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29 September 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

The great tragedy of the present situation is that the persistent attacks of the Army-Air Force combination upon the Navy have forced the Navy to view every proposal that emanates from either the Army or Air Force in regard to policy with grave suspicion. At the time the Unification Act was first passed many Naval officers predicted that the ultimate objectives of merger have not been changed in the slightest, and that the 1947 act was viewed by the Army and Air Force merely as a stop-gap agreement or temporary check to their ambitions, and that the Army and Air Force would be satisfied with this because it would commit the Navy to a position from which they could not withdraw at a later date. From this position of acceptance of an acceptable Unification Act continued pressure by the Army and Air Force would then inevitably force the Navy into the merger.

These pessimistic predictions of many Naval officers apparently were justified. The course of events since then, the unremitting pressure for modification of the Unification Act in the direction of the original merger procedures, and the acquiescence on the part of practically all of the senior officers of the Air Force in the vicious attacks against the Navy by Huie and Lanphier demonstrated that these pessimistic fears were completely justified.

In my opinion, no further purpose can be served by pretending that we believe that the Army and Air Force are working within the spirit of the Unification Act. I believe that we should come out baldly and state that they maneuvered the Navy into acceptance of a proposition which they (the Army and Air Force) had no intention of considering as permanent. It was a political maneuver of the same type as we have seen used time and time again by the Russians in their dealings with the United States and Great Britain.

To go back again to my original thesis of tragedy - this conviction on the part of myself and many other Naval officers now makes it mandatory to view all proposals emanating from this same source with grave suspicion. We feel that any concession merely becomes the basis for further demands, and therefore we have been forced into the position of adopting a mirror policy vis-a-vis the Army and Air Force. The result is that we have rejected many of their proposals which are intellectually meritorious. Proposals are not being considered



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on their merits. Each proposal as to functions and missions is being considered on the background of its relationship to this aggressive policy of domination.

I believe that the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of Defense should have this situation explained to them directly, positively and in person by some responsible and senior Naval officer.

To continue my analogy to the Russians, I recommend that the first few paragraphs of Archibald McLeish's article, "The Conquest of America" in the August issue of Atlantic Monthly be read. The Navy is in the same situation with regard to unification, and actually is being intellectually hamstrung by the necessity of maintaining a defensive posture against inter-service aggression.

We should inform Mr. Johnson and Mr. Matthews that the only bar to real unified service thinking is the continuation of this intentional and aggressive encroachment upon the agreements of 1947 which were entered into in good faith by the Navy. We should tell our civilian bosses that we consider that these encroachments and other similar encroachments are deliberate breaches of the honorable good faith that should be a fundamental element of military character.

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