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THE U.S. ARMY BETWEEN WORLD WARS I AND II

The material that follows was extracted from official history of the U.S. Army; see sources listed below. It is repeated here to remind the reader of the events following the allied victory in World War I which led to the transformation of the U.S. Army from a modern-day military force to one of obsolescence. The reader should reflect on these historical events and lessons learned, and relate them to the course the Army may be forced to take in this period after the allied victory in the Cold War and Operation Desert Storm. Deja vu?

Part One: U.S. Military Policy and the Army

Demobilization and Reorganization

Soon after the armistice of November 1918 the War Department urged Congress to authorize the establishment of a permanent Regular Army of nearly 600,000 and a three-month universal training system that would permit a quick expansion of this force to meet the requirements of a new major war. Congress and American public opinion rejected these proposals.

In the first full month of demobilization the Army released about 650,000 officers and men, and within nine months it demobilized nearly 3,250,000 without seriously disturbing the American economy.

A demobilization of war industry and disposal of surplus materiel paralleled the release of men, but the War Department kept a large reserve of weapons for peacetime or new emergency use.

A law of February 28, 1919, permitted enlistments in the Regular Army for either one or three years; and by the end of the year the active Army, reduced to a strength of about 19,000 officers and 205,000 enlisted men, was again a Regular volunteer force.

When the National Defense Act was adopted in June 1920, the Regular Army numbered about 200,000—about two-thirds the maximum strength authorized in the act. In January 1921 Congress directed a reduction in enlisted strength to 175,000, and in June 1921 to 150,000 as soon as possible.

A year later Congress limited the active Army to 12,000 commissioned officers and 125,000 enlisted men, not including the 7,000 or so in the Philippine Scouts, and Regular Army strength was stabilized at about this level until 1936.

Appropriations for the military expenses of the War Department also became stabilized during this same period, amounting to about \$300 million a year.

This was about half of what a full implementation of the National Defense Act had been estimated to cost. The United States during these years spent rather less on its Army than on its Navy, in line with the national policy of depending on the Navy as the first line of defense.

War Department officials, especially in the early 1920's, repeatedly expressed alarm over the failure of Congress to appropriate enough money to carry out the terms of the National Defense Act. They believed that it was essential for minimum defense needs to have a Regular Army with an enlisted strength of 150,000 or (after the Air Corps Act of 1926) of 165,000.

As Chief of Staff, Douglas MacArthur pointed out in 1922 that the United States ranked seventeenth among the nations in active Army strength.

For almost two decades ground units had to get along as best they could with weapons left over from World War I.

In 1933 General MacArthur described the Army's tanks (except for a dozen experimental models) as completely useless for employment against any modern unit on the battlefield.

But not much new equipment was forthcoming for ground units in the field until Army appropriations began to rise in 1936.

For a number of years only about one-fourth of the officers and one-half of the enlisted men of the Regular Army were available for assignment to tactical units in the continental United States. Many units existed only on paper; almost all had only skeletonized strength. Instead of nine infantry divisions, there were actually three.

For the most part Regular units had to train as battalions or companies. The continued dispersion of skeletonized divisions, brigades and regiments among a large number of posts, many of them relics of the Indian Wars, was a serious hindrance to the training of Regulars, although helpful in training the civilian components.

Efforts to abandon small posts continued to meet with stubborn opposition from local interests and their elected representatives in Congress. In the infantry, for local example, in 1932 the 24 regiments available in the United States for field service were spread among 45 posts, with a battalion or less at 34. Most of the organic transportation of these units was of World War I vintage, and the Army did not have the money to concentrate them for training by other means.

The act of 1920 contemplated a National Guard of 436,000 but its actual peacetime strength became stabilized at about 180,000.

Numerically, the National Guard was the largest component of the Army of the United States between 1922 and 1939.

The most important and immediately disruptive nonmilitary duty began in 1933 after Congress passed an act that put large numbers of jobless young men into reforestation and other reclamation work.

For more than a year the War Department had to keep about 3,000 Regular officers and many noncommissioned officers assigned to this task, and in order to do so the Army had to strip tactical units of their leadership. Unit training was brought to a standstill and the readiness of units for immediate military employment was almost destroyed.

