

BEDELL SMITH AND FUNCTIONALIST DILEMMAS

by

LEIF H. URSETH

B.A., Augsburg College, 1971

M.A., University of North Dakota, 1994

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

College of Arts and Sciences

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Manhattan, Kansas

2010

Abstract

General Walter Bedell Smith is the subject of this dissertation. It examines his career as Eisenhower's chief of staff from a functionalist perspective. Functionalism as a school of thought emphasizes the organic nature of social institutions, the importance of improvisation while framing solutions to problems, and the necessity of producing predictable results. In practice, the US Army and Smith applied functionalism in a restricted way, but conceived of the General Staff as the "brain of the army." While working for General Marshall in the War Department General Staff and later as General Eisenhower's chief of staff, General Smith met his responsibilities with respect to order, cohesion and objectives. Two general conditions complicated Smith's role at Eisenhower's headquarters: first, the burgeoning size of the staff made it difficult for Smith to manage by means of direct supervision and still preserve a measure of initiative among staff members; second, Smith's poor health and cholera sometimes hindered his ability to adopt means that were consistent with the organic aspect of functionalism. In Washington, Algiers and London, Bedell Smith gained notoriety as a "hatchetman" who did his superior's dirty work. His ugly reputation was fitting in some ways, but undeserved in others. His achievements have been underestimated. Smith was the firm defender of the Eisenhower's prerogatives. Among British colleagues, he was a disciple of cooperation and diplomacy. He was intelligent, orderly and functionalist in the sense that his decisiveness and willingness to accept responsibility achieved quick and predictable results. Smith's understanding of principal issues and his grasp of details earned the trust and respect of colleagues. He acted out of duty, not "natural" meanness. The traits of a "hatchetman" – feared and detested by some – were the distinguishing features that won favor from his superiors, Marshall and Eisenhower.

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General Walter Bedell Smith is the subject of this dissertation. It examines his career as Eisenhower's chief of staff from a functionalist perspective. Functionalism as a school of thought emphasizes the organic nature of social institutions, the importance of improvisation while framing solutions to problems, and the necessity of producing predictable results. In practice, the US Army and Smith applied functionalism in a restricted way, but conceived of the General Staff as the "brain of the army." While working for General Marshall in the War Department General Staff and later as General Eisenhower's chief of staff, General Smith met his responsibilities with respect to order, cohesion and objectives. Two general conditions complicated Smith's role at Eisenhower's headquarters: first, the burgeoning size of the staff made it difficult for Smith to manage by means of direct supervision and still preserve a measure of initiative among staff members; second, Smith's poor health and cholera sometimes hindered his ability to adopt means that were consistent with the organic aspect of functionalism. In Washington, Algiers and London, Bedell Smith gained notoriety as a "hatchetman" who did his superior's dirty work. His ugly reputation was fitting in some ways, but undeserved in others. His achievements have been underestimated. Smith was the firm defender of the Eisenhower's prerogatives. Among British colleagues, he was a disciple of cooperation and diplomacy. He was intelligent, orderly and functionalist in the sense that his decisiveness and willingness to accept responsibility achieved quick and predictable results. Smith's understanding of principal issues and his grasp of details earned the trust and respect of colleagues. He acted out of duty, not "natural" meanness. The traits of a "hatchetman" – feared and detested by some – were the distinguishing features that won favor from his superiors, Marshall and Eisenhower.

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Introduction

After five years and eight months of butchery, mayhem, terror, and unrelenting suffering, there was peace in Europe. It was shortly before 0200, May 7, 1945 in Rheims, France. In the glare and heat of bright lights, reporters and photographers scurried to and fro, grimly determined to meet press deadlines. The military leaders of the western European Theater of Operations were gathering to play out the final drama of the Second World War in Europe. The *New York Times* reported that the German surrender in the West occurred in “a little red schoolhouse,” recording one of many myths about the Second World War.¹ In reality the scene was the *École Professionnelle et Technique de Garçons*.² The Allied delegation included General Dwight D. Eisenhower’s lieutenants: Tedder, Morgan, Spaatz, Bull, and others. General Ivan Susloparoff represented the Soviet Union, and General François Sevez, the French Republic. While the somber Supreme Allied Commander waited below, the German delegation trudged into the upper War Room. There, after futile attempts to buy time, Generaloberst Alfred Jodl and Admiral Alfred von Friedeburg stood before the scarred, ink-smudged oak table upon which the instrument of surrender lay.

Opposite Jodl stood the American General Walter Bedell Smith, like Eisenhower, descended from German stock.³ Smith, Eisenhower’s chief of staff, had one of the nastiest

¹ *New York Times*, May 8, 1945, p. 1; Greenwich Mean Time, 0100.

² Georgi Zhukov would supervise a second surrender in Berlin, May 9, 1945; Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder would represent the western Allies. Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel signed for Nazi Germany.

³ With few exception in this dissertation, all references to General Smith will be to Bedell Smith – a name that he adopted. Nobody ever called him “Walt” or “Walter.” Nicknames such as “Beetle,” “Beadle,” “Beedle,” and the like will occur only in citations.

reputations in the entire United States Army. Smith sternly directed the assemblage to be seated. Although Bavarian, Jodl appeared the model of Prussianism. His eyes blinked from the glare of the lights as he numbly stared across the table at the poker-faced and taciturn Allied chief of staff. The American general, unflinchingly, stared back with his fierce bulldog appearance. Assisted by his interpreter, British General Kenneth Strong, Smith tersely explained the terms of the surrender. Signatures affixed, General Smith ordered adjournment. It was then 0200. Smith had spoken his final lines in the conflict that humbled Hitler's generals. The Allied mission in Europe was complete.⁴ For Eisenhower and his team of war managers the long road to Allied victory had been difficult. This is the story of Bedell Smith's journey to Rheims and the dilemmas he faced as Eisenhower's chief of staff.

The story of Bedell Smith demands serious revision in the interest of fairness. Historians, journalists, and laymen alike have often made grossly inaccurate generalizations about leading historical figures. In that vein, common depictions of General Smith are vastly overdrawn. Almost immediately after the German surrender and throughout the postwar era, the more negative aspects of Smith's personality were brought to the fore as a steady stream of negative anecdotes, and abuse flowed into the popular press. Gordon Mason, the author of a recent bestseller and a critic of Smith, called him "a man who could cuss in three languages and in almost every sentence."⁵ General Eisenhower's naval aide, Captain Harry C. Butcher – the Suetonius of his day – was much given to a great deal of chitchat and gossip. From the outset,

⁴ Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier and President*, Touchstone edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 199-200.

⁵ Gordon Mason, as quoted in Anthony Summers with Robbyn Swan, *The Arrogance of Power: The Secret World of Richard Nixon* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 133.

Smith and Butcher had a mutual dislike, and it is difficult to tell which man was most responsible for the animus between them. The ink on the German surrender document was hardly dry when Butcher published the famous diary that Eisenhower had directed him to keep during the war. Eisenhower did his best to purge some of the more hurtful comments about Smith and others. Nonetheless, many of the negative images of the chief of staff became part of popular lore. Captain Butcher was often the authoritative source upon whom many Americans relied. Butcher recorded that Smith might well have been chief of staff to General Eisenhower, but was “just a neurotic with an aching ulcer to the aides”⁶ If not careful, one would garner the distinct impression that the chief of staff for Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force is a case study in psychological dysfunction.

A number of authors have given some credit to General Smith. Stephen E. Ambrose has noted Smith’s accomplishments while working for the War Department General Staff, his strong character, his diplomatic skills, and his near indispensability to Eisenhower.⁷ Merle Miller, while mentioning some of the nastier traits of Eisenhower’s chief of staff – namely, his explosive temper and profane language – nevertheless notes Smith’s seminal mind and his role in reducing the burdens of the Supreme Commander. Miller adds that Smith was, in Eisenhower’s phrase, “general manager of the war.”⁸ In a recent biography of Eisenhower, Carlo D’Este clearly appreciates the contributions of General Smith, pointing out that Smith did not always relish the

⁶ Butcher Diary, Box 166, Folder 3, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; hereafter, DDEL.

⁷ Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1970), 81-82.

⁸ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1987; reprint First Perigee edition, 1988), 393-394.

task required of him – yet it was a job that he did well.⁹ One would be remiss in failing to note the pioneering work on Bedell Smith done by D. K. R. Crosswell. His research regarding the taxing staff work and organizational skills of General Smith in establishing the Allied headquarters in North Africa and Europe according to the principle of unity of command merits attention. Crosswell’s biography of the most important staff officer of the Second World War represents a huge step in correcting the more grievous misconceptions about this diplomat-soldier and war manager.¹⁰

Although these last writers have provided more balanced portrayals of Bedell Smith than earlier commentators did, the emphasis placed on isolated incidents and personalities creates the impression that factionalism and personality were far more widespread than was the case. The depiction of abusive behavior sometimes sells books. Some writers fall into the habit of relating a good, juicy anecdote to engage the reader. Merle Miller has written that Eisenhower did not relish saying no to his friends or to others he disliked. For that reason, he frequently surrounded himself with “sons of bitches.”¹¹ The context makes clear that one of the principal “sons-of-bitches” was Smith.

Is it reasonable to assume that the cold, competent, and calculating George C. Marshall would have promoted a loose cannon to the War Department General Staff, its Secretariat, and its equivalent in the Combined Chiefs of Staff? Is it fair to assume that Dwight D. Eisenhower,

⁹ Carlo D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), 318.

¹⁰ D. K. R. Crosswell, *The Chief of Staff: The Military Career of General Walter Bedell Smith* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991).

¹¹ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier*, 11.

a former Army Chief of Operations and later Supreme Allied Commander, would have picked an undisciplined officer as chief of staff at Allied Force Headquarters and Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force? Is it reasonable that a grossly intemperate staff officer would have the skill, patience and wherewithal to negotiate the Italian armistice and the German surrender? Moreover, is it reasonable to assume that President Harry S. Truman in the nuclear age would have selected an ill-tempered general as Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency? The answer to these rhetorical questions is an emphatic “No.” The Smith presented in this dissertation was none of those things.

There are, however, a series of other questions not so easily answered. What was the purpose of an operational chief of staff? What role did Bedell Smith play as war manager within the Allied high command? How did American officers of the line and staff view the role of the chief of staff? How did the performance of Bedell Smith stack up against chiefs of staff in other theaters of operations? What were the duties and status of those who rendered opinions about Smith? In other words, were the opinions regarding the chief of staff influenced by the role of the observer or commentator?

This dissertation reveals that Bedell Smith was a complex man, a blend of the old and new. Characterizations of Smith vary depending on his assigned roles. First, this dissertation examines the role of Smith as gatekeeper of Allied headquarters. He was a practical functionalist who did not always use the best means to achieved desired ends, but his superiors valued him as one who achieved results. As operational chief of staff, Bedell Smith served principally as General Eisenhower’s executive agent. It was Smith’s primary role to manage Eisenhower’s headquarters. In that role, he defended the prerogatives of his superior. Smith was actually the

commander of the headquarters staff but Eisenhower greatly expanded the responsibilities of his chief of staff in areas far beyond the scope of anything imagined in 1940. Smith wore many hats other than the one he donned at headquarters. Although the traditional conflict between officers of the line and those of the staff should not be exaggerated, tensions did surface from time to time. Older officers also resented rapidly-rising young officers within the command and staff. In any institution, also, there is always some animosity regarding war managers. Eisenhower and Smith experienced difficulties with Montgomery and Patton mainly on the issue of war management. More often than not, however, disgruntled officers did not risk a direct confrontation with Eisenhower, but chose instead to attack his “Court.” Chief among Eisenhower’s retinue was his chief of staff – Bedell Smith.

Second, this dissertation relies on a selection of oral histories and published works that render perspectives on Bedell Smith drawn from outside as well as inside general headquarters. The status of those who dealt with Smith greatly influenced attitudes regarding the chief of staff. Because of his various roles within the Allied command, Smith often exhibited chameleon-like tendencies as Carlo D’Este has noted. Many people, the British for instance, who did not have to serve under his demanding scrutiny at headquarters saw Smith in a different light.¹² A number of line officers such as Lieutenant General James M. Gavin held the chief of staff in high esteem.

Third, and most importantly, this dissertation examines the career of General Bedell Smith through the organic metaphor of functionalism. With the benefit of functionalist theory, one can better understand how Bedell Smith thought and acted in practice. A different viewpoint of Eisenhower’s chief of staff emerges.

¹² D’Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier’s Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), 318.

As applied to social institutions, functionalism has two fundamental principles: one, that all social institutions are organic; two, that all social institutions are self-regulating. In many ways, functionalists attempt to solve the age-old dilemma of western dualism, which had led to seemingly endless arguments between Realists and Nominalist, idealist and positivist. From a functionalist perspective, all values, norms and repetitive social customs have the purpose of sustaining a social system.¹³ In other words, functionalists were interested in that which maintained equilibrium or homeostasis between interdependent groups within a social institution. The functionalists emphasized purpose, practicality and utility. An idea has validity if it works. Ideas have value primarily because of observable and tested consequences. The effect of an idea is more important than its origin.¹⁴ In other words, verifiable results were more important than doctrine. Functionalism, consequently, represented a distinct break from the introspective methods of the past – theories which bore little resemblance to reality.¹⁵ Smith was a man of action, consistent with functionalism in that action took precedent over idle speculation which had little consequences in practice. Action was the means by which to bridge theory and reality, doctrine and practice.

¹³ Ian Whitaker, "The Nature and Value of Functionalism in Sociology," in *Functionalism in the Social Sciences: The Strengths and Limits of Functionalism in Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, and Sociology*, Monograph 5, edited by Don Martindale (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, February 1965), 127-143.

¹⁴ Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor*, trans. W. D. Halls (New York: Macmillan, Co., 1893; reprint, New York: Free Press, Macmillan Co., 1984), ix-xv.

¹⁵ Drawing from the sociological theories of Alfred Marshall, Vilfredo Pareto, Émile Durkheim and Max Weber, Talcott Parsons labeled his brand of functionalism as structural functional analysis which examined the way in which independent groups within a social system contributed to the development and maintenance of it. Therefore, parts of a social system have an inherent functional unity which insures the survival of society. See, Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1937; Free Press, 1949), 702-725.

The proper metaphor for the United States Army that Bedell Smith joined is organic. By the early twentieth century, American military thinkers conceived of the army as constituting a head, brain and body with all its appendages. Popular references to well oiled military machines are misleading. They can easily lead one to define the American army in mechanistic terms. Often cited for their arbitrary methods, the Prussians themselves had abandoned mechanistic conceptions of the military during the nineteenth century. They conceived of the general staff as the brain of the army.¹⁶ This concept was also current in American military thought.¹⁷

A second fundamental of functionalism is that social institutions and its independent parts are self-regulating. Sociological analysis indicates that social institutions exhibit a strong tendency to perform predictably. Despite the recurrence of dysfunction, organizations tend to adapt and establish equilibrium. Broadly defined, equilibrium is the relative state of balance that insures stability within an institution. Without functional unity or – relative harmony within social groups – society would disintegrate. Regulating norms and guiding values enable social organizations to survive. This organic phenomenon and its inherent adaptive principle help regulate social institutions.¹⁸ While structural functionalism focuses on the group, it is true, nonetheless, that the individual has an important role in making organizational changes. The soldier has a function to fulfill in the institution of the army. Function is the contribution that

¹⁶ Spencer Wilkinson, *The Brain of An Army: A Popular Account of the German General Staff*, 2d ed. (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co., 1895), 204.

¹⁷ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), 7-18.

¹⁸ Talcott Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*. (New York: Free Press, 1967), 225.

one makes to sustaining that organic institution – that of the general differs from that of the private soldier and the lieutenant colonel. Consequently, the functionalist model is neither mechanistic nor arbitrary.

Bedell Smith's training led him part way down the path of functionalism, but that does not necessarily mean that he internalized every aspect of his military education. What he consciously grasped from his education is one thing. That which he subconsciously incorporated through socialization is another. Smith bore the mark of a functionalist by basing his decisions on tested experience. He was decisive and took full responsibility for his actions and their consequences. The results that stemmed from his actions won the approval of his superiors, namely Generals Marshall and Eisenhower. Functionalism claimed to be ideologically neutral – a claim that cannot always be substantiated – but Smith was at least not conscious of any ideological bias. In all probability, he never realized any inconsistency in his thoughts and actions. Utopian ideas that little play in Smith's world. There has a tendency to view some of Bedell Smith's actions as temporary lapses in character and judgment. From the functionalist perspective, this viewpoint is questionable. It is doubtful whether everyone can ever internalize all the cherished values and practices of a society, thereby attaining complete integration in a social institution.¹⁹

Bedell Smith understood the main function of the general headquarters, which was to control the theaters of operation under Eisenhower's command.²⁰ Guided by the principle of

¹⁹ C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 26-30.

²⁰ I used the plural here, because Eisenhower exercised command over more than theater. For a brief stint, he also simultaneously commanded the US European Theater of Operations and the Northwest African Theater of Operations.

unity of command and the concept of Allied teamwork, he kept in mind the objective of the Allied mission, which was the ultimate defeat of German's armed forces. Smith exercised a good command of strategic, operational and tactical objectives. Guided by practical experience and observation rather than theory, he made self-conscious decisions that helped insure control within the headquarters. As functionalist, he reasoned that, if one can control, one can predict. During his entire stint of duty as chief of staff, time was Smith's enemy. For instance, he streamlined the staff of Eisenhower's headquarters in the short span of two months prior to the Northwest African operation. His reorganization produced quick results in the theater. He understood the army like few others, and he won the respect of Eisenhower and many other colleagues.²¹

The means that Bedell Smith used to achieve his objectives were not always consistent with functionalist thought. In practice, he employed functionalism as the the model for staff management. For Bedell Smith, however, it presented dilemmas. The structure of Eisenhower's headquarters required a flexibility that would foster cooperation and initiative within the institution and still maintain the essential demand of organizational unity. A pragmatic functionalist, Bedell Smith found himself in a paradoxical situation – caught between enforcing unity of command and a corresponding dissipation of his personal power as the size of organization increased. On one hand, he defended General Eisenhower's prerogatives, enforcing the chain of command and overseeing the planning of operations, among the many manifest functions of the headquarters. During the initial upheaval of reorganization in autumn 1942, for

²¹ *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, edited by Alfred D. Chandler (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), vol. 2, #609, 693.

instance, some regarded the changes that Smith enforced as radical while others objected to his imperious manner. Yet he quickly brought cohesion to the staff. The headquarters that he built had a simple and formal hierarchy. To have acted otherwise would have engendered the loss of time. Formal power passed through the chain of command. Smith used his authority to control the headquarters with relative ease. He relied on direct supervision to coordinate many activities. Standardization of policy and procedures was rapid.²² His decisive actions met with approval.

The Army General Staff and Eisenhower's headquarters staff were analogous to the brain. Nonetheless, some functions of the brain are mechanical. Although a general staff "thinks" for the army, some functions of the general staff as well as the human brain are mechanical.²³ Bedell Smith was not interested in consensus in routine matters, correctly believing that many decisions were best made by those who possessed authority. There is ample evidence, however, that in strategic and operational discussions at higher echelons Smith was more flexible, more prone to improvise. He was often consistent with the type of functionalism that the US Army embraced. More typical than not, Smith – like many officers – followed democratic processes in order to get input for his decisions.

On the other hand, as the headquarters grew and the scope of Smith's responsibilities expanded, his power dissipated. Research indicates that power is informal on the lateral axis of any institution. The phenomenon of self-regulation was particularly strong on the periphery of

²² The standardization process in reorganization of staff is discussed in Henry Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives: Designing Effective Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983), 141.

²³ The medulla oblongata of brain does not think. It regulates. This is true of certain sections of the general staff as well.

the headquarters, where every type of specialist worked. As the headquarters became more complex, there was a natural drift away from centralization of authority and power along the horizontal axis.²⁴ Specialists possessed information, which did not originate from formal channels. In other words, their expertise often gave them an informal power without formal delegation. Firmly wedded to the principle of unity of command, Smith found it difficult to manage specialists on the horizontal axis of the headquarters.²⁵

Bedell Smith encountered institutional inertia at times, which General Marshall himself acknowledged.²⁶ Nonetheless, Smith failed to spend the time to develop informal lines of communication with members of the headquarters staff, which he so successfully cultivated when dealing with superiors in Washington and London. Increasingly, Smith found it more difficult to coordinate the multitudinous tasks for which he was responsible. The increasing complexity of the headquarters made it impossible for Smith to comprehend the mass of information that poured into the headquarters.

Bedell Smith faced many dilemmas, which were complicated by a headquarters whose design contradicted the functionalist principle of flexibility. His abrasive personality, however, also exacerbated his situation. His caustic temperament and marginal health were often at odds

²⁴ Jay R. Galbraith, *Competing with Flexible Lateral Organizations*, 2nd ed. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1994), 7-11, 37-40.

²⁵ *Functionalism in the Social Sciences: The Strengths and Limits of Functionalism in Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, and Sociology*, Monograph 5, edited by Don Martindale (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, February 1965), 156-157.

²⁶ *George C. Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, edited by Larry I. Bland, Joellen K. Bland, rev. ed. (Lexington, VA: George C. Marshall Research Foundation, 1991) 624.

with functionalist goals. A sarcastic disposition hindered his ability to coordinate needed effort in an integrated headquarters. By summer 1942, he had long since demonstrated his knowledge of military matters but his impatience and perfectionism hindered performance, particularly at headquarters. The alienation, which Smith experienced, bred alienation in others. His brand of functionalism, coupled with his idiosyncracies, did not encourage people to take an active role in some quarters. Although equal participation in decision making was not feasible, Smith did not encourage the free exchange of ideas. He appeared to have a conception of a frictionless staff that would perform flawlessly. Yet no institution or group functions without a degree of friction.²⁷ His abilities were manifest, but only with supreme effort does personality change. Moreover, superb military leaders know that modern war has to be administered through delegation.²⁸ Unlike Marshall and Eisenhower, Smith never mastered the art of delegation. Fatigue, owing to overwork, repeatedly sapped Smith's constitution and weakened his performance. The burden of work and poor health accentuated his fluctuating moods and insecurities. For his own personal survival, Smith often played the chameleon.

In addition to health and personality, Bedell Smith's socialization, perceptions of power and various defense mechanisms made his role and the dilemmas he faced more difficult. These issues affected the specific tasks delegated to him as Eisenhower's chief of staff. A close examination of these subjects shows that Smith strayed from the guiding tenets of functionalism

²⁷ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1968), 161-162; Peter F. Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), 549.

²⁸ Richard Overly, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1997), 269; Jay R. Galbraith, Diane Downey and Amy Kates, *Designing Dynamic Organizations: A Hands-On Guide for Leaders at All Levels* (New York: AMACOM, 2002), 12-14.

at different times and under different circumstances. For instance, sociological analysis indicates that social institutions exhibit a strong tendency to perform predictably. Organizations tend to adapt and establish equilibrium despite recurrent dysfunction. Understandably, Smith sought predictability, but his means of insuring solidarity was often mechanical and not organic.

Particularly within the general headquarters – less so in the wider arena of war – Smith often appeared obsessed with external control as a means of insuring equilibrium. Like many early functionalists, he tended to define equilibrium as order.²⁹ It is sometimes necessary to keep subordinates in line by taking stern measures to thwart dysfunction. Excellent leaders, however, must first convince their underlings to want to perform their expected duties without resorting to sarcasm and autocratic behavior.³⁰ At headquarters Bedell Smith sometimes enforced discipline by resorting to threats. Even though he professed the importance of getting things done in a collective manner, Smith acted in ways inconsistent with functionalism.

Notwithstanding, Smith was consistent with respect to functionalist practice in two ways. First, he rejected utopian schemes that had not been tested. In most instances, Smith based his decision making on what had proved successful in the past and had a high probability of achieving success in the future. Second, he emphasized action over rigid doctrine and experience over classical principles.³¹ He was a proponent of practical utility.

²⁹ Kenneth D. Bailey, *Sociology and the New Systems Theory: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1994), 114, 152; Talcott Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*. (New York: Free Press, 1967), 225.

³⁰ Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 32.

³¹ Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: Free Press, 1951), 36, 43, 118-119, 272-277; Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*, 473-481, 719-725.

Certain critics and even friends of Bedell Smith labeled him as “Prussian.” The popular biographer Merle Miller quotes Arthur S. Nevins as saying, “Smith was just naturally mean.”³² To many, Smith acted like a black widow spider or praying mantis intent on devouring its prey. He angered some officers who believed that he frequently exceeded the scope of his authority. Others detested the his manner of speaking more than the content of his statements.³³ Smith’s temper was legendary. The undeniable violence of his language evoked fear more than respect.

In doing Eisenhower’s “dirty work,” Smith’s predicament was not enviable. On one hand, his job required a full measure of toughness. On the other, he ran the risk of exceeding authority in order to protect the interests of his superior and the Allied team. While establishing a military headquarters and maintaining order within it, Smith fought the natural tendency toward disorder that might have undermined the Allied mission.

Bedell Smith was more diplomatic in wider circles. Among Allies, he was no “Prussian.” Although on the lookout for perceived dysfunction, which might undermine Allied teamwork and Eisenhower’s prerogatives, Smith displayed a remarkable ability to adapt to many difficult situations as they arose. Like Eisenhower, Smith often appeared more British or Allied than American. He developed a surprising flair for resolving arguments, which was greatly admired and appreciated by Allied colleagues. Consensus was a key goal in accordance with specified guidelines. Smith helped shape the goals of the Allied war effort in the Second World War.

³² As quoted, Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him*, 393.

³³ “Social Role and the Division of Labor,” Everett C. Hughes, *The Sociological Eye: Selected Papers* (Chicago & New York: Aldine-Atherton, 1971), 304-310.

As operational chief of staff, he supervised Allied army recruitment and training while keeping a close watch on development in Allied intelligence and logistics.

With few exceptions, General Marshall approved of Bedell Smith's performance in Washington and London. Although critical of any officer who displayed bad temper, Marshall also admitted that he himself was not always in a position to discern the predicament that each subordinate faced. The Army Chief of Staff lauded Smith's administrative skills and thought that he was the perfect complement to Eisenhower. He greatly appreciated Smith efforts as the liaison man both on the War Department General Staff and at Eisenhower's headquarters.³⁴

While organizing General Eisenhower's headquarters and touting the principle of unity of command, Smith followed the dictates of his superior. In the performance of his varied tasks, Smith struggled with the exercise of power, but in many cases he applied it not so much to impose it on others but out of a sense of duty that he believed was required of him. Despite lapses in temperament and consistency, Smith's superb performance of duty won the respect of Eisenhower. After Bedell Smith's death in August 1961, President Eisenhower expressed his feelings about his former chief of staff in a letter to Air Chief Marshal Sir William Elliot of Great Britain:

I think you know how much I admired his abilities and talents. But I also loved him for his intransigence, for his irascibility – and I even tolerated his complete neglect, to the end, of his physical elements. He was a great and wonderful and shy and proud man. . . . I miss him greatly.³⁵

³⁴ Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall*, vol. 2, *Ordeal and Hope* (New York: Viking Press, 1966), 408-410; *Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 486, 539.

³⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower to Sir William Elliot, August 26, 1961, Elliot Papers and Correspondence, 4/2/14, Liddell Hart Centre for Military History, Kings College, University of London.

This is hardly a characterization of a narrow-minded staff officer. Most of the time, Smith worked through the institutional framework of the military establishment. He was after all a member of a team. Eisenhower tolerated and forgave the imperfections and idiosyncracies of Bedell Smith because of his loyalty, dedication to duty and efficient performance. Smith was the right officer to produce order and stability at Eisenhower's headquarters. He was also the man most suited to address important issues with British allies. Marshall and Eisenhower chose Smith for leadership because of his decisiveness and his ability to get things done quickly and effectively.

The general outline of this dissertation is as follows: Chapter One addresses Smith's childhood, adolescence, marriage and experience in World War One. Chapter Two concerns his early career as a staff officer and his formal education at the army service school. The third chapter entails Smith's service on the General Staff and his work as General Marshall's chief secretary. Chapter Four speaks to Smith's difficulties regarding the integration of staff work during the reorganization of General Eisenhower's headquarters during autumn 1942. Chapter Five details Smith's expanding role as a soldier-diplomat during 1943. Chapter Six addresses General Smith's pivotal role as chief of staff at Supreme Headquarters and his functionalism approach to the problems that SHAEF encountered during the final year of the war.

Chapter One

Childhood, Adolescence, Marriage and World War I

There is little to be gleaned from archival sources in Indianapolis concerning the early life of Bedell Smith. By contrast Eisenhower spoke frequently about his parents, siblings and wife. Smith said little about family and wrote even less. The dearth of evidence pertaining to a man who rose to prominence in American military and diplomatic circles is startling. The matter is further complicated by the fact that throughout his career Smith concealed much of his private life, determined to separate it from his public career. In many ways, he was an extremely private man. Socialization is a life-long process. One can only speculate about Smith's awareness of self, his innermost feelings and values learned in childhood. This chapter describes Smith's childhood, adolescence, marriage and service record during the First World War. Early in life, Smith exhibited a certain inflexibility that surfaced in play and at work. His rigid adherence to rules often reflected a mechanical search for order. Smith experienced a great deal of frustration as an organizational man. He often found it difficult to adjust to changing circumstances.

Bedell Smith yearned to be a soldier from childhood. He became one of many army officers who rose from the lower middle class to the higher echelons of the service. Smith seized every opportunity for advancement open to him in the Indiana State National Guard. Promoted from the enlisted ranks, Smith later attained the rank of full general. Very few army officers achieved that rank without a degree from West Point, Virginia Military Institute or some other reputable institution of higher learning. The same dogged persistence that characterized Smith in the enlisted ranks of the National Guard typified his later performance at the army service

schools.¹ By persistent hard work, Smith became one of the prominent war managers of his day.

Growing up a Hoosier

Around the turn the century, no one in Indianapolis suspected that a young neighbor lad of relatively modest means would rise to such prominence, even if it was an “age of rugged individualism.” Walter Bedell Smith was born October 5, 1895 to William Long Smith and his wife, Ida.² The future general had a younger brother George with whom he spent a great deal of time hunting and fishing in the streams near Indianapolis. Smith’s love of hunting and fishing remained with him for the rest of his life. Both of his parents worked for the Pettis Dry Goods Company which had a subdivision in women’s apparel. William Smith was a silk buyer, his wife Ida a supervisor. Both William and Ida were descendants of German immigrants. William’s ancestors traced back to the American Revolutionary War. The maternal branch of the family – the Bedells – were more recent arrivals from German lands. The Smiths purchased a home at 1723 Ashland Avenue.³ The community was a modest middle-class neighborhood.

¹ “Transcript of ‘Newsmakers’ Program,” CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 1, File Folder 1, DDEL; although he would be granted many honorary doctorates, Bedell never earned a college degree from any institution; among the service schools that Smith attended were US Army Infantry School, the US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, and the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

² Biographical Sketch, The Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, File Folder 3, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, hereafter, DDEL; Biographical Sketch, n.d., p. 702, in Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

³ *Indianapolis News*, June 19, 1945, and Wayne Guthrie, “Smith Left Great Military Record,” *Indianapolis News*, January 29, 1965, p. 9 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society; *Indianapolis News*, June 6, 1944, p. 8; there is some debate about the Smith residence on Ashland Avenue. Ashland Avenue was later renamed Carrollton Avenue. Some records say Ash Avenue; others record the house number as 1721; most list 1723; a few 1725.

General Smith's nickname had various spellings derived from his mother's maiden name. Many sources refer to "Beadle" or "Beedle." The more common spelling was "Beetle." One close childhood buddy, H. F. Weinmann, stated that the most common appellation for the young Smith was "Boodle."⁴ Smith's Aunt Lena recalled that his parents began to call him Bedell at a very early date.⁵ No one ever called him "Walter" or "Walt." Although he never officially changed his name, General Smith accepted Bedell as a first name. Government documents list his baptismal name but most of Smith's correspondence bore the signature *Bedell Smith*. The British frequently referred to him as Bedell-Smith.⁶

Early in life, Bedell Smith suffered from poor health. Recalling the sick three-year old boy years later, Mrs. Nettie Rigler, his nurse, said that Bedell was, nonetheless, "smart as a tack when a baby."⁷ A number of reporters visited Indianapolis at the time of the Italian armistice in 1943. Mrs. George W. Spahr, an elderly neighbor lady, reminisced about Smith as a child. She felt certain that the sickly toddler would die.⁸ In time, however, the young lad recovered and began showing extraordinary vigor. Mrs. Spahr also recollected Bedell Smith as a seven-or eight year-old boy, walking along the avenue in the standard garb of the day – shirt, knee-pants with suspenders, and long black stockings. After school and on weekends, neighbors often noticed

⁴ *Indianapolis News*, June 19, 1945, p. 1, part 2.

⁵ *Indianapolis Star*, September 26, 1943, p. 13.

⁶ The British often used hyphenated or double last names. For instance, Bedell-Smith, Leigh-Mallory, etc. I have elected to use Bedell Smith because none of his colleagues chose to call him "Walter."

⁷ *Indianapolis Times*, May 8, 1945, p. 2 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

⁸ *Indianapolis Times*, September 16, 1943, p. 9.

Bedell and his black and white fox terrier, Spot, on their way to some undisclosed location.⁹

As the young Smith grew older, nearly everyone thought that young Bedell had little interest in study. Most believed that the Smith boys were somewhat analogous to Huckleberry Finn and Jim on the river. Smith confessed as much, later recalling his desire to escape the confines of the schoolhouse. Once outside, he and his brother, George, went to their favorite fishing hole just beyond the neighboring cornfields, which were part of suburbia by 1950.¹⁰

Many times, the young Smith visited his Uncle George and Aunt Lena. They lived in the nearby neighborhood. Young Bedell would bring his wood, lead, and tin toy soldiers along on these visits where he would conduct his make-believe deployments, ambushes, and maneuvers.¹¹ Under rocking chairs, beneath tables, and the like, young Smith conducted his make-believe battles. All the while, his relatives did their best to maneuver in such a way as to avoid crushing Bedell's tin, lead, and wooden soldiers.¹² Uncle Paul Bedell declared that his nephew was a soldier from the age of five.¹³

Christened Roman Catholic, Bedell and his brother, George, attended Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral School through the elementary years. For reasons unknown, Smith transferred to

⁹ Ibid, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, October 18, 1953, p. 14.

¹¹ *Indianapolis Star*, September 26, 1943, p. 17.

¹² *Indianapolis Star*, September 26, 1943, no page, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

¹³ *Indianapolis News*, June 19, 1945, p. 1, part 1 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

Public School #10 and, from there, to School #29 (also known as Oliver Perry Morton School, for what one today would call middle or junior high school.)¹⁴ The recollections of Bedell Smith regarding elementary and junior high school experience were distinctly positive. Of course, the passage of 35 years can affect memories. It does not appear that the priests and nuns at the cathedral school left any recorded opinions of Bedell Smith as a student.

Smith's elementary teachers had specific memories of the young Bedell Smith. Lucy Wilson Thomas was one of his instructors at Public School #10. She recalled that Ida Smith had begun reading to her son when he was but a child. By the time Bedell was in the sixth grade, Bedell Smith was an avid reader although much of what he read did not apply to schoolwork at hand. Mrs. Thomas thought that Bedell was rather bright and showed great promise. Many of Smith's other teachers shared this opinion.¹⁵

School records are stronger for Bedell Smith's high school years. He entered Emmerich Manual Training High School in September 1909. Three and a half decades later, Bedell Smith recalled his time at Emmerich Manual, stating that as a teenager he was "probably one of its most stupid students."¹⁶ His utterance would be one of many self-effacing statements that became

¹⁴ *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, October 18, 1953, p. 13; *Indianapolis News*, June 6, 1944, p. 8; *New Indianapolis Times*, August 11, 1961, p. 19.

¹⁵ *Indianapolis News*, June 19, 1945, p. 1, part 2 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

¹⁶ Mary E. Bostwick, *Indianapolis Star*, June 21, 1945, p. 4 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society; *Indianapolis News*, March 4, 1946, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

characteristic of him. Later, many of his teachers took special interest in his career. Miss Arda Knox, an art teacher at Emmerich Manual, never forgot young Bedell Smith. She had always thought that Smith would do well, but he rose far beyond her expectations. Whenever time would permit, Knox would write to him fondly, expressing hometown pride and affection. She wrote to Smith whenever he earned a promotion or appeared in the headlines. Knox continued to correspond with Smith until the German surrender in 1945.¹⁷

Those who remembered Bedell Smith seldom recalled his sense of humor. He did relax on occasion, even making fun of a poor personal performance. In 1953, Smith reflected on his days at Emmerich. In his freshman year, Bedell built a big quartered-oak library table in the woodworking shop. It was a standard school project of the day. The shop instructor was very fussy about the quality of workmanship. Although Smith had assembled his project almost to perfection, his project failed when the instructor noticed that Bedell had marred the finish by sanding against the grain on one section of the table.¹⁸ The teacher promised to give Smith a passing grade if he agreed to refinish the table in his spare time. Although the general was not given to raucous laughter, a slight grin appeared as he related his misfortune. His humor was frequently dry.

On another occasion in the school shop, Bedell was working at the forge. The teacher was Mr. Yule whom the students called "Dad." Bedell and his partner were in too much of a hurry.

¹⁷ Miss Arda Knox to Bedell Smith, handwritten note, May 8, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, File Folder 2, DDEL.

¹⁸ Ben Cole, "Indiana's Walter Bedell Smith," *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, October 18, 1953, p. 13.

Their haste and carelessness nearly precipitated a serious accident. Impatiently, his cohort asked the burly, barrel-chested Smith to swing a twelve-pound sledgehammer in order to cut a heavy iron bar. Smith was supposed to tap lightly on the iron piece at the molten crease. Determined, his first two swings were wild. Mustering all the power he could, Smith swung a third time, bringing the full weight of the sledge far wide of the molten crease. Smith later recalled with a sheepish grin, “I guess I must have hit too hard on the last swing, because the end of that bar went sailing across the room,” landing in front of the instructor.¹⁹ Miraculously, no one was hurt. Instructor “Dad” Yule never moved or flinched but merely looked at Smith and said, “When you put 12 pounds of steel on one end of a hickory stick and a darned fool on the other, anything’s liable to happen.”²⁰

In later years, Bedell Smith appeared to recall past pranks and incidents with a certain degree of embarrassment and shame. He found it difficult to laugh at himself. Smith was not much of a prankster. He appears to have been an obedient son at home. Smith seldom mentioned his father, who was in poor health. One can only imagine what impact his father’s protracted illness had on the young Bedell. He helped out with family chores and fetched water for his mother in an age without indoor plumbing. There is no indication that he was ever in serious trouble at school. This was certainly the opinion of E. H. Kemper McComb, the principal at Emmerich. McComb followed Smith’s career as he advanced through the ranks. Like most of the teachers at Manual, McComb described the future chief of staff as a “solid and substantial

¹⁹ Ibid, as quoted. Smith meant that the free end of the hot bar sailed across the room.

²⁰ Ibid, Yule as quoted.

student” but did not believe that Bedell Smith was particularly brilliant.²¹ He was not inclined to study.

Friends in the upper-elementary and junior high levels recalled that Smith was a leader. Displaying a flair for the dramatic, Bedell would round up kids in the neighborhood for “military drill.” The elder Smith had obtained an old streetcar, to his son’s delight, and moved it into the backyard. The old cab served as the general headquarters for young Smith’s cadre. His friends soon gave him another name, “Brigadier Brendel.”²² Then, the serious play began. The young Smith began drilling his brother, George, and friends in dead earnest, arming them with broomsticks. The boys of the neighborhood played along with Bedell – most of the time enjoying it – but for him it was serious business. Whatever socialization process was in play, Smith was in control. He worked at play unlike the other boys. He was the director of action and manipulator of his “troops.” Smith reserved the role of drill sergeant for himself, exhibiting perfectionist traits that remained with him for life. Adults from the community later recalled Bedell and the “rank and file” marching through woods, fields and roads near Indianapolis. During his high school years, he played sandlot baseball and football. During the winter, he played a variant of hockey known as shinny.²³ Unlike Dwight D. Eisenhower and Omar N. Bradley, however, Bedell Smith showed

²¹ *Indianapolis Times*, May 8, 1945, p. 2 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

²² *Indianapolis Star*, October 4, 1943, no page, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society; *Indianapolis Star*, August 19, 1950, p. 5; *Indianapolis Times*, May 8, 1945, p. 2, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

²³ D. K. R. Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 4.

little interest in organized sports. For one who later placed so much emphasis on teamwork within an organization, Bedell Smith tended to define cooperation as compliance at an early age.

Old friends were quick to point out Bedell Smith's sense of justice. From an early age, Smith had a finely-tuned sense of ethics, and he did not tolerate bullies. There were several instances when Bedell stood up for the underdog. When Smith was merely a lad of seven, a ten-year old bully ventured into the neighborhood, threatening everyone in sight. The unnamed miscreant received the shock of his early life when Bedell administered a sound thrashing. Many contemporaries of Bedell Smith related different versions of this story. Proud of the subsequent accomplishments of his bold nephew, George Bedell loved to relate this incident. He would chuckle and then explain that Bedell would warn the ruffian, "Stop or I'll take a poke at you!"²⁴ After a number of ugly incidents of this type, bullies no longer made trouble for Smith and his friends. There is no evidence that Bedell Smith himself picked fights. For the moment, he had won the respect of his peers by standing up for principle. Self-defense does not necessarily indicate high standards of personal conduct, but the courage to defend others does.

Later, when some of these childhood incidents found their way into the press, General Smith expressed his dissatisfaction with the publicity. In a post-World War II interview, Smith's wife stated that neither she nor the general appreciated these stories about childhood play.²⁵ The Smiths zealously guarded their privacy – something that became more difficult as years passed.

Smith related one special story from childhood. In the summer of 1908, he learned that

²⁴ As quoted, *Indianapolis Star*, May 8, 1945, pp. 1, 12; incident also related in *Indianapolis Star*, September 26, 1943, p. 17.

²⁵ "Reed to Kellum," undated letter, W. B. Smith File, W. H Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society; *Indianapolis Star*, June 17, 1945, no page number, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

First Lieutenant Hugh A. Drum had come home on furlough. Drum was a Regular Army officer whose parents lived across the street from the Smiths. The thirteen-year old's sense of excitement and wonder could not have been greater. Thereafter, whenever the young officer came home, Bedell would spend hours on the porch of the Drum residence adoring his idol.²⁶ Undoubtedly, Smith made a pest of himself, trying to spend every spare moment with his *beau ideal*. More than ever, Smith wanted to be a soldier. Nonetheless, he was never a romantic. Smith became a pragmatic soldier. Later professing an intense admiration for General Marshall, Smith rejected idealistic conceptions associated with military life.

For the moment, Bedell Smith had to postpone his dream, because he was still attending Emmerich Manual High. He appeared headed for the life of a tradesman, and that prospect had little charm for him. The young Smith had a number of jobs while in high school, and, because his father's health was failing, he had to help his family make ends meet. There was a drugstore at College Avenue and 16th Street in Indianapolis where Bedell worked as a soda jerk for a brief time at six dollars a week.²⁷ In need of more money and having a certain ability as a mechanic, Smith took a job after school at the National Motor Car Company. He labored at the company plant into the early hours of the morning. George M. Dickson, Sr., the owner of the plant, spoke

²⁶ *Indianapolis Star*, August 19, 1950, p. 5; *Indianapolis News*, June 6, 1944, n.p., in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society; Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 5. Hugh A. Drum would emerge as one of the most promising officers of the First World War, serving as chief of staff for the US 1st Army during the Meuse-Argonne offensive. A highly-competent, but vain officer, he was later General George C. Marshall's chief competitor for the post of US Army Chief of Staff.

²⁷ *Indianapolis Star*, August 10, 1961, p. 1.

highly of Smith and later recalled that he was a good worker.²⁸ Smith detested mechanical work. Despite his good work record, he found the experience frustrating and devoid of purpose.

A bewildering number of dates are cited for Bedell Smith's entry into the Indiana National Guard. The confusion owed a great deal to the secretiveness of both Smith and his wife, Nori. The couple closed guarded their private lives as if somewhat embarrassed about their past. In a post-Second World War interview, Nori Smith stated that neither she nor the general appreciated the stories about childhood play and other private matters, which were leaked to the press.²⁹ One thing is certain – Smith entered the National Guard while still in high school. Both Smith and the National Guard left a mighty thin paper trail with respect to his early military life. In an interview in 1950 with CBS, Smith said he entered the Indiana National Guard at the age of sixteen.³⁰ There is no reason to doubt the general's word. Interested writers tended to push back the date of Smith's induction over time. At any rate, his mother refused to sign the induction papers until Bedell managed to convince her that the Indiana National Guard with its ties to the Civil War era

²⁸ "Mickey McCarty Says," August 16, 1961, *Indianapolis News*, p. 25; , p.25; Wayne Guthrie, "Smith Left Great Military Record," *Indianapolis News*, January 29, 1965, p. 9; *Indianapolis Times*, May 8, 1945, n.p., in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

²⁹ "Reed to Kellum," undated letter, W. B. Smith File, W. H Smith Library, Indiana Historical Society; *Indianapolis Star*, June 17, 1945, no page number, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society; see Biographical Sketch, "Walter Bedell Smith," in Indiana Clipping File, Walter Bedell Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society and Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 1, File Folder 1 & Box 10, Folder 3, DDEL, for various dates and legends concerning Smith induction into the Indiana National Guard.

³⁰ "Transcript of 'Newsmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 1, File Folder 1, DDEL; see also Stephen E. Ambrose, *Traces: A Publication of the Indiana Historical Society* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, Summer 1996), 36.

was merely a social group that a respectable young man could join.³¹ By the time he was a teenager, Smith aspired to be an army officer but, for the moment, service in the National Guard did not offer much hope of becoming an officer in the Regular Army. With his father's health steadily declining, Smith took part-time jobs to add to his family's limited resources instead.

Behavior learned in youth tends to persist throughout life. Long before the army service schools implanted functionalist doctrine in Bedell Smith, he exhibited a tendency to act without thinking. Smith's service record indicates his ability and knowledge, but personality changes only with difficulty.³² His experience as a noncommissioned officer in the Indiana National Guard and his brief stint as a junior officer in combat during World War I reinforced his idiosyncracies. Drill and combat require instinctive action, but rigid adherence to the chain of command often conflicts with the organic aspects of functionalism. Years later, Smith confessed that his years as a first sergeant contributed to some of his less attractive personality quirks, his hair-trigger temper and tart tongue.³³ He passed quickly through the enlisted ranks from private to first sergeant while in the National Guard.³⁴ He was twenty-one years old when the United States entered World War I.

³¹ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 6.

³² Peter Drucker, *People and Performance: The Best of Peter Drucker on Management* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 56, 314.

³³ W. H. Lawrence, "'Beetle' is back on the Eisenhower Team," *New York Times Magazine*, March 1, 1953, 44.

³⁴ Sources conflict regarding Smith's enlisted rank at the outset of World War I. One writer recorded that he was a first sergeant by the time he was eighteen years old – a distinct improbability; others state that he was a sergeant major in 1917 – possible but not probable; see Wayne Guthrie, "Smith Left Great Military Record," *Indianapolis News*, January 29, 1965, p. 9; Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, File Folder 3, DDEL; Memorandum, Walter Bedell Smith, January 21, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL; "Transcript of 'Newsmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 1, File Folder 1, DDEL.

Bedell Smith had joined Company D, 2nd Indiana Infantry. It was a unit whose members did not take soldiering seriously. One can glean from meager sources that in the years before the First World War the Indiana National Guard like many similar militias lacked good organization and *esprit de corps*.³⁵ The attitudes in these units were apathetic. Performance was pathetic.³⁶ Smith, however, immediately impressed the officers under whom he served, and, in particular, he excelled at drill. Years later, he confessed that his years as a first sergeant contributed to some of his less attractive personality quirks, his hair-trigger temper and tart tongue.³⁷ Many officers who had prior service as enlisted men tended to exhibit behavioral characteristics of enlisted life. Officers without service as enlisted men seldom adopted such conduct. Although a good many people in the Indiana National Guard did not take their duties seriously, Smith performed his in dead earnest. He expected guardsmen in his unit to look and act like soldiers.

Bedell Smith was scheduled to graduate from high school in the spring of 1914. Possibly because of duty in the National Guard, he failed to appear at the Emmerich Manual High School commencement exercises. The Department of War ordered units of the Indiana National Guard to the Mexican Border as part of General Pershing's expedition, but Smith remained in Indiana doing staff work.³⁸ So he was technically a high-school dropout, although Principal McComb,

³⁵ Associated Press Bulletin, August 10, 1961 in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society.

³⁶ John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 141.

³⁷ W. H. Lawrence, "'Beetle' is back on the Eisenhower Team," *New York Times Magazine*, March 1, 1953, 44.

³⁸ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 7-8.

decades later, explained that Smith had enough credits to graduate and had merely failed to show for graduation ceremonies because of military obligations. At nearly fifty years of age, General Smith received his high school diploma in 1945. Ironically, his absence that day at Manual may have helped in the long run. In time, a number of officers recommended Smith as an officer candidate.³⁹ In spring 1917, Captain James W. Hunt, Smith's company commander, recommended him for Officer Training Camp.⁴⁰ First Sergeant Smith seized the initiative. With the American declaration of war, he gambled on a reserve commission through the Reserve Officers Training Corps.

The opportunity was a godsend to Smith. The preceding four years had been difficult for the Smith family and equally frustrating for Smith himself. His middle-aged father, whose health had been in poor even as a young man, became even more ill early in 1913. Young Smith had by then enrolled in Butler University, Indianapolis, but dropped out to support his family.⁴¹ He made passing comments regarding his departure from Butler, but never revealed his feelings about it. A layman can only surmise what impact this family crisis had on Smith. Unlike Eisenhower, Smith never talked about his father and made few comments about his family. One can say with

³⁹ William P. Snyder, "Walter Bedell Smith: Eisenhower's Chief of Staff," *Military Affairs: The Journal of Military History, including theory and technology* 68 (January 1984), 6; see also "General Smith and Manual," *Indianapolis News*, March 4, 1946, n.p., Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

⁴⁰ Biographical Sketch, n.d., p. 702, in Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN; Hunt would rise to the rank of colonel in the Indiana National Guard.

⁴¹ W. H. Lawrence, "'Beetle' Is Back on the Eisenhower Team," *New York Times Magazine*, March 1, 1953, 12.

certainty that the family and its experiences are of primary importance in early socialization. It is impossible to say that a father in poor health contributed to dysfunction in the Smith family, but one may hazard a guess that it affected the socialization of Bedell Smith.⁴² Certainly, the lack of a formal education was an impediment to anyone seeking high rank in the army. It is likely that he took the disappointments of adolescence to the grave. Any further attempt to interpret the resultant alienation would be sheer speculation.⁴³

Bedell Smith had another serious interest outside of his service in the National Guard. One day while still at Manual High School, he met Mary Eleanor Cline. She was an attractive brunette, tall, slim, poised and modest. Prior to their acquaintance, Smith had not taken much notice of women, although they showed interest in him. The Cline girl was another matter. Miss Cline, as more than a few people recalled, was a “tall, tweedy and charming woman.”⁴⁴ When the couple first met, she was attending St. Agnes Academy adjacent to Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral.⁴⁵ To Bedell and friends, Mary Eleanor was “Nory.”⁴⁶ Two years Bedell’s senior, Nory

⁴² Talcott Parsons, *Social Structure and Personality* (Free Press ed. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965), 50, 213-214, 300.

⁴³ Parsons, *Social System*, 430-431; Ida Smith went to live with Bedell and his wife when he was an instructor at Fort Benning. A widow for many years, she died in her early sixties for her son entered the Army War College. See Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 50, 63.

⁴⁴ Charles Christian Wertenbaker, “The Invasion Plan: ‘Beedle’ Smith, Eisenhower’s Chief of Staff, Worked Out the Secret, Guarded Moves,” *Life* 16 (June 12, 1944), 95.

⁴⁵ *Indiana Catholic*, June 22, 1945, n.p., in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

⁴⁶ The most common spelling of Mary Eleanor Cline’s nickname is Nory. Some references refer to her as Nori or Norrie. In this dissertation, the common spelling appears.

lived just three blocks away. The young couple's commitment was genuine. Much like General Marshall, Bedell Smith guarded his emotions, reserving warmth, love and affection for his wife in privacy. Anyone who closely examines the correspondence of Smith will understand that the love and respect between Bedell and Nory Smith were life-long, in sickness and in health. Their lives were not without humor. In a post-World II interview, Smith commented that the Clines were "kind of rich," and he joked about Nory's marginal driving skills in her father's automobile.⁴⁷ Bedell and Nory were married July 1, 1917 in a traditional Roman Catholic nuptial Mass.⁴⁸ For unrevealed reasons, the union would be childless, but not loveless. After a very short honeymoon, Smith departed for officer training school.

From First Sergeant to Commissioned Officer: the First World War

Given his professed interest in history, Bedell Smith strangely left a very scanty record regarding his impressions of World War I. He never commented on the general European conflict, diplomatic blunders, the failure of the Schlieffen Plan on the western front and colossal butchery at the Somme and Verdun. As a young lieutenant, however, Smith briefly experienced the mud, blood, barbed wire that complicated the life of an infantryman. Smith and thousands of Americans trudged off to war in order to preserve freedom of the seas and democracy. Only later did Smith infer that his departure for Europe was not without anxiety.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ben Cole, "Indiana's Walter Bedell Smith," *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, October 18, 1953, p. 14; "Hoosier Gen. Bedell Smith Dies in Ambulance," *Indianapolis News*, August 10, 1961, p. 18.

⁴⁸ Biographical Sketch, n.d., p. 702, in Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN; see also Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 9.

⁴⁹ Charles Christian Wertenbaker, "The Invasion Plan," *Life* 16 (June 12, 1944), 95.

Smith understood that the United States and its army was woefully unprepared for war. The demand for trained soldiers, goods, and services vastly exceeded supply. Rapid and erratic mobilization tested the patience of those civilian and military leaders who were responsible for gearing the United States for war. Baffling conundrums in production, procurement, training, organization, and personality plagued the American industrial and military establishments. Early optimism faded as Americans became conscious of the realities of war. Smith's tactical training hardly provided much of a basis for functionalism, except for an instinctive idea of teamwork. The notion that modern warfare would have to be closely managed had surfaced in the 1870s. Those who were thinking at all – or had the time to do so – accepted it as gospel by the First World War.⁵⁰

The United States Army had 127, 588 officers and men in its ranks at the advent of war. The National Defense Act of 1916 stipulated that that National Guard could be ordered to serve abroad in time of emergency. The law also provided increased opportunities for those who wished to earn a commission in the US Army Reserve. Upon completion of training, these officers would become junior officers or specialists in the army if general mobilization was warranted.⁵¹ The army liberalized its policy, permitting non-commissioned officers like Smith to enter officer training schools.

Smith entered the US Army's officer training course at Fort Benjamin Harrison. He began

⁵⁰ Walter Millis, *Arms and Men: A Study in American Military History* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1956), 137.

⁵¹ Millett, Allan R. and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, Macmillan, 1984), 323-325.

training in mid-August 1917. The carnival-like atmosphere of his pre-war service in the National Guard had disappeared.⁵² Smith left little record of his experiences in officer training school, but he later stated that the training was a grueling ordeal. This was also true of most prospective officer candidates of that day. Many of the candidates were university graduates. Some were students who had forsaken their studies in search of adventure. Stifling his apprehension, Smith relied on grit and experience since he was “no college boy.” The Officer Training School was his only avenue to a reserve army commission. He could not afford failure. Smith soon discovered that his company commander was Captain B. C. Lockwood, Jr., a hard-bitten Regular Army officer, who tolerated no nonsense. Decades later, Smith recalled, “I was scared to death of him.”⁵³ His recollection is rather amusing in light of the fact that Smith would later stand before the taciturn and demanding General George C. Marshall, giving a report without flinching. For the moment, Bedell Smith modeled the behavior of harsh drill sergeants and demanding officers, who demanded strict obedience in training and combat. His penchant for order remained with him as he progressed through the officer ranks. His rigid manner of acting was clearly at odds with organic functionalism.

Bedell Smith’s experience with Captain Lockwood reflects the human side of an American officer who has often been reviled as heartless and devoid of feeling. Throughout training, Bedell Smith was subject to the same emotional strains that other officers experienced. His childhood friend, Humphrey C. Harrington was a bunkmate of Smith. Harrington noted the loneliness and

⁵² Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 9.

⁵³ Ben Cole, “Indiana’s Walter Bedell Smith,” *Indianapolis Star Magazine*, October 18, 1953, 14; during the post-Second World War era, Lockwood would serve under Smith as a brigadier general.

isolation of Smith and all those who shared the experience of Officers Training Camp. Smith dearly missed Nory.⁵⁴ Like others in service, nonetheless, perseverance was his main trait.

There are some accounts that describe sundry experiences of officer candidates of the First World War era. Undoubtedly, their experiences paralleled those of Bedell Smith. Like Smith, they too received reserve commissions through officer training courses as the American army began to expand in the expectation of war. Edmund P. Arpin, Jr., a native of Wisconsin, left a record of his experiences as an officer candidate. An idealist college boy, Arpin described himself as a “man of action” who joined the army in April 1917.⁵⁵ Completing officer training at Fort Sheridan in Illinois, he mustered out as a captain in 1919 after serving in Europe with the US 32nd Infantry Division. Arpin recollected the drudgery of army training, and he vividly recalled with great astonishment the pervasive profanity of drill sergeants and captains who berated those who failed to pass muster.⁵⁶ Smith undoubtedly shared similar experiences. His behavior mirrored that of the drill sergeant. Smith’s profanity was no exception and, in all likelihood, was deeply ingrained by the time he had completed officer training.

Another officer of that day would later become well known in US Army circles for his expertise as a logistician and division commander. He was Charles Bolté, who would become a general officer in the United States Army. He had studied at Armour Institute of Technology, today, the Illinois Institute of Technology. Bolté completed his training at Plattsburgh, New York, in 1916. Lieutenant Bolté began active duty with the same division as did Bedell Smith – the

⁵⁴ *Indianapolis Star*, August 19, 1950, p. 3.

⁵⁵ “A Wisconsinite in World War I: Reminiscences of Edmund P. Arpin,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 51 (Autumn 1967), Part 1, 4.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Part 1, 6, 8, Part 2, 125.

newly organized US 4th Infantry Division. He thought that some aspects of the officer training program were suspect. He was particularly critical of the subsequent preparation that both officers and enlisted men received prior to combat. It was, he said, “a case of the blind leading the blind.”⁵⁷ Indeed, many of the junior officers of the American army of that day were unprepared for battle because the Officer Training Camps had offered its candidates only rudimentary education in tactics.⁵⁸

Upon completion of officer training, Bedell Smith received his commission as second lieutenant on November 27, 1917.⁵⁹ Receiving his gold bars, he became what was popularly called a “Sears and Roebuck lieutenant” (the Second World War generation would refer to these newly commissioned officers as “90-day wonders.”⁶⁰ Smith chose the infantry branch of the combined arms. The army posted him to Company A, 1st Battalion, 39th Infantry, 7th Brigade, US 4th Infantry Division. Granted a short furlough just prior to the Christmas holiday of 1917, Smith spent his time with his new bride and her parents. Shortly thereafter, he received orders to join his unit at Camp Greene, North Carolina in the pines of the Piedmont area.⁶¹ There, the Department of War fleshed out the remainder of the Ivy Division with new recruits and volunteers.

⁵⁷ Bolté as quoted in Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars: The American Military Experience in World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 57. See also Charles Bolté, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn Burg, Oral History # 395, October 17, 1973, DDEL.

⁵⁸ Timothy K. Nenner, “Tactical Dysfunction in the AEF, 1917-1918,” *Military Affairs* (October 1987): 179.

⁵⁹ Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, Folder 3, DDEL.

⁶⁰ Charles Bolté, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn Burg, Oral History # 395, October 17, 1973, DDEL.

⁶¹ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 10.

The conditions at Camp Greene were not at all accommodating. Winter 1918 was extremely severe. Even the American South was cold that winter. There was an *ad hoc* aspect to the congested camp because of the shortage of barracks. The men lived in tents. Battling wind, rain and mud, the officers and men of the division soon found themselves contending with snowstorms. Weather conditions prohibited proper training. The companies, battalions and regiments of the US 4th Infantry Division competed with other Regular Army units for personnel. Many of the new recruits, moreover, were mentally and physically unfit for duty in the infantry. Illness also took its toll. A terrible outbreak of spinal meningitis furthered hampered training. There were more delays until skeletal units had reached full strength.⁶² By early March, however, the entire division had filled out.

The Ludendorff Offensive of that spring increased demand for American divisions on the Western Front. By third week of April 1918, the lead elements US 4th Infantry Division had arrived in Camp Mills, Long Island, New York for one final week of training. From there, Smith and his comrades moved on to Camp Merritt in New Jersey which served as a staging ground for embarkation for Europe. Like many American divisions during the First World War, the US 4th Infantry Division was inadequately trained for the rigors of trench warfare. Smith and his fellow comrades would soon learned how ill prepared they were for war.

After a short furlough, Smith and his division embarked for Europe on May 9, 1918. It was an uneventful Atlantic crossing. Upon disembarkation at Brest, Smith began receiving

⁶² Christian A. Bach and Henry Noble Hall, *The Fourth Division: Its Services and Achievements in the World War* (Garden City, NJ: US 4th Infantry Division Press, 1920), 18-22. Bach served as a colonel and chief of staff in the division, and Noble was a London *Times* war correspondent.

training in small-unit tactics in a quiet sector of the front. He commented briefly on his combat experience a decade later. Smith was convinced of the need for cooperation and coordination in all missions. By that time, practical functionalism was a solid staple of army education. In the event of another war, Smith thought that tactical performance would have to improve.⁶³ Smith's unit had to contend with poor weather and logistical problems that armies have always confronted. But it seems that during World War I inadequate training, inexperience, poor communications and tactical dysfunction were particularly troublesome. These difficulties hindered the efficiency of American combat units.⁶⁴

Events in Europe in 1918 affected the subsequent career of Smith. Wounded in action, his experience in combat was brief. He always spoke modestly of his war record. On a number of occasions, particularly after World War II, Smith expressed appreciation for the those who bore the burden of combat.⁶⁵ Because his experience in command was limited, a few army officers questioned whether Smith was really a soldier. Major General Raymond W. Barker, for instance, was rather dismissive of Smith's combat record in World War I, stating that he was in essence an office manager.⁶⁶ Although Smith was not always true to functionalism, Barker and others did not

⁶³ Walter Bedell Smith, "Operations of the 1st Battalion, 39th Infantry in Aisne-Marne Offensive," *Mailing List* 4 (Fort Benning: Infantry School: June 1931): 137-152.

⁶⁴ Nenninger, *Tactical Dysfunction in the AEF*, 181; Charles Christian Wertenbaker, "The Invasion Plan," *Life* 16 (June 12, 1944), 95; Smith was posted to the 7th Brigade, US 4th Infantry Division.

⁶⁵ As quoted in *Indianapolis News*, June 21, 1945, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society; WIBC Radio, Indianapolis, and its affiliates broadcasted Smith's address.

⁶⁶ Raymond W. Barker, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, July 15, 1972, Oral History 331, DDEL.

fully grasp all of the concepts of functionalism either. The interdependence of all units, whether line or staff, is an underlying principle of functionalism. War managers – office personnel, if one wishes to use the term – must coordinate efforts in pursuit of military objectives.

Bedell Smith received his “baptism of fire” during the early phase of the Aisne-Marne offensive (July 18-August 5, 1918). Unlike the American 1st and 2nd Infantry Divisions, which functioned with some degree of tactical independence, the newly arrived US 4th Infantry Division would not operate as a unit. In piecemeal fashion, the Allied command threw the US 7th Brigade into the II Corps, French 6th Army, in the Soissons sector near the junction of the Marne and Ourcq Rivers.⁶⁷ The command ordered the marginally-trained 39th Infantry to the front on July 16 as part of an attempt to reduce the Marne salient. Smith’s regiment began moving toward the front under the mistaken impression that it was going on a tour of the trenches. In the afternoon, however, the green regiment received orders to move to the front in earnest. This would be no leisurely tour. Smith and his comrades would be participating in a major offensive. The unit began an uncoordinated advance into the line. It had to rely on French artillery support.

On the evening of July 17th, Smith’s battalion began marching through the Valley of the Ourcq. Bedell Smith later recalled the experiences of the 1st Battalion, US 39th Infantry during this offensive.⁶⁸ The regiment was to fill a gap in the front line between the French 6th and 10th Armies. Specifically, Smith’s regiment was to relieve a unit of the French 33rd Division.⁶⁹ Night

⁶⁷ Laurence Stallings, *The Doughboys: The Story of the AEF, 1917-1918*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 158-159; Bach and Hall, *Fourth Division*, 68-69.

⁶⁸ Walter Bedell Smith, “Operations of the 1st Battalion, 39th Infantry in Aisne-Marne Offensive,” *Mailing List 4* (Fort Benning: Infantry School: June 1931): 137-152.

⁶⁹ Bach and Hall, *Fourth Division*, 69-70.

had fallen. Bringing up the rear, the 1st Battalion encountered difficult terrain. To add to misery, the heavens poured torrents of rain that soon turned the ground and roads into a sea of mud.⁷⁰ Transportation, including mule trains bearing ammunition, foodstuffs and supplies, became entangled with French artillery units bound for the front. Slogging blindly in the inky darkness of night, the 39th Infantry, caked with mud and dead with fatigue, stumbled into the front lines opposite the Savières River just before midnight. The river was more like a stream, and, just beyond it, lay the 1st Battalion's first tactical objective – a densely-wooded ridge known as Buisson de Cresnes.

Smith instinctively recognized that things were not going well for his unit. The battalion commander decided to forego reconnaissance. Addle-brained junior officers and sergeants stared blankly at poorly lit terrain maps. Unit cohesion broke down. The platoons A and B Companies became hopelessly entangled. Recollecting the disorder within less than two hundred yards of the German position, Smith later wrote, “The floundering, splashing, and the shouting made enough noise to alarm every German in the Marne salient.”⁷¹ Fortunately for Smith and his platoon, a German counterattack never came on that night.

At daylight, officers and men of the 39th Infantry went into action mid-way in the line of the thirty-five mile salient. The Allied High Command had issued orders that the attack would begin at 4:30 A.M, July 18, 1918. The Americans would follow an hour later. Because of confusion in the French camp, the French 6th Army commander, General Jean M. J. Degoutte,

⁷⁰ Smith, “Operations of the 1st Battalion,” *Mailing List*, 138-139.

⁷¹ Bach and Hall, *Fourth Division*, 139-141.

belatedly changed the jump-off time to 8:00. Luckily, the failure to reconnoiter the front did not seriously hamper the assault in part because the Germans did not believe anyone would be foolhardy enough to attack across the swollen Savières River. The muddy waterway, however, caused delay. Smith later recalled the lack of command and control. Individual soldiers and isolated small units acquitted themselves rather well. Nonetheless, Smith thought that his unit's success in capturing its objective owed more to luck than planning.⁷²

Bedell Smith described what happened the next day as a badly botched blunder. In a series of uncoordinated movements over difficult terrain, the 39th Infantry paid a terrible price. Raked to and fro by artillery, mortar and machine gun fire, the Americans plowed forward massacring their German tormentors who by that time had opened up with trench mortars as well. The 1st Battalion sustained 542 casualties, 67 missing-in action.⁷³ Lieutenant Smith was wounded. It was a tough initiation. The tactical performance of the American Expeditionary Force was unsatisfactory, despite later pronouncements.⁷⁴

Fortunately, Smith's shrapnel wounds were not serious, but his brief combat career ended. Smith understood, nonetheless, what it was like to be under enemy fire. He later commented on the importance of sound training, tactics, and intelligence in terms of established principles of war such as speed and surprise. His experience in combat reinforced the idea of the interdependence of all groups within the army. He had a rough conception of functionalism at the close of the

⁷² Smith, "Operations of the 1st Battalion," *Mailing List*, 150-151.

⁷³ Bach and Hall, *Fourth Division*, 74, 87.

⁷⁴ Nenninger, *Tactical Dysfunction in the AEF*, 177. See also Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army*, 139.

war.⁷⁵ Later, he correctly concluded that disobedience in any institution might become malignant.

Smith's brief stint as a combat leader became the object of derision in some quarters. Much of this criticism was unfair. Mark Wayne Clark had limited experience as a captain in World War I – Eisenhower and Bradley had none.⁷⁶ These judgments were arbitrary as well. Smith never gained broad tactical experience. Some would label him a “War Department Man.”⁷⁷

Transition to Staff Officer

After he was wounded, Lieutenant Bedell Smith began the transition from combat officer to staff officer. The United States Army had to muster millions of soldiers for service in a foreign war. The army struggled to insure adequate support services. Army Chief of Staff General Peyton C. March worked hard to provide Pershing's army with logistical support, but he found it impossible to provide adequate personnel for the various echelons.⁷⁸ During the course of the war, the American Expeditionary Force confronted an acute shortage of staff officers, whose skills were needed for the Personnel and Operation Divisions of the general headquarters.

⁷⁵ Smith, “Operations of the 1st Battalion,” *Mailing List*, 150-152.

⁷⁶ Mark W. Clark, *Calculated Risk* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 58; Martin Blumenson, *The Patton Papers 1940-1945*, paperback ed. (Boston: Da Capo Press), 1974), 185.

⁷⁷ Barker, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, July 15, 1972, Oral History 331, DDEL.

⁷⁸ John J. Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, Vol. 1 (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1931), 104; Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, Macmillan, 1981), 332-333. The conflict between March and Pershing is part of another story. In an odd sense, the American Army had two general staffs during the First World War; one in Washington, the other at Chaumont. By the time Bedell Smith became General Eisenhower's chief of staff, there would be no doubt where ultimate authority in the American Army lay. It would rest not with a theater commander but with General George C. Marshall. See Edward M. Coffman, *The Hilt of the Sword: The Career of Peyton C. March*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 59-83.

Pershing believed that the best qualified staff officers had been trained at the infantry and cavalry service schools at Fort Leavenworth. Some members of his staff were graduates of the Army War College, but that institution did not have reputation that it would later deserve. Both March and Pershing tried to rotate staff officers at all levels in the United States and Europe, but the practice was not feasible. By autumn 1918, the shortage of staff officers had become so acute that it was impossible to fill staff positions in field commands. Pershing decided to establish an American school at Langres, France which provided a three-month course for staff officers.⁷⁹ Having recovered from his wounds, Smith took advantage of the opportunity to serve as a staff officer.

Chiefs of staff have always confronted the problem of enforcing the chain of command on one hand and persuading subordinates to do willing what they do not wish to do on the other. Army staff officers also model what they have learned from experience. Bedell was no exception in this respect. One of the most important staff officers in the American Expeditionary Force was General James G. Harbord. His role as chief of staff presaged Smith's later activities as General Eisenhower's chief of staff. The career paths of Harbord and Smith were in many ways similar. Both began their military careers as privates; both were zealous in guarding the prerogatives of their superiors. As gatekeeper for theater commanders, Harbord and Smith were feared in their

⁷⁹ Those officers who had served in the line and had passed the screening process were admitted to the school. The Langres Staff College cranked out four classes between November 1917 and December 1918, but the institution simply could not meet the demand for staff; see Pershing to Baker, November 19, 1918, as printed in *The United States Army in the World War*, vol. 12, (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 2-3; Nenninger, *Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army*, 139; Kenneth Finlayson, *An Uncertain Trumpet: The Evolution of U.S. Army Infantry Doctrine, 1919-1941* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 40.

respective domains. Loyalty was their trademark, a prerequisite for anyone in a bureaucratic organization. Teamwork was their motto. Neither Harbord nor Smith were West Point graduates, although the former earned a college degree. Both officers came up through the ranks and were graduates of the army service schools.⁸⁰ Like Smith, Harbord was no respecter of pedigree. Older officers, particularly those serving in the line, resented Harbord's influence with the boss.⁸¹ Donald Smythe has written that Harbord was the "neck of the bottle" through which everything flowed.⁸² A generation later the same was true in Bedell Smith's, but the functionalist would conceive the metaphor as the brain of the army – the General Staff. The headquarters that Harbord commanded during World War I, however, paled in comparison to the organization that Smith managed in World War II. The monstrous size of Eisenhower's headquarters staff directly affected its manageability. It had serious implications for a practical functionalist like Bedell Smith.

Many early staff officers had hard-boiled reputations. Colonel Alfred W. Bjornstad, for instance, presented the stereotypical image of the aggressive staff officer, armed with an acerbic tongue. Serving as chief of staff of the US III Corps, Colonel Bjornstad also had a reputation for brilliance. Dubbed by his associates as suspicious, he was difficult to please and many considered

⁸⁰ James G. Harbord, *The American Army in France, 1917-1919* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1936), xiii; General Harbord (1866-1947) was born in Illinois, but reared in Kansas. He graduated from Kansas State Agricultural College in 1887, later Kansas State University.

⁸¹ Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army*, 143.

⁸² Donald Smythe, *Pershing: General of the Armies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 35.

him a full-fledged bully.⁸³ There was a measure of Harbord and Bjornstad in Bedell Smith.

One must ask whether Smith consciously modeled, or borrowed, from other officers like Harbord and Bjornstad. Later functionalists have criticized sociological abstractions and theories about individuals and society without reference to historical context. One must not frame the dilemmas that Smith faced as operational chief of staff by ascribing too much emphasis to alienation.⁸⁴ Some of Smith's behavior was modeled on his experiences in the old army. The events of Smith's early life were never observed with any degree of accuracy and elicited no comment. Those that have been recovered must be studied within context.⁸⁵

George C. Marshall was one officer of that day whose manners and methods epitomized functionalism. He served as a staff officer in the US 1st Infantry Division and then later as the assistant chief of staff for operations in the US 1st Army. Here the contrast with Bedell Smith is striking. A master of self-control, Marshall was an officer of exemplary caliber. Assertive but taciturn, he understood power and the limits of authority. He won Pershing's respect without resorting to sycophancy.⁸⁶ The General of the Armies highly regarded Marshall's abilities as a

⁸³ Nenner, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army*, 143. Bullard relieved Bjornstad in mid-October 1918 for having overstepped the limits of his authority.

⁸⁴ Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 40-48.

⁸⁵ Mills tried integrate sociological issues with the private life of individual within historical context. In other words, he thought that sociology should attempt to reconcile biography and environmental situations.

⁸⁶ Coffman, *The Hilt of the Sword*, 166; Nenner, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army*, 144-145; Pershing, *My Experiences in the World War*, vol. 2, 258, 402.

war manager. Ambitious and efficient in many respects, Smith never measured up to Marshall, who served as his mentor.

Bedell Smith did not receive his staff training at Langres. After receiving a tetanus shot at the field hospital, Smith moved on to a base hospital. His wounds healed quickly, and he firmly believed that he would return to his combat unit.⁸⁷ By August 1918, however, Smith was bound for Washington D.C. for staff duty in War Department General Staff. There Smith learned that the army had assigned him to the Bureau of Military Intelligence.⁸⁸ In the nation's capital, Smith received his first lessons as a war manager.

Bedell Smith returned to the United States with a hazy grasp of functionalism. The army service schools later reinforced what he had experienced. His wartime experience had granted him a crude understanding of group interdependence in the army. His childhood was typically middle-class. Although he had exhibited perfectionism and inflexibility, one can only guess with respect to the sociological and psychological implications of Smith's early life. Having served in Europe, Lieutenant Bedell Smith had in large part fulfilled his boyhood dream of becoming an officer in the United States Army. He had done so without a high school diploma and a university education. Smith later stated that he had no regrets for his meager formal education, but his remark was less than candid. Smith was not a member of the "West Point Protective Society" nor the "Chaumont Circle." He would seize, nevertheless, every opportunity afforded an army officer during the inter-war era. Smith would have to secure a commission in the Regular Army.

⁸⁷ "Transcript of 'Newsmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 2, DDEL; Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 20-21.

⁸⁸ Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, File Folder 3, DDEL.

Chapter Two

Inter-war Years: Regular Army Officer, Education and Health

During the inter-war years, Bedell Smith began his career as a professional army officer. The National Defense Act of 1920 provided Smith an opportunity to receive a commission in the Regular Army. Smith was one of 14,565 reserve officers whom the US Army granted a chance to test for regular army commissions.¹ During the first decade of the inter-war period, Smith worked as a staff officer in Washington, D. C. and at various army posts in the United States and its territories. He was highly motivated in an era of slow promotions and low pay. His superiors noted his efficiency at every post that he held.

Smith received three important assignments during the 1920s which affected his later career. First, he began the decade attached to the Bureau of Military Intelligence. Smith gained knowledge about the workings of the national capital. He familiarized himself with staff policies and procedures of the State, War and Navy Departments.² Second, the War Department detailed Bedell Smith to the Bureau of the Budget in 1925. While he was preparing for these protracted budgetary sessions, his writing and speaking skills improved greatly. His tenure at the Bureau of the Budget marked the beginning of his career as a military manager. Smith also served as Executive Officer and Deputy Chief Coordinator for the US Army during the Coolidge

¹ War Department, *Report of the Chief of Staff, United States Army*, (Washington D. C.: US Government Printing Office, 1920), 12-13, 34-35; *Report of the Chief of Staff*, 1921, 54. Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, Macmillan, 1984), 367; Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL. The US Army permitted Smith to keep his rank as a first lieutenant in Reserve Officers Corps when he transferred to the Regular Army. He received his commission in the Regular Army, July 1, 1920. He held that rank of first lieutenant until 1929.

² Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL.

Administration, and, by 1927, he was Executive Vice Chairman of the Federal Liquidation Board. His job entailed preparing estimates relating to army appropriations. These positions required great mastery of detail. The strict line-item accounting method of the day granted little leeway on budgetary matters. When presenting requests, an officer would have to give concise, logical and articulate presentations. Smith's duties constituted on-the-job training. The experience he gained in Washington, D. C. served him well twenty years later. He could not afford to be sloppy, because unclear thinking meant rebuff. Perhaps his attitude reflected a fear of disapproval as much as the functionalist goal of doing what is best for the army.

Smith received a third assignment – a two-year stint at Fort McKinley in the Philippine Islands in 1929.³ He did not receive a command however. When he discovered that he would be serving as an adjutant with the 45th Infantry, he was unhappy. Smith earned a reputation as a competent staff officer. Hard work earned him a promotion to the rank of captain.⁴ Smith soon had the reputation of an officer who could get things done quickly and efficiently. An anonymous officer who served with Smith in the 45th Infantry later referred to him “as the best regimental

³ Biographical Sketch, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, DDEL. While serving at other army posts during the 1920s, Smith seldom found the monotony of staff work challenging. At Fort Dodge Iowa, for instance, he was frequently out of the office by noon. Smith often went hunting and fishing in the countryside north of Des Moines. He read works by Joseph Conrad, Ford Maddox Ford and Edgar Lee Masters as well as military history. See Walter Bedell Smith, “Comments on the Russians” September 25, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 2, DDEL. See also William P. Snyder, “Walter Bedell Smith: Eisenhower’s Chief of Staff,” *Military Affairs: The Journal of Military History* 68 (January 1984), 6.

⁴ Biographical Sketch, n.d., p. 703, in Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN.

adjutant” in the service.⁵ The post gave Smith a fundamental knowledge of line and staff procedures at levels of company and field command.

With the onset of the Great Depression, Smith began his formal education at the army service schools. Instructors attempted to inject functionalism into the general curriculum. In other words, Smith never enrolled in a specific course entitled “Functionalism,” but the current teaching methods accorded with functionalist thought. Throughout the 1930s – at Fort Benning, Fort Leavenworth and the Army War College – instructors tried to implement progressive education. Formal training stressed understanding, judgment and application of logic in problem solving. At the Army War College, student-officers even discussed the importance of temperament in assessing a candidate’s potential.⁶ Smith was a good student, but intellectual ability is not the only qualification of good officer. He never internalized all of the concepts of functionalism.

By the 1930s Smith had drawn the attention of army officers who would later hold prominent positions in the military hierarchy. In that decade, Smith also began experiencing gastro-intestinal disorders, which affected his performance as an army officer. Poor health suggests dysfunction. It can affect socialization. Although Smith’s health did not represent dysfunction in a clinical sense, it bred alienation, particularly during his tours as an instructor

⁵ As quoted, Harold Hinton, “Soldier, Diplomat, Intelligence Chief,” *New York Times Magazine* (August 27, 1950): 30. See also *Stars and Stripes*, September 12, 1942, London press clippings in Smith Papers, Box 7, Folder A-L, DDEL.

⁶ Boyd L. Dastrup, *The US Army Command and General Staff College: A Centennial History* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1982), 60; Harry P. Ball, *Of Responsible Command: A History of the U.S. Army War College* (Carlisle, PA: Alumni Association, US Army War College, 1983), 211-213; George S. Pappas, *Prudens Futuri: The US Army War College, 1901-1967* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 1968), 90.

at Fort Benning. His method of teaching often violated the basic principles of functionalism.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which his poor health affected his teaching.

Fort Benning, Omar N. Bradley and George C. Marshall

Upon completion of his tour of duty oversea, Smith reported to the Infantry School at Fort Benning in the spring of 1931. He enrolled directly as a candidate in the Advanced Officers' Course because he already had considerable experience at company level.⁷ All of the special service schools, whether Fort Benning, Fort Riley or Fort Sill, functioned as laboratories for the development of tactics.⁸ At Fort Benning, Bedell Smith began his formal military education.

Lieutenant Colonel George C. Marshall was the Assistant Commandant in charge of the Department of Academic Affairs at the Infantry School. During his tenure at Fort Benning (1927-1932), Marshall revamped the curriculum especially concerning infantry tactics. Since his days at Leavenworth, Marshall had developed his thoughts concerning tactics, the employment of soldiers in battle. Rejecting military scholasticism on the one hand and the "school solution" on the other, he wisely chose the middle path, steering clear of rote learning and warfare by the book. Military doctrine constitutes the common language that guides all military operations regardless of the level of war – tactical, operational and strategic. Infantry tactical doctrine is the body of recommended methods of fighting. A pragmatic functionalist, Marshall believed that infantry techniques had to be adjusted to circumstances to insure results. Infantry officers need to adapt to

⁷ Office Biography of General Smith, January 21, 1944, attached to letter, Colonel Dan Gilmer to General Smith, March 13, 1945, Chief of Staff's Personal Papers, Smith Papers, Box 7, DDEL.

⁸ Thomas T. Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1971, Oral History 486, DDEL. The schools of the combined arms were at Fort Benning, Fort Riley and Fort Sill for infantry, cavalry and artillery, respectively.

unforeseen events. Because of past experiences, Marshall and his instructors focused on simplicity of instruction and orders. In other words, army infantry officers needed to distinguish between infantry tactical doctrine and infantry technique in the field. Marshall's focus was on the art of improvisation.⁹

The cornerstone of military education of Smith and his fellow candidates was a study in functionalism. Teachers and students at Fort Benning discussed problems in search of practical solutions. Instructors buttressed lessons in infantry doctrine with practical exercises. Functionalism emphasized the importance of uniform prescriptions upon which good generalship had depended in the past and their connection with ever-changing tactical developments.¹⁰ According to functionalist thought, sound decision making yields actions based on the probability that the means employed will yield predictable results.¹¹ The strength of functionalism lay in its emphasis on observable consequences and adaptability. The instructors at the Infantry School were not committed to ideology. Ideas were essentially instruments that fostered tested and workable plans for action. The army was able to get things done in its collective interest by adopting functionalist methods. Theory is useless unless scientifically verified. Marshall and his instructors prepared company-grade officers for combat, and, any reasonable assessment of the army education within historical context and its limitations will render a positive verdict.

Bedell Smith made few comments about his years at the Infantry School. In a brief state-

⁹ Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall*, vol. 1, *Education of a General, 1880-1939* (New York: Viking Press, 1963), 251-255.

¹⁰ Wilkinson, *The Brain of An Army*, 181.

¹¹ Parsons, *Structure of Social Action*, 699.

ment a decade later, he spoke of the excellent tradition at Fort Benning.¹² He made, however, a number of acquaintances at the Infantry School – all of whom influenced his career. The first of these was Major Omar N. Bradley. A native of Moberly, Missouri and graduate of West Point, Bradley was the chief instructor in the Weapons Section. Perpetually on the lookout for talent, Bradley immediately took notice of Smith, whom he held to be an outstanding student officer in the Advanced Course.¹³ Bradley observed that the hardworking, 35-year-old captain was articulate with an analytical mind. He recorded that Captain Smith was genuinely modest, shy, not without humor and kindness.

Major Bradley likewise noticed aspects of Bedell Smith's personality that contributed to his negative persona. Rather stiff in public, brutally candid and tempestuous at times, Smith reminded Bradley of Lieutenant Colonel Joseph W. Stilwell, who was also serving as an instructor at Fort Benning. The hard-driving, sarcastic Stilwell had already earned a nasty reputation for discipline, perfectionism and a fair share of intolerance. Bradley concluded, nevertheless, that Smith would make a good instructor. He immediately put in a formal request that the Infantry School employ Smith as an instructor in the Weapons Section, following graduation. Shortly thereafter, Marshall paid a visit to a classroom where Smith was presenting a monograph on an assigned topic.

Unflinchingly, Smith gave his talk, expressing his ideas with great deftness. It would not be the last time that Smith came under intense scrutiny of the steely, blue-eyed Marshall. Smith

¹² J. Lawton Collins, *Lightning Joe: An Autobiography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 192.

¹³ Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1951), 31.

apparently handled the subsequent discussion with skill. Colonel Marshall wondered why no one had requested Smith as an instructor.¹⁴ Returning to his office, Marshall discovered on his desk Bradley's recommendation of Smith. Although he did not discuss the matter with Bradley, Marshall undoubtedly was pleased, not only with the prospect of Smith as instructor, but with the judgment of Bradley as well. Smith had passed his first test with Marshall. Finishing in the top third of his class, Bedell Smith graduated from the Infantry School in June 1932.¹⁵ Following graduation, Smith began his first hitch as an instructor at Fort Benning, assigned to Bradley's section.

In fact, more than competence bound Omar Bradley and Bedell Smith. The socio-economic backgrounds of officers were becoming increasingly less static during the inter-war era. Bradley and Smith, representatives of the emerging class of war managers, were both of lower-middle class background. In this they found a great deal of commonality. Bradley organized a trapshooting range as he too was fond of hunting. Smith joined Bradley and fellow officers by invitation. By the latter's admission, the two men became friends. One should not, of course, exaggerate the depth of the relationship, because later there would be friction under the pressures of war. Bradley later recalled that he found Smith friendly and more relaxed away from work. Nonetheless, he was never comfortable with Smith's abrasive behavior.¹⁶

¹⁴ Omar N. Bradley and Clay Blair, *A General's Life: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 69.

¹⁵ "Transcript of 'Newsmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 2, DDEL.

¹⁶ Bradley and Blair, *A General's Life*, 69, 124.

George C. Marshall had the greatest influence on Smith's military career. A graduate of Virginia Military Institute and Leavenworth and a master of the English language, Marshall was a paragon of self-discipline and a superb teacher. He displayed a rare talent for succinct instruction and incisive interrogation. Stern but fair, Marshall set high standards of performance from students, instructors and those who later fought under him. He firmly believed that leadership required more than mere formal compliance; one had to lead by commanding assent.¹⁷ More importantly with respect to Smith's functionalism, Marshall taught that romantic ideas about warfare were nonsense. The army and its constituent units were corporate entities led by managing directors. Teamwork, analysis and common sense trumped unbridled enthusiasm.¹⁸

Until the end of his life, Smith spoke of his affection and admiration for Marshall as the ideal officer. Despite his gift for analysis and synthesis when speaking and writing, Smith never fully measured up to the standard that Marshall presented. Smith later stated that Marshall had thought of him as a son.¹⁹ Smith was quick to point out, however, that Marshall had always addressed him by his last name. By adopting Marshall as his model, he set unrealistic goals, which were impossible to meet. Like many perfectionists, Smith placed high demands on himself and the process work gave him little satisfaction. Although Smith earned Marshall's praise on a number of occasions, one should not describe their relationship as close friendship.

¹⁷ Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall*, vol. 1, *Education of a General, 1880-1939*, 248-255; Leonard Mosley, *Marshall: Hero for Our Times* (New York: Hearst Books, 1969), 18-19, 65-74.

¹⁸ Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, 273.

¹⁹ Holograph, Smith to Ismay, February 26, 1961, 4/29/40, Papers of Lord Hastings L. Ismay, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.

Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth

Smith had yet to demonstrate further competence in the advanced schools of the army. A revised federal law permitted increased enrollment at the US Army Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth.²⁰ With an excellent service record, Smith took full advantage of the opportunity. In the first week of September 1933, Bedell Smith joined his colleagues in Kansas. His arrival coincided with the US Army's decision to return to the two-year course.²¹

The curriculum at Leavenworth had undergone revision since World War I. Functionalism stresses practical methods to achieve results which are readily verifiable. In accordance with functionalist methods and objectives, the Command and General Staff School did not focus on military theory or abstractions. The study of theory, doctrine and emerging technologies were of no benefit if the army lacked effective commanders and staff. The school supplemented lectures with map exercises and related problems.²² Believing that theory gleaned from lectures was insufficient when the test of war came, instructors at the Command and General Staff School directed its student-officers to apply knowledge gained from past experiences. Whether these experiences were personal or drawn from historical examples, all solutions and recommended actions had to be practical. Some candidates found the grilling that they experienced perplexing.

²⁰ Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 30.

²¹ Ball, *Of Responsible Command*, 243-244; Pappas, *Prudens Futuri*, 90; Dastrup, *The US Army Command and General Staff College*, 44, 54, 60. During the 1920s, the Leavenworth course had been reduce to a single year. Bedell Smith's classmates included several notable Second World War commanders, Mark Wayne Clark, Matthew Ridgway and Maxwell D. Taylor.

²² Dastrup, *The US Army Command and General Staff College*, 74; Timothy K. Nenniger, "Leavenworth and Its Critics: The U.S. Army Command and General Staff School, 1920-1940," *Infantry Journal* 58 (April 1994): 225.

Bedell Smith, who handled these interrogations rather well, later became a master of intimidation himself. Student-officers got into trouble if their recommended actions showed little chance of predictable results.

Life at the Command and General Staff School was often taxing. Competition was fierce. Instructors graded candidates solely on an individual basis whereas the faculty at the Army War College did not formally rank student-officers. Most candidates found the lecture courses not all that difficult. Practical applications in assigned exercises, however, tested the mental endurance of some student-officers. Some talk surfaced regarding suicides of officer-candidates and their wives.²³ Most candidates found the experience valuable. They understood that the mission of the Command and General Staff College was to prepare its candidates for line and staff duty with tactical units and higher tactical command. The educational program at Leavenworth combined responsibility and experience with practicality.²⁴

Leavenworth put its stamp on Bedell Smith. In all probability, Smith first synthesized his thoughts regarding functionalism while at Leavenworth. He never specifically commented on functionalism, but his subsequent actions reflected many of its principles. As an organization man, Smith came to believe that an individual's sense of meaning is derived from the group – in his case, the army. Longing to belong, Smith sublimated himself in the group. This trait later

²³ Charles Bolté, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, October 17, 1973, Oral History 395, DDEL; Nenninger, *Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army*, 105.

²⁴ Frank James Price, *Troy H. Middleton: A Biography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 91-92; Jacob L. Devers, interview #1 by Maclyn P. Burg, Oral History 377, DDEL.

served him well with equals and superiors.²⁵ Individualism alone had no place in Smith's world. Smith professed that close collaboration with members of the group guaranteed predictability and equilibrium. All social institutions, including the one to which he belonged, were necessary for the survival of society. Smith thought that society and its institutions were organic, but he was not always true to the functionalist creed. He abhorred conflict, yet with subordinates he often precipitated it.²⁶

Smith never commented on the relative merits of the educational system at the Command and General Staff College. Meager evidence suggests that the rigors of Leavenworth had not tested his abilities. It is clear, however, that Leavenworth provided the framework for the later Ike-Beetle team. Later, as Supreme Allied Commander, Eisenhower exercised the power of command whereas Smith was the administrator of the staff. Smith had learned that an effective staff officer relieved the commander of burdensome administrative detail. He knew that a chief of staff had to insure that subordinates followed the the will of the commander. Smith understood that a commander and his staff officer were bound by loyalty. The commander was the initiator behind operations and the chief of staff was the executive agent.²⁷ For a practical soldier, Smith had a basic grasp of functionalism. An obedient army bureaucrat, he sought predictability and order. Smith conceived of the army as an organic whole, which required commitment to the

²⁵ Sir Hastings L. Ismay, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 20, 1946, USAMHI; Smith to Ismay, December 15, 1942, The Papers of Lord Ismay, 4/29/1, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, University of London, UK.

²⁶ William H., Jr. Whyte, *The Organizational Man* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1956), 7-8; Durkheim, *The Division of Labor*, xv. Aee also Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 170.

²⁷ Dastrup, *US Army Command and General Staff College*, 74-75.

principle of unity of command. He would later follow the letter of functionalism, not always its spirit. Like other staff officers, Smith had little experience with large staffs and never dreamed that his lack of firsthand knowledge would complicate his future tasks. The extent of executive authority that a future commander might grant his chief of staff was not clear at all.²⁸

On June 21, 1935, Bedell Smith graduated from Leavenworth in the top third of his class.²⁹

Like most of his classmates, he never received a command. For that reason, one of his friends,

²⁸ The debate over the relative merits of the educational program at the Command and General Staff School is an argument without end. Oral histories point to three general currents of opinion regarding the curriculum at Leavenworth: first, positive reflections; second, negative recollections; third, those opinions that meshed criticism with significant regard for the methods of instruction used at Leavenworth. Selected opinions are as follows. Eisenhower, who finished at the top of his class (1926), believed that average candidates with proper attitudes, good study habits, and adequate rest mastered the program. Criticism varied – the most severe came from those outside of the infantry arm. Stilwell, Patton, Bolté and Lutes – among others – groused about rote learning, arbitrary evaluations, and instructors who had failed to keep pace with technological and logistical developments. Omar N. Bradley was most representative of the third category, critical of the instructional methods but convinced that assets of Leavenworth outweighed its debits. For a sampling of opinion, see Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Eisenhower: The Prewar Diaries and Selected Papers, 1905-1941*, edited by Holt and Leyerzapf, 44-48. Eisenhower had written an essay on the subject, current housed in NARA, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, RG-407, but the writer relies on a revised edition entitled, "The Leavenworth Course," *Infantry Journal* 30 (June 1927): 589-600; George S. Patton to Dwight D. Eisenhower, July 9, 1926, Box 91, File Folder 6 (July 1926-November 1942), Pre-Presidential Papers, DDEL; Stanley P. Hirshson, *General Patton: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), 169-171; Charles Bolté, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, October 17, 1973, Oral History 395, DDEL; Leroy Lutes, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 20, 1976, Oral History 408, DDEL; Elwood R. Quesada, interview # 3 by John Luter, September 12, 1967, Oral History 308, DDEL, original copy in Columbia University Oral History Project; Bradley G. Chynoweth, *Bellamy Park* (New York: Vanity Press, 1975), 121; Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1951), 495; Omar N. Bradley and Clay Blair, *A General's Life: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 79; Thomas T. Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1972, Oral History 486, DDEL; Thomas J. Betts, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn Burg, October 18, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL.

²⁹ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 61, n. 80, 376; Faculty Board Proceedings, June 16, 1935, Combined Arms Research Library, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS; Smith's precise ranking was 39/120.

Maxwell D. Taylor, referred to the Class of 1935 as one of “aides, adjutants, and asses.”³⁰ Yet upon graduation, Smith had the satisfaction of having met the standards of his superiors and peers. A few select friends believed that he would do well in the event of war.³¹

Teaching, Health and Marriage

Failing to obtain a line assignment despite his high standing at Leavenworth, Bedell Smith returned to the Infantry School as an instructor in 1935. Stuck at the rank of captain and with limited experience as an infantry officer, Smith resigned himself to the idea of permanent staff duty and possibly a dead-end career. While teaching at the Infantry School, Smith improved his writing skills. Smith submitted a number of articles to the *Mailing List*, a widely-distributed journal.³² He had long since gained a reputation of a good speaker. But problems surfaced with his teaching.

At Fort Benning, Bedell Smith earned a negative reputation that followed him to the grave. Omar Bradley had correctly assessed Smith’s competence in terms of subject matter. But there was nothing organic about Smith’s approach to learning. With respect to functionalism, his method of instruction was mechanical. He drove himself and others mercilessly. The free exchange of ideas was nearly nonexistent. His teaching methods failed to produce positive results. Smith’s relations with student-officers grew increasingly distant. No innovator, he routinely went by the book and tolerated little that struck him as nonsense. The quality of his

³⁰ D. K. R. Crosswell cited Taylor’s comment taken from a letter he received from the general, December 10, 1984. I am grateful for Crosswell’s willingness to share Taylor’s letter.

³¹ Harry J. Collins to Smith, November 4, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL; Collins was a division commander during World War II.

³² William P. Snyder, “Walter Bedell Smith: Eisenhower’s Chief of Staff,” *Military Affairs* 48 (January 1984), 6.

teaching slipped further as he berated students.³³ His sarcasm made it difficult for those around him to see his positive qualities. Collegiality was missing. Miraculously, Smith won the approval of his superiors by hard work and sheer will. Under these circumstances, one has to gauge the man by the way he treated his inferiors. For all of his talent, Smith motivated through fear. His teaching methods were contrary to the spirit of functionalism. The experience of having Smith for an instructor was demoralizing for student-officers.

Bedell Smith was apparently unaware that his methods achieved only short-term results. The functionalist would argue that he confused short-term success with long-term achievement and performance.³⁴ One suspects that Smith's ritualistic behavior, his rigid adherence to rules and regulations, owed much to personal insecurity. A healthy measure of conformity is expected in any social group, but Smith's uncompromising attitude suggests that insecurity and poor self-esteem were responsible for his performance. Smith's manners and methods were more fitting to a traditional society where nearly everyone shares identical beliefs and where social cohesion is more readily achieved. But Smith's students were part of a complex organization – the United States Army – whose officers held varying beliefs.³⁵

Smith's rigid conformity did not fit well in the US Army. His strict adherence to rules was clearly at odds with functionalism, which tends to avoid extremes. Smith found it difficult to adjust to changing circumstances. He had difficulty understanding the limits of coercive power.

³³ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 62-63.

³⁴ Henry Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 89.

³⁵ Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, 3-9.

Smith exhibited formalistic behavior, a defense mechanism, which attempts to stifle any perceived dysfunction. Consensus existed among officers regarding institutional goals, but it does not follow that everyone adhered to rigid conformity.³⁶ Smith overcompensated. By strict adherence to rules and regulations, he sought to insure the approval of his superiors. At the outset at least, Smith was unaware that rigid conformity was at odds with any a self-correcting, organic principle operates in social institutions. Moreover, Smith had plenty of talent, but sound leadership requires balanced temperament as well as intelligence.³⁷ Smith never denied that there were some rough edges to his personality. He confessed as much later in an interview with W. H. Lawrence of the *New York Times*.³⁸ His intemperate manner at Fort Benning earned grudging respect, but little loyalty, from his inferiors. Nonetheless, Smith's superiors tolerated his manners and methods because his actions got results.

Smith's irascibility owed as much as to poor health as his experience as a first sergeant. It was during the mid-and late-1930s when Bedell Smith began having problems with ulcers. Some have directly attributed Smith's stomach ailments to nerves. Others, Merle Miller, for instance,

³⁶ Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 39-40, 128, 132-134; Parsons, *Structure of Social Action*, 713-717; Parsons, *Structure of Social Action*, 713-717.

³⁷ Rose Laub Coser, "Reflections on Merton's Role-set Theory," in Merton, *Consensus and Controversy*, 163. Merton distinguishes between attitudinal, behavioral and doctrinal conformity. Attitudinal conformity corresponds to those who hold the norms of an institution to be legitimate. Behavioral conformists follow the values of the institution regardless of privately held attitudes. Doctrinal conformity relates to those who rigidly adhere to rules and regulations.

³⁸ W. H. Lawrence, "'Beetle' is Back on the Eisenhower Team," *New York Times Magazine*, March 1, 1953, 44.

suggest that the ulcer had little to do with Smith's demeanor, citing an old friend of Eisenhower, who dismissed the ulcer. Accordingly, "Smith was just naturally mean."³⁹ But he was not naturally mean. As stated previous, poor health suggests dysfunction. Smith certainly displayed a fair share of small-mindedness when he was ill and over-worked.

Those who blame Smith's ulcer on nerves are remiss. Based on endoscopic research, medical authorities at the Mayo Clinic no longer accept the notion that stress is the primary cause of peptic ulcers. Indeed, even spicy food is not the cause of ulcers.⁴⁰ Today, researchers know that *Helicobacter pylori*, a type of bacteria, is the main culprit. *H. pylori* invades the mucus membrane of the stomach and gastro-intestinal tract. Excessive smoking, alcohol, poor diet and certain types of medications exacerbate ulcers, but they are not the cause of the disease.⁴¹ Like Eisenhower, Smith was a heavy smoker. His poor diet had a deleterious effect on his mind and body. Undoubtedly, the disorder hindered Smith's effectiveness at times, and he truly feared that

³⁹ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him*, 1st repr. Perigee ed. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1988), 393: In the text, Miller refers to Arthur S. Nevins's opinion regarding Smith's natural meanness; Nevins made his comments in an interview at the National Historic Site at Gettysburg, PA. Nevins (1891-1979), an army officer and friend of Eisenhower, wrote *Looking Back: Over More than Fifty Years of Friendship with General Eisenhower* (1972).

⁴⁰ General Website for Digestive Diseases, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota: two sites regarding primary causes for ulcers: [http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?objectid:](http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?objectid;) & [http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/peptic-ulcer/DS00242/DSECTION=cause.](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/peptic-ulcer/DS00242/DSECTION=cause)

⁴¹ Publication No. 03-4225, December 2002, National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive, and Kidney Diseases, National Institute of Health, e-mail: nddic@info.niddk.nih.gov; see also, Butcher, *My Three Years*, 124, 149; see Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 121-122, concerning Smith's "buttermilk" diet and perforated ulcer.

his career would end by order of the Department of War. Smith's fears were fully justified.

General Marshall continually reminded the officers who served under him that "a sick commander is not a good commander."⁴²

Precarious health dogged Bedell Smith to the grave. The best guess is bacteria-driven ulcers altered his demeanor. Poor health sapped his energy, triggering his insecurities, mood swings, sarcasm, profanity and defense mechanisms. At times, poor health hindered Smith's ability to get things done in the collective interest of the army.⁴³ Although his drive, attention to detail and professionalism often produced tangible results, one also suspects that Smith himself added to the stress that he experienced while trying to meet expectations. At Fort Benning he sought a type of mechanical solidarity which was clearly at odds with functionalism.⁴⁴ Smith demanded machine-like performance, which was inherently arbitrary in a day and age when social institutions were not.

Admittedly, some things are beyond the scope of the historian. In all likelihood, one cannot attribute every manifestation of bad temper to ulcers. A lack of evidence makes it exceedingly difficult to render a definitive assessment regarding Bedell Smith's irascibility. There are hints however. Alfred Adler and others have attested that bad temper signifies inferiority. Whether traced to childhood or subsequent socialization, Smith's demeanor owed

⁴² 2 B, S-10, Bradley-Hansen Commentary File, WWII, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle, PA.

⁴³ Talcott Parsons, *Social Structure and Personality* (Free Press ed. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965), 259-262; Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, 429-433.

⁴⁴ Bailey, *Sociology and the New Systems Theory*, 203; Parsons, *Social Structure and Personality*, 252, 286.

something to insecurity and fear of failure. Whether primary or secondary in origin, low self-esteem, along with poor health, impedes effective performance of social roles.⁴⁵ There is more verifiable evidence relating to Smith's ulcers. The layman must consider the alienation that was part of Smith's life. Whether the root of the problem rested with his health or socialization, Smith often found it difficult to get things done in the collective interests of the army. Fatigued, impatience and occasionally defensive, Smith did not meet the standards of good health from a functionalist perspective.

There were happier moments in his private life. Smith was once again free to pursue his passion for fishing. He and Nory lived in a tastefully decorated home with their cat and dog. Both enjoyed gardening. Junior officers occasionally joined Smith in hunting and Nory had a reputation as a fine hostess. Pretty but modest, Nory was the product of a finishing school. She met the prerequisites of an officer's wife.⁴⁶ On a modest income, Nory entertained with ease in a day and age when a *faux pas* on the part of an overly-anxious wife could adversely affect her husband's career.⁴⁷ She helped Smith who appeared uncomfortable at social events. His stiffness at social affairs was apparent. It is puzzling to reconcile his awkwardness with the later opinions of American and British officers who thought Smith an excellent host. Aside from formal social obligations, the Smiths lived in isolation, zealously guarding their privacy.

⁴⁵ Parsons, *Social System*, 229-235, 259, 430-431.

⁴⁶ Charles Christian Wertenbaker, "The Invasion Plan: 'Beetle' Smith, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff," 16 *Life* (June 12, 1944), 95.

⁴⁷ Bonnie Domrose Stone and Betty Sowers Alt, *Uncle Sam's Brides: The World of Military Wives*, (New York: Walker & Co., 1990), 6; Betty Sowers Alt and Bonnie Domrose Stone, *Campfollowing: A History of the Military Wife* (New York: Praeger Press, 1991), 85.

Curiosity has led writers to comment on the fact that they were childless. Many of these registered opinions are blatantly unfair, based on an instinctive and ingrained dislike of Smith rather than fact. Although it is legitimate to ponder childlessness, the undocumented nature of Smith's private life leads only to conjecture. David Irving, for instance, refers to the Smith's union as "loveless."⁴⁸ It truly is a pity that scholars are not yet privy to private correspondence between the Smiths. Their private exchanges may never be public knowledge. If one speculates at all, the best guess is that the bond between Smith and his wife was strong.⁴⁹ Although evidence is scant, numerous encrypted telegrams and other exchanges in the Smith Papers reveal mutual love, devotion and respect. There is nothing to support the opinion that a bad marriage and the lack of children made Bedell Smith a heartless, loveless and friendless. Although there is plenty room for debate, some studies suggest that childlessness is no absolute indicator of marital bliss.⁵⁰

Army War College

Bedell Smith entered the Army War College in 1936. Officers who had performed well at the Command and General Staff School received appointments. By the 1930s, the War College

⁴⁸ David Irving, *The War Between the Generals* (New York: Congdon & Latte's, Inc., 1981), 39.

⁴⁹ Telegram, AGWAR, for Humelsine to SHAEF FORWARD for Scott for General W. B. Smith, May 16, 1945, Smith Papers, Box 9, Folder 2, DDEL; see also Telegram, AGWAR, signed Stoner to SHAEF FORWARD for General W. B. Smith, June 1, 1945, among others housed in Smith Papers. AGWAR was the acronym for Adjutant General, Department of War; Nory writes, "Dearest Bedell, . . . Am thinking of you every minute. I love you so much and am so proud. . . . am with you in spirit. God bless you." Bedell responded in kind.

⁵⁰ Robin W. Simon and Ranae J. Evenson, "Clarifying the Relationship Between Parenthood and Depression," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 46 (December 2005): 341-358; see website: Johanna Olexy and Lee Herring, "Parenthood Does Not Make People Happier," a @ www.asanet/cs/root/topnav/press/parenthood_does_not_make-people-happier.

was the apex of the army's educational system. Its mission was to train officers for higher tactical commands and upper general staff positions. More than 2000 officers had graduated from the War College by 1940.⁵¹ During World War II, the Army War College supplied the United States Army with most of its war managers.

The curriculum and methods of teaching were somewhat different from the Command and General Staff College. Unlike Leavenworth, the faculty at the Army War College did not rank student-officers and the competition was muted. As the saying went at the time, student-officers were "measured but not marked."⁵² Instructors emphasized cooperation and coordination with respect to the larger problems of modern warfare – industrial mobilization, international relations, logistics and international political science. Candidates met in groups, applying their knowledge and experience to problem solving. The emphasis was on teamwork. Perhaps, for these reasons, the learning atmosphere was more relaxed than at Leavenworth.

The army's post-graduate education system did not guarantee promotion during the inter-war period. Army officers were at the mercy of the seniority system. The situation worsened with the harsh economic conditions of the 1930s. Thomas J. Betts, a colleague of Smith, recalled that he was frozen at the rank of captain for years on end. Smith was a captain. He wondered if he would ever pass through the narrow bottleneck that led to promotion. Another candidate of those years, Thomas T. Handy, later joked about gray-haired second lieutenants who were the army's

⁵¹ Pappas, *Prudens Futuri*, 85-86, 136; Walter Millis, *Arms and Men*, 177-179.

⁵² Pappas, *Prudens Futuri*, as quoted, 106. See also Ball, *Of Responsible Command*, 209-214.

Ph.Ds. These officers were not senile, he cracked, but they too old for service when war came.⁵³

After World War II, Smith briefly mentioned what he considered weaknesses in the program of the War College. The curriculum did not adequately prepare its candidates for the logistical nightmares of war. He realized that no one at the War College could possibly have envisioned the demands that World War II would place on the Department of War and theaters of war. Nonetheless, Smith believed that greater emphasis should have been placed on the problem of obtaining good staff officers and infantry replacements. He also intimated that the War College might have paid more attention to attention to political affairs.⁵⁴

Many of Smith's fellow officers agreed with him in subsequent interviews. Leroy Lutes was one of many general officers who seconded Smith's opinion on logistical training. As Deputy Army Chief of Staff, General Handy asked many commanders whether the service schools had given them anything of value with respect to administration of personnel. According to the general's rough survey, 75 percent of the respondents were decidedly negative regarding their personnel training at the War College.⁵⁵ After commenting on administrative and logistical difficulties during the war, General William H. Simpson believed that army officers were not

⁵³ Betts, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn Burg, October 18, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL. Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1972, Oral History 486, DDEL.

⁵⁴ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 13, 1947, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA; hereafter, USAMHI.

⁵⁵ Lutes, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 12, 1974, Oral History 408, DDEL. An expert in logistics, Lutes served as a troubleshooter in all theaters of war. See also Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1972, Oral History 486, DDEL.

prepared to face the political problems that later arose in Europe.⁵⁶ Finally, at the top of the military hierarchy, General Marshall was bedeviled by persistent personnel shortages and political problems. For instance, he once moaned to Handy that he was simply “sick and tired of going from one crisis to another about infantry replacements.”⁵⁷

There was nothing that could have totally prepared Bedell Smith for the dilemmas that he would face during the coming war. It is unreasonable to nitpick because of a few shortcomings of the service schools. No one at the Command and General Staff College or the Army War College had a crystal ball revealing all the future difficulties that Eisenhower, Smith and others would face in the European theater.⁵⁸ Admittedly, Smith’s functionalist education was suspect in terms of political and administrative training. Only with great difficulty would Smith adjust to changing circumstances. To his credit, he became surprisingly adept at political affairs. Like many army officers of his day, he lacked experience in higher tactical command. From a functionalist point

⁵⁶ William H. Simpson, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, March 15, 1972, Oral History 314, DDEL. Simpson commanded the US 9th Army in Europe.

⁵⁷ General Marshall as quoted, Thomas T. Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1972, Oral History 486, DDEL. General Jacob L. Devers commanded 6th Army Group in Europe. He stated that the key to success in Europe and elsewhere depended on good personnel. See, Jacob L. Devers, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 19, 1974, Oral History 377, DDEL.

⁵⁸ For discussion of the army educational system, see Crosswell, Dastrup and Finlayson and Nenninger; for opinions of Second World War general officers regarding logistics, personnel and military theory, see – among others – Jacob L. Devers, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 19, 1974, Oral History 377, DDEL; Thomas T. Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1972, Oral History 486, DDEL; Leroy Lutes, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 16, 1974, Oral History 408, DDEL; William H. Simpson, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, March 15, 1972, Oral History 314, DDEL; Harold Alexander interview with Sidney T. Matthews, undated, USAMHI; Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of the United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1977), 212-214; Van Creveld, Martin. *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977; paperback ed., 1995.

of view, this deficiency adversely affected Smith's relations with officers of the line from time to time. Nonetheless, Smith had taken advantage of every opportunity that the army offered through its educational system. He graduated from the War College in 1937, having received a good foundation as a manager of war. Smith joined the Army General Staff in October 1939.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ After graduating from the War College, Smith returned to Fort Benning. There he served as an instructor in the Weapons Section. On January 1, 1939, Smith was promoted to the rank of major. See Biographical Sketch, n.d., p. 703, in Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN; Biographical Sketch, Smith Papers, Box 10, DDEL; "Preparing Mobilization Plans" *Mailing List* 16 (1938), 251-309.

Chapter Three

Secretary for General Marshall

War Department General Staff

General George C. Marshall was the most consistent functionalist in the US Army during the World War II era. He was a pragmatic functionalist who demanded results. He conceived of truth as a process tested by experience rather than ideas drawn from a repository of unchanging doctrine. What mattered most to him was the result of actions taken to insure that the army functioned as an organic whole. For instance, he conceived of the General Staff as the brain of the army. Marshall and the General Staff battled army bureaus that in many ways contradicted unity of command.¹ During the period leading up to war, the Army Chief of Staff enlisted the help of staff officers who had to exercise a good measure of prudence when dealing with politicians in Washington. Marshall demanded more than just a feeling of allegiance from the staff officers who served on the General Staff. They had to commit to a course of action and accept responsibility for it.

Bedell Smith began his apprenticeship under Marshall in September 1939. Colonel Omar Bradley, who was serving in the Secretariat of the War Department General Staff, recommended Smith because of his writing skills.² Demanding solutions and results, Marshall required that members of the staff exhibit a good command of all issues outlined in each paper. Nearly every

¹ For example, the Bureau of Infantry, which was Smith's specialty in the combined arms.

² Bradley was an assistant to Colonel Orlando Ward, the Chief of the Secretariat. Among those in Marshall's inner circle were in the Secretariat were Leonard T. Gerow, Lorenzo D. Gasser and Maxwell Taylor. See Bradley Commentary, Bradley/Hansen File, 38-A, S-7, USAMHI & Mark Wayne Clark, interview by staff, tape #2, n.d., USAMHI.

staff officer recalled degrees of anxiety when reporting to Marshall about a particular issue. The Army Chief of Staff's penetrating questions caught a number of secretaries off guard at morning briefings.³ Perhaps General Handy best summed up the atmosphere during these briefings, stating, "by God you had better know what you were talking about."⁴ Marshall's icy demeanor did not rattle Smith, who appeared to thrive in such an environment. His briefings were candid, uncluttered with minutiae. Smith's ability to offer clear-cut solutions and to accept responsibility for his actions typified functionalism. He soon discovered that he would be doing more than letter writing.

Before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, General Marshall began delegating many political chores to Smith. He was never far from Marshall's side during this time. Primarily concerned with strategic and logistical matters, Marshall needed reliable young officers who could grease the political machine, beginning at the very top with the President Roosevelt. Smith handled his political assignments with a great deal of discretion.

Smith frequently served as Marshall's point man at the White House and on the "Hill." He established a number of important political ties from the outset, relying on his previous experience in Washington. Smith became friends with President Roosevelt's congenial press secretary, Steve Early. When President Roosevelt's military aide Major General Edwin "Pa" Watson began placing excessive demands on Marshall's time, Smith received the task of keeping

³ Maxwell D. Taylor, for instance, left a record of the workings of the Secretariat. He recalled an occasion in which he failed to measure up to General Marshall's standards of performance. See Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972), 39.

⁴ Thomas T. Handy, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, May 22, 1973, Oral History 486, DDEL.

the military aide at bay.⁵He managed to do so by without arousing animosity. He also developed close ties with members of the cabinet, namely, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson (1867-1950) and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau (1891-1967).⁶ For example, Smith made numerous trips to the Department of the Treasury where he impressed Morgenthau with his intelligence and familiarity with budgetary matters.⁷

As General Marshall's liaison officer, Smith developed harmonious relations with many Congressmen. In doing so, Smith relieved Marshall of many of his burdens. Often when there were delicate appropriation or procurement measures before Congress, the Army Chief of Staff dispatched Smith to the office of Senator Richard B. Russell, the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Both Marshall and Russell relied on the expertise of Smith, gained many years before while working with the Bureau of the Budget. His mastery of detail impressed the senator. More importantly, Smith's proposed solutions did not escape Marshall's notice. Even though decisiveness alone is not the mark of a functionalist, but Smith often accomplished things in short order. His actions in the interest of the army bore the trademark of functionalism. His search for order and predictability granted a measure of equilibrium within the political establishment and its military arm.

⁵ Merle Miller, *Ike the Soldier: As They Knew Him*, 393.

⁶ For multiple citations, see Stimson, Henry L. and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948, and John Morton Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Legacy, 1938-1941*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965.

⁷ Smith, for instance, worked well with presidential adviser Harry Hopkins (1890-1946), maintaining good relations despite their different temperaments. Major Walter B. Smith Memorandum, Regarding Foreign Sale or Exchange of Munitions File, June 25, 1940, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adjutant General, Record Group 165, National Archives Records Administration, Box 1761, College Park, Maryland; hereafter, RG with number, NARA. See also Mosley, *Marshall*, 134-135.

General Marshall's confidence in Smith grew. Prior to his appointment as Chief of the Secretariat, Smith began briefing Bernard M. Baruch, who had directed the War Industries Board during the World War I. During World War II, Baruch was a presidential adviser. A talented expert in finance, he was a close confidant of Roosevelt. Marshall knew that Baruch had influence with the President on key issues. Baruch had an enormous ego and had to be handled with care.⁸ He had expressed his strong desire to observe the army maneuvers at Fort Benning in April 1940. Marshall chose Smith to serve as Baruch's aide during the exercise. Marshall also wrote to Brigadier General Asa L. Singleton at Fort Benning, apprising him of Baruch's visit. Smith was careful to maintain confidentiality at all costs. In this case and many others, Marshall noted that Smith had earned the full confidence of Baruch. By all accounts, Smith handled his task with efficiency and a great deal of savvy.⁹ A month after the maneuvers, Marshall once again called on Smith to assist Baruch in revising manpower requisitions for the coming year. Once again, Smith's enthusiasm, drive and performance impressed the Chief of Staff.¹⁰ Overall, those who disliked Smith's brusque manner – Bradley for instance – admitted that he had helped to lighten the burdens of General Marshall.¹¹ Given his brusqueness, Smith's collegiality with his superiors was remarkably positive.

⁸ See Tape #16, February 15, 1957 as printed in *Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 1991), 484.

⁹ Letter to Brigadier General Asa L. Singleton, April 11, 1940, in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 2, "We Cannot Delay," July 1, 1939-December 6, 1941, edited by Larry I. Bland (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 194; see a second letter to Singleton dated, April 22, 1940, which follows above source.

¹⁰ Marshall to Baruch, May 14, 1940, pp. 200-201, in the above source.

¹¹ Bradley Commentary, Bradley/Hansen File, 38-A, S-7, USAMHI.

General Marshall recognized Smith's willingness to take the initiative on a number of issues beyond the immediate bounds of the General Staff, Capitol Hill and the White House. Smith did so in an functionalist and orderly way. In 1939, for instance, the US Army began searching for a light-weight utility vehicle, which would be a marked improvement over the trucks of the day. When Smith was an assistant secretary in 1940, the Department of War called for bids. Few companies responded. When the Willys Overland Company failed to meet the deadline for bids, the Bantam Motor Company developed the prototype of what would later receive the moniker "jeep." One day in early 1940, Harry Payne, the enterprising president of Bantam, approached Major Smith about the vehicle. Bantam Motor Company was a very small company, and Smith questioned its productive capacity. He inspected the model and he thought it showed promise.¹²

Before raising the issue of the jeep with Marshall, Smith gathered sufficient information about the vehicle. Having organized his thoughts, he had the temerity to interrupt Marshall who was in a meeting with other generals. Smith gave a brief description of the machine. The Chief of Staff queried Smith, "Well, what do you think of it?" "I think it's good," Smith replied. He also interjected that he had been unable to convince the Quartermaster Corps, Field Artillery, or Air Corps of the value of the vehicle. After queried him about the cost the vehicle, Marshall told Smith to go ahead with the project. By November 1940, Bantam had presented the army with a quarter-ton prototype. Smith's decisiveness produced quick results which were characteristic

¹² Geoffrey Perret, *There's a War to be Won: The United States Army in World War II* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), 99-102.

of functionalism. Smith immediately began distributing jeeps to the Tank Corps at Fort Knox and, shortly thereafter, ordered 38,000 additional vehicles.¹³

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, General Marshall and his lieutenants in the General Staff had the opportunity to reorganize the entire Department of War along functionalist lines. Smith played a major role in the reorganization, serving as Chief of the Secretariat of the General Staff. He also had two other simultaneous posts: Secretary of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff.¹⁴ While discharging his duties, Smith was both consistent and inconsistent with respect to functionalism.

As a functionalist, Bedell Smith addressed the fundamental problem of order in a large institution.¹⁵ While insuring order in the Secretariat, he was consistent in terms of motive. Smith believed that his service in the Secretariat was the turning point of his career. The Secretariat functioned as a steering committee that screened correspondence arriving at the Office of the Chief of Staff. The Secretariat was the nucleus of the War Department General Staff, a kind of inner staff for Marshall.¹⁶ Staff officers in the Secretariat forwarded only matters of gravest importance to the Chief of Staff. Once General Marshall had made his decision, the Secretariat

¹³ Marshall and Smith as quoted in Tape #8, December 7, 1956, *Interviews and Reminiscences*, 267. Ultimately Bantam lost out to Willys Overland's more reliable, rugged though heavier model.

¹⁴ "Transcript of 'Newmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Smith Papers, Box 2, File Folder 1, DDEL. See also Biographical Sketch, March 13, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, DDEL & *New York Times*, July 26, 1941, pp. 1, 4, 5. By July 1941, Smith held the temporary rank of colonel.

¹⁵ Parsons, *Social System*, pp. 12, 36-37.

¹⁶ J. Lawton Collins, *Lightning Joe: An Autobiography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 95.

transmitted orders to the appropriate agencies which bore the responsibility for carrying out decisions. Smith insured that the Secretariat were responsible for filing papers and reports, and monitoring future developments that pertained to each decision. The Secretariat reduced the burdens of General Marshall in another way. Politicians and field officers visited the Department of War placing demands on Marshall's hectic work schedule. The Secretariat determined who would see Marshall on a particular occasion. Smith and his staff understood that one did not bother Marshall with trivial matters.¹⁸ Occasionally, Smith's manners and methods offended those seeking an audience with the Army Chief of Staff. Nonetheless, Smith and other members of his staff protected Marshall from the constant press of visitors, members of the press for instance. In other words, Smith saved Marshall time so that he was free to focus on important issues.¹⁹

Marshall valued Smith's determination and ambition. Smith was the sort of officer who insured that the Secretariat was a tidy organization.²⁰ At the time, Drew Middleton of the *New York Times* described Smith as "an orderly man with an orderly brain."²¹ At work Smith was tidy – the picture of order. He understood the workings of the army like few others. The Chief of Staff relied on Smith to cut through the red tape of the Washington bureaucracy. Nonetheless, his

¹⁸ Jacob L. Devers, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 19, 1974, Oral History 377, DDEL.

¹⁹ J. Lawton Collins, *Lightning Joe: An Autobiography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 95.

²⁰ Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall*, vol. 2, *Ordeal and Hope* (New York: Viking Press, 1966), 408.

²¹ Drew Middleton, as quoted in "Transcript of 'Newsmakers' Program," CBS Network, 11:05 A.M., January 8, 1950, by Mr. Dallas Townsend in Smith Papers, Box 2, DDEL.

manners and methods outside were more polished when dealing with civilians and officers outside of the Secretariat. Whenever institutional inertia stymied needed effort, Marshall lean heavily on Smith.²²

Notwithstanding, Bedell Smith's behavior exhibited tendencies that were inconsistent with the organic nature of functionalism. As the gatekeeper of General Marshall's office, Smith was brutally efficient as he would later be at Eisenhower's headquarters. Aware that Marshall demanded quick, but discreet, flow of information, Smith revamped the filing system of the Secretariat. He did so in a mechanical way. But one needs to be careful here because parts of organic systems react mechanically.²³ Smith instituted what became known by some as the "two-minute rule" and by others as the "one-minute rule," depending on the source.²⁴ Upon request, the Chief Secretary frequently demanded that a staff officer quickly produce a requested letter, file or brief. Failure to do so in a timely fashion brought a stiff reprimand from Smith. A number of officers and enlisted men failed to live up to expectations and soon disappeared from the Secretariat. Smith did not realize that a degree of friction is inevitable in all organizations.²⁵ The functionalist equation encompasses order on one hand and initiative on the other. Smith often failed to balance the equation. His failure to do so made it difficult to motivate subordinates and to integrate their work. Conservative by nature, Bedell Smith was never comfortable with rapid change and the confusion it bred.

²² Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall*, vol. 2, *Ordeal and Hope* (New York: Viking Press, 1966), 408.

²³ The medulla oblongata of the brain does not "think" – it regulates organic functions.

²⁴ Miller, *Ike the Soldier*, 393; Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 140.

²⁵ Drucker, *Management*, 549.

Although common courtesy is not exclusively functionalist, the lack of it certainly hinders the achievement of functionalist goals. Marshall understood this. Smith did not. He was a terror at the office. On one occasion, Smith was meeting with some officers when Ruth Briggs, his personal secretary, peeked into the conference room. Smith bellowed at Briggs, "Get the hell out of here!" The startled secretary hastily withdrew from the office. Glancing at the other members in the room, the irate Smith remarked, "You'll have to excuse her gentlemen. She's an idiot." Without pausing, he went on with the meeting just as if nothing had happened.²⁶ Understandably, these outbursts caught the eye of historians more often than the many times when Smith exercised caution and diplomacy. While serving in the secretariat, Smith gained the reputation of a fierce hatchetman.²⁷ Marshall was not unmindful of Smith's intemperance. A fair man, Marshall measured Smith's performance in terms of his decisiveness, his ability to get things done, and his willingness to accept responsibility. These were traits that Marshall valued especially in times of duress. He tolerated poor manners and imprudence within limits because Bedell Smith produced quick results in the pursuit of objectives.

Bedell Smith tried to get things done in the collective interests of the army according to functionalist principles. The dire military situation in 1942, however, created a terrible dilemma. On one hand, conditions demanded rapid change. To accomplish the goals of reorganization, both Marshall and Eisenhower sanctioned the work of Smith as a hatchetman. Under the press of time,

²⁶ As quoted in Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970), 82; although Ruth Briggs became a life-long friend of Bedell Smith, his nasty outburst engendered much ill-will.

²⁷ Notes, November 13, 1956, *Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest Pogue*, 627.

Smith ruthlessly swung the ax. On the other hand, it appears that the functionalist model – or at minimum, the way it was implemented by pragmatic officers -- did not adequately address the problem of radical change in complex organizations. With the exception of routine matters, Smith often functioned in a crisis that demanded extraordinary measures. Equilibrium in any institution returns only after the shock of reorganization.²⁸

Bedell Smith's psychological disposition often contradicted aspects of functionalism. At that stage in his life, Smith tended to define power as rigid control over others.²⁹ According to functionalist theory, excellent leaders must have the ability to persuade. Smith was sadly lacking in this trait. Moreover, he found some of his assigned tasks unpleasant. While admitting the necessity for some of his actions, Smith stated that he did not enjoy the role of hatchetman.³⁰ His motivation came from a sense of duty. Like most perfectionists, Smith found little satisfaction in work and feared the prospect of making a mistake. General Marshall operated on the according to the "doctrine of no surprises." In practice – whether cutting through bureaucratic red tape or discussion a problem with a high-placed politician – Smith could get results which pleased

²⁸ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*, Free Press paperback ed, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1960), viii; Don Martindale, "Limits and Alternatives to Functionalism in Sociology," in *Functionalism in the Social Sciences: The Strengths and Limits of Functionalism in Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, and Sociology*, Monograph 5, (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, February 1965), 157; Mills, *Sociological Imagination*, 4, 13.

²⁹ Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, 225.

³⁰ "Transcript of 'Newmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Smith Papers, Box 2, File Folder 1, DDEL.

General Marshall. Smith was determined never to be caught off guard by circumstances.³¹

Smith's perfectionism and impatience undermined his functionalism. He often placed unrealistic demands on himself and he frequently demanded the same of others.³² Perfectionist traits often made it very difficult for Smith to accept credit or to give credit to his subordinates. His perfectionism in many ways reflected a type of distorted idealism. This aspect of Smith's behavior stood in stark contrast to functionalism, and it did not improve his performance or the attitudes of others. Collegiality suffered. Smith's conception of power as control over others was antithetical to the organic characteristics of functionalism. No one doubted Smith's intelligence, but that quality is not the only measure of leadership. It also requires patience, prudence, courtesy and the art of persuasion. All of these characteristics serve as means to an end. Despite a lengthy list of accomplishments to his credit – his ability to establish informal ties with civilian leaders, his confidentiality, and his resolution of interdepartmental squabbles – Smith found it

³¹ See discussion on perfectionism in A. E. Mallinger and J. DeWyse, *Too Perfect: When Being in Control Gets Out of Control* (New York: Random House, 1993), with comment by Carey Goldberg, March 2009, website:<http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/articles/2009/03/02>. Marshall gave Smith a task that proved to be beyond him. Marshall believed that the Army band had not received the same recognition of other service bands enjoyed. He pestered Smith about improving publicity for the Army band long after he had left the Secretariat. On one occasion, Smith moaned to General Thomas Handy, then Chief of Army Operations, "For God's sake! Can't you get the old man off my back about this band. He's just giving me hell." As quoted in Handy, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, May 22, 1973, Oral History 486, DDEL. See interview #1 by Dr. Burg, November, 6, 1972 and Tape #17, February 20, 1957, *Interviews and Reminiscences*, 502. Handy succeeded Eisenhower as Chief of Operations.

³² Thomas Greenspoon, "'Healthy Perfectionism' is an Oxymoron," *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education* (Prufrock Press), Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 197-208.

difficult to accept credit for the successes that he had achieved.³³ His official correspondence is laced with self-effacing statements.

Pearl Harbor and Aftermath

Five days after the attack on Pearl Harbor,³⁴ Colonel Bedell Smith placed a call to Fort Sam Houston. In a moment, Brigadier General Dwight D. Eisenhower came to the phone. “Is that you, Ike?” Smith asked. Aroused from a deep sleep, Eisenhower managed to answer in the affirmative. “The Chief says for you to hop a plane and get up here right away,” Smith related. After a few perfunctory comments regarding formal orders, Smith hung up the phone. It was the beginning of a long association. Marshall had chosen Eisenhower as his new Chief of War Plans. Smith too would play a large role in the reorganization of the Department of War in early 1942.

³³ A dispute erupted between heads of the Office of War Information and the Office of Strategic Services over control of intelligence. The headstrong William J. Donovan of the OSS came to loggerheads over the issue with an equally determined Elmer H. Davis, who headed up the OWI. Prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, Donovan’s agents had been active in North Africa. They predicted that a German conquest of the region was a certainty. Wild rumors began circulating that the Germans were about to invade Spain. Davis wanted control over information emanating from the OSS. The problem stemmed from the fact that the President had given Donovan a free hand for his “cloak-and-dagger” operations. OSS was not responsible to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Marshall wanted all intelligence developed by the OSS sent through military and naval channels before it reached the President’s desk. Marshall called on Smith to resolve the dispute quickly and quietly. Marshall thought that Smith skillfully produced a workable resolution of the dispute. See Stansfield Turner, *Burn Before Reading: Presidents, CIA Directors, and Secret Intelligence* (New York: Hyperion, 2005), 15-16, 20-24.

³⁴ After the war, Smith gave the War Department Judge Advocate General a sworn affidavit concerning his view of the disaster at Pearl Harbor. According to the testimony of Colonel Otis K. Sadtler Major General Leonard T. Gerow, Chief of the War Plans Division, had taken lightly intelligence that the Japanese were about to sever diplomatic relations. Sadtler also stated that Smith had been uncooperative as well. Smith acquitted himself well, stating that he had not been privy to “Ultra” transmissions and had not read “Magic” intercepts. See Affidavit of Lieutenant General Walter B. Smith, June 15, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 9, DDEL.

General Marshall relied on Smith during discussions with civilian and military leaders of the United Kingdom. Despite the sincere differences that he had with British colleagues, Smith operated as a functionalist. He consistently emphasized the importance of the organic qualities of the Allied war effort. Close Allied cooperation was a constant theme during these talks. Smith's standing with Marshall increased as a result of his work at Allied conferences. In August 1941, Smith had attended the Argentia Conference. Having a clerical role only, he watched the debates concerning hemispheric defense. There were many proposals, but the American delegation was ill-prepared to plan a war to which they were not yet a party. Smith's responsibilities ballooned in two month's time. As Chief of the Secretariat, Smith helped General Marshall coordinate the Arcadia Conference in late December 1941. Smith helped systematize the flow of information between the War Department, the American services and British counterparts. He worked closely with Field Marshal Sir John Dill Chief of the British Joint Staff Mission. The Allies agreed to convert the Joint Army-Navy Board into the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. Marshall directed Smith to serve as Secretary of the Joint Board until the US Joint Chiefs of Staff became operational on February 9, 1942.³⁵

The Allies also set up headquarters of the Combined Chiefs of Staffs in Washington, DC.

³⁵ Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1952), 366-367; William D. Leahy, *I Was There*, 94-98; a detailed account of the evolution of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is found in Verne Davis, unpublished document, "History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in World War II," Historical Section, Joint Secretariat of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2 vols., Manuscript in Center of Military History Files, USAMHI. An advisory body to the president, the new organization included the Army Chief of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations and Chief of the Army Air Forces – General Marshall, Admiral Ernest J. King and General Henry H. Arnold, respectively. After a lengthy debate and postponement, President Roosevelt appointed a fourth member in July 1942, the Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief. The US Joint Chiefs of Staff, paralleled the British Chiefs of Staff.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff was an amalgamation of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff and the British Chiefs of Staff, which served as an inter-allied agency to manage the conduct of the war, global planning and strategy. Pleased with Smith's efficiency, the Marshall selected Smith as the American Secretary of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Brigadier Vivian "Dumbie" Dykes became Smith's counterpart in the Secretariat of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. With this new responsibility, Smith won promotion to the rank of brigadier general.³⁶

At the Arcadia Conference, the Allied leadership adopted the "Europe First" policy. The fall of Tobruk in June 1942 and mounting pressure from the British forced President Roosevelt's hand. Moreover, the Democratic Party was facing mid-term Congressional elections. The United States – its military reorganizing and its industry retooling for war – simply was not prepared for a direct assault on Fortress Europe. Roosevelt elected to seize the initiative by striking first in North Africa.³⁷

In the wake of the Arcadia Conference, Bedell Smith worked at a hectic pace. In the

³⁶ *Establishing the Anglo-American Alliance: The Second World War Diaries of Brigadier Vivian Dykes*, edited by Alex Danchev (London: Brassey's, 1990), *Dykes Diary*, February 5, 6, & 8, 1942; hereafter cited as *Dykes Diary* with appropriate date (or page if citing Danchev's editorial comment); "Designation of Secretary for the Joint Board," January 31, 1942, Office of the Chief of Staff, Adjutant General, 201 File, Walter B. Smith, Central Decimal File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Box 37, NARA; also in same file, "Nomination for temporary appointment as brigadier general," February 2, 1942; see also Biographical Sketch, March 13, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, DDEL.

³⁷ B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd revised ed. (New York: Meridian-Penguin, Henry Holt & Co., 1991), 265-266, 378-379; B. H. Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War*, Paragon paperback ed. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1971), 171, 271-279, 289-291; *The Rommel Papers*, edited by B. H. Liddell Hart, translated by Paul Findlay (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co, 1953), 260; *War Reports of General George C. Marshall, General H. H. Arnold, Admiral Ernest J. King* (Philadelphia & New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947), 154; British arguments summarized in War Cabinet Chiefs of Staff Committee, Operation "ROUND-UP": Minute by the Prime Minister, British Chief of Staff (42) 169 (O), June 15, & 29, 1942, SHAEF RECORDS, RG 331, Allied Operational and Occupational Headquarters, WWII, Box 83, NARA NARA.

months that followed, he put in many 18-hour days inside and outside of the War Department General Staff. With the declaration of war, General Marshall was free to reorganize the entire Department of War, which he called “the poorest command post in the Army.”³⁸ The Chief of Staff directed the War Department General Staff to begin culling out officers who had failed to meet his standards. Smith played a role in this ruthless process, but there were others who were equally merciless. The times called for tough decisions. Marshall, for instance, assigned the bulk of the job to Lieutenant General Joseph T. McNarney, who relentlessly established fixed lines of authority within the US Army as a whole. Marshall referred to McNarney as “merciless man. A true hatchet man.”³⁹ Both McNarney and Smith typified the functionalist attitudes of the officers who worked for Marshall during this critical phase of the war. The Chief of Staff demanded results, and McNarney and Smith produced them. McNarney was every bit as brutal in method as Bedell Smith, but the epithet stuck to the latter.⁴⁰

For the first time, Smith worked closely with Eisenhower. The new Operations Division replaced the War Plans Division with Eisenhower.⁴¹ As Chief of Army Operations, Eisenhower

³⁸ Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 289.

³⁹ Marshall, as quoted in *Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 627; see also, Executive Order, for General Marshall’s records, n.d., February, 1942, Office of the Chief of Staff, Central Decimal File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 37, NARA.

⁴⁰ See Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 292. McNarney was brazen enough to challenge Marshall. On one occasion the Chief of Staff began criticizing an Air Corps plan. One of Marshall’s suggestions did not meet McNarney’s approval. McNarney exclaimed, “Jesus, man, you can’t do that!” Startled, Marshall, glanced quickly at McNarney, but said nothing.

⁴¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1948), 31.

was engaged in a desperate struggle to support MacArthur's forces in the Philippines. Eisenhower and Smith took measure of each other. The more Eisenhower saw of Smith, the more he admired his efficiency and commitment to teamwork.

As Chief of the Secretariat, Bedell Smith won the approval of General Marshall and of a good many other high-ranking officers on the War Department General Staff. Smith had worked at a hectic pace, constantly striving for perfection more than excellence. By choosing Marshall as his model, Smith set goals that were unrealistic and, undoubtedly, bred frustration and defense mechanisms. He found it difficult to accept a compliment. A measure of self-effacement was always evident in Smith. It is difficult to believe, for example, Smith's public assertion that he never regretted taking a field command.⁴² He had trained for the infantry for two decades.

Consciously or unconsciously, Smith appeared to compensate by performing well in staff work. Sublimation was also in play. At the turning point in his career, Smith substituted the opportunity to command for security. One also finds it difficult to believe for a minute that Smith was unhindered by the lack of a West Point education.⁴³ He was an outsider to some extent. One suspects that Smith's lack of pedigree precipitated some of the tongue lashings he gave out.

There is, however, no credible reason to dispute Smith's remark that many of his duties were thankless and, at times, monotonous. He freely admitted that he had been ruthless out of necessity, particularly in his later role as Eisenhower's chief of staff. Smith could be obstinate,

⁴² Upon his promotion to the rank of lieutenant general, for example, Smith responded to a congratulatory letter by stating that his promotion was "merely an accident of location." There are many self-effacing comments in his personal correspondence. See Bedell Smith to Major General Harry J. Collins, March 14, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 8, File Folder 1, DDEL.

⁴³ "Transcript of 'Newmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 2, File Folder 1, DDEL.

sometimes deceptive, at times a hatchet man, but he did not enjoy his job. There was nothing glamorous about his role.

Anglo-American Cooperation and Vivian Dykes

Bedell Smith's work in the Secretariat of the Combined Chiefs of Staff reflected practical functionalism. He served as the the head of the American representatives in that body. While serving as General Marshall's secretary, Smith received the task of promoting Allied cooperation on strategic issues. Reaching consensus on matters relating to coalition warfare was a challenge for the Allied leadership. It was a difficult tight rope to walk because of differing opinions among the Allies and within the American camp as well.

It was fortunate that his British counterpart was Brigadier Vivian Dykes. "Dumbie" Dykes was three years Smith's junior and had graduated from the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. He had joined the Royal Engineers, had been gassed in the World War I, and had slowly worked his way into the favor of Field Marshall Sir John Dill during the inter-war years. By 1940, Dykes had risen to the War Cabinet, becoming Director of War Plans within a year. He was a tough negotiator for British strategic views.⁴⁴

Smith and Dykes agreed with "Europe First" strategy without disregarding other theaters of war. Yet the two officers had their differences. Loyal to General Marshall, Smith argued for the direct approach to strategy that American military leaders advocated. Educated in the tradition of Ulysses S. Grant, Smith wanted to go for the jugular, a cross-channel assault into the heart of Nazi-occupied Europe with the intention of destroying Nazi Germany's ability to wage war.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Dykes Diary*, 4-7.

⁴⁵ Richard W. Steele, *The First Offensive 1942: Roosevelt, Marshall and the Making of American Strategy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), vii.

Like his superiors, Brigadier Dykes favored an initial campaign in North Africa as part of an indirect approach, which would tighten the ring around Hitler's *Festung Europa*.⁴⁶ He believed, however, that the Allies would ultimately have to conduct a land campaign in northwestern Europe. Given Smith's reputation for rigidity, many doubted whether he could serve effectively in the Joint Secretariat.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1942, a strong bond of mutual trust developed between the two officers in personal and professional matters. On informal occasions, Smith was a good host. Bedell and Nory Smith invited Dykes to their home on many occasions. The British brigadier thoroughly appreciated Nory's good cooking and strawberry shortcake. Smith, an avid fisherman and hunter, showed Dykes his hand-made rifle stocks and fishing poles. Thoroughly enjoying the home of his new friend, Dykes romped with the dogs of the Smith household, a setter and pointer. For Dykes, the Smith residence became his home away from home. Within a month of their initial acquaintance, Dykes was touring Civil War battlefields, attending parties, and fishing with the Smiths. These outings which the two officers shared lightened the burden and drudgery of war that weighed on the British staff officer.⁴⁷

Smith read Marshall's mind and understood that Americans would have to negotiate with allies despite frustrations. Smith and Dykes establish good relations from the outset and instantly agreed on office accommodations. They occasionally criticized the unreasonableness of their own countrymen, particularly at times when suspicions were rife. Dykes respected the professionalism

⁴⁶ Winston S. Churchill, *The Grand Alliance*, vol. 3, *The Second World War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., Riverside Press Cambridge, 1950), 659, 662-665.

⁴⁷ Numerous citations in the *Dykes Diary*, beginning with February 5, 1942.

of his American colleague. He depicted Smith as a man of reason. It was the first of many very positive impressions that Bedell Smith left on Allied leadership. The few quarrels the two men had were quickly resolved. On his part, Smith appreciated the wit of his British counterpart.⁴⁸ For all of his bluntness at headquarters, Smith showed remarkable flexibility in his dealings with Dykes. In contrast to his stiff demeanor of Fort Benning days, Smith began to reveal a softer, albeit determined, side of his personality when dealing with British allies. It was through Dykes that Bedell Smith greatly expanded his ties with the British Chiefs of Staff. The two officers contributed greatly to the establishment of the Anglo-American alliance.

Bedell Smith usually worked better with equals than subordinates. His cooperation with his British colleague represented professional duty and obligation. Flexibility is a means of achieving functionalist goals. But in this case, Smith's correspondence and Dykes' diary suggest mutual affection.⁴⁹ Their friendship continued until Dykes was killed in an airplane crash following the Casablanca Conference. Grief-stricken, Smith struggled to express his feelings over the loss of a friend and colleague. If ever Bedell Smith had a close friend, it was Vivian Dykes.

Bedell Smith chose his friends carefully. Doing so did not make him antisocial. As Crosswell has written, Smith was not reclusive. Yet the common impression is that he was a

⁴⁸ *Dykes Diary*, February 5, 6, & 8, 1942. See editorial comment by Alex Danchev, *Dykes Diary*, 8-9.

⁴⁹ Outgoing Message, War Cabinet Offices, London, to Joint Staff Offices, Washington, D. C., January 29, 1943, 122/274, The Records of the Cabinet Office, Public Records Office, hereafter, CAB, PRO, Kew, London. On January 29, 1943, Dykes boarded a four-engine airplane bound for London. Over the Bay of Biscay, the starboard engines caught fire and failed. With both port engines at full throttle, the pilot struggled to keep the plane under control but the aircraft hit the water at an acute angle. Dykes was killed outright. He was 44 years of age. See letter of condolence, Bedell Smith to Winifred Dykes, 30 January 1943. Cf. Eleanor Bedell Smith to Coleridge, n.d. [February 1943], CAB 122/274, PRO, Kew, London.

“loner.” The term is misleading, giving the impression that Smith was an oddball. He certainly lacked Eisenhower’s ease in social situations. Smith was more comfortable at informal settings. He was an introvert. Perhaps Eisenhower and Bradley described Smith best as a shy man.⁵⁰ Had he been all that atypical, Smith would never have worked for Eisenhower, much less Marshall.

A “Crackerjack” Chief of Staff for the European Theater of Operations

Allied strategic plans remained in limbo throughout the summer of 1942. Observing the clash of personalities and the ebb of events, Bedell Smith complained bitterly to Vivian Dykes about inter-Allied and inter-service bickering and indecision.⁵¹ American military leaders hammered out a series of operational plans as British fortunes in North Africa foundered.⁵² The British put forth a plan for the invasion of North Africa. As the Allied strategic debate raged American strategic plans were “hammered out on the anvil of necessity” in the summer of 1942.⁵³

Dissatisfied with things in the US European Theater of Operations and still hoping to provide the Red Army some support in 1942, General Marshall ordered Eisenhower to London on

⁵⁰ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 200; D’Este, *Eisenhower*, 318; Dwight D. Eisenhower to Sir William Elliot, August 26, 1961, Elliot Papers and Correspondence, 4/2/14, Liddell Hart Centre for Military History, Kings College, University of London; Bradley and Blair, *A General’s Life*, 69; Kay Summersby, *Eisenhower Was My Boss* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948), 50.

⁵¹ *Dykes Diary*, July 30, 1942.

⁵² US Army planners put forward three operational plans: Operation ROUNDUP was a plan for a cross-channel invasion of northwestern Europe; BOLERO was the buildup for ROUNDUP; Operation SLEDGEHAMMER, entailed a plan to invade the continent of Europe in the event that the Red Army collapsed; Greenfield wrote that American operational plans were “hammered out on the anvil of necessity” while the strategic debate raged. GYMNAST was a British plan, calling for an invasion of North Africa; Greenfield, *Historian and the Army*, 28-29; Charles Bolté, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, October 17, 1973, Oral History 395, DDEL.

⁵³ As quoted, Kent Roberts Greenfield, *The Historian and the Army* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1954), 29.

May 23, 1942 to review the state of American military power there. Eisenhower thought that Major General James E. Chaney ran a lackadaisical command. He recommended a change in command. Marshall recalled Chaney, and Eisenhower became the theater commander. He received formal notice on his new command on June 11, 1942.⁵⁴

Eisenhower wanted only one man for his chief of staff – Bedell Smith. Marshall promised to release Smith from the Secretariat as soon as possible. Eisenhower considered Smith a godsend – “a master of detail with clear comprehension of main issues.”⁵⁵ Eisenhower recognized Smith’s loyalty, ability to manage conferences and diplomatic skill. Both officers looked forward to serving in London. Anxious to secure an excellent British liaison officer within Eisenhower’s command, Smith requested Brigadier Dykes for the post. The British refused the request. Brigadier Dykes recorded that Eisenhower and Smith appeared “curiously nervous” about their new assignments, “like young boys off to a new school.”⁵⁶

There was a hitch. General Marshall still needed Bedell Smith’s services in Washington. General Eisenhower departed for London without Smith. Arriving in the United Kingdom a second time, Eisenhower was even less impressed with the American command than he had been in May. Brigadier General Charles L. Bolté had served as Chaney’s chief of staff. Eisenhower retained Bolté’s services for the moment. Their relations were cool. Bolté had tried to push the

⁵⁴ Memorandum for the Chief of Staff, June 3, 1942, and notes printed in *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 1, 327 and notes 315; see also Marshall to Stark, May 20, 1942, printed in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, edited by Larry I. Bland, vol. 3, “The Right Man for the Job, December 7, 1941 – May 31, 1943,” (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 206-207, hereafter, *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*.

⁵⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1948), 54.

⁵⁶ *Dykes Diary*, June 20, 1942.

services of a fine staff officer to head up the Intelligence Division. Eisenhower had set his mind on another officer who had been posted as military attaché. Glaring at his interim chief of staff, Eisenhower struggled with his temper, “I don’t know Case. I know McClure and I want McClure over here.” When Boltè failed to produce McClure promptly because of extenuating circumstances, Eisenhower snapped, “I don’t give a goddamn. I want him over here!”⁵⁷

Eisenhower could be aloof and curt with his subordinates.⁵⁸ He, however, was not being pigheaded by requesting McClure. His attitude was more than personal pique. Understandably, he wanted his own team. As the new theater commander, Eisenhower needed to gain control over the command and staff. With external threats looming and with time as the enemy, he wanted as few disruptions as possible. By selecting those whom he knew, Eisenhower could better predict events.

Eisenhower did not know Bedell Smith all that well, except by professional reputation. He wanted Smith for chief of staff because of his expertise and association with Marshall. During the reorganization of the theater and when rapid change was most evident, Eisenhower needed Smith most. A functionalist would agree that Smith was an excellent candidate for restoring order to the headquarters staff during a crisis – Smith acted, accepted responsibility and got prompt results. One must consider the performance of Bedell Smith within the context of convulsive change.⁵⁹ Yet his personality and health were not always conducive to the task.

⁵⁷ As quoted, Charles Boltè, interview #2, by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 14, 1974, Oral History 395, DDEL. General Robert McClure later became chief of the Psychological Warfare, SHAEF. See *Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, vol. 1, #446, 490.

⁵⁸ Charles Bolté, #3 interview by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, January 29, 1975, Oral History 395, DDEL.

⁵⁹ Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 3-4.

Health and work presented a dilemma for Smith. He experience trouble in times of flux.

Throughout the summer of 1942, Eisenhower pressed Marshall to release Smith from duties in the Secretariat. On June 26, for instance, Eisenhower cabled the Army Chief of Staff requesting the release of Smith. He gently urged Smith's promotion to brigadier general. Eisenhower also emphasized that he needed Smith to coordinate planning with the British. Marshall kept delaying Smith's release from the Secretariat. Hopes soared when Eisenhower received some good news on July 7. Smith received orders relieving him of duties in the Secretariat of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Eisenhower responded immediately. He cabled Smith, stressing the enormous importance of his new position.⁶⁰ The War Department agreed to release Smith on, or about, August 1, 1942. Smith, however, was still working in Washington in mid-August. Impatient, Eisenhower told Butcher that General Marshall had deprived him of "a crackerjack" chief of staff.⁶¹

General Marshall, meanwhile, gave Smith three major assignments before dispatching him to Eisenhower's headquarters. First, Smith received the task of orienting Admiral William D. Leahy, who had been appointed Chief of Staff to the President. Although Leahy's appointment did not receive official approval until July 21, 1942, Smith began the admiral's orientation in late June. Roosevelt had stated that Leahy's position was purely one of liaison, an opinion quite at

⁶⁰ Eisenhower to Marshall, June 26, 1942, *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 1, 360. See Outgoing Message, War Department Cable #1885 to USFOR, London, Marshall to Eisenhower, July 6, 1942, Office of the Chief of Staff, Central Decimal File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 37, NARA; cf. Smith's orders are in above file; Incoming Message, USFOR #153, London to AGWAR, Eisenhower to Smith, July 7, 1942 in above file; USFOR signifying United States Forces, Europe, and AGWAR, Adjutant General War Department.

⁶¹ Manuscript *Butcher Diary*, August 11, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 3, DDEL.

odds with that of General Marshall. Like his superior, Smith wanted Leahy to assume an assertive role, something more than a mere administrative "leg man" to the President.⁶² Admiral Leahy never functioned in the same way that the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff does today.

Second, Smith accompanied General Marshall to London in July 1942. There, the Allied strategic debate reached its climax. On July 8, 1942, the British War Cabinet had cabled the Joint Staff Mission in Washington that Churchill had tabled SLEDGEHAMMER as unworkable for 1942. Churchill cherished the hope that the United States would join in GYMNAST during the autumn. It would serve as the best means of assisting the Soviet Union. General Marshall and Admiral King strenuously opposed any diversion of military and naval forces for a North African campaign on the grounds of logistics alone.⁶³ American and British opinion was sharply divided. President Roosevelt intervened, directing the Joint Chiefs of Staff to find an alternative to a cross-Channel assault as an immediate objective. United States forces, moreover, were to engage the Germans somewhere else in 1942. Cooperation with the British was essential. Nonetheless, President Roosevelt granted Marshall one final attempt to persuade the British to accept a cross-

⁶² William D. Leahy, *I Was There* (New York: Whittlesey House of McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1950), 97-98. See Memorandum for General Surlis, September 2, 1942, printed in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, 338. Leahy's proper title was "Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief," 285. See Butcher Diary, September 7, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 5, DDEL.

⁶³ Cable, British War Cabinet Offices to Joint Staff Mission, Washington, July 8, 1942, COS [W] No. 217, (OPD, Exec. 1, Item 4), RG-165, Records of the War Department General Staff and Special Staffs, Box 1, NARA; Memorandum for the President, July 12, 1942, COS [W] (OPD, Exec. 5, Item 1), RG-165, Records of the War Department General Staff and Special Staffs, Box 1, NARA; Memorandum for Admiral King, July 15, 1942, 276, as printed in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, 276. See also Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 341-342.

Channel invasion.⁶⁴ On July 17, Roosevelt, King and Hopkins departed for London with Smith and Dykes in their party.

