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DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER AT THE ARMY WAR COLLEGE, 1927-1928

by

DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN COOLING

(Editor's Note: *Little is known of Major Dwight D. Eisenhower's year at the Army War College. But, like every student officer he had to write a research paper, then termed a "Staff Memorandum." He apparently believed that the question of reserves was central to manpower procurement for the Army, for he chose as his topic, "An Enlisted Reserve for the Regular Army." This article reflects how Major Eisenhower, later the historic military commander in World War II and distinguished President of the United States, treated a prosaic subject that is still relevant today when isolationist sentiment, reserves, dollar constraints, and manpower procurement continue to be controversial issues. Although his paper appears less sophisticated than today's War College essays on national and international security affairs, it has substantial historical interest since it draws interesting and instructive parallels between the world and the US Army of 1928 and those of 1975.)*

* * * * *

The Army War College in the late 1920s was a pleasant, contemplative assignment for senior professionals of that generation. Then located beside the gently lapping waters of the Potomac River on Greenleaf's Point (now Buzzard Point) in downtown Washington, the neo-classical building provided the requisite setting in an era of peace for the Army's senior educational institution. "To anyone subjected to the pressures at Leavenworth [the Command and General Staff College]," concluded one recent analyst, "the War College seemed by contrast to be pleasurably contrived for a leisurely respite." It was into such a halcyon atmosphere that young Major Dwight David Eisenhower entered with the academic class of 1927-1928.[1]

Major Eisenhower had just finished an instructive year with the Battle Monuments Commission, surveying and preparing a guidebook on the battlefields of World War I. He was scarcely two years out of the Command and General Staff course, a young officer who enjoyed the respect of General of the Army John J. Pershing. Eisenhower and his wife, Mamie, lived across town at the Wyoming Apartments, a fashionable older building located on upper Connecticut Avenue not far from Rock Creek Park. There the evenings were filled with old friends, now also in attendance at the War College—friends like Gee Gerow and Wade Haislip, both of

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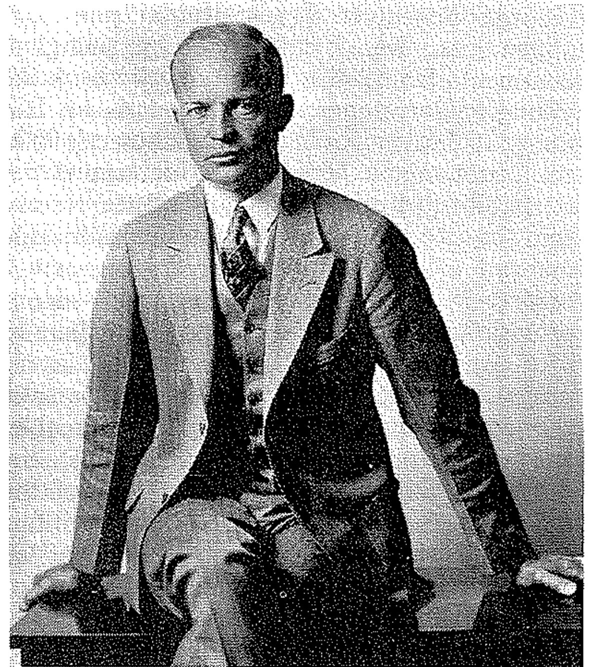
whom had also served in the 19th Infantry at Fort Sam Houston, and Everett Hughes, one of Eisenhower's instructors at Leavenworth. Before the onset of the wet Washington winter, another former mentor and the new Commandant of the War College, Major General William D. "Fox" Connor, joined the group adding distinction and intellectual prestige to the environment of Eisenhower's "year at the War College."[2]

