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THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. TOTAL FORCE POLICY:  
A PRODUCT OF PUBLIC POLICY

by

Scott D. Parker  
Lt Col, USAF

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
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April 1993

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## ABSTRACT

**TITLE:** The Evolution of U.S. Total Force Policy: A Product of Public Policy

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From a historical perspective, the structure and mix of active and reserve military forces that have served our nation have evolved dramatically to suit the changing needs of a changing society. The end of the Cold War and current federal budgetary constraints dictate that national defense be provided at a reduced cost. Civilian and military leaders within DoD make structural decisions based upon current national security policy, anticipated threats, and budgetary constraints. However, historical data and analysis of the current public policy environment leads to a conclusion that broader, more fundamental, structural adjustments result from societal forces that are largely uncontrollable. Current trends in the total force mix illustrate this point. The force is moving toward increased reliance upon reserve forces, despite DoD plans to draw down the active and reserve forces at roughly the same rate. As our nation proceeds through a period of uncertainty regarding potential threats to national security, appropriate roles for its military forces, and declining budgets; it is increasingly important that the defense community actively participate in the public policy debate, that will determine its ultimate structure.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Scott D. Parker (M.S., Embry-Riddell University, B.S., USAF Academy) became interested in total force policy and public policy issues as a result of past exposure to these topical areas while serving in the United States Air Force. His interest in total force policy was kindled in 1985-87 at March Air Force Base, California, where he served as Chief Pilot and Operations Officer for a KC-10 squadron. His unit shared aircraft, maintenance, ground facilities, and missions with an Air Force Reserve associate KC-10 squadron. During this period, he gained distinct, first-hand insights into the capabilities, as well as some of the limitations of reserve forces. He was then reassigned to Washington, D.C., as a Legislative Liaison Officer from 1988-90. In this capacity, he facilitated all Air Force interactions with the United States Congress regarding environmental and force structure issues, including military base closures. His personal contact with the workings of government and public policy formulation built the foundation of an intense and continuing interest in these areas. He also served as a KC-135 Squadron Commander at Beale Air Force, California, in 1991-92. Lieutenant Colonel Parker is a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1993.

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship that exists between public perceptions of United States (U.S.) national security and the nation's defense budget is easily recognizable. Every 9th grade civics student knows that the U.S. Congress, as the elected representatives of 535 heterogeneous constituencies, executes its constitutional responsibility in this regard, each year. Each Member of Congress participates in this, and other policy areas, recognizing that their success and survival in office is ultimately contingent upon how well they represent the views of those who sent them to Washington. Clearly, all military functions are affected by the funding levels that constrain them. The impacts of public policy upon national security policy, however, go far beyond annual authorizations and appropriations.

Currently, the fundamental structure of our armed forces is the subject of increasing public and Congressional debate (12: xix). In view of the dynamic nature of the emerging security environment, this development should not be surprising. Throughout the history of our nation, the organizational framework of U.S. armed forces has evolved to suit the character and needs of the evolving society it served. This is an inherent property of military institutions that serve democratic societies, particularly those societies where military power is subordinated to civilian leadership (1:184). In this essay, I intend to illustrate the central role of public policy in this evolutionary process; but more specifically, its role in establishing the mix of active duty and reserve forces within our

## Total Force.

I will begin with a brief examination of the terms 'national security policy', 'public policy', and 'total force policy' to provide context; and conclude by identifying a few factors that challenge current planners and decision makers regarding the ongoing debate over the appropriate mix of forces. However, the bulk of the paper will be a chronological examination of historical examples that illustrate the timeless nature of these issues and the means by which our predecessors addressed them.

The overarching purpose of this paper is simply to point out that although U.S. armed forces and their associated force structure are planned, programmed, budgeted, trained, equipped and employed by direction of civilian and military leadership within the National Command Authorities and the Department of Defense (DoD); the essence of their ultimate structure is largely determined by external, and typically uncontrollable, societal forces.

## PUBLIC POLICY/NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY OVERLAP

One definition of a policy is -- a broad statement of intent or guidance, usually issued by an authoritative source. Obviously, policies of many kinds, whether they be public, private, or federal; stated, implied, or assumed; are woven into the fabric of this, or any, society. For the purposes of this paper, I am concerned principally with two types of policy: national security policy, and public policy. But more precisely, I will examine the intersection of these two types of policy,

where the formulation of a third body of policy -- total force policy -- is transacted.

National security policy fits easily into the broad definition already provided. Public policy, however, is much more difficult to capture because its source is the cumulative values, biases and perceptions of a broad society of individuals (14:2). As a result, public policy may be dynamic and fast moving (when public opinion is mobilized), but more often it is diffuse and slow to crystalize.

The predominant view of national security policy in our nation subscribes to the elitist school of foreign affairs. This view asserts that external matters should generally be the responsibility of a select few individuals, because the public has limited ability to stay abreast of broad, fast-moving issues (15:63-4). It is certainly true that most national security decisions are made by the President in his role as Commander in Chief, or by close advisors. In fact, even most routine decisions regarding national defense are made without public involvement or knowledge. However, despite the impracticality of regular public involvement in national security matters, the public does set broad parameters, within which, political leaders are obliged to remain. This is where public policy overlaps into national security decision making.

