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## Henry E. Eccles, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Arleigh Burke

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## **HENRY E. ECCLES**

### **REAR ADMIRAL, U.S. NAVY (RET.)**

*This special issue is in honor of RADM Henry E. Eccles on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his retirement from active naval service. We were delighted with the enthusiastic response of those of his friends who were asked to contribute articles. The first three contributions were submitted by men who have known Admiral Eccles for many years and who hold him in great esteem and affection. The diversity of their backgrounds is good indication of the diversity of Admiral Eccles' own interests. These articles show the extent of the influence of Admiral Eccles' ideas. Admiral Arleigh Burke, our most distinguished naval officer today, was Chief of Naval Operations from 1955 to 1961. He has known Admiral Eccles since they were both midshipmen at the Naval Academy. Ambassador Thomas S. Estes was a career Foreign Service Officer who served for several years as ambassador to the Republic of Upper Volta and afterwards as State Department Advisor to the President, Naval War College. Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, Jr. had a successful career in journalism and then with the Central Intelligence Agency, before becoming Professor of Political Science at Brown University. [Ed.]*

### **MY FRIEND HENRY E. ECCLES**

The Naval War College has been in historic Newport on glorious Narragansett Bay for almost a century. Its mission has remained constant, but the faculty and students stay for only short periods—and most of the population of Newport ebb and flow even faster. Yet, the Naval War College has been remarkably stable with all the frequent changes.

The reason for its steady improvement and staunch endurance is the wisdom and understanding of its successive presidents of the value of the advice and judgment of a few extraordinary naval officers who have voluntarily dedicated themselves to the good of that college. The first was Stephen B. Luce, followed by men such as Alfred Thayer Mahan and William S. Sims. For the last 25 years, that man has been Henry Eccles.

Aside from the Naval War College, Henry Eccles has four interests: logistics; the science of command; his gracious wife, Isabel; and more logistics. What experience did this son of an Episcopalian minister have that would cause him to be known as Mr. Logistics? If Henry were older, we might think back to the early survival kits known as Missionary Barrels.

However, he probably became mildly interested in that dull but critical subject in his 4 years at the Naval Academy when it was correctly known as the best trade school in the United States for the best profession in the world.

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At that time there was a rigid, fixed engineering curriculum and the only social studies were those conducted by Professor Bell, the dancing instructor. Henry narrowly escaped joining those few midshipmen who bilged waltzing. Maybe in his years as a young officer in those smelly R and S boats, in which there were few safety devices except the skill and reliability of men, he came to realize the absolute necessity in a ship at sea of having the proper gear on hand and all of it workable.

It was not surprising then to find Henry ashore in repair facilities and engineering duties in the Bureau of Ships. He went on to his graduate degree in engineering at Columbia University.

July 1940 found Henry on the China Station in command of an old World War I four stacker, *John D. Edwards*. River pirates and unfriendly shore batteries occasionally punctuated the peace and quiet, requiring Commander Eccles to exercise great alertness and his 4" guns. War came and the China Station ships were recalled to the Philippines. By February 1942, *John D. Edwards* was in the seas of Indonesia, fighting desperately to stem the powerful Japanese drives to the south. She was one of those gallant old destroyers whose torpedoes wreaked considerable damage on a much more powerful force.

*John D. Edwards* eventually made her way to Perth and Henry to the Adelphi Hotel along with some of his wartime associates. In those early desperate battles, he already knew the truth of Napoleon's old maxim "for want of a nail . . ."

After a stint in Base Development Planning in the Navy Department, he put into practice his logistic ideas as Head, Advanced Base Section, Service Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet under that other cagey logistician, Adm. "Wild Bill" Calhoun. He sharpened his practical knowledge of getting the right material to the right place on time and reinforced his conviction of the great weight of logistics in successful war operations.

After the war, Henry had his opportunity to do something about his beloved specialty of logistics. He established the Logistics Department at the Naval War College. Here was the welcome chance to teach others that the soft underbelly of warfare is that prosaic, unpopular art of adequate logistics. His students liked his vigorous, hard-hitting lectures, and some of them may have even comprehended their significance. At least they paid attention. Under Henry Eccles, they'd better.

