

THE PERSHING-MARCH CONFLICT IN WORLD WAR I

by

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On 4 March 1918, the War Department received a needed shot of adrenalin: Major General Peyton C. March became the new Chief of Staff. An experienced artilleryman, March had come to France with the American Expeditionary Forces in July 1917 to command the artillery training camp at Valdahon, and later the whole of AEF artillery. General John J. Pershing had known him for years (first at West Point in the 1880's, later on the General Staff in Washington in 1903) and considered him "a very able man." When Secretary of War Newton D. Baker requested March as Chief of Staff, Pershing said, "He will be difficult to replace, but I feel that you need the best man we can find, so I cheerfully let him go."¹

Before General March left France, Pershing saw to it that he was thoroughly briefed on the whole AEF operation. March visited Chaumont to learn the general headquarters viewpoint and method of operation, did the same with the supply headquarters at Tours, consulted with General Tasker H. Bliss about the Supreme War Council at Versailles, toured the trenches to gain the doughboy's viewpoint, met French Marshal Ferdinand Foch and Premier Clemenceau, and spent some time with Pershing. "We went over together the entire military situation," said March.² During the good-byes, Pershing wished March well and said he knew he would make good. After he left, one of Pershing's staff said to him, "That man is going to cause you trouble." "I know that," Pershing replied, "But he is a capable officer."³

Pershing was to find that March's conception of the office of Chief of Staff—its nature and prerogatives—differed markedly from those of his three predecessors, Hugh L. Scott, Tasker H. Bliss, and John Biddle. Bliss, by his own admission, felt that his job as Chief of Staff was to give Pershing everything he asked for. Except in name, he said, he was "Assistant Chief of Staff of the A.E.F."⁴ March in no way believed this, nor, it might be added, did Elihu Root in setting up the Army General Staff in 1903. Nor indeed is such an arrangement tolerable to anyone who has a proper conception of General Staff functions, military hierarchy, and proper subordination. A review of the troubled relationship between Pershing and March, which was largely a reflection of their differing concepts of the proper role of the Chief of Staff, will have relevance to the contemporary officer. For there is considerable temptation on the part of those in the field, even today, to regard their own commands as paramount and thus deserving of effectively autonomous status. As will become apparent in the pages that follow, however, the Chief of Staff should remain the supreme military authority in the Army. He should not be an assistant to anybody, except to his civilian superior, the Secretary.⁵

March intuitively and correctly grasped the foregoing truism. Pershing did not, nor did the AEF Chief of Staff, James G. Harbord, who considered March's claims to supremacy a "hallucination." Both conceived of the AEF chief as virtually an independent commander, directly under the

President and the Secretary of War, subject to no other soldier. March, they felt, had power over the War Department General Staff, but over no one else, except insofar as he spoke for the Secretary of War, in which case he was simply a messenger boy transmitting orders. When March acted otherwise, Harbord considered it a case of a telegraph wire taking on airs because it carried an important message.⁶

When March took over, the war had been in progress almost a year, during which three different men had served as Chief of Staff. During this time Pershing was the one constant factor in the War Department-AEF relationship. By March 1918 he had consolidated his position as a virtually self-directing field commander.⁷ When March went into office with a different conception of his role, there was bound to be friction.

Much of it was caused by Secretary Baker's faulty concept of the general staff, featuring the romantic notion of glorifying his field commander and allowing him a largely independent status. To Baker, a controversy over whether the Chief of Staff or the field commander was supreme was "purely technical" and "unimportant"—which speaks volumes on how well Baker understood basic general staff organization and principles.⁸ Because the Chiefs of Staff before General March were not sufficiently effectual, Secretary Baker had turned for advice to bureau chiefs such as Major General Enoch H. Crowder, the Provost Marshal General, and deferred increasingly to a strong overseas commander like Pershing.⁹ March accurately put his finger on the deficiency:

If a Chief of Staff is a weak man, and the results obtained by his supervision are not satisfactory to the Secretary of War, the remedy is not to break down his authority and invest subordinates with that authority. The answer is to get a new Chief of Staff who can handle the job.¹⁰

March certainly could handle it. A human dynamo, he "lived, breathed, and slept efficiency," said one subordinate. "He

took the War Department like a dog takes a cat by the neck, and he shook it," said another. March provided the energy that galvanized the Department; it shuddered, coughed, blew out the black carbon, and, like a great machine, roared to life and began to hum.¹¹ Up at 0600, March was generally the first man in the office, took lunch at his desk, came back to work after supper, and stayed until midnight or later. He cut through red tape with dispatch. A standing subordinate summarized orally the content of papers, while March barked out "approved" or "disapproved," not even touching the documents. When a subordinate said, "I am not very familiar with this paper, General," March gave him a dirty look and snapped, "Take it back and get familiar with it."¹²