In comparison with other forms of policy, public policy is often fuzzy and hard to pin down. For the average American citizen, the term 'public policy' most likely conjures up thoughts of issues like: the tradeoffs between energy needs and

environmental concerns, welfare policy, or perhaps health care. It is easy to forget that public policy exists across the entire spectrum of societal endeavor. The common aspect that brings these current issues to mind, is the relative absence of consensus that exists in these policy areas. This lack of consensus, or contention, drives public policy debate and keeps such issues high in the public consciousness.

In the case of national security policy, there is an automatic public policy debate that occurs every year in conjunction with Congressional actions regarding defense authorizations and appropriations. In an abstract sense, this debate springs from two offsetting imperatives. 1) Our national values, institutions, and way of life, must be maintained and protected -- regardless of expense. 2) Every tax dollar spent on national defense, over and above the amount that will actually provide that protection, is a dollar that would better serve those same values and institutions if it were expended while addressing other valid societal needs -- or perhaps if it were not spent at all. Recognizing that it is impossible to forecast precise defense needs, and equally impossible to maintain a credible and cost-effective national defense if funding levels fluctuate directly in parallel with the status of international affairs, one can see the basis for broad contention that often characterizes this debate.

It is safe to say that there has seldom, if ever, been complete consensus on how much is enough for national defense. In fact, the degree of consensus within Congress and the public

regarding this question has varied dramatically depending on the circumstances of the time. The following paragraph is intended to illustrate the relationship of consensus on defense needs and the character of the associated debate. It should be noted, however, I employ extremely broad generalizations to characterize this dynamic relationship. As a result, this oversimplified premise is probably only useful in an abstract sense, but it does provide some basic information as a frame of reference.

When prevailing world conditions paint a clear picture of anticipated threats to the U.S. or its interests, regardless of whether those threats are compelling or benign, the defense debate tends to be comparatively short, and involves relatively little public scrutiny. Furthermore, appropriate provisions for national defense are likely to result. When the threat picture is less certain, the various positions that define the debate will be more contentious, and arrayed across a broader spectrum. Under these conditions, the debate will probably receive more public scrutiny, and the level of resources provided for national defense is more likely to miss the mark. Ultimately, if a significant level of contention prevails, and the public perceives a mismatch between the national security environment (threats) and the resources appropriated for national defense, the issue will be redressed in future elections, as with all issues that assume a high profile in the public consciousness.

One continuing factor that has significantly influenced the public policy debate regarding active and reserve force mix is the strength of the political base enjoyed by the reserve

components. This support base is the result of several factors. 1) the leadership of reserve component units (particularly National Guard) typically have maintained close contact with local political leaders, or may have personally served in both military and political capacities. The fact that most Adjutant Generals for State National Guard organizations are politically appointed by the State Governor, is illustrative of this continuing relationship (18:11). 2) Reserve components are generally more politically attractive than active forces. Under most circumstances, a military unit or facility, active or reserve, is viewed as a political plus for nearby communities, particularly for their politicians. It means jobs and federal funds infused into home districts. The added political dimension of reserve components, in this regard, is that the labor force is less transitory. Reserve units are largely composed of local citizens/voters.

One final point on public policy -- it exists in all societies; but under authoritarian regimes, it may have only one interpreter. The U.S. Constitution divides power in a way that ensures opportunities for public policy debate, and provides every citizen the right and means to participate, at least indirectly. To take this point one step farther, and tie it to the topic of this paper, it is important to remember that the Constitution does not ordain and establish a government designed for military efficiency. It does establish a framework for providing for the common defense, but in a manner designed to protect individual rights and public interests from domestic

enemies, as well as foreign ones (16:37).

#### TOTAL FORCE POLICY

The term 'Total Force' was introduced in a Department of Defense memorandum from Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird on August 21, 1970. His intent was to ensure consideration of both active and reserve forces in planning and programming, to determine and establish the most advantageous force mix for implementing the National Security Strategy. The need to reduce expenditures by reducing the active force and relying to a greater extent upon reserve forces was the impetus for his vision of future force structure (12.xx).

Three years later, Secretary Laird's successor, James Schlesinger, formalized 'Total Force Policy' as "...no longer a concept, but a policy integrating active and reserve forces into a homogeneous whole". This guidance resulted in a new perspective within the Department of Defense ensuring increased emphasis for training, equipment, funding, and the overall capability and credibility of the reserve components (17.1). These developments were largely the product of the Vietnam conflict, which I believe constitutes the most dramatic example of public policy influence over national security decision making in recent history. I will examine some aspects of this national security policy debacle in the historical portion of the paper, but I mention it now to highlight the significance of this period in the evolution of our active/reserve force mix.

Current Department of Defense (DoD) total force policy is

most often articulated through the following tenets: 1) reliance on reserve forces as the primary augmentation for active forces, and 2) integrated use of all personnel; active, reserve, civilian and allied (12:xx).

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For obvious reasons, the historical portion of the paper is limited in scope. I will cite only a handful of examples, but have selected those that I believe best illustrate the role of public policy in determining the active and reserve force mix in the U.S. armed forces. I will focus on the early formative years of U.S. public policy in this area, when the parameters that defined the debate were broader and perhaps more urgent.