The War College assignment proved to be merely an interlude for Eisenhower between assignments relating to the guidebook on battlefields. But it was a valued interlude, for at the War College students learned to think about the big problems of war–supply, movement of large bodies of troops, relations with allies, grand strategy. Furthermore, it was generally assumed that those who did well at the War College would become generals if the United States ever entered another conflict. Overall hung the "lessons" and techniques of World War I. The curriculum was structured to reflect the staff organization of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), as if every future war would be fought in the image of the one just past. Young Eisenhower found himself involved with committee work, organized command and staff instruction, lectures, conferences, and individual preparation on subject areas such as War Plans (Scope, Method, Agencies), G1 (Personnel and Morale), G3 (Operations and Training), G4 (Supply), Assistant Secretary of War (Procurement), G2 (Intelligence), Command (Organization, Strategy, Tactics), more War Plans (Preparation), and finally more Command (Exercises and Field Reconnaissance).

Like every student, he also had to prepare a research paper, then termed a "Staff Memorandum," and Ike chose the timely (if somewhat prosaic) topic, "An Enlisted Reserve for the Regular Army."[3] These "staff memoranda" were to be completed between 15 September 1927 and the first Monday in April of the following year. They were to be "broad enough to require General Staff action in that it is of interest to the Army or Navy, . . . should be of a live



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Dwight D. Eisenhower while a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission (1928).

nature, . . . treating questions that now need attention or will need it in the near future," and "should contribute something of value to the betterment of national defense." Eisenhower undoubtedly believed that the question of reserves was central to manpower procurement, especially since the typical American approach to the Army as reflected in the National Defense Act of 1920 had skeletonized the nine Regular Army divisions, while emphasizing a mobilizable National Guard and Organized Reserve (although during the twenties the Guard rarely reached half of the projected 435,000-man strength and the Reserve never numbered more than 100,000 in an Officers' Reserve Corps and an almost nonexistent Enlisted Reserve Corps). But, it seemed terribly important to work on this problem and so Major Dwight D. Eisenhower chose it for his student research.[4]

Eisenhower's paper, which he submitted on 15 March 1928, epitomized the principles emphasized in War College Study at that time–brevity, lucidity, and practicality. Research was conducted in materials available in the College records section as well as from

other published and unpublished government records. Seventeen pages of text plus four appendices were enhanced by marginal comments from "Fox" Connor who took the young major under his tutelage as he had done at Leavenworth. In Eisenhower's eyes the problem was simple: "To determine the advisability of establishing an enlisted reserve for the Regular Army, and a practicable method of producing and organizing such a reserve." He assumed that the major provisions of existing laws would continue to form the basis for the nation's military program. Therefore, "In the effort to make the conclusions practicable and reasonable, and applicable to present conditions, the subject is limited to a consideration of the effects on our military position that would be produced through the accumulation of an enlisted reserve for the Regular Army, and of economical and acceptable methods of securing it."[5]

Eisenhower first outlined the "facts bearing on the problem." Citing the emergency missions of the Regular Army noted in Army Regulations, as well as in the 1925 Secretary of War report, he listed the requirements for overseas garrisons and continental defense forces, and for personnel to develop the reserves. He also specified general continuing duties "for the overhead of the Army of the United States," and "to provide an adequate, organized, balanced, and effective expeditionary force, which will be available in emergencies, within the continental limits of the United States or elsewhere, and which will serve as a model for . . . National Guard and Organized Reserves." Eisenhower felt that none of the missions could be neglected, and that the defense of US territory and vital interests until the civilian components were prepared for battle was of utmost importance. "Initial successes under these conditions may relieve us of the necessity of waging a long and bitter war with large armies with its consequent losses in men, material, and money," he declared.

Eisenhower next examined the "strength required to carry out the missions of the Regular Army upon the outbreak of an emergency." He cited three separate studies of the problem which existed in the War College records section. One had based requirements upon the carrying capacity of vessels available to transport troops to combat areas, visualizing that the United States would have to provide 300,000 men in a field army plus 150,000 to 200,000 for other missions within thirty days after a declaration of war.

