

The University of California
ADMINISTRATION OF ASSIGNMENTS OF UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE OFFICERS

A Report to
The Faculty of the School of Business
Administration
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Business Administration

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May 1, 1950

PREFACE

The following study has been undertaken to complete the requirements for the M.B.A. degree in a field in which the author is personally associated.

The scope of the study is largely the result of personal analysis of the military personnel field. This was considered essential because of the lack of factual material available in this area of study.

I must emphasize at this point that the material contained in this study is the result of personal observations and opinions of the author and in no manner reflects the policy or the opinions of the United States Air Force or the Department of National Defense.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE AIR FORCE'S PERSONNEL PROBLEMS

This study has been undertaken with the objective of setting forth the many personnel problems involving officer assignment in the United States Air Force. Like any large decentralized organization the Air Force has involved problems of personnel administration. In many of its personnel problems a marked similarity is observed between the civilian and military, but on the whole there exists a vast difference both in the type and scope of the problems involved.

It may appear to the uninformed that an assignment program should simple involve determination of the job vacancies and matching them with the available manpower. In officer assignment in the United States Air Force this is far from true, for in making assignments the personnel officer must take into consideration the following factors:

1. Availability of funds - that is, whether Congress has appropriated sufficient funds for each base to accomplish its mission.
2. Officer authorization - the number and types of officers allotted to each base unit to carry out its mission.
3. Availability of individual categories of officers - the problem presented by the difficulties

in obtaining certain critical or specialized categories of officers.

4. The mandatory quotas - higher headquarters allots mandatory quotas for schooling and overseas assignments which must be filled by the bases.
5. The problem of the reserve officer - reserve officers are currently on three year tours of duty at the end of which they must be replaced.
6. The regulations of Headquarters, USAF - these place restrictions on the job assignments and the length of tours of duty in any job capacity.
7. The regulations of individual commands - these often go further than the regulations from Headquarters, Washington and place additional restrictions on the assignment process.
8. The nonwritten policies - the tendency to limit all assignments to a three year period at any job location and other similar tendencies.
9. The lack of proficiency of officers in their military occupational specialty - officers are often ill trained and equipped to perform their prescribed duties.

The foregoing are just a minute sample of the many factors which might effect the classification officer in the assignment process. It is thus the objective of this study to indicate just what an assignment process entails. In order to adequately present the problem it was deemed necessary to divide the study in four phases.

CHAPTER I The necessary background and introduction material to acquaint the reader with the personnel and organizational problems of the Air Force.

CHAPTER II The process of procurement and assignment of Air Force officers as outlined by directives from the various headquarters.

CHAPTER III The problems encountered by a base commander in the procurement and assignment of officers and the techniques used to solve these problems.

CHAPTER IV A possible solution to the assignment problem through centralized assignment of all personnel in Headquarters, Washington.

This study has been conducted in cooperation with the personnel staffs of Hamilton, Fairfield, and Mather Air Force Bases. Much of the material presented in the first three chapters is the result of the helpful suggestions of the personnel staffs of the forementioned bases.

There has been an attempt to present the material with as few military terms and concepts as possible. It was necessary, however, in allowing for continuity of thought, to utilize some basic military terms and concepts. The first step should therefore be to define certain strictly military terms.

Basic Terms

Commanding Officer.--The chief executive of any base, post or unit.

Base.--An operational and administrative self sufficient unit with a mission to perform.

Headquarters USAF.--Used to indicate the highest position of authority and responsibility within the United States Air Force.

Flying Officer.--An officer who holds an aeronautical rating and participates in frequent aerial flights. To be distinguished from a ground officer who does not participate in aerial flights.

Military Occupational Specialty.--The type of specialized work any officer is trained to perform. It may be obtained by completion of a formal training course or an on the job training program. Any officer may be qualified in several military occupational specialties.

Mission.--A definite task or assignment given to a unit in a military action.

Rating.--The grade or rank of an officer

Corps.--A body of officers associated in a common work.

Tactical.--A form of military procedure requiring skillfull operations to accomplish an end.

Temporary Duty.--An assignment in a prescribed activity away from an officer's home base.

Replacement Center.--A base operated for the purpose of screening officers for determination of future assignments.

Brief History of the Air Force

In order to comprehend the magnitude of the personnel problem in the USAF it is necessary to present certain

background material for the understanding of the problems involved. The USAF as we know it today originated just prior to World War I as a branch of the Army Signal Corps and numbering less than a hundred officers and men. Since that time it has shown an increasing importance due to different concepts of modern warfare. The Air Force grew slowly at first; even as late as 1938 (then still a part of the Army) it numbered less than three thousand officers. With the imminence of World War II training programs were pushed to their maximum capacity with the result that during World War II air officers numbered in the hundreds of thousands. There was an actual excess of officers in nearly all categories during this wartime period with the result that officer assignment often became a rather haphazard and inefficient method of selection of officers for duty. The whole assignment process, however, was interwoven with the conditions prevalent at this time which paid little heed to scientific officer procurement and assignment methods. Thus we learn little or nothing about the proper methods of assignment that might be applicable to a smaller peacetime Air Force.

With the conclusion of hostilities the vast majority of officers made a mass exodus toward the separation centers with the result that actual chaos resulted in the whole personnel system. Little regard was paid to future requirements of officer personnel because of Congressional uncertainty and political pressures exerted by the various groups to cut down the armed forces. It was necessary at this time to improvise

systems of assignments to complete the demobilization of the wartime officers and to place on an inactive status the many wartime bases which were surplus at this time. The first real step toward stabilization of the officer corps of the Air Force was brought about in 1946 at which time the Regular Air Officers Corps which numbered about three thousand and was supplemented by an induction of ten thousand officers. These officers were selected by a competitive process which placed a great deal of stress on the educational backgrounds and service records of the candidates involved. This step gave a basic cadre of officers upon which to build the peacetime requirements of an expanded air force. Along with this induction program various procedures were established to provide new sources of Air Force Officers. These included an Air Cadet program for flying officers, an expanded college Air ROTC program for the necessary ground specialties required in the new Air Force and an administration course to select outstanding enlisted men for officer training. The outstanding students of these programs are given regular commissions at the completion of their training. An added source of regular officers was an increase in the quota of West Point graduates assigned to the Air Force along with the definite percentage of Annapolis graduates who were now being assigned to the Air Force. The aforementioned steps not only established the basic force of regular officers required for the present but also provided for a method of replacement of these regular officers as required in the future.

The progress in regular officer procurement was not

the only development in the personnel problem accomplished during this post war period for also basic policies and plans were being formulated to solve the assignment process. We must remember that the processes utilized prior to World War II were now obsolete, and the wartime assignment process was too inefficient and expensive. The policy of the USAF was to stabilize the whole problem of officer training and assignment so that the peacetime mission could be accomplished. Short and long range plans were drawn and submitted for Congressional approval. With the establishment of a separate Department of the Air Force in 1948 many of these personnel policy plans began to take effect. The results of the planning program will become readily apparent at a later point in this study.

The Present Officer Composition of the USAF

The present total strength of the USAF is 57,706 officers.¹ This figure is determined by Congress acting on the recommendations of the President and the Secretary of National Defense. This present strength may be broken down into seventeen thousand regular officers and forty thousand reserve officers. It is necessary at this time to differentiate between these two categories of officers in order to clarify future references to both of these groups.

A regular officer is an officer who has graduated from a service academy or has been inducted into the regular service by the use of some selective device. The regular officer has unlimited tenure in the same manner as has any

¹Air Force Times, January 14, 1950, p. 6.

civil service type of employee. He is subject to a career planning system which involves attendance at specified service schools and performance of certain types of duties at designated periods throughout his career. He is ranked within the regular officer group according to length of service, and his promotions are based primarily upon this service factor. He has priority on certain types of duties and schooling over the reserve officer because of his permanent tenure. As an example, only a regular officer can become a base commander or only a regular can attend college under the civilian institution program.

The bulk of the officer corps is made up of reserve officers. The large majority of the reserve officers are officers who served in World War II. They perform under limited tenure, at present they may volunteer for three year tours of duty at the pleasure of the government. This means that the government may retain them for their three year tour or place them on the inactive list anytime during the three year period. The reserve officers, because of their limited tenure, are restricted from holding key positions and in the attendance of certain schools. They are subject to the same rules and regulations as the regular officer but do not enjoy the same prerogatives. The promotion system of the reserve officers is not as extensive as that regulating the regular officers.

There is a vast difference in the status of the reserve and regular officer in the Air Force which has a tremendous effect on the morale of the reserve officer and direct-

ly effects the assignment process. Many of the reserve officers who served conscientiously in World War II feel that they are being discriminated against in both assignments and promotions which tends to create a morale problem. Recently the Air Force has begun a reduction program aimed at a reduction in the older reserve officers. This is necessary because the intake of reserve officers amounts to eight thousand a year from all sources while the outgo only totals three thousand. Since the military budget calls for a stable force of officers, five thousand of these older officers (reserve) must be returned to the inactive status each year. The selection of these men to revert to the inactive status is made semi-annually from Headquarters USAF with little prior notification given to the specific bases as to the individual involved. This creates a problem of assignment planning and places the individual officer in a position of perpetual indecision as to his status.

The Tendency Toward Specialization of Officer Training and Assignment

In the Air Force prior to World War II the general attitude was that each officer should be a generalist instead of a specialist in the performance of his duties. This means that an officer would not devote his career toward any one specialty such as intelligence, supply, personnel or other fields but would rather have a working knowledge of all these fields. In other words, an able officer should be able to step into a position in any of these fields and do a good job.

This was at the time possible for the organization was small, the problems were few, and the personnel was usually outstanding and well trained. The event of World War II, however, changed the entire picture. The Air Force was no longer small, its problems were varied, and the personnel on the whole were not as competent. This meant the formation of entirely new concepts of training and assignment. The following system of general military schools was established.

1. The Air Tactical School.-- Involves training in the general duties of supply, personnel, operations and intelligence from a squadron standpoint. (The smallest organizational unit in the Air Force)
2. The Air Command and Staff School.-- Involves training in the general duties of supply, personnel, operations and intelligence from a standpoint of staff assistance at a high administrative level.
3. Air War College.-- Involves training of the highest rank of Air Force officers for command positions.
4. A system of training for specialized skills as required in the Air Force was established in the following fields:
 - a. Budget and Fiscal
 - b. Public Relations
 - c. Military Management
 - d. Intelligence

e. Supply

The above list of specialized schools is anything but complete, but is included to indicate the factor of recognition by the Air Force that certain specialized skills are required in a modern Air Force. The training and assignment policy has to be revised so that training and assignment in these specialized fields might be accomplished over an entire career.

