

1992

Truman Smith : United States military attaché : an examination of his career

W. Karin Hall
San Jose State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses

Recommended Citation

Hall, W. Karin, "Truman Smith : United States military attaché : an examination of his career" (1992). *Master's Theses*. 322.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.d5qu-y84e>
https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/322

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

U·M·I

University Microfilms International
A Beil & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

Order Number 1348683

**Truman Smith: United States military attaché. An examination
of his career**

Hall, W. Karin, M.A.

San Jose State University, 1992

Copyright ©1992 by Hall, W. Karin. All rights reserved.

U·M·I
300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

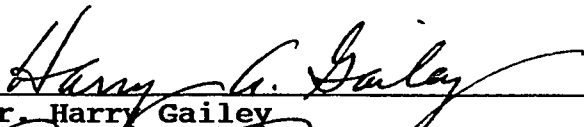
**TRUMAN SMITH:
UNITED STATES MILITARY ATTACHÉ**
An Examination of his Career

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
San Jose State University

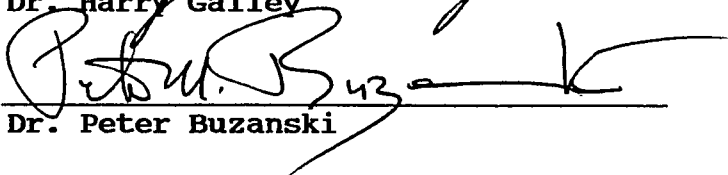
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
W. Karin Hall
June, 1992


APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



Dr. Harry Gailey



Dr. Peter Buzanski



Dr. Charles Burdick

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE
COMMITTEE



ABSTRACT

Truman Smith: United States Military Attaché An Examination of his Career

by W. Karin Hall

This thesis charts the professional army career of Truman Smith, who lived from 1893 to 1970. After graduating from Yale, Smith fought in France in World War I, and served as liaison officer with the American occupation forces in Koblenz, Rhineland. In 1920 he was reassigned to Berlin as assistant military attaché under commissioner Ellis Dresel and Ambassador Alanson B. Houghton. In this capacity he went to Munich in 1922 to observe the nascent National Socialist Party and interview Adolf Hitler. From 1929 to 1933 he served as instructor under George Catlett Marshall at Fort Benning, Georgia. From 1935 to 1939, as American military attaché in Berlin, his reports of German rearmament alerted the Roosevelt government to prepare for war. To gain intelligence of German military air development, Smith enlisted Charles Lindbergh, who subsequently joined the "America First" isolationist movement. Smith's association with Lindbergh troubled his years as German strategy specialist with G-2 in the War Department from 1939 to 1945.

Advisor: Professor Charles B. Burdick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I could not have written this paper without the generosity, wisdom, and, above all, optimism, of a man whose professional integrity and personal spirit truly define the role of mentor.

As so many other former students,
I will follow you through the forest now;
no need to mark the trees,
your footsteps are familiar.
I join your legion,
Charles;
Thank you.

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE vi

"LETTER TO GENERAL X". vii

INTRODUCTION 1

FROM LINE OFFICER TO MILITARY DIPLOMAT 7

FROM MILITARY OBSERVER TO ASSISTANT MILITARY ATTACHÉ . 39
Berlin 1920 - 1924

EDUCATION AND GROWTH 60
1924 - 1935

SMITH AND LINDBERGH. 84
1935 - 1939

THE WAR YEARS. 125
1939 - 1945

BIBLIOGRAPHY 150

PROLOGUE¹

He was gregarious, outgoing, with great joie de vivre. Very self-confident; loud booming voice; dominated every conversation with bombastic egocentric approach. A big man, six foot four inches. He lacked social graces. Still, he was a good questioner, who won people over through tact, consideration, openness, discretion. While he exuded self-confidence he was not a conceited, arrogant ass. His enthusiasm for every task and his ability to use people were traits. He was always willing to share glory, was loyal to his friends, a man of principle. He gave the impression of being impetuous and impulsive, but this was incorrect because he was always thinking. He was a good raconteur - as was his wife of whom he was proud. He was not mean or vindictive in any way; nor arbitrary or small. Despite conviviality he was not a drinker, nor did he encourage unusual behaviour.

In work he employed everyone possible; expressed appreciation in small ways, and then asked for more. He was always at work; he liked history and enjoyed talking about it which gave him an excellent base for small talk.

He was a heavy smoker; he was addicted to chocolate. He disliked uncouth behaviour.

¹Description of Truman Smith by General A.C. Wedemeyer; interview and notes by Professor Charles Burdick, 21 July, 1978, in Palo Alto, California.

"LETTER TO GENERAL X"

What does matter is a certain ordering of things.
Civilization is an intangible possession;
it does not reside in things, but in the invisible bonds
that link them one to the other
in this way and not in that way.
Suppose we do achieve the mass distribution
of perfectly machined musical instruments;
where will the musicians be?

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
(1932; two months before his death)

INTRODUCTION

Was Truman Smith, military attaché to Germany during the crucial years of 1935 to 1939, a patriotic American who foresaw Germany's hegemonic ambitions and tried to warn his country, or was he a pro-Nazi Germanophile who preferred Germany's mastery to Bolshevik domination of Europe?

This study will examine this controversy which overshadows the career of Truman Smith. Occasionally the weight and magnitude of events outdistance the actors who play an important part, or even write one of the acts, in the grand play of history. Without doubt Truman Smith was a pivotal individual in the history of the United States. This fact could not be otherwise, considering his crucial role as military attaché to Germany from 1935 to 1939. During these eventful years he was one of the players who brought the United States out of their post-war reluctance toward any military participation abroad. The country did not want to be involved again in European quarrels, and was blind to the fact that no real choice any longer existed. However, the work Smith produced soon served to "guide the reorganization and rearmament of the United States preceding

World War II."¹ He caused the Roosevelt government to recognize the reality as well as the danger of Hitler's drive toward war and territorial aggrandizement.

[He] managed to maintain such a close watch over the German Army expansion that he could forward accurate estimates of its actual size and composition to MID at regular intervals and submit numerous special intelligence reports on a wide variety of military subjects.²

During the past half century, Smith's contribution was overshadowed by the justifiably greater preoccupation of historians attempting to fathom the reasons for the Second World War. Mentioned only as a footnote if at all, known mostly as the man who, for better or worse, introduced Charles Lindbergh to Germany during the Nazi dictatorship, Truman Smith deserves historical recognition for greater accomplishments.

When Smith arrived in Germany in the summer of 1935 he was alarmed by what he recognized as a war-time economy. Unlike his predecessor, Colonel Jacob Wuest, he learned quickly that Germany was not simply attempting to regain its defensive capacity; he saw a country preparing for war, and he proceeded to gather as much information as he could in

¹Bruce W. Bidwell, History of the Military Intelligence Division, Department of the Army General Staff: 1775-1941, (Frederick: University Publications of America, 1986), 269.

²Ibid., 269. MID is the abbreviation for Military Intelligence Division, a section of the War Department in Washington. It is also referred to as G-2.

order to notify his superiors of the extent of this activity.³ Frustrated in his efforts by German secrecy, but innovative and intelligent, Smith enlisted the aid of Charles Lindbergh, an international hero since 1927, to obtain insight into the German air developments and manufacturing on several visits from 1936 to 1938. Lindbergh's primary value to Smith lay in his notoriety, which the German government decided to exploit for its own ends.

Conscious of America's industrial potential and the lesson of World War One still fresh in their minds, German officials were anxious to remain on friendly terms with the United States. Thus, while they attempted to keep their armament and development efforts secret, they began selectively to share important developments of their military advances with the military attaché's office. They were most eager to keep America, which they knew had a small army and outdated materiel but a rapidly growing Air Corps, from changing its *status quo*.

While stationed with the occupation army in the German Rheinland in 1919, and as assistant military attaché in

³For a detailed synopsis of Smith's reports, see "War Potential and Intentions of European Axis Nations," a year-by-year account beginning in 1935, apparently prepared in 1941, when Smith was working at the War Department. RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, DC.

Berlin from 1920 to 1924 Smith had occasion to make numerous friends among German officers with whom he maintained contact throughout his life and career. Because of the limiting terms of the Versailles Treaty concerning the size and structure of the German forces, and worried about the quality of their officer corps, a number of German *Wehrmacht* officers continued their training by participating in an exchange program of officer training schools between the United States Army and their own.⁴ Smith did not see these men simply as members of a vanquished enemy force, but considered these men equals within the greater fraternity of soldiers. But he remained unaltered by this official German wooing of the United States and continued to sound the alarm.

The Lindbergh visits were, from Smith's perspective, one of the more successful of his efforts as military attaché. But involving Lindbergh in his intelligence gathering proved a costly gamble for Smith; the famous aviator's zealous battle to keep America out of the war had its origins in this visit. The after-shocks of this joint

⁴The War Department admitted German officers to U.S. military schools as civilian participants as early as 1925; from 1929 they were admitted officially as officers of the Reichswehr which continued until 1934. Wilhelm Deist, "Die deutsche Aufrüstung in Amerikanischer Sicht: Berichte des US-Militarattachés in Berlin in den Jahren 1933-1939," Russland, Deutschland, Amerika, (Wiesbaden: Verlag Steiner, 1978) 280.

venture continued to rock Smith's career until his retirement in 1945. For some time after he returned to the United States in April, 1939, he was dogged by criticism of his reporting of Germany's growing military strength, especially with regard to the German Air estimates. His strongest attribute as military attaché, that of having a large acquaintance among the military officers of his assigned country, rather than being an asset, became a political millstone and added to the attacks on his reputation. The implication was that "these exaggerations were not motivated by a desire to report honestly...but by pro-German sentiment."⁵ The outbreak of World War II, however, forced this issue into the background of unfolding events.

Smith was recalled to active service in May of 1939 by General George Marshall, deputy chief of staff,⁶ to serve as military intelligence advisor at the War Department, where he was the subject of continued controversy. As Lindbergh in his simplistic idealism used his notoriety for the isolationist cause, Smith, who had liked and befriended Lindbergh, became a target for men within the Roosevelt

⁵Comment by General Alfred C. Wedemeyer, in Robert Hessen, ed., Berlin Alert: The Memoirs and Reports of Truman Smith, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1984), viii.

⁶Marshall became Chief of Staff September 1, 1939.

administration. Thus he found himself near the center of the America First controversy. However, Marshall meticulously placed efficiency before politics, and though he did not share Smith's own isolationist views, was more concerned with getting the best possible intelligence on Germany during the war. Smith, although ailing, served as the German expert at the War Department's Military Intelligence Division until the end of the war. Throughout these years, Marshall consistently and successfully resisted continuous pressure from the Administration to dismiss Smith from service, and, as a final flourish, personally presented Smith with the Distinguished Service Medal on the day Marshall left for Germany in 1945.

At times, throughout this paper, the reader will be able to discern the man only from the shadow he casts, and no more. Smith's friendship with the German officers, his real feelings toward Nazi Germany, his disappointment which must have come when his career was cut short by illness, these can only be gleaned from the circumstances, and his actions; he did not begin with the wisdom of later years. He wrote of himself only in the third person, and then sparingly, almost grudgingly, and as if this were too personal a preoccupation, not fitting for a man. Thus his record and the people who knew him will have to suffice to give the measure of the man.

FROM LINE OFFICER TO MILITARY DIPLOMAT

The United States, after lengthy deliberation, entered the Great War in April of 1917. Though initially attempting to remain neutral, economic ties with the Allies made a decision not to take sides in the conflict increasingly difficult. In the end, Woodrow Wilson's efforts to stay out of the war drowned in the Atlantic, when Germany announced that she would use her submarines to attack all shipping in those waters beginning in January, 1917. The United States, however, was only marginally prepared for war, reflecting the isolationist policy which the country had pursued with regard to Europe -- a preference for the "mutual non-involvement" of the Monroe Doctrine which still prevailed in the American public attitude.¹ Despite this isolationist tradition the Wilson government launched a concerted effort to organize the American industry and distribution systems for potential war. Simultaneously, the government pursued a highly effective information campaign designed to sway public opinion against Germany. On April 6, America joined the Allied countries in the First World War. After the

¹Keith L. Nelson, Victors Divided: America and the Allied in Germany, 1918-1923 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 2.

decisive, final Allied push in the Meuse-Argonne offensive in the Fall of 1918, Germany had no choice but to surrender, and the Armistice signed on November 11, 1918.

American industrial strength helped win the war and gave the nation a new identity which it never lost again; American attitudes, however, did not extend to accepting this responsibility and participating in a post-war occupation of German territory. Most Americans wanted their troops to return home, and preferred to leave Europe to its own devices. Initially President Wilson, too, was considerably reluctant to sanction an occupation of German territory in the Rhineland. He was uncomfortable with this provision which was included in the wording of the Armistice agreement at France's insistence.² Under the pretense of allowing the indigenous population their autonomy, France, and more precisely Marshal Ferdinand Foch, wanted a militarily neutralized area. The long-term, hidden goal of France was to either absorb the Rhineland, or at the very least create a semi-independent state. As a third option the French considered the formation of a separate state with an economic and military dependence on Belgium and Luxembourg.³

²Ibid., 4.

³Ibid., 12.

The veiled, retributive motives of a France bent on territorial gains left neither Britain nor the United States much choice but to participate in the occupation of the Rhineland, or see their national interests slip from their control.⁴ Throughout the armistice negotiations French Premier Georges Clemenceau was determined to eliminate permanently the German threat to his country, and to separate the Rhineland region from the German Reich. Foch used the possible danger of renewed German hostilities as a rationale. The diplomatic complexities which hampered communications, arising from the physical distance between Paris and Washington, also worked to his advantage. As commander of the allied armies, Foch manipulated American and British desires for a speedy peace agreement in order to win concessions from both parties, resulting in the Allied occupation.⁵ Thus American forces, through circumstances not entirely of their own choice, occupied the section between the Rhine and the Moselle, with their headquarters in Koblenz.

⁴Bullitt Lowry, "The American Occupation of Germany, the French, and the Rhenish Separatist Movement, 1919", 7-10. This paper was read at the Duquesne Historical Society forum, October, 1982. Professor Lowry gives voice to the sentiments expressed in Truman Smith's letters of the time, that "the American occupation authorities [came] to believe that the French were, if not enemy, at least the more irritating antagonist."

⁵Nelson, Victors Divided, 20.

Because Wilson's Fourteen Points anticipated a new world order of international co-operation, and his preferred path was peace without victory, his administration had made no plans for a possible occupation program.⁶ Even though England and the United States disliked French efforts to secure claims on disputed German territory, they had greatly desired to begin the peace process and thus became only gradually aware of French efforts to circumvent Wilson's Fourteen Point agenda.⁷ In Washington, Wilson's personal participation in the Peace Conference at Versailles, and his undiplomatic partisan selection of Democratic advisers, succeeded only in creating lasting, detrimental enmity between his administration and the Republican leadership. The rift was finally responsible for the Senate's refusal to ratify the Peace Treaty. Thus America was excluded from the Peace agreement between the Allies and Germany, and the American zone in the Rhineland transferred to the French controlled Rhineland High Commission when peace was declared on January 10, 1920.⁸

⁶Ibid., 5.

⁷Ibid., 9.

⁸U.S. Army, Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, Third Army. American Military Government of Occupied Germany, 1918-1920; Report of the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 356. This report, compiled by Truman Smith, is referred to as "The Hunt Report;" Col. I.L. Hunt was one of the authors.

Captain Truman Smith received the opportunity to join the office of Civil Affairs of the Army in Koblenz as a staff officer in March, 1919. This appointment represented a unique opportunity for his career and simultaneously satisfied his personal interests in history and international affairs. During the fifteen months which he served with the office, Smith participated in the shaping of American occupation policy, making staff level decisions, and serving as liaison officer to the civil government, gaining valuable experience which he would utilize in his later career as military attache.

Smith had received his commission as an Infantry officer in the United States Army on November 28, 1916, after he participated in the Mexican Border incident as a National Guardsman in 1916, and decided on an army career. In mid-April 1918, after a provisional officer course at Fort Leavenworth, he was on his way to European shores in the company of some two million other relatively inexperienced United States soldiers.⁹ According to his own judgement he crossed the threshold to manhood in the *Bois de Forêt* on the road to Cunel, in thirty-three days of

Three additional volumes contain collected documents. Hereafter cited as Hunt Report.

⁹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert: The Memoirs and Reports of Truman Smith (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1987), 10-11.

combat during the Meuse-Argonne offensive.¹⁰ He participated in heavy battle from September 27 through October 28 and lost many friends; he was the only remaining officer of the 1st Battalion and at the end of the encounter held command over some 900 men.¹¹ He willed himself to continue at his post until his division was relieved, at which time he was so exhausted that he could no longer walk. This quiet tenacity in the exercise of what he saw as proper conduct was a lifelong habit.

By mid-December 1918, only marginally recuperated, he rejoined his 4th Infantry regiment and spent Christmas in Plaidt near Andernach, a small town on the Moselle river, near the Koblenz headquarters of the American Third Army. When he arrived there General Pershing's men were undergoing a rigorous regimen of exercise and recreation, designed to extirpate the mental and physical effects of sustained and exhaustive combat, and to reassert the discipline essential for the civilized conduct of an occupying army. This environment was necessary for Smith's full recovery, and he welcomed the physical demands as much as the healing powers of recreation. He also attempted to continue his personal

¹⁰This offensive officially terminated with the Armistice; Truman Smith participated from 24 September through 28 October 1918, at which time he completed his tour of duty.

¹¹Smith, Berlin Alert, 14.

intellectual growth, as much by habit as by need.¹² His letters written during these three months reveal the mental ferment between the lines, while the content and form are those of a contemplative man searching for answers to the horror he had seen and experienced.

Smith attempted to comprehend the magnitude of the devastation, both human and environmental. Yet he was unable to express the grief he felt over the loss of friends, carefully skirting the question of Why, even though it loomed very large in every line he wrote during those first few weeks. "What a mess we went through," he wrote in restrained anguish; "one is apt to come out feeling three great thrills and a sea of dreary nothings...I blush to mention them -- one changes so...."¹³ As the weeks passed, he spent much time sorting out the contradictions inherent in the experience of the war's end, attempting to temper the preconceived and idealistic notions of the untried young man with the practical experience of the proven officer. As a soldier, he understood the reasons for rules such as the

¹²"I shall stagnate mentally if I don't get something to read," he wrote on December 23, 1918, in a letter to his wife. He lamented the dearth of available books, and asked to have some sent. Katherine A. H. Smith, "My Life, 1916-1924," 100. The letters from Truman Smith to his wife are incorporated into her Memoirs complete, and apparently verbatim.

¹³Ibid., 92.

ordinance against fraternization with the conquered population, but the scholar in him wanted to make contact with the German people. While he obeyed the rules without question, he wrote privately about the importance of high-mindedness. He opposed reprisals against Germany, considering such conduct to be un-American; in this instance he was certain that Americans would not change their principles simply for revenge. He did not want Americans to "imitate other nations in having won, disgrace our knockout blow by a kick. Wilson has won me completely over to his ideas.... Germans aren't very different from other folk," he wrote to his wife.¹⁴ Circumstances forced his billeting with a German family, and he, therefore, had the opportunity to observe the former enemy at close range. When he came home on Christmas day he found a small Christmas tree with three candles in his room, his wife's picture placed beneath. He was astonished at the thoughtfulness, but he did not cross the line of occupation propriety as he saw it and allow the gift to touch his personal humanity. The enemy was still the enemy.¹⁵

By February 1919, he expressed more negative feelings toward France and what he saw as her barely veiled designs

¹⁴Ibid., 114.

¹⁵Ibid., 101.

on the Rhineland. "I'm directly behind Mr. Wilson in his great fights for ideals and the League of Nations. And the devil take Clemenceau, and that crew of bloody Metternichs," he exclaimed, and defended his attitude as being "first and last pro-American."¹⁶ Yet in March he called the Germans servile, "a direct result of the military system;" he felt uncomfortable with this trait, which he considered a characteristic aspect of the German culture, but at the same time he admitted frankly the contradictory fact that he enjoyed the physical comforts which their solicitude allowed him personally.¹⁷ He also pondered what he considered a problem with the mixed message confronting the American soldier, who had read and heard about the supposed "bad" German before he left home, and had entered the war to fight the "Boche." Now with daily contact both the German middle class and the peasants seemed human and industrious, and the purpose for the continued presence of the American victors less clear. The stern, punitive motives accompanying the decision for occupation faded with the reality of daily experience. "Americans," he said, have "two serious national characteristics -- they cannot hate for long, and

¹⁶Ibid., 114.

¹⁷Ibid., 120.

they are easy-going."¹⁸ He disliked the methods and attitudes of the French. Still, he was able to lament the fact that they did reveal attributes which were worse than the American soldiers', or even the Germans'. "All France's destroyed churches and towns do not make half the impression on the doughboy, as the charge of 15 francs for a handkerchief." He also remarked, somewhat cynically, that the "doughboy" really could care less about Europe; he just wanted to go home.¹⁹

Truman Smith mended gradually from the effects of the war, and with soldierly stoicism adjusted to his daily routine as Captain of A Company. As a result of the recognition of his ability, he received in March two transfer opportunities.²⁰ The offer he accepted came from the Headquarters of the 3rd Army, American Expeditionary Forces, Office of Civil Affairs, in Koblenz which governed the American sector of the occupation. Colonel Irwin L.

¹⁸Ibid., 119.

¹⁹Ibid., 121.

²⁰Ibid., 119. On March 13, 1919, Smith wrote, "I imagine my days in the 4th Infantry are numbered. Today I received two very nice letters, one to go to the 7th Infantry with Colonel Morrow, as adjutant, the other to go to the 3rd Army in the Bureau of Civil Affairs. The latter I shall grab as the experience should be tremendously interesting.... I would prefer it to anything in the Army of Occupation, and am looking forward to it, you may be certain."

Hunt, once a second lieutenant under Truman Smith's father in the Philippines, was in need of an able assistant in civil administration, and, as a family friend, was aware of the young Smith's Yale education. Truman Smith was elated at the invitation to join Colonel Hunt in Koblenz.²¹ He considered the opportunity propitious, and the work "the most interesting in the 3rd Army, as it has the entire charge of the relations with the German Governments."²²

After the Armistice the German armed forces left the Rhineland, and the first American unit to occupy the thirty square miles around Koblenz on December 13, 1918, was the 3rd Army, which was renamed the American Army in Germany (AFG) on July 2, 1919. It consisted of about 10,000 men, commanded by Major General Henry Tureman Allen, recently arrived and "widely regarded as the right man in the right place;"²³ before the War he had been Military Attaché to Germany and Russia, and his diplomatic skills were considerable and needed to be. Under General Allen the AFG became what a staff officer at the War Department called a

²¹Ibid., 117-18, contains the full letter from Colonel Hunt. Hunt had been a friend of Truman Smith's father at West Point; Smith, Berlin Alert, 15.

²²Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1916-1924," 119.

²³"Der [sic] Rhein Entlang: The American Occupation Forces in Germany, 1918-1923, A Photo Essay," Military Affairs, Volume XLVI, No. 4, December 1982, 184.

"synonym for military smartness, discipline, dress, and drill."²⁴ In order to forestall the diverse problems which could accompany military interludes, General Allen developed a great variety of recreational programs to keep his troops occupied.²⁵

Truman Smith found the atmosphere of Koblenz much to his liking. He thrived within the soldierly world and the comradeship of the officers with whom he worked. In this group he found several former classmates and even one of his professors from Yale.²⁶ At the time Smith decided to join the Army he was a graduate student of history at Columbia University;²⁷ this assignment in Germany represented a

²⁴Observation by General James Guthrie Harbord, Deputy Chief of Staff at the War Department, who referred to General Allen himself as "a picturesque and dashing figure of the Old Army." James Guthrie Harbord, The American Army in France, 1917-1919 (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1936), 560.

²⁵Alfred E. Cornebise, "Der [sic] Rhein Entlang," 184. For more extended detail, see also his book, The Amaroc News: The Daily Newspaper of the American Forces in Germany 1919-1923. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981).

²⁶Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1916-1924," 123. Vernon Evans was a childhood friend of Truman; their parents had been friends at West Point. Tom Barber, Truman's best friend throughout these years, had served with him in the 12th Infantry Regiment in New York, and had been an usher at the Smith's wedding. Ibid., 156.

²⁷Smith, in his recollections, mentions "call[ing] frequently at the home of Professor Todd of Columbia" in the winter of 1915. Henry Alfred Todd was Professor of Romance Philology.

unique opportunity for his career, and simultaneously satisfied his personal interests in history and international affairs. As a member of the occupation army he was very aware that he was participating in historically crucial events. Thus he accepted his assignment with enthusiasm. For the next fifteen months he was actively engaged in using his natural gifts and his education to develop the administrative and diplomatic skills which would serve him so well at the height of his career, from 1935 to 1939, as American military attache in Berlin. He participated in the shaping of American occupation policy, making staff level decisions. He became intricately involved in the necessary daily arrangements affecting the Allied Forces, the German army, the civilian governments, and the population at large. He participated in the creation of the Hunt Report, a document compiled as a guide for use in occupation policy during a postwar period.²⁸ In addition and most crucial to his future career, Smith worked as the liaison officer between the Office of Civil Affairs, the German Government in the Rhineland, the British and

²⁸The Hunt Report; for further information on this subject see also Earl F. Ziemke, "Erwin L. Hunt, Henry D. Morgenthau, Jr., and German-American Relations After Two Wars," in Germany and America: Essays on Problems of International Relations and Immigration, ed. Hans L. Trefousse (New York: Brooklin College Press, 1980), 359-64. Also see below, p. 20ff.

French sectors of occupation, and, importantly, the remnant German army. With this latter group he made life-long contacts which were to become an asset as well as a bane in the years to come. He also attained considerable diplomatic skills which were an important component of his selection as Assistant Military Attaché to Berlin after his tour of duty ended in Koblenz in 1920.

To achieve proficiency and the necessary measure of sophistication in such a complex and frequently delicate job required competence, expertise, and dedicated application, all best obtained from practical experience. Smith had never considered the career of a military attaché; however, he was now receiving the training which would make him so successful in this profession in later years.

He already possessed many of the necessary attributes. He came from a prominent Connecticut family and carried the name of his famous grandfather, Senator Truman Smith. He had reason to honor the memory of his father, Edmund Dickinson Smith, who had been a West Point graduate and instructor and who had died in combat in the Philippines in 1900, leaving the young son a legacy to emulate. He was born at West Point on August 25, 1893, and this combined cultural heritage encouraged in the young man adherence to principles and tradition. His grandfather was a graduate of Yale, and Truman Smith followed in those footsteps,

receiving an Ivy League education²⁹ which also promised the concomitant benefits of success as he pursued his career within the brotherhood of fellow graduates. He was also ensured the continuous interest and protection of a mentor in Colonel I.H. Hunt. Last but not least, Smith's imposing height and stature were physical attributes which predisposed him to being noted. To this collection of circumstances which shaped his personality and his goals he added the necessary tenacity which was at the foundation of his continuous aim to excel. Combined with his combat experience in France, these factors served him extremely well throughout his life, and he now had the chance to test himself during his service in the Rhineland. In May, 1919, he wrote,

[This] is the most interesting and by far the best position I have ever been in. All communications to and fro between the American military authorities and the

²⁹Smith was a member of the Class of 1915, which included the poet Archibald MacLeish and Dean Acheson, Secretary of State under Harry S. Truman. At the time a number of remarkable professors were teaching at Yale, among them Max Farrand, who taught American History. George Peter Wilson, Emeritus Professor and Historian of Yale University, letter to Professor Charles Burdick, San Jose State University, 5 October, 1978. This letter, in the author's collection, describes the History department at Yale in the period 1912-25. Smith was also influenced by Chauncy Tinker, who specialized in "The Age of Johnson" in his English class and left a lasting impression on the young man. William A. Jordan to Professor Charles Burdick, 19 October 1978. This letter, also in the author's collection, from the Yale Class of 1915 secretary, details some of Smith's activities.

government of the occupied territory go through my hands. I see of course every day the Boche officials and of course I am learning a good deal of psychology. Some are snotty, some are not, but in none of these higher officials do I find that detestable severity which I see among the commercial classes. I can forgive them much, but not for grovelling my feet when I've licked them. Fortunately many of these higher officials are gentlemen, and no matter how hard an order we put over on them, take it as a matter of course under military rule. My impression of the civil official here is that they are army officers without uniforms... efficient...and exceedingly correct in behaviour.³⁰

On April 4, 1919, Smith officially became Assistant to the Office of the President of the Rhine Provinces, assigned to serve under Colonel Hunt.³¹ On April 19, 1919, his promotion to Major belatedly reached him in Koblenz, accompanied by the Distinguished Service Medal for gallantry in action during the Meuse-Argonne campaign. The citation read in part, "he displayed qualities of leadership and wisdom which were unusually brilliant and meritorious."³²

Those "qualities of leadership and wisdom" now stood him in good stead. He was at the hub of decision-making as

³⁰Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1916-1924," 127-28.

³¹Smith, Berlin Alert, 15; see also Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1916-1924," 127.

³²Katherine Smith confides in her notebook that General Fred W. Sladen, Smith's commander in the Argonne offensive, had said that Truman deserved the Distinguished Service Cross, but did not "write up the citation with enough purple prose." Her husband's writing ability, she contends, ensured that all decorations he requested for his men were approved, even "the D.S.C. for Sladen!" Katherine Smith, "My Life 1916-1924," 87.

chief political assistant to Colonel Hunt, and was soon indispensable as liaison officer and negotiator between the American Occupation Army, the German government of the Rhineland *Oberpraesidium*, and the regional government of the district of Koblenz, the *Regierung*. He travelled frequently in this capacity. Reasonably fluent in French, he enjoyed practicing his German during these diplomatic tours. In April he became involved in difficult negotiations involving the Rhenish separatist movement; he went to Cologne which was located in the British sector, to meet with the city's *Oberbuergermeister*, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, later the Chancellor of West Germany. He also met with Dr. Hans Dorten, the moving force behind the Separatists, a group intent on establishing a separate Rhineland Republic. Though a considerable segment of the Rhenish population favored such a move, the Americans opposed and countered such efforts throughout the occupation.³³ Among a number of German officers whom Smith befriended during this time in his dealings with the German army was Friedrich von Boetticher, a member of the German General Staff, who

³³Keith I. Nelson, Victors Divided, 110-112. General Allen had refused to meet personally with Dr. Dorten. This movement was vigorously opposed by the Americans, and their opposition was partially responsible for its eventual failure. See also Erwin Bischof, Rheinischer Separatismus 1918-1924: Hans Adam Dortens Rheinstaatsbestrebung (Bern: Verlag Herbert Lang & Cie AG, 1969), 100, 135.

supervised the military materiel transfer imposed by Allied reparation demands. Von Boetticher, as assistant to General Wilhelm Groener, recognized the United States as a rising world power and made every effort to steer German interest and policy westward during this time. Having frequent contact with Smith professionally, he even had occasion to rescue the young major from the snares of a duel when an overly zealous German officer took offense to one of Smith's remarks.³⁴ During these months immediately following the war, Von Boetticher and a number of his fellow officers thus cultivated relations with the more fair-minded American officers. He would serve later as German military attaché to Washington.

This aspect of his assignment presented Smith with no patriotic difficulty. He was influenced strongly and daily by what he saw as abuses of the French occupation, as well as by the adherence to "scrupulous fairness" by General Henry T. Allen, whose decisions "carried considerable weight with the occupying powers and with the German citizenry in the zones."³⁵ Though he carefully observed the required

³⁴Alfred M. Beck, "The Ambivalent Attache': Friedrich von Boetticher in America" (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1977), 49.

³⁵Ibid., 47.

distance to German officers in his social life,³⁶ Smith clearly identified his German military counterparts with the fraternity of the soldier, rather than with the country they served.

This attitude is very evident in his correspondence during these months. His letters are preoccupied with Germany's dilemma concerning the Treaty of Versailles, and with France's suspect support of the Rhineland's autonomy. The relentless, often underhanded efforts of the French government to obtain its goal caused much animosity among the American occupation forces. Smith referred at one point to French "Prussianism," calling the attitude shortsighted. "France that pure savior of civilization is certainly a sorry spectacle today," he wrote on May 8, after the peace terms were revealed.³⁷ He believed that the French had pulled the rug out from under President Wilson and the American nation, and had made it look hypocritical. He was certain that the peace terms would have a devastating effect on Germany; he was convinced that even if Germany signed the Treaty she would certainly have no intention of honoring its terms, and that this in turn would mean war sooner or later.

³⁶Though Katherine Smith's memoirs of these years contain detailed accounts of their social life, as well as a plethora of names of participants, no German officer's appears among them.

³⁷Katherine Smith, "My Life 1916-1924," 129.

"It will take Europe fifteen years before she will settle down, and then she won't," he declared on June 22. "The peace conditions bolster up [Germany's] belief of the justice of their cause."³⁸ I wonder what on earth I was fighting for. I certainly believed I was fighting Prussianism... and the peace conference proves there is a French as well as a native variety."³⁹ Smith's attitude was indicative of that of many command level American officers, and prevailed throughout the Weimar Republic. "Military men in both countries were ahead of their political counterparts in forging a close connection;"⁴⁰ the continuous, though cautious, exchange of friendship, ideas, and military experience continued uninterrupted until the end of 1932.

Smith's insightful letters ceased with the arrival in Koblenz of his young wife, Katherine Holling Smith, in early September 1919. She had, with considerable difficulty, secured the necessary papers to obtain a passport in order to join her husband abroad.⁴¹ They had been married on

³⁸Ibid., 135.

³⁹Ibid., 132.

⁴⁰Beck, "The Ambivalent Attache'," 47.

⁴¹Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 135. Since her husband was in the Rhineland with the American expeditionary forces, it was necessary for Mrs. Smith to secure a permit from the War Department before the State Department would

July 14, 1917, the day Truman Smith received his promotion to Captain. Having been separated for over a year, she was determined to join her husband, even though both expected to return within a few months time.

As Katherine Smith, the protected child of an affluent New York family, adjusted to the trying conditions of being an officer's wife within an occupation army, daily life for them both quickly assumed a semi-settled condition. Truman continued his work at the Office of Civil Affairs, and his wife tried to balance her penchant for elite positioning with the realities of Germany's economic chaos. Whatever deprivations, be it accommodations without a view, insolence from the natives, scabies, or lack of clean water, these were soon overcome with vivacious spirit and with the realization of the outrageous bargains to be acquired. Furs, lace, china, furniture, were treasures encountered in her daily outings; she had a keen eye for quality and its value, honed in the world in which she grew up. She had her troubles, too. "The other day we had a little tiff with a German. [Her companion] thought the man was fresh to her when we were looking at the old clock and frightened her. So... I hailed two soldiers and told them to arrest him or

issue a passport.

put a good scare in him."⁴²

General Allen believed strongly in variety to maintain morale among his troops, and encouraged extensive travel along the Rhine. During the Fall and Winter of 1919, Smith had occasion to combine his frequent, official travels with pleasurable outings. These routinely consisted of the small group of friends who worked together at the Office of Civil Affairs; his childhood friend Vernon Evans, Colonel Hunt, and his best friend from the days of the 12th Infantry in New York, Tom Barber. Occasionally Colonel Hunt invited Katherine Smith to accompany them in their army Cadillac. These travels and Smith's extensive knowledge of both the AFG and occupied Germany which he acquired during these months would lay the foundation for his future career. However, by far the most important tangible work done and completed in the Office of Civil Affairs between April 1919 and June 1920 was the Hunt Report, a guide to occupation administration, compiled and largely written by Truman Smith. This project, or the need for its creation, was a primary motive for Colonel Hunt's request to assign Truman Smith to his office. While instrumental at the time, the Hunt Report would later also prove to be of political and humanitarian importance to the policy of the American

⁴²Ibid., 167.

occupation army in World War II.⁴³

When Truman Smith arrived in Koblenz in April, 1919, the Military Commander, Lieutenant Colonel James Lockett of the 39th Infantry, was completing a report to the Commanding General of the Third Army, on the "Civil Administration of District under Military Government of the Military Commander, Coblenz."⁴⁴ The American occupation forces had taken up their positions in the Rhineland in November of 1918, with a great deal of ignorance about local conditions, customs, laws, and culture, and had no true appreciation of what lay in store for them. As a result their administrative efforts encountered appreciable difficulties managing both their own needs, and the civil affairs of the occupied territories.⁴⁵ Initially, daily *Anordnungen*, or ordinances, provided corrective measures based on hindsight. But this system ended in failure, and made plain the need for a more consistent program of planned

⁴³Earl F. Ziemke, "Erwin L. Hunt, Henry D. Morgenthau, Jr., and German-American Relations After Two Wars." In Germany and America: Essays, 229-40.

⁴⁴U.S. Military Commander, Coblenz, Report of the Military Commander Coblenz, Germany: From December 8, 1918, to May 22, 1919 (Fort Leavenworth: General Service Schools Press, 1921). The Commander of the Third Army at that time was General J. T. Dickman.

⁴⁵U.S. Military Commander, Coblenz, Report, 131-38. These seven pages comprise the extent of Lockett's "Remarks and Recommendations," meant to serve as suggestions and guidelines for similar situations in the future.

administration. As the first effort of its kind, Colonel Lockett's document attempted to remedy American ignorance about the occupied territory and its people. He saw the need to establish an American policy for the daily operations of the territory, and to produce a record as well as a simple reference manual, to govern both the civilian population and the roughly 240,000 troops spread over an area of about 2,500 square miles. Colonel Lockett's report was thus the precursor to the Hunt Report. Continuity was assured, because Colonel I. L. Hunt was appointed as Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, 3rd Army, the day before Lt. Col. Lockett assumed the office of Military Commander for the City of Koblenz, and Hunt remained in this capacity until the American occupation forces went home.⁴⁶

When Colonel Hunt requested Truman Smith's assignment as liaison officer, he did so with an expanded version of the Lockett report in mind. In his letter to Smith he made specific reference to the project. "Knowing that you have done some special work in historic studies, I have borne you in mind with the possible view of asking for your detail in my office in connection with civil Administration," his

⁴⁶Keith L. Nelson, Victors Divided, 31-9. For additional detail, see also the Hunt Report, 65.

letter began.⁴⁷ Clearly, past association and friendship made possible the start of a remarkable career for the now twenty-six year old Smith, and he used this opportunity to prove his ability and versatility as he applied himself to his task.

While Colonel Lockett's finished product is contained in a single slim booklet, the Hunt Report is composed of four volumes. Volume two through four hold all significant documents collected by the Office of Civil Affairs, from the first day of the occupation, until the Inter-Allied High Commission replaced the military occupation of the American Army in January, 1920. The first volume, however, represents a considerably expanded version of Lockett's work, eighteen chapters in all. It concerns itself with the administrative detail of the military government, the rules for the dispensation of military justice, the daily *Anordnungen* and their regularly necessary modifications. The report also records general administration of, and guidelines for, sanitation, food supplies and distribution, industry and labor conditions, financial institutions, as well as the conduct of the military and civilian population. Additionally, it contains specifics about the Rhenish Separatist movement, the occupation organization of the

⁴⁷The letter was written on March 12, 1919. Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 117-18.

Allied powers (France, Belgium, and Britain) in the region, and contingency plans for Allied movement into other regions of Germany, should political events make such a move necessary. The eight chapters which focus on the historical background of Germany, the military and civil administration of occupied Germany, the Rhenish Separatist movement, plans for possible military advance into the unoccupied sector, and the events and circumstances leading to the final withdrawal of the American occupation forces, were written by Truman Smith.

Yet the Hunt Report did not simply confine itself to practical matters of administration, politics, military and civilian relations, or practical suggestions evolved from recently gained experience, as had the Lockett report.⁴⁸ On January 26, 1919, in a letter to his wife, Smith reflected on the haphazard progress of the peace negotiations on both sides of the Atlantic. "Wilson is like a sheep amidst wolves at Versailles. His plane of thought is far higher than anyone's in Europe. If he could dictate terms the world would be a happier place."⁴⁹ The ideals of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, and General Pershing's appeal to human generosity upon the entry of his troops into

⁴⁸The Lockett report seems to have served as the initial outline of the Hunt Report.

⁴⁹Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 109.

the Rhineland in November 1919, were attributes firmly embedded in the attitude of the young men who wrote the Hunt Report, and thence were incorporated into their work. "You have come not as despoilers or oppressors, but simply as the instruments of a strong, free government whose purpose towards the people of Germany are beneficent."⁵⁰ Thus the report also ventured into the realm of moral obligation and idealism, defining present conduct and suggesting future policy. "Forbearance and farsightedness" were daily goals of Smith and his fellow officers, and "justness and humanity of the rule of the Army" was their philosophy. Always aware of history, Smith pondered the judgement of "historians and students of tomorrow." In the closing paragraph he wrote:

The Army of today awaits that verdict, confident of the justness of its deeds and the humanity of its purpose. For certain it is that the Army of the United States has its roots deep in the soil of the American people and that the spirit of its service on the Rhine has only reflected the spirit of service to humanity which animated the nation throughout the World War.⁵¹

The military government of the United States army transferred its power *pro forma* on January 10, 1920, to the High Commission which was to govern the Rhineland henceforth. Not being a signatory to the Peace Treaty, the

⁵⁰Hunt Report, 203. Pershing's words were part of his anti-fraternization General Orders No. 218, issued November 28, 1918.

⁵¹Ibid., 364-65.

United States' military was still bound by the terms of the Armistice of November 11, 1918. Strictly speaking the Peace Treaty could not legally be enforced without American participation. The American Senate's failure to ratify the Treaty left the direction of American policy undefined. At this point the Rhineland High Commission simply saw fit to take matters in its own hands, declaring the entire territory, including that of the Americans, to be under its jurisdiction. Thus General Allen had no choice but to accede to the terms of the Rhineland agreement. Being legally bound only by the terms of the Armistice, he declared a *modus vivendi* under which the American military government adapted the conformation of its administration to that of the other occupied zones; however, the military government retained the right to revoke its cooperation should it deem such action necessary.⁵² On February 1, 1920, General Allen finally received the orders from Washington to return to the United States, the occupying army units had already left on January 24. Neither the Germans nor the Allies were happy to see them depart from the Rheinland, where "their presence may have preserved a semblance of normality for the Coblenz zone and it may have

⁵²Ibid., 363.

retarded French momentum and moderated German resistance."⁵³

Still working in the Office of Civil Affairs in Koblenz, Smith now had to contemplate his own future. On January 2, 1920, Colonel Edward Davis, the military attaché at the American Mission in Berlin, sent an inquiring letter to Colonel Hunt in Koblenz, asking if he could suggest an officer to serve as his assistant. Hunt recommended Smith without hesitation. He wrote an unusually detailed recommendation because, he said, "I consider him eminently qualified for this duty, and he himself would like very much such an assignment. In addition, he stressed that Smith was "a graduate of Yale and of Columbia Universities, having specialized in historical research in the latter institution."⁵⁴ He probably possesses a better knowledge of European history and politics than any other line officer in the service today."⁵⁵ Colonel Davis' interest was

⁵³Keith L. Nelson, Victors Divided, 251-53. See also Henry T. Allen, The Rhineland Occupation, (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1927).

⁵⁴An example of literary license which frequently surfaces in such letters; Smith entered Columbia University in the Fall of 1915, with the intent of attaining a masters degree in history; he left in June 1916, having entered military service, never to return.

⁵⁵The recommendation was accompanied by a letter from Major General Allen, freeing Truman Smith for "detail as Assistant Military Attaché" within 30 days. Records of the War Department, General and Special Staffs, M.I.D. No.2345 826, RG165, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

immediate, but administrative and communication difficulties delayed the actual appointment. In an effort to sort out Smith's eligibility for such a post, eighteen different letters passed between Koblenz, Berlin, and Washington between January and June, 1920, when Smith finally received the blessing of the War Department in Washington to be "detailed as Assistant Military Attaché to the American Legation, The Hague, Netherlands, and as Military Observer in Germany, attached to the staff of the American Commissioner in Berlin."⁵⁶ The correspondence dealt chiefly with the logistical problems of whether an officer already in Germany could rightly be assigned to the post in Berlin. Efforts were made to locate a replacement for the departing Assistant Military Attaché, Major Oliver W. DeGruchy, in the United States, and budget limitations made it necessary that the attache requested by Davis was not an additional staff assignment, but a replacement. Reassured of the departure of DeGruchy, and unable to find an officer with equal qualifications to Smith's in the United States, M.I.D. finally gave its grudging consent.

With the gradual departure of the American forces from the Rhineland, Truman Smith and his friends were parting,

⁵⁶Records of the War Department, General and Special Staffs, M.I.D. No. 2345 826, RG165, National Archives, Washington D.C.

too. Tom Barber, planning to return to civilian life, was the first to leave in January, Vernon Evans left in March, but continued a military career. By mid-June, Colonel Hunt was at the War Department, where he attached to Smith's file a letter containing the following assessment of his late friend Edmund Dickinson Smith's son:

Supervised German Civil administration of the *Oberpraesidium* of the Rhine province and the *Regierung* of Koblenz. These duties brought him into intimate personal contact with the highest and ablest German Civil Officials. His tact in conveying the instructions of the Commanding General to these officials and his firmness and excellent judgement in supervising their execution added greatly to the prestige of the American administration. He prepared the report on the Military Occupation from December 1, 1918, until January 10, 1920 setting forth in admirable forms the achievements of the Army of Occupation in civil administration.⁵⁷

Truman Smith and his wife Katherine finally left for Berlin by train on June 18, 1920.⁵⁸ He had come to Koblenz to participate in the shaping of history, and had employed his ability to make a lasting contribution to a document

⁵⁷Col. I.L. Hunt to Adjutant General, U.S. Army, 3 June 1920, detailing services of Major Truman Smith, contained in Efficiency Reports, Smith, Truman 0-4619 at the National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records), St. Louis, MO 63132.