Bedell Smith had been watching these developments with interest. Prior to the trip to London, the idea began circulating that General Marshall favored a strategic shift to the Pacific war if the British remained obstinate regarding strategy in Europe. On Tuesday evening July 14, 1942, the Smiths invited Brigadier Vivian Dykes to dine. After dinner, Smith speculated that Marshall, by suggesting a strategic shift to the Pacific, had merely been bluffing. In an interview with Forrest C. Pogue in 1956, Marshall admitted that he had been posturing, but he added that Admiral King had genuinely supported the Pacific alternative.⁶⁵ It was all a “bogey,” Smith declared, but then Marshall discovered that several people liked the option.⁶⁶ Bedell Smith also declared that President Roosevelt was the cagiest of politicians, a shrewd master of men and events. Marshall was bluffing, and the President knew it. Smith frequently shared his opinion that Roosevelt was a master of grand strategy.⁶⁷ Smith was loyal to General Marshall while striving for Allied unity. Notwithstanding, one might question loose talk with Brigadier Dykes

⁶⁴ Memorandum for the President, July 10, 1942 printed in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, 276; in same source, and Radio No. 2135, Marshall to Eisenhower, July 13, 1942, 273-274; Memorandum for the President, July 12, 1942, COS [W] (OPD, Exec. 5, Item 1), RG-165, Records of the War Department General Staff and Special Staffs, Box 1, NARA. See the President's handwritten draft of July 15 for Harry Hopkins, George C. Marshall, and Ernst J. King as printed in Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942: United States Army in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1953), 274-275. See also Memorandum for Admiral King, July 15, 1942, 276, as printed in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, 276; Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 341-342.

⁶⁵ Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 340-341.

⁶⁶ *Dykes Diary*, July 14, 1942.

⁶⁷ *Butcher Diary*, Manuscript, September 7, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 5, DDEL.

regarding American strategic options. Rightly or wrongly, there will always be a question whether Smith was overly familiar with some British officers or cleverly playing along with his Allied counterparts in order to glean information.

The Americans were in a fighting mood when they arrived in London. General Ismay noted that Admiral King had arrived, and as always, was “tough as nails,” and General Henry H. Arnold was vigilant in defending his superior and the interest of American air power.⁶⁸ General Marshall polled the American delegation to insure unity in the face of what he perceived as British intransigence. Although American representatives were unified on the surface, the Chief of Staff had already lost the strategic argument.⁶⁹ An atmosphere of distrust was evident. Nearly everyone’s nerves were frayed.

Alex Danchev has stated that Smith and Dykes were twin architects of a harmonious and effective Combined Secretariat. Without such an organization, Danchev argues, it would have been difficult to reach any consensus whatsoever.⁷⁰ Although it is possible to exaggerate the role of two chief secretaries, there is no question that Smith and Dykes helped to reduce tensions behind the scenes. On Saturday, July 18, for instance, the British Chiefs of Staff spent the day ruminating over alternatives to SLEDGEHAMMER. After the British adjourned their meeting, Bedell Smith called on Vivian Dykes. Ian Jacob and Jo Hollis, two other member of the British staff, were present. The three British staff officers emphasized that SLEDGEHAMMER might

⁶⁸ Hastings Lionel Ismay, *The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay* (New York: Viking Press, 1960), 253.

⁶⁹ The Americans were unified on the surface. But the line and staff of Eisenhower’s command were solidly behind General Marshall while Admiral Harold R. Stark, the liaison with the Royal Navy, appeared to be leaning toward the British position.

⁷⁰ Editorial comment by Alex Danchev, *Dykes Diary*, 14.

well be a disaster, whereas GYMNAST might have positive results even if the situation on the Eastern front deteriorated. They also intimated that the North African option might not preclude a cross-Channel assault in late 1943. Smith, while disagreeing on British strategy in Europe, was not disagreeable. Responding more positively than Dykes dared hope, Smith flatly stated that the Pacific alternative was definitely no longer an option.⁷¹

On July 18, British and American delegations met on the fourth floor of Claridge's Hotel, which served as a temporary headquarters. Bedell Smith played an active role in the debates that followed. He drafted and re-drafted correspondence to President Roosevelt and Secretary of War Stimson. By July 20, Eisenhower and his staff had produced a revision of SLEDGEHAMMER, which called for an operation directed at the Cotentin Peninsula.⁷²

From a functionalist perspective, the strategic debate was a nightmare. Raging arguments threatened Allied unity. The intransigence of the opposing factions offered little prospect of compromise. With strategic objectives undefined, there was no way to predict the outcome of any future Allied operation in the European theater. The climax of debate came on Wednesday, July 22, 1942. Flanked by the American Secretariat and Eisenhower's military, naval and air staffs, Marshall argued for the practicability of SLEDGEHAMMER. Despite the most cogent arguments of General Marshall and those of his chief planner, Albert C. Wedemeyer, the British delegation remained unconvinced. General Brooke and Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal remained adamantly opposed to any assault on the coast of Normandy in 1942. The British were

⁷¹ *Dykes Diary*, July 18, 1942.

⁷² Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 607; the American Secretariat and Eisenhower's staff – General Mark Wayne Clark and Colonel Raymond W. Barker, among others – labored all Saturday night to produce a revamped operational plan.

in no mood to face the possibility of a tactical disaster.⁷³ For General Marshall it was a bitter disappointment but he bore it well. He discussed strategy later with Lord Cherwell, who lent a friendly ear. Having heard the American general out, Cherwell replied, "It's no use – you are arguing against the casualties of the Somme."⁷⁴ By the evening of July 22, the Americans admitted defeat.

Smith regretted that the Americans had lost the strategic argument, although he changed his opinion in time. Eisenhower later recorded that July 22, 1942 had been the "Blackest Day in History," but he came to accept the British alternative strategy.⁷⁵ Wedemeyer complained bitterly to Handy, declaring that he knew that Eisenhower and Smith would soon buckle in the face of British pressure. The American war effort, he said, was now tied to a "subterranean umbilicus."⁷⁶

The agreement, formally known as CCS 94, received the blessing of President Roosevelt. On the morning of July 25, the Combined Chiefs of Staff held its 33rd meeting. Bedell Smith and Vivian Dykes took the minutes. Discussion revolved around command of the Northwest African campaign. Subsequently, the Allies gave the operation the codename TORCH. With Churchill's

⁷³ War Cabinet and Planning, 2nd Meeting, "Minutes of the Meeting," April 12, 1942, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principle File, Box 152, File Folder 2, DDEL; War Cabinet and Planning, 4th Meeting; "Minutes," April 13, 1942, in above source; *Memoirs of General Lord Ismay* (New York: Viking Press, 1960), 260. See also J. M. A. Gwyer and J. R. M. Butler, *Grand Strategy*, vol. 3, *June 1941-August 1942*, part 2, 624-638 for official British account of the mid-summer debates; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare*, 278; Butcher Diary, July 22, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 2, DDEL.

⁷⁴ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, reprint Penguin ed. by Barnes & Noble ed. (New York: Viking Press, 1976), 280.

⁷⁵ Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 145-146.

⁷⁶ As quoted, Albert C. Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1958), 191. See also Memorandum, Wedemeyer to Handy, July 14, 1942, Office of the Chief of Staff, (OPD, Exec. 5, Item 1), RG-165, Records of WDGS & Special Staffs, Box 1, NARA.

concurrence, President Roosevelt stipulated that the campaign should open no later than October 30, 1942. There was agreement that the operation would be primarily an American affair. For that reason, General Brooke proposed that the commander should be an American with a headquarters centered in London. Eisenhower and his staff immediately began planning for the North African operation. For several weeks, however, the question of who should command was unresolved. Marshall's name came up in the discussions that followed. President Roosevelt, Secretary of War Stimson and Admiral King, among others, believed Marshall's role on the Combined Chiefs of Staff indispensable. King suggested that Eisenhower was the logical choice to command TORCH. Command of TORCH did not fall to Eisenhower until August 6.⁷⁷

Once the decision had been made, Bedell Smith became an apostle of cooperation and good will. As July 22, 1942, drew to a close, Eisenhower and Clark joined Smith in his room at Claridge's Hotel. As a gesture of good will, Brigadier Dykes came by around 7:00 P.M. The British Chiefs of Staff threw a dinner party, perhaps to mollify the disgruntled American officers. As the evening wore on, moods improved. Later, Vivian Dykes and Bedell Smith had one of their private chats. Smith expressed relief that the main issue was now behind them. He declared that he had never had much faith in the American plan as a viable option – a “flip-flop” from what he had previously expressed. The two friends turned their thoughts to cooperation on the British plan, GYMNAST.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ I. S. O. Playfair, et al, *The Mediterranean and Middle East*, vol. 4, *The Destruction of the Axis Forces in Africa*, edited by Sir James M. Butler (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1966), 112; Ambrose, *Supreme Commander: The War Years of General Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 78, *Memoirs of General Lord Ismay*, 260-261; Winston S. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, vol. 3, *The Second World War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., Riverside Press Cambridge, 1950), 447-449; Butcher Diary, July 25, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 2, DDEL.

⁷⁸ *Dykes Diary*, July 22, 1942; Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 102.

Smith's mood sometimes fluctuated, depending on the company he kept. The British had won the round, but other matters remained stalemated. The next evening, Thursday, July 23, Butcher and Clark joined Eisenhower in his room at the Dorchester Hotel. Eisenhower was still muttering about the recent change of plans. Bedell Smith arrived. He was ill, his peptic ulcer was giving him considerable trouble. The four officers ate re-hydrated noodles with bread and butter for dinner. Afterwards, conversation turned to the chances for ROUNDUP in 1943. Smith tried to lift Eisenhower's spirits. Both Clark and Smith expressed doubt that the British would scrap ROUNDUP in its entirety. Just when spirits seemed to be improving, Smith trumpeted that the invasion of Europe ought to be carried out even if they had to wait until 1945. His utterance hardly improved the mood of the evening.⁷⁹

When ill and fatigued, Bedell Smith occasionally slipped out of his functionalist mode. He accepted the revised Allied strategic goals as defined the Allied leadership. Allied cooperation was crucial for success against a common enemy. Not all of Bedell Smith's dealings with the British allies were smooth, however. Smith was particularly fierce when defending American prerogatives. There were a number of meetings on July 24 and, despite his best intentions, Smith lost his temper. He was edgy. Trouble developed over the final version of the proposal regarding TORCH and BOLERO. Smith tangled with General Ismay late in the afternoon. Smith took exception to what he construed as Ismay's arrogant behavior. The squabble centered around the role of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. The British general bluntly stated that its authority was not

⁷⁹ *Butcher Diary*, Manuscript, July 23, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 2, DDEL.

final regarding strategic compromise.⁸⁰ Churchill, the British general declared, was actually the chairman of the British Chiefs of Staff. Moreover, Smith thought that Ismay's statement violated the chain of command. He reacted vehemently. Always a stickler for detail, Smith countered, pointing out that Ismay's argument did not conform to the document that had established the Combined Chiefs of Staff. When it came to knowledge of organizational history and structure, Bedell Smith was in his element. He was justified in supporting fixed lines of authority from a functionalist standpoint. However, his manner of speaking was clearly at odds with functionalist thought and practice. Smith's indignant outburst nearly upset Allied harmony when it was most needed. As it happened, Churchill sided with Smith the next day.⁸¹

When he took time to gather his thoughts, Smith made cogent arguments for cooperation. Smith won the respect of members of the British Secretariat. That evening – July 24 – Smith and Dykes went to dinner. They were exhausted, but feeling much better than they had two nights earlier. Another British staff officer, Brigadier Ian Jacob, joined them. During dinner and after a few drinks, Smith declared that he had “had a hell of a job” making a case for the compromise. Vivian Dykes was absolutely convinced that Bedell Smith was pivotal in breaking the deadlock.⁸² It would not be the last time the British officer rendered that opinion.

The third assignment that Smith received from General Marshall in summer 1942 involved coordinating the planning of Operation TORCH. For the first time in his career, Smith worked

⁸⁰ For the substance of this argument, see *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, 280; King and Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King*, 404-405; Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare*, 280-281. Issues regarding the logistics and landing craft for TORCH were debated, as well as the Allied air offensive and buildup (BOLERO) in Britain.

⁸¹ *Dykes Diary*, July 24, 1942; Dykes, who was present, rejected Ismay's argument.

⁸² *Ibid*; see also September 2, 1942 entry.

closely with the US Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Ernest J. King and British Admiral Sir Andrew Browne Cunningham, who had been selected to command the Allied naval armada during Operation TORCH. In performance of his duties, Smith demonstrated that he was a functionalist in every way by his work in the collective interest of the Allied coalition.⁸³

On the evening of July 25, Smith returned to Washington with General Marshall and the rest of the American party. Smith was confident that Marshall had approved of his performance. Dykes returned to Washington on July 29. He joined Bedell and Nory for dinner. Afterwards, the three went to visit Mamie Eisenhower at the Wardman Park Hotel. While Mamie and Nory visited, Smith told Dykes that he had a low opinion of Eisenhower's current staff. If BOLERO and TORCH had any chance of succeeding, the staff would have to improve significantly. Smith was intent on straightening out staff problems as soon as he became chief of staff.⁸⁴ He told Dykes that the decision to launch the North African campaign meant that Nazi Germany would not be defeated until 1944.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, Smith expressed his enthusiasm for TORCH, revealing his private thoughts only to his British colleague. He looked forward to joining Eisenhower in London.

On July 30, 1942, Marshall had cabled Eisenhower, stating that he expected to release Smith from the Secretariat by August 10. Marshall scheduled a farewell luncheon for Smith at the Army and Navy Club on August 8. Although many respected the Smith's enormous drive and expertise, there is little doubt that some were glad that he was transferring to Eisenhower's

⁸³ Parsons, *Social Structure and Personality* (Free Press ed. London: Collier-Macmillan, 1965), 259-262.

⁸⁴ *Dykes Diary*, July 29, 1942.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, August 3, 1942.

command. Marshall then reversed himself on August 5. The Chief of Staff stated that in all likelihood he would keep Smith in Washington until the latter part of August, possibly longer. Marshall went on to inquire whether Eisenhower was still intent on getting Smith. Marshall suggested that Eisenhower accept another officer as chief of staff.⁸⁶

Eisenhower was unhappy with Marshall's decision. Finding the performance of General Bolté unsatisfactory, Eisenhower secured Major General John E. Dahlquist as his acting chief of staff. The theater commander gave Dahlquist serious consideration for a permanent job, but opted to wait for Smith's release. He believed that Smith was the best office manager in the US Army – one who could lighten his burdens. Eisenhower was responsible for commanding the European Theater of Operations, including the American air war. Pressed for time, Eisenhower wanted to concentrate on the North African operation. In Eisenhower's judgment, Bedell Smith was the staff officer who showed the most promise of whipping the headquarters staff into shape. Throughout August 1942 impatiently waiting for Smith's release, Eisenhower repeatedly grouched that TORCH had only a fifty percent chance of success.⁸⁷

While working on Operation TORCH, Smith had to deal with the Department of the Navy. Eisenhower needed adequate naval support for the North African landing. Many people found

⁸⁶ Marshall to Eisenhower, July 30, 1942, printed in *Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, 283-285; Memorandum for Members of the Joint U.S. Secretariat, August 8, 1942, Office of the Chief of Staff, Central Decimal File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 37, NARA; Outgoing Message, War Department Cable #2890 to USFOR, London, Marshall to Eisenhower, August 5, 1942, Office of the Chief of Staff, Central Decimal File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 37, NARA.

⁸⁷ *Dykes Diary*, August 6, 13, 17, 24; Eisenhower was able to secure two excellent planners: Generals Alfred M. Gruenther and Lyman L. Lemnitzer. See Alfred M. Gruenther, interview by Ed Edwin, April 20, 1967, Oral History 113, DDEL; Lyman L. Lemnitzer, interview by David C. Berliner, November 21, 1972, Oral History 301, DDEL; original documents from the Columbia University Oral History Project.

Admiral King intimidating.⁸⁸ Marshall could barely tolerate the Chief of Naval Operations, believing that he was “perpetually mean.”⁸⁹ He assigned Smith to deal with the annoying naval chief. Dealing with the cantankerous admiral was a difficult assignment. King’s war was Pacific-centered. Until Allied troop strength in the European Theater of Operations had met expectations, King was reluctant to commit naval forces to TORCH, which he considered a diversion. Smith never succeeded in winning the argument with King. Nor did he try. He knew, however, that Marshall had the ear of President Roosevelt. Indeed, Marshall was pivotal in winning Admiral King’s cooperation without a presidential directive. Although he privately expressed his outrage with the recalcitrant admiral, Smith took an oblique approach to him. Although he found the experience exasperating, Smith was diplomatic with King. Marshall was pleased with his chief secretary. In the long run, King expressed respect for Smith’s ability to achieve results consistent with objectives.⁹⁰

Smith’s relations with Admiral Cunningham of the Royal Navy were cordial. There is no doubt as to Smith’s genuine desire for unity in Allied circles. Cunningham and Smith engaged in a number of lengthy conversations about Allied cooperation during the course of the war. In these heart-to-heart chats, the British admiral found Smith most cooperative. Familiar with Admiral King’s opinion on Operation TORCH, Smith sought Cunningham’s point of view. The chief of staff’s inquisitiveness with respect to naval and logistical issues impressed Cunningham. He took

⁸⁸ John Gunther, *Roosevelt in Retrospect* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 81.

⁸⁹ *George C. Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 593; Admiral Leahy too found King undiplomatic and quick tempered; see Leahy, *I Was There*, 104.

⁹⁰ King and Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral*, 364, 390, 395, 405, 407-412, 585; see also *Dykes Diary*, August 20, 21, 25, 27 & 29, 1942.

the time to explain the benefits that would accrue from a successful operation in North Africa. Cunningham discovered that Smith was a good listener, who maintained confidentiality.⁹¹ Smith sincerely feared that disunity might well destroy the Allied war effort. Success in war required unity of purpose and the coordination of all forces on land, at sea and in the air.

The burden of work had taken its toll on Bedell Smith by the end of August 1942. Driving himself without proper rest, Smith was physically exhausted. His aching ulcer was very close to perforating, although he did not yet realize it. While striving for Allied unity and cooperation, Smith could point to his achievements with satisfaction. He was cognizant of the pivotal strategic issues, having participated in Allied discussions. He had also won the respect of British officers. More importantly, he had earned the coveted approval of General Marshall, who was the most consistent functionalist in the US Army. Marshall released Smith on September 4, 1942. Three days later, Smith joined Eisenhower in London.⁹⁰

⁹¹ Andrew Browne Cunningham, *A Sailor's Odyssey: The Autobiography of Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1951), 469; Cunningham, affectionately known, as "A. B. C.," would serve as Commander-in-Chief of Allied Naval Forces in the Mediterranean; in 1943, he became First Sea Lord of the Royal Navy.

⁹⁰ Radio CM-IN-2816 (Secret), Eisenhower to Operations Division, Classified Message Center, September 7, 1942, RG-165, Records of the War Department General Staff and Special Staffs, Box 1761, NARA; London to AGWAR, No. 1890, September 7, 1942; Eisenhower's statement that Smith touched down in London, at 3:33 PM, GMT.

Chapter Four

Functionalist Dilemmas: Reorganization of Eisenhower's Staff

General Challenges

Assuming his role as chief of staff in September 1942, Brigadier General Bedell Smith immediately began restructuring Eisenhower's headquarters. In essence, this meant reinforcing the change of command. Sociologists tend to refer to it as the vertical axis. The chain of command was the tool employed by Eisenhower and Smith to gain firm control over the line and staff of the European theater. Eisenhower directed Smith to tighten control over the headquarters as a means of insuring the functionalist goal of predictability. It was Smith's responsibility to help define the means by which Allied policy could be executed. He buttressed Eisenhower's authority according to the principle of unity of command. Smith brought order to a headquarters that was in disarray. Eisenhower, who concentrated on larger operational matters, countenanced Smith's means as long as they produced results.

From a functionalist point of view, the headquarters, which Bedell Smith built, worked well as long as the scale of the organization remained relatively small.¹ His training had prepared him to address the main functions of a headquarters. The arrangement insured that external authority or formal power ran along the vertical axis to the lower echelons of the headquarters and field units. On the vertical axis of the staff, Smith's approach made good sense with respect to the chain of command. It rendered a great deal of efficiency with regard to routine tasks. In the short run, it served the purpose of bolstering unity of command and directing the planning of operations in North Africa and the United Kingdom.

¹ Mintzberg, *Structuring of Organizations*, 333-334.

As the size of the headquarters mushroomed, Bedell Smith's dilemmas multiplied. Some of these difficulties were not of his own doing. First, he had no experience with large staffs. The headquarters, which Smith built, lacked varying degrees of flexibility in the long run. He adopted a traditional method of management that was often a barrier to effective communication.² Smith failed to comprehend fully the principle of self-regulating functionalism. The chief of staff was responsible for coordinating activities of the staff. He needed the cooperation of those on periphery of the headquarters, who helped coordinate the work of organizational units within the military hierarchy.³ Specialists in the lateral organization had an informal authority of their own, which was a problem for Smith. He had to enforce unity of command on one hand and he needed the skill of experts on the other. There was an ever-present danger that the staff would dominate the decision making. Yet some decisions emanating from the lateral axis may lead to quicker and better solutions.⁴ Smith's reluctance to delegate made his tasks even more difficult than they might otherwise have been. He tended to opt for centralization and control. As a practical functionalist, Smith did not fully understand that the primary shortcoming of the headquarters was that it was too big and too unwieldy.⁵ Although Eisenhower was as much responsible for the burgeoning staff as his chief of staff, Smith engaged in empire building.

Bedell Smith faced a second problem. He had enormous responsibilities, when contrasted

² Galbraith, *Competing with Flexible Lateral Organizations*, 6-9.

³ *Ibid*, 9-17.

⁴ Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, and Joseph Lampel, *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management* (New York: Free Press, 1998), 65. There are trade-offs, which are evident in all delegation, where staff members fail to see the "big picture."

⁵ Robert W. Crawford, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 5, 1948, USAMHI.

with other operational chiefs of staff. From fall 1942 until spring 1944, Bedell Smith commanded three staffs at Eisenhower's headquarters. He restructured the staff of the European Theater of Operations. Smith then revamped the staff at Allied Force Headquarters. Finally, relying on his experience in London and Algiers, Smith built the staff of Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force.⁶ Given the constraints of time, he was remarkably successful. While performing his job, he immediately won the trust of General Eisenhower.

Bedell Smith's conceptions of power, personality and health were often at odds with functionalism. At Allied Force Headquarters and later at Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, formal authority rested with General Eisenhower, who received strategic direction from the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Eisenhower's granted to Smith broad discretionary powers. Smith received executive control of the headquarters, which provided the means to control the theater. His authority was restricted to the staff in theory.⁷ The complexities of coalition warfare, however, were such that Smith often acted in Eisenhower's name. The chief of staff, for instance, occasionally issued orders to field officers of the support and operational commands. There were resentments about this method of delegation, but they receded over time. Smith too often relied on naked power to force subordinates into line. His abrasive personality and lack of self-control engendered ill will. Finally, his marginal health was by itself a burden.

⁶ Acronyms for European Theater of Operations, Allied Force Headquarters, and Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force are ETO, AFHQ and SHAEF, respectively.

⁷ Noel Sproles and Alex Yates, "A Historical Study of Operational Command: A Resource for Researchers," *Scientific & Technical Report* (Edinburgh, South Australia, Australia: DSTO Information Sciences Laboratory, March 2005), 48-49 website: <http://www.dsto.gov.au/publications/3757>. The coordination of logistics, Eisenhower reserved for himself as well the ultimate direction of military operations. See Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 149-150.

Preliminary Instructions

Bedell Smith arrived in London on September 7, 1942. A jubilant Eisenhower met him at Hendon airfield. Smith briefed Eisenhower on matters in Washington and expounded at length about global war and the talents of General Marshall.⁸ Smith was very enthusiastic about his new assignment. The discussion narrowed to the North African operation to which President Roosevelt had given his final approval.⁹ Smith was confident that Operation TORCH would succeed. General Eisenhower was impressed with Smith's briefing. He wanted no pessimists in his theater.

After dinner that evening with Butcher, Eisenhower and Smith resumed discussions about the European Theater. They agreed wholeheartedly with General Clark that Marshall was "very quick to bust guys."¹⁰ Sobered by the responsibility of their tasks, both men went off to bed.

The next day, Eisenhower laid out two general priorities that required Smith's assistance. On one hand, Eisenhower had responsibility for Operation TORCH. The presidential decision had given Allied planners a mere two months to prepare for the assault.¹¹ On the other hand, Eisenhower was also the commanding general of American armed forces in the European theater. He believed that he was only a caretaker for Marshall with respect to the US European Theater of

⁸Harry C. Butcher, *My Three Years* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1946), 90-93.

⁹ Winston S. Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, vol. 4, *The Second World War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Riverside Press Cambridge, 1950), 542-543; After hearing Roosevelt's decision, the Prime Minister replied "O.K., full blast." Full text, see above source; the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff issued a formal directive to Eisenhower on September 9.

¹⁰ Mark Wayne Clark, interview by staff, tape #1, n.d., USAMHI.

¹¹ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 60-61.

Operations.¹² On this sensitive matter, Eisenhower valued Smith's close ties with Marshall. Smith provided a close link to the US Army General Staff, but also a firm knowledge of politics on Capitol Hill. Marshall had refused to abandon ROUNDUP as a contingency for 1943. He, therefore, directed Eisenhower to continue the American buildup in the United Kingdom within the constraints placed upon it by Operation TORCH. Finally, General Marshall ordered Eisenhower to restructure the command and staff of European Theater of Operations.

Initially, Smith had two staffs to manage.¹³ During his first week in London, Smith spent most of his time in conference with Eisenhower. Eisenhower directed his chief of staff to convene a staff conference as soon as possible in order to "lay down the law."¹⁴ He stated that he would not tolerate General Chaney's laissez-faire approach to command. Eisenhower added that he would not accept the lackluster performance which he had perceived in Major General Charles Bolté, Smith's predecessor. The headquarters was in crisis. Eisenhower also instructed Smith to work closely with Major General Mark Wayne Clark on the planning of TORCH. The new chief of staff participated in all subsequent planning for operations in Northwest Africa and Northwest Europe.¹⁵

¹² *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 1, # 399, 425-427. The assumption was that Marshall would command the cross-channel invasion when the time came. Eisenhower also had responsibility for administering the Eighth Army Air Force and its operations.

¹³ Headquarters staffs: European Theater of Operations and Allied Force Headquarters. See Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 109-111.

¹⁴ Manuscript, Butcher Diary, September 8, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 5, in General File (July 8 – September 15, 1942), DDEL.

¹⁵ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 9, 1947, USAMHI; Butcher Diary, September 7, 1942, and September 9, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 5, in General File (July 8-September 15, 1942), DDEL. Eisenhower assigned Clark the responsibility for restructuring the command of US II Corp; it the nucleus of the force bound for North Africa.

Eisenhower also confronted a bewildering array of problems relating to diplomacy, air power, personnel, intelligence, planning, and logistics. With the invasion of North Africa looming, he delegated many responsibilities to his chief of staff. From the beginning, General Eisenhower was impressed with Smith's mastery of detail and grasp of major issues.¹⁶

While Clark concentrated on the headquarters staff for Operation Torch, Smith initially focused on the European Theater Operations. Guided by the principle of unity of command, the chief of staff addressed seemingly endless snarls concerning civil rights, censorship, medical facilities, inter-service rivalries. For instance, Eisenhower complained about the loose discipline and the sloppy dress of air force personnel.¹⁷ He directed Smith to take up the matter with the highest echelon of the Eighth Air Force command. Even though Eisenhower was the theater commander, there were thorny complications. Ground, naval and air forces were organized according to function, but technically speaking Eisenhower exercised direct authority over ground forces only. He wanted authority to direct all forces in pursuit of the objective.¹⁸ Smith's goal was to build an integrated headquarters that would facilitate unity of command, cooperation and coordination. In others words, Smith wanted the headquarters to function as the means by which Eisenhower controlled the theater. Functional unity would insure future success.¹⁹

¹⁶ Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 54-55.

¹⁷ Manuscript, Butcher Diary, September 23, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 1, in General File (September 16 -- November 2, 1942), DDEL.

¹⁸ Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 210; long after Smith had organized an integrated headquarters, Eisenhower exercised only direct command over ground forces, but indirect command over naval and air forces with few exceptions.

¹⁹ Sproles and Yates, "A Historical Study of Operational Command," pp. 15-19, 24, 34.

Eisenhower soon discovered that Smith achieved quick result which relieved him of administrative detail. Aside from his duties at headquarters, the chief of staff gave needed direction and coordination to naval and air staffs.²⁰ During his first month in London, Smith raced from division to division at general headquarters, from his office to field units. He exhausted himself, however, while bringing much needed cohesion to the theater staff and command.

A man of action more than deep introspection, Bedell Smith was the right officer to ramrod all the necessary changes demanded by Eisenhower. He was a good choice to bolster the chain of command. Under the duress of time and with the size of the Eisenhower's staff still relatively small, Smith brought functional unity to the headquarters in large part because the environment in which he worked was relatively stable. During a time of crisis, Smith found it easier to coordinate the work of staff by means of a linear method. Everything flowed through the chain of command. Smith standardized staff procedures and work routines. He enforced rules and regulations – seeking among other things – unity of command and discipline. Despite his roughshod methods, his actions represented a functionalist attempt to achieve objectives. Smith stifled any perceived threat to the power and authority of Eisenhower. The urgency of the moment increased cooperation. A distinct possibility existed that things might disintegrate.²¹

The self-regulating aspect of functionalism is an organic phenomenon that evolves only over time. The luxury of time was not available in autumn 1942. Smith's objectives were

²⁰ E. Dwight Salmon, Paul Birdsall, Lynn M. Case, Colin P. Gormley and Herbert J. Vogt, *History of Allied Force Headquarters* (Washington, D. C.: US Department of War, 1945), 17-19; Butcher, *My Three Years*, 104; "godsend" cited from *Crusade in Europe*, 54.

²¹ Organizations do not just "evolve" – they can also "dissolve." In times of crisis, organizations require firm management from the top. See Drucker, *Management*, 523; Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives*, 141.

functionalist in that he achieved dramatic results. The means that he employed to achieve his goals, however, were often at odds with functionalism. Smith fell into the trap of overusing discipline as an instrument of power.²²

Smith made remarkable progress. He deserved the bulk of the credit for these rapid improvements, but much is owed to the dedication of the staff. Research suggests that a new organization will unite in an organic way under a highly-motivated supervisor, particularly during a crisis – which, essentially, is the kind of process suggested in functionalist theory. Subordinates tend to pull together until equilibrium is restored. Under Smith's leadership, the headquarters had assumed an organic, yet centralized nature.²³

Although pleased with Smith's work, Eisenhower, nevertheless, had some concerns about Smith's behavior. He spoke to his chief of staff about the functionalist goals of cooperation and teamwork in late September 1942. Eisenhower stressed the importance of good communication with staff members. There was a thin line, he said, between enforcing the chain of command and fostering mutual understanding.²⁴ Smith nodded in agreement, but it is clear that he had trouble discerning the line of demarcation. He took satisfaction in having brought functional unity to the headquarters. With Operation TORCH fast approaching, Eisenhower lauded Smith's performance and tolerated his roughshod methods.

²² Everett C. Hughes, *The Sociological Eye: Selected Papers* (Chicago & New York: Aldine- Atherton, 1971), 305.

²³ During a rapid reorganization, much depends on the whim of the manager who acts as the master and brain of the entire structure. Some of the actions are mechanical. They produce quick results. See Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations*, 305-306, 312, 333.

²⁴ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 121-122.

Role and Task of Reshaping Headquarters

General Eisenhower delegated more authority to Bedell Smith than to any operational chief of staff in the history of the republic. As enthusiastic as Smith was upon assuming his role as chief of staff, he never dreamed that his backstage responsibilities would be so onerous.²⁵ Only three years earlier, he was a lowly captain. Like other staff officers who served in the inter-war period, Smith lacked experience with large staffs. His functionalist education and training had emphasized the importance of a efficient staff, but the learning curve that he confronted in 1942 was steep. Unlike most contemporary executives, Smith did not have the benefit of time in which to apply functionalist principles in a consistent way. Nor did time permit him to polish his executive skills had he been so inclined.

Education and experience had taught Smith that a general controls his command through the staff of his headquarters.²⁶ A newly revised army field manual, *FM 101-5* (1940), greatly strengthened the role and authority of the operational chief of staff. Eisenhower permitted Smith to use *FM 101-5* as a job description. The field manual specified that operational chiefs of staff must complement their commanders. On this point, Eisenhower was comfortable with Bedell Smith as chief of staff. Indeed, Eisenhower and Smith functioned as a team. In this broader – rather than restricted – role, Smith was relatively free to exercise authority over his staff as he saw fit.

FM 101-5 also permitted Eisenhower to make Smith the virtual commander of the headquarters staff. As Eisenhower's executive agent, Smith concerned himself with more than routine

²⁵ "Transcript of 'Newmakers' Program," CBS interview with Dallas Townsend, January 8, 1950, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 2, File Folder 1, DDEL.

²⁶ "Staff Personality," Infantry School Mailing List 13 (January 1938): 176.

staff functions. He was the medium through which all communications between Eisenhower and his headquarters flowed. Smith was responsible for directing and coordinating the headquarters, which included synchronizing army, navy and air staffs according to the principle of unity of command. Smith was also accountable for the planning and supervision of operations in the field. He channeled all decisions of the commander to the appropriate staff and transmitted Eisenhower's decisions in the form of orders to those who executed them.²⁷ Smith was free to make many decisions in Eisenhower's name through delegation. Matters of grave importance were left to Eisenhower.²⁸

Bedell Smith took full advantages of the loopholes in the army field manual, which he interpreted in most liberal terms. He sought predictability by means of control while rebuilding Eisenhower's staff. *FM 101-5* presented a problem for Smith. He sometimes had difficulty distinguishing except between black and white. Yet in Smith's world, many things were gray. He had the responsibility of enforcing unity of command on one hand and the obligation to cooperate with underlings on the other. Smith instinctively opted for the former instead of the latter. It was necessary to do both. Functionalism required flexibility on his part. US Army policy as framed in *FM 101-5*, further complicated matters. The field manual was vague in places, and Eisenhower

²⁷ Chapter 1, "Staff Doctrines and Functions," *Staff Officers' Field Manual*, "Staff and Combat Orders," War Department (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1940), 7; hereafter cited as *FM 101-5*. Copy of document obtained from Combined Arms Research Library, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS; *FM 101-5* made the chief of staff was the executive officer, the main advisor and principal coordinator of the commanding general; Richard F. Vaughn, *Staff Control and the Chief of Staff's Challenge in an Operational Level Headquarters* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, May 5, 1988), 2.

²⁸ Walter Bedell Smith, *Eisenhower's Great Decisions* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1956), 11-14; Vaughn, *Staff Control*, 17-18.

did not always delineate the limits of authority. Where the boundaries of authority were not explicit, Smith felt no obligation to explain or justify the way in which he wielded power. If one momentarily sets aside his personal quirks, it appears that Smith's behavior as chief of staff was not unique. Others who wielded power in similar circumstances had identical problems.²⁹ While performing his tasks, Smith had the blessings of Eisenhower in terms of goals. Clark also gave the chief of staff plenty of encouragement. Both men, however, had mild reservations about Smith's manner of execution. As gatekeeper at headquarters, Smith sometimes acted in ways inconsistent with functionalist theory and practice. A domineering manipulator, Smith frequently treating subordinates as objects. The chief of staff's brusqueness and despotic disposition got him in trouble later when others complained that he had overstepped his authority.

To reiterate, Smith was consistently functionalist with respect to his reorganization of the staff through the chain of command. In this task, he acted on the basis of tested practices rather than doctrine. With the headquarters staff still manageable and the environment relatively simple, Smith quickly established firm command and control of Eisenhower's headquarters through direct supervision.³⁰ Eisenhower even permitted Smith to write some of the the directives under the umbrella of executive delegation based on *FM 101-5*. Smith saw to it that these operational initiatives were promptly executed through formal lines of authority.³¹ He never tolerated anyone who appeared to threaten Eisenhower's prerogatives. The hard-driving Smith knew that all rules

²⁹ Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 114, 169.

³⁰ Galbraith, *Competing with Flexible Lateral Organizations*, 6; Mintzberg, *Structuring of Organizations*, 305-306.

³¹ Vaughn, *Staff Control*, 3-18. Command and control is the process through which activities of military forces are directed, coordinated, and controlled to accomplish the mission.

and regulations served a practical purpose for the survival of the headquarters and the Allied cause.³² Few doubted the chief of staff's loyalty and dedication, but many officers thought that Eisenhower had delegated too much responsibility and authority. Others claimed that Smith was power hungry and had exceeded his authority. Having centralized rapidly under the chief of staff's leadership, the staff was becoming increasingly bloated. It became more difficult to manage over time.

Smith had another responsibility and it presented a lot of problems from a functionalist standpoint. Internal lines of authority are coordinative, and their maintenance depends on the art of persuasion. As chief coordinator of the headquarters, Smith had the task of integrating the work of various groups in the interest of mutual cooperation. Throughout his career, Smith never totally understood the limits of coercive power. The important task of enforcing cohesion on one hand while encouraging cooperation on the other was a dilemma for Smith. Possessing a knack for establishing informal lines of communication with superiors in Washington and London, Smith often failed to do the same with inferiors. In most instances, he issued a flat order in the face of real or perceived intransigence. Some situations called for discussion and reflection rather than mechanical response. His abrasive manner and explosive temper alienated many staffers.³³ From a functionalist standpoint, Smith lacked the patience to convince subordinates to do willingly what they did not want to do.

³² As Durkheim spoke the institutions, values and customs that bind society together, Parson echoed that rules and regulations are necessary for the survival of organizations and institutions. See Parsons, *Structure of Social Action*, 719-720; Parsons, *Structure of Social Action*, 725.

³³ See Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 149-150.

Bedell Smith and the Chain of Command

Not surprisingly, Smith kept the existing divisions of the European Theater general headquarters – Personnel, Intelligence, Operations and Logistics – which had their parallels in the War Department General Staff.³⁴ The British accepted the American staff system. Eisenhower sought to eliminate national prejudices, which might hinder cooperation. He directed Smith to appoint deputies of the opposite nationality. If, for example, the head of the Intelligence Division (G-2) were British, the assistant chief of staff would be American and vice versa. This concept of layering often extended down to the sections and subsections of departments in many cases.³⁵

Smith's chief innovation was the creation of a secretariat, the nucleus of the headquarters staff. It was essentially his small staff. The secretariat was Smith's means of command and control over the headquarters staff. Much like its parent organization in the War Department General Staff, this steering committee typified Smith's search for order, predictability, unity of command and efficiency. The secretariat of Eisenhower's headquarters was functionalist by design. Its secretary served as Smith's chief of staff. Approximately six to eight officers with enlisted clerical help served in the organization at one time. The secretariat at AFHQ and SHAEF monitored activities of the staff, funneled all sorts of instructions, orders and data to staff sections, set up conferences, and conducted follow-up procedures. It was likewise responsible for ushering visitors when time permitted.

³⁴ Public Relations and Psychological Warfare Divisions would be added later.

³⁵ E. Dwight Salmon, et al, *History of Allied Force Headquarters*, 13-15. Allied planners momentarily ignored the axiom within the Operations Division for TORCH where most of the planning fell under American purview. In North Africa, the principle of "opposite numbers" took full effect. Smith agreed that the concept of layering would promote stability within the staff. See Vaughn, *Staff Control*, 23.

The chief of the secretariat had huge responsibilities. Turnover was high. There were five chief secretaries in the span of three and a half years. Several officers failed to pass muster. Colonel Dan Gilmer, for instance, survived the wear-and-tear of duty until the spring 1944. He was the epitome of mechanical efficiency, and Smith greatly admired his ability. In this particular instance, the turnover was indicative of a certain amount of friction. In the secretariat, Smith expected everyone to perform under the umbrella of fear. The demoralizing effect of striving for perfection hindered performance in the long run, so that the secretariat did not function in an organic fashion.³⁶ Although he surpassed Smith in the quest for order, Gilmer alienated many senior staff officers in the Allied command. He was sacked for his lack of collegiality. Chief secretaries aside, the rate of turnover among most of the headquarters staff stabilized by late 1943.³⁷ It was relatively easy for Smith to control the secretariat from the top. He used the secretariat as a means of directing only the most important matters to Eisenhower for decision making. With those outside of the headquarters, Smith worked for consensus. At headquarters he worked to control the staff.

³⁶ Manuscript, Butcher Diary, September 15, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 5, in General File (July 8 – September 15, 1942), DDEL; William P. Snyder, “Walter Bedell Smith: Eisenhower's Chief of Staff,” *Military Affairs: The Journal of Military History* 48 (January 1984), 9-10. The most notable secretaries were Colonels Dan Gilmer and Ford Trimble. Lieutenant Colonel Carter Burgess replaced Trimble when he returned to duty on the War Department General Staff. Gilmer ran afoul of Eisenhower and British General John F. C. Whiteley, a deputy chief of staff. See *The Diary of Everett S. Hughes*, March 11, 1944, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D. C.; hereafter cited as *Hughes Diary*; General Hughes's handwritten diary is nearly impossible to decipher. I express gratitude to D. K. R. Crosswell who gave me his typescript of the diary which I have in my possession; see also *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1767, 1940-1941; RG-165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Box 1722, NARA. Gilmer returned to WDGS in 1944.

³⁷ Snyder, “Walter Bedell Smith,” 9.

Marshall and Eisenhower greatly appreciated Smith's willingness to accept responsibility. Smith was not shy in accepting challenges. He adopted a traditional management style with bureaucratic mechanisms that enabled Smith to tighten control over the staff while Eisenhower focused on command of the theater. Determined to strengthen the chain of command, Smith followed functionalist theory by adopting a the tested model of staff management, which had been in practice since World War I.³⁸ With great justification, there was a danger that disorder and poor performance might well undermine the command.³⁹ The integrated staff that he fashioned had within it certain factions opposed to quick action.⁴⁰ Using common sense, Smith restricted discussion when options were clear-cut. Circumstances sometimes demand direct supervision. Some decisions are best made at the top.⁴¹ With those outside of the headquarters, Smith worked for consensus. But at headquarters he worked forcefully to control the staff, since was his duty to reduce the heavy burdens that Eisenhower had to bear.

The Problem of Comprehensibility

Bedell Smith faced four major problems while managing a large headquarters. He was no longer able to understand all of the intricacies of a bureaucratic staff; his imperious methods did not achieve optimal efficiency of the staff; his abrasive personality actually stifled initiative over time; finally, his poor health heightened his insecurities and reduced his effectiveness at work. All of these dilemmas suggest that Smith interpreted equilibrium as order, whereas a large degree

³⁸ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 123.

³⁹ Drucker, *Management*, 523-526.

⁴⁰ Pogue, *Organizer of Victory*, 195; *George C. Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 624.

⁴¹ Galbraith, et al, *Designing Dynamic Organizations*, 14-15.

of instability is inherent in a cumbersome organization. The headquarters staff, which granted Eisenhower control over the European Theater of Operations, required a greater degree of flexibility as time went along.

Unwittingly, Smith found himself in a paradoxical situation, caught between enforcing unity of command and the decentralization of power, particularly along the horizontal axis. He confronted perplexing problems as the size of the headquarters increased and as its latent or unexpected functions grew in complexity.⁴² As its size ballooned, the organization evolved into a more specialized and organic entity. In other words, the staff drifted toward decentralization and increasing complexity. It is doubtful whether Smith recognized the phenomenon. If he did, he most likely construed the process of decentralization as a threat to the chain of command. The resultant dynamic nature of the environment in which Smith worked made it more burdensome to maintain internal cohesion with the headquarters. For all of his decisiveness, intelligence and mastery of critical detail, Bedell Smith had difficulty coping with the massive amount of information needed to make all decisions. The large staff became too big for direct supervision. Smith's particular version of functionalism could not address all the problems that a dynamic environment presented.⁴³

One hesitates to criticize Smith for failing to understand the more organic aspects of large institutions. The self-regulatory aspects of functionalism confound its most ardent advocates. If his training had prepared him at all, Smith certainly had not internalized the phenomenon. Few in his day had experience with large staffs. In terms of methods of staff management, Lieutenant

⁴² Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives*, 187.

⁴³ Robert W. Crawford, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 5, 1948, USAMHI.

General Richard K. Sutherland, MacArthur's chief of staff, used top-down staff management as did Smith.⁴⁴ The historical record suggests that Sutherland frequently over-stepped the bounds of his authority, often interfering with commanders in the field. Bedell Smith was imperious, but never as brazen as Sutherland. Nonetheless, staff management run from the top was often ineffective in large organizations.

It was Smith's job, nonetheless, to make the staff function smoothly. As a micro-manager, Smith often located problems, but found it increasingly difficult to solve them. Excellent managers supervise the work of others. To do so, they must surrender a measure of power to subordinates.⁴⁵ Smith's duty was to define the objectives of the staff, but he was not accountable for the specific work of his subordinates. His major responsibility for collective efforts of the headquarters staff. Smith chose to coordinate *and* work. Smith expended too much effort in direct management.⁴⁶ In this sense, his actions were inconsistent with functionalist theory.

Smith's micro-management of the headquarters staff and his failure to delegate were the two major instances where he was not true to the functionalist model. These tendencies further separated him from members of the staff. Those in position of authority must heed subordinates

⁴⁴ Although he was extreme on occasion, Smith was not alone in attempting to control his environment. Other military men, including MacArthur and Eisenhower occasionally fell into the trap of micro-management. See Noel Sproles and Alex Yates, "A Historical Study of Operational Command: A Resource for Researchers," *Scientific & Technical Report* (Edinburgh, South Australia, Australia: DSTO Information Sciences Laboratory, March 2005), pp. 49-51; website: <http://www.dsto.gov.au/publications/3757>.

⁴⁵ The following address the problem of power and delegation: Whyte, *The Organizational Man*, 149; Drucker, *People and Performance*, 11; Noel Sproles and Alex Yates, "A Historical Study of Operational Command," p. 49.

⁴⁶ John Courtney Hodges Lee, interview with Forrest C. Pogue, March 21, 1947, USAMHI; Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, 269; Vaughn, *Staff Control*, 3; Drucker, *Management*, 389-391, 521.

who are often closer to many the problems their confront their superior.⁴⁷ Smith was slow to grasp this idea. Fearing mistakes by subordinates, Smith often violated functionalism by interfering with the particular details of an individual staff member's work. He spent a lot of time as a handler of disturbances at lower echelons.

Smith occasionally carried micro-management to extremes Forrest C. Pogue, for instance, once told a story about the chief of staff's overzealous behavior regarding security and intrusions at headquarters. Smith was prowling around AFHQ one afternoon when he spied the unsecured desk drawer of a visiting officer from the US General Staff. The officer had written a report critical of Eisenhower's command. The brief lay on the desktop. With a sinister smirk, Smith quickly penned the officer a short note with a veiled threat concerning what would happen to negligent officers who penned criticism of the command.⁴⁸ Smith used the security lapse as an opportunity to warn intruders from wherever they came. Security lapses were certainly a legitimate concern for anyone at working at headquarters. The task of watch dog might well have been handled by military police rather than the chief of staff.

Smith deserved credit in the many instances when options were clear-cut. There is no reason to doubt that Bedell Smith had the US Army's best interest at heart, but the traditional method of staff management often imposed limitations on his performance as the complexity of the general headquarters mushroomed.⁴⁹ Given the task of ensuring that orders were carried out

⁴⁷ Mintzberg, et al, *Strategy Safari*, 214-215; Mintzberg, *Structuring of Organizations*, 321; Galbraith, et al, *Designing Dynamic Organizations*, 12-15.

⁴⁸ Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope*, vol. 2 (New York: Viking Press, 1966), 76.

⁴⁹ Drucker, *Management*, 391; Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives*, 140-147.

within the chain of command, Smith wanted an orderly, frictionless headquarters. All staffs demand constant fine-tuning, but no organization – especially a large one – exists without imperfections, friction and confusion.⁵⁰ Smith could not fine-tune everything at Eisenhower's headquarters from the top.

Bedell Smith: Power, Control and Delegation

Bedell Smith's typical day began at 0800 when the secretariat met to discuss matters of importance. At 0900, a formal conference convened with Eisenhower, his deputy commander, allied deputy chiefs of staff and representative staff from air and naval components. Smith was a picture of order with the agenda laid out with precision regardless of who was attending briefings. The secretary of the general staff, key members of the secretariat, and deputy chiefs of staff were present. Field commanders were there when directed by the Eisenhower. Smith often presided over meetings when Eisenhower was indisposed. He dominated these conferences at times.⁵¹ Whether Eisenhower was present or not, Smith was a persuasive speaker in controlled situations.

At times – at headquarters at least – some believed that Smith was a power monger and that he always had the correct answer without serious reflection.⁵² Complaints surfaced when on occasion Smith ran roughshod over staff officers in the theater. Eisenhower, however, tolerated Smith's idiosyncracies, passing them off as Prussianism.⁵³ One wonders how much functionalist thought influenced Eisenhower. Eager to achieve unity of command and teamwork within the

⁵⁰ Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 159.

⁵¹ Vaughn, *Staff Control*, 24

⁵² Raymond W. Barker, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, July 15, 1972, Oral History 331, DDEL.

⁵³ See Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander*, 81-82.

theater, he almost always excused Smith's imperious behavior. Top-down management tends to centralize power, yet the bureaucratic snarl which Smith confronted did not increase his power but reduced it.⁵⁴ Not a reflective man, Smith never fully understood the challenge that he faced. On one hand, it was his duty to control the staff. On the other, technocrats of all sorts had an authority which limited Smith's power.⁵⁵ Eisenhower would certainly have relieved Smith if there had been any serious reservations about his performance. Smith was loyal, hard-working and dedicated to Allied teamwork. It is questionable whether he was personally driven toward power.⁵⁶ Hindsight suggests that Smith and his deputy chiefs of staff might have distributed some of the work which they thought could not be done outside of the headquarters.

Drawing from his experience on War Department General Staff, General Smith demanded speed, efficiency and mechanical reaction at Eisenhower's headquarters. Few questioned Smith's knowledge, but some doubted his integrity and wisdom. Many staff officers were unaccustomed to the level of efficiency that Smith demanded.⁵⁷ General Barker, for instance, thought Smith's methods imperious.⁵⁸ The dilemma that Smith faced, exacerbated by the constraints of time, was a matter of balance. It was not appropriate to dish out excessive praise for mediocre work or to

⁵⁴ As organizations get larger, the direct power of the vertical axis decreases. See Drucker, *Management*, 525-526.

⁵⁵ The horizontal or lateral axis increases with the expansion of any bureaucratic organization. See Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives*, 139-140.

⁵⁶ Robert W. Crawford, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 5, 1948, USAMHI.

⁵⁷ William P. Snyder, "Walter Bedell Smith: Eisenhower's Chief of Staff," *Military Affairs: The Journal of Military History* 48 (January 1984), 9-10.

⁵⁸ Raymond W. Barker, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, July 15, 1972, Oral History 331, DDEL.

hand out draconian reprimands to those who failed to meet his standards of performance. Smith tended to tolerate a mistake, but not a second one. Many viewed his strong personality with suspicion. Leadership, simply put, is “the art of influencing others to do willingly what is required in order to achieve a goal.”⁵⁹ But Bedell Smith did so by intimidating subordinates.

A functionalist of the purest ilk would say that Bedell Smith operated with a traditional definition of power, meaning control over others.⁶⁰ Many American staff officers had heard of Smith’s reputation for instilling fear.⁶¹ Most of them conformed quickly. The rapidly expanding US Army, however, experienced a shortage of captains and majors for staff positions in every echelon. Smith began a desperate search for staff personnel. Whenever he could, Smith selected junior officers with combat experience to fill vacancies. Fearful of delegation, he personally took it upon himself to educate incoming staff officers. A few were reduced to bundles of nerves.

