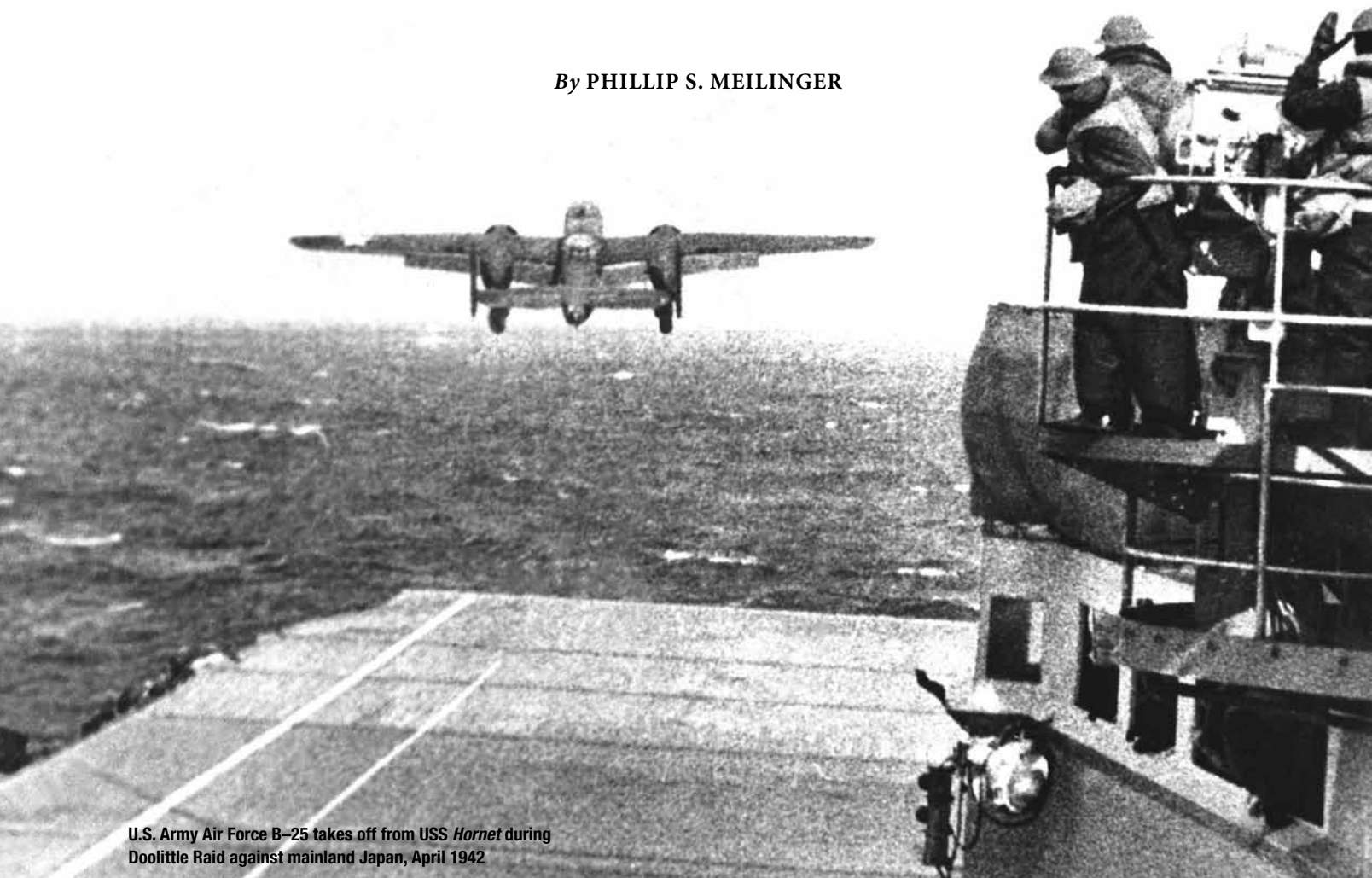


# ADMIRALS RUN AMOK

THE DANGER OF INTER-SERVICE RIVALRY

By PHILLIP S. MEILINGER



U.S. Army Air Force B-25 takes off from USS *Hornet* during Doolittle Raid against mainland Japan, April 1942

**U**nification was the term used to describe the formation of a Department of Defense composed of three branches for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Unification had been discussed for decades, but initially it had few friends either in uniform or in Congress. That changed with World War II when global war against powerful enemies demanded far more than the “coordination” employed grudgingly by the Army and Navy since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. When Harry Truman became President, he pushed hard for unification and the separate Air Force it entailed.<sup>1</sup> A repeated justification for unification was efficiency: ending duplication would result in budget savings. Congress agreed with this rationale, but this strained the Services.<sup>2</sup> Because of fiscal austerity and demobilization following the war, all in uniform believed combat capability was at a dangerously low level. Although such beliefs no doubt resulted in a self-serving parochialism in some quarters, the average Soldier, Sailor, or Airman sincerely believed his special expertise was vital to American security but was in danger of being eroded away, a situation not unlike the present.

