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COMMAND

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History is a long record of the birth, growth, decline and fall of nations. They, like individuals, are subject to the inexorable law of the survival of the fittest, which does not necessarily mean the survival of the best, but the survival of the one best fitted continually to cope with conditions. Whatever may be the experience of mankind in the future, it is a fact that practically no nation was ever born in the past without going through the labor pains of war. It is, moreover, a singular phenomenon, to which there are practically no exceptions, that the growth of nations in the past was coordinate and commensurate with their military efficiency, whereas their decline and fall was invariably brought about by their military decay. It is literally true that no nation has ever been crushed unless it was rotten inside. Rome saw its armies scattered by Hannibal, but through that very calamity became the ruler of the ancient world. It would thus seem to be justified to say that, judged by the past, a nation can endure only so long as its people possess the qualities required to make them deserve to live and the energy necessary to cope continually with conditions, in a word, so long as they possess and exert the will to defend what it may be their destiny to transmit as a heritage to posterity. This will is at present, as it was in the past, expressed in the military system of each nation.

Military systems however, as well as methods of warfare, have been undergoing a constant change throughout history, keeping pace with the material, moral and political progress made by mankind, but the dominant factor in both, the human element, has remained essentially the same. The instinct of self-preservation is as potent now as it ever was, and hatred and love, fear and courage, cowardice and bravery, hope and despair, greed and generosity, selfishness and self-sacrifice, animate men today just as much as they did ages ago when our ancestors dwelt in caves. Although science and invention

have given us marvelously powerful weapons, speedy means of transportation, and rapid means of communication, war can not be waged by mechanical means alone, nor even by such means predominantly, for man is and will always remain the incomparable instrument whose elementary character, aptitude, energies, sentiments, fears, desires, and instincts, constitute the dominant factors.

For these reasons, it is impossible to discuss COMMAND, which is to military forces what the head is to the human body - the agency that controls and directs - without a complete grasp of the fact that the human element is the vital factor. It is the human element that constitutes the basic factor in the defense of a nation, and, therewith, in the fighting forces, the army and navy, provided for that defense. That is why COMMAND - LEADERSHIP - has throughout all the ages been of such transcendental importance; that is why no leader has ever been successful unless he understood human nature.

While COMMAND may be defined as the exclusive right or power to control, or the occupancy of a position of chief authority, and the exercise of such control or authority, these attributes can not, in the nature of the case, be separated from the agency itself. Hence, in speaking of the COMMAND, we mean not only the attributes thereof, but the agency in which they are vested itself.

The COMMAND is then the agency which occupies the position of chief authority in respect to the military forces entrusted to it, with the exclusive right or power, or both, to exercise control over those forces. It is evident that COMMAND as defined, implies UNITY. Such unity - unity of the military thought, in Napoleon's words - is one of the prime factors of the strength of a military force and can not be assured unless the COMMAND is vested in a single individual, the commander, who is in truth the head of the force he commands. The terms

COMMAND and COMMANDER are accordingly used interchangeably, with this distinction, however, that the term COMMAND is employed to designate the chief military authority impersonally, whereas the term COMMANDER is employed to indicate that authority in a personal way.

Having thus established what COMMAND is, we may proceed to determine its functions. Military forces are provided by a nation for its defense. Since COMMAND is the chief authority of and has exclusive control over the military forces entrusted to it, it follows that the power vested in it is coupled with a responsibility coordinate and commensurate therewith, that is to say with the responsibility for the defense of the nation. As this is too general a statement of functions to be satisfactory, however, it will be necessary to deduce the detailed functions of COMMAND therefrom.

A perfect military force would be one in which each element could and would respond to the will of the COMMAND as promptly and surely as the muscles of the body respond to an impulse from the brain. While it may be impossible to attain this ideal completely, it is evident that the closer it is approached, the more certain and effective will be the action of the force as a whole in response to the will of the COMMAND. Obviously this result can not be attained, if the military force is merely an armed mob, or a collection of ships gathered together without system or plan. It can be attained only if the force is given form, cohesion, skill and self-confidence.

It is apparent that the first requisite is to bring order out of chaos by laying the foundation for harmonious effort and unity of action, in a word by giving the military force form - by organizing it. The first function of the COMMAND is therefore that of ORGANIZATION.

Organization alone will not suffice, however, for the constituent elements of the military force will still lack the

cohesion, skill and self-confidence necessary to enable them to function effectively alone or collectively in carrying out the will of the COMMAND. An organized military force that has no cohesion would be like a building the bricks of which were laid without mortar to cement them. Cohesion is produced by discipline, which may be defined as that subconscious obedience that is essential to all military control. Discipline has been produced successfully in a number of different ways, each, in general, adapted to the racial peculiarities, national characteristics and temper of the men composing the forces and in harmony with the spirit of the times. Until comparatively recent times, it was inculcated by extremely harsh means. The ancient Romans, for example, expected a soldier to dread his officers more than he did the enemy, and flogging and other harsh methods of producing discipline were in vogue in practically all armies and navies even as late as the 19th Century. But the best discipline has always been that which consisted largely of willing obedience resulting from personal pride, esprit de corps, sense of duty, loyalty to the commander, patriotism, or religious fanaticism. This kind of discipline is best taught by inculcating habits of obedience, self-control, and coordination; by meting out wise rewards and just punishments; by creating mutual confidence and esteem; and, finally, by precept and example.

But an organized military force that possesses nothing but cohesion would be like a sword-blade, which, though tempered well, has a dull edge and a blunt point. It must be given a sharp edge and a fine point to become a truly effective weapon. Similarly, to make a military force really effective, it must, like the sword-blade, acquire a sharp edge - skill, and a fine point - self-confidence. This, as in the case of cohesion, is the province of training. Without such training, organization, cohesion, and valor would be ineffective. "So sensible were the

Romans of the imperfection of valor without skill and practice that in their language, the name of an army was borrowed from the word which signified exercise." (Gibbon).