Before March took over, turnaround time for troopships was as high as 67 days; under him it went down to an average of 35. A month before his assignment, the United States shipped some 49,000 men to Europe; the month after, almost 120,000. In subsequent months the number skyrocketed to 245,000, 278,000, and 306,000.¹³ "I propose to get the men to France if they have to swim," March said, and he meant it. His basic idea was that troopships should be ferryboats, not trans-Atlantic luxury liners. A ferryboat is uncomfortable, but the discomfort lasts only a short time and the boat gets you there. March packed the men in virtually like sardines, with three men for

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each bunk, in which they slept in shifts. On Pershing's recommendation he later cut the cargo allotment from 50 pounds per man per day to 30 pounds, saving cargo space and increasing the transport of men. By the summer of 1918, he was pouring men onto the shores of France at the rate of 10,000 per day.¹⁴

Afraid of nobody, March was ruthless, possibly even unscrupulous at times, in achieving his ends. He once received a letter from President Wilson expressing annoyance that a certain ship had been taken over for cargo service to France which he had personally promised the Secretary of the Treasury would be retained in America for carrying coal to New England. Knowing that Secretary Baker would be questioned about this at the Cabinet meeting the next day, March put stevedores on a crash program of loading the ship around the clock, so that by the time of the meeting it was two-thirds full. As he expected, the President acquiesced rather than order the ship unloaded again.¹⁵

Efficient to a fault, March hewed mightily around him and let the chips fall where they might. "You cannot run a war on tact," he asserted, and he did not. Endowed with a positive genius for irritating everyone, he was described as a modern-day Richelieu, strong in manner as well as in deed. Another put it more succinctly: "March was a real sonuvabitch if there ever was one."¹⁶ Ernest Ginnetti, a barber at the Army Navy Club in Washington, remembered the time an officer approached March in the barber chair to ask if he would be in his office for business later. March ignored him. Approaching closer, the officer repeated his question. At that, March leaped out of the chair. "Yes, damn you!" he rasped, "but I'm not going to be in to see you!"¹⁷

Frederick Palmer, a wartime correspondent, said that when he met March on the street he expected to see a trail of horseshoe nails bitten in two behind him. Secretary Baker claimed that a large part of his working day was acting the Good Samaritan: pouring in oil and binding up the wounds of subordinates whom March had laid low in his relentless drive for efficiency. He was

"arrogant, harsh, dictatorial, and opinionated," said Baker; he ruled by a reign of terror, "riding rough-shod over everyone."¹⁸

Did that include Pershing? Hardly. Pershing was not the type of man anyone rode over. He did, however, have several set-tos with March in the spring of 1918. The first concerned promotions. In April, asked to recommend names for general officer vacancies, Pershing sent them to Washington and was surprised to discover later that three of ten new major generals and over half of the brigadiers were not from his list. Irritated, and accustomed to having his recommendations followed, he cabled his disapproval, requesting that Baker be informed (which should, he thought, solve the matter) and that confirmation by the Senate be deferred until he sent a new list.¹⁹ March's reply lectured Pershing as though he were a schoolboy:

The American Expeditionary Force is only a part of the American Army and whatever promotions to the grades of Major General and Brigadier General are necessary will be made . . . from the entire Army. You were directed to submit recommendations as were other general officers. . . . Your recommendations are regarded as especially valuable as far as they are limited to the American Expeditionary Forces, but the efficiency of senior officers at home is determined by what there is actually accomplished here, based upon specific reports of inspectors and division commanders. . . . There will be no changes in the nominations already sent to the Senate.²⁰

When Baker later saw the cable, he wrote on the bottom of it: "An excellent illustration of the way *not* to send a message!"²¹ Pershing returned a soft answer, saying that it had not been his intention to try to limit Army promotions to the AEF, which would be manifestly unfair and hurt officer morale at home, but to point out that service overseas was the acid test. There had been cases of officers promoted at home and then sent overseas, where they outranked tested AEF

officers but proved to be inadequate. He was trying to avoid that.²²

Another disagreement was over the Sam Browne belt. An insignificant item of clothing, but one with strong symbolical overtones, the Sam Browne belt was an over-the-shoulder strap designed by a British officer of that name while serving in India in the 1870's. Originally it served a practical purpose: it helped hold up the waist belt when it was heavily burdened with sword, revolver, binoculars, canteen, and other items. Later, when these were eliminated, the strap remained as part of the dress uniform, eventually becoming the distinguishing mark of the British officer. Pershing liked it, feeling it "set off" the uniform and gave it a more military look. Soon after landing in Europe in June 1917, he ordered it worn at AEF headquarters and subsequently prescribed it for all AEF officers.²³

In America, however, it was prohibited. In view of the leather shortage, it seemed to March downright extravagant to use scarce material on these ceremonial belts which had no practical purpose and which were never used in the trenches (a pistol belt being substituted instead). In May he suggested that Pershing do away with it.²⁴ Pershing disagreed and the belt stayed. Harbord, considering March's view "narrow," said that going without the Sam Browne belt was like going out without one's pants!²⁵ The result was that every officer going to Europe had to purchase the belt. March estimated the total cost at 2 million dollars if the war had gone into 1919. In time it became a caste symbol, setting off the AEF officer from both the enlisted man overseas and the officer at home—and it was detested by both.²⁶