In the second half of 1934 the War Department called a large number of Reserve officers to active duty to replace the Regulars and by August 1935 9,300 Reserve officers (not counted in active Army strength) were serving with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

Despite its initial and serious interference with normal Army operations, in the long run the CCC program had a beneficial effect on military preparedness. It furnished many thousands of Reserve officers with valuable training and it gave nonmilitary but disciplined training to many hundreds of thousands of young men who were to become soldiers and sailors in World War II.

National and Military Policy

For fifteen years, from 1921 to 1936, the American people, their representatives in Congress and their Presidents thought that the United States could and should avoid future wars with other major powers, except possibly Japan.

They believed the nation could achieve this goal by maintaining a minimum of defensive military strength, avoiding entangling commitments with Old World nations, yet use American good offices to promote international peace and the limitation of armaments.

The United States took the initiative in 1921 in calling a conference in Washington to consider the limitation of armaments. The resulting naval treaty of 1922 temporarily checked a race for naval supremacy. It froze capital ship strengths of the United States, Great Britain and Japan in a 5-5-3 ratio for a number of years.

In effect these provisions also meant that it would be impossible for the United States to defend the Philippines against a Japanese attack.

In 1928 the United States and France joined in drafting the Pact of Paris, which renounced war as an instrument of national policy. Thereafter, the United States announced to the world that, if other

powers did likewise, it would limit its armed forces to those necessary to maintain internal order and defend national territory against aggression and invasion.

In 1931 the chief of the Army's War Plans Division advised the Chief of Staff that the defense of frontiers was precisely the cardinal task for which the Army had been organized, equipped, and trained.

There was no real conflict between national policy and the Army's conception of its mission during the 1920's and early 1930's. But in the Army's opinion the government and the American public, in their antipathy to war, failed to support even minimum needs for national defense.

In 1933 Japan quit the League of Nations and a year later announced that it would no longer be bound by the naval limitation treaties after they expired in 1936. In Europe, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, and by 1936 Nazi Germany had denounced the Treaty of Versailles, embarked on rearmament and occupied the demilitarized Rhineland.

The neutrality acts passed by Congress between 1935 and 1937 were a direct response to these European developments.

No quick changes in American military policy followed. But beginning in 1935 the armed forces received substantially larger appropriations that permitted them to improve their readiness for action. Army improvements during the next three years reflected not only the increasingly critical international situation but also the careful planning of the War Department during General Douglas MacArthur's tour as Chief of Staff from 1930 to 1935.

His recommendations led to a reorganization of the combat forces and a modest increase in their size, and were accompanied by more realistic planning for using the manpower and industrial might of the United States for war, if that should become necessary.

The central objective of the Chief of Staff's recommendations had been to establish a small hard-hitting force ready for emergency use. In line with this objective the Army wanted to mechanize and motorize its Regular combat units as soon as it could, and to fill their ranks so that they could be trained effectively.

In 1935 Congress authorized the Regular Army to increase its enlisted strength to the long-sought goal of 165,000. This increase was accompanied during the following years by substantially greater expenditures for equipment and housing, so that by 1938 the Regular Army was considerably stronger and far readier for action than it had been in the early 1930's.

But in the meantime the strength and power of foreign armies had been increasing even more rapidly.

In the slow rebuilding of the 1930's, the Army concentrated on equipping and training its combat units for mobile warfare rather than for the static warfare that had characterized operations on the Western Front in World War I. Through research it managed to acquire some new weapons that promised increased firepower and mobility as soon as equipment could be produced in quantity.

The Beginnings of World War II

The German annexation of Austria in March 1938 followed by the Czech crisis in September of the same year awakened the United States and the other democratic nations to the imminence of another great world conflict.

President Roosevelt and his advisers, being fully aware of the danger, had launched the nation on a limited preparedness campaign at the beginning of 1939. By then the technological improvement of the airplane had introduced a new factor into the military calculations of the United States. The moment was approaching when it would be feasible for a hostile Old World power to establish air bases in the Western Hemisphere from which the Panama Canal—then the key to American naval defense—or the continental United States itself might be attacked. Such a development would destroy the oceanic security that the American nation had so long enjoyed.

A month after the European war began the President changed the avowed national military policy from one of guarding the United States and its possessions only to one of hemisphere defense, and the policy of hemisphere defense was to be the focus of Army plans and actions until the end of 1940.