General Bradley’s aide Chester B. Hansen remarked:

If you got the A treatment from Smith, you took the afternoon off.
If you got the B treatment, you took the rest of the week off.
If you got the C treatment, you started cleaning out your desk.⁶²

Working with Allied staffers was a different story. On one hand, British staff officers with longer

⁵⁹ Quoted in Jacques A. Dextraze, “The Art of Leadership,” p. 2; website: http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_01/iss_2/CAJ_vol1.2_07_e.pdf. General Dextraze was a junior officer during the Second World War and later became the Chief of the Canadian Defense Staff in the 1970s.

⁶⁰ Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, 225.

⁶¹ Carlo D’Este states that Smith made Patton look like Little Red Riding Hood when it came to the use of power. See D’Este, *Patton: A Genius for War*, 1st paperback ed. (New York: Harper-Collins, 1996), 569.

⁶² Bradley/Hansen File, 38-A, S-7, USAMHI.

staff experience were not so easily intimidated.⁶³ On the other, Smith was far more cooperative with British colleagues in the interest of teamwork. By late fall 1942, nonetheless, Bedell Smith's domineering tactics were meeting resistance at headquarters.

General Marshall worried about the growth of the headquarters. Major General Thomas J. Betts stated that it was the intention of the War Department General Staff that staff personnel on the operational level would be "hewers of wood and drawers of water."⁶⁴ Marshall envisioned a small staff, somewhat on the order that Pershing had used. Bedell Smith never accepted that conception. Estimates vary, but historian William P. Snyder has asserted that the staff at Allied Force Headquarters exceeded 4,000 by late 1943. Betts declared that both Eisenhower and Smith:

discovered that for a big war you have to have a big staff. It's very cumbersome, and very annoying often, and usually you can't trace down stupidities too well because there are too many links in the chain of command.⁶⁵

The size of SHAEF mushroomed to over 15,000 personnel by early 1945.⁶⁶ Although Smith was the chief architect of the burgeoning staff, Eisenhower bore nearly as much responsibility for the growth in the size of the headquarters staff.

Faced with the growing complexity of two staffs, Smith focused too little on chemistry of the headquarters. Although Eisenhower had delegated the task of coordination to his chief of staff, Smith was himself reluctant to delegate much at all. He was incapable of formulating a

⁶³ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 138-139.

⁶⁴ Thomas J. Betts, interview #2 by Dr. MacClynn P. Burg, November 20, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL; Betts's quotation is a little garbled so I have quoted *Joshua* 9:21.

⁶⁵ Thomas J. Betts, interview #2 by Dr. MacClynn P. Burg, November 20, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL.

⁶⁶ William P. Snyder, "Walter Bedell Smith," 9; Vaughn, *Staff Control*, 17-18.

strategy that addressed personal initiative with respect to the staff while still preserving unity of command. Instead, the headstrong chief of staff employed the tactics of power, often treating staff members as automatons. It was not necessary for Smith to get along with everyone in routine affairs, but flexibility was important in non-routine matters. Coercive power alone is an ineffective means for coordinating work.⁶⁷ Eisenhower had directed Smith to remove truculent personalities, pessimists, glory seekers and all other perceived misfits from headquarters.⁶⁸ Smith readily complied.

Bedell Smith had a life-long suspicion of specialists. He remained suspicious of Oxford dons and other experts within the headquarters.⁶⁹ His manner of dealing with them often defied the organic tenets of functionalism. Disputes erupted between Smith and a number of staff officers in support services. Smith's lack of receptivity often stifled initiative. Functionalism, at least in the way that he practiced it, did not always foster change. Inflexibility is antithetical to functionalism. Fearing threats to unity of command, he lacked the patience to lend an ear to specialists who possessed an informal power derive from their expertise.⁷⁰

Smith confronted a dilemma that demanded more analysis than time permitted and more will power than he possessed. It was really a struggle between the distribution of power and the preservation of unity of command. It is also clear that Smith did not recognize dynamic changes that were occurring developing in the headquarters. Anyone with a perceived agenda found

⁶⁷ Mintzberg, *Structuring of Organizations*, 153.

⁶⁸ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1948), 34-35, 74-76.

⁶⁹ Pogue, *Organizer of Victory*, vol. 3 (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 498.

⁷⁰ Galbraith, et al, *Designing Dynamic Organizations*, 6; Drucker, *Management*, 523.

himself the target of Smith's wrath. Moreover, specialists tended to give length explanations while offering solutions. When upset, his manners were bad.⁷¹ He was never at his best under conditions of flux.

It was a terrible predicament, in part owed to direct management, in part to personality. In either case, Smith's conception of functionalism was narrow. The design of the headquarters hindered cooperation and coordination, because it deprived the chief of staff of valuable feedback at a time when he could no longer understand the complexity of the organization.⁷² Finding Smith either obstinate, inattentive or exhausted, a few bold staffers circumvented Smith by going directly to Eisenhower.⁷³ Others isolated themselves from what they perceived as Smith's arbitrary power. Most could not. Smith was never able to establish proper liaison with experts. Through the eyes of a functionalist, power is essentially the ability to integrate and mobilize subordinates in the interests of a collective effort to meet necessary objectives. Power entails motivating.⁷⁴ Smith understood the objectives of his mission, but not the process whereby cohesion occurs.

Eisenhower later remarked that persuasion is the measure of success in leadership rather than adherence to autocratic routine. Discretionary flexibility is the mark of an excellent leader.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Robert W. Crawford, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 5, 1948, USAMHI; D'Este, *A Genius for War*, 569.

⁷² Galbraith, et al, *Designing Dynamic Organizations*, 9-11; Sproles and Yates, "A Historical Study of Operational Command, 49.

⁷³ D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 318.

⁷⁴ Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, 225.

⁷⁵ Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 75.

Smith had difficulty adjusting to circumstances from time to time. He often played a “zero-sum game” whereby gain in power by one person causes a corresponding loss of power by other people.⁷⁶ When offering compliments, he tended to direct them outside the staff. Writing to an officer in US 12th Air Force, for instance, Smith lauded his abilities as well as the performance of his engineers.⁷⁷ But as a rule, Smith too often tried to motivate others by fear.

There were a number of notable instances when Smith’s impatience and his traditional concept of power showed at headquarters. One time in North Africa, Smith began searching the personnel files to find a suitable enlisted man who could assist the prominent French banker Jean Monnet, a political adviser to General Henri Giraud. A young French-speaking American sergeant received the task. Smith impatiently rattled off instructions to the young NCO. The addled sergeant promptly misconstrued the chief of staff’s directions, subsequently granting Monnet access to classified files. Upon discovering the error, Smith bellowed, “Take this blankety-blank fool out and shoot him now!”⁷⁸ Everyone in the office winced, thankful that they were not the object of Smith’s rage. His anger abated, the sergeant remained at headquarters but reduced to the rank of corporal. Although sometimes there are compelling reasons to administer a reprimand in public, it is not wise to do so in common practice.

When addressing subordinates, Smith was inclined to speak before thinking. This bad habit bred ill will. Smith was strapped for time because of the multitude of tasks that Eisenhower

⁷⁶ Parsons, *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*, 229-232, 299.

⁷⁷ Smith to Davison, January 6, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 2, File Folder 1, DDEL. Brigadier General Donald A. Davison headed the Provisional Engineer Command, US 12th Army Air Force.

⁷⁸ As quoted, Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 179. Monnet had been dispatched to AFHQ by President Roosevelt and his adviser Harry Hopkins.

had given him, but that was a poor excuse for his lack of civility. His micro-management further robbed him of the time necessary to develop an excellent staff. Impatiently instructing rather than delegating, Smith focused on the task rather than the tools for the task.⁷⁹ The whole ordeal sapped his energy.

Some staff officers thought that Smith was closed to suggestions. The chief of staff's harsh responses to their inquiries reinforced their fears. Collegiality suffered. In 1944, H. B. Hughes, Chief of the Engineering Section at SHAEF, complained that the engineers had not been invited to the major conferences leading up to Operation OVERLORD.⁸⁰ Hughes held Smith responsible for this oversight. In this case, Smith stood on more solid ground. It made little sense to a practical functionalist to clutter general staff meetings with matters that could be fixed at a lower echelon.

On another occasion prior to the Normandy landing, Major General Charles H. Corlett arrived in the European theater under orders from General Marshall. He had demonstrated his expertise in amphibious warfare while serving in the Central Pacific theater. General Corlett found Eisenhower, Bradley and Patton unresponsive to his suggestions.⁸¹ Later, Smith spent a weekend with Corlett and Brigadier General George Shea, an artillery officer. Corlett and Shea were alarmed by what they perceived as a dearth of fire support for the Normandy landings.

⁷⁹ Drucker, *People and Performance*, 55-58.

⁸⁰ H. B. W. Hughes, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 12, 1947, USAMHI. In fairness, Hughes complained about this practice at 12th Army Group and the Communication Zone as well.

⁸¹ Charles H. Corlett, *Cowboy Pete: The Autobiography of Major General Charles H. Corlett*, edited by William Farrington, 1st ed. (Santa Fe, NM: Sleeping Fox Enterprises, 1974), 87-90; Corlett declared that the preservation of "family feeling" was most important in ETO.

Corlett added that the quantity of ammunition expended at Kwajalein far surpassed that allocated for the Normandy beaches. When they pressed the issue by launching into the intricate details about amphibious warfare, Smith lost his temper. Glaring at Corlett while pounding the table, Smith roared, “Do I have to defend the plan to you?”⁸² Other chiefs of staff in other theaters of war behaved in like manner but, in this instance, Smith was plainly pig-headed.⁸³ With lives on the line, Corlett found the chief of staff uncooperative.

Although he was a micro-manager, Bedell Smith still had only a generalist’s acquaintance with many fields. It was impossible for the chief of staff to direct technically trained experts in their specific fields. At high levels of command, executive responsibility and support services require greater differentiation.⁸⁴ Once again, Smith faced a dilemma. Many well-intentioned staff officers put forth bold ideas that were impractical. However, some proposals were not necessarily disruptive to headquarters or Allied plans – a few were sound. Occasionally, Smith could have listened out of respect for a fellow officer with compromise as an option. Failing that, he might have feigned respect in the interest of good will.⁸⁵ But this Smith was rarely inclined to do.

⁸² Ibid, as quoted, 89.

⁸³ With a touch of humor, General Betts recalled some examples of the makeshift planning. One had, he said, “Fifteen minutes to work out what you were going to do after the breakout.” See Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, June 25, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL.

⁸⁴ Parsons describes the difficult predicament that a generalist like Smith confronts at the higher echelon with respect to well-trained specialists. See Parsons, *Social Structure and Personality*, 345.

⁸⁵ Smith was often torn between the “committee approach to leadership” and workable compromise. This situations is described in Whyte, *The Organizational Man*, 245-246.

Consequently, pressures of the moment and the limits of knowledge impeded Smith's quest for cohesion and solidarity in the long run.⁸⁶

Bedell Smith and Personality

One can empathize with Smith. He knew he was doing Eisenhower's dirty work and did not enjoy it. Granted considerable leeway by his superior, he was in an unenviable predicament. While accepting responsibility and the risk that went with the job, Smith worked for the greater good of the command without sharing in the glory. Perceiving threats to his authority, Smith often reacted defensively. To bolster and protect his status, he developed defense mechanisms. Smith used the privileges of his office to reward loyalty and to punish perceived disloyalty.⁸⁷ The unfair practice triggered hostility. Smith's integrity suffered.

Smith decided who would receive an audience with Eisenhower. Many times, assistant chiefs of staff and section chiefs received a brusque "No!" from Bedell Smith. While scheduling contacts, Smith saved Eisenhower precious time, but his abrupt manner put colleagues ill at ease. Smith sometimes checked field commanders at the door. Smith stopped Lieutenant General William H. Simpson at Supreme Headquarters. "We're too darn busy," Smith grunted, "You just sit tight, and Ike will see you pretty soon."⁸⁸ Other times, he stalled them in the outer office. On

⁸⁶ Lieutenant General Richard K. Sutherland had the reputation for inflexibility as well. He was not openly receptive to the ideas of field commanders and staff officers. See, for instance, Robert L. Eichelberger, in collaboration with Milton MacKaye, *Our Jungle Road to Tokyo* (New York: Viking Press, 1950), 11-15. See also Walter Krueger, *From Downunder to Nippon: The Story of Sixth Army in World War* (Washington, D. C.: Combat Forces Press, 1953), 83.

⁸⁷ Everett C. Hughes, *The Sociological Eye: Selected Papers* (Chicago & New York: Aldine- Atherton, 1971), 307-308, 345-347. See also Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 150.

⁸⁸ William H. Simpson, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, March 15, 1972, Oral History 314, DDEL.

some occasions, Smith avoided the caller altogether. Field commanders and particularly their staffs thought that Smith exceeded the limits of his authority. Granted a wide degree of freedom, Smith adopted the notion that while Eisenhower commanded the theater, the chief of staff would run it in some cases. To those who wanted access to the Allied commander-in-chief Smith often appeared to be an imperious meddler. Frequently, their opinion was justified.

It was not so much what Smith said, but rather the manner in which he said it. Once in the autumn 1942 when the chief of staff was working on budgetary matters, General Bolté presented a bill for the chief aide of Lieutenant General John Courtney Hodges Lee. Giving the invoice a quick glance, Smith roared at Bolté, "You tell that son-of-a bitch to pay his own bills!"⁸⁹ It was Smith's responsibility to keep a close eye on finances and the chief of staff was often within his rights to chide or censure. The tempests that he brewed blew over quickly. Most became accustomed to Smith's way of doing things. Smith did not always employ accepted functionalist means of working toward those objectives.⁹⁰

In spite of the heavy burdens that he bore, the measure of Bedell Smith lies to some degree in the manner in which he treated subordinates. As Eisenhower's gatekeeper, Smith sometimes acted as if he was about to lose control of circumstances with respect to the staff and even with Eisenhower's field officers. Even a traditional management style functions best when a superior

⁸⁹ Charles Bolté, #2 interview by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 14, 1974, Oral History 395, DDEL; Lee was Eisenhower's chief of supply and deputy commander ETO in 1942; the aide who passed on the \$10,000 bill was Colonel Pleasant B. Rogers, known derisively as "P-l-e-a-s." See also Hotel Bills and Related Memoranda for September and October 1942 in Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff's Personal Papers, 1942-1944, Box 7, DDEL.

⁹⁰ Eisenhower once complained to Butcher that one of the hardest things to get subordinates to do is to get them to produce. He did not care for formalistic officers on one hand, or those prone to publicity on the other. He wanted a balance between the two extremes. Eisenhower thought Smith represented the mean. See Butcher, *My Three Years*, 220.

treats his subordinates as humans, not machines. Smith was loyal to Eisenhower, but loyalty did not always extend downward. The chief of staff was not alone in this behavior, but he was in the spotlight.

Smith's sarcasm, which he often directed at friend and foe alike, reflected his impatience and frustration. Frequently, staff officers and enlisted personnel were unable to discern whether Smith's remarks were merely witty, ironic, caustic or simply rude. His ridicule was not consistent with functionalist methods. It suggested insecurity and inferiority as well. His sarcasm extended to field commanders. Commenting on the relief of General Fredendall after the battle of Kasserine, Smith replied laconically, "He was a good colonel before the war."⁹¹ It was anybody's guess what Smith meant. Yet in spite of his idiosyncracies, a sense of loyalty, duty and common purpose emerged at headquarters. Sarcastic and profane, Smith had the confidence of Marshall and Eisenhower. In this Smith took satisfaction.

Marshall was aware of Smith's temper, but believed that he exercised self-control when it counted. Moreover, Smith had an enormous burden, commanding a staff that had tremendous influence on Eisenhower.⁹² Eisenhower never held Smith responsible for the explosion in the size of staffs.⁹³ Smith was decisive and he conducted meetings and conferences to Eisenhower's satisfaction. His grasp of policy, his detailed knowledge of the command, and his ability to gauge

⁹¹ As quoted, Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947, USAMHI; Smith was one who recommended Fredendall's relief. On reliefs, see, James M. Gavin, interview by Ed Edwin, January 20, 1967, Columbia University Oral History Project; Oral History 184, DDEL.

⁹² Pogue, *Ordeal and Hope*, 14; Notes, November 13, 1956 in *Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 624.

⁹³ Truscott, *Command Missions*, 129. Eisenhower enlisted Major General Lucian K. Truscott in an effort to restrict the explosive growth of staffs.

Eisenhower's thinking also won him favor. By mid-autumn 1942, Smith had gained control over the headquarters. The entire command was shaping up as well. Nonetheless, Smith was paying a heavy price for his efforts. The reorganization was nearly too much for Smith, whom Drew Middleton labeled as "an orderly man with an orderly brain." The limits of personal knowledge, the pressures of the moment, an irascible personality and chronic illness were impediments to Smith's quest for functional solidarity.

Bedell Smith and Poor Health

As previously noted, poor physical health suggests dysfunction. Bedell Smith's poor health affected his ability to perform at an optimum level as chief of staff. His ulcers affected his moods. Illness, exhaustion and accompanying moodiness made Smith's job more miserable than it might otherwise have been.⁹⁴ In this state of adversity, the chief of staff struggled to adapt to circumstances.

Smith had been at Eisenhower's headquarters only three weeks when he suffered his first medical crisis. The unrelenting grind of work had taken its toll. By September 28, 1942, Smith was exhausted, living on a diet of beans and milk. Butcher recorded that everyone was telling Smith to get proper rest. The next day, Prime Minister Churchill was convinced that Smith was going to collapse.⁹⁵

Fearing that Smith would be out of the war for good, Churchill pleaded with Eisenhower to send his chief of staff to the hospital at once. He added that the British were fond of Smith and that his loss would be theirs. Eisenhower assented. With considerable protest, Smith entered the

⁹⁴ Parson addresses illness as a hindrance to work performance. See Parsons, *Social System*, 430-431.

⁹⁵ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 124-127; Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 527.

American General Hospital at Oxford. His ulcer was perforating. Upon arrival, the doctors immediately ordered a blood transfusion.⁹⁶

Smith feared that General Marshall would order him home. The Army Chief of Staff had counseled officers about proper rest and relaxation. Eisenhower had also insisted on a number of occasions that no one was indispensable.⁹⁷ When Eisenhower visited Smith in the hospital, he found him anxious to leave, apologetic for his ailments. By October 12, Smith was back at headquarters, and Eisenhower lent his full support, confident of a full recovery.⁹⁸ A week later, Marshall admonished Smith, "Discretion is the better part of valor and it will enable you to keep on good terms with me."⁹⁹ Believing that it was better to speak and act decisively when dealing with Marshall, Smith answered quickly. He was on the mend and would follow the good advice of the Army Chief of Staff.¹⁰⁰ There was little hesitancy in Smith and decisiveness probably saved his career.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 126.

⁹⁷ D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 705.

⁹⁸ *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 1, #544, 607.

⁹⁹ Marshall to Smith, October 19, 1942, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL.

¹⁰⁰ Smith to Marshall, October 22, 1942, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box, 7 DDEL.

¹⁰¹ Thomas J. Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, June 25, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL; see also Thomas T. Handy, interview #2 with Dr. MacClynn P. Burg, May 22, 1973, Oral History 486, DDEL. General Adna Chaffee, Jr. had abused his health and died before the war; Generals John Hilldring and Charles H. Corlett, among others, had lost commands because of illness and fatigue. General Alexander M. Patch was frequently ill but managed to hold the command of the US 7th Army. See Bradley Commentary, Bradley/Hansen File, 2 B, S-10, USAMHI; Jacob L. Devers, interview #4 by Dr. MacClynn P. Burg, July 2, 1975, Oral History 377, DDEL. See also Ernest N. Harmon and Milton MacKaye and William Ross MacKaye, *Combat Commander: Autobiography of a Soldier* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), 216; Dennis Showalter, *Patton and Rommel: Men of War in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Berkeley, 2005), 211, 218; Pogue, *Organizer of Victory*, 457-459.

There is no doubt that illness affected Bedell Smith's performance. A layman might well attribute Smith's behavior to ulcers, which prevented him from performing well.¹⁰² Nonetheless, Butcher's estimate of Smith as neurotic with a throbbing ulcer is too harsh.¹⁰³ One wonders, however, why Smith had such limited contact with his past, his family and Indianapolis. That was never true of Eisenhower, for instance. Smith struggled with some personal turmoil, which was not pathological, but hindered his performance of certain tasks. Further speculation more properly belongs to the realm of clinical psychology.¹⁰⁴ The worst manifestations of Bedell Smith's behavior surfaced at headquarters. As ill as he was, it is hard imagine Smith as an operational chief of staff today.

Bedell and the British: A Striking Contrast

Smith was a chameleon. The colors he showed in British circles were different from those showed among Americans. British Air Marshall Sir James M. Robb, who served on the Allied air staffs in the Mediterranean and Northwest Europe, remarked that the chief of staff was never the "dreadful 'Beetle' of Butcher's book."¹⁰⁵ As he was loyal to Eisenhower, Smith was likewise devoted to the Allied cause.

Bedell Smith, lacking Eisenhower's affability, was still able to establish good relations with those outside of general headquarters. He was not known for socializing but he was fond of the British. Aside from Prime Minister Churchill and Vivian Dykes, other British officers

¹⁰² Parsons, *Social Structure and Personality*, 252-262; 274, 285-287.

¹⁰³ Manuscript, Butcher Diary, December 20, 1942, Box 166, Folder 3, DDEL.

¹⁰⁴ Illness and early death of Smith's father may have influenced the development of Smith personality, but beyond that one can only surmise.

¹⁰⁵ Sir James M. Robb, "Higher Direction of War," published paper, 1946, para. 1 & 4; one copy housed at DDEL.

expressed affection and respect for Smith. A good many British officers served under him. Sir Humfrey M. Gale, Chief Administrative Officer of G-1 and G-4, complimented Smith on his kindness and spirit of Allied teamwork. The British general and his associates regarded Smith as one of the principal figures of the Second World War.¹⁰⁶ Sir Frederick E. Morgan was Smith's immediate subordinate at Supreme Headquarters, 1944-1945. As deputy chief of staff, he had clashed with Smith from time to time. They resolved their differences over time. Although they were not close friends, the two officers developed a mutual respect. General Morgan noted that Smith waged a spirited and successful battle against enemies within and without.¹⁰⁷ Harold Macmillan, a future British prime minister and Eisenhower's political adviser, labeled Smith as "a most charming and excellent fellow." He went on to say that chief of staff was loyal and yet a sincere friend of the United Kingdom.¹⁰⁸ Numerous others thought highly of Bedell Smith as well.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Gale to Smith, September 4, 1945, Box 10, File Folder 2, F-O, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL.

¹⁰⁷ Sir Frederick Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, manuscript, p. 15, Records of the Cabinet Office, 106/1038, Public Record Office, Kew, London; hereafter, PRO; Morgan served under Smith as deputy chief of staff.

¹⁰⁸ As quoted, Harold Macmillan, *War Diaries: Politics and War in the Mediterranean, January 1943--May 1945* (London: Macmillan Co., 1984), 26; see also, Harold Macmillan, *The Blast of War, 1939-1945* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1967), 222-224.

¹⁰⁹ Others include: Sir Ian Jacob and Jo Hollis of the British Secretariat believed that Eisenhower and Smith complemented each other well. They said that Eisenhower required a tough chief of staff in face of the mounting challenges; Kay Summersby, Eisenhower's British driver, described Smith as a congenial gentleman who Smith invited friends to his Christmas dinner; see Summersby, *Eisenhower Was My Boss*, 50.

Smith's demeanor and actions in Allied circles were more consistent with functionalist theory. In practice, his tasks as chief of staff were different from those at headquarters. He did not serve exclusively as a war manager. Most of his British colleagues did not serve under him. Less defensive, Smith more open to suggestion. His positive qualities surfaced. He continued to emphasize the functionalist premise of the interdependence of constituent groups within the Allied staff and command. He mentioned differences – sometimes bitter – at AFHQ and SHAEF, but his general theme was collegiality, compromise and unity of purpose. After the war, Smith and his British colleagues agreed that “the lubricating effects of a few gins-and-bitters, [made] even the Yorkshireman and the Yankee speak the same language.”¹¹⁰

Bedell Smith always professed that unity of purpose took precedence over personality. General Ismay later commented that never had intimacy been so genuine between the Allies as in the integrated staff.¹¹¹ Moreover, Smith tended to be more receptive among British colleagues. Eisenhower lauded Smith's ability to assemble an Allied team and his skill in managing high-level conferences.¹¹²

Smith, however, never compromised on the principle of unity of command. He was most functionalist on this principle. The axiom had taken on an almost religious overtones in American military circles. For instance, Marshall, Eisenhower and Smith had long professed that unity of

¹¹⁰ Address of General W. Bedell Smith, “Problems at an Integrated Headquarters,” October 10, 1945, London, as quoted, p. 17; transcript in Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, File Folder 1, DDEL.

¹¹¹ Smith to Ismay, December 15, 1942, The Papers of Lord Ismay, 4/29/1, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, University of London, UK. See also Sir Hastings L. Ismay, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 20, 1946, USAMHI.

¹¹² Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 54-55, 75.

command and coordination were part of a composite whole.¹¹³ The Allied command and staff needed to coordinate land, sea and air power in pursuit of a common goal. Eisenhower insisted that all forces be sufficiently combined for Operation TORCH.¹¹⁴ Smith steadfastly defended Eisenhower's prerogative of command to the fullest extent.¹¹⁵ He agreed with Eisenhower that national prejudices would have to be set aside in the interests of unity. It was Smith's function to bolster unity of command and, thereby insure predictability.

The British War Office began meddling in operational affairs in October 1942. The lead tactical units deployed inside the Mediterranean comprised the British 1st Army, which included American combat units. Its commander was British General Kenneth A. N. Anderson. The British War Office authorized Anderson to report to them whenever he believed British elements were endangered under Eisenhower's command.¹¹⁶ Eisenhower objected, declaring that unity of command, cooperation and coordination were at stake.

Smith's functionalism showed in two respects in the argument that followed. First, Smith was adamant that all constituent parts of the Allied force function as a unified whole. Anxious to defend Eisenhower's prerogative as commander of TORCH, Smith wanted to stifle any attempt that eroded the principle of unity of command. He insisted that the British War Office adhere

¹¹³ Notes on BOLERO, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principle File, Box 152, File Folder 2, DDEL; Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 18; King et al, *A Naval Record*, 362.

¹¹⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1948), 210.

¹¹⁵ At the outset of the Second World War, the British continued the practice of component commands, whereby, ground, air and sea commanders were co-equals. The British method of operation permitted, for example, a unified ground commander who relied on semi-independent component commanders for air and fleet; see Sproles and Yates, "A Historical Study of Operational Command," p. 23.

¹¹⁶ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 137-138.

to proper lines of authority. Second, while the argument raged, Smith continually pleaded for moderation. His quest for unity of purpose won the respect of his British colleagues. Resolution of the issue owed more to Eisenhower than anyone else, but Smith also displayed patience and good sense.¹¹⁷ His insistence on unity of command and common purpose was part of his version of functionalism. It was deeply ingrained in his mindset.

Preparing for TORCH: A Risky Operation

Smith oversaw the planning for Operation TORCH, one of the riskiest gambles of the war.¹¹⁸ The western Allies were able to seize the initiative in the Northwest African campaign, but the limits of time weighed heavily on Allied Force Headquarters. The pace of planning was hectic. Eisenhower was pleased with the feedback that he received from subordinates concerning Smith. Brigadier General Alfred M. Gruenther, the chief planner, lauded Smith's knowledge of planning and intelligence despite the heavy burden of his other responsibilities. Smith had completed the reorganization of the headquarters at the European theater command.¹¹⁹ He had played a role in soothing Churchill's fears that the North African campaign would swallow too many of the resources for BOLERO.¹²⁰ So pleased was Eisenhower that he gave Smith the further

¹¹⁷ Manuscript, Butcher Diary, February 10, 1943, Box 166, File Folder 2, in General File (January 8 – May 5, 1943), DDEL.

¹¹⁸ Thomas T. Handy, #2 interview by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, May 22, 1973, Oral History 486, DDEL; Handy declared that TORCH was "the riskiest operation of the war." He contended that American military leaders would not have taken such a gamble later in the war.

¹¹⁹ Alfred M. Gruenther, interview #1 by Ed Edwin, April 20, 1967, Columbia University Oral History Project; Oral History 113, DDEL.

¹²⁰ Smith to Marshall, October 22, 1942, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff's Personal Correspondence, Box 7, DDEL.

authority to act in his name, subject to discretion.¹²¹ “All the British like him,” Eisenhower wrote Marshall.¹²² Eisenhower later stated that, if anything happened to him, Bradley was the best choice to succeed; if not Bradley, then Smith.¹²³

During his first stint of duty in the United Kingdom then, Bedell Smith worked for functionalist objectives within the headquarters and at large. From a functionalist perspective, however, Smith’s performance mirrored some serious shortcomings. The traditional management style that he adopted had not always produced the best results at a large headquarters. Despite his intelligence and overall knowledge of military procedures, Smith found it increasingly difficult to comprehend all of the issues that confronted Eisenhower’s headquarters. As the headquarters increased in size, Smith found it more difficult to manage. A micro-manager, he worked too much and delegated too little. He relied too much on coercive power when dealing with subordinates. Smith was more feared than respected within the headquarters. His personality and stiff demeanor bred alienation, creating the impression that he was unwilling to accept advice. Smith’s impatience, temper and sarcasm did not fit well with functionalism. He had functionalist goals, but often employed means that contradicted the theory.

¹²¹ Aside from routine duties at headquarters regarding discipline and censorship, Smith was heavily engaged in matters related to BOLERO-ROUNDUP, which included the coordination of air and naval staffs; see, Cable, Eisenhower to Smith, AFHQ CP GIBRALTAR OUTGOING TO ABFOR LONDON, November 13, 1942, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 109, File Folder 8, DDEL; see also George F. Howe, *Northwest Africa*, 80. *Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West*, vol. 1, *United States Army in World War II*, edited by Kent Roberts Greenfield, reprt. ed. (Washington, D. C.: Center of Military History, 1991), 33; Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare*, 324-327, 354-355.

¹²² *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 1, #534, 592.

¹²³ Ambrose, *Supreme Commander*, 665; D’Este, *Eisenhower*, 318.

If Smith's inconsistencies bothered General Eisenhower at all, he never paid much attention to them. Smith had obediently followed Eisenhower's directives regarding the reorganization of the theater command and staff. Smith had quickly revamped the headquarters along fixed lines of authority. He was a disciple of the principle of unity of command. Smith had zealously defended Eisenhower's prerogatives. Having built one operational staff and supervised the planning of another, Smith had kept a close eye on developments in North Africa and Europe.¹²⁴ The chief of staff had gained the confidence of Churchill, Ismay and other high-ranking British officials and in the process had lightened the burdens of his superior. Eisenhower acknowledged this, declaring that Smith had given him a great deal of peace of mind.¹²⁵ Smith's idiosyncracies weighed little alongside his actions and the results that they produced. In early November 1942, Smith began deploying the forward echelons to the Mediterranean during the opening phases of Operation TORCH.

¹²⁴ Generals Clark and Gruenther actually laid the foundation for the staff that planned the North African campaign. See Summary Memorandum, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 165, Adjutant General, Box 1713, NARA. Eisenhower surrendered responsibilities of the European Theater of Operations in February 1943. Lieutenant General Frank M. Andrews replaced Eisenhower as commander of the United States forces in the United Kingdom. Andrews, a competent senior airman, subsequently died in a plane crash (May 1943). General Devers then succeeded Andrews.

¹²⁵ Eisenhower to Smith, November 11, 1942, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 109, File Folder 8, DDEL. Smith was promoted to the rank of major general on December 3, 1942. Both Marshall and Eisenhower thought that a promotion would improve Smith's standing at headquarters and in Allied circles. See also Biographical Sketch, March 13, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL.

Chapter Five

Bedell Smith and Functionalism at AFHQ and SHAEF

War in the Mediterranean

When Bedell Smith joined Eisenhower's headquarters in Algiers on a permanent basis in February 1943, his health had improved significantly from the previous autumn. With renewed enthusiasm and strength, Smith set about defending Eisenhower's prerogatives within the theater and, from his particular functionalist perspective, he strove to achieve purpose and unity within the headquarters staff. Smith perceived the headquarters as the brain of the forces under General Eisenhower's command. Although Eisenhower and Clark had also contributed in laying the groundwork for the staff, Smith greatly improved the functioning of it. Once again, Lord Ismay expressed astonishment with the degree of personal intimacy at Allied Force Headquarters and within the theater itself. He attributed much of the credit for establishing a smooth-running headquarters to Smith.¹ Smith's accomplishments also did not escape the critical eye of General Brooke. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff thought that Smith was a brilliant chief of staff whose insight and organizational skills contributed much to Eisenhower's success.²

Anecdotal evidence on the efficiency of AFHQ, however, is suspect. Even before Smith joined AFHQ in Algiers, General Clark had complained that the headquarters staff was at least twice the size that was needed. The number of staff officers had bloated to 1400 by January 1943 and, by autumn of that year, the overall size of the staff had reached 4070. Marshall instructed Eisenhower to get control of the staff. Eisenhower ordered the first of several troubleshooting

¹ Lord Ismay, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 20, 1946, USAMHI.

² Lord Alanbrooke, *War Diaries, 1939-1945*, rev. ed. by Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), xlix.

missions to investigate the ballooning bureaucracy. It was an ongoing battle that raged until the end of the war. The predicament for Smith was not entirely of his own doing. If Eisenhower was to exercise direct command of operations in the field, unity of command and simplicity were needed. On one hand, a small staff did not permit, for instance, close control over such things as planning, strategic missions and reserves. On the other hand, a large staff was cumbersome and its design often did not provide the means to a desired end.³

In the Mediterranean, Bedell Smith encountered many of the same difficulties that he had experienced earlier in London. Once again, his means were frequently at odds with functionalist goals in three ways. First, his acerbic personality did not improve the internal chemistry of Allied Force Headquarters, and his reluctance to delegate work persisted. For the first time, Smith had to work closely with American and British field officers with whom greater tact was required. He met other general officers who could be as obstinate and petulant as him. Second, as the Mediterranean war intensified the large headquarters began to decentralize in an organic way. It was impossible to manage like a foreman in a sweatshop. Third, Smith was unprepared for unexpected developments which were more difficult to control through direct supervision. For instance, General Eisenhower entrusted to Smith the administration of civil affairs and French rearmament, which no previous operational chief of staff could have possibly envisioned. The campaign required more specialists to address complicated issues that could not be put off until the conclusion of the conflict. Smith found the task of coordinating the numerous activities of the various divisions and sections of AFHQ burdensome.

³ Thomas J. Betts, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 20, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL; Robert W. Crawford, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 5, 1948, USAMHI. See also Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 210; Truscott, *Command Missions*, 125.

Bedell Smith was more thin-skinned than is commonly understood. His hard-boiled reputation masked insecurity. In spite of Eisenhower's confidence in his abilities, Smith himself was not free from doubt. His health had improved significantly from the previous autumn, but his bad manners had not. From a functionalist standpoint, Smith's outbursts suggest dysfunction. Usually reserved for subordinates, Smith occasionally directed his temper even at Eisenhower. One morning, Robert D. Murphy, a State Department official, walked into Smith's office to discuss a matter related to French civil affairs. He found Smith staring angrily at his annual performance review. Murphy followed him down the hall to Eisenhower's office. Cursing and objecting to the contents of the appraisal, Smith threw the evaluation on Eisenhower's desk. Somewhat startled, Eisenhower tried to reassure his chief of staff that it was a good review. Unsatisfied with his superior's reply, Smith went on, "then you say the officer suffers from bad health – that's not true, you had two days sick [leave] last year and I didn't have any." General Eisenhower promptly removed the reference to bad health and the tension abated.⁴ One can rest assured that Bedell Smith would have never acted in that manner in the presence of General Marshall.

Despite Smith's bad manners and the roughshod means which Smith employed to attain objectives, Eisenhower's faith in his chief of staff continued to wax. Such was his confidence in the abilities of his chief of staff that Eisenhower greatly extended Smith's responsibilities beyond that of the headquarters staff. The Allies won strategic victories at El Alamein and Stalingrad while Smith concentrated on French political affairs and Allied Force Headquarters.⁵ By mid-

⁴ As quoted, Robert D. Murphy, interviewed by David C. Berliner, October 12, 1972, Columbia University Oral History Project (1973) OH-292, DDEL.

⁵ B. H. Liddell Hart, *The German Generals Talk*, paperback ed. (New York: Quill, 1979), 154-155; Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1997), 15-18.

spring 1943 when all Allied forces in North Africa fell under Eisenhower's command, both staff and command had achieved a large degree of equilibrium. The accomplishment was amazing considering all of the interdependent units, which functioned within the far-flung Mediterranean Theater of Operations. The German threat, however, remained ominous in North Africa and Sicily. Any failure on the part of the newly established Allied Force Headquarters would reflect negatively in Washington, London and Moscow.⁶ Smith began representing General Eisenhower at major military conferences and, with the fall of Mussolini's government in mid-summer 1943, Eisenhower assigned the negotiation of the Italian Armistice to his chief of staff. By autumn of that year, Smith could point to important accomplishments. The integrated headquarters that he engineer suited Allied objectives. Perhaps British Field Marshal Harold Alexander summed up Smith's role the best, stating that if anyone in high command wanted something done, Smith was the officer to get it done quickly.⁷

The French Muddle

French politics influenced affairs at Allied headquarters in fall 1942. With Northwest African landing set for November 8, 1942, a frantic search began for a suitable French leader, sufficiently removed from the Vichy government but still capable of winning over French army officers and the French fleet. President Roosevelt employed a career diplomat, Robert D. Murphy, to find a suitable leader around whom the disparate French factions could rally. Collaboration with Charles de Gaulle was out of the question. If he was not consciously a

⁶ George C. Marshall, Henry H. Arnold and Ernest J. King, *The War Reports*, foreword by Walter Millis (Philadelphia & New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1947), 155.

⁷ Field Marshal Harold Alexander, interview by Sidney T. Matthews with George F. Howe, n.d., USAMHI.

functionalist, President Roosevelt certainly reasoned like one. He was not about to tamper with French internal affairs during the middle of a war.⁸ He essentially left political matters in North Africa on Eisenhower's doorstep.⁹ Murphy's mission failed when his candidates – General Henri-Honoré Giraud and Admiral Jean François Darlan – refused to cooperate with each other and the Allies.¹⁰ Eisenhower and Clark settled on Darlan as the best man to aid the invasion and gain the French Navy. On Friday, November 13, 1942, Eisenhower agreed to the “Clark-Darlan Agreement.” After strenuous arm-twisting, Darlan issued the order for a cease fire for Oran,

⁸ See Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 103-135 for an account of this diplomatic mission and the many French factions of that period; Murphy later became Eisenhower's political adviser at AFHQ; Giraud was a twice-escaped prisoner of war, residing in southern France in late 1942; Eisenhower was aghast at the fluid nature of French politics. Both Eisenhower and Smith feared that unrest among the indigenous population might hinder military operations. For the moment, Smith thought that it was best to collaborate with French colonials despite suspect ideologies. Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947, USAMHI; see also Memorandum, Clark to Eisenhower, October 15, 1942, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 153, File Folder 5, DDEL; William L. Langer, *Our Vichy Gamble*, rpt. ed. (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1965), 7-9, 288.

⁹ Roosevelt had no intention of imposing de Gaulle on France contrary to the will of the French people. The Gaullist element, he declared, should be excluded from the war in North Africa; Lieutenant George M. Elsey, “Cover Letter Regarding Differences between President Roosevelt and General de Gaulle,” June 21, 1945, Record Group 218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 5, NARA. See also, Harrison Freeman Matthews, transcript of tape-recorded interview by Richard D. McKinzie, June 7, 1973, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library. Murphy later became Eisenhower's political adviser at AFHQ.

¹⁰ Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain was the President of Vichy France and totally unacceptable to the British; the bulk of the French officer corps remained loyal to Pétain; both London and Washington feared that the French fleet might fall into German hands; Murphy's candidates were: Giraud, a French military hero, but outside the Vichy circle and Darlan, Minister of the French Navy.

Algiers and Casablanca as the invasion opened.¹¹ Eisenhower became mired in French politics.

Fallout from the “Darlan Deal”

Bedell Smith continued to be one of Eisenhower’s staunchest defenders on both sides of the Atlantic when the storm broke over the “Darlan Deal” in mid-November. Although there were positive things about the settlement from a practical standpoint, a full-blown press war raged for a month about ethics and military expediency.¹² Eisenhower and Smith shared contempt for politics and the press. Smith thought that Darlan possessed constitutional authority whereas Giraud did not. Giraud was absolutely unreliable and de Gaulle was not an option in late 1942. Smith agreed with Eisenhower’s arrangement with Admiral Darlan. The decision to back Darlan was part of the search for predictability. It was a risky gamble, but it was the best option for the moment.¹³ It followed the central principles of functionalism which placed ends over means. Eisenhower had a war to war to fight and had received little direction from his civilian and

¹¹ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947, USAMHI; the Darlan Deal led to massive economic and military aid to French North Africa through the Lend-Lease Act. The settlement did not disrupt the administrative authority in French North Africa, keeping Vichy-appointed officials in place. The agreement specified roles for Darlan and Giraud. Darlan had made it possible for the Allies to gain control of harbors, fortifications and airfields, but offered no guarantees concerning the French Navy.

¹² Willkie Address, *New York Times*, November 17, 1942, p. 20. Willkie denounced the deal as appeasement and called for a clarification of American war aims. Edward R. Murrow, the dean of American broadcasting, wondered whether Americans had gotten into bed with the Nazis. Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson made common cause with Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau who believed that military expediency had sacrificed national honor. Elmer Davis and Milton Eisenhower were critical of the Clark-Darlan Agreement. See Raymond Daniell, *New York Times*, November 23, 1942, p. 11, regarding Eisenhower’s illiberal politics, expediency and censorship.

¹³ Fed up with worm-like French officers, Eisenhower wrote, “All of these Frogs have a single thought – ME.” in Letter, Eisenhower to Smith, November 9, 1942, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 109, File Folder 8, DDEL. Eisenhower left a log of his worries as commander printed in *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #589, 675.

military superiors. In a postwar interview, Smith told George F. Howe that military tradition, pride and a lack of political freedom had not allowed French officers in North Africa to switch immediately to the Allied cause.¹⁴ The decision to support Darlan may have been one of expediency, but it was also functionalist. Smith stated that teamwork on behalf of military advances was the central theme of the decision – not political ideology.¹⁵

Eisenhower bore the brunt of savage newspaper attacks. Appreciating neither French sensibilities nor the politics of war, Eisenhower and Clark announced their satisfaction with the settlement from the outset. They had acted to save lives. Instantly, there was talk of Vidkun Quisling and Eisenhower's illiberal policies.¹⁶ Roosevelt and Churchill lent vocal support for Eisenhower, but it was tepid at best. Understandably, the experience left Eisenhower shaken. Bewildered and angered, Eisenhower protested that he was an idealist and no reactionary.¹⁷

¹⁴ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947, USAMHI.

¹⁵ James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), 294-297. Frustrations ran high among Allied leaders during the final weeks of negotiations: "Kiss Darlan's stern if you have to," Churchill groaned, "but get the French Navy." Frustrated with the obstinate Darlan, Eisenhower interjected, "What I need around here is a damned good assassin!" Both quotations in Manuscript, Butcher Diary, November 8, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 1, in General File (November 6 – November 27, 1942), DDEL.

¹⁶ "Eisenhower Backs Up Darlan," *New York Times*, November 16, 1942, p. 6; Eleanor Roosevelt weighed in on flawed American policy and Eisenhower's shortcomings. See Burns, *Soldier of Freedom*, 295-296; Thomas Fleming, *The New Dealers' War: Franklin Roosevelt and the War within World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 168-170; Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin: The story of their relationship, based on Eleanor Roosevelt's private letters* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), 709, n. 709; Nathan Miller, *FDR: An Intimate History* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1983), 191-191.

¹⁷ Senator Vandenberg and Secretary of War Stimson lent support to Eisenhower. See *New York Times*, November 18, 1942, pp. 1, 4, & November 22, 1942, p. 2, E; Speaking of temporary expediency, Roosevelt quoted an old Bulgarian Orthodox proverb in a letter to Churchill, stating the need "to walk with the devil until you have crossed the bridge," as quoted in Burns, *Roosevelt*, 297. See also Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 635.

Sensitive to the torrent of accusations, the thin-skinned general was determined never again to play the scapegoat.

Eisenhower resolved to do some fence mending in London and Washington. In the weeks that followed, politics absorbed much of Smith's time. Outside of aforementioned informal contacts, there were four specific reasons for the extended role that Smith played. First, Smith had long since won the respect of the British whereas Clark did not possess the knack for getting along with the Allies.¹⁸ Second, General Marshall had voiced his displeasure with the publicity that Clark's mission had engendered in the national press.¹⁹ Alarmed by the tone of Marshall's cables, Eisenhower declared that, henceforth, assignments would go to selfless men. Smith was loyal, decisive and discreet. Accordingly, Eisenhower ordered Smith to review censorship policy. Third, Smith had the confidence and respect of Marshall. Finally, Eisenhower believed that Smith had been his staunchest supporter throughout the ordeal with the French. Consequently, Eisenhower stated that Smith deserved credit for his tough public relations work in fighting the rear-guard action of diplomacy.²⁰

¹⁸ Martin Blumenson, *Mark Clark* (New York: Congdon & Weed, Inc., 1984, 2. See also Blumenson, *The Patton Papers 1940-1945*, paperback ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974), 83-84; Miller, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1988, 423; Butcher, *My Three Years*, 152.

¹⁹ In a coded radio communique on November 20, 1942, General Marshall declared that theater censors had been remiss. He warned against grandstanding and self-promotion. Walter Lippmann's account of Clark's mission to Cherchel particularly annoyed the Army Chief of Staff. See, Radio Communique No. R-3345, Secret: "To Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower," November 20, 1942, as reprinted in *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, ed. Larry I. Bland, vol. 3, *"The Right Man for the Job" December 7, 1941-May 31, 1943* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 444-445; General Marshall also feared that the unwarranted publicity might hinder prospects for Clark's promotion to lieutenant general.

²⁰ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #615, 701-702, #652, 747-749; #653, 749-750; see Manuscript, Butcher Diary, November 8, 1942, Box 165, File Folder 1, DDEL.

Since November, Smith had shuttled between London, Gibraltar and Algiers – promoting Allied unity. It was grueling work. Smith operated without fanfare even though he wanted to join headquarters in Tunisia.²¹ Smith's new mission entailed work in London and Washington. He began in the United Kingdom. Cautioning him to take care of his health, Eisenhower wrote Smith, “. . . thank God you are in London at this particular time.”²² By Thanksgiving Day, the chief of staff was able to report that the tumult over Darlan had abated in Britain. The turmoil in Washington, however, still persisted. In advance of his flight to the United States, Smith received a long list of projected needs. He departed for Washington on November 27.²³

In the nation's capital, Bedell Smith worked at a frenetic pace. He first briefed General Marshall at Fort Myer.²⁴ Marshall's radio communique on December 1 complimented Smith on his informative briefing, which helped confirm the Chief of Staff's confidence in Eisenhower's leadership.²⁵ Smith attended a number of social functions. The fence mending went well but there were awkward moments. While dining with President Roosevelt, the First Lady, Admiral

²¹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #609, 695, #616, 703.

²² *Ibid*, Eisenhower to Smith, November 11, 1942, #625, 713.

²³ Memorandum, General Smith's travel itinerary through February 16, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, "Chief of Staff's Personal Papers," 1942-1944, Box 7, DDEL; Among other things, Smith was to speak to Marshall concerning the procurement of fighters and food stuffs for the Tunisian campaign. It was also suggested that Smith relax a little with his wife, Nory. See Butcher, *My Three Years*, 201.

²⁴ Smith briefed Marshall concerned Darlan, personnel and logistics. True to form, Smith was concise; Smith also discussed strategy with Field Marshall Dill and Brigadier Dykes who expressed their fears about mounting tensions within the Combined Chiefs of Staff. During his stay, Smith managed some time alone with Nory, but there was little opportunity for leisure; see *Dykes Diary*, November 9 & 12, 1942. See also Alex Danchev's editorial comment on p. 14.

²⁵ Radio Communique No. R-3802 \iSecret\i, December 1, 1942, as reprinted in *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, 462.

Leahy and Harry Hopkins, Smith listened intently. When the subject of Darlan arose, Mrs. Roosevelt castigated Eisenhower for his illiberal tendencies.²⁶

When it his turn came to speak, Smith calmly explained Eisenhower's predicament. In this instance, Smith's manner conformed with functionalist theory and practice – his means conformed with his ends. As Eisenhower's ambassador, he couched his words in functionalist terms, declaring that the decision to treat with Darlan had been based on the need for greater stability in Northwest Africa and predictability in ground war. He was concerned about the prospect of an outbreak of unrest among the indigenous population while Eisenhower's forces were engaged in a battle with the Germans. Smith did not relish the thought of fighting a protracted insurgency in Northwest Africa. He stressed that Eisenhower's decision had saved American lives. Unruffled by Mrs. Roosevelt's previous comments, Smith stated that Darlan offered the best prospects for cooperation at the moment.²⁷ Admiral Leahy agreed with Smith that Darlan had the only claim to legitimacy that might help the military campaign and win over French colonials who were still undecided.²⁸

Smith flew back to London on December 4, 1942. Eisenhower was pleased with Smith's performance in Washington, but was relieved to have him back in the theater. Smith also received notice that he would divide his time between London and Algiers during December.²⁹ Dill and Eisenhower thought it best that Smith serve as Churchill's liaison between London and Algiers.

²⁶ Leahy, *I Was There*, 135-137; see Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin: The story of their relationship, based on Eleanor Roosevelt's private letters* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), 709, n. 709.

²⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947, USAMHI.

²⁸ Leahy, *I Was There*, 135.

²⁹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #691, 800-801.

With the Casablanca Conference rapidly approaching, Smith spent much of his time discussing Allied policy with key political and military leaders. He spent days discussing a wide range of issues with Prime Minister Churchill. Suspicions still lingering from earlier strategic debates. Smith worked diligently for compromise. A committed ally, his manners were good and his attitude was conciliatory. He confided to Ismay that the time had come for the Allies to put aside personality and nationality in the interests of teamwork and policy.³⁰

The stew over the Darlan Affair continued to simmer until Christmas, but most observers thought that things had stabilized by mid-December. Nonetheless, French politics continued to consume General Eisenhower's time. He impatiently declared, "The sooner I can get rid of these questions that are outside the military scope, the happier I will be!"³¹ Many of Eisenhower's troubles evaporated on Christmas Eve 1942 when Admiral Darlan was assassinated at the Palais d'Été in Algiers by Fernand Bonnier de la Chapelle, a young fanatic.³² President Roosevelt called the assassination "murder in the first degree," but almost everyone at Allied Force Headquarters was relieved.³³ French affairs appeared less muddled.

³⁰ Smith to Ismay, December 15, 1942, The Papers of Lord Ismay, 4/29/1, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, University of London, UK. See also John S. D. Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1982), 216; Butcher Diary, January 19, 1943, Box 166, File Folder 1, in General File (January 8 – May 5, 1943), DDEL. Parenthetically, Smith did not play a role at Casablanca, but recommended one of its suburbs, Anfa, as an excellent locale for the conference.

³¹ As quoted, *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #973, 781. For the the final agreement between Admiral Darlan and the Allies, which received its signature on November 23, 1942, see Enclosure, n.d., possibly June 13, 1944, RG 218, Box 5, NARA.