In war, however, so much depends upon chance and upon the intelligent understanding of the will of the COMMAND by subordinate commanders, especially by those at a distance and perhaps faced by a situation that the COMMAND had not foreseen, that organization and training, i.e., the acquisition of cohesion through discipline and of skill through practice, do not suffice. Something more must be provided to make assurance of success doubly sure. This something more is INDOCTRINATION, which is the keystone of all military action and therefore the basis of all training as well. Doctrine may be defined as a set of reasoned beliefs, in the art of war, fundamental principles which forty centuries of warfare have shown to be immutable, though their application has always varied and will always vary. The acceptance of this doctrine assures uniformity of understanding and provides a "common language". The possession of such "common language" assures harmony of effort and gives COMMAND confidence that subordinate commanders will understand the purpose of the Command and will follow such course of reasoning and will take such action as a result thereof as is necessary to accomplish the aims of the COMMAND.

Without DOCTRINE, supervision and coordination, teamwork and cooperation, and unity of action are difficult if not impossible. Doctrine knits all parts of the military force together in intellectual bonds, and assures that each part will work intelligently for the interests of the others and of the whole.

Doctrine can not, in the nature of the case, emanate from any agency other than the COMMAND. Neither can training, which is based upon doctrine, be effectively conducted except by the COMMAND. It follows then that the second function of

the COMMAND is INDOCTRINATION AND TRAINING.

A military force is like any machine. It requires constant attention to keep all of its parts functioning smoothly. It must be supplied with the wherewithal to keep it going; waste must be replaced and wear and tear made good. It is apparent that, if these matters were neglected, the military machine could not be maintained at its maximum fighting efficiency, and would quickly cease to function. Since the COMMAND is responsible for the fighting efficiency of the forces entrusted to it, it follows that these matters, which we may classify under the category of administration (this including all personnel matters) and supply, must be cared for by it, in other words, that the third function of the COMMAND is ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPLY.

With a military force properly organized, disciplined, trained and indoctrinated, administered and supplied, in the hands of the COMMAND, the employment of that force for the purpose of carrying out the mission to which it owes its existence may be visualized and plans formulated to that end. These plans must of necessity emanate from the COMMAND, whose fourth function is accordingly that of PLANNING.

Having organized, trained and indoctrinated, administered and supplied the military force entrusted to it, and made plans for its employment, the COMMAND is naturally faced with its fifth and greatest function, that of EXECUTION.

To summarize, it may be said then that the functions of the COMMAND consist of organizing, training and indoctrinating, administering and supplying, planning and executing. It performs these functions no matter how simple or complex its own mechanism may be, for, whether simple or complex, the dominant factor in it, the master mind, is that of a single individual, the commander. "From him must flow the energy that wields the weapon, the enthusiasm that nerves the human mass, the organized military group, to the supreme effort on the

battlefield."

So much for the theory of COMMAND in the abstract. It applies alike to land forces and naval forces, to armies and to fleets. To develop it further would merely produce general maxims designed to guide the COMMAND in carrying out its functions, and this would be quite useless, for the reason that, as MacCauley so well says in his essay on Machiavelli: "Every man who has seen the world knows that nothing is so useless as a general maxim.....But few indeed of the wise apothegms which have been uttered, from the time of the Seven Sages of Greece to that of Poor Richard, have prevented a single foolish action." The functions of COMMAND must be carried out by a human being, for, with, and upon other human beings. In the application, these functions are therefore almost wholly dependent upon the human touch, good, bad, or indifferent, of the master mind that dominates - of the commander. Here is accordingly, where COMMAND ceases to be a theory and becomes an art, an art that can not be learned from books, since in it we can not as in mathematics say that things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, for conditions are never twice the same, and practically everything depends upon the qualities of the commander. As Napoleon said in his Seventh Comment upon General Rog-niat's text-book: "Tactics, evolutions, the science of engineering and of artillery, may be learned from books, like geometry; but the knowledge of high command can be acquired only by a study of the history of wars and of the battles fought by great commanders and by experience. There are no hard and fast rules; everything depends upon the character with which nature has endowed the commander; upon his outstanding abilities, as well as upon his deficiencies; upon the quality of his troops; upon their armament; upon the season; and upon a thousand circumstances which prevent things from ever appearing the same in any two cases." The most profitable thing to do, therefore, is

to discover what the qualities are that have made commanders succeed and to endeavor to emulate them. While this study and emulation will not in itself produce successful commanders, the clear conception gained of the qualities required for command, especially for high command, that is, for the command of armies and fleets, will at least make us all better followers than we would otherwise be. Moreover, it will enable each of us to discover and to mitigate his bad qualities and to cultivate and to develop those that will make us better commanders in peace and in future war.

Success in the ART OF COMMAND depends so much upon the character and the natural endowments of the commander, that it is quite safe to say that great commanders are born, not made. When, for example, we analyze the action taken by a Nelson or a Napoleon in a single campaign, we are forcibly struck by the extreme simplicity of the conception and execution. "Napoleon's plans of campaign possess an inherent objective necessity. After one has studied them sufficiently to grasp them thoroughly, one is convinced that they could not possibly have been different; that the creative action of the strategic genius consisted merely of discovering what the nature of things required. The Empire style referred to in the history of art, with its classicism, its straight-lined simplicity, is in a certain sense comparable to the art of war of this epoch". These words of Professor Delbruck express at one and the same time how extremely simple and yet how tremendously difficult the art of command is. The action to be taken is simplicity itself, so much so in fact that, in the perusal, it is self-evident; but the great difficulty lies in discovering what the nature of things requires. "In war there is but one favorable moment", said Napoleon, "the great thing is to seize it". That faculty of discovering the simple, self-evident remedy, of doing the obvious thing at the favorable moment, that is denied to the average mortal.

"Everything depends upon the character with which nature has endowed the commander; upon his outstanding abilities, as well as upon his deficiencies", said Napoleon. "The first quality of a commander-in-chief is the possession of a cool head, which receives correct impressions of things, which never becomes over-excited, which does not permit itself to be intoxicated by good nor bewildered by bad news; a mind in which the successive or simultaneous impressions received during the course of a day classify themselves, and take only the place they should properly occupy; for good sense and reason are the result of comparing several sensations, weighed with equal consideration. There are men who, from their physical and moral constitution, are unable to form practical views upon a subject; whatever knowledge, intelligence, courage or good qualities of any kind they may possess, nature has not called them to the command of armies, nor to the direction of grand operations of war. It is necessary that a warrior have as much character as intellect; men who have a great deal of intelligence and little character are the least adapted for war; they are like ships with masts disproportionate to the ballast; it is better to have a great deal of character and less intelligence. Men of mediocre minds and corresponding character will often succeed in this profession: there should be as much base as elevation. Caesar, Hannibal, Turenne, Prince Eugene, and Frederick, were men who possessed both character and intelligence in a high degree." (Derrecagnax, Modern War.)