Despite these and other disagreements which will be considered shortly, relations between March and Pershing were generally good during the war itself. The oft-mentioned "feud" between the two men was, as Edward M. Coffman has pointed out, a later development, fostered in the 1930's by the war memoirs of the two principals and their associates. But during 1918-19, the tone in cables and letters was cordial, even

friendly. One reads the correspondence between the two men with the feeling that March attempted to be the more cordial.²⁷

Perhaps that is because General Harbord, who considered March ambitious and not to be trusted, kept whispering in Pershing's ear about him. On 14 March 1918, for example, March asked Pershing to rotate back to America 30 General Staff officers, to be replaced by 30 from stateside. The change would inject into the War Department officers with the AEF viewpoint and give foreign service to home officers whose careers would otherwise suffer without it.²⁸ Harbord saw all sorts of dark implications in the proposal. It was "a distinctly unfriendly act," he told Pershing.

It shows no consideration for your needs, and undermines your well-laid foundation, with what wild ambition in mind we can only guess. The best that could be said, if it is not hostile, is that it is selfish, inconsiderate, and ordered with no thought for your organization or intelligent comprehension of the task immediately before you.²⁹

If March had proposed taking the officers only from Pershing's General Headquarters (30 men out of a total of 64), as Harbord thought, his objections would have had merit. But March realized this would be unfair and had explicitly stated that they could come from the whole AEF. It was a perfectly reasonable request, but Pershing's staff, which was not above poisoning him against March, misread its plain words and tended to see a conspiracy where none was involved.³⁰

The incident is also instructive in illustrating the AEF attitude toward its autonomy. Harbord put it thus: "All you wish from America is such Staff Service there as will insure you a steady flow of troops and supplies. *You do not want there a Staff dealing with any phase of your business here*" (emphasis supplied). It would be hard to find a more concise statement of a field command desiring independence from General Staff control.³¹

Once Pershing correctly understood

March's intent, he complied, but only halfheartedly. Of 30 officers sent back, only three were found suited for General Staff work. An exchange arrangement limped on, but Pershing was not about to let good men out of his hands, so pressed was he for General Staff officers. One effect of his policy was to foredoom General Staff officers in Washington to sitting out the war at their desks.³²

During the summer of 1918, a supply crisis developed in the AEF which prompted a proposal by Secretary Baker to dispatch General George W. Goethals to Europe as logistics chief in a coordinate, rather than subordinate, role vis-à-vis Pershing. Pershing, energetically pleading the need for unity of command, was able to scotch the proposal. Harbord became the new AEF Services of Supply commander.³³ One upshot of the plan to send Goethals over was to bring to a head rumors circulating in Europe that General March wanted Pershing's job. Some of Pershing's staff, Harbord in particular, saw the Goethals proposal as a step toward this. In fact, in Harbord's view, it was more than a step—it was a plot.³⁴ It was inconceivable, reasoned Harbord, that Baker had made the proposal without consulting the Chief of Staff, who must have advised him to do it. The proposal envisioned “a perfectly impossible situation from any military standpoint except that which might desire the failure of the expedition and incidentally of Pershing; or perhaps I ought to say ‘of Pershing’ and not necessarily of the expedition. A divided control here in France would mean nothing but disaster.”³⁵

Not necessarily. In World War II Lieutenant General Brehon B. Somervell proposed putting supplies for all theaters under one head, who would be located in the United States. He would establish priorities and be responsible for the purchase, storage, transport, and delivery of goods right up to the zone of operations, being directly under the War Department and not under any theater commander. It was no conspiracy, simply a proposal for efficiency which had advantages and drawbacks. Theater com-

manders understandably opposed it and it was not adopted. But it was not a plot.³⁶ Pershing was not so sure. After explaining to the Presidential advisor, Colonel House, that supply conditions were better than people in America thought, he added: “Confidentially, in view of the facts, one is inclined to suspect that this erroneous impression has been circulated for a purpose.”³⁷

Pershing was also concerned over what he considered “a very curt tone” in March's July cables which gave “a distinct impression of unfriendliness.” March was acting, in Pershing's view, as if he were Pershing's military superior. He was, of course, but, as we have seen, Pershing never admitted it.³⁸

The promotion question came up again in May 1918 when the War Department asked Pershing's recommendations for six major generals and 33 brigadiers. When the promotions were made in July, Pershing was furious. Men whom he had *not* recommended, like Douglas MacArthur, were promoted over scores of others who had served longer and were, he felt, more deserving. Others whom he *had* recommended were passed over. These included some of his top General Headquarters officers like LeRoy Eltinge, Dennis E. Nolan, and Fox Conner, as well as top regimental commanders like Frank McCoy and Paul B. Malone.³⁹ “The question of promotions,” Pershing wrote in his diary, “involves some transactions on the part of the Chief of Staff in Washington which I am afraid would not look well in the light of an honest investigation.”⁴⁰ “It is an outrage,” Harbord said, suggesting that it was probably no accident that all five of those who had been passed over had had differences with General March when he was commander of the artillery camp at Valdahon in the early days of the AEF. Since it was unlikely that the Secretary, normally so cooperative, would disregard Pershing's recommendations, the culprit must be the Chief of Staff.⁴¹ On 17 July Harbord told Pershing of the bad impression the new promotions had made, warning:

You are held responsible as the channel through which the merits of the men who

serve under you must be made known to the Secretary of War. Once your people think you do not reward merit by your recommendations, or that your recommendations are not followed by the War Department, your influence is on the wane.⁴²

Actually, Pershing himself was partly to blame for what had happened. Because he had announced the policy of rotating officers from staff to line, it could happen that a colonel was promoted to brigadier general while serving temporarily on the General Staff and then, when he went out to line duty, such as McCoy and Malone had done, have disproportionate rank over other regimental commanders, who were normally lieutenant colonels or colonels. Hence March's reluctance to promote such people. He subsequently explained this to Pershing and asked him for the names of men he expected to keep permanently at General Headquarters and whom he wanted promoted. These March promoted the next time around.⁴³

Nonetheless, Pershing was still aggrieved. The proposal to send over Goethals with independent command, the tone of superiority in March's recent cables, and the objectionable July promotion list—all seemed to indicate a pattern of hostility on the part of the Chief of Staff.⁴⁴ On 17 August Pershing wrote Secretary Baker a frank letter, setting forth what he considered a lack of "satisfactory teamwork with us over here" and suggesting that "some of the personnel" in Washington might not be "entirely satisfactory." He had March in mind, of course, although he did not mention him by name. But the meaning was clear. The War Department would probably never run smoothly, he said, until someone was put in charge "who has actually gone through this organization here from beginning to end. . . . All this comes to my mind following the idea of an occasional change, of which you spoke when here as being your intention."⁴⁵ Baker, who appreciated March's effectiveness, was not about to relieve him, nor did he show him Pershing's letter. March said later that, had he known about it, "there certainly would

have been a showdown." Pershing, he correctly observed, "wanted a rubber stamp for Chief of Staff at home, so he could be entirely independent of any supervision or control."⁴⁶

In August 1918 March tried to codify the lines of authority by issuing War Department General Order 80, which stated that "the Chief of Staff by law . . . takes rank and precedence over all officers of the Army. . . ."⁴⁷ But it was too late. Pershing had become so entrenched in privilege and so enjoyed the confidence of the Secretary of War that, practically speaking, the newly promulgated status of the Chief of Staff was never realized. Secretary Baker permitted March to raise himself to a coordinate position with Pershing, but not a superior one.

Another disagreement between Pershing and March during the war concerned the 100-division program. On 23 June 1918 Pershing and Marshal Foch sent a joint recommendation to the War Department calling for 100 American divisions in France by July 1919. Lacking carefully calculated analysis, Pershing's recommendation appears to have been inspired simply by an impulse to have as many divisions as possible and by the knowledge that he would probably get less than he asked for. Even 80 divisions, he conceded, would probably overtax AEF transportation and supply facilities.⁴⁸ After a study March concluded that a 100-division program was impossible and that the best he could possibly hope to achieve was 80 divisions. On 23 July he sent this information to General Bliss, the American military representative on the Supreme War Council at Versailles. March did not send such a message to Pershing. Perhaps he assumed that Bliss would tell him.⁴⁹

Pershing certainly knew about March's decision by the first week of August, when Lloyd George cabled Clemenceau that America had abandoned the 100-division program and was shooting for only 80. Clemenceau gave a copy of the cable to Pershing a few days later.⁵⁰ Yet the AEF commander continued to urge the 100-

division program as a *minimum*. "This is the very least American force that will insure our victory in 1919," he cabled Washington on 17 August.⁵¹ But what was meant by "a division"? Was it a combat division, or did it also include what was called a depot division, which provided replacements to keep combat divisions going? On 20 August Pershing told his staff that the 80-division program meant 80 combat divisions. With the necessary depot divisions to go along with them (one for every five combat divisions), that made a total of 96—very near the 100 that Pershing had requested.⁵²

The War Department was not thinking this way and confusion was being compounded. Pershing was calling for 100 divisions as a "minimum," without expecting to get them and possibly not even believing they were needed. The War Department was planning on 80 divisions, without, however, telling its field commander, who was officially in the dark for two months after the decision was made. And that same field commander, knowing unofficially through Bliss and Lloyd George that 80 divisions was the official program, tried to hedge by stating that 80 was really 96.⁵³ Furthermore, different people calculated differently as to the number in a division. For Foch, Clemenceau, and Bliss, 100 divisions meant 4,160,000; for March, 4,260,000; for Pershing, "at least 5,000,000."⁵⁴ It was a strange way to run a war.

