

MORE ON GODDARD

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FOREWORD

The following material was transcribed from a tape recording. The occasion for the recording was the Society of Photographic Instrumentation Engineers' Annual Symposium, at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, 8 August 1963.*

By now, it is becoming customary for me to introduce Gen. George W. Goddard; by the same token, it's getting harder to do so. (See RAND Paper P-2700.)

He's a great guy, and it's fun to talk about him. Hence this publication.

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I had a speech. The day before yesterday, within a short interval, about five people came up to me saying, substantially and independently: "Are you going to give the same speech?" I knew that I was going to, but I didn't realize how many people remembered it.* So last night I tore up the old speech, and today we have a new one.

I have the difficult task of introducing a man who not only needs no introduction, but hasn't needed one for about fifty years: General George W. Goddard. Furthermore, this task, or rather, this delightful assignment, has fallen on someone who already suffers from considerable overexposure at SPIE meetings. People are starting to call me Goddard's Boswell! I began to wonder how come I got picked for this detail, and pretty soon I decided to do a systems analysis on how to get picked to introduce George Goddard.

It isn't easy to be picked to introduce George. Anyone who wants this job has to meet numerous and difficult qualifications. Here are just a few of them.

(1) It's best to have worked for him at some time. This immediately reduces the number of potential introducers to 217,468 people, by my count.

(2) It's also best not to be a direct competitor of George Goddard. Now don't misunderstand me. This qualification is necessary in order to remove any doubt whatsoever about the sincerity of the remarks that follow.

(3) Next, one should really have some feelings about reconnaissance and its developing role in the nation and in the world at large. This is an important qualification because Goddard and reconnaissance are

* The reference is to my speech to the same audience in August 1961.

indissolubly linked and will remain that way.

(4) The fourth qualification that I have chosen from a list of many, is that you have to have as many tellable stories about him as I have. It turns out that, by my calculations, I'm the only one who meets these qualifications.

I suppose, if I'm going to talk about the development of reconnaissance, I should really paint a glowing picture of how it should have been--a glorious account of pure, dedicated, right, errorless, tireless, self-sacrificing workers who were fighting bureaucracy at all echelons up and down the line, with undivided attention, and steady progress toward the goal. It wasn't like that, and of course, that's where the fun came in, because it really wasn't like that.

The best story I can recall that really tells what it was really like is this one:

There was a chap who came into a bar one night. He ordered a double martini and put it right down. He ordered another one. When the bartender came up, he said, "Say, how come you smell like that?" Our friend said, "What do you mean?" "Well, since you came in," said the bartender, "the place isn't as habitable as it was before you came in." He continued: "What is it?" "Well," the fellow said, "it's my job." "What do you mean it's your job?" He answered: "I work in a circus. I follow behind the elephants, picking up behind them, the bears, the tigers, and the lions. While we're on the road, it's not too hard to get clean, but now we are in winter quarters in this fair city." He said, "I've got to get in and swab out the pits and cages every day, and the stuff gets in my eye glasses, in my hair, and I just can't get it out!"

Clearly revolted at this story and the turn of events, which he didn't expect, the bartender asked: "Why keep this job--why don't you quit it?" The answer was quick: "What! And get out of show business?" That's about how it's been in reconnaissance.

George Goddard did a lot of things and I can tell you about most of them, but I'm not going to. The main thing he did, and the one thing I want you to remember, is that he made a subject out of reconnaissance. It used to be a little activity, tied on to a branch of the old Equipment Laboratory at Wright Field. By force of personality, activity, fanaticism, hard work, dedication, (and getting a lot of other people to pick up behind him) he made a separate and large activity. He fought hard, and in thinking over some of these fights, some of which I was engaged in directly, and in others only as a water boy, I began to think that I should write an essay entitled, "The Theory of the Enemy". The best way to illustrate the point I want to make is via another story.

I remember a few years ago, I visited some general in the Pentagon about 5:30 one afternoon, and he was madder than hell; ashes were scattered all over his table. Papers were torn and scattered and coffee was spilled--the furniture in disarray, and I realized he had been fighting all day. Now, who was he fighting? Americans! Everyone of them was an American! The exterior enemy is really a very minor enemy, and takes up about one-tenth the energy, effort and agitation as do our fellow Americans. The exterior enemy creates far fewer ulcers than the number generated by our fellow Americans! These were the main opponents Goddard had. Unfortunately, most of his

opponents weren't malicious, treasonable or anything like that. They were just stupid! The trouble is, there's no law against that, and it's a good thing there isn't. Too many people would be guilty.

George was a tough guy, and he's still a tough guy. Now that he's a retired general he's even tougher than when he was an active general. I think I told you the last time I talked about George that as a lieutenant (you know they still have lieutenants) in 1925 he told off a Congressman directly. Now this is a sad commentary on how far we've come down hill since then. This combination of Lieutenant versus Congressman, hadn't happened before, to my knowledge, and I'm sure will never happen again. George is judged best by his associates, and the people he raised.