"The real secret of the great commander is the combination of boldness and prudence. We find this combination in Alexander, who, before entering upon his campaign into the interior of Persia, first protects his rear by the conquest of Tyre and Egypt and materially increases his army. We find it in Hannibal, who, instead of attacking Rome, first endeavors to detach Rome's allies from their allegiance. We find it in Scipio, who, although he risks a decisive battle without having a secure line of retreat, first brings up Masinissa with his reinforcements. We

find it in Caesar...in Gustavus Adolphus and Frederick. We find it likewise in Napoleon. No matter how recklessly he challenges fate again and again, he by no means rushes headlong and aimlessly into the unknown, but knows perfectly where he must call a halt, turns from the offensive to the defensive, takes the risk of the enemy attacking him in his turn and at the same time endeavors to supplement his victory through policy.

"The best example of this is the campaign of Austerlitz. Napoleon has annihilated an Austrian Army at Ulm, has taken Vienna, and has penetrated Moravia as far as the vicinity of Ollmütz, where the Russians confront him with their main force. To fight an offensive battle at such a juncture appears too risky to Napoleon, since the enemy is numerically somewhat superior to him. He therefore begins to negotiate, and when the enemy begins to advance, he takes up a defensive position. On December 2, 1805, he wins the resulting battle by assuming the offensive at the favorable moment. His opponent had extended his lines very much in order to envelop the Emperor and had thereby attenuated his center without making provision for adequate reserves. This was the place to strike. 'How long will it take you to capture that height?' (at Pratzen) inquired the Emperor of Marshal Soult, who had halted beside him. 'Twenty minutes' replied that officer. 'Then we shall wait another quarter of an hour', retorted the Emperor. To gauge this quarter of an hour properly, that was the difficult thing to do.....

"Austerlitz is important both in conception and in execution, because it shows us the manner in which the commander, Napoleon, exercises self-control, because we see in it how this man with all his recklessness, never for a single moment loses his self-possession. His prudence even goes so far that, when the advance of the enemy was reported to him, he instructs Talleyrand, who was negotiating for him in Vienna, to offer the

Austrians peace on easy terms. Although he counted with assurance upon victory, he made every effort to cover his rear even diplomatically in case of defeat." (Delbrück, History of the Art of War.)

"Intelligence and capacity are often regarded as the chief qualities of a military leader. This is generally an error. In the first place, there are no chief qualities. The qualities necessary for a commander of troops vary according to the circumstances in which he is placed. This much is certain: with a commander, qualities of character have the greatest weight. Two of these are held by the Germans in esteem beyond all others: decision and good sense. The ability to form a clear resolution without hesitation, and to put it into execution, is indeed an eminent virtue, especially in a military leader. It is what Verdy du Vernois calls clearness in conception and energy in execution." (Derrecagaiz; Modern War)

Napoleon said of himself: "There is no more apprehensive person than myself when I am formulating a plan of campaign. I exaggerate all dangers and consider all circumstances in their blackest colors. I am in a state of embarrassing excitement. This does not prevent me, however, from appearing to be in good humor before my entourage. But once my decision has been made, then I forget everything and think only of that which will make my plan succeed."

Again, when Napoleon was negotiating with the Austrians in regard to the armistice at Leoben, he said to the Austrian generals: "There are many good generals in Europe, but they see too much at one and the same time. I, on the contrary, see but one thing, the hostile masses. I endeavor to annihilate them, because I am certain that everything else will be decided thereby."

"Real greatness can not be grasped by the mass of people" says Professor Delbruck. "The public always likes to feel that victory was gained by an inferior over a superior force. The public is therefore likely to appreciate and acclaim the art of generalship only if it is demonstrated that the general had calculated everything carefully beforehand and had foreseen all that happened. That strategy constitutes a movement within an impenetrable element and that the most necessary quality of a general is daring, was first propounded by Clausewitz. If Napoleon had admitted after Marengo, how close he had been to losing that battle and moreover that his main body had in fact already suffered defeat when Desaix arrived late in the evening, the French people would not have admired his boldness but would have criticised his rashness, which caused him to disperse his forces and was retrieved by good luck only."

"A leader's knowledge of war is incomplete", wrote Marmont, "if in addition to his skill in conceiving technical combinations he does not possess a knowledge of the human heart, if he have not the power of gauging the momentary temper of his own troops and also that of the enemy."

Ragenau considers character, judgment, authority, and understanding of men, in the order named, to be the qualities that a true commander must possess.

Larned in "A Study of Greatness in Men" states that historical immortality may be attained through qualities of character and powers of transcendental superiority and cites as factors of character and power first, those attributes that endow character and conduct with a moral or ethical quality; second, the rational, purely intellectual, reasoning and imaginative powers; and third, the force of feeling and volition, which, by ardor, enthusiasm, passion, desire, resolution, and will, energize human nature.

"Character makes the general", says v.d. Goltz. "Highly intellectual natures are apt to adopt a certain universality

of view which is prejudicial to success within the narrow sphere of life in the field....Clever men usually look too far afield for the best method, and fail to perceive the paramount importance of the timely adoption of a practical method...Courage and love of responsibility are necessary to a general, but are rare gifts....Courage of responsibility is born of a certain nobility of mind which must be inherent in the general, and which ennobles his whole nature. It consists in a sense of superiority which raises above the common herd....Nobility of soul...is the very quality which soldiers most highly esteem in their general.... Healthy ambition is indispensable to a general. Men of very strong will and great qualities remain sometimes unknown, because they lack the inner impulse to shine forth....Some have been only induced, almost forced, by chance events to disclose their talents, Cromwell and Washington being examples of this....Great deeds are impossible without ambition...The general undergoes his hardest trials in the days of disaster. He must possess the special gift of being able to bear disappointments and the buffetings of fate, of whatever sort they may be. There are characters, vigorous in other respects, which lose their tranquility, their presence of mind, and their patience upon their hopes being dashed to the ground. We characterize that quality which is especially successful in combating the depressing influences of misfortune, as 'greatness of soul', and attribute this quality to our ideal of a general.....We must take it....to be self-understood that he can not exist without circumspection, courage, boldness, enterprise, foresight, discernment, perseverance, etc....A thorough knowledge of the secrets of human nature is very essential to a general....A less appreciated, but yet indispensable quality in a commander is imagination...he must be able to clearly picture to himself, at any moment during long and intricate marches and operations, the position of his own troops and the probable situation of those of the enemy. And more than this, he must foresee the situation as it will be at the expiration of two, three,