Immediately after the European war started the President proclaimed a limited national emergency and authorized increases in Regular Army and National Guard enlisted strengths to 227,000 and 235,000 respectively. He also proclaimed American neutrality in the war, but at his urging Congress presently gave indirect support to the western democracies by ending the prohibition on munitions sales to nations at war embodied in the Neutrality Act of 1937.

The successful German seizure of Denmark and Norway in April 1940 followed by the quick defeat of the Low Countries and France and the grave threat to Great Britain forced the United States in June to adopt a new and greatly enlarged program for defense. It then looked as if the nation might eventually have to face the aggressors of the Old World almost alone.

Prewar Mobilization

Under the leadership of Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall and, after July, of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, the Army embarked in the summer of 1940 on a large expansion designed to protect the United States and the rest of the Western Hemisphere against any hostile forces that might be unleashed from the Old World.

Expansion programs had the overwhelming support of the American people who, though still strongly opposed to entering the war, were now convinced that the danger to the United States was very real. Congressional appropriations between May and October 1940 reflected this conviction.

The Army received more than \$8 billion for its needs during the succeeding year—a sum greater than what had been granted for the support of its military activities during the preceding twenty years.

During the last six months of 1940 the active Army more than doubled in strength and, by mid-1941, achieved its planned strength of one and a half million officers and men.

By the autumn of 1941 the Army had 27 infantry, 5 armored and 2 cavalry divisions, 35 air groups, and a host of supporting units in training in the continental United States.

But most of these units were still unready for action, in part because the United States had shared so much of its old and new military equipment with the nations that were actively fighting the Axis triumvirate of Germany, Italy and Japan.

Toward War

On the eve of France's defeat in June 1940 President Roosevelt had directed the transfer or diversion of large stocks of Army World War I weapons, ammunition and aircraft to France and Great Britain. After France fell these munitions helped to replace Britain's losses in the evacuation of its expeditionary force from Dunkerque.

Prewar foreign aid was nonetheless a measure of self defense; its fundamental purpose was to help contain the military might of the Axis powers until the United States could complete its own protective mobilization.

Thus by early 1941 the focus of American policy had shifted from hemisphere defense to a limited participation in the war.

The Germans invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, and three days later Army troops landed in Greenland to protect it against German attack and to build air bases for the air ferry route across the North Atlantic. Earlier in June the President had also decided that Americans should relieve British troops guarding Iceland, and the initial contingent of American forces reached there in early July, to be followed by a sizable Army expeditionary force in September.

Apparently all of the overt American moves in 1941 toward involvement in the war against Germany had solid backing in American public opinion, with only an increasingly small though vociferous minority criticizing the President for the nation's departures from neutrality. But the American people were still not prepared for an open declaration of war.

The Japanese attack of December 7, 1941, on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines at once ended the division of American opinion toward participation in the war. America went to war with a unanimity of popular support that was unprecedented in the military history of the United States.

This was also the first time in its history that the United States had entered a war with a large Army in being and an industrial system partially retooled for war.

The Army numbered 1,643,477, and it was ready to defend the Western Hemisphere against invasion. But it was not ready to take part in large-scale operations across the oceans. Many months would pass before the United States could launch even limited offensives.

Part Two: Pre-WWII Sentiment and Its Effect on the Army

Views of War Department Leadership

The armed forces of the United States underwent an almost continuous weakening from 1918 onward for a decade and a half. The fluctuation in numbers from 1922 to 1936 was small, but the deterioration in equipment was continuous in that the 1918 surplus, used up rather than replaced, was not only increasingly obsolescent but increasingly ineffective owing to wear and age.

In the mid-thirties the Navy was permitted, by a cautious increase in appropriations, to make a start on a new shipbuilding program which by that time was acutely needed.

The Army was less favored, presumably because there was a continuing public confidence, shared by the White House and Congress, in oceans as a bulwark and a belief that the Navy could safely be thought of not merely as the traditional "first line of defense" but as the only really necessary line of defense for the time being.

Even the growing research of the airplane, unmistakably clear on the day of the first trans-Atlantic flight, was not exploited in military form to any such degree as it was in Europe and Japan. The abiding need for trained and equipped forces, recognized and continuously recalculated by the Army's General Staff, was generally ignored by the ultimate authority in government.

Prewar America was not war-minded, nor even defense-minded to an assertive degree. Even in early 1940 an urgent Army plea to Congress for 166 airplanes was beaten down to 57, and no 4-motor bombers were permitted, an opponent making the explanation that these were not defensive but "aggressive" weapons.

