



Left to right, Henry H. Arnold, Joseph T. McNarney, George C. Marshall, Brehon B. Somervell, and Lesley J. McNair (NDU Special Collections)

# Leadership and Operational Art in World War II

## The Case for General Lesley J. McNair

By Christopher J. Lamb

The U.S. Army's reputation for effectiveness during World War II has not fared well over time, particularly regarding the European theater of operations. This is surprising given what the Army accomplished. Just to refresh the reader's memory, the United States went to war with a small, impoverished Army that conducted maneuvers with wooden weapons and borrowed vehicles in the years leading up to World War II. Yet within 12 months of Germany declaring war on the United States, the Army invaded North Africa and knocked Vichy French forces out of the war. In another 12 months, it knocked Italy out of the war. And 12 months later, the Army was on the border of Germany, having just defeated Adolf Hitler's last-gasp effort to stop the Allied onslaught.

Nevertheless, these achievements seem to have diminished over time. By way of illustration, ask any military officer which of the following factors best explains U.S. victories in the European theater during World War II:

- Army leaders executed an organizational miracle in quickly creating competent armies that won a series of victories from North Africa to the heart of Germany.
- The Russians did the preponderance of fighting, leaving an exhausted Wehrmacht to be mopped up by the relatively incapable Army.
- The American people tightened their collective belt so U.S. and Russian forces together could overwhelm the German military with vastly superior numbers of . . . well, everything!

Fifty years ago, most readers would have chosen the first statement; today, few would. This sad fact is one reason all serious students of U.S. military performance should read Mark Calhoun's new biography *General Lesley J. McNair: Unsung Architect of the U.S. Army*.

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“Should” is the key word, for as Calhoun points out, McNair is often overlooked or maligned by historians and even those within the Army to which he dedicated his life.

There are several reasons why McNair is not much appreciated today. Most immediately, he spent most of his career in staff assignments rather than commanding forces in the field. For many observers this fact alone disqualifies McNair as a subject worthy of serious study. Even Calhoun’s colleagues at the Army’s School of Advanced Military Studies, where he is an associate professor, advised against his researching McNair. Most military historians seem to agree there is little to learn from McNair since they ignore or disparage McNair without actually bothering to research his career and decisions. More broadly, Calhoun suspects the lack of interest in McNair’s career reflects the currently prevailing view that the U.S. Army performed poorly in World War II and that the United States only won the war by sharing astounding materiel abundance with its Allies. Some go even further, and argue the richly supplied Army was relatively incapable even compared to a war-weary Wehrmacht *because* it was led by men like McNair who got more wrong than they got right when preparing the Army for war.

Calhoun was undeterred by these narratives and his colleagues’ recommendation, and the result is a superb biography that contributes to the growing literature that challenges the reigning scholarship on Army performance in World War II. It is puzzling that McNair, a man so respected by leaders as diverse as Generals John Pershing and George Marshall, should fall into disrepute. Our Allies, and even our enemies, had much better things to say about McNair’s work than contemporary historians. Keenly aware of how isolationist sentiments kept the Army prostrate during the interwar years, both friends and foes were shocked by its sudden emergence as a global force.

Winston Churchill considered the sudden rise of the U.S. Army “a prodigy of organization.” He thought the mass production of divisions was an unparalleled “spectacle”:

*I saw the creation of this mighty force—this mighty Army, victorious in every theater against the enemy in so short a time and from such a very small parent stock. This is an achievement which the soldiers of every other country will always study with admiration and with envy. But that is not the whole story, nor even the greatest part of the story. To create great Armies is one thing; to lead them and to handle them is another. It remains to me a mystery as yet unexplained how the very small staffs which the United States kept during the years of peace were able not only to build up the Armies and Air Force units, but also to find the leaders and vast staffs capable of handling enormous masses and of moving them faster and farther than masses have ever been moved in war before.<sup>1</sup>*

Churchill attributed the Army’s triumph of organization and arms to its professional officer corps, who were “able to preserve the art not only of creating mighty armies almost at the stroke of a wand—but of leading and guiding those armies upon a scale incomparably greater than anything that was prepared for or even dreamed of.”