A further study of the program of specialization brought about the discovery that service schools could not train the officers required for certain technical and non-technical fields. The result of this study was the adoption of the civilian institutions program in which annually over one thousand regular officers take graduate and under graduate courses ranging from library science to nuclear physics in colleges throughout the United States. The policy of Air Force Headquarters is to train the necessary specialists either in service schools or civilian institutions but to provide this training for service personnel so that the service will have trained officers in all phases of technical and non-technical specializations. Is it any wonder then that the general assignments have given way to a form of specialization of assignments? The policy of the USAF is for these trained specialists to operate in their chosen field for a minimum length of time to justify the training costs involved. Does it not seem logical that these same individuals might spend periods of time up to and including careers in

these specialized fields? This policy of specialization of training and assignments creates entirely new problems in the assignment process.

The Difficulties Brought About by Congressional Indecision

The Air Force is required to compile and submit its budgetary estimates for the various functions performed a year in advance of the fiscal year in which the funds are utilized. This involves a great deal of planning from a national standpoint where the Chief of Air Force compiles the requests of his individual commands and adjusts the figures in light of the overall importance of each command's importance to the national interests. These adjusted figures are then presented to the President and the Bureau of the Budget for further adjustment and study in light of the overall governmental requirements. These adjusted figures are then presented to Congress for approval. Congress then may adopt one of three courses.

1. Accept the figures as they exist and appropriate the necessary funds.
2. Increase the authorization and the funds for certain specific projects or grant a general increase in the entire Air Force appropriations. Congress very seldom increases the amounts requested by the agencies and recommended by the President.
3. Decrease of the amounts involved in certain specific requests or an across the board decrease

of the total appropriation.

The problem of not knowing just how much money the Air Force and each individual base will obtain and therefore how many officers to request creates a definite planning and assignment problem for each personnel office. Let us use as an hypothetical example Base X which, before June 1949, requested money to operate with 500 officers for the fiscal year 1950-1951. In about June of 1950 Congress will finally begin to consider specific requests for the entire Air Force, but they usually cannot quite agree on a total figure for appropriation. The months of July and August might pass without any appropriations other than supplemental legislation enabling the bases to operate from month to month. Finally in October (as actually occurred in 1949) Congress passed the necessary legislation but added the authorization and appropriation for an additional ten groups of tactical aircraft. Base X happens to be a base employing tactical aircraft and would receive one new group under this new authorization. Now the problem of Base X personnel section is whether they should plan to increase its officer's strength or attempt to retain its present staff of officers? Finally, higher headquarters orders them to request new officers and to start transferring their presently assigned personnel to the new organization. Then the executive branch decides to hold up the money for the new groups because it is not in line with budgetary planning. The base is then informed to drop the whole thing and reassign their shifted personnel to their old duties. The above cited case is not uncommon in the

planning carried on by the lower echelons of the Air Force and the confusion that results. The individual bases have little information as to their exact officer strength and necessary assignments until after the fiscal year has already begun.

It is clearly evident that even the most precise pre-planning accomplished at the lower echelons may come to naught with one adverse decision of Congress. Some method of close coordination and control is necessary between the Air Force and Congress on one hand and the Air Force Headquarters and the individual base commanders on the other so that adequate training and planning for assignments may be accomplished in light of projected future planning.

Personnel Planning

Personnel Planning involves a knowledge of what is going on at the present time along with what to expect as to future commitments. Closely interwoven with the problem of personnel assignments are the related problems of training and procurement. From the standpoint of the base personnel section it is a question of pre-planning only to have plans changed time and again as conflicting decisions are rendered in the governmental hierarchy. The base personnel section is in a position of extreme decentralization and cannot secure the necessary information to plan adequately any future program. For this reason it is evident that the individual personnel sections are not in a position to make any valid decision on personnel planning problems because of a lack of

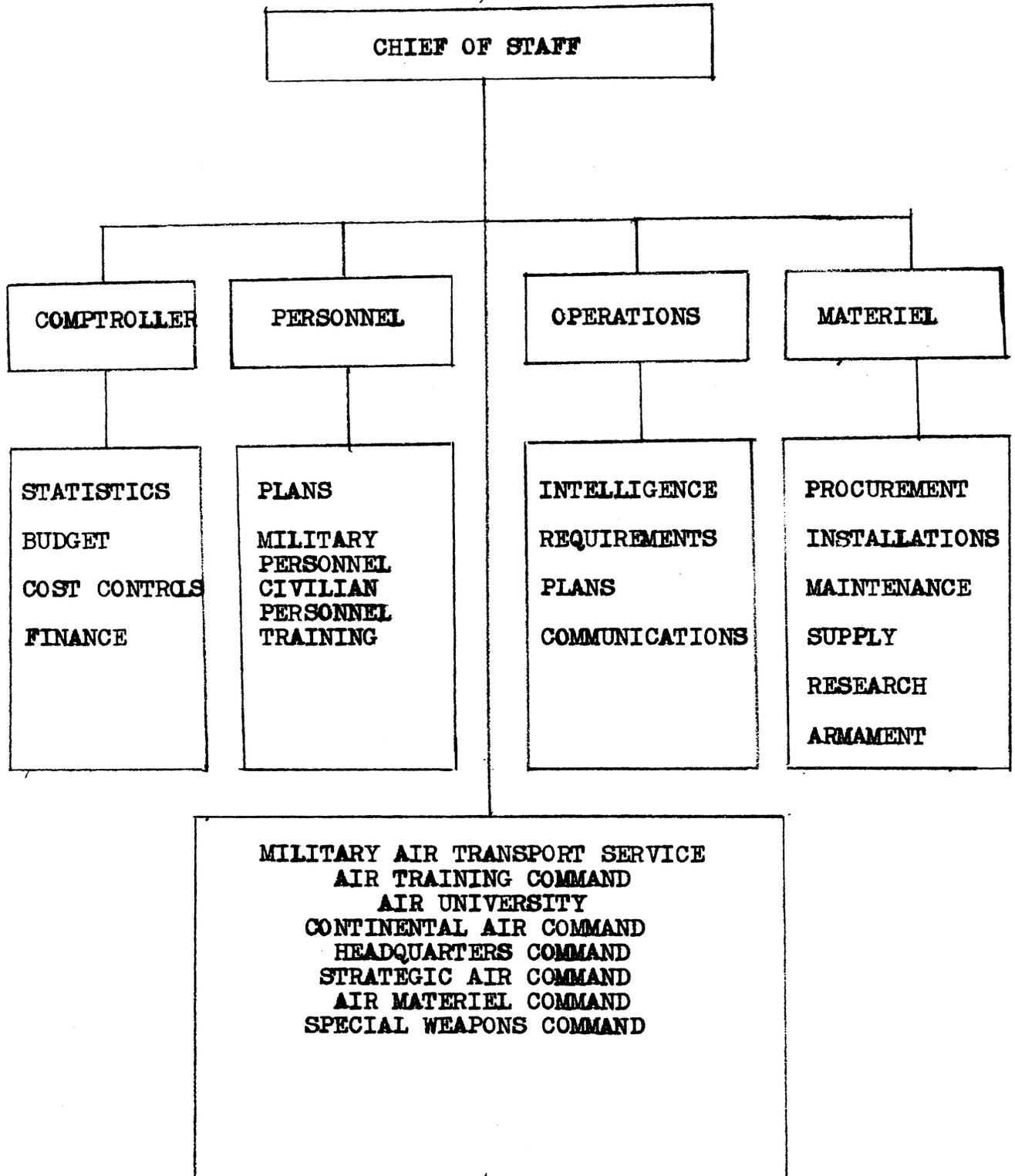
comprehension of the ever changing mission of the USAF as a whole. The only level of the Air Force that is in a position to comprehend the changing missions and make allotments of personnel accordingly to the various units is Headquarters USAF. It is the authority that should control all assignments throughout the Air Force. The tenor of this study is directed toward the feasibility of centralized assignments from Washington rather than the existing system which is to be described in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II
THE PROCESS OF PROCUREMENT AND ASSIGNMENT
OF AIR FORCE OFFICERS

In order to prevent chaos and duplication of effort in the officer procurement and assignment program, USAF Headquarters and to a lesser extent the Major Commands have laid down certain basic policies as to procedural ritual. These procedures are considered by many to be too involved and time consuming in regulating the personnel functions. It is necessary to present these methods and regulations as laid down by Washington in order to receive an appreciation of the problems effecting the individual personnel officers.

Before entering into a discussion of what these personnel regulations entail, it is necessary to present a basic organizational chart of the Air Force so that lines of command and authority may be definitely established in the reader's mind. The following organizational chart indicates the functional sub-divisions of Headquarters USAF. The seven Major Commands which are indicated on this chart are co-equals both in authority and responsibility.

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



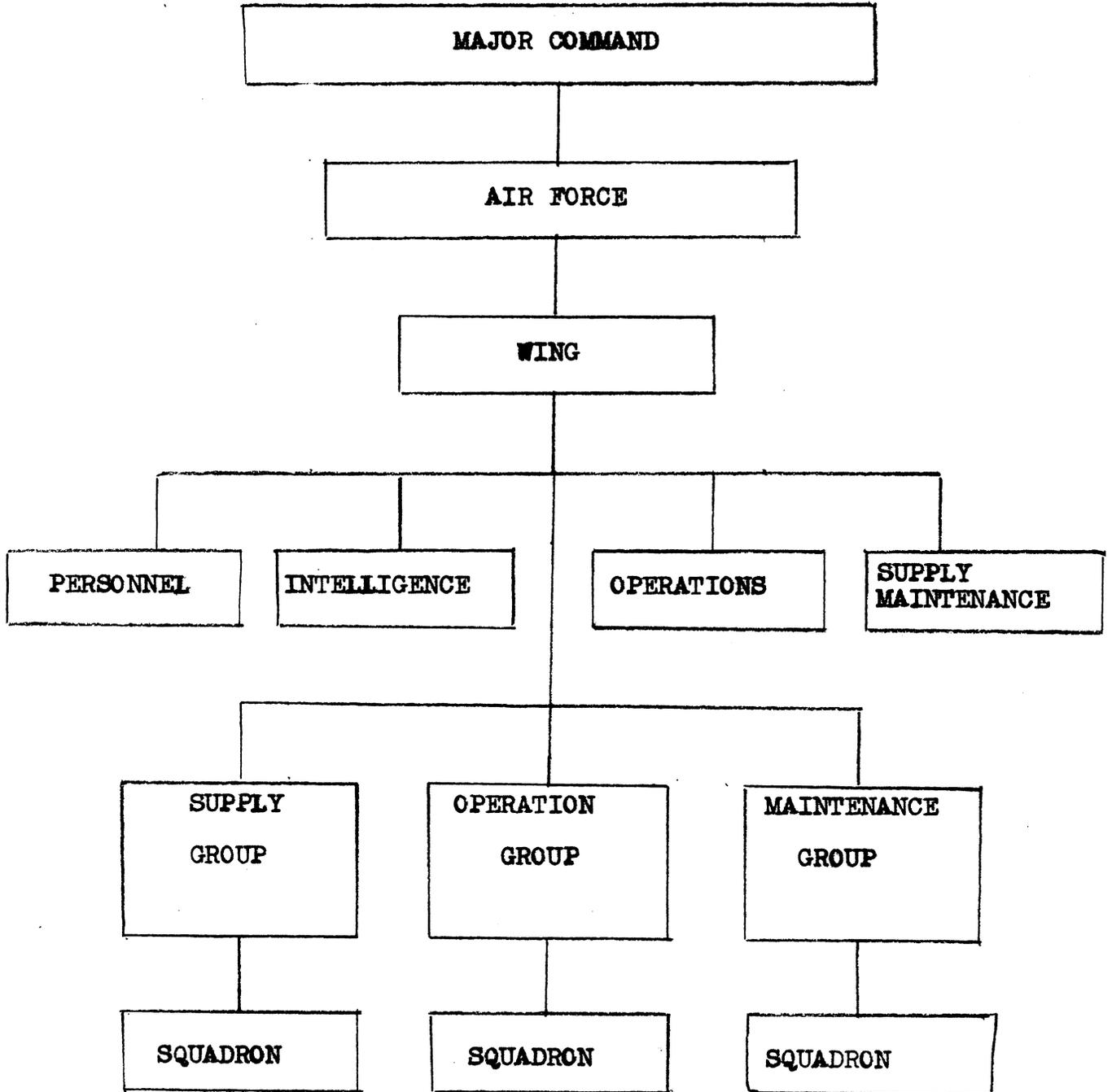
Missions of the Seven Co-Equal United States

Air Force Commands

1. Military Air Transport Service.--To transport men and materials throughout the world.
2. Air Training Command.--To provide basic training in the general and specific skills required.
3. Air University.--To provide an advanced form of training in military and related specialized subjects.
4. Continental Air Command.--To provide sufficient tactical and non tactical support so as to protect adequately the United States.
5. Headquarters Command.--To supervise the numerous miscellaneous functions existing in the Washington D.C. area.
6. Strategic Air Command.--To provide a long range striking force to protect the United States and its possessions.
7. Air Materiel Command.--To provide supervision and control over procurement, research, supply, and maintenance functions.
8. Special Weapons Command.--To provide supervision and control over research facilities for the development of special weapons.

The following organizational chart indicates a normal organizational structure that might be found to be existing within any of the above listed Major Commands.

ORGANIZATION CHART OF A TYPICAL AIR FORCE COMMAND



Each group has at least one squadron.

The Process of Determination of Officer Authorization and Procurement

The material covered in the following section is not a specific policy of any one Major Command but rather is a general policy which the Major Commands attempt to follow. A great deal of study has gone into the amount of men and equipment that the standard operational unit requires to complete its mission. These studies have resulted in the establishment of a personnel and equipment authorization called "Table of Organization and Equipment" for the various types of operational units. The various operational units have been standardized as to type and amounts of equipment, and numbers and types of personnel authorized. These personnel allotments are further broken down into specific types of military occupational specialties along with designated ratings of the officers and enlisted men concerned. To illustrate this point let us turn to the following example.

A jet fighter squadron according to its table of organization will consist of 15 jet planes, 25 officers and 100 enlisted men. The ranks, positions and military occupational specialty titles will all be included in the table of organization, so that a complete separate organization chart broken down by functions exists for each type of operational unit. Of course, there are many different types of operational units such as light bomber, heavy bomber, reconnaissance, etc., but within each standard operational grouping the organizational allotment for men and equipment is definitely fixed.

These tables of organization and equipment for the

standard operational units are established and published by Headquarters, Washington. It is very difficult for any unit individually to bring about a change in these authorizations, for all changes must be approved by Washington after a study of the justification presented. The concerted efforts of many different units will in all probability bring about a new Table of Organization and Equipment for the combined opinion would indicate the obsolescence of the older plan of organization.

The operational units are not operationally self sufficient from other than a tactical standpoint, for they must be housed, fed, and maintained. In order to keep a unit operational there must exist an additional authorization of personnel. This authorization is called Table of Distribution Augmentation and includes a similar breakdown of officer, enlisted and civilian personnel into the various duties and ranks required for the purpose of performing housekeeping activities for the operational unit.

The next problem is how is this manpower authorization determined and by whom? In the first place Congress ultimately determines the officer, enlisted, and civilian strength of the Air Force. Thus Headquarters, Washington, has a definite manpower pool to apportion among the various Major Commands. This apportionment by Headquarters, Washington to the Major Commands is determined by the following factors.

1. Mission of the Major Commands
2. The importance of projects existing in the Major

Commands

3. The overall planning strategy
4. Past commitments

The Major Command is then given sufficient personnel to fill all the Tables of Organization of the units under its command along with personnel to fill the unit's Table of Distribution Augmentation as determined by the aforementioned factors. The Major Command thus has a manpower source over and above the Table of Organization that it must redistribute among the individual bases within its jurisdiction. In the large majority of the Major Commands a manpower survey team visits the bases and conducts a job survey to determine just what positions and manpower are required. The bases attempt to justify as large a force as they can so that they may successfully complete their mission with the least friction. The quota for the Table of Distribution Augmentation as given to the Major Commands by Washington does not allow all the personnel that the Major Commands' bases might require so there must be some method of allotting this service personnel within the Command. The following factors are usually considered:

1. The results of the manpower survey
2. The type of unit that it maintains (Heavy bomb group would be given larger allotments than a fighter squadron)
3. The location and condition of the individual base (Bases in Alaska are allotted additional personnel because of the operating conditions)

4. Importance of the individual units (Bases conducting research might be allotted additional personnel)

The quota of personnel assigned any base under the Table of Distribution Augmentation can be and is often changed by the action of the Major Command. For example, if a heavy bomber wing was transferred to a base to replace a fighter wing a great deal more personnel would be involved which would call for more personnel to maintain them. In this instance, the base would apply for an increase in its Table of Distribution Augmentation and would readily receive a new quota. The Major Command would then have to locate surplus personnel and assign them where needed.

The allotment by the Major Command is not the last step in the allotment process for the individual base commanders must then allot the personnel assigned through the Table of Distribution Augmentation to the various groups within the base. The group commander then follows a similar allotment procedure to man his various squadrons. The base commander is given quite a bit of leeway in his allotment of personnel within his command. The approval of the Major Command has to be secured after the allotment is made, and further changes are also to be approved, but the Major Commands allow a great deal of freedom of selection by the Base Commander in this instance.

To summarize briefly, each individual base has a Table of Organization and Equipment specifying a certain authorization for its operational unit which is fixed and also a Table

of Distribution Augmentation which is an added authorization to maintain the operational unit. Thus we have a series of authorized openings to be filled in a base organization as authorized by the Table of Organization and the Table of Distribution Augmentation. This is called authorized personnel requirements and includes the number, specialties, and ranks of the officers required to operate and maintain a unit.

The next step is to determine how and from where these authorized positions are filled. Each base is required to submit quarterly a concise report containing the following elements to its Major Command.

1. Number of personnel authorized under its Table of Organization and Equipment and Table of Distribution Augmentation broken down into occupational specialties and ratings.
2. The numbers of personnel holding the authorized positions broken down as to military occupational specialties and ratings.
3. The number of personnel on a non-duty status including hospitals, confined to quarters, sick leave, temporary duty elsewhere, completing schooling, etc.
4. The shortages, if any, in any authorized position and the military specialty number and the rating required to fill this position.
5. Future needs, if any, as determined by advance planning.

The Major Commands can thus plot the status of authorized against non-authorized personnel within its jurisdiction. This report serves the valuable function of allowing the Major Commands to keep an up-to-date card index file on the assignment status of each officer within its jurisdiction along with the overages and requirements of its bases.

The Major Command can determine shortages and future requirements through a careful study of this report. It then combines the reports of its various bases and sends a consolidated report to Headquarters, Washington. Headquarters, Washington has a consolidated report from each command and can combine them into one overall Air Force wide evaluation of personnel shortages and requirements.

The above mentioned report is not utilized specifically to requisition future personnel needs but rather to determine future planning requirements. A separate form submitted monthly to the Major Commands is used to requisition officer personnel. The base personnel section must determine three months in advance its officer requirements for the future. In other words, a request is placed three months before there is actual need for the officer. A base personnel section must consider overseas shipments, school quotas, temporary duty to other bases, reserve officer's tours being completed and other potential losses in future personnel. The personnel section must coordinate future personnel requirements with future personnel authorizations and determine requirements broken down into officer specializations, numbers and ratings. This report is submitted directly to the Major Command monthly by

the base personnel section with the base commanding officer's approval. The Major Command attempts to transfer officers within its command to fill these authorized vacancies. A revised list of requirements is then forwarded to Washington as a consolidated request for personnel from the command. Headquarters, Washington receives consolidated reports from the Major Commands defining the personnel requirements Air Force wide. From this report Washington is able to plan the necessary transfers to fill the projected future requirements. To insure proper planning and flow of personnel a card index similiar to the one maintained at Major Commands is maintained at Washington. This index file records the following information on each officer.

1. The military occupational specialties in which the officer is qualified.
2. The different duty positions the officer has held.
3. The semi-annual ratings received in each duty status.
4. The various training schools the officer has attended and his class standing.
5. The amount of overseas service and his date of last return.
6. Any distinguished service, awards, citations
7. A brief career history of each officer.

With the forementioned all inclusive information, Headquarters Air Force is able to fill specific individual requirements by offsetting individual available officers with

the needs of each command and base. The decisions as to how and from where to fill the personnel requirements rests entirely with Washington, for only Washington has any idea of the surplus available officer personnel. Washington receives very similar reports from many reporting agencies indicating the numbers and types of available officers. The following are the important sources of personnel available for re-assignment.

1. Returns from overseas service - Officers return to replacement centers from which they are re-assigned to fill authorized vacancies.
2. Student trainees graduates such as Air University and Air Training Command graduates, also graduates of the Civilian Institution program.
3. Recently integrated officers such as - Service Academies, Air R.O.T.C., Air Cadets and Officer Candidates Schools.
4. Patients released from general hospitals.
5. Reserve officers reverting from civilian to active status.

