reserve Officers Training Corps students of the various arms of services attending institutions, other than medical, within the continental United States which offer a college degree upon completion of an accredited college course leading to a degree."³⁰ To be eligible for appointment a candidate had to be a male citizen of the United States between the age of 21 and 27 years, who had completed a prescribed course of instruction at the appropriate school in lieu of ROTC summer camp. The selection was to be made by a permanent board of Regular Army officers, two of whom were to hold commissions in the arm or service desired by the candidate and one in the Medical Corps. The board was to examine the record of each applicant and then give him an oral examination, with the final appointment dependent upon the results of a physical examination and the availability of the necessary funds.³¹ Since aviation seemed to have an especial appeal for ROTC students, this new regulation was regarded with favor by the Air Corps.

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Officers Reserve Corps

Meanwhile a decision had been made on 7 April 1941 to allocate--- provided funds could be found---an additional 4,127 Reserve officers to the Air Corps,³² and at the same time to order to active duty a limited number (15) of colonels and lieutenants colonels of the Air Reserve. In addition a recommendation was made to re-appoint select World War I officers as captains in the Reserve and have them ordered to active duty immediately. No possible source of Reserve officers was overlooked in view of the world situation, the diligence with which they were sought contrasting sharply with the treatment accorded them only a year or so previously.

The spirit of the Selective Service Act appeared to point toward the suspension of appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps. That lead was followed but since it soon proved unwise and unworkable on 2 May 1941 the suspension was lifted on certain categories, including the Air Corps Reserve. In sections of the ORC requiring military knowledge, however, no appointments were to be made without special authority from the Secretary of War unless the applicant was a recent graduate of the United States Military Academy, the United States Naval Academy, the Citizens Military Training Camp, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, an Air Corps Training Center, a special course of training established under supervision of the Chief of the Air Corps, or schools established for the training of officer candidates. Completion of an Army extension course alone would not be considered sufficient to meet the military educational requirements for a commission. No application was to be accepted from a man who was in the Selective Service age, unless it was first submitted to the Secretary of War. Applications that had to go to the Secretary were to be accompanied.

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by a statement from the chief of the branch concerned that the applicant possessed the special qualifications required for the position to which he would be assigned if commissioned; and that after careful investigation, no qualified officer was believed to be available for the assignment.³³

Despite the need of the Air Corps for Reserve officers, some types of recruiting from this source had been restricted as far back as December 1939, and it was later deemed expedient to maintain the pretense, at least, of a consistent policy. The Adjutant General's office was equal to the occasion: Reserve officers might be had, and the policy of not recruiting them to be maintained, by the device of permitting exceptions to the rules, exceptions so broad as to include practically all suitable applicants. Candidates for commissions who came within any of the following categories were to be taken regardless of the restrictions: (1) those who had enrolled in Army extension courses before 20 December 1939, and whose enrollment had not been canceled; (2) those whose enrollment in an Army extension course, or whose examination had been authorized, before 4 March 1941 and who desired to be commissioned in sections of the Officers' Reserve Corps in which appointments had not been suspended; (3) warrant officers and enlisted men of the Regular Army and enlisted men of the Regular Army Reserve who were enrolled in an Army extension course on 3 April 1941; and (4) those who could qualify under special authority issued by the War Department. These were the blanket exceptions, but there was yet a broader pathway into the ORC. With the approval of the Secretary of War those who, if commissioned, might be unavailable by reason of civilian occupational status for immediate mobilization assignment could be appointed.³⁴

Although the Air Corps hailed this liberal change of policy as the

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answer to its problem the response was not wholly satisfactory. Former Reserve officers continued to accept positions in industry or in civil status with the government; not in any great number did they seek to have their names returned to the Reserve roster. To encourage a greater interest and to make the policy more attractive an appeal was directed to former Reserve officers who were within the Selective Service age bracket promising reappointment in the lowest grade of their former branch of service provided the following conditions were met: (1) the original appointment had been made since 1933; (2) the officer was in an eligible status at the time his appointment terminated; (3) appointment was not terminated for misconduct or similar cause; (4) a final type physical examination be passed; (5) the approval of corps area or department be obtained; and (6) a certificate of capacity be secured. If appointed, the applicant was to be ordered to extended active duty for at least a year,³⁵ but this offer of second lieutenancies tempted very few away from civilian employment.

Thus commanders in the field felt keenly the need for additional Reserve officer material. On 31 May 1941 an officer at March Field appealed to the Chief of the Air Corps concerning recent instructions for setting up Officer Candidate Schools, in which men would be trained and commissioned in the Reserve. He found that the allocation of cadres to these schools failed to provide for Air Corps Reserve officers. To make matters worse, radio advice from the Commanding General, Ninth Corps Area, was interpreted as excluding from consideration applications for OCS made by Air Corps personnel; this was objected to as a crippling discrimination against the men of the Air Corps and the Air Corps itself.³⁶ This change was immediately denied by the Plans Division, which went on to assure the Air Corps of adequate encouragement and protection under provisions of law.³⁷

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The Air Corps, not satisfied with promises that it would get Reserve officers, was taking positive action within its own sphere of influence. By the end of June 1941, all Air Reserve officers not deferred or physically disqualified who were willing to accept had been called to extended active duty. Of the remainder, those who were eligible were being called without their consent.³⁸

Up to the summer of 1941, then, the Air Corps continued to seek men from every available source, as well as to make the most effective use of the officers it had. It was the only branch of the armed services, for example, which automatically extended the tours of active duty for its reservists to one full year--the maximum under the law.³⁹ Even this was not sufficient however, for a law of 3 April 1939 had limited to 3,000 the number of Reserve officers the Air Corps might accept for active duty in any one year, and when the emergency arose, this law proved a serious limitation upon an expanding arm of the national military force. Since a direct demand for repeal might meet with irritating delays, the limitation of the law was evaded by indirection: relative, rather than direct, legislation was utilized to lift the restriction.⁴⁰

The public during this time seemed neither to approve nor to understand the ways in which the problem of the Reserve officer was handled. When opposition became articulate in Congress, then, the War Department proposed an over-all solution which the legislators were willing to put to the test inasmuch as nothing better offered itself. On 22 September 1941 Public Law No. 252 (77th Congress) was approved. This law^{*} provided that all persons commissioned during the emergency were to be appointed

* See above, p. 11.

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in the Army of the United States to hold office during the war and not more than six months thereafter. In the application of the law, however, the Adjutant General found it necessary to make the following exceptions: (1) qualified applicants selected for appointment in the Regular Army; (2) members of the graduating classes of the Senior Division of the ROTC who qualified, under current War Department regulations and instructions, for appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps; (3) qualified graduates of junior units of ROTC who were twenty-one years of age at the time of graduation, and graduates of such units holding certificates of appointment who presented the certificates within six months after reaching their twenty-first birthday; and (4) members of the graduating classes of aviation cadets who upon graduation were recommended for appointment as Reserve officers.⁴¹ All applications for appointment in the Officers' Reserve Corps then being processed, and those received thereafter, that were not within the excepted categories were to be considered applications for appointment in the Army of the United States. This law proved an effective solution to the Reserve officer problem.

One additional action was necessary to dispose of the problem definitely for the duration of the war: on 13 December 1941 Congress approved a bill extending the active duty period for all members of the Army of the United States to include the period of the war and six months immediately following its termination, unless sooner released by the President.⁴²

Retired Officers

In 1939 General Emmons had made a study of the acute shortage of officers in the Air Corps and had submitted a proposed solution to the problem to General Arnold. One of the provisions of this proposal was to increase the usefulness of general officers by making it possible to create careers

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for them in the Air Corps instead of continuing the policy of temporary appointment to higher commands for a maximum of four years. General Arnold agreed that the system was not satisfactory, that it would eventually result in having the majority of the more efficient high-ranking officers retired after having served their four-year tour of duty. The inevitable consequence, as he saw it, would be to make brigadier generals of the more efficient junior officers while men with wide and valuable experience sat on the side lines.⁴³

The problem was a real one: more officers in all grades were needed. Retired officers who might be recalled were a potential source, and many of them were able and anxious to return to active duty. One of the difficulties in their way was to find, under regulations designed to function in normal peacetime, a way to recall these men and to use to the best advantage their recognized ability.*⁴⁴ The Chief of the Air Corps, who was not initially responsible for plans to use these officers, also gave the matter considerable thought and concluded that eventually it might become necessary to call retired officers to active duty in the Air Corps. He thought however that they should be assigned only to positions which required neither flying nor tactical duties.⁴⁵

Early in 1940, then, the Air Corps made a careful study of all phases of the retired officer problem. In the course of the investigation General Yount became convinced that if this category of personnel were to be used those disqualified for flying and those who had previously served in other branches of the Army would, under current regulations, be counted as

* The responsibility for recalling to active duty and the authority to grant temporary promotion were both vested in The Adjutant General's office.

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part of the 10 per cent of non-flying officers to which the Air Corps was limited. Therefore, Yount recommended that no retired officers be used except those who had served in the Air Corps; and those, he thought, should be used sparingly and only on jobs classified as "duty not with troops." General Arnold approved these recommendations as a guide to future policy.⁴⁶

As the military program was revised upward, the need for the services and experience of retired officers increased. It ceased to be a theoretical question. The Chief of the Personnel Division, however, advised caution, pointing out that any consideration of the utilization of retired officers under conditions as they then existed depended upon (1) the desire of the individual to be recalled to active duty, and (2) the willingness of a station commander to request that a retired officer be recalled to serve in a particular capacity. He suggested that commanding officers be instructed to encourage retired officers to file applications for active duty only where a particular individual was desired. The Division did not consider it wise to place retired officers of other branches on duty in positions where they might outrank senior Air Corps officers. This stipulation was momentarily obviated by the fact that on the basis of recent progress in procurement it did not appear that a very large number of qualified retired officers, Air Corps or otherwise, could be obtained for active duty. Rather, in all probability the additional administrative burden would, to a large extent, have to be borne by Reserve officers together with Regular Army officers trained in specialties.⁴⁷

This was sound reasoning and wise policy--at least Training and Operations Division thought so when it concurred. That division went further, however, and insisted that officers retired from the Air Corps

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after long service were more valuable when recalled from civil life than Reserve officers on extended active duty. It recommended, therefore, that consideration be given in deserving cases to the question likely to be of great importance to retired officers contemplating a return to active duty--temporary promotion. For retired Air Corps officers recalled to the colors, in cases where the nature of the work to be performed and other circumstances justified it, an advance of two grades beyond the rank held at the time of retirement was suggested.⁴⁸ Personnel believed this suggestion sound and important and initiated a move for a general policy on temporary promotion. The effort was only partially successful: an agreement was secured to consider promotion one grade at a time after six months of active service had been completed in grade.⁴⁹

Early in 1941 the Air Corps announced that officers retired for physical disability would not be assigned, when recalled to active duty, to any type of job which required either regular or frequent participation in aerial activity. A current regulation rendered void any aeronautical rating upon retirement lasting for a year; this was not to be altered. An officer holding such a lapsed rating, if assigned to flying activity when recalled to active duty, would have to be qualified and granted a pilot's rating by the Chief of Air Corps.⁵⁰ Slowly the Air Corps was advancing toward a policy with respect to retired officers.

In view of the fact that retired officers were under the control of The Adjutant General, however, the Air Corps could only decide what it would like to do. The Plans Division pointed out that it had gained the impression from the G-1 Division of the War Department General Staff that retired officers on active duty status could be recommended for temporary promotion if the grade held was not in keeping with the job assignment and

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higher rank was essential to the best interest of the service. The War Department on the contrary had turned down a proposal to promote retired officers on the basis of duty performance; the rule applied only to officers on the active list. Therefore, it was suggested that in considering retired officers for temporary promotion the following points should be kept in mind: (1) "in studies having to do with temporary rank in the Air Corps the AD has expressed a view that rank in a staff officer is not essential"; and (2) "retired officers promoted under section 127a of the National Defense Act, as amended, will be senior to all Air Corps officers holding the same grade under the Air Corps Temporary Promotion Act, irrespective of dates of appointment."⁵¹

The lack of well-defined rules applicable to retired officers under emergency conditions was a constant source of irritation to the Air Corps; to the Adjutant General the retired officer problem seemed to be an enigma. Numerous regulations were published from time to time but all proved ineffective when considered in the light of the problem as a whole. Finally, on 17 July 1941 announcement was made that upon approved recommendations of appropriate commanders retired officers on active duty would be granted temporary promotion to the next grade in the AUS after the completion of the required period of active commissioned service as ordinarily credited for promotion purposes. An officer granted initial temporary promotion under this authorization would be advanced no more than one grade and must serve at least one year of active duty in the higher bracket before becoming eligible for promotion to the next grade, regardless of the amount of active service completed.⁵² This was an approach to the principle applied to all categories in the AUS, and it simplified the problem for the AAF.

From the first the Air Corps had objected to certain War Department rules that made special categories of retired officers serving on temporary active duty since some of the restrictions tended to limit the usefulness of the officers involved.⁵³ The Air Corps wanted a general policy to apply, one that would permit it to deal with this highly desirable category of officer personnel with some certainty and assurance. The Plans Division took the problem up with the Chief of Personnel⁵⁴ and together they agreed that certain principles needed to be established: (1) that a man who reached retirement age could be recalled to active duty immediately; (2) that men already serving should not be released as long as their abilities could be utilized; (3) that it should not be necessary to state the specific assignment intended for an officer when requesting his recall to active duty; (4) that no definite period of active duty should be set for such officers--they should be retained until the emergency was definitely over; and (5) that over-age officers could be called to active duty with or without their consent. These principles were finally accepted by the War Department and incorporated in a general policy announced on 7 January 1942.

Changes in Procurement Policy and Procedure

Early in 1940 General Arnold had requested the addition of seven major generals and sixteen brigadier generals to the Air Corps based on the fact that the Air Corps performed the function of both an arm and a service.⁵⁵ This request was further supported by the current shortage of Air Corps officers which was expected to continue for a considerable time and to grow more acute as the expansion program developed. The Adjutant General was informed that this would necessitate the performance

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of administrative functions by pilots, even trained to fly, not to sit at a desk.⁵⁶ Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, however, directed that no action be taken to secure legislation to permit the proposed appointments. He explained that action by Congress was pending; if it did not materialize, he would return to the question the following year.⁵⁷ A few days later The Adjutant General wrote General Arnold that his plan was "not favorably considered"; there would be no increase in Regular Army commissioned personnel other than that provided for by the Act of 3 April 1939. No other plan would be entertained during the period of the emergency.⁵⁸

Such a stringent policy was calculated to cause concern in view of the program under way. On 1 July 1939 the Air Corps had been composed of three wings in the continental United States and two wings in the insular possessions, with a total strength of 2,000 officers and 18,000 enlisted men.⁵⁹ On 30 June 1940 there were 2,210 Regular Army and 1,112 Reserve officers on duty in the Air Corps, a total of 3,322, as well as 45,910 enlisted men and 1,894 Flying Cadets. On 15 January 1941 it was expected there would be approximately 6,180 officers (2,270 Regular Army and 3,910 Reserve), 83,000 enlisted men, and 7,000 Flying Cadets. On 30 June 1941 it was planned to have approximately 10,100 officers (2,368 Regular Army and 7,732 Reserve), 151,000 enlisted men, and 15,000 Flying Cadets.⁶⁰ By 1 July 1942 it was expected this force would reach a total strength of twenty-three wings with some 36,000 officers and 276,000 enlisted men.⁶¹ Obviously an expanded officer procurement program was mandatory.

While still striving for such a program, the Air Corps took steps to get the maximum good out of the system currently in use. Applications for commissions and statements of qualifications were being sent to Wright

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Field for determination and suitable assignment until, in August 1941, these functions were transferred to Washington and a board of three Materiel Division officers. This board was supplied from Wright Field with a list of vacancies; the board then determined whether the applicant was qualified to fill any of them. This change in procedure was estimated to have reduced the time required for processing applications by at least three weeks.⁶²

There were many ramifications of the officer procurement program, and anything that tended to restrict or retard an increasing flow of commissioned personnel for the AAF was questioned. Late in 1941 for example, General Spaatz pointed out that the requirement that applicants for appointment in the Regular Army had to be "single and not previously married" was not in the best interest of either the AAF or the Army as a whole. He thought it manifestly unjust in the case of Reserve officers who had served continuously on extended duty for a period of years before taking the examinations for a Regular Army commission, as Air Corps Reserve officers were encouraged to do. The original purpose of the provision in the National Defense Act was to discourage marriage until after young men had become established in the Army, a period of one year from the date of their original appointment. This rule, Spaatz contended, was never meant to apply to Reserve officers who had served a year or more on extended active duty prior to obtaining commissions in the Regular Army, and it should not now. Air Corps Reserve officers served continuously on active duty, and in some cases they were not able to obtain Regular Army commissions because of a lack of vacancies until they had, in some instances, served seven or eight years.⁶³ The marriage regulation thus prevented the Air Corps from availing itself of the services of many able--but, also, human--men.

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Another circumstance that seriously retarded procurement of officers was the fact that the preparation of commissions was a function of The Adjutant General's office. As the Army expanded, the AGO was unable to keep pace with it, and the Chief of the Air Corps became convinced that if commissioning were placed in the hands of the service directly concerned the inflow of much-needed officer personnel would be facilitated. A study of the question seemed to support the belief that authority to issue commissions could well be delegated to agencies other than The Adjutant General's office. It was to be expected that The Adjutant General would offer strong objection to any such decentralization on the ground that it would destroy the uniformity in investigation and qualification then in existence and would, moreover, be more expensive. Nevertheless, it was thought that something should be done, and General Arnold was willing to accept the responsibility. To provoke as little opposition as possible he asked only for authority to direct issuance of appointment orders, with subsequent preparation of the formal certificate left in the hands of TAG.⁶⁴ The request was denied on the ground that "the necessary procedure and policies" were already in effect to permit the commissioning of qualified applicants in the AUS for service in the AF.⁶⁵ It is not surprising, then, that on the following day the AF complained that of some 200 applications which it had sent to the AGO fewer than 30 had been completed.⁶⁶

At the time, the AF urgently needed thousands of additional officers to release more and more flying officers from administrative duties; a considerable proportion of these could be obtained only from civilian sources. Efforts to have qualified persons commissioned for this purpose, however, often met with considerable delay. Therefore, it was recommended that the

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procedure for commissioning civilian personnel be simplified and that the Chief of the AAF be notified promptly of final action on applications.⁶⁷

Commissioning from Civilian Life

The Air Corps needed special types of officer personnel, most of which came within the lower age brackets. There was dismay, consequently, when Secretary of War Stimson announced on 12 January 1942 that from then on the policy of the War Department would be to appoint no civilian to a commissioned grade who had not reached his thirtieth birthday. The War Department recognized that certain exceptions to this policy might be highly desirable, even imperative--but they were to be handled as exceptions. The AAF had protested that the complex and extraordinary demands of modern warfare required unusual qualifications which were to be found in men under 30 to a much larger degree than in men of more advanced age. In the interest of efficiency, the Air Corps had been forced to process an increasing number of exceptions to the new policy until this procedure became so widespread that it tended to destroy the rule. Consequently broad and general exceptions were authorized to such an extent that the AAF no longer felt seriously handicapped by the new policy.⁶⁸ The War Department Personnel Board, nevertheless, clung to the fiction of approving commissions for civilians under 30 "only in most critical cases" and under exceptional circumstances.

The AAF gradually streamlined its own machinery for speeding up officer procurement. Early in February 1942 the Appointment and Procurement Section of the Personnel Division (A-1) of the Air Staff was authorized to process all applications for appointment of civilians and enlisted men as officers for duty with the AAF. The Chief of the Air Corps, the Air Force Combat Command, and the Air Staff were to submit their officer needs to this section. Job classifications were prepared to cover assignments suit-

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able for officers without military experience and requisitions were to be made within these classifications. In so far as possible, the grade and assignment and the number of officers required in each were to be specified. Requisitions for technical training or experience beyond the range of the job classifications were accepted, but every effort was made to keep such exceptions to the minimum. If officers in the field discovered men who were apparently qualified, names and other pertinent information were to be forwarded to the Appointment and Procurement Section. An Air Force Board was set up in A-1 headquarters to make final recommendations to The Adjutant General on each application for appointment.⁶⁹

The Chief of the Air Corps, allotted a procurement objective of 2,600 officers to be commissioned in the AUS, made a careful analysis of the duties which could be performed by men commissioned directly from civilian life. This analysis, he hoped, would enable him to order officers to duty when and where they were most needed since, under existing directives, persons could be commissioned only to fill specific vacancies. When his study indicated a need for a number of officers in various categories, General Arnold proposed to establish a pool of carefully selected officers. He recommended that he be authorized to refer to The Adjutant General civilians to be commissioned in the AUS within the allotted procurement objective and in the qualification categories which he deemed essential to form a pool of this sort.⁷⁰ The plan was not approved.

Meanwhile the AF was accusing the Appointment and Procurement Section of the A-1 Division of becoming a bottle-neck, retarding rather than expediting procurement. The Section defended itself for past deficiencies by explaining that it had been necessary to gather and train an office

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force; even so, it had already reduced the time required for processing commission applications to a minimum. It also had established friendly contacts with other agencies through which it expected to become increasingly effective.⁷¹

About this time The Adjutant General announced that the chiefs of arms and services might recommend for appointment in the AUS former officers whose commissions were terminated under honorable conditions since 31 December 1931.*⁷² The AAF had long been drawing upon this source and now increased its tempo, convinced that these men could meet its needs far better than persons who had had no military experience. Yet, within a week the War Department was to make even more extensive use of former officers who had served in World War I.⁷³

The Air Corps extended its procurement practice until it approached the status of an independent system covering the entire country. It used neither the corps area nor The Adjutant General's Personnel Placement Section in locating suitable candidates for commissions. It procured from civil life and commissioned as captains approximately 40 first-rate personnel managers of industrial plants to spark the program. After an exhaustive study of direct mail and air routes, with reference to the area covered, regional offices were set up and procurement officers operated out of these headquarters on a published schedule. They visited neighboring communities and established local offices with some prominent individual or organization. At these centers they interviewed, by appointment, pro-

* Men discharged or whose commissions were terminated as a result of reclassification proceedings, and those whose resignations were accepted under the provisions of AR 605-230 or "for the good of the service," were not to be appointed under this authorization.

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spects suggested by local citizens.⁷⁴ The Air Corps had a well prepared and simply worded specification for each of its 34 types of jobs. The interviewing officer had a standard interview sheet from which he could determine where a man was most likely to prove satisfactory.⁷⁵ Each day the papers of those candidates whom the interviewing officer considered qualified were forwarded to the regional office. Here a classification board studied the data; if it was decided that there was no place for a particular applicant in the Air Corps, he was promptly notified. The papers of those candidates who were approved by the regional board were forwarded to Washington where a screening board composed of three Air Corps officers and two personnel consultants decided which candidates would and which would not be commissioned. The necessary information regarding those selected for commissions was sent to the Reserve Division of The Adjutant General's office for final action.⁷⁶ The system proved exceedingly effective: it produced some 8,000 officers between February and June.

Other services were not so fortunate, and the War Department made a careful survey of the over-all procurement program. It was discovered that the Personnel Placement Section of the Reserve Division, AGO, was bogged down with questionnaires. There were an estimated 180,000 in the office and 50,000 more were on the way. Two main factors appeared to be responsible: (1) full use was not being made of the Section by those who were supposed to use it; and (2) the Section was so understaffed that it could not handle all the paper work.⁷⁷ As a result of the survey, a procurement system quite similar to that already developed in the Air Corps was recommended.

The Adjutant General approved the suggested change and took immediate steps to activate the new system. Procurement Divisions were organized in all appropriate offices and the Officer Procurement Division was directed

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to establish field offices in principal cities throughout the country. These offices were to be manned with the necessary number and grades of officers having personnel procurement background experience. The offices were to operate as exempted activities and the Corps Area Placement Agencies were to be discontinued as the Officer Placement Divisions began to function.⁷⁸

The AAF found its procurement activities hampered somewhat by a requirement that civilians commissioned for administrative duties have previous military experience. If continued and enforced, this rule would have compelled the AAF to pass up men of proved worth and to accept others who met the requirement but might have less ability. It was necessary to continue to procure officers from civilian life because there were not enough graduates from Officer Candidate Schools to fill all vacancies and the supply of Reserve officers had been exhausted. There were various arguments in favor of lifting the restriction. Conferences with commanders in the field had revealed the belief that the person who had proved himself to possess executive ability in a civil capacity was better equipped to take over military administrative duties than the graduate of OCS whose ability along those lines remained to be determined. It was also generally believed that World War I experience did not necessarily imply fitness for administrative duties in the current and very different type of conflict. In order, therefore, to supply the administrative officer needs of the AAF it was recommended in July 1942 that the military experience prerequisite be rescinded. If military background was deemed absolutely essential, those commissioned from civilian life could be required to attend an Officers Training School. In the event of this action an applicant would also be required to sign, before receiving his commission, an agreement that if he failed to complete the OTS course satisfactorily, he would resign his commission.⁷⁹

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On the whole, the AAF had been fortunate in its civilian-officer procurement program--by 22 August 1942 15,198 officers had been commissioned from civil life. This left a total of only 1,933 to be appointed under current procurement directives. According to these statistics all administrative officer requirements, as determined by the Program Planning and Control Unit, would be met by the end of September and a pool of 5,000 officers would be built up by the end of October.⁸⁰ It appeared that in this manner General Arnold might get the officer pool which had earlier been refused him by TAG.

There were more tangible reasons for this success than the glamor of wings and picturesque stories of aerial warfare. The Appointment and Procurement Division, A-1, made it a rule to write to every civilian who applied for a commission. Each applicant who was qualified, but for whom there was no present vacancy in the Air Corps, was notified that in view of this fact his papers were being sent to the Procurement Division of AGO in the hope that some other branch might avail itself of his services. The papers of applicants who did not meet the requirements were sent to the AGO with a request that they be notified that their services could not be utilized. Applicants whose papers were held for future needs, and for whom there was a good chance for appointment, were notified that their applications remained under active consideration.⁸¹ This courteous procedure made the AAF many friends.

Differences in procurement procedure in the various services led to a decision late in 1942 to revise the system by making the Procurement Branch in the Office of The Adjutant General the operating agency of the Commanding General, Service of Supply, in all matters relating to personnel procurement for the AUS.⁸² This was known as the Officer Procurement

Service. It was authorized to deal directly with the commanding generals, including the Commanding General of the AAF.⁸³ To the AAF, however, the change was of little moment. It had already been announced, on 30 September 1942, that the need for commissioning civilians for administrative duties with the AAF no longer existed.⁸⁴ It was planned that such appointments would thereafter be made from among graduates of OCS.

The Army Specialist Corps

This development was a far cry from that which had led to the creation of the Army Specialist Corps. To follow the history of this organization, short-lived though it was, it is necessary to go back to 1939. In that year AR 140-39 made provision for the appointment of properly qualified personnel in a Specialist Reserve. In May 1939, however, appointments in this Reserve were suspended.

Soon after this the Air Corps expansion program, which called for practically doubling the strength of this branch of the service, was under way. The new personnel would have to come largely from properly qualified Reservists, but many of these men, among them some of those of the greatest potential value to the Air Corps, were excluded by reason of grade and age restrictions from appointment in the Air Corps Reserve. Therefore, General Arnold "recommended and urged" that The Adjutant General raise the suspension of appointments in the Specialist Reserve, at least to the extent that men especially recommended by the Chief of the Air Corps might be commissioned in a grade appropriate to the individual's qualifications.⁸⁵ Arnold at that time believed this to be the only way the Air Corps could secure a sufficient number of properly qualified Reserve officers to man the growing Air Corps. By indorsement, The Adjutant General replied that the suspension had been ordered because there was a surplus of specialists.

Three months later General Arnold decided to reopen the correspondence.

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He directed the Chief of the Reserve Division to prepare a letter containing a plea for a limited number of technicians for the Specialist Reserve. He took issue with the statement that there was a surplus of specialists as far as the Air Corps was concerned and directed that the letter be made strong and be coordinated with the Materiel and Plans Division.⁸⁶

No reply to this letter was received. Hence, on 6 June 1940 General Arnold sent a memorandum to the Chief of Staff explaining that he had urged the War Department to change the regulations so that the appointment of skilled civilian specialists in the Officers' Reserve Corps could be made to help carry the burden incident to Air Corps expansion. He went on to point out that the time had come, the emergency was sufficiently immediate and urgent, to demand changes in policies and regulations that would permit the commissioning in the Reserve Corps of civilians trained in fields such as engineering and business administration, with a view to calling them to extended active duty if and when deemed necessary. Arnold also observed that a man over 35 years of age, no matter how badly the Air Corps might need his services, could not be procured under current regulations.⁸⁷

There was no answer to this memorandum, but it brought about authorization for 50 officers to be commissioned in the Reserve of another branch of the Army to be detailed to the Air Corps for duty.

