

Builder of U. S. Air Power

General Arnold has been fighting for America's safety for almost forty years

by JAMES MOORE

THE FAMOUS smile which has won General Arnold the nickname of "Happy" is a pleasant front for a shrewd and grimly purposeful character. His real nature shows in his determined stride, his set jaw. He's a fighter. He's been fighting for our safety for almost forty years.

As a young West Point graduate, Arnold became, in 1911, the country's fourth military man assigned to fly. Twice he won the coveted airman's award, the Mackay Trophy.

Then, in 1925, came the trial of General Billy Mitchell for criticizing the neglect of aviation by his superiors. Arnold fought wholeheartedly in Mitchell's defense.

After Mitchell was suspended and reduced in rank, he said: "Fighting from my side of the barricades was an officer whose convictions and courage may help to bring our Air Force to its required strength before the next war comes upon us. He was Major H. H. Arnold. He'll lead the Air Corps. He grew up with airplanes and he has all the essentials of leadership."

But Arnold was exiled to a minor command in the Middlewest. It took him twelve years to fulfill Mitchell's prophecy. In 1938 he was made Chief of the Air Corps, and in the seven years that followed he planned, directed and carried through to smashing victory those theories for which Mitchell had been broken.

In his direction of the Air Force's gigantic growth, General Arnold's first thought was always for his men. The Training Command he planned and organized turned out, swiftly and safely, the thousands of air crews needed. He demanded, and got, the planes his men needed where and when they needed them. He directed our best doctors and scientists in medical and technological research that kept his men and equipment in the peak of fighting condition.

This wasn't accomplished by a 48-hour week. Even now Arnold is at his desk by 7:30 in the morning. He leaves when the cleaning force comes to work. And he frequently spends the night in a bomber flying to some outlying base which needs his attention.

There are still two major tasks confronting General Arnold. One is to get all his men home as quickly as possible. The second is to plan for the future so powerful an air force that never again shall we be caught as staggeringly unprepared as we were in 1938. This last has been his personal, forty-year war. He has won it, you may feel, but he is determined it should remain won so our country may be safe. Then, indeed, he will be "Happy" Arnold.