

## **Education, Classification, and Military Strength: A look at the Development of the U. S. Army During World War II**

The development of the US Army in World War II was hampered by the poor quality of education received by potential soldiers or poor utilization of America's entrance into World War II following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor saw the nation in a weak military position. Not one of the branches of the military possessed anywhere near sufficient strength in manpower to deal with the impending crisis created by Japanese and German aggression. A military force of sufficient size and fighting capability would have to be forged from the stock of young men born in the good times of the 1920's and toughened during the nearly decade-long Great Depression. Almost immediately there was the threat of invasion of the West Coast and nightly German U-boat attacks on merchant shipping along the east coast. Due to these immediate threats, some tactical units tasked with coastal defense and anti-submarine warfare were staffed with men who were rushed through the induction process with little or no military training or study by classification personnel.<sup>1</sup> Unlike wars in the past men could not be taken from their villages, given a weapon, and shoved into the ranks to create an effective army. With the rapid advances in technology, World War II would demand men with complex skills to operate and repair the weapons of war.<sup>2</sup> The skills necessary to perform on the modern battlefield demanded a degree of knowledge not previously seen in warfare. The average soldier or airman could be required to understand how to operate a myriad of weapons systems and other technologies in numerous

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<sup>1</sup> Walter V. Bingham, "The Army Personnel Classification System," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 220, Organizing for Total War, (March 1942): 26.

<sup>2</sup> Robert R. Palmer, Bert I. Wiley, and William R. Keast, *The Ground Forces: The Procurement and Training of Ground Combat troops, United States Army in World War II*, (Washington: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1991): 2.

situations that required mental acuity to learn how to complete. This paper will look at how the U.S. Army took millions of young men, classified them by their intelligence, as defined by the Army, and forged an army and air force capable of defeating Germany and Japan, all the while attempting to preserve and train the best and brightest of these to build the future prosperity. Due to issues beyond the control of the military concerning the education of America's youth, and some its own policies, the U.S. Army's classification system fell short of the expectations placed upon scientific personnel study in determining the most efficient manner in which to best utilize the available manpower in creation of a combat force capable of fighting a three-front war against Germany and Japan.

The size of the Army was, by an act of Congress, set at 7.7 million men.<sup>3</sup> The fighting ability of the Army Ground Forces (AGF) and Army Air Corps (AAC) revolved around the training and leadership the average soldier or airman received and this depended upon the capabilities of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers.<sup>4</sup> Of the 7.7 million men allotted to the Army, The Selective Service Act of 1940 permitted 10.6 percent of these men to be African-Americans, which would force the Army to create ten divisions consisting entirely of African-Americans.<sup>5</sup> Achieving this would cause a significant increase in the number of African-American troops in the army, considering in 1939 there were only 3640 enlisted personnel and five officers of African-American descent.<sup>6</sup> While segregation is not a focus of this paper it will play a significant role in the classification and utilization African-American troops during World

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<sup>3</sup> Louis Keefer, *Scholars in Foxholes: The Story of the Army Specialized Training Program in World War II*, (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1988): 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ulysses Lee, *United States Army in World War II: Special Studies- The Employment of Negro Troops*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966): 239.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Bielakowski, *African-American Troops in World War II*, (Oxford & New York: Osprey Publishing Ltd., 2007): 4; Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Selective Service and Training Act of 1940," *World Affairs* 103, no. 3 (September 1940): 182.

<sup>6</sup> John R. Craf, "ASTP," *The Journal of Higher Education* 14, no. 8 (November 1943): 15.

War II. The Army faced a daunting task of obtaining, classifying, and training the men who would staff its three branches of service, the Army Ground Forces (AGF), Army Air Corps, (ACC) later Air Force, and the Army Service Forces (ASF).