America’s enemies were also surprised by the Army’s achievement. Erwin Rommel is often cited in this respect. The renowned German general acknowledged the Americans could not be compared to his own veteran troops but drew little consolation from his early victory over the Army at Kasserine Pass in North Africa. He stated the Americans “made up for their lack of experience by their far better and more plentiful equipment and their tactically more flexible command,” noting that “the tactical conduct of the enemy’s defense had been first class. They had recovered very quickly after the first shock and had soon succeeded in damping up our advance.” After D-Day, Rommel was even more impressed and, like Churchill, attributed the success to stellar leadership: “The leaders of the American economy and the American General Staff have achieved miracles,” and “the organization, training, and equipment of the U.S. Army all bear witness to great imagination and foresight.” He claimed:

*European generals of the old school could certainly have executed the invasion with the forces available, but they could never have prepared it—neither technically, organizationally, nor in the field of training. The functioning of the Allied fighting machine, with all its complexity, surprised even me, and I already had a fairly high opinion of their powers.*

Calhoun explains how the Army achieved its successes and why they are now so roundly dismissed. In answering the latter question he rebuts supercilious British historians and generals who, he believes, have skewed the historical record. He cites Gerhard Weinberg’s observation about British disappointment in American performance at Kasserine: “It is difficult to understand,” Weinberg stated, why the British “found it so hard to comprehend that the Americans’ taking several months to learn what it had taken [the British] army and its leaders three years” to learn “was a good, not a bad, sign for the Allied cause.”

Calhoun also aligns his work with growing scholarship that questions the “material preponderance thesis,” arguing that the Soldiers who:

*fought their way across Western Europe to defeat Germany did so in the face of disadvantages that make the material preponderance argument seem like fantasy [and did so against] a tenacious . . . German army that remained a competent and determined foe, fighting to protect its homeland and benefiting from shorter lines of communication and increasingly compact front lines.*

Calhoun reviews the literature on comparative combat effectiveness of U.S. and German units, citing some recent studies arguing the Army bested the Wehrmacht when they met on equal terms. He believes men like General McNair were largely responsible for the solid Army performance:

*The U.S. army could and did stand toe to toe against the German army and win, in battle after battle and campaign after campaign, [which] resulted largely from*

*the army's logical organization and sound doctrine, as well as the arduous training that helped American citizen-soldiers learn this doctrine and overcome their lack of combat experience.*

Calhoun knows he has an uphill battle in challenging the established view of Army performance but optimistically asserts that “careful research and compelling arguments can eventually change even the most well-entrenched narratives.”

To this end, Calhoun makes a comprehensive case for a reappraisal of Army performance while charting McNair’s career path in detail. His case does not rest on the ad hominem argument that biased British commentators have dominated World War II scholarship, or even on the awkward and ultimately less-than-relevant comparisons of the relative combat effectiveness of individual U.S. and German divisions. Instead, his argument for a reappraisal of Army World War II performance has three main elements, all of which emphasize operational factors.

First, he emphasizes just how handicapped the Army was in terms of human and material resources before and during the war. Most readers know the Army was small and inadequately equipped before the war. They may even know that British observers of Army prewar maneuvers declared it would be outright murder to send American troops against the Germans. But readers may be surprised to discover how much President Franklin D. Roosevelt deprived the military in the years leading up to World War II (for example, cutting officer pay by 15 percent while requiring Army officers to run Civilian Conservation Corps programs that had to avoid any semblance of military ethos for the participants). General Marshall could not get the President to take even a 40-minute drive to Fort Belvoir to observe Army ground training before the war.