Again on 22 June 1940 General Arnold wrote to The Adjutant General urging that immediate steps be taken to reopen the Specialist Reserve to permit commissions to be granted to a large number of men who could not be appointed to the Air Corps Reserve because of the age limitation. He said that there were a number of World War I flyers, engineers, and industrialists, who were willing to accept commissions; these men could aid materially in

carrying the load placed on the Air Corps by vastly larger procurement problems and the stepped-up training program. Such action could be taken at once, Arnold argued, since the 1940 appropriation act did not contain the limitations of the previous year which had prevented Specialist Reserve officers in grade above that of second lieutenant from being called to active duty. He also pointed out that his recommendation was especially urgent in view of the critical shortage of Regular Army Air Corps officers.*⁸⁸

Persistence at last provoked action. The results however, were not what General Arnold had been seeking: he was authorized to recommend for appointment in the Specialist Reserve Corps 250 majors and 150 captains to be assigned to the Air Corps; and he was also authorized to recommend appointment of a limited number of Reserve officers for duty with the arms and services assignment group for supply procurement. In addition a register of aeronautical engineers and research specialists was set up in the Reserve Division, Office of the Chief of Air Corps. But, only persons who volunteered their services for the duration of the emergency were included in this register.⁸⁹ If this was not all that General Arnold wanted or that the Air Corps needed—and it certainly was not—at least it represented some progress. In view of the tremendous expansion of the Air Corps then under way and in prospect, it was imperative that its very small quotas of Specialist Reserve officers be filled with the best material that could be found. Even under the most favorable circumstances this would still not make up for the shortage of experienced Regular Army Officers called away to tasks incident to procurement and other phases of the ex-

* See above, pp. 20ff

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pansion program.⁹⁰

General Arnold returned to the subject on 27 November 1940 in a closely reasoned argument addressed to The Adjutant General. He again urged lifting the suspension of appointment in the Specialist Reserve for the Air Corps. He considered it extremely desirable to have in peace and in war a sufficient number of qualified aeronautical engineers and research specialists available as technical advisers in matters relating to development, research, procurement, and manufacture of necessary or desired equipment. These specialists would be men who had gained prominence and training through years of activity in their respective industries and professions; therefore, they would be found in the older age groups. Arnold pointed out that these men were prevented from associating themselves closely with the Army Air Corps by a provision in the National Defense Act of 3 June 1916, which limited original appointment in the Air Corps Reserve to the grade of second lieutenant. Taken together these facts made it necessary to appoint the desired personnel in the Specialist Reserve to a grade commensurate with each individual's age and experience. In conclusion, General Arnold made this observation:

For some time, information has been received that due to age restrictions, this type of personnel is being lost to the Army Air Corps due to their accepting Reserve Commissions in the Naval Service. A continuation of this practice will eventually mean that the majority of these highly trained technical experts will be associated with the Naval Reserve with the result that their interests will then naturally be along Naval aeronautical development lines rather than Army.⁹¹

Such arguments could neither be answered nor ignored; they finally made at least one convert. On 3 July 1941, Robert A. Lovett, Assistant Secretary of War, sent the Secretary a memorandum in which he recommended immediate steps be taken to set up an Air Specialist Section in the Officers'

Reserve Corps and to permit appointments to be made therein in such number as the Chief, AAF, might determine from time to time. He based this recommendation upon the conviction that the Air Corps was in immediate need of men of superior qualifications for technical and administrative positions. He agreed with General Arnold that the men should be selected upon the basis of character, experience, and achievement, and that they should be commissioned in a grade commensurate with the positions they were to fill. (This was to be without regard to their status as civilians or Reserve officers.) The type of individual wanted belonged in, and should be commissioned in, the Air Corps Specialist Reserve, Lovett stated, but there was no such branch of the Reserve Corps. He felt that this fact should not be permitted to interfere, however, since the President could create an Air Corps Specialist Reserve under the National Defense Act. Lovett recommended therefore, that the President take action at once and in such manner as to permit the needs of the service to be fully met.⁹²

This recommendation was not acted upon, and before long Public Law 252 authorized temporary appointment of officers in the AUS. This rendered the selection and procurement by the Air Corps of a considerable number of technical, scientific, and administrative officers even more important.⁹³ If action was not immediate the men most suited to Air Corps needs would be commissioned and called to active duty with the AUS. The arguments advanced by General Arnold were strong and cogent; but there were other arguments urged upon the Secretary of War.

A broader scope was sought for utilization of technical skills and on 23 January 1942 The Adjutant General announced that shortly an Executive order would establish an "Emergency Corps of Specialists."⁹⁴ The new corps was to be a vehicle by which the War Department and the Army in the field

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could take advantage of the knowledge of experts without having their utilization involve command functions. Thus, the members of the new organization would relieve many officers from administrative jobs and permit their assignment to the combat posts for which they had primarily been trained, and in which they could be most useful. The term of service in the corps was to be for the duration of the emergency and six months thereafter unless sooner terminated.

The preliminary announcement of the imminent organization of the Specialist Corps was favorably received by the Air Corps. It showed promise of bringing about everything that General Arnold had recommended. To be sure, General Arnold had argued that the changes should be made within the military, and the proposed Specialist Corps was to be a civilian organization, but it was results that Arnold was interested in and he welcomed the promise of things long hoped for.

In order to make an intelligent survey of activities with a view to determining the demands and uses to be made of the Specialist Corps, the Personnel Division recommended that the Chief of Air Corps draft a policy containing at least a general outline of such activities.⁹⁵ Before this recommendation could be acted upon, Executive Order No. 9078 of 26 February 1942 was published; this established the Army Specialist Corps.

The Corps was to consist of professional, scientific, technical, and administrative personnel in such numbers as might be determined by the Secretary of War. Its objectives were to be: (1) to bring into the war effort skilled persons who had the required qualifications to enable them to perform duties of military personnel who might thus be relieved for combat and command duties; (2) to supply all arms and services with individuals possessing desired professional skills; (3) to train persons whose background qualified them to receive technical training in scientific or

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professional fields in which military demands exceeded supply; and (4) to utilize the services of scientists within the District of Columbia as consultants.⁹⁶ With these basic objectives there could be no quarrel. When a survey was undertaken to determine how many members of the Specialist Corps could be used by the AAF, however, a great lukewarmness below the top echelon was discovered. In fact, few divisions or agencies could find any place for them. They had commissioned men with special skills but no military training and these could not be assigned to combat duty even if their places could be filled by members of the Specialist Corps. Headquarters, 2d Air Force, expressed the opinion that it wanted no Specialist Corps personnel until it was established that they were really specialists and not merely individuals with highly placed or numerous political friends. Even then they would be accepted only with the understanding that any Specialist Corps member found to be incompetent could be removed from an assignment without lengthy or complicated procedure.⁹⁷

While discouraging reports were still coming in from various parts of the AAF, The Adjutant General called for a review by the AAF of previous estimates of requirements with a view to extending them to cover the current calendar year. He was particularly interested to know the number of positions and the grades in which Army Specialist Corps personnel might be utilized.⁹⁸ In determining these matters General Arnold was given to understand that Corps personnel would be authorized to exercise supervisory and administrative control over military personnel serving under their immediate jurisdiction. Reports indicated, however, that Specialist Corps members would be welcome, under these circumstances, only in such positions as directors of theaters, post exchanges, and service clubs. They were not

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wanted even for such things as athletic or physical training positions.⁹⁹

Then on 2 May 1942 the Air Service Command reported an estimated need for 795 members of the Specialist Corps.¹⁰⁰

During this same month an attempt was made to secure information concerning the AAF's need for AUS officers coming direct from civilian life; since the procurement of these officers and Army Specialist Corps officers had to be coordinated, such information must be had before any reasonably accurate estimate could be made of the numbers of Specialist Corps personnel needed by the AAF.¹⁰¹ The study which resulted from this investigation recommended that: (1) Army Specialist Corps members be used in positions not calling for command functions or tactical staff decisions; (2) Army Specialist Corps personnel be used where highly specialized training was demanded but not where military training or indoctrination was required; (3) AUS specialist officers who were filling positions which could also be filled by Army Specialist Corps personnel, should be retained; and (4) the Division of Personnel should establish and publish a policy, including a list of positions that should be filled by members of the Army Specialist Corps and a list of positions that might be filled with the AAF coordinating as to the allotment of numbers required.¹⁰² Obviously, the report was not an enthusiastic endorsement of the Army Specialist Corps program.

In June Secretary Stimson published a general explanation of purpose as well as policy concerning the Corps¹⁰³ and this was followed by another AAF study. The latter concluded that the Specialist Corps might be of considerable value to the AAF if certain changes were made. Under existing regulations for example Corps members could not be placed in positions involving accountability for government property; this disqualified them for most of the positions in which they were needed by the AAF. Another difficulty was that Corps personnel were subject to call and induction by

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Selective Service. Furthermore, the Specialist Corps was maintaining strict physical requirements; this fact largely tended to defeat the purpose of the organization. So far as the AAF was concerned, at least, many men barred from the Air Corps on physical grounds, who would have been most welcome as members of the Specialist Corps, were also being excluded from the latter by its physical requirements. Until these difficulties were straightened out, the AAF could find but few and minor uses for Specialist Corps personnel.¹⁰⁴

This same study, however, suggested several possible solutions to the problem: (1) until changes were made in the draft status of Specialist Corps personnel, no procurement objective beyond that already temporarily in effect should be requested; (2) the Corps should be considered merely as an organization in which desirable individuals, physically disqualified for Selective Service, could be commissioned for specialized tasks and for replacement duty; and (3) a further study should be made by commands employing civilians to determine if there were any groups of considerable size which might be brought under the Specialist Corps. The last, of course, would be particularly desirable if the other suggested changes were made. But any additional procurement directives should be over, above, and apart from, the regular AAF officer authorization.¹⁰⁵

In a Headquarters Office Instruction dated 21 July 1942 it was pointed out that facilities were available at the AAF Officers' Training School in Miami Beach to give basic military training to Specialist Corps personnel.¹⁰⁶ The Personnel Division, acting on this suggestion, recommended that the Commanding General, Air Force Technical Training Command, provide facilities for giving Specialist Corps commissioned personnel the same course given men newly commissioned in the AUS at Miami Beach. Unfortunately, any Corps members sent to OTS would have to be in lieu of, not in addition to, the

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number of AUS officers that might be trained.

Up to the autumn of 1942, then, no Specialist Corps officer had been processed for duty with the AAF. The Corps inquired as to the reason for the indifference shown by the AAF; the reply was that, as matters stood, few men possessed of the skills and training needed in the AAF would care to be commissioned in the Specialist Corps as long as they could just as easily get into AUS. It was suggested that the most likely solution would be for the Specialist Corps to seek a membership of desirable specialists who could not meet the physical requirements of the AUS. Men physically ineligible not only for the Air Corps but for Selective Service could choose the Specialist Corps as a means of getting into active service in the war; the organization would be respected, and its members would be acceptable throughout the armed services.¹⁰⁷ This question of morale had not been raised previously in AAF discussions.

Meanwhile, to add to the concern of the Specialist Corps the number of commissions in the AUS mounted steadily. At the same time, OCS was meeting with such favor that it was generally felt that all future requirements for administrative officers would be met from this source.¹⁰⁸ The Specialist Corps, almost as a retaliative measure, began a procurement campaign, and at once complaints began to be heard from various parts of the AAF. One Technical Training Command headquarters reported that it was increasingly difficult to retain civilian instructors for its schools; efforts were being made to replace Army instructors with civilians, but little headway could be made. Earlier the Navy had done some recruiting among these schools but an agreement had been reached which put a stop to the practice. Now it was the Specialist Corps that was proselytizing.¹⁰⁹

The Army Specialist Corps in its short life-span had made few friends and in the AAF it had alienated those who had felt kindly toward it in the

earlier days. Much, if not most, of what General Arnold had contemplated for the Specialist Reserve was beyond the range of the Specialist Corps and gradually fell upon the AUS. Therefore, when the Corps was dissolved on 4 November 1942, there were few who mourned its passing. The AAF had sought an organization to serve, within the military framework, certain clearly defined needs. When the Corps was activated, every effort was made to help it attain the objectives for which it was created. Its weaknesses--as they appeared to the AAF--were pointed out, and remedies were suggested. But, when it became apparent that the nature of the organization which prevented it from meeting AAF needs, was not to be changed, other means of serving the same purpose were sought.

Procurement Limited to Former Members of Army Specialist Corps and to
Graduates of OCS

The dissolution of the Army Specialist Corps did affect the AAF in one respect. The Air Corps officer procurement system had become so effective in keeping officer strength near the demand level that the prospective influx of former Specialist Corps members made it necessary to change the system in order to prevent the commissioning of more men than could be placed. In announcing the change, Secretary Stimson said that members of the Army Specialist Corps, eligible and desiring to enter the AUS, together with the graduates of OCS, were sufficient to meet substantially every requirement for officers. Therefore, previous rules and policies governing appointment from civil life were rescinded.¹¹⁰ Henceforth the criterion for such appointment (and procurement) were to be as follows: (1) no person would be given a commission unless fitted for the particular position by training and experience beyond that normally provided at OCS; (2) no one without previous commissioned experience under 35 years of age would be appointed unless classified 4-F by Selective Service;

and (3) no one between 34 and 35 years of age without prior commissioned service would be appointed from civil life if classified by Selective Service as 1-A or 2. Exceptions to these rules were to be made "in cases where there is critical need for the services of a particular individual, or where the individual is within a scarce category of specialized skill in which not enough trained men to fill the requirements of the armed forces are available at the time required."¹¹¹ The Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, was to determine the categories and submit the recommendations to the Secretary of War for his approval.

Stimson's statement of policy left something to be desired and the AAF sought clarification. An interpretation of "age 35" was especially requested since an Executive Order had previously mentioned induction below the "age of 38" and the fact that scarce categories permitted commissioning up to 38. The Army Air Forces wished sufficient latitude for individuals with special qualifications to meet the requirements.¹¹²

The answers to the AAF's request for clarification were not wholly satisfactory. Future requirements, as far as possible, were to be filled by the proper classification, training, and utilization of officers available and by graduates of OCS. To meet the occasional need for the services of a particular individual who possessed outstanding ability and experience in special fields, the Commanding General, AAF, might submit recommendations to the Secretary of War's Personnel Board. Any such request for appointment was to be accompanied by full details concerning the special qualifications of the individual, the necessity for his services, and the specific position or duty to which he was to be assigned. With this data at hand, if the Board thought the appointment was justified, it could authorize approval as an exception to the general rule.¹¹³ This authority was not to be used to procure appointment of civilians for routine administrative duties which

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could satisfactorily be handled by officers trained at OCS or service schools.

There was general agreement in military circles that the officer procurement policy should be highly adaptable and in March 1943 the Secretary of War's Personnel Board set up a new program for commissioning certain civilian employees. The object was to preserve for the AAF the services of individuals who had been connected with the Materiel Command. Most of these men had been in this employment for more than a year and it was feared that they might be drafted or take commissions in the Navy. Therefore, it was agreed that these men came within the scarce category class and that they would not have to obtain either reclassification or release from current classification by Selective Service.¹¹⁴ This was a special case, and was not to be regarded in any quarter as a means of escape from Selective Service.

By the middle of 1943 the Army was approaching its maximum planned strength in both commissioned and enlisted personnel; officer shortage, except in a few critical categories, had been largely overcome. Therefore the War Department announced there would be a further material reduction in the number of officers procured from civilian sources. It recognized that for a few professional and very scarce categories procurement could be from no other source, but it was convinced that within the Army, at it was then constituted, it should be possible to find qualified persons for practically all requirements. In line with this conviction Stimson directed his Personnel Board to examine all recommendations for civilian appointments and to withhold approval in every case where it was not apparent that the individual possessed the desired qualities to a degree that could not be approached among officers already in the Army.

The General Staff was to undertake to establish more effective classification and assignment methods in an effort to fill all requirements from Army personnel, and the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, was to take steps to reduce the number of special categories. Finally, commanding generals were to refrain from recommending appointment of civilians except in cases where no other solution was possible.¹¹⁵ This was merely the logical development of practices begun as far back as May 1943 when the Officer Procurement Service began to explore the possibility of finding warrant officers and enlisted men qualified to fill all requests for commissions in the scarce categories.¹¹⁶

The War Department was not able to stop entirely the practice of commissioning direct from civil life. In May 1943 the AAF received approval from the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, for a procurement objective to cover the appointment of 55 maintenance supply technicians as supply officers for duty with the Air Service Command.¹¹⁷ But then, in October the Commanding General, Third Air Force, was directed to accept no more applications from civilians except for appointment as service pilots.¹¹⁸ Reduction in the troop basis and the changing situation combined to produce a surplus of commissioned officers in all but a few scarce categories.

The problem of officer procurement would not remain long in the same status, however. Early in March 1944 the AAF was allotted a procurement objective for the appointment of not more than 3,000 second lieutenants qualified for, or holding, aeronautical ratings subject to the following restrictions: (1) appointments were available only to flight personnel who were not graduates of the aviation cadet training course, enlisted men, or Air Corps Enlisted Reserves due for early call to active duty; (2) eligibles had to have 1,000 hours of flying time; (3) an Air Corps Enlisted

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Reserve member must have, in addition to the flying time, at least six months' experience as an instructor in the CAA or with an AAF civilian contractor, and must have completed the prescribed course of training of 60 days at an AAF instructors' school; and (4) each person recommended for appointment under this authorization was to hold a valid army aeronautical rating or be eligible for such a rating.¹¹⁹ The AAF protested that these requirements were too high and too rigid.

Conclusion

Before the end of 1944, however, the problem of officer procurement had ceased to be a problem. With the end of the war in Europe certain, if not actually in sight, the prospect of a protracted struggle in the Pacific aroused no qualms in the AAF as to its officer personnel. Indeed, as early as December 1943 The Adjutant General wrote:

There are currently a considerable number of officers within the Army for whom no suitable assignments are available or in prospect. This situation is occasioned in part by the completion of duties for which such officers were called to active duty or appointed from civil life; reduction in overhead or changes as a result of reorganization which eliminated the officer's specific assignment; and other similar reasons resulting in officers being rendered surplus through no fault of their own.¹²⁰

A few months later it was pointed out that "as the emphasis of the Army Air Forces program shifts more and more to combat deployment, the organization and training phase of our original mission will diminish, thus reducing the number of suitable assignments available either for officers of generalized experience or certain types of specialists."¹²¹ It was estimated in May 1944 that as of 31 December 1944 the AAF would have surpluses totaling 34,000 in various officer categories and shortages of 12,000 in others. It was planned to make up the shortages by transferring 3,000 officers from the Army Service Forces and retraining 9,000 of the

34,000, leaving a net surplus at the end of 1944 of 25,000.* ¹²²

As of 30 June 1945 the AAF had some 155,000 pilots; after V-J Day the plans for the "Interim Air Force" called for only 30,000. In addition, there were to be 56,000 officer positions other than aircrew specialties, of which perhaps a third might be filled by pilots. Thus the Interim Air Force could absorb approximately 50,000 pilots—one-third of the June 1945 pilot strength—leaving about 100,000, or two-thirds, to be discharged. ¹²³

A month later—31 July 1945—the number of rated AAF officers in excess of all known requirements totaled 109,800: 82,700 pilots, 10,000 bombardiers, 13,000 navigators, 2,100 flight engineers, and 2,000 radar observers. ¹²⁴ Thus the AAF officer problem in 1945 was not a matter of procurement but one of selecting and keeping in the service the best men it could find for the relatively few officer positions allotted to the Interim Air Force.

It must be admitted that the AAF officer procurement program succeeded beyond reasonable expectations. Beset with difficulties, hampered often by conflicts between War Department policy and what seemed the best interests of the air arm, the AAF built up its officer strength from 2,636 in July 1939 to 388,295 in the peak month of May 1945. The year-by-year growth is interesting: by the end of 1939 the AAF had 3,006 officers; a year later this figure was more than doubled—6,437; in 1941 the latter figure was almost quadrupled—24,521; and the following year brought the total to more than five times the 1941 top—127,267. Such a geometric progression could not, of course, be long continued. In 1943, although almost 150,000 officers were added to the AAF, the total at the end of the year—274,347—

* There was some feeling, however, that this estimate was in error, that 30,000 to 35,000 would be a more realistic figure.

was little more than twice the previous year's total. An increment of more than 100,000 in 1944 brought the total at the end of that year to 375,975 and the figure rose until May 1945 when it began to decline as separations outnumbered new commissions.¹²⁵

No one will assert that this procurement program resulted in putting the right man in every officer position in the AAF. There were misfits--men ill-chosen or mal-assigned--among AAF officers as there are among the personnel of every large organization. But the outstanding performance of the Army Air Forces in World War II testifies that AAF procurement was remarkably successful in its search for quality as well as quantity in officers.

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Chapter II

THE TRAINING OF AAF OFFICERS

This chapter does not purport to deal with the numerous types of specialized training conducted by the AAF in many schools and camps scattered all over the country;¹ rather, it is concerned with the Officer Candidate School, established to train administrative officers, and the Officer Training School, designed to provide military indoctrination for men who had been commissioned directly from civilian life.

Officer Candidate School

Traditionally, the United States has fought its wars with a citizen army despite the one great difficulty inherent in its use: an inadequate supply of efficient, competent officers in times of emergency. To train men for commissioned duty in World War I, camps were established which turned out a product at least to some degree satisfactory to the War Department. Therefore, it was not unnatural for the military authorities to turn to the same or a similar device when the next crisis arose; on 26 April 1941 Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson authorized the establishment of Officer Candidate Schools.

The directive was specific. It designated the branches of service permitted to establish schools, the location, the number of candidates to be admitted, and the date of opening for each organization. The Air Corps did not appear upon the list.² It was permitted to send a few candidates to schools primarily designed to cater to the needs of other arms and services

but this arrangement soon proved totally inadequate. There was a critical shortage of maintenance, engineer, and supply officers and General Arnold asked the Chief of Staff, Gen. George C. Marshall, if the establishment of an Air Corps officer candidate school might not be the solution of the problem. He went on to suggest that, if the idea met with approval, the first school be opened with an enrollment of 60 at Duncan Field, the San Antonio Air Depot. The course could get under way about 1 January 1942, and subsequent classes could enter training every three months until 400 men had been graduated. Instruction could be started immediately, Arnold said, since the San Antonio Air Depot had facilities for classrooms and housing and competent officer instructors were available at the moment. The whole project could be launched merely by changing the authorization of 26 April 1941 to make it include the Air Corps.³

No one demurred; within a fortnight the Maintenance Command had a program drafted.* The proposal, incorporated in a memorandum to The Adjutant General and prepared for the signature of the Deputy Chief of Air Staff, contained few, if any, ideas not previously considered. It was specified that (1) the school be established at the San Antonio Air Depot; (2) each class should enroll 60 students until 400 had been graduated; (3) enrollment should be limited to warrant officers and enlisted men under 29 years of age who had served at least five months in the army by the time they entered training; (4) the first class should start on or about 1 January 1942, and those who successfully completed the course were to be commissioned second lieutenants in the Army of the United States or in the Officers Re-

* In the process of working out a detailed plan the Command secured the collaboration of the G-1 and G-3 sections of the General Staff. (R&R, G/AC to C/AS, 12 Aug. 1941.)

serve Corps, all assigned to the Maintenance Command; and (5) unsuccessful candidates would be returned to the units from which they had come.⁴ Thus, if put into operation, the plan would serve only one branch of the Air Corps.

Before the hastily drafted plan had gone far on its way through channels, the Maintenance Command discovered that its suggested 29 year age limit was contrary to AR 140-1, paragraph 13c, which established a 35 year age limit. The command hurriedly suggested the correction which was approved by Chief of the Air Staff. But this was only the beginning of alterations and modifications. The Air Force Combat Command objected to limiting graduates to 400. It needed supply and engineer officers and demanded equal priority with the Maintenance Command until its requirements were met. Training and Operations agreed that the limit was too low, pointing out that under the 54 group program, requirements of the Combat Command would be 422 engineer and 438 supply officers. Under the contemplated, though not yet approved, 84 group program requirements soared to 784 engineer and 788 supply officers.⁵ The original memo was rewritten by the Materiel Division so as to include the recommendations of the Combat Command and the change previously suggested by the Chief of the Maintenance Command: the age limit was raised from 29 to 35, and provision was made for a maximum of 800 instead of 400 graduates. The Materiel Division explained that the limit was written in because The Adjutant General would insist upon a definite figure which could be changed later if an increase proved to be desirable.⁶ The revised version of the memo appeared to be generally satisfactory, but its trip through channels was a slow one.

The proposal was in the office of the Air Adjutant General on 11 January 1942. On that date Lt. Col. John B. Cooley, Assistant Air Adjutant General, wrote a memo showing that approximately 12,000 ground officers (for service

as transportation officers, mess officers, and adjutants) over and above those then on duty would be required during the year.* He called attention to the idea that many officers might be obtained by commissioning men direct from civil life; but such officers, he cautioned, would generally be older men unsuited for junior duty in squadrons. Therefore, Colonel Cooley believed that officer candidate schools should be established without delay and that they should graduate officers at the rate of 8,000 per year. Four schools, he felt, should be established to train (1) adjutants, (2) mess officers, (3) transportation officers, and (4) supply officers, each giving courses of three months' duration. Finally, Cooley thought that the first candidates should be individuals who had failed satisfactorily to pass flying courses.⁷

The Training Division, studying the problem in relation to available equipment and facilities, concluded that training 8,000 candidates per year was an undertaking of such magnitude that it should not be undertaken as the responsibility of either the Technical Training Command or the Flying Training Command since both were burdened with the expansion of functions already assigned them. The Training Division recommended that the initiation, organization, and operation of the schools be handled by a project officer or an officer under the Flying Training Command. It agreed with Colonel Cooley's suggestion that the enrollees be men who had been eliminated from the Aviation Cadet course, because this would mean that each man would have the desired scholastic background. Since the object of the program was the production of administrative officers rather than combat pilots, no additional

* This figure did not include such ground specialists as engineer, communications, and armament officers.

qualifications need be required. This Division also concurred in the opinion that the course should consist of three months' instruction with new classes entering every month so that the students could gain experience and training in handling the incoming groups. Since there could be no assurance that each officer would be assigned to the kind of work for which he had been especially trained a regular administrative course was preferred rather than a separate course for each of the four kinds of administrative work. If the first four weeks were used for drill and military law and customs, the last eight weeks could be devoted to a short course in each of the four kinds of administrative duty. Ten classes of 800 men each could be graduated during the first year and 11 classes in the second. The Division pointed out, however, that time would be required to reach the maximum operating strength--estimated at 2,400, including students, instructors, and supervisory personnel. It was recommended that the latter two categories be taken from each technical command in approximately equal numbers.⁸ The general outlines of what was needed had finally emerged.

General Yount, Commanding General, Air Corps Flying Training Command, was directed to initiate the Air Corps Officer Candidate School, a task which he delegated to a training center commander. The Commanding General, Gulf Coast Air Corps Training Center at Randolph Field, was asked to determine whether his facilities were adequate and could be made immediately available for a school capable of graduating 8,000 men per year who would be qualified for administrative duties as non-flying Air Corps officers. If feasible, it was desired to initiate the entire project into operation at one institution, and since construction costs were to be kept at the minimum, General Yount mentioned existing educational plants such as Texas A & M, the University of

Texas, Oklahoma A & M, and the University of Missouri as possible locations for the new school.⁹

General Yount, therefore, recommended to General Arnold in February 1942 that the directive to establish four schools be reconsidered and that authority be issued to set up one school at which the desired subjects would be included in a single schedule of instruction.¹⁰ His recommendation was based upon two arguments: (1) there was no assurance that an officer, after graduation, could always be used in the field of his specialty, but if he were well grounded in administrative work generally, he would be of great value to the service; (2) it was believed that three months would be more than enough time for training an individual in any one of the subjects desired. These recommendations were concurred in by indorsement, Lt. Col. L. S. Smith signing for the Chief of the Air Corps and Lieutenant Colonel Whitney for General Arnold.¹¹

Because of the shortage of AF officers qualified to perform non-flying duties (12,000 such officers would be needed in the calendar year 1942) no time could be lost in getting the program under way.¹² Final impetus was given at a conference participated in by Maj. Gen. W. R. Weaver, Maj. Gen. M. F. Harmon, and Col. F. Trubee Davison on 17 February 1942. There it was decided that since speed was paramount in activating the school the Air Corps should not avail itself of the facilities of existing educational institutions as had been earlier suggested. The conferences felt that quicker and better results would be obtained if all efforts were centered initially upon the establishment and early opening of one central institution for training officer candidates. After considering the advantages and disadvantages of available locations, they suggested initiating the work in the Miami Beach area, which had already been cleared for use by the air forces. As a result

of the conference General Weaver was requested to order 25 officers to Miami Beach by 21 February 1942.¹³ General Weaver also agreed to have an engineer available immediately to handle the leasing of the property that would be involved.