The method in which millions of men began their classification by the Army was taking the Army General Classification Test (AGCT). The AGCT was the primary test used by the Army to classify recruits.<sup>7</sup> The AGCT assessed the recruit in native endowments, and the combined effects of schooling and of social experience, in an effort to determine his intelligence.<sup>8</sup> The results of the test would determine if the recruit was inducted into the army or tested further or ultimately rejected. The results could also determine if the recruit was accepted into desired specialized training, like pilot training or the newly minted Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP). The ASTP was program designed to supply the army with highly trained specialists and technicians by sending qualified recruits for additional college level training in engineering, foreign language, medical, veterinary and dental studies.<sup>9</sup> Another reason for further testing was to determine if the recruit was illiterate, but of sufficient intelligence to be of use to the army with further remedial training. Literacy was defined as the ability to read and understand English at a fourth-grade standard.<sup>10</sup> Intelligence was defined as the ability to learn military duties within a year.<sup>11</sup> If a recruit was determined to lack sufficient intelligence he was rejected by the army and returned home.

On December 7, 1941 America was only beginning to prepare for war. Plans of how to mobilize the nation's manpower were being worked out and in the early stages of

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<sup>7</sup> Lee, *Employment*, 241.

<sup>8</sup> Palmer, et al., *Procurement*, 6.

<sup>9</sup> Keefer, *Scholars*, 37.

<sup>10</sup> Roy K. Davenport, "Implications of Military Selection and Classification in Relation to Universal Military Training," *The Journal of Negro Education* 15, no. 4 (Autumn 1946): 586.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Goldberg, *Army Training of Illiterates in World War II*, (New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia College, 1951): 34.

implementation. At this point in time, the military was highly segregated with little chance of desegregation happening as President Roosevelt was not about to go against the Southern Democrats and desegregate the armed forces.<sup>12</sup> This decision, made for political reasons, would affect the African-American contribution to the war and even the future.

The modern mechanized army requires more of the men in its ranks than to be able to shoot and march. The tanks, weapons systems, and warplanes of the U.S. Army during World War II were some of the most technologically advanced machines to date. This necessitated a cohort of men who could operate and repair them. The soldier average would need to possess some measure of military intelligence if they were going to function effectively and efficiently on the modern battlefield. It was of vital importance to the army that each enlisted man be assigned to a role of “best usefulness” and that each officer given a duty he was suited for by his previously acquired skill set, which might be one of the three different categories; line, staff or specific specialty.<sup>13</sup> This allowed the Army some flexibility in assigning officers

With the global scope of the war evident and the need for a large military to defend the United States and eventually shift over to the offensive to defeat Germany and Japan, the War Manpower Commission announced on August 19, 1942 that “all able-bodied male students” were slated for entry into the armed forces and that each branch of the military would then be responsible for their training.<sup>14</sup> As part of the build-up of the military, it was deemed necessary for the Army Air Force to receive the greater percentage of the Army's recruits scoring in the highest categories of the AGCT. This allowed for the development of the air force, which would provide for the immediate defense of the nation and the first offensive punches against Germany,

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<sup>12</sup> Bielakowski, *African-American Troops*, 5.

<sup>13</sup> Bingham, *Personnel*, 24.

<sup>14</sup> Craff, *ASTP*, 399.

mainly, and Japan.<sup>15</sup> Another pressing need was for men in coastal artillery and anti-aircraft artillery units stationed along the coasts. The men rushed to these units often did not go through the whole classification process because of the immediate need for defense of the coast, especially the West coast, from invasion. The immediate needs of the nation took precedence over the ideal situation, especially when it came to classifying every soldier into his ideal position early in the war.

With the entry of the US into the war, a greater impetus was placed on “scientific personnel studies” in which it was hoped that improvements could be made on the selection and training of the new recruits.<sup>16</sup> One of the improvements hoped for was that the smarter army could win the war faster and even go as far as reducing casualties. When the Army was suffering high casualty rates in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, Lt. General Lesley J. McNair, commanding general of the AGF, came to believe the army was sustaining “avoidable casualties” due to the fact that the ground forces did not receive enough high classification men to serve in leadership roles.<sup>17</sup> Lt. Gen. McNair also believed it was taking longer than necessary to defeat the enemy on the ground, for this reason. While his statement might bear a measure of truth about the casualty rate, the winning of the war might have had more to do with the overall strategic plan being implemented in the European theater, but that is a discussion for another time.