⁵⁸Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 229-30. Worried about the civil unrest throughout Germany and in Berlin, Mrs. Smith was initially reluctant to go, but never questioned following her husband. In one respect, at least, she felt reassured. "All the men working in the Embassy [the Mission in Berlin] are either Yale or Harvard which is nice," she wrote to her mother on June 2, 1920.

which would influence United States policy in the next war. The Hunt Report reappeared years later, essentially intact, directly influencing the policy of the United States throughout the historical events which followed the collapse of Germany's Third Reich, issued as "Handbook" during World War II. It had also been used as textbook, for want of any other guidelines available, at Charlottesville, Virginia, to train officers in anticipation of the occupation of Germany in 1945. While this all lay in the future, Smith was satisfied that he had done his job to the best of his ability, and was looking forward to a new challenge. He had spent the past year developing his personal interest "in German history, art, architecture, economy, and politics," had traveled much and liked most of what he saw.⁵⁹ He was ready to go to Berlin and apply what he had learned.

⁵⁹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 16.

**FROM MILITARY OBSERVER TO ASSISTANT MILITARY ATTACHÉ:
BERLIN 1920 - 1924**

With the passing of the Great War the role of the diplomat underwent a major change; the relative independence he had enjoyed in the 19th century fell victim to a new set of rules. Advances in technology, a new speed of communication as well as the new world's changed procedures of political diplomacy had stripped from his office his accustomed sovereignty and prestige and made him more directly accountable to the government he represented. This new situation made desirable the close collaboration of any number of specialists, such as the expertise of the military attaché, which now became important to the Embassy as well as to the army.¹

Even though President Wilson attempted a course of neutrality with Germany at the beginning of the Great War, by 1917 the relations between the two countries were mutually suspicious; each country saw the other at odds with its own interests. After the Armistice was signed, however,

¹Herman J. Rupieper, "Alanson B. Houghton: An American Ambassador in Germany, 1922-1925." The International History Review, Vol. 1, Number 4, October 1979, 490. Gordon Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds., The Diplomats 1919-1939, (New York: Atheneum, 1972), Vol. 1, 7.

the majority of the American public expressed a desire to establish stability and order in Europe. The most prevailing opinion was to keep Europe and Germany economically sound in order to remove social unrest and with it the threat of Communism.² Thus, the main concern for Commissioner Ellis Dresel, predecessor to Ambassador Alan B. Houghton, was the issue of German-American trade relations. Complications arose and slowed the negotiations process because of the reparations demands on Germany, and the Senate's non-ratification of the Treaty of Versailles. The tumultuous political situation in Germany also contributed to the cautious political climate in the United States, which expressed itself in an initial hesitancy among the economic interest groups. Here the specialist was needed to supplement the bargaining tools of the Ambassador. The presence and ability of a military observer became an essential component of the Ambassador's requirement to accurately apprise his government of the situation.

In June 1920, when Truman Smith left Koblenz for the American Diplomatic Mission in Berlin, the office was headed by Ellis Loring Dresel who had himself arrived only in mid-January. Mr. Dresel had been a member of the American

²Werner Link, Die amerikanische Stabilisierungspolitik in Deutschland 1921-1932, (Dusseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1970), 35.

Embassy for two years prior to 1917, and after the war served as an "unofficial" United States representative at Versailles. Now the Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, had sent Dresel to Berlin as American Commissioner, not to establish "official relations, [as] this Government and Department merely desires to have an official representative at Berlin from whom it can receive information of interest and importance."³ On his journey to Berlin, Dresel traveled through Cologne in the Rhineland to confer with General Allen and Pierrepoint Noyes, the American representative on the Inter-Allied Rhineland Commission. On January 15, 1920, General Allen wrote in his journal,

"Mr. Dresel, much delayed in his journey from Paris, arrived too late for dinner and went to Mr. Noyes for the night. Both of them have been over here for a conference with me. He is on his way to Berlin, where he will serve as 'Commissioner' with quite a staff. He will in fact be in charge of whatever representation we maintain in Germany through this long armistice period."⁴

Under the circumstances his diplomatic status was a delicate one, since formal relations between the United States and Germany were still dependent on the upcoming decision reached in the Senate. Therefore diplomatic

³Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919, Vol.I, 244.

⁴Henry T. Allen, My Rhineland Journal, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923), 71.

business, for the time being, was conducted indirectly, via the offices of the Spanish Embassy.⁵

As soon as Ellis Dresel arrived in Berlin in January 1920, the German government initiated overtures proposing a separate peace with the United States. He was henceforth fully occupied with these negotiations.⁶ What complicated and delayed the process was the American political situation. The November election, which brought about a change of administration from Wilson to that of Warren Harding, caused the diplomatic process in Berlin to come to a near stand-still, since Harding was not inaugurated until March, 1921. In addition, Charles Evans Hughes, the incoming Secretary of State, was still hoping for Treaty ratification and was much concerned about the ensuing practical complications which the construct of a separate treaty would entail. Thus a separate peace between Germany and the United States could not become a reality until August 25, 1921. On that day, however, the Treaty of Berlin was finally signed by Dresel and the German Foreign Minister, Dr. Friedrich Rosen. Three months later Dresel

⁵Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919, Vol. I, 242.

⁶Most of the official documents passing between Germany and the United States during 1921 are concerned with reparations, the occupation of the Rhineland (Germany did not want the United States to withdraw), and the resumption of friendly relations terminating in an official Treaty.

acquired official status as charges d'affaires, "precisely three years after the cessation of hostilities," when ratification of the Treaty was exchanged on November 11, 1921.⁷ But Dresel's labors brought him also the termination of his post in Berlin; in mid-April of 1922 he was replaced by Ambassador Alanson B. Houghton.⁸

Throughout the previous months the United States watched developments in Germany, worried whether the new Government could acquire the strength which would position the country as a buffer-state between the West and Bolshevism; certain that a political balance would have to precede formal trade relations. American policy attached conditions for a middle-of-the-road political program; the goal of the United States was to pursue a balancing policy and support the "bourgeois-democratic parties" of the political center.⁹ The competition for American favor was at times especially difficult to sort out for the diplomatic mission in Berlin; for example, during the Kapp Putsch both

⁷Sally Marks and Denis Delude, "German-American Relations, 1918-1921," Mid America: A Historical Review, October 1971, V. 53/4, 221-25.

⁸Once again, the roads lead through the Rhineland. Houghton, on his way to, Dresel on his way from Berlin confer on the situation in Berlin. Henry T. Allen, My Rhineland Journal, 348.

⁹Werner Link, Die amerikanische Stabilisierungspolitik in Deutschland 1921-1932, (Dusseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1970), 78-9.

Kapp and the Ebert government wooed Dresel and American money.¹⁰ After World War I, "foreign relations had become a field in which political, economic, financial, and commercial problems overlapped to determine the conduct of diplomatic missions."¹¹ Germany was ready for business and growth, and wanted money and trade to fuel both these needs. Even with the Treaty of Berlin concluded and the businessman cum Ambassador Houghton ready to serve both countries' needs, the political situation in Germany was still far from stable; Germany still had to tend to its infant Republic's frail constitution. At the moment, throughout the country, several boils were testing her health.

At the time of Truman Smith's arrival, Berlin was still resonating from the Kapp Putsch of March 13. The General Strike which thwarted the attempted overthrow of the young Ebert government, gave encouragement to renewed Communist agitation and again threatened social stability. New Reichstag elections on June 6, 1920, revealed the extent of the political confusion and lack of faith of the German people in their young Republic. In this climate of political instability and uncertainty, Ellis Dresel sent Truman Smith to observe the 1921 plebiscite in upper

¹⁰Ibid., 80.

¹¹Herman J. Rupieper, "Alanson B. Houghton: An American Ambassador in Germany, 1922-1925," 490.

Silesia,¹² in which the population of the region decided whether to remain German, or join Poland. Even though the status of diplomatic non-recognition still existed at this time between Germany and the United States, Smith attended unofficially, the only American participant.¹³ But in November 1921, after re-establishment of normal diplomatic relations with Germany, Smith's status changed to assistant military attache. As full-fledged member of the attaché office in Berlin, he was now able to travel as an official representative of his country.

As the complex political and social structure of post-war Germany made it necessary for the ambassador to be "increasingly dependent on the staff of his embassy," Ambassador Houghton requested the "loan" of Smith from the military attaché office in November of 1922.¹⁴ As a result of an article prepared by "an American correspondent of the New York Herald," Truman Smith was sent to Bavaria by

¹²In order to allow him to travel, Smith was obliged to make his own passport, since none could be issued to him until establishment of normal diplomatic relations. Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 311.

¹³Truman Smith, Berlin Alert: The Memoirs and Reports of Truman Smith, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1984), 16. In Oppeln, Upper Silesia, he dined and played bridge at the British High Commissioner's residence; present was also Monsignor Achille Ratti, papal nuncio to Poland, soon to be Pius XI (1922-1939), who was an avid bridge player. Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 311.

¹⁴Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 17.

Houghton concerned about "the growing strength of the National Socialist Party in Bavaria,"¹⁵ amidst American concern about a possible secession movement in that State. Reports of renewed disquieting, political stirrings, which were connected with a new political movement, the National Socialist party and its leader, Adolf Hitler, needed to be verified and evaluated. Also, this new party in Bavaria was rumored to be financed by industrialist money to a considerable extent, and the possibility of nationwide involvement would require a potential policy reassessment. While a political evaluation was the primary focus, Smith was also to report on the condition of the 7th Division of *Reichswehr*, examine reported problems concerning the Bavarian "relations to the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission,"¹⁶ and investigate the National Socialist movement in Munich, and its role in Bavarian politics. To facilitate a more thorough understanding of the movement, Houghton had instructed Smith to attempt a personal evaluation of certain members of the conservative political

¹⁵"Development of a Fascisti Movement in Bavaria," Service Report No. 3849, November 3, 1922. RG165/2657-B-565, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC.

¹⁶"Conditions in Bavaria - The Reichswehr - Service Report," 23 November, 1922, Report No. 3932, RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, DC.

element.¹⁷ Smith, neither a trained diplomat nor an intelligence agent, thus found himself on a delicate diplomatic mission. Bavaria, after the nearly successful communist take-over of the Munich city government by Kurt Eisner in November of 1919, had become the stronghold of right-wing conservatism, and Smith was fully aware of this. He wrote,

It is an unquestionable fact, that a large part of the success achieved by Hittler [sic] is due to the policy of non-interference, laying aside actual sympathy, extended towards him by the Bavarian Government.... Sympathy towards Hittler [sic] was found in very high government positions. The Bavarian Minister of the Interior has on several occasions in the Diet officially proclaimed government toleration of the National Socialists and actual sympathy with many of their aims. This attitude is not surprising considering the present composition of the Bavarian cabinet, in which "national" parties alone are represented.¹⁸

Profiting from the general climate of fear, the National Socialist Party by 1922 held any attempted balance at bay. The initially rag-tag movement seemed to build its strength on paranoia and feed on the strong, unifying Bavarian nationalism. Nationalism and monarchism

¹⁷Smith's wife, Katherine, who accompanied on his trip, noted that her husband was asked by Houghton to "sound out General Ludendorff, find out [the] sentiments concerning Prince Rupprecht [sic] of Bavaria - and by the way there is a fellow stirring up trouble. Have a look at him." Katherine Smith, "My Life 1920-24," 363.

¹⁸"Conditions in Bavaria," 3.

represented the cohesive glue for a population which felt betrayed by the Socialists in Berlin who had sold out the German nation, and "dethroned their good king along with the bad Kaiser.... [The] Bavarians did not expect the [Weimar] Republic to endure long," said Robert Murphy who was the Acting Consul General from 1921-25 in Munich. "They were impatiently anticipating the restoration of some form of monarchy which would bring back their own Wittelsbach royalty."¹⁹ In addition to Robert Murphy's regular reports on the activities of the budding Nazi Party, a report containing the article of the American correspondent of the New York Herald quoted *verbatim*, was sent from Berlin to the War Department on November, 1922,²⁰ warning of a developing "Fascisti" movement in Bavaria. This report appears to have prompted Ambassador Houghton to dispatch Truman Smith to Munich.

The first stop Smith made when he arrived on November

¹⁹Robert Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), 17.

²⁰This report was entitled "Development of the Fascisti Movement in Bavaria," and seems to have been sent by Smith. Service Report No. 3849, November 3, 1922, RG 165/2657-B-565, National Archives, Washington D.C. Murphy vented his frustration at Washington's silence later in his memoirs, "not once did our State Department ask my opinion about any political event, nor express concern over the growing Nazi movement. No comment came from Washington when I sent my eyewitness report of the Hitler group's attempt to overthrow the government of Bavaria in 1923." Robert Murphy, Diplomat among Warriors, 16.

15, 1922, was to see Acting Consul Robert Murphy.²¹ Murphy informed Smith of the general political situation, as well as the difficulty of the Allied Control Commission in supervising compliance with the terms of the Treaty. They discussed at length the many *Regimentsvereine* (regimental organizations) which had become havens for well-armed paramilitary groups. These were simply the original "Bavarian corps, division, brigade, regiment, and battalion" of the War numbering in the thousands, with Ludendorff and other leaders at the head.²² Smith decided that both the American Embassy in Berlin as well as the Government in Washington had definite reason to be concerned about the stability of Germany's young socialist government, and he proceeded to evaluate methodically the conditions. The following day he went to see the Ministerial Director at the Bavarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he received a

²¹Berlin Alert, 48. "I called at 3:30 p.m. on Consul Murphy at the consulate, Lederer Strasse 25, [who] informed me that there are very few American tourists in Munich at the present time"; Murphy was happy to see Smith since foreigners only received permission for an eight-day stay from the Bavarian Government. Murphy made no mention of Smith's visit, not their lengthy conversation on the state of affairs, in his memoirs later.

²²Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 49. Others included Georg Escherich, head of the former local defence force, or *Einwohnerwehr*; *Korvettenkapitän* (Navy Colonel) Herman Ehrhardt, whose Marine Brigade had been disbanded by the Government; Ludendorff's "wartime associate, the sinister Colonel [Max] Bauer." Gordon Craig, Germany 1866-1945, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 429-30.

cautious explanation for Bavaria's conservative stance. This outlook, the official said, would be natural to a State more agricultural than industrial, that Bavaria did not experience the development after 1870 which occurred in North Germany, and that Socialism, consequently, "made little headway" in a State where "the bulk of the land was owned and farmed by peasants."²³ He was also informed that the National Socialists "were a growing factor to be reckoned with ...hostile to the Bavarian Government" but that exact accounts of their strength were not available. Minimizing the unrest which had prompted Smith's visit, the director implied that Berlin-Bavaria rivalry was at the heart of the concern. Smith had presented him with a letter of introduction from the Berlin Foreign Office and promptly received a lecture on the essential inherent differences between Berlin and Bavaria, with the implication that these could only be understood by Germans. Smith fully understood the attempted pacification designed to allay any American concerns, but he proceeded to make his rounds in high places in order to obtain as much information as he possible could.²⁴

²³Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 51. see also "Political Conditions in Bavaria - Service Report No. 3951," 28 November, 1922. Records of the War Department, RG 165, National Archives, Washington, DC.

²⁴Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 51-2.

His next call was to Otto *Freiherr* Kress von Kressenstein, General of the Cavalry, artillery commander of the Seventh Division, who remembered Smith's superior, Colonel Edward Davis, and they warmed to each other as soldiers. This fraternal sentiment caused Smith to feel quite confident about the information he received, though his report is meticulously unbiased. He was quite realistic about some of the complaints he received; when told that costly cavalry regiments were a financial burden, and the *Reichswehr* should be able to replace them with infantry or artillery regiments, he made the editorial comment, "this is a typical German argument. They do not have to have horses for their Cavalry unless they want them." General Kress further told him that the "spirit, discipline, and training" of the remaining *Reichswehr* troops were "excellent," except that the extreme length of service imposed (12 years) by the Versailles Treaty would be "a very serious impediment to the development of the *Reichswehr*."²⁵ With regard to recent incidents between the population and the Allied Control Commission, he was told that these were not very important and were, quite understandably, caused in part by the "provocative" behavior of the French, who were much

²⁵"Conditions in Bavaria-The *Reichswehr*-Service Report," No. 3932, November 23, 1922, RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC. See also: Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 52.

disliked. Smith promptly interviewed a British major of the Control Commission, who said that their work was impeded by the Bavarian authorities' intimidation of people who reported Treaty violations. He also gave Smith information on the problem of concealed weapons, and his view of the paramilitary *Regimentsvereine* (Regimental Societies).²⁶

At this point Smith decided to focus his attention on the National Socialist Labor Party, "the most active political force in Bavaria at the present time." He wrote in his report,

Until a short time ago, the activities of the party were confined very largely to the vicinity of Munich. This was explained by Hittler's [sic] Chief of Staff as due to the condition of party finances. In recent months, he stated, large sums of money have been received anonymously. A well informed [source] stated that Director Hugenberg of Krupps had recently donated 40 million marks to the National Socialists. Nuernberg industrialists were also financing the movement. The party is at the present time purchasing motor trucks to use in transporting their "Stoss Truppen" from city to city. Such purchases cannot be carried out today without considerable capital.²⁷

Aware that such extensive organization would also require leadership, Truman Smith interviewed the three major

²⁶"Conditions in Bavaria - Activities of Control Commission - Service Report 3539," 27 November, 1922. Records of the War Department, RG 165, National Archives, Washington, DC.

²⁷"Conditions in Bavaria - The National Socialist Labor Party - Service Report," November 25, 1922, No. 3933 RG 165. Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington D.C.

political figures of the Bavarian political scene during his seven days in Munich: Ruprecht of Wittelsbach, former Crown Prince of Bavaria; the enigmatic General Ludendorff; and Adolf Hitler, the leader of the National Socialist Party. This third interview, Smith was convinced, was "the first interview of any American diplomat with the future fuhrer [sic]." ²⁸

Prince Ruprecht's comments were brief. He reassured Smith that he had no divisive aspirations to the Bavarian throne, that he fully supported the maintenance of the German Republic, and voiced his conviction that "in case disorders do break out in Germany this winter, Bavaria is undoubtedly in a stronger position, with respect to maintaining law and order, than North Germany." ²⁹

Smith interviewed General Ludendorff in his home on November 19, 1922. Ludendorff saw a great Bolshevik danger to Germany, and was convinced that the actions of the Socialist government in Berlin would result in a battle between the two countries on German soil. Since Bolshevism was attempting to strangle German industrial prosperity, and

²⁸Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 46.

²⁹"Crown Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria - Service Report 3938," 27 November, 1922. Records of the War Department, RG 165, National Archives, Washington, DC. Smith referred to Prince Ruprecht as "the cleverest politician in Bavaria," and noted that he commanded a sizeable following. Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 50.

the Berlin Government in his opinion was too weak to protect the country, only a National dictator could provide the strength that was needed to protect Germany and the West. However, without the support of the Allies, this would be difficult; the first step of allied action should be withdrawal from the Rhineland, as well as removal of all the military restrictions imposed by the Versailles Treaty. He saw in Italy and Mussolini's Fascisti a positive movement toward a "National Reawakening in Europe," and saw Bavaria beginning to follow in Italy's footsteps. The Allies should recognize the danger, overcome their animosity toward Germany, and collaborate to defeat Bolshevism.³⁰

The third, and most interesting, interview was with Hitler, in a third-floor room "drab and dreary beyond belief, akin to a back bedroom in a decaying New York tenement," on November 20, 1922.³¹ Rather a series of monologues prompted by occasional questions; "it was as if [Smith] had pressed a gramophone switch which set off a full-length speech. In consequence the interview lasted

³⁰"General Ludendorff on the Political Situation - Service Report 3944," 28 November, 1922. Records of the War Department, RG 165, National Archives, Washington DC.

³¹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 46.

hours."³² The essence of his soliloquies were as follows: He, Hitler, must defeat Marxism, be it Communist or Socialist variety, and return the aims of German labor to the ideals of Nationalism. The parliamentary system of Government presently in control and enmeshed in factionalist bickering is ineffective and should be replaced. "His movement aims at the establishment of a national dictatorship through non-parliamentary action," in the interest of the nation, to allow the country to regain its balance and its place in the international community. A parliamentary system would only interfere with achieving this goal, therefore to even debate the advantages of either republic or monarchy was a moot point. "To permit the existing differences of viewpoint on this question to interfere with the achievement of the National Dictatorship, so vital to the interests of Germany, would be absurdity," he stated.³³ Present in Smith's summary of Hitler's comments was a paraphrase which seemed to echo Napoleon, "It is possible in the distant future that the popular will of

³²Ibid., 46. The first Western diplomat to interview Hitler was British Control Commission Officer, Colonel Stuart Ruddle, a few weeks previously.

³³"Conditions in Bavaria - The National Socialist Labor Party-Service Report No. 3933," 25 November, 1922. RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC.

the nation may decide for a Monarchical form of government."³⁴

Although anti-Semitic propaganda was a regular by-product of National Socialist vocabulary and was used to attract sympathizers to their cause, Smith found such rhetoric nearly absent in his interview. For this reason Smith addressed the issue bluntly. "Hittler [sic] stated, when directly asked as to this point, that he favored the withdrawal of citizenship from all Jews and their exclusion from public offices."³⁵

Though his report attempts to strike an impartial tone, Truman Smith did not underestimate the growing National Socialist movement, nor its appeal outside of Bavaria.

It is believed that not only in Munich but in all of Germany, there is a fertile field even among the factory workers for a National movement.... It seems hardly probable furthermore, that with the results already achieved, there will be any lack of money, for the propagation of the idea of a National Dictatorship. These facts, coupled with the magnetism and oratorical ability of the National Socialist leader, speak for a rapid and consistent development of the German "Fascisti."³⁶

³⁴Ibid., 2.

³⁵Ibid., 2. Smith also writes that "other leaders of the movement gave the impression, however, that anti-Semitism was a propaganda weapon rather than a basic aim of the movement."

³⁶Ibid., 3.

Smith spent seven busy days in Munich³⁷ and exercised his responsibility with an objectivity and thoroughness which afterwards won him a commendation from Ambassador Houghton. "I have just read carefully through Captain Smith's report on his visit to Bavaria. The report seems to me so complete, so impartial and clearly stated, that I should like to ask you to express to Captain Smith my warm appreciation of his services."³⁸

Smith was taking this movement seriously, discussing the possibilities and the probability of its success. He could not, however, see how in practical terms a "National Dictatorship" could pass the vigilance of the other European countries, especially France, much less obtain their toleration of such a government. This stumbling block may have been the reason why he also dismissed Hitler himself as "an uneducated madman."³⁹ His interview with Hitler contains all major elements of the agenda which Germany's

³⁷While Truman Smith was busy with official business, his wife Katherine spent the days in the company of Putzi Hanfstaengl, who decided to accompany Smith one evening to hear Hitler speak in a *Bierkeller*. "Putz had never heard of the man.... This was the beginning of a fateful relationship for Putz." Katherine Smith, "My Life 1919-1924," 365.