³² *New York Times*, December 25, 1942, 1,4, & December 26, 1942, 3.

³³ General Clark thought that the assassination was "an act of Providence," analogous to "the lancing of a troublesome boil." See Clark, *Calculated Risk*, 130; Giraud succeed Darlan as High Commissioner; see Roosevelt as quoted, *New York Times*, December 25, 1942, p. 1. See also Butcher Diary, December 30, 1942, Box 166, File Folder 4, DDEL.

Eisenhower delegated new tasks to Bedell Smith in the wake of the assassination of Darlan. Eisenhower entrusted his chief of staff with the frustrating responsibility of addressing French civil affairs and rearmament after he permanently joined Allied Force Headquarters. AFHQ was called upon to address, placed far greater demands on Smith and his staff. The changing circumstances of war, which required generals and other officers to be governors as well as warriors, were beyond anything that Smith's training had given him.³⁴ The experience sparked his interest in a postwar diplomatic career in the long run. In the short run, however, Smith's tasks required delegation, patience and tact. Many difficulties did not disappear quickly by means of external control. Smith's work regarding French political matters, for instance, extended though 1945.

Following Eisenhower's instruction, Smith showed functionalist pragmatism in policy. He made no attempt, for instance, to overhaul the civil administrative system of French North Africa. Smith found the search for qualified civil administrators frustrating, but agreed with his superiors that Gaullist candidates would not do. From a functionalist point of view, the western Allies simply could not install large numbers of unqualified men in French offices regardless of their political purity. For the moment, Allied policy excluded the Free French in the civil affairs of North Africa. The Allies would maintain the status quo until conditions permitted appropriate

³⁴ Smith became operational chief of staff for AFHQ in February 1943; General Devers, commander of US forces in the Mediterranean theater, thought that civil affairs should fall under his purview. Having Eisenhower's ear, Smith won the argument. Once the British drive under Montgomery linked up with Eisenhower's forces in Tunisia, Smith became chief of staff of the entire Allied headquarters in North Africa. See Summary Memorandum, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group 165, Adjutant General, Box 1713, NARA; Butcher, *My Three Years*, 236-242, 288-290. General Frank M. Andrews replaced Eisenhower as commander of the United States forces in the United Kingdom.

change. It was not practical to make widespread changes in civil administration while the military campaign in North Africa was still in doubt. Meanwhile, Marcel Peyrouton and others tied to the Vichy regime remained in office. Smith placed civil affairs directly under AFHQ because he thought that unity of command could be more easily enforced.³⁵ The problems of governance, public health, economics and education were so pervasive that they continued long after Smith had departed the theater.

Smith played a major part in determining what military role French troops would serve in the Allied coalition. French sentiment, as well as can be determined, wanted a French army to liberate France; there was no great desire to be liberated by others. General Jean de Lattre de Tassigny insisted that the Free French soldiers were not going to be deployed as small isolated units within American armed forces.³⁶ De Gaulle, Alphonse Juin, and de Lattre willingly tolerated piecemeal deployment for a while, but they insisted on the training and equipping of a French army for liberation. Smith was willing to accede to French desires as long as unity of command was maintained. Meanwhile, Smith mustered the resources to train and equip French combat units. He also proposed that a French army serve as part of an army group scheduled to invade southern France.³⁷ It would take a long time before the French army met expectations.

³⁵ Msg, Eisenhower to Elmer Davis, Director, OWI, January 24, 1943, OPD, Msg files, CM-IN 11349, cited in Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors*, United States Army in World War II Series, edited by Stetson Conn (Washington, D.C.: Office of Military History, 1964), p. 49; François Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle* (St James's Place, London: Collins, 1981), 238; Sir Frederick E. Morgan, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 8, 1947, USAMHI.

³⁶ During World War I, General Pershing had insisted on the preservation the US Army as an autonomous element.

³⁷ Lattre de Tassigny, *History of the French First Army*, 31-32. The French 1st Army later comprised part of 6th Army Group during the drive up the Rhone River Valley.

Bedell Smith had responsibility for civil affairs in Metropolitan France. The United States and the United Kingdom, however, had not reached consensus regarding a unified policy with respect to Metropolitan France. With D-Day only weeks away, Smith radioed General Marshall requesting a clarification regarding French collaboration. Smith feared that the international press would accentuate Allied differences once the invasion of northwestern Europe began.³⁸ Smith knew that Roosevelt tended to wait on circumstances, but he also knew that the President did not want the French Committee of National Liberation to entrench itself as the government of France.³⁹ On May 15, Smith presented his views as follows: first, General Charles de Gaulle, by then having gained the support of the FCNL, was the *de facto* political leader of France; second, the FCNL should function for military purposes only; third, Smith thought that Eisenhower ought to be free to deal with the FCNL and any other faction that had no ties to the Vichy government.⁴⁰ Smith was leery of de Gaulle's political ambition, but he put forward a strong functionalist argument with respect to a military role for the FCNL. Predictability of success hinged on the cooperation of the Free French. Until Roosevelt and Churchill reached an agreement on policy toward France, Generals Marshall and Eisenhower granted Smith the right to

³⁸ Radio Message, Smith to Marshall, Eyes Only Cable, May 14, 1944, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box, 4, NARA;

³⁹ Churchill and Roosevelt had difficult reaching an agreement regarding Allied policy toward the French Committee of National Liberation; hereafter, FCNL. The FCNL had stripped Giraud of his military command in April. See Enclosure: review of the history of French relations by U.S. Ambassador to Algiers, n.d., possibly June 13, 1944, RG-218, Box 5, NARA.

⁴⁰ Smith to Marshall, Eyes Only Cable, May 15, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 4, NARA. See also Cable, S-51959, Eisenhower to Marshall, May 17, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 4, NARA. According to Smith, options were limited – negotiation either with the detested Vichy or with those who had admiration for Charles de Gaulle.

negotiate with French leaders in a quiet way.⁴¹ A clear Allied policy did not reach Supreme Headquarters until the invasion force was on the continent of Europe.

Before and after the Normandy landing, Smith primarily dealt with three French generals – Charles de Gaulle, Pierre-Joseph Koenig and Alphonse Juin. The loose-ended experience was very taxing for the chief of staff. Smith thought that no bonafide French government existed during the war. He had been present when de Gaulle walked out on Giraud during a stormy conference in mid-1943. Later when Smith requested that de Gaulle and Roosevelt have a few drinks to discuss matters, de Gaulle accused him of being Roosevelt's mouthpiece. Seeking positive results, Smith held his tongue, but later remarked, "I should have told him to go to hell."⁴⁰ From Smith's perspective, rapprochement between Giraud and de Gaulle was an impossibility.

Like his superiors, Smith contended that the political destiny of France would have to be resolved after the war. He viewed de Gaulle as a general with an ambitious political agenda. Smith was troubled by de Gaulle's desire to inject issues of French national pride while the Allies were about to engage in a terrible struggle on the continent. On the eve of the Normandy landing, Eisenhower asked de Gaulle to address the French people. Piqued, de Gaulle reneged because of the wording of the text. He then complied at the eleventh hour.⁴¹

Yet privately, Smith recognized de Gaulle as the symbol of resistance to Nazi tyranny. Smith and Eisenhower wanted to gain the confidence of the French leader, and perhaps enlist

⁴¹ Memorandum for the President, Marshall to Roosevelt for Leahy, May 16, 1944, Record Group 218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 4, NARA.

⁴⁰ As quoted, Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI.

⁴¹ Churchill allegedly roared, "Go tell Bedell-Smith to put de Gaulle in a plane and send him back to Algiers – in chains if necessary." As quoted, François Kersaudy, *Churchill and De Gaulle*, 347.

his help in French civil affairs and rearmament.⁴² Although he believed that the authority to direct military strategy was Eisenhower's prerogative, de Gaulle insisted that the Supreme Commander had limited authority to dictate civil affairs in France.⁴³ Believing that the line between political and military affairs was thin, Smith took exception to de Gaulle's opinion. To insure some degree of predictability in French affairs, Smith tolerated de Gaulle.

Smith's relations with Pierre-Joseph Koenig, Chief of the French Forces of the Interior, were harmonious from the outset. When Smith and Air Marshal Tedder reported British concerns about French civilian casualties resulting from Allied bombing, Koenig interjected, "This is War, and it must be expected that people will be killed. We would take twice the anticipated loss to be rid of the Germans." "To my surprise," Smith reported to Marshall, "Koenig takes a much more cold blooded view than we do."⁴⁴ Relations between SHAEF and Koenig remained cordial throughout the conflict.

The third figure in the French circle was General Alphonse Juin with whom Bedell Smith had the most contact and trouble. Juin, the Chief of the Allied Military Mission to the French

⁴² Hilldring and Holmes to Smith, July 11, 1944 in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs*, 715; Smith felt the FCNL was the best means to insure French cooperation p. 665 above source.

⁴³ Charles de Gaulle, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, January 14, 1947, USAMHI; see also Alphonse Juin, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 6, 1946, USAMHI; the one exceptional issue where de Gaulle challenged Eisenhower on strategy concerned the abandonment of Strasbourg in early 1945; Smith found De Gaulle's constant comparisons between the commands of Foch and Eisenhower irritating.

⁴⁴ As quoted, Radio Message, Smith to Marshall, May 17, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 4, NARA. See also Prime Minister to President (Churchill to Roosevelt), May 7, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 15, NARA. For exchanges concerning Allied bombing policy, see Prime Minister to President (Churchill to Roosevelt), May 7, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 15, NARA & President to Prime Minister (Roosevelt to Churchill), May 11, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman's File, Box 16, NARA.

Government, was frequently evasive and consistently questioned Eisenhower's authority to run the war. On the issue of command and control of French forces, Bedell Smith would not budge. A member of Eisenhower's air staff later recalled that Smith, Eisenhower and nearly everyone at headquarters "cussed the French" because of their unreliability.⁴⁵ From the chief of staff's point of view, General Juin not only undermined the principle of unity of command, but also defied the equilibrium, so prized by functionalists, which Eisenhower, Smith and entire Allied command so earnestly sought. Juin exacerbated Smith's troubles with intelligence, military affairs, and civil relations.

Always security conscious, Smith knew that Allied intelligence of French internal politics was uncertain at best. Knowledge, for instance, of the Maquis and its various guerilla activities was sketchy. Smith thought that the information supplied by Resistance groups might be skewed. The disparate elements of the French Resistance lacked a centralized hierarchy and a coherent political program. Political fissures abounded. Like his military superiors, Smith thought that the main objective of the Allied armed forces was to defeat the military might of the Axis. Like his military superiors, Bedell Smith was not an ideologue. Consequently, he wanted to postpone

⁴⁵ Sir James M. Robb, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 3, 1947, USAMHI. Robb did not envy Smith's task of cementing French relations. In an unpublished manuscript entitled "Higher Directions of War," Air Marshal Robb offers a rare view of Allied High Command at the top. As Chief of the Air Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff, SHAEF 1944-1944, Robb thought that Bedell Smith's accomplishments were far more significant and more positive than Captain Harry C. Butcher's *My Three Years* have led many to believe. Robb's manuscript is housed at DDEL.

and limit political discussion as much as possible.⁴⁶ Yet everyone – Eisenhower, Smith and the entire Allied Force Headquarters were involved in politics from 1943 onward.

The primary difficulty for Smith as a functionalist was that Juin focused mainly on issues beyond the conflict. Not blind to the needs of postwar France, Smith was more interested in the war at hand. Although the French people tended to close ranks against the dreaded Nazis, Smith's chief worry was the prospect that internal disorder might hinder Allied lines of communication. Issues that arose after France was no longer a battlefield were of secondary consideration to Smith.

Most of the French leadership from de Gaulle on down favored incorporating security units into a revitalized French army. Smith cooperated with the French by supplying and training security battalions for the Zone of the Interior, but trouble began when de Gaulle and Juin began pressuring him for the incorporation of security battalions into a new French army in the Zone of

⁴⁶ Tab B "History of Resistance Forces in France" 1940-1944 (through September 1944), November 12, 1944 in INDEX OF REPORTS, SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, November 27, 1944, Tab A, RG 331, Box 110, NARA. Estimates placed approximately 350,000 to 450,000 people in the Resistance, not all armed. See "Report on the French Forces of the Interior," G-2 Division, SHAEF, to Chief of Staff, SHAEF, November 25, 1944, RG 331, Box 110, NARA. The French political factions were as follows: In general, the bulk of the Françaises de l'Interieur (FFI) supported de Gaulle as part of the national resistance; the Francs Tireurs et Partisans Français (FTP), a communist-dominated resistance movement, controlled much of Paris; neither of the above parties were represented in the Consultative Assembly of parliamentarians; both the FFI and FTP had little respect for French generals and politicians who had presided over the demise of the Third Republic. See Tab C. "Examination of Differences between the Provisional Government and the F.F.I.", November 15, 1944 & Tab D. FFI AND FTP – POLITICAL ASPECTS, November 27, 1944 in INDEX OF REPORTS, SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, November 27, 1944, Tab A, RG 331, Box 110, NARA. See also an unattributed article, "Possibility of Difficulties Arising in France, Directly or Indirectly related to the Resistance Movement, which might Adversely affect the War Effort," November 27, 1944, RG 331, Box 110, NARA.

Communications and on the front.⁴⁷ For the time being, Smith wanted these security battalions to serve only in the Zone of Interior.

In September 1944, Juin wrote Smith that French forces were not receiving adequate logistical support from Supreme Headquarters. The chief of staff stated that Allied army groups had absolute priority over the reconstitution of the French army.⁴⁸ All logistical requests, he declared, were incumbent on the acceptance of Allied command and control. The war that the Allies were fighting required that the largest share of the logistical pie would go to Anglo-American forces. It was not Smith's chief priority or responsibility to train and supply a French

⁴⁷ Juin to Smith, Chief of Staff of (French) National Defense to SHAEF, September 20, 1944, SHAEF RECORDS, Record Group 331, Allied Operational and Occupational Headquarters, WWII, Box 110; hereafter, RG 331, Box 110, NARA; Smith to Juin, Chief of Staff of (French) National Defense to SHAEF, September 27, 1944, RG 331, Box 110, NARA. Of the many sources relating to French rearmament, see Memorandum for Chief of Staff, Subject: "Command and Employment of French Troops," October 29, 1944; Eisenhower to the Secretariat of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, "REARMAMENT OF ADDITIONAL FRENCH DIVISIONS," November 1, 1944; MEMORANDUM ON GENERAL JUIN'S LETTER REGARDING THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE FRENCH ARMY, Tab F, November 13, 1944; MINUTES OF MEETING ON FRENCH REARMAMENT PROGRAM AND ON COMMAND OF FRENCH UNITS EQUIPPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH LIBERATED MANPOWER PROGRAM HELD AT SUPREME HEADQUARTER, AEF ON 18 NOVEMBER 1944, Tab B; Letter, General Smith to General Alphonse Juin, Head of the Allied Liaison Mission with the French Government, November 24, 1944, Tab C; SHAEF Memorandum, Morgan to Smith, Subject: "French Rearmament Plan," December 3, 1944; SHAEF, OUTGOING MESSAGE, Eisenhower to AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff, SCAF 148, December 19, 1944; Brief of General Smith's Conference with Mr. Diethelm, French Minister of War, Wednesday, 20 December 1944; all housed in SHAEF RECORDS, RG 331, Allied Operational and Occupational Headquarters, WWII, Box 110, NARA; Staff Memorandum, Smith to Juin, Subject: "Command and Control of FRENCH Forces, November 1944 [specific date missing], Tab H to File 201B, RG 331, Box 110, NARA; Eisenhower to the Secretariat of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, "REARMAMENT OF ADDITIONAL FRENCH DIVISIONS," November 1, 1944, RG 331, Box 110, NARA.

⁴⁸ Tab B; Letter, General Smith to General Alphonse Juin, Head of the Allied Liaison Mission with the French Government, November 24, 1944, in the above footnote.

army with the postwar era in mind. Anxious to employ French troops in the liberation of France, Juin grew impatient.

The showdown between Smith and Juin came in November 1944 when the Allied offensive had stalled in Germany and the Netherlands. One wintry evening, the two officers got into a heated argument over command and control. In this instance, Smith stifled his anger, exercising unusual self-control. The next morning, Smith was still fuming when he met Deputy Supreme Commander Tedder in the hallway. Smith bellowed, "Juin said things to me last night for which, if he had been an American, I would have socked him in the jaw."⁴⁹

Allied Force Headquarters in French North Africa

Smith faced other dilemmas when he arrived in Algiers in February 1943. First, the far-flung Mediterranean theater hampered tight-knit integration and communications. For example, Cunningham and Tedder had situated their headquarters at great distances from Allied Force Headquarters. As the campaign proceeded, this was true for army commands as well.⁵⁰ Second, Smith fought institutional inertia at Allied Force Headquarters and, occasionally, at field commands. He also pushed Eisenhower to take firm command. In the process, Smith occasionally overreacted. Some officers believed that he went beyond the limits of his authority.

The task of securing adequate staffing was onerous. Eager to join the Eisenhower team, many officers wrote to the chief of staff requesting regimental combat commands.⁵¹ In some cases, Smith granted temporary staff assignments, counseling officers to bear with him until

⁴⁹ As quoted, Tedder, *With Prejudice*, 634. The specific date is unknown.

⁵⁰ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 171-172.

⁵¹ Thomas T. Handy, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, December 18, 1975, Oral History 486, DDEL.

combat commands became available.⁵² He often added, “work where you are placed, as I am doing, [and] you will certainly get an opportunity to command an organization again before very long.”⁵³ Some chafed, considering the glut of colonels ahead of them. Smith was impatient at times, empathetic at others. If officers refused staff positions, he sent them back to the United States. Very few officers requested staff jobs, and commanders griped when Smith rotated seasoned combat officers into the staff. He selected officers with battle experience to fill staff positions so that in the future the army would not face a shortage of planners and high-level officers.⁵⁴ As stated previously, Smith believed that the individual achieves significance in the group. Only by working in concert with others did one make a contribution to the whole Allied effort. As a functionalist, he believed an individual officer made his contribution through the organization. No officer was indispensable.⁵⁵

While securing army personnel, Smith also battled manpower shortages within the theater.

⁵² Smith often responded in this way: “Just sit tight. We haven’t forgotten you, and will get you down here at the first opportunity,” or “Don’t worry about the future.” Colonel Paul D. Ginder wrote, “I’ll stack my up my record and assignments for the past seventeen years against anyone in my service.” See Ginder to Smith, February 28, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 8, DDEL. Smith to Ginder, July 8, 1944, & Smith to Stroh, May 31, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 8, DDEL. Ginder received a command, Stroh command of a division.

⁵³ Smith to Ginder, July 8, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 8, DDEL.

⁵⁴ Major General Lucian K. Truscott needled Smith, complaining he had taken one of his best line officers, Major Theodore S. Conway, and made a “paper-pusher” out of him. See, Truscott to Smith, December 1, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, “Chief of Staff’s Personal Papers,” 1942-1944, Box 7, DDEL; Smith to Truscott, December 15, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, “Chief of Staff’s Personal Papers,” 1942-1944, Box7, DDEL.

⁵⁵ Whyte, *The Organizational Man*, 7-8. In spite of Eisenhower’s opinion that Smith was nearly indispensable, Smith never believed it himself. See Ambrose, *The Supreme Commander*, 81.

Moreover, line units required constant training in North Africa and Europe.⁵⁶ He understood the importance of training a large pool of staff officers with combat experience to serve as generals and military governors in the post-war world. Despite his reluctance to delegate, Smith needed excellent staff officers with military experience to control Allied Force Headquarters. Many general officers later recalled that the service schools had not given enough attention to personnel and civil affairs.⁵⁷

Far more serious for Bedell Smith was the cost of a large bureaucratic headquarters. As Allied Force Headquarters grew larger, he no longer had the time and energy to absorb all the information that poured into Algiers. It is true that Smith with all his mastery of detail firmly grasped the main issues, but no one brain could possibly comprehend and control all of the unexpected developments that arose. The headquarters began to decentralize, particularly on the lateral or horizontal axis – the larger the headquarters, the weaker the hierarchy. The process demanded that Smith give up some of his power through delegation to deputy chiefs of staff and

⁵⁶ Peter R. Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe: The Triumph of American Infantry Division, 1941-1945* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1999), 82-83, 116-117. See also Eisenhower to Marshall for Smith, July 9, 1943, in *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, # 1105, 1247-1249. Key personnel, both civilian and military, were as follows: Robert Murphy (Advisor on Civil Affairs), Harold Macmillan (British Resident Minister, AFHQ), Brigadier General Julius C. Holmes, G-5, AFHQ, Major General John Hildring, G-5, WDGS. See, handwritten letter, Holmes to Smith, January 29, 1943, Box 7, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL. Smith cooperated well with Robert Murphy, Harold MacMillan, Julius C. Holmes and John Hildring while clarifying public relations and civil affairs policy in Washington. His contributions in logistics were not particularly noteworthy.

⁵⁷ Thomas T. Handy, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 6, 1972, Oral History 486, DDEL; Jacob L. Devers, interview #1 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, August 19, 1974, Oral History 377, DDEL; William H. Simpson, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, March 15, 1972, Oral History 314, DDEL.

specialists.⁵⁸ This he was reluctant to do. Therefore, Smith faced a dilemma whereby the process of decentralization worked against the tight-knit staff that he had built. He found himself in a paradoxical situation of enforcing unity of command while his power dissipated. The process of adjustment or self-regulation was foreign to his top-down kind of management.

Smith was deeply concerned with the overlapping functions in the theater. He tended to define narrowly order as equilibrium as did others in his day. His rigid adherence to perceived threats to order undermined his functionalist training. For instance, Smith engaged in turf battles with General Everett S. Hughes, deputy commander of US Forces in the Mediterranean in 1943. Unity of command was the principle that Smith often used to his advantage whenever his agenda was threatened. Hughes saw a great deal of knavery in Smith, believing that he interfered in matters that were not his business. For his part, Smith resented encroachments on his domain. The problem also lay with issues of power and authority, which were in part ill-defined by Eisenhower himself. Charged by Eisenhower to investigate overlapping functions in the Mediterranean theater, Hughes believed that Smith had overstepped the bounds of his authority. Both Hughes and Smith expected each other to react similarly in corresponding situations. Although Hughes was not guiltless, Smith was often a manipulator who was prone to using coercion. His actions were not always consistent with functionalism in terms of the cohesion of staff and command. Having different expectations and personalities, the two men often did not speak the same language.⁵⁹ Hughes was never fond of Smith, and their relations were always

⁵⁸ Two sources that address the issue of delegation to specialists are: Mintzberg, *Structure in Five*, 126, 139-140; Galbraith, *Competing with Flexible Lateral Organizations*, 11, 16.

⁵⁹ This is a common occurrence in large organizations. See Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 29, 40-41.

strained. Smith accused Hughes of being an “empire builder of the first water.”⁶⁰ Anxious to defend his own domain as deputy theater commander, Hughes leveled the same charge against Smith.

One of the functions of Allied Force Headquarters was censorship of the press. As Eisenhower’s principal coordinator, Smith found the task troublesome. The main function entailed the prosecution of war and the security of information related to it. Eisenhower, as mentioned earlier, had directed Smith to enforce censorship in the strictest way. Smith tried to compromise by granting liberal press accreditation on one hand and enforcing a strict policy of censorship on the other. After the setback at Kasserine in February 1943, the chief of staff was particularly vigorous in his pursuit of transgressors.⁶¹ Eisenhower himself railed against all “brainless” journalists who had created distrust among Allied commanders, staff and the public.⁶² The functionalist tries to view a particular problem with a degree of detachment in order to predict and control events. As will be shown, Eisenhower adopted a functionalist and organic solution, treating the press as quasi-staff members of Allied Force Headquarters.⁶³ But Smith found the balancing act difficult. More so than Eisenhower, Bedell Smith was suspicious of the press in the wake of the Darlan affair.

⁶⁰ *The Diary of Everett S. Hughes*, February 10, 1943, & May 7, 1943, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Washington, D. C.; hereafter cited as *Hughes Diary*; General Hughes’s handwritten diary is nearly impossible to decipher. I relied heavily on D. K. R. Crosswell’s typed copy of the diary, which he lent me.

⁶¹ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 170.

⁶² *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #939, 1083-1084.

⁶³ Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Myth Maker* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 315.

Nonetheless, one unexpected development at headquarters was the task of providing news to a democratic society without sacrificing security. Smith was not comfortable with reporters. He was leery of newspapermen, but not hostile. One day when the chief of staff was battling press leaks, Harold MacMillan heard Smith mutter impatiently, "Jesus Christ may have walked on the waters but I guess we cannot do the same."⁶⁴ The questions of aggressive news reporters were never tidy and, on occasion, they tested Smith's forbearance. When dealing with the press, Smith had trouble with unforeseen circumstances. But as the year 1943 went along he learned to adjust. The most consistent of functionalists realizes that there are no textbook answers for unexpected events.⁶⁵ The task of preserving the essence of the democratic press on one hand while maintaining security on the other was challenging. Harold Macmillan believed that Smith, with few exceptions, handled matters with the press rather well given the difficulty of the task.⁶⁶ Yet the chief of staff might have tried to make the press part of the organic whole of the Allied team as Eisenhower did. The problem of censorship persisted until the final surrender in May 1945.

There were honest disagreements among the Allied command, Allied Force Headquarters and in the field. They did not critically undermine Allied unity. Smith was disagreeable at times however. His personality, bad manners and impatience violated the principles of functionalism

⁶⁴ As quoted, Macmillan, *Blast of War*, 364. General Alexander, however, adamantly supported Smith's efforts to stop press leaks. See BBC report, 2100 hours, March 23, 1943, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 3, File Folder 8. See also Field Marshal Harold Alexander, interview by Sidney T. Matthews with George F. Howe, n.d., USAMHI.

⁶⁵ Drucker, *Management*, 549.

⁶⁶ Macmillan, *War Diaries*, April 15, 1943, 63. Smith relied on the Psychological Warfare Section, the Office of War Information, and the Office of Strategic Services in these matters. Smith had little say or control over actions of the OWI and OSS, whose specialists he did not trust. See Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 146-147.

and the organic nature of Allied teamwork. One day, Smith clashed over procedure with Philip Wigglesworth, a senior British airman. A liaison officer, Wigglesworth had gone directly to Eisenhower, bypassing the chief of staff. Smith barked that Wigglesworth was uncooperative and would not fit into the integrated headquarters. He demanded that all communications with General Eisenhower be funneled through the chief of staff. The British airman refused to back down, contending that his superior Air Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder had the right to communicate directly with the Allied commander.

Tedder mediated the dispute between the two officers who were equally stubborn.⁶⁷ Smith and Wigglesworth never got along well, and the latter later told Pogue that the chief of staff was a rather “small man.”⁶⁸ Smith’s frustration was justified on the basis of unity of command, but the way he addressed his British colleague created antipathy. In this instance, his harsh demeanor was hardly functionalist. It only hindered the integration of the air staff, which was one of his many tasks. Moreover, Smith sometimes acted like Eisenhower’s deputy commander rather than chief of staff. Some officers felt that he had overstepped his authority.⁶⁹

Smith also oversaw the planning for Operation HUSKY.⁷⁰ His duties brought him into contact for the first time with General Montgomery. The British general was very critical of the

⁶⁷ Having served in British Middle Eastern Command under Alexander, Tedder became chief deputy of the air staff after Eisenhower assumed command of the entire Mediterranean theater. See Lord Tedder, *With Prejudice: The War Memoirs of Marshall of the Royal Air Force* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1966), 405.

⁶⁸ Air Marshal Sir Philip Wigglesworth, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, April 1, 1947, USAMHI. Smith never commented on the incident.

⁶⁹ Smith also clashed with another British air officer, Leslie Scarman, who believed that Smith had undermined Tedder’s authority at SHAEF because of his ties with Churchill. See Leslie Scarman, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 25, 1947, USAMHI.

⁷⁰ The code name for the invasion of Sicily.

planning staff at AFHQ. Montgomery's methods bothered Smith more than his personality. The British general preferred to plan in isolation at his tactical headquarter, immersed in operational detail.⁷¹ As stiff as he was at times, Smith thought that the military establishment was organic. He believed that the commanding general functioned as a managing director. Subject to control from above, the headquarters staff, the brain of the command, did the planning. Unlike Montgomery, Eisenhower did not do his own the planning.⁷² Smith was also troubled by Montgomery's refusal to attend meetings scheduled by his superiors. British general had a habit of demanding that he confer with all of his superiors in private.⁷³ Montgomery frequently belittled Eisenhower in his dispatches to the British War Office and Field Marshall Brooke. Smith viewed such maverick behavior as a threat to Eisenhower's prerogatives and a violation of the principle of unity of command. Montgomery's lack of concern for the political issues of the war also bothered Smith. Nonetheless, he agreed to the British general's recommended changes for the invasion of Sicily. For the moment, Smith set Montgomery's arrogance aside in the interest of unity.

Montgomery and Smith shared some striking similarities. Both men had a propensity for rudeness. They were micro-managers. Like Smith, Montgomery often failed to credit the work of subordinates. But unlike Smith, the British general only begrudgingly acknowledged the efforts and contributions of his equals and superiors. For all of his shortcomings as functionalist, Smith

⁷¹ Like his British colleague Sir Frederick Morgan, Smith thought that neither the Combined Chiefs of Staff nor the British 8th Army could have done the planning for the Mediterranean operations. See Sir Frederick E. Morgan, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 8, 1947, USAMHI.

⁷² Walter Bedell Smith, *Eisenhower's Great Decisions* (New York, Toronto, & London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1956), 7-13; Whyte, *The Organizational Man*, 151.

⁷³ Montgomery to Brooke, April 30, 1943, 6/2/22, Papers of Lord Alanbrooke, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.

did not stoop to that sort of knavery. As the time passed, Bedell Smith gained confidence when discussing operations with Montgomery.⁷⁴ For the moment, General Montgomery expressed fondness for Smith.⁷⁵ Only later in the war did Montgomery's personality become a serious issue for Smith.

By the time German resistance collapsed in North Africa, Benito Mussolini's empire was tottering. Smith had flown to Washington on May 9, 1943 to present Eisenhower's views on how best to exploit the fruits of the Tunisian campaign.⁷⁶ At the Trident Conference, the chief of staff once again performed loyally. Once again, the measure of Bedell Smith lies in his decisiveness, his acceptance of responsibility and, above all, in the results that his actions produced. It was these outstanding traits that General Eisenhower valued over and above simple loyalty and

⁷⁴ Once during the planning of HUSKY when Montgomery mentioned his unpopularity at headquarters, Smith responded, "General, to serve under you would be a great privilege for anyone: to serve alongside you wouldn't be too bad. But say, General, to serve over you is hell!" As quoted, Horrocks, Sir Brian Horrocks, *A Full Life*, rev. ed. (London: Leo Cooper Ltd. 1974), 159. British General Miles Dempsey credited Eisenhower, not Smith, for the expression. See Miles Dempsey, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, March 12-13, 1947, USAMHI. When General Montgomery declared that Alexander should be denied a role in the invasion of Sicily, Smith grew bolder. When the British general expressed the opinion that a single army invade Sicily and that he should command it, Smith objected. Eisenhower had settled on Alexander as commander of 15th Army Group and the decision was final. See Nigel Hamilton, *Master of the Battlefield: Monty's War Years 1942-1944*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1983), 261-265, 270.

⁷⁵ Montgomery added that Smith was "the real power behind the throne, and I understand that Eisenhower has complete trust in him." See Montgomery to Brooke, May 6, 1943, 6/2/23, Papers of Lord Alanbrooke, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.

⁷⁶ Memorandum, General Smith's travel itinerary through February 16, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, "Chief of Staff's Personal Papers," 1942-1944, Box 7, DDEL. The Germans surrender on May 12, 1943 and, a victory parade was staged in Tunis on May 20.

obedience. The stage was set for the invasion of Sicily and one of Bedell Smith's greatest accomplishment of the war – the Italian armistice.⁷⁷

Bedell Smith and the Italian Armistice

An abrupt change in the Italian political situation occurred prior to the Allied invasion of the Italian mainland. As the man-on-the-spot, General Eisenhower found himself once again embroiled in messy political affairs while military matters remained in doubt. While the Allied political leaders and the Combined Chiefs of Staff framed a change in policy toward Rome, Eisenhower entrusted his chief of staff with a difficult diplomatic task. Smith, who more than anyone in General Eisenhower's entourage understood the military objectives of the Allied mission, was able to secure a military armistice under the press of time. During the negotiations that followed, Smith's stated objective was to get the Italians out of the war as quickly as possible. The means that he employed to accomplish that goal consisted firmness of purpose, a good measure of shrewdness and diplomatic savvy. There was little room for diplomatic maneuver. Bedell Smith succeeded in securing what was tantamount to unconditional surrender. Given the unpredictable twists and turns of Italian politics, Smith responded rather well to this unexpected turn of events.

In the final week of July 1943, the government of Benito Mussolini collapsed. In early August 1943, the new regime of Marshal Pietro Badoglio made a series of uncoordinated peace

⁷⁷ The conference set May 1, 1944 for Operation OVERLORD, and appointed Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Morgan as Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander (Designate), known as COSSAC. Morgan and his staff began planning for the cross-Channel invasion. See Sir Frederick Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, manuscript, pp. 92, 256, Records of the Cabinet Office, 106/1038, PRO, UK, & Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 126-131. See also Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 782-799; Richard J. Barnet, *Roots of War* (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 61-62.

overtures, which Ronald Campbell, the British ambassador to Portugal, relayed to the Allies. The Italians had no intention of surrendering.⁷⁸ Their goal was to end the war with the Allies and make a clean break with Nazi Germany. To complicate matters, Badoglio told Italians that unconditional surrender was an impossibility and, in doing so, he continually tested the patience of both Allied leaders and his own people.⁷⁹ The turmoil in Italy shrouded nearly every bit of Allied intelligence in fog.⁸⁰

The ghost of Admiral Darlan hovered over Allied circles as their leaders struggled with the question of how to exploit the change of regime. Furthermore, Marshal Badoglio bore the stench of Fascism. Roosevelt and Churchill were not sure what to make of the peace offer. While they and the Combined Chiefs of Staff haggled over policy in Washington and London, and in Quebec at the Quadrant Conference, Allied Force Headquarters attended to the surrender of Sicily and the impending invasion of Italy.

Bedell Smith, having attended the Trident Conference, knew that President Roosevelt's attitude toward unconditional surrender had hardened. Churchill had concurred. Smith had

⁷⁸ On July 26, 1943, the British Broadcasting Company issued sketch details regarding the ouster of Mussolini; see Hellmuth Günther Dahms, *Geschichte des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Tübingen: Rainer Wunderlich Verlag, Hermann Heins, 1965), 606-616. Two major Italian factions had sought to escape the onslaught of Allied invasion by conspiring against the Fascist dictator. First, the Italian Fascist Grand Council had voted to revoke Mussolini's command over the Italian Armed Forces and restore the monarchy. Second, a successful conspiracy hatched a plot for the arrest and deposition of Mussolini. One of the peace feelers came from the good offices of the Vatican.

⁷⁹ F. William Deakin, *The Brutal Friendship: Mussolini, Hitler and the Fall of Italian Fascism*, rev. ed. (London: Phoenix Press, 1962), 426; George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), 145-152; Macmillan, *Blast of War*, 372-375; Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin*, 160-161; Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 188.

⁸⁰ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #1163, 1313.

discussed the Casablanca Directive with Eisenhower at length, and they both were convinced that the policy was unwise.⁸¹ Still, even with the more objectionable Fascists removed from the scene, Roosevelt reiterated that the American government would not deal with Fascists in any way.⁸² The Combined Chiefs of Staff were en route to the Quadrant Conference at Quebec.

When directions from the Combined Chiefs of Staff were not immediately forthcoming, Eisenhower directed an anonymous group of intelligence and operational staff officers at Allied Force Headquarters to begin drafting an instrument for a military armistice in late July 1943.⁸³ After several revisions, these straightforward stipulations – later referred to as the “Short Terms” – made no mention of unconditional surrender. Eisenhower and Smith thought that these concise conditions would provide the best means for negotiations with the Italian government. President Roosevelt accepted the “Short Terms” on July 23, freeing Eisenhower to act if Badoglio opened

⁸¹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #1055, n. 1, 1162; Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

⁸² See Roosevelt’s speech in Robert J. Quinlan, ed., *The Italian Armistice*, in *American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies*, edited by Harold Stein (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1963), 220.

⁸³ In addition to the cessation of hostilities, the “Short Terms” called for the cessation of hostilities, equitable exchange of prisoners of war, transfer of Italian naval and air power to the United Nations, territorial provisions, including the immediate surrender of Corsica; and the prompt cooperation of the Italian government in all matters listed. See Memorandum, W. B. Smith to War Department General Staff, Combined Chiefs of Staff, September 6, 1943, Records of the US JCS, Chairman’s File, 1942-1948, National Archives Records Administration, Record Group 218, Box 1761, College Park, Maryland, hereafter, RG with number, NARA. See also Tab A, dated September 3, 1943 from Fairfield Camp, Sicily.

serious negotiations. Meanwhile, the British Foreign Office drafted the “Long Terms” as an instrument of unconditional surrender.⁸⁴

Hopes soared on August 5, 1943 when Brigadier General Giuseppe Castellano arrived in Madrid en route to Lisbon. British Ambassador Sir Samuel Hoare reported that King Victor Immanuel desired to open secret negotiations.⁸⁵ The fog was clearing; yet it was apparent that Badoglio was seeking co-belligerency as an ally.⁸⁶ That evening, Castellano and his translator departed for Lisbon where he hoped to contact Ambassador Campbell for further discussions.⁸⁷ On August 16, Smith was attending the capitulation of German forces in Sicily when he learned of Italian intentions.⁸⁸ Events moved quickly. In Quebec on August 17, Roosevelt and Churchill drafted the Quebec Memorandum. Combined Chiefs of Staff issued a direct order to Eisenhower

⁸⁴ President to Prime Minister, July 30, 1943, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 17, NARA; see also Sir Kenneth Strong, *Intelligence at the Top: The Recollections of an Intelligence Officer* (London: Cassell & Co., 1968), 104; Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI; George F. Kennan, interview by Howard M. Smyth, January 2, 1947, USAMHI.

⁸⁵ Castellano was chief of staff to Vittorio Ambrosio, Chief of Staff of the Italian Armed Forces; Castellano was accompanied by his interpreter Signor Franco Montanari of the Italian Foreign Office; see Giuseppe Castellano, *Come Firmai L'Armistizio Di Cassibile*, 1st ed. (Rome: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1945), 22, 90; my translation, *As I Signed the Armistice of Cassibile*.

⁸⁶ Ambassador Hoare communicated Castellano's sentiments to Quebec; see, Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 5, *Closing the Ring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Riverside Press, 1951), 103; see also Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 188; Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 105.

⁸⁷ Castellano, *Come Firmai*, 98-99.

⁸⁸ Telegram 231 in AFHQ Incoming, Eyes Only Cable, Devers to Eisenhower, August 16, 1943, Pre-Presidential Papers, Box 34, File Folder 3, DDEL; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #1213, n. 6, 1364. Eisenhower learned the substance of these matters through official channels at Quadrant. Following the resolution of differences regarding Castellano's credentials and diplomatic protocol, the preliminary steps for talks began on August 16.

to open negotiations with Castellano on late August 18, 1943.⁸⁹ They directed Eisenhower to dispatch two staff officers – one British, the other American – to Lisbon at once.

A Trip to Lisbon

With time running short, Eisenhower did not dawdle. His choice of staff officers required little pondering. He would send two officers of tested reliability in whom he had complete confidence. The primary choice fell to the “orderly man with an orderly mind,” Bedell Smith. Next, Eisenhower selected his intelligence deputy, Brigadier Kenneth W. D. Strong.⁹⁰

Smith and Strong were in a predicament in a number of ways. First, their diplomatic mission stood a chance of compromising the Allied landings in Italy. German intelligence agents were lurking on the Iberian peninsula. Second, there was a distinct possibility that the international press might leak the news of negotiations. Third, Smith and Strong did not imply that they were dealing with Fascists in violation of the policy of unconditional surrender. Eisenhower was anxious to avoid another Darlan Affair. Finally, news arrived that Castellano and the Italian government wanted assurances that the Allies would land on the Italian mainland with sufficient force to overwhelm the Germans. The Badoglio government repeatedly expressed the fear of German reprisals. Badoglio wanted guarantees that the Allied forces secure Rome before he would issue a public change of policy.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Albert Garland and Howard Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, United States Army in World War II Series (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1965), 446-447.

⁹⁰ Strong had replaced Brigadier Eric E. Mockler-Ferryman as Chief of Intelligence at AFHQ after Kasserine; see Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947; see also *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #831, 969; Memorandum, Eisenhower to Brooke, March 14, 1943, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 3, File Folder 3, DDEL.

⁹¹ Nigel Nicolson, *Alex: The Life of Field Marshal Earl Alexander of Tunis* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 209.

Without committing to specific political stipulations, Smith had to convince Castellano that unconditional surrender was merely an honorable military armistice.⁹² Smith had no authority to negotiate on the basis of co-belligerency. He needed to accomplish the mission quietly without leaving the impression that the Allied governments had accepted Italians as comrades-in-arms. Smith also had to work quickly before the Allied press and German intelligence learned of his mission. Moreover, General Eisenhower and his tactical commander, Alexander, needed a quick settlement before September 9, the scheduled target date for Operation AVALANCHE.⁹³

One final problem remained. Although accepting Italian diplomatic overtures, Roosevelt, Churchill and their respective governments had compromised on the plan for negotiation. Smith, had to negotiate on the basis of the “Short Terms,” which were military articles. But the British Foreign Office and the US Department of State soon issued the “Long Terms.” These political conditions included the unconditional surrender directive. The policy granted Smith precious little leeway during his talks with Castellano. The political document proved to be a nightmare for generals. Smith was not pleased with the compromise.⁹⁴

After preliminary briefings, Smith and Strong flew to Gibraltar at 1600, August 18, 1943. They carried with them a directive from the Combined Chiefs of Staff and an incomplete version of the “Short Terms.”⁹⁵ Smith and Strong traveled *incognito*, disguised as British businessmen

⁹² Churchill, vol. 5, *Closing the Ring*, 106.

⁹³ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* See also Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 104.

⁹⁵ Memorandum on Aerial Flights, February 16, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL; Macmillan, *Blast of War*, 380-381.

with fictitious names and fake passports.⁹⁶ After an overnight stop, the pair flew to Lisbon.

Bedell Smith and Guisepppe Castellano

Smith and Strong met George F. Kennan, the American chargé d'affaires, whose apartment overlooked the German embassy. After remaining undercover all day, Kennan drove his guests to meet General Castellano in Campbell's living quarters at the British Embassy. Following a brief exchange of formalities and difficulties, Smith, Strong, Campbell, Castellano, and George F. Kennan began discussing preliminary issues with Montanari as interpreter.⁹⁷ Deliberations got underway around 2230 hours and continued until 0700 the next morning. The party labored throughout the night without a meal. Both Smith and Strong were irked that Campbell did not offer a sandwich or a cup of coffee.⁹⁸

Smith and Castellano opened negotiations with Montanari in the middle. Smith had all the documents neatly stacked on the table as was his habit. A man of decision, Bedell Smith did not waste any time. He got right to the point. Smith stiffly demanded that the Italian armed forces lay

⁹⁶ Neither Smith nor Strong had Portuguese visas; Smith had an American passport, but it bizarrely listed his next-of-kin as the Adjutant General of the United States Army without rendering a specific name. Major General Smith James Alexander Ulio (1882-1958) was Adjutant General, WDGS, from 1942-1946. He was not related to Smith in any way whatsoever. Smith ultimately secured a British passport. It is miraculous that Smith and Strong were able to complete their mission without detection. See Arlington National Cemetery Website: www.arlingtoncemetery.net/jaulio.htm; www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,764735,00.html?iid=chix-sphere.

⁹⁷ Anxiety heightened when it was revealed that the Italians had failed to supply a radio. Fortunately, British Intelligence had provided a second radio. Further repairs and adjustments resolved transmission problems, see George F. Kennan, interview by Howard M. Smyth, January 2, 1947, USAMHI. See also Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 106-107.

⁹⁸ Campbell served only whiskey and soda.

down their arms.⁹⁹ The main function of his mission amounted to an ultimatum. Eisenhower possessed full authority from the United Nations. Intent on carrying out his instructions, Smith added that he was merely communicating terms acceptable to the Allies. He demanded that Italy either accept or reject the stipulations without discussion of political matters.¹⁰⁰

Observers thought that Bedell Smith was a little “Prussian” at the outset. Brigadier Strong recalled that the chief of staff was initially brusque, perhaps overly conscious of the event. Smith’s demeanor began shifting, rigid at times, tactful at others.¹⁰¹ Castellano had his own recollections. He thought that Smith exhibited marked pomposity. Before Castellano could object, Smith began reading the documents in a ponderous manner and then suddenly addressed the Italian general. Without using the term “unconditional surrender,” Smith peered over his glasses and once again requested what was tantamount to capitulation.

Astonished, Castellano interrupted, convinced that there had been a misunderstanding. He had only wished to explore possibilities for collaboration against the Nazi war effort. Castellano possessed no authority to act on the matter of armistice. Operating under Eisenhower’s orders, Smith rejected co-belligerency out of hand. Declaring that the future status of the Italian armed forces were subject to Allied civilian governments, Smith next focused specifically on the “Short Terms.” As Smith read on, the Italians began to show visible signs of depression.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Giuseppe Castellano, *Come Firmai L'Armistizio Di Cassibile*, 102-103; Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 108.

¹⁰⁰ Castellano, *Come Firmai*, 103-105.

¹⁰¹ Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 108.

¹⁰² Castellano, *Come Firmai*, 105; Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI; the complete list of the “Short Terms” is housed in Office of the Chief of Staff, Chairman’s File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 4, NARA. See also Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 108-109.

Bedell Smith had ridden roughshod over General Castellano in the early round, but the chief of staff began to show signs of flexibility within the limits of his mission. Prior to a recess, Smith paused, cleverly pointing out the gallantry of the Italian troops during the recent battle for Messina. Smith expressed willingness to shake the hand of their commanding general.¹⁰³ This courteous gesture was not lost on Castellano. Smith and the entire Allied party left the two Italians alone to ruminate.¹⁰⁴

Following the short recess, Castellano expressed fears that any cooperation by the Italians would bring terrible retribution at the hands of the Nazis, who were reinforcing their position daily.¹⁰⁵ Smith responded that Roosevelt and Churchill had expressed willingness to modify conditions as stated in the Quebec Memorandum.¹⁰⁶ Without offering any firm guarantees, the chief of staff went on to say that much depended on the extent of Italian cooperation with the scheduled Allied operations.¹⁰⁷ He hoped to prevent a long war of attrition on the mainland of Italy, but he was careful not to reveal his fears.

True to their instructions, Smith and Strong did not divulge any military intelligence. Nor did they glean anything from Castellano that was new. When pushed on the precise “order of

¹⁰³ Castellano, *Come Firmai*, 106.

¹⁰⁴ Kennan, interview by Smyth, January 2, 1947; see also Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947; from time to time Smith referred to Castellano as his “pet Wop” but he thought Castellano was sincere and competent. See, for instance, Smith to Ismay, September 12, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL.

¹⁰⁵ Castellano, *Come Firmai*, 112-11. Castellano kept bring up concerns about the treatment Italian monarch should he fall into Allied hands.

¹⁰⁶ Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 457-458.

¹⁰⁷ Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 109.

battle,” Smith balked.¹⁰⁸ Worried about the emergence of a fifth column if the Italian campaign bogged down, Smith and Strong tried one last gamble. They told Castellano that his government would soon receive an expanded document covering political and economic stipulations that would range beyond those of the “Short Terms.” Castellano did not respond. Had he known the substance of the “Long Terms,” he most assuredly would have objected to them. With dawn approaching, Castellano expressed his willingness to take the terms back to Rome. All parties agreed that the Italian government would notify Allied Force Headquarters of acceptance of the terms by August 28. If there were no reply by midnight August 30, the Allies would assume that Italy had rejected the armistice.¹⁰⁹

After assuring a safe return home for Castellano, it was time for farewells. Castellano turned to Smith, thanking him for the kindness and deference that he had shown. The chief of staff responded politely.¹¹⁰ The first round of negotiation had concluded. Smith and Strong were back in Algiers by August 20. That evening Smith briefed General Eisenhower on the mission.¹¹¹ The week passed quickly.

Up to this point – in Lisbon at any rate – Smith had operated as a practical functionalist. He had kept the clear-cut military objective in mind. Smith had shown flexibility and courtesy that would have surprised some of his subordinates at headquarters. Racing against time, he was trying to establish some degree of predictability in advance of the Allied invasion of the Italian

¹⁰⁸ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI; Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 109-110; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 458.

¹⁰⁹ Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 459.

¹¹⁰ Castellano, *Come Firmati*, 118.

¹¹¹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 5, Chronology, 128.

mainland. By a combination of threats and palaver, the chief of staff had managed to control the discussion with Castellano. Smith had reason to hope that the Italian political situation had stabilized.

The political equilibrium which Smith had hoped for did not exist. The intangibles of Italian politics threatened the understanding reached in Lisbon. Four unexpected developments tightened the straightjacket in which Smith had to negotiate. First, concerned about Castellano's prolonged absence, the desperate Italian government had dispatched a second envoy, Brigadier General Giacomo Zanussi, to Lisbon. He had mistakenly received a copy of the "Long Terms" while in Lisbon.¹¹² Second, fearing that Smith's mission might be compromised and deeply suspicious of this second overture, General Eisenhower had Zanussi sequestered in Algiers until Castellano returned from Rome. Third, the Germans began bolstering their defenses on the mainland.¹¹³ Finally, the Italian leadership began asking about details regarding the date and strength of the Allied invasion.¹¹⁴ The imponderables raised doubts whether the non-Fascist

¹¹² Italian authorities had panicked over Castellano's prolonged absence. They sent Brigadier General Giacomo Zanussi of the Italian Army General Staff to Lisbon by air on August 25 with a second peace proposal; the final version of the "Long Terms" arrived in Portugal. It contained forty-two terms including demand for unconditional surrender as well as political, economic and financial stipulations. See the "Long Terms" – INSTRUMENT OF SURRENDER OF ITALY, Tab E, Office of the Chief of Staff, Chairman's File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 4, NARA.

¹¹³ Albert Kesselring, *Kesselring: A Soldier's Record*, introduction by S. L. A. Marshall (New York: William Morrow, 1954), 207-211; see Ralph S. Mavrogordato, "Hitler's Decision on the Defense of Italy" in Kent Roberts Greenfield, *Command Decisions* (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1960), 303-311; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #1213, 1362-1363; see also Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI; Macmillan, *Blast of War*, 387.

¹¹⁴ Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 109-110; Garland and Smyth, *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, 458.

elements in Italy could possibly come to an agreement on a military armistice.¹¹⁵ A practical functionalist, Smith feared that the lack of cohesion in Italian political and military circles might well endanger Allied operations in Italy. Smith had the similar concerns regarding negotiations with French leaders with one exception – while treating with the Italians, he dealt almost exclusively with one Italian leader – Castellano. Negotiating with the French was another matter. The French had many proud and truculent leaders.

