

*Return to
AS-14*

Speech
1 July 49
Grad exercises
in Post Theater
at 0945

General Irwin, Colonel Clarke, Members of the Faculty and

Staff of the Officers Division of the Army Security Agency School,

Members of the Graduating Class, Fellow Zendians, ladies and gentlemen:

It seems that every time a class is about to graduate from the Officers Division of the Army Security Agency School somebody from the Organization and Training Section of the Army Security Agency Staff comes scurrying around hunting for me in my lair, to invite me to take part in the graduating exercises. I imagine that the theory behind this summons is that I have had lots of experience and may have something diverting or useful to offer from my participation in graduations of the past. I'm sure that there are some who assume that as an old Signal Corps hand, I was present at the graduation exercises of the carrier pigeons which Noah released from the Ark and some days I feel that if I wasn't there I succumbed before Noah finished building the first aircraft carrier in history.

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Well, anyhow, on the bare chance that there might be something to the theory behind the invitation I accepted it; but no sooner had I done so than I began worrying about what I could say. However, I did not begin seriously on the business of worrying until a day or so ago, when, letting free association take over subconscious cerebration, my thoughts reverted to last Sunday, which you will remember was one of the hottest days we've had so far. I'd planned to play some golf but it was entirely too hot for an old man so I stayed home and busied myself, not with my stamp collection, but with my collection of cryptographic items. My better nine-tenths had laid down the law, more or less, and had told me that it was high time that I cleared out some of the large accumulation of old pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, etc., that I'd saved on the bare chance that there might come a day when I'd have the opportunity to cut out for my scrap book everything I had ever encountered having

any bearing upon my fields of interest. (A bad case of "collectimania," you see.) Well, among the many doodads I had saved I came across this little thing, which the next day I took to the office and sent to the historical files. But yesterday, when I was casting about in my memory for something to use as a jumping off place, I remembered it and asked that it be brought back to me. It's rather amusing-- but it's also instructive. First I'll read you what it says on the cover.

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We had, I assure you, some difficult problems and exercises for the students in those days but they also had moments of fun and levity during school hours, just as I am informed by my secret Zendian Agent has been the case in the school days just completed by this class. Incidentally, my secret agent, I can tell you now that school is over, was none less than Marshall Salvo Salvasio himself, whom unfortunately none of the members of this class is in a position to punish for his

treason by court martial proceedings, because he's already out in the field, collecting 2-headed, 6-fingered gentry to do his dirty work in the next class.

But to revert to the days of old, this little program, ladies and gentlemen, was the program for the graduation exercises held in my home just 10 years ago. There were only two students, and the faculty taught their subjects in addition to their regular duties which were many indeed. The entire student body, faculty, staff, officers of the University, etc., could foregather in the living room of a small house. Little did any of us then visualize the growth that lay ahead of what I had then facetiously called the Signal Intelligence University. But here we are today, with a class of 25 officers, many of whom have had wide experience in the military field; a staff and faculty of almost 20; a large auditorium; an Army band; and a very distinguished guest speaker to mark the occasion of this graduation. Yes, we have

come a long way since 1938 and in the growth of that tiny nucleus which I had facetiously dubbed "a University." And I am happy to say that with the physical growth in size and number of students in the University, there has been an even greater broadening of the scope of the instruction, a growth that corresponds to the astonishing development that has taken place in the field.

This brings me directly to the pleasant task which was assigned me -- to introduce the next speaker who will present the graduation message on this occasion. I have just said that we have come a long way in cryptology since the founding of the nucleus of the Army Security Agency School and I do not think there is anybody inside or outside this auditorium who can seriously challenge the statement which I am in a good position to make, namely, there is one and only one man to whom belongs the lion's share of the credit for not only the growth of the Signal Intelligence University but also for the vital role that

the Army Security Agency played in winning the last war and for the prominent position the Agency has rightfully been given in the National Military Establishment.

I have known Colonel Clarke, Chief of the Army Security Agency, for a good many years. Indeed, he was a student of mine for a short time when I gave each year for about 10 years what was designated most unwarrantedly as a "course in codes and ciphers" at the Signal School at Fort Monmouth. It was a 2-weeks' "quickie" and I tried to cover a lot of territory. I know that I must have said at least a few things that made a more or less lasting impression, because every once in awhile Colonel Clarke goes back to those days and reminds me of some incident that I related, from which he drew a lesson that has remained with him over the years. I am always startled on these occasions because I cannot remember the incident myself. It may be that I was responsible for evoking the interest which he took in the

field of cryptology and which led him step by step to a position in which he could play a prominent role in guiding the destinies of our organization. Colonel Clarke had seen that organization grow from a one-cryptanalyst, one-clerk unit set up in 1921 in the Office of the Chief Signal Officer to a world-wide agency numbering over 14,000 people at the height of the war in 1945. It was his foresight and broad vision from the years after 1940 which stimulated and fostered that growth and enabled the organization to accomplish its most noteworthy achievements during the war. It was his vision which after the war was over led to the establishment of the Army Security Agency as a separate entity. And I am sure I am telling no secrets when I indicate that it was his initiative and forthright action which led to the recent events involving certain unifying operations in our field.

With this background, I am sure you will all agree with me that Colonel Clarke is in a most favorable position to deliver a message of importance to the members of the graduating class. Colonel Clarke: