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Index Title

11 February 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL NORSTAD:

SUBJECT: Officer Personnel for Plans & Policy Group

1. As of this morning, the authorized allotment of officers to this Group is 51 and the actual strength 48 (including two temporarily assigned officers). We have been promised four officers (Colonels Hartsborn and Harris, Lt Colonel Stromberg and Major Corbett) to arrive during the next 90 days. During this period, we will also lose the two officers (Lt Colonel Beers and Major Morrison) who are temporarily assigned in connection with the Civil Defense Board.

2. In over three years of experience of selecting personnel for our particular type of work, some of whom were selected on their record, some by previous knowledge, we have gauged correctly the capability of the individual at least ninety percent of the time in our estimate prior to his assignment. During the past six months we have consistently failed to get the individuals who we estimated were capable of taking the place of 10 to 15 key officers in this establishment.

3. For example, we have failed to secure the following named officers, each of which is eminently qualified for duty in this Group:

Byroade - In this case, we did not submit a formal application as in conversations with interested parties indicated this officer had been promised a tour at the Armed Forces Staff College, followed by one at the National War College. However, we didn't get him.

Gaughey - Our formal request for this officer was turned down by COAG in compliance with their policy of returning officers who have been on staff work overseas to their basic branch in order to further "career planning."

Billingslea - We tried to get this officer for the Advanced Study Group but were turned down by COAG because of AGF opposition.

Nichols, K.D. - This officer was also requested for the Advanced Study Group. COAG turned us down in order to allow him to consider a West Point assignment.

Booth, R.H. - COAG refused our request for this officer on the basis that General Arnold (Plans Section, AGF) wanted him. Officer did not desire

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P. P. Lee

such officers should be, in general, between the ages of 30 and 40. (though some might be up to 45) should have had

It is will be seen from the above, of approximately 15 officers in this Group may be required to be key individuals, probably as many as 12 will leave Washington assignment.

Whipple - Here, again, COAG ruled that "career planning" required the return of this officer to his basic branch. Reconsideration requested.

Moody - This is an officer particularly qualified for cover and deception work. Again turned down by COAG in order to further the officer's "career planning." However, COAG gave in on Corbett for this work after previously using the "career planning" excuse.

4. Other elements of the personnel problem include requests for Jannarone, of Manhattan Engineer District, who has been promised us but date of assignment is indefinite; request for Ladue, Bailey, and Dresser to which no firm replies have been received, though it is understood these officers have been "earmarked" upon return from overseas; and for any one of the list of officers now in China. As for this last list, it is known that their availability cannot yet be determined but it is hoped that we can secure some personnel from this source.

5. We have also requested 5 officers graduating from the Naval War College, Colonels Lane, Edson, Vaughn, Erlenkotter and Downy, who will presumably be available in June or July.

6. The following officers from the Manhattan Engineer District, or agencies thereof, are believed to be available shortly and we have asked for as many of them as we can get: Fields, Gee, Parker, Clarke, Betts and Young.

7. Our request for officers from current classes at the National War College has apparently resulted in promises of assignment of three: Colonels Verbeck, Day and Tarrant.

8. Factors having a bearing on officer strength are as follows:

a. In the event of unification, it appears likely that:

(1) Air officers will gradually be withdrawn by the Air Forces for other duty. At present these total 16.

(2) Some officers will be furnished from this Group for duty with the new Joint Staff.

b. At least Vittrup and Wood, and probably Porter, will leave the Group to attend the National War College next class. While nominations for the Armed Forces Staff College next August have not yet been made, it is reasonable to assume that approximately four officers from this Group will be so detailed.

c. It is likely that it may be necessary to release for other assignments or due to completion of approximately 2½ years service on the General Staff, most of the following Ground Force officers: Goodpaster, Bonesteel, Hutchin, Goodwin, Johnson, Liggett, Rowny, Dupuy, Taylor, Dsiuban, Conway and Twitchell.

9. As will be seen from the above, of approximately 15 officers in this Group that I consider to be key individuals, probably as many as 12 will leave by 1 September and there exist in the Group no individuals of the experience and general caliber to take their places. It appears that the three factors (a) career planning, (b) schools, and (c) natural tendency of every commander to hang on to a good man, plus ability of most of them to offer more in the nature of quarters, etc., than we have, add up to giving us the choice between the following alternatives:

a. Accept that the Group will deteriorate by 1 September to a condition where it will be unable to compete with the State Department, Navy Department, the Air Staff, etc., or

b. Personnel of adequate caliber will have to be provided by command decisions regardless of administrative regulation.

10. It should be noted that in addition to failure to provide the individuals requested, the personnel people have rarely offered any substitute at all and have never, to my knowledge, offered an individual approaching the caliber of the officer or officers requested. It is believed that the first alternative listed above is unacceptable. In an effort to implement the second alternative, it is recommended that the following action be taken:

a. Request the Director of Personnel & Administration to initiate a survey leading to establishment of a list of qualified officers for duty in this Group and the furnishing of the names of officers available for assignment, say in increments of 5 each month beginning 1 March and extending through 1 August 1947. (See Draft Memo for Gen Paul)

b. Consider the dispatch of informal letters to General Lee and General McNarney requesting their assistance in informing us of officers to be returned from overseas within the next six months believed competent for duty in this Group. A draft for this purpose is attached.

G. A. LINCOLN
Brig General, GSC
Chief, Plans & Policy Group

2 Incls

1. Draft Memo for Gen Paul
2. Draft ltr to Gens Lee and McNarney

D R A F T

11 February 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL PAUL:

I have been looking over the situation confronting the Plans & Operations Division with regard to officer strength between now and 1 September 1947.

It appears likely, what with losses to the National War College, Armed Forces Staff College, the Naval War College, and other assignments, as well as losses incident to unification (probably all Air officers plus an increment for the new Joint Staff), this Division is going to be woefully short of officers, particularly those qualified for key positions.

Efforts to obtain officers by name, such as in the recent cases of Colonels Whipple and Caughey, to mention two, have met with responses from COAS that in order to further officers' career planning, a policy has been established whereby officers returning from long tours of duty overseas are returned to their basic branches for assignment. This policy is all right in theory but in practice I believe it works out that few, if any, command jobs are available for such officers and they probably end up in either positions not in keeping with their capabilities or in staff positions in headquarters subordinate to the War Department. In any event, no policy has apparently been established to insure a continuation of a supply of qualified officers to the War Department General Staff and to the Plans & Operations Division in particular. Requests have recently been submitted and it is understood will be approved for certain personnel at the current classes at the National War College and at the Naval War College and additional requests will be submitted for personnel completing the Armed Forces Staff College in August. However, it is doubtful if the officers assigned as a result of these requests will be sufficient to fill all possible vacancies. It is believed timely to suggest that a survey be made of officers returning from overseas, or available from other sources, and an effort be made to submit to this Division the names of, say, 5 officers who will be available for assignment on the 1st of each month beginning 1 March and ending 1 August 1947. Such officers should be, in general, between the ages of 30 and 40, (though some might be up to 45) should have had overseas experience, preferably in command positions, or in planning branches of corps or higher headquarters.

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As a further guide to capabilities, we need people of the capabilities of Colonel James McCormack, Jr., already "lost" to the Atomic Energy Commission, and Brigadier General G. S. Lincoln, Colonels C. H. Bonesteel, M. S. Johnson, R. J. Wood, R. L. Vittrup, R. W. Porter and H. A. Twitchell, all of whom I anticipate may depart by September.

Request your comment on the above proposal.

LAURIS NORSTAD
Major General, GSC
Director of Plans & Operations

It is essential to us that you see to releasing officers during the next few months who will have been overseas for a long time and who would make good contributions to this Division. Unfortunately, it seems to be the policy of the War Relocation Authority, particularly if they have been in staff positions, to return them to their basic branches in order to facilitate their discharge. While I agree in principle with this objective, a realistic appraisal of the situation indicates that few officers in the grade of Lt Colonel or above who return to the states are able to obtain command jobs and, in general, are assigned insignificant positions, not in keeping with their capabilities, or are assigned staff jobs in some other headquarters within the States. In other words, they might as well be in Washington. If I knew about the return of officers in advance, it may be possible to initiate action before the "other" branch is set.

I would appreciate it, then, if you could have one of your people drop me a list of potential overseas listing individuals who are returning to the States and who may be considered for retention or assignment to active duty in the States if they are

11 February 1947

Draft Letter to be sent Generals McNarney and Lee:

Bear General:

There appears to be a dearth of competent officers to fill the places of those leaving Plans & Operations. By this summer, we will have reached a point at which some 10 or 12 of my key people will be departing either to attend the National War College, the Armed Forces Staff College, the Naval War College, or are vulnerable for overseas assignments, or will have finished more than 30 months on the War Department General Staff.

In addition, in event unification legislation is enacted, I will face the loss, though probably gradually it is true, of all the Air officers who number between 30 and 40% of my officer strength. Added to this, there will probably be a requirement for officers to serve on the Joint Staff which will be created as a result of unification.

The thought occurs to me that you may be releasing officers during the next six months who will have been overseas for a long time and who would make good material for work in this Division. Unfortunately, it seems to be the policy that officers returning from overseas, particularly if they have been in staff assignments, should be returned to their basic branches in order to facilitate "career planning." While I agree in principle with this objective, a realistic examination of the situation indicates that few officers in the grade of Lt Colonel or Colonel who return to the States are able to obtain command jobs and, in general, end up in insignificant positions, not in keeping with their capabilities, or are assigned staff jobs in some other headquarters within the States, in which case, of course, they might as well be in Washington. If I know about the return of officers in advance, it may be possible to initiate action before the "policy" starts to work.

I would appreciate it, then, if you could have one of your people drop me an informal memorandum listing individuals who are returning to the States and who might be considered for vacancies certain to arise in the Plans & Operations Division between now and 1 September 1947. I have in mind officers in the

temporary grade of Lt Colonel or Colonel, somewhere between the ages of 30 and 40 years, (or perhaps a few as old as 45) and who have either had command positions or higher staff positions. Naturally, officers who have had planning experience in higher headquarters, preferably in G-3 or G-4 work, normally make the best material for our purposes, but this should not be interpreted as restricting you in suggesting any one that you deem qualified. As a guide to recommendations, I might add that I foresee the loss of such people as Brigadier General G. A. Lincoln, Colonels R. L. Vittrup, R. J. Wood, G. H. Bonesteel, R. W. Porter, H. A. Twitchell, and M. S. Johnson,--all key people. I have already lost Colonel James McCormack, Jr.

With very best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

LAURIS NORSTAD
Major General, GSC
Director of Plans & Operations.