or even more days. Jomini extols this quality in Napoleon, and attributes to it the rapidity and ease of all his arrangements.... He...forgot nothing, and never failed to notice chance means to the end in view; he thought of things which every one else would have forgotten, and was rich in inspirations....The importance to a general of a good memory is under-estimated...Even the most inventive brain would fail, if a good memory did not afford it effectual aid....One of the most important talents of a general we would call that of a 'creative mind'...If will power, ambition, and a love of fame are combined with creative power, the result is an irresistible spirit of enterprise, and it is rightly asserted, that of two generals who are in other respects equal, the most energetic must gain the day....Good health and a robust constitution are invaluable to a general. There have, it is true, been famous generals who were sickly, but that only proves the extraordinary vitality of their spirit....A general needs a special kind of bravery....We admire in illustrious soldiers, that they always become more clear-sighted and resourceful in moments of the greatest danger, while all around them are working with blunted senses. Only courage of a kind incapable of understanding how it is possible not to have courage singles out the true soldier among his fellows....Inexorability and that seemingly hideous callousness are among the attributes necessary to him who would achieve great things in war. In the case of the general there is only one crime for which history never pardons him, and that is - defeat.....All heroes from Alexander to Napoleon, were filled with a belief in their mission, which gave them, in the most difficult situations, an unshakable sense of security. But at the bottom of it all lies the conviction that fortune, in the long run, only remains constant to the deserving, and that chance, ruling with the freedom of divinity - 'Sa sacré Majesté le hasard', as Frederick called it - declares quite as often for us as against us. Hence great generals owed what we call belief in their mission not to the favor of fortune, but really to faith in

their own ability...."

That a commander must have confidence in himself and must never lose it for a moment if he wishes to succeed, is well illustrated by General Hooker's conduct at Chancellorsville, in connection with which Bigelow tells the following interesting anecdote in his "Chancellorsville": "A couple of months after the battle of Chancellorsville, when Hooker had crossed the Rappahannock with the Army of the Potomac in the campaign of Gettysburg, he was asked by General Doubleday: 'Hooker, what was the matter with you at Chancellorsville? Some say you were injured by a shell, and others that you were drunk; now tell us what it was.' Hooker answered frankly and good-naturally: 'Doubleday, I was not hurt by a shell, and I was not drunk. For once I lost confidence in Hooker, and that is all there is to it.'"

All great leaders have had one quality that they either possessed or acquired, Prestige, of which le Bon says that it "is the mainspring of all authority. Neither gods, kings, nor women have ever reigned without it." After enumerating some of the great leaders and stating that they all possessed prestige in a high degree and owed the position they attained more particularly to this power, he continues: "It is evident, for instance, that Napoleon at the zenith of his glory enjoyed an immense prestige by the mere fact of his power, but he was already endowed in part with this prestige when he was without power and completely unknown. When, an obscure general, he was sent, thanks to influential protection to command the army of Italy, he found himself among rough generals who were of a mind to give a hostile reception to the young intruder dispatched them by the Directory. From the very beginning, from the first interview, without the aid of speeches, gestures or threats, at the first sight of the man who was to become great they were vanquished.... General Vandamme, a rough typical soldier of the Revolution.... said of him to Marshal d'Arnano in 1815, as on one occasion they mounted together the stairs of the Tuilleries: 'That devil of a

man exercises a fascination on me that I can not explain even to myself, and in such a degree that, though I fear neither God nor devil, when I am in his presence I am ready to tremble like a child, and he could make me go through the eye of a needle or throw myself into the fire.' Napoleon exercised a like fascination on all who came into contact with him."

"War is the realm of uncertainty", says Clausewitz; "three-fourths of those things upon which action in war depends are shrouded in the fog of more or less uncertainty. Here, therefore, a fine, penetrating intellect is first of all required to discover the truth with the tact of its judgment...An ordinary intellect may hit upon the truth by chance some time, but the majority of cases, the average result, will invariably bring to light the deficient understanding...Firmly relying upon his better inner knowledge, the leader must stand like a rock against which the waves break...Ordinary mortals, who are swayed by the suggestions of others, usually become undecided on the spot." Moltke says similarly that in war, after the operations begin, everything is uncertain except that which the commander himself possesses within himself in the form of will-power and enterprise. Clausewitz likewise says: "If we are to be successful in the struggle with the unexpected, two qualities are indispensably necessary to us, in the first place, an intellect which even in this intense darkness is not without some faint ray of inner light that leads us to the truth, and in the second place, courage to follow this faint ray of light. The first quality has been figuratively expressed by the French phrase coup d'oeil, the second is determination.....This peculiar cast of the mind, which conquers every other fear in the human breast by the horror of wavering and hesitating, is the quality which in strong natures constitutes determination."

Boldness is the noblest virtue of a commander, but the higher his position, the more necessary it is that this boldness

be paired with superior mentality. As Clausewitz so aptly says: "If we ask ourselves what kind of mind comes closest to military genius, then a look at the subject as well as at experience will tell us that penetrating rather than inventive minds, broad gauged minds rather than such as have a special bent, cool rather than fiery heads, are those to which in time of war, we should prefer to entrust the welfare of our women and children, the honor and safety of the nation."

The paths by which successful commanders have ascended to the pinnacle of military fame have been varied. Some were born with all the qualities necessary for high command, whereas others supplemented natural endowments by training, self-discipline and experience. But none has ever been truly successful, unless he possessed that unity of qualities compounded of character, judgment, intelligence and understanding of men.

"Everything is simple in war", says Clausewitz, "but the simplest thing is difficult. These difficulties accumulate and produce a friction that no one can correctly appreciate who has not seen war...A mighty, iron will-power overcomes this friction, crushes the obstacles.....The firm will of a proud spirit rises dominant in the center of the art of war, like an obelisk toward which all the avenues of a city converge." This proud spirit lived in Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Frederick, Washington, Napoleon, Nelson and Lee.