A second study, "based on the minimum situation in which our national safety could be menaced," estimated that upon the declaration of an emergency 284,000 men were necessary for foreign garrisons, bridge heads at sensitive points, vital operations, secondary operations, frontier defense in secondary areas, and strategic reserve and frontier defense in general. Eisenhower carefully added an additional 40,000 to 50,000 to the second study for "furnishing cadres for fixed coast defenses; manning anti-aircraft equipment in vital areas; personnel for organizing and training civilian components; necessary overhead and miscellaneous duties in Zone of Interior. . . . Assuming that secondary and defensive missions could be performed by National Guard units and about one-half of the reserve could be furnished by them, we would still require an initial strength for the Regular Army of about 250,000," said Eisenhower. He emphasized that the second study proposed two expeditionary forces of 76,000 and 48,000, ("for what purpose?" questioned "Fox" Connor in an unanswered marginal note), but "by providing for the larger only, and undertaking upon the outbreak of war only the one which promises the best results, we can diminish the 250,000 to about 200,000, although the larger number would be most desirable."

Finally, the young Major cited yet a third study which placed the minimum requirements of the Regular Army upon mobilization as 277,000 men. He concluded that "A total strength of 200,000 trained men available to the Regular Army immediately upon the declaration of war is taken as the irreducible minimum consistent with national safety." Each of the studies emphasized the

vital necessity "for immediate operations by a moderately strong mobile force, upon the declaration of war," and in Eisenhower's eyes, the regulars were the only component "of our Army available for immediate service in an emergency."

Eisenhower then painstakingly examined "Strength and organization of the Regular Army available to carry out missions." He noted that the National Defense Act had provided for a Regular enlisted strength of not more than 280,000 in 1920, and only 214,000 were actually on muster rolls in June of the following year. But, somewhat deceived by the legal semantics, Ike claimed that the act had actually "repealed the laws of 1912 and 1916 which had provided for an enlisted reserve," since "it is evident that Congress considered under the conditions existing at the time and in view of the other provisions it made for national defense, that there was no need for continuing the existence of the enlisted reserve." He was obviously referring to the pool of four million veterans present immediately after the war, and post-war expectations of raising the National Guard to a strength of 435,000 and the 280,000-man regular force as projected in the National Defense Act of 1920. "At present," however, "with the contingent of veterans rapidly disappearing as a military asset, and with the National Guard less than one-half the strength it was expected to reach, the Regular Army has been reduced to about 40% of that considered necessary under the most favorable conditions." Eisenhower pointed to economy and the absence of threat to the nation at the time as causes for such a situation, and "any increase in the strength available to the Regular Army upon declaration of war must therefore be provided in some manner which will be much less expensive than that of maintaining greater numbers on the active list of the Army."

Although the isolationist national mood of the twenties made overseas military involvement an almost-taboo subject, Major Eisenhower approached the matter without hesitation. Connor's marginal comments cautioned him several times about the anathema attached to the term "expeditionary force," which Ike saw as one of the Army's primary missions. The War College student suggested that, except for such a mission, the organization and development of great civilian levies were vital for the cadre or expansible Army of six understrength infantry and two "reduced peace strength cavalry" divisions which constituted the Regular Army under a War Department policy of 15 August 1927. "This system has the great advantage of providing a framework into which large numbers of reinforcements who have received the training necessary in lower grades may be absorbed quickly, and also develops instructors and other key men for use with civilian components." But, if "trained reinforcements are not immediately available, then any expeditionary force, being composed of cadres only will remove from the Zone of Interior too large a proportion of the very

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Major General William D. "Fox" Connor

men who must be depended upon to assist in the development of civilian components." Furthermore, claimed Ike, the expeditionary force itself would be so weak that if opposed by any considerable army "we can expect nothing but disaster in the beginning, and a protracted war with heavy costs in men and wealth."