Precise roles and missions assigned to the Services were of enormous import; they were the Services’ lifeblood. No Service wanted its budget cut, but if tasks were taken away, cuts were inevitable. The issue causing the most debate was fundamental to the ethos and structure of the new Air Force.

### Assigning Functions

In March 1948, Defense Secretary James Forrestal gathered his chiefs to Key West to hammer out decisions and compromises regarding roles and missions. A result of these meetings was a statement defining “primary” versus “collateral” functions.<sup>3</sup> A *primary function* was one in which a particular Service had a clear-cut responsibility, whereas in a *collateral function* a Service supported whoever had a responsibility as primary. Forrestal admitted that such definitions were fluid and that a clear distinction was not always possible—the function of close air support, for example, was something all the Services might claim as

primary depending on the situation. Yet the Secretary’s intent was to preclude one Service using a collateral function “as the basis for establishing additional force requirements.”<sup>4</sup> When building a budget request, a Service would see to its primary functions first; if these were adequately covered and there were funds remaining, those dollars could be spent on collateral functions. If there was disagreement as to whether or not the primary functions were adequately covered, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) or Secretary of Defense would decide.

Some of the functions assigned were vaguely worded and invited trouble. The Navy,

The Key West decision regarding strategic bombing was immediately challenged. The Navy had its eye on the mission, and Vice Admiral Daniel Gallery wrote a memorandum stating that “the Navy was the branch of the National Defense destined to deliver the Atom Bomb.” To Gallery, this function was crucial because the next war would be dominated by atomic weapons, and if the Navy did not participate in strategic bombing, it would be obsolete. He continued, “the time is right now for the Navy to start an aggressive campaign aimed at proving that the Navy can deliver the atomic bomb more effectively than the Air Force can.”<sup>7</sup>

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### *if the Navy did not participate in strategic bombing, it would be obsolete*

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for example, was given the primary function of conducting air operations “as necessary for the accomplishment of objectives in a naval campaign.” The Air Force was given the primary function of *strategic air warfare*, defined as:

*Air combat and supporting operations designed to effect, through the systematic application of force to a selected series of vital targets, the progressive destruction and disintegration of the enemy’s war-making capacity to a point where he no longer retains the ability or the will to wage war. Vital targets may include key manufacturing systems, sources of raw material, critical material, stock piles, power systems, transportation systems, communications facilities, concentrations of uncommitted elements of enemy armed forces, key agricultural areas, and other such target systems.*<sup>5</sup>

This definition described the bombing campaigns against Germany and Japan, but what of naval aviation? Were the thousands of missions flown by carrier aircraft against land objectives in the Pacific an example of hitting targets “necessary for the accomplishment of a naval campaign,” or were they strikes against “uncommitted elements of enemy armed forces”? Nonetheless, Forrestal noted in his diary that the chiefs had reached an understanding recognizing “the right of the Navy to proceed with the development of weapons the Navy considers essential to its function, but with the proviso that the Navy will not develop a separate strategic air force, this function being reserved to the Air Force.”<sup>6</sup>

Using Gallery’s logic, Admiral Louis Denfeld, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), wrote Forrestal on April 22, 1948, to “clarify” the decision reached in Florida. He argued that the Navy should be allowed to strike any targets, anywhere, without reference to the Air Force, and he wanted this interpretation accepted as official policy. General Hoyt Vandenberg, the Air Force chief of staff, protested that this would undermine the entire basis of Key West. If the Navy was allowed a free hand in strategic air warfare, then what was the point of assigning primary and collateral functions and attempting to eliminate redundancy? General Dwight Eisenhower (Army chief of staff) and Admiral William Leahy (chief of staff to the President) agreed, and Denfeld’s move was rejected.<sup>8</sup> The issue did not go away, however. Forrestal noted glumly but presciently in his official report that the most divisive issue remained: “What is to be the use, and who is to be user of air power?”<sup>9</sup>