However, I will also give limited treatment to some examples in recent history I find equally compelling. Additionally, I have decided to focus on the U.S. Army. Although many aspects of the evolution of the Navy are similar, its dissimilar medium and mission, particularly in the early years, generated substantially different public policy implications (15:92). As a maritime nation, reliant upon the free navigation of the high seas for external commerce, the need for a credible navy was widely accepted. As a result, the debate regarding land forces was more contentious and, for the purpose of this paper, more instructive.

Any historical examination of the U.S. Army must begin with acknowledgment of the central role of the citizen-soldier. His principles are deeply ingrained in our national identity. However, one must also acknowledge that the history of the United

States Army is more accurately characterized as a history of two armies: a citizen army, and a regular army (3:xi).

Proponents of a regular army have always asserted a belief that true security can only be guaranteed by professional, full-time soldiers. One basic assumption associated with this concept is, the standing army would be expanded by incorporating civilians, for training and employment, during national security emergencies. Supporters of a citizen army historically contend only citizen-soldiers can guarantee protection of a democratic society from usurpers within the military establishment charged with defending that society (3:xi). Clearly, these concepts spring from different perspectives of national security, but they are not mutually exclusive. The conflict, as well as the harmony, existing between these differing concepts provided a defining and continuing framework for past debate regarding U.S. Army force structure.

#### ANCIENT INFLUENCES ON U.S. ARMY STRUCTURE

The origins of both regular and citizen armies can be traced to ancient cultures. Examples of both can be found as early as the fifth century B.C., in the Spartans (standing army) and the Athenians (part-time soldiers). However, the idea of supplementing full-time forces with reserve forces did not emerge until the late fourth century A.D. (4:1). The Roman Limitanei (reserves) were loosely formed groups of men living on the frontiers who could be called to reinforce or augment the Comitatus (regular army), or respond independently to regional

security needs. Having greater influence on the American citizen-soldier, however, was the military system of feudal England.

In 1181, King Henry II codified the previously informal military relationship between the crown, the nobility, and the people of England. He did so through the Assize of Arms, a decree that required all freemen to swear allegiance to the crown, swearing to possess and bear arms in its defense (3:3). Under the feudal system, local nobles maintained their own forces for local defense. Military service was the principle means by which men offset their obligation to the crown or local nobles for their freedom, land to farm, or other royal favors. These locally trained bands, or fyrd (later called militia), were required to participate in royal military ventures as part of their obligation. The King seldom had a large military force at his disposal until he had mobilized his subjects. Units were organized by communities with local nobility as leaders. Thus, military power flowed from the communities to the crown, rather than from the king to his subjects (5:10).

In the 17th Century, when English subjects began colonizing the new world in substantial numbers, citizen armies elsewhere in the world were largely falling into unpreparedness due to lack of use. This was a result of the dramatic changes that were taking place in the professional standing armies of Europe and Asia (4:2). However, the citizen-soldier was well suited to the new world.

## COLONIAL PERIOD

Life in the colonies was difficult. In the early years, defense required everyone's attention. As a result, the militia concept was employed, rigidly enforced, and vigorously maintained (5:12). But as compelling as the threat was, it was not the same sort of threat faced by Europeans. Colonists were at times threatened by Indians, but with decreasing frequency as time passed. They also could not afford the luxury of full-time soldiers who would be an economic drain and draw manpower from farms and businesses. But the colonies' selection of a decentralized militia system was more than a practical economic decision.

Few men came to the new world to be soldiers. In fact, it's very likely they were avoiding military service. In most cases, colonists were escaping tyranny of one form or another. The standing army was often viewed as the embodiment of that tyranny, and not without good reason (3:12). Memories of military dictatorship under Oliver Cromwell remained relatively fresh for British subjects (3:30). The features the colonials built into their militias were reflective of an abhorrence for military institutions coincident with a very real need for effective, albeit infrequent defense.

As the population of the colonies grew, the colonial militia units also grew. However, the Indian threat was moving west along with the frontier (7:19). As the threat decreased, typical militia structure evolved, dividing into two classes: the large manpower pool composed of most of the men; and those who out of

special interest, exceptional ability, or freedom from other encumbrances, were better able to spend time training (5:12). As the threat continued to decrease, so did their readiness. Not surprisingly, local units, in keeping with their local philosophy, trained and equipped themselves to offset local threats. The very nature of these units made it difficult to assume a broader national perspective which would be necessary to refocus on a new purpose, the war for independence.

#### THE NEW REPUBLIC

The first military engagement of the American Revolution occurred on April 19, 1775. The 'shot heard around the world' was particularly illustrative of the explosive public policy environment of the time. Regular British troops, already a symbol of oppression, were advancing to Lexington and Concord to confiscate local war supplies (6:11). In the eyes of the local people, a standing army seeking to disarm a community self-defense force was certainly evil personified. The British troops represented a clear threat to their right to defend themselves, bringing basic freedom into question. They saw no choice but to fight, and there was no turning back.