Washington thus has a vast reserve against which they can draw to fill the requirements of the many bases. The procedure usually followed is for Washington to allot the officers to the authorized openings as required. For example, let us say their records indicate Hamilton Air Force Base requires a supply officer, an operations officer and a doctor. Washington's records indicate that three officers of the required specializations have just returned from overseas

service and are now located at the replacement center at Newark, New Jersey. Washington will order the base commander at Newark to publish orders transferring these officers to Hamilton Air Force Base in their primary military occupational specialty. The Base Commander at Newark Air Force Base will then publish the necessary orders to send the men to Hamilton. Usually two weeks leeway is allowed so that the officer will arrive at least two weeks before a vacancy occurs. This two week period is utilized to acquaint the replacement with his duties and also to allow him to settle in the community. The commanding officer at Newark will send a copy of the orders to Hamilton as soon as they are published so Hamilton will know a replacement is on the way and will not have to request a similar replacement in the next monthly report. This procedure is followed because the officer usually take annual leave in the period before reassignment and does not report directly to his newly assigned base.

In making the assignments of officers to fill authorized vacancies Washington must not only consider the qualifications of the individual officer, but also the travel expenses incurred in a trip of the magnitude mentioned in the above example. It must balance one factor against another and attempt to fill all vacancies in authorizations before the expiration date. This necessitates a rather complete and rigid reporting system to keep Headquarters, Washington informed on the available manpower. A particular unit of the personnel office in Washington receives all requests for

manpower as well as the lists of available manpower. It is this section's problem to place adequately the twenty-five thousand officers that are reassigned annually.

The Process of Officer Assignment at the Base Level

The base personnel section is advised usually a month in advance of the officer's reporting date. It will receive a copy of the order directing the officer to report which will carry the following information:

1. Name, rank and serial number
2. Reporting date
3. Regular or reserve officer
4. Flying or non-flying
5. Military occupational specialty
6. Date of return from overseas
7. Color

This information is invaluable for use in determining to just what duty within the base the officer shall be assigned. It must be recalled that usually an officer has several military occupational specialties one of which is designated primary, but often the primary military occupational specialty is not required in reassignment. The officer is then transferred in a secondary military occupational specialty for which there is a demand. For example, the author of this study has the following military occupational specialties:

1. Operations and training staff officer (Primary)
2. Staff intelligence officer (Secondary)

3. Staff personnel officer (Secondary)
4. Staff administrative officer (Secondary)
5. Flying specialty (Secondary)

This means he could be transferred and assigned in any one of the five occupational specialties in which he was at one time or another qualified to perform. The mere fact that they are listed on his records indicates that he is currently capable of performing the indicated duties. This is often not true because an officer might not be assigned in one of his occupational specialties for a period of many years. Therefore, it is possible for a base to receive a replacement who is no longer qualified to perform a certain duty specialty. The regulations provide that if an officer feels he is not qualified in any one of his occupational specialties he may request a de-classification board to remove specific occupational specialties from his records. There are no repercussions from these requests, for officers are encouraged to ask for de-classification if the situation warrants the procedure. It should be evident from the foregoing that many officers are transferred with little present knowledge of what the duties of one of their secondary occupational specialties entails.

The usual procedure is for the personnel officer to tentatively assign each officer to an authorized vacancy as the transfer order arrives at the new base. With the arrival of the replacement the personnel officer usually holds an informal conference with the replacement and determines if he is qualified to fill the authorized position to which he was

transferred. This interrogation usually reverts to simple questions regarding the replacement's background and his ability to fill the authorized position. It is usually accompanied by a study of the replacement's service record which is forwarded to the new base. The following information is available to the personnel section from the service records.

1. Types of duties performed in the past
2. Ratings received in each duty
3. Commendations received
4. Disciplinary action received (if any)
5. Listing of military occupational specialties
6. Complete history of individual officer service

The personnel officer usually assigns the replacement in the military occupational specialty in which he was transferred, unless the replacement officer states that he is no longer qualified in that specialty. The personnel assignment officer must guard against reassigned officers disliking certain specialized duties and stating that they are no longer qualified in a certain specialty. In this case the personnel officer should remove the occupational specialty from the officer's service record. Many officers make a habit of collecting occupational specialties so periodically they must undergo de-classification to insure qualification in their remaining specialties. Every consideration is given to the officer in this regard, and if he can prove qualification in each of his specialties, de-classification proceedings are not undertaken.

Often the personnel assignment officer receives a replacement who has what is known as a critical occupational specialty. This means that there is a critical shortage of some certain specialties as determined by Headquarters USAF. Headquarters publishes a list periodically, and if an officer has any one of these occupational specialties listed on his record, he is to be assigned to that type of duty. For example, if an officer replacement was assigned to Mather Air Force Base in his primary occupational specialty of general supply officer, and a study of his records indicated he had a critical occupational specialty of Radar Officer he would be assigned in the Radar Authorization even though transferred to occupy a supply officer authorization.

A personnel officer must therefore use discretion in the assignment of individual officers, for according to regulations the only replacements that have to be assigned in the occupational specialty listed on their transfer orders are the following:

1. When the transfer specialty is a critical one.
2. Graduates of a flying training school must serve in that capacity for 12 months following graduation.
3. Graduates of specialized schools such as armament, transportation, budget and fiscal, etc. must serve in that capacity for 12 months following graduation.
4. Certain specific skills assigned and controlled directly by Washington.

It is possible then for the personnel officer to assign an officer to an entirely different duty than the one for which he was transferred to the base. The general rule is, however, to assign an officer in his transferred occupational specialty unless he is qualified to fill a more critical position in the unit. The commanding officer must be allowed some discretion in the assignment process, for it is he who is held responsible for the performance of the base's mission. He may use his own judgment in the entire assignment process with the few exceptions listed. He can transfer at will officers to and from the various duties within his own organization with the exception of those officers who have had special training or occupy a critical specialty as mentioned above. In fact, often it is necessary to completely re-shuffle the duty assignments of the various officers within a base to find certain skills required for vacated authorizations. Officers with past experience in the required specialties are transferred to the vacated positions, and on the job training is undertaken to serve as a stop gap until qualified personnel may be secured. The base commander will find it fairly easy to receive permission to carry out radical shifts of personnel during periods of stress. The higher commands are in close contact with the personnel problems of the individual bases under its command and will readily approve any legitimate personnel requests by the base commanders. Any changes in status not requested by higher headquarters must be reported to the Major Commands so that their records may be kept up to date

and the necessary authorization given in each instance. The Major Commands then consolidate these changes from its several bases and report to Washington the status of consolidated changes. Washington may then adjust its records to record any personnel shuffling carried on at the base level.

Prerogatives of the Major Commands in the Assignment Process

In the preceding section it was indicated that it is often necessary to shift the officer personnel within a base to fill any vacancies that might occur, but one may appreciate the fact that on a single base certain skills may be difficult to find. It is for this reason that the Major Commands have the authorization to assign and reassign officers of all elements under their jurisdiction subject to the limitation set forth below.

1. The approval of Washington must be obtained for permanent change of station for officers who have less than twelve months to serve prior to separation or who have served less than eighteen months at their present station. Such requests will be approved for cogent military reason and will include the following information:
 - a. Occupational specialty of proposed assignment
 - b. Occupational specialty of present assignment and source of replacement
 - c. Statement that no officer in the command

with longer service at present station is qualified or potentially qualified to fill the new assignment

2. The limitation does not apply when reassignment is for the following reasons:
 - a. Separation
 - b. Overseas service
 - c. Duty with civilian components or civilian educational institutions
 - d. Unit movement, inactivation of station or hospitalization

This limitation does not act to limit the tour of duty in the zone of interior to eighteen months. It is the policy of the USAF to keep officers at one station as long as possible consistent with career planning and overseas requirements. Commander should further the military education of officers by rotation of duties within commands at the same station. Washington looks with disfavor upon numerous changes of station within the command; rather, it feels that the utilization of the Air Force schools system and on the job training programs should solve the greater majority of the problems at the base level.

A base commander should always attempt to secure his future required personnel from his Major Commands because of the familiarity of duties and techniques utilized within any one command. When the base personnel section sends its monthly requests for personnel to the Major Command, it is done with the idea of the Major Command fill-

ing whatever requirements it can within its own organization. For example, if Craig Air Force Base requests a Communication officer and the Major Commands records indicate Maxwell Air Force Base, another of its units, has a communications officer over and above its authorization, the Major Command will transfer this officer to Craig and delete the request for a communications officer when the commands consolidated request is forwarded to Washington.

This system whereby a Major Command has the authority to assign officers among its bases decreases the personnel work load carried by Washington. It also is less expensive from a travel standpoint to reassign men within the same command, for usually a Major Command's bases are concentrated in a limited area.

In briefly summarizing the procurement and assignment process as established by regulation, it is evident that a lack of pertinent regulations in the personnel process allow for haphazard procedures of assignment. Of course, there are a few specific and general regulations, but on the whole a great deal of discretion is left to the Major Commands as to the actual procedures used. For this reason there exists a hodgepodge of different interpretations of the general rules and regulations established by Washington. It is apparent that Washington desires a certain amount of information and as long as it gets that information the Major Commands may regulate their own affairs within reason. This, of course, creates a problem of confusion for the personnel officer when transferring from command to

command, for he must learn entirely new techniques and interpretations when specific techniques could be common to all commands. Of course, you might consider this elasticity necessary because of the different missions and problems effecting all commands, but more specific provisions for both procurement and assignment of officers would provide for a superior system of overall control of delegation of authority and responsibility.

CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY A BASE COMMANDER IN THE PERSONNEL PROCESS

The personnel problem is one of the most difficult problems confronting the USAF at the present time. These problems extend all the way from those encountered at Headquarters, Washington to those encountered by its smallest unit. Outsiders often ask why the military services should have the many and varied personnel problems it encounters. The problem exists because of the peculiarities of the service with its many and varied positions an officer can hold other than active in his specialty at a base. It has been estimated that in order for a base to function it must have at least twenty-five per cent more officers than it would require if the officers had just to perform their normal duties. The point expressed here is that a base is required to assign officers to non-contributory duties. These duties involve performance of activities outside of the normal scope of the base function. The following is a partial list of where a base's officers might be at any one time.

1. Active duty performing the job assigned
2. Leave status - Since 30 days annual leave is granted one twelfth of the officers are on the average not present for duty.
3. School status - It has been conservatively est-

imated that 10 per cent of a base's authorization is on temporary duty away from the base attending school.