When Secretary Baker arrived in France in September, he was surprised to find Pershing calculating on having many more men there by July 1919 than March was planning. Informed of this, March cabled Pershing on 25 September, over two months after the decision had been made, that a 100-division program was out of the question. The most that could be accomplished was 80 divisions, and that meant a *total* of 80 divisions, both combat and depot, with a division being calculated at 40,000 men. "This 80-division in France program is the official program," said March bluntly, "and you will give instructions . . . to correspond therewith."⁵⁵

But Pershing was not through yet. In a

bit of sleight of hand, he cabled back that he was indeed planning on only 80 divisions and was, like March, calculating a division at 40,000 men—the division itself (which was normally about 28,000), plus proportionate corps and army troops to bring it up to that higher figure. But, he added, one must also figure in the supply troops to support the divisions (an additional 800,000) and also replacement troops (600,000)—a total of 1,400,000 extra men. Counting these supply and replacement troops, 80 divisions averaged out closer to 52,000 per division than 40,000. "The figures you give as to strength of divisions are in error," concluded Pershing.⁵⁶ Exasperated, March laid down the law: "The demands for tonnage . . . were not based upon divisions or other units but upon the number of men which we propose to transport and the necessary cargo tonnage to supply that given number of men." That maximum figure was 3,360,000 men and no more. Pershing would have to plan his operations accordingly.⁵⁷

As it turned out, neither 80, 96, nor 100 divisions were needed in Europe in 1919, although few could have predicted this. When someone asked Pershing in early October when the war would end, he answered, "I do not know."⁵⁸ But Foch had premonitions. The Allies had the initiative everywhere, the Central Powers were beginning to crack, and one had only to observe Foch swinging down the street at his headquarters at Bombon, his cap set at a jaunty angle and his stick over his shoulder, to know that the war was going well. Just before returning to America in early October, Baker asked Foch how many American divisions he needed in Europe to win in 1919. Expecting to hear a number like 80 or 96 or 100, he was startled to hear Foch answer, "Forty." Thinking that the interpreter had mistranslated, Baker repeated the question, only to receive the same answer. When the Secretary remonstrated that there were almost that many divisions already in France and that Pershing was insisting on 100 divisions, Foch said flatly: "I win the war with forty."⁵⁹

Since only a little over three months earlier Foch had loudly called for 100

divisions and signed his name with Pershing to a statement demanding them as a minimum, Harbord suspected that the generalissimo was deliberately trying to embarrass Pershing with his civilian superior.⁶⁰ But such was not the case. The tide of war had simply changed that much in three months. Foch, charged with the overall view of the front, saw it, whereas Pershing, heavily engaged in the Meuse-Argonne Campaign and making little progress, did not. He still wanted all the men he could lay his hands on.

After the armistice Pershing remained almost a year in France, then returned to America in September 1919 where he was given a tumultuous reception in New York City and was presented by Secretary Baker with a commission permanently endowing him with the rank of full general in the Regular Army.⁶¹ Pershing's receipt of the sword of permanent rank was the culmination of almost a year of political infighting in Washington. When Pershing had sailed for France in May 1917, he had worn only two stars. In October 1917, in order to provide him equality with his European counterparts, the War Department promoted him to four-star general. The promotion, however, was "for the period of the existing emergency only," which meant that he would revert to two-star rank when the war was over, i.e. when the AEF went out of existence.⁶² To prevent this, the Administration introduced a bill to award Pershing with a permanent commission as a full four-star general. Conscious of March's signal contributions to the war effort, it also included him for the same rank. When Pershing's name was read out on the floor of the House of Representatives, the entire body rose to its feet, applauding and cheering. But when the clerk went on to add March's name, a number of congressmen groaned, hurriedly resumed their seats, and called out, "No. No. Sit down, sit down."⁶³

During the war a number of them had resented March's harsh, dictatorial manner, and they now proposed to settle old scores. One congressman, for example, had asked

March to exempt a certain constituent from the draft, only to be met with the sharp answer, "I am here to get men across to France, not to keep them from going." There was no way such a legislator was going to vote four stars for March.⁶⁴ Other congressmen—Fiorello La Guardia, for one—were simply ignorant of the important work that a Chief of Staff does in modern war. He protested against rewarding anyone with permanent rank who had not earned it "on the field of battle"—as if Pershing, miles behind the front lines at Paris, Chaumont, Souilly, or Ligny, had been any more in danger than March in Washington.⁶⁵

Pershing showed little more appreciation for March's titanic labors than the congressmen. When a US Senator sent him a copy of Baker's letter to Senator Wadsworth, chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, arguing that Pershing's and March's work were "complementary" and that "together they wrought the . . . victory," Pershing replied that Baker "failed to appreciate the relative importance of each man's duties." Besides, he added, March came into office late and, while he did good work, the reward of permanent rank had traditionally been reserved "for actual service in the field, and I do not think the policy ought to be changed."⁶⁶

It was not. Congress voted permanent rank for Pershing and refused it for March, who eventually reverted to two stars.⁶⁷ It left an anomalous situation. March, who as Chief of Staff claimed to be Pershing's superior, was outranked by him, four stars to two. In such a strange and contradictory way did the Republic reward its two World War I heroes.