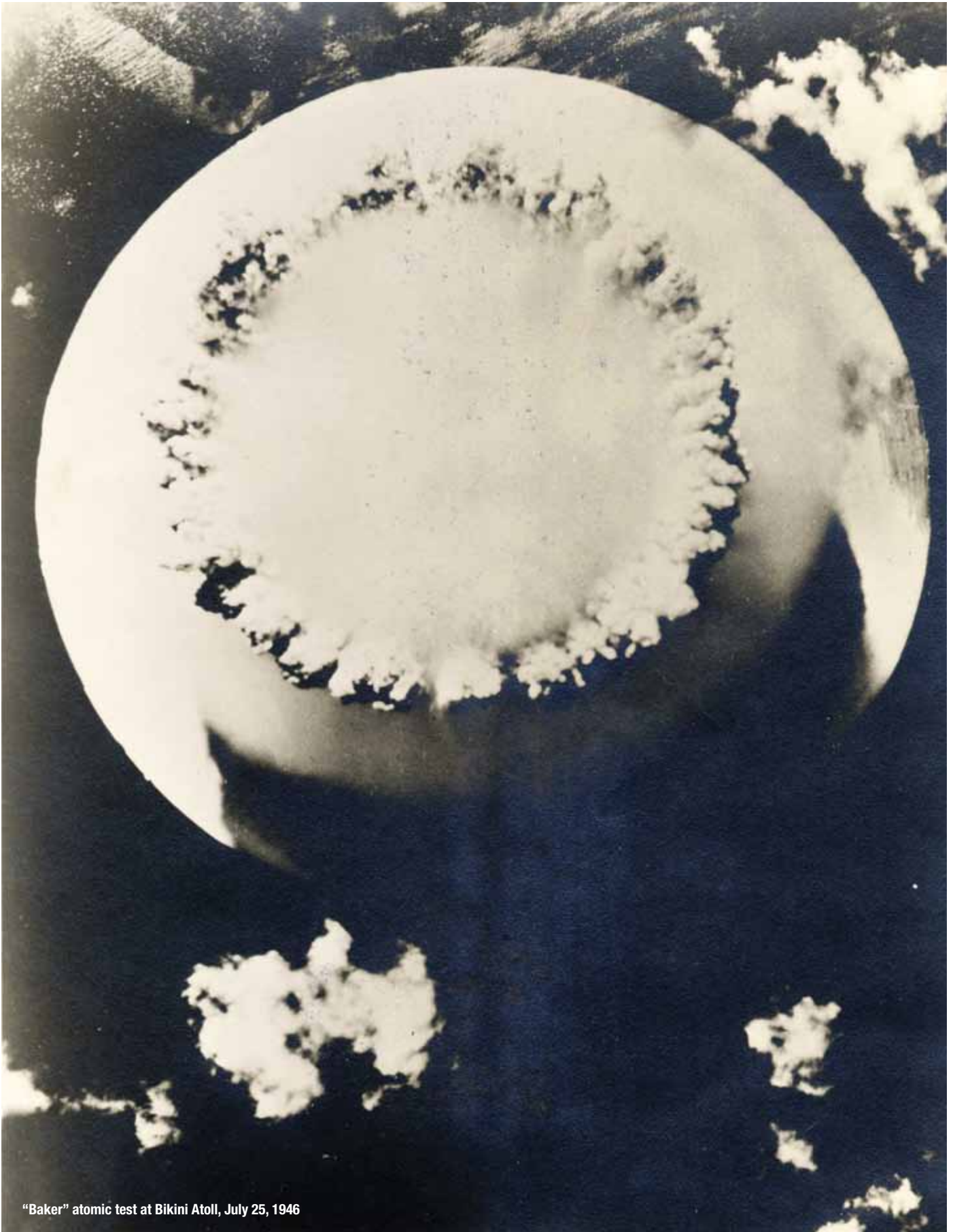
Disagreement over roles and missions erupted into one of the nastiest inter-Service fights in American history. The issue, as Forrestal feared, concerned airpower. Although the Navy had strategic bombing only as a collateral function, it laid plans for building a “supercarrier” designed to carry multi-engine bombers. These aircraft were to be used, among other things, to deliver atomic weapons.

Forrestal had agreed that the Navy could build one such ship, but not an entire class, and then only with JCS concurrence.<sup>10</sup> Denfeld ignored Forrestal’s qualifications and

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**Colonel Phillip S. Meilinger, USAF (Ret.), served in the U.S. Air Force for 30 years. He holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Michigan. His latest book is *Into the Sun: Novels of the U.S. Air Force* (Imprint Publications, 2011).**

Joint Army-Navy Task Force One



"Baker" atomic test at Bikini Atoll, July 25, 1946



announced the carrier had been authorized. The Air Force protested this statement, so Forrestal referred the matter to the JCS. Denfeld and General Omar Bradley, who had just taken over as Army chief of staff, approved the ship, but Vandenberg disagreed stating: "I have not felt, nor do I now feel, that I can give my approval to the 65,000 ton carrier project."<sup>11</sup> Congress, unaware of Forrestal's earlier comments or the Air Force dissent, assumed all was well and approved funds for the ship.

The matter was not closed. Although the keel of USS *United States* was laid on April 18, 1949, Forrestal had resigned the previous month. His successor was Louis Johnson, who upon taking office declared that the dissension over the new carrier was causing him concern. He directed the JCS to review the issue once again.<sup>12</sup>

Denfeld responded that the carrier's enhanced size and flush-top construction (there would be no "island" on the edge) allowed increased capability. Indeed, the *United States* would be able to operate heavier, multi-engine aircraft that could employ "more complex armaments"—atomic weapons—but it could also carry a larger number of smaller aircraft. The ship was an evolutionary step allowing greater air operations in support of the fleet.<sup>13</sup>

Vandenberg argued that it was simply unnecessary and a waste of money—the total cost of the carrier with its aircraft and defensive screen was \$1.265 billion—8 percent of the entire annual defense budget. He also argued the ship was highly vulnerable and the Navy was putting all of its eggs in one fragile basket. He referred to the agreements of the previous year: the Air Force was responsible for strategic bombing. The Navy was to tend to sea control, antisubmarine warfare, and mine-laying.<sup>14</sup>

These arguments were expected. The surprise came from Bradley, who now changed his mind: "The Navy's mission as agreed to by the Joint Chiefs was to conduct naval campaigns designed primarily to protect lines of communication leading to important sources of raw materials and to areas of projected military operations." The supercarrier was being built for strategic air operations, and that was not the Navy's primary function. The *United States* was too expensive.<sup>15</sup> Eisenhower, now chief of staff to the President, agreed with Bradley. Although he too had originally favored construction of the ship, he now felt otherwise.<sup>16</sup>

Johnson then conferred with Congress, spoke with President Truman who concurred with his plans, and on April 23 announced the cancellation of the *United States*. The Navy and its supporters were outraged, and Secretary James Sullivan, out of town when the announcement was made, resigned in protest. Soon after, rumors began circulating that the new Strategic Air Command (SAC) bomber, the Consolidated-Vultee (Convair) B-36, was not living up to expectations, but there were also unanswered questions regarding its contract. Newspaper columnist Hanson Baldwin, a Naval Academy graduate, wrote a piece hinting of fraudulent airplane contracts and "financial high jinks."<sup>17</sup> Because of such rumors the House Armed Services Committee, chaired by Carl Vinson, called for hearings on the matter.

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### Spurious Stories

The hearings began on August 9, 1949, and the first speaker was Congressman James Van Zandt, a commander in the naval Reserve. Van Zandt reiterated the rumors of fraud and misdoings that had been circulating. Referring to an anonymous document, he stated that reports had reached him of 55 allegations of wrongdoing, some linking Air Force Secretary Stuart Symington and Defense Secretary Johnson with Floyd Odlum, president of Convair—favors given in return for contracts. Van Zandt claimed four aircraft contracts had been cancelled in order to funnel more money toward Convair to buy more B-36s. Finally, he claimed plans were afoot for Symington to take over this expanded corporation. He wanted a full investigation.<sup>18</sup>

The hearings that followed were a fiasco. In response to Van Zandt's allegations, House committee staffers conducted an independent investigation and found nothing amiss. The Air Force then sent a number of witnesses to the stand to defend the B-36 and its procurement details. General George Kenney, commander of Air University, testified that he was in charge of procurement at Wright Field in 1941 when a solicitation was put out for a bomber that could fly 10,000 miles

and carry a 10,000-pound payload. There were four proposals, and the Consolidated entry (the company had not yet merged with Vultee) was the best—he recommended the design to General "Hap" Arnold, and the development contract was let. He soon left for another assignment and was not involved with the B-36 again until he was SAC commander in 1946. When briefed on the status of the program at that time, he was "not happy with the information that [he] got." The B-36 was not living up to expectations; there were problems with its engines and propellers, and its range was not what had been hoped. Kenney suggested the procurement decision be reconsidered.

Much was made by the Navy of this suggestion, seeming to indicate the operational commander in charge of the aircraft did not want it; therefore, fraud must have been involved in its continued development. Not so, said Kenney. Convair put new engines and props on the aircraft and difficulties with the landing gear and flaps were corrected. The range was increased. By June 1947, Kenney decided that "the trouble that I had not liked had been cured. The airplane had astonished me." When asked if pressure had been put on him to support the plane, he scoffed: "Nobody could sell me a bomber except the bomber." Congressman Van Zandt continued to push him on whether or not there were aircraft out there—like the Navy's "Banshee" jet fighter—that could intercept the bomber, but Kenney remained firm. He would take as many B-36s as Congress would give him.<sup>19</sup>

General Curtis LeMay, the SAC commander, followed and testified that on January 3, 1949, he had briefed the Air Force Senior Officers Board and asked for two additional groups and more aircraft for each group—72 more planes. That indicated his support for the bomber. He too was pressed on the charges of fraud and collusion in the production contract but retorted characteristically, "I expect that if I am called upon to fight I will order my crews out in those airplanes, and I expect to be in the first one myself." When pushed on the Navy's new fighter and similar developments in Britain or the Soviet Union, LeMay responded, "It's my business to know these things. I know of no night fighter that could be brought against us at the present time that would be at all effective." In conclusion he stated categorically, "I have been an advocate of the B-36 ever since I heard about it."<sup>20</sup>

General Vandenberg and Secretary Symington were equally forceful in their testimonies, with Vandenberg stating that LeMay knew more about strategic bombing than anyone in the world; if he said the B-36 would do the job, it would.<sup>21</sup> The arguments made by the Airmen were so convincing that the House realized the Navy's entire case depended upon Van Zandt's anonymous document. Demands were made to identify the accuser. The committee's council threatened to resign if that was not done.

Symington knew who wrote the document. When the rumors first began circulating, he asked his Office of Special Investigations to look into the matter. The investigators assumed the spurious stories were originating from the Navy Department, so they took samples from various typewriters. These were forwarded to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which compared them to the "anonymous document." They found a match. Symington provided this information to Vinson, who then called one Cedric Worth to the stand.<sup>22</sup>

Worth was a Hollywood script writer and Naval Reserve officer who served as an aide to Assistant Secretary of the Navy Dan Kimball. When asked if he knew who authored the document charging the Air Force with criminal malfeasance, Worth admitted he wrote it himself, but conceded he had no proof any of it was true. After some hostile questioning, Worth admitted it was all just a "tragic mistake."<sup>23</sup>

Worth's testimony was a show-stopper. The Navy and Van Zandt were embarrassed, and Vinson told the Sailors privately that evening he was going to bring the hearings to a close. Initially, he had intended to discuss the broader issue of unification and the Navy's role in future war, but Worth's testimony had forced his hand. Several admirals protested, but Vinson told them that they would have to wait until the following year when he would hold different hearings on unification and the Navy. The political climate was too charged with scandal to proceed.<sup>24</sup> The hearings closed on August 25 with a remarkable statement by Chairman Vinson: "There has been, in the judgment of the committee, not one iota, not one scintilla, of evidence offered thus far in these hearings that would support charges or insinuations that collusion, fraud, corruption, influence, or favoritism played any part whatsoever in the procurement of the B-36 bomber."<sup>25</sup>

### The Admirals Strike Back

It was a clear victory for the Air Force, but the matter was not over. The new Navy Secretary Francis Matthews called for an internal investigation to discover if Worth had received help from the Navy staff in composing his fiction. As it turned out, he had received a great deal of help.<sup>26</sup> This damning investigation prompted Matthews and Denfeld to agree that further hearings would not be in the Navy's best interest. But they would not get off so easily.

Captain John Crommelin was disturbed over unification and what he saw as unequal treatment of the Navy, so he leaked a classified document to the press revealing widespread discontent within his Service. He stated it was "necessary to the interests of national security" that he make the report public so there could be an airing of the issues.<sup>27</sup> Denfeld was reluctant to open barely closed wounds, but his staff was adamant that the Navy press on. They wanted new hearings to be used as a platform to debate defense priorities.<sup>28</sup>

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*Crommelin leaked a classified document to the press revealing widespread discontent within his Service*

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Vinson rescheduled the hearings for October 5, 1949. The Navy's arguments fell into three categories: the concept of an atomic strike by SAC was a poor strategy; the B-36—even if legally procured—was a substandard weapon that could not carry out the atomic strike; and the Navy was being treated as an unequal partner in the Defense Department.

Navy witnesses stated that Airmen were attempting to beguile the American people with promises of a "cheap victory." Atomic bombing would not work because the B-36 was an inferior aircraft and would not be able to penetrate Soviet defenses. Moreover, such an atomic blitz was immoral—even though the Navy was eager to participate in it. In an attempt to turn the tables on the Air Force, one admiral argued that it was the Airmen who were putting all their eggs in one basket—the B-36—and other important missions of tactical air support and airlift were being slighted.<sup>29</sup> Seamen claimed their budget was cut too drastically and they were threatened with impotency. The cancellation

of the *United States* was proof the Army and Air Force were ganging up on them. Denfeld, the final Navy witness, was particularly vocal about all of this.