Less than two months later on June 14, 1775 the young Continental Congress first authorized troops to be mustered under its own sponsorship. These troops were dispatched from several units to assist New England militias laying siege to Boston (3:28). This day can probably be cited as the birth of the U.S. Army as we know it, but it presents even broader national and

international implications. For the first time, a wholly representative government was pursuing national policy, using its armed forces, in response to public resolve.

Even in war, however, public fear of a powerful standing army was nearly as strong as hate for the British. Against the desires of George Washington, the Continental Congress limited the term of enlistment into the Continental Army to one year. This constraint was in line with revolutionary ideals, but required retraining much of the army each spring. Washington believed he could have ended the conflict before the costly winter at Valley Forge if not hampered by such constraints (7: 22). From a modern perspective, these public and Congressional concerns seem paranoid, or at least far-fetched. However, our perspective is founded on 200 years of successful subordination of our military to civilian authority. Our revolutionary forefathers had no such foundation. In fact, they had legitimate reason for concern.

One illustration of instability within the army was controversy over pension for officers of the Continental Army (3: 75). The officers wanted one half pay for life after leaving the army, which was apparently the European tradition. For ideological and economical reasons, Congress was not so inclined. They did not wish to give the army characteristics of a regular force, and such treatment of officers only made a class statement that seemed hypocritical in light of lofty ideals they espoused. Only Washington's efforts as mediator kept most officers from quitting the war. The controversy continued, however, and by the

war's end, many officers had resigned and others made thinly veiled threats that the Army might refuse to be disestablished (3:77).

With independence won, the new nation attempted to establish a military organizational framework that would match its ideology and meet its changing security needs. Many people in government saw the performance of militia as generally poor, and proposed to keep a standing army. Others continued to fear a regular army and saw deficiencies in the militia as merely a product of inattention (7:6).

Six days before the cessation of hostilities, Alexander Hamilton, as Chairman of a Congressional Committee, requested that General Washington provide his views on proper post-war military policy (7:4). Washington had often been highly critical of the poorly trained and undisciplined militias during the conflict, but gathered inputs from all his generals to achieve consensus on this important question (7:14). All but one of his generals were in agreement on the major points. A small regular army was needed to man the garrisons on the frontiers, and the state militias should be uniformly trained and capable of responding nationally (7:7). The relative safety from Europe provided by sheer distance and time, made the decision to demobilize the large army easily acceptable to the public.

President Washington and his Secretary of War, Henry Knox, later proposed a military structure with three tiers: a small regular army on the frontiers; 3 divisions of regional Continental Militia, based upon compulsory service; and

continuance of state militias as reserves. The Congress generally did not support the plan. Two aspects of the proposal were unacceptable to the states, the public, and particularly the local leaders of state militias. First, compulsory service to a Federal Army was unresponsive to local manpower requirements and had an autocratic ring. Additionally, the relegation of the militia to a tertiary role was personally insulting. It must be remembered that a citizen army had just defeated a European regular army, validating its capability as a defensive force (7: 45).

Another factor influencing the intellectuals of the time was the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, a Prussian metaphysician. He wrote and spoke extensively on the eventuality of a federation of representative governments that would put an end to war. He also suggested that standing armies provoke wars, while citizen armies tend to deter wars (8:453), (7:61).

Thus far, my references to Congress may have left the impression the body shared a common view on defense. Nothing could be farther from the truth. At this point in our history, the views of legislators were perhaps more diverse than at any other time (7:52). Shay's Rebellion and other events led to concern that the Articles of Confederation lacked the strength to hold our young country together. In general, there were those Members of Congress who supported stronger central government, with Alexander Hamilton on the extreme; and states' rights supporters who wished to continue with decentralized power.

When the Constitutional Convention convened in 1787, the

delegates expressed opinions ranging from opposition to any new power for the Federal government, to Hamilton's proposal which would shift extensive power to the President.

The product of that effort, our Constitution, put a needed framework on the broadest aspects of military organization, but the question of regular army versus citizen army was not answered, nor could it have been. While providing for a nondescript regular force, it codified the militia system in numerous clauses that can be summarized as follows. Congress might call the state militias into federal service to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions. It might provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia. The Constitution also divided military power between the federal government and the states. The states retained their historic militias, with authority to appoint their officers and conduct training.

After three more years of debate, the Washington/Knox proposal for the structure of the Army had been amended to the point that it included little the authors had intended. Enacted as the Militia Act of 1792, it granted extensive states' rights. In essence, the law sanctioned limitless numbers of unorganized, generally untrained, local organizations; relatively free from federal supervision and control (7:65). At one point during this period, the size of the regular army fell to a strength of 80 men (3:82).

Over the next decade, both Thomas Jefferson and James Madison attempted to revive Washington's proposal for a

Continental Militia or any military organization focused on national versus local defense. But they were not successful (7:63).

#### THE 19TH CENTURY

The War of 1812 was an embarrassment for the citizen army. The performance of the militia was generally poor due to insufficient training over the preceding 20 years (7:73). Improving performance from the expanded Regular Army and the Navy accounted for the successful expulsion of the British.