4. Hospital - Free hospital care and unlimited sick leave contribute to keeping an ample force in the hospital.
5. Detached service or temporary duty - This is usually away from the home base performing some specific duty other than normal as directed by higher Headquarters.
6. On the base training programs - This involves general training during working hours such as chemical warfare, physical training, etc.
7. Flying - Rated officers usually hold ground jobs, but they must also maintain their flying proficiency. This involves flying missions and completing ground training which often interferes with their assigned duties.
8. The miscellaneous non duty status - These are jobs given temporarily on the base such as inventory officer, courts officer, officer of the day, etc. They normally are of a very short duration.
9. The pipeline - This is one of the greatest potential wastes of manpower. It has been estimated that 15 to 20 per cent of the officers are constantly in the pipeline which involves the following:

- a. Waiting for reassignment on a base or a reception center
- b. Traveling to or from a duty station including schools
- c. Temporary jobs for officers about to be separated or retired.

It must be clearly evident that an officer may be legally many places besides present for duty. To illustrate this point the following figures were taken from the February 1, 1950 statistical report of a well known Air Base.

Officers assigned	800	
Officers present for duty	628	This figure does not indicate how many officers were on flying proficiency trips, performing miscellaneous duty or detailed to on the job training programs.
Temporary Duty and Detached Service	117	This figure is not broken down, but the large majority are school students away from the base.
Hospital	10	
Confinement	1	Disciplinary action
Leave	44	

A thorough study of this daily statistical report indicates that on the average 15 per cent of the officers were assigned temporary duty or detached service away from

the base itself. The figure 628 given as present for duty simple means that many officers are available for duty if not performing the many other varied duties enumerated above. A conservative estimate would be about 575 officers were actually performing their stated duties on this particular day for which the figures were available. These figures further indicate that since about 575 officers were actually present performing their prescribed duties and 628 were available to perform these prescribed duties, about 125% of those officers present for duty or 140% of those available for duty must be authorized to a base in order to provide sufficient strength to perform the base's mission. This is necessary because the base's mission often includes these non-duty assignments which must be allotted to the bases by Washington. These figures are utilized to indicate the tremendous planning problem the base personnel officer has in allotting the personnel to the duty positions. He not only has to fill and keep filled the numerous authorized positions on his base, but he must coordinate his assignments with a constantly changing force of approximately twenty per cent of his total assigned officers. The reader should not receive the impression from the foregoing example that there are actually eight hundred job openings on this aforementioned base, but rather there could be from five to seven hundred duty openings all of which may or may not be filled. There might actually be an excessive number of officers resulting from certain sections having more officers present than required. These overages are often made up of

newly commissioned officers who have little knowledge of duties other than flying. The personnel officer will usually tap this available source first in making temporary duty assignments. The remaining officers would then divide the work among themselves until the temporary duty officer returned to active duty. The purpose of the study at this point is to impress the reader of the tremendous amount of planning and shifting involved in the personnel section's mission to keep the proper specialties in definite duty positions and at the same time provide personnel for numerous off the base functions.

In order to point out specific individual problems of the assignment officer, it is necessary to present the most pressing difficulties encountered by the personnel section in their assignment process.

The Effect of School Quotas

It is the mission of the peacetime Air Force to train its officers for possible future wars. In order to accomplish this mission officers have to be trained through the following media.

On the job training

General staff schools

On the base general training courses

Civilian institutions

Specialty schools

Let us now examine briefly how each of these training processes effects the assignment activity.

On the job training.--This program offers no problem to the assignment officer for it actually aids him in filling required vacancies. Through on the job training a non-qualified officer can become qualified in a certain occupational specialty and after successful completion of two months of service in that specialty be permanently assigned to that duty status. It serves as a relief valve in the event that Headquarters cannot find an adequate replacement. An officer may then be assigned to train in a specialty and when he indicates sufficient proficiency in his new assignment, he is awarded the occupational specialty. However, an officer cannot possibly be proficient in a specialty with simply two months service. He, therefore, should not be assigned elsewhere on the basis of this abbreviated training. This unfortunately is often the case, however.

General staff schools.--Regular officers are required to attend these three schools at different times during their career. It does involve rigid planning on the personnel officer's part, but usually several months notice is given to the base personnel office that a certain quota of officers are to be selected for attendance. The personnel section is usually allowed wide discretion in selection of these officers. The officers are returned to the base at the completion of the courses. During their absences (which may vary from 4 to 10 months) other officers are placed in the vacated positions, if available. If there are no surplus officers available, then the duty staff must double up to carry on the activities.

On the base general training courses.--They usually

involve a directive from a higher command requesting that all officer personnel be trained in some minor phase such as first aid, decompression chamber, or similiar simple training. This involves training during duty hours but has very little effect on the assignment process for all the officers take the course at the same time for a few hours weekly.

Civilian institutions.--This does not involve a mandatory quota but is a voluntary request on the part of the individual officers. If selected for this type of training, the officer will be lost to the base and will be re-assigned elsewhere upon completion of his training. The assignment officer must be well informed as to the existence of these requests and the final action taken by Washington. Usually the personnel section is notified as to definite selection many months before reassignment date. This allows sufficient time to request and train a replacement for the position.

Specialty schools.--This is the type of training that brings forth the greatest problems to the assignment officer. To understand the problems encountered you must understand the procedures involved. The Air Force maintains probably forty or fifty officer specialization schools which train students for anything from mess supervisors to comptrollers. Headquarters, Washington decides through a planning board just what its requirements will be in each of these fields of specialization. A yearly quota is set up in line with its overall mission and commands requirements.

These quotas are then sub-alloted to each of the Major Commands as a mandatory quota. The amount of the quota allotted depends upon the planned needs of the commands. The Major Command then allots a definite quota to each base within its jurisdiction. The quotas are supposed to be allotted on a basis of future authorized requirements of each Major Command and within the commands to each base. The figures arrived at for the quotas are usually too high in light of the required future openings with the result that the graduates are difficult to assign. Regulations require assignment for a year after graduation but because of the numbers involved many of these trainees are declared surplus.

In reality the situation amounts to this; some schools are considered extremely desirable assignments, and the bases and commands have no difficulty filling the quotas. This is because officers request attendance before a mandatory quota is sent to a base. The Air Force allows all officers to volunteer for all training courses within the Air Force. This means there is no need for a mandatory quota for certain types of schools. On the other hand, some schools are considered extremely undesirable assignments so very few officers request assignment and mandatory quotas must be assigned to the Major Commands and thence to the individual bases.

The typical order received by the base ordering schooling contains the following information:

1. Name of school
2. Reporting date - Usually within 30 days
3. Qualifications necessary - Usually at a minimum

in mandatory quotas

4. Duration of course - If the course is over 20 weeks, the officer will be reassigned elsewhere upon completion of course.

It is the policy of the Air Force to first ask for volunteers before assigning anyone to a specific quota. The base personnel office must then publish a request for volunteers who normally are difficult to find. If no volunteers are available, the personnel office then studies the service records to determine the officers with the proper qualifications. A list of eligible officers is compiled, and a decision is made concerning eligibility in conjunction with the prospective assignees' superior officer. It usually boils down to the selection of the least desired officer on the base being selected for the training. These same men often become perpetual students from the standpoint that somebody has to be trained so the best solution from the base's standpoint is to select the officer who contributes least to the overall mission. These officers soon acquire the name of quota fillers. I had the opportunity to observe the same officers returning for entirely different specialized training because they did not fit into their command's assignment process so they were reassigned to fill mandatory quotas.

To indicate the seriousness of the problem let me use an example that was called to my attention regarding a mandatory training quota for a helicopter pilot, a transportation officer, and a radar observer. There was an

average of thirty days allowed to select the prospective students, train their replacements and send them to the three schools located throughout the United States. A call was made for volunteers, but after three days of fruitless waiting, the personnel section compiled a list of eligible officers and decided to pick one from each of the three groups to fill each vacancy. The group commanding officer selected and forwarded to the personnel section the name of an officer in each case who was considered to be one of the poorer officers in the group organization. The personnel section could do nothing but forward the three names submitted to the command as its contribution toward the mandatory quota. The three officers were assigned to these respective schools by the command, and the results of the training program were as follows:

1. Since the radar observers course was over twenty weeks it was a permanent change of station. This enabled the personnel officer to request immediately a suitable replacement since the officer would not return to his original base.
2. The helicopter pilot returned after ten weeks training, but no authorization existed for a helicopter pilot on this particular base so he had to be declared surplus and he later was transferred to another base.
3. The transportation officer returned after 12 weeks training, but there was no opening for the base was only authorized two transportation officers,

and they already had two previous graduates of the same school occupying these positions. This officer was also declared surplus for he could only be utilized in a transportation capacity for one year after returning from school. This officer after a prolonged waiting period was subsequently transferred to another base.

It must be recalled that a school program of under twenty weeks duration calls for temporary duty status. Officers on temporary duty status always return to the home base, so a request for a replacement is not justified even though they are present on the base for duty. The foregoing examples are not uncommon experiences for the base personnel office, but as a matter of fact this practice occurs with ever increasing frequency in conjunction with the mandatory school quotas.

We must now turn our attention to the manner in which the personnel section conducts its planning so as to lessen the effects of the mandatory quota system.

1. Requesting the Major Commands to give as much notice as possible in the case of mandatory quotas so that adequate selective machinery may be set in motion.
2. Requesting the Major Commands to allot the quotas only after a preliminary investigation as to each base's immediate requirements.
3. A long range planning program aimed at informing the bases just how many of its officers shall be

assigned to each school quota during the next fiscal year.

4. The practice of giving complete publication to all schools quotas explaining the inherent advantages of attendance so that the quotas may be filled with volunteer officers.
5. As a last resort the mandatory selection of officers whose loss would least effect the mission of the base but with the definite possibilities of a future opening for the trainee.

Any of the above mentioned steps will provide an adequate flow of replacements to the service schools, but since school quota planning is often accomplished in a haphazard manner without adequately weighing the future needs, it is the usual procedure for the base to provide "a warm body". This has a detrimental effect on the whole educational system of the Air Force and results in a poor quality specialist in the least desirable fields.

The Effect of Overseas Assignments

It is necessary because of world commitments to station between a third and a half of the Air Force officer strength outside the continental United States. This is accomplished through tours of duty varying from 18 months to three years depending upon the location of assignment. This variation of time element exists because of the varying degrees of desirability of the overseas locations.