The CNO began by noting apprehension within the Navy due to the trend "to arrest and diminish" its capabilities. Reductions to the fleet were the result of "arbitrary decisions imposed without consultation and without understanding." He argued that the air offensive "is not solely a function of the United States Air Force" and that the Navy should have a voice in deciding whether the B-36 should be procured at all. Denfeld stated categorically that "projection of our armed strength overseas and hence keeping the war from our homeland is a Navy task." The supercarrier's cancellation was "neither in accord with the spirit nor the concept of unification." He concluded by proclaiming, contradictorily, that he "supported the principle that each Service within budgetary limitations be permitted to design and develop its own weapons."<sup>30</sup>

General Bradley was aghast at this "Revolt of the Admirals" and later wrote, "Never in our military history had there been anything comparable—not even the Billy Mitchell rebellion of the 1920s—a complete breakdown in discipline occurred. Neither Matthews nor Denfeld could control his subordinates." Bradley lambasted Denfeld for letting "his admirals run amok. It was utterly disgraceful." He was especially irritated with the CNO for deliberately misrepresenting American war plans and atomic bomb tests in order to attack the Air Force.<sup>31</sup>

Vandenberg responded by beginning his testimony with a description of the organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, charged by law with developing war plans. They were assisted by a Joint Staff, consisting of equal numbers of officers from the three Services. At that time, the Joint Staff was headed by an admiral. The JCS were advised by civilian agencies led by distinguished scientists. All these groups had a hand in devising the current U.S. war plan—and this was the *national* war plan, not the Air Force plan. That plan called for an atomic air offensive to be carried out by Strategic Air Command. In its warfighting role, SAC worked for the JCS, not the Air Force, and its targets were selected by the Joint Staff. It was not the intent of the atomic air campaign to end the war; only surface forces could do that. Instead, the purpose of the air offensive was to serve as an equalizer to the millions of Soviet



Louis Johnson is sworn in as Secretary of Defense as James Forrestal looks on, March 28, 1949



XB-36

troops that greatly outnumbered U.S. forces. He asked if there was a better alternative: “Is it proposed that we build and maintain a standing Army capable of meeting the masses of an enemy army on the ground in equal man-to-man, body-to-body, gun-to-gun combat?”

### Let the Air Force Do Its Job

The B-36 was not a perfect aircraft, but it was the best heavy bomber in the world. It had already flown 5,000 miles, dropped a 10,000-pound bomb (the weight of an atomic bomb at the time), and returned to base, with most of the trip at an altitude of 40,000 feet. Regarding the claim the bomber would need escort, as had the B-17s, B-24s, and B-29s in World War II, the chief replied that SAC had its own fleet of fighter escorts to accompany the bombers partially on their way, but the distances involved were so great that escort to and from the target was infeasible; carrier-based aircraft would be even less useful.

As for the charge of overemphasis on bombardment, Vandenberg noted there were 48 combat groups in the Air Force, but only 4 were equipped with the B-36. If the Service was allowed to expand to 70 groups—its goal for the past 5 years—there would still be only 4 B-36 groups. When all aircraft available at the start of a war were counted, the B-36 comprised only 3 percent of the total.

Referring to the *United States*, Vandenberg argued the ship was not needed for the Navy’s primary functions. Funds were too scarce to buy weapons not in support of the approved war plan. That was what unification was all about—eliminating redundancy and wasteful overlap. The Air Force had been given strategic air warfare as a primary function by the Secretary of Defense, and that decision was ratified by the President. SAC existed to carry out that function. Let them do their job.<sup>32</sup> It was a clinching argument. One observer noted wryly that “What strength there was in the Admirals’ case was there by mistake.”<sup>33</sup> The Air Force had won its brief in Congress and in the court of public opinion.

As a result of the hearings, relations between the Air Force and Navy were strained for years. SAC got its B-36s, even though it soon was obvious the aircraft was only a stopgap. All-jet bombers like the B-47 and B-52 were already in development, and upon their entry into the inventory the B-36s would gradually be retired. Maintenance problems never went away entirely, although the bomber’s in-commission rate was not much

different from other new aircraft of that era. The “Peacemakers” served for over a decade, although they never saw combat, and the last B-36 was retired in 1959.