Eisenhower then focused his attention on the "Discrepancy between strength required and strength available," or as "Fox" Connor more aptly suggested in a marginal note, "War strength less peace strength of units=Reserve needed." Eisenhower calculated that "we require at least 75,000 trained reinforcements, immediately upon the declaration of war," and cited a G3 study of 1927 confirming that amount. He noted that "considerations of economy must remain as a most important factor in fixing the maximum figure to be attained." Still, "while it is true that a nation's military problem is not based on its capacity to finance her efforts, yet needless military expenditures, if carried to the extreme, operate to defeat one of the purposes for which they are made; namely, the insurance of national prosperity." He saw the essential qualifications of reinforcements to be immediately available when called, sufficiently trained to function in active field service, and in good physical condition. This seemed self-explanatory to Eisenhower as he sought enlisted reserve reinforcements consisting of "men of normal enlisted caliber who are well disciplined, and experienced in drill, maneuver, camping, firing, etc."

All of this led to the next topic of Eisenhower's scrutiny—"Means for providing the forces to fill the gap between the numbers required by the missions, and the strength available in Regular Army." This consideration required a comprehensive analysis of both the National Guard and Enlisted Reserve Corps, which is extremely illuminating on the status of military institutions at the time. Eisenhower pointed out that the National Guard in 1927/1928 "receives annually the equivalent of one month's training, the units being maintained at reduced peace strength." The annual turnover in enlisted men averaged 60 percent which meant "that any time the average man in the Guard is about one month advanced in training," an amount "insufficient in which to inculcate in men the necessary standards of discipline, and give to them the practical instruction which will enable them to function satisfactorily even as replacements for active units." Eisenhower noted that Guard officers claimed that by remaining near their home stations for two to four weeks after mobilization, "in the average case they will be practically filled up by the return of former enlisted men, and all will be afforded time to adjust their civilian affairs so as to work a minimum of hardship on the individual upon his departure." Similarly, civilian pursuits would leave the Guardsmen physically unqualified for field service until after one month's intensive training. "From every standpoint it is evident that the greater part of the National Guard should not be required to enter active campaign immediately upon declaration of war except in case of dire necessity," Eisenhower said. He added: "It has been officially stated that mobilization of the National Guard cannot be *completed* until eight months after the beginning of a war"—a statement which led "Fox" Connor to render a large "?" in the margin.

Eisenhower dismissed the 6,000-man Enlisted Reserve Corps with a wave of the pen since they "receive no training, and in any event, may not be called to active duty until after an emergency has been expressly declared by Congress." Similarly, while recognizing the Citizens Military Training Camps and Reserve Officers Training Corps as "essentially training schools," students in those schools "have not received the thorough training in the practical parts of the military profession which is essential in those intended for immediate active service." Ike saw greater hope in those soldiers recently discharged from the Regular service and advocated "organizing these men into a reserve and requiring them under certain conditions to report immediately for active service," since the "availability of such men will be practically the same as that of soldiers in

active service," and "their physical fitness for immediate field service will remain, for several years after discharge from active training, much superior to that of the average civilian who has not had this training."

Eisenhower's major thesis was that "Experience has shown that the cost of maintaining a soldier in the reserve is only a small fraction of that necessary to maintain him in the active force." To substantiate his claim, he quoted the 1912 Chief of Staff, Major General Leonard Wood, who argued:

> 'The economic effect of a reserve system therefore is to reduce the per capita cost of any given army, at the same time assuring maximum effectiveness in war. If we do not have reserves we are committed to a policy of maximum cost.'

Ike stated that under the Act of 1916 the pay of a soldier in the reserve was fixed at $24 per year, while the cost for a Regular was about $1200 per year not including overhead. To reinforce his point, detailed statistics in the text and appendices outlined both British and American experiences with reserves in terms of strength, pay, and reenlistment figures. He was a meticulous debater!

Up to this point, Eisenhower had been largely analyzing the Army's missions and manpower problems. Having offered the Reserve force as a solution, he then necessarily had to move on to "Methods of Raising an Enlisted Reserve through utilization of the Regular Army itself." He cited two basic alternatives: the Marine Corps solution which consisted of enlisting in a reserve those persons discharged from the active force who volunteer for this service; and a second possibility whereby all enlistments would be for a stated number of years, part of which would be spent in active service and the remainder in the reserve. He then proceeded to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each alternative.