Readers also may be surprised to discover that Americans did *not* tighten their belts to enable the arsenal of democracy to overwhelm the Axis powers with American abundance. On the contrary, “consumer spending in America went

up (as a percentage of GDP) every year of the war.” For this startling tidbit and other aspects of the national economic mismanagement of the war, Calhoun relies on compelling scholarship by Jim Lacey.<sup>2</sup> Americans wanted guns and butter and they got them, but at some cost to the Army, which endured personnel and material shortages that affected Army force design and mobilization plans. The Army halted most weapons development programs in 1936, and they were not resumed until 1939 or 1940. When resources did begin to flow the Army was disadvantaged in favor of air and naval power because U.S. leaders like Roosevelt believed World War II would be a “war of machines rather than men.”

The Army also suffered acute personnel shortages. With only 5 percent of volunteers opting to serve in infantry or armor, the Army was short 330,000 men by September 1942. Manpower limitations help explain the lack of a rotation base for infantry divisions and the practice of feeding individual replacements into frontline units, which produced many quick casualties. Low-quality recruits were another limitation McNair had to deal with. The Army received a grossly disproportionate share of the lowest quality recruits in terms of size, health, and intelligence. Even more surprising is the extent to which the Army allocated the small percentage of high-quality recruits it did receive to Army Service Forces and Army Air Forces (McNair’s competitors for resources) on the grounds that operating their equipment demanded better personnel.

These air and support units hogged resources while doing their best to remain independent of McNair’s Army Ground Forces, which bore the brunt of tough missions and casualties; this was an organizational imbalance that Calhoun gently insists must be laid at Marshall’s feet. Shipping was also a limiting factor for the Army. Marshall told Roosevelt in January 1943 that the Army could replace personnel more easily than lost shipping. Even America’s Allies sometimes seemed to take precedence over McNair’s Army Ground Forces. As another source relates, the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored

Division fought in North Africa in late 1942 with light, under-gunned tanks while the British at El Alamein several months earlier had enough new U.S. M4 Sherman medium tanks to equip an entire armored division.<sup>3</sup> Calhoun argues McNair understood the impact of all these key shortages and limitations well before other officers, and necessarily adjusted force design to emphasize efficiency as well as effectiveness.

The second element in Calhoun’s case is how, despite the neglect and second-class status, Army leaders such as Generals McNair, George S. Patton, and Albert C. Wedemeyer studied the German military and built an impressive force that proved equal to the task of defeating the Wehrmacht on its own turf at the end of extended American lines of communication. Army officers learned a great deal from World War I, but mostly how unprepared the Nation was for modern warfare. They knew that if the United States was to avoid the stunning losses the American Expeditionary Forces suffered in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive (more than 100,000 casualties in 47 days of fighting), the Army needed a new doctrinal foundation and training regime. McNair was able to resolve ongoing controversy over the design, size, and composition of Army divisions when others could not, earning Marshall’s moniker as “the brains of the army.” McNair was able to push out 14 divisions in 1942, 16 more in 1943, and 48 more in 1944 before hitting the wall with a mere 8 divisions in 45. Because of McNair, Calhoun argues, the Army “deployed to combat well-trained, in logically organized units, with a mechanized combined arms doctrine that proved appropriate to the World War II battlefield.”

An interesting aspect of Calhoun’s case for superior Army performance that distinguishes him from most of the other so-called revisionist historians is his emphasis on learning as opposed to adaptation. Calhoun notes that, intentionally or not, many of these historians leave readers with the impression that “the U.S. Army faced a situation for which it lacked the appropriate training, equipment, and leadership—yet somehow it

possessed a unique ability to find novel and innovative approaches to fight and thereby overcome its many limitations.” In contrast, Calhoun argues the primary way the Army succeeded was by “learning how to fight as it was trained, organized, and equipped” to do so. Certainly this was McNair’s view of what success required. He put little stock in the wartime propaganda that assured the American public that the creative, adaptive spirit of free citizen-soldiers would invariably defeat the goosestepping automatons of the Third Reich. McNair put his faith in realistic training and did his best to provide it, knowing such training could favorably flatten and shorten the learning curve Soldiers would invariably experience in real combat. Calhoun makes a strong case that McNair succeeded and that the Army learned from training and combat how to execute its doctrine to good effect. It did not have to “adapt” its doctrine on the fly to defeat the Germans.

The third part of Calhoun’s case is that Army performance must be judged with operational as well as tactical and strategic criteria. Historians who focus on the strategic level of war are impressed by the casualties the Russians absorbed and inflicted on the Germans, and the role U.S. material support played in Russian success. Calhoun does not think these facts should blind historians to the reality that Eisenhower’s operational strategy accurately accounted for U.S. strategic advantages and limitations, which were reflected in the way the Army was organized, trained, equipped, and employed. Albeit widely interpreted now as too timid, Eisenhower’s operational strategy of maintaining pressure all along the Western front and not overextending the line in a salient that would invite German counterattack was successful. Eisenhower understood that fragile coalition unity—easily ruptured by military reverses—was an imperative. He also understood that because of limited Army resources, the large numbers of U.S. troops pouring onto the Western front were increasingly ill-trained and at the end of a fragile supply chain. Calhoun’s response to the armchair generals who argue with success is that Eisenhower was correct to “doggedly



Upon his arrival in Washington, General Ben Lear (left) greets injured General McNair (NDU Special Collections)

adhere to [his broad front strategy] despite some subordinates’ desire to pursue a more aggressive operational approach.” It ensured, Calhoun states, “the logistical sustainability of Allied operations—a skill the Wehrmacht never mastered, despite the boldness of its commanders and its impressive tactical prowess.”

If some commentators focus too much on the strategic setting and ignore logistical and other operational constraints, others make an even greater mistake by focusing singularly on German tactical excellence, according to Calhoun. The battle at Kasserine Pass is a case in point. Calhoun argues that viewed as a months-long campaign, American forces learned from early tactical reverses, employed their doctrine and training, and emerged victorious.

As for individual weapon systems, many historians consider it shocking that U.S. tanks and antitank weapons were inferior to the best German models. Given the paucity of funding and lack of preparedness prior to World War II, it is surprising that American weapons were not outclassed more often. Army leaders understood their subordinates’ frustration with their less-capable weapons. Eisenhower early on “ordered Patton to conduct demonstrations of the M3 Stuart light tank penetrating the armor of captured German Panzer IVs to improve his troops’ confidence in the 37mm gun.” But McNair knew the 37-mm antitank weapon was underpowered, and said so. As Calhoun notes, McNair did not control the Army Ordnance Department or establish broader resource priorities.



Lesley J. McNair in his office at the Army War College (NDU Special Collections)

According to Calhoun, “The limitation in American production and shipping capacity that made fielding new weapon systems particularly challenging” was something Army leaders like McNair had to live with. New and better tanks and tank destroyers were delivered late in the war but McNair had to construct a doctrine and training regime based on what he had and not what he hoped he might receive at some point.

That doctrine emphasized combined arms and maneuver, which helps explain the lack of a heavy tank equal to what the Germans fielded. Calhoun argues that a conscious decision was made to go with the reliable and fast Sherman as part of a combined arms package that worked well until the later stages of the war when the Germans deployed their heaviest tanks. Heavy tanks and their onerous support requirements could not be delivered in time by Army Ordnance and would have imposed logistical burdens at the expense of other critical elements of the combined arms package, which, taken as a whole, did a good job of destroying German tanks of all sizes. Artillery, airpower, and antitank weapons were intended to be the primary means of killing enemy tanks. Thus, according to Calhoun, Army Ground Forces “possessed combined arms doctrine, organizations, and

equipment that made it superior to the Wehrmacht in combat effectiveness, despite the threat posed by German heavy tanks.” He cites Eisenhower in this regard, who reported that “in pieces of artillery, the enemy has lost eight to our one [and] we have knocked out twice as many tanks as we have lost.”