Then Henry went to CINCNELM and Allied Forces, Southern Europe and, as you'd expect, to head the logistic section. Here he whetted his skill on European logistic systems as compared to ours--and helped improve them all.

When he retired from the Navy, Henry was not a man to abandon a lifelong interest so he joined the George Washington University Logistics Research Project, and since he retired in Newport, he kept a fatherly eye on the Naval War College. Fortunately for the Navy, his keen interest in and great contributions to the War College were appreciated by the leaders of that College, and his worthwhile efforts were promoted.

Henry Eccles' vast experience in the two fundamentals of naval warfare, the arts of command and supply, was the foundation for his great work in the last quarter century—but this was not the only, and probably not the most important, factor for his great success. He provides the inspiration of unbounded energy applied nearly wholly to working. He likes to work. He even gave up golf because logistics was more fun—and maybe because he wasn't very good at golf. Above all, he is a practical fellow. He is not averse to new theories, but uniquely among professorial types, he accepts only theories which have a good probability of working. He analyzes new concepts completely and tries them out on a small scale, thereby avoiding the prevalent custom of making mistakes on a colossal scale. His demand for excellent performance is surpassed by his more insistent demand for reliability. He is impatient with wand-waving enthusiasts who ignore the actual situation and base their solution to the problem on what they wish the situation to be.

Henry Eccles, the man who can write as well as fight, and who sometimes seems to do both simultaneously, probably has several other good qualities. Few men have been so steadfastly influential and gained so much admiration and affection from their associates.



ARLEIGH BURKE  
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

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### “RAMB” HENRY E. ECCLES

Throughout the history of the U.S. Navy, marines have muttered their opinions about certain admirals (but never loud enough to be heard) and some have even put their opinions in writing (but never for publication). It was with delight, therefore, that this former marine accepted—indeed, seized—the opportunity to put in writing the opinions he has expressed from time to time about one admiral, without any concern about the consequences that he might have endured a few years ago.

Admiral Eccles deservedly enjoys a high reputation as an expert on strategy and logistics. He should have a reputation for something else, about which the less said the better in the days when he was an aspiring young naval officer. Today it can be mentioned out loud.

Those who have heard his lectures or engaged in what can be a lively conversation with him, or who have read any of his published works, know well that he is a firm advocate of civil-military relations. This is not so surprising, perhaps, when it is remembered that logistics, at least, requires an understanding of the economy and may call for some contact with civilian economists. When it comes to political theory and political scientists, however, that was something else again a quarter of a century—and

more—ago. Yet here was Henry Eccles contending that long ago that military theory had to be related to economic and political theory. This is quite evident in the Preface to his book *Military Concepts and Philosophy* which he describes as an outgrowth of lectures on strategy and logistics given during the period 1953 to 1963, and of prior books and articles.

Not being an economist, and having given up studies in strategy and logistics after transferring from the Marine Corps to the Diplomatic Corps, I will approach this delicate subject from the viewpoint of a political scientist.

The admiral also asserts in the Preface to his book that rather than trying to write comprehensively on military, economic and political theory, he confined his political and economic remarks to a few areas of overlap. He hoped that in doing so he would provide a “useful link for political scientists and economists.” Insofar as political theory is concerned, the facts prove otherwise. He has managed one way or another in his own words to include in his “remarks” nearly every element involved in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. References to geography, natural resources, industrial establishments, people, social structure, political institutions and even diplomacy will be found in his writings when military-civil relations are being discussed.

In short, Admiral Eccles should also enjoy a high reputation as a political as well as a military expert now that one can be both without jeopardizing professional standing, career or family. Having served through at least part of the earlier period when Admiral Eccles was harboring thoughts about military-political coordination, contrary to custom in *either* the military or diplomatic establishments, I will cite a few examples, some hopefully excusably personal, to substantiate my views about the admiral.

