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From the Archives

World War II Leaders on “Morale”

“The unfailing formula for production of morale is patriotism, self-respect, discipline, and self-confidence within a military unit, joined with fair treatment and merited appreciation from without. It cannot be produced by pampering or coddling an army, and is not necessarily destroyed by hardship, danger, or even calamity. Though it can survive and develop in adversity that comes as an inescapable incident of service, it will quickly wither of indifference or injustice on the part of their government or of ignorance, personal ambition, or ineptitude on the part of military leaders.”

—General of the Army Douglas MacArthur
*Annual Report of the Chief of Staff, US Army for
the Fiscal Year Ending 30 June 1933*

“Morale is a state of mind. It is steadfastness and courage and hope. It is confidence and zeal and loyalty. It is élan, *esprit de corps*, and determination. It is staying power, the spirit which endures to the end—the will to win. With it all things are possible; without it everything else, planning, preparation, production, count for naught.”

—General of the Army George C. Marshall
15 June 1941, address at Trinity College,
Hartford, Connecticut

“Machines are nothing without men. Men are nothing without morale.”

—Admiral of the Fleet Ernest J. King
19 June 1942, graduation address to,
the US Naval Academy

“Morale is the greatest single factor in successful war . . . In any long and bitter campaign, morale will suffer unless all ranks thoroughly believe that their commanders are concerned first and always with the welfare of troops who do the fighting.”

—General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower
Crusade in Europe, 1948