Calhoun explains how McNair’s entire career prepared him well for the task of fielding and training Army divisions in combined arms warfare. He excelled in diverse assignments but especially took advantage of his educational opportunities. While teaching Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) courses at Purdue University, he published influential articles on military affairs. He also debated Christian pacifists who wanted to end ROTC and forswear all military preparedness, arguing they practiced “treason under the guise of religion.” Later his research at the Army War College was considered to be of “exceptional merit” and forwarded by the commandant to the War Department. Still later, Marshall handpicked McNair to serve as commandant of the Army’s Command and Staff College because he wanted its methods and curriculum updated, which McNair did, advancing Army doctrine in the process. McNair made the most of all these opportunities

to evaluate and better understand the mobile, mechanized warfare that he and other Army generals fully expected would characterize the coming war in Europe.

Prejudice against staff assignments and staff-heavy careers notwithstanding, anyone who reads Calhoun’s book will likely conclude McNair was a quintessential “soldier’s soldier.” He was taciturn, formal, disciplined, physically fit, energetic, and faithfully implemented decisions by his superiors without complaint whether he agreed with them or not. He did not play office politics, build a cult of personality, or seek attention from the press. In fact, he became more reserved and more focused on his work over time, in large part because of his poor hearing, which deteriorated over the course of his career and contributed to social isolation, but which he accepted matter-of-factly.

McNair deplored large staffs. He believed they skewed the tooth-to-tail ratio and shifted the collective burden to the relative few on the frontlines. He made sure General Marshall knew infantry made up 11 percent of Army personnel but suffered 60 percent of the casualties during the campaign in Italy, and could not make rapid headway because the frontline Soldiers were grossly outnumbered by their support troops. Worldwide, during the first half of 1944, Army Ground Forces took 83 percent of the casualties while only constituting 35 percent of U.S. forces. McNair believed that “American soldiers were sustaining avoidable casualties . . . because their natural leaders (of course, with exceptions) sat at desks or tended machines well behind the lines.” This greatly upset McNair, who made a point of keeping his hard-working staff minuscule and all Army Ground Force overhead positions lean compared to the bloated staffs his competitors built up in Army Service Forces and Army Air Forces. By 1945 the percentage of McNair’s Army Ground Forces in overhead positions was 4.1 percent compared to 22.9 and 32.2 percent for Army Service Forces and Army Air Forces, respectively.

McNair was a straight talker. Years before Patton made his colorful speeches to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army in 1944, McNair gave the

entire Army and the Nation a “blood and guts” speech on Armistice Day, December 1, 1942. He told his audience, “It is the avowed purpose of the Army to make killers of all of you.” He stated that Soldiers had to make a “fiendish transformation” and “hate more and more,” and that “those of you who do not hate now are going to do so later.” He explained that although war kills by fire so far as possible, “modern war” also required close combat and even hand-to-hand combat for final victory against a determined enemy. He did not want any illusions about fighting antiseptically with detachment:

*Our soldiers must have the fighting spirit. If you call that hating our enemies, then we must hate with every fiber of our being. We must lust for battle; our object in life must be to kill; we must scheme and plan night and day to kill. . . . Since killing is the object of our efforts, the sooner we get in the killing mood, the better and more skillful we shall be when the real test comes. The struggle is for survival—kill or be killed.*

McNair noted that polling reportedly indicated that:

*One half of you expect the war to end within two years. But your reason must tell you that it will end only when you finish it. If you intend to do the job in two years, make yourself into fighting devils now, not later. . . . You are going to get killing mad eventually, why not now while you have time to learn thoroughly the art of killing. Soldiers learn quickly and well in battle—no doubt about that—but the method is costly to both you and the Nation.<sup>4</sup>*

McNair’s objective was to motivate his troops to expect the worst and minimize it by rigorous training while they still had the opportunity. His speech shocked some Americans, and Calhoun only quotes a single paragraph from it, but it deserves to be read in its entirety as a model of empirical analysis, transparency, candor, reason, and moving oratory.