³⁸Alanson B. Houghton, letter to Lt. Col. C.F. Cox, Berlin, 25 November, 1922. The commendation was entered in his efficiency record. Papers of Truman Smith, Hoover Memorial Library, Stanford, CA.

³⁹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 43.

nemesis repeated in Mein Kampf, and which he followed to his and his country's doom. Hitler, he said, "seeks control of the Reich," and wants to be "dictator through non-parliamentary action," that he wants to eliminate the party system, i.e. democracy, that he "wants power not hampered by any legislative or popular assembly," in order to "overthrow Marxism," including Socialism in any form, and win "labor to the Nationalist ideals of state and society." Finally, that Hitler wants to take the "citizenship from all Jews and their exclusion from public office."⁴⁰ Smith's impression at the time was that the movement would grow rapidly and consistently. He saw the "elements of danger," the possibility of a National Socialist Party success in Germany, but was unable to reconcile his personal perception of the country and its people as a group with the strange apparition in that dank room on the afternoon of November 22, 1922.

Smith's reports went to Washington, to be buried in classified secrecy. Ambassador Houghton understood their content and made every attempt to facilitate German economic prosperity, proceeding with hope and industry to fashion a

⁴⁰Ibid., 1-2.

"Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Consular Rights"⁴¹
between the two countries. Truman Smith completed his tour
of duty a year later and departed for the United States.

In 1935 he was to return to Berlin, himself a full-
fledged military attaché, astonished that the unlikely had
happened and Hitler had achieved in ten years what he said
he would, establish a National Dictatorship.

⁴¹United States, Department of State, Papers Relating
to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923, Vol.
II. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office,
1936), 29.

EDUCATION AND GROWTH

1924 - 1935

The United States of the 1920s, after finding itself in the spot-light as victor in Europe and surprised at its own power and potential leadership, took to the attention it was receiving worldwide like a blushing bride taken to the floor for the first dance at her wedding. Gradually aware of its power and the seductive charm of its role as a creditor nation, the country shared capital and know-how from its cornucopia across the globe. But the wealth was not strewn mindlessly; "While favoring the expansion of overseas trade and investment, American officials were not willing to incur excessive costs and risk in their pursuit."¹ However, while concentrating on economic expansion, developments in other countries compelled the United States to keep a wary eye on revolution and unrest abroad. Once again reluctant to expend any but the most necessary resources on defence, the country had nonetheless no choice but to stay wary, in case events beyond its control would threaten vital interests if not its position

¹John Braeman, "American Military Power and Security," in Major Problems in American Foreign Policy; Volume II: Since 1914, third edition, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Co., 1989), 157.

as the most powerful among nations. Never again could the United States of America mind its own business, however strenuously some of her citizens would try to get back into the egg of isolationism.

The American military establishment, however, did not intend to turn its back on world events, but kept a keen eye on revolutions and developments abroad. Though expenditures were granted only sparingly, the Army tried to maintain a level of preparedness, expecting and making ready for the worst they approached the post-war era with a realism born of soldierly perfectionism and the lessons just learned. Though America had sheathed the sword, it planned to keep it at the ready, and scanned the shores and the horizon beyond. After World War I, "army planning was based upon an 'insurance' concept of preparedness, resting upon a small professional force capable of emergency defense, while providing the nucleus for the mobilization and training of a mass 'citizen' army."² This "small professional force" was trained and led by an officer corps which had recently gained valuable on-the-job training during the War in Europe. With the benefit of that experience, the system itself underwent improvements in strategic planning, staffing, education, promotion, intelligence, and equipment,

²Ibid., 150.

clearing the path for Chief of Staff General Douglas A. MacArthur's "sweeping revamping of the army's organizational structure" by 1932.³ With the nightmarish memory of trench warfare vivid in their minds, the military establishment prepared for a more mobile, rapid military capability, backed up by the Industrial Mobilization Plan of 1930.

Truman Smith's initial contribution to this effort came from abroad, serving as assistant military attaché in Berlin. Because of the war, and to a larger extent as a result of post-war problems dealing with occupation, reparations, and inter-allied difficulties, the Intelligence branch of the War Department, G-2, was considerably more interested in "foreign events, making a continuing effort to view military questions in their larger political, social, and economic context."⁴ This global view now permeated all aspects of military planning, preparation, and training.

Smith returned to the United States in April, 1924, at the end of his tour of duty in Berlin, and was assigned to Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York.⁵ As the army reduced

³Ibid., 151.

⁴Ibid., 150.

⁵Fort Hamilton was a remnant from the previous century, guarding the Narrows between Brooklyn and Staten Island; it has since made way for the Verrazano Bridge.

its personnel and readjusted its ranks⁶, Smith's grade reverted back to Captain, an event which he took with more equanimity than his wife.⁷ The past four years in the thick of weighty diplomatic activity and the company of Europe's most illustrious and famous people in Germany had been exciting and financially comfortable, and trading this for the anonymity of army life on an out-of-the-way base was a difficult adjustment for them both. "No contrast in life could possibly have been greater than Berlin and Hamilton; the one at the hub of stirring events, the other an isolated back water."⁸ In Germany domestic problems were part of the adventure, now they were mundane and very real. Servants were difficult to come by, and Mrs. Smith had to learn housekeeping, a task which she conquered with the indomitable spirit with which she approached all of life. They had lost their first child, born in Koblenz in 1920, at age two-and-a-half, and Mrs. Smith was expecting another,

⁶Though limitations in funding kept "the army's enlisted strength in the latter twenties and early thirties to 118,750 men.... The officer corps remained at approximately twice the pre-war level, thus providing the cadre that was able to lead the vastly expanded army of World War II." John Braeman, "American Military Power," 150.

⁷"I was furious," Katherine Smith noted in her memoirs. "It seemed such a mean petty thing to do but Truman took it as a matter of course." Katherine Smith, "My Life 1924-1935, Years of Preparation," unpublished memoirs, U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 4.

⁸Ibid., 14.

which was born a month after her husband's return.

Life was difficult for Truman, as well. He was assigned to command the Service Company, "which contained the regimental wagon train with some sixty assorted horses and mules, a motor transport platoon, and various regimental supply personnel."⁹ After serving in Germany, Fort Hamilton felt especially onerous and humiliating; "Truman loathed this duty. He knew nothing of animals and cared less. Fresh from the war this service irked him."¹⁰ Smith applied for a transfer, which was denied by his commanding officer, Colonel Edwin Croft. He found a respite from his mundane duties during the summer, when the troops went to Fort Dix, New Jersey, for training, as part of the 1st Division to which the 18th Infantry belonged. When the division commander, Major General Preston Brown, came for inspection to Fort Hamilton, Katherine Smith seized the opportunity to tell him that her husband was a Yale graduate as well.¹¹ In Spring of 1926, encouraged by Colonel Croft, Smith applied for attendance in the advanced course at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Initially Smith

⁹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 18.

¹⁰Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 8.

¹¹"P. Brown, as he was called, was a Yale graduate, reputedly a strong Eli, his son then at Yale.... He looked at me sharply but made no comment. However, I had hit the mark." Ibid., 13.

was hesitant, "feeling the Argonne had taught him all he needed to know of command," but placed Benning "first on his preference list."¹² The War Department approved his application, which was accompanied by recommendations from both his superior officers. Katherine Smith, having learned about "army solidarity" as well as "no matter how dull a post might seem at first encounter.... those in the Army truly lived for the 'good of the Service,'" had been able to adjust to the privations which accompanied the reduced salary of her husband. They left Fort Hamilton for Georgia in the summer of 1926, traveling by ship to Savannah, and in their newly purchased "four cylinder Dodge" to the city of Columbus, where they encountered a very different world.

People moved slowly, spoke slowly, took their time about their tasks, always willing to chat and pass the time of day. Accustomed as I was to the hurry and non-committal coldness of the North, I found it irksome to spend so much time waiting. But after I spent four years in the blistering humid heat of spring and summer I marveled they had the energy to move at all. I learned to appreciate their kindness and friendliness.¹³

But for Truman Smith the next year among the ninety officers in the advanced course at Fort Benning was rigorous and fast-paced; he thrived in the intense competition, and

¹²"We were eternally grateful to Colonel Croft," Mrs. Smith wrote later. "Benning became one of the greatest experiences in our lives." *Ibid.*, 14.

¹³*Ibid.*, 17.

placed near the top of his class. At the end of the year he applied with most of his class to attend the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, which he attended for the next year, changing the easygoing, pleasant climate of Benning for the sterner weather of the Mid-West. Though he did not rate Leavenworth to be of the same quality as Benning despite its fierce reputation, Smith was gratified to graduate fourth in his class. At Benning he had particularly liked the subjects of military history and tactics; at Leavenworth he privately took issue with the "archaic" methods, and the "stereotyped and artificial" military problems they were given to solve. Many of the young officers attending these schools had undergone trial by fire, and were not content to simply listen and copy. With the benefit of first-hand experience from the war, Smith was eager to change the system of instruction and to participate in the process himself. Thus he was at once elated and eager when he learned of his assignment to Benning, this time as instructor in the Military History Department.¹⁴ "The ensuing four-year tour of duty at the Infantry School was about the most pleasant period of my entire army life," Smith wrote in 1964. The experience he gained under the mentorship of Lieutenant Colonel George C.

¹⁴Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 20-21.

Marshall, Assistant Commander of the Infantry School, were as important for his later career as the contact with Marshall himself. As one of the "astonishing galaxy of instructors and pupils"¹⁵, Smith became, and went out into the world subsequently, as one of "Marshall's men."

When Marshall took over the Academic Department in 1928 to direct it "with a relatively unrestricted hand" until June, 1932¹⁶, he decided to adapt its curriculum to possible wars of the future, rather than memorizing the tactics and remedies of failure of those past. When the American army joined its Allies in France in 1917, Marshall saw static warfare and its glaring shortcomings first-hand; in a lecture at Benning he said, "it was apparent that few [officers] had a correct idea of the various applications of the fundamental principle of simplicity."¹⁷ He wanted to "teach company-grade officers small-unit tactics and to train enlisted men to become training cadre themselves in the event of mobilization." As a student of General John J. Pershing, and himself an experienced war veteran, he had

¹⁵Robert Payne, The Marshall Story: A Biography of General George C. Marshall, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951), 105.

¹⁶Larry I. Bland, ed. The Papers of George Catlett Marshall; Volume I: 'The Soldierly Spirit' December 1880 - June 1939, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 319.

¹⁷The Papers of George Catlett Marshall, Volume I, 336.

absorbed the lesson that future battles "based on fire power and maneuverability" depended on thorough tactical and practical training of these men.¹⁸ What had bothered Smith at Leavenworth, Marshall, too, verbalized: "I found that the technique and practices developed at Benning and Leavenworth would practically halt the development of an open warfare situation, apparently requiring an armistice or some understanding with a complacent enemy," he once remarked with usual dry wit.¹⁹ A perfectionist himself, he wanted to train his men to be the best, endeavored to train officers who could think, lead, be innovative, able to respond to changed situations and alien territory with practical ability and initiative.

The Academic Department at Fort Benning had at that time some three to five hundred students, and from sixty to eighty instructors. Throughout these five years of restructuring, Marshall insisted on the full cooperation of his instructors; if one of these resisted his "Benning Revolution," he simply replaced him. Supported in his "'move, shoot, and communicate' policy" by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Stilwell and Major Omar Bradley, both of whom

¹⁸Ed Cray, General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 104.

¹⁹Ibid., quote by Marshall, 105.

were on his teaching staff, Marshall turned out the quality he aimed for. "Some 150 of the students and instructors... became Generals in the next twenty years."²⁰

Truman Smith thrived in Benning's environment, and so did his wife. Benning was no longer a sleepy Infantry training school ten miles from Columbus; under Marshall's restless influence it became an active, social place. Riding clubs and hunts²¹, pageants, amateur theater productions in which Smith also participated, golf, tennis and tennis tournaments. Smith's teaching schedule included public speaking, the confidence for which he had the opportunity to hone while practicing his "fluent but ungrammatic"²² German during his tour of duty in Koblenz and Berlin. But he especially enjoyed the class he taught in military history where he developed the use of early World War I battles on the German and French sides. Set up as problems which the students were asked to solve, he focused especially on what Marshall emphasized, namely "the

²⁰Ibid., 106.

²¹One day at a flag race luncheon Katherine Smith suggested a treasure hunt, "adapted to a riding hunt at Benning. He [Marshall] was delighted with the idea. 'You get one up and we will all have lunch at my house afterwards next Sunday,'" he told her. Katherine Smith, "My Life 1924-1935," 56.

²²General A.C. Wedemeyer, interviewed by Charles Burdick, 21 July, 1978, in Palo Alto, California. Notes in author's possession.

confusion and uncertainty of modern battle." As part of the course, monographs were required to be written and presented orally to the class and instructors by the students, who were given the option of using their own experience if they had been in the war.²³ These monographs and lectures eventually found their way into a book, Infantry In Battle²⁴, which has an introduction by Marshall and was used as a textbook in the Infantry School. Smith was also asked to present his military history lectures throughout the South, to officers of the Reserve as well as the National Guard, and the Air Corps Academy at Maxwell Field, Montgomery. Much to Smith's delight, Marshall assigned him yet another task, that of school librarian. During the next three years, with the generous allotment of twenty to thirty thousand dollars, Smith was to increase the eight thousand book collection, since "Marshall wished to create a great

²³Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 22. A good account of this aspect of the Benning Infantry school is to be found in Forrest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall: Education of a General, (New York: The Viking Press, 1963), 254-59.

²⁴The Infantry Journal, Incorporated, Infantry In Battle, (Richmond: Garrett & Massie, 1939). As military attache in Germany in 1935, Smith came upon a version of the two-volume book which was translated into German; in a letter to Marshall dated November 16, 1935, he reported that it was available for only 40 cents in Germany, but that the original cost all of \$3.00 in the U.S. The Papers of George Catlett Marshall, Volume I, 479.

military library."²⁵

Throughout his years at Benning, Smith maintained his connection with several of the friends whom he had made during his years in Germany among German army officers. This *Leitfaden* (continuum) of Smith's "German life" had its origins in Koblenz, and was not severed even by the Second World War. Nor was Smith an isolated case. Though a certain amount of professional reserve was built into the German and American officers' relationships with each other in daily contact, the Germans appreciated the American open-minded generosity, as well as their interest in the future use the *Reichswehr* (German Army) was going to make of its recent military experience. In 1922, Major Friedrich von Boetticher, aide-de-camp to General Hans von Seeckt during the War, and later German military attaché to Washington from 1933 to 1941, went on a three month visit to the United States at the invitation of the War Department, to see army organization, air bases, and weapons proving grounds. The United States allowed the defeated Germans access to weapons developments and personnel training which no other nation would grant them.²⁶

²⁵Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 23.

²⁶Manfred Kehrig, Die Wiedereinrichtung des deutschen Militärischen Attachédienstes nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg (1919-1933), (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag, 1966), 86-87.

No matter which direction the German nation faces as either aggressor or defender, it has to look warily over its shoulder at its many neighbors, and this situation has changed little since pre-historic tribal times, or since the period in which the tribes held their own against Roman-occupied Gaul. Considering that good fences make good neighbors, Germany was historically at a disadvantage as a region without geographic barriers; even the Rhine has not been an obstacle in either direction since Roman times. After the First World War and following its rescue from a nearly fatal demise by the pact between Chancellor Friedrich Ebert and General Wilhelm Groener in November of 1918, the German *Reichswehr's* first priority was to rebuild its capabilities in spite of the severe Versailles restrictions imposed upon the country. Surrounded by potential enemies with vastly superior combined military power and precluded from development of any sort, the *Reichswehr* decided to evade the strictures of Versailles. Germany initiated a cautious approach of the United States military establishment, requesting observation of, or participation in, precisely defined military facilities. Initially the contact amounted to no more than personal travel combined with an occasional tour of a military installation or teaching college. This gradually resulted in an officer exchange program which terminated in 1934 with the accession

of the National Socialists.

Benning was one of a series of destinations of the German officers. The War Department kept abreast of these visits and authorized each separately; they frequently lasted only a few hours in each location, and no more than a few days. The phenomenon was low-key; starting in 1925, these officers came usually two per year, and they travelled together. They visited primarily artillery installations, air fields, teaching institutions like the R.O.T.C. and National Guard Camps, as well as West Point, M.I.T., the Army War College in Washington, and the Tank School at Fort Meade. They were interested in the United States' officer training, new technological innovations, as well as in combined maneuvers, in airplane development, even the organization of military personnel quarters. The *Reichswehr* sent only their best, most personable men, or those who already had contacts like Smith in the United States Army. As the military attaché in Berlin, Colonel Edward Carpenter, wrote to the War Department, "I do not know of any two German officers who are better fitted to make a favorable impression with our people than these two. I have been told, very confidentially, that General von Blomberg is one

of the most important rising officers in the German Army."²⁷ When General von Blomberg arrived at Fort Benning with his colleague Col. Kuehlenthal,

General King offered the German officers every opportunity to see the school at work and... tendered the General a review that showed our troops to great advantage. General von Blomberg was the house guest of General and Mrs. King, and Colonel Kuehlenthal of Major and Mrs. Truman Smith....²⁸

The attraction of Fort Benning to the German officers was Marshall's new approach in tactics and training, preparing officers for future wars. Katherine Smith remembered the visit well; "Colonel Marshall appointed Truman as Blomberg's Aide during his stay.... This innocuous temporary assignment as Aide turned out to be a link in the chain drawing Truman back to Berlin in 1935 with all its fatal consequences."²⁹

Two years previously, in 1928, the German Chief of

²⁷Colonel Edward Carpenter to Colonel Robert C. Foy, at the War Department, January 21, 1930. Records of the War Department, The National Archives, RG 165. In a series of correspondence with the War Department, Col. Carpenter highly recommends the German officers from personal experience; of von Blomberg he writes, "this officer is my most intimate friend in the German Army."

²⁸Lt. Colonel W. Krueger, letter to Colonel R.C. Foy, at the War Department, October 22, 1930. RG 165, Records of the War Department, The National Archives, Washington D.C. Colonel Kuehlenthal was the *Leiter der Heeresstatistischen Abteilung/T3* (Chief of Army Statistics).

²⁹Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 66.

Staff, General Wilhelm Heye, had approached the American military attaché in Berlin about the "possibility of sending German officers to the United States for six months to see various military activities and having us send officers to Germany on the same status."³⁰ The query was cautious, the response on the American side initially circumspect, for fear of violating Versailles stipulations, or offending the French government. Finally, one of the officers in question, Captain Adolf von Schell, attended Fort Benning from September 1930 to September 1931³¹. Truman Smith and his wife took von Schell under their wing, easing his adjustment to America. Among other cultural differences, Mrs. Smith wrote many years later, von Schell "had never seen a Negro till he reached Georgia. At dinner his

³⁰Col. A.L. Conger to the War Department, Report D-9477, RG 165, Records of the War Department, The National Archives, Washington D.C. In 1922, the War Department invited Major Friedrich von Boetticher to tour Army facilities, and offered also the opportunity to send German Air officers to the U.S. for the same purpose. Manfred Kehrig, Die Wiedereinrichtung des deutschen militärischen Attachedienstes, 86.

³¹Col. Edward Carpenter, Report to the War Department, No. D-10,925, 17 July, 1930. Captain Adolf von Schell was a general staff officer; a fellow officer, Captain Gerd von Massow, "a trained former pursuit plane pilot (*Jagdflieger*)," attended the flight school at Brooks Field, Texas. In 1936, Colonel Gerd von Massow, then commander of the *Richthofen Geschwader* (Wing) at Doeberitz, would give Charles Lindbergh and the American assistant attaché of air, Captain Koenig, a tour of his Wing during Lindbergh's first visit to Germany, which was arranged by Truman Smith. See also: Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 95.

apprehensive eyes followed Minnie around the table much to my amusement."³² Schell not only benefitted from his stay at Benning, but made a considerable contribution himself to the school. When he arrived in September, he spoke very little English; in the Spring of 1931 he was able to give lectures which were very popular, having been asked by Marshall to do so.³³ "He admired Colonel Marshall immensely, was overjoyed when Marshall gave him a photograph signed 'To my friend Adolph von Schell.'"³⁴

As a result of von Blomberg's stay at Benning, Truman Smith was invited in 1931 to attend manoeuvres in Arys, East Prussia, and at the Field Artillery School at Juterborg. This visit, which the Germans initially hoped would be in form of an assignment by an American officer to their

³²Ibid., 68.

³³In April, 1931, the question was posited by the *Reichswehrministerium* (Army Ministry from 1920-1935) if Benning might request von Schell to serve another year, possibly in the capacity of instructor. Such a request, should it be granted, would be "contrary to my understanding of the Provisions of the Versailles Treaty and... would be one step further toward the emancipation of the German Army." Colonel Edward Carpenter to Colonel Robert Foy at the War Department, 17 April, 1931, Records of the War Department, RG 165, National Archives, Washington DC.

³⁴Being in possession of this photograph, and Truman Smith's last minute assistance, prevented the transfer of the now prisoner of war, von Schell, from the British to the Russians in 1945. Marshall replaced the photograph later. The Smith's continued their contact with von Schell after the war, initially with food aid. Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 67-70.

General Staff,³⁵ was not an openly official one, since this was not legal under the terms of the Versailles Treaty. Smith was sent as "a carefully selected officer [who] would be able to get a complete inside story of the training of what we all know exists, namely the German General Staff."³⁶ Here he met an old friend from Koblenz, General of the Artillery Friedrich von Boetticher. "I profited greatly from the two weeks... renewed my acquaintance with many German officers [and] made several new friends later destined to be useful." He also learned a great deal about German military "thinking" and developments, which he shared in lectures at Benning upon his return.³⁷

In the Spring of 1932 several of "Marshall's Men" received orders to attend the Army War College in Washington; Smith and a number of his friends were among

³⁵Letter from Col. R.C. Foy to Col. Edward Carpenter, 12 August, 1931, RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC.

³⁶Letter from the Military Attaché in Berlin to the Chief of the Military Attaché section, G-2, at the War Department. Col. Edward Carpenter to Col. Robert C. Foy, April 17, 1931, Records of the War Department RG 165, National Archives, Washington DC, 3.

³⁷Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 24. The Smiths used their summer vacation for this trip; Mrs. Smith and her now seven-year-old daughter Kaetchen spent the time in Munich in the company of the former's mother. Truman joined them to go to Bayreuth for three days of the Wagner festival; Mrs. Smith felt that good music could also be had in Vienna, London, and New York, and "much more comfortably" besides. Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 78-80.

them. The family moved back to Washington, into a small, charming and furnished house in Georgetown. While Katherine Smith renewed old acquaintances, Truman and his friend from Benning, Paul Peabody, shared transportation on their daily rides to the War College, where they completed the "peak of the pyramid" in the training sequence of the army officers destined to become future generals and General Staff officers."³⁸ Aside from lectures in diplomacy, politics, and industry among others which were usually delivered by experts in the field, small study groups would engage in shared research on a given subject, write and present a detailed report to the combined group, which then was given the opportunity to critique and ask questions.