Going back a bit beyond the period under discussion, Frederick H. Hartmann recalls in his *The New Age of American Diplomacy* that a Council of National Defense was established in 1916 and that it had been suggested by the Naval War College and discussed in Congress as early as 1911. He quotes Admiral Mahan as stating that there was little appreciation of relations between diplomacy and the Army and Navy. Hartmann notes that the Secretary of War supported the bill but did not include the Secretary of State.

The situation had not improved a war later. After Pearl Harbor the staff of the Legation at Bangkok, Thailand, was interned by the Japanese forces. It was then learned that the Military and Naval Attachés had received instructions just prior to the attack to destroy their codes, but not to inform the American Minister. Previously the staff of the Legation and the attachés collaborated in a study predicting the invasion of Thailand from Indochina in the first 2 weeks of December. The study was never acknowledged by the Department of State nor was it ever referred to the War Department so far as I was able to discern when I examined the notations on the original document many years later.

Ambassador Robert Murphy recalls in his book *Diplomat Among Warriors* being briefed by President Roosevelt on his secret mission to General

Eisenhower's headquarters in London to help in planning the landings in North Africa, probably the first instance of modern joint military-diplomatic planning. The President warned Murphy not to tell anyone in the State Department about his mission or the plans for the landings. As a good Foreign Service officer, Murphy pointed out that this could put him in an awkward position with Secretary of State Hull. The President told him not to worry about it, that the Secretary would be informed a day or so before the landings.

Ambassador Murphy, who went to London disguised as a lieutenant colonel, writes that in the first days at the Pentagon and in London he became aware of "my own appalling ignorance of military matters." He was a key figure in the first major American offensive of the war but states, "I did not know the first principles of military science." He points out that his military colleagues had the benefit of instruction in political problems at the Army War College and other military schools.

As the junior Foreign Service officer on Ambassador Murphy's staff at Allied Force Headquarters in Algeria and later in Italy, I saw at firsthand the difficulties that arose when political problems had to be solved, from those at the top involving Darlan, Giraud and de Gaulle, down to those at my level. For example, the treatment of prisoners of war, governed by the Geneva Convention, became a political issue on one memorable occasion. At that time I was assigned to accompany Swiss inspectors, who had diplomatic status, and who inspected our camps to ensure compliance with the Convention. I was instructed to report on the results of each inspection. At one camp the senior German officer charged that mass punishment was being imposed for infractions by unidentified individuals. In my attempts to get the facts and mitigate any adverse repercussions for American prisoners in German hands, I (in civilian clothes, of course) was roundly rebuffed by the American officer commanding the camp. Thanks to the sympathetic understanding of the Swiss which gave time for a quick call for help and equally quick action between Ambassador Murphy's and General Eisenhower's staff, the matter was "clarified" and the Swiss report dealt lightly with an inadvertent disciplinary action caused by a misunderstanding—or diplomatic phrases to that effect—which prevented any repercussions.

In another instance, during an exchange of sick and wounded prisoners, the Algiers Port Commander understandably objected violently to having the Swedish exchange ship *Gripsholm* lighted up like a Christmas tree when the harbor and city were under a strict blackout. Incidentally, this was the same *Gripsholm* which was used in the first exchange of interned diplomatic personnel, happily including me among them. The Port Commander, a British admiral, ordered that the lights be extinguished. The *Gripsholm's* captain refused, citing the international agreement under which he was operating and which guaranteed the safety of his ship. An aide telephoned me. I quickly saw that I was getting into rather deep water and reported the problem to my superiors, recommending the captain's position be upheld. Telegrams went to London and Washington. London supported the American position that the lights must stay on. Washington supported the British admiral. This, at least, illustrated the allied nature of the responses. Finally a compromise was

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reached. It was agreed that on the basis of the several nightly air raids the enemy had a pretty good idea of the location of the harbor so the *Gripsholm* was anchored farther out with her lights on.

Gradually the assistance that could be given the military services by the Political Advisor became recognized and "POLAD" became a special staff section of the headquarters. The POLAD staff in turn gradually began to understand the responsibilities of military command and how to help their military colleagues by going through proper channels. The mutual cooperation and understanding brought about some interesting and unusual situations.