McNair was also “joint” for his time period. He battled branch parochialism in his attempts to provide effective, combined arms support for frontline

troops. Contrary to many accounts and assumptions, he was not partial to his branch, which was artillery. As General Paul F. Gorman remarks in a study of Army training, McNair wanted highly realistic training and impartial training assessments, stating, “The truth is sought, regardless of whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, or whether it supports or condemns our present organization and tactics.”<sup>5</sup> Among the interesting anecdotes Calhoun relates in this regard is McNair’s clashes with Billy Mitchell and Hap Arnold as a result of his leading a joint analytic effort to determine the most effective mix of forces for defending Hawaii. Both men were branch “partisans” who were guilty of intentional misrepresentations, according to Calhoun. In contrast, McNair took a combined arms approach to warfighting. Calhoun effectively makes the case that throughout McNair’s career his objective, rigorous analysis of military force development and training issues explains why his superior officers kept rewarding him with advancement.

Calhoun’s book is excellent but not without some imperfections. To paraphrase another reviewer in another context, it is so good we cannot help wishing it were better. As others have noted, it would benefit from more data and charts to help illustrate comparative funding levels between and within the Services, the extent to which Army logistics were insufferably strained, and the differences between types of divisions and their equipment. Calhoun’s explanation of Army organizational politics also leaves something to be desired. Often when he asserts McNair did not have the authority to resolve an issue, it is hard to understand why, and the reader suspects Calhoun may be giving McNair the benefit of the doubt too often. Many sources believe McNair could have done better if he had experimented with more and better integrated combined arms elements, but Calhoun typically attributes such shortcomings to inadequate resources and authority, often but not always making a compelling case.

Calhoun does agree, however, that McNair was loath to take bureaucratic politics seriously, unlike his protagonists in Army Service Forces and Army

Air Forces, something he attributes to McNair’s personality and respect for the chain of command. For example, McNair’s Army Ground Forces controlled tank training but not tank production, unlike the Army Air Forces, which managed to gain direct control over aircraft procurement. Rather than fight these sorts of bureaucratic battles, McNair seemed to believe integrating the efforts of functional commands of equal rank was the job of the next higher echelon in the chain of command (that is, General Marshall).

Also, while Calhoun is well-acquainted with most sources, as another reviewer notes, he could have used other Army officer remembrances of McNair (including his subordinates) more extensively to better explain his behaviors and bureaucratic challenges.<sup>6</sup> For example, he missed Major J.E. Raymond’s insightful description of the informal atmosphere in McNair’s headquarters and of McNair’s indefatigable and parsimonious approach to his work as documented in Phyllis J. McClellan’s *Silent Sentinel on the Potomac, Fort McNair, 1791–1991*. He also missed a superb treatment of McNair’s development of doctrine and training in General Paul F. Gorman’s *The Secret of Future Victories*.<sup>7</sup>

Calhoun’s account of how General McNair’s career ended is poignant. He notes that McNair seemed downcast—despondent over the War Department’s bureaucracy, the consistent short-changing of ground forces, and even pessimistic about the problems confronting the Army and its conduct of the war. As the Army had to cover increasing combat losses, it began to eat into the training base and disrupt unit integrity, forcing McNair to issue triage guidance for training priorities, safeguarding individual and small-unit training at the expense of larger-unit maneuvers.<sup>8</sup> It must have been excruciating for McNair, who had done so much with so little, to have to increasingly push Soldiers forward to battle in patchwork divisions not properly prepared for the test of battle.

