

ADMIRAL OPPOSES SEPARATE AIR UNIT

John Towers, Chief of Navy Aeronautics Bureau, Says Different Missions of Army and Navy Call For Different Flying.

By CHARLES T. LUCEY
Times Special Writer

WASHINGTON, Aug. 2.—Rear Admiral John H. Towers, chief of the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics, today declared his opposition to a separate department of military aviation, co-equal with the Army and Navy.

"The naval aviator is part of a team," Admiral Towers said. "If he doesn't practice with the team he can't do his share; he doesn't know the signals or the plays. Airplanes today are as much a part of the Navy as its guns."

The Navy is by no means subordinating aviation's role, he said, but wants a great naval air force. The die-hards who gave everything to ships and nothing to the air arm are gone, he insisted.

"Aviation is the forward pass of warfare—the quick open play with the element of surprise," he said. "But you've got to have line play or you can't get away with forward passes."

Missions Differ, He Says

Admiral Towers said he saw no advantage in a separate, unified air service with the possible exception that, under some conditions, minor economies might be achieved. The different missions of Army and Navy make different types of planes necessary, but wherever possible the two services now order the same types, he said.

Advocates of a separate air force concede that the Navy should have airplanes of its own, based aboard carriers and warships and subject to Navy command. But back of this and back of a comparatively small number of Army squadrons, they insist, there should be a great central air force such as those in Germany, England and Italy. It could work with the Army or Navy or alone, as circumstances dictated.

Bombing is bombing whether over land or sea, they argue.

Just Flying Not Enough

But, Admiral Towers countered, the flying man working with the Navy must know more than how to fly, because flying itself is only one part of the naval aviator's training. Aviators from a separate air force coming in to back up the Navy or to execute their own air mission over the sea would be handicapped by lack of naval knowledge, in his opinion.

If they were doing reconnaissance flying, he suggested, they might have difficulty in telling one type of enemy vessel from another. If they were observing maneuvers, they would not understand the significance of some of them. They might not be able, from considerable heights, to tell a merchant vessel from a warship—after all, he said, it's not so easy.

Or, he said, the flier not thoroughly trained at sea might mistake an enemy vessel for one of his own, or might pass up an enemy ship, in the belief it was a U. S. vessel.

Which Ship to Bomb Is Factor

"If a separate air force came out to the scene of a naval engagement," Admiral Towers said, "and assuming they could tell our forces from the enemy—which I doubt—the bombs should be dropped on that part of the enemy force which it is most important to put out of commission."

I don't see how a separate-air-force man, knowing nothing of naval warfare, could have any means of deciding which vessels to bomb. He'd probably bomb the big ships—the best targets but also the most resistant to bombing attack.

It might be much more im-



Rear Admiral John H. Towers.
"Aviation is the forward pass of warfare."

portant to bomb smaller ships trying to get around an end for a torpedo attack to drive our big ships up under the enemy's guns. But a separate-air-force man wouldn't know that."

Naval aviators live with the fleet, he said, and they follow maneuvers and gunnery and all naval operations.

Having a Cabinet department of aviation isn't as important, in Admiral Towers' opinion, as having unity of command over all types of fighting forces in an immediate area of combat operations.

The Army recognizes that its giant flying fortress patrol bombers could be more effective at sea than led by naval fliers, he said. He mentioned the bases in Puerto Rico as an example of how the Navy's flying-boat patrols could carry on their scouting and then, if action were called for, could at once get the support of the flying fortresses.

Admiral Towers emphasized that there already is much co-operation between the Army and Navy in plane research and procurement.

Woman, 83, Dies; Never Walked

INDIANA, Pa., Aug. 2 (U. P.)—Paralyzed since early infancy, Miss Ella M. Armstrong, 83, died in her home near Cherry Tree, without ever having walked a step.

Despite a lifetime confined to a wheel chair, Miss Armstrong educated herself and earned a livelihood by making quilts. The money she saved was enough to cover her funeral expenses.

It might be much more im-

'Army Travels on Stomach' ---Maj. Pettibone Is on 'Job'

FORT LEWIS, Wash., Aug. 2 (U. P.)—For 30 days this month, Maj. E. K. Pettibone, chief cook of the U. S. Army, will come into his own during the maneuvers of the 4th Army of the National Guard.

Maj. Pettibone wrote "The Army Cook," which is to military circles what the Boston Cookbook is to the housewife. He will see that the

troops are properly fed, and the major believed like Napoleon did, that an army travels on its stomach.

Maj. Pettibone has numerous years as a cook behind him, but he started learning the art of feeding armies 23 years ago in the Western Front, when he cut his "eye teeth" on the French "tail-heads" system.

This system consisted of establishing "tailheads" every day at convenient locations and to which all the rations for that day were sent.

He will use this system, with a few modifications and improvements of his own, during the maneuvers in Washington.

The system also provides for

contain all the mineral elements and vitamins necessary to keep soldiers from developing either rickets or flat feet.

When the troops go into the maneuvers, the rations will be increased on the theory that the soldier expends more energy when he is on the march.

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