We may well agree with Clausewitz when he says that "military genius consists of an harmoniously balanced union of powers". Such stars of the first magnitude have been extremely rare, but they as well as the great commanders of lesser magnitudes, all possessed natural gifts and qualities, discussed more or less in detail above, that ensured their success. These are summarized for convenience in the following table; since we may safely assume that in the future as in the past a commander must possess them in order to succeed:

1. Character:
 - Boldness coupled with prudence;
 - Iron will-power; determination; resolution.
 - Moral courage; decisiveness; firmness.
 - Fortitude; steadfastness of purpose;
 - Resourcefulness; originality; self-reliance; initiative;
 - Energy;
 - Patience; tenacity; perseverance;
 - Simplicity;
 - Enthusiasm;
 - Charm; magnetism.
2. Judgment and common sense.
3. Intelligence:
 - Penetration;
 - Breadth of view;
 - Provision;
 - Boldness of conception;
 - Creative imagination.
4. Understanding of men.
5. Executive, creative and organizing ability.
6. Knowledge.
7. Bearing.
 - Dignity;
 - Coolness; imperturbability in danger.
8. Prestige.
9. Health.

The relatively low place assigned to knowledge in the foregoing list, leads to the interesting reflection that none of the great leaders of the past was a man of great learning or a specialist. The assertion is often made, indeed, that Napoleon's skill in employing artillery was due to the specialist training he had received as an artilleryman at the outset of his career, but a moment's reflection will show this assertion to be nothing but stuff and nonsense, for he handled his infantry quite as effectively as he did his artillery and yet he had never been an infantryman. We are therefore led to suspect that his skill in employing artillery was not due to his intimate knowledge of that arm at all, but to the plain fact that he applied common sense to the problem of its employment, just as he applied that same rare quality to all that pertained to the conduct of war. The fact of the matter is that generalship does not require great learning nor a thorough and intimate

knowledge of the technique of any and all arms and weapons, but penetration and breadth of view and a knowledge of the powers and limitations of each arm and weapon and above all else profound judgment and wisdom in using them combined for the purpose of winning battles.

The foregoing discussion on COMMAND would be incomplete without developing the fact that, although COMMAND, as already stated, implies "unity", that is, the exclusive right or power to control the forces entrusted to it, something more is required in order that success may be assured, to wit, UNITY OF COMMAND, by which is meant the right or power of the COMMAND to control all the forces that can and must be made available for the purpose of attaining that success.

Although UNITY OF COMMAND, as defined above, is not an inherent attribute of COMMAND, it must be provided if success is to be assured, for history is replete with examples showing that UNITY OF COMMAND is vital to the success of any military undertaking. Without it, one of the fundamental principles of strategy, which requires that all forces that can be made available, must be brought to bear against the enemy at the decisive point at the decisive time, could not be carried out. What the greatest master of the art of war, Napoleon, thought of unity of command, is stated in his LXIV War Maxim: "Nothing is more important in war than unity in the command; thus when there is war against but one power there should be but one army, acting on one line, and led by one chief."

Lack of unity of command has probably been the cause of more defeats and disasters than any other contributing factor. The defeat of the Allied French, Austrians and Russians in the Seven Years' War can be ascribed to no other cause, for, had they been united, they would have been overwhelmingly superior to anything Frederick the Great could have put into

the field against them. Lack of unity of command almost cost the Allied Austrians, Russians and Prussians the battle of Leipzig, and, had Napoleon's means of communication been equal to the demands made upon them by his army, the Allies would undoubtedly have been defeated. Even at Waterloo, success of the Allied cause rested wholly upon such cooperation as Blucher cheerfully gave to Wellington. There was no unity of command, and had Blucher not cooperated wholeheartedly with Wellington, there is little doubt but what Napoleon would have won that famous battle and the history of the world would have been changed thereby.

Our own history is full of examples of the absence of unity of command and of the disastrous consequences flowing therefrom. We need only recall the days of the Civil War. Independent armies were in every field from the very start. In 1861, when McDowell was advancing toward Centreville, Patterson was in the Shenandoah Valley, McClellan in West Virginia, and other forces were scattered about elsewhere. No attempt was made to place all forces in the East under one commander. Was it surprising that McDowell was defeated in consequence at Bull Run? For three years the Northern Armies were conducted without unity of command and the cost of this neglect, in blood and treasure, was enormous. It is not too much to say that, had all the Northern Forces been placed under the control of one commander from the very start, that bloody struggle would probably have been shortened by at least two years.

Finally, our own generation should have a vivid recollection of the terrible lessons taught by the World War in regard to the fatal consequences produced by the absence of unity of command. Let us examine the most glaring instance of this lack of unity of command during that war. In August, 1914, when the German right wing was sweeping through Belgium, lack of unity of command of the French, British and Belgian

Armies all but cost the Allies the loss of the war and would probably have done so had it not been for the inexplicable blunders made by the Germans. Nevertheless, in spite of this object lesson, the lack of unity of command continued until it finally brought the Allies to the brink of disaster when the Germans launched their great offensive simultaneously against the French and British on March 21, 1918; on the general front Arras - LaFere. The Germans directed their main effort against Amiens, at the junction of the French and British Armies, presumably the weakest spot in the Allied line. They believed that if they succeeded in breaking that line at that point, the French would be above all else concerned about the safety of Paris and the British for that of the Channel ports. Subsequent events seemed to justify this belief, for the Allied line was broken and, in the words of General Mangin, "The commander of each army thought only of his own army, for which he was responsible to his government. General Petain directed, March 24th: Above all else, maintain the firm cohesion of the French Armies....and then, if possible, maintain contact with the British. Marshal Haig wrote from Abbeville, on March 25th, that the separation of the British and French Armies was merely a question of time, and that he was making preparations to withdraw so as to cover the Channel ports....Accordingly, the British Armies will retire toward the west, to the sea, the French Armies toward the south...The fatal separation will be completed and the way to Paris will be open. Disaster is imminent, because there is no unity of command." London and Paris conferred as to ways and means to meet the disastrous course of events. The evacuation of Paris was discussed. Clemenceau declared he would fight until he reached the Pyrenees, and tentative plans were formulated for embarking the British Armies for home.