As planned, the Officer Candidate School got off to an auspicious start on 23 February 1942. On that day Secretary of War Stimson directed that a letter be sent to the Chief of the Army Air Forces, The Chief of the Air Corps, and the Commanding General of the Air Corps Technical Training Command stating (1) that, effective that day, the Air Corps Officer Candidate School was established at Miami Beach, and (2) that the school was given an exempted status and placed under the control of the Chief of the AAF and under the supervision and jurisdiction of the Commanding General of the Air Corps Technical Training Command.¹⁴ On the same day Col. J. S. Stowell, Commandant of the school, sent a telegram to General Arnold saying that 378 officer candidates had started training at 0730 and that approximately 64 additional men were scheduled to arrive during the day.¹⁵

There was some criticism from the public regarding the establishment of the school at Miami Beach, and although it never became voluminous or too vehement, it was pointed enough to sting Air Corps Headquarters. "Good reasons" were requested for placing earnest young soldiers in the midst of a "gay beach life" dominated by wine, women, and racing, as well as for leasing expensive resort property to house an army camp.¹⁶ The answer to the first point was that vice would be rooted out and conditions would be generally improved by the mere presence of thousands of fine, young American boys. As to the second, it was said that the authorities charged with establishing the school believed its location at Miami Beach would be helpful to the

economic welfare of that community and of the nation as a whole, since it would utilize facilities which, if not occupied by the armed forces, would be idle for the duration of the war. Moreover, and perhaps more to the point, new construction could not have been erected in time to permit the successful carrying out of the program.¹⁷

The AAF had every right to be proud of its success in establishing the OCS with so little basis for criticism. Organizing it had taken a matter of days, not weeks or months: the final decision to set up the school at Miami Beach was made on a Friday; by the following Sunday personnel were on their way; and on Tuesday morning classes were started. In less than three months, on 11 May 1942, the first class was graduated.¹⁸

Selection of men for OCS never attained the level of a scientific procedure. The first class was assembled upon orders of the Commanding General, Technical Training Command, to stations under his jurisdiction. There was no selective process; men were taken because they were immediately available; little or no screening procedure was involved.¹⁹ Later selection involved a fairly regularized procedure: (1) an enlisted man applied to his commanding officer for permission to try for OCS; (2) if the man was considered to be qualified (and if his commanding officer was willing to release him), he was ordered to appear before a board of officers; (3) if the board decided that the individual possessed the proper qualifications and was ready for OCS, it recommended approval of his application; and (4) the candidate was then ordered to report to Miami Beach upon a specified date to begin training. However, a man might also be sent to Miami Beach upon the initiative of his commanding officer or any higher commander, thus providing an opportunity for personal and political friendships to be used when a man was dubious about

meeting the minimum qualification standards.

As soon as the success of the AAF OCS was assured, action was initiated to stop the assignment of Air Corps personnel to Officer Candidate Schools conducted by the Field Artillery, Infantry, and Cavalry. The instruction at these particular schools was of comparatively little value to Air Corps officers, but schools conducted by the other arms and services were of considerable value, and quotas for them were continued.²⁰

Early in the summer of 1942 there was an increasing demand for more officers to be immediately available. Late in May, therefore, The Adjutant General informed General Arnold that he was to increase the "capacity" of the OCS at Miami Beach from 4,500 to 5,000 by 30 September 1942.²¹ There was some doubt as to the exact meaning of "capacity" but the Director of Individual Training interpreted it to refer to the number of students graduated by the end of September rather than the number of students in training at any one time.²²

Rapid expansion in any case proved harmful; deterioration in quality was quickly apparent. Early in July General Wooten, Commanding Officer of the AAF Technical Training Command (Miami area), wrote to the Commanding General, AAF TTC (Knollwood Field), his observations on the first three classes. The average of those entering the third class he believed to be far below that of the first and second classes. In the opinion of the faculty, Wooten related, most of the men who had been eliminated were not basically qualified even to pursue the course, much less to be officers. Gravely concerned over the long range prospects of the school, he urged a more careful selection of candidates as a means of reducing the number of eliminations, and, consequently, the cost of the school in time, money, and energy.²³ When this report reached General

Arnold, he requested immediate data on the organizations whose recommended candidates failed to measure up to expectations. The whole affair, he thought, reflected seriously upon the commanding officers of all arms and services who furnished men of inferior quality.²⁴

In view of the failure of the AAF OCS to meet expectations, it was decided to reduce the size of the classes effective 4 March 1943. But already a vested interest had developed: aspirants totaling approximately 3,000 were being processed. Drastic reduction of that number would throw into idleness an efficient organization for the indoctrination processing of potential leaders. If the school was turning out more administrative officers than were needed, the situation could be remedied without interfering with the efficient machinery that had to be kept in operation if its usefulness was to be preserved. The non-destructive solution was to send to Miami Beach enough aviation cadets from those awaiting a call to training to insure full utilization of OCS facilities, and thus give the cadets a period of AAF indoctrination before beginning their pilot training. This practice would also tend to allay criticism of the practice of holding cadets on waiting lists until pilot training facilities were available and would also make for better understanding between administrative and flying officers.²⁵ The Director of Tactical Inspection sent Maj. Richard E. Elwell to find out just what was going on at Miami Beach. The major, favorably impressed, reported that the course was adequately designed to fit Air Force needs, particularly for well-trained administrative officers, and that it was fulfilling its task admirably. The percentage of failures was surprisingly low--only 3.6 per cent for the first seven complete classes. In Elwell's opinion this was not an indication of low standards but rather of an efficient staff

working with exceptional students²⁶ and he was convinced that the school should be continued at maximum capacity. Despite this note of unqualified approval, however, there continued to be something less than universal satisfaction, a fact which was made patent by numerous severe denunciations of small irregularities.²⁷

At this time the Chief of Staff, General Marshall, was considering the general question of officer training. The fact that the various arms and services maintained their own Officer Candidate Schools created problems of administration and instruction and it was decided, in the summer of 1943, to solve at least some of these problems by standardizing the curricula. The AAF objected, arguing that in order to turn out a well equipped AAF administrative officer it was necessary to include in his curriculum certain subjects peculiar to the air arm, which would not be wanted in the curricula of other schools. For example, in addition to Army regulations covering administrative matters, there was an AAF regulation, a thorough knowledge of which was essential to an air officer if he was to perform his duties acceptably. Classification was cited as another field in which AAF practices differed from those of the ground and service forces.²⁸ The General Staff apparently was not impressed by the AAF argument for on 9 August 1943 it sent out additional information on the proposed changes. The following day the Assistant Chief of Staff for Training reported that General Arnold did not approve the suggested modification in either training or organization. Despite Arnold's criticism the course as established was considered satisfactory in academic training requirements; the qualification in which OCS graduates were most likely to be deficient was leadership, and that could best be developed by on-the-job training.²⁹

The case was by no means closed, however. On 29 November 1943 the Acting Chief of Staff announced a tentatively approved plan for the re-organization of the Officer Candidate School program. This plan would (1) institute a six-months' training cycle; (2) establish a Branch Immaterial OCS to which all candidates would be sent for instruction in subjects common to all arms and services; and (3) require, upon completion of this three months' basic training, three months' additional instruction at the school of the arm or service for which the candidate was selected.³⁰ Again the AAF balked. On 17 December 1943 Maj. Gen. E. M. Giles, in a memorandum to General Marshall, argued against the whole plan. The Army Air Forces could not concur, he stated, because (1) it believed that the plan already in operation met its needs admirably, since a majority of the courses provided instruction peculiar to the AAF; (2) it was believed that the essential instruction which it was proposed to give in the Branch Immaterial school was being covered in the first month of the AAF OCS at Miami Beach; and (3) the AAF OCS was geared to the production of approximately 675 officers per month, the minimum figure required to meet AAF needs and a change to the proposed system would mean that for a period of six months the AAF would receive no officers from OCS. General Giles reiterated the conviction of the AAF that its officer training program was adequate and could best be carried out by leaving its organization unchanged. He therefore recommended that the AAF be exempt from participation in the proposed reorganization.³¹ The arguments were sound, and proved effective for the AAF continued to operate its OCS as before.

In the fall of 1943 the capacity of other Officer Candidate Schools was reduced as planned, a reduction made possible by the fact that the Army was all but meeting its officer requirements from other sources. This

favorable situation prompted The Adjutant General to attempt to impress upon all selecting agencies the fact that quality rather than quantity of officer material was now the great need.³² The AAF was duly impressed and made an investigation to determine whether improvements might be made in its ranks. The conditions revealed were surprising and disappointing to the AAF high commands: candidates had been sent to Miami Beach who fell short of every required standard. Some were deficient in leadership ability, some had little education, some were physically unfit, and many had had little or no basic training. In Class 44-A, which entered training on 20 September 1943, at least 396 had had only six weeks or less of basic training and two to three per cent of all applicants ordered to OCS had been discharged for physical disability.³³ In view of these facts, General Giles ordered all commanders to whom OCS quotas were allotted to have their OCS examining boards familiarize themselves thoroughly with the curriculum, so that they would know what was expected of applicants when and if they became officer candidates.³⁴

The chief purpose for which OCS had been established, however, had already been attained. The demand for officers had diminished to such an extent that it could now be met largely from other sources; administrative problems were growing more complicated and more difficult with decreasing enrollment. Consequently, late in March 1944, it was ordered that the school be moved from Miami Beach to San Antonio, there to operate upon an ever-narrowing basis until it no longer served an essential purpose.³⁵

Officer Training School

The problem of military training for officers commissioned direct from civil life was not as urgent in the Army Air Forces as it was in some other arms and services. It was handled by on-the-job training at first

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but, as the number of men entering in commissioned grade increased, the problem began to be associated with Officer Candidate Schools. Such training was spoken of, however, as a refresher course for officers newly called to active duty, implying that most of the men involved had had some prior military experience. Early consideration of the problem revolved around the idea of providing officer training as a course at the OCS. In the meantime, what was known as a pool of administrative officers developed at Lowry Field, Denver, Colorado, where officers, assembled fresh from civil life to await assignment, received such on-the-job training as could readily be given. At a conference on 17 February 1942, Generals Weaver and Harmon and Colonel Davison decided to use the pool in a more or less formal way for the purpose of indoctrinating 500 newly commissioned officers, so that they might enter more efficiently upon their duties when assigned.³⁶

The arrangement did not prove completely satisfactory. The officers were sent to the Lowry Field technical school which was prepared neither to offer them the type of course they needed nor to accommodate them in addition to the influx of regular technical personnel. Therefore, on 6 April 1942 Col. L. S. Smith, Director of Individual Training, informed the Commanding General, AAF Technical Training Command, Knollwood Field, that a need had arisen to provide newly commissioned officer personnel with a course of basic instruction. The scope of the course was to be large, albeit general, and was to extend over a period of six weeks. The size of the classes could not be determined in advance, since men of this category were being called and processed to meet immediate requirements before quantity output was accomplished by the recently opened OCS. Facilities for academic instruction and drill grounds adequate to accommodate classes of 400 were to be provided. The first class was to begin receiving instruction on

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18 April 1942, and a new class was to report every two weeks thereafter.³⁷

Unpromising complications appeared before the program got under way. Many of the first group came on telegraphic orders from The Adjutant General and some had neither taken the oath of office nor received letters of appointment. Since finance rules prohibited the payment of salary or traveling expenses to an officer until he had taken the oath of office, these men could not be reimbursed for their travel, and until the oath was administered at Miami Beach they were not paid. The camp adjutant asked Colonel Bevans, Director of Personnel, AAF to straighten the matter out as soon as possible, since the unfavorable impression caused by the appointees' having to pay travel expense themselves would have an unwholesome effect on morale as long as the situation prevailed.³⁸

Problems seemed inherent in the training setup at Miami Beach. Morale sank to a low ebb in the OTS and even spread to the OGS. The young instructors charged with the training of the newly commissioned officers were resentful; they felt that they were being discriminated against in view of the fact that many of their "pupils" with far less military experience held a much higher rank. Likewise, many of the officer candidates who were working to gain commissions as second lieutenants were unavoidably, and unfortunately, thrown in contact with men who had been given commissions as high as field grade without having, in some cases, even a rudimentary knowledge of basic military training. The presence of such officers among the enlisted candidates, none of whom had less than six months service and many of whom had much more,³⁹ was demoralizing.

Limited service officers sent to Miami Beach for indoctrination complicated the situation still further. With the course including drill and strenuous physical exercise, these officers could not take the training with-

out undue hardship and, in some cases, danger to life or health. Their presence constituted a second special group and resulted in another unfavorable morale factor.⁴⁰

With all these things in mind, the Director of Personnel, AAF, asked for immediate remedial action. He suggested, first, that the school be moved to another geographical location, or, if this course seemed impracticable, that OTS be abandoned in favor of assigning newly commissioned officers to permanent duty commands for on-the-job training. In any event he would have no limited service officers sent to Miami Beach. Such men were appointed only for non-military work and their procurement should be so handled that they would be immediately capable, with a minimum of one-the-job training, of taking over the positions for which they were chosen.⁴¹

This frank appraisal produced a considerable emotional outburst. There were some staunch defenders of things as they were. The Directorate of Individual Training pointed out that the school could not be abandoned, since it was initiated as a result of a directive from A-1 and the directive had not been revoked. Moreover, the personnel concerned needed a basic course of military instruction. The proposal to change the location of the school was considered definitely impracticable because of (1) lack of information as to how long the school was to be continued; (2) uncertainty regarding the number of officers to be processed; (3) lack of supervisory personnel to undertake instruction at any other location; and (4) the necessity for locating the school at a place where adequate housing could be obtained without a huge and costly construction program. In view of these factors, the Directorate recommended the desirability of continuing the course and urged that it be retained at Miami Beach, since "it is absolutely

impossible to furnish supervision and necessary instructors to continue it at any other place.⁴²

Indecision prevailed, however. The Assistant Chief of Air Staff for Personnel learned informally that a representative of The Air Inspector had recently inspected the AAF OCS. Since the OTS was located in the same place, the Office of The Air Inspector was asked for its opinion as to the advisability of continuing the school. The reply was that there were some very good arguments against permitting the course to continue at Miami Beach but that on the whole it seemed less objectionable to let it remain there than to move it to a new location.⁴³ The Assistant Chief of Air Staff grasped at this rather negative straw and informed the Directorate of Personnel that the school would remain at Miami.⁴⁴ The issue was merely postponed, however, not settled.

There can be little wonder that OTS was constantly in difficulty. It was from the very first something of an orphan. In July 1942, three months after OTS had opened, Lt. Kenneth D. King, Acting Assistant Air Adjutant General, wrote the Commanding General, AAF Technical Training Command at Knollwood Field, that he could find no authority for the activation of OTS and requested a copy of it from him.⁴⁵ No one was able to produce the document. The Military Personnel Division had no record of the authorization or initiation of OTS at Miami Beach; the Directorate of Individual Training said that it was their understanding that OTS was never intended to be established as a separate school, but rather as a part of OCS. Consequently Military Personnel recommended that no additional headquarters be established in view of the fact that the number of applicants processed would be reduced to practically nothing in the course of a few months.⁴⁶ Little broad,

genuine interest was manifested anywhere in OTS or its welfare.

The riddle of documentary authorization was finally solved. It was the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, A-1, who turned up the missing information: the "officer training course," sometimes referred to as "officer training school," was established pursuant to a directive dated 6 April 1942 from the Director of Individual Training to the Commanding General, Air Corps Technical Training Command, subject: initiation of an officers' training course to be conducted in conjunction with the activities of the OCS at Miami Beach.

With authorization for OTS thus established, for the moment no one raised the question of its value or suggested its abolition. Col. E. S. Wetzel, for Military Personnel, planned to suggest to the Chief of Air Staff that each Air Corps command and AAF activity be directed to order its quota of officers to each class. These men were to be selected from those commissioned direct from civil life as well as Reserve officers whose efficiency and value to the service might thus be increased. Unassigned officers assigned to the school were to be classified at the school and assigned to other duty if and when they could be replaced with graduates of OCS.⁴⁷

The plan was challenged before it got out of headquarters: sending officers to OTS on unassigned status was declared to be illegal.⁴⁸ Only officers initially appointed in the Army of the United States who, upon completion of OTS, would have had less than one year of service in the Army could be sent on unassigned status. All others must, under existing regulations, be sent on temporary duty and return after graduation to the station from which originally ordered.

Feeling persisted in high places that OTS should be discontinued, but in October 1942 it was decided to maintain operations for several specific

purposes: (1) to give a refresher and indoctrination course for officers on duty who had need of, or would profit by, such training; (2) to serve as a means by which officers considered unsuitable could be recommended to The Adjutant General for release under the provisions of AR 605-10; * and (3) to provide indoctrination for men being currently commissioned direct from civil life each month, including newly appointed flight surgeons. This was little more than a restatement of the original arguments advanced in justification of the program, but a check made during the following February revealed that these purposes were far from being adequately pursued. Nevertheless the Director of Personnel cautioned against a final determination to eliminate the school without giving due consideration to all phases of the problem. He pointed out specifically that AR 605-10, as amended 30 December 1942, should be studied most carefully. It required all officers commissioned direct from civil life without previous military training to attend a prescribed course of indoctrination. Service pilots, he noted, were being commissioned without being sent to OTS and, if the subject were agitated, there might be embarrassing requests for an explanation. He suggested that some provision be made within the commands and the air forces, or possibly at the Replacement Pool for officers at Lowry Field, to provide the required training before discontinuing OTS. So far as the Director of Personnel was concerned it was not known whether commitments had been made by Headquarters AAF to any command or air force to furnish training in the future to officers on duty. His lack of information on the subject, however, was by no means proof that some definite commitment on a flow chart basis did not exist, through which a command or air force was sending commissioned personnel to OTS. The possibility of such commitments as well as the entire question

* This was previous to the amendment of that regulation on 30 December 1942.

of continuing to afford indoctrination to officers in the Army of the United States, he felt should be thoroughly canvassed before final decisions were made.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, the school remained under almost continuous attack. An examination of the arguments advanced against it convinced Colonel Davison, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, A-1, that the school should be abolished. To avoid the almost certain violent reaction to an immediate cancellation, Davison suggested termination with the class entering 20 February 1943. He suggested to the Director of Personnel that the OTS administrative and teaching personnel be used in the college training program for aviation cadets, in which 1,000 officers were urgently needed. Indicating that this was a basis for action, not a statement of opinion, Colonel Davison added, "Any comment you have should be received by us at your earliest possible convenience prior to February 20, 1943."⁵⁰

The action of A-1 was no surprise to those familiar with the situation. Back in November 1942, Headquarters AAF had notified the Commanding General, AAF TTC, Knollwood Field, that operations would be conducted on a reduced scale--250 students entering every two weeks. These men were to be detailed to the school from the group already assigned to various commands in accordance with quotas established and announced from the office of the Chief of Military Personnel. One hundred and fifty of the group were to be assigned on the basis of quotas currently established, the remainder to be detailed on the basis of special quotas announced from time to time.⁵¹

Personnel did not agree with the views of Colonel Davison. In a survey of the commands of the AAF it concluded that between 125 and 150 officers on duty, who would profit by OTS, could be spared each two weeks

through the class scheduled to begin on 15 May 1943. Moreover, it was estimated that the Director of Personnel would recommend for appointment direct from civil life a minimum of 75 officers each week who should be assigned to OTS, at least through the class beginning 15 May. Personnel argued that by 15 May direct commissioning from civil life of men required under AR 605-10 to pursue courses of training, would be limited to approximately 50 per month. To this relatively small number the prescribed indoctrination might be given by the requisitioning agency or at the Officer Replacement Pool. In order to improve the general morale of the school as it lingered towards its end, Personnel further recommended that in the future OTS was not to be used as a means for selecting officers for release to The Adjutant General's office. The Chief of Air Staff, however, was impressed neither by the contribution of OTS nor by the arguments of its supporters.

Still the champions of OTS fought to save the institution; they came forward with a proposed reorganization. The chief feature of this plan was the extension of the course of instruction from 6 to 12 weeks. But those who believed in OTS could not agree among themselves. The Division of Military Personnel, heretofore a staunch defender, now argued that OTS had been established originally as a six weeks' course and since the trainees possessed superior educational advantages, business backgrounds, and experience, it had been possible to give the course in a shorter period of time than was required in OCS. Therefore, inasmuch as the desired results had been satisfactorily obtained from the six weeks' course, and because there was a mounting volume of requests from commands to waive OTS altogether, and since officers could not be spared for even six weeks, the Personnel

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Division could not concur in the recommendation that the course be lengthened.⁵²

The axe had long been poised; it now descended gently, almost apologetically, on 6 May 1943. On that day the Chief of the Appointment Section of Military Personnel, wrote the Appointment and Induction Branch of The Adjutant General's office that "the officers' training school of the AAF, located at Miami Beach, Florida will be discontinued after the completion of the class beginning May 15, 1943."⁵³

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Chapter III

EXPLANATION OF AF OFFICERS

The Air Corps did not fare well under the general Army promotion policy. This branch of the service was relatively new and, more than any other branch, was dependent upon constantly changing and rapidly developing mechanical equipment and technical achievement. Moreover, its personnel were exposed to dangers inherent in flying, to which the members of other branches were not subjected. The cost price and the severe strain, both physical and mental, characteristic of service in the Air Corps were recognized as being greater than those of any other branch of the Army; how much greater was a matter of conjecture--and argument. When the emergency came, and then the war, expansion of the Air Corps was of course tremendous. Officers in various trades were required in unprecedented numbers and to meet the demand men with less commissioned service, even with less military experience, than other branches of the Army required had to be used. Because of the consequent tension between the Air Corps and the rest of the Army--and within the Air Corps itself--the War Department tried to evolve a policy satisfactory to every one and at the same time applicable to actual conditions. The Air Corps demanded qualified men regardless of age or prior military experience, and it wanted them to have rank commensurate with their duties and responsibilities. Fortunately for the developing program, it was usually possible to present convincing

ments in support of this insistence. Consequently, the AF gained the right to appoint at a younger service age and also to promote its officers more rapidly than ever before--more rapidly, too, than seemed wise in other branches of the Army.

Promotion Policies under Public Law No. 691

The nation's emergency did not beget or begin the controversy over promotion policies; it had been in progress for some time. The National Defense Act as amended 15 June 1933 provided that in time of war officers of the Regular Army and the Reserve might be appointed to higher temporary grades without vacating their permanent commissions.¹ The Air Corps Promotion Act of 16 June 1936 also authorized temporary promotion to the grade of major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel in the Air Corps.² These promotions were to be made in order of seniority in each grade according to the appointees' positions on the rank list of permanent grades. When an officer holding a temporary appointment became eligible for permanent promotion, his temporary status was vacated. An officer holding temporary rank under the provisions of the act was eligible to exercise no command outside his own corps except by seniority under permanent commission. The urgency upon which need for the act was justified to Congress would end, so far as the officers of field or staff were concerned, when permanent promotion resulted in a distribution of commissioned personnel appropriate to Air Corps requirements. The law was enacted to meet the reasonable demands of the Air Corps, but administration of such legislation, no matter how judicious, would spawn discussion.

Initiation which followed the passage of the Air Corps Promotion Act directed attention to a phase of the problem that contained explosive possibilities. This was the effect the new system would have upon the standing of the Reserve officer in relation to that of men holding commissions in the Regular Army. The War Department did nothing to allay anxiety when it chose this time to call attention to the fact that Air Corps Reserve officers who were on extended active duty or had previously served on such duty, if otherwise qualified, were to be promoted to first lieutenancies in the Air Corps Reserve at the conclusion of three years of accumulated active service. The commanding general of the corps area or department in which the officer served was to forward, shortly before expiration of the three years, a recommendation for promotion, with essential accompanying documents, to the War Department.³

In applying the act of 16 June 1936, the War Department also made it a policy to vacate temporary appointments of Air Corps officers just prior to retirement. The Air Corps protested and marshalled some very strong arguments against the practice. It was urged that the prevailing policy was contrary to the intent of the law and an injustice to the officers concerned. Hearings on the bill while it was pending in Congress were cited as clearly establishing that the intent of Congress was to provide a legal remedy for an inequitable situation. It had often been pointed out that Air Corps officers, because of the promotion system--or the War Department's administration of it--were denied rank and pay commensurate with the duty they performed. The Air Corps believed that the

tenor of all laws pertaining to the retirement of officers for physical disabilities incurred in line of duty indicated an intention on the part of Congress to provide an officer with a retirement income in line with the services he had rendered the country. Congress had also indicated an intention to confer as much honor as possible upon officers at the time of retirement. Medical authorities supplied another argument against the practice of voiding temporary appointments upon retirement. They agreed that physical deterioration of the human body was accelerated by flying duty. Consequently, the retirement of Air Corps officers was expected eight to ten years earlier than that of officers in other branches of service. This meant that, under War Department procedure, an Air Corps officer was confronted with the prospect of early retirement accompanied by the stigma of a reduction in rank.⁴

The Adjutant General defended the War Department policy. He argued that the temporary promotion law for the Air Corps was what it appeared to be and nothing more; it was never meant to be a retirement plan in disguise. He insisted that there was every indication that Congress believed the interests of officers to be adequately protected under law and that it would be contrary to sound policy to use this act as a vehicle for increasing the rank and pay benefits for a special group. Attention was also called to the probability that if preferential retirement benefits were accorded Air Corps officers other groups would press for similar or equal benefits, to the detriment of the generally satisfactory retirement system.⁵ This would be harmful to the service as a whole; hence no change was to be made in the retirement policy.

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When the expansion program was launched in 1929, the Air Corps found itself severely handicapped. It did not have a sufficient number of officers,* and War Department policy threatened to wreck any plan for upgrading outstandingly competent men. In order to bring this condition to the attention of the other arms and services, General Arnold prepared a memo for The Adjutant General.⁶ He pointed out that the Air Corps was being expanded from an organization of 1,670 Regular Army officers and approximately 500 Reserve officers to a set-up requiring 3,203 Regulars and 1,460 Reserves. The Corps had enough qualified and experienced men to fill essential needs in the grades of colonel and lieutenant colonel. Calculated on the basis of service records, if the required number of those grades should be permitted and officers were promoted to fill the vacancies as of 1 July 1940, the junior officers promoted to the grade of lieutenant colonel would have at least 12 years of commissioned service and the officers promoted to the grade of major would have at least 10 years and 8 months of commissioned service. This would leave in the Air Corps 116 officers eligible for the grade of captain, according to the current interpretation of the law. In view of this mounting shortage of officers General Arnold suggested the desirability of lowering the amount of service required, at least for promotion to captain. He wished also to extend the period of active duty of Reserve officers from three to seven years until 1949. If the latter suggestion were adopted, and the number of years of service required for promotion to captain were reduced to seven or fewer, the Reserve officers who remained on extended active duty

* See above, Chapter I.

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would be eligible for promotion to the grade of captain. In this case, disregarding attrition, 257 additional men would become eligible for promotion during the next five years: 24 by 1 July 1941, 69 by 1 July 1942, 47 by 1 July 1943, 106 by 1 July 1944, and 1 by 1 July 1945.⁷

General Arnold's memo received less prompt attention than he doubtless thought it deserved. Eventually, however, it did elicit a reply. In February of the following year, Maj. Gen. F. S. Davis, The Adjutant General, wrote to General Arnold that, in regard to his communication of the previous August, effective 1 March 1940 the authorized permanent and temporary field grades in the Air Corps would be: colonels 80, lieutenant colonels 133, and majors 379. This authorization was based upon the minimum peacetime requirements as determined by the War Department. The figures had been reached by pursuing the following principles as a guide: (1) all command positions were to carry appropriate rank; (2) a high grade was not essential in a staff office, but a fair proportion of rank was to be allotted to command staffs, to the Office of the Chief of Air Corps, to the Materiel Division, and to service schools; (3) captains and lieutenants were to be used interchangeably, no definite allotment of jobs being made for captains. Also effective 1 March 1940, in each grade from colonel on down, where the number of officers of permanent and temporary rank already authorized was insufficient to fill the allotted quotas, Air Corps officers of the next lower grade were to be recommended for advanced temporary rank. All such promotions were to be in accordance with the standing on the relative list of Air

Corps officers and no one was to be advanced more than one grade above his permanent rank. In the event that this prohibition resulted in a decrease in the number of colonels authorized, the number of officers in the next lower grade was to be increased by as many as necessary to compensate for failure to attain the quota in the higher grade.⁸

The seriousness of the rapidly falling national barometer and the increasing possibility of the country's being drawn into the war convinced people familiar with the military organization, especially those in the Air Corps, that a new law governing promotion was necessary. By the middle of 1940 it was also generally agreed among airmen what the new act should provide. The Plans Division summarized the need by suggesting that in time of war or national emergency the War Department have authority to promote any officer of the Regular Army to a higher temporary grade without vacating his permanent appointment.⁹ There seemed to be no controversial issue involved in such a suggestion.

