

# THE NON CONVENTIONAL - USE OF THE MILITARY TO - INFLUENCE SOCIAL AND - CULTURAL CHANGE -

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Argumentative Essay -

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*The U.S military throughout its history have gone from an explicit fighting force, cultivating cultural and social change not only at home but also in foreign lands.*

*In 1862, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln appointed military provisional governors to Louisiana, North Carolina and Tennessee. After Tennessee was readmitted to the Union, the ten remaining states were divided and placed into four military districts, under the supervision of the U.S Army; they were readmitted between 1868 and 1870.*

*After the Civil War ended, with a victory for the Union, the U.S government with the military as its enforcers, simultaneously moved to reconstruct the former Confederate States by experimenting in cultural and social engineering using the 11 states that ceded from the Union. Having been granted their freedom as a result, many slaves who were restricted to plantations all their lives had nowhere to go. Some stayed on the plantation, some left in search of family, while for others; the new state of freedom was cause for both confusion and jubilation.*

*The Army's mission under reconstruction was to protect the rights of the former slaves. To protect these rights, a state of martial law was declared, to which the Army supervised the electoral process and protected the blacks from violence. The*

*scope of this mission was unclear in its definition, thereby dooming it to fail from the beginning. Former General and Missouri Senator Carl Schurz stated “There are limits to what the military force can accomplish politically, socially and culturally.”*

*The Union troops were handed the task of overturning years of oppression of Southern Blacks, but racist attitudes were not only confined to the south but were also ingrained in the culture of the Northern and Midwestern states. The lack of support from these states and the birth of the terrorist organization the Ku Klux Klan guaranteed the complete collapse and failure of the mission.*

*Changes in policies and social behavior also played a crucial role in the failure of the government’s reconstruction efforts. Mainly the changes brought about black domination in the electoral process. Some whites were not able to vote because they were former Confederate soldiers, while others resented having to live under the rules and direction of uneducated former slaves, as black Union Soldiers watched their every move.*

*Historian Walter Lynwood Fleming stated “The negro troops, even at their best were everywhere considered offensive by the native whites. The Negro soldier*

*with his new uniform, freedom and weapon was more than southern temper can tranquility bear, and race conflicts were everywhere.”*

*Other contributing factors to the failure of reconstruction included but were not limited to anti black violence sweeping through the South in 1875 and 1876, the Democratic Party’s use of force, fraud and terrorism combined with a lack of support from the traitors to the North, and the North’s attitude that it was more important to unite the country than to reconstruct the South.*

*A direct effect of the failure of reconstruction came to light one September morning in 1957. To preface; On May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the separate but equal policy in the nation’s public schools was unconstitutional.*

*On 02 September, 1957 Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus mobilized the Arkansas State National Guard, under the command of COL Marian Johnson, with the sole purpose of preventing nine Colored kids from getting a proper education. Governor Faubus used the State National Guard in an illegal fashion to enforce the segregationist policies of the state, and to appease the Confederate flag flying lynch mob that gathered in front of Central High School. The Governor instructed*

*the militia to ignore the ruling of the Supreme Court, and tried to make a case for State rights.*

Until the Russians put Sputnik into space, the eyes of the world were focused on Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, where the world witnessed the U.S military being used in a non conventional operation to enforce the constitutional rights of nine African American students who's right is was to attend and desegregate Central High School in Little Rock Arkansas.

Entered the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. The 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, nicknamed the Screaming Eagles is an Infantry Division trained in Air Assault operations. Some of the Division's historical feats to that point included landing on Normandy Beach and the Battle of the Bulge. The 101<sup>st</sup> was dispatched by President Dwight Eisenhower to enforce federal law, quell the violence and to take charge of the situation since the local police were unable or unwilling to enforce the law of the land.

Once again, as in the days of the failed reconstruction era, federal troops occupied a Southern City to reinforce social and cultural change on the local population as determined by federal law, and once again military presence was used to persuade and redirect the practitioners of racism and bigotry.

Consistent with the outcome of reconstruction, when the Federal troops departed, the segregationist intensified their efforts to get rid of the nine black students. In the end Earnest Green graduated on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1958, Minniejean Brown transferred to the New York City school system. The others were forced to attend other schools or take correspondence courses when voters opted to close the schools to prevent further desegregation. Green told reporters after his graduation “It’s been an interesting year; I’ve had a course in human relations first hand.”

Another failed attempt at cultural and social engineering was Western Expansion. The United States government with the aid of the military decided to rid or acculturate the Native people of the Americas.

In 1830 President Johnson and congress signed the Indian Removal Act. This was another experiment in social engineering, which indiscriminately removed large numbers of Native Americans from their rightfully owned territory by force or by genocide, so that the government could primarily expand white settlements. This resulted in the Five Civilized Tribes having to relocate to Reservations. This trek would later be known as the Trail of Tears.

Soon after, the Indian wars began. This fight for land and inalienable rights led to two famous battles between the warring factions. The battle of Little Big Horn in 1876 and the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890.

On the Reservations ran by the military, portions of land were set aside for Christian churches and boarding schools. One in particular was designed by CPT Richard Henry Pratt. CPT Pratt and the military designed the schools to strip the native people of their culture, language and traditions. The native children, some kidnapped from their homes had their hair cut short, were clothed in European style clothing and were forbidden to speak their native tongue. The objective here was forced cultural assimilation, kill the culture but keep the man.

Approaching the objective from a different perspective, MG George Crook believed that to effectively accomplish the military's mission; they must be able to gain the trust of the enemy, learn the enemy's ways and customs, gain insights on issues that affect the local people, avoid killing non-combatants and show respect for the enemy's cultures and customs.

MG Crook and his forces used pacification to bring the Indians into the fold of the white man. This process eliminated some of the "Indian problems." MG Crook

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raised the economic status of the Apaches by employing them to build irrigation canals, plant crops and raise cattle which were later purchased by the U.S Army.

By understanding the culture of the Apache people, MG Crook was able to avoid unnecessary bloodshed and was still able to accomplish the Army's mission.

Throughout the course of history, the U.S military have engaged on both sides of the battle. We have seen military resources used to destroy the enemy and also as a means of enforcing social and cultural change without including their people in the decision making process or outcome. History again is rearing its ugly head with the global war on terrorism, where the military once again is asked to be the enforcers of social and cultural change in the Middle East. We are not equipped nor do we have the capacity to perform such a mission in the Middle East.

The United States military dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century Continental Army, to the 21st century technologically advanced military. Over this period, the U.S military have been involved in most of the world's major conflicts to include World War I World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the present Global War on Terrorism. Over the years the military have progressed from a strictly fighting force, to a force that implement and enforce respect of the enemies' culture and traditions.

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