At this critical moment, when the Allies were in great

extremity, a council of war, which was attended by the commanders-in-chief of the various Allied armies and by the leading Allied statesmen, met at Doullens on March 26, 1918. At this council, soldier and statesman alike recognized that the war was lost unless self-interest was relegated to the background for the moment. As a result, unity of command was adopted and Marshal Foch invested with the supreme command over the Allied Armies on the Western Front. This action was decisive, even our former enemies admitting this. As one prominent German writer puts it: "This historic hour, in which a grave neglect was remedied at the eleventh hour, just before it was too late, decided the battle, perhaps the entire war."

Examples to prove the soundness of the contention that unity of command is vital to success in war, could be multiplied. Enough has, however, been said already to indicate clearly that the old adage "United we stand, divided we fall", though applied to a political situation, is equally applicable in the military field. It is, like the principles of strategy, based upon common sense and so simple that it is more often honored in the breach than in the observance. But its simplicity does not detract in the slightest degree from the vital necessity of applying it. It can not be cast aside without wantonly courting disaster.

If unity of command is of such vital importance, why then, it may well be asked, is it not applied to the army and navy of each country? The answer is simple. Armies and fleets do not, as a rule, operate together, their respective spheres of activity being usually far removed from each other. When armies and fleets do operate together, however, unity of command or, at the very least, unity of strategic direction, should undoubtedly be provided.

An attempt has been made in the foregoing pages to demonstrate the transcendental importance of the COMMAND to

success in war, to deduce its attributes and functions, to show the vital necessity of unity of command to the success of any military undertaking, and to discover the qualities that a commander must possess in order to succeed. Nothing remains, therefore, but to point out that the attributes and functions of command and the qualities that a commander must possess to assure success have remained constant throughout all history, whereas the practice of the exercise of command has undergone a gradual change, keeping pace with the progress made by the art of war, just as the latter has kept pace with advancing civilization.

It is but natural that the practical exercise of command should have been suited to the times in which a commander lived, to his own peculiar talents and to the racial and national characteristics of the forces he commanded. For example, Hannibal commanded an army knit together neither by ties of race, religion, nor love of country; Scipio Africanus and Caesar commanded armies composed of Roman citizens; Cromwell commanded an army of religious fanatics; Frederick commanded an army composed of highly trained professional soldiers welded together by the well-nigh perfect iron discipline of old Prussia; and Napoleon commanded at the outset of his career armies composed of zealous and enthusiastic levies of the Revolution and later on armies fired by love of glory and animated by fanatic devotion to his person and almost fatalistic belief in his star.

Until comparatively recent times, all the functions of command were exercised in person by even the highest commanders. The size, armament and mobility of armies and fleets were such as to permit this practice. Commanders of all grades, even the highest, participated personally in battle, seeking thereby by personal example to stimulate their forces to greater exertion and enthusiasm. Personal leadership thus played a

tremendously important role. Alexander the Great, for instance, invariably led his troops in person; Gustavus Adolphus fell at Lutzen while fighting at the head of his troops; Blucher personally led his cavalry at Ligny; Nelson was wounded while personally leading a landing party against Santa Cruz, Teneriffe and was killed on the deck of his flagship at Trafalgar because he scorned to take shelter. Napoleon's marshals, notably Murat and Ney, were invariably in the thickest of the fight, and during our own Civil War, the number of division and even corps commanders killed in action bears eloquent testimony of the fact that they commanded in person at the head of their troops.

Such personal leadership became more and more difficult for higher commanders and finally impossible as the size, armament and mobility of armies and therewith the complexity of the conduct of war increased to a point where a single individual, no matter how gifted, could no longer attend personally to all the functions of command. Even the armies of the First Empire had already outgrown the old system of command and Napoleon's ultimate failure may, to an extent at least, be ascribed to this fact. Napoleon himself did not introduce any change in the prevailing practice of personal command, but it is a curious fact that the terrible chastisement meted out by him to Europe was the direct cause that led to a change in that practice. Prussia, after her deep humiliation at Jena and Auerstadt at the hands of Napoleon, realizing that she had no leader capable of coping with that past master of the art of war, evolved a new system of command, one which forms the basis of that of the present day. This system consisted essentially of furnishing a commander with a competent adviser in the form of a chief of staff, aided by a number of qualified assistants, who relieved the commander of as much of the burden

of carrying on the functions of command as he deemed desirable or necessary, but not of the attributes of command - responsibility and the power of exclusive control, that is, decision. These attributes the commander could not delegate even if he would, for to do so would have passed his power of command to others.

In line with the foregoing, the Prussians accordingly, during their War of Liberation, placed Marshal Blucher in command of their army and gave him General Scharnhorst and, after that officer's death, General Gneisenau as chief of staff, these officers being aided by a small but select body of capable assistants. This body of officers formed the nucleus of the Prussian General Staff. It was not, as is so often stated, a staff whose functions were general in nature, as its translated name appears to indicate, but THE STAFF OF THE GENERAL. Although at its birth subordinate to the Prussian Ministry of War, the Prussian General Staff was made independent of that Ministry in 1829 and remained independent of that agency until its abolition by the Treaty of Versailles.

The Prussian General Staff developed rapidly under the able guidance of a number of distinguished soldiers, particularly under that of Fieldmarshal von Moltke, who was its chief from 1857 until 1888, and became the model upon which all other general staffs were organized. But many years were to pass before other nations adopted the general staff system. It was not in fact until the Prussian victories of 1864 and 1866 and the German victory of 1870-71 burst upon a startled Europe that other powers began to realize that the Germans had invented and quietly developed a system that was practically a guarantee of success against any opponent who did not possess it. They accordingly took immediate steps to remedy their neglect and it was not long before all continental European armies boasted of a general staff, even Japan adopting that system. England and the United States alone among all the

powers held aloof, but they also finally had to adopt the system for their armies and by the opening of the 20th Century every army of any size had a general staff.

While the armies of the powers thus set the pace in this regard, navies were for some reason or other for a long time rather loath to adopt the new system, although they also - those of England and of the United States excepted - finally followed suit by organizing staffs analogous to the general staffs of armies and called, by the Germans for example, Admiral Staffs.

While it would be profitable to discuss in detail the historical development of this new command system and the form in which it is at present in vogue in various armies and navies; this would lead us entirely too far afield. But the system in general and the organization and functions of the staff and its relation to command must be discussed in order to present a clear picture of how the command functions or should function at the present time.

In the first place, it should be pointed out that a general staff (or admiral staff) is an agency quite distinct from other so-called staffs, with which it must not be confounded. As a matter of fact, the term staff should not be used at all except to designate the general staff. Since the term staff is, however, constantly being used indiscriminately to designate not only the general staff but other so-called staff agencies, thereby giving rise to misconceptions, it is well to bear in mind that there are four such agencies, viz.,

1. The General Staff;
2. The Technical Staff;
3. The Supply and Administrative Staff; and
4. The Personal Staff of the Commander.

The general staff (or admiral staff) is the only true staff, that is to say, it is the only staff agency designed to relieve the commander of as much of the burden of carrying

on the functions of command as possible, always excepting the attributes of command, that is, responsibility and the power of exercising exclusive control. The technical staff consists of groups of technical personnel, each under a chief, who exercises command functions within his department and in addition, when called upon to do so, gives advice, on matters with his cognizance, to the commander and the general staff. The supply and administrative staff consists of groups of supply and administrative personnel - usually referred to as The Services - each under a chief, who exercises command functions within his department and in addition, when called upon to do so, gives advice, on matters within his cognizance, to the commander and to the general staff. The personal staff of a commander consists of his personal aids.

This system applies in principle to the central command organization at the seat of government as well as to all higher troop units, that is, to divisions and higher units. Thus each general staff is divided into two distinct groups, the first being at the seat of government, the second with troops. The first was called the Great General Staff by the Germans and is called the War Department General Staff by us. The second is everywhere called the General Staff with troops. Admiral Staffs, where they exist, follow a similar grouping, the first being at the capital of the country, the second with the fleet and its major subordinate units.

The technical staff is similarly divided into two groups, usually consisting of the chiefs of the various arms at the seat of government and of officers of the various technical branches detailed as technical staff officers on the staff of the commanders of higher units.

The supply and administrative staff - or the Services - are likewise divided into two groups, consisting of the chiefs of the various bureaus and their bureaus at the seat of government, and of their representatives functioning as

administrative and supply officers, such as adjutant, quartermaster, finance officer, etc.; on the staff of higher commanders.

It should be borne in mind that the general staff organization existing at the present time in various countries was not evolved on the spur of the moment but was the gradual development of many years, being in the process powerfully influenced by the existing governmental system, institutions, traditions, racial and national characteristics and the historical background and development of the particular nation to which it pertains. In some countries, for example, the general staff at the seat of government was coordinate with the ministry of war and the military cabinet (the latter charged with personnel matters affecting officers), as in the former German Empire; in others, it is merely an agency of the ministry of war, coordinate with but not superior to other agencies of that ministry, as in France; and in others again, it is the chief agency of the war department, not coordinate with, but superior to all other agencies of that department, except that of the Assistant Secretary of War, as in the United States. It must, moreover, be remembered that the general staff organization is not as old as technical, administrative and supply, and personnel staffs, so-called. This accounts to a large extent for the slowness with which the general staff system developed, for the fact that, in some armies, the general staff does not as yet occupy a position superior to these other agencies, and for the friction that often obtains between general staff and these other agencies even in armies where the general staff is paramount.

The object of all organization is decentralization of effort. Organization consists essentially of nothing but the distribution of labor. To assure adequate results, labor must

be suitably distributed, responsibility for its performance fixed, and power commensurate with its performance must be allotted. This applies to staff organization as well.

It will be recalled that the attributes of the COMMAND were stated to be the exclusive power or right to control, or the position of chief authority and the exercise of such control or authority and that the functions of the COMMAND were stated to be those of organization, indoctrination and training, administration and supply, planning and execution. These functions then constitute the labor that must be suitably distributed, responsibility for its performance fixed and power commensurate with that responsibility allotted. But, as was stated above, the commander can not divest himself of the power of exercising exclusive control nor of the responsibility of carrying on the functions of command. How then can the indicated distribution of labor be effected, responsibility for its performance fixed, and power commensurate with its performance allotted? Simply by not considering the true staff, that is, the general staff, as anything other than brain cells of the commander, acting solely as part of his dominating personality. These brain cells are one and all controlled by and subject to his brain cell that expresses his will. Their acts are never their own acts, but his acts, being either actually sanctioned by him or accepted by him as acts performed by his alter ego, the general staff. This is the only true conception of general staff performance. If it is borne in mind, it becomes apparent that a suitable distribution of command functions can be effected without difficulty, the power exercised in the execution being always that of the commander.

But even after this distribution is made, coordination of effort would still be essential, a task that would tax the commander's energies and time unduly and would interfere

seriously with his devoting himself to those matters incident to command which he and he alone is competent to attend to personally. For this reason, he is provided with a chief of staff. The latter is the chief adviser and personal representative of the commander. He assists the commander in the supervision and coordination of the command and should enjoy his complete confidence and a considerable degree of independence in the performance of his duties. He is responsible for the working of the whole staff, and, under the orders of his commander, for the control and coordination of the operations of the troops. His powers of supervision, coordination and control in the commander's name are coextensive with this responsibility and are exercised to the extent that he deems necessary to its discharge.

The command functions may be suitably distributed in various ways. If we analyze these functions, we perceive at once -

- First: That administration and supply may be grouped together with advantage as pertaining to the maintenance of fighting efficiency in men and material;
- Second: That, since information of the enemy is essential to the formulation of plans and to their execution, provision must be made for the collection, evaluation and dissemination of military intelligence of the enemy; and
- Third: That organization, indoctrination and training, the formulation of plans of operations and supervision over their execution are so intimately related as to make it expedient to group them together.

By assigning the functions enumerated under each group above to a separate general staff division, called the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Divisions, respectively, we should obtain a distribution of labor that would be at one and the same time simple, effi-

cient, and so flexible as to adapt itself readily to any and all conditions.

If it is desired to divide the functions into four groups the best arrangement would be to create a fourth general staff division and to assign supply to it. This is the arrangement at present used in our army, except in the War Department General Staff, which will be discussed later. If it is desired to divide the functions into five groups, the best arrangement would be to use the four-group arrangement above described, but to create a fifth general staff division and to assign indoctrination and training to it. This five-group arrangement of functions was used by the General Staff of G.H.Q. of the A.E.F., although the four-group arrangement was used by the general staff of its armies, and the three-group arrangement by the general staff of each of its corps and of each of its divisions.