One of these group problems, organized and chaired by Smith, was entitled: "Strategic Survey of Germany," a sixty page report and analysis of the

Strategic situation of Germany including maximum military effort that country could initiate and maintain; where its most vital interests lie and how they coincide or conflict with those of Blue [the United States]. It further sets forth Germany's probable action in a war in which Blue might be involved.³⁹

Smith became especially interested in the subject of

³⁸Ibid., 24.

³⁹Course at the Army War College, 1932-33, G-2, Supplement No. 1, to Report of Committee No. 5, December 20, 1932, The Truman Smith Papers, The Hoover Memorial Library, Stanford, CA.

industrial mobilization. Three years later, in Germany as military attaché, he received great benefit from the information and knowledge he had received at the War College, as he watched and analyzed Hitler's massive mobilization effort.

While in Washington, the Smiths witnessed the inauguration of President Roosevelt in March of 1933. According to their opinion, Roosevelt was elected because of the crash of 1929. "He blundered about with his 'New Deal' left leaning policies... copied Hitler's plan of the 'Arbeitskorp' [sic] in founding the CCC camps... which did good work... but he devalued the dollar,"⁴⁰ Katherine Smith wrote in her memoirs. They sympathized with the plight of the "bonus marchers," but felt that the situation was most difficult for the army which had to drive them out. Their life, however, was insular in its existence, and comfortable despite the depression. Washington was still "dry," and of more immediate concern to Mrs. Smith was the need for vigilance in case she received wood alcohol instead of gin from the regular supplier of alcoholic beverages who came once a month from Baltimore. "I did not tell Truman the name of the bootlegger, nor would I let him go downstairs to my little meetings in the reception room. I did not want

⁴⁰Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 87-88.

him involved in the remotest way in my shady doings,"⁴¹ she said; she saw the Volstead Act throughout its existence as an infringement on personal freedom.

With the end of the Washington year in 1933 came Smith's next assignment, and he was scheduled for troop service abroad. For the first time in his military career, Smith turned his back on Europe and the problems of Germany. Given the choice, he seized the opportunity to return to Hawaii, where he had vacationed as a young Yale student. For the next two years he served as commander of the 2nd Battalion of the 27th Infantry at Schofield Barracks, near Honolulu. Life was easy and he enjoyed himself, but he amended the daily routine with writing a manual to umpire maneuvers when he discovered that the Army had no such directives available. The most excitement he experienced, however, were occasionally scheduled night maneuvers on the island of Oahu, whose wild, mountainous ranges, comprised the extent of any serious challenge during this tour of duty. Thus his mind was ever on the larger problems occupying the world stage, especially the rumblings in Europe. A soldier is trained to smell blood, especially if it may potentially be his own, and he keeps abreast of developments, hoping that the rumblings are a passing

⁴¹Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 85-86.

distant thunder. Smith also kept abreast of the movements of the military attachés and knew that the position in Vienna was becoming vacant soon. Since Vienna was considered a career backwater, Smith decided to decline such an offer, but he jumped at the chance of going to Berlin. "It seemed to be a different matter, as I knew well, even in far-off Hawaii... that the Berlin attachéship would become a post of military importance."⁴²

The letter came on October 4, 1934, from Colonel Charles Burnett, who was the Chief of the Attaché section at the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department. He had searched his lists of available personnel and decided that Smith was the perfect choice to be sent to Germany, because of his ability, tact, training, and not least because of his many contacts among the German army officer corps. "If there was ever a man made to order for a job, you are the man in this case, and I shall be badly disappointed if you don't say yes."⁴³

Leaving Hawaii was difficult, especially for Mrs. Smith. They went by transport to New York through the Panama Canal, which took them four weeks. As his wife prepared their household once again for the forthcoming

⁴²Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 27.

⁴³Ibid., 27.

change of the meteorological and political climate; which would be very different from the tropical peace which she was very reluctant to leave behind. Smith spent two weeks at the War Department, taking a crash course to prepare for the post of Military Attaché. Of greater benefit to him was the experience of seeing the practical functions of the Military Intelligence Division office. He found the department "inadequately organized, staffed and financed," and learned, he said later with some bitterness and hindsight, that "military attachés lacked prestige and were little regarded or listened to."⁴ While the two weeks were enough time to become thoroughly discouraged, Smith was not. He believed that he could do the job better than anyone, and was confident that he would succeed. He did not go to serve time, but to rise to the challenge. The Chief of Staff at the time was Douglas MacArthur, and when Smith was ready to depart, he paid a final visit to the General in July, 1935.

I was shown in to General MacArthur. He was seated at his desk, his jacket of a loud rancous [sic] tweed, smoking a cigarette. He looked at me considering, waved me to a chair and began pacing the room back and forth as was his custom when considering a problem, smoking furiously. He stepped in front of me. I rose. "You are very young to be going to Berlin."

"Yes, Sir."

Pacing again. I sat down.
He confronted me again. I rose.

⁴Ibid., 28.

"You have no rank."

"Yes, Sir."

Pacing. Then he stopped once more and once more I rose.

"Well, Smith, I have only this to say to you. I have long noted when you young officers go abroad they very soon end up in the British pocket. Now Smith, my advice to you is never go to bed with a corpse."

He waved me away.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Quoted in: Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1924-1935," 129.

SMITH AND LINDBERGH
1935 - 1939

In the summer of 1936, Charles Lindbergh visited Germany at the invitation of the German Government. From July 22 to August 2, he toured a number of airplane and engine manufacturing and research facilities, piloted a few German airplanes some of which were of recent design, attended a state luncheon at Minister Hermann Goering's residence, and watched the opening ceremonies of the Berlin Olympics the day before he departed again for England. During the eleven days of his stay in Berlin, Lindbergh resided at the home of the American military attaché, Colonel Truman Smith. Few people knew that Lindbergh's visit was conceived and arranged by Truman Smith, that Lindbergh came to Germany as a result of Smith's appeal to a fellow officer's patriotic duty. The American military attaché was concerned that a thorough and realistic assessment of German air production and mobilization capability was essential to United States security. By utilizing Lindbergh's fame as well as his knowledge of air matters, Smith was able to provide extensive intelligence of German air capability to Washington from 1936 to 1939.

The methods which are at the disposal of a military attaché to gather intelligence are limited by the very

nature of his office. As a soldier of a foreign army he is relegated to the inglorious role of an official spy, negotiating access to the host country's military activity and establishments within defined regulations which, if broken by his conduct, may bring about his banishment. His role as a member of the diplomatic corps demands that his activities, his movements, and his contacts with the military establishment be open to scrutiny and requires, in most countries, the official sanction of the host government. Thus, his basic assignment, to "procure information for the preparation of the Army for war" is impeded by his public position as a member of the ambassadorial staff. He operates in the "ambiguous zone between diplomacy and defense." In order to obtain information or intelligence without resorting to covert activity, he has to rely to a considerable extent on officially sanctioned contacts among the host country's own military personnel, as well as his social skills and status within the diplomatic community.¹ His opportunities to obtain good intelligence are severely restricted and consequently the military attaché's personal ingenuity is vital, to enable him to recognize and seize any opportunity which will allow his country to maintain a competitive

¹Alfred Vagts, The Military Attaché, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967). ix-x.

status of military preparedness.

Though the post of military attaché, according to Smith's own words, lacked the prestige of the regular services, and may even have been a hardship as it required the existence of independent means on the part of the officer under consideration,² Truman Smith had enjoyed his assignment as assistant military attaché in Berlin from 1920 to 1924. When the letter arrived from the War Department in October 1934 from Colonel Burnett, the chief of the attache section of the Military Intelligence Division asking Smith to accept the position of military attaché in Berlin, the decision was not difficult.³ The four years he had spent

²"Military Attachés should be able to personally finance the extra cost of the position. In some European capitals this may run as high as \$15,000.00 per year. Not to be able to do this is a positive indication of failure and their presence in a foreign capitol, under such conditions, is useless." Memorandum by Major G.M. Halloran, Army War College, Washington Barracks, D.C., dated Oct. 31, 1925. U.S. Army War College Papers, 311A-15, Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks.

³Truman Smith, Berlin Alert: The Memoirs and Reports of Truman Smith. (Stanford University: Hoover Institution Press, 1987), 26. On December 13, 1934, a letter went to the chief of Staff at the War Department in Washington, sent by Brig. Gen. Alfred T. Smith (no relation) of the General Staff, directing Truman Smith's assignment to replace Col. Jacob Wuest as military attaché to "Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands." Citing Smith's qualifications and his general efficiency rating as "Superior," the directive also, inaccurately, refers to Smith as "a personal friend of Chancellor Hitler before the latter had emerged from obscurity." "Memorandum to the Chief of Staff," G-2/2345-826, Records of the War Department, Record Group 165, National Archives, Washington

in Germany in the aftermath of the First World War had satisfied his special love for history and nourished a liking for Europe, supplementing his traditional Yale education. He found in the European peoples, especially the Germans, a resonating kinship. His army career as an infantry officer and his participation in the 1918 battles in France had shaped his self-discipline and had furnished him with a measure of self-confidence. During the year following the Armistice serving with the Office of Civil Affairs in Koblenz with the occupation forces in the Rhineland, he developed an aptitude for organizational skills dealing with the problems of establishing civilian government under military occupation in the aftermath of a major war.⁴ The combined result made him particularly qualified for his new assignment. He was also endowed with a fundamental and "thorough knowledge of military affairs [and] a keen knowledge of international affairs and familiarity with social customs" and expected to display "a sympathetic attitude toward foreigners, their customs, and even their prejudices." Additionally, the essential social

D.C. The memorandum refers to Smith's visit to Munich in 1922, where he interviewed Hitler.

⁴See U. S. Army, Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, Third Army. American Military Government of Occupied Germany, 1918-1929; Report of the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943).

component inherent in the position "calls for much entertaining, making it necessary for the attache to have independent means,"⁵ and the Smith's were able to meet this requirement as well.⁶

With the advent of National Socialism and Adolf Hitler's disregard for the restrictions of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, Germany had charged headlong into an industrial and military expansionist program which caused

⁵"Determine and report upon the proper qualifications for an officer for duty as Military Attaché." Memorandum for the Director, G-I Division, Army War College, 1925. U.S. Army War College Papers 311A-15, Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks.

⁶This requirement placed an unusual burden on the diplomatic personnel in Germany during the Nazi era, particularly with historical hindsight. Truman Smith has not escaped his share of accusations; whether justified or not remains to be examined. David Kahn has referred to him as an "observant, lively, intelligent Germanophile" in his essay "The United States views Germany and Japan in 1941." Knowing One's Enemy: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars, Ernest May, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 489. The reference he cites for his opinion is taken from Anne Lindbergh's The Flower and the Nettle: Diaries and Letters 1936-1939 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 84, 187. On page 84, Mrs. Lindbergh makes a single sentence remark: "Colonel Smith is alive, questioning, and talks well." On page 187, "The Smiths leave for Berlin. They are both remarkable with people, observant, sympathetic, able to make people at ease. She, more unconsciously, spontaneously; he, more consciously. I feel, too, that he is not so much interested in people's conversation as he is in the people themselves, skipping the steps of conversation and jumping ahead with sheer perception." The person she then continues to describe as what Kahn terms "Germanophile", is not Smith, but Major General Walther von Reichenau, whom she mentions by his full name on page 184.

the Allied powers to cast watchful eyes on the country. Because of his background, Truman Smith was well qualified to apply his acquired skills and basic intelligence to this challenging assignment. During the next four years of his career he would see German preparations for war on an unprecedented scale, and he would do his utmost to alert his country to the changes. For this reason Smith decided to enlist the aid and prestige of Charles Lindbergh,⁷ a decision which would prove a watershed in Smith's life and career and have a permanent impact on the internal political scene of the United States.⁸

Truman Smith, his wife, and their eleven-year-old daughter "Kätchen" arrived in Berlin in the middle of August, 1935. They found the city much changed from their

⁷The suggestion came from Mrs. Smith, who remarked on the Lindbergh's visit to France when she read it in the morning paper. "There's the man who could help me if he would!" he exclaimed, upon which his wife encouraged him to contact Lindbergh. Katherine Smith, "My Life, Berlin: August 1935 - April 1939," U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA., 91.

⁸"I hardly need to tell you that the present German air development is very imposing and on a scale which I believe is unmatched in the world" Smith told Lindbergh in his first letter to the aviator in which he asked for his participation in his efforts. Berlin Alert, 89. "Colonel Lindbergh became fascinated by Germany in general, and by German air power developments in particular." He later joined and was very vocal in the America First movement for non-intervention. Wayne S. Cole, Charles A. Lindbergh and the Battle Against American Intervention in World War II. 31.

earlier stay in 1924. Germany was now rebuilding with a new sense of purpose. "No more shabby fronts and broken fences" wrote Mrs. Smith. "All was clean, freshly painted and in August blooming with leafy trees and window boxes full of flowers.... [but] one felt hurry in the air and a certain tenseness."⁹ While decorating its streets and lulling the citizenry in superficial prosperity and security, Germany was devoting great energies to building an infrastructure which would allow eventual aggressive war and conquest. "There was a good deal of the atmosphere of a story out of the Arabian Nights about Germany" during these years, Smith wrote in his memoirs.¹⁰ This sense of anticipation and restlessness was also apparent in the offices of the military attaches. As early as 1933, Germany's disregard for the Versailles restrictions had produced in the community of attaches two polarized camps into which they aligned themselves: those who treated Germans as the conquered, and the others who saw in Germany "a rising great power not to be permanently restricted by the Treaty....This cleavage between these two viewpoints is and has been very

⁹Katherine Smith, "My Life, Berlin 1935-1939," 1.

¹⁰Berlin Alert, 80.

great and at times bitter."¹¹ Smith did not need the counsel of his colleagues to place himself in the second category. He was astute enough to pursue his responsibilities with his accustomed vigor and relative objectivity, regardless of his own views. He also remembered General Douglas MacArthur's admonishment, and he aimed to be his own man.

As the American military attaché in Berlin, Smith had to function within considerable constraints. He had only two assistants, the assistant attaché, Captain James Crockett, and an assistant for air matters, Captain Theodore Koenig. Information was officially not freely available from the German Government, and the American attachés had neither budget nor the inclination to gather covert intelligence. Nonetheless, during the years 1935 through 1939, an average of six hundred intelligence dispatches were sent annually by his small office; in 1938 the number reached seven-hundred and thirty-three.¹² The range of

¹¹Captain Crockett, the assistant military attaché in Germany since 1933, wrote a situation report for Smith which he requested while still in Hawaii. Crockett, James C., Berlin, to Truman Smith, Schofield Barracks, Honolulu, 2 March, 1935. Hoover Presidential Library, Truman Smith Papers.

¹²"Roster and Reports by the military attaché sent to the War Department's G-2 section", National Archives Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, Record Group 165, Military Intelligence Division.

their content was remarkable, as was the complete absence of personal bias. Smith reported on every facet of Germany's military rebirth; equipment, manufacture, construction, command structure, administration, personnel, training, and he interspersed these with his personal assessments and analysis of the state of the current political, historical, and economic developments in the country. This flood of information, often multi-paged reports, was received by the small and understaffed Intelligence section Smith had visited before his departure at the War Department in Washington, and Smith soon realized that the note of urgency which he tried to inject in his reports produced few replies or queries. He saw this lack of acknowledgement as especially critical with regard to Germany's increased activity in military air expansion. He felt stung by what he considered a reprimand when the response to his estimates of air production was a directive from the War Department "not to let the Nazis fool him and to keep his feet on the ground."¹³ Smith was gravely concerned with the trend he saw developing and expressed his thoughts and fears with visionary clarity to his wife one day in January of 1936.

¹³Katherine Smith, My Life: 1935-1939, 90. This comment appeared in a letter from Colonel Warner McCabe, in charge of the Intelligence Section of the War Department, and prompted Smith's recruitment of Charles Lindbergh to verify his estimates.

I think I see the shape of events to come in the next few years. I hope I may be wrong, but...if events continue in the direction they are now moving, England and France will go to war against Hitler. We will be involved in it also. I cannot see from here that either England or France have any realization of what the future holds for them or what they should do to prepare themselves. We will... bear the major brunt. England is totally unprepared. She has only four divisions. France is demoralized. In the end Germany will be defeated utterly. Europe will be in chaos. Russia will be the winner. It will be her chance. Then I don't know what will happen to us.... But it is the period after the defeat of Germany I fear. Russia. What will she do? How shall we face her alone? Neither England or France will do anything after this war to help us against Russia. They will not have the strength even if they should have the will. Unless something unexpected happens to change the course of events such as the assassination of Hitler or his death through illness this is the way I see the future. I hope I may be wrong.¹⁴

About this time Smith realized that Washington was too far removed from Germany to give his air reports the attention he felt was vital to Washington.¹⁵ He believed that he had to resort to other means to communicate his concern. The days of procuring information by simply

¹⁴This personal reflection is quoted in Katherine Smith's memoirs; Truman Smith had "come home from the office one day.... He looked very disturbed." Katherine Smith, My Life: 1935-1939, 76. Charles Lindbergh voiced this same fear of the collapse of European civilization nearly four years later in his letter to the U.S. Ambassador to Britain, Joseph Kennedy, of September 22, 1938, after his third annual visit to Germany on behalf of Truman Smith. Berlin Alert, 155.

¹⁵ "Col. Charles Burnett expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the air reports of the Berlin office in contradistinction to those dealing with the German army." Berlin Alert, 84.

inviting a specifically befriended officer of the host army to dinner with the intent of asking pertinent questions casually were no more in Germany; in 1935 the *Wehrmacht* had decided to curtail such possible information leakage. It had established a separate office for foreign attachés for each military branch as part of the new General Staff which controlled the content and the frequency of information given to foreign attachés. German military personnel were no longer allowed to socialize indiscriminately with foreign diplomatic personnel; this privilege now fell on the members of the German attaché offices exclusively. Exceptions were made only if prior friendships existed.¹⁶ Smith was in a better position than most since he had many friends in the *Wehrmacht* from previous years, though he maintained the proprieties and politely cleared all his social lists with the German officer in charge of the Attache section. He was the only foreign attaché in this fortunate position at this time; the American naval attaché, Captain Benjamin Dutton, with whom Smith shared his office, had no contacts himself, and he and many foreign attachés relied on Smith for a considerable amount of information. The British and French,

¹⁶Friedrich-Carl Rabe von Pappenheim, Erinnerungen des Soldaten und Diplomaten 1914 - 1955. (Osnabrueck: Biblio Verlag, 1987) p. 56.

according to Mrs. Smith, "relied more on paid spies."¹⁷ The very marginal funds allocated for the maintenance of the American military attaché's office did not include money for covert activity.¹⁸ Smith realized that they "would have to depend on their wits, and their wits alone" in order to make sense of the unusual expansion of Goering's German Luftwaffe.¹⁹

When Truman Smith arrived in Germany in August 1935, "evidence of amazing air developments could be observed wherever one traveled."²⁰ Not only did he see new construction of barracks, airfields, and factories, but he also noticed a considerable increase in military air personnel in and around Berlin. Smith was aware that Goering had only recently changed the defensive role of the tiny German air remnants into the independent and powerful

¹⁷Katherine Smith, My Life: 1935-1939. 22.

¹⁸The allowance for the military attache office budget was just five dollars short of five thousand dollars, annually. About half of the amount was used for "Office, hangar, and garage rent" and utilities. Any other expenses, from entertainment allowance to street car tickets, had to be covered by the rest. James C. Crockett to Truman Smith, 2 March, 1935, Truman Smith Papers, Hoover Institution Library, Stanford. In any case, funds for covert activity would never have been awarded.

¹⁹Ibid., 83.

²⁰Berlin Alert, 80.

Luftwaffe²¹ and tried to make sense of the purpose of this expansion. His predecessor, Lieut. Col. Jacob W. Wuest, reported already in January of 1933, that "it is definitely known that many planes already exist and others are being built in Germany which when supplied with the necessary armaments at once become planes for combat."²² In April 1934, after months of negotiations between the two countries in which Hitler sought alliance with Britain and instead alerted them to the possible German danger,²³ the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a polite protest to the British Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps, concerning a questioned increase in military expenditures which Germany's Foreign Minister, Freiherr Constantin von Neurath defended as necessary. He made reference to a budget needed "for aerial

²¹A good account of the administrative reorganization can be found in Karl-Heinz Voelker, Die Deutsche Luftwaffe: 1933-1939. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1967. 11-14.

²²Col. Wuest, however, does not see any "just cause for alarm." He was convinced that both cost and backwardness would keep Germany from becoming a real threat to her neighbors soon. "Armaments and Military Power of Germany." Report No. D-12,602, page 5. Records of the War Department, M.I.D. #2016-1090/7, The National Archives, Record Group 165. The Papers of Jacob W. Wuest are at West Point.

²³Edward W. Bennett, German Rearmament and the West, 1932-33, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

traffic and... aerial protection."²⁴ Thus, observing developments and reporting the situation to Washington was Smith's priority in the months ahead as he became increasingly aware of the serious implications of such an extensive effort on the part of Germany.

The problem he faced was a major one, and the means for solving it depended almost exclusively on his personal judgement and decisiveness. Ordinarily he could expect to work closely with the American Ambassador, William E. Dodd, but relations between the American military attaché office and the Embassy had soured after Dodd's appointment and Smith's office had for some time functioned independently of the embassy. Ambassador Dodd seemed to have "a marked distaste for military matters"²⁵ and "professed to be uninterested in the expansion of the German army and air force."²⁶ Unable to appreciate the difficult position of

²⁴Translated copy of the letter was sent to the War Department in Washington in May of 1934. Records of the War Department, M.I.D. #2016-1184-2. National Archives, RG 165.

²⁵Mr. Dodd was a "pacifist," Katherine Smith wrote in her Memoirs. "He would not therefore permit either his Military or his Naval Attaché to appear in uniform when attending an official ceremony with him." Katherine Smith, My Life: 1935-1939, 3.

²⁶Berlin Alert, 79. Captain Crockett had told Smith in his letter, "with reference to your question as to the supervision by the Embassy of the Military Attaché's office, I can reply that the supervision is non-existent." Capt. James Crockett to Truman Smith, 2 March, 1935. In Ambassador Dodd's Diary, one of the few references to his attachés was

the attaché who finds himself forced to serve two masters, Dodd was disdainful of the attaches. This attitude was reciprocal. When the Smith's arrived, they were told to "look out for Mr. Dodd."²⁷ Dodd, in turn, recorded in his diary, August 16, 1934:

Captain Crockett, Assistant Military Attaché here, gave a dinner tonight. It was a nice little party, though nothing worthwhile was said. To repeat what I have said before: Army and Navy Attaches here, and I think all over Europe, are utterly unequal to their supposed functions. They simply have never received good training, except in drill and tactics. They may know a little formal history, but they really do not grasp the social and economic problems in countries to which they are accredited. Nor are they clever enough to spy on German military performances. Spying is really what governments expect in such fields.²⁸

Under these circumstances Smith made the decision that the usual collaborative relationship with the Ambassador would be futile, and he simply maintained a *pro forma* acquaintance with Dodd. This state of affairs did not change until the Ambassador was replaced by Hugh Wilson in

made on Oct. 26, 1934. It reads, "Colonel Wuest, our Military Attaché and flying machine observer, came into the office to tell me about German military preparations. He was excited. 'War is imminent, preparations are everywhere,' but he was not specific and I had little time to listen." Ambassador Dodd's Diary, 1933-38, William E. Dodd, Jr. and Martha Dodd, eds. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941), 181.