### Resisting Unification

The Navy lost a few senior officers. Denfeld was fired immediately after his appearance before the House.<sup>34</sup> Secretary Matthews knew something was amiss when Denfeld refused to show him his testimony in advance, although the admiral had promised he would. Later, Denfeld said he was sorry for breaking his promise, but he was determined to make his case despite its violation of norms. He said his subordinates

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*the purpose of the air offensive was to serve as an equalizer to the millions of Soviet troops that greatly outnumbered U.S. forces*

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thought he was too soft; he had to show them he was “hard-boiled.” Matthews later claimed he had already decided he could not live with Denfeld. His testimony to Congress was the last straw: “I could not administer the office with a CNO I could not trust. There are not two policies in the Navy: there is only one policy.”<sup>35</sup> In his letter to President Truman detailing his reasons for firing his top officer, Matthews wrote: “Very soon after I assumed office, it became clear to me that there was definite resistance on the part of some naval officers to accepting unification of the Armed Services, notwithstanding the fact that it was established by law.” As for the specific incident resulting in Denfeld’s relief, the Secretary stated, “A military establishment is not a political democracy. Integrity of command is indispensable at all times. There can be no twilight zone in the measure of loyalty to superiors and respect for authority existing between various official ranks. Inability to conform to such requirements for military stability would disqualify any of us for positions subordinate to the Commander in Chief.”<sup>36</sup> It was a devastating indictment.

The roles and missions subject was toxic, and it had erupted into a startling display of insubordination. Sailors believed the Air Force message: strategic bombing with atomic weapons was the future of war,

and their institutional survival depended on a share of the atomic pie. The Key West and Newport agreements precluded such a move, and the Navy was desperate to find a way out of that box canyon. Regrettably, they chose a path that did them disservice. Although the resultant hearings totally exonerated the Air Force, some Navy zealots demanded further hearings. These revealed malaise within the fleet because Sailors did not enjoy the status and primacy they felt was their right. They had grown used to a President who had been a Navy assistant secretary (Franklin Roosevelt), a Defense Secretary with a Navy background (Forrestal), and a chief of staff to the President who was an admiral (Leahy). This did not strike Sailors as biased in their favor, yet they objected to a new President (Truman), a new Defense Secretary (Johnson), and a new chief of staff (Eisenhower) who had Army backgrounds. The admirals saw no inconsistency in their stance.

In one sense, the long-term result of the revolt was minimal. The Navy eventually got its big-deck carriers and nuclear weapons went to sea. The biggest loser was national security. The smears by uniformed officers against their civilian superiors and colleagues were a serious blot on the American military tradition. Worse, the Revolt of the Admirals caused a lingering ill will and distrust within the Services—the baleful maladies that unification of the armed forces was designed to correct. Worse still, less than a year later, the United States would be at war in Korea.

Inter-Service rivalry is as old as the Services themselves. Competition is a good thing and the American way, but at times this rivalry can overstep its bounds and become dangerous as one Service either distorts the truth or actively works to undermine the efforts of a sister Service. Such baleful actions are generally most common during periods of fiscal austerity. The Services then begin to face severe cutbacks and fear their ability to carry out their wartime missions will be comprised. At such times, jointness is too easily forgotten and the Services become parochial rather than competitive.

The current economic situation in the United States is often stated to be the worst since the Great Depression. Budget cuts are inevitable, and it is likely the Defense Department will endure its share. It is the duty of Service leaders, both military and civilian, to ensure the resultant budget struggles are



handled with professionalism, honesty, and honor. The disgraceful events of 1949 must not be repeated. JFQ

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Harry S. Truman, "Our Armed Forces Must be Unified," *Colliers*, August 26, 1944, 16; Alfred C. Cole et al., eds., *The Department of Defense: Documents on Establishment and Organization, 1944–1978* (Washington, DC: Secretary of Defense Historical Office, 1978), 7–17.

<sup>2</sup> Steven L. Rearden, *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense: Vol. I: The Formative Years, 1947–1950* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1984), 385–393.

<sup>3</sup> The terms *missions*, *roles*, and *functions* are often used interchangeably but have separate meanings: a mission is a task assigned to a unified or combatant command; a role is a broad and enduring purpose for which a Service was established; and a function is a specific responsibility assigned to a Service that permits it to fulfill one of its roles. See Warren A. Trest, *Air Force Roles and Missions: A History* (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998), ix.

<sup>4</sup> Letter, Forrestal to Truman, "Functions of the Armed Forces and the Joint Chiefs of Staff," April 21, 1948, in Richard I. Wolf, *The United States Air Force: Basic Documents on Roles and Missions* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1987), 155.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 165–166.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Millis and E.S. Duffield, eds., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking, 1951), 392.

<sup>7</sup> This memorandum was leaked to the press on April 10, 1948. See Paul Y. Hammond, *Super Carriers and B–36 Bombers: Appropriations, Strategy, and Politics* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), 14.