But whatever arrangement is employed, the chief of staff coordinates the labor of the general staff divisions as well as those of the other staff agencies, so as to produce harmonious, well-balanced results, which he then, if necessary, presents to his commander for approval. In large units, needless to say, the chief of staff, as well as the chiefs of general staff divisions, each with his proper sphere, must be allowed a great deal of latitude in the performance of his duties; this latitude extending even to the issue of orders in the commander's name, in case of necessity, without prior reference to him. In extensive land operations this is necessary - although use should be made of it only with caution as it is easily abused - whereas in naval operations the need for such a practice does not appear to be so manifest, since commander and staff are together within the confined space of a ship and therefore within easy reach of each other.

Our War Department General Staff organization is unique in that, although it employs the four-group arrangement des-

cribed above; it has a fifth division, called the War Plans Division, which is devoted exclusively to planning. This was designed primarily for the purpose of providing the nucleus of the General Staff of the General Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies in the field in war. Since this is the motive for its existence, it is but natural that it should be charged with the preparation of the plans that it must execute as the general staff of G.H.Q. when war ensues. But it is nevertheless a bona fide War Department General Staff Division, just as the four other general staff divisions; and functions in peace accordingly in a dual capacity. When war ensues and a G.H.Q. is to be formed, the War Plans Division forms the nucleus of the general staff of G.H.Q., with a part of its personnel and leaves the remainder behind in the War Department to continue to function as the War Plans Division, War Department General Staff. In order that it may be in instant readiness for its prospective duties, it is organized in peace time into four sections, analogous to and with the same functions as those of the four-group general staff arrangement described above.

Our general staff is not an operating agency, that is to say, it does not command anything nor operate administration and supply, these being operated by the Services. Its functions are laid down in the National Defense Act and are as follows:

"The duties of the War Department General Staff shall be to prepare plans for national defense and the use of the military forces for that purpose, both separately and in conjunction with the naval forces, and for the mobilization of the manhood of the Nation and its material resources in an emergency, to investigate and report upon all questions affecting the efficiency of the Army of the United States, and its state of preparation for military operations; and to render professional aid and assistance to the Secretary of War and the Chief of Staff.

"The duties of the General Staff with troops shall be to render professional aid and assistance to the general officers over them; to act as their agents in harmonizing the plans, duties, and operations of the various organizations and services under their jurisdiction, in preparing detailed

instructions for the execution of the plans of the commanding generals, and in supervising the execution of such instructions.

"The Chief of Staff shall preside over the War Department General Staff and, under the direction of the President, or of the Secretary of War under the direction of the President, shall cause to be made, by the War Department General Staff, the necessary plans for recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, mobilizing, training, and demobilizing the Army of the United States and for the use of the military forces for national defense. He shall transmit to the Secretary of War the plans and recommendations prepared for that purpose by the War Department General Staff and advise him in regard thereto; upon the approval of such plans or recommendations by the Secretary of War, he shall act as the agent of the Secretary of War in carrying the same into effect. Whenever any plan or recommendation involving legislation by Congress affecting national defense or the reorganization of the Army is presented by the Secretary of War to Congress, or to one of the committees of Congress, the same shall be accompanied, when not incompatible with the public interest, by a study prepared in the appropriate division of the War Department General Staff, including the comments and recommendations of said division for or against such plan, and such pertinent comments for or against the plan as may be made by the Secretary of War, the Chief of Staff, or individual officers of the division of the War Department General Staff in which the plan was prepared."

While the law thus provides a general staff for our Army, it does not provide an analogous agency for our Navy. Although the Chief of Naval Operations and the personnel of his office perform many functions similar to those assigned by law to the Chief of Staff and to the War Department General Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations and his personnel are charged neither with as much responsibility nor invested with as much power as the War Department agencies named. In the absence of an admiral staff corps, our Navy has accordingly no coordinating agency in the Navy Department comparable to the War Department General Staff, nor in the Fleet one comparable to the General Staff with Troops. The complexity of modern warfare and the increasing difficulty of peace time preparation therefor would seem to indicate the necessity of providing our Navy with an admiral staff corps. Whether this staff should be organized on the lines of the general staff of our Army is debatable, but if it is to be an effective

agency, it should be made an integral part of the agency of COMMAND, without becoming an operating agency, however, and be organized to handle efficiently the functions of -

Maintenance of fighting efficiency in men and matériel, that is, administration and supply; Collection, evaluation and dissemination of military intelligence of the enemy; and Organization, indoctrination and training, formulation of plans of operations and supervision over their execution.

But, although our Navy still lacks an admiral staff, we possess one coordinating agency of great power that no nation has ever boasted of heretofore, to wit, THE JOINT BOARD. This was created some years ago by agreement between the Secretaries of War and of the Navy and consists of the Chief of Staff, the Deputy Chief of Staff, and the Chief of the War Plans Division, War Department General Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, and the Director of the War Plans Division, Office Chief of Naval Operations. It handles all matters involving joint Army and Navy interests and requiring joint Army and Navy action that are referred to it by either Secretary, and has the power to initiate such matters and to make recommendations in connection therewith. Its recommendations, when approved by both Secretaries, become binding upon the two departments. The Joint Board is assisted by the Joint Planning Committee, which constitutes its working body and is composed of four officers of the War Plans Division, War Department General Staff and of four officers of the War Plans Division, Office Chief of Naval Operations.

This system provides the machinery for effectively solving the many problems in which both Army and Navy are

interested. That it has worked well is attested by the fact that since its creation, although a multitude of knotty problems were handled by it; two only were found incapable of solution.

If we compare the general staff system produced by the provisions of law quoted above with other general staff systems, we realize that no general staff has ever been invested with more comprehensive power, nor been more truly an integral part of the agency of COMMAND than our general staff, and that none has therefore ever had so fair a chance to demonstrate that it is the Brain of the Army.

While our system is not perfect, it is constantly being improved and has, on the whole, already overwhelmingly demonstrated its usefulness. As more and more officers trained by and for this system reach positions of authority, we may confidently expect that it will continue to improve, keeping pace with the progress made by the art of war; that its success will sooner or later result in our Navy adopting an analogous system; and that the importance of correctly solving the many difficult military problems confronting us; and the necessity of providing unity of command; or at least unity of strategic direction, in case of joint army and navy operations; will eventually produce legislation giving The Joint Board and its Planning Committee the legal status of a Joint Army and Navy General Staff and providing the Commanders-in-Chief of Joint Army and Navy Forces with Joint Army and Navy General Staffs.

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