Yet controversy was inherent in the subject. While the measure was pending in Congress, on 18 September 1940 the Adjutant General announced new rules governing temporary promotion of Regular Army first and second lieutenants. All men in those grades in the promotion-list branches who had completed one year's service as Regular Army officers by 9 September 1940 were to be advanced to the next higher rank. Lieutenants of the non-promotion-list branches who had completed a year's service creditable for promotion were also to be moved up, provided there were no marks against them on their records.¹⁰ Reserve officers in the Air Corps interpreted this as an effort to give Regular Army men a favored position and they appealed to their Congressmen to

act immediately. Senator Chan Gurney wrote to the chairman of the military affairs committee that he had had considerable correspondence on the subject with men of the Reserve who had more experience than the Regular Army officers involved. He was sure that the new policy had caused bad feeling in the Air Corps such as to lower the morale and decrease the effectiveness of the Reserve officers.¹¹ Senator Harry R. Shepard, the committee chairman, appealed to General Arnold, then Chief of the Air Corps, for information on which to base a reply. In the meantime, the furor had induced the War Department, through the Adjutant General, to announce that all Reserve Lieutenants on extended active duty with the Regular Army on 9 September 1940, if not otherwise disqualified, would be advanced one grade.¹² In addition, Air Corps Reserve officers who had accepted ~~selection~~ appointment as second lieutenants in order to be placed on extended active duty were to be promoted to the grade held before accepting the lower rank. All restrictions against promotions of Air Corps Reserve officers on extended active duty were revoked.¹³

After these changes had been announced, General Arnold replied to Senator Shepard's appeal by telling him that the complaints in Senator Gurney's letter were based upon the promotion of Regular Army first and second lieutenants, but that all basis for grievance had now been removed. Further, it was his understanding that the avalanche of criticism had now subsided.¹⁴

No one familiar with the issue supposed that it was definitely or permanently removed from the realm of controversy, or that the

problem was confined to the lower commissioned grades. But for the moment all was quiet, and the Chief of the Air Corps seized upon the favorable occasion to suggest a solution for at least part of the problem. He recommended that Air Corps Reserve officers be promoted on the same basis as Regular Army officers of equal service and in the field grades required by the 54 Group Plan; he thought that 50 per cent of the increase should be made immediately and the remainder in equal installments every four months beginning 15 March 1941. This would mean 212 colonels recommended (81 then authorized), an increase of 131; 160 lieutenant colonels recommended (133 then authorized), an increase of 327; 1097 majors recommended (389 then authorized), an increase of 708. The total increase in the three grades would thus be 1166.¹⁵ General Arnold's request was referred in some quarters as "special pleading." General Brett, for example, urged the adoption of a clear cut policy for the promotion of all Reserve officers on extended active duty. He suggested that when a Reserve officer entered upon active service he be given a "running mate" on the Regular Army promotion list and that thereafter the two be advanced at the same time. He argued that this would be preferable to anything yet suggested, as well as to the system then in use which permitted Reserve officer to be promoted on the strength of their time in service and the completion of extension courses, with little attention paid to active duty.¹⁶

At any rate, something had to be done. The War Department took up General Arnold's recommendation and made a job in laying off field officers needed in his office as well as in the Materiel Division, the training centers, the technical schools, and other Air Corps units.

The survey disclosed that temporary promotion in Air Corps field grades had been confined to Regular Army officers. These promotions had been accomplished under the Act of 16 June 1926 which contained this limitation: "Further provided, that no officer holding temporary rank under the provisions of this act shall be eligible to command outside his own corps except by seniority under his permanent commission."¹⁷ Upon the basis of this study, the Personnel Division recommended that all Air Corps Reserve officers on extended active duty be given temporary promotions under the same conditions as Regular Army officers. The Division found that the Act of 16 June 1926 applied only to officers of the Regular Army; therefore temporary promotion of Reserve officers would have to be accomplished under the National Defense Act, which contained no limitation with respect to command privileges. The Division found a need for the promotion of 124 Air Corps Reserve officers to the grade of major, but it called attention to the fact that they would have only from 4 to 6 years of commanded experience. Yet, if they served with officers of other branches, they would for all purposes of command be senior to Regular Army captains with service ranging up to 17 years.¹⁸ The subject of commanding in this fashion afflicated.

Attempts to protect the valid interest of the Regular Army officers had wide and various ramifications. Officers of the Air Corps Reserve had pointed out that they were required to complete numerous extension courses which were not required of Regular Army officers. When this question was put to the divisions of the General Staff, Training and Operations observatory, the primary purpose of extension courses was

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To prepare Reserve officers for mobilization assignment and only incidentally to qualify them for promotion. Since this was the case, the Division could see no reason for requiring the extension work when a Reserve officer was on extended active duty, whether in peacetime or during an emergency. The fact that he was on active duty implied that an officer was either carrying out or being trained in his mobilization assignment; therefore promotion should be determined on the basis of qualifications and efficiency reports.¹⁹ The comment was particularly applicable to the Air Corps, since the percentage of Air Corps Reserve officers on active duty in normal peacetime was much greater than that in the reserves of other arms and services.

The War Department sought to stem the discussion by destroying its significance. Therefore, The Adjutant General's office announced on 19 September 1941 that normally an officer would neither be considered for promotion often than once in a 12 months' period nor be moved up more than one grade at a time. In a direct reference to the promotion of Regular Army lieutenants, it was further announced that officers promoted subsequent to 1 September 1940 would not again be promoted until they had served a year in grade, and men originally commissioned since the cut-off date would not be promoted until they had completed a year of active military service in the grade to which they had been appointed.²⁰ But nothing short of a general option based upon an act of Congress could stem out the agitation for changes.

Promotion Policies under Public Law No. 455

The Air Corps felt more vital concern over the problem of promotion than the other arms and services did. During the summer of

1941 it worked out what were considered to be its legislative needs and early in October the Adjutant General and the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, concurred in the proposed recommendations. Later, G-1 withdrew its concurrence because the proposed act applied to all officers serving with or on duty for the Air Corps. Only a few days were required to reconcile the divergent opinions by limiting the application of the act to "Regular Army Air Corps Officers, Officers of the Air Corps Reserve, and those officers of other branches who are assigned to strict Air Corps duties with the Air Corps."²¹ The bill provided for temporary promotion (by selection) to any grade below that of brigadier general of Regular Army Air Corps, Air Corps Reserve, and National Guard officers ordered into the active military service of the United States with an Air Corps unit. To meet the problem of relative rank in grade it was stipulated that men temporarily promoted would take rank in grade from the date of their commissions or letters of enrollment; Regular Army Air Corps officers were to take rank in grade within the Air Corps from the date of earliest promotion to that grade. This provision was inserted to prevent the embarrassing situation that would arise if an officer received a permanent promotion to a grade already held temporarily under the act of 1936. By the terms of that law, he would have to resign and assume the rank from the day stated in his new commission, thus suffering materially in seniority.²²

Senator Robert R. Reynolds was Chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs and as such was expected to pilot the measure through the Senate. Therefore Air Corps needs were explained to him in some detail. Temporary promotion was explained by a variety of laws and

regulations. Regular Army officers, under the National Defense Act, might be promoted by selection. But, since it is unfair to officers of other branches to give temporary promotion to a larger proportion of Air Corps officers temporary promotion of Regular Army Air Corps officers was in practice much slower than the requirements of the Corps. Regular Army Air Corps officers could also be temporarily promoted in order of seniority to the grades of major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel. Since such promotions did not involve command outside the Air Corps it would be most beneficial if they were extended to all grades below general officers and enlarged to permit promotion by selection in time of war or national emergency. Reserve officers assigned to duty with the Air Corps could be temporarily promoted, but such promotions involved command outside the Air Corps. National Guard officers on active service found their temporary promotion status governed by War Department policy rather than legislation; this class of officers could be used more effectively if placed upon a legislative basis. To meet the problem of relative rank in grade during the continuance of a temporary appointment, the bill provided that officers on this status take rank in grade during the life of their appointments from the date given in their commissions.²² Such a recourse was expected to go far toward curing the more serious symptoms of irritation and discontent.

Promotion within the rapidly growing Army had become highly complicated and technical. As soon as the act regulating temporary

promotion was well on its way through Congress, the War Department set to work to evolve a practical and simple method of application that would work in time of war. The plan was to have the Chief of the Army Air Forces, and the chiefs of the other arms and services, make recommendations for the promotion of officers under their respective jurisdictions.²⁴

On 1 January 1942 the War Department ordered, "effective at once," the discontinuance of the noncombatant system of promotion.²⁵

Obviously, however, with the country at war promotions could not all be stopped; therefore, exceptions were made: position vacancies might be filled under certain conditions, and second lieutenants might be recommended for promotion without having served for six months in a position calling for a higher grade.

A workable promotion system was taking shape. The Act approved on 16 February 1942 provided as follows:

During any war in which the United States is now engaged, any officer of the Regular Army Air Corps, any officer of the Air Corps Reserve or any other section of the Officers' Reserve Corps assigned to duty with any tactical unit, or any installation, or any staff of the Air Corps, any officer of the National Guard of the United States ordered into the active military service of the United States with an Air Corps unit or assigned to duty with any tactical unit, or any installation, or any staff, of the Air Corps, may be appointed to higher temporary rank not above that of colonel, without vacating his existing commission in the Regular Army, the Officers' Reserve Corps, the National Guard of the United States, or the Army of the United States, as the case may be. The provisions of this Act shall not apply to officers of the arms and services other than Air Corps who are assigned to those units or departments of such arms or services on duty with the Air Corps. Officers so appointed shall be appointed and commissioned in the Army of the United States and shall take rank in the grade to which appointed from the date stated in their commissions or letters of appointment. Such appointments shall continue until six months after the termination of any war in which the United States is now engaged unless sooner terminated by order of the President, or until

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relieved from assignment to the duty herein described, whichever is the earlier: Provided, That the temporary promotion of any officer under the terms of this Act shall not prevent his subsequent permanent promotion nor, if eligible therefor, his subsequent temporary promotion under section 4 of the Act of June 16, 1936 (9 Stat. 1525) . . . , or under section 127a of the National Defense Act, as amended . . . : Provided further, That during the period described herein, and in order to preserve relative rank in grade, every Regular Army Air Corps officer shall take rank in grade within the Air Corps from the date of the earliest promotion to that grade under this or any other provisions of existing law. Officers temporarily appointed under this Act shall be entitled to the pay, flying pay, and allowances pertaining to the grade to which temporarily appointed. No officer holding temporary rank under the provisions of this Act shall be eligible to command outside the Air Corps, except by seniority under his present commission, unless specifically so ordered by competent authority.²⁶

Headquarters, Army Air Forces, interpreted the new law as one designed to meet Air Corps needs for promotion of officers by selection at a faster rate and at earlier ages than might be desirable for the rest of the Army. It thought of the Act as supplementing rather than replacing existing machinery for temporary promotion in the Army of the United States. In formulating policy under the new authorization the Air Corps leaders decided not to recommend for promotion under this law any officer who was immediately eligible for a promotion that would give him command privileges throughout the Army. Recommendations under the new act were to be forwarded to AF Headquarters so as to become effective 1 March 1942. Thereafter, recommendations were to be so forwarded that they might become effective on the first day of each succeeding third month. These recommendations were to be submitted by commanding officers of the following organizations: each of the numbered Air Forces, 5th Air Support Command, Flying Training Command, Technical Training Command, Air Service Command, Materiel

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Division, and Perryville Command. Each superior officer in echelon of command was to forward his own recommendations and to approve or disapprove by appropriate endorsement each recommendation submitted to him from a lower echelon. A recommendation for promotion one grade above the highest held on 1 March, based solely on demonstrated fitness and capacity, could be made for any officer. Thereafter, no one was to be recommended for promotion until three months following the date of his last previous appointment. No recommendation was to be submitted unless a position vacancy existed and the officer recommended was qualified as to service and grade. No recommendation was to call for advancement of more than one grade; however, provision for exceptions may be seen in the statement: "In exceptional circumstances in which the interest of the Government is the dominant and controlling consideration, separate recommendations embracing statements of all the circumstances justifying extraordinary action may be transmitted through normal channels of command." Position vacancies were to be filled from within units to an extent which would promote the best interests and efficiency of the AF.²⁷

Contrary to expectations, the problem was not solved by the new law or by the rules announced by the AF; the temporary promotion program encountered difficulty from the start. Maj. Gen. George E. Stromeyer, Commanding Col. of the South West Air Forces Training Center, complained before the end of March that there had been "just no promotions in his command. He wanted his recommendations—those yet to be made as well as those already made—to go through promptly.

He was particularly critical of the failure to promote lieutenants promptly.²⁸

Investigation revealed that the Adjutant General had refused to accept recommendations for promotion of AF officers under regulations issued by the War Department.²⁹ This action was based upon a conviction that the new promotion policy gave an advantage not justified in law to Air Corps officers. A committee was quickly requested: recommendations for promotion of Air Corp to company grades would be processed by the Adjutant General's office; those calling for promotion to field grades would be referred to the Crisis Board.³⁰ The new procedure meant that during the following year there would be fewer promotions of AF officers to the higher grades in which the experience level of the AF was already well below that of the other services.

This was a serious check to AF development. The Air Forces, regardless of experience, had to have officers of various grades. On 6 March 1942 a new statement of functions, together with a new Table of Organization, was published. This assigned to the Director of Personnel the duty of supervising promotion within the AF, under general policies laid down by the Chief of Air Staff.³¹ The Chief of Air Staff authorized him to proceed under the provisions of an AF Regulation all recommendations for promotion that were deemed essential and could not be achieved under other authorizations. An attempt was

* This board was composed of a group of officers headed by General Julian Harris, former Chief of Staff, to work with the G-1 Division of the General Staff in regulating promotions so as to maintain an approximately equal experience level in combat among AF officers and those of other branches.

also made to make automatic, under War Department ruling, the promotion of all officers previously recommended for promotion under AF regulations.²² If this attempt succeeded, the procedure would partially free the AF from long standing restrictions.

It was somewhat discouraging when difficulties developed between the AF and other arms and services. But it was more serious for trouble to arise within the AF itself. Perhaps such trouble was, under the circumstances, inevitable: officers attached to Headquarters felt that they were being discriminated against in favor of men in the field. To clarify the situation a memo was drafted setting forth the basis upon which promotions would be made. The policy provided (1) that there must be a position vacancy; (2) that the officer concerned must possess ability to fill properly the job to which assigned; (3) that the advantage of raising the morale of the officer must be weighed against the fact that his promotion might have an adverse effect upon his fellow officers; and (4) that the relative rank of officers with whom the individual to be promoted ordinarily conducted business must be considered. No one was to be recommended for promotion until he had been on the job long enough to prove that he was qualified for it; a period of one month was to be considered the minimum time in which a commander could properly evaluate the ability of an officer to perform a task to which he had been newly assigned.²³

Following Pearl Harbor, Air Corps expansion was so rapid that a new promotion policy had to be adopted almost immediately. This was accomplished by a War Department Circular, the chief feature of which was the reduction of the time in grade an officer was required

to serve. The sole criterion for promotion was announced to be demonstrated fitness and capacity for the duties and responsibilities of the next higher grade, assuming that a position vacancy existed. Except for those engaged in combat, normally no officer would be promoted more than one grade at a time and no officer once promoted would be again advanced until he had served six months in grade. Generally no officer except second lieutenant would be recommended for promotion until he had by outstanding performance of duty demonstrated his fitness for the next higher grade. But when in the opinion of a general officer, who possessed personal knowledge of the circumstances, an officer other than a second lieutenant clearly demonstrated his fitness for promotion in less than six months, the War Department was prepared to consider waiving the time-in-grade requirement. A second lieutenant might be recommended for promotion to fill a position vacancy at any time after he had satisfactorily demonstrated his fitness for the next higher grade. The necessity for more rapid promotion in the Air Corps was recognized, but in order to maintain as nearly as possible a just parity between Air Corps officers and those of other branches, it was determined: (1) that temporary promotion in the Air Corps and among officers serving with the Air Corps would be accomplished within the Corps under the most appropriate authority; (2) promotion of these officers to temporary grade in the NUS under the National Defense Act was to be accomplished at a rate which would maintain as nearly as possible this general relative position with respect to other officers of the same permanent grades; and (3) when, because of the nature of the duties being performed

by an officer of the Air Corps or by one of another branch serving with the AAF, it should become necessary to protect his seniority with respect to other officers commissioned in the US, promotion was to be accomplished in the US.²⁴

A rush of criticism and complaint followed the announcement of this policy. One view was that an injustice was being done to Regular Army officers on duty with the AAF, branch immaterial, as compared to special staff officers. These Regular Army men, it was alleged, were either forgotten or not available to their own services and were apparently not included in promotion policies of the AAF.²⁵ This was one of many aberrations for which the Personnel Division, G-1, of the General Staff took the Air Corps to task. G-1 learned that promotion of officers of the Air Corps, other than Regular Army officers on duty with the AAF, had been accomplished in accordance with recommendations by the Commanding General, Army Air Forces. The Adjutant General held such appointments unlawful. Therefore, they were without effect; and the Comptroller would have to refuse payment of the increase in salary. He would also be required to demand the return of any overage already paid. Such action, the Personnel Division pointed out, would place Army Air Force Headquarters in an awkward position and would have a bad effect upon the morale of AAF officers.²⁶ The Judge Advocate General demanded that immediate steps be taken to prevent recurrence of this illegal conduct, and that prompt action be taken to correct the situation already existing. In this crisis Secretary of War Stimson intervened to prevent further harm to the war effort. He directed the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, to insure that there would be no further examples of unlawful promotions. Stimson

also ordered a prompt examination to determine whether unlawful promotions were still being made; if so, he ordered that corrective measures be initiated without delay.³⁷

Because the volume of promotions taxed office forces and because many AF commanders did not fully realize the importance of accuracy in paper work, the Promotion Board—which had been set up to process all recommendations for promotion—soon complained that numerous returns failed to comply with regulations. The most numerous irregularities were (1) final endorsements without a statement to the effect that the relative rank of the officer concerned had been duly considered, and without the required notation, "To the best of my knowledge and belief, this is 'the best fitted officer available in this command for the grade and position for which promotion is recommended"; (2) endorsements signed by staff officers, whereas regulations required the signature of the commanding officer; and (3) lack of certification on the final endorsement that a position vacancy existed.³⁸ Under the law and regulations, the Promotion Board could do nothing other than return such recommendations for correction.

In view of this apparent carelessness the AF decided to check on the promotion policies followed by division commanders. On 26 Jan 1943 a message was sent to the various headquarters asking for ground rules. Replies indicated (1) that recommendations were submitted upon three months' in grade and demonstration of ability; (2) that in cases where fitness for the next higher grade was clearly apparent but the required time in grade could not be shown because of transfer or other circumstance beyond control, recommendation was made for promotion

in US, 'G; and (3) that every effort was made to protect seniority in the US requirement of the command in which the individual concerned originally entered the service.³⁹ In general it was found that a genuine effort was made to require officers to demonstrate their worthiness over a period of six months. Always the letter of the law was obeyed; no favoritism was revealed; and Regular Army, Reserve, and National Guard officers were all treated alike under direction from higher authority. No basis for complaint was discovered.

Demands for Air Corps officers slackened by the summer of 1943, but the volume of recommendations for promotion showed no sign of diminishing. A revision of policy, as set in AF Form 710, AFM 25-10, was called for. Because such revision would take time, rendering any change or the issuance of directions clarifying the desire of the Commanding General, AF, all operations under AF regulation were suspended on 29 April 1943. To prevent troubling the processing department by nothing of much importance, no report on or before 25 April was to be accepted; those of later date were to be returned without action. The letter, however, could be resubmitted after the ban was lifted, without reference to the time limitation.⁴⁰

The changes that were made in the regulation proved to be minor ones. Since the object was to check, not stop, the flow from grade to grade, all that was deemed necessary was to extend the time required in grade; a return to the six-months rule was thought to be sufficient, with record liaisonistic event.⁴¹ The measures taken to restrain notifications apparently succeeded toward that which was desired. Complaints soon came into Headquarters about officers being barred from promotion

because they had not served under one commander for a sufficient length of time. This was a particular hardship upon men selected for assignment to detached duties. It, however, took it into the writer's mind at this time that all existing regulations could no longer stand upon such grounds, that under existing regulations it was necessary only for the commanding officer initiating the recommendation to have knowledge of the manner in which the officer had performed during consideration correspondence with the grade to which it was proposed to promote him.

In the event position vacancies did not exist within the command, a report of that fact was to be made to the next higher headquarters.⁴²

The situation did not clear up according to the desire of the Chief of Air Staff. He had the records in his office searched and found that there were officers in the USA holding grades lower than those held in the Air Corps. Thereupon he directed that in all such cases those officers who were eligible should be promoted to USA grades equal to those held in the Air Corps. Commanders were warned, however, that grades could not be jumped in the USA and that promotion therein was not an automatic policy. Determined to clear up the Air Corps situation, the Chief of Air Staff on 17 April directed that all officers eligible for promotion be given the grade to which they were entitled. These promotions were to be facilitated by enlisting with active duty all officers appointed from civilian life, Reserve Officers, and National Guard officers called to active duty in a grade higher than 2d Lieutenant; for 1st Lieutenants the credit was six months, for captains one year, for majors two years, and for lieutenant colonels four years. After these adjustments were made, promotion should then

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be made according to the following new schedule of time in grade: for 2d lieutenants, six months; for 1st lieutenants, one year; for captains, two years; for majors, three years; and for lieutenant colonels, six years. The new promotion regulations were in addition to, not in place of, other laws and regulations.¹³

The policy set forth in this letter of 17 April was evidently short-lived; for an AF regulation published three days later established the time in grade required for promotion to colonel at 12 months, to lieutenant colonel or major at 9 months, to captain or 1st lieutenant at 6 months. It was pointed out, however, that these were minimum periods; they were not to be thought of as average, and no officer was to be considered ready for promotion merely because he had served the required time in grade. On the other hand, the time in grade requirement might be waived by a field commander in the case of an officer who conspicuously demonstrated in combat his fitness for higher rank, and 2d lieutenants who earned promotion in combat might be promoted regardless of position vacancies. Promotion under this regulation were not valid outside the AF; an officer who was transferred to another command would revert to his former rank as soon as he was relieved of duty with the AF.¹⁴

The above regulation was rescinded on 8 August 1947. From that date, all promotions were to be according to JR 605-12; there would no longer be any difference between promotions in the US, AG, and those in the AF. Recommendations for promotion to 1st lieutenant or captain were to be forwarded directly to the Adjutant General; recommendations for promotion to major, lieutenant colonel, or colonel

vers to be sent to him through Headquarters, AF. At the same time it was announced that action had already been taken, in War Department Decrict Order No. 123, dated 1 August 1944, to promote in the Army of the United States all officers holding higher grades in the Army of the United States, Air Corps.⁴⁵

The establishing of parity between US and US, AC, grades was a boon to the AF. The time was to come when Air Corps officers who had been declared surplus and recommended by the AF for separation would be picked up and kept in the service willy-nilly by the ground or service forces; but at least they would be spared the loss of income and humiliating demotion upon leaving the AF that would have been their lot but for the action taken on 1 August. In addition, the new ruling represented a great saving in paper work for the AF. In an effort to keep AF grades as nearly as possible level with AUS, AC, order, two sets of papers were used for each change in grade—one recommending promotion in US, AC, and another, filed as soon as the individual became eligible through time in grade, recommending promotion in the US.

These advantages were partially offset by the fact that promotions would come much more slowly in the AF than they had in AUS, AC. But so far as the AF as a whole was concerned, the general solution of the officer procurement problem by the middle of 1944 made the promotion problem a much less critical one. Inevitably there would be cases of inequity and injustice, fancied or real, among individuals, but such cases would not be numerous enough or important enough to affect materially the functioning of the AF.

* See above, Chapter I.

It would have been impossible to devise a promotion plan satisfactory to the Air Corps and at the same time fair to officers in other components. But it was vitally necessary that the AF should accord its officers rank commensurate with responsibility and to do this meant, in many instances, advancing them beyond ground forces or service forces officers senior to them in age, with much greater experience, and—it might sometimes appear—of more ability. When a young flyer proved that he was the right man to act as commanding officer of a squadron or group, or even a wing; when another youngster demonstrated a flair for accomplishment in procurement or research and development; or when still another was thrown by force of circumstance into an administrative job of great responsibility, such men had to have the rank that would enable them to move about on equal terms with their associates.

The promotion policies under which the Air Corps operated from 1936 through the first half of 1944 may at times have been illegal (as the War Department thought in 1942) or unfair to officers in other components (as the officers in those components firmly believed), but they served their purpose. When the time came, officers of the rank required for the AF to perform its mission were available.

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Chapter IV

THE DISPOSITION OF UNSATISFACTORY

AAF OFFICERS

At the beginning of the late emergency the disposition of unsatisfactory Army officers was determined according to procedures laid down in an Army Regulation dated 6 February 1935.¹ This in turn was based on the National Defense Act, as amended by an Act of Congress approved 4 June 1920, which provided:

Immediately upon the passage of this act, and in September of 1921 and every year thereafter, the President shall convene a board of not less than five general officers which shall arrange all officers in two classes, namely: Class A, consisting of officers who should be retained in the service, and Class B, of officers who should not be retained in the service. Until otherwise finally classified, all officers shall be regarded as belonging to Class A and shall be promoted according to the provisions of this act to fill any vacancies which may occur prior to such final classification. No officer shall be finally classified in Class B until he shall have been given an opportunity to appear before a court of inquiry. In any such court of inquiry he shall be furnished with a full copy of the official records upon which the proposed classification is based and shall be given an opportunity to present testimony in his own behalf. The record of such court of inquiry shall be forwarded to the final classification board for reconsideration of the case, and after such consideration the finding of said classification board shall be final and not subject to further revision except upon the order of the President. Whenever an officer is placed in Class B, a board of not less than three officers shall be convened to determine whether such classification is due to his neglect, misconduct, or avoidable habits. If the finding is affirmative, he shall be discharged from the Army; if negative, he shall be placed on the unlimited retired list with pay²

In the peace-time Army, with its fewer than 10,000 officers, the procedure outlined in this regulation was both feasible and adequate for several reasons. These officers were, for the most part, graduates of West Point and other recognized military academies or men who had gained commissions in World War I. Some had been officers in the National Guard or the Officers' Reserve Corps, others were graduates of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, and a few were former enlisted men risen from the ranks. In view of the fact that they had deliberately chosen to make the Army their career they were more than likely to be, in general, good soldiers. Moreover, in the 1930's there was little of the pressure and strain which war engenders to reveal hidden deficiencies or unrecognized flaws.