The first scheme obviously depended upon the number of men discharged annually from the Army and qualified for reserve service, the percentage of those willing to volunteer, and the length of reserve service. In Eisenhower's eyes its main advantage lay in its voluntary nature, for "there can be no objection raised to it on the grounds that to enlist in the Army a man is compelled to make himself liable to service for an unusually long period," as well as the fact that "this system begins to build a reserve immediately upon passage of law authorizing it." Yet, Ike also saw disadvantages since a "discharged man may refuse to enlist in the reserve, and the total force is thus reduced in size by the number who annually do so refuse, multiplied by years of term of reserve service." Furthermore, "another disadvantage is that it gives no opportunity to vary the size of the reserve as compared to the active force through varying by administrative action the length of service in each." He tended to dismiss this first alternative since the Marine Corps experience seemed too limited for Army use and anyway, "it would probably not exceed 20,000 men, under present conditions."

The second solution, which packaged active and reserve service in a stated enlistment, depended "upon the number of men qualified to enter the reserve, who are discharged annually from the active force, which in turn depends upon—(a) Size of Army; (b) Length of active service; and, (c) Various modifying service, and the length of reserve service." Ike saw advantages to such a system since "it assures that every man, trained in the active force at maximum cost, will be equally available for service in the reserves where he is maintained at minimum cost"; and "by authorizing the Secretary of War to vary the ratio of reserve service to active service in an enlistment period of a fixed total length, the total size of the force available may be varied to anticipate needs, or meet changing conditions." "Fox" Connor bluntly attached this marginal note to the last observation: "Those who bug out or want to get out who now desert." But Eisenhower also noted the main disadvantage that "it increases the length of the enlistment (if it is to be effective) beyond that of our present three year term," and cited the heated opposition which had been raised on this very point in military circles.

Ike illustrated this opposition by telling of

recent American experiences as well as those of the British. "One argument advanced against the increasing of the term of enlistment," he said, "is that it will increase enormously the difficulty of procuring recruits for the Army, although during the years 1913-14-15, when enlistments were for a total of seven years, recruiting did not fall off." Further, the law of 1912 provided no peacetime pay for reservists and thus recruits undertook an increased length of service with no additional inducement whatsoever. Thus, Eisenhower felt that "Even if some difficulty is experienced in this matter at first, if a modest amount is paid the reservist each year it appears probable that eventually the reserve feature may become an asset rather than a detriment in recruiting." He claimed that the British had been successful in recruiting voluntary reenlistments for their reserves for years, "and the public thoroughly understands the advantages as well as the obligations of reserve service."

Another opposition objective noted by Eisenhower was that the public "will consider un-American any attempt to lengthen our present term of enlistment." But, "such objections apparently had no weight in 1912, and the final answer is that if the man undertaking such service does not object, the public will not concern itself in the matter." Probably Americans would "object strenuously to instituting the twelve year period of the British, but a strong reserve can be built up with a period of half that length."

Major Eisenhower believed that Army regulations provided for discharge from the regulars on "account of dependents, physical incapacity, etc., [Connor noted in the margin "by purchase and desertion"] and thus could be also applied to reserves, including those persons exempted under any draft law similar to that of 1917." The reserve, said Ike, was intended for service only when facing a real emergency, and in general all men in the reserve would be called to military service with others through the operations of a draft law. To him, ". . . service in the reserve does not necessarily increase a man's *liability* for service, it simply advances the date on which he reports for duty," and "whatever pay is given the reservist during peacetime is pay for this *availability*."

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Eisenhower visiting the US Fifth Corps Monument at Sedan, France, in 1928.