Our daughter was born in the WAC hospital at Oran, Algeria, thanks to this kind of cooperation, and today she shows her children her GI dog tags which describe her as "Honorary WAC No. 1". When she was discharged from the hospital there was a small problem with regard to the amount to be paid for her rations, and another at the military airport with regard to two civilians trying to return to Algiers on one set of travel orders, but these were resolved in that same spirit of cooperation.

As combat operations increased it was discovered that a number of GIs were not American citizens, in spite of the fact that they were supposed to have been naturalized before leaving the United States. As a result of an agreement among the War, Justice and State Departments, Foreign Service officers were appointed as Special Naturalization Examiners with power to naturalize any alien in the U.S. Armed Forces who had entered the United States legally. These naturalizations were to take place in the "repell-depots" (Replenishment Depots) far from combat zones, but exceptions had to be made eventually. I received one of the appointments and found myself on Anzio Beachhead where I naturalized 112 GIs and one Army nurse under enemy artillery fire.

Out of the crucible of these early trials and tribulations came the experience that set the pattern for solving political-military problems in Italy, in occupied Europe and later in NATO.

It took a little longer for the successful military-civilian relationships established in a military setting to penetrate and become acceptable in Washington. I can recall that as late as 1949-50 a colonel and I at the Pentagon carefully followed instructions in communicating on matters of mutual official interest up and back down through the hierarchy of our two great departments—after practically clandestine telephone calls and meetings to get the job done—as we had done previously abroad. The election of General Eisenhower as President and the reorganization of the Defense Department helped open the way for more direct communication and, eventually, the happy situation that exists today. Some 15 military and civilian officers exchange desks for 2-year periods; civilian officers spend an academic year at the war colleges and an ambassador is Deputy Commandant at the National War College; several military officers spend an academic year at the State Department's Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy, the Department's highest level of training; and several ambassadors have had the good fortune

to be assigned to the staffs of the presidents of the war colleges. (I was happy to have been one of them.)

None of this is intended to suggest that there are not differences of views or political or personality clashes among the professionals of both services. There *should* be differences of views and the offer of several options in the formulation of foreign policy which, in spite of opinions to the contrary, is only as effective as the military support behind it. It may be noted that the new Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, testifying before the Senate Foreign Operations Committee last February, just after assuming his new duties, discussed military assistance and told the Committee that the Department of State would join with the Department of Defense in supplying any additional information or data the Committee might desire. We have come a long way from the 1916 Council of National Defense.

What all this *is* intended to suggest, however, is that what Admiral Eccles foresaw years ago has come to pass. Yet he still reiterates the need for civilian-military coordination which is summed up in the following excerpt from a recent draft manuscript:

As in all important problems, military problems are interdisciplinary.

To understand military power in a free society requires in essence a thorough grasp of civil-military relations and of the reciprocal responsibilities between civilian executives and military professionals.

Many military professionals have been so narrow in their experience and study that, until they go to one of the War Colleges, they remain ignorant of politics. In the same way, many political and social scientists remain equally ignorant of military realities.

If no other evidence were available, this passage alone should substantiate the charge that Admiral Eccles should also enjoy, openly, a high reputation as a political as well as a military expert, and not try modestly to hide his expertise under the guise of some political remarks in a few areas of "overlap." He has indeed forged a far more useful link between political scientists and economists than he himself realizes—or would admit.

To predict how economists would make use of that linkage is, of course, not really possible, given their models, linear equations and graphs. But political scientists with their intuitive approach to matters of serious import would probably agree that an admiral with such an appreciation of the political factor in military planning should be suitably recognized.

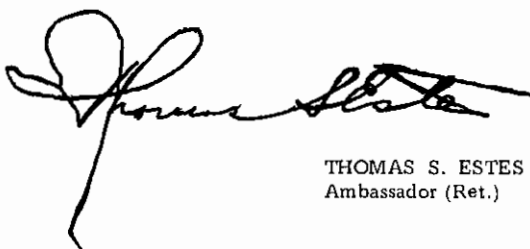
In view of the fact that several admirals have been appointed to serve as ambassadors, and in spite of the fact that for some unknown reason no ambassador has been appointed to serve as an admiral, it is believed that most political scientists would agree that Admiral Eccles should have been one of those recognized by such an appointment. Since that does not seem feasible at the moment, an alternative has been voted unanimously by a committee of one to appoint him an honorary member of the fraternity of retired



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ambassadors by changing his rank from RADM to RAMB for the purpose of this issue of the *Naval War College Review*. This has been done on one condition, however; he must continue to be a retired ambassador just as long as he has been a retired admiral.

Congratulations to RAMB Henry Eccles.



THOMAS S. ESTES  
Ambassador (Ret.)

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### ECCLES STRATEGY ON STRATEGY

To many persons throughout the world, military and civilian alike, Henry Eccles' name is synonymous with logistics. He has carried the message to all who would hear his lectures or read his books and articles that you cannot fight a war or even make a show of force unless you have the logistics to do so. His book *Logistics in the National Defense* is replete with illustrations of belated or nonexistent logistical planning adversely affecting military operations. In an article published in this journal in March 1969, "Suez 1956—Some Military Lessons", he made the point that Eden and Pineau made the decision to attack Egypt in order to regain control of the Suez Canal without the vaguest idea of whether their military forces had the logistic capability to accomplish their objective.

One of Admiral Eccles obvious crusades is to give logistics its place in the hierarchy of considerations fundamental to higher command. In his *Command Logistics*<sup>1</sup> prepared for the use of the Naval Warfare Class in 1956 he uses an illustration of "The Structure and Relationship of the Military Factors in War" in which a ceiling lamp reflects *Intelligence* on the interlocking circles of *Strategy* and *Logistics*, which are on the upper plane, and *Tactics*, which is on the lower plane.<sup>2</sup> (Naturally, this endears him to this author who has been more parochial in preaching that *intelligence* is a vital consideration in all command decisions.)

Henry Eccles has worked long and hard to convince the students in defense colleges of the importance of logistics and of the necessary qualities of a logistician. If the number of generations of students are an indication of an educator's impact, it should be noted that he organized the first formal War College course in naval logistics in 1947. Thirty years later he still is lecturing on "Principles of Logistics" at the Naval War College.

He reminds his students that:

The logistician . . . should be well grounded in the humanities and in ecology, for otherwise he will lack the sense of human values which determine ultimate objectives and thus transcend the routine business and technical considerations in major logistical decisions.<sup>3</sup>

One of the best known of the Eccles' principles is: "Logistics is the bridge between the nation's economy and the tactical operations of its combat forces." He usually follows this dictum by emphasizing that the logistic system must be in harmony with the economic system of the nation and with the tactical concepts and environment of the combat units, and by reminding us that economic factors limit the combat forces which can be employed. In his Suez article he points out that the British and French had fine combat troops, but no landing craft to transport them to the combat zone.

Admiral Eccles not only is a scholar but he is also a preacher. In a lecture to the U. S. Air Force School of Logistics on 2 April 1959 on "Logistics Philosophy" he opened with this statement:

The problems of national security are so complex, so urgent and so truly vital that we dare not be superficial. In addition, we must realize that vested interests frequently influence people in their comments and actions relative to national defense. These are hard to identify and, if one attempts to do this specifically, one may do grave injustice to a sincere individual who may not even be aware of unusual bias. Nevertheless, it is a fact that few people are both clear and objective in their judgments. It is also true that a N. I. H. (Not Invented Here) attitude sometimes colors the advice our senior officials receive from their subordinates.

It is therefore particularly important to improve the perspective of those who are involved in logistics studies and research because this is the only way that the relative importance of the many individual facets of this enormous subject can be judged. I believe that a sound broad philosophy is essential to a good perspective.<sup>4</sup>

As a preacher must set the example, so does Henry Eccles. Later, in the same lecture, he said: "Perhaps the most important element of my own specific logistic philosophy is the conviction that the study of logistics has no real meaning unless it is related to the study of war, or human conflict as a whole."

Thus he leads his students into the importance of strategy, and, perhaps even more important, to the necessity for the development of theory.