After the War of 1812, the militia was publicly discredited and the United States entered a long period where the expansible regular army philosophy would dominate. Though over the next 100 years, citizen-soldiers were utilized in all significant military actions, they were not well respected. The citizen soldier more or less lived a self-fulfilling prophecy. He was viewed as incapable of meeting the nation's defense needs, and as a result was not afforded the means to correct the deficiencies (7:90).

The expansible army concept was refined by John C. Calhoun as Secretary of War in 1817. It is ironic that this recognized champion of states' right in other aspects of his political career, attempted to institutionalize a near meaningless role for the state militias in national defense. The structure he advocated was a small army that would serve as a core force for training as large a force as necessary from raw recruits (7:76). However, his plan was never fully implemented.

The next major event shaping Army organizational philosophy was the Burnside Commission. This was a committee of several Members of Congress who had served during the Civil War. Their charter was to study and report on the establishment of a sound U.S. military system (7:108). Notwithstanding the commission's keen awareness of the role of the citizen-soldier on both sides of the Civil War, they were greatly influenced by the unfinished manuscripts of General Emory Upton. General Upton was a General Sherman protege and a respected tactical army expert (3:275,6). His writings showed a great inclination toward Prussian means of rapidly mobilizing a nation for war. The essence was similar to Calhoun's expansible army concept, but went one step further. The Prussian system entailed complete subjugation of local militias to the regular army. General Upton's views had great influence on the military establishment of that period. Predominant military attitudes moved farther away from maintaining institutions that would serve both military and societal purposes, toward insistence that other institutions be adjusted to facilitate military expediency (3:281). Despite strong support within the defense establishment and the endorsement of the Burnside Commission, Uptonian views were never passed into law. However, his book, Military Policy of the United States was published just in time to play a key role in the restructuring debate that occurred after the turn of the century.

## THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Secretary of War Elihu Root, influenced by Upton's writings, made great efforts to reorganize the Army after the Spanish-American War in 1899. His goal was to build an army of 60,000 that could be expanded instantly to 250,000 well-trained troops (4:12). But he also recognized two key facts Upton would not have supported. First, he saw that the effectiveness of militia or volunteer troops was contingent upon Federal appropriations. Second, he recognized the militia was a force already in being, while any other form of reserve was merely hypothetical (4:13). These views were not shared by everyone in his department. He worked closely with Congressman Charles Dick, a major general in the Ohio Militia, in his reorganization efforts. A great deal of new law resulted, most notably the Dick Act of 1903. The following are some of the more significant changes implemented under Secretary Root (7:128). Federal military arms, equipment and supplies were made available to militia units that drilled at least 24 times each year and conducted a summer encampment of at least 5 days. Militia units became subject to periodic inspections by Regular Army Officers. National Guard Officers were declared eligible for Regular Army schools and were to receive full pay and allowances when serving with the Regular Army (4:14). Additionally, ambiguous laws complicating the ability of Militia units to be mobilized for overseas duty were overcome. Despite Secretary Root's many initiatives, many influential officers clung to the strict Uptonian approach (8:4,5). As a result, key mobilization

manpower questions were left for future debate.

Tension on the Mexican border in May, 1916, resulting from Pancho Villa's raids, required the first mobilization of the recently created Army Reserve (3,000 troops) and intensified the debate on Army reorganization (4:27). The National Defense Act (NDA) of 1916 was the result.

The NDA of 1916 was omnibus legislation that provided something for everyone. It defined the Army as "the Regular Army, the Volunteer Army, the Officers' Reserve Corps, the Enlisted Reserve Corps, the National Guard while in the service of the United States, and such other land forces as are now or hereafter may be authorized by law" (10:8378). In preparation for entering the war in Europe, the size of the Regular Army was increased to 175,000 (10:8395). An intense effort from the War Department to eliminate the state role of the various militia organizations, creating a purely Federal Reserve force, was defeated (7:128). The National Guard would receive federal pay for drills which were increased to 48 per year (4:29). The authorized strength and Federal appropriation for militia units were tied directly to the state's number of Congressional Representatives rather than any operational purpose (10:8387,8). Provisions were made establishing the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and other Officer training camps (origin of Officer Candidate School) (10:8385,6).

This 100 page law included many other provisions which continue to impact defense agencies today; but nearly as significant as the substantive changes were the political

fingerprints left behind. The two versions of the bill, HR 12766, that passed their respective houses of Congress were so dramatically different, major portions of the law were entirely rewritten in conference (10: 8375). This means that a handful of select Members from each house met and compromised on the differences, as they saw fit. The larger bodies of the entire Congress were given the opportunity to vote upon the Conference Report for the bill as rewritten, but the bill's passage was never in doubt due to the approach of World War I and the sheer weight of the implications of funds being infused into every state.

World War I had dramatic impact on public policy regarding the structure of the Army. The draft had provided 67 percent of the Army's manpower. The Army was 213,557 strong at the beginning of the War, and 3,685,458 before the end (3:357,8). Men from virtually every community were sent to France. When the 'War to end all Wars' ended, abhorrence of war and isolationist tendencies again dominated the public policy debate. The United States demobilized rapidly. By Christmas of 1919, Army strength was down to pre-war levels at 130,000 troops. The War Department wanted to return to the Uptonian expansible army concept and increase the Regular Army to 500,000 men. However, Congress and the public were in no mood for increases of any kind, though some Members of Congress did think further adjustments to the structure were needed (4:33). Senator James Wadsworth and the Military Affairs Committee of the U.S. Senate, with the assistance of Colonel John McAuley Palmer (an active duty

advocate of total force principles), legislated a series of amendments to the NDA of 1916, commonly known as the NDA of 1920.