The necessity of scientific personnel study in the rapidly expanding Army following Pearl Harbor was to conserve manpower and speed up the training process.<sup>18</sup> With a sense of urgency born of the lack of proper preparation, the US sought to build its military to meet the imminent threats posed by Germany and Japan. The classification process is not a simple take the test and

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<sup>15</sup> Palmer, et al., *Procurement*, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Bingham, *Personnel*, 28.

<sup>17</sup> Palmer, et al., *Procurement*, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Bingham, *Personnel*, 19-20.

see where you get assigned. The overall process took several steps which were completed over a period of time beginning at the induction center. After transit to a reception center where the enlistee was given uniforms, necessary equipment, a complete physical with inoculations and the AGCT. Following several days at the reception center the recruit is sent to a replacement training center for several weeks of introductory military training before being shipped to a tactical unit where he will serve for a number of months. At no time is the recruit absent from the classification system. The scrutiny he faces will follow him for most of the early part of his military career as he is further evaluated in his tactical unit to determine his exact assignment within the unit.<sup>19</sup>

One of the ways the war department gathered information on a recruit was to look at his occupation in civilian life. If he was engaged as a skilled workman he mostly likely possessed a higher intelligence level, greater initiative, and a sense of responsibility along with a superior physique than men who were not. This was not an end all be all method of determining a man's eventual assignment, it merely gave the Army an indication as to how well he could adapt to his new role as a combat soldier and leader. Even those with a superior intelligence would have to learn their military job in the Army as there were few crossover occupations from civilian life in the army.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the fact that there was a war on and the immediate need for manpower was great, the Army understood that it needed to look to the future as well. If it drafted all the young men allowed by the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 it would eventually run out of trained men capable of performing the technical jobs the Army and eventually the nation would need in

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<sup>19</sup> Bingham, *Personnel*, 20.

<sup>20</sup> Palmer, et al., *Procurement*, 9-10.

the future.<sup>21</sup> In order to preserve enough men with these skills, the Army created a special training program in which approximately 150,000 young men could be trained for the future in fields such as medicine and other technical fields. The Army's would be called the Army Specialized Training Program or ASTP.<sup>22</sup> The goal of these programs was to provide the military with specially trained technicians that the Colleges could train more rapidly and efficiently than the Army could within its own organization.<sup>23</sup> One of the biggest opponents of the program was Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair. Gen. McNair felt the army needed men “with the brains and battlefield skills to defeat the more experienced German and Japanese Armies.”<sup>24</sup> Not being against having men with additional education, but he saw no reason why it provided a better soldier when it came to combat effectiveness.

The plan was officially announced in the New York Times on December 18, 1942 and gave a description of all that the program would entail. Throughout the winter and spring of 1943 the Army worked diligently to locate and acquire the necessary university and college support for the program. In the spring, more than three hundred colleges and Universities welcomed on campus the nearly 150,000 young men beginning their training.<sup>25</sup> The ASTP term was divided into twelve-week terms with a week off between terms; and offered in two phases, a basic and an advanced.<sup>26</sup> The basic phase covered what a college or university student would cover in the first year and a half of college in three sessions over nine months, while the advanced phase covered from the point the basic phase left off until the student was at a level of

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<sup>21</sup> Malcolm M. Willey, “The College Training Programs of the Armed Forces,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 231 Higher Education and the War, (January 1944): 16.

<sup>22</sup> Willey, *College Training*, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Craff, *ASTP*, 399.

<sup>24</sup> Keefer, *Scholars*, 31-33.

<sup>25</sup> Willey, *College Training*, 14; Palmer et al., *Procurement*, 33.

<sup>26</sup> Keefer, *Scholars*, 44.

expertise “commensurate with the Army's needs.”<sup>27</sup> The one deviation was in the medical field, where medical, dental, and veterinary students participated in accelerated courses approved by their respective professional educating associations.

In order to be considered for ASTP, the recruit must meet a series of criteria. One he must have a high school diploma. Two, he must have scored an 110 or higher on the AGCT. This was the same threshold set for entrance to Officer Candidate school (OCS), although this score was later changed to 115 for the ASTP. Three, he must have completed basic training. For older men who might have already attended some college, the criteria were slightly different. They must have had completed at least one year of college and had “substantial background” in a foreign language or a year of mathematics, physics, or biology. For those with more than three years of college they must have majored in pre-dentistry, pre-medicine, or engineering, or “substantial background” in one or more foreign languages.<sup>28</sup>

Since the ASTP was a training function of the Army the students were in uniform and under military discipline, receiving the regular pay of an enlisted man.<sup>29</sup> Men who entered the basic phase held the rank of Private regardless of the rank held before entering the program. Men who held non-commissioned officer ranks and entered the advanced phase retained their rank. When a student-soldier graduated the basic phase and moved to the advanced phase he was also promoted to Private First Class.<sup>30</sup> The loss of rank by some men who held higher ranks prior to joining the ASTP became an issue, especially because of the loss of pay that accompanied the loss of rank. Another issue concerning rank was what would happen when the men finished their coursework. A War Department memo dated February 19, 1943 stated that the

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>28</sup> Keefer, *Scholars*, 49-50; Craff, *ASTP*, 400.

<sup>29</sup> Willey, *College Training*, 17.

<sup>30</sup> Craff, *ASTP*, 402.

“Mission of the Army Specialized Training Program is to prepare personnel for Officer candidate school and for other military tasks.”<sup>31</sup> The only problem with this promise is that it was never fulfilled, mainly because few men finished their coursework before the program was abruptly ended in April 1944 due to the need for infantry replacements to replenish casualty riddled units. This occurred due to higher than predicted casualties in the front-line combat units. Many divisions still in training in the states were culled for trained replacements to bring decimated combat units up to strength and these losses were made good with men from the ASTP.

In 1943, the air forces received nearly 250,000 men with 41.7 percent of these men scoring in AGCT grades I or II. During the same time frame, the AGF received approximately 308,000 men of which only 29.7 percent were in AGCT grades I or II. Overall, the AGF supplied about 47 percent or about 45,000 men, of those supplied to the ASTP from the three major commands of the Army. The percentage of men supplied by the AGF was proportionately more than those supplied by ASF due to the fact that only 42 percent of the troops in the states were in the AGF.<sup>32</sup> The army's own policies depleted the fighting strength of the AGF by allotting too many men with the highest intelligence to the AAC or ASTP. The army understood that men with high intelligence were needed in positions of leadership by its own policy of only accepting men in AGCT grades I and II for training as officers. We saw in Lt. General McNair's comment earlier about needing “brains” to lead men in combat, and thereby, possibly, hold the number of casualties sustained by the army to a minimum and win the war faster. A string of poor policy decisions by the top leaders early in the war contributed to the weakened leadership of the AGF at the platoon and company levels by the siphoning off those with leadership potential to the AAC or ASTP.

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<sup>31</sup> Palmer et al., *Procurement*, 31.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 33-34.

Another reality in the selection of men to serve in the army was the necessity to reject men as unfit to serve due to a myriad reasons. Aside from physical reasons such as heart, lung, skeletal issues, clearly evident mental deficiency or disease, and venereal disease, mainly syphilis, men were also rejected because of educational deficiency. In a time period of June through July 1943 approximately 8 percent of all white troops rejected and 34.5 percent of all African-American troops rejected were for educational deficiency.<sup>33</sup> One of the biggest indicators of educational deficiency was illiteracy, although this might not entirely be the case. Some were initially labeled as illiterate due to the fact that they could not read and understand English, but were fluent in another language and had not been in the country long enough to gain sufficient ability in English. The induction centers bore the responsibility of correctly classifying these men as non-English speakers and not as “slow learners”<sup>34</sup> The Army used the ability to read as a basis for judging recruits learning ability.

The high rate of illiteracy encountered by the armed forces in World War II created a problem of national concern for many reasons. One, it reduced the available number of men; two, it placed a higher burden on other population groups such as older men and fathers; three, it lowered the overall ability of the army to perform, four, it increased the burden on states and locales that emphasized education; five, it lowered the “social efficiency” of the nation as a whole.<sup>35</sup> The military's standard of literacy was set at the “ability to read at a fourth-grade standard.”<sup>36</sup> To illustrate how big of an issue illiteracy was to the procurement of manpower for the military, immediately prior to Pearl Harbor over 347,000 men who registered for Selective

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<sup>33</sup> Martin D. Jenkins, Francis A. Gregory, Howard H. Long, Jane E. McAllister, and Charles H. Thompson, *The Black and White of rejections for Military Service: A Study of Rejections of Selective Service Registrants, by Race, on Account of Educational and Mental Deficiencies*, (Montgomery, AL: American Teachers Association, 1944): 5.