He points out that: "Strategic plans are mere dreams until there is assurance that they can and will be logistically supported."<sup>5</sup> To this he adds his definition of strategy:

Strategy is the comprehensive direction of power. Tactics is its immediate application. If (strategy) is a type of direction which

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takes into account the multitude of possible enemy counteractions and thus it becomes a means of control. It is this element of control which is the essence of strategy: Control being the element which differentiates true strategic action from a haphazard series of improvisations.<sup>6</sup>

As an intense student of warfare, Henry Eccles is an authority on "improvisations" and on how many times the fates of nations have hung on the delicate thread of a "jury-rigged" operation rather than a well-developed concept. Therefore, he emphasizes the need of theory to provide the base for military planning. He writes: "... the development of a comprehensive theory of war is essential if we are to deal wisely with the problems posed by human conflict."<sup>7</sup> And he uses the best possible model to emphasize the absolute necessity for theory: "... the true intellectual challenge posed by the political-military success of the Communists is to evolve an equally effective theory."<sup>8</sup>

He argues for the importance of theory obviously because of a conviction that too many officers prefer practical application and action. Admiral Eccles comments: "... many practical military leaders and even scholars frequently consider military theory to be an unrealistic abstraction." He continues:

Theory does not pretend to solve problems: it sheds light on problems and thus can provide guidance for those who have the responsibility for solving them.

In the application of theory to an actual problem of life, the responsible executive must make many compromises between conflicting optimum solutions of parts of the problem. Thus, in effect, he must decide when and to what degree it is appropriate for one theoretical consideration to overbalance another. This requires experience and common sense plus a lively feeling of personal responsibility for the results of the decision.

Very rarely is a creative military theorist competent to make specific military plans, for very rarely does he have the same kind and urgency of responsibility as the high military executive and commander. However, if the responsible executive does not understand these theoretical considerations he will be relying on guesses where he should rely on knowledge.

And finally:

It is important to recognize that a theory of war is something more than a mere description of war at a given stage. Theory does not content itself merely with retracing the factual state of affairs. Its task is to penetrate to the inner structure of warfare, to its component parts and to the interrelations existing between them.<sup>9</sup>

And to this he adds an important commentary in a short paper of 26 October 1974, on *Military Fundamentals*, saying:

The fundamentals are fundamental for that very reason—they do not vary with the opinions or practices of any bureaucracy but depend for

their validity on the course of events in human conflict and the cause and effect relation determined as far as possible by logical analysis of history throughout the world.

As a teacher whose mission is to make military men theorists as well as fighters, Admiral Eccles warns his students—and we are all in that category—of the perils of sophistry and self-seekers. He writes:

Since there is a natural tendency in all bureaucracies to restrict access to knowledge of faults to small “need to know” groups, and since persons who “need to know” generally have little time to dwell upon theory and its educational implications, a very special effort is required if military education is to reflect military reality. Yet this is a vital element of progress, for a continuing interaction between military theory and military reality is an essential element in military research and education.<sup>10</sup>

Further, he repeatedly emphasizes (his own words) “that all the substantive elements in the entire military problem of creating, supporting, and employing combat forces be given balanced and coherent consideration in military research and education,” and that “The military professionals have an obligation to furnish the intellectual leadership in these areas, particularly in establishing the coherence and balance in both fields.”<sup>11</sup>

Henry Eccles is true to his own word in furnishing intellectual leadership. In the Foreword to *Logistics in the National Defense*, Henry Wriston, the former president of Brown University and later President of the American Assembly at Columbia, wrote:

It is rare to find a professional in any field as perceptive of the propriety of methods alien to his own, which nevertheless impinge upon his field of thought and action. It suggests, at least by inference, that reciprocal sensitiveness to the military ideas and methods upon the part of the civilian would be welcome, and in the national interest.

Dr. Wriston proceeds to comment on the book:

The passages upon “duplication,” “waste,” competition among the armed forces are luminous as well as frank and realistic. The endless arguments about centralization and decentralization are reviewed fairly—and with a tolerant spirit. The absolute necessity for compromise, for cooperation upon the human level, get great stress. It is hopeful of less friction to see such perceptive treatment of the age-old dilemma between design of a flawless organizational structure and the personal relationships which can make the theoretically poor organization work tolerably well, and a perfect structure fall flat.