Reclassification of Officers under AR 605-230

With the passage of the Selective Service Act and the subsequent expansion of the Army, however, a need was felt for some procedure to supplement AR 605-200, a procedure that would make it possible to keep in the service many officers who might, under the existing policy, be classified in Class B and consequently lost to the Army. An attempt was made to fill this need in January 1941 by the publication of AR 605-230, which provided for the appointment in all commands of reclassification boards with wide powers. When a commanding officer decided that one of his subordinates was not properly fulfilling the duties of his position, he would first consider whether there was in his command any vacancy calling for an officer of the same grade, to which the delinquent officer might properly be assigned. If there

was such a vacancy, the commander could solve the problem--at least, for the time being--by reassigning the officer. If no such vacancy existed, the fact was to be reported to the next higher commander, who might reassign the officer within his command, forward the report to the next higher headquarters, or return the report with appropriate instructions. Any commander who had jurisdiction over a reclassification board could recommend an officer to the board, which was to consist of at least five commissioned officers of the Army of the United States, one of whom should be a line officer, one an officer of the Medical Corps, and all--so far as practicable--senior in permanent and temporary grades to the officer appearing before the board.³

Under AR 605-230 a reclassification board could recommend (1) discharge not caused by physical disability;* (2) demotion; (3) reassignment; (4) observation and treatment in an Army hospital; (5) a combination of (2) and (3) above; (6) disciplinary action in addition to, or exclusive of, any of the above; or (7) other suitable action. Reclassification board proceedings were not to be used, however, in cases where court martial or punishment under Article of War 104 could be applied. The recommendation of a reclassification board was to become effective as soon as it was approved by the commander under whose authority the board was convened, except that recommendations involving discharge or demotion were required to have final action taken by the War Department.⁴

An officer holding permanent rank in the Regular Army, National Guard, or Officers' Reserve Corps, and higher temporary rank in the Army of the United States, could not be demoted beyond his permanent grade. A reclassification board might recommend the termination of

* An officer suffering from physical disability would appear before an Army retiring board (see AR 605-250). [REDACTED]

his temporary grade if the recommendation was approved by the authority that convened the board and by the War Department, in which case the officer would revert to his permanent rank or be tendered an appointment to a rank intermediate between his permanent one and the one from which he was being demoted. An officer who did not hold permanent rank could not, strictly speaking, be demoted. He could be discharged and then offered a commission in a lower grade, which, if accepted, would represent a demotion.⁵

When AR 605-230 was republished on 7 June 1941 provision was made for an officer who had been recommended for reclassification to submit his resignation under the authority of AR 605-275. The forwarding endorsements were to indicate clearly that the resignation was voluntary on the part of the officer, that he had been recommended for reclassification, and that reassignment was not recommended. If the resignation was submitted while the officer was under investigation for misconduct, the forwarding endorsement was so to state.*

If an officer who resigned to avoid reclassification had shown an admirable character and devotion to duty and had been recommended for reclassification solely because of lack of military proficiency, he would be considered separated from the service under honorable conditions and was entitled to a Certificate of Service. On the other hand, if the recommendation was based upon faults over which he presumably had control, such as laziness or drunkenness, he would be considered separated under conditions other than honorable and would not be entitled to a Certificate of Service.⁶

* Another change in this edition of the regulation was the dropping of recommendation (6) "Disciplinary action in addition to or exclusive of any of the above." Presumably, however, it might still be invoked under recommendation (7) "Other suitable action."

The machinery for handling unsatisfactory officers was now in order; unfortunately, it seems not to have worked--at least, not to have worked well. In August 1941 the necessity for revitalizing the efficiency of the Air Corps officer personnel was recognized. This problem was thought to involve four major operations: (1) the removal of unfit officers from the active list; (2) the promotion of the best fitted officers; (3) the regrouping and reassignment of officers in accordance with their qualifications; and (4) an infusion of new officers in two categories, namely (a) junior officers, and (b) technical specialists from civil life. A sampling of the efficiency reports of 1,259 officers ranging in grade from second lieutenant to colonel showed that, as of 30 June 1940, 109 were rated "Superior," 1,119 were rated "Excellent," and 31 were "Very Satisfactory"; none were merely "Satisfactory" and none were "Unsatisfactory." This sampling led the Military Personnel Division to conclude that "the elimination of unfit officers cannot be based on efficiency report general ratings but will require an analysis of individual records by a board of general officers." After discovering and eliminating the unfit officers, this board would distinguish between the "fitted" and the "best fitted" of those remaining; the former were to be given assignments according to their qualifications, the latter given promotions as well as proper assignments.⁷

The Division also opposed demotion as a means of handling inefficient officers.

If an officer has been promoted beyond his capacity for effective employment, this fact should be recognized and his retirement from the Active list should follow. There can be no retrogressions. This is an accepted, vital, sound premise that has been acknowledged throughout military history. The Congress has provided in the law the proper protection--i.e., reward through retirement pay for services rendered. Any proposal to reduce an officer in rank should be summarily rejected.⁸

Two days after this memo, the ideas of the Military Personnel Division were partially incorporated in a new edition of AR 605-230. In listing the recommendations that could be made by reclassification boards, recommendation (1) "Discharge not caused by physical disability" was amended by the additional phrase, "or in the case of Regular Army officers their removal from the active list of the Army under the provisions of Public Law 190, 77th Congress."

In March 1942 another complaint was voiced, this time about the delay in reclassifying and eliminating unsatisfactory officers. A specific case was cited in which four and a half months had elapsed since the beginning of reclassification proceedings and as of that date nothing had been settled.⁹ The Director of Personnel replied that investigations had revealed the current reclassification procedure as functioning satisfactorily in the majority of cases. A certain amount of delay was admitted, occasioned by the fact that the commander's recommendation for reclassification board action must be submitted to the corps area commander through channels. This was done to give higher commanders the opportunity to reassign the officer concerned if he saw fit, a valuable procedure, the Director said, to insure the utilization of every officer.¹⁰ The difficulty seems to have been not with AR 605-230, then, but with the administration of it. Even the procedure mentioned above as conducive to delay could not hold up proceedings for any unreasonable length of time if every recommendation was handled promptly and expeditiously in each echelon of command through which it had to pass.

To insure smoother functioning, instructions were sent in June 1942 to all organizations and activities of the AAF to the effect that reclassification proceedings initiated by subordinate commanders were to be acted upon within 48 hours of their receipt at each headquarters having jurisdiction. In the same letter commanders were emphatically reminded of the necessity in time of war for eliminating every officer who, by reason of recognized inefficiency, might jeopardize the success of a future--or present--mission.¹¹

Proposal to supplement AR 605-230: Despite the changes effected, AAF Headquarters still felt that the procedure under AR 605-230 was too slow and cumbersome to meet the needs of the AAF. Hence, on 26 October 1942 Col. F. Trubee Davison asked that General Arnold be authorized to recommend publication of orders effecting the reduction and change of duty assignment of any officer with the AAF holding temporary rank under Public Law 455.¹² Three days later Secretary of War Stimson directed that such an AAF regulation be drafted despite doubts as to the wisdom of the proposed procedure voiced in some quarters. For example, an officer in the Directorate of Organizational Planning wrote: "I seriously doubt the advisability of processing all recommendations for reclassification, demotion, reassignment, resignation etc., through this Hq. for all AAF personnel. If an AAF general officer in the field makes a determination in a given case there would appear to be little or no need for a review in this Hq."¹³ It was also pointed out that the proposed AAF regulation would amount to an exception to AR 605-230 and that some confusion might ensue from treatment of the subject solely under AAF regulations, separate and apart from any basic authority in

Army regulations.¹⁴ Eventually a compromise arrangement was adopted.

In a letter accompanying a revision of AR 605-230, addressed to the commanding generals of most of the overseas commands, it was directed that procedure under AR 605-230 was to be normal procedure in applicable cases. It was recognized, however,

that in contact with the enemy or when such contact is considered imminent, morale and example may require demotion equally as expeditious as promotion. Accordingly, in addition to the procedures authorized in AR 605-230, you are hereby authorized to demote officers of your command, holding temporary higher grade, to a lower grade for failure to perform satisfactorily the duty of the higher grade.¹⁵

The letter cautioned that the authorization granted in it was not to be utilized to effect the following: (1) demotion of general officers or officers serving in permanent grades; (2) separation from the service; (3) punishment in lieu of court martial proceedings; or (4) demotion of any officer where conditions and circumstances indicated that the provisions of AR 605-230 would be equally effective. Moreover, the authority to demote was granted only to a commanding general; it was not to be delegated by him to subordinates.¹⁶

On 28 January 1943 the Director of Personnel, at the behest of General Arnold, ordered the Personnel Research and Statistics Division to make a study of the system of reclassifying officers,¹⁷ and a month later the Personnel Division, G-1, expressed the opinion that AR 605-230 should be revised "to permit more expeditious handling of cases wherein it is manifestly to the best interests of the service to accomplish the demotion of an officer promptly or to accomplish his prompt separation from the service. This is especially true in those cases wherein prompt action is necessary in disciplinary cases of a minor

nature."¹⁸ And in a letter to Director of Personnel General Bevans, Maj. Gen. Davenport Johnson joined the dissenting chorus by branding the current procedure for handling inefficient and undesirable officers as cumbersome and involved. General Johnson thought the fault lay in the fact that AAF officers had to be sent to service commands for reclassification. He suggested that reclassification authority be vested in the AAF commands and that a simplified procedure be evolved whereby an officer would appear before a board in the command to which he was assigned and, on the recommendation of his superiors, be summarily returned to civil life.¹⁹ This was the solution which General Bevans himself had suggested several months previously.²⁰

Agitation for AAF jurisdiction over reclassification: A memo from the Assistant Chief of Staff to the Chief of Staff outlined the oft-attacked reclassification problem as of 25 May 1943. After observing that any AAF officer could recommend the reclassification of any officer below him in the chain of command, the memo pointed out that once classification proceedings had started the air force command could reassign the subject officer. Final decision as to discharge or any action other than reassignment, however, was outside the control of the AAF. Only two items of information showing the history of reclassification procedures under combat conditions had

* This objection is somewhat strange in view of the wording of AR 605-230, Sec. 1, par. 4: "These are not disciplinary regulations. The procedure prescribed herein is not to be used in lieu of action under general court-martial procedure or under provisions of AW 104. Under no circumstances will action under these regulations be substituted for disciplinary action."

been found. In World War I, 1,371 officers (1.7 per cent of the total officer strength of the American Expeditionary Force) were reclassified. To date in World War II, it had been reported that more than half of the commanding officers in overseas air depot groups had been returned as unsatisfactory. According to reports from The Adjutant General's office, no more than 53 AAF officers had been reclassified during the previous two years. In all the instances studied (43) the reclassification procedures had been successful in removing the officer from the duty in which he was judged unsatisfactory.²¹

Thirty cases were studied to determine the average time for reclassification papers to move from one step to another. From the time proceedings were begun in an AAF command to the time when a service command received the reclassification papers was found to take 34 days. When a service commander found the charges properly made, orders were issued at once for the subject officer to report to a Service Command Reclassification Center. Delays occurred in six cases because the provisions of AR 605-230 were not met. It required an average of six days between the time papers were sent to the service commander and the time they were sent to the Reclassification Board; the Board, on the average, met 21 days after receipt of the papers. Thus, it took an average of 120 days to complete the process from the time the form recommending reclassification was made out to the time when final action was taken by the War Department. The memo went on to recommend that reclassification jurisdiction over AAF officers be granted to the Commanding General, AAF, which, in addition to proposed changes in AR 605-230, was thought to be the solution to the problem of disposing of unsatisfactory officers.²²

The blame for the relative failure of the reclassification system could not all be placed on the procedure provided for in AR 605-230. When reclassification proceedings were invoked, the desired result was generally attained; such proceedings were not invoked often enough. The personnel officers of the continental air forces and commands, agreed in conference that unsuitable officers were often passed along to another command instead of being reclassified. They thought that reluctance to reclassify was due rather to the natural distaste for confronting a fellow officer with an unsatisfactory rating than to any deficiencies in the existing system.²³

On 29 May 1943 General Bevans reported to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, the results of a study made by his office. One of the main faults of the reclassification system was found to be the difficulty in developing satisfactory evidence for the Service Command Reclassification Boards, the members of which were without personal knowledge of the officer or any personal experience with the case. The final conclusion reached was that the provisions of AR 605-230 could be made effective if reclassification jurisdiction over AAF officers were transferred to the AAF commands.²⁴ Following up this lead, Bevans, on the same day, suggested to General Arnold a step which the AAF could take to facilitate reclassification without waiting for War Department approval: the activation of an AAF Personnel Redistribution Command for receiving and disposing of all returned personnel from overseas theaters, and also for receiving incompetent or malassigned officers on duty in the continental United States, for determination of necessary action such as reassignment,

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reclassification, demotion, or separation from the service. The Command was to establish three reception centers, one at Miami Beach, one at Atlantic City, and one at a suitable location on the West Coast.²⁵

Two days later Devans told General Johnson that a recommendation was being sent to the General Staff which, if approved, would give the Commanding General, AAF, reclassification jurisdiction. Moreover, directives had been prepared to be sent to all continental AAF commanding generals calling for the establishment of a reclassification board at each command headquarters. If the recommendation to the General Staff should be approved, these boards would presumably be manned by AAF officers; otherwise, they would be composed of Army Service Force personnel.²⁶

Revision of AR 605-230, 9 June 1943

A revision of AR 605-230 dated 9 June 1943 was designed to simplify and clarify reclassification procedures then prescribed. It introduced an informal procedure leading to the expeditious demotion and reassignment of officers who held temporary grades, the duties of which they were manifestly not professionally qualified to perform, and the expeditious demotion of officers whose conduct, habits, or traits of character were not those desired but were not of such a serious nature as to call for trial by court martial or separation from the service. It permitted an officer in lieu of reclassification to resign* or voluntarily to request demotion. A general officer under this revision might recommend the demotion of an officer--whether

* Resignation in lieu of reclassification had been possible, at least in appropriate cases, since the revision of 7 June 1941.

he had been recommended for reclassification or not--without instituting reclassification proceedings. If the subject officer was of company grade, the final decision was made by the headquarters of the army or command to which he was assigned; if he was of field grade, the recommendation had to be approved by the War Department. In addition, an officer whose demotion had been recommended could request trial by court martial or a hearing before a reclassification board.²⁷

Re-evaluation Board procedure: A few days after the newly-revised AR 605-230 appeared, the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, reported the development of new procedures for the implementation of the revised regulation. Unsatisfactory officers were to be temporarily transferred to command headquarters where a competent re-evaluation board* would determine whether the subject officer could be of further value to the AAF by being assigned to other duties in a grade commensurate with his proven capacity. It was thought that a large majority of unsatisfactory officers would prefer demotion and re-assignment to separation and thus more officers would be salvaged at a time when the need for them was very great.²⁸

Before the end of June, re-evaluation boards were being organized in all air forces and commands. But like reclassification boards, they could function only if the unsatisfactory officers were ordered to appear before them; it was not their job to seek out those who merited

* These boards were in no sense a substitute for reclassification boards. Cases which called for reclassification were not to be brought before a re-evaluation board, although the latter might find reclassification to be the only solution in some of the cases it reviewed. (Memo from Col. A. H. Foster, 26 June 1943, in AAG 210.11, Eligibility and Qualifications).

demotion or some other form of reclassification. In an attempt to assure that inefficient officers would be discovered and subjected to appropriate action, one headquarters issued the following directive:

All officers charged with the function of command will initiate, and thereafter will continue, a survey of all officers who come within their supervision and control. Those who are deficient through failure or inability to discharge fully their responsibilities will be given an opportunity to correct this condition by reassignment within the appropriate commands or action by the Ho. Re-evaluation Board. Immediately, as it becomes apparent that such corrective action is inadequate, reclassification proceedings will be initiated under the provisions of AR 605-230 dated 9 June 1943

Delinquencies of individual officers must be recognized at their outset through constant supervision, and thereafter will be dealt with in the most appropriate and expedient manner.²⁹

Despite these attempts to oil the machinery, War Department Circular dated 10 July 1943 reported, over General Marshall's signature, that out of 500,000 officers only four were eliminated from the Army for inefficiency during the month of May 1943. The reasons for such a record, the circular went on to say, were (1) an unwillingness on the part of responsible commanders to rid the Army of inefficient officers whose lack of leadership would be fatal to success and would result in heavy casualties; or (2) a complacent acceptance of things as they are. "It is inconceivable that of 500,000 officers only four should fail to come up to the desired standards of leadership."³⁰ The same message was sent by General Marshall to the Commanding General, Proving Ground Command, with this significant addition: "Commanders of every echelon will be judged by their discernment and moral courage in the elimination of the unfit."³¹

Several difficulties had cropped up in eliminating unfit officers in the Proving Ground Command. The commanding general complained of

the clause that stipulated a discharge "without honor" when an officer, judged unfit for service in commissioned grade, but otherwise honorable and diligent, tried to resign.³² In this case, apparently a misunderstanding or misinterpretation was involved, for G-1 informally replied that favorable action without prejudice would be taken on resignations tendered when the resignation did not involve misconduct, undesirable habits, or objectionable traits of character.³³ Another difficulty lay in the fact that even the simplified procedure authorized by the revision of AR 605-230 was still cumbersome in practice. Formal action and supporting evidence were still prerequisites, and this heavy administrative requirement, coupled with the general shortage of officers (particularly in the non-flying categories), continued to create a negative impetus on the part of the lower level units.³⁴

The Commanding General of the Third Air Force on 5 August 1943 added his weight to the growing burden of criticism,³⁵ and two days later General Yount wrote of the grave concern felt by General Marshall over the situation. Yount observed that the complacent acceptance of things as they were and the reluctance of commanders to take necessary remedial action were strikingly demonstrated by the fact that in a recent month fewer than 10 officers were eliminated from the entire Army for inefficiency. "A policy of wholesale elimination is not desired," he went on; "however, there must be no temporizing with incompetence or the morally unfit."³⁶

Officer Qualification Boards and Committees: As a result of this situation the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, called

a conference for the first three days in September 1943³⁷ to include A-1's and classification officers of all continental air forces and commands. At this meeting it was determined that: (1) the procedure of AR 605-230 and the machinery authorized for re-evaluation and reclassification were adequate; (2) all air forces and commands with reclassification jurisdiction had reported that Reclassification Centers, including Reclassification Boards, had been established in accordance with AR 605-230 as revised 9 June 1943; (3) the time elapsed since issuance of instructions on 15 June 1943 suggesting establishment of re-evaluation boards had been insufficient to indicate conclusive results; and (4) action taken to date by lower echelons (groups, station, and unit commanders) proved that they should be more sternly impressed with the need for prompt and continuing action leading to reassignment, demotion, or elimination of officers. The conference consequently recommended: (1) that the re-evaluation boards be known thenceforth as Officer Qualification Boards; (2) that an Immediate Action Letter be prepared for General Arnold's signature to be addressed to the commanding generals of all air forces and commands directing prompt action on the letter of 15 June 1943 and instructing them personally to impress upon the commanders of lower echelons that proper and continuing action must be taken immediately; (3) that commanding generals of air forces and commands would direct commanders of lower echelons to call conferences of their group, station, and unit commanders to inform them that they were personally responsible for re-evaluation and reclassification within their respective commands. At such conferences

unit commanders would be advised that surveys would shortly thereafter be made; if these surveys disclosed that reclassification had not been initiated in cases where it was warranted, disciplinary action against the commanding officer would be taken.³⁸

Slowly the effort to weed out unsatisfactory officers began to get results. For example, the Reclassification Board at Fort Worth, Texas processed 29 reclassification cases during the month of September, 1943; in addition, a number of voluntary resignations were forwarded through channels.³⁹ There was no thought of relaxation, however. As the supply of officer personnel became more and more nearly adequate in quantity, it became even more imperative to emphasize the element of quality. General Bevans recognized this fact in a memo of 28 October 1943 addressed to the commanding generals of all air forces and commands:

1. The development of capable officers by the Army Air Forces has reached the stage, in numbers and extent of training, where there can be no excuse for the retention of any officer in his current or lower grade or in the service who does not measure up to standards required. The upward flow of ability, leadership and constructive thinking, beyond the confines of prescribed duty, must be allowed to make itself felt.⁴⁰

In October 1943 it was decided to change the name of Officer Qualification Boards to Officer Qualification Committees to emphasize the informality of the functions performed. The recommendations of committee members to commanders were not to be incorporated into proceedings nor used to substantiate cases against unsatisfactory officers; the committees were merely to assist commanders in the identification of inefficient officers and to furnish guidance in paper work and appropriate procedure. This change also sharpened the

distinction between Officer Qualification Committees and Reclassification Boards, making it clear that the former were not bound by the provisions set forth in AR 605-230 for the composition and procedure of the Reclassification Boards.⁴¹

Certification of officers: Neither by the appointing of committees nor by the exhorting of commanders could the essential weakness of the procedure authorized by AR 605-230 be overcome. Another attempt was made to meet the situation by substituting what might be considered positive action for negative: simultaneously with the organization of Officer Qualification Committees a Manual on Demotion or Separation of Unsatisfactory Officers was prepared. In this manual members of an Officer Qualification Committee were directed to have each commanding officer under their jurisdiction certify on an Officer Duty Roster Certification form that each officer in his command (1) was not over-graded as an officer, (2) was not unqualified in his current duty assignment, and (3) had no traits or habits affecting performance. Thus a commander who might be reluctant to report one of his officers as unsatisfactory would find himself in the position of having, in effect, to do that or to put himself on record as certifying that the officer was satisfactory. If, through personal friendship or for some other reason, the commander should choose the second alternative, there was a very real danger that the subject officer's inefficiency would be discovered by someone higher in the line of command with perhaps disastrous results to the subordinate commander's career.⁴² All officers remaining uncertified would be scrutinized carefully by the commander and the members of the Officer Qualification Committee

in order that the correct decision be made as to what constituted the proper corrective action to be taken in each case. The commander would then initiate whatever action seemed to be demanded. General Evans warned that success demanded speed with justice. "This calls for extreme care in processing. Strict observance of the steps required, full consideration of facts, impartial judgment and completeness of detail in original paper work will eliminate returns of papers and subsequent loss of time."⁴³

Encouraging results of the certification plan were brought out in a report made to General Evans only a few days after the plan went into effect. Many previously unknown deficient officers were being identified; malassignments resulting in inefficiency were being corrected; action was being taken in the cases of higher ranking officers, thus clearing up bottlenecks in operations and in promotion channels; morale was improving among all officers when action was taken against the obviously inefficient; general efficiency and attention to duty was improving in recognition of the fact that those qualities were being recognized by certification; and weaknesses in the indoctrination of junior officers were revealed through interviews with uncertified officers.⁴⁴ In fact, so successful was the AAF program that within a month after its effective date representatives of the Army Ground Forces requested a conference with AAF personnel officers to discuss reclassification, suggesting that they wished to adopt a program similar to that of the AAF.⁴⁵

Satisfaction with the AAF reclassification program was not, however, universal. At a meeting of the General Council on 22 December

1943 Lt. Gen. Joseph T. McNarney, Deputy Chief of Staff, expressed the opinion that "Air Corps figures [regarding relief of officers from active duty] are much too low." He felt that since the Army Air Forces had been given preferential treatment to enable them to meet their commitments, they had the obligation to eliminate by reclassification unsatisfactory officers. "The figures indicate that they are not using this means."⁴⁶

Maj. Gen. B. M. Giles called upon the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, to answer this criticism of the AAF program. It was thought that General McNarney did not take into full consideration the efforts being directed toward eliminating lengthy Reclassification Board hearings by taking advantage of the provision for voluntary resignation contained in AR 605-230. In addition, the program of certification was reported as resulting in "an increasing number of separation actions."⁴⁷ In fact, as of 15 December 1943, 36,735 officers on continental duty had been covered by the certification process. Of this number, 701 were uncertified and 819, marked "Unknown,"* were placed on a probationary trial period. There had been 142 voluntary resignations, 4 demotions, 74 separations through reclassification proceedings, and 99 reassessments through reclassification.⁴⁸ On 4 January 1944 General Giles reported to General McNarney that the certification of all AAF officers on continental duty was expected to be completed by 31 January 1944.⁴⁹

* The term "Unknown" was used when either the subject officer or the commanding officer involved had been too recently assigned for a fair opinion to have been formed.

Some time in January the Secretary of War apparently requested that G-1 simplify AR 605-230. Apropos of that request G-1 recommended that certain current requirements (full efficiency report, informal hearing prior to formal hearing, necessity for officer's defense statements to be sworn, officer to have defense counsel--unless specifically requested and convenient, and a statement at each echelon that "full consideration has been given reassignment") be dropped. The following new provisions were also suggested: (1) a new Form A to provide more assistance and guidance to the initiating commander; (2) the establishment of a form for submission of papers to the subject officer and a mandatory provision that reclassification papers be forwarded 10 days after submission to the subject officer, whether or not he had returned his defense statements; these might be furnished by the officer to the Reclassification Board when he appeared, rather than forwarded with Form A; (3) the permitting of oral testimony, if desired, in lieu of sworn statements; and (4) authorization of the use of a true copy of 66-1 or 66-2 instead of the original. G-1 also thought that whatever changes in the recommendations authorized to Reclassification Boards necessary to bring them into line with existing separation policies should be made. These included (1) adoption of the AMF plan for emphasis on voluntary action and submission of resignation on the commanding officer's decision to reclassify, rather than on the execution of papers as a necessary preliminary; (2) a statement that reclassification procedural provisions are "guides" and that papers were not to be returned from higher echelons for minor errors in procedure; and (3) provision for the reclassification of officers whose performance was barely satisfactory. In this connection, it was suggested that reclassification be authorized for [redacted]

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any officer in the "least competent five per cent" of all officers of the command, due consideration having been given to his grade; that transfer or reassignment of officers in the least competent five per cent be mandatory; that such officers be placed on probation ~~for~~ one year; and that any officer unsatisfactory or remaining in the least competent five per cent in his new position "at any time after three months additional trial" should have reclassification proceedings reopened for separation.⁵⁰

In response to these suggestions, the AAF Plans and Liaison Division made some others: (1) that it be made mandatory for the initiating officer to forward each case within 24 hours, allowing the subject officer either to forward defense papers later or to hand carry them to the Reclassification Board when he appeared before it; (2) that the Commanding General, AAF, be authorized to determine which echelons might order officers directly to the Reclassification Center; (3) that an entirely new and simplified procedure be established for the separation of officers under honorable conditions, one under which the surplus and barely efficient officers would be separated; reclassification would thus be used primarily, if not solely, for officers being disposed of for the good of the service; and (4) that commanders be authorized and directed to maintain a record of disciplinary action or failures of commission or omission on the part of officers whose performance trend suggested them as probable subjects for reclassification.⁵¹

As of 31 January 1944 the certification process had been applied to 106,699 AAF officers, of which 92,261 had been certified as

satisfactory, 1,747 had failed of certification, and 12,691 had been marked "Unknown." With respect to those officers not certified there were 545 actions that did not result in formal reclassification board hearings, including 405 reassessments, 2 demotions, 10 summary discharges, 25 voluntary resignations under honorable conditions, 57 voluntary resignations for the good of the service, 38 other separations, and 3 court-martial. The formal reclassification board cases numbered 185, completed or pending, in which recommendations were made involving 27 reassessments, 6 demotions, 3 cases of relief from active duty, 1 removal from the active list of the Regular Army, 26 honorable discharges, 46 discharges for the good of the service, 13 cases sent to Army hospitals for observation and treatment, and 1 court martial. In 62 cases still pending the recommendation to be made was unknown.⁵² In February 1944 the Plans and Liaison Division had more complete figures than these. According to them, by the end of the previous month 82 per cent (135,274) of the officers on continental duty with separate air forces, commands, the Weather Wing, and the Army Airways Communications System Wing had been covered by the certification process. Of these officers, 2,383 were unsatisfactory and 14,227 were marked "Unknown."⁵³

A conference of A-1 officers was held at Headquarters, AAF, 7-10 February 1944, in which a Committee on Disposition of Unsatisfactory and Surplus Officers reported that, under the currently established procedure, the existing machinery for dealing with unsatisfactory officers was generally effective and had been of definite value in improving the morale and the efficiency of other officers.