<sup>34</sup> Goldberg, *Illiterates*, 32.

<sup>35</sup> Jenkins et al., *Black and White*, 10.

<sup>36</sup> Goldberg, *Illiterates*, 36.

Service merely made marks on their registration cards due to their inability to sign their names. Of that number 125,000 were white and over 220,000 were African-American.<sup>37</sup> The problem of illiteracy was such a big issue the Army struggled with finding a policy that would allow it to meet its manpower requirements while still maintaining a high level of efficiency needed to fight and win the war.

During the course of the war, the Army's policy toward acceptance of illiterates changed three times. The first policy was to reject all men who could not read up to standard. This period ran from October 1940, the start of the draft, until August 1, 1942. Following August 1942 until June 1943, 10 percent of "Intelligent illiterates" would be accepted into the army. From June 1943 until September 1945, the point when the draft ended all men who could pass the screening exams could join the army.<sup>38</sup> The 10 percent standard meant that the army would only accept 10 percent of the men from any induction center on any given day. To help implement the 10 percent standard, the Visual Classification Test (VCT) was introduced to help determine which of the illiterates possessed sufficient ability to learn to read and thereby perform their military duties.<sup>39</sup> This policy helped boost the number of men being inducted, because nearly 13 percent of men who were drafted failed the Army's literacy test.<sup>40</sup> As the war progressed and offensive activity began to take place in both theaters of the war, higher than expected numbers of casualties were being sustained. This put pressure on the War Manpower Commission to supply enough men to the military to meet the force requirements commanders in Washington and the field deemed necessary.

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<sup>37</sup> Gladyce H. Bradley, "A Review of Educational Problems Based on Military Selection and Classification Data in World War II," *The Journal of Educational Research* 43, no. 3 (November 1949): 161.

<sup>38</sup> Goldberg, *Illiterates*, 32-33.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>40</sup> H. M. Kallen, "The War and Education in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology* 48, no. 3 (November 1942): 338.

The VCT was used along with a battery of tests to help determine which men would fill the 10 percent quota of “Intelligent illiterates.” Those receiving the highest score on the VCT or the battery of tests were accepted.<sup>41</sup> The battery of tests used were F. L. Well's *Concrete Directions Test*, The *Block Counting Test* (DST-10) and the *Directions Test* (DST-2a) and the recruits scores were tallied and those with the highest scores made the cut for that days quota. The *Concrete Directions Test* required the user to demonstrate the proper use of common tools. For the *Block Counting Test*, the recruit had to determine from a picture the number of blocks in a pile. The *Direction Test* required the recruit to make non-language responses to written directions.<sup>42</sup> The men inducted upon scoring high enough on the battery were sent to special training units that offered them instruction tailored to their needs in an effort to improve their condition so that it meet basic army standards.<sup>43</sup>

The Special Training Units (STU) offered remedial help to those men who suffered from educational deficiencies. As we saw earlier, men suffering from educational deficiencies placed a great strain on the army and the nation as a whole. In the time period from June 1943 until October 1944 the Army offered remedial help through special training units to 180,000 recruits in an effort to raise their literacy rate so that they could function in the army. Of this number, nearly 150,000 or 85 percent achieved the minimum army standard for literacy and allowed to continue their military service. And, of that 150,000 nearly 87,000 were African-Americans.<sup>44</sup> A 1948 census report on illiteracy in America attributes the Army's efforts to teach men to read and write with lowering the illiteracy rate in the nation.<sup>45</sup> After June 1943, 9 percent of of all

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<sup>41</sup> Goldberg, *Illiterates*, 40.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>43</sup> Bingham, *Personnel*, 23.

