AN EVALUATION OF TRENDS IN ROLES AND MISSIONS OF THE US ARMED SERVICES

A Report prepared for the Douglas Aircraft Company, Inc. under Subcontract No. DAC-G-65-512, dated 28 September, 1965, of Prime Contract DA 49-092-ARO-117 with the Department of the Army

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PREFACE

This study, "An Evaluation of Trends in Roles and Missions of the US Armed Services," has been performed by the Historical Evaluation and Research Organization (HERO) for Douglas Aircraft Company, Inc. under Subcontract No. DAC-G-65-512, dated 28 September, 1965, of Prime Contract DA 49-092-ARO-117 with the Department of the Army.

Despite strict budgetary constraints, HERO has applied to this study a level of professional effort at least 20% higher than that prescribed under the terms of the contract between Douglas Aircraft Company, Inc. and HERO. It is now evident that a far more intensive effort is required in order to do full justice to the topic--which is one of major importance in US national security affairs.

Thus, although this report is considered by HERO to be performance in full of the task assigned under the contractual terms, it must be considered to be tentative and preliminary, and subject to possible future modification, if funds for revision should be made available.

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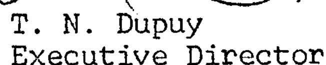

Washington, D.C.
24 November 1965

T. N. Dupuy
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An Evaluation of Trends in Roles and Missions

of the US Armed Forces

ARMY

by R. Ernest Dupuy

Establishment

The US Army was grudgingly established through stark necessity by Act of Congress June 3, 1784, just 24 hours after that same Congress had abolished the remnants of the Continental Army.

"Whereas," read the crippling Act of June 2, "standing armies in times of peace are inconsistent with the principles of republican governments, dangerous to the liberties of a free people, and generally converted into destructive engines for establishing despotism. . . . Resolved, that the commanding officer be and he is hereby directed to discharge the troops now in the service of the United States. . . ."

Next day, whirling their legislative teetotum exactly 180 degrees, the Congress concocted this recipe:

> Whereas a body of troops to consist of 700 noncommissioned officers and privates, properly officered, are immediately and indispensibly necessary for securing and protecting the northwestern frontiers of the United States and their Indian friends and allies, and for garrisoning the posts soon to be evacuated by the troops of his Britannic Majesty:
>
> Resolved, that it be and it is hereby recommended to the states hereafter named,[1] and as most conveniently situated, to furnish forthwith from their militia 700 men, to serve for twelve months [and] . . . that the Secretary of War take order for forming the said troops when assembled into one regiment to consist of eight companies of infantry and two of artillery, arming and equipping them in a soldier-like manner.

One year later, the Congress, recognizing that the garrisoning of the frontier might be a job for professionals, enacted another resolution almost identical with the Act of June 3, 1784, except that the term of enlistment of the 700-man regiment was raised to three years, the words "from their militia" were omitted, and the objective became more definite: "For the protection of the Northwestern frontiers, to defend the settlers on the land belonging to the United States from the depredations of the Indians and to prevent unwarrantable intrusion thereon, and for guarding the public stores."

Those three acts of Congress embrace the basic trends which would henceforth govern the organization and strength of our national armed forces right down to the dawn of the nuclear age: in emergency, extemporize at the last minute; when the strain is over, demolish. In this case, the Revolutionary War had been won, so the veteran Continental Army must go.[2] But the settlers expanding westward through the Ohio Valley needed protection from Indians, and redcoat garrisons still frowned on the border, so a new force must be created; raw troops, unsullied by the stigma of "standing army."

The Constitution, ratified July 2, 1788, clarified the respective responsibilities of the legislative and executive branches of government with respect to the armed forces.

The Congress would "raise and support armies /and/ provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia," while "The President shall be Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and the militia of the several states when called into the service of the United States." This was all well and good, except that when the Congress got around to its militia responsibility, the Act of May 8, 1792, which would remain in effect until 1903, was a hodgepodge of inefficiency better calculated to produce mobs than soldiers.

In any event, the initial role of the Regular Army had thus been fixed by the Congress: defense of the western frontier against the Indians. This would be its principal mission for more than 100 years to come; actually it would end only in 1891.

Insofar as other wars and threats of wars--domestic and foreign--were concerned, the nation's fighting land forces up to and including the Spanish-American War on each occasion embraced such of the Regular Army (always totally inadequate in numbers) as could be mobilized, plus an ad hoc accretion of hastily gathered militia and volunteers. This conglomeration, the temporary Army of the occasion, received of course in each case its own specific mission.

On two of these occasions the Army was definitely committed as an instrument of US foreign policy. The ill-fated and miserably conducted attempts to invade Canada during the War of 1812 were for the purpose of adding that country to the United States. The Mexican War had similar objectives--successful in this case--the Army implementing "manifest destiny," at the expense of Mexico.

The course of the Spanish-American War backhandedly but ineluctably carried both the nation and the Army into an entirely new international role, of which more later.

Further discussion of the military policy of the United States is beyond the scope of this paper.[3]

Meanwhile, the Industrial Revolution and the demands of a newly expanding nation had combined early in our national history to cast the Regular Army in a unique additional role.

19th Century--Age of Development and Isolation

As the nation's boundaries slowly and irresistably moved west from the Mississippi and south to the Rio Grande the national urge was for exploration and exploitation. Expansion in communications and expansion of education in specialized fields heretofore unknown also went hand in hand with the advances the twin giants steam and iron were making on land and water.

Qualified men were needed to explore, to build roads and railroads, to develop rivers and harbors, and to furnish the nucleus of scientists and educators to found our tremendous present-day technological educational system.

But in all the United States there was only one instrumentality geared to carry this load: the Army, and in particular--after 1818--the United States Military Academy. As one authority put it: "Engineering as a profession in the United States, dates back no further than 1850. Its first beginnings may have been as early as 1830. . . . Before 1840 real instruction in engineering was offered almost exclusively in the Military Academy at West Point. Up to 1840, even up to 1850, nearly all the civil engineers had received their preparation in this military school. . . ."

The Army's role of nation-building drew to a close coincidentally with the Civil War, with one exception: the monumental task of river and harbor improvement; of harnessing the inland

waterways for power and irrigation and of facilitating the safe harboring of ocean trade. This chore, laid upon the Corps of Engineers by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1824, continues, of course, today. But by 1861 the Continental United States had been explored; the army had completed the surveys for the great transcontinental railroads; and civilian technological institutions had appeared, most of them with Army officers in key positions on their respective faculties.

The Army had more than proven the veracity of the statement made by Francis Weyland, president of Brown University, in 1851: "Altho there are more than 120 colleges in the United States, the West Point Academy has done more to build up the system of internal improvements in the United States than all the colleges combined."

The Army--the huge temporary Army--of the Civil War had but one mission: the preservation of the Union by force of arms. And when that task was accomplished it faded away after the completion of one additional temporary job. A mobilization of part of these veteran forces, under General Sheridan, along the Mexican border--a showing of teeth by a very capable watchdog--took France hurriedly out of Mexico. After that the now attenuated Regular Army returned to its initial mission: Indian fighting.

In addition, however, came the burden of military occupation of the Southern states--a by-product of Reconstruction, lasting from 1867 to 1877. Labor outbreaks in 1877 and in the '80s, and the Pullman strikes in the Chicago area in 1894, also all necessitated calling in of Federal troops when police and militia units proved ineffective. This use of the Army in civil disturbances has continued to the present day--restricted to instances under Presidential direction only, vis, Little Rock. Other use of Federal troops as a posse comitatus has been prohibited since 1878. The Army has also been utilized in national disasters, such as the San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

The United States as a World Power, to 1945

The abominably mismanaged Spanish-American War became a milestone for both the Army and the nation. It was the last of the opera-bouffe conglomerations of insufficient Regulars and hastily raised flocks of ill-trained, poorly led citizen-soldiers. The purchase of the Philippine Islands from Spain brought the nation into the ranks of colonial powers, with all the concomitant

obligations of what Rudyard Kipling termed "the white man's burden." Both nation and Army had to raise their respective sights; they were, willy-nilly, in the international arena where, although the Army and the Navy realized it while the nation for some time had not, the status and weight of the national armed forces played a part in the comity of nations. President Theodore Roosevelt would later express it all in his famous remark: "Walk softly but carry a big stick." We were in the big league, and the role of the Army, like that of the Navy, had vastly increased in importance.

Something of this had already percolated into US foreign policy, for in 1901 a small force of US Regulars had joined England, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan in our first international amphibious operation: the relief of the legations in Peking when the Boxer troubles flared in China. And in 1903 the Congress did something--long belated--to amend the strictures of the Militia Act of 1792. It passed the so-called Dick Bill, which for the first time placed National Guard organization, armament, and discipline on a par with the Regular Army--in theory at least. The Regular for the first time had a real junior partner.

Reorganization of the Regular Army came the same year; creation of the post of Chief of Staff and of a General Staff. The War College and the Command and General Staff School gave thought to international relations. Foreign service--in the Philippines, in Panama where the Canal was being built by the Army Engineers, in newly annexed Hawaii--became a fact. Actually, the basic mission of the Army had not changed; the frontier had expanded. And the framework--though by no means either the manpower nor the armament of an Army fit for its increased responsibilities--was in the making.

The creation of an Officers Reserve Corps and a Reserve Officers Training Corps in 1916 helped immeasurably to facilitate the organization and training of the vast Army called into being through selective service when at long last the United States entered World War I in 1917--a most reluctant dragon under a President reelected on the slogan: "He kept us out of war."

The role of the Army in this war was, of course, to implement national policy. German imperialism was to be destroyed. The United States, said President Wilson, was joining the fight for ultimate world peace. "The world must be made safe for democracy." The specific mission of the AEF merits inspection. The United States was not an "Ally." General Pershing's

directive was to "cooperate." His troops were to be "a separate and distinct component of the combined /Allied/ forces, the identity of which must be preserved." Nor did the President later identify himself, except vicariously, with the Supreme Allied Council, when that body undertook to direct the high strategy of the Allies.

Far different was US participation in World War II. Integration was the keynote of the Anglo-American effort, at least officially, beginning at the Churchill-Roosevelt summit. It is not too much to say that American tactical doctrine dominated the Allied operations after 1942, although wrangling over strategy was not infrequent. The Allies of 1914-1918 could and did deemphasize US military effort, but by the close of 1945 there was no honest doubt in anyone's mind as to whom final victory over the Axis nations was due.

As in World War I, the role of the Army (and Navy) was that of an instrument of national policy. By this time the instrument was one of immense precision geared to a home-front developing an unparalleled potential of national resources. The striking power of the United States was unmatched by anything heretofore known in history.[5]

But scientific and technological advances had contributed to an intermingling of simultaneous operations on land, sea, and air. Consequently the wartime missions of the respective armed forces, heretofore so simple basically, frequently overlapped. No longer could it be said that the land belonged to the Army, the sea to the Navy. A new force--air power--had sprung in all its immensity from its feeble beginnings in World War I. A gap had opened wide between the Army and its own Army Air Corps (see chapter on Air Corps)--a gap which unlike the gap between Army and Navy could not be composed by integration of forces or unity of command, because it was caused by doctrines clashing in diametric opposition.

In substance the Army Air Corps, having become--so far as its mother service was concerned--an <u>enfant terrible</u> fighting for independence, wanted to operate and control any projectile flying through the air (tube artillery shells and small arms excepted). The Army wished to control all weapons and materiel which were essential to success of its mission. Further cause for Army anxiety was the impression by 1947 that the Navy was overdeveloping the Marine Corps to the extent that it was becoming a second "Army," bidding fair to usurp legitimate Army roles and missions on land. Heated arguments spread through the public press and into the halls of Congress. The interservice bickering was

alarming. Serious consideration began to be given to unification: the merging of all armed services into a one-uniformed whole.

Establishment of the Department of Defense

The National Defense Act of 1947 was enacted as a cure-all. It established a Department of Defense controlling all the armed services, and independence to the Army Air Corps, which became the Air Force (leaving Navy and Marine aviation untouched). The Joint Chiefs of Staff, up to this time a temporary wartime setup, became a permanent institution. Over all a National Security Council was established.

The now independent Air Force redoubled its demands on all the other services. Joint Chiefs became--not unnaturally--protagonists for their respective services as postwar economies threatened their budgets. Wishful reliance on the atomic bomb--to be delivered when necessary by fleets of manned aircraft--brought about a definite change in public opinion and in Administration circles with regard to the ground forces. The foot soldier was passe. This trend became even more definite in the Eisenhower Administration, with Charles E. Wilson as Secretary of Defense.

The Army, whose world-wide responsibilities were increasing rather than diminishing, found itself gasping for existence as its budgets were throttled. Wilson, apostle of "big business," looked for "a bigger bang for a buck." He didn't find it in the Army. Meanwhile a proposal by Admiral Arthur Radford, USN, Chairman of the JCS, to cut conventional forces, particularly the Army, in favor of atomic weapons to be used by Navy and Air Force, brought about an explosion. Radford's plan, discussed in executive session of the JCS, July 9, 1956, was "leaked" by unidentified Army personnel to the press. The resultant publicity caused by this so-called "Revolt of the Colonels," rocked Washington, brought consternation to the NATO nations, and necessitated assurance by Secretary Wilson to Chancellor Adenauer of Germany that no significant reduction in our ground forces in Europe was intended.[6]

Wilson was not through yet with the Army, however. On November 26, 1956, he issued a directive arbitrarily "reassigning the respective roles and missions of the services . . . he drastically curtailed army activities in the missile field to a 700-mile range--turning ICBM's and IRBM's over to the Air Force

and Navy. /His directive/ was in effect an attempt to formalize the art of war into a parlor-game version of football; prescribing who should carry the ball and how much yardage could be gained without penalty."[7]

Another attempt to cut the Army down was made at a dramatic session of the National Security Council, July 25, 1957, with President Eisenhower in the chair. Secretary Wilson, presenting a long-range program drawn under his personal direction, bluntly stated that it was based on an approved policy "to maximize air power and minimize the foot-soldier."[8] The plan did not meet approval.

To sum up, during the period 1947-1959, successive policies of "containment" and "massive retaliation" dominated the thinking of the Administration and the Department of Defense. Not until the advent of the Kennedy Administration did the Army's own belief in "flexible response" as essential to its ability to carry out its mission find favor. It was a period during which two successive Army Chiefs of Staff labored in frustration.[9]

Post-World War II--Maintaining Status as a World Power in Competition with the Soviet Union

The encroachment of communism upon the world since V-J Day --August 15, 1945--has been continuous and insidious, overt and covert. The response of the Free World has, perforce, been spearheaded and supported by the only major power capable of confronting the Soviet Union in the West and/or Red China in the East. Some of these confrontations have been indirect; others--such as NATO and its military forces, the Berlin Blockade and the Berlin Wall, Korea, Lebanon and Vietnam--have called for the direct participation of our military force and particularly the Army. The Army participation, of course, has varied widely in strength and composition, from small groups of advisers (MAAG) to field armies.

The American military policy has veered like a weathercock on a gusty day. Until September 23, 1949, when President Truman announced that the Soviet Union had succeeded in exploding a nuclear device, thus ending our monopoly of nuclear fission, we were able to wave the atom bomb as a back-stop to NATO forces; and, as already related, the Army was relegated to an inferior place in our national defense make-up. We would pay dearly for that in the

first campaign on the Korean War--the North Korean Army drive on Pusan. Later, the fear of escalation and use of atomic bombs by the Soviet Union kept the war in a category new to American soldiers: a war of limits, in which the word victory took on a new meaning.