To one trained in the academic disciplines and a member of academic communities all my working life, it is music to hear theory well spoken of. Theory is not just dreams or wishful thinking. It is the orderly interpretation of accumulated experience and its formal

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enunciation as a guide to future intelligent action to better that experience . . ."

To a layman reading in a professional field one other essential quality marks this volume. When a theory has been expounded there are illustrations to make clear both its relevances and its significances. This volume is based on wide reading—as the notes amply demonstrate. It is founded upon severe analytical and sternly disciplined thought. It is filled with material which can only have been the fruit of long, first-hand experience. It is made more instructive by historical instances outside the author's own observation but available to him in the voluminous literature.

In his conclusion Dr. Wriston says, "Finally, this is an intensely logical book." This is high praise from one of the most respected academicians of his time. But to those who have been closely associated with Henry Eccles it will come as no surprise.

As one who had the honor to occupy a chair on the faculty of the Naval War College, I look back on the many benefits of that association. One of the real pleasures was the visits from Henry Eccles. I well remember the "barroom" doors of Luce Hall being pushed in; Henry taking a quick look to see if we had visitors; coming in and dropping a paper on the desk with an almost standard opening question: "What do you think of this?"

When I completed my year in the Nimitz Chair in the summer of 1972 I took with me a folder labelled "Henry Eccles Articles" which occupies an important place in my library and it is readily accessible. A glance through that file reveals the remarkable diversity and broad interests of the man. One item is a letter from Norman Cousins, the editor of *Saturday Review*, acknowledging and commenting on an Eccles "Letter to the Editor." The editorial to which Admiral Eccles took exception, "Toward A Military Welfare State?"<sup>1,2</sup> suggested more civilian control of the military. Henry Eccles comments were direct! ". . . I think an excellent case can be made for the contention that many of our worst mistakes have been the result of the unwise exercise of power by civilians in positions of great military authority."

This was only the shot across the bow. Further on in the letter he says:

Certainly, the budgetary sleight of hand which concealed the true extent of the military deficits in the spring of 1966 and thus contributed to our current inflation was the act of civilians in government, not the military.

In the light of this record, I am curious to know what civilian-run institutions should serve as models for an improved Department of Defense. Would you suggest General Motors or Ford Motors? I.B.M.? United States Postal Service? The Department of Justice? The City of New York? The Penn Central Railroad? The planners of the new civic center in Albany? Or the architects and builders of the Senate and House Office Buildings in Washington? Consolidated Edison? Our Universities?

If this salvo did not score direct hits, at least the editor was splashed. It was only the beginning. The admiral continues:

My twenty-five years of intensive study and teaching of military history, theory, and principles suggests that our troubles are caused by first, the complex intractable nature of modern human conflict; second, the tremendous domestic and frequently partisan political pressure exerted on the Department of Defense; third, the neglect of sound, thoroughly documented military principles; and fourth, the pervasive human factors of short-sightedness, superficiality, ignorance, arrogance and selfishness which are evident at least as much in our civilian leaders and institutions as they are among the military. While some benefit undoubtedly can come from institutional reform in the military, the precise nature of such reform is not clear. Too much emphasis on such generalization as "civilian control" can easily obscure and distract us from more important fundamental matters.

This was a direct hit, but three more blows were still to come:

We need more wisdom in the manner in which civilian control is exercised. If civilian control extends to detailed control of operations, the resulting ineptitude and confusion detracts from the effectiveness of the control being exercised in the appropriate areas and thus becomes *self-defeating both in the area of control and in the accomplishment of the political purposes which military effort must support. This is one of the major lessons of the Vietnam tragedy.* (Admiral Eccles' underlining.)

In other words, civilians who exercise control must understand the nature, behavior, and purposes of the systems and military forces which they control.