That America was peace-minded for two decades is hardly worth the saying; what matters is that because of this state of mind the nation's military strength was allowed to decrease and decay to the point where it became tragically insufficient and, even more important, incapable of restoration save after the loss of many lives and the expenditure of other resources beyond man's comprehension.

From the annual reports of Secretary of War John W. Weeks in 1921, 1922 and 1923 warnings were extracted that "our present combat strength will be insufficient to fulfill the functions required by our national defense policy," that "additional cuts would endanger our safety," that "factors which introduce cause for war are not in the making; it is the height of folly to continue the present policy of cutting our financial support of the War Department. ... We are already cut below our vital needs."

Similar complaints of unpreparedness were extracted from the annual reports of Secretary of War Dwight F. Davis in 1925-28, his successors Patrick J. Hurley, George H. Dern and Harry H. Woodring, and Assistant Secretaries of that period, likewise from reports and speeches of General Pershing and every succeeding chief of staff.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur in 1934 summarized the personnel shortage dramatically, declaring: "In many cases there is but one officer on duty with an entire battalion; this lack of officers (has)

brought Regular Army training in the continental United States to a virtual standstill ... correction is mandatory. Stocks of materiel, he continued, were “inadequate even for limited forces ... and, such as they are, manifestly obsolescent.”

Secretary Henry L. Stimson in his 1941 report made the following statement: “Not until our country saw its former democratic allies and friends struck down in quick succession did our Congress, representing accurately the view of our public, authorize the fiscal appropriations necessary to make any adequate defense. Until such congressional action, no increased American armies would be raised and paid for and no contracts for munitions could be entered into.”

General MacArthur, before the same committee, on 28 November 1932, in his pleas for the Army’s miniature armored forces of that day said explosively that “they suffer tremendously from one thing and one thing only—that Congress will not give them enough money to equip them properly with modern tanks.”

Deterioration of the Army Between Wars

In the thirties, when war clouds were mounting both in Europe and Asia, the U.S. Army had ample time to rebuild itself, but no money. When war broke out in Europe late in that decade, the Army was given more and more money, but time, far more precious than money, now was lacking.

In their preliminaries, developments and immediate sequels World War I and World War II followed a cycle whose phases are well marked: (1) prior to the war, insufficient military expenditures, based on the public’s prewar conviction that war could not come to America; (2) discovery that war could come after all; (3) a belated rush for arms, men, ships and planes to overcome the nation’s demonstrated military weakness; (4) advance of the producing and training program, attended by misunderstanding, delays and costly outlay, but gradual creation of a large and powerful army; (5) mounting successes in the field and eventual victory; (6) immediately thereafter, rapid demobilization and dissolution of the Army as a powerful fighting force; (7) sharp reduction of appropriations sought by the military establishment, dictated by concern over its high cost and for a time by the revived hope that, again, war would not come to America.

In 1933 the Army was accordingly at the lowest effectiveness that it had touched since World War I, standing seventeenth among the world’s armies by the estimate of the current chief of staff.

On 30 June of that year the Army strength stood at approximately 14,000 officers and 122,000 enlisted men, even though the 1920 National Defense Act had authorized a peacetime strength of 280,000 enlisted men.

When the total number in the Army dropped from 280,000 to 125,000 or less it became impossible to maintain even in skeleton form the whole number of units that had been planned originally, and many of them ceased to exist. Hence corps and field army units had to be re-created altogether when the rebuilding of the Army was under way.

Instead of a lean, hard organization capable of scientific expansion on short notice, there was from 1920 onward an emaciated organization incapable of expanding directly and automatically into a rounded field force; the skeleton units which had been eliminated would now have to be re-created from the beginning.

This problem of re-creating whole units, rising in acute form when the Army expansion of 1940 was under way, was referred to at the time by the Chief of Staff (then General Marshall) in an explanation of current personnel needs: "During the lean years, dating back to 1921, the Army's fight for personnel was a fight for its very life. ... By successive stages the strength of the Army was cut and cut until 1935 it had declined to 118,750.

"Let me give you a specific example of the effect of these reductions upon the efficiency of the Army. During this period I commanded a post which had for its garrison a battalion of infantry, the basic fighting unit of every army. It was a battalion only in name, for it could muster barely 200 men for the little field training that could be accomplished with available funds. The normal strength of a battalion in most armies of the world varies from 800 to 1,000 men. ...