In what has been termed the "strategy of terror," a new trend appeared with the Eisenhower Administration: the Dulles-Wilson doctrine which brought into our language a new term--"brinksmanship," which was based on "massive retaliation," should Russia launch an atomic war.

As a result, a change came in Soviet strategy, circa 1961, when Khrushchev abandoned attempts at direct militant expansionism. Another new trend appeared; what Khrushchev termed "wars of national liberation." Subversion and insurgency in weak spots of the Free World left no room for the use of "massive retaliation." One might as well hunt flies with a 12-gauge shotgun.

Here it was that the Army's own long-considered program on "flexible response" paid off. The Kennedy Administration seized upon it, and, through Defense Secretary McNamara, brought up the Army's feeble reserve--one attenuated division in 1958 when the Lebanon crisis broke--to a strength sufficient to implement national policy around the world as needed.

There the matter rests today. There appears to be no valid forseeable reason why the Army should again be degraded from its present position as one of the vital supports of national policy and national defense.

Footnotes

1. Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

2. One unit only escaped: Alexander Hamilton's Battery of artillery, then garrisoning West Point; this force of 80-odd men was specifically exempted, from demobilization . . . guardians of military stores. Both Hamilton's Battery and the newly authorized regiment of 1784 are still Regular Army components today.

3. Classic analysis of US military policy up to and partly including the Civil War may be found in Upton, Emory, Military Policy of the United States, GPO, Washington, 1914. See also Dupuy, R. Ernest and Trevor N. Dupuy, Military Heritage of America, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1956.

4. Riedler, A., American Technological Schools. H.R. Doc., 2d Session, 53rd Congress, vol. 5, Part I, Washington, 1895. For West Point's part in this, see Dupuy, R. Ernest, Men of West Point, Sloane, New York, 1951, pp. 25-53.

5. See Dupuy and Dupuy, op. cit., pp. 635-646, for an analysis and evaluation.

6. See Taylor, Maxwell D., The Uncertain Trumpet, New York, Harper, 1960, pp. 39-43. The story broke as an exclusive in the New York Times, July 13, 1956, under the by-line of the late Anthony Laviero, its Washington military correspondent.

7. Dupuy, R. Ernest, Compact History of the US Army, Hawthorn Books, Inc., New York, Revised ed., 1961, p. 293.

8. Taylor, op. cit., p. 51.

9. Both wrote books about it upon retirement: Matthew B. Ridgway, Soldier, Harper, New York, 1956, and Taylor, op. cit.

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NAVY

by

Grace P. Hayes

Despite the fact that the Revolutionary War had demonstrated to many Americans the value and use of naval power in support of land operations and its importance for the protection of commerce, by the end of 1785 the Revolutionary naval forces had suffered the same fate as the Army. The ships that had been gathered together by the colonies during the war were sold and the Continental Congress had neither inclination nor funds to maintain a navy in peacetime.

Authorization in the Constitution for the Congress "to build and equip a navy" by no means insured action to establish one, for, while many strongly felt the necessity for a navy, others were firmly opposed to incurring the expenses involved in constructing and maintaining naval vessels. The Congressional Act of 1789 which created the War Department, giving its Secretary jurisdiction over naval forces as well as land forces, still provided no naval forces. It was a direct threat to American commerce that finally brought about the beginning of the US Navy.

Pirate vessels based on the Barbary Coast had for many years preyed on shipping of all nations, and many had paid tribute in order to acquire safe passage for their vessels in the Mediterranean. By the beginning of 1794 the pirates had become a serious threat to American shipping, and some American citizens were being held as prisoners in Algiers. The government was faced with the problem of paying tribute, leaving the commercial interests to shift for themselves, or providing naval protection for American shipping. Led by the Federalists and strongly supported in New England and the Middle Atlantic states, but just as violently opposed in the South Atlantic and Frontier states, in March 1794 a bill was passed by the Congress, providing for a naval force of six frigates, but with the proviso that should peace be made with Algiers there should be "no further proceeding . . . under this act."