The quotas are determined by Washington who in turn allot a mandatory quota to the Major Commands. The Major

Commands select the officers by name from among the total force within the commands. Selection is made on the following basis in their order of importance:

1. Date of return from last overseas tour
2. Military occupational specialty
3. Length of time reserve officer has remaining on current tour
4. Rank of officer

In other words the Major Commands will have orders to reassign so many officers of named rank in definite occupational specialties. The amount of the quota depends upon the Command's officer strength. The Major Command will then go through its files and compile a list of the eligible officers. A selection is then made on the basis of which eligible officers have the least overseas service. The selected names are then forwarded to the individual bases for reassignment. An advance notice of from 30 to 90 days is usually given the base personnel section so a request for a replacement may be initiated. In other words, the base personnel section has no idea who will be selected for overseas assignment until the notice arrives from the Major Command. The Major Command will often select officers who are holding down a critical occupational specialty for reassignment with only thirty days prior notice. Since the procurement process involves a period of about two months the base will often just have to go without the services of one of its most important job authorizations. Little or no consideration is given by the Major Command to a possible

replacement for the officer concerned or as to the advisability of taking a similiarly specialized officer from one of its many bases.

The personnel section is thus faced with irregular periodic requests for officers by name. Under normal circumstances this request is mandatory and has to be filled by the office named. This involves a constantly changing planning process for overseas shipments which are usually irregular in numbers and nature. The following are some of the tactics utilized by the personnel section to lessen the effects of overseas shipments on the assignment process:

1. By keeping the base informed as to the relative overseas standing of the various specialties required, this information may be approximated by the personnel section.
2. When the personnel section knows an officer is about to be assigned for overseas duty, a replacement shall be trained and made available through on the job training. This planning is often thrown amiss by the success of some officers who manage to serve a minimum of overseas service.
3. A planning program in conjunction with its Major Command in which a priority system of officers is set up so as not to conflict with the base's mission.
4. In cases that would cause undue hardships a written appeal to the Major Command might bring

a revocation of the assignment order temporarily until a replacement may be trained.

Overseas shipments are a necessary drain on a base's officer strength, but a much more comprehensive system of planning for selection should be established. There is no reason to reassign an officer occupying an occupational specialty who cannot be replaced within the command. It should be evident that no officer should be ordered to an overseas assignment until an adequate replacement is present to assume his duties.

The Effect of the Assignment of Non-Qualified Officers

The Air Force is a large organization; it has nearly sixty thousand officers who range in competence from poor to superior. The statistics available indicate that 42% of the regular officers are college graduates while among the reserve officers the percentage is close to 20%.¹ The educational background of an officer is very important, for it often aids him in understanding and mastering the many varied skills necessary to efficiently man an Air Force. Each officer has one or more military occupational specialties either obtained through a definite training school or by the completion of sixty days of on the job training and certification by a superior officer. The completion of a course at an Air Force training school usually qualifies an officer to perform the indicated duty, and little difficulty is experienced with this type of training in the assignment process. There is a great deal of sub-standard work by the officers who received their

¹Air Force Times, March 4, 1950, P. 11.

with the remark that his record says he is qualified. The officer concerned will usually fail to reject any duty assignment for fear it might be a reflection on his competence. The result is usually the frustrated officer vainly attempts to perform his duties, but he accomplishes such poor results that he is declared surplus to the base and transferred elsewhere in the same occupational specialty once again to start the same cycle.

At this point something should be mentioned regarding the time required for Washington to fill the monthly requests for replacements. This time varies from a few days to an indefinite period depending upon the criticalness of the occupational specialty. This is one of the reasons that compromise assignments are often necessary in the base personnel section.

The tasks in a modern Air Force are so specialized that an officer cannot possibly be competent in more than three occupational specialties, while many officers service records indicate a competence in over ten occupational specialties. This certainly is the result of poor planning and classification procedures, and a solution must be developed to determine adequate competency in occupational specialties. The following are some of the methods utilized by the base personnel section to prevent assignment of non-qualified officers:

1. Investigation of the qualifications of every officer assigned in other than his primary

occupational specialty.

2. Personal interviews with newly assigned officers in an attempt to evaluate fitness for specialized duties.
3. Reassignment of officers who are definitely not qualified in their transferred specialty.
4. Periodic evaluations of borderline cases of possible malassignment by conferring with the superiors involved.
5. Continued efforts toward narrower specialized assignments rather than generalized assignments in many specialties.

The problem cannot be solved at the base level but rather must stem from a decision at the top level of the Air Force Hierarchy. The base can only begin to attempt to solve this problem and then only from the standpoint of lessening the difficulties, not solving them.

The Effect of the Instability of the Status of the Reserve Officer upon Assignments

Approximately two thirds of the Air Force's officer strength is composed of reserve officers. Many of these officers have served through two wars and are still on active duty. Over fifty per cent of the reserve officers on active duty served in World War II. Many have outstanding service records and could adequately undertake either a military or civilian career. There is a necessity to remove periodically a certain quota of these officers for budgetary reasons. The policy of the Air Force is to have

an ever ready force of officers both regular and reserve available for rapid mobilization in event of war. Peacetime periods are to be utilized as a basis for training to build up a force of reserve officers for future requirements. The present system of reserve officer training produces a force of approximately 7500 annually. These newly commissioned reserve officers are required to serve a tour of duty of three years and to then return to civilian life to be on call when required. The large mass of reserve officers who served during the war years were asked to volunteer to serve until a training program could be established to provide a steady flow of officers through the training process. This mission of training has now been accomplished, but the older reserve officers (28-38 age group) have no desire to return to inactive status. They feel that the Air Force owes them the moral obligation of continued employment. Unfortunately, the force is so large (approximately 20,000) that budgetary limitations make it prohibitive. The Air Force has thus adopted the policy of periodically selecting a certain quota of reserve officers who must be returned to inactive status and also a quota to be removed from flying status. This means that each Major Command is given an allotment for dismissal and another for grounding.

The individual officers concerned have no idea as to whom will be selected by the Major Commands for either quota. The methods of selection varies from Command to Command, and about the only common element of selection is the one of personality. Commanding officers of bases and

units often express their desires on the retention of certain reserve officers from strictly a personality viewpoint rather than an overall evaluation analysis. Reserve officers and the base concerned are given a minimum of sixty days notice as to dismissal or grounding procedures. In the event of grounding the officer may be allowed to revert to inactive status if he objects to the grounding procedures.

Let us look to the problems of the personnel section in each instance. From the standpoint of dismissal proceedings, the personnel section must adopt a policy of having trained replacements available for every reserve officer. This entails a great deal of planning involving cross training of regular officers out of their specialized field. Several bases have adopted the policy of not placing any reserve officer in a key position for fear of future dismissal quotas. Another factor to be considered is the reluctance of the personnel section to accept reserve officers for assignment to the command for fear of dismissal quotas or the completion of the normal tour of duty by the reserve officer. The personnel section must be ready at any time to replace a reserve officer or at least have some regular officer in mind to perform on the job training.

In regard to grounding proceedings this involves removing an officer from flying status and utilizing him in a ground capacity. This creates a tremendous problem for usually the men that are grounded have had only limited experience, if any, in a ground duty specialization. This in-

volves a surplus of officers in an untrained category along with many vacancies in specialized duties. Formal schooling or on the job training is required to acquaint the grounded officer with his new duty assignment. About the time this ground officer has completed his training course, he will be named in a dismissal quota and all his training will have been for naught.

This whole problem of reserve officers' dismissals and groundings is a costly one. From the standpoint of the morale and efficiency of the officers effected. With this constant threat of insecurity of tenure constantly hovering overhead the reserve officer can only perform at a minimum of his normal efficiency. Many cases of malselection for dismissal have been brought to my attention. It is certainly not the fault of the bases involved, and Washington is often too far removed from the scene to realize the seriousness of the situation. In order to protect the existence of the entire organized reserve program some policy definition must be set forth so that individuals will know their future status. A point system should be established in which the various factors of age, service, rank, etc. would be totaled. Then it would be possible to set date of return to inactive status on a point basis. This would place the date of return to inactive status in a determinable category and allow for improved morale and efficiency in the personnel function.

In order to bring this part to a close, it should be evident that the problems as presented are personally con-

sidered as definitely affecting not only the personnel functions of the Air Force but also the thoroughness with which the Air Force's mission is accomplished. One factor which is considered as common among most of the personnel problems effecting the personnel section of the bases is that the problems cannot be thoroughly solved at a base level. True, attempted solutions have been presented, but they are only temporary stopgap proposals which lessen the impact of the more serious malpractices. These problems will continue as long as the attempted solution is in the hands of the individual base or even the Major Command. The solution of the personnel problem is bigger than either of these two units, and its solution can only exist through a clear definition of policy and delination of authority and responsibility at Headquarters, Washington.

The prime purpose of the study thus far has been to give the reader an appreciation of the vastness of the diversions in personnel application that exists throughout the Air Force. It is my goal to achieve in the subsequent section an attempted solution to the immense problem at hand. This involves the consideration of a system of centralized personnel assignment at Headquarters, Washington.

CHAPTER IV
CENTRALIZED ASSIGNMENT OF OFFICERS

Throughout this study the reader has observed a tendency toward critical analysis of the present system of officer assignment. This is due in part to the author's distaste for duplication of functions and inefficiency of operation in any organization. It is not my belief that the source of trouble lies with individuals as such but rather to the lack of policy determination and application. The present system which entails a combination of centralized and decentralized control fails adequately to define lines of authority and responsibility. The Base Commanders are held responsible for the performance of a mission while at the same time they are adversely affected by the indeterminate-ness of the personnel system which directly effects the performance of that mission. Regulations do exist, but on the whole they are general in nature and are subject to mis-application by both the Major Commands and the individual bases. Personalities too often enter into the personnel picture with the result that poorly trained officers are retained in positions for which they are not qualified. Many bases have adequately trained staffs of personnel experts, but they are not in a position to authoritatively more than improvise local remedies for the immediate problems at hand.

The personnel system as existing today requires a complete overhaul with the reorganization process initiating directly at the top level of the hierarchy and then be allow-

ed to permeate down to the lowest operational unit. In order to effect this reorganization certain broad definitions of policy will have to be effected for Air Force wide consumption. The following initial changes of policy should be effected immediately as a prelude to centralization of assignment.

**Establishment of Broader Career Fields with Career
Specialization in These Defined Fields**

The first step in this undertaking would be to define the extent of each career field as it will exist and then assign officers to these general specialized fields for periods up to and including whole careers. To illustrate this point, let us investigate a few general fields as they exist today. At the present time the personnel field employs the following occupational specialties.

1. Military Personnel Officer
2. Civilian Personnel Officer
3. Classification and Assignment Officer
4. Personnel Staff Officer
5. Personnel Affairs Officer

The general supply field employs the following occupational military specialties.