The Committee went on to point out, however, that the machinery had not been used as it should have been; the necessity and the value of appropriately disposing of unsatisfactory officers had not been sufficiently impressed upon commanders in the lower and middle echelons. It was thought that the major impediments in the program were (1) a lack of moral fortitude on the part of commanders to identify unsatisfactory officers and initiate action with regard to them; (2) reluctance on the part of commanders to initiate reclassification because of the uncertainty about securing replacements; (3) the intricate paperwork involved in the preparation of a reclassification case; (4) failure on the part of commanders to bring shortcomings to the attention of subordinates; and (5) the difficulty of evaluating and properly disposing of junior officers during the short period of time spent in the Operational Training Unit. The Committee therefore recommended (1) that there be established in all commands a continuous program of indoctrination of commanders as to the necessity for eliminating unsatisfactory officers from the AAF; (2) that commanders should assign priority to replacements for vacancies created by elimination of unsatisfactory officers; and (3) that officers be designated at appropriate levels to specialize in the administrative procedures required in the handling of unsatisfactory officers and to be available for help to commanders on call. The Committee also recommended that certification be accomplished at least semiannually except in those commands where the turnover rate of officers was high, in which a quarterly certification would be preferable.⁵⁴

A few days after the conference ended, the Chief of Air Staff sent a copy of the above report, together with a letter, to the commanding general of each continental air force and command. The letter established "simple standards" for determining unsatisfactory officers and requested complete recertification of all officers on continental duty to be completed by 15 April 1944, a full report of which was to be submitted to AAF Headquarters not later than 30 April 1944. In addition, the letter effectuated certain recommendations made by the A-1 conference and established a policy guide with regard to relief from active duty of officers for whom no satisfactory assignments then remained.⁵⁵ The report called for in the letter was to be in addition to one requested by the Chief of Staff in a telegram dated 17 February 1944.⁵⁶

The "simple standards" for determining unsatisfactory officers referred to above were as follows: (1) inability to accomplish assigned duties commensurate with grade and training promptly and efficiently without close supervision; (2) a record of bad judgment; (3) a record of mistakes of commission or omission; (4) the possession of weak traits of character, lack of integrity, or habits that either affect efficient performance, reflect upon the service, or result in lack of respect from his subordinates; (5) lack of aggressiveness or marked indolence; (6) inadequate training or lack of up-to-date military skill commensurate with grade; (7) unawareness of, or failure to correct, inefficient performance, bad judgment, or mistakes on the part of his subordinates; and (8) any other type of malperformance that adversely affects the AAF mission. Another

interesting point brought out in this letter is that in the certification to be completed in April no officer who had not himself been certified as satisfactory was to certify his subordinates.

Since the report due on or before 30 April 1944 was not to be cumulative but was to cover only the period from 1 March through 15 April, it may be of interest to look at the figures representing the status of the program as of 29 February 1944. To that date the following actions had been taken with respect to unsatisfactory officers: 692 separations, including 342 voluntary resignations, of which 114 were honorable and 226 for the good of the service, 17 demotions, 818 transfers, and 49 formal reclassification cases still pending.⁵⁸

The reaction expressed by an officer of the Third Air Force as to the progress of the campaign to eliminate unsatisfactory officers was probably typical of that experienced by many others throughout the AF:

During the recertification of all officers and at a recent conference of the Reclassification Board members and all Officer Qualification Committees of this Air Force, together with a representative of your CG, AAF⁵⁹ headquarters, a marked degree of enthusiasm has been shown with a view toward vigorous prosecution in connection with the demotion or separation of unsatisfactory officer personnel. As a result of the initial certification and the recertification by this HQ., all officers in this Air Force have become cognizant of the fact that their performance of duty, conduct, and habits and traits of character must meet certain standards in order for them to remain on duty as officers for the duration of this war.

Promised Revision of AR 605-230 and AR 605-275 (1944)

During the spring and summer of 1944 another revision of AR 605-230 was in progress. A representative of the Classification and Replacement Branch of The Adjutant General's office observed

that this revision should be designed to make reclassification more easily accomplished by allowing field commanders wide freedom of action to insure the efficiency of their commands despite the possibility, in this case, of a few injustices. He also thought provision should be made for an appeal to an impartial board by any officer who felt that he had been unfairly treated. "The common law concept of burden of proof and assuming a person innocent until found guilty should not apply. These are not criminal proceedings nor disciplinary proceedings, and the concept should be one of permitting the Army to rid itself of some of the questionable human material that by error has been in positions of leadership." He pointed out that the penalty for bad leadership in the Army is visited upon innocent soldiers. Particular objection was made to the current requirement that sworn statements be secured from witnesses not available to testify in person; in many instances the carrying out of this provision involved inordinate delay.⁶⁰ Along with this proposed revision of AR 605-230 there was also pending a proposed revision of AR 605-275. With reference to proposals submitted by G-1 for AAF approval, the Plans and Liaison Division expressed the opinion that the proposed procedures would be more, rather than less, unwieldy and burdensome.⁶¹

In mid-July representatives of the AAF Classification and Separation Branch met with representatives of the Army Service Forces, Army Ground Forces, and G-1 to consider the revision of AR 605-230. AAF suggestions made previously were agreed to, the most important detail of which was the elimination of some paper work by using, instead of formal reclassification or other supporting papers, an

interview summary sheet in substantiating resignations. Also, the commanding general was to be authorized to take final action in demotion cases. The "GI Bill of Rights" made necessary a change in the type of discharges since a discharge or resignation "for the good of the service" had become, in effect, a dishonorable discharge; some administrative action by the War Department would be necessary to convert some discharges already issued. The conference also agreed to adopt the AAF principle for determining whether a discharge should be honorable or otherwise, namely, when the recommendation for reclassification was the result of factors over which the officer had no control, he would receive an honorable discharge, and when the decision was the result of factors over which he did have control, the discharge would be without specification as to character. It was believed that with these revisions of AR 605-230 faster and fairer separation would result.

Pending action on the revision of AR 605-230, a number of letters were sent to all continental air forces and commands expressing dissatisfaction with the result thus far obtained in the attempt to eliminate all inefficient and undesirable officers from the AAF. AAF Headquarters was conducting a comprehensive study to discover the reasons for the relative ineffectiveness of the AAF campaign--particularly for the sharp decline in separations during the month of June--so that corrective action could be taken.⁶³

One officer, speaking from experience in an overseas theater, was convinced that the difficulty in separating or demoting officers who did not measure up to required standards could be attributed to

the following circumstances: (1) lack of definite instruction from the War Department and Headquarters, AAF; (2) the failure of certain members of the theater staff to give sympathetic cooperation; and (3) a feeling that existed in the overseas theater that they should not be burdened with the necessity of taking such administrative action when they were busy with their combat duties.⁶⁴ Only the first of these points applied to the continental air forces; but it was an important one. Despite all the efforts of G-1 and Headquarters, AAF, to clarify matters, there was still much confusion.

The Secretary of War's Separations Board

The AAF program for disposing of unsatisfactory officers had long been encountering difficulties caused by the Secretary of War's Separations Board. On 28 January 1944 the Plans and Liaison Division complained that an increasing number of cases submitted by Headquarters, AAF, to The Adjutant General's office were being returned for reasons not understood by the Division. It was thought that the trouble lay in the fact that the newly-appointed Secretary of War's Separations Board had not yet established a fixed policy, or, if it had, had not communicated it to the AAF authorities concerned. G-1 agreed to take the matter up with the Board and make every effort to have a statement of policy formulated immediately.⁶⁵

Again on 2 February 1944 the Plans and Liaison Division took up the question of unnecessary returns of resignations. In some instances The Adjutant General, acting presumably for the Secretary of War's Separations Board, requested affidavits and reclassification papers that did not exist because they had not been thought necessary.

The Board thought that separation cases should contain full information regarding specific reasons for separation, particularly those for the good of the service, in order to avoid any future difficulties if the cases should be reopened. The Plans and Liaison Division concurred in principle but pointed out that it was unnecessary to have affidavits and other substantiating papers when the endorsements to resignations contain dates, places, and other pertinent facts. Without the papers, however, it would be difficult to support a statement that the officer had been "grounded by a Flying Evaluation Board because of lack of intestinal fortitude."⁶⁶

Early in March General Evans sent a memo to the Chief of Staff requesting that the policy be clarified regarding the separation of officers under honorable and other than honorable conditions, as well as that regarding the type and degree of supporting evidence necessary for action upon resignations of unsatisfactory officers. Included with the memo was a brief, describing cases initiated within the AAF, submitted to The Adjutant General and returned as an indication of non-concurrence.⁶⁷ A conference on 20 March 1944, more than two weeks later, between representatives of the AAF Plans and Liaison Division and of G-1 brought out the fact that the brief was still under consideration by the Separations Board. The AAF representatives pointed out that the officers whose cases were discussed in the brief, not having been assigned to any duty, had become a morale problem and that consequently a prompt decision on the part of the Board was most desirable.⁶⁸ Three days later no action had yet been taken. G-1 was reminded that some of the officers whose disposition depended upon

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the requested determination of policy had been unassigned at Re-classification Centers for more than two months; thereupon immediate action was promised.

The promised action finally came in the form of a memo from the President of the Separations Board to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1. Among the suggestions made by the Board, the most important were (1) that charges must be specific and must be supported by statements (in the case of officers) or affidavits from persons in a position to know the facts, and (2) that the case submitted must make clear that an officer submitting a resignation knew fully and clearly the reasons for his proposed reclassification and the nature and consequences of his resigning.⁶⁹ In addition, the Board wrote that it

understands and concurs in the desire of the Army Air Forces to expedite action and eliminate unnecessary paper work in cases where a resignation is submitted. The Board, however, is charged with the review and the directing of final action in the name of the Secretary of War in such cases, and the discharge of that duty necessarily involves the making of a determination by the Board as to whether or not such separation should be under honorable conditions. Insofar as it can possibly do so the Board must obviate the possibility of a miscarriage of justice and also protect the Secretary of War against criticism because of the separation or the conditions under which made.⁷⁰

The AAF concurred in the comments of the Separations Board⁷¹ and immediately sent out telegrams revising their instructions to the field. A resignation submitted by an officer had to clearly state the reasons as to why he was recommended for reclassification, and the indorsement of the station commander had to state the specific facts which caused him to initiate recommendation for reclassification proceedings and caused him to approve the resignation

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of the officer concerned. Each of these two items was to be supported by affidavits or certificates.⁷²

It was soon discovered, however, that the latter of the above two requirements constituted a barrier in obtaining resignations in lieu of reclassification. The matter was discussed on 21 April 1944 at a meeting of the Separations Board at which the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, and the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, A-1, were present. G-1 recommended that the new requirement be dropped,⁷³ and on the following day the Plans and Liaison Division stated that authority could be obtained "to revert to the more simple procedure formerly in effect and discontinue the lately introduced methods which are interfering with voluntary resignations."⁷⁴ No evidence is available, however, that the requirement in question was ever formally rescinded.

During the month of May resignations in lieu of reclassification totaled 50, of which 16 were under honorable conditions and 34 for the good of the service. Reclassification Board action resulted in 38 discharges, 24 other than honorable and 14 honorable. Resignations for the good of the service (under AR 605-275) totaled 29 bringing the complete total of discharges in May to 117. During June these figures dropped alarmingly. There were only 32 resignations in lieu of reclassification, 11 of them honorable, 21 otherwise. Reclassification Board action brought about 4 discharges other than honorable and 3 honorable discharges, a total of only 7, and there were 20 resignations for the good of the service. The total figure for the month--representing all the unsatisfactory officers eliminated from the service--was 59, a decline of 50 per cent from the preceding month.⁷⁵

A memorandum was prepared for submission by A-1 to the Chief of Staff, Army Air Forces, recommending that the commanding generals of all continental air forces and commands be directed to explain the reasons for the decreased number of recommendations for separation of unsatisfactory officers during June.⁷⁶ Headquarters, AAF, knew very well that one most important reason was the fact that the Secretary of War's Separations Board had been returning cases that had been submitted to them without giving any reason for their refusal to approve the recommendations. Requests made by the AAF to the Separations Board and to G-1 for reasons for their disapproval in certain cases had themselves been disapproved or ignored. Prior to 21 June 1944 Headquarters, AAF, had added to the confusion in the field by merely returning these cases through channels to the initiating commander just as the papers were received from The Adjutant General, without attempting any explanation of their own for the War Department's action. The field commanders, quite naturally, were hopelessly puzzled when cases which they had considered properly prepared and adequately supported came back to them disapproved.⁷⁷

As soon as it was realized that this confusion in the field existed, Headquarters, AAF, took steps to correct the situation. A record was kept of cases returned disapproved by The Adjutant General and attempts were made to learn verbally from the Separations Board the reason for their disapproval. Whatever information could be secured was then passed on to the field. Moreover, A-1 would carefully review all cases before submitting them to The Adjutant General and would return for correction any that seemed to be inadequately supported.⁷⁸

Toward the end of July information was received at Headquarters, AAF, that the War Department had finally approved the request that the Separations Board state their reasons in each case not favorably considered. At the same time it was learned that the Separations Board would automatically approve the separation of any officer who was found unsatisfactory or inefficient in two different assignments by two different reclassification boards.⁷⁹ Before the middle of August, however, complaint was made by the Classification and Separations Branch of a notice received from The Adjutant General directing that in a reclassification case not favorably considered by the Separations Board, the officer would be reassigned and the case would be filed in the War Department. This procedure was clearly not in conformity with the War Department directive that the Board be required to explain fully the reason for disapproval of reclassification cases.⁸⁰ A representative of G-1 gave assurances that steps would be taken to insure the enforcement of the policy.

The Problem of Unsatisfactory Officers Returned from Overseas

As overseas commands gained combat experience they discovered that some of their officers were either inefficient, or undesirable, or both. It seems to have been common practice for some overseas commanders, with or without authorization from Washington, to send such officers back to the United States instead of initiating reclassification proceedings against them. Such commanders thus relieved themselves of both an administrative burden and an unpleasant duty. The officers who were returned then had to be reassigned and kept in the new assignment

long enough for their lack of fitness to be fully determined before demotion or separation proceedings could be started. This practice threw an added burden on the commanders of the continental air forces and commands to which such officers were assigned; they were already laboring to eliminate the inefficient and undesirable from their commands and to have new additions in these categories as all but intolerable. In August 1944, the acting Chief of Air Staff wrote to the Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, warning him that no unsatisfactory officers were to be returned to the United States without either reclassification or relief from active duty proceedings being initiated against them.⁸¹ Subsequently, AF Headquarters, Mediterranean Theater of Operations, sent to all subordinate air forces and commands a directive to the same effect. At the same time, the entire certification and reclassification procedure of the AF was put into effect in each air force and command in the theater.⁸² Thus the problem seems to have been solved; at least, no further complaints were found.

Final Revision of AR 605-230

The revision of AR 605-230, which had been under consideration for several months, was finally published on 7 August 1944. It authorized minor modifications in administrative procedure deemed appropriate for particular commands or situations and provided that papers would not be returned for correction except where the rights of the officer concerned had been prejudiced or where the evidence presented was insufficient as a basis for sound decision. As a further expedient, a reclassification board might recommend that an officer be given an honorable discharge if the reclassification action resulted from deficiencies over which the officer had no control;

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otherwise the discharge was to be without specification. Neither in discharges resulting from reclassification board proceedings nor in those resulting from resignations submitted in lieu of reclassification were the words "for the good of the service" to be used. Provision was also made for the demotion of an officer who held a commission in the National Guard or the Officers' Reserve Corps and whose grade in the Army of the United States was no higher than his permanent grade. Such an officer might be relieved from active duty and then, without affecting his grade in the inactive status, be reappointed to a lower grade in the AUS.

The AAF standard operating procedure manual on disposition of unsatisfactory officers, revised in the light of the changes in AR 605-230, was reviewed by representatives of G-1; they suggested a few changes in phraseology and then approved the entire manual. In fact, they asked for extra copies to send to the Army Service Forces, Army Ground Forces, and all overseas commanders as an example of good implementation of a regulation.⁸³

Perhaps the revision of AR 605-230 provided the necessary stimulus; perhaps the campaign to eliminate unsatisfactory officers, slow in gaining momentum, had finally got into high gear; in any event, after the alarming slump in June the number of separation cases substantially increased. In July the Classification and Separations Branch received 479 cases, of which 477 cases were processed during the month; in August the total number received was 819, of which 647 cases were processed.⁸⁴ The figures for September were not available, but in October 708 cases were processed, of which 187 were reclassification cases, resignations, and discharges,⁸⁵ the

remainder being surplus officers over 36 years of age who were relieved from active duty, or Army Retiring Board cases. The November total was about the same--712 instead of 703--but the proportion of discharges, resignations, and reclassification cases was considerably higher--259 instead of 187.⁸⁶ In December the record total of 757 was reached, but the number of reclassification cases, resignations,⁸⁷ and discharges dropped to 172.

A study made early in January revealed that during the second half of 1944, an average of 665 officers was separated from the AAF each month.⁸⁸ Of the 665, however, 353 were caused by death or total disability; only 99 were discharges. The 213 "Other" would presumably include resignations in lieu of reclassification, along with other resignations and cases of relief from active duty.⁸⁹ Hence the AAF authorities were still not satisfied with the progress made to date in ridding the AAF of unsatisfactory officers.

General Arnold had verbally informed field commanders that they were to remove from duty and report to Headquarters, AAF, any officer deemed to be incompetent. Headquarters, AAF, would then remove these incompetents from the command and institute Public Law 190 or reclassification proceedings against them, or assign them to positions suited to their capabilities.⁹⁰ At the same time it was recommended that a "190" board be established at AAF Headquarters, which would review cases of Regular Army officers who were recommended by The Adjutant General for appearance before it.⁹¹ No objection to the idea was expressed by G-1, but a staff study was to be made in connection with the matter.⁹² A few weeks later a recommendation was

received from G-1 that a single War Department 190 Board be appointed to hear the cases of all Regular Army officers who had been recommended for separation and desired to appear before a board. Under this plan these officers would be heard by a 190 Board instead of a Reclassification Board. It was also recommended that a panel of the 190 Board review the efficiency ratings of all Regular Army officers below a certain level with a view to taking action to relieve these officers from active duty.⁹³

Though progress had undoubtedly been made, a report by a Committee on Disposition of Unsatisfactory and Surplus Officers, dated 12 February 1945, voiced the now familiar complaint that "though adequate machinery has been provided to identify and eliminate unsatisfactory officers, the effort to date has not been prosecuted as expeditiously and vigorously as might have been possible or was reasonable to expect."⁹⁴ The Committee recommended a continuous program of indoctrination for all commanders as to the necessity for elimination of unsatisfactory officers from the AAF, and, among other things, for continuous operation of Officer Qualification Committees.⁹⁵

One of the main difficulties in ridding the AAF of incompetents and undesirables lay in the fact that there was often too much delay in the processing of resignation papers. Investigation disclosed that some of the delays were warranted, but others were caused by a lack of standardized procedures for handling all types of cases, of follow-up action, of any system governing intra-office transmission within divisions, and of complete records. It was therefore recommended (1) that additional personnel be assigned to the Separations Section

in the office of the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, or that the Section be relieved of some of its other duties in order to have more time available for separation cases; (2) that resignations in lieu of reclassification and unconditional resignations be handled through Headquarters, AAF, from the time first received until finally dispatched to The Adjutant General; (3) that a system be inaugurated by the Separations Section to follow up its cases after forwarding to The Adjutant General's office; (4) that Headquarters, Continental Air Forces, be admonished to provide a more expeditious handling for Inspector General Action Letters in all echelons; and (5) that approximately 30 days after recommendations were placed in effect, a survey be made to determine whether or not there was then any delay in the handling of the cases.⁹⁶

The recommendation that more personnel be assigned to the Separations Section was carried out with good results. At the end of February the Section reported that the backlog of officers' separations cases which had been prevalent in December and January had been cleared up and that the Section found itself able to process all ordinary cases in three days. Problematic cases would take longer since they would require review by the Air Judge Advocate, Air Surgeon, Air Inspector, or Officers' Branch. At the same time it was pointed out that once papers were forwarded to The Adjutant General's office, between three and four weeks elapsed before final action was taken.⁹⁷ Early in April it was reported that The Adjutant General's office had speeded up its handling of separation cases. Such delay as still existed came between the initiating of proceedings and the arrival of papers at Headquarters, AAF.⁹⁸

Other delays were due to irregular handling of resignation cases in the field. Despite the clear enunciation of policy contained in AR 605-275, 9 November 1944, and in AAF Letter 35-40, 2 November 1944, several of the lower echelons were continuing to stop resignation cases and return them, because of some irregularity--fancied or real--in the papers, to the initiating commanders. This was directly contrary to policy. Any echelon involved might approve or disapprove a resignation, but it had no right to halt the onward progress of a case. All cases, approved or disapproved, were to be forwarded through channels to The Adjutant General for final action.⁹⁹ A suggestion was made to send a letter to each field commander in the hope that handling as expeditious as that which then prevailed at Headquarters, AAF, might be achieved in the field.¹⁰⁰

Miscellaneous Separation Problems

Several miscellaneous problems involved in the separation of AAF officers may well be considered here.

The problem of retired officers recalled to active duty: In its desperate need for officers the AAF had recalled to active duty a number of retired officers, some of whom, under the strain of war and advancing years, failed to perform their duties satisfactorily. Since several of these officers were of high rank, the disposition of them could prove very embarrassing to AAF authorities. In August 1943 General Arnold instructed that each case of release or retention of over-age retired officers be the subject of board action, the board to be as senior as possible with General Bevans, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, as one of its members. The action

of the board was to be a recommendation subject to the approval, in each case, of the Chief of Air Staff.¹⁰¹ Three months later letters were sent over the signature of General Giles--in one case the signature was that of General Arnold--to the commanding general of each air force and command commenting upon the existence of dead wood among AAF generals and calling upon the addressee to report the names of all generals in his command who were "incapable of properly discharging the responsibilities of their present rank."¹⁰² An AAF General Officer Board in June 1944 sent to the Chief of Air Staff a list of 5 major generals and 15 brigadier generals recommending that the officers named be persuaded to seek retirement for physical disability so that they might be retired in the grade then held (in each case higher than the permanent grade), and be replaced by "other, and for the most part, younger officers."¹⁰³ It seems unlikely that the whole problem of over-age retired officers was solved by the retirement of 20 generals; but no evidence was found of other action or other complaints.

Army Retiring Board cases: The Separations Section had observed a number of cases handled by Army Retiring Boards which perhaps would more properly have been handled by Reclassification Boards, cases in which the reason for the subject officer's failure to perform his duties satisfactorily was not, strictly speaking, a physical disability but rather the possession of undesirable habits and traits of character.¹⁰⁴ In taking over the function of processing Army Retiring Board cases--a function formerly performed by the Assistant Executive, Military Personnel Division--the Separations Section would receive cases directly from the Office of The Air Surgeon.

Having reviewed the case, the Section would either transmit it to The Adjutant General, through The Surgeon General, recommending that the officer not be continued on active duty, or forward the case--if it were that of an officer recommended for limited service--to the Planning Section, Officers' Branch, for consideration with a view to possible assignment. In the event a suitable assignment could be found, recommendation was to be made by indorsement to The Adjutant General that the officer be assigned in a limited service capacity; if none of these existed, recommendation would be made that the officer be retired from active duty. Particular attention was to be paid to all cases that appeared not to fall within the purview of retirement procedure but should properly have been disposed of by other administrative measures.¹⁰⁵ Procedure was also agreed upon for the disposition of officer personnel who were placed on limited service status by hospital disposition boards. Necessary data on these officers was to be wired by the disposition board to Headquarters, AAF; it would then be determined by the Classification and Separations Branch whether a given officer should be placed on limited service and retained or ordered to appear before an Army Retiring Board.¹⁰⁶

In May 1945 The Air Surgeon complained that officers who were scheduled to appear before AAF Army Retiring Boards were having their cases delayed approximately one month. The reason for the delay was the difficulty in getting board members together (service on a retiring board was an additional duty, and most officers were fully occupied with their primary duties). To remedy this situation an effort was made to have Army Retirement Board membership in the AAF

made a primary duty,¹⁰⁷ but there is no evidence to indicate that the effort was successful.

Fear of flying cases: One of the most vexing and harassing of all reclassification problems was that which had to do with cases of flying officers who refused to fly or had a fear of flying. Such cases were reported through the first 9 months of 1944 at a rate of less than 20 a month,* but the figure suddenly rose in October to 63 and for the first 18 days of November it was 40. The rise in the number of cases was thought to indicate that the commands were becoming indoctrinated with AF policies, so that the practice of assigning officers who were afraid to fly to administrative positions was rapidly diminishing. G-1 had approved, in November 1944, the AAF practice of separating officers who had a fear of flying, without specification as to the character of the discharge.¹⁰⁸

Early in December a definite policy was laid down in a letter from General Giles to the commanding generals of all air forces and commands. It provided that rated officers who were performing unsatisfactory flying duty would be referred by the unit commander to the local flight surgeon for a physical examination. If found physically disqualified for flying, the individual might be grounded, recommended for temporary suspension or indefinite suspension; if

* The month-by-month figures are: January, 18; February, 10; March, 13; April, 11; May, 22; June, 13; July, 18; August, 18; September, 15; October, 63; November (first 18 days only), 40. (Daily Diary, Classification and Separations Branch, 2-3 Dec. 1944.)

found physically qualified for flying, he would be ordered to appear before a local Flying Evaluation Board. If the local flight surgeon was unable to determine the officer's physical qualifications for flying, an appearance before a Central Medical Examining Board was called for. The decision of the local Flying Evaluation Board was to be reviewed by the commanding general of the air force or command concerned. If the decision of the local board was not concurred in, the officer would be ordered to appear before a Central Flying Evaluation Board but such reference was to be kept to a minimum. Central Flying Evaluation Boards were not to be allowed to become boards of appeal from decisions of local boards. If a rated officer refused to fly, or refused to fly the airplane to which he was assigned, he would be asked to put his refusal in writing over his signature. If he refused to make such a written declaration, statements from persons who heard the refusal would be submitted to the Flying Evaluation Board as evidence. Consideration was to be given to harrowing experiences which might have resulted in a temporary or permanent lack of incentive for flying, but since this was essentially a medical condition, consideration would be given to it in the physical examination but ignored by the Flying Evaluation Board.¹⁰⁹

Nothing in the letter relating to the re-evaluation of rated officers was to be construed as applying to rated officers of mature judgment and extensive service. It was to be assumed that such officers might be valuable to the AAF in assignments that did not require flying. But young officers who had been trained and commissioned for the sole purpose of flying were of value only in that

role; if they refused to perform it, they were to be eliminated from the AF. An officer removed from flying status because of physical reasons, or for reasons where lack of incentive was not the controlling factor, might be reassigned to administrative duties if his education, experience, or skill indicated that he would be of continued use as an officer. Flagrant cases of refusal to fly, serious wilful violation of flying regulations, and other appropriate cases would call for strong disciplinary action such as General Court Martial. In other cases, reclassification proceedings under AR 605-220 were to be instituted, or the officer might submit his voluntary resignation under the provisions of AR 605-275.¹¹⁰

Apparently the policy of giving a discharge without specification of character to officers who failed to perform their flying duties for fear of flying or from "lack of incentive for flying" had evolved during the last part of 1944. In a case that began before that policy had developed, a lieutenant was recommended by the Reclassification Board for an honorable discharge; the recommendation was approved by the commanding general and forwarded to The Adjutant General, who returned it disapproved. The Board considered the case again and made the same recommendation; again the general approved it and again The Adjutant General disapproved. A new board was appointed and tried, unsuccessfully, to unearth more evidence; consequently, it reached the same decision as its predecessor and again the case went to The Adjutant General. This time General Yount, the commanding general involved, wrote a strong letter to General Giles urging that each of these fear of flying cases "be considered on its merits and not in

accordance with a fixed policy which cannot apply with fairness in all cases."*¹¹¹

The Secretary of War's Separations Board did not always adhere to the policy of discharging without specification as to character all officers who were recommended for separation because of fear of flying. In several cases submitted to The Adjutant General in the spring of 1945 the Separations Board recommended honorable discharge instead of the discharge without specification and such cases were said to have become more numerous during the month of March.¹¹² Several officers in the same category, reported by Headquarters, Continental Air Forces, for reclassification, were recommended for honorable discharges instead of discharges without specification as to character.¹¹³

On 30 May 1945 a conference, attended by Generals Eaker, Persons, and Reber, was held to consider the advisability of a change of policy in fear of flying cases, and on the same day General Anderson ordered a study to be made with a view to assuring humane review of each case of fear of flying. Pending the completion of the study and the determination of a new policy, General Anderson directed that each fear of flying case be referred first to him and then to General Eaker.¹¹⁴ On the following day General Eaker suggested to

* In the case just referred to, the lieutenant in question did not refuse to fly and did not admit fear of flying; but the flight surgeon who examined him decided that the sleeplessness and the nervous tension that made it impossible for him safely to perform his flying duties were the result of subconscious fear and consequently grounded him.

General Arnold that officers who were reclassified for fear of flying be disgrated, deprived of their commissions, and returned to an enlisted status in which non-flying duties only would be involved.¹¹⁵

Legislation was required, however, to permit the reduction of officers to enlisted status, and pending the passage of such legislation it was decided to continue the existing policy of recommending discharge without specification as to character for all officers reclassified for fear of flying. A suggested interim policy involving loss of rating, grounding, and reassignment to administrative duties was disapproved. The War Department felt that legislation such as the AAF wanted would be difficult to secure, and, as a possible solution to the immediate problem, it was suggested that the officers in question be honorably discharged but subject to Selective Service induction.