²⁷Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1935-1939," 2.

²⁸William E. Dodd, Jr., and Martha Dodd, eds. Ambassador Dodd's Diary 1933-1938, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941), 151-52.

the Spring of 1938. Wilson had been chancellor at the Embassy in 1921, when Smith served as assistant military attaché. The new Ambassador found in place a well-functioning attaché section which he happily supported without interference.

In order to obtain reliable information of Germany's unsettling increase in air capability and related industries, Smith had at his disposal only his assistant air attaché, Captain Koenig, who had no training in intelligence and no experience in preparing reports, and neither of them had "knowledge of aeronautical science and engineering."²⁹ Smith, by virtue of his training as infantry officer and specialties in advanced courses, had extensive knowledge in most fields of military activity, but felt deficient in air matters. Though, by his own admission, his "technical knowledge of air matters was negligible,"³⁰ he knew enough to realize the importance of ongoing German activity. He realized that he needed an assistant who was trained in the field. He saw this as a necessity not only because of the evidence of the considerable German air expansion activities, but also because he was intrigued by what seemed incongruous elements within it, "a very small air force

²⁹Berlin Alert, 79.

³⁰Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 78.

[and] an overwhelmingly impressive aviation industry running at full blast."³¹ While building new and updating old facilities on a large scale, Germany seemed to produce only almost outdated equipment with unusual productivity, and, in comparison to the production effort, possessed relatively few trained pilots or qualified personnel in command. To keep track of his information Smith kept a "large Order-of-Battle chart, units identified, weapons, training methods, lists of officers, their character showing what types of decisions they were apt to make, etc." However, when "he turned his attention to air developments [he] was appalled to find his air assistant had done nothing of the kind."³²

After an initial assessment of the situation and the options at his disposal, Smith requested in late 1935 that the Washington D.C. chief of the Attaché Section send a qualified replacement for Captain Koenig. Until such a specialist arrived, Smith directed the eager Koenig in a systematic effort to improve the accuracy of the reporting system by restructuring the existing process, and proceeded

³¹This "paradox" was the reason for Smith's report to M.I.D. on 21 March, 1937, "Germany's Present Air Strength and German Air Potentialities." National Archives, Records of the War Department, RG 165, #2082-844-10.

³²Capt. Koenig was "the nicest man possible" with excellent social relationships among German officers, but "could not pump his friends to find out the things he should. He felt this was 'not a nice thing to do.'" Katherine Smith, My Life: 1935-1939, 89-90.

to direct the gathering of whatever physical information they could acquire.³³ Not content to wait and simply report on what limited observations were possible, Smith one day decided on a larger gamble. He brought into play the innovative skills which an officer uses when confronted with a challenge which has but two choices: to fight, or to surrender. The directive taught at the War College allows for a situation in which a military attaché will need to act on his own.

He is required not only to report information, but also to give his personal evaluation of the information which he sends in... A military attaché cannot operate under any set rules. His success must depend to a large extent upon his own initiative. While the Military Intelligence Division tries to help the military attaché in every way possible, the Division cannot make a successful attaché out of an officer who does not possess certain essential qualifications.³⁴

As a result of his many years of acquaintance and friendship among the German officer corps, Smith was able to renew old friendships now that he had returned to Berlin, where he found many familiar faces. This was greatly to his advantage in obtaining information concerning facilities, maneuvers, production and production increase in materiel,

³³Berlin Alert, 85-86.

³⁴Colonel Stanley H. Ford, "The Military Intelligence Division, War Department General Staff," Lecture delivered at the Army War College, Washington D.C., November 29, 1929. U.S. Army War College Papers, 362-A-3, Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks.

political gossip, as well as the social pulse of the German army. This source contributed to Smith's reputation of being one of the best-informed foreign military attachés in Berlin, but also was a factor in the doubt cast on his estimates by Britain and France.

Since Smith was an infantry officer by training, his sources naturally were Army officers and ergo three-fourths of his reports dealt with Army matters. However, in view of the escalated air activity he was concerned to increase his information sources for aviation. His opportunity was very limited however. He knew well the chief of the German Attaché Section of the Air Ministry, Colonel Friedrich Karl Hanesse, and their relationship was one of mutual amiability and respect.³⁵ Nevertheless, he was frustrated in his efforts to gain greater access to air and production facilities since these developments were surrounded by considerable secrecy.

Finally, in May 1936, the opportunity presented itself with the report in the newspaper that Charles Lindbergh had inspected an airplane factory in France. Thus Smith decided after some contemplation that what Lindbergh could do in France, he could probably do in Germany. He had never met

³⁵Truman Smith always made a point of informing the German attaché office when he met socially with any German officers. Katherine Smith, "My Life, 1935-1939," 22-23.

Lindbergh, but he hoped because Charles Lindbergh was a reserve officer in the United States Army, he would agree to Smith's request, especially if he knew the reason and was told of the urgent nature of the appeal.³⁶

Smith proceeded on the assumption that he would be able to enlist Lindbergh's cooperation, and first approached Colonel Hanesse of the German Air Ministry to obtain the necessary official sanction from the Germans.³⁷ This request was not unique in the relationship between the countries; between 1930 and 1938, several German officers as well many aviation experts visited American aviation facilities.³⁸ About "four hundred German aircraft

³⁶Berlin Alert, 87.

³⁷The German government was thoroughly informed about Lindbergh by their Military Attaché in Washington, von Boetticher. In 1933, the attache sent reports from Washington on Lindbergh's exploratory flights in which he sought new routes for Pan American. He also told his government that he thought that America, rather than competing in passenger shipping, would put its efforts into travel by air. Alfred M. Beck, "The Ambivalent Attaché," 157-58. The possibility exists that Germany's competitive air development with the U.S. stems from this information.

³⁸In July, 1933, Oscar R. Henschel, locomotive and aircraft manufacturer, who later built the Hs.123 dive bomber, visited the Glenn L. Martin Company in Baltimore and the Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Company at East Hartford. Letter from the War Department to Col. C. Burnett, Foreign Liaison Officer, July 19, 1933, RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC. In August of the same year Dr. Kurt Schnauffer, of the *Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Luftfahrt*, Berlin-Adlershof, an aviation research facility, visited the same facilities, as well as Wright Field, United Aircraft and Transport Corp. in

engineers and designers" visited in all; the arrangements were made by the German Military Attaché, Friedrich von Boetticher. The influence of and positive attitude towards Germany in the War Department was the result of von Boetticher's friendly relations with its officers.³⁹

Smith received an invitation for Lindbergh from *Reichsmarshall* Hermann Goering, and State Secretary, Field Marshall Erhard Milch, which stated "that the Luftwaffe and the German air industry would be delighted to show [him] combat units and factories."⁴⁰ At this point Smith, justifiably concerned lest Lindbergh be used "principally for their own [German] propaganda purposes," compiled with Hanesse a list of specific agreements, which included also the accompaniment of Lindbergh by either himself, or the

Hartford, the Wright Aeronautical Corp. in Paterson, N.J., and Langley Field in Virginia. Friedrich von Boetticher to Col. Charles Burnett, August 22, 1933, RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC. Dr. Heinrich Koppenberg, managing director of the *Junkers* works, came to visit the Hamilton Standard Propeller Co. two months after Lindbergh toured *his* factory in Dessau. Friedrich von Boetticher to Col. Charles Burnett, Sept. 18, 1936, RG 165, Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington DC. These visits were arranged by Friedrich von Boetticher, friend of Truman Smith, and, from April, 1933, German Military Attache in Washington DC.

³⁹Alfred M. Beck, "The Ambivalent Attaché: Friedrich von Boetticher in America 1933-1941," (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1977), 146, 104.

⁴⁰Berlin Alert, 87.

assistant military attache for air, Capt. Koenig.⁴¹ Much to Smith's relief Ambassador Dodd was in the United States during this time, and he was able to work out the necessary arrangements with the American Embassy through the more favorably inclined Ferdinand Meyer, counselor and charge d'affaires, who made the necessary arrangements with the State Department.

Thus having cleared the way, Smith wrote to Lindbergh, who at that time resided with his family near London. In this first letter of what was to become a lengthy correspondence, Smith omitted his own role in initiating the German invitation and also hastened to reassure the publicity-phobic aviator that the "strictest censorship would be imposed...with respect to your visit and that they would not allow even the slightest notice to appear in connection therewith."⁴² The constant concern with publicity of Charles and Anne Lindbergh was a well-known fact. Lindbergh replied by June 6, from France, that he would be "extremely interested," since he had never visited

⁴¹Ibid., 87.

⁴²Ibid., 89. Lindbergh also writes about this first letter in his Autobiography of Values, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976) 19. Considering the fact that this letter so profoundly changed the Lindbergh's lives, his account of its arrival is remarkably terse.

Germany and was curious about the country.⁴³

Charles and Anne Lindbergh landed in their small, rented monoplane at Tempelhof airport in Berlin in the early afternoon of July 22, 1936.⁴⁴ For the duration of their stay they resided at the Smith's apartment. Though Smith had attempted to moderate publicity of Lindbergh's presence, Goering's young Air Ministry and its officials made the most of the opportunity to feature and entertain the famous flyer. The final draft of Lindbergh's itinerary revealed that the visit would not remain a private one for long. Eventually, all of Smith's fears concerning publicity proved justified. The Berlin Air Club treated Lindbergh to a formal luncheon⁴⁵, the elite *Richthofen Geschwader* (Wing)

⁴³Letter from Lindbergh to Smith; copy of Lindbergh's correspondence to Smith in the author's possession.

⁴⁴In his Autobiography of Values, Charles Lindbergh says of his first flight into German air-space, "crossing the Channel near Dover, and following one of the authorized 'corridors' through the Maginot Line....I gained the impression that Germany was looking eastward, militarily, yet it was obvious that bombing planes would not find the Maginot Line a formidable obstacle should they wish to cross it. The Germans knew that France was deficient in both defensive and retaliatory air power." Charles A. Lindbergh, Autobiography of Values, 146.

⁴⁵Lindbergh had prepared a short speech for the occasion which included a warning that aviation had "turned defense into attack," and that war would never be the same again, hence a new responsibility should be recognized by nations contemplating war. Quoted by Truman Smith in Berlin Alert, 95. Anne Lindbergh noted in her diary, "(Lord, how serious it is, how grim - too grim for this occasion? No, it must be said, it's all right.) The faces are very serious,

of the Luftwaffe located near Berlin staged an open house and arranged for entertainment in his honor for an entire day.⁴⁶ In addition, all the facilities and airplanes Smith had requested for review were shown to Lindbergh and the assistant air attaché, Captain Koenig; included among them were the new Heinkel medium bomber He. 111 at the Heinkel factories at Rostock. At Dessau at the Junker factory they also saw the new Junker medium bomber JU 86, as well as the new dive bomber JU 87, the "Stuka."⁴⁷ The German political element, always on the lookout for the kind of positive propaganda which would lend legitimacy to the Nazi party had succeeded in landing a major publicity coup. Neither Smith nor the naive Lindbergh, were able to retain control over this or the succeeding visits by Lindbergh to Germany; they were no match for the sophisticated propaganda machine Nazi

thoughtful, still. (I don't believe half of them understand it or its implications.)" Anne Morrow Lindbergh, The Flower and the Nettle; Diaries and Letters 1936-1939, (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1976), 86-87.

⁴⁶Truman Smith drily wrote, "Colonel Lindbergh and Captain Koenig both considered the flying they observed at Doeberitz of mediocre quality. On the other hand, the field itself, its hangars, barracks, and shops, were laid out and constructed according to the most modern principles." Berlin Alert, 96.

⁴⁷Berlin Alert, 96 - 98. In 1955 Truman Smith wrote, "It is extremely difficult from the vantage point of the year 1955 to transpose oneself nineteen years into the past and recreate the excitement [we] felt during Lindbergh's initial visit to Germany when, for the first time, Goering showed them the modern planes of his new Luftwaffe." 105.

Germany used to stay in power, nor could they foresee how irreparably the effects of these visits would damage both their lives in succeeding years.

As the political fallout of Smith's coup lay as yet some time ahead, the information garnered during the visit was of great interest to Lindbergh and certainly valuable to Smith's intelligence reports. In addition, the aviator's fame and prestige provided the immediate and very important result of linking Smith to Lindbergh, especially after they appeared in each other's company publicly during a state luncheon at Goering's residence on July 28.

Goering had assembled for the occasion a number of the most important figures of the aviation world, and Smith was able to meet and converse with [Secretary of the German Air Ministry, Erhard] Milch and Colonel Ernst Udet [who] had just been appointed chief of the Technical Bureau of the Luftwaffe, an office which supervised the design and construction of new airplanes....This luncheon was the first occasion the military attache [Smith] had obtained to discuss politics and aviation matters with the leaders of the Luftwaffe. Previously there had been no opportunity to exchange more than a few formal phrases with any of them.⁴⁸

Henceforth Smith's association and friendship with Lindbergh provided the entree to many German officials and manufacturers, as well as their circle of acquaintances. However, Smith possessed enough qualities of his own to impress and charm the men gathered around Goering's table.

⁴⁸Berlin Alert, 100.

As military attaché he was expected to "be a good mixer, at home in clubs or in private families, as well as with diplomats, in the salon and with other officials.... He should be well read, familiar with the history, politics, and literature of Europe especially; and be able to converse easily with foreign officials."⁴⁹ Truman Smith came as close as any officer could to matching this description of attributes desirable for his profession, and he used these qualities at Goering's luncheon. He was unquestionably able to impress both Milch and Udet, and henceforth "an even closer liaison developed between the American officers and the Air Ministry."⁵⁰

As they collaborated to analyze their respective data and conclusions compiled during these ten days, Smith, Lindbergh and Koenig pooled their expertise in the reports which they prepared for Washington. Lindbergh, however, felt compelled to pass on his observations to friends and acquaintances in the Air Corps and among "civilian leaders in both the scientific and manufacturing fields in the

⁴⁹Memorandum for the Director, G-I Division, Army War College, "Determine and report upon the proper qualifications for an officer for duty as Military Attaché." October 30, 1925. U.S. Army War College Papers, Military History Institute, Calisle Barracks. 1-2.

⁵⁰Berlin Alert, 103. Milch, Smith says, "liked Americans and knew America well;" Udet had been to the United States in the 20's as barnstormer and motorcycle racer.

American Aviation world."⁵¹ The experience had left the impressionable Lindbergh with a viewpoint which he began to disseminate with considerable fervor, overcome as he was by the implications of Germany's preparations. He acknowledged that during his visit Nazi power and rapid growth was supposed to "impress" the Americans, but he was accustomed to seeing the world from above where distances are insignificant, borders invisible, and the English Channel in particular a negligible obstacle. On the occasion of the luncheon at Goering's home at Berlin, he was shown a photo album of military airfields by the Marshal who boasted, "'our first seventy.' From the inspection trips I had made through German factories, I knew warplanes were being built to fill those fields."⁵²

If prior to Lindbergh's visit Smith had reason to be concerned that the reports sent by his office were not taken seriously by Washington, this was the case no longer. Not only could Lindbergh verify Smith's cause for concern, but Smith's claims were now legitimized. The first phase of his bold intelligence strike was an absolute success, and there was more to come. "The skepticism ...suddenly vanished," Smith remembered later. This change manifested itself

⁵¹Berlin Alert, 105.

⁵²Charles Lindbergh, Autobiography of Values, 146.

"through a marked increase in the number of queries on every conceivable matter relating to aviation," although these did not come from G-2, but from the Air Corps.⁵³ The vanguard of a heightened American interest had arrived: publicity at home revealed the effectiveness of Lindbergh's contribution, and proved the success of Smith's idea. American airplane manufacturers and air specialists had shared their information for some years with the Germans; they now came to see for themselves the growing German air industry whose officials were happy to reveal to their American counterparts their rapid expansion and their own developments. Smith was orchestrating the increased activity, content to see the effect and to find that the information which had been sent back in his reports was finally getting out.

The assistant attaché for air, Captain Koenig, had been able to make the most of his ten days at the side of Lindbergh and to continue the use of his celebrity status by passing through the now open door of the German Air Ministry and its installations with relative ease, taking the American civil engineers, scientists, pilots, and company executives with him. Truman Smith would accompany them from time to time on these inspection tours, but more frequently

⁵³Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 105.

he stayed in his office trying to make sense of the information which was now coming in rapidly. His reports to G-2 at Washington's War Department increasingly revealed that, however incomplete and uneven the development of the new Luftwaffe still was, it was shaping itself into a pattern which was consistent only with aggressive aims.

Thus he did not cease to call the alarm. His situation reports in the Spring of 1937 continue the note of urgency within his calm assessment. In the previous year he wrote in one of his reports that

The German Air Force was just emerging from the Kindergarten stage. It was equipped with planes equivalent to ours of 1933 or 1934 vintage.... The prospects of the new air arm for the future were highly promising. Its ground and school layout was matched in no land. The industry behind the Air Force was larger than in any other state of the world and this industry, though scientifically still behind America's and probably Great Britain's also, was making steady, and even rapid progress."⁵⁴

The pace at which Germany continued to rearm became obvious and was promising to outstrip the combined strength of France and England, threatening the stability of Europe.⁵⁵ With this increase Smith's work became more and more voluminous, and the complexity of the air intelligence

⁵⁴"Is Time working For or Against Germany? The Trend of Relative Military Strength." Report No. 15,215, sent by Truman Smith on 2 April, 1937. 2-6.

⁵⁵Ibid., 5-6.

exceeded Captain Koenig's ability if not his spirits. Smith urgently requested a technically more qualified assistant attache for air, which was finally granted.

On August 25, 1937, Major Arthur W. Vanaman of the Air Corps arrived in Berlin. He had been with the service since 1917, and had received an extensive practical and theoretical education. He had studied Military Aeronautics at M.I.T., engineering at the Air Corps Engineering School at Wright Field, Ohio, graduated from the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, and spent two years at the Army Industrial College and the Army War College in Washington.⁵⁶ Apart from his technical training, he had studied, in his own words, "economics of warfare...; procurement in time of war...; the mobilizing of the economy for an all-out effort...; the application of economy and weapons in relation to strategic values."⁵⁷ He also had the benefit of years of practical experience; as a commanding officer and pilot he had been to the Philippines in the early 1920's, to "modify small pursuit planes and tested airplanes there before test pilots were officially

⁵⁶Service Record of General Arthur Vanaman. The Albert F. Stimson Historical Research Center, USAF, Maxwell AFB, AL.

⁵⁷"Interview of Major General Arthur W. Vanaman" by Mr. Hugh N. Ahmann, 10-12 February, 1976, at Palm Springs, Ca. 151-59. United States Air Force Oral History Program.

designated as such." During that time he went on excursions to China and Japan; was once "volunteered" to go to China for three months, "with the Navy, doing, on the side, a little intelligence work" taking pictures from the air.⁵⁸ Between this tour in the Far East and the courses he attended, Vanaman was working as an aeronautical engineer, experimental engineer⁵⁹ as well as engineer in research and development.⁶⁰ After all this education he was finally ready for a military career. Thus he was none too eager to go as assistant air attaché to Berlin when approached by Lieutenant Colonel John F. Curry of the Air Corps at the G-2 Air office. Colonel Curry had visited Berlin himself in July of 1937, and had seen and heard from Truman Smith what type of man was needed for the job. Vanaman knew that the assignment would impede the career for which he had so assiduously prepared, but accepted the position. He believed later that he could have evaded the assignment had he tried hard enough, but he chose to see it as another challenge, enrolled in a Berlitz course for the German

⁵⁸Vanaman, "Oral History," 58-66.

⁵⁹He was involved in the development of "flying clothes to oxygen systems to radio equipment," and whatever came along. Vanaman, "Oral History," 119.

⁶⁰All this research and development was not pursued with any particular enemy in mind, but to be "ready for this coalition or that coalition of different nations getting together." Vanaman, "Oral History," 106.

language with his family, and went.⁶¹

Vanaman was exactly the man Smith needed to obtain the thorough and educated intelligence he wanted. However, since the former was unknown to the German officials, his access to the German air industry would have to undergo the usual time-consuming process of gradual social assimilation, and Smith was restless to have his new expert air attache accepted by the Germans. Then fortune interceded on their behalf. A few short weeks after Vanaman's arrival, Colonel Hanesse of the Air Ministry conveyed another invitation from Goering to Lindbergh.

The German Lilienthal Aeronautical Society scheduled another congress, to take place in Munich from October 12 through 16, 1937. Smith arranged for their attendance at the congress, as well as an "extensive tour of factories and air establishments" at its conclusion.⁶² Again Lindbergh provided the important link, this time for Vanaman, to enter the right circles, and the visit allowed the new assistant air attaché the opportunity to employ his own expert judgement.

⁶¹The decisive factor was probably the underlying appeal to Vanaman's patriotic duty, even though Colonel Curry told him that he would volunteer, or be ordered to go. Interview with Major General Arthur W. Vanaman at Rancho Mirage, Ca., 29 February, 1980, by Charles Burdick.

⁶²Berlin Alert, 108.

In addition to attendance at the congress, Smith, Lindbergh, and Vanaman had the opportunity to tour the Bavarian Motor works which was at the time building American Pratt & Whitney airplane engines under license, allowing Vanaman to use his ability to estimate production rate potential in a war economy. Years later Vanaman remembered. "Lindbergh was a very savvy person, but he couldn't read the production or the potential production. He was not experienced in that."⁶³ Vanaman's expertise made a very vital difference in the accuracy of their reports.

This second visit by Lindbergh engendered "The General Air Estimate of November 1, 1937,"⁶⁴ a co-operative effort between Lindbergh, Smith, and Vanaman. The dry, detached, style of Smith's reports had given way to emotional language. "The form, the phraseology, and a few of the ideas contained in it" were Smith's. "The bulk of the thoughts contained therein are merely the attaché's interpretations of Colonel Lindbergh's views," Smith said, although "many of the paragraphs are couched in Lindbergh's

⁶³Vanaman, "Oral History," 175.

⁶⁴This report received much notoriety in the United States in 1942 when it was used to exonerate the Army from charges that it had been "caught napping" by the Luftwaffe air buildup during the general finger-pointing after Pearl Harbor. In 1944 the press quoted sections of it, allegedly at the instigation of Republican partisan politics to embarrass the Roosevelt administration. Berlin Alert, 119.

exact words." He went on to explain that "Major Vanaman did not take a major part in its preparation."⁶⁵ The report intended to impart the serious implications of their observations, and began with the direct and simple statement, "Germany is once more a world power in the air," and ended with the comment that "the upward movement is still gaining momentum."⁶⁶ The rest, however, contained language more emotionally charged. It attempted to find the reasons for the build-up of air power at the same time as it was critical of Britain and disparaging of France. The statements were interspersed with the technical information, analysis of policy, estimates on personnel, equipment, and production. Throughout, there was an emphasis on the pace of German rearmament, and it ended with the warning that the years 1941-42 could see German attainment of "technical parity" with the United States, *if* the latter would ignore the menace.⁶⁷ Certainly the concern among these men was substantial, and in the year 1937 the alarm was justified.