1. General Supply Officer
2. Supply and Evacuation Staff Officer
3. Quartermaster Staff
4. Army Exchange Officer
5. Sales Officer
6. Quartermaster Supply Officer

7. Salvage and Property Disposal Officer

The five types of personnel functions should be combined into a single field of personnel. The seven types of supply functions should be combined into a single field of supply. In other words, instead of having five personnel and seven supply occupational specialties, this would broaden the fields to one general specialty of supply and one of personnel. This would be possible because of the similarity of duties and responsibilities involved in the performance within a single field. There is no necessity to divide these general broad fields into subdivisions for assignment purposes because the problems and the techniques utilized are all inclusive. A general inclusive training course would be established, and officers upon graduation would be assigned to these broad fields rather than to specialties within the field. Since the officer would spend long periods of duty in a general specialty, he would develop a general aptitude to perform any or all of the duties involved in the general field. The idea of detailed specialization functions adequately when a large force of officers are available, but wartime conditions are no longer prevalent so we must return to more generalized assignment fields.

At the present time, the Air Force utilizes about two hundred and fifty occupational specialties. Because of the restricted nature of the classification of the occupational specialties, the author does not wish to group the various categories into general fields, but some of the common general fields of specialization with the numerical designation in-

dicating the effects of generalization are as follows:

1. Personnel	5	(Present specialties in field)
2. Supply	7	
3. Procurement	5	
4. Intelligence	5	
5. Administration	7	
6. Transportation	4	
7. Police	4	
8. Food Services	3	
9. Civil Engineering	8	
10. Legal	4	

The combination of these forty-seven occupational specialties into ten general fields of specialization could be accomplished with ease because of the similiarity of duties involved within each of these fields. The above list is be no means all inclusive as to the overall number of general fields that would be established, but is rather a mere guide as to the intent of the system. Of course, there are many specialties functioning within a general field at present that could not be brought under a general category, but would have to be set up as an individual general field of specialization. This would be necessary because of the techniques and procedures peculiar to these special fields. In my opinion it would be possible to condense the present two hundred and fifty occupational specialties to about twenty-five general fields of specialization along with another fifteen singly fields of specialization characterized by individual techniques and requirements.

The value of general fields of specialization as listed above should be immediately apparent. The training requirements could immediately be consolidated along with the whole administrative process. It would no longer be necessary to maintain several separate schools for the same general fields as now exists. A standardization of procedures and records could be accomplished in light of general applicability rather than the present involved system of precise details. The mandatory quota system of replacement would not affect a base's mission to the same extent as the present because officers would more readily be available for generalized assignments. The system should allow consolidation of duties and assignment within any office so as to effect a measure of officer and monetary economy, for it would effect the combination of similar functions into a general operating field with a need for less operating personnel. It should be indicated at this point that the foregoing system is particularly applicable to a military branch in periods of peacetime when Congressional budgetary limitations enforce economy moves to preserve efficiency of operation.

Establishment of Standards of Minimum Proficiency in an Occupational Specialty

The question of whether an officer might be allowed to train in more than one field of military specialty is bound to cause varied opinions. The average officer should be allowed to hold two occupational specialties, a ground

specialty and also a flying specialty. In some instances an officer should be allowed to have more than these two indicated specialties if they are in the same general area, and if the officer is competent to carry out required duties in the three fields. The problem is to set definite standards for minimum operational requirements in the various general specialties. These standards should include minimum educational requirements, military schooling requirements, annual proficiency tests, and other pertinent material.

To qualify in any general field an officer should first have the necessary general educational background such as officer's candidate school, Cadet training or similiar courses. Then each field should have some specific military training school to acquaint the prospective student with the standard techniques of the specialty. The officer should be assigned to the general field and only transferred within that specific field. An effort should be made by the individual bases to shift officers among the various types of duties within his general field so that they might quickly become proficient in all phases of the field. In other words the various section heads would be made responsible for acquainting their staff officers with the many duties within their general field of specialization.

A definite system of correspondence courses and training manuals should be available for the student to complete his general education. The officer should be required to take frequent proficiency tests, particularly during the early years in his career so that competency in the various

phases of his generalized training in his specialized field might be recorded. When an officer has more than one general specialty field and he fails to attain a passing grade in an annual proficiency test in one of his specialty fields, he should not be allowed to perform in that specialty until he is able to successfully complete the required examination.

In the case of officers with over five years service the examination process might be discontinued unless his efficiency ratings fall below a certain minimum. In this instance, the officer will be required to pass a proficiency test or have his general specialty removed from his record. In the case of officers who fail successfully to pass the required examination in any of his general specialties the following action shall prevail:

1. An evaluation of the officer's records shall be undertaken to determine if additional training is warranted.
2. If additional training is not warranted, the officer shall be dismissed from the service in the next reduction of forces.

The chief purpose of the adoption of minimum standards is to set the point below which an officer will be of little value to the service and should be dismissed. It also would set standards of educational background and military training common to each specialty. It would abolish any system of personal consideration of individual officers by setting standards of competence required for any general field of interest.

This system of standards could not be placed in effect overnight, for even after standards were established an initial training period for all officers would be required followed by a prolonged testing period to remove the misfits from the service. This would tend to raise the overall educational standards of the officer corps in the Air Force.

Establishment of Definite Tenure for Reserve Officers

As has been previously established the reserve officer has little stability either in the assignment process or in his duty tenure. The reserve officer had thus been placed in an unenviable position of secondary importance in regards to the Air Force officer utilization program.

In order to secure an adequate flow of reserve officers in the future and to utilize their present skills, Headquarters USAF should make definite commitments as to the reserve officer's peacetime employment. The average reserve officer is aware of the fact that he will not be able to remain on active duty forever, but he does want some sort of security of tenure and an opportunity to compete on equal terms with the regular officer for job assignments. He does not want to be released from duty on the middle of a three year tour of duty because it disrupts any personal planning he might have done in the past.

The Air Force must adopt a policy of gradually reverting to inactive status the officers with a large amount of active duty service. In all probability the establish-

ment of ten years service as a maximum amount of peacetime service would probably result in a turnover sufficient to stabilize the officer strength within Congressional limits. The following might be made a standard for establishing at least limited tenure for reserve officers.

1. Limiting the amount of active peacetime service of reserve officers to ten years
2. Establishment of three year tours of active duty
 - a. A new tour would be authorized only at the pleasure of the government
 - b. No officer would revert, under normal circumstances, to the inactive status during his three year tour of duty.

The establishment of this type of policy would insure pre-planning both from the standpoint of the individual officer's personal relations and the Air Force in its master planning. The morale of the Reserve officer should certainly improve, for he would be eligible to occupy all types of positions because of his defined tenure. This would also allow for more standardized assignments during the tour of active duty.

Establishment of Three Year Tours of Duty at a Single Duty Station

It appears to the average officer that he is always on the move either to a new station or to some type of training program. The Air Force has attempted in recent

years to stabilize assignments for a period of three years. The average tour of duty of officers at an individual base probably varies from six months to two years, but it is nowhere as high as it should be. There is no longer any reason for constant shifting from base to base as was necessary during war time. With a stable force of officers operating under general assignment there is no reason the average length of tours could not be raised to about three years.

The cost of these movements should be considered if for no other reason. As recently as 1946 within a period of a year and a half the author was transferred from Spokane, Washington to San Francisco, to Orlando, Florida, to Berkeley, California and finally to Montgomery, Alabama. The cost to the government of shipping a family of four from San Francisco to the east coast amounts to about \$1500.

Stabilized assignments would cut this amount again and again from a standpoint of economies involved. We should also adopt the viewpoint that stability of assignment would cut down the administrative costs of pre-planning large and frequent personnel movements. If Washington transferred an officer to a base and all concerned knew that he would be there for at least three years, the entire problem of personnel assignment would be clarified and planning could be based on the long run outlook rather than the present short run outlook. Training programs and overseas allotments could be coordinated to such an extent that the arrival and departure of officers would be a rarity rather than the pre-

sent system of uninterrupted flow.

**Establishment of an Adequate Section of Records
in Washington**

In order to establish a system of centralized assignment, an adequate punchcard record system must be initiated and kept up to date at Headquarters, Washington. These individual officer's records should indicate the following information pertinent to assignment:

1. Military occupational specialties
2. Date of return from overseas service
3. Present assignment, location and date of transfer
4. Efficiency ratings
5. Civilian and military educational background
6. Special qualifications
7. Results of proficiency tests in specialties
8. Date of completion of reserve tour if applicable
9. Future planned assignments

The centralized assignment section would have detailed information on all the officers within the Air Force. The existence of a detailed and up-to-date system of records is not enough, for they also must be used to make the assignments necessary throughout the Air Force. An adequate records system would be a definite requirement for establishment of three years tours of duty and for planning future training and overseas duty assignments.

Establishment of a Centralized Personnel Assignment Office

In order to accomplish centralized assignments a central office must be established with adequate authority and responsibilities for the assignment function. This office must be placed high enough in the Air Force organizational structure so that it may resist adequately both internal and external pressures to assignments. I would suggest this section head be made functionally responsible to the Air Force's Director of Personnel, but his line authority and responsibility should come directly from the Chief of Staff Air Force.

The establishment of the office and the defining of the lines of authority and responsibility would be the first step in any involved process. This would entail transferring the entire assignment process to the one agency which would be the agency responsible for personnel planning and assignment throughout the Air Force. The assignment functions which had previously been divided among Washington, the Major Commands and the bases would be concentrated in a central agency in Washington. It would be this centralized agency's responsibility to determine the many and varied individual authorized officer positions required in the Air Force and then to adequately fill these positions on an individual basis. This agency would thus be required to determine the officer authorization for each base broken down as to numbers, ranks, and occupational specialties. The selection of officers to fill these positions would then

be determined in light of future training and overseas replacement requirements.

The next step would be to secure the necessary personnel to man the central personnel office. This step should be taken with greatest caution because of the critical nature of the whole operation. The personnel should be carefully screened and tested before actual appointment of the office. These selected officers who should have rather broad background in personnel problems should contact the prominent figures in the civilian personnel field for advice and guidance.

The next step would be to draw up the required regulations to put this new method of assignment in effect. They would include the previously covered material such as three year tours of duty, maintenance of operational proficiency and the other phases mentioned along with these recommendations. A detailed set of regulations would be drawn up indicating the methods of personnel assignments and the flow of authority and responsibility for the personnel function. As it has been previously stated, it should be a gradual process and not a complete overnight change. It would not be possible to centralize assignment entirely for at least three years after the plan went into operation because of the preliminary stabilization necessary.

Within the central personnel office there should exist a department which we shall call the centralized assignment unit. This department would be required to do the planning concerning the availability and allotment of the

total officer force. It would necessarily have to establish a complete system of coordination between individual bases' requirements and Congressional appropriations. It should be possible to plan requirements at least a year in advance for Congress has promised a fairly stable officer force in the future. The individual bases would draw against this total force in accordance with the importance of its mission.