NOTES

1. James G. Harbord, "Personalities and Personal Relationships in the American Expeditionary Forces," Army War College lecture, 29 April 1933. Reprinted as a separate pamphlet from the *Congressional Record* of 1 May 1933, pp. 3, 8; John J. Pershing to Senator Francis E. Warren, 4 February 1918, Francis E. Warren Papers, University of Wyoming; Tasker H. Bliss to Newton D. Baker, 2 February 1918, Tasker H. Bliss Papers, Library of Congress, Box 74; John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1931), I, 314; Edward M. Coffman, *The Hilt of the Sword* (Madison, Wis.: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1966), pp. 39-51; Peyton C. March, *The Nation at War* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1932), pp. 34-36.

2. Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 52-53; Pershing, *Experiences*, I, 314; John J. Pershing Diary, 2 and 4 February 1918, John J. Pershing Papers, Library of Congress, Box 4; Tasker H. Bliss Diary, 4-6 February 1918, Bliss Papers, Box 65; March, *Nation at War*, p. 36; Pershing to Francis E. Warren, 4 February 1918, Francis Warren Pershing Papers. When I consulted the Francis Warren Pershing Papers they were at Southampton, N.Y. at Mr. Pershing's country home; they have since been given to the Library of Congress where they are filed in 48 boxes at the end of the Pershing Papers collection.

3. John C. Hughes interview, 30 October 1964.

4. Tasker H. Bliss to Pershing, 17 March 1921, Pershing Papers, Box 26.

5. William Harding Carter, *Creation of the American General Staff* (Washington: GPO, 1924), p. 48. The command hierarchy suffered no such obfuscation in World War II. Eisenhower, the field commander, was clearly under Marshall, the Chief of Staff in Washington.

6. Harbord, "Personalities," pp. 8-10; p. 13 of an early draft of ch. 46 of *My Experiences in the World War*, Pershing Papers, Box 366.

7. AEF generals, from Pershing on down, were virtually unanimous in praising Baker as a great Secretary of War. James E. Hewes Jr. has quite rightly suggested that one reason is that Baker let the AEF do pretty much as it wanted (Hewes, *From Root to McNamara: Army Organization and Administration, 1900-1963* [Washington: GPO, 1975], p. 23).

8. Newton D. Baker to James G. Harbord, 14 December 1934, Newton D. Baker Papers, Library of Congress, Box 113; Thomas G. Frothingham, *The American Reinforcements in the World War* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971), pp. xxii-xxiii.

9. Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 53; Enoch H. Crowder to John J. Pershing, 19 January 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 56.

10. Peyton C. March to Newton D. Baker, 2 August 1918, Provost Marshal General #1157, Box 146, Chief of Staff File, Record Group 165, National Archives.

11. William J. Snow, *Signposts of Experience* (Washington: US Field Artillery Assoc., 1941), p. 175; Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 64; George W. Hinman interview, 22 July 1960; Harbord, "Personalities," p. 10; Edward M. Coffman, *The War To End All Wars* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), p. 163; James G. Harbord, *The American Army in France, 1917-1919* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1936), p. 151; Frederick Palmer to Newton D. Baker, [22 March 1931], N. D. Baker Papers, Box 184. For deficient conditions that March found in the War Department when he took over, see Dennis E. Nolan to Pershing, 8 November 1930, Pershing Papers, Box 354; March, *Nation at War*, pp. 39-40; Pershing's interview with March, 30 October 1919, Record Group 165, National Archives; and Edward M. Coffman, "The Battle Against Red Tape: Business Methods of the War Department General Staff, 1917-1918," *Military Affairs*, 26 (Spring 1962), 2.

12. Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 62, 144; March, *Nation at War*, pp. 51-52, 56, 66-67; Coffman, "Battle Against Red Tape," p. 8.

13. March, *Nation at War*, p. 76; Leonard P. Ayres, *The War with Germany: A Statistical Summary* (Washington: GPO, 1919), p. 37.

14. March, *Nation at War*, pp. 3, 69-70, 75-76, 93-94, and 101; Coffman, *War to End War*, pp. 227, 231; Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 65, 73, 84, 88-89; War Department Cable A #1347, 18 May 1918, James G. Harbord Papers, New York Historical Society (cited hereafter as Harbord Papers—NYHS); US Department of the Army, *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1918* (cited hereafter as *USAWW*) (Washington: GPO, 1918), II, 537; Andre Kaspi, *Le temps des Americains: le concours Americain a la France en 1917-1918* (Paris:

Publications De La Sorbonne, 1976), p. 294; "War Foe Says Pershing Broke German Morale," *Chicago News*, 9 March 1931, in Pershing Papers, Box 359.

15. March, *Nation at War*, pp. 362-63. March simply disregarded American field regulations on the shipment of troops. The Germans, reading American regulations, concluded that the United States could never ship more than 7000 men on the *Leviathan*, a German ship which had been taken over by America when the war broke out; actually March was shipping 12,000 ("Organization for Espionage and Counter-Espionage," in Dennis E. Nolan to Pershing, n.d., pp. 20-21, Pershing Papers, Box 352).

16. Bernard M. Baruch, *Baruch: The Public Years* (New York: Holt, 1960), p. 57; John C. Hughes diary, 1 February 1918, John C. Hughes Papers, possessed by his son, Lawrence Hughes, President of William Morrow and Company, New York, N.Y.; Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 189; Clarence H. Cramer, *Newton D. Baker: A Biography* (Cleveland: World Publ., 1961), p. 128; Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Education of a General, 1880-1939* (New York: Viking, 1963), p. 207; John M. Virden interview, 8 March 1961; Merritte W. Ireland to Pershing, 28 December 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 106.

17. Ginnetti interview, 3 May 1961.

18. Frederick Palmer to Newton D. Baker, [22 March 1931], and 3 November 1934, N. D. Baker Papers, Box 184; Newton D. Baker Army War College lecture, 11 May 1929, in Pershing Papers, Box 354; Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 146; Secretary Baker's pencil notation on Cable A #1159, 23 April 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 19; Newton D. Baker to Frederick Palmer, 5 November 1934, N. D. Baker Papers, Box 184; Newton D. Baker interview of 6 April 1928 by Ray S. Baker and A. Howard Meneely, in Ray Stannard Baker Papers, Library of Congress, Series I, Box 20; George Van Horn Moseley interview, 13 September 1961.

19. Cable A #995, 27 March 1918, Harbord Papers—NYHS; Cable P #834 and #954, 1 and 19 April 1918, War Department Cables, Record Group 407, National Archives; Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 58-59. Pershing later judged that he might have overstepped himself. He wrote to Baker, "My cablegram with reference to promotions was peculiarly unfortunate, especially in its wording; . . . carelessly worded and brusque telegrams sometime slip through notwithstanding instructions" (March to Pershing, 10 May 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 123; Pershing to Baker, 6 or 7 June 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 19).

20. Cable A #1159, 23 April 1918, in *USAWW*, II, 342. It was messages such as this which caused Harbord to complain later of the "rasping and irritating method of expression" used by the Chief of Staff. Harbord, "Personalities," p. 9.

21. A copy of the cable, with Baker's addendum, is in Pershing Papers, Box 19.

22. Pershing to March, 23 April 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 123; Pershing to Secretary Baker, 18 June 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 19; Harbord, *American Army*, p. 224; Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 58, 81; Pershing, *Experiences*, I, 350-51; Harbord to Pershing, 9 March 1918, James G. Harbord Papers, Library of Congress (cited hereafter as Harbord Papers—LC).

23. William Mitchell, *Memoirs of World War I* (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 134; Frederick Palmer, *America in France* (New York: J. Murray, 1919), pp. 66-67; T. Bentley Mott, *Twenty Years as Military Attaché* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1937), p. 119; Robert Ginsburgh, "Pershing as His Orderlies Know Him," *The American Legion Monthly*, 5 (November 1928), 53; Pershing to Baker, 11 July 1919, Pershing Papers, Box 19; James L. Collins diary, 19 June 1917, possessed by his son, BG James L. Collins, Center of Military History, Washington; *USAWW*, XVI, 56.

24. *USAWW*, XVII, 74; Cable A #1317, 15 May 1918,

Harbord Papers—NYHS; March, *Nation at War*, p. 175; Laurence Stallings, *The Doughboys: The Story of the AEF, 1917-1918* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 177.

25. Cable P #1172, 23 May 1918, Record Group 120, National Archives; Harbord to Leonard Wood, 4 February 1919, Harbord Papers—LC; Baker to Pershing, 3 August 1919, Pershing Papers, Box 19.

26. Cable A #1317, 15 May 1918, Harbord Papers—NYHS; Baker to Pershing, 3 August 1919, Pershing Papers, Box 19; Edward G. Lowry, *Washington Close-ups* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1921), pp. 256-58.

27. Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 117-18; Senator Francis E. Warren to Pershing, 27 July 1918, Warren Papers; Mrs. Peyton C. March interview, 11 March 1961. The Pershing-March correspondence is in the Pershing Papers, Box 123.

28. March to Pershing, 10 May 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 123; Coffman, *War*, p. 186; Mrs. Peyton C. March interview, 16 March 1961; Cable A #915, 14 March 1918, Harbord Papers—NYHS.

29. Harbord to Pershing, 16 March 1918, Harbord Papers—LC.

30. Cable P #753, 19 March 1918, in *USAWW*, II, 244-45; Cable A #956, 21 March 1918, Harbord Papers—NYHS. For another example involving Harbord see Allan R. Millett, *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1975), p. 442.