Ironically, McNair suffered the quick fate he feared for the many green troops he prepared for war. He was assigned



After arriving in Washington, General and Mrs. McNair were taken to their Army War College quarters (NDU Special Collections)

command of field forces in Europe, where he was soon killed on the frontlines. As Calhoun relates, close observation was a hallmark of McNair's approach to problem-solving over the years. He pioneered observed-fires for artillery, made a habit of observing training up close, and had previously been wounded in North Africa while observing fighting too closely. Told his presence boosted troop morale, he returned to the frontlines a second day in a row. He was killed by bombs inaccurately dropped by the Army Air Forces' B-24 long-range strategic bombers, which were pressed into service for close air support. Thus, the man whose career is now dismissed as uninteresting because so much of it was spent in staff assignments became the only American lieutenant general ever killed in combat. A few weeks later his son and only child was killed in the Pacific by a Japanese sniper, leaving Mrs. McNair totally bereft.

In his speech lauding the American Army, Churchill stated the unparalleled organizational proficiency of the Army in World War II came from a small, professional corps of Army leaders who "frugally, modestly, industriously, faithfully" pursued "professional studies and duties" for a long period of time without

public appreciation. It was, Churchill stated, "a gift made by the Officer Corps of the United States to their nation in time of trouble," one that he hoped would not be forgotten. Calhoun's book depicts the extent to which the gift has been forgotten, particularly the sacrifices made by McNair, the unsung architect of the U.S. Army. Fortunately, Calhoun's book also admirably provides a compelling correction to this egregious oversight.

The import of Calhoun's biography goes well beyond the contribution it makes to World War II historiography and the ongoing debate over U.S. Army performance during that period. His impressive recounting of McNair's career is a reminder that effective leadership—particularly in the military—can best be measured by organizational performance and that superior performance requires education, experimentation, and rigorous training. The branch (and Service) parochialism McNair labored to overcome in favor of better combined arms performance, and the careful attention he paid to force design, doctrine, and training, are still important issues for the Army and Pentagon more broadly.

As another reviewer wryly muses, McNair's experience makes us wonder,

"Does the Army achieve synergy among the staff, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, and U.S. Army Forces Command, or do unnecessary friction, redundancy, and bureaucratic infighting remain?"<sup>1</sup> Indeed, given the prejudice against staff assignments that Calhoun's colleagues assume to be the norm today, we have to ask whether military leaders really appreciate the critical importance of contributions from officers with McNair-like credentials. Put differently, would serving as "the brains of the Army" (or the joint force) any longer be a sure-fire path to promotion, or even considered a compliment?

In any case, for this reviewer, who works at General McNair's namesake installation, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Calhoun's book is a must-read. It also is a moving reminder that we must come to work every day intent on trying to contribute to military performance with the same spirit of objectivity and determination that exemplified General McNair's long, distinguished, and selfless career. JFQ

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Winston Churchill, "Address to American and British Service Members, The Pentagon, Washington, DC, March 9, 1946," in *The Sinews of Peace: Post-War Speeches* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1949).

<sup>2</sup> Mark T. Calhoun, *General Lesley J. McNair: Unsung Architect of the U.S. Army* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015), 201. See Jim Lacey, *Keep from All Thoughtful Men: How U.S. Economists Won World War II* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Paul F. Gorman, *The Secret of Future Victories* (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, February 1992), II-1-II-57.

<sup>4</sup> The speech can be read in its entirety at <[www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1942/1942-11-11d.html](http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1942/1942-11-11d.html)>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II-14.

<sup>6</sup> This point is made by T.J. Johnson, book review, *Cavalry and Armor Journal*, April–June 2016, 48.

<sup>7</sup> Phyllis J. McClellan, *Silent Sentinel on the Potomac, Fort McNair, 1791–1991* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1993), 154.

<sup>8</sup> Gorman, II-38–39.

<sup>9</sup> Gregory Fontenot, "Efficiency Guru McNair Managed Army Growth," *Army*, March 2016, 69.