To set standards of personnel performance it would be necessary to use traveling manpower evaluation teams operating from the centralized unit who would upon request investigate and determine the officer strength of every base in the Air Force. These teams would set definite working standards to apply depending upon the location and the importance of the mission of the bases. The Major Command should be removed from the personnel scene altogether but still be retained as a headquarters for all other functions.

The individual base commanders should have little authority if any over the assignment within their base. The Base Commander should be allowed to transfer within his base anyone within his occupational specialty. He should, however, be allowed to transfer within his base an officer among any one of his general occupational specialties with the approval of Washington. A Base Commander should not be allowed to even request a transfer to an occupational specialty in which the officer does not maintain proficiency. The Base Commander should be allowed to request reassignment of officers with whom he has personality conflicts, but these cases should be held to a minimum. He should be also allowed to request re-

placement of all officers who do not establish minimum proficiency requirements as determined by efficiency ratings or examinations.

The foregoing sections indicate a rough generalization of the necessary ground work to put the process of centralization of assignment into effect. We will now turn to an explanation of how the assignment system would operate.

Operation of the Centralized Assignment Process

The process of centralized assignment would necessarily involve a great deal of personnel planning. This planning should be accomplished at least one year in advance of the projected assignments. The minimum strength of the officer corps as promised by Congress would be allotted to the individual bases. The allotment would be determined by a study of the reports of the personnel evaluation teams in conjunction with the Chief of Air Staff who would determine the importance of the mission of the individual bases. Each base would be thus given an allotment broken down to consider the following factors:

1. Number of officers authorized in each occupational specialty
2. Number of officers who will have to be replaced because of termination of tours of duty. This listing will include the numbers, ranks, and military specializations of the required officers.
3. Numbers of officers who will be selected by the centralized personnel office for overseas service

or schooling during the coming year. The schooling and overseas requirements will be determined at the central office where officers will be selected for these duties by name. These names along with their occupational specialties will be checked against the base's authorization so that adequate replacements may be transferred to the bases to fill these future vacancies.

Officers would be assigned to occupy a specific vacancy at the bases concerned. This vacancy would call for an officer of specific rank and occupational specialty. It would be the duty and responsibility of the centralized personnel office to fill any vacancies which might exist in the future with an officer of specified rank and occupational specialty. The officer would be assigned to fill a vacancy in which he has had adequate training and experience. There would be no necessity to evaluate his qualifications at the base level, but rather he would be immediately assigned to the transferred specialty. The base would not be required to request any personnel, for the entire assignment process would be concentrated in Washington whose responsibility it would be to see that adequate personnel was available at all times in the required authorizations.

The assignment process should allow for two weeks overlap so that a replacement would be available two weeks before the incumbent was reassigned elsewhere. This would allow for familiarization of the assignee in his new duty status. An officer would never be transferred out of his

duty position unless a replacement was available to take over his duties.

It is now necessary to summarize briefly what has been covered regarding centralized assignment and then endeavor to explain how the centralized section will actually assign personnel. The following are the points upon which the centralized assignment process would be based.

1. Establishment of twenty-five general fields of specialization and fifteen individual fields of specialization.
2. Limitations as to the number of occupational specialties an officer can hold
3. Establishment of three year tours of duty for reserve officers
4. Establishment of three year tours of duty at one location for all officers
5. Establishment of an adequate punch card record system located in Washington
6. Publication of the necessary regulations to put the process into effect
7. Determination of a base's officer strength by setting standards of operations through the use of traveling evaluation teams
8. Establishment of the physical centralized office along with an adequate personnel staff
9. Realigning the training program to coordinate it with the needs of centralized planning
10. Removal of the Major Commands from the personnel

- picture and restrictions on the Base Commanders' personnel authority
11. Selection of trainees with regard to future authorized requirements
 12. Selection of overseas replacements on a basis of qualifications and previous overseas service
 13. Reassignment by a position authorization to occupy an authorized specific vacancy rather than mere assignment to a base
 14. Transfer of an officer out of a position only when an authorized replacement is available to immediately fill the position
 15. All assignments will be made during the summer periods (This will be adhered to as closely as possible).

The aforementioned are the more important of the factors upon which the centralized assignment process is based. The correct application of these factors to the personnel assignment problem should allow for a simple procedural system of assignments. Let us use a nearby base as an example as to the projected methods to be utilized by the centralized office in the performance of its function.

We shall say Hamilton Field has been authorized 500 officers by the traveling evaluation team. This team applied the standardized officer allotment to this field after an investigation indicated no additional requirements were necessary. This authorization was broken down to include the general and specialized fields authorized. The results are

30 general fields (personnel, supply, etc) and 4 specialized fields (mapmaker, band master, etc). The planning is now being directed in Washington toward the assignments that will be made one year hence.

A perusal of the records of the centralized unit indicates the following information concerning Hamilton Field:

1. Fifty officers' (both regular and reserve) three year tours are ending and will have to be replaced. This involves transfers of fifteen general specialties and one specialized field broken down into exact requirements.
2. The Air Force overseas quota selected independently by Washington involves seventy-five officers located at Hamilton Field. This involves transfers of eighteen general specialties and no specialized fields broken down into exact requirements.

Washington compiles the total for Hamilton Field and determines that one hundred and twenty-five officers of certain occupational specialties will have to be replaced by next July.

The next step is the consolidation of the needs of the various bases throughout the world. A final figure will in all probability amount to over ten thousand officers who must be shifted by the month of July.

Washington must then try to balance the force of available officers against the needs of the bases. The end figure will in all probability indicate that it will be nec-

essary to train a number of officers for required generalized and specialized requirements. The intervening year will be utilized to train the required personnel.

Hamilton would then in all probability receive an order to send a certain quota of its officers to prescribed schools during the coming year. Every effort would be made to train the officers required on a certain base from that base. If Hamilton is going to require personnel and supply officers, Washington should endeavor to select the students from Hamilton itself to attend the training courses. Of course, this would not always be possible, but it should be used in the selection process whenever possible. The base's total authorization would have been established with sufficient flexibility to allow for trainees so that there would be no necessity for temporary replacement while the trainees were attending school.

Washington should have the final plans laid by the start of the new year so that preliminary information could be given to the bases as to the transferees concerned along with the projected future assignments. This allows the officer involved adequate time to settle his affairs and make preliminary plans for his future assignment.

A final order would be issued during May verifying the preliminary orders. The transferred officers could then take annual leave and continue on to their new station.

The procedure as mentioned above gives the reader a general idea of how the assignment system would operate. It might seem rather simple after the preliminary steps of

duty stabilization, but when one considers the magnitude of the planning involved in shifting from ten to twenty thousand officers annually he must realize the importance of extremely close coordination between the centralized personnel office and the outlying bases.

Advantages of Centralized Personnel Assignment

1. Reduce the required personnel monitoring force by one half. The bases would no longer require a large personnel office other than an administrative officer to handle reports and records.
2. Serve as an adequate determinant of training needs rather than the haphazard system that now exists.
3. Improve the morale of the reserve officer by establishing tenure of position and allowing him to occupy key positions.
4. Take some of the personality approach out of the personnel field and substitute selection by qualifications.
5. Set a definite basis for overseas tours which would be apparent to the officer concerned.
6. Standardize the periods of reassignments to prevent duplication of efforts.
7. Removes from the service the inefficient officer through proficiency tests or efficiency ratings.
8. Provides for more efficient records through the maintenance and use of a punch card system.
9. Initiates an economy measure by reducing costly

transfers and duplication of training effort through standardization of specialties.

10. Reduces the number of specialties required to a number that allows for greater ease of planning and administration.
11. Makes sure a vacancy does not exist by only transferring an officer when a replacement is available.

Disadvantages of Centralized Personnel Assignment

1. Takes a great deal of power away from the base commander who is held responsible for the execution of the mission.
2. Centralization will only function through timely pre-planning, and this is not always possible in a governmental agency.
3. The advantages of transfers within Major Commands will be lost.
4. The centralized assignment office is too far from the scene to understand and appreciate the problems of all the bases.
5. Standardization of reassignment periods puts an undue burden on the transportation service.
6. Some of the officers would not have sufficient background to perform the duties of a general field of specialization.
7. It will be an extremely difficult process to fill about fifty thousand positions from one location without a reversion to a system of red tape with inefficient operation.

8. There will be many cases of personality clashes brought about by the Commanding officers' desires to get around the assignment process.
9. Many Commanding officers will attempt to get around the system by transferring officers within the base unofficially.

Conclusion

The author has endeavored to impress the reader with the personnel problems as they exist today in the Air Force. The present system of assignment and the related methods of training are hold overs from the system developed during World War II. The personnel system was devised to give a great deal of flexibility so as to allow improvisations and supplements to established policy procedures when required. This was often necessary during wartime with unstandardized procedures and regulations. The authority and responsibility was thus divided between Washington, the Major Commands, and the individual bases. There existed, however, few lines of demarcation of authority so that a delineation of authority and responsibility for specific procedures could not be determined.

Instead of adopting an entirely new personnel system at the conclusion of hostilities, the wartime procedures were reformed to allow for the peculiarities of a peacetime force. This only increased the problems for not only is the Air Force operating under a wartime system but many of the peacetime innovations in the system only further complicated an already complex system. A great deal of confusion exists to-

day at the various levels of the hierarchy because of the lack of specific determination of authority and responsibility for the various personnel phases. It is this problem of defining definite policies and enforcing them through adequately designated lines of authority and responsibility that has to be solved. Centralized assignments along with the prescribed corrective measures is just one of the many methods that may be used to adequately define authority and responsibility for the procedures involved. Centralized assignments would only function after preliminary designated step had been undertaken to prescribe and enforce definite basic personnel procedures. The assignment procedures are subordinated by these basic policy declarations which would provide the structural outline for the operation of any assignment process. I have recommended centralized assignment in Washington as one method of implementing the basic personnel policies which have been outlined in detail. It certainly is not the only method of implementing the basic policies for a decentralized application is also possible.

The centralized system was selected because of its adaptability to a small compact force of officers. This does not mean the force of officers today is small, but then the study is pointed towards future requirements. The possibilities of future technical advancements in warfare do not necessarily call for a large force of officers, but rather a small highly trained group of specialized technicians. The days of the large standing armies and Air Forces are numbered. The trend of the future will be toward

smaller specialized forces with personnel problems of limited magnitude. A centralized assignment process was recommended because it gives definition and stability to the present assignment procedures and at the same time provide planning for future requirements in light of future needs.

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