31. Harbord to Pershing, 16 March 1918, Harbord Papers—LC.

32. Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 61; Pershing to March, 5 May 1918, and March to Pershing 6 May [June] 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 123.

33. For the details of the so-called Goethals proposal, see my article "Your Authority in France Will Be Supreme": The Baker-Pershing Relationship in World War I," *Parameters*, 9 (September 1979), 41-42.

34. Senator F. E. Warren to Pershing, 27 August 1918, Francis Warren Pershing Papers; Harbord to Pershing, 23 September 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 87; *The New York Times*, 9 April 1918, p. 6; George W. Goethals to his son, 25 August 1918, George W. Goethals Papers, Library of Congress, Box 2; Diary of Leonard Wood, 30 September 1918, Leonard Wood Papers, Library of Congress, Box 11; Frederick Palmer, *John J. Pershing: A Biography* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Military Service Publishing, 1948), p. 253; "No Popular Cry for Pershing as Presidential Candidate," *The American Army Gazette*, n.d. [1919], Pershing Papers, Box 163; George S. Patton to Pershing, 26 March 1919, Pershing Papers, Box 155.

35. Harbord, *American Army*, p. 351; Harbord, *Leaves*, p. 339.

36. Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *The War Department: Global Logistics and Strategy, 1940-1943*, in *United States Army in World War II* (Washington: GPO, 1955), II, 242-43.

37. Pershing to Edward M. House, 7 August 1918, House Papers, Drawer 11, Folder 52. It is certainly not true that March desired Pershing to fail. Nor is there any evidence that March hoped to supplant Pershing or attempted to do so. It is true, however, that the appointment of Goethals in a coordinate capacity (i.e. coordinate to Pershing but subordinate to March) would extend the latter's influence overseas. Rumors also had it that March had intended to appoint Goethals out of hand, but was forestalled by Baker

who insisted on asking Pershing about it first (Coffman, *War*, p. 186; Interview with George Van Horn Moseley, 13 September 1960; Palmer, *Pershing*, pp. 253-54).

38. Pershing to Baker, 28 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 19.

39. Harbord, *Leaves*, p. 310; Pershing to March, 15 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 19; Harbord, *American Army*, p. 304; Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 110; Pershing diary, 11 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 4.

40. Pershing diary, 22 August 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 4.

41. Harbord, *Leaves*, p. 310; Harbord, *American Army*, p. 304.

42. Harbord to Pershing, 17 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 87.

43. March to Pershing, 2 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 123.

44. Pershing to Baker, 28 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 19.

45. Pershing, *Experiences*, II, 223.

46. March, *Nation at War*, pp. 266-67.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

48. *USAWW*, II, 482-83 and 544; Pershing diary, 23 June 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 4; Pershing, *Experiences*, II, 121.

49. *USAWW*, II, 544; Pershing to March, 19 July 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 123; Coffman, *War*, p. 180.

50. *USAWW*, II, 566; Pershing, *Experiences*, II, 224.

51. *USAWW*, II, 579-80.

52. *Ibid.*, II, 588, 610.

53. *Ibid.*, II, 580, 588, 610.

54. *Ibid.*, II, 489; Coffman, *War*, p. 179; Ferdinand Foch, *The Memoirs of Marshal Foch*, trans. T. Bentley Mott (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1931), p. 345.

55. *USAWW*, II, 610, 613-14; March, *Nation at War*, p. 304.

56. *USAWW*, II, 618.

57. *Ibid.*, II, 625-66.

58. Pershing to Mrs. George S. Patton, 10 October 1918, Pershing Papers, Box 155.

59. Newton D. Baker to Frederick Palmer, 18 July 1931, N. D. Baker Papers, Box 184.

60. James G. Harbord, "The Preservation of American Identity in the World War," Army War College lecture, 11 April 1932, p. 13, copy in Pershing Papers, Box 88.

61. Pershing diary, 8 September 1919, Pershing Papers, Box 4; "General Pershing's Homecoming," *Current History*, 11 (October 1919), 1-2.

62. Coffman, *Hilt*, pp. 189-90; James L. Collins diary, 22 March 1919; Frederick B. Wiener, "How Many Stars for Pershing?" *Army*, 20 (December 1970), 31-32.

63. March, *Nation at War*, pp. 349-50; Preston Brown to Harbord, 19 July 1919, enclosed with Harbord to Pershing, 4 August 1919, Pershing Papers, Box 87; *The New York Times*, 19 July 1919, p. 5.

64. March, *Nation at War*, pp. 350-51.

65. Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 195.

66. Pershing to Senator Francis E. Warren, 11 January and 15 August 1919, Francis Warren Pershing Papers; Baker to James W. Wadsworth, 28 July 1919, Peyton C. March Papers, Library of Congress, Box 8.

67. Coffman, *Hilt*, p. 215. A copy of Pershing's permanent commission as general, dated 4 September 1919, is in Pershing Papers, Box 419.