In mid-August all cases involving fear of flying that had been processed after 1 June 1945 were returned to the Separations Section for reprocessing under the new policy: recommendation for honorable discharge, followed by immediate reinduction in an enlisted status. An alternative, to be adopted if the officer possessed any specialized qualifications valuable to the AAF, was to recommend reassignment to ground or technical duties. This policy, after being approved by the War Department, struck a snag when the Secretary of War's Separations Board pointed out that the Selective Service Act stated that officers who have been honorably discharged will not be reinducted. Again it was necessary to have all pending cases, by that time 60 in

number, returned to the Separations Section for reprocessing. It was proposed either that a new policy be adopted, providing for discrediting and reassignment, or that there be a return to the old policy of recommending discharge without specification as to character. General Baker approved the first alternative on 26 October 1945 and before the middle of November the Separations Section had reprocessed the cases--77 of them by that time. War Department approval of the new policy--dated 5 November 1945 but received by the Separations Section on 26 November--was granted, but with the stipulation that all cases initiated prior to 14 August 1945 be handled as in the past--by discharge without specification. This time it was necessary to send telegrams to all commands requesting them to return all cases that had been sent to their recommending reassignment. By 12 December 1945 all the cases had been reprocessed and forwarded to The Adjutant General, the recommendation in most instances calling for discharge without specification as to the character thereof, and immediate reinduction.¹¹⁶

The last word on fear of flying cases was contained in AAF Letter 35-300, dated 13 December 1945. It provided that an officer found to be physically qualified for flying but failing in the performance of his flying duties be ordered before a flying evaluation board. If the board found that he had a fear of flying, fear of flying certain types of aircraft, or had a lack of incentive for flying, or had simply refused to fly, he would--subject to approval of the board's finding by Headquarters, AAF--be permanently removed from all flying duties, prohibited from wearing the aviation badge, and assigned to

ground duties at a station where few, if any, flying personnel were assigned and where little flying was conducted. As a ground officer, he would be eligible for transfer overseas. Exceptions were made for officers whose cases had been initiated before 14 August 1945 and for combat returnees who had completed a combat tour under honorable conditions. The former were to be discharged without specification as to character; the latter might be separated from the service under readjustment regulations or, upon request, be removed from flying status and retained as ground officers while still wearing the aviation badge.¹¹⁷

Cases of flying deficiency not due to fear of flying: There were many officers who, after being trained and commissioned for flying, proved to be unable to perform flying duties satisfactorily, but whose inability to fly was not due to fear. In some instances physical reasons were responsible; in others, pure lack of flying proficiency was the difficulty. In January 1945, when the Army Ground Forces were in dire need of replacements, a procedure was arranged through informal liaison with G-1 whereby rated officers, who were removed from flying because of lack of flying proficiency or for physical reasons, would be offered to the ground forces for retraining and reassignment to ground force commands.¹¹⁸ Of course, this procedure was to be applied only to officers for whom there was no need in the AAF; those with special skills or experience that could be profitably used in the AF would be retained and reassigned to ground duties. A few days later the observation was made that the new procedure would apply only to officers in company grades who had had

no combat experience. Officers offered to the ground forces and accepted by them would be notified; any officer so accepted would have to certify in writing that he was willing to make the transfer. Any officer who did not concur was to be honorably discharged,¹¹⁹ as were those not wanted by either AAF or AGF. At first each case was sent to the Army Ground Forces and returned by them to Headquarters, AAF, before being submitted to The Adjutant General for final action. In March a more expeditious procedure was adopted: the return trip to Headquarters, AAF, was eliminated and by having the Army Ground Forces send the cases direct to The Adjutant General approximately one week's time was saved in reaching a final decision.¹²⁰ In October it was noted that rated officers removed from flying for lack of flying proficiency or for physical reasons, who had no qualifications vitally needed in the AAF, were no longer being offered for transfer to the Army Ground Forces; with the cessation of hostilities the ground forces, of course, had no need for their services.¹²¹

Release of pregnant nurses: Another problem had to do with the discharge of nurses for pregnancy.* Colonel Morhouse of the Station Hospital at Mitchel Field, N. Y., had complained to the commanding officer there that a new system put into effect in January 1945 was impairing the discharge of pregnant nurses. He pointed out that under the system in practice from 22 September 1944 to 3 January 1945 the

* Nothing was found in AAF files about the discharge for pregnancy of members of the Women's Army Corps; apparently such discharges were handled within their own organization.

average time elapsing between the arrival of 40 nurses in the United States and their release to inactive status was six days. Eight nurses had been discharged under the new system, and the average elapsed time between their arrival in the United States and separation from the service was 15 days.¹²² A reply from the Office of The Air Surgeon pointed out that information received from The Adjutant General indicated that the average time required to issue orders discharging nurses for pregnancy, upon receipt of the necessary information from the station or installation concerned, was only three or four days. The possibility of granting authority to issue discharges to debarkation hospitals was being studied, however, and The Air Surgeon wanted any available information to substantiate the feasibility of that method.¹²³ The Adjutant General turned a deaf ear to this plea for a return to the former practice. He said that the method formerly in use had led to numerous errors, some of which were still being corrected. One of the mistakes was the relief from active duty of Regular Army and non-AUS nurses who, having no legal inactive status, should have been discharged; another was the discharge of some AUS nurses who should only have been relieved from active duty. In some instances nurses who should have been retained for physical or other reasons had been prematurely separated, and there had also been confusion in Women's Army Corps and Army Nurse Corps procedures.¹²⁴ The Adjutant General suggested that if the request for separation were sent to his office by radio as soon as the diagnosis of pregnancy was established, the time for processing in his office could be cut to even less than four days (his original

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estimate). Necessary reports could later be sent by mail.¹²⁵ The Classification and Separations Branch, established in June 1944, processed no cases of release of nurses for pregnancy during the first two months of its existence. In August there were 22 cases; in September, 46; in October, 35; in November, 71; in December, 33; in January 1945 there were 78; in February, 72; in March, 60; in April, 70; in May, 44; and in June, 77.¹²⁶

Disposition of Unsatisfactory Officers in 1945

During the first part of 1945 the effort to rid the AAF of unsuitable and inefficient officers went on unremittingly. In January, 104 officers were recommended for separation from the service; in February, 202; in March, 175; in April, 118; in May, 118; and in June, 144.¹²⁷ With the cessation of hostilities in Europe and the prospect of a one-front war, there was no longer the critical urgency to weed out the unfit. There were thousands of combat-tried veterans of fighting in Europe and North Africa; to select only the best fitted of these for redeployment to the Pacific would not be an insuperable task. Moreover, although an early termination of hostilities against the Japanese was by no means confidently expected, interest at AAF Headquarters had already shifted to the problem of selecting the relatively small number of officers need to man the interim and post war forces. As of 25 June 1945, the Officer Evaluation Survey had covered more than 300,000 officers, of whom more than 100,000 had been recommended as qualified for commissions in the Regular Army, another 245,000 recommended for Organized Reserve commissions,

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and only 54,000 were not recommended for any future commissioned service.¹²⁸ These figures would seem to indicate--and the efficiency of the AAF in combat bears the statement out--that the AAF had done well in its program of eliminating unsatisfactory officers.

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Chapter V

THE DISPOSITION OF SATISFACTORY AAF OFFICERS

Before 7 December 1941 the matter of releasing officers from active duty seems to have been relatively simple. Regular Army officers were retired for disability or after the stipulated period of service. Officers of the National Guard and the Reserve were called to active duty for specific tours, generally not very long ones; it was usually possible for them to make arrangements beforehand so that nothing short of a sudden calamity would require their presence at home before the end of a tour of duty. It would appear, however, that authority was given in AR 140-5 either for the outright discharge of a Reserve officer¹ or for his relief from active duty. At least, there is a provision that "an officer may be relieved from assignment by the commander having jurisdiction at the officer's own request at any time except during the period of war,"² in which relief from assignment might be interpreted as return to inactive status rather than transfer to another active duty assignment. During 1941 it was recognized that active service might in some cases involve undue hardship, and provision was made for relief in such cases.³

With the entrance of the United States into the war the situation changed. For a time the need for officers was so urgent that any man who had been commissioned found it extremely difficult to get out of uniform. Some officers were released to take positions in essential industry, and a few cases of undue hardship were recognized, but, in general, during the first months of

the war the only officers released were the inept and the unfit. In fact, such was the need for officers that even the misfits were separated in numbers too few to suit the Commanding General, AAF and the Chief of Staff.*

The Disposition of Surplus Officers

By the summer of 1943 the successful completion of the officer procurement program was in sight,¹ and the problem of disposing of those officers who were already, or would soon become, surplus to the requirements of the AAF was beginning to cause concern. The General Council, at its meeting on 23 August 1943, discussed a proposed circular prepared by the Army Service Forces which would have provided for the elimination from the service of

a. Any company grade officer over 45 years of age and any field grade officer over 55 years of age (regardless of component) for whom no suitable position exists commensurate with his grade.

b. Any Army of the United States officer appointed directly from civil life for whom no suitable position exists commensurate with his grade and qualifications.⁴

It seems to have been felt that the provisions of the proposed circular were too arbitrary, that the application of them would result in eliminating many efficient officers along with inefficient ones. Mention was made of the fact that authority already existed⁵ to weed out unsatisfactory officers if commanders would only exercise that authority. General McNarney, Deputy Chief of Staff, expressed the opinion that the aim of the proposal was all-right but that the mechanics of it had not been satisfactorily worked out. It was decided to return the paper to G-1 for coordination with the Army Service Forces.

At a later meeting of the Council it was pointed out that a surplus of some 50,000 officers in the ground arms and services was anticipated by 31 December 1943. Though this figure did not apply to the AAF, it can be

* See above, pp. 113, 136, 140.

¹ See above, pp. 47-51.

assumed that the causes which were responsible for the surplus in other branches--reduction in the planned strength of the Army, reduction in certain overhead activities, and the fact that it was not possible to make an immediate sharp curtailment in officer candidate school output when the new troop basis was approved in July--would sooner or later be felt in the AAF.⁶ Action was taken before the end of the year. On 8 December a letter was sent by The Adjutant General to the commanding generals, all forces and commands, directing that all officers over 45 years of age, "for whom no suitable assignments are available or in prospect" because of completion of duties, reduction in overhead, changes as a result of reorganizations which eliminated the officer's specific assignment, or "other similar reasons resulting in officers being rendered surplus through no fault of their own," be reported through command channels to The Adjutant General.⁷ Each commander taking action on the report was required either to reassign the officer within his jurisdiction or to forward the report with a statement that (1) the officer had been rendered surplus to the command through no fault of his own, and that

- (2) There exists no other position, or there is no other position in prospect, commensurate with the grade and qualifications of the officer concerned to which he might be assigned, and;
- (3) The case involved is not one that should properly be handled under the provisions of AR 605-230 or by appropriate disciplinary action, and;
- (4) The officer concerned has served honorably, faithfully, and satisfactorily, and his record is such as to warrant separation under honorable conditions.⁸

Officers thus reported to The Adjutant General would be relieved from active duty. Those who held commissions in the National Guard or Officers' Reserve Corps would be returned to inactive status in the grade held at the time of relief from active duty; such officers holding temporary grades in AUS would retain the higher grade for the period of the emergency and six months there-

after, at the end of which time they would revert to their appointments on inactive status during the period of the emergency and for six months thereafter. It was also provided that any officer relieved from active duty under this authorization would be permitted to submit his resignation at the time of relief or at any time while on inactive status.⁹

Reduction of age limit to 38: Within a few days there was another change in War Department policy with respect to relief from active duty. The age limit was reduced from 45 years to 38; any officer more than 38 for whom no suitable assignment existed could request relief. It was thought that the new policy would "permit many officers, who are not too well qualified physically, to return to civilian life where they will be of much greater value, and will provide a procedure whereby this can be done without prejudice to the officer concerned."¹⁰ In the AAF this procedure was supplemented to include "voluntary action on the part of any officer whose commander contemplated the recommendation of relief, and notice to the officer concerned, even though only the immediate commander had decided upon the contemplated action."¹¹

Personnel officers from all over the United States met in Washington for a four-day conference in February; part of the report of that conference follows:

1. It is desirable that each Command and Air Force establish a method for Commanders at each echelon to personally inform subordinates that, as the emphasis of the Army Air Forces program shifts more and more to combat deployment, the organization and training phase of our original mission will diminish, thus reducing the number of suitable assignments available either for officers of generalized experience or certain types of specialists. Such officers over thirty-eight (38) years of age and thus immune from present Selective Service Regulations will be relieved from active duty in order to allow them to return to civilian life where their experience can be put to even more constructive use at this time. The relief from active duty of officers over thirty-eight (38) years of age is a matter for the immediate commanders to determine and recommend from a standpoint of current needs, thus there is no provision for the relief of officers for whose qualifications or experience there is still a need.

2. It is considered to be extremely important in fairness to such officers that proper steps be initiated immediately to avoid confusion between the relief of such officers and the disposition of unsatisfactory officers. In this regard, public relations officers at each installation should be prepared to issue releases to the home town press and radio prior to the arrival of officers relieved from active duty. These releases should contain a factual statement of the officer's honorable service and reason for relief.

3. Since it is probable that some AAF officers on duty overseas, but declared "surplus" within the theater, may be useful to the continental Air Forces or Commands, it is suggested that recommendations be initiated that the War Department authorize the immediate return of AAF officers to the United States when they have been approved as "surplus" by the theater Commander. Such officers should be directed to Redistribution Stations and should be properly identified by appropriate papers.¹²

Between 1 December 1943 and 30 April 1944, 289 AAF officers were declared surplus; of this number, 8 were colonels, 21 lieutenant colonels, 102 majors, 119 captains, 32 1st lieutenants, and 7 2d lieutenants.¹³ In only 83 of the first 316 cases processed by AAF Headquarters was the relief requested by the commander; in the remaining 233 cases it was the officer himself who made the request.¹⁴

In May it was said that the AAF anticipated, as of 31 December 1944, surpluses of 34,000 in various officer categories and shortages of 12,000 in others. Transfers between the AAF and ASF were expected to result in a net AAF gain of 3,000. The resulting net shortage of 9,000 would have to be met by restraining officers in surplus categories. It was estimated that the surplus of rated officers, as of 31 December 1944, would be about 30,500, some 15,000 of whom would have to be reclassified to ground duties if they were to be retained. The majority of these officers were returned air crew personnel, and the AAF planned to take care of this surplus by placing the officers involved in an inactive reserve status.¹⁵ To this proposal, however, G-1 opposed vehement objection:

It is not appropriate to return thousands of able-bodied young men to civil life while other thousands of comparable age are being drafted. The release of some 15,000 combat-experienced officers is particularly undesirable because of the unfilled officer positions existing in the Army Air Forces . . . and of the number of qualified rated officers on duty in the United States who have had no tour of combat service.¹⁶

G-1 went on to propose that

those who are physically unfit for any further military duty should be relieved. Battle-wounded officers qualified for limited service only should be released if they so desire. Combat-weary officers who voluntarily apply for relief from active duty for the purpose of accepting essential employment in a specific key civilian activity (such as NACA) may be released. All others not required for or useable in rated Air Corps positions should be retained for assignment to non-rated Air Corps or ASWAAF positions. Surplus officers of arms and services other than Air Corps . . . should be transferred to Army Service Forces, and as rated officers are retrained and become available for non-rated positions, additional ASWAAF officers should be released to Army Service Forces.¹⁷

The AAF, in an attempt to facilitate relief from active duty of surplus officers, urged that authority be delegated to the Commanding Generals, AAF, AGF, and ASF, to relieve any officer over 38 years of age whose request for relief or recommendation for his relief had been approved by the appropriate commanding general. G-1 concurred in this recommendation,¹⁸ but when action was taken it proved to be, to all appearances, a step in the opposite direction. In July G-1 announced that "the new policy with regard to relief from active duty of officers over 38 years of age for whom no suitable assignment now exists will restrict the initiation of such relief cases to recommendations by the commander."¹⁹ It would be no longer possible for an officer to request his own relief. The reason behind this strange development was that legal conflicts had arisen with respect to separation pay and other compensation not authorized for those requesting relief in order to accept civilian employment. The Adjutant General decided, however, that the WD Circular
²⁰ prescribing the new policy did not preclude officers, either more or less

than 38 years old, from making requests for relief from active duty if such requests were accompanied by substantiating evidence in the form of certificates or affidavits. He warned that requests of this type would receive favorable consideration only in cases where the circumstances were most unusual.²¹

In recognition of the new policy, a letter was prepared and approved by the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel (A-1), setting forth the procedures proposed for use by the AAF in implementing WD Circular 341 (1944). In the main previous procedures were to be continued, but it was pointed out that although an officer might no longer initiate a request for relief from active duty, there was nothing to prevent him from informing his commanding officer of his desire to be relieved. The commanding officer, if he concurred, could then initiate a recommendation which the subject officer was to indorse to indicate that he had no objection to being relieved. The proposed letter, or manual, was informally approved by G-1.²²

Difficulties with the WD Separation Board: During the month of September a controversy arose between the War Department's Separations Board and representatives of G-1 and A-1 over the relief from active duty of officers with "Excellent" or "Superior" performance ratings. The Board cited General White (Maj. Gen. M. G. White, WDGS, G-1) as their authority for the policy of retaining such officers in active service even though they were surplus. Representatives of G-1 believed that the Board had misinterpreted General White; they thought that he had intended to convey the feeling that it would be wrong for the War Department to relieve officers with high performance ratings immediately upon their return from overseas. The G-1 representatives agreed with the AAF view that officers, no matter what their rating, should be relieved if they are not needed.²³ A few days later representatives of G-1 and A-1 met again and agreed that immediate steps should be taken to clarify the

situation. The number of recommendations for relief from active duty had become so great as to make it impossible for the Separations Board to handle them; in view of this fact they believed that once the three major forces agreed that an officer was surplus to their requirements he should be released forthwith.²⁴ Early in October G-1 advised the AAF that a paper had been sent by them to the Separations Board establishing a policy that would eliminate consideration of performance ratings as a factor in determining whether or not an officer should be relieved. In addition the paper provided

that future cases will not be submitted to the War Department Separations Board for review after they have been cleared by the AAF, ASF, and AGF. Upon such clearance from the three major branches, TAG will issue orders. While the above paper has been forwarded to the board for comment, it is understood that this policy will be adopted.

There was another issue in controversy at this time, in which again representatives of G-1 and of A-1 stood together against the Separations Board. The Board seemed to be reluctant to relieve from active duty any officer of the National Guard or Officers' Reserve Corps who did not want to be relieved. Politically sensitive, the members of the Board were fully aware that the relief against his will of an officer from a component other than the Regular Army might lead to repercussions that would make it necessary for someone to draft a reply, for the signature of the Secretary of War, to a letter from an angry member of Congress. They hoped to avoid any such embarrassment to the Secretary. The G-1 and AAF representatives could, and did, adopt an apparently more lofty attitude: they argued that any officer who was no longer needed, no matter what his component was, should be relieved from active duty.*²⁶

* It is interesting to note, however, that, some months later, A-1--or his Deputy, at least--had developed political consciousness: "Cases where the officer does not concur with relief from active duty will be referred to the two other major commands to determine whether or not a suitable assignment can be found and to the Secretary of War's Separations Board for final action because of congressional inquiries." (Memo for General Arnold from Brig. Gen. J. H. McCormick, DAG/AS, A-1, 3 Apr. 1945)

Again the board apparently lost the decision--the paper that set forth the policy of ignoring high performance ratings in relief from active duty cases likewise declared that no attention was to be paid to the officer's component.²⁷

Revision of WD Circular 341: At the meeting of the General Council on 13 November 1944 it was observed that more than 6,000 officers over 38 years of age for whom no suitable assignment existed or was in prospect had been released since the policy of releasing such officers had been established the previous December.²⁸ On the same day personnel officers from the General Staff and the AAF met to consider changes in WD Circular 341. The representatives of G-1 recommended that relief from active duty of surplus officers should again be arranged so that it could be voluntarily requested by officers more than 38 years of age; with this proposal G-1 concurred. They also concurred in another AAF recommendation--that officers for whom no suitable assignment could be found by AAF, AGF, and ASF should be automatically separated by the WD Separations Board.²⁹ The fact that the second recommendation was made at this time would seem to indicate that the recommended policy, which presumably had been established more than a month previously,³⁰ had not actually been put into effect.

Discussion of the proposed changes in WD Circular 341 continued through most of December, and somewhere about the first of the month G-1 submitted a draft of the proposed amending circular. No copy of that draft is now available, but some idea of its contents may be gained from the changes recommended earlier by the AAF, with ASF concurring. These changes were (1) to include a policy statement that "officers will be relieved only by military necessity"; (2) to provide a clearer statement on the relief of officers who became surplus because the special qualifications for which they were commissioned were no

longer needed; (3) to define more clearly the conditions governing relief of physically unqualified officers; and (4) to make "stiffer" the requirements for the relief of officers because of undue hardship or because they wanted to take positions in essential industry.³¹ In the circular as it was finally submitted to the Deputy Chief of Staff were typical examples of reasons for seeking release because of personal hardship. The Deputy Chief of Staff objected to these examples, apparently fearing that they might put ideas into the heads of officers who would not otherwise have been prompted to ask for relief.³² The offending examples were removed, and WD Circular No. 485, "Relief of Officers, Warrant Officers, and Flight Officers from Active Duty," was published on 29 December 1944.

The new circular consisted of four sections, of which the first was devoted to a general statement as to the purport of the circular. Section II established the procedure to be followed in the relief of officers for whom no suitable assignment could be found. Section III applied the same, or very similar, procedure to cases in which the relief of the officer concerned was "essential to national health, safety or interest"; it was under this section that an officer who wished to take a civilian job in essential industry would apply. Section IV was concerned with cases in which relief was sought because of undue hardship.

WD plan for readjustment of personnel after defeat of Germany: On the same day that saw the publication of Circular 485, a report was made to the Chief, Military Personnel Division, on the "War Department Plan for Readjustment of Personnel after Defeat of Germany." The AAF had concurred in the plan, though reluctantly because of a change that had been made in it. It had been originally intended that each of the three major forces--air, ground, and service--would determine which of its officers were non-essential and return

them to civil life. The change provided that "scarce category" personnel whom any of the forces proposed to release might be "picked up" and kept in service by either of the other forces. The AAF feared, and not without reason, that the officers whom they wished to release in order that they might engage in civilian pursuits valuable to the AAF--the aircraft industry or some fields of research and development--would be the very ones that AGF or ASF would refuse to release. That the AAF fears were not ungrounded was soon demonstrated. During five days in February 202 cases of relief from active duty of surplus officers were submitted to The Adjutant General's Screening Board, 80 of them by the AAF. During this procedure 10 of the Air Corps officers were picked up for reassignment by AGF or ASF; the AAF did not pick up any AGF or ASF officers. The AAF urged G-1 to eliminate the screening board procedure and institute a procedure under which the AGF and ASF could pick up only such AAF officers as were classified in categories in which AGF or ASF had shortages.

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In February, too, the AAF made another attempt to by-pass the Secretary of War's Separations Board. A staff study outlining a procedure whereby relief from active duty cases would go directly from the headquarters of the major command or air force concerned to The Adjutant General, having been approved by G-1, was sent to the Separations Board for concurrence.

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Expediting relief of surplus officers: At the end of January a proposal had been made that would have expedited the relief of surplus officers. The only part played by Headquarters, AAF, in passing on such cases was to determine whether or not the officer in question was surplus to all continental air forces and commands. It was pointed out that the answer to that question could be secured from the Officers' Branch, Military Personnel Division, A-1, and the

case could then be sent directly from the air force or command to The Adjutant General. Included among the papers in the case would be a telegram to Headquarters, AAF, recommending the officer for relief from active duty as surplus to the command and a telegram from Headquarters, AAF, stating that the officer was surplus to all continental air forces and commands. G-1 informally concurred and asked for a staff study on the implementation of the procedure;³⁶ there the matter seems to have been dropped.

That the AAF was justified in wishing to expedite the separation of surplus officers was brought out in a meeting of the General Council on 13 March 1945. On that occasion the Legislative and Liaison Division reported:

Considerable and increasing interest is being manifested by Congress in the problem of relief from active duty. Many members of Congress are experiencing difficulty in understanding why the War Department disapproves requests for relief from active duty submitted by officers who wish to return to essential civilian activity, or who are over-age. Especially it is difficult to explain to the satisfaction of Congress negative action on such requests when the command in the field has approved separation and when certain members of Congress have heard that sizable surpluses exist in certain categories. There also appears to be growing criticism of the amount of time required to process one of these cases and actually get the officer returned to inactive status.³⁷

The AAF had already, a week before the above report was given, made another of its numerous attempts both to prevent AAF surplus officers from being picked up by AGF or ASF and to expedite separations. A-1 prepared a staff study for G-1 again recommending that the screening board be abolished,³⁸ and a few days later this recommendation was urged by the AAF at a meeting with representatives of G-1, AGF, and ASF. The ASF representative did not concur, but G-1 agreed to consider the proposal.³⁹

Further emphasis was given to the surplus officer problem on 17 March by a memo addressed to the Commanding Generals, AAF, AGF, and ASF, stating that the Chief of Staff had expressed concern about "failure to separate officers who are surplus to requirements" and "stagnation of promotions particularly in the lower grades."⁴⁰

Two days later the AAF brought out a new version of AAF Letter 35-49 which authorized reversal of the policy that had been adopted during the previous summer,* and made it again possible for an officer to request his own relief from active duty if he was over 38 years of age, if his relief was "essential to national health, safety or interest," or if retention on active duty would entail undue hardship.⁴¹

The AAF reply to G-1's memorandum of 17 March took the form of a memorandum by Maj. Gen. Hubert R. Harmon, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, to the Chief of Staff. Harmon pointed out that the world-wide total of 31,151 officers in excess of AAF authorized strength was a reserve rather than a surplus. Most of these officers were rated officers; so long as the two-front war continued, combat crew replacements would be needed at the rate of 48,000 per year--38,000 more than the current training program would provide. Whenever the war should become a one-front war, readjustment regulations would take care of the situation. He also pointed out that only 14,017 AAF officers were over 38 years of age and hence subject to relief under Circular 485; many of these obviously had to be retained on the basis of military necessity. One of several recommendations contained in the memorandum was:

That officers, except Regular Army, whose efficiency ratings remain within the lowest 10%, compared with others of similar grade, for a period in excess of one year, but who are not subject to reclassification or disciplinary action, be subject to honorable discharge for the convenience of the government upon the recommendation of the immediate commander and approval by the Commanding General of the major branch of service, theater or defense command.⁴²

* War Department Circular No. 341 (19 August 1944) and AAF Letter 35-49 (6 October 1944) had provided that an officer could not request his relief from active duty; the request had to originate with his commanding officer.