I am reminded of another story that I haven't told you before. The big deal in civil service (or even in the not-so-civil service) is the writing of job descriptions. When you enter in at what is now called a GS-5 and used to be called a P-1, there is a big long job description written. Now the difficulty with that job description is that in order to become a P-2, you have to have a better job description. It is like pumping up a big balloon. Each one gets better. And, as you get up the ladder (I had this experience), you find that, of course, the job of writing these job descriptions falls on the guy who wants the promotion. So it is a self-serving problem and you can devote a lot of attention to it. Believe me you can. These job descriptions are so glorious, it's unbelievable. The job description of the President of the United States as found in the Constitution is nothing like the average job description of a medium

grade civil servant. As I was crawling up this ladder I told Goddard one day, "George, how would you like to be a Major General?" "Fine", he said, "what do I do?" I said, "You hand in this job description," (which I had just finished) "and just say 'That guy works for me!'"

Over the years he has stimulated industry, R&D, stimulated the growth of huge optics (which were already pretty big at the time we were really trying to develop bigger ones), and has been responsible for new films, cameras, mounts, and progress in all parameters and in all directions.

In order to see what he was really doing, note that he used the entire military service as a device to push reconnaissance. His image of the problem was "Now here is reconnaissance, and everything else, SAC, TAC, etc., just supports that activity." It may eventually be like that, but he had the image early.

What about reconnaissance itself? It used to be that the subject had genuine heroes, much glamour, and many personalities. One of the difficulties now is that reconnaissance has hit the big time, and part of the price that has been paid for hitting the big time is that it is now pretty cool, depersonalized, and spiral bound. Much reconnaissance these days is in the form of reports. This development seems to have been inevitable. As we look at reconnaissance, being quite serious, the future is bright, brighter than it has ever been, and assured.

A few recent instances are enough to convey the message. The Cuban affair was a complete triumph for airborne reconnaissance. The U-2 incident, and events that both preceded and followed this incident, are intimately related to the increasing general understanding of the role of reconnaissance in keeping stability and enforcing peace,

in monitoring activities and doing all the things that are necessary to be done, full time, during peace time.

The future that we can see will be one in which there will likely be some inspection as part of some arms control agreements; the skills we have we will be using in preserving stability, and in the numerous and rapidly expanding civil uses of observation. Remember, reconnaissance and observation has no gun. Many people will accuse me of being very devious about career planning. In war time they call it reconnaissance, but the same skills are usable and needed in peace time. So, while there may be a surplus of bombardiers in peace time, there is really no surplus of reconnaissance people. But this is another speech, and another subject.

George will be a symbol forever--he still raises a hell of a good fight; his style is not only unique, but many people claim it had better not be duplicated. This is a big country, but many feel it's just barely big enough for one like George. As we honor George we pay respect to a career of nearly half a century. He welded the "what to do" with "the how to get it done."

In giving him as much credit as I have given him, note that fortunately, there is no law of conservation of credit in this scientific and technical world. His works have made it possible for others to get much credit for parallel, subordinate, and corollary work. Of all the things that he has done and jobs he's held, he will be remembered principally as an R&D Chief, a Laboratory Chief. If one had to try to make room for his awards, his accomplishments, his souvenirs, his letters, his friends--well, let me tell you a story.

Many of you will remember when a B-24 was found in the Libyan desert not many years ago. It received much press coverage. But what failed to get an adequate press coverage--because of some blowup at the time--the U-2 incident of May 1, 1960--was the story about an American GI. About that time the British were going to the Woomera test range in Australia, and they found an American GI wandering around up there. He was shot down out of New Guinea some 18 years before and he was wandering around living on whatever you live on in the Australian bush. All he was wearing was a belt, which was all that was left. He had no shoes, no clothes; he was sunburnt, calloused, and with stringy beard, and festering sores, he was a complete human wreck, just managing to exist.

Now what do you think they did? They sent him back to Sydney, and debriefed him. That is the first thing you have to do. They debriefed him! Then they cleaned him up, rehabilitated him, and gave him about \$127,000 back pay. He was a kid when he got in the service and he didn't know what to do with money and time. So he wandered around Sydney, a town celebrity for a while, bought a car, and learned how to drive.

He rented a penthouse on the top floor of the leading Sydney hotel. The living room was about the size of this banquet room we are in right now. One day he decided to pick up a girl. He did, and she went up with him to this magnificent suite. She knew who he was by sight, of course, for everybody in Sydney knew him.

As she sat down on the bed and took off her shoes, he started pushing the furniture against the wall, making a big clearing--like the clearing

I was talking about a minute ago--and she said, "Soldier Boy, whatever in hell are you doing?" And, he said, "Well, Ma'am, I never entertained no lady before, but if it is anything like a kangaroo we're going to need lots of room!"

Even if we cleared away the tables and chairs, there isn't enough room here to lay out all George's medals, honors, letters, and certificates. In short, George has done more for aerial reconnaissance than anybody I've ever heard of. He was fortunate in occupying a unique position, one probably never to be attained again by anybody. I wonder whether anybody will even get in the position to do that much again. His career extends over half a century. It started right after the Wright Brothers invented the airplane. Many people think the airplane is almost finished, but I don't share that opinion. He is intimately associated with the era of the airplane--the entire era of the airplane, and like Old Man River he just keeps rolling along. The other night he literally ran my wife and me into the ground while he out-walked and out-talked us. We had to sit down for a couple of hours; when we got back upstairs, he was still on his feet, and talking.

His paper, "Milestones in Aerial Photography" is going to be a good one. I give you George Goddard.