In the new law, Congress again refused to eliminate the state role of the National Guard, which was apparently the most contentious issue in the debate (7:181). The new definition of The United States Army included the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves. The country was divided into Corps areas for reservists establishing the first peacetime reserve organizational structure (4:34). Additionally, many of the Root reforms of 1903 and provisions of the NDA of 1916 were adjusted to meet the current environment, which included a ceiling of 280,000 troops for the Regular Army (7:181). The framework established by this legislation provided a fundamental structure whose resilience has absorbed the turbulence of all U.S. military endeavors undertaken since. It also had the effect of narrowing the public policy debate over force mix. The debate has continued, but under the assumption that both active and reserve forces had a valid and continuing role in defending the nation.

In a broad sense, public policy surrounding World War II was similar to World War I. Similar public reluctance to prepare and mobilize was experienced. Similar contention over the appropriate timing and means of mobilizing reserve components was also present. When the war ended, the nation, once again, immediately went about the business of demobilizing and restructuring for peace. The size of the Army was reduced from over 8 million people to around 1 million in the first year after

the war (3:486). One significant public policy difference between the world wars was the post-war role of the U.S. in world security.

#### COLD WAR

The Soviet threat that emerged from World War II, precluded the U.S. introversion that normally accompanied post-war demobilization (15:50,124). The role the nation assumed to counter this threat on a global scale was unprecedented. Initially, faith in a strategy exploiting air power (strategic bombing) and nuclear weapons, allowed for rapid demobilization of the wartime force (3:502). The relatively high level of public policy consensus regarding both the acknowledgment of the threat and the resolve to posture our nation against it, led to high levels of defense spending that in other times would not have been politically possible. That consensus remained high for almost half of a century. Since most Americans have lived only during this period, it may be difficult to view the Cold War as a public policy anomaly. However, there is no previous period where the U.S. maintained relatively large standing forces for a period extending beyond the length of ongoing conflict.

With regard to the evolving mix of active duty and reserve forces, another significant aspect of this period is the high level of political activism of the reserve components. Defense initiatives that would have enhanced the position of active forces within the mix, such as: elimination of the National Guard's dual status, and universal military training for all

young men; were effectively reversed in Congress by intense lobby efforts conducted by influential individuals and organizations like The National Guard Association (NGAUS) and The Reserve Officer's Association (ROA) (18:11).

One example of the politics involved, is the creation of the Air National Guard. It was established as an organization separate from the Army National Guard in 1946, the year before the National Security Act of 1947 created a separate Air Force. This was a successful attempt to maintain a higher level of conventional air power within the Air Guard at a time when that capability in the active force was being cut dramatically (18:20).

In the years that have followed, the reserve components have employed this political tool regularly and have made large strides in capability as a result. They have employed these increased capabilities playing significant roles in all sizeable military actions occurring since, with one notable exception.

#### VIETNAM

The Vietnam conflict was not the first military action to receive intense public scrutiny, but I believe none, before or since, better illustrates the dynamics of the relationship between public policy and national security policy. Clearly, many significant public policy issues were generated by U.S. involvement and the execution of this undeclared war. With regard to the topic of this paper, one is particularly salient. Prior to the Vietnam conflict, DoD, under the leadership of

Secretary Robert McNamara, made adjustments in the force mix that were intended to require mobilization of the reserve components to support any large conflict. Yet even after the number of troops deployed to Southeast Asia exceeded 300 thousand and the active forces were stretched very thin, the reserves were never called up (3:533,4). This fateful omission caused great damage to both the active and reserve forces of the period, and contributed significantly to their disenfranchisement from the society they were sworn to defend.

As the war drug on, many active duty soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen, served multiple combat tours under increasingly demoralizing conditions. At the same time, reserve forces who had been trained to supplement and reinforce active forces in large conflicts, were bystanders -- trained, ready, and disappointed. The morale of the reserve forces was soon dealt another severe blow. The reserves became a refuge for many who wished to avoid service in Vietnam, detracting from its capability and credibility as a fighting force (21:37,8).

Subsequently, some analysts have blamed this decision upon President Johnson's lack of political will. They assert that he personally decided to refrain from mobilizing the reserves, despite three separate requests from the Joint Chiefs of Staff that he do so. His intentions were, reportedly, to minimize the public impact of U.S. involvement and to maintain the focus of public attention on domestic issues (19:G4). Some also contend that if the reserves had been mobilized, public support for the war effort would have been stronger and more enduring, because

the nation would have been more personally involved.

A recent Rand Corporation study states that there is insufficient evidence to either support or refute that contention (12:95). But regardless of its effect on public support for the war, in retrospect, it is clear that mobilization of the reserves would have served the national interest by stimulating public policy debate. I believe earlier, more extensive public scrutiny would have helped the nation and its leadership focus upon the fundamental objectives (or lack thereof) of U.S. involvement. And ultimately, it would have affected the decisions that determined the U.S. strategy for handling the conflict.

In the aftermath of the Vietnam conflict, General Creighton Abrams, the Chief of Staff of the Army, was determined to ensure that future Presidents would not be able to send the Army to war without the reserve forces who were maintained for that purpose (21:43). With the enthusiastic support of Secretary Schlesinger, he emerged as the architect drawing up the initial plans for the construction of our current total force.

#### OPERATION DESERT STORM

The Gulf War was a showcase for the capabilities of U.S. and coalition armed forces, as well as the first test under fire for U.S. Total Force Policy. Approximately 20 per cent of the U.S. forces deployed in the region were from the reserve components. Their performance was cited by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and many others as "Magnificent" (19:G4). Even detailed critical analysis indicates that reserve forces were generally ready.

(13:83). Some readiness problems were encountered within Army National Guard combat units, but were found to be correctable through post-mobilization training. The bottom line on reserve component performance seems to validate the perspectives of military visionaries like George Washington and John McAuley Palmer who believed that the citizen-soldier is well suited to the defense needs of a free nation, but only if properly trained and resourced.

Another significant public policy spin-off of the desert success is the illumination of the Vietnam fallacy that large scale conflicts can somehow be fought "in cold blood" without paying the political price of mobilization (19.G4).

#### CURRENT CHALLENGES

The fundamental question, "What is the appropriate mix of active and reserve components?", is once again being asked by lawmakers and by members of the defense establishment. However, the context of the question is significantly different than in the recent past. When the Cold War ended, the principal threat that drove public policy on national defense went away. The relatively high level of consensus that narrowed the national security debate during the Cold War has eroded somewhat, despite the uncertainty and apparent dangers presented in the current national and regional security environment. As a result, a broader spectrum of ideas and philosophies are shaping the U.S. armed forces of the future in the current debate.

The current context of the force mix debate differs from past

iterations in another significant respect. Today, a great deal more empirical data exists than in the past. Valuable insights can be drawn from analysis of experiences such as: the precipitous demobilizations that followed most U.S. conflicts, leaving forces inadequately prepared for the next challenge; the Vietnam experience; and 20 years of maturation within an all-volunteer, total force framework. Additionally, the conduct and results of Operation Desert Storm provide extensive data for analysis, and clear, unambiguous insight into the capabilities of properly trained and resourced reserve forces. Furthermore, there is evidence that some of these lessons may have been learned, not merely within the defense community, but within the society as a whole. The fact that current defense drawdowns have proceeded, thus far, at a controlled pace rather than in a rush (as in the past), indicates the willingness of the nation and its elected leaders to remain committed to a total force capable of protecting U.S. interests and values in a dynamic and challenging world security environment. But the question remains -- "What is the correct active/reserve mix to accomplish that task?"

It is not possible to fully examine the parameters and constraints that influence force mix decisions in this short essay. However, a brief look at the internal DoD decision process illustrates the complexity and the operational implications of such decisions.

Thus far, I have identified only one significant limitation on the utility and value of reserve forces -- if they are not sufficiently funded and trained, they will not be ready when

called, and can not be expected to perform adequately when employed. It is important to recognize, however, that even well trained reserve forces are not a panacea, universally compatible with all missions, under all circumstances. In addition to remembering lessons recently learned regarding the credibility and cost-effectiveness of reserve forces, military planners and decision makers also factor in numerous off-setting, but equally compelling, considerations when determining appropriate missions for reserve units. Three general examples of such considerations spring to mind, but only begin to characterize the complexity and dynamics of the current decision environment.

First, responsiveness is a central concern for any military organization. Unlike ages past, if U.S. armed forces are needed in today's security environment, it is likely that they will be needed quickly. We know from dozens of recent applications, from Operations ELDORADO CANYON (Lybia raid) to RESTORE HOPE (Somalia relief), that reserve forces are capable of a timely response when required in small numbers and for limited time periods. Additionally, the Persian Gulf War demonstrated the ability to mobilize on a larger scale and make dramatic contributions. However, the high levels of support and cooperation experienced during Operation Desert Storm from civilian employers and individual reservists, may be difficult to replicate if frequent mobilizations of long duration become necessary, or if less support for a particular conflict is manifested in the broader population.

Obviously, the future remains unknowable, but we do know

that political leaders are understandably reluctant to even discuss military applications, publicly, without a high level of certainty that the public's sensitivities will not be offended. It has been postulated by historians and foreign affairs analysts that our national mood shifts, or cycles, over time between introversion and extraversion. This shift occurs in relation to perceived national interests and societal influences, and military power is normally implicit in its manifestations (15:6). So, once again, we return to public policy analysis with the question -- "How responsive will the society expect U.S. armed forces to be?". It follows that as the public mood shifts, so will the answer to this question. Military planners must make every attempt to build in the flexibility needed to accommodate this phenomenon.