"Part of the reason for this deplorable condition was that, while the new air arm had developed in the latter stages of the World War, no provision for its essential expansion in our Army was made except by emasculation of the basic ground forces. The Air Corps was obtaining the necessary personnel to man and maintain its growing number of planes by stripping the Infantry, Artillery, Engineers and Signal troops. Important headquarters units, essential for battlefield control, were being dropped from the rolls. The Army as a team was gradually being starved into a condition almost comparable to its pre-Spanish-American War condition.

"We will be seriously handicapped in our problem of developing skill in handling large units, and keeping them properly supplied in the field, until we are able to organize again at least a limited number of essential control, supply, and communications units of corps and army troops. Furthermore, and of equal or greater importance, is the pressing necessity for a certain minimum of seasoned, trained units immediately available for service."

Planning and Funding for Mobilization

The General Staff planning of 1933-39 aimed at a provision of weapons and other equipment sufficient for such a force and it was Congress' failure to supply (adequate) funds ... that disturbed the General Staff through-out the period.

In 1932 the supply chief of the staff (G-4) had recognized realistically "the probability of greatly reduced War Department appropriations for Fiscal Year 1934 and succeeding years," and initiated steps toward producing a well planned and balanced and equipped force at some future time when money should be available. The cumulative value of this 1934 planning of a six-year program was to prove incalculable as World War II drew nearer.

General MacArthur manifested concern over equipment shortages as early as 1933 in his annual report as Chief of Staff, without result.

General Craig, his successor, in his own last annual report summarized his anxiety thus: "The problem encountered on my entry into office was the lack of realism in military war plans. ... (They) comprehended many paper units, conjectural supply, and a disregard of the time element which forms the main pillar of any planning structure. ... What transpires on prospective battlefields is influenced vitally years before in the councils of the staff and in the legislative halls of Congress. Time is the only thing that may be irrevocably lost, and it is the thing first lost sight of in the seductive false security of peaceful times. ... The sums appropriated this year will not be fully transformed into military powers for two years. Persons who state that they see no threat to the peace of the United States would hesitate to make that forecast through a two-year period."

Not until the alarms of 1940 (when the period of Craig's warning was not yet half over) was there any common grasp of the fact that appropriations could not in fact "be fully transformed into military powers for two years."

Scant Funds Allowed for New Weapons

How little Congress, the appropriating authority, understood the need for new weapons, even in 1939, is suggested by a contemporary, unofficial analysis of military expenditures of the War Department, as measured by appropriations for the fiscal year 1939, distributed among the several functions. The appropriations totaled \$646,000,000 but, of these, \$192,000,000, were for nonmilitary purposes, such as Panama Canal costs and rivers and harbors work.

The balance of \$454,000,000 was for military purposes. Rates of pay and subsistence for a stated number of men was almost inflexible; it totaled 58 percent. Repair of weapons plus construction and repair of plants consumed 13 percent more, and the seacoast defenses plus miscellaneous, another 6 percent.

In the residue represented by training, new equipment and research and development, amounting to much less than a quarter of the total, had to be found the dollars for whatever revitalizing the field forces were to receive. The funds for new equipment (at a time when Germany was putting the final polish upon an immense army wholly supplied with new equipment, the war and the Versailles treaty having eliminated all the old equipment) were 18.5 percent of the pinched total, but this was a high-water mark in expenditures over a period of time.

That somewhat more was being expended for producing entirely new weapons and for remodeling old ones during the years 1936-39 is only partly attributable to a national appreciation of the trends in Europe and Asia or even to the industry and judgement of the ordnance experts. Largely it is due to the fact that the Army's old equipment, most of it made during World War I, some of it earlier, was seriously out of repair, and had to be replaced with something.

There still was reluctance to spend money on the scientific research and development that alone could produce a weapon new in design and effectiveness, as distinguished from a new issue of an

old design. Only \$5,000,000, 1.2 percent of the whole military fund and less than four-fifths of a cent in the whole War Department dollar for the year 1939, was allotted to research and development. \$5,000,000 was one-twentieth of the cost of a new battleship which was being laid down by the Navy in that same year. It was one-four-hundredth part of the moneys later to be spent for the research, development, and production of the atomic bomb alone—at a time when the 1939 viewpoint on military expenditure had gone through a revolutionary change.