It now behooved Eisenhower to evaluate the results to be expected in applying this general system to the Army in 1927/1928. He assumed that the size of the Regulars would remain fixed at approximately the current strength and that all enlistments would be made for a certain number of years, part of which would be active and part in a reserve status. He also assumed that "if unaffected by other factors the number of men qualified annually for service in the reserve would be the total size of the active force divided by the number of years spent in active service." But that number was diminished by such things as the percentage of reenlistments ("50,000, thus leaving about 65,000 as the actual source for a potential reserve"). Ike pointed out that the extreme desirability of reenlistments for establishing stability in regular units dictated that the active portion of reenlistment periods should be relatively long. "From the standpoint of raising a reserve, there exists no reason for diminishing the three year term of active service in these cases, and any such reduction would needlessly increase expenses." However, "if

the requirements of the active Army permit, the number of men passed into the reserve annually would be increased by *limiting the number* permitted to reenlist." Annual losses from other causes included honorable discharge ("less than 22,000 or one-third of the 65,000 left as a source of a reserve"); desertion ("available data shows that only 52% of men who enlist for three years are discharged per expiration of term of service, while of those enlisting for one year about 70% to 80% are discharged per expiration of term of service"); and losses through discharge by purchase and for minority concealed at enlistment. All of these losses could be mitigated through requirements for reserve tours, and a "short term of active service will increase the number of men qualified for the reserve, both by increasing the capacity of the Regular Army, and by decreasing losses due to desertion."

Eisenhower felt the real key to the problem lay in the ratio of the length of reserve to active service, and he concluded that "if we are to raise a large reserve, . . . the first should be as large as possible and the second as small." He believed that the seven year total enlistment period authorized by acts of 1912 and 1916 was the maximum obtainable limit given political considerations, and Connor agreed with him. But, the Major contended that certain lower limits applied to the length of active service, for example training requirements in the continental United States, indicated that it should not be less than one year, and "the requirements of garrisons in foreign possessions because of time and money spent in transportation, demand a longer period than this, and for those stations two years is taken as the minimum" (to which Connor affixed the comment, "No! The length of tour *there* should be the limit."). Then, too, Ike found that "as the length of active service is diminished the annual number of replacements required for the Army increases. Since the initial procurement, equipping, and transportation of the recruit is an item of expense, the reduction of the term of active service also increases the expenditures made in recruiting activities."

Ike's thesis was tested against available data provided by the War Department G3 for an Army averaging a strength of 115,000 men, and his paper incorporated elaborate statistical charts which showed "those combinations which will provide a suitable reserve to meet our demands, and yet one which will meet requirements in the active Army, and which will entail a moderate length of total service." He found that "in the five year group all these considerations seem fairly well met." The two years active service and three years reserve would give only 73,203 in the accumulated reserve, but the four and one ratio provided 219,408, "and it is entirely feasible to use both these combinations in our Army." Disregarding reenlisted men and those on foreign duty, there were about 50,000 men in the active Army, by his calculations, "of whom any desired portion could be one year enlistments," especially since "apparently Congress intends retaining them," and "they will be made very advantageous to our defense program provided the four years service is required after discharge." But, Ike cautioned that exact results could be determined only by trial and the six year enlistment (with combinations of four and two, and five and one) would insure more certain results. Showing his political acumen, Major Eisenhower noted, ". . . the six year total enlistment period should not be recommended to Congress until after the five year plan has been tested thoroughly."

Eisenhower foresaw certain effects on annual Army expenditures, particularly in the annual pay of the reservists, and the cost of procuring, equipping, and transporting additional numbers of annual replacements caused by shortening of active service, all of which amounted to "a total of $7,112,000 increased annual expenditures in peace time to provide an estimated accumulated reserve of 100,000 men." But, "this amount, compared to that necessary to maintain a like number on active duty is insignificant" and through "careful administration should be cut down."