The second fundamental consideration when determining appropriate missions for reserve units is to recognize and assess operational factors such as readiness and capability. As I have indicated earlier, recent history has proven the utility of reserve forces that have been properly resourced. However, this issue is larger than merely providing adequate funding levels. Circumstances may exist, as in the case of Army National Guard Combat Units preparing for deployment to the Persian Gulf, where adequate readiness may not be possible until intense, and extensive, post-mobilization training has been conducted. A constant high state of readiness and proficiency regarding some military skills may require more time than the average citizen-soldier can give. A lack of adequate, local training facilities

will also limit the types of missions that a unit can be expected to accomplish in a cost-effective manner.

In the final analysis, the cost of keeping reserve forces ready to meet the rigors of some missions may simply be too high. In these cases, a decision might be made to continue as planned, but maintain the unit at a lower state of readiness. Such a solution would also necessitate the inclusion of a plan for an appropriate period of training after mobilization. As a result, such a decision would need to be reconciled with the first factor mentioned -- responsiveness; as well as, the final consideration on my short list -- the pivotal issue of expense.

While it is true that use of reserve forces generates significant cost savings in personnel, training, and a lower level of peace time operational activity: there is no across-the-board equation that can be applied to all units and all missions that will render a 'total dollars saved' answer (22:14). Every case must be judged based upon its own circumstances. In fact, the cost of assigning some missions to reserve forces may approach, or even exceed, active duty costs, after factoring in overhead expenses (22:59).

It is important to make force mix decisions that exploit the advantages of reserve forces where they exist, but in concert with a broader total force policy that allows the National Command Authorities the latitude needed to respond to national security challenges in line with public expectations.

In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993, Congress mandated that a study be conducted which

would provide comprehensive analytical information to answer the force mix question (12:xix). At the heart of this mandate was an assertion that previous DoD reports to Congress on this topic had not been satisfactory. The Rand Corporation was commissioned to conduct the study, and recently released their product. The study concluded that the current total force policy is working effectively. Further, it found that the DoD Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System provides an adequate vehicle for incorporating total force options into the defense decision making process (12:xxii).

However, it is important to note that the internal DoD decision making process, though it results from the best military judgement available, merely provides a point of departure for the broader, less focused, public policy process. For this reason, thorough analysis, balanced positions and policies, and strong advocacy for those positions, from DoD, is necessary to facilitate effective public policy making. All participants in the debate deserve the benefit of a credible, military assessment of the security environment and alternatives for meeting anticipated challenges. I believe that history shows us there is a need for this sort of a public policy strategy, which becomes all the more compelling during periods when the debate is dominated by contention, rather than consensus. I believe most observers recognize that we have recently entered one such period.

## CONCLUSIONS

Through much of U.S. history, isolationist tendencies have

caused national defense policy to center around geography. It was believed that two broad oceans would provide much of the protection our country would need. This focus often led to a policy of acceptable unpreparedness -- a concept difficult to grasp from a modern perspective. Such a policy was not a political conspiracy, hatched in smoke filled rooms -- although it was certainly not a stranger there. It was the product of public policy -- and perhaps the most successful aspect of our early democratic experience.

But the world changed. For the last 50 years, the potential price of unpreparedness has been too great. Despite several periods of reduced conventional military capability during this time, public policy has demanded an overall defense posture capable of offsetting all immanent threats, including, the nuclear threat posed by the Soviet Union.

Today, we are faced with an entirely new situation -- a dynamic world where no major threat is apparent, but where one could reappear instantly. The need to maintain high peacetime levels of preparedness across the entire spectrum of military capabilities has probably never been higher. All alternatives to this posture imply some level of abdication of the world leadership role that appears to be in our continuing interest. But at the same time, competing requirements for national resources require that this preparedness be maintained at a lower cost.

The Department of Defense plans to meet these challenges by maintaining high readiness in both active duty and reserve forces. This would be accomplished by cutting the size of all

components at roughly the same rate, and preserving shrinking resources to ensure the readiness of the units and individuals that remain. Thus far, it appears that public policy (specifically Congress) is supporting the active reductions, but not those proposed for the reserve components (20:20). During the last three years, the active force has been reduced from 2.1 to about 1.8 million people; while the number of citizen-soldiers has only dropped from 1.15 to 1.11 million.

Therefore, it seems that emerging public policy regarding the appropriate force mix to meet the current dynamics in national security matters, is to divest military capability slowly from the active forces and rely to a greater extent upon the reserve components. When viewing these events in a historic context, this trend is not at all surprising. The structure of our armed forces have always been the product of compromise between the vision of military professionals and a broad variety of competing interests. However, if reductions in defense spending begin to cut into readiness, or if it becomes apparent that the active force is becoming too small to ensure a total force capable of adequately responding to protect the nation and its continuing vital interests, I believe the trend must be reversed.

The case must always be made that preparedness precludes conflict, simply because conflict is more likely when a vacuum of military power exists. But on the other hand; a large, standing force, in the absence of a compelling threat, is not politically sustainable, nor even desirable in a democratic society. As a result, I view the goal of attaining the appropriate mix of

active and reserve forces within the U.S. total force as a moving target that will continue to evolve, based upon these contentious concepts, as long as there is a United States, or until the world Immanual Kant wrote about, where mankind is at peace, and armies are no longer necessary, becomes reality -- which does not seem likely in the near term.

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