<sup>8</sup> "Chronology of Changes in Key West Agreements, April 1948–January 1958," Joint Chiefs of Staff Historical Study, February 7, 1958, National Archives, RG 218, file CCS 337, box 96.

<sup>9</sup> Rearden, 402.

<sup>10</sup> Millis and Duffield, 393, 467; "Press Release for Secretary Forrestal," March 26, 1948, in "Public Statements by the Secretaries of Defense" microfilm, University Publications of America, reel 1.

<sup>11</sup> Memorandum, Vandenberg to Forrestal, May 26, 1949, Vandenberg papers, LOC, box 52.

<sup>12</sup> Robert S. Allen and William V. Shannon, *The Truman Merry-Go-Round* (New York: Vanguard, 1950), 446; "Mr. Secretary Johnson," *Newsweek*, July 25, 1949, 19.

<sup>13</sup> Memorandum, Denfeld to Johnson, April 22, 1949, Vandenberg papers, LOC, box 52. The *United States* would be 158 feet longer and 77 feet wider than the largest existing carrier at the time, the *Midway*.

<sup>14</sup> "Supercarrier Study," March 28, 1949, Vandenberg papers, LOC, box 97; memorandum,

Vandenberg to Johnson, April 23, 1949, Vandenberg papers, LOC, box 52.

<sup>15</sup> Memorandum, Bradley to Johnson, April 22, 1949, Vandenberg papers, LOC, box 52.

<sup>16</sup> Hammond, 28. The position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was not established until August 1949.

<sup>17</sup> Hanson W. Baldwin, "War Plane Orders Face Examination by Congressmen," *The New York Times*, May 24, 1949, 1; and "Inquiry on the B–36 Bomber," *The New York Times*, July 21, 1949, 3.

<sup>18</sup> Congress, House, Armed Services Committee, *Investigation of the B–36 Bomber Program*, 81<sup>st</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949), 13–15. The contents of the "anonymous document" are found on pages 528–533.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*; Kenney's testimony runs from pages 115–139.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*; LeMay's testimony runs from pages 139–163.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*; Vandenberg's testimony runs from pages 165–205.

<sup>22</sup> Edward J. Hagerty, *Air Force Office of Special Investigations, 1948 to 2000* (Washington, DC: Department of the Air Force, 2001), 60–61.

<sup>23</sup> *Investigation of the B–36 Bomber Program*, 610–611. Also see "Author of Letter Describes Career," *The New York Times*, August 25, 1949, 5.

<sup>24</sup> "Notes on meeting with representative of Navy League in SECNAV's office," January 11, 1950, 3–4, copy received from U.S. Naval Institute. Matthews met with the Navy League representatives to discuss the relief of Admiral Denfeld, and in the course of the discussion, he referred to the "cowardly anonymous attack" made by Cedric Worth with the connivance of several Navy members. Of note, Vinson had been chairman of the old House Committee on Naval Affairs and was close to many senior naval officers.

<sup>25</sup> *Investigation of the B–36 Bomber Program*, 654.

<sup>26</sup> Murray Green, "Stuart Symington and the B–36" (Ph.D. diss., American University, 1969), chapter 13; "House to Fight Air Force Slash," *Aviation Week*, September 5, 1949, 16; Hammond, 40–41.

<sup>27</sup> Hanson W. Baldwin, "Danger in Defense Row," *The New York Times*, September 15, 1949, 13; "Navy Inquiry," *Aviation Week*, September 19, 1949, 16.

<sup>28</sup> "Notes on Meeting with Navy League and SECNAV," 4–6.

<sup>29</sup> Congress, House, Armed Services Committee, *The National Defense Program—Unification and Strategy*, 81<sup>st</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949), 46–52.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 350–361.

<sup>31</sup> Omar Bradley and Clair Blair, *A General's Life: An Autobiography by General of the Army Omar N. Bradley* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 488, 507–510. Several times during his testimony, Denfeld referred to a top secret report that examined the capability of the Air Force to carry

out the war plan—when asked for details, he coyly responded he was not allowed to comment further due to classification issues.

<sup>32</sup> See *The National Defense Program—Unification and Strategy*, 451–469, for Vandenberg's testimony.

<sup>33</sup> "State of the Unification," *Economist*, October 22, 1949, 893–894.

<sup>34</sup> For the Navy's side of this episode, see Jeffrey G. Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals: The Fight for Naval Aviation, 1945–1950* (Washington, DC: Naval History Center, 1994).

<sup>35</sup> "Notes on Meeting with Navy League and SECNAV," 8–10.

<sup>36</sup> Letter, Matthews to Truman, October 2, 1949, copy provided by U.S. Naval Institute.