Final Negotiations in Sicily

Busy with preparations for the invasion of Italy, Eisenhower directed Smith to fly to General Alexander's headquarters in Cassibile, Sicily.¹¹⁶ Smith cabled the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the British Chiefs of Staff. With time ebbing and anxious for results, he would use the "Short Terms" with the understanding that sweeping terms of surrender would follow. After delays, Castellano arrived in Sicily on August 31, one day after the deadline had passed.¹¹⁷

The second round of meetings opened in a field tent in an olive grove. Smith asked Castellano if he now had authority to sign a military armistice. Castellano responded that he was bringing good news. The Italian government would accept the "Short Terms" but there were conditions. Castellano declared that the Allies would have to land with at least fifteen divisions and secure Rome as well.¹¹⁸ Smith cut him off. The invasion was coming, and it would proceed with or without Italian compliance. Eisenhower had authority to modify terms only after the

¹¹⁵ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

¹¹⁶ Michael Howard, *History of the Second World War*, vol. 4, United Kingdom Military Series, edited by J. R. M. Butler (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1972), 528.

¹¹⁷ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #1213, 1363; vol. 5, Chronology, 130.

¹¹⁸ Castellano, *Come Firmar*, 135; Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, 108-109.

armistice had been signed, and Badoglio would have to announce the armistice before the Salerno landing. Having made a few comments about the strength of the Italian Navy, Castellano rested his case.¹¹⁹ In all likelihood, Badoglio would never have permitted talks to continue if he had known that the Allies would invade at Salerno with only minimum force.¹²⁰

Castellano agreed to return to Rome to discuss the “Short Terms” upon Zanussi’s advice and after a show of toughness by General Alexander.¹²¹ The frazzled Castellano returned to Cassibile on September 2. He again stalled. Smith was irate. Montgomery’s 8th Army would be crossing the straits of Messina, bound for the toe of Italy within hours.¹²² Following another round of sharp exchanges, Smith notified Eisenhower of Castellano’s willingness to sign. Eisenhower flew in from Tunis on September 3. Smith, however, signed the instrument of armistice for Eisenhower as Castellano did for Badoglio.¹²³

¹¹⁹ With respect to the size of the Allied force, Castellano suspected that Smith was bluffing; he was. Castellano wanted a guarantee of fifteen divisions on the landing; Smith stated the Allies could match that number, but actually the US 5th Army mustered only half that number. See Castellano, *Come Firmai*, 138-140; Clark, *Calculated Risk*, 175.

¹²⁰ Nicolson, *Alex*, 210-211.

¹²¹ Smith accepted Macmillan’s idea for a bit of impromptu acting by General Alexander. For an account of Alexander’s ruse and simulated rage while confronting Castellano, see Nicolson, *Alexander of Tunis*, 210.

¹²² Macmillan, *War Diaries*, September 2, 1943, 203; Montgomery, *Memoirs*, 170-173; Operations BAYTOWN & BUTTRESS.

¹²³ The “Short Terms” – Tab A: Conditions as presented beforehand; Tab B: actual document of military armistice (non-circulating), Office of the Chief of Staff, Chairman’s File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 4, NARA. General Eisenhower announced the military armistice at 1800 hours Rome time on September 8, 1943 before the landing. Marshal Badoglio followed at 1815. ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS AIDE MEMOIRE, September 3, 1943, Tab C, Office of the Chief of Staff, Chairman’s File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 4, NARA. See also *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #1228, 1382, #1229, 1382-1383.

Eisenhower quickly departed after the signing of the armistice, leaving the dirty work to Smith who had to complete the preliminaries of formal surrender. The chief of staff had hoped that the Allied leadership would have tempered the “Long Terms.” Bedell Smith next slipped the cover letter to Castellano.¹²⁴ Shaken, Castellano carried both documents back to Rome. On September 8, General Eisenhower and Badoglio announced the armistice. The Italians had vacillated but had kept their word.¹²⁵

General Eisenhower thought the the injection of the “Long Terms” was a “crooked deal.”¹²⁶ Smith, however, did not spend much time worrying about the means employed at Cassibile to secure the ends. He later expressed annoyance with the “unconditional surrender” clause that had cost thousands of lives both in Italy and Germany in the long term.¹²⁷ In the short term, he and Strong had maneuvered the Italians out of the war. As a practical functionalist, he had produced results which were entirely consistent with the objectives of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Writing to General Ismay, Smith expressed that the Italian government faced the predicament of winning the support of its people while agreeing to a surrender.¹²⁸ To achieve

¹²⁴ Cover letter, Smith to Castellano, September 3, 1943, Tab D, Office of the Chief of Staff, Chairman’s File, 1942-1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 4, NARA. Castellano was so upset with the “Long Terms” that he elected to withhold them from the king and premier until they had signed the military armistice. See Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 194.

¹²⁵ Privately, Smith had a low opinion of the leading Italian politicians. Victor Immanuel III was “an absolutely pitiful” creature and Badoglio was an indecisive old man who tended to weep a great deal. Castellano was an exception. See Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

¹²⁶ Macmillan, *Blast of War*, 385.

¹²⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

¹²⁸ Smith to Ismay, September 12, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7 (I), DDEL.

Allied goals, he had rewritten the first article of the “Long Terms” with no mention of the Allied demand of unconditional surrender.¹²⁹ Seeking predictable results while adhering to policy, Smith wanted to strengthen anti-Fascist partisans and decrease the chances of Italian resistance in the streets. General Eisenhower agreed and the Allied leaders elected to keep secret specific terms of the surrender for fear of upsetting Fascist elements in Italy.¹³⁰ The formal Italian capitulation took place on Malta on September 30.¹³¹ Yet Italian civil affairs and politics would consumed much of Smith’s time during the next two months.

Assessment

While negotiating a military armistice with General Castellano, Bedell Smith was thinking in a functionalist mode. His clear objective was an armistice that would benefit the entire Allied force that would have to land on the beaches of Italy. In the performance of this task, Smith had worked under the heavy constraints of time, hampered by the policy of unconditional surrender. Nonetheless, he adroitly orchestrated the Italian armistice without revealing details of military operations. Smith tried to control the environment in which he operated with limited options. Restricted to the discussion of military matters, Smith and Strong were able to glean valuable intelligence about the political as well as military situation on the Italian mainland. It is not sufficient to say that he operated from a position of power alone. Smith used the carrot as well

¹²⁹ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

¹³⁰ Memorandum, President to Prime Minister, September 27, 1943, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 17, NARA.

¹³¹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1299, 1469-1470.

as the stick. At times he was tough, at others flexible.¹³² There were even instances of kindness and empathy.¹³³ Castellano, however, was easier to manipulate than the flux in Italian affairs, which were outside of Smith's control. As a practical functionalist, Smith was inclined to compromise just to get the Italians out of the war. A conservative man, Smith viewed the armistice as an opportunity to reduce the conflict which might have been worse if the Badoglio government rejected Allied terms.

Like many practically oriented men, whether formally acquainted with functionalist thinking or not, Smith as usual tended to downplay his individual contributions to the war effort. Many wrote Smith to congratulate him on his ability and accomplishments. Sometimes these people referred to the Italian negotiations, at other times to Smith's staff work and promotions. In response, the chief of staff invariably used the word "we" when referring to the work before him. He found meaning by contributing to the efforts and objectives of the Allied team.¹³⁴ A functionalist most often thinks in terms of the group. As to his promotions, Smith referred to

¹³² Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI; for instance, Smith threatened that the Vatican itself would be subject to heavy bombing if the Italians continued to hold out. Later, Smith and Castellano exchanged pleasantries over a meal. See Castellano, *Come Firmati*, 140-142.

¹³³ Castellano to Smith, December 12, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 10, DDEL. The two men met after the armistice. Castellano again inquired when the Allied landing would take place. Smith rather impatiently replied that he fully understood the anxiety Castellano felt with respect to the date, but he could not offer any specific information. Then, pausing slightly and in a low voice, Smith murmured, "I can only say that the landing will take place in two weeks." When questioned about the veracity of Castellano's remark, Smith freely admitted its truth. See Castellano, *Come Firmati*, 170-171; Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947. Smith and Castellano continued to correspond after the war.

¹³⁴ Smith to Ismay, September 12, 1943, Box 7 (I); Smith to Sally Chamberlin, February 7, 1944, Box 7 (C); both sources housed in the Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL.

them as accidents of location.¹³⁵ The degree to which Smith's response were self-effacing in problematic.

Yet, for his work in Lisbon and Cassibile, Bedell Smith received accolades from Allied circles. General Eisenhower was pleased that his chief of staff had followed instructions under difficult circumstances and kept the negotiations free of "pomp and bluster."¹³⁶ Brigadier Strong gave the lion's share of the credit to Smith for the success of the negotiations. George F. Kennan, a diplomat himself, praised Smith for his conduct and logic. Ambassador Campbell, who had been engaged in diplomacy for years, told Strong that Bedell Smith's mastery of the art of negotiation was the most brilliant that he had ever witnessed.¹³⁷ Smith took satisfaction in that he was part of a team. He had relieved some of Eisenhower's burdens and saved lives in the process.¹³⁸

A Tough Autumn for Functionalists, 1943

General Marshall, Bedell Smith's mentor, had viewed Mediterranean operations as relatively insignificant to the main Allied effort, which was in Europe. A functionalist, he favored operations, which included bold maneuvers grounded on tested experience. As far as Marshall was concerned, the clear objective of the Allied military effort was the defeat of the armed forces of Nazi Germany. The Allied 15th Army Group got bogged down, focusing on Rome rather than

¹³⁵ Among numerous examples, Smith to J. L. DeWitt, January 14, 1944, Box 8 (W); Smith to Collins, March 14, 1944, Box 8 (C), Smith to E. G. "Gerry" Chapman, March 25, 1944, Box 8 (C), all sources housed in the Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL.

¹³⁶ John S. D. Eisenhower, *Allies: Pearl Harbor to D-Day*, 343 & n. 4, 343.

¹³⁷ Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 108, 115; George F. Kennan, interview by Howard M. Smyth, January 2, 1947, USAMHI.

¹³⁸ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

the German army. The Allies had knocked Italy out of the war, but the second objective of tying down German forces in Italy was more nebulous. The campaign was a long, bloody struggle with difficult tactical objectives. Its objectives were questionable and its planning was suspect.¹³⁹

Political problems continued to annoy the entire Allied command and headquarters. While battling personnel shortages needed for the Allied offensive, Smith tried to tackle Italian civilian relief. The Badoglio regime was unable to address food and medical problems in the middle of a war. Smith's own advisers thought that North Africa could supply the necessary food stuffs for Italy. Allied Force Headquarters did not requisition food from the United States. Smith bore responsibility for the decision. The food crisis was full blown by November 1943, and typhus broke out. Smith admitted that he and AFHQ had made a mistake.¹⁴⁰ While addressing these unexpected developments, Eisenhower and Smith became involved in a disciplinary action against General Patton.¹⁴¹ He had struck two soldiers in the final month of the campaign in Sicily. The whole story does not bear repeating here, but the sorry episode leaked out by November 1943.

¹³⁹ Martin Blumenson, "General Lucas at Anzio," in Kent Roberts Greenfield, *Command Decisions* (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1960), 323-324. See Notes on "The Invasion of Italy, Phase I, 3-20, September 1943, diary entries, #71 & #73 in *Montgomery and the Eighth Army: A Selection from the Diaries, Correspondence and Other Papers of Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, August 1942-December 1943*, edited by Stephen Brooks (London: Army Records Society, Bodley Head Ltd, 1991), 289-290.

¹⁴⁰ "Military Necessity Demands Relief of Civilian Distress," in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors*, 306-315.

¹⁴¹ Patton struck privates Charles H. Kuhl and Paul G. Bennett. See Colonel Herbert S. Clarkson, Inspector General, "Treatment of Certain Mentally Ill Hospital Patients by Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr.," September 18, 1943, & Donald Coe, Blue Network, from AFHQ, November 23, 1943, both sources in Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 91, File Folder 3, DDEL; Noel Monks, *Eyewitness* (London: Frederick Muller, 1956), 195-197; Ladilas Farago, *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph*, paperback ed. (London: Arthur Barker Ltd., 1966), 183-191; *New York Times*, November 24, 1943, 6. The Washington columnist Drew Pearson, who was not a military journalist, released the story in a truncated form on November 23, 1943 during his weekly radio program.

Neither Eisenhower nor Smith handled the incident well but the chief of staff took the brunt of the criticism. The American press and public were in an uproar.

While American troops were going ashore at Salerno, Bedell became the chief proponent of what Carlo D'Este has called "a half-baked operation."¹⁴² Concerned about the German build-up in Italy and a shortage of British manpower, General Alexander hatched a plan for an amphibious and airborne operation to liberate Rome. Whether from exhaustion or from his knowledge that Marshall was tired of the "notorious orthodoxy" of Allied planners, Smith rashly accepted the plan.¹⁴³ Code named GIANT II, the plan was unsound – a tactician's nightmare. Airborne commanders feared that the plan was a recipe for disaster. When doubts arose about the feasibility of the mission and the lack of Italian cooperation, Brigadier General Taylor went to Rome and reported back that the operation was too risky. Eisenhower cancelled the operation.¹⁴⁴

Smith was conservative by instinct but, in this case, he appeared to discard predictability. Perhaps his recent success in military diplomacy had buoyed his hopes for breaking the stalemate. Smith oversaw operations and his acceptance of this particular plan was out of character for a functionalist. In this instance, he ignored doctrine and common practice. Smith was flexible to a

¹⁴² As quoted, D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life*, 449-450.

¹⁴³ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 2, #969, n. 1, 1112; Norman Gelb, *Ike and Monty: Generals at War* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1994), 237.

¹⁴⁴ Eisenhower gave his initial support to the mission, scheduled for the night of September 8-9 just hours before the Salerno landing. See *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, # 1227, 1381-1382 & # 1232, 1386-1387. See also Lyman L. Lemnitzer, interview by Howard M. Smyth, March 3, 1947, USAMHI; Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 80; James M. Gavin, *On to Berlin: Battles of an Airborne Commander 1943-1946* (New York: Viking Press, 1978), 59; Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 54; Clay Blair, *Ridgway's Paratroopers: The American Airborne in World II* (New York: Quill/William Morrow, 1985), 136-139.

point that appeared reckless.¹⁴⁵ Smith laid the blame for the cancellation at the feet of vacillating Italian leaders and specialists like General Taylor. He said the situation called for grit. Admitting that the proposed operation was a gamble, Smith thought that it would have had “a better than even chance for success.”¹⁴⁶ A functionalist prefers much more than a fifty-fifty chance.

Ike for Operation OVERLORD

At the Cairo Conference in November 1943, President Roosevelt told Eisenhower that he would command Operation OVERLORD, but in the preceding two months Washington was rife with rumor about who would get the assignment.¹⁴⁷ While Eisenhower was paying a visit to the Italian front, Smith had heard from Secretary of the Navy Knox and Ambassador Harriman that Marshall would command OVERLORD.¹⁴⁸ Having returned from the front, Eisenhower ordered

¹⁴⁵ Smith’s behavior in this instance did not conform with pragmatic and functional predictability. See Rose Laub Coser, “Reflections on Merton’s Role-set Theory,” in Merton, *Consensus and Controversy*, 163. See Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 265.

¹⁴⁶ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Howard M. Smyth, May 13, 1947, USAMHI. Without downplaying the difficulties, Field Marshal Kesselring believed that the Allies had missed a great opportunity by failing to execute the plan. In a postwar interview, the German field marshal told Liddell Hart that an airborne operation with a concerted amphibious landing in the vicinity of Rome rather than Salerno would have triggered an automatic German evacuation of southern Italy. See Liddell Hart, *History of the Second World War*, 455, citing a postwar interview with Kesselring in *The Other Side of the Hill*, 361-362. See also Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 1st Signet rpt. ed. (New York: Praeger Press, 1967), 291; Kesselring, *A Soldier’s Record*, 223; Kenneth W. D. Strong, interview by Howard M. Smyth, October 29, 1947, USAMHI. Admiral Cunningham declared that he was prepared to support the amphibious operation and, if necessary, past Ostia and up the Tiber River. See Cunningham, *A Sailor’s Odyssey*, 561; Strong, *Intelligence at the Top*, 116-119.

¹⁴⁷ At Teheran, Stalin asked whether a decision had been made concerning the command of OVERLORD. Roosevelt and Churchill replied that the decision would soon be made. See, Third Plenary Session, Teheran Conference, November 29, 1943, RG 218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 15, NARA.

¹⁴⁸ One of the current rumors had it that Eisenhower would become Army Chief of Staff. The prospect of inheriting Marshall’s job did not thrill Eisenhower. See Butcher, *My Three Years*, 421-428; Ambrose, *Supreme Commander*, 299-300.

Smith to Washington to discuss strategy and logistics regarding the Mediterranean theaters on October 7.¹⁴⁹ Unofficially, Smith was really snooping for his boss. Visiting old friends, political connections and President Roosevelt, Smith attempted to sift rumor from fact regarding the command of OVERLORD.¹⁵⁰ Anxious to hear some news, Eisenhower cabled Smith, “Every time you go away I learn again how much I depend upon you.”¹⁵¹

Smith returned to Algiers on October 21. Briefing Eisenhower, Smith stated that he wished to follow Eisenhower to Washington if the prospect presented itself. Nodding in agreement, Eisenhower declared that he would not surrender Smith’s services unless ordered to do so by the president.¹⁵² Smith, Eisenhower declared to Marshall, “is the only one I have that can come to see you to make sure we are on the right track.”¹⁵³

The stress of the Italian campaign precipitated one of the more ugly exchanges between Smith and Eisenhower. The lack of progress on the front wore on everyone’s nerves as German

¹⁴⁹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1311, 1482-1483.

¹⁵⁰ Although the president revealed little, Smith discovered that general opinion favored keeping Marshall as Chief of Staff. For example, Leahy, Arnold, and Pershing thought that Marshall was indispensable to the Combined Chiefs of Staff. General Brooke mirrored British opinion, professing that Eisenhower and Smith were a fine team and should transfer to OVERLORD. See *F. D. R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945*, vol. 2, edited by Elliot Roosevelt, rev. rpt ed. (New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1970, 1453; King and Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King*, 526; Pershing to Roosevelt, September 16, 1943, as printed in Leonard Mosley, *Marshall: Hero for Our Times* (New York: Hearst Books, 1982), 254; Pogue, *Supreme Command*, 27; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1310, 1482, n. 6; Sir Arthur Bryant, *Triumph in the West* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959), 74-75, 127.

¹⁵¹ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1333, 1501

¹⁵² Eisenhower, as quoted, *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1335, 1503. See also Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 194; Butcher, *My Three Years*, 428.

¹⁵³ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 3, #1335, 1503.

resistance stiffened.¹⁵⁴ One damp day after touring the battlefield, the two men got into a row. Eisenhower asked Smith to dine with him that evening. Depressed, Smith murmured something to the effect that he did not care to do so. Incensed with his chief of staff's lack of courtesy, Eisenhower bellowed that no one in the entire command had the right to refuse his invitation to dine. With that, Eisenhower rescinded his dinner invitation. Smith began to smolder. Scowling, he intimated he would quit even if it meant staying in the Mediterranean or returning to the War Department General Staff. Eisenhower snarled that Smith's transfer would suit him just fine. The two officers jostled along in sullen silence until tempers cooled. Smith apologized first.¹⁵⁵ A brief moment passed and then Eisenhower reciprocated, adding that the whole matter would be forgotten. Colonel Carter Burgess recalled Smith muttering that it was unwise to "vacation with the boss."¹⁵⁶

As 1943 drew to a close, Smith could point to a number of significant accomplishments. Out of necessity, Eisenhower had greatly expanded Smith's role at Allied Force Headquarters. Smith had established an integrated headquarters along functionalist lines. At times his manner of speaking – how he said things as opposed to what he said – was at odds with functionalism. But he was consistently functionalist in the way he produced the results that Eisenhower desired. Smith, for instance, had shown a great degree of flexibility while negotiating the Italian armistice.

¹⁵⁴ Vietinghoff and Mackensen used the Gothic, Reinhard, Gustav and Bernhard Lines as impediments to Allied advances. Italy became the graveyard of reputations. See *The War Reports of General George C. Marshall, General H. H. Arnold, Admiral Ernest J. King* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1947), 168.

¹⁵⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower, interview by Stephen E. Ambrose, October 11, 1967, cited in *Supreme Commander*, 317-318. Stephen Ambrose states that this incident occurred on during the afternoon and evening of December 21, 1943. More likely, the correct day is December 20, based on *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 5, Chronology, p. 138-139.

¹⁵⁶ As quoted, Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 202.

During these talks, he kept the means and ends in mind. Smith had also successfully executed his assigned tasks related to French and Italian civil affairs. Consequently, he had gained the trust of General Eisenhower, British leaders and the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Pleased with Smith's performance, Eisenhower recommended him for the Legion of Merit. Smith was soon sporting an Oak Leaf Cluster and the Distinguished Service Medal. The accompanying citation praised Smith for his display of "great courage, tact, resolution and sound judgment" in the performance of duties.¹⁵⁷ In December 1943, Eisenhower surrendered the Mediterranean theater to British General Henry "Jumbo" Wilson. At Churchill's insistence, Smith temporarily remained at Allied Force Headquarters. Having oriented General Wilson, Smith transferred to Eisenhower's new headquarters in London.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ Allied Force Headquarters, General Orders, No. 46, August 11, 1943, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL.

¹⁵⁸ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 5, Chronology, p. 137; Bryant, *Triumph in the West*, 75.

Chapter Six

Five Cases of Functionalism at Supreme Headquarters

During his stint as operational chief of staff at Supreme Headquarters 1944-1945, there were five specific cases where Bedell Smith's actions especially well expressed a functionalist mentality. Those instances, in chronological order, related to the operational planning for OVERLORD, Allied air power, Operation MARKET-GARDEN, Field Marshal Montgomery and civil rights.

Bedell Smith had learned much since he went to London sixteen months earlier. The solemn Allied undertaking in 1944 helped him to be sure. Everyone at headquarters and in the entire theater united in one colossal effort to liberate Nazi-dominated Europe. The headquarters coalesced under its driven chief of staff. Smith deserved much credit for establishing a large degree of equilibrium, which was his functionalist goal. He still struggled with delegation and often failed to encourage initiatives on the part of subordinates. Staff officers of various stations still bypassed him when he was upset. It was his responsibility, nevertheless, to eliminate as much uncertainty at headquarters as possible, given the seriousness of Operation OVERLORD. Despite the monstrous headquarters, Smith was more effective in fostering teamwork and cooperation through the chain of command than had been the case in the Mediterranean. In many respects, his abilities as a coordinator improved as well. Smith was not indispensable, but it is difficult to imagine that anyone else could have done better at Supreme Headquarters.

Preliminaries concerning Staffing and Personalities

Upon his arrival in London, Bedell Smith concentrated on the creation of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force. Modeled on Allied Force Headquarters, the integrated

staff at Supreme Headquarters included the secretariat, the four major general staff sections and enlarged civil affairs and psychological warfare divisions. Determined to insure functional unity, Smith continued the practice of layering as had been implemented in 1942 and at Allied Force Headquarters. For example, the Chief of the Intelligence Divisions, his deputies and section leaders were of the opposite nationality.¹ The chief of staff also supervised military missions to France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands.² The aforementioned French relations aside, new issues relating to the press in Europe constituted a matter of concern before, during and after the Normandy landing.

As he had done in Algiers, General Smith used the integrated headquarters to insure unity of command and Allied teamwork. But his conception of loyalty was somewhat skewed in terms of functionalism. As best as can be determined, Smith's definition of loyalty was restricted – a bureaucratic virtue that entailed strict obedience enforced by the chain of command. Thus, loyalty was the chief prerequisite at headquarters. He addressed disorder and dysfunction with power.

Loyalty is more than blind obedience from a functionalist perspective. It constitutes more than a rigid feeling of allegiance to a person or a group. In the purest sense, it even requires more than a full commitment to a course of action and the acceptance of responsibility for it. The

¹ The practice of layering continued from AFHQ where divisions heads and their deputies were of the opposite nationality. The Personnel and Logistical Divisions were directly responsible to the General Administrative Officer Sir Humfrey M. Gale whose deputies directed G-1 and G-4 divisions because the United States and the United Kingdom had differing methods of personnel and supply. Intelligence (G-2) and Operations (G-3), under Kenneth Strong and Major General Harold "Pinky" Bull, respectively, reported directly to Smith. Supervising Civil Affairs (G-5) only loosely, Smith at length appointed Canadian Lieutenant General A. E. Grasset as deputy chief of staff. Smith maintained close supervision of the Division of Psychological Warfare, which fell to Major General Robert McClure. See J. F. M. Whiteley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 18, 1946, USAMHI.

² Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 219. See also Pogue, *Supreme Command*, chapters 3-4.

internalization of values and goals of society and its institutions is fundamental to functionalism. As a functionalist, Bedell Smith valued continuity, regularity, and rationality as a means to frame solutions for problems.³ At headquarters, his personality and methods worked against the cohesion that he sought.

Longing to belong, Bedell Smith himself employed means that did not foster a healthy atmosphere of “belongingness” within Eisenhower’s headquarters. His interactions with some staff members did not promote that same sense of belonging. That sentiment was essential to producing equilibrium within the staff. Although the headquarters worked – the Allies did win the war after all – Smith might have focused more on the internal chemistry of the staff if he had been so inclined. Although it is questionable whether anyone can fully internalize all of the values of society and the principles of functionalism, Smith either lacked the time or the patience required to foster a dynamic equilibrium within the group.⁴ Too often he was inclined toward uniformity in behavior that did not always comply with unity of purpose.

Eisenhower was determined to exercise greater control over Supreme Headquarters than had been possible in the Mediterranean theater. With a sense of determination and hope, Smith wrote to General Handy in February 1944, “We are doing our best to straighten out a rather tangled situation and I think we are making some progress, but sometimes it seems discouragingly slow.”⁵ Lauding Smith’s excellent performance, Ismay declared that the degree of intimacy in

³ Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 295.

⁴ Whyte, *The Organizational Man*, 32–35, 42, 52; Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 264.

⁵ Smith to Handy, February 9, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, A-L, DDEL.

London had improved over that in Algiers.⁶ By March 1944, SHAEF was fully established at Bushy Park.

Tensions flared from time to time in spite of the general sense of purpose and good will. Searching for talent for his staff, Bedell Smith tangled almost immediately with Field Marshal Alan F. Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Smith selected experienced staff officers with whom he and Eisenhower were acquainted. While filling key staff positions at Supreme Headquarters, Smith's choices were practical, but they also mirrored functionalism. The chief of staff wanted to preserve as much continuity with General Eisenhower's previous command as possible. Consequently, Smith looked to Allied Force Headquarters for an experienced pool of talent. Brooke, a difficult person himself, concluded that Smith was stripping Allied Force Headquarters of its best talent. Tempers flared in a private meeting. Brooke thought that Smith's ego had gotten the best of him.⁷ Several top staff positions were at issue. For example, Smith was determined to obtain the services of General Strong as intelligence chief for Supreme Headquarters.⁸ Brooke initially refused Strong's transfer. Disgusted with Brooke's obstinacy, Smith growled, "You are not being very helpful."⁹ He concluded that the attitude of the Imperial

⁶ Sir Hastings L. Ismay, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 20, 1946, USAMHI. Smith was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general in mid-January. For the specific date of promotion – January 13, 1944. See biographical sketch by Colonel Dan Gilmer, January 13, 1944, in Papers of Walter, Bedell Smith, Box 7, DDEL.

⁷ Entry, December 31, 1943 in Lord Alanbrooke, *War Diaries, 1939-1945*, rev. ed. by Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 504-505.

⁸ J. F. M. Whiteley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 18, 1946, USAMHI; Major General John F. C. Whiteley had been serving as G-2 in London, but Smith wanted him as deputy chief of operations under Bull.

⁹ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI.

Chief of Staff defied common sense. Smith used practical logic, arguing that General Strong was fluent in the German language and, therefore, well suited for the struggle against Nazi Germany.

Shortly thereafter, Brooke relented, but not before he had spoken to Eisenhower about Smith's attitude. Brooke recorded in his diary that he had "put Bedell in his place" and that would no longer tolerate "string-pulling."¹⁰ The Supreme Commander told Brooke that Smith was curt by nature. Eisenhower then ordered Smith to apologize.¹¹ The chief of staff complied, but later declared that Brooke was insidious, instigating much of the trouble that General Eisenhower had with Montgomery. Years later, Smith groused that Brooke was "the only man who ever complained to my commander about me."¹² While Smith's assertion was questionable, he had every right to request an intelligence officer with experience and talent. The incident provided one striking example where Smith seriously clashed with a superior. Notwithstanding, Brooke was as responsible as Smith for promoting teamwork, given the gravity of the situations that Operation OVERLORD presented.

¹⁰As quoted in Sir Arthur Bryant, *Triumph in the West: A History of the War Years Based on the Diaries of Field-Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959), 97; general reference, 91-97.

¹¹ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 474.

¹² Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI; *George C. Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 399-400; at the Malta Conference, tempers flared again. After ably presenting Eisenhower's views related to "closing the Rhine," Smith found Brooke's snide behavior outrageous. His eyes ablaze, Smith threw down the gauntlet in dyspeptic rage, roaring, "Goddam[n] it let's have it out right now!" Stifling his own anger at Brooke, Marshall ordered Smith to leave the conference room. He stewed outside in the hall, while Marshall settled the dispute in closed session. Smith as quoted in interview with Sir Ian Jacob, June 27, 1968, in Ambrose, *Supreme Commander*, 586.

Smith spent a lot of time turning down those who wanted to join the Eisenhower team in London. Experience was pivotal, but also connections and past misfortunes. Higher echelons rejected others. Eisenhower wanted new officers to lead the air offensive for the upcoming Normandy landing. It helped if Eisenhower or Smith personally knew the officer in question. The high command transferred Major General Ira C. Eaker to the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. The functional unity of the entire Allied effort was pivotal. Knowing full well that no one was indispensable, Smith, nevertheless, understood General Eaker's disappointment over his transfer.¹³ The chief of staff relayed his best wishes to Eaker, asking him to greet fine team at AFHQ.¹⁴ Most who entered the theater were anxious to serve on the Allied team. Many of their responses had a personal touch.¹⁵ Bedell Smith's correspondence included many requests that he simply could not grant.

Eisenhower's insistence on retaining the nucleus of staff officers from his Mediterranean command made good functional sense, but the task of coordinating operational plans created problems for Smith.¹⁶ Smith had to incorporate into the OVERLORD plan the previous work of

¹³ Eaker's stringent adherence to strategic air doctrine, even in the wake of the disaster at Schweinfurt, led to his relief. Major General James Doolittle received command of the US 8th Army Air Force with Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz as his superior and commander of US Strategic Air Forces. Eaker replaced Tedder in the Mediterranean. See C. J. C. Molony with F. C. Flynn, H. L. Davies, and T. P. Gleave, *The Mediterranean and Middle East*, vol. 5. *The Campaign in Sicily 1943 and The Campaign in Italy 3rd September 1943 to 31st March 1944*, edited by Sir James Butler (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1973), 576; Tedder, *With Prejudice*, 364.

¹⁴ Smith to Eaker, February 1, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7 (E), DDEL.

¹⁵ For instance, Major General Robert M. Littlejohn, Chief Quartermaster, SHAEF, wrote, "It will be a pleasure to serve under you and our Big Chief – General IKE." See Littlejohn to Smith, January 24, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7 (L), DDEL.

¹⁶ Russell F. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants: The Campaign of France and Germany 1944 – 1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 37.

the Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander (Designate).¹⁷ With Eisenhower's appointment as Supreme Commander, British Lieutenant General Sir Frederick E. Morgan's COSSAC staff fell under Smith's purview. Some COSSAC staff members joined Supreme Headquarters if they met Smith's approval. After some initial acrimony, Smith chose Morgan as Allied Deputy Chief of Staff. Smith valued the British general's experience, and Morgan accepted the post.¹⁸

Major General Thomas J. Betts had joined the COSSAC staff in 1943, having served earlier at AFHQ. Staff members at COSSAC (Norfolk House) were anxious about the establishment of SHAEF. Yet Betts, along with others, thought that Smith "brought a refreshing air of realism" to the impending operation. The chief of staff told assembled staff members that Eisenhower would bring some of his staff from North Africa, but would keep most of the COSSAC staff at SHAEF. The level of apprehension receded.¹⁹

Driven by his duty to enforce unity of command, Smith, less frequently than earlier, still struggled with the problem of cohesion on one hand and institutional friction on the other.²⁰ Most of the time, his methods were justified from a functionalist standpoint. On occasion, Smith's methods were mechanical, his temper explosive. Nonetheless, one should neither underestimate nor exaggerate divisiveness in the organization. The internal chemistry of the staff at Supreme

¹⁷ Hereafter, COSSAC, the acronym for Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander (Designate). Sir Frederick E. Morgan received the appointment as COSSAC on March 13, 1943. Morgan and his staff prepared the preliminary plan for the Normandy invasion by mid-July 1943.

¹⁸ Morgan could join Supreme Headquarters, Smith said, but he would have to serve under him or leave. Smith attempted to secure the command of a corps for Morgan. Montgomery agreed, but Brooke refused; see Smith, interview by Pogue, May 13, 1947, USAMHI.

¹⁹ As quoted, Thomas J. Betts, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 20, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL.

²⁰ Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 159-161.

Headquarters improved as the Normandy invasion approached. The ability of Eisenhower, Smith and other principal staff officers to adjust to changing circumstances determined the performance of SHAEF.²¹ Practical considerations, not abstractions, governed Smith's decision making, and, as a functionalist, he expected others to be able to see things much as he himself did. He was determined that Supreme Headquarters would have more than a political or administrative role. Shortly after Smith's arrival in London, it was clear to everyone – American, British or otherwise, that Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force was a military headquarters.²²

Nevertheless, jealousy, pettiness and temper affected personal relations at Supreme Headquarters.²³ Colonel Ford Trimble told a story about a British lieutenant general who drifted into Smith's office one day. Smith sensed that the British officer was ill-informed about the subject at hand. Trimble watched as the chief of staff bluntly directed the general to depart and not return until he had learned something about the topic under consideration.²⁴ The general was uninformed but, once again, it was not so much what Smith said but how he said it. On another occasion before General Strong was released from Allied Force Headquarters, Smith temporarily appointed British Major General John F. C. Whiteley as head of the Intelligence Division. The decision necessitated the removal of British Major General P. G. "Edward" Whitefoord who held the post in COSSAC. Whitefoord differed with Smith on the size of the staff and on the structure of the headquarters. Smith directed the British officer to comply with the new changes or leave. When Whitefoord refused to leave, Smith simply replaced him without notifying him in advance.

²¹ Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 172-173.

²² Sir Hastings L. Ismay, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 20, 1946, USAMHI.

²³ John F. M. Whiteley, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, December 18, 1947, USAMHI.

²⁴ Ford Trimble, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 17, 1946, USAMHI.

Whitefoord first learned of it when he arrived at work to find at his desk none other than General Whiteley.²⁵ General Betts wondered whether Smith had removed Whitefoord and a few others others merely to set examples.²⁶ The removal of Whitefoord was Smith's prerogative, but he might have had the propriety of relieving the British general in person.

Smith sometimes refused to let staffers go, usually because he needed them. Major General Barker, a carry-over from COSSAC requested a field command. "I've had an awful lot of this, and I'm fed up with it," he complained. Smith responded, "No you can't. You're too deeply into this, and I need you here with me to help me get oriented [. . .] I can't consider you going back to a division."²⁷ Determined, nonetheless, Barker countered by stating that personnel was not his specialty. Barker failed to free himself of staff duty. General Betts also inquired what his status would be at SHAEF in the long term. Betts politely told Smith that if he preferred someone else it was all right. Smith struggled with his temper, believing that Betts was complaining because he had not been given Strong's job. In this instance, Smith called Betts aside and spoke to him in soft tones about cooperation. Smith persuaded him to remain on the team.²⁸

²⁵ Thomas J. Betts, interview #2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, November 20, 1973, Oral History 397, DDEL.

²⁶ Thomas J. Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, June 25, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL; J. O. Curtis, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 16, 1950, USAMHI. Whitefoord preferred a scaled-down headquarters modeled on the British system or similar to the one Pershing had once had.

²⁷ Raymond W. Barker, interview # 2 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, July 16, 1972, Oral History 331, DDEL; Barker habitually referred to Smith's Napoleonic complex behind the chief of staff's back. Incidentally, Wedemeyer mentioned that Marshall did not have a favorable opinion of Barker. Whether Smith was aware of this is difficult to tell. See Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!*, 121.

²⁸ Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg; Betts served for a period of time as Assistant Chief of Staff under General Whiteley.

Smith was a functionalist who found personal meaning in the group, and he expected the same of others. Associates outside of the headquarters had less strident opinions. General Henry Wilson, Eisenhower's successor at AFHQ, found Smith very helpful. General Devers found Smith cooperative but, on least on occasion, the chief of staff referred to the former as small-minded.²⁹ Anecdotal evidence suggests that there were nearly as many unjustified opinions concerning Smith's deputies Morgan, Gale and Strong. A good many problems were systemic.³⁰ The worst trait of Bedell Smith was his fiery temper, but he managed to settle disputes on many occasions. For instance, when Crawford and his superior Sir Humfrey M. Gale got into an argument over logistics, Smith helped resolve the dispute.³¹

Eisenhower, whose opinion really counted, thought highly of Smith's choice of deputies.³² As the date of the Normandy landing approached, the Allied team focused its energy on objectives tasks and individuals appeared willing to bear any burden to achieve success.³³ General Morgan later commented that Supreme Headquarters was remarkably efficient despite shortcomings.³⁴

²⁹ Devers to Smith, February 2, 1944, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 7, A-L, DDEL; Eisenhower had a poor opinion of Devers. He referred to him as "22 caliber." Bradley found Devers was egotistical, intolerant, and garrulous. See Bradley and Blair, *A General's Life*, 210.

³⁰ H. B. W. Hughes, Chief Engineer at SHAEF, interview with Pogue, February 12, 1947, USAMHI.

³¹ According to Crawford, Gale never interfered in American logistics again; see Robert W. Crawford, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 5, 1948, USAMHI.

³² Eisenhower to Brooke, May 8, 1945, Pre-Presidential Papers, Box 3, File Folder 2, DDEL; E. T. Williams, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, May 30-31, 1947, USAMHI, Crosswell, *Chief of Staff*, 81,141, 223.

³³ Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, June 25, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL.

³⁴ Notes from MSS written by Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick E. Morgan, p. 15, in Pogue interviews, USAMHI.

Much of the credit for its success must go to Bedell Smith's enormous drive and not only to Dwight D. Eisenhower's talents.³⁵

Bedell Smith and Planning OVERLORD

Bedell Smith's functionalist way of thinking became evident during early 1944 when Allied generals began serious planning for the cross-Channel invasion. Allied leaders engaged in heated discussions over strategic options prior to the Normandy landing. Agreeing that Operation OVERLORD was the top priority, the Combined Chiefs of Staff were, nonetheless, divided over the relative importance of operations in the Mediterranean theater. Smith feared that the acrimony engendered by these debates would undermine unity of purpose. While supporting Eisenhower's objectives, Smith worked for consensus. As a functionalist, the chief of staff exhibited more flexibility in method and manner than many had come to expect. He often was the voice of moderation.

In the first week of January 1944 at Norfolk House, Montgomery and Smith began reviewing the operational plan that Morgan and his staff had proposed for the cross-Channel invasion. Both generals agreed that the lodgment area for the Normandy beachhead was too narrow.³⁶ Bearing in mind the functionalist aspect of predictability, Smith recoiled in shock when he first looked at the plan. "My God," he exclaimed, "if I were going to do it, I would want ten or

³⁵ See Albert W. Kenner, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, June 1, 1945, USAMHI; Kenner's second interview with Pogue, May 27, 1948.

³⁶ Russell F. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants*, 37. Norfolk House in St. James Square was the location where the COSSAC planning staff was headquartered. Morgan was present. Morgan and Barker agreed with Montgomery and Smith. Major General Charles A. West preferred the narrow beachhead because it would conform to the principle of concentration. The firm majority held that a three-division assault proposed by COSSAC was insufficient. See also Gordon A. Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack: The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, rev. reprint ed. (Washington, D. C.: Center of Military History, 2002), 166.

twelve divisions!"³⁷ On January 5, Smith signaled Eisenhower in Washington that Montgomery wanted to expand the Normandy beachhead. Eisenhower also agreed that the width of the landing area was too narrow. The Allied command decided to extend the beachhead westward to the area known as Utah Beach.³⁸

Eisenhower then ordered Smith to the Mediterranean to discuss a wide range of issues with Generals Wilson, Alexander and Devers. The widening of the assault necessitated the procurement of additional landing craft. An appalling shortage of landing craft had developed in both theaters of operation. It complicated the scheduled landing at Anzio in late January and in the Normandy landing in May. Most of the British leadership and a few American generals in Italy were anxious to execute an end run at Anzio toward Rome.³⁹ Having directed the planning of the operation, Smith initially thought that the operation was worth the risk.⁴⁰

Smith began to have second doubts about the the Anzio operation. The primary Allied objective was to secure a foothold on the beaches of Normandy. If the Allies did not gain control over the landing craft shortage, the chances of success at Normandy would diminish. By mid-January, Smith had conducted a study as to the feasibility of success at Anzio. He concluded that

³⁷ Smith, as quoted, in interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 9, 1947, USAMHI.

³⁸ Max Hastings, *OVERLORD: D-Day and the Battle for Normandy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 31. See Raymond W. Barker, interview by Forrest C. Pogue & Roland G. Ruppenthal, October 16, 1946, USAMHI; the original plan of a thirty mile front would not do. In other words, the beachhead would have to encompass a two-army front. British 2nd Army would secure the Allied left flank that stretched to the River Orne (Gold, Juno and Sword beaches). The British were also to secure forward airfields as soon as possible. The US 1st Army on the right flank (Omaha and Utah beaches) would extend westward to the Dunes of Varreville on the Cotentin Peninsula. It had the responsibility for taking the port of Cherbourg.

³⁹ The Anzio operation had received the codename SHINGLE.

⁴⁰ Smith to Eisenhower, January 9, 1944, Box 7 (E), Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL.

the gamble was not worth it.⁴¹ He based his conclusion not merely on his study, but on that aspect of functionalism which emphasizes control as a means to ensure predictability. Smith voiced concerns that the shortage of landing craft would endanger Operation OVERLORD.⁴²

Smith was not adverse to argument but, as a practical functionalist, he feared protracted debate that showed little promise of results. He also valued that aspect of functionalism which framed solutions on the basis of rationality. Smith worried that petty differences might distract the Allied leadership from the primary objective of 1944 – a successful landing on the coast of France which would result in the defeat of German military forces. A proposed landing on the southern coast of France further intensified the strategic debate. General Eisenhower wanted a second landing in southern France to be carried out in conjunction with Operation OVERLORD.⁴³ Generally speaking, the British Chiefs of Staff and the field commanders in the Mediterranean theaters objected to the proposed plan. Although the arguments did not always divide along strict nationalistic lines, the British tended to oppose ANVIL and the Americans naturally backed Eisenhower. With tempers flaring over operations in the Mediterranean, Smith was concerned that differences within the Combined Chiefs of Staff might threaten the fabric of the Allied command. He was as concerned about the equilibrium at the higher echelons as he was at headquarters. Bolder than in the past and anxious to please British colleagues, Smith offered a compromise solution by accepting ANVIL but only as a diversion. Eisenhower rejected Smith's

⁴¹Dominick Graham, Dominick and Shelford Bidwell, *Tug of War: The Battle for Italy, 1943-1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986), 128-129.

⁴² Minutes of Supreme Allied Commander's Conference, February 26, 1944, SHAEF SGS, RG-319, Records of the US Army General Staff, NARA; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #1473, 1652.

⁴³ Entry, February 29, 1943 in Alanbrooke, *War Diaries, 1939-1945*, 527; ANVIL-DRAGOON refers to the invasion of southern France through the Rhone River Valley.

idea. The chief did not react defensively and, three years later, he declared that Eisenhower's had been correct in rejecting ANVIL as a diversion.⁴⁴ The British Chiefs of Staff and Eisenhower finally settled their differences – the shortage of landing craft necessitated a postponement of ANVIL to insure success in Normandy.⁴⁵ Three simultaneous fronts in Italy, Normandy and southern France would only lead to more divisiveness. Two strong fronts were better than three weak ones. For Smith success in Normandy was the first priority.

During the final revision of the operational plan for OVERLORD, Bedell Smith's decision making was typically functionalist. The chief of staff simplified the planning process so that it would conform more closely to the thoughts of the tactical commander, General Montgomery. Smith's manner and method reflected cooperation and teamwork in pursuit of military objectives. While Eisenhower was on furlough, Montgomery met with Allied army commanders and their chiefs of staff on January 7, 1944 to review the COSSAC plan.⁴⁶ Montgomery stated that more detailed planning would begin on January 21 when Eisenhower returned to London. There was no longer any argument that the front needed widening, but the question lingered as to how much

⁴⁴ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by George F. Howe, May 12, 1947, USAMHI; Sir Hastings L. Ismay, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 20, 1946, USAMHI.

⁴⁵ On March 21, Eisenhower reluctantly canceled ANVIL for the moment. His decision was a postponement not a cancellation. The debate over ANVIL-DRAGOON extended far beyond D-Day, and it could not be executed in support of OVERLORD. The Allied 6th Army Group began operations in the Rhone River Valley in August 1944. See, Cable, Prime Minister to President (Churchill to Roosevelt), # 774, August 31, 1944, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 16, NARA.

⁴⁶ Principal attendees were Montgomery, Smith, Tedder, and Eisenhower's deputy commanders, Admiral Sir Bertram H. Ramsay and Air Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory. See CCS to Prime Minister, January 14, 1944, Overlord-Anvil Papers and Cable Log, Box 21, File Folder 1, Walter Bedell Smith: Collection of World War II Documents, DDEL; Notes taken on Meeting of Army Commanders and their Chiefs of Staff at Headquarters, 21 Army Group, 7 January 1944, in Pogue interviews, USAMHI; D'Este, *Decision in Normandy*, 56.

wider it should be. Eisenhower and Smith both agreed with Montgomery that the COSSAC plan calling for a three-division assault was terribly anemic. Montgomery had settled on a five-division assault on five beaches.⁴⁷

With Eisenhower's support, the chief planners prepared to forward the revised draft to the Combined Chiefs of Staff for approval.⁴⁸ A COSSAC compromise plan surfaced on Saturday, January 22, which offered a critique of Montgomery's plan. The criticism was not personal, but raised sincere concerns about perceived weakness in his plan.⁴⁹ Initially, Smith felt that the COSSAC planners should have an opportunity to present another appreciation at the next Supreme Commander's conference scheduled for Monday, January 24.

Bedell Smith's subsequent decision demonstrates his functionalism. Smith sounded out Montgomery on the revised plan. Having heard the British general's opinions, Smith quietly changed his mind about the compromise plan. He came to the conclusion that both Eisenhower

⁴⁷ Montgomery's revision of the COSSAC plan: speed and depth were key factors in the drive off the British beaches of Gold, Juno and Sword. Montgomery insisted that airborne units be dropped prior to the amphibious assault to protect the flanks of the lodgment area. British 2nd Army were to engage German armored units while American force broke loose on the right flank. Further fine-tuning of the plan continued through May 1944. Special Meeting held in Room 126, Norfolk House, at 0930 hours, 13 February 1944, Overlord-Anvil Papers and Cable Log, Box 21, File Folder 3, Walter Bedell Smith: Collection of World War II Documents, DDEL.

⁴⁸ Much of what Montgomery said and did not say became subjects of controversy and endless debate; see, *Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein*, 196; Charles A. West, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 19, 1947, USAMHI; Carlo D'Este, *Decision in Normandy*, Barnes & Noble ed. (New York: E. P. Dutton & William S. Konecky Associates, 1994), 14.

⁴⁹ Eisenhower's staff included many former COSSAC planners. Their plan called for a four-division assault that would concentrate on three objectives: first, the seizure of Caen; second, defeat of German reserves; and third, the capture of territory south and east of Caen for the purpose of forward airfields. The planners rather tardily called for the seizure of Cherbourg. Those who favored the plan were concerned about the dispersion on a wide front, the rate of buildup and availability of landing craft.

and Montgomery would have rejected it.⁵⁰ Believing that further discussion would only complicate matters, he cabled Montgomery's plan to the Combined Chiefs of Staff without waiting for further debate on the revised COSSAC appreciation.⁵¹ Smith's training had taught him that at the hour of decision it was better to act than debate.⁵² It made little sense to burden Eisenhower at the eleventh hour. Reflecting those early conferences with Smith, Montgomery wrote, "Luckily Bedell Smith was there for me and he proved a tower of strength."⁵³ The chief of staff's decision illustrated that aspect of functionalism that values simplicity as a means to insure predictable results.

Bedell Smith and Allied Air Power

Bedell Smith's functionalism was also evident in General Eisenhower's fight to gain control over Allied air power in advance of the Normandy landing. The chief of staff thought that all the combined arms were interdependent. Consequently, all Allied air forces were subject to unity of command, all units working in concert against the Third Reich. Command and control of air power was Eisenhower's prerogative as Supreme Commander of Allied forces.

Smith held definite opinions on the employment of air power. He placed his faith in tactical air power which, coupled with infantry and armor, gave the "one-two" punch for the

⁵⁰ D'Este, *Decision in Normandy*, 67-68.

⁵¹ Cable B 33/M37, SUPREME COMMANDER ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF AND BRITISH CHIEFS OF STAFF [To AGWAR for Combined Chiefs of Staff reptd British C/S from SCAEF, signed Eisenhower], January 23, 1944, Overlord-Anvil Papers and Cable Log, Box 21, File Folder 1, Walter Bedell Smith: Collection of World War II Documents, DDEL.

⁵² Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, June 25, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL.

⁵³ *Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein*, 196.

Allied advance.⁵⁴ In early January while still in Washington, Eisenhower had discussed air power with Generals Marshall and Arnold. The Supreme Commander then cabled Smith, expressing concern that he might not be able to win approval for command and control of all air forces for the invasion. Eisenhower and Smith knew that they would have at their disposal the Allied tactical air forces. Eisenhower also demanded a direct control of the strategic air forces.⁵⁵

After the October 14, 1943 air raid on Schweinfurt, President Roosevelt ordered General Arnold to reappraise the role of air power. Arnold promptly announced that the main objective for the Allied air war would be the destruction of the Luftwaffe in preparation for the Normandy landing.⁵⁶ After mid-February 1944, Allied air power had achieved not merely air superiority, but air supremacy as well. Marshall was determined that Eisenhower have command and control of Allied air forces during the critical phases of the Normandy campaign.⁵⁷ Eisenhower and Smith wanted the resources of Operation POINTBLANK redirected in order to isolate the battlefield.⁵⁸

Winning direct command and control of the strategic bombers was no easy task. Every

⁵⁴ Smith, *Eisenhower's Six Great Decisions*, 75-76.

⁵⁵ US Strategic Air Forces answered to Arnold, who reported to Marshall; see Richard G. Davis, *Carl A. Spaatz and the Air War in Europe* (Washington, D. C.: Center for Air Force History, 1993), 313-314. The British 2nd Air Tactical Air Force and the US 9th Army Air Force were under Air Chief Marshal Trafford Leigh-Mallory who commander the Allied Expeditionary Air Forces, but British Bomber Command and the US 8th Army Air Force were not.

⁵⁶ *New York Times*, October 19, 1943, p. 1. See also "Employment of Strategic Air Forces in the Support of OVERLORD," March 24, 1944, Air 37/1125, Papers of Sir James M. Robb, PRO, Kew, London.

⁵⁷ Pogue, *Organizer of Victory*, 361; Butcher, *My Three Years*, 467, 525. Eisenhower singled out the B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberators.