<sup>44</sup> Bradley, *Review*, 164.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No 20 *Illiteracy in the United States: October, 1947*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948): 1.

whites and 49 percent of all African-American received at the reception centers went to STU's because of illiteracy.<sup>46</sup> But in the STUs, the African-American troops did as well or better than white recruits. Only 12.9 percent of African-Americans failed to obtain reading proficiency, while 15.8 percent of all whites in the program failed to obtain proficiency; and both groups did it in similar time frames, while being taught in segregated units.<sup>47</sup>

The reason for high numbers of illiteracy was the lack of access to educational opportunities. One study done in 1930 showed that only 47 percent of the nation's children of high school age were actually enrolled in high school.<sup>48</sup> The area of with the highest rejections for military service was in the Fourth and Eighth Service Commands. The fourth service command comprised the states of Tennessee, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. The eighth service command comprised the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico.<sup>49</sup> One can see that nearly all these states, with the lowest rates of literacy comprised the majority of the former slave-holding states of the Confederacy. White children in some of these states like Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, and Georgia were four to five times as likely to attend high school as African-American children.<sup>50</sup> Many of the Northern states had rejection rates among their African-American recruits lower than most of the Southern states had among their white recruits.<sup>51</sup> The meager educational opportunities offered by the southern states hampered their young men's ability to contribute to the nation's defense. While the ability to read may not be a vital skill necessary to a successful

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<sup>46</sup> Lee, *Employment*, 263.

<sup>47</sup> Herbert Aptheker, "Literacy, The Negro and World War II," *The Journal of Negro Education* 15, no. 4 (Autumn 1946): 602.

<sup>48</sup> James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860 s- 1935*. (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988): 187.

<sup>49</sup> Bradley, *Review*, 166.

<sup>50</sup> Anderson, *Education*, 188.

<sup>51</sup> Jenkins et al., *Black and White*, 7.

military career, it did prove how well a student had been acculturated in the public school system and his ability to quickly learn the military task assigned to him. The lack of education afforded to the nation's children and especially in the South hampered the war effort by removing approximately three quarters of a million men from the available manpower pool.<sup>52</sup> Nearly a 500,000 of them were White, with 250,000 being African-American. This shifted the burden of fighting to other population groups, especially since casualties were higher than expected.

The entrance of the United States into World War II placed the need for trainable manpower by the military of primary concern for the defense of the nation. The ability to rapidly mobilize, classify, and assigned recruits to a military job could jeopardize the Armed Forces ability to defend the nation. Men of differing educational backgrounds would have to be tested and sent to units where their skills could best be utilized by the Army. The army developed scientific personal testing to accomplish this mission. Each recruit was given a standardized test to ascertain his intelligence. Once he met the threshold for service he was sent to a unit for further training and observation in what could be his military job. If he meets certain criteria he could be sent to the Army Air Corps to learn to fly, navigate, or be a bombardier. In the first months of the mobilization period high numbers of men who scored in AGCT grades I or II were sent to the air forces, but this decision left the ground forces seriously short of men of higher intelligence and caused a deficiency in the tactical level leadership of the army. Lt. General McNair saw this as a reason for the high casualties being sustained by combat commands. Another drain on the on the was the Army's perceived need to keep some of the best and brightest in College to train them to be doctors, dentists, veterinarians, and engineers should the Army have need of them in the future. This lead to the creation of the Army

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<sup>52</sup> Aptheker, *Literacy*, 599.

Specialized Training Program. This program took approximately 150,000 additional AGCT Grade I and II men from the manpower pool. The problem arising from this decision was the program was never allowed to run its full course and many of the men were pulled from the program and inserted into depleted divisions to bring them up to their full complement of men before being shipped overseas. Many of these men saw action in the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest and later Battle of the Bulge, some of the heaviest fighting of the European theater. Another drain on the manpower pool needed by the armed forces was educational deficiencies. Men who could not read and understand English sufficiently to perform their military duties also strained the system. Large numbers of these men required remedial help to gain the knowledge needed to perform in the military, thereby forcing the armed forces to expend additional time and resources to correct problems created by lack of educational opportunities, especially for men coming from the South. Because of the decision to send large numbers of highly intelligent men to the air forces or back to college for additional training and the lack of educational opportunity for large numbers of men who were rejected for military service, the Army's reliance on scientific personnel study to assign men in their best-fit military job fell short in its utilization of the manpower allotted it in the creation of the fighting force that would fight the three-front war with Germany and Japan.

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