Also in my Eccles file are drafts of chapters on projected books, a review of *The Nerves of Government* by Karl W. Deutsch; a short piece entitled "Notes on Military Research and Discipline"; one headed "Notes On The Pentagon Papers"; some thoughts on logistic support of the forces in Vietnam; "Further Notes on Discipline"; and many others.

Prolific is the word for Henry Eccles. When I asked the assistance of the Library of the Naval War College in assembling his writings, a foot-high box arrived filled with books and articles. While logistics, strategy and theory may be his priority subjects, he writes on a wide variety of subjects, including comments on his extensive reading. It is not unusual for him to drop off some pages of quotations which impressed him as worthwhile and which always were thought-provoking. While he may reject I.B.M. as a model for defense organization, he does value the corporation slogan: THINK!

He has never shied away from controversial or emotional issues nor from taking unpopular positions, writing on such subjects as *Military Unionization* (28 January 1977) and Vietnam. In a talk to Naval Academy graduates in 1973, later reprinted in *Shipmate*,<sup>13</sup> entitled "The Vietnam Hurricane," he stated in his conclusion:

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It is difficult to dignify U. S. military action in Vietnam by the word *strategy*.

At no time did any course of action which was adopted pass the test of *suitability, feasibility, and acceptability* . . .

. . . the war was *over-managed* . . . This over-management—this excessive control of operational details from Washington—introduced time delays which compounded the other errors in a regenerative manner to produce an ineffective, gigantic but muscle-bound military effort, national frustration and national division. It was in truth *The Vietnam Hurricane*.

One of the magnificent Eccles graphics accompanied this lecture/article entitled "The Vietnam Hurricane or The Pentagon in the Eye of the Storm". In it the winds spinning out from each of the five sides of the Pentagon reach perimeters labelled "Assumptions," "Intelligence," "Inherent Complexity," "The Integrity of Command," and "Faulty Judgments and Decisions," with a total of 31 failures noted, including some listed in more than one area such as "self-serving staff study" (under both The Integrity of Command and Faulty Judgment and Decisions). The list is a staggering indictment which some will resent, some will ignore, a few will study, and maybe a handful will attempt corrective measures.

But Henry Eccles will not be surprised by this. He is a wise man, and he practices what he preaches. He is a student of mankind and not just of warfare or logistics. He knows that history must repeat and repeat before the lesson is learned and that the scholar's job is constant, not transient. For what he says, this nation is in his debt.

When I call Henry Eccles an outstanding military intellectual I am extending the highest praise. Many years ago an admiral remarked that sailors were not supposed to write books. Times have changed. Today if military scholars do not develop a sound theoretical base for the future use of force by the United States, this nation may not survive, for our strategy must be based on logistics which our economy can and will support, and this is subject to constant change. It is as simple, and complex, as that!



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## NOTES

1. Henry E. Eccles, *Command Logistics* (Newport, R.I.: U.S. Naval War College, February 1956).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 7 and see also in his book *Logistics in the National Defense* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1959), p. 20.
3. In *The Military and Civilian Aspects of Logistics* presented to the Convention of the Society of Logistic Engineers, Los Angeles, 5 September 1968.
4. Unpublished MS., Naval War College Library, p. 1.
5. *Logistic Research Notes, A Working Paper*, 25 October 1961, Unpublished MS., Naval War College Library, p. 3. Also, *Notes on Logistics Consolidation in the United States Armed Forces*, commenting on Hanson Baldwin's "Supplying Armed Forces," *The New York Times*, 11 August 1961; and *A Problem for Logistic Research*, 6 January 1954, revised 1 October 1955, redistributed December 1961.
6. A statement by Dr. Herbert Rosinski with a further note by Rear Adm. Henry E. Eccles, September 1955.
7. *Logistics Philosophy*, p. 5.
8. *An Introduction to Logistics Presentations*, U.S. Naval War College, 1 January 1959, p. 2.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Logistics, Systems Analysis and Military Management, A Working Paper*, Unpublished MS., 20 October 1967, p. 7.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
12. *Saturday Review*, 27 March 1971.
13. *Shipmate*, July-August 1973, pp. 23-26.

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