Lindbergh's association with Vanaman during his second

⁶⁵Berlin Alert, 113-14. Major Vanaman "furnished all the technical data but was not in agreement with some of the thoughts and bowed out." Interview with Charles Burdick, 29 February, 1980.

⁶⁶"General Estimate as of Nov. 1, 1937." October 25, 1937, M.I.D. Report 15,540, RG 165. Records of the War Department, National Archives, Washington, DC.

⁶⁷Ibid., 1-3.

visit to Germany did gain the latter the status he needed to effectively assist Truman Smith. The most valuable Lindbergh visit was his third, in October of 1938. On this occasion he and Vanaman toured the secret Rechlin air testing field to which no foreign attachés had been allowed access.⁶⁸ Here they observed the top-secret Junker 88 super bomber⁶⁹ and were able to examine several new airplanes, among them the Messerschmidt 109 fighter plane, and the Storch, a new infantry-artillery liaison plane which Lindbergh received permission to pilot unaccompanied.⁷⁰

Vanaman had also brought with him an additional bonus, his association with the larger community of the American air industry, and in the months to come he employed their expertise and judgement as well.⁷¹ "Immediately I got on

⁶⁸While Smith's memoirs state specifically that Lindbergh went to Rechlin in 1938 without Vanaman, Vanaman says that he was present and clearly recalls details of the trip as well as the circumstances under which he suggested it to Goering at a party at Ambassador Wilson's residence. See Vanaman Oral History, 199-203; Berlin Alert, 111-12.

⁶⁹Lindbergh wrote about this trip to Rechlin in his journal on Friday, October 21, 1938, and also mentions that "Major Vanaman and I were asked not to mention the fact that we had been shown the Junkers 88." Charles Lindbergh, The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970). 107.

⁷⁰Berlin Alert, 110-11.

⁷¹According to Smith, Vanaman's "prestige with the American Air Corps" was one of his valuable assets. Berlin Alert, 120.

the horn with people that I was well acquainted with," and arranged their visits to German facilities. "These people I could get into the plants. And when Dutch Kindelberger⁷² walked through a plant, he could tell you right off the reel what their production was, what it could be and what they could build up to."⁷³

Now a virtual team effort was mobilized between Vanaman and American experts as the German air production facilities were visited by a considerable number of American air experts.⁷⁴ The American attache and this *de facto* official team had access where no other country's attachés were able to gain entry, including the French and British. Between the end of 1937 and 1939, "the Americans had been... quite a few times in at least ninety percent of [German] air factories, both the airplane and the engine," was the

⁷²James H. Kindelberger was president of the North American Aviation, Incorporated, which also produced the famous B-25 bombers.

⁷³Vanaman, "Oral History," 175.

⁷⁴Other experts included Glenn Martin, president of Glenn Martin Company; Laurence Bell of Bell Aircraft of Buffalo, N.Y.; Dr. Igor Sikorsky of United Aircraft, who designed helicopters and amphibian aircraft; Jerome C. Hunsaker of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Berlin Alert, 106. See also "Report on Military Aircraft, Plants, and Production in Germany, Italy, France, and England" 12 September, 1938, made by Lawrence D. Bell to the Chief of the Air Corps, General H. Arnold. RG 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, National Archives, Washington, DC.

estimate by Vanaman.

Vanaman had also befriended Dr. Adolf Baeumker, chief of the Air Research Department of the Air Ministry and "the head of the Lilienthal Gesellschaft... [which] dictated a lot of air policy, that is, developmental policies." As a result of this relationship he had been in "colleges where research was conducted that nobody knew about." He introduced Laurence Bell to Baeumker and arranged for him to witness "their rocket-assisted take-off down in the woods in Bavaria" because Baeumker and many men like him were "very anti-Nazi and pro-United States."⁷⁵ Smith soon realized the significant contribution Vanaman was making to the Attaché office; thanks to Lindbergh's fame he was working without Smith's assistance some four months after his arrival.⁷⁶ By the end of Lindbergh's third official visit to Germany in the Fall of 1938, the resultant Annual Air Report was Major Vanaman's work throughout; Smith merely needed to put his signature to the pages as ranking attache, and he considered the report superior work. Able to appreciate fully the difficulty of obtaining reliable information on the Luftwaffe himself now, Smith said years later that "Major Vanaman's very slight underestimate of

⁷⁵Vanaman, "Oral History," 190-92.

⁷⁶Berlin Alert, 120.

[the] actual figures must be considered quite remarkable in view of the secrecy with which the German Air Ministry shrouded all matters having to do with the number of aircraft produced." Vanaman estimated the existence of "9,900 planes of all types," and the total aircraft production rate during that year to be between 9,000 and 10,000. This figure was supported in 1953 by the former Chief of the Attache' Section, General Hanesse, who verified that the actual figure was 10,600 planes total, the production rate 12,000 per anum.⁷⁷

Charles Lindbergh had now witnessed three consecutive years of German air development and his concern over the danger became acute. After his 1938 visit to Germany he sent Ambassador Joseph Kennedy in London a lengthy letter outlining his opinion, determined to make the danger known to a wider audience in the American government.⁷⁸ Even with this all-out effort and the reports of other witnesses

⁷⁷Berlin Alert, 141-42.

⁷⁸Kennedy sent a letter to the State Department, which contained Lindbergh's letter verbatim; this letter surfaced as reference in the American press as the semi-mythical Lindbergh Report. Initially "lost", the letter was located in 1953 by Truman Smith in the files of the State Department. In this letter Lindbergh simply makes clear his position and opposition to any war in Europe, and why; he was convinced that Britain and France were incapable of standing up against Germany, and that war would destroy European civilization. Whether Roosevelt ever received this letter is not known. Berlin Alert, 153-58.

to the German armament activities, the War Department was still inclined to treat the Military Attaché's work with a certain lack of credulity⁷⁹ and a considerable extent of bureaucratic inefficiency caused by understaffing.⁸⁰

Vanaman simply used the initiative he was expected to utilize as military attaché and sent his information directly to General Arnold of the Air Corps, "by-passing channels and misplaced reports."⁸¹

Smith's efforts to prove that an aggressive German air development was taking place were on the whole successful; if the Roosevelt Government did not respond directly to the information, at least the War Department and the Air Corps were thoroughly informed. He also sent remarkably accurate

⁷⁹The War Department also received information from the British and the French intelligence services which caused Smith's reports to seem disproportionately large; neither of these two countries had any access to the facilities which the Americans did. Beck mentions in his dissertation that the "military attaché reports from Berlin estimated the production at 2,600 planes a month in early 1941, while the London attaches would admit of only 1,800... little more than guesswork." A note on the same page indicates that "other reports supporting the Berlin estimates...were arriving from Attaches in Vichy and in Berne, Switzerland." Adolf Beck, "The Ambivalent Attache," 282.

⁸⁰Smith refers to Deputy Chief of the Air Corps, General H. Arnold's memoirs that Arnold seems to have been ignorant of much of the material that was sent to Washington by his office. Berlin Alert, 143. Vanaman says much the same in his Oral History; he was convinced that the Air Corps did not receive these reports, "Arnold didn't seem to have any of this input" until Lindbergh personally informed him. "I don't remember ever getting evaluation of a report from Air." Vanaman Oral History, 172.

⁸¹Interview with Major General Vanaman, by Charles Burdick, 29 February, 1980.

estimates about the size and active personnel strength of the German Army, and recognizing early the potential emergence of a major army under Hitler's leadership. He accurately analyzed the implications of Hitler's restructuring of the Army in 1938, as well as the importance of Hitler's diplomatic moves which he realistically interpreted as holding actions in the West in order to expand into the East. He predicted the remilitarization of the Rhineland, the taking of Czechoslovakia, and the *Anschluss* of Austria. He listened to the increasing acceptance and resignation among the German Army officers, and was convinced that, friends or not, their Prussian training predisposed them to accept Hitler's tyranny over the people and the army.⁸² As he increasingly lost his contacts after Hitler personally took command of the Army, Smith saw the basis of his information network crumble. At the same time, his service in Berlin was drawing to a close.

In December 1938, while he underwent a routine physical for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, Truman Smith was discovered to be suffering from Diabetes. Confident that he could continue to serve, he applied for troop service. He appealed to Marshall, eager for a Western posting and was appalled when he realized that his condition

⁸²Deist, "Die deutsche Aufrüstung in amerikanischer Sicht," 283-87.

automatically required mandatory retirement. However, the outbreak of World War II allowed General Marshall to circumvent such rigid rules. Marshall "personally admired Truman Smith and highly respected his professional abilities, particularly his judgement concerning military affairs in Europe. He considered Smith's retirement a serious loss." ⁸³ Smith's expertise was needed in the War Department as "special consultant on Germany."⁸⁴ His promotion in December was back-dated to July 1, 1938, and Smith, after a period of recovery, began a new chapter of his career at the Intelligence Division of the War Department in Washington in September, 1939.

⁸³General A.C. Wedemeyer, in the foreword to Berlin Alert, Smith's posthumously published memoirs and papers.

⁸⁴Berlin Alert, 31.

THE WAR YEARS

1939 - 1945

When Smith returned to the United States for medical treatment in April of 1939, he shared his time between Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, and the War Department.¹ Sorely in need of capable personnel, General George C. Marshall, the Chief of the War Plans Division in Washington, circumvented the rigid rule of mandatory retirement as Smith and his expertise was essential to understanding the rapid developments in Germany.² Smith's performance in Berlin had convinced Marshall that Smith was the expert he needed, and when the Chief of G-2, Colonel Warner McCabe, gave his assent, Marshall notified the White House that Smith was going to stay.³ But his illness was not the only reason that Smith's continued service was a thorny issue. His association with Charles Lindbergh proved

¹"Each morning a War Department car called for me at eight and returned me to the hospital in time for supper," Smith reported later in his memoirs. Berlin Alert, 31.

²Ibid., 31. See also: "Memorandum for the Surgeon General," in The Papers of George Catlett Marshall, Larry I. Bland, ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 616.

³Leonard Mosley, Marshall: Hero for our Times, (New York, Hearst Books, 1982), 134.

to be a greater obstacle.

Throughout the period of his service with G-2, from April, 1939 to June, 1945, Marshall continued to protect Smith from persistent administration pressure to have him dismissed or retired. The simple fact of the matter was that Marshall, besides respecting Smith's ability, could not afford to lose the value of his knowledge just as troubles were mounting in Europe and Asia, and the United States saw itself drawn into the maelstrom. Smith had proven his analytical strength, and Marshall would not sacrifice a valuable man for political reasons.

After Charles Lindbergh's initial visit in July, 1936, he returned to Germany to aid Smith annually during the next three years, where, "as Smith had hoped, the Germans from Hermann Goering on down proudly showed Colonel Lindbergh... their finest planes and aviation research and manufacturing facilities."⁴ Though Lindbergh went to Germany twice on behalf of the French government in December 1938, and January 1939, while he assisted Smith the Lindberghs stayed in the apartment of Truman and Katherine Smith.⁵ Already on their first encounter both men discovered a mutual

⁴Wayne S. Cole, Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932 - 45, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 280.

⁵Berlin Alert, 29. These visits ranged from a few days to a week; the Smiths also reciprocated and visited their famous guests in England and France.

compatibility and laid the foundation for their life-long association. As military attache Smith knew a darker side of Germany, but the Lindberghs viewed Germany as it preferred to be seen, "the newness of things, streets, buildings, houses. The neatness, order, trimness, cleanliness.... The activity, lots of people on the streets, middle class, dowdy, but in good condition."⁶ Lindbergh's isolationist mentality, and his inability to comprehend the sense of a community as a result of his lonely childhood, made him incapable of seeing the artificiality of Germany. Never having been in Germany previously he was unable to compare what he saw to the preceding era, and he was not inclined to search deeply. His life was in the air, on the run, and since distances were negligible to his mind, the growth of German air power and the militaristic nature of the increased research and production were seen by him instantly as capable of great destruction. "Aviation has...created the most fundamental change ever made in war. It has turned defense into attack," he said in July of 1936 during his first visit to Germany, at a luncheon given in

⁶Anne Morrow Lindbergh, The Flower and the Nettle: Diaries and Letters 1936 - 1939, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1976), 83.

his honor in Berlin.⁷ This view of a shrunken globe, where civilization was universally threatened, henceforth dominated Lindbergh's personal belief and soon propelled him into isolationist politics. When the war clouds began to gather and he finally realized that appeasement did not satisfy Hitler's goals, he favored retreat across the moat of the Atlantic, preferring for Europe to settle their differences without endangering the peace of the United States.

Smith's view, on the other hand, was that of the soldier, and consequently less lofty. His job was to gather as much information as was possible on a potential enemy and of a revolutionary military machine which he saw first-hand in the making. He had no illusions about Germany heeding idealistic speeches, but worked with ingenuity and diligence to inform the War Department of the unsettling expansion. He was also aware of the military deficiencies of the United States and hence his massive volume of reports was engendered also by a sense of mission and his own sense of urgency.⁸ Although he efficiently improved an antiquated

⁷Leonard Mosley, Lindbergh, (New York: Dell Publishing, 1977), 283. Mosley quotes Lindbergh's speech given on this occasion.

⁸"Roster and Reports by the German military attache' sent to the War Department's G-2 section," National Archives Records of the War Department General and Specific Staffs, RG 165, Military Intelligence Division.

and consequently useless reporting system and thus insured that the War Department in Washington was henceforth thoroughly informed on the subject of Germany, "the view in political circles [was] largely dependent for their opinions on press stories from Berlin... pictur[ing] a weak and divided Germany whose army and air force were still far from ready."⁹ This political state of affairs left Smith with a growing sense of frustration, convinced that the enormity of the German armament effort was not properly perceived by the Administration. Thus Truman Smith and Charles Lindbergh, for separate reasons, were united in their mission to inform their country of the growing danger, using language colorful enough to cause American policy makers to sit up and listen. "Germany is once more a world power in the air," their report stated in 1937, and "their upward movement is still gaining momentum."¹⁰ This report was a thoroughly collaborative effort by both men. "The bulk of the thoughts contained therein are merely the attache's interpretations of Colonel Lindbergh's views", Smith said, although "many of the paragraphs are couched in Lindbergh's exact words."¹¹

⁹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 119.

¹⁰"General Estimate as of Nov. 1, 1937," Report No. 15 540, RG 165, Records of the War Department, The National Archives, Washington DC.

¹¹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 113-14.

General George Marshall was appointed Chief of Staff by Roosevelt after lengthy political posturing among some of the officers under consideration. On April 23, 1939, Roosevelt finally made his unenthusiastic choice encouraged in that direction by Marshall's mentor General Pershing, and his own "resident Rasputin," Harry L. Hopkins.¹² Marshall had hoped to be chosen by virtue of his merits rather than by default, yet was realistic enough to wait for the President's respect based on future performance. His opportunity came all too soon: on the day he was to be officially sworn into office, Germany invaded Poland. With the looming threat of war Marshall realized the urgent necessity to restructure and expand a "skeletal army [while] battling a cautious president and niggardly Congress"¹³ Marshall knew he needed to ready the Army for the possibility of a war, and he also knew that neither the administration nor the majority of the people and their representatives in Congress wanted to become involved in a war. He had no illusions about the difficulty of his assignment, but trusted in his ability and his "strength with the Army [which] has rested on the well known fact that

¹²Ed Cray, General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990), 139.

¹³Ed Cray, General of the Army, 126.

I attended strictly to business and enlisted no influence of any sort at any time."¹⁴ As he set about organizing and modernizing the jumbled, poorly equipped "unstitched patchwork" of his army. His major frustration was the lack of time required to make his army battle-ready, and the dearth of comprehension of the urgency in Congress and the White House, both of which only responded when one country after another in Europe fell to Nazi power.¹⁵ In May, 1940, the turning point came during a tense meeting with the President, when Marshall minced no words, and finally caught Roosevelt's attention long enough to convince him of the emergency. France fell the next day.¹⁶

Throughout his life, Marshall remained aloof from politics, refusing even now to be drawn into the intimate circle of the President, choosing his officers by virtue of their ability alone. All he asked in return was that they, too, adhered to his view that politics had no place in the army. When it came to the Administration's attention that a member of the War Department Intelligence staff was on friendly terms with Lindbergh, the White House "hinted that

¹⁴Marshall adhered to his non-political stance assiduously and even refused to vote for that reason. Ed Cray, General of the Army, 138.

¹⁵Ed Cray, General of the Army, 147.

¹⁶Ibid., 154-55.

Truman Smith was a traitor and a spy and asked General Marshall to throw him out."¹⁷

At Fort Benning Marshall had begun the habit of noting the names of promising young officers in a "little black book," and Smith's was among them. These notes Marshall utilized when he attained his post as Chief of Staff.¹⁸ He had maintained contact with Smith while he was in Berlin, and he "received detailed reports" from him during this time.¹⁹ That Smith would ask Marshall to assist him in finding a new assignment was quite natural under the circumstances, as was Marshall's retention of Smith as German specialist at G-2 after his return from Berlin. Certain in the judgement of his men, Marshall's requirement was simple; whatever their own political convictions, they were to keep these to themselves.²⁰ His own support of Roosevelt was based on his interventionist views, but "all

¹⁷Leonard Mosley, Marshall: A Hero for our Times, 134.

¹⁸"He constantly referred to it later, when he came to pick the men to lead the armies in World War II." Leonard Mosley, Marshall: Hero for Our Times, 96.

¹⁹Forrest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall: Education of a General 1880 - 1939, (New York: Viking Press, 1963), 313. See also: The Papers of George Catlett Marshall, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1981), Vol. I and II, which contains letters from Marshall to Smith between 1935 and 1939.

²⁰"After once having assigned an officer to his job General Marshall seldom intervened." Quote by General Bradley in Ed Cray, General of the Army, 106.

he asked of those members of the department who did not agree with him was that they keep their arguments confined to military practicalities and stay out of politics."²¹

As a result of his acquaintance with Lindbergh which Truman Smith continued after his return, he began to find himself in increasing difficulties with members of the Roosevelt Administration. After the fall of France to German troops on 22 June, 1940, Columnists Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson "launched personal attacks on [Smith] for being pro-German and anti-American."²² These attacks, Smith was told by "G-2 comrades...[came from] Justice Felix Frankfurter and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes who ... suggested to the President that [he] be court-martialed."²³ On July 8, 1940, Marguerite (Missy) LeHand, Roosevelt's personal secretary, received a note from Rose Bigman, Walter Winchell's assistant, stating that "Mr. Winchell asked me to send the attached to you for the President's attention." The single paragraph read:

Information relayed to me by eminent war correspondents now in the U.S. is that Major Truman Smith, USA, is Col Lindbergh's host while Lindbergh visits Washington. That Lindy lives at the Smith's home there. When the Lindberghs came to Berlin, who found a house they liked. These newspaper aces allege Smith is an adviser on the

²¹Leonard Mosley, Marshall: A Hero for Our Time, 152.

²²Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 33.

²³Ibid., 33.

speeches made recently on the air. They are not sure if Smith is still attached to US Military Intelligence. Smith allegedly terrific pro-Nazi.²⁴

Lindbergh had returned to the United States at the same time as Truman Smith, and moved to New York. Between April and September 1939 he frequently visited the War Department in his capacity as a member of the National Aeronautics Advisory Committee and always stopped in to see Truman Smith and discuss the current state of affairs in Europe. During these visits Lindbergh stayed at prominent Washington hotels; Truman Smith still returned to the Walter Reed Hospital every night.

Lindbergh's increasing preoccupation with the danger of a world war and his conviction that it would spell the end of civilization had caused him to support appeasement policies. In July 1939 he had been invited to dine with William Castle, Undersecretary of State with the Hoover administration, and several other guests. Here he met Fulton Lewis Jr., a conservative radio commentator, who offered him the opportunity to voice his views as a guest speaker.²⁵ Always keeping his own counsel²⁶, Lindbergh

²⁴"Rose Bigman to Miss LeHand," July 8, 1940. Copy from Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, 12538.

²⁵Kenneth S. Davis, The Hero: Charles A. Lindbergh and the American Dream, (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959), 386.

shortly thereafter decided to accept the opportunity and to warn the nation of the danger to the country as he saw it. The outbreak of World War II in Europe gradually eased him into the isolationist camp.

On September 14, 1939, at the height of the heated debate raging between the interventionist and isolationist camps in Congress and across the nation, Lindbergh asked Chief of the Air Corps, Major General Henry H. Arnold, to relieve him of his duty on the Advisory Commission of the United States Air Corps. In the personal battle between his love for a strong, modern Air Corps, and keeping his country out of a war which he thought did not concern this nation, isolationist sentiments had won. He was planning his first radio address the following day. The Administration tried a half-hearted attempt to influence Lindbergh's determination to speak out against the country's involvement in Europe; General Arnold relayed to Smith the offer for Lindbergh, a cabinet post as Secretary of Air in return for his

²⁶Charles August Lindbergh, The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), 352. Though Lindbergh says that Smith "is one of the few people who have even seen those addresses before I deliver them," Smith scoffed at the idea of anyone writing Lindbergh's material. "In speech writing as in flying, Charles Lindbergh is the 'lone wolf'." Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 33.

silence.²⁷ The people who knew him were not surprised that he refused.

As Lindbergh gradually established relationships within the political ranks of Middle West isolationists which resulted in his joining the America First Committee, Smith's troubles were only beginning. On the 18th of May, 1940, after Lindbergh spoke about the futility of American aid to Britain, Smith was accused of writing Lindbergh's speeches and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau reportedly asked for his dismissal.²⁸ Smith offered to resign, but Marshall would not permit him to do so. Following Marshall's suggestion to "take these attacks on the oblique," Smith took an extended leave until "the political heat had cooled." Marshall then personally sent word to the President via Bernard Baruch "self-styled park bench sage and influential 'elder statesman number one' in Washington,"²⁹ asking him to intervene to avoid "a misunderstanding over a minor matter... between the administration and the Army."³⁰ But as the press left off its attacks on Smith, greater trouble loomed ahead.

²⁷Charles A. Lindbergh, The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh, 257-58.

²⁸Ibid., 352.

²⁹Ed Cray, General of the Army, 152.

³⁰Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 34.

In September 1940, Smith was accused of having made an offensive remark about Roosevelt at a cocktail party in July of 1939. Although at the time of the incident Smith was at Walter Reed Hospital, the charge was not resolved until finally the intervention of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson was necessary to allow Smith to clear his name. The individual who had reported Smith's supposed tactless comment was Interior Secretary Harold Ickes' friend Harry Slattery, head of the Rural Electrification Bureau. Coming face to face with Mr. Slattery in Stimson's office and presence, Smith was quickly cleared; Mr. Slattery said that Smith was not the person he remembered. Marshall, years later in a letter to Smith, referred to these difficult times when he commented on Smith's stoical silence during "the bitter resentment and the serious attacks made upon you because you recited the facts of the German buildup of military power... All these things are an inevitable part of democracy and the consequent political reaction."³¹

On April 1, 1941, Lindbergh joined the America First Committee and became a member of its executive committee. Of the many famous people involved in its efforts, Lindbergh "was undoubtedly the star of the show."³² On April 25,

³¹Ibid., 35-6.