Finally, the student paper addressed

"factors bearing on administration and organization of enlisted reserve." Eisenhower argued against administration of reserves by the Adjutant General in Washington since it concentrated the administrative load, thereby failing to take advantage of existing facilities elsewhere which were capable of performing a portion of the work with little or no increase in overhead. The Adjutant General's Office was also too far removed from individuals throughout the United States, increasing both communications with them in peacetime and mobilization problems in an emergency. Similarly, he felt that administration by parent active unit "is cumbersome and slow, and mobilization would be extremely difficult in an emergency." To Ike, the Army Corps Areas were ideal for this mission since they were distributed roughly according to population, and the headquarters of each was well placed to accommodate regional administration of reservists. Furthermore, Corps Areas were the agencies through which the mobilization plan was to be put into effect, and the added tasks of reserve administration "would occasion little disturbance in their programs." "Plans for mobilization of the reserve could be prepared, and the men collected in a minimum of time for forwarding to the point desired." He concluded his consideration of reserve administration with relatively minor matters relating to features of peacetime pay and wartime bonuses, physical inspection, and records management.

The conclusions of Eisenhower's study can best be appreciated, both as a think-piece and an administrative exercise at the War College in 1927-1928, by direct quotation. They included:

> 1. The active strength of the Army is at least 75,000 less than that essential to permit it to carry out its vital missions in an emergency, and there exists no feasible way of providing the reinforcements needed except by organizing all men discharged from the Regular Army into an Enlisted Reserve.
>
> 2. Recommendations should be made to Congress for the creation of a Regular Army Reserve by making all original enlistments in the Army for a period of five years, either two or one with the active Army, and three or four with the reserves, the exact number of each to be determined by the Secretary of War.
>
> 3. All reenlistments in the active force should be for three years active and two years reserve service.
>
> 4. Upon completion of service in reserve, a man should be allowed to reenlist therein prior to becoming thirty-six years of age.
>
> 5. All men procuring discharge by purchase from the active Army should be required to complete the full enlistment in the reserve.
>
> 6. Pay of the reservist should be $36.00 per year, payable quarterly, and each should receive a bonus of $100.00 which is payable immediately upon being accepted for active duty in an emergency.
>
> 7. The reservists should be required to report immediately to the proper station upon call of the President. They should be assured that they will not be called except when in the opinion of the President a national emergency exists in which the safety of the United States is likely to be imperilled.
>
> 8. All administration of the Enlisted Reserve should be intrusted to Corps Areas.
>
> 9. If it is found to be impossible to secure authorization for a reserve raised under the above general system, efforts should be made to secure authorization for one raised in a manner similar to that employed by the Marine Corps. Pay and administration features should be as discussed above.

Major Eisenhower completed his student exercise with the recommendation that "efforts be made to secure authorization from Congress for a reserve created under the general system outlined in paragraph IV, subparagraphs 2-7 inclusive, and substantially as shown in Exhibit D. [An appendix incorporating Eisenhower's recommended language for an amendment to the National Defense Act.]" But, the final word came

from the student's patient and understanding mentor, "Fox" Connor. The Army War College Commandant penciled under Ike's inked signature at the bottom of the paper: "First get a reserve of some kind better say one like Congress in its wisdom set up—with a few frills. Let any one go to the reserve who wants to at a small purchase price or at none if well trained." The wisdom of political accommodation surely was not lost upon the impressionable young major.

It remains for us today to appreciate what the War College experience and the student exercise in particular did for young Eisenhower, and to suggest some value, other than merely antiquarian enjoyment, for the present generation of senior military professionals. Was the year at Greenleaf's Point merely a pleasant interlude of golf and social whirl, or did Ike gain some measure of professionalism which later carried him to Supreme Allied Command in World War II? The historical record is rather silent on this point, as have been biographers of the soldier-statesman. Even Eisenhower's own appreciation of the period at the War College is not at all clear. One year to the day after Pearl Harbor, Ike told a friend and colleague, Thomas T. Handy "I think the best way to describe our operations to date is that they have violated every recognized principle of war, are in conflict with all operational and logistic methods laid down in textbooks, and will be condemned, in their entirety, by all Leavenworth and War College classes for the next twenty-five years."

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Major Eisenhower (front row, 2d from left) in the official photograph of the War College Class of 1928.