The peacetime failure to develop new weapons was in some degree due to the fact that World War I had left on hand a massive surplus of weapons and other equipment, in working condition but in large part obsolescent. The congressional view was that this surplus should be thriftily used up before anything else of the sort was bought, and newspapers of the period disclose no noticeable expression of disagreement.

Hence the slow and ineffective tanks of types little modified from 1918 standards lingered at U.S. Army posts while Germany was building the swift and powerfully armed vehicles that were to make possible Hitler's dazzling successes of 1940. Alongside the 1918 tanks at U.S. Army posts until 1938 lay the 1918 type antitank weapons. Not until 1940 did the American 81- and 60-mm mortars replace the World War I type throughout the Army.

The M-1 semiautomatic rifle (Garand), which greatly increased infantry fire power and which was developed by Army Ordnance persistence as a replacement for the pre-1917 Springfield, came from the factories so slowly in 1941 that training plans had to be adjusted to its delivery.

The invaluable "bazooka," which for the first time made an enemy tank really vulnerable to assault by a lone infantryman, was issued to troop units while they were deployed in the Tunisian campaign, and to others aboard ship on their way overseas; few of them had ever seen the weapon previously, or heard of it.

The War Department at this time was already encouraging new studies of how effectively a locomotive shop, for example, could be used to produce a self-propelled gun, or a typewriter plant could turn out a machine gun in mass production, or a watch manufacturer could use the precision of his craft for the making of intricate bomb fuses. Educational orders for such weapons justified the companies' purchase of appropriate tools and dies and development of labor skills, looking toward an ultimate production of the desired weapons by mass methods.

An educational-orders bill prepared by the Army in 1927 and favorably reported was delayed until 1929 and finally beaten on the floor of the House. Similar efforts failed in 1931 and 1933. Each of these bills proposed spending only \$2,000,000 a year. They failed primarily because pacifist expressions common in publications of that period denounced munitions manufacturers as war instigators; industries became reluctant to take munitions orders, while munitions plants surviving from 1918 were for the most part allowed to deteriorate.

Not until 1938 was a bill finally passed to authorize an educational-orders program and implemented by another bill which provided the money for it—not by providing new money, it is worth observing, but by transferring \$2,000,000 from other military funds to a special fund for educational orders.

Additional indication of the national state of mind in the early thirties is afforded by the experience with the President's July 1933 allocation of \$2,500,000 (under National Recovery Administration authority) to government arsenals for supplemental munitions manufacture, primarily as a means of creating "made work" for the unemployed.

The allocation to the arsenals was publicly deplored by the pacifist spokesmen who declared that it debauched the unfortunates who were dependent on government relief. The pacifists made their influence felt in Congress; when the second recovery appropriation bill passed it forbade the expending of relief funds for munitions manufacture. That prohibition remained in effect until 1937.

The reference to the struggle for educational-orders is enough to throw additional light upon the arms-procurement difficulties that harassed the chief of staff and the War Department in general during the thirties. Efforts to get merely enough weapons or ammunition or training to prevent troop deterioration encountered a professional pacifist opposition that was surprisingly potent in Congress.

The money finally obtained for educational-orders (which were designed by the Ordnance Department of the Army not to supply weapons currently but to pave the way to eventual mass production) is seen to have been grotesquely small on almost any basis of comparison. The principle of giving educational-orders was unquestionably good but, for the reasons given, the practice was weak in that the War Department was enabled to place orders only late and only in small quantities.

The same handicaps affected the purchases of stock piles of "critical and strategic materials," the term that the Army and Munitions Board used to describe the commodities essential to American industry but not produced sufficiently, if at all, within the United States or contiguous territory—such as rubber, tungsten, tin, copra, quinine and a score of others. The danger of being cut off by wartime blockade from the sources of these supplies was so apparent that the items were listed and recommended for acquisition in quantity.

The nation actually accumulated by 1941 little in the way of strategic materials in proportion to war needs. As a result there were unnecessarily large problems with synthetics and substitutions throughout the war.

Rebuffs repeated for nearly two decades had resulted in holding Regular Army personnel at levels far below the 1920 National Defense Act requirement of 280,000 men. They had prevented the acquisition of materiel urgently recommended by the General Staff with the result that in the autumn of 1939 there was an accumulated deficit that General Marshall calculated at \$700,000,000, much of it needing eighteen months to transform from dollars to materiel.

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