On 31 March the Deputy Chief of AAF quoted General Arnold as "believing it undesirable to retain in the AAF a single officer or enlisted man for whom no job could be found," and sought the opinion of A-1 as to changes in existing regulations that might be necessary to accomplish expeditious separations.⁴³ A-1 replied that changes in WD Circular No. 485 had been recommended and that these would, if approved, provide the necessary procedure.⁴⁴ Despite the fact that the AAF made numerous efforts throughout the month of April to secure these procedural changes, the required approval was not granted.⁴⁵ Early in the following month this observation was made:

In the normal separation program conducted by this office for the past 18 months, a monthly separation rate of 866 officers was reached during April. However, the major problem of surplus officers in the Army Air Forces has not been solved. Every effort has been made to secure the necessary changes in War Department procedure which would allow more rapid separation. While none of the Army Air Forces recommendations have been approved to date, it has been indicated informally that the War Department approved one recommendation which will allow the separation of returnee rated officers who desire separation and who are not essential.⁴⁶

A comment made early in April, however, by one of those who were in the best position to know indicates that the blame for delay in separations could not all be charged to the War Department. The Chief of the Classification and Separations Branch noted that The Adjutant General's office had speeded up the processing of officer separations, but a study had shown that in practically all continental air forces and commands the movement of separation papers was very sluggish.⁴⁷

Separations under RR 1-5

The AAF had long contended that military necessity--rather than length of service, number of decorations, dependent children, or any combination of these factors-- should be the prime consideration in determining whether or

not an officer should be released from active service. That contention received recognition when Readjustment Regulations 1-5 were approved on 26 April 1945 to provide as follows:

Selection of surplus and non-essential officers will be made on a weighing of the factors of military necessity, efficiency, desires of the officer as to retention, and an adjusted service rating score similar to that in RR 1-1 for enlisted personnel. In the case of officers military necessity must be the controlling factor; the adjusted service rating score will be given consideration as an aid and guide in reaching a decision, especially in the case of officers with lengthy service overseas and long and hazardous service in combat. It is the aim of these regulations, that, other factors being equal and without endangering the military effectiveness of the officer force needed to carry on the war against Japan, those officers to be declared surplus by the theater or major command in which they are serving and to be declared non-essential by the major force concerned in the continental United States will be those with highest scores and who do not desire retention in the service With this information (adjusted service rating form) and in consideration of the factors described above, the Commanding Generals of the Army Air, Ground, and Service Forces will determine the essentiality of individual officers.⁴⁸

On 9 May The Adjutant General issued a confidential letter⁴⁹ suspending Section II of WD Circular 485, which, since it pertained to release of surplus officers, had been superseded by RR 1-5. Sections III, IV, and V, covering relief of officers to return to essential industry or to prevent undue hardship, remained in effect for officers who were not entitled to relief under RR 1-5.⁵⁰ The Adjutant General's action called for a revision of AAF Letter 35-49; this was published on 30 May. The revised version warned all officers that upon applying for relief from active duty they would be subject to reassignment to the Army Ground or Service Forces if they were surplus to AAF requirements.⁵¹ Even those who applied for relief to return to essential industry or because of personal hardship were not always safe from the Screening Board.⁵²

"Implementation of Procedures for Readjustment of Officers, Warrant Officers, and Flight Officers after Defeat of Germany" was set forth in a

restricted letter.⁵³ By the terms of this letter the Commanding Generals, AAF, AGF, and ASF, were required to submit to G-1, WD General Staff,

a list of requirements by Military Occupational Specialty and Civilian Occupational Specialty of officers who possess unusual qualifications which are not readily obtainable through normal manning operations. This list is limited only to scarce categories and will be revised from time to time to meet changing conditions. The War Department will consolidate the lists of the three major commands, and any officer who possesses qualifications in accordance with any one of these scarce categories must be referred to the major command in which such category exists. That command will either reassign him to one of their organizations or recommend his release from active duty.⁵⁴

As of 23 May the AAF listed its critical shortages as follows: "Radar Maintenance & Repair; Telephone & Telegraph Officer; Tel & Tel Officer, Inside Plant; Engr Equipment, Maint & Repair C; Auditing Officer; Photographic Eq Engineer."⁵⁵ Thus any AGF or ASF officer who had 0145, 0400, 0410, 4880, 6110, or 7052 for an MOS was subject to being picked up by the AAF even though he might be surplus to his own command's requirements; and an AAF officer with any one of those MOS's would be relieved from active duty only to return to essential industry or to prevent undue hardship.

From 12 May to 26 May 1945, 1,865 AAF officers were separated, of whom 131 were non-rated; in the following week the total was 1,533, of whom 110 were non-rated.⁵⁶ During the entire month of May the AAF recommended 2,712 officers for separation; of this total 118 were for unsuitability or inefficiency, 83 for personal hardships, 287 for return to essential industry, 285 surplus officers, 328 for physical disability, 44 as pregnant nurses, and 1,567 under RR 1-5.⁵⁷

The month of June saw the AAF victorious in its long-continued struggle against The Adjutant General's Screening Board: a letter of 18 June 1945 announced the disbandment of the Board.⁵⁸ Thereafter all applications for relief from active duty that were not favorably considered by the Secretary of

War's Separations Board would be returned to the major command having primary interest.⁵⁹

Before the end of June the list of critically scarce MOS's had grown to 13; one--Photographic Equipment Engineer--had been dropped, but eight others--Radar Officer; Electronics Officer; Radar Observer, Bombardment (designated set); Message Center Officer, Cryptographic; Marine Engineer; Signal Equipment Maintenance & Repair Officer; Photo-Interpreter; and Topographic Engineer--had been added.⁶⁰ By the middle of August the situation had greatly changed. Only five of the categories on the previous list still remained critical: Radar Officer; Radar Maintenance & Repair Officer; Message Center Officer, Cryptographic; Telephone & Telegraph Officer, Inside Plant; and Signal Equipment Maintenance & Repair Officer. Eleven new MOS's, however, had been added: Radio Officer; Radio Officer, VHF; Classification & Assignment Officer; Vocational & Educational Guidance Officer; Maintenance & Repair Officer, Airborne Signal Equipment; Salvage & Property Disposal Officer; Automotive Maintenance & Repair Officer; Public Relations Officer; Personal Affairs Officer; Finance Officer, Disbursing; and Airport Engineer.⁶¹

Another AAF struggle was won on 1 September 1945. As of that date the War Department granted to the Commanding General, AAF, authority for final approval of requests for relief from active duty under WD Circular 485. Cases that were disapproved were to be sent to the Secretary of War's Separation Board for final action.⁶² Before the middle of September further decentralization was accomplished when G-1 approved the delegation of this authority to the eight major AAF Zone of Interior commands. From this time on, relief

* At the time, these were: Personnel Distribution Command, Training Command, Continental Air Force, Air Transport Command, Technical Service Command, AAF Center, Army Airways Communications System, and the Weather Wing.

from active duty for national health, safety, or interest, or to prevent undue hardship, could be accomplished in the field, and cases that were disapproved could be sent directly to The Adjutant General without having to pass through Headquarters, AAF.⁶³ At the same time the policy governing relief for personal hardship was to be liberalized, the decision in each case to be based upon a comparison of the subject individual's situation with the normal hardship experienced by families of all members of the armed service.⁶⁴

The cessation of hostilities was followed almost immediately--as had been the case in 1918--by a frenzied demand for the return to civilian life of men in uniform. The planning for demobilization by both AAF and War Department authorities had been careful and thorough, and a detailed program was ready in the summer of 1944.⁶⁵ As carried out it did not satisfy everyone, but only a miracle could have done that. There simply were not enough ships and aircraft to get the men back from overseas as soon as they wanted to be back; there were no separation facilities capable of getting them out of the Army as rapidly as their families wanted them out. A letter from A-1 to The Far East Air Forces is of interest in this connection:

We here have been just as upset as the newspapers indicate. The determination of separation and overseas screening scores have been changing with each edition of the newspapers. We here in Headquarters Army Air Forces took the bull by the horns and established our own scores along these lines. It is well that we did as otherwise we would be way behind. However, the War Department has now come out with what purport to be definite scores. Within these, and insofar as we can, the AAF is establishing their own policies

The officers' score, just announced this past week-end, requires field grade officers to have 100 points and company grade 85 points. These are considerably higher than scores we had been working on under 1 - 5. However, we are now restricted to these scores and with the exception of cases which were actually in the mill under 1 - 5 and which consisted primarily of pilots, we must now conform to the 100 - 85 ASRS for release of officers. Presently in G-1 pending approval, is the reinstatement of Sec 2, Cir 485, 1944 which is the old surplus clause.

Under this, each major force and overseas command will be given monthly quotas for the release of officers "for whom no suitable assignment exists" without regard to ASRS. This will be, we hope, the life-saver, as under the 100 - 85, we will release very few officers.⁶⁶

The revision of WD Circular 485 was accomplished by the publication, on 22 September 1945, of WD Circular 290. The new policy permitted each command to separate.

officers surplus to the needs of the command who have completed a reasonable tour of service, who are surplus to the needs of the Army on the basis of their present qualifications and whose retraining in a skill needed by the Army would be uneconomical within the time they could be reasonably expected to serve before becoming otherwise eligible for separation.⁶⁷

Provision was also made that "male officers who have attained the age of 50 years and female officers who have attained the age of 40 years will be relieved from active duty upon their own request." The section relating to relief for reasons of essentiality to the national health, safety, or interest was left substantially unchanged; the one governing relief to prevent personal hardship was liberalized.

Establishment of AAF Separation Bases

It was reported early in September that based on assigned strength as of 30 June 1945 there would be 150,000 rated AAF officers surplus to post- V-J Day requirements; of this total, 45,000 had already been separated or selected for separation.⁶⁸ All officers whose Adjusted Service Rating (ASR) scores made them eligible for separation before V-J Day were to be separated by 31⁷⁰ October 1945. It was impossible for the ASF separation centers to process officers and men for separation as fast as they became eligible; the backlog of individuals awaiting discharge or relief from active duty was rapidly increasing to the embarrassment of the War Department.⁷¹ In a move to alleviate

the difficulty, the AAF sought and received from the War Department authority to separate its own personnel.⁷² The Personnel Distribution Command was to separate its eligible personnel, both permanent party and attached, while the Continental Air Force would be responsible for all other eligible Zone of Interior personnel.⁷³ Separation facilities were established at the six Redistribution Stations: No. 1 at Atlantic City, New Jersey; No. 2 at Miami Beach, Florida; No. 3 at Santa Monica, California; No. 4 at Santa Ana, California; No. 5 at Greensboro, North Carolina; and No. 6 at San Antonio,⁷⁴ Texas; and at the Overseas Replacement Depot at Kearns, Utah,⁷⁵ all to be operated by the Personnel Distribution Command. By 17 September the Continental Air Force had 27 separation bases in operation, a number increased to 43 within the following four weeks.⁷⁶ This delegation of separation authority to the AAF was a temporary, emergency expedient; it was expected that by 1 December the ASF separation centers would be in a position to resume responsibility for AAF as well as AGF and ASF personnel.⁷⁷ The expectation proved to be over-optimistic.

On 11 September the six scarce categories of officer specialists were said to be: Highway Traffic Engineer (MOS 0615); Superintendent, Water Division (0815); Legal Officer (8101), with admiralty law experience; officers and warrant officers who had experience or training in statutory renegotiation activities; officers and warrant officers who had experience or training in contract termination and property disposal activities; and Civil Affairs or Military Government Officers who were assigned in occupied territories or who were in training for such assignment. Officers in these categories were to be retained, however, no more than six months after they became eligible for release under the point score system.⁷⁸ By the end of December, a much longer list was recognized. It did not contain any of the six categories just

mentioned, but did include most of the MOS's in the June and August lists.*

There had been published on 22 September 1945 WD Circular 290 which superseded WD Circular 485, 1944. This was followed, on 24 October 1945, by a revision of AAF Letter 35-49. Together these provided for the relief from active duty of officers, warrant officers, and flight officers, who were not eligible for relief under readjustment regulations. The Letter gave to the commanders of the major AAF commands authority "to exercise final approval jurisdiction on all recommendations or requests for relief from active duty which are submitted by their lower echelons under provisions of Circular 290, with such exceptions as are hereinafter stated in subsequent paragraphs of this Letter." Combat wounded officers were to be given special consideration and were not to "be encouraged to remain on active duty unless a specific request is made for retention and the individual's physical condition, experience, and requirements of the service will permit him to usefully ^{Sic} employed."⁷⁸

The Letter continued with the observation that readjustment regulations would be the normal procedure to be followed in accomplishing demobilization. However, in order to avoid having a large number of officers kept on duty awaiting reduction of the critical Adjusted Service Rating score, and to maintain capacity flow through separation facilities, AAF Headquarters would authorize the separation of certain categories of surplus officers under Circular 290.

* See above, p. 169. The MOS's listed as critical in December were: 0224, 0430, 0503, 0410, 2210, 5000, 6110, 6400, 6402, 7052, 7914, 7915, 7916, 7917, 8218, 8219, and 8503.

✓ The exceptions were officers of the Medical Department, who were under the jurisdiction of the Air Surgeon, and those of the Chaplain Corps, over whom the Air Chaplain had authority.

The method would be to issue, with War Department approval, "bloc release directives" under which the commands would be permitted to separate officers in certain "family groups or fields of skill" even though their Adjusted Service Rating scores were lower than the generally applicable critical score. In each directive the score would be set so as to make eligible for separation as many individuals as would be required to keep separation facilities fully utilized.

Commanders at various echelons could recommend for relief from active duty surplus officers provided

- (a) They have completed at least 2 years of total active military service, either enlisted or commissioned, since 16 September 1940, and are ineligible for overseas duty
- (b) Their retraining in skills needed by the Army would be uneconomical within the time they could reasonably be expected to serve before otherwise becoming eligible for separation
- (c) They are entitled to separations under honorable conditions and no hospital disposition board or Army retirement board is pending in their case.
- (d) They desire relief from active duty.⁷⁹

Individual officers were not authorized to request relief;* presumably, however, an officer could still suggest to his commanding officer that he be recommended for relief. Requests for release essential to national health, safety, or interest were authorized in Section III; but it was observed that readjustment regulations and Section II (relating to surplus officers) should cover most cases and hence that requests submitted under Section III should be held to a minimum and approved only when the officers concerned are ineligible for release under readjustment regulations or Section II.

The policy governing release because of undue hardship is stated in these words:

* This was a return to the policy of late 1944 and early 1945. See above, p 165.

Consideration should be liberalized toward those releases of officers under section IV of the above cited WD Circular 290. During our engagement in the war rigid standards concerning retention of officers in the military service were observed; and it was expected that all military personnel and their families would be required to undergo severe personal hardships in order to attain victory. Since the cessation of hostilities and the comparative lessening requirement for all-out effort, these rigid standards should be relaxed and action should be taken to alleviate hardship cases that are abnormal during the current peacetime standards.⁸⁰

Nevertheless, an application for release under this section still had to establish clearly that:

- a. The individual or his family is undergoing hardships greater than the normal hardships which are being experienced by all members or families of members of the military service.
- b. The hardship is not of a temporary nature.
- c. There are no means of alleviating the condition other than by relieving the officer.
- d. Upon release, the officer will be able to eliminate or materially alleviate the condition.⁸¹

The new version of AAF Letter 35-49 also provided, under authority of WD Circular 290, Section V, for relief of officers because of age; any male officer who had reached the age of 50 years or female officer who had reached the age of 40 years might submit a request in writing for relief from active duty. If (1) the officer was entitled to separation under honorable conditions; (2) no disciplinary action or reclassification proceedings under AR 605-230 were pending or appropriate; (3) no hospital disposition board or Army retirement board proceedings were pending or believed appropriate; such relief would be granted.⁸² By 1 October this provision had been amended to permit the retention, for a period not to exceed six months from the date of his application, of any male officer who sought release because of age if his MOS was on the critical list of scarce categories.⁸³

Telegraphic notice was given to Personnel Distribution Command (PDC) and

the Continental Air Force (CAF) on 25 September that effective 1 October the critical score for male officers--excluding Medical Department officers--would be 75; this applied to all grades, including warrant officers and flight officers. For WAC officers the new score would be 39.⁸⁴ These criteria remained in effect until 31 December 1945 when they became for male officers 70 or four years of service, and for WAC officers, 37 or three years and three months of service.⁸⁵ A month later still other criteria became effective: for male officers scores of 65 or higher or 42 months of honorable active service; for WAC officers 36 months of service completed as of 30 April.⁸⁶

Early in October it became evident that the ASF would not be in a position to take back the responsibility for separations as soon as had been anticipated; consequently, CAF and PDC were directed to extend planning for the operation of AAF separation bases after 1 December and to "continue for whatever period is necessary to provide for prompt separation of all eligible personnel in the ZI in excess of the capacity of WD Separation Centers."⁸⁷

By 1 February 1946 only two PDC redistribution stations were still processing separations--Santa Ana and Greensboro; soon after that, the Personnel Distribution Command to all intents and purposes ceased to function,⁸⁸ its functions and facilities being transferred to the Air Defense Command⁸⁹ or the Strategic Air Command.⁹⁰ During the period from 10 September 1945 to 15 February 1946 the separation bases of PDC had separated 26,493 officers.⁹¹

Meanwhile, CAF with a larger number of separation bases was making a correspondingly larger contribution to the AAF demobilization program. At the end of the first month of operations, CAF was processing separations at the rate of 10,000 a day. By 15 November the backlog of personnel eligible for separation had been so reduced that it was possible to close 2 of the 43

* See above, p. 172.

bases, the 15 left operated at the diminished rate of 5,000 separations daily. The number of separations accomplished reached 500,000 early in December, and at the beginning of the new year six more bases were closed with the nine remaining operating at a daily capacity of 2,500. On 31 January 1946 the War Department approved a recommendation by Headquarters, CAF, that the AAF separations program be terminated. The official closing came on 19 February with the processing of the 734,715th separation.⁹²

The Disposition of Special Categories of Satisfactory Officers

There remains to be discussed the disposition of certain special categories of satisfactory officers.

AAF General officers: As early as September 1944 thought was being given to the problem offered by the generals who would be rendered surplus by demobilization, partial or complete, reassignment of whom would be precluded because of the lack of appropriate positions.⁹³ A recommendation representing the views of the AAF in the matter was requested, and in reply General Bevans pointed out that there were "general officer positions far in excess of the number of general officers in the Army Air Forces."⁹⁴ Indeed, for some time because of the lack of generals the AAF had been constrained to use colonels in positions which should have been filled by general officers. It was clear, then, that not until extensive demobilization had occurred would the problem of surplus generals confront the AAF. Immediately following V-E Day, however, a problem would arise: it would be necessary to reassign many general officers in order to carry out the redeployment necessary for an all-out effort against Japan and then to direct that effort. It was suggested that the Commanding General, AAF, be authorized "to assign and reassign AAF general officers within the continental United States to such positions as he may determine justify or require the assignment of a general officer thereto,"

without reference to the War Department. It was to be understood, of course, that any general officer found to be surplus to the needs of the AAF would be reported to the War Department.⁹⁵ There was no indication that the War Department concurred in this recommendation.

The problem of general officers cropped up again a few months later when the AAF was asked how many generals would be needed to fill AAF positions in the overseas theaters as of 30 June 1946. The AAF asked for 14 for the European Theater, 24 for the Pacific, 3 for the Caribbean Defense Command, and 1 for Alaska. In the same memo a strong protest was lodged against the proposed allocation to the AAF of only 133 out of a total of 500 Army generals; it was the view of the AAF that 215 represented its absolute minimum requirements.⁹⁶ As of V-J Day the AAF had 321 general officers, 20.7 per cent of the number assigned to the Army; yet the total strength of the AAF--2,253,182--was 28.1 per cent of the total strength of the Army. If the strength of the AAF in general officers had been proportionate to total strength, it would have had 436. As of January 1946 there were 219 AAF generals; thus the AAF could argue that it had suffered a reduction of approximately 50 per cent, not from what it had had--that was less than one-third--but from what it should have had.⁹⁷

The problem of retired officers recalled to active duty: As has already been pointed out,* the AAF, in order to fill its desperate need for officers, had in the early days of the war recalled to active duty many officers who had previously been retired. As these men reached the statutory age for retirement, it was the usual thing for their commanding officers to seek to have them retained on active duty. The policy that governed in such cases was

* See above, pp.20 ff.

explained at a meeting of the General Council in August of 1943.

Additional instructions relative to the relief of officers who are over the statutory age for retirement have been issued to the three principal commanders and to defense commands within the United States. Recommendations for the retention of over-age officers, other than general officers, who are under the jurisdiction of the Commanding Generals, Army Ground Forces, Army Air Forces, Army Service Forces, or Defense Commands, will be sent directly to The Adjutant General and acted upon by him in accordance with the recommendations of the principal commander concerned. All other cases will be sent to G-1, and all general officer cases will be sent to G-1 for presentation to the Chief of Staff. G-1 is also taking separate action with regard to over-age officers who are now overseas.⁹⁸

Soon after V-E Day, however, a new policy was established. Since there was by that time a plethora of officers, there was no point in retaining those who were over-age. Hence it was decreed that all officers who had reached the statutory retirement age should be granted accrued leave and relieved from active duty not later than 31 December 1945. For the future, all officers upon attaining the statutory age were to be retired or relieved from active duty. Exceptions would be made only in the case of general officers, and all such exceptions were to have the specific approval of the Chief of Staff.⁹⁹

Officers returned from overseas: Another problem was that of officers returning from overseas who did not wish to be separated or were ineligible for separation. Since the AAF had enough officers to meet Zone of Interior requirements, returnees could be taken care of only by separating or sending overseas officers holding Zone of Interior positions. One device designed to help in this situation was the policy that a returned officer might be assigned to a position formerly held by an officer of higher rank.¹⁰⁰ Despite efforts to dispose properly of returned officers, complaints of malassignment were so numerous¹⁰¹ that a War Department Returnee Advisory Board was appointed to investigate the manner in which War Department policies with respect to returnees were being carried out and to recommend such changes in those policies

as might be deemed desirable.¹⁰² In October the AAF requested authority from the War Department "to relieve from active duty all AAF officers returned from overseas who desire release, but who are ineligible under RR 1-5, immediately upon their return to the U. S."¹⁰³ No evidence was found to indicate that the War Department granted this request, but in December the AAF was given authority to separate on arrival in the United States "aircrew officers having primary MOS listed as currently eligible for release as surplus in Z/I, regardless of ASR score, if they have minimum of two years active military service."¹⁰⁴

Former POW's, evadees, and combat wounded officers: In November 1944, WD Circular 341 was revised to add two new categories of officers who might request relief from active duty:

a. Recovered prisoners of war or those who have been "dropped" in enemy territory and who have evaded imprisonment, all of whom are other than regular Army and, regardless of age, who have been in excess of 60 days prisoner in enemy hands or evading capture in enemy controlled territory and who request relief from active duty.

b. Combat wounded officers who, as a result of their wounds, are permanently below the physical standards for general service who desire relief from active duty. In other words combat wounded officers will normally not be encouraged to remain on active duty, as rehabilitation and adjustment to their disability is finally facilitated by return to civilian environment and employment and can be accomplished better during the war than during the general demobilization period after the war is terminated.¹⁰⁵

The policy was expressed a little differently 11 months later when General Eaker wrote: "Officers who are combat wounded will not be encouraged to remain on active duty unless a specific request is made for retention and the individual's physical condition, experience, and requirements of the service will permit him to be usefully employed."¹⁰⁶

Release of officers to aircraft industry, civil airlines, or NACA:

Early recognition had been given by the AAF, as has already been noted,* that

* See above, pp. 4 ff.

some individuals could make a much more valuable contribution to the war effort as key figures in essential industry than as members of the armed forces. Yet many of these men held reserve commissions and others sought commissions to prevent being drafted. Consequently, as early as October 1943 the Director of War Mobilization ordered the release of the men important to the aircraft industry who were then in uniform. Representatives of the Army, Navy, and War Production Board took counsel together to determine a procedure for complying with this directive.¹⁰⁷ In response to requests for the release of approximately 3,000 individuals, the Army had by 10 January 1944 returned 1,002 to civilian status, and during the same period the Navy received about 2,000 requests and released 390.¹⁰⁸

Toward the end of the war the air lines began to think about getting back into their employ the men, particularly captains, pilots, and co-pilots, who had worked for them before entering the service.¹⁰⁹ There was authority under WD Circular 485 (1944) to release officers to the air lines on grounds of essentiality, but a board of officers appointed to determine policy in this matter recommended that an AAF letter be published.¹¹⁰ This recommendation was carried out by the publication of AAF Letter 35-206, 17 April 1945, subject: Release of Pilots from Active Duty for Employment with Civil Airlines of the United States. The air lines encountered difficulty when they attempted to get pilots from the Air Transport Command. ATC said flatly that since adequately trained replacements were not to be had it could not let any pilots go at that time. The Command did agree, however, that whenever it disapproved a pilot's request for release it would furnish a statement to the effect that a replacement was being trained and that at the end of a definite period (three to six months) his request would receive favorable consideration.¹¹¹

In July AAF Letter 35-206 was rescinded, but it was still possible for

former air lines pilots--as well as other officers--to gain relief from active duty under the provisions of Section III, WD Circular 485 (1944).¹¹² Impetus was given to the quest for pilots when the War Department issued a directive for the movement of 25,000 military personnel per month between east coast and west coast ports via commercial air lines.¹¹³ This was the Transcon Project, designed to relieve already overstrained rail facilities and at the same time to expedite the delivery to their homes of troops returning from overseas. For some reason the men the air lines were seeking appeared to be in no hurry to return to their pre-war jobs. A representative of the Officers' Branch, A-1, made a five-day trip to Nashville, Tennessee, expecting to interview some 200 former air line pilots with a view to releasing them to their old employers. Only 22 pilots turned up, and of that number only 10 were relieved from active duty.¹¹⁴

Other efforts to help the air lines in their manpower problem included a request from Headquarters, AAF, for the return from overseas to the United States of all former air line captains, first pilots, and co-pilots, who had indicated no desire to remain on active duty during the remainder of the emergency,¹¹⁵ and a message, also from Washington, to PDC, the Air Technical Service Command, the AAF Center, and the Army Air Force Training Command,

directing rated officers or flight officers eligible for relief from active duty who present letter from a civil airline to their station commanding officer indicating acceptance for immediate employment as pilot or co-pilot, and who will sign certificate that they will accept immediate employment upon relief from active duty, will be given highest priority for transfer to appropriate separation centers.¹¹⁶

Efforts of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics to secure needed personnel from the Army also were beset with difficulties. First, there was a difference of opinion within G-1 as to whether or not the AAF had

authority to relieve officers at AAF installations for employment with NACA. This was followed by uncertainty about the legality of an officer's receiving compensation from NACA while on terminal leave.¹¹⁷ Then it was discovered that recommendations for the release of officers to NACA were being held up for two weeks or more in ASF Headquarters. To eliminate this delay, the AAF won approval from G-1 for a new procedure that would by-pass ASF and allow the AAF to send recommendations direct to The Adjutant General's office where, an Adjutant General representative gave assurance, they would be acted upon immediately.¹¹⁸ Other efforts to shorten the time between the recommendation for release and actual employment by NACA indicate that both to NACA and AAF the need for the personnel in question seemed very urgent.¹¹⁹

There were special problems, too, in the treatment of warrant officers and flight officers, of medical officers, of WAC officers, and of Chaplains, but space is lacking here for anything like adequate discussion of them.

That it was always right, or wise, or even fair, in its disposition of satisfactory commissioned officers cannot be maintained of the AAF any more than of any other very large organization; but it can safely be said that the leaders of the AAF were, on the whole, eminently successful in their handling of personnel problems.

AHS-II, Glossary

G L O S S A R Y

A-1	Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel
AMFTC	Army Air Force Technical Training Command
AMG	Air Adjutant General
AC/AS	Assistant Chief of Air Staff
ACFTC	Air Corps Flying Training Command
AFASAP	Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel (A-1)
AFACT	Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Training
AFAPB	Air Force Promotion Board
AFCC	Air Force Combat Command
AFDAR	Directorate of Military Requirements
AFDOP	Directorete of Personnel
AFDFU	Directorate of Program Planning
AFMOP	Directorate of Organizational Planning
AFMP	Air Force Military Personnel Division
AFIT	Directorate of Individual Training
APTAI	Office of the Air Inspector
AGF	Army Ground Forces
AGO	The Adjutant General's Office
AJA	Air Judge Advocate
AR	Army Regulation
ASC	Air Service Command
ASF	Army Service Forces
ASR	Adjusted Service Rating
AS/W	Assistant Secretary of War
ASAAF	Arms and Services with the AAF
ATC	Air Transport Command
AU	Air University
AUS	Army of the United States
CAF	Continental Air Force
CBI	China-Burma-India Theater
CDC	Caribbean Defense Command
DAC/AS	Deputy Assistant Chief of Air Staff
DG/AAF	Deputy Chief of the AAF
DG/AS	Deputy Chief of Air Staff
DC/S	Deputy Chief of Staff
EWO	European Theater of Operations
FTC	Flying Training Command

G-1	Assistant Chief of Staff, Personnel and Administration
G-3	Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations and Training
GCACTC	Gulf Coast Air Corps Training Center
HDC	Hawaiian Defense Command
MD	Materiel Division
MEA	Middle East Area
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
NACA	National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics
OC/AC	Office of the Chief of Air Corps
OCS	Officer Candidate School
ORC	Officers' Reserve Corps
OTS	Officers' Training School
PD	Plans Division
PDC	Personnel Distribution Command
PGC	Proving Ground Command
PL	Public Law
PR	Public Resolution
RD	Reserve Division
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
RR	Readjustment Regulation
RS	Reserve Section
SAC	Strategic Air Command
S/AS	Secretary of Air Staff
SOE	Services of Supply
SPA	South Pacific Area
S/H	Secretary of War
SWPA	Southwest Pacific Area
SPB	Secretary of War's Personnel Board
S. SB	Secretary of War's Separations Board
TAG	The Adjutant General
TAI	The Air Inspector
T&O	Training and Operations
TTC	Technical Training Command
WDGS	War Department General Staff
WFD	War Plans Division
Z/I	Zone of the Interior

AHS-II, Notes, Chap. I

N O T E S

Chapter I

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26. Instruction Governing Delivery of Letters of Appointment to Graduates of ROTC, in AAG 210.1J.
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