⁵⁸ Operation POINTBLANK was the Combined Bomber Offensive, which issued from the Casablanca Directive and specified target selection and specific missions designed to crush the industrial might of the German Reich. See *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #1539, 1715-1717 & n. 2, 1717-1718. See also Pogue, *Organizer of Victory*, 30-31.

type of institutional inertia presented itself. The Supreme Commander threatened to resign if control were not granted. Eisenhower's threat probably reflected momentary petulance, but Smith was adamant that the strategic air commanders yield. He concurred with Eisenhower that without fixed lines of authority the Normandy landing might result in a tactical disaster.

Deputy Supreme Commander Tedder discussed air power with Smith on a number of occasions. The United Kingdom had had an independent Royal Air Force for years. On one occasion, both men began talking about the prospect of an independent United States Air Force. Smith snarled that an independent air arm "would come only over his dead body."⁵⁹ With respect to tactical operations, Smith refused to compromise on the issue of chain of command. The insistence on fixed lines of authority was a distinguishing trait of a practical functionalist.

From a functionalist point of view and without benefit of hindsight, Smith made sense. Given the seriousness of the Normandy landing, General Eisenhower was justified in demanding command and control of Allied air power. To a functionalist like Smith, it made no more sense to create an independent air force in the middle of a war than it did to create democracies in French North Africa at the time regardless of any theoretical long-term objective. After considerable wrangling, the Combined Chiefs of Staff finally granted Eisenhower control of the strategic air forces for the six weeks preceding the Normandy landing and the twelve weeks following.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Arthur Lord Tedder, *With Prejudice: The War Memoirs of Marshal of the Royal Air Force* (Boston & Toronto: Little, Brown & Co., 1966), as quoted, 405.

⁶⁰ "Directives to Subordinate Commanders," Combined Chiefs of Staff to Eisenhower, AGWAR to SHAEF, February 13, 1944, Box 2, Reel 17, 322.001/2, Records of the Secretary of the General Staff, SHAEF, 1943-1945, DDEL. There are several copies, or variants, of this directive floating around. For instance, the following memorandum went out to Air Marshall Robb: "Employment of Strategic Air Forces in Support of OVERLORD," March 24, 1944, Papers of Sir James Robb, Air 37/1125, PRO, Kew, London.

Bedell Smith's search for unity of command was complicated by Air Chief Marshal Arthur Tedder's position in the Allied command. While in the Mediterranean theater, the chief of staff had in many ways served as *de facto* deputy commander. Things were different at SHAEF with a formal deputy commander. Indeed, Smith was pleased with Tedder's appointment as deputy commander because the air marshal was an expert on tactical aviation. Furthermore, Tedder was as much of a disciple of unity of command as was Smith. The chief of staff declared that Tedder ought to be Eisenhower's air commander instead of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, who was considered a weak link in the command. Anxious to defend his superior's prerogatives, Smith feared that British lieutenants might use Tedder to undermine the authority of the Supreme Commander. For the purposes of predictability, Smith did not like the overlapping functions within the command.⁶¹

The Combined Chiefs realized that the appointment of Tedder as deputy supreme commander made things difficult for Smith. One cannot exclude the possibility that Smith's anxiety, perhaps jealousy, may have initially affected relations with Tedder. Smith, however, supported Tedder's position on strategic targets during the Normandy campaign.⁶² Rapport was excellent over time.

⁶¹ Robb agreed with Smith, stating that many strategic air commanders did relish the thought of operating under SHAEF; Robb, interview by Pogue, February 3, 1947, USAMH.

⁶² Smith favored Tedder's Transportation Plan, which called for the heavy bombers to destroy German railroad transport and reserves. Major General Carl A. Spaatz's Oil Plan went into operation later, but was initially put aside. See "Final Minutes of a Meeting to Discuss the Bombing Policy in the Period before 'OVERLORD'," March 25, 1944, in Papers of Sir James Robb, Air 37/1125, PRO, Kew, London; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #1539, n. 2, 1717-1718; see also Alfred C. Mierzejewski, *The Collapse of the German War Economy, 1944-1945: Allied Air Power and the German National Railway* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 181; Williamson Murray, *Strategy for Defeat: The Luftwaffe, 1933-1945* (Secaucus, NJ: Chartwell Books, 1986), 224.

Lieutenant Colonel Carter Burgess, who would soon become chief of the secretariat, noted the dedication and unity of purpose of the Allied team as the date for the Normandy landing approached. Despite its size and heavy work load, the large headquarters was functioning at its best during any time of the war. As a functionalist, Smith was pleased that the constituent units of the expeditionary forces had coalesced. With his pool of talented deputies, he was working harder than ever.⁶³ One can only approximate his hectic work pace during that phase of the war. Smith seemed to be everywhere. He monitored tactical air operations.⁶⁴ In letter after letter, Smith listed priorities that would help isolate the battle field. He spent those final weeks in a frantic search for more landing craft, naval gunnery support, ammunition and medical support.⁶⁵ Smith periodically briefed all credentialed correspondents, keeping a close watch on possible security leaks. He reviewed intelligence and deception plans, and worked closely with the Psychological Warfare Division. On May 19, 1944, Smith issued Eisenhower's final instructions to the 21st Army Group, its naval armada and its tactical air forces.⁶⁶

⁶³ Carter Burgess, interview by Thomas F. Hogan, August 29, 1967, Oral History 97, Columbia University, DDEL.

⁶⁴ For example, see Memorandum, Smith to Robb, Morgan, Gale and Bull, July 26, 1944, Air 37/1125, Papers of Sir James Robb, PRO, Kew, London; Smith stressed Eisenhower's priorities for aviation: close air support, attack on German lines of communication, elimination of German rocket installations airborne operations and supply of troops by air. The strategic bombardment of industrial installations was a secondary priority.

⁶⁵ Thomas T. Handy, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, December 18, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL. Southwick House, the residence of British Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, the commander of the Allied naval armada. The pre-invasion discussions took place there.

⁶⁶ SHAEF War Diary, May 19, 1944, Box 29, File Folder 2, Collection of World War II Documents, DDEL; see April 13 & April 28, 1944, same source; see also in File Folder 1, March 25, 1944.

D-Day and Aftermath

Bedell Smith was confident that Allied forces would seize the Normandy beach and make a sustained drive into the heart of the German Reich. Despite an undercurrent of tension, the chief of staff was convinced that every means by which to achieve the ends had been considered. Allied planners had defined objectives and, despite imponderables, the operation stood a good chance of success.⁶⁷ Smith expressed confidence in the tactical commanders of the operation, and General Montgomery's declaration that the Allies had the initiative buoyed his spirits.⁶⁸ The chief of staff's mood at Supreme Headquarters appeared to have improved. The change in behavior, may have owed something to physical exhaustion. But in fairness, Allied unity of purpose was evident, and Smith deserved some of the credit. Smith had told Butcher in May that the European war had left him unfit to serve as chief of staff for another campaign. The job was ungratifying. He declared that that he was "damned well going to get out of the Army after the war."⁶⁹ At any rate, Smith was relieved when Eisenhower issued the order to launch the invasion.⁷⁰

One instinctive trait of Smith, above all others, stood in sharp contrast to his functionalist mentor, General George C. Marshall. Smith had a tendency to speak without thinking. Following

⁶⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, *Eisenhower's Great Decisions* (New York, Toronto, & London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1956), 39–53.

⁶⁸ On April 4, 1944, St. Paul's School in Kensington. After Montgomery and Bradley had spoken, Lawton Collins of the US VII Corps grasped Montgomery's pointer and began delivering a very lucid briefing. Smith remarked to Collins, "Joe, done in the best tradition of Benning!" As quoted, J. Lawton Collins, *Lightning Joe: An Autobiography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 192; Montgomery's Pre-Invasion Address to Officers, May 21, 1944, Alanbrooke Diary, 6/2/24, Papers of Lord Alanbrooke, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK. See Blumenson, *Breakout and Pursuit*, 32.

⁶⁹ Butcher, *My Three Years*, 538.

⁷⁰ Smith, *Eisenhower's Great Decisions*, 55.

the July Plot, Paris fell and the Allied armies then raced across old First World War battlefields of France. By late August 1944, the 21st Army Group was in Brussels. Allied generals confidently predicted that the Third Reich would collapse by Christmas.⁷¹ Overconfident, Smith rashly announced that the conflict was over from a military standpoint. Yet by mid-September, the Allied offensive had lost momentum. The Wehrmacht had regrouped, reinforced and rallied behind the Siegfried Line.⁷²

Bedell Smith and Operation MARKET-GARDEN

The hazards of Operation MARKET-GARDEN shocked Bedell Smith back to his senses. Granting Montgomery operational command, Eisenhower agreed to a plan to bridge the lower Rhine River. He did so with the proviso, however, that Montgomery destroy German rocket installations in his sector and then secure Antwerp. Smith supported his superior's decision. As an organizational man, Smith thought that, if 21st Army Group could accomplish the objective, so much the better. The drive to the Rhine was Allied effort. The chief of staff had some serious concerns. As Eisenhower's executive agent, Smith wanted it understood that SHAEF was an operational headquarters.⁷³ The function of that organization was to insure that directives were executed with the objective in mind, and he thought that Eisenhower was too slow to assert

⁷¹ Heinz Guderian, *Panzer Leader*, translated by Constantine Fitzgibbon, rpt. ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1996), 342-347.

⁷² Edgar T. Williams, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 30-31, 1947, USAMHI; Murray and Millett, *A War To Be Won*, 436.; Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 757. Limited logistics, manpower shortages, bungled intelligence, poor weather and very bad luck hindered the advance into the heartland of Germany.

⁷³ Tedder, *With Prejudice*, 618.

command.⁷⁴ From experience and from discussions with his Deputy Chief of Staff Frederick E. Morgan, Smith also knew that Field Marshal Montgomery had a long history of insubordination and was not awed in the least by authority. As a functionalist, Smith did not accept the notion that any army group operated independently of the whole. Whatever the needs of Allied cooperation, he insisted that the intrinsic demands of organizational unity could not be deferred, let alone ignored. As far as Smith was concerned, it was not a simple matter of Montgomery's personality even though it too was a problem. The issue of command was paramount. When the British general began ignoring intelligence summaries from Supreme Headquarters, Smith began to wonder if the operation had a high predictability of success. Montgomery was difficult to manage.⁷⁵

General Eisenhower and the Supreme Headquarters made every honest effort to support MARKET-GARDEN.⁷⁶ Bedell Smith had responsibility for coordinating air and ground logistical support for the operation. His first misgivings arose when he discussed logistics with the British

⁷⁴ Omar N. Bradley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue with Chester B. Hansen in attendance, October 14, 1946, USAMHI. General Bradley agreed with Smith that Eisenhower was slow to take command.

⁷⁵ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI; Notes by Frederick E. Morgan, entitled "OVERLORD by the Under-Dog-in-Chief," u.d., USAMHI; Hastings, *OVERLORD*, 229.

⁷⁶ The operational plan for MARKET called for the employment of three airborne divisions, buttressed by the Polish 1st Airborne Brigade. The First Allied Airborne Army had as its objective the seizure of one canal at Eindhoven, and three river bridges on the Maas, at Grave, on the Waal at Nijmegen and on the Lek at Arnhem. GARDEN, the ground force of the British 2nd Army, was to thrust northward along a narrow, sixty mile, corridor forcing the Lower Rhine at Arnhem. From there, the Allied forces would drive through the North German plain into the Ruhr. Montgomery neglected to clear the Scheldt Estuary. Brooke ultimately found fault with Montgomery, declaring that Antwerp had to be secured before moving on Arnhem; October 5, 1944 entry, Alanbrooke, *War Diaries*, 600; see also, Sir Francis de Guingand, *Operation Victory* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1947), 411; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #1880, 2053, #1900, 2074-2077, #1909, 2090-2092, #1910, 2092-94. #1920, 2100-2101.

field marshal on September 12. Montgomery told Smith that the 21st Army Group required 1000 tons of supplies per day by air lift to the Brussels sector. Upon returning to Supreme Headquarters, Smith met with Eisenhower. The Supreme Commander stated that he could guarantee only 500 tons per day because the airborne phase of the operation (MARKET) demanded its share of supply.

Although Smith agreed to the plan, he did not believe that 21st Army Group could execute a single thrust on a narrow front all the way to Berlin. His anxiety about predictability intensified. Later, Smith commented that Montgomery's strategy was "the most fantastic bit of balderdash ever proposed by a competent general."⁷⁷

There were ominous warning signs pertaining to this makeshift operation. Brigadier Edgar T. Williams, chief of intelligence at 21st Army Group, noted the impact of overconfidence within the Allied command. He thought Eisenhower was too lenient with Montgomery and should have kept him on a tighter leash. Williams added that the command and staff had failed to prepare as they had for Normandy. Lackadaisical attitudes prevailed from the lower ranks to Supreme Headquarters. Plagued by serious shortages of manpower and years of fighting, British combat units were not prepared for a tough fight.⁷⁸

On September 15, less than two days before the attack would commence, Smith met with General Strong. The Chief of Intelligence and his staff had been examining intelligence reports. Allied reconnaissance had been unable to establish the whereabouts of 9th and 10th SS Panzer Divisions since the first of the month. The next day brought more troubling news. Intelligence

⁷⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 9, 1947, USAMHI; for debate regarding narrow and broad front approaches, see G. E. Patrick Murray, *Eisenhower Versus Montgomery* (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 1996), 83-87.

⁷⁸ E. T. Williams, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 30-31, 1947, USAMHI.

reports supplied by the Dutch underground indicated that German armored forces were refitting near Arnhem.⁷⁹ While pouring over intelligence data, Smith and Strong received additional ominous reports from aerial reconnaissance and tactical commanders.⁸⁰ Just as Smith was preparing to discuss the matter with Eisenhower, General Strong presented yet another troubling intelligence summary of similar substance, adding that German forces were recovering in the Scheldt Estuary. Strong reiterated to Smith that British forces at Arnhem would not be able to hold.⁸¹ It did not appear to either Smith or Strong that Montgomery or anyone in position of authority at 21st Army Group was taking these reports seriously. The fact that Supreme Headquarters was so far removed from the field of battle did not help things.

As a functionalist, Smith strove for predictability and, in this instance, he displayed a degree of flexibility. The chief of staff thought that Montgomery and others at 21st Army Group had failed to adjust to circumstances. Fearing disaster, Smith spoke to Eisenhower regarding the weakness of paratroopers when confronted by heavy armor over an extended period of time. He prudently advised that two airborne divisions be dropped near Arnhem in addition to the Free

⁷⁹ Weekly Intelligence Summary, #25, September 9, 1944, Box 8, Selected Records of SHAEF, 1943-1945, DDEL; Weekly Intelligence Summary, #26, September 16, 1944, Box 8, Selected Records of SHAEF, 1943-1945, DDEL.

⁸⁰ Major General Robert E. Urquhart, commander of the British 1st Airborne Division, believed that 21st Army Group had seriously underestimated German strength at Arnhem; he learned that British Lieutenant General Frederick "Boy" Browning, commander of the First Allied Airborne Army, had relieved a junior intelligence officer who confirmed that Robert E. Urquhart with Wilfred Greatorex, *Arnhem* (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1958), 7-9.

⁸¹ Walter Bedell Smith, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI; Cornelis Bauer and Theodoor A. Boerce, *The Battle of Arnhem: The Betrayal Myth Refuted*, translated by D. R. Welsh (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1966), 42; Miles Dempsey, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, March 12-13, 1947, USAMHI; Ryan, *A Bridge Too Far*, 157-167.

Polish Airborne Brigade. Smith suggested dropping the seasoned British 6th Airborne Division. If another airborne division was not deployed to Arnhem, Smith argued, the operational plan would have to be revised. Having granted Montgomery operational command, Eisenhower was unwilling to interfere with his subordinate but he granted Smith permission to address the issue with the British commander. Montgomery waved off Smith's objections.⁸² MARKET-GARDEN had limited success, falling short of its principal objective – crossing the Rhine.⁸³ A brutal postmortem followed. The British field marshal's reputation suffered and the debate over the merits of the operation continued for years.⁸⁴

The precise degree to which Smith's failure to establish a small tactical headquarters impaired communications with the front and those at 21st Army Group invites endless debate.⁸⁵ Smith contemplated such an organization but never acted on it. It was an oversight that was unfitting for a functionalist who thought that Supreme Headquarters provided the means of

⁸² Stephen E. Ambrose, *Pegasus Bridge, D-Day: The Daring British Airborne Raid* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 62, 209-211. Major General Richard N. Gale commanded this airborne division. Bradley recalled Smith saying, "Montgomery ridiculed my idea," haughtily brushing aside his objections, Smith as quoted, Bradley and Blair, *A General's Life*, 330-331.

⁸³ The US 101st Airborne Division secured its objectives; the Wilhelmina Canal and Eindhoven; the US 82nd Airborne Division seized the Maas Bridge at Grave, but failed to take the Waal Bridge at Nijmegen in a timely fashion. In the meantime, British XXX Corps confronted terrain that left little room for maneuver. The weather turned nasty, and the drive stalled less than twenty miles from Arnhem. The German forces pocketed British 1st Airborne Division on the banks of the Lek. The division surrendered on September 26.

⁸⁴ The Canadian historian Charles P. Stacey was convinced that a lethal battle on the north German plain would have ensued even if Montgomery had crossed the Lower Rhine at Arnhem; see Stacey, *The Victory Campaign*, vol. 3, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1967), 313-321.

⁸⁵ Alan Moorehead credited Bedell Smith and Francis de Guingand for reducing tensions between SHAEF and Montgomery; Moorehead, interview by Pogue, January 21, 1947.

achieving command and control of the battlefield. SHAEF FORWARD was never a tactical headquarters. The relative lack of contact between Supreme Headquarters and the 21st Army Group left something to be desired.⁸⁶ A confident field commander, Montgomery was convinced that SHAEF was too large and too far from the battlefield throughout the entire European campaign.⁸⁷ There was a measure of truth to Montgomery's opinion, but British field marshal did not fully respect Supreme Headquarters. Smith came to detest Montgomery's desire to be at center-stage. A general officer intensely committed to the group – in this case, the Allied Expeditionary Force – Smith had little time for what he considered grandstanding.⁸⁸ Truculent personalities, whether Montgomery's or Smith's, fortunately did not compromise Allied unity.

Smith paid a price for a large headquarters where he was responsible for insuring unity of command, coordination and cooperation. He most often tried to run things from the top while the natural drift of the monstrous headquarters moved toward decentralization. During the autumn campaign, Smith and SHAEF were simply too far removed from the battle lines.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Smith preferred to communicate with General De Guingand, Montgomery's chief of staff.

⁸⁷ *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein* (Cleveland & New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), 316; Sir Francis de Guingand, *Generals At War* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964), 103.

⁸⁸ De Guingand, *Operation Victory*, 182.

⁸⁹ Betts, interview #3 by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, June 25, 1975, Oral History 397, DDEL; during the Battle of the Bulge, General Marshall visited Maastricht, where he witnessed exhausted infantrymen limping off the line without proper attention. Flushed with anger, Marshall criticized Bedell Smith for his failure to delegate responsibility for proper care of infantrymen. According to Marshall, this oversight was the greatest error committed by Bedell Smith. Interview with Pogue, November 19, 1956, Tape #18, in *George C. Marshall: Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 538-539.

As had been true at headquarters, friction occasionally arose between Smith and field commanders. The chief of staff's impatience and acerbic tongue irritated army commanders and their staffs. Given the choice between enforcing unity of command and lending an ear to Eisenhower's lieutenants, Smith most often chose the former.⁹⁰ The organic aspect of functionalism required the chief of staff to do both. It was a dilemma for Smith whose rigid ways owed much to his socialization, personality and marginal health. The remoteness of Supreme Headquarters only complicated matters. Yet for all the criticism of SHAEF, many thought it operated well with respect to intelligence and the political aspects of war.⁹¹

Personalities, whether Montgomery's, Smith's or, for that matter, Eisenhower's became a serious problem during the final months of the war.⁹² After the failure of MARKET-GARDEN, Smith's relations with Montgomery rapidly deteriorated. He viewed with suspicion all mavericks, who appeared to threaten the functionalist goal of teamwork. Determined that Eisenhower take firm command of operations, Smith pushed for a showdown with Field Marshal Montgomery.⁹³

Bedell Smith and Saving Montgomery's Command

Despite his few idiosyncratic lapses, Smith's adherence to functionalism is well illustrated by his performance during late 1944 and early 1945. Difficulties between General Eisenhower

⁹⁰ Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives*, 252.

⁹¹ Crawford, interview, May 5, 1948; Lord Tedder, interview, February 13, 1947; Alan Moorehead, interview, January 21, 1947; all interviews by Pogue, USAMHI; *Devers Diary*, November 27, 1944, USAMHI.

⁹² Raymond W. Barker, interview by Forrest C. Pogue & Roland G. Ruppenthal, October 16, 1946, USAMHI.

⁹³ L. F. Ellis, *Victory in the West*, vol. 2, *The Defeat of Germany*, United Kingdom Military Series, edited by Sir James Butler (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1968), 200.

and Field Marshal Montgomery escalated after the fiasco at Arnhem.⁹⁴ These revolved around the failure of the fall offensive. Montgomery asserted that the Allies had suffered a strategic reverse. The real issue, however, was primarily one of command.

Prior to the Maastricht Conference on December 7, 1944, Eisenhower argued that there had been no strategic reverse but, as far as both he and Montgomery were concerned, the meeting was a political disaster. Montgomery declared that if chiefs of staff were present at the conference they should not speak. Exasperated, Eisenhower declared that it was an insult to Smith in whom he had great trust and judgment.⁹⁵

Ailing from neuritis, Smith snapped, "What makes me so Goddam[ned] mad is that Monty won't talk in the presence of anyone else. He gets Ike into a corner alone."⁹⁶ Regarding the field marshal's ambition to command all Allied ground forces, Smith remarked that it was impossible "to give a correct portrayal of Montgomery without showing him to be a S.O.B."⁹⁷

Subsequently, the German armies punched through Allied lines in the Ardennes in what was soon to be labeled as the Battle of the Bulge.⁹⁸ Reacting to the crisis, General Whiteley, with Strong's concurrence, suggested giving Montgomery command of Allied forces north of the

⁹⁴ Montgomery to Brooke, November 28, 1944, 6/2/34, Papers of Lord Alanbrooke, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.

⁹⁵ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #2145, 2323-2325.

⁹⁶ Bedell Smith, as quoted, Tedder, *With Prejudice*, 631.

⁹⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI.

⁹⁸ Having overrun American positions on the front, German panzer units created a finger-like gap in the Allied line on the north end of the Schnee Eifel.

bulge.⁹⁹ Smith erupted in anger, suggesting that Whiteley was acting more British than Allied. Smith then paused to deliver the suggestion to Bradley and Eisenhower. The chief of staff had spoken without thinking. He admitted later that his temper gotten the best of him. But in this instance, Smith's rage and discourtesy risked the goals of functionalism.¹⁰⁰ General Whiteley was justifiably incensed.¹⁰¹

Upon reflection, Smith came to believe that Whiteley's suggestion was sound. Although he was known to detest the demeanor of Montgomery, Smith always professed that Allied unity was more important than personal animosity.¹⁰² The next morning, December 20, he supported Whiteley's suggestion in conference. Immediately afterwards, Smith walked into his British colleague's office, extended his hand and rendered a heartfelt apology for his insulting outburst the previous evening.¹⁰³ Although Smith was rebuked by Bradley, Eisenhower ordered the US 1st

⁹⁹ J. F. M. Whiteley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 18, 1946, USAMHI; Kenneth W. D. Strong, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 12, 1946, USAMHI.

¹⁰⁰ Walter Bedell Smith, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI.

¹⁰¹ J. F. M. Whiteley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, December 18, 1946, USAMHI.

¹⁰² General Morgan included Bradley as one who also detested Montgomery. Notes from MSS written by Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick E. Morgan, in Pogue interviews, n.d., USAMHI.

¹⁰³ There were other occasions when Smith apologized. Following a misunderstanding over press policy and accreditation, Smith said to Colonel R. Ernest Dupuy, "I was misinformed. Sorry. Everything okay." See Outgoing Message, SHAEF FORWARD to SHAEF MAIN (Smith to Dupuy), September 23, 1944, SHAEF RECORDS, Press Issues, RG 331, Allied Operational and Occupational Headquarters, WWII, Box 4, NARA. See also John S. D. Eisenhower, *The Bitter Woods*, 270-271. In postwar interviews, Strong stated there had been "no serious argument" at the time. As for Whiteley, he made only oblique reference to differences of opinion.

and 9th Armies passed to Montgomery's command.¹⁰⁴ The US 9th Army would participate in 21st Army Group operations until the surrender of Germany.

After an uncomfortable meeting with Montgomery on December 28 at Hasselt, Belgium, Eisenhower returned to SHAEF depressed but determined to resolve the issue of command. The next day, Eisenhower received a letter from Montgomery that was full of arrogance.¹⁰⁵ Fully confident that he had the backing of General Marshall, Eisenhower decided to appeal to the Combined Chiefs.¹⁰⁶ More than personality was at stake. Montgomery was not willing to accept Eisenhower's prerogative to exercise tactical command. Firmly committed to Allied cooperation, Smith, nevertheless, insisted that SHAEF was a tactical organization – not merely a political one. Smith thought that, since Montgomery had failed to respect the Supreme Commander and had ignored the chain of command, he should be reduced to a subordinate's role.¹⁰⁷

Smith was at his office in Versailles on December 30 when General Francis de Guingand, Montgomery's chief of staff, phoned from Brussels to voice his concern over the arrogant tone of Montgomery's letter. The British staff officer feared a terrible rupture in inter-Allied relations. Offering a grave assessment of the situation, Smith thought that a little diplomacy might still have

¹⁰⁴ Walter Bedell Smith, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI; Omar N. Bradley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue with Lieutenant Colonel Chester B. Hansen present, November 6, 1946, USAMHI; Bradley and Blair, *A General's Story*, 363-364; Cipher Telegram, Montgomery to Brooke, Exfor Tac, 21 AG to War Office, December 20, 1944, 6//2/36, Papers of Lord Alanbrooke, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.

¹⁰⁵ *Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein*, 290. Montgomery slyly and disingenuously noted that he had surrendered on the issue of command, but not on how to command; the meeting at Hasselt took place on December 28, 1944.

¹⁰⁶ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #2215, 2390.

¹⁰⁷ Walter Bedell Smith, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI. Bradley fully supported Smith's on this matter. See Omar N. Bradley, interview by Forrest C. Pogue with Lieutenant Colonel Chester B. Hansen present, November 6, 1946, USAMHI.

some chance of resolving the dispute. De Guingand took a nighttime flight through inclement weather, arriving the next morning at Orly Airfield near Paris. He went straight to Smith's office and then the two went to see Eisenhower.¹⁰⁸

De Guingand and Smith arrived at Eisenhower's dimly-lit office none too soon. The mood was somber. The Supreme Commander sat huddled with Colonel James Gault and Tedder. Smith broke the silence, stating the purpose of de Guingand's visit. Eisenhower spoke of the press and of Montgomery's inconsiderate behavior, which kept the issue of command alive. He was no longer willing to tolerate Montgomery's antics. Eisenhower held in his hand a freshly written dispatch that he intended to send to General Marshall.¹⁰⁹ The showdown had arrived.

General Eisenhower handed the cable to de Guingand, who quickly perused its content. Flabbergasted, de Guingand instantly recognized that Montgomery, not Eisenhower, would have to step down. The British officer fully understood that Montgomery often failed to see beyond the confines of his headquarters and command. De Guingand asked Eisenhower to delay his cable. Montgomery certainly had not understood the gravity of the impasse. Eisenhower and Tedder, especially, were inclined to reject any compromise.¹¹⁰

Bedell Smith did not think that Montgomery was indispensable as a commander. Nor did he focus on the British field marshal's quirks. He weighed the possible impact that the relief of Montgomery might have on British public opinion. But Smith was prepared to accept another British commander who would cooperate to the fullest extent with Eisenhower. Fed up with

¹⁰⁸ Sir Francis de Guingand, *Generals At War* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1964), 106-107.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants*, 544.

Montgomery's insubordination, Smith had recommended sending a much stronger letter than Eisenhower and Tedder had written. As a functionalist, Smith insisted that Montgomery submit to headquarters – the means by which Eisenhower's authority and organizational unity was sustained. Only because of insubordination, however, did Bedell Smith ever contemplate Montgomery's relief.¹¹¹ Advising caution, Smith thought it wise to grant de Guingand the chance to clarify matters with Montgomery. After a brief discussion about a suitable replacement for Montgomery, Eisenhower granted de Guingand the opportunity to put Montgomery in his place.

After spending a restful evening at Smith's cottage, De Guingand returned to 21st Army Group Tactical Headquarters.¹¹² It did not take him long to convince the British field marshal that he was about to be relieved and that Alexander would be his replacement. Montgomery caved, signed a dispatch which de Guingand had written, and sent it to General Eisenhower, vowing wholehearted support for Allied effort.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Walter Bedell Smith, interviewed by Forrest C. Pogue, May 8, 1947, USAMHI. despite anger and misgivings during the heat of battle, Eisenhower and Bradley would also couch their opinions in softer language over time.

¹¹² De Guingand and Smith engaged in light-hearted conversation while sipping a few drinks and eating a small snack. De Guingand always maintained that Smith was a delightful host and a great ally. See De Guingand, *Generals At War*, 110-111.

¹¹³ Montgomery to Eisenhower, December 31, 1944, as printed in L. F. Ellis, *Victory in the West*, vol. 2, *The Defeat of Germany*, United Kingdom Military Series, edited by Sir James Butler (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1968), 202; Cipher Telegram, Montgomery to Brooke, M-413, Exfor Tac, 21 AG to War Office, January 1, 1945, 6/2/36, Papers of Lord Alanbrooke, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK. See also, *Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein*, 319. During the turbulent postwar era when generals and historians engaged in seemingly endless arguments about Eisenhower and Montgomery, Bedell Smith was the only top-ranking American officer to give the British field marshal his due. See D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life*, 581.

The subject of the command of ground forces resurfaced a number of times in January and February 1945. Montgomery held a botched press conference on January 7, 1945 that whipped up a political tempest. He gave the impression that he alone had initiated the Allied counterattack and that his leadership during the Battle of the Bulge had stabilized the front. Montgomery's blustering angered Smith. From a functionalist standpoint, Montgomery refused to acknowledge the interdependence of the entire Allied command. Montgomery later stated that the American soldier had borne the burden during the battle, but his comments at the time were misleading. It was not only what Montgomery said but how he said it that riled American commanders. British colleagues were also perturbed. Prime Minister Churchill rebuked him in Parliament.¹¹⁴ At the Malta Conference in February 1945, Smith presented Eisenhower's strategy for the final campaign of the war. After long debate and some acrimony, Montgomery submitted. The issue of how much independence a forces commander had died.¹¹⁵ A practical functionalist, Bedell Smith rejected the idea that army group could operate as an autonomous unit.

Bedell Smith, Manpower Crisis, Civil Rights and Functionalism

Evidence of Bedell Smith's functionalism surfaced with the manpower crisis of early 1945. The Battle of the Bulge initiated the crisis. On December 26, 1944, Lieutenant General

¹¹⁴ Montgomery, *Normandy to the Baltic*, 277-288; *Memoirs of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein*, 278-282; "Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill's Remarks to the House of Commons," January 18, 1945, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 5th ser., vol. 407 (1944-1945), 415-418.

¹¹⁵ The Malta Conference is more formally known as the ARGONAUT Conference; Smith presented Eisenhower's arguments for "Closing the Rhine." Smith and Brooke aired their differences as mentioned previously. Marshall would not countenance even Alexander as ground force commander. Interestingly enough, when Montgomery discovered that Alexander might possibly obtain the command, he reversed all of his previous arguments concerning command; *Interviews and Reminiscences for Forrest C. Pogue*, 399-400; James Gault, interview by Forrest C. Pogue, February 13, 1947, USAMHI; Lord Tedder interview same date, USAMHI.

John C. H. Lee, Eisenhower's deputy theater commander, suggested that a limited number of blacks with infantry training be given the opportunity to serve at the front.¹¹⁸ After consulting Eisenhower, Lee wrote a circular, calling for volunteers. Thousands of black soldiers volunteered for combat duty.¹¹⁹

Eisenhower told General Marshall that he did not think blacks ought to be denied the right to serve in combat units. If sufficient volunteers could be mustered, the Supreme Commander planned to attach them temporarily to seasoned infantry divisions.¹²⁰ General Lee's circular, however, went beyond what Eisenhower had intended. He proposed that black volunteers be permanently sandwiched, individually or in units, where most needed. In other words, "Jim Crow" would terminate in the European theater.

Bedell Smith did not like Lee's proposal.¹²¹ Aware of racial tensions within the army, he freely acknowledged the outstanding performance of the US 99th Fighter Squadron, nonetheless. Earlier in his career, he had noted the contributions of black cavalrymen.¹²² Having failed to

¹¹⁸ During the first week of fighting, American servicemen suffered 40,000 casualties in the infantry ranks alone. By end of December 1944, that figure had risen to 77,000. There were 60,000 non-combat injuries as well. Efforts to comb out non-essential personnel from rear echelon areas had not met expectations. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants*, 568; Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 11-22, 181-194, 214-215.

¹¹⁹ Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops, United States Army in World War II: Special Studies* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1966), 689.

¹²⁰ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #2227, 2408-2409.

¹²¹ Diary of Jacob L. Devers, January 6, 1945, USAMHI. Dever's supported Smith's opinion at that critical stage in the war. Patton, an exception to the rule, thought that blacks were unskilled in technical trades but challenged those of 761st Tank Battalion to prove him wrong. They roared their approval when he piped, "when you see those kraut s.o.b.'s don't spare the ammunition." As quoted, Studs Terkel, *The Good War*, 1st Ballantine paperback ed. (New York: Random House, 1985), 262.

¹²² Lee, *Employment of Negro Troops*, 78, 458-460.

convince Lee to rescind his directive, Smith broached the subject with Eisenhower. He did not object to the idea of integrated units on the basis of race. The chief of staff's logic made good sense from a functionalist perspective. There were hardly any blacks in the theater with infantry training. More importantly, Smith thought that it made little sense to change social policy during a war. He said that Lee's proposal did not conform to War Department policy. Besides, he feared that the press might spread Lee's circular to black organizations and other pressure groups. If the Department of War segregated at home against the desires of blacks, Smith reasoned that an uproar would surely result if the command used black infantrymen as gun fodder at that critical phase of the war. After consulting with the Department of War, Eisenhower rewrote Lee's circular and the proposal died as far as infantry units were concerned.¹²³

The Collapse of Nazi Germany and Surrender

Bedell Smith's duties in the last two months of the war were primarily routine in nature. On March 7, 1945, the US 9th Armored Division crossed the bridge at Remagen. Eisenhower reached the strategic decision to forgo an assault on Berlin on March 28. By the end of April, Adolf Hitler was dead in his bunker.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, Smith addressed the food shortage in the Netherlands. With the Dutch on the verge of starvation, Eisenhower asked Smith to engage in tough negotiations with Artur Seyss-Inquart, the Austrian-born Reichskommissar of the Netherlands. Smith demanded that Seyss-Inquart permit the transfer of foodstuffs to the Dutch

¹²³ Memorandum, Office of Chief of Staff (SHAEF) to Eisenhower, January 3, 1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 5, NARA; Lee, *Employment of Negro Troops*, 690; Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants*, 569. There was a mix opinion regarding the employment of black troops.

¹²⁴ Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The Last Days of Hitler* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1947), 180-201; Bullock, *Study in Tyranny*, 777-799.

populace without further bloodshed.¹²⁵ Reichskommissar found the experience unnerving, but declared that he was not free to comply as long as Germany had a legitimate government. Under strict orders from Eisenhower to get results, Smith threatened harsh punishment, including the firing squad, if the obstinate Reichskommissar failed to comply with Eisenhower's request for humanitarian relief.¹²⁶ The war was over, Smith said, and the Allied powers would not tolerate any more breaches of faith.¹²⁷ German forces in the Netherlands soon capitulated.

Germany capitulated in the early morning hours at Rheims on May 7, 1945. Eisenhower thought that Smith deserved the honor of conducting the surrender. Lieutenant General Bedell Smith and Generaloberst Jodl signed the instrument of surrender in the War Room. Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel surrendered in Moscow the next day.¹²⁸ After making last-minute revisions of the document of surrender, Smith nearly collapsed from exhaustion.¹²⁹ Eisenhower, steadfast but humble in victory, later credited three officers for his success – Marshall, Bradley and Smith.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #2431, 2630.

¹²⁶ De Guingand, *Operation Victory*, 452; see Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors*, 826-830; *Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol. 4, #2439, 2638-2639.

¹²⁷ As quoted, "REICHSKOMMISSAR OF THE NETHERLANDS RECEIVES A CHILLY BLAST FROM GENERAL BEDELL SMITH," First Canadian Army Intelligence Summary No. 308, 4 May 45, app. D, an. 71, SHAEF files, G-5, 60, Hist Rpt, Relief to Holland, as printed in Coles and Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors*, 832.

¹²⁸ Incoming Classified Message, Allied Expeditionary Forces, Forward Echelon, Rheims, France to War Department (SCAF 375), May 9, 1945, RG-218, Records of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Box 5, NARA; Jean de Lattre de Tassigny, *The History of the French First Army*, 511.

¹²⁹ Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors*, 240-241.

¹³⁰ Ambrose, *Supreme Commander*, 665.

Homecoming, Postwar and Death

As had been the case throughout most of his career, health problems plagued Bedell Smith for the rest of his life. In early April 1945, Smith developed a serious toothache, which he ignored until after the surrender. By mid-May, a terrible abscess resulted. An army dentist discovered a number of very poor teeth that had to be extracted. He prescribed antibiotics. Oral surgery followed.¹³¹ Recuperating in the hospital, Smith wrote to Julius Holmes about the surrender. His one thought, he said, was “Thank God that's over. Now I can go home and to bed!”¹³²

Expressing pride in her husband's accomplishments, Nory Smith wanted advice about his homecoming that the Hoosier state was planning. She was planning a long, quiet rest for him upon his arrival in the states.¹³³ Smith began packing for his first furlough in two and a half years.

It was a short but wonderful homecoming. At 10:30 A.M., June 20, 1945, the forty-nine year old Smith and his wife flew into Stout Field in Indianapolis aboard a B-17 Flying Fortress. Exuberant, flag-waving citizens had lined the parade route. Emotionally overwhelmed for a brief moment, Bedell leaned toward Nory and managed to choke out, “Golly, what a welcome.”¹³⁴ At the Claypool Hotel, Smith listened to General Eisenhower's cable, which praised his ability,

¹³¹ Memorandum, Smith to Colonel Scott for Mrs. W. B. Smith, April 2, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 9, File Folder 3, DDEL.at SHAEF FORWARD.

¹³² Smith to Holmes, May 21, 1945, Box 9, File Folder 2, I-R, Papers of General Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL. Holmes worked in the Division of Civil Affairs, SHAEF.

¹³³ Telegram from *Indianapolis Star*, delivered to AGWAR, SIGNED STONER TO SHAEF FORWARD FOR GENERAL W. B. SMITH, June 8, 1945 Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 9, File Folder 3, DDEL. AGWAR, SIGNED SOONER TO SHAEF FORWARD FOR GENERAL W. B. SMITH, June 8, 1945, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, Box 9, above source; AGWAR FOR HUMELSINE TO SHAEF FORWARD FROM MOORE, June 8, 1945, above source. Governor Ralph F. Gates, Mayor Robert F. Tyndall and other dignitaries planned the homecoming.

¹³⁴ As quoted, *Indianapolis Star*, June 21, 1945, p. 4.

loyalty and selfless dedication to the Allied cause.¹³⁵ Self-effacing to the end, Smith accepted the tribute on behalf of Eisenhower and the brave troops who had served on the front lines. It had always been a matter of teamwork.¹³⁶ During the luncheon, both Smith and Nory chatted with well-wishers. The festivities were all too brief. By 6:00 P.M., the Smiths were in flight to Washington, D. C.¹³⁷

Smith was in the hospital during the dismantling of Supreme Headquarters. He missed friends who had served in the organization that he had built and managed. The bulk of his correspondence was with British colleagues. They responded in kind, praising Smith abilities and often fretting over his precarious health.¹³⁸ Smith continued to correspond with De Guingand, Ismay and Macmillan in the months and years that followed.

General Smith had every intention of leaving the US Army after the war. He did not. During the immediate postwar era, Bedell Smith made the transition from general to American diplomat and cabinet officer. While still in uniform, Smith served as the Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency during the Truman Administration.

¹³⁵ Eisenhower's telegram appeared in the *Indianapolis News*, Morning Edition, June 20, 1945, p. 3.

¹³⁶*Indianapolis News*, June 21, 1945, in Indiana Clipping File, Walter B. Smith File, Box 8, File Folder 3, W. H. Smith Memorial Library, Indiana State Historical Society. WIBC Radio, Indianapolis, and its affiliates broadcasted Smith's comments.

¹³⁷ *Indianapolis Star*, June 21, 1945, p. 4.

¹³⁸ Smith to Morgan, July 27, 1945, Box 10, File Folder 2, F-O, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL; Smith to Ismay, June 16, 1945, 4/29/22, Papers of Lord Hastings L. Ismay, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK; Holograph, Smith to Gale, July 21, 1945, Box 10, File Folder 2, F-O, Papers of General Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL; Holograph, Morgan to Smith, July 14, 1945, Box 10, File Folder 2, F-O, Papers of General Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL; Gale to Smith, July 31, 1945; above source; Gale to Smith, September 4, 1945, above source.

Later, he worked as Undersecretary of State during President Eisenhower's first term.¹³⁹

Smith grew increasingly melancholy as his health continued to deteriorate. He was bitter as well. On one occasion, Smith poured out his frustrations to his neighbor Richard M. Nixon. With a few drinks under his belt, Smith's emotions gave way. He moaned that he had only been Eisenhower's "prat boy" – an English term signifying a fool or ass who behaves stupidly.¹⁴⁰ Upon Marshall's death, Smith wrote a long letter to Lord Ismay. In it, Smith professed his admiration and affection for Marshall, who did not compare to anyone else in the service. Smith had been reading and rereading Marshall's final report, which referred to him as a son. The experience triggered heartfelt emotion.¹⁴¹ Following numerous hospitalizations for gastric, pulmonary, cardiac, and dental disorders, Bedell Smith died of a coronary arrest in an ambulance on August 9, 1961.¹⁴²

Tributes poured in from colleagues on both sides of the Atlantic. President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan noted Bedell Smith's accomplishments in civil and military life.¹⁴³

After the formalities at the national rotunda, the simple funeral procession made its way to the

¹³⁹ Smith to Pace, January 12, 1953, Box 2, Papers of Walter Bedell Smith, DDEL. Frank Pace was Secretary of the Army. Smith retired from the army as a full general in 1953.

¹⁴⁰ Richard M. Nixon, interviewed by Walter J. Brown, *Media Archives*, University of Georgia, online @ <http://www.libs.uga.edu/media/collections/nixon>.

¹⁴¹ Holograph, Smith to Ismay, February 26, 1961, 4/29/40, Papers of Lord Hastings L. Ismay, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.. Smith was once again in the hospital when General Marshall died.

¹⁴² *Indianapolis Star*, September 22, 1960, p. 4; Smith to Elliot, June 6, 1961, 4/2/9, Papers of Sir William Elliot, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK. See *Indianapolis Times*, August 11, 1961, p. 19.

¹⁴³ For tributes from Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, see – among others – *New York Herald Tribune*, newspaper clipping, August 10-11, 1961, 4/2/16, Papers of Sir William Elliot, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London, UK.

Fort Myer Chapel at Arlington National Cemetery on Monday, August 14. Many old friends were there that day. Eisenhower was a pallbearer. Following the requiem mass, Smith was buried on a peaceful knoll overlooking the Potomac River not far from the grave of his mentor, General of the Army George Catlett Marshall.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ *Indianapolis Star*, August 11, 1961, pp. 1-2. See an anonymous newspaper article, n.d., 6/2/16, Papers of Sir William Elliot, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, London.

Conclusion

Bedell Smith was a practical functionalist whose decisions mirrored the influence of functionalism in a number of ways. He made conclusions based on what had been demonstrated to work in the past. Yet Smith was no slave to static theory or doctrine. A man of action, he attempted to bridge the gap between ideas and practice. Smith became more adept at improvising over time. In Washington, Algiers and London, Smith sought simplicity and order as the means to frame solutions for the problems. While serving as General Marshall's chief secretary, Smith acted with dispatch, accepting full responsibility for his actions. It was this characteristic of Smith's that won him favor with Generals Marshall and Eisenhower.

While serving of the War Department General Staff, Smith was a master at cutting through mountains of bureaucratic red tape. Although he never specifically referred to functionalism as a theory or method, Smith acted pragmatically according to functionalist ideas and methods that had been discussed and implemented at the army service schools. He accepted the basic functionalist idea that all constituent units of the military were interdependent. Consequently, his use of the secretariat at Eisenhower's headquarters to tighten control over the headquarters reflected a functionalist goal of coordination and predictability. Smith based his decision making on the functionalist premise that the needs of an organization develop from the nature of the institution itself. Accordingly, he insisted that the intrinsic requirements of organizational unity trumped the aspirations of individuals. The focus was on the group or the organization. The survival of the organization, for instance, required the enforcement of unity of command and the promotion of unity of purpose. Although the staffs at Allied Force Headquarters and Supreme Headquarters performed many routine, mechanical duties, the process of debate at higher echelons was not

typically arbitrary. Unity for Smith did not necessarily mean uniformity in all matters. He was the officer on whom Eisenhower relied to get things done in the collective interests of the army and the Allied coalition.

Smith's functionalist training had provided him with a model for management. It was no surprise that Smith adopted a hierarchical structure for management. At first glance, the design of the headquarters appears to have been at odds with the organic aspects of functionalism. The staff served as the brain of the Allied armed forces, but like the human brain many of its functions were instinctive or perfunctory. Smith's job at headquarters was to regulate and integrate the work of the headquarters staff. At the outset, it was a remarkably simple arrangement modeled on the US Army General Staff. It was very effective as long as the headquarters relatively small. Within a very short period – in autumn 1942 and again in 1944 – the hard-driving Smith had gained control of the theater staff. With procedures standardized and little time wasted, the headquarters worked. Workability is an axiom of functionalism. In this milieu, Smith tried to stabilize the headquarters just as field commanders attempted to do on a conventional battlefield. To Eisenhower's satisfaction, Smith was able to fulfill the clear-cut objectives of defending Eisenhower's prerogatives and enforcing the chain of command. Despite its cumbersome size, the headquarters gave Eisenhower firm control over the theater and, in many cases, often granted him an inclusive perspective of large issues in the field.

Although he might have encouraged the establishment of a smaller tactical headquarters, it is unreasonable, therefore, to blame Bedell Smith for a few of the shortcomings of Allied Force Headquarters and Supreme Headquarters. He struggled with the perplexities of managing a large staff. He soon confronted what was for him a troubling paradox – the contradiction between unity

of command and decentralization of power in large institutions. Some of Smith's difficulties stemmed from the fact that both he and Eisenhower sanctioned a large staff, but circumstances in which the chief of staff found himself were not entirely of his own doing. Bureaucracies become inherently unstable in the complex milieu. At times the traditional management style, which Smith adopted, became an impediment to effective performance. In other words, direct supervision of staff activities was inappropriate in many instances. Smith anxiously regarded the evolving decentralization of power, a likely consequence of expansion in size, as a threat. While focusing on the needs of the high command, Smith sometimes had to defer to individuals – the combat engineers, for instance – whose contributions were important for decision making. Smith soon found it impossible to coordinate all of the staff work through the chain of command. The inherently unstable situation demanded greater flexibility on the part of Smith as it became impossible any one person to comprehend fully the scope and detail of activities handed by the headquarters.

Some division chiefs and staff members thought that Bedell Smith was imperious. The perception was both true and false. Smith's predicament was one that structural functionalists now recognize – namely how does one balance the free exchange of ideas with efficient practice? Inevitably, one or the other must be sacrificed to some degree. Smith occasionally failed to develop useful liaisons that would have improved the internal chemistry of the staff. Smith had to preserve an element of initiative within the staff. Yet he correctly judged that endless debate would in many cases prove pointless. Smith never mastered the art of delegation and, from a functionalist point of view, this was his greatest weakness as a war manager. Smith's reluctance to delegate suggested a lack of confidence in individual staff members. This aspect of his staff

management bred ill will, and it robbed him of time and health. As the principal coordinator of the headquarters, Smith walked a tightrope between the attainment of goals and the maintenance of headquarters.¹ He was slow to understand that managers do not always get their way, but he was not typically closed to suggestion. More often than not, Bedell Smith was decisive and very effective in achieving objectives.

Undoubtedly, poor health affected Bedell Smith's performance as chief of staff, but his temper has been exaggerated in terms of frequency. Occasionally, the means he applied worked at cross-purposes with functionalist objectives. When exhausted, Smith exhibited bad manners. With ample knowledge and experience to offer, he had much to say but often said it devoid of common courtesy. Smith's sarcasm was difficult to interpret. Yet most of the time his methods were grounded in rationality – fundamental principle of functionalism. As the Allied headquarters assumed larger functions such as civil affairs, Smith understood that as the progressed generals would assume the roles of governors and diplomats.

Bedell Smith conceived of the headquarters – whether in Washington, Algiers or London – as the hub of operational and tactical planning. Supreme Headquarters, for instance, was charged with executing Allied military strategy in Europe. As a superb gatekeeper at headquarters, Smith had to protect Eisenhower's prerogatives while lending an ear to the concerns of British allies and theater commanders, all of whom had specific agendas. Although it is true that Bedell Smith often thought that his solutions to problems were the correct ones, he frequently improvised and compromised to achieved goals. Conflict between Smith and deputy theater commanders occasionally ensued regarding the overlapping functions at headquarters and within the theater.

¹ Robert K. Merton, *Sociological Ambivalence and Other Essays* (New York: Macmillan, 1976), 105.

But these squabbles too have been greatly exaggerated. As he had done for General Marshall in Washington, Smith allotted a great deal of time to solving bureaucratic snarls for General Eisenhower. The good work that Smith accomplished at headquarters has been underestimated.

General Bedell Smith's achievements in the wider arena of war requires more study. He was the operational chief of staff for the European Theater of Operations, and the responsibilities of the chiefs of staff in other theaters, with the possible exception of the Russian front, paled in comparison with those of Smith. Army doctrine and Eisenhower greatly expanded the role of Smith in areas that the chiefs of staff of World War One would have never imagined. Smith's professionalism, selflessness and devotion to duty won the respect of Eisenhower and many colleagues. Excellent American line officers such as Matthew Ridgway and James Gavin thought that Smith was superb chief of staff. General Bradley was critical of Smith's tempestuous nature, but praised his keen intelligence and contributions to the Allied cause. Admired and respected by Minister Winston Churchill, Smith was also loved and respected by British colleagues such as Lord Ismay, Macmillan, de Guingand and others for the high standards he set and the unity of purpose for which he strove. Field Marshal Montgomery valued Smith abilities and – to begin with at least – would have liked to have had him as chief of staff. Bedell Smith's relations with presidential advisers and politicians from both sides of the aisle fostered much good will and lessened the burdens of General Eisenhower. But it was General Marshall's respect that Smith coveted most, and he earned it. Smith never lived up to exacting and functionalist standards that his mentor set. Bedell Smith was much more than an unsophisticated hatchetman.

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