³²Kenneth S. Davis, The Hero, 400.

1941, during a news conference, President Roosevelt finally decided to defuse some of Lindbergh's power by referring to Thomas Paine's comments, "The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and of woman."³³ Lindbergh responded by resigning his commission in the United States Air Corps Reserve.

The relationship between Smith and Lindbergh had already begun to ebb after the latter's attack on the Administration on October 14, 1940. When he called the Smith residence the following day, Katherine Smith picked up Lindbergh for a short meeting in her car, suggesting the inadvisability of his meeting Truman since "they might make life very difficult for Truman if they thought he had any part in it."³⁴ Lindbergh no longer visited the War Department in the Munitions Building, where he had spent many hours working and discussing military affairs. While maintaining an acquaintance, they were no longer close friends; the Smiths did not appear on a list of mutual friends which Anne and Charles made one reflective day in

³³Quoted in The Hero, 403.

³⁴Lindbergh paraphrases Mrs. Smith's concern, and adds cryptically, "...I do not want my actions to be a source of embarrassment to my friends. "Charles A. Lindbergh, The Wartime Journals, 405.

May of 1943.³⁵ However, they continued to meet regularly thereafter. The Smiths, too, regardless of Truman's work, placed themselves in the isolationist camp, perhaps more because of anti-Roosevelt sentiments than from strategic conviction. Though not writing Lindbergh's speeches, Smith participated in discussions which fed into Lindbergh's material. On May 14, 1941, Anne Lindbergh noted in her diary, "Kay and Truman - like everyone else - give me ideas as to what Charles should say in his next speech. They want him to reiterate all the points he has used."³⁶ On June 4, 1943, on one of his short periods of leave, when Charles and Anne were in Washington as guests of the Smith's, Truman demonstrated that he was obviously privy to Lindbergh's activities in the Pacific theater of war.³⁷ In August 1944, Anne Lindbergh discovered the death of her close friend Antoine de Saint-Exupery in a newspaper while visiting the Smiths.³⁸ On January 20, 1944, Anne wrote,

Truman is... rather low-spirited. He talks about the increasing horror and cruelty he sees coming in the war. The frightful bombings can only result, he feels, in unspeakable savagery on both sides - no prisoners,

³⁵Anne Morrow Lindbergh, War Within and War Without: Diaries and Letters 1939-1944, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1980), 355.

³⁶Ibid., 184.

³⁷Ibid., 357.

³⁸Ibid., 446.

shooting or torturing of pilots, retaliation. He sees nothing but chaos.³⁹

This dark vision is not surprising; at the time the War Department was preparing for the invasion in Normandy. Also, as a result of a heavy work schedule at G-2 his health suffered, and Smith felt his contribution did, as well. However, rather than approve his request for retirement, Marshall sent him on sick leave to New Mexico, in one of the aircraft which he used himself. Smith returned the first day of May, much improved.

However, although Smith had been slated to retire, and was even looking forward to civilian life almost three years earlier, an army retirement board now insisted on equal treatment for all armed forces. Regardless of Smith's value and expertise, Marshall could not keep Smith's medical status papers inactive on his desk any longer. But his retirement was once again postponed when the United States entered World War II on December 8, 1941. A few days after Pearl Harbor Marshall personally called Smith and ordered

³⁹Ibid., 403. This sentiment on Smith's part is understandable, considering his participation in the final battle during the Meuse-Argonne offensive in World War I. Marshall himself said on April 10, 1940, when haggling with Senators over his defense budget needs, "I am more of a pacifist than you think... I went through one war, and I do not want to see another. My idea, however, as to the sound basis for peace may differ from others'." Quoted in Ed Cray, General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 152.

him to return to active duty. On February 1, 1942, Truman Smith was back in his office and the Intelligence Division was shortly afterwards transferred to its new offices in the Pentagon.⁴⁰

For the next three and a quarter years Smith rendered important service to the planning of American military activities in Europe. With the outbreak of the war he had provided Marshall and "most branches of the General Staff" who had been surprised by the rapid warfare of German troops with his extensive knowledge of Germany's military strength, her equipment, her officer corps, and her military mind. After American soldiers landed in Europe, he was one of the experts who routinely provided analyses of German troop movements, intelligence "summaries of army operations" for the army, and also to the Air Corps as well. In 1943 Marshall considered directing the invasion of Europe from England and insisted on Smith's accompaniment as "special intelligence consultant," even though doctors pronounced Smith "physically unfit for overseas service." Smith saw Marshall's "insistence to have me with him in Europe [as] the greatest single compliment I ever received in my life." However, at the last moment Marshall was asked to remain in

⁴⁰Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 37.

Washington by Roosevelt.⁴¹

During this time, Smith worked as chief of the Intelligence Planning and Strategy Group at G-2,⁴² directing the work of seven officers to provide details of German movements using information from "cables, press and radio reports, [and], more importantly, the summaries of the ultra secret material carefully passed by hand from individual to individual."⁴³ All specialists of the geographic sections prepared reports of military, political, or economic intelligence materials daily in the small hours of the morning, which was then presented with the aid of equally current maps and charts by 8:00 a.m. to the chiefs of the War Department. Not only was Smith required to know the latest intelligence on the German Army, but also to give his analysis and answer questions by the Chiefs of Staff.

Curiously, some of the information which was used by

⁴¹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 39-40. See also Forrest Pogue, George C. Marshall, Vol.III, Organizer of Victory 1943-1945, 120.

⁴²"Memorandum: Organization of Military Intelligence Division, G2, W.D.G.S.," 30 August, 1943, RG 165, Records of the War Department, The National Archives, Washington, DC. Though the Intelligence Division was reorganized several times as the department adjusted to necessary growth, Smith retained essentially the same position.

⁴³Edmund T. Delaney to Charles Burdick, July 5, 1978. E.T. Delaney was the French specialist at G-2 when Truman Smith worked as the German specialist. Letter in author's possession.

G-2 came from a very unlikely source, the German Army itself, via Friedrich von Boetticher, the German Military Attaché. He requested and received from the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW) Ausland* (Headquarters of the Armed Forces) in Germany "detailed material to pass on to the General Staff [in the U.S.]," he also obtained "detailed projection slides of aerial engagements" on more than one occasion which he passed on to his contacts at the War Department, possibly Smith. The material which von Boetticher brought was of such value that he "was exempted from security searches."⁴⁴ While this activity lasted, the material was used primarily as one of the sources available to the War Department to verify the information that was received by the ULTRA team at the Special Branch. Having possession of the German Enigma ciphering machine since 1939 provided the Allies with nearly complete access to German military communications. This made the work of Smith and his colleagues "a fascinating experience [as they] arrive[d] at the Pentagon so early in the morning and read in the "black book" the orders which had been issued only hours earlier to the German field forces at the time of the Invasion."⁴⁵ On August 18, 1941, General Marshall ordered

⁴⁴Alfred Beck, "The Ambivalent Attaché," 232-277.

⁴⁵Edmund T. Delaney to Charles Burdick, July 5, 1978.

a halt to von Boetticher's contributions; four days before that date the Washington Administration made public the terms of the Atlantic Charter.⁴⁶ While it lasted, the material which von Boetticher provided "balanced the exaggerated, faulty, or perhaps purposefully misleading" intelligence provided by Britain.⁴⁷

When Smith finally retired from the army after thirty years of service he had not only earned the respect of many fellow soldiers, but also of some who were still forming their careers.

I can well remember the shock we all had when, in 1939 or early 1940, in a lecture at the War College, Truman Smith ran his pointer across a map of Europe from the North Cape of Norway, through the Saar Basin in France, down the length of Italy, and stated categorically that this line was Hitler's goal of German hegemony in western Europe. Few in authority in Washington would believe Truman.⁴⁸

But George Catlett Marshall always had. On January 19, 1945, as Marshall, "already in his flying togs," was about to depart for Yalta with Roosevelt, he arranged for a

⁴⁶The Atlantic Charter was a document of principles with regard to post-World War II aims agreed upon by Roosevelt and Churchill during a secret meeting in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland, August 9, 1941. Since this meeting was arranged to discuss the possibility of support from other nations against the aggression of Germany, von Boetticher's services could have been considered no longer proper.

⁴⁷Adolf Beck, "The Ambivalent Attache'," 333.

⁴⁸J. Lawton Collins, Lightning Joe: An Autobiography, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1979), 94.

hasty 9:00 a.m. ceremony in his office at the Pentagon. Secretary of State, Henry L. Stimson, presented a very surprised Truman Smith with the Distinguished Service Medal. The citation read:

Colonel Truman Smith, General Staff Corps, United States Army, rendered distinguished service to the United States Government. As Military Attache' to Germany during the fateful period from August 1935 to March 1939, Colonel Smith accurately reported Nazi Germany's rapidly growing military strength and intentions and greatly facilitated the efforts of the United States Army to keep abreast of German organizations, tactics, and equipment. His reports stimulated action and were in a measure responsible for the manner in which the army developed its plans to build up the military strength of this country. Upon return of Colonel Smith to the United States his intimate and expert knowledge of the enemy was of importance to the formulation of Allied strategic plans. Though suffering a severe physical limitation he continued to render important service on the War Department Staff, from 23 February 1942 to date. His contribution to the war effort of the nation has been of major significance.⁴⁹

Smith retired from the Army, officially on June 12, 1946, after thirty years of continuous service, with the permanent grade of Lieutenant Colonel. Though Marshall valued him highly and never wavered in his defence of Smith, illness and controversy conspired against Smith and his ability, and he was never able to attain his full potential career. Yet in his sparse writings he evidences no bitterness, and if he felt any, he kept such weakness private. Even though a new chapter had begun in the history

⁴⁹Truman Smith, Berlin Alert, 42.

of the United States, and he realized when Marshall went to Europe that his own name was not to appear in its writing, he adjusted to this inevitable fact with pragmatism. In addition, any physical ailment, however manageable, serves as the final arbiter in the mind. As far as he was concerned he had always aimed to give his best, and that certainty must have allowed him the bedrock of contentment when private misgivings assailed him.

Reports of Smith's alleged sympathy with Nazism surfaced not only in Administration circles of Washington, but also in some books and memoirs written after the war. Some of the most damaging come from former German officers themselves. Friedrich Carl Rabe von Pappenheim of the German Attaché Office remembers his "good friend" Truman Smith arriving at his office the morning after the remilitarization of the Rhineland. He describes Smith's unqualified, enthusiastic support of Germany's right to self-determination. He supports this assumption by relating the latter's trip to Munich in 1922, the purpose of which remained elusive to Pappenheim, but that the interview with Hitler (in 1922) resulted in Smith's conversion to National Socialism.⁵⁰ This incident was an example of Smith's

⁵⁰Friedrich-Carl Rabe von Pappenheim, Erinnerungen des Soldaten und Diplomaten 1914-1955, (Osnabruck: Biblio Verlag, 1987), 76.

ability to gain access to information; back-slapping, raucous, cigarette hanging from his mouth, cheering on the man while his eyes and ears were wide open. "Only with difficulty was I able to interrupt his incessant talking in order to give him the official information [on the German Military's move into the Rhineland] which at the moment did not even seem to interest him greatly," Pappenheim said. Even years later could he not suspect that Smith had already known of the German move beforehand. The jovial, loud demeanor belied this knowledge, and the somber, warning reports he sent to G-2. His record is at distinct odds with descriptions like those of von Pappenheim. Only when reading his work can Truman Smith's loyalty to himself and his country be recognized, and here no question exists as to where he stood.

The incident with Rabe von Pappenheim illustrates clearly the most difficult aspect of the attaché's assignment, and serves as verification of Smith's achievements. The successful attache must possess the attributes of Janus, yet with a different expression on each of his two faces. He must keep watch on his potential enemy, and he may even befriend him, but he never loses sight of his country's interest. To do this most successfully, and to get the information required for his own country's security, he needs to be adept at appearing

interested in, or even charmed by, his host country. To this end he cannot criticize, rebuke, or openly judge, even where his own principles would demand it. In order to serve his country best, he will have to seem, if not partisan, at least fraternally "objective," a cohort, a collegial spirit. Smith certainly had his own points of view as to politics, or to class, or to loyalty; on these issues he was distinctly conservative, and behind the jovial manner he was intensely private. Yet he had the ability to be neutral, objective, watchful, and as such he appeared a kindred spirit to many people, who saw what they wanted to see. Above all, Smith was a professional gatherer of information, a neutral agent in a process, and he aimed to fulfill his assignment to his best ability.

When Smith arrived at Berlin in 1935, he was appalled at the disorganized, mediocre quality of reporting which emanated from the Berlin office, and he instantly set to work to improve the process. He wrote to Marshall in January, 1936, "I have long been disgusted at the trivial contents of most of the reports received by G-2 from Military Attachés, and am trying my best to set out on new paths." Smith was not obliged to make any changes, but, to him whose mentor was Marshall himself, any other course would have been inconceivable.

You say in your letter you wonder what our work consists

of other than formalities...they are...the impediment of work rather than the work itself....The most powerful if not the largest army and air force in Europe is coming into existence under a strict veil of secrecy. Piercing this veil is proving a difficult task...we have to dig out each detail bit by bit.⁵¹

He was a perfectionist and hence only one way would do, the right way. That this usually turned out to be the more difficult, so be it. "I am trying in my new job to remain a soldier and to do the best I can in a very difficult situation,"⁵² he told Marshall, and proceeded to share how he had started the job, and what was next on the agenda. These are not the words of a man who was a "Germanophile," or Nazi convert, nor the deeds of a man who would defend the interests of another country. While he loved Germany and was loyal to friends, such feelings could never interfere with his sense of duty, nor his honor.

Truman Smith died in October, 1970, at the age of 77.

⁵¹Larry I. Bland, ed., The Papers of George Catlett Marshall, Vol. I, 482-83.

⁵²Ibid., 484.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Henry T. My Rhineland Journal. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923.
- _____. The Rhineland Occupation. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1927.
- Bennett, Edward W. German Rearmament and the West 1939-1933. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Bidwell, Bruce W. History of the Military Intelligence Division, Department of the Army General Staff: 1775-1941. Frederick: University Publications of America, 1986.
- Bischof, Erwin. Rheinischer Separatismus 1918-1924: Hans Adam Dortens Rheinstaatsbestrebung. Bern, Switzerland: Verlag Herbert Land & Cie AG, 1969.
- Braeman, John. "American Military Power and Security." In Thomas G. Paterson Major Problems in American Foreign Policy; Volume II: Since 1914. Documents and essays. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1989.
- Cole, Wayne S. Roosevelt and the Isolationists 1932-45. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983.
- Collins, J. Lawton. Lightning Joe: An Autobiography. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979.
- Cornebise, Alfred E. "Der [sic] Rhein Entlang: The American Occupation Forces in Germany, 1918-1923, A Photo Essay." Military Affairs. Vol. XLVI, No.4, December 1982. 183-88.
- Craig, Gordon and Felix Gilbert, eds. The Diplomats 1919-1939. Vol.2. New York: Atheneum, 1972.
- Craig, Gordon. Germany 1866-1945. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Cray, Ed. General of the Army: George C. Marshall, Soldier and Statesman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990.

- Davis, Kenneth S. The Hero: Charles A. Lindbergh and the American Dream. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1959.
- Deist, Wilhelm. "Die deutsche Aufrüstung in Amerikanischer Sicht: Berichte des US-Militarattachés in Berlin aus den Jahren 1933-1939." In Russland, Deutschland, Amerika: Frankfurter historische Abhandlungen, Band 17. Wiesbaden: Verlag Steiner, 1978.
- Dodd, William E. and Martha Dodd. Ambassador Dodd's Diary. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co. 1941.
- Harbord, James Guthrie. The American Army in France 1917-1919. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1936.
- Kehrig, Manfred. Die Wiedereinrichtung des deutschen militärischen Attachédienstes nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg 1919-1933. Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag, 1966.
- Lindbergh, Anne Morrow. The Flower and the Nettle: Diaries and Letters 1936-39. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1976.
- _____. War Within and War Without: Diaries and Letters 1939-44. New York: Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, 1980.
- Lindbergh, Charles A. The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1970.
- _____. Autobiography of Values. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1977.
- Link, Werner. Die amerikanische Stabilisierungspolitik in Deutschland 1921-1932. Dusseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1970.
- Marks, Sally and Denis Delude. "German-American Relations, 1918-1921." Mid America A Historical Review. Vol.53/4, 221-25.
- Marshall, George C. The Papers of George Catlett Marshall. Edited by Larry I. Bland. Vol. I - III. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1981.

- May, Ernest R., ed. Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Mosley, Leonard. Lindbergh. New York: Dell Publishing, 1977.
- _____. Marshall: Hero for Our Times. New York: Hearst Books, 1982.
- Murphy, Robert. Diplomat Among Warriors. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964.
- Nelson, Keith L. Victors Divided: America and the Allies in Germany 1918-1923. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- Pogue, Forrest C. George C. Marshall: Education of a General 1880-1939. New York: Viking Press, 1963.
- Rabe von Pappenheim, Friedrich-Carl. Erinnerungen des Soldaten und Diplomaten 1914-1955. Osnabrueck: Biblio Verlag, 1987.
- Rupieper, Herman J. "Alanson B. Houghton: An American Ambassador in Germany 1922-1925." The International History Review. Vol. 1. No.4, October 1970. 490-508.
- Smith, Truman. Berlin Alert: The Memoirs and Reports of Truman Smith. Edited by Robert Hessen. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1984.
- U.S. Army, Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, Third Army. American Military Government of Occupied Germany, 1918-1920; Report of the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943.
- U.S. Department of State, The. Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. Vol.I and II, 1919. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1936.
- U.S. Military Commander, Coblenz. Report of the Military Commander Coblenz, Germany: From December 8, 1918, to May 22, 1919. Fort Leavenworth: General Service Schools Press, 1921.
- Vagts, Alfred. The Military Attaché. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964.

Voelker, Karl-Heinz. Die deutsche Luftwaffe 1933-1939.
Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1967.

Ziemke, Earl F. "Erwin L. Hunt, Henry D. Morgenthau, Jr.,
and the German-American Relations After Two Wars."
In Germany and America: Essays on Problems of Inter-
national Relations and Immigration. Edited by Hans
L. Trefousse. New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1980.
229-40.

UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

"Armaments and Military Power of Germany." Report D-12 602,
by Lt. Col. J.W.S. Wuest, Military Attache, to MID, War
Department, 16 January, 1933. RG 165. Records of the
War Department General and Special Staffs. National
Archives, Washington, DC.

Beck, Alfred M. "The Ambivalent Attaché: Friedrich von
Boetticher in America 1933-1941." Ph.D. diss., George-
town University, 1977.

Bell, Lawrence D. "Report on Military Aircraft, Plants, and
Production in Germany, Italy, and England." September
12, 1938. Bell Aircraft Corporation to Chief of Air
Corps, War Department, Washington. Records of the War
Department General and Special Staffs, RG 165. National
Archives, Washington, DC.

"Conditions in Bavaria." Report No. 3932, November 23, 1922.
Records of the War Department General and Special
Staffs, MID, RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.

_____. Report No. 3933, November 25, 1922.
Records of the War Department General and Special
Staffs, MID, RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.

_____. Report No. 3539, November 27, 1922.
Records of the War Department General and Special
Staffs, MID, RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.

"Crown Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria." Report No. 3938,
November 27, 1922. Records of the War Department
General and Special Staffs, MID RG 165. National
Archives, Washington, DC.

Crockett, James C., to Truman Smith. 2 March, 1935. Truman
Smith Papers, Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

- "Development of a Fascisti Movement in Bavaria." Report No. 3849, November 3, 1922. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, MID RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.
- Ford, Col. Stanley H. "The Military Intelligence Division, War Department General Staff." Lecture delivered at the Army War College, Washington, DC. November 29, 1929. U.S. Army War College Papers. Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.
- "General Ludendorff on the Political Situation." Report No. 3944, November 28, 1922. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, MID, RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.
- Halloran, Major G.M. "Memorandum for the Director, G-1 Div., Army War College, October 30, 1925. U.S. Army War College Papers. Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.
- Houghton, Alanson B., to Lt. Colonel C.F. Cox, 25 November 1922. Papers of Truman Smith. Hoover Institution. Stanford University.
- Hunt, Col. I.L. to Adjutant General, U.S. Army, 3 June, 1920. "Efficiency Reports Smith, Truman 0-4619." National Personnel Records Center. Military Personnel Records, St. Louis, Missouri.
- Jordan, William A., to Charles Burdick, 19 October, 1978. Letter in author's collection.
- "Letter from Lt.Col. Davis at the American Mission in Berlin to Department of Military Intelligence, Washington." Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs, MID, RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.
- Lowry, Bullitt. "The American Occupation of Germany, the French, and the Rhenish Separatist Movement, 1919." Duquesne, Pennsylvania: Duquesne Historical Society Forum, 1982.
- "Memorandum for Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1." 29 January, 1920. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs MID, RG 165. National Archives, Washington, DC.

"Memorandum for General Nolan: Qualifications of Captain Truman O. Smith, Infantry." From Lt.Col. I.L. Hunt, Office of the Judge Advocate General, War Department. MID, RG 165. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs. National Archives, Washington, DC.

"Official Letter of Evaluation and Commendation from Col. I.L. Hunt, Office of the Advocate General, War Department, to the Adjutant General, U.S. Army, reg. Truman Smith." No. 0-4619. National Personell Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

Pierson, George Wilson, Emeritus Professor and Historian of Yale University, to Professor Charles Burdick, Professor of History, San Jose State University, 5 October, 1978. Letter in author's collection.

"Roster and Reports by the Military Attache to the War Department's G-2 Section." 1931-1941. MID RG 165. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs. National Archives, Washington, DC.

Smith, Katherine A.H. "My Life, 1916-1924." U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

_____. "My Life, 1924-1935." U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

_____. "My Life, 1935-1939." U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Smith, Major Truman. "General Estimate as of Nov.1, 1937." Report No. 15 540, to the U.S. War Department. MID, RG 165. Smith Papers. Hoover Institution. Stanford University.

_____. "Germany's Present Air Strength and German Air Potentialities." March 21, 1937. MID Report No. 15 200, RG 165. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs. National Archives, Washington, DC.

_____. "Is Time Working For or Against Germany? The Trend of Relative Military Strength." April 2, 1937. MID Report No. 15 216, RG 165. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs. National Archives, Washington, DC.

_____. "War Potential and Intentions of European Axis Nations." Prepared at the War Department, 1941 (?). RG 165. Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs. National Archives, Washington, DC.

Vanaman, Major General Arthur W., to Charles Burdick, 29 February, 1980. Copy in Author's collection.

_____. "An Oral History Interview with Major General Arthur W. Vanaman." Interview by Hugh N. Ahmann, 10-12 February, 1976. U.S. Air Force History Program. Copy in author's collection.