Yet, we can hardly attribute such "maverickism" to training at the service schools in the twenties.[6] Leavenworth and the War College trained officers such as Eisenhower to deal with issues of a professional nature in the realm of strictly military affairs. The somewhat sterile exercises with procurement, logistics, management, and war planning taught student officers to think and act along firmly established patterns, but the discipline, repetition, and teamwork emphasized in War College exercises also honed the basic professional qualities of a military officer. At the same time, this training impinged upon issues of contemporary concern—procurement of manpower to staff an institution such as an army was of prime concern not only in the War Department of the twenties but also among those politicians concerned with national defense. Ike dealt with a basic issue that was central to the concept of war in his era. His student research on reserve policy lay in the mainstream of American military thought of the period, which argued basically for the expansible Army plan advocated not only by Emory Upton in the late nineteenth century but also by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun years earlier, and even in embryonic form by Alexander Hamilton in the late eighteenth century.

More important, his suggestions and focus are not unlike those with which a succeeding generation of commanders and planners have had to cope regarding National Guard and reserve force structure, a volunteer army, and wedding man and technology for the battlefield. There is, for example, a striking parallel between his belief that "initial

successes . . . may relieve us of the necessity of waging a long and bitter war with large armies with its consequent losses in men, material, and money," and the emphasis that today's senior Army commanders place on the importance of winning the "first battle of the next war, so that the aggressor knows right at the outset what's facing him, that he can't beat us with a conventional mode . . . ."[7] And, if today's six year military obligation for every male individual entering the military service, Individual Ready Reserve phenomena, and the multitude of modified options, packages, and alternatives seem strangely reminiscent of similar phrases in Eisenhower's student paper, they are but the natural evolution of basic questions of manpower and national security—analyzed, changed, and implemented through many intervening years of staff actions and proposals.

PERHAPS with such impressions in mind—and as hazy as they must necessarily remain—we can see the value of the study of "An Enlisted Reserve for the Regular Army" for young Major Dwight D. Eisenhower. As Major General E. K. G. Sixsmith, a retired British army officer, has written of General Eisenhower: "We are left with the picture of a commander of manifest integrity who warmed the heart and uplifted the spirit of everyone who worked with him. His special genius was his skill at management."[8] It is, perhaps, appropriate to think that Ike developed this proficiency, at least in part, through his experiences at the Army War College in 1927-1928.

NOTES

1. Peter Lyon, *Eisenhower, Portrait of the Hero* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974), p. 62.

2. *Ibid.* Surprisingly little treatment has been accorded to Eisenhower's year at the War College in standard biographies of the General such as Stephen E. Ambrose, *Ike; Abilene to Berlin* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 59-60; Relman Morin, *Dwight D. Eisenhower; A Gauge of Greatness* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969), p. 47; or E. K. G. Sixsmith, *Eisenhower as Military Commander* (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), pp. 7-8.

3. On the War College curriculum at this time see, George S. Pappas, *Prudens Futuri; The US Army War College, 1901-1967* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: US Army War College Alumni Association, 1967), Chapter VI; and Miscellaneous Document, Volume VII, Numbers 1 and 2, "General Outline of the Course, and Orientation, the Army War College Course, 1927-1928," Army War College Curricular Files, Archives Branch, US Army Military History Research Collection, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

4. The reserve question and general treatment of the US Army in the 1920s may be traced in Russell F. Wiegley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), Chapter 17, especially pp. 401-02.

5. Eisenhower's full paper, with marginal pencil notes by Major General William D. "Fox" Connor, may be seen in Army War College Curricular Files, No. 349-42, US Army Military History Research Collection, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

6. Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970), p. 62.

7. "AGAUS Conference Speakers," *The National Guardsman*, Vol. XXIX, No. 6 (June 1975), 31-32. Both GEN Wm. E. DePuy, Commander of US Army Training and Doctrine Command, and GEN Bernard W. Rogers, Commander of US Army Forces Command, stated in addresses at the annual conference of the Adjutant Generals Association in Biloxi, Miss., 7-10 April 1975, that the US must win the first battle of the next war.

8. Sixsmith, p. 221.