



**STRATEGY
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**THE FORCE PROJECTION OF AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO
CUBA DURING THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR:
A PERSPECTIVE**

BY

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A PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

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The concept of force projection is a key factor in implementing United States national military strategy. Historical analysis of the Spanish-American War illustrate elements of force projection. During this conflict military forces deployed to Cuba to wage a campaign that eventually enabled the United States to become a world power. Is there a correlation between force projection doctrine outlined in Field Manual 100-5, Operations, June 1993, and this historical event? Are there any significant lessons learned that can be applied to today's force projection strategy? Although the Spanish-American War was fought over 100 years ago, it provides a perspective on force projection doctrine that is currently being used today. The campaign in Cuba was a decisive victory for the United States, however, the force projection of military power overseas proved to be a tremendous task.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
THE FORCE PROJECTION OF AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE TO CUBA DURING THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR: A PERSPECTIVE	1
FORCE PROJECTION	2
DECLARATION OF WAR	2
WAR OBJECTIVES	3
MILITARY PREPAREDNESS	3
GEOSTRATEGIC FACTORS	4
WARTIME STRATEGY	4
Initial Strategy Development	4
Final Strategy	5
MOBILIZATION	6
PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES	7
DEPLOYMENT	7
ENTRY OPERATIONS	8
OPERATIONS	9
First Contact At Las Quasimas	9
Plan Of Attack	10
The Battle Of El Caney	10
Kettle Hill And San Juan Hill	10
THE SIEGE OF SANTIAGO	11
WAR TERMINATION AND POSTCONFLICT	11
REDEPLOYMENT AND RECONSTITUTION	12
DEMOBILIZATION	13
CONCLUSION	13
ENDNOTES	15
BIBLIOGRAPHY	19

**THE FORCE PROJECTION OF AN
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The concept of force projection is a key factor in implementing the United States national military strategy. Historical analysis of the Spanish-American War illustrates elements of force projection. During this conflict military forces deployed to Cuba to wage a campaign that eventually enabled the United States to become a world power. Is there a correlation between current force projection doctrine outlined in Field Manual (FM) 100-5 and this historical event? Are there any significant lessons learned that can be applied to today's force projection strategy? Although the Spanish-American War was fought over 100 years ago, it provides a perspective on force projection doctrine that is currently being used today.

Force projection is the demonstrated ability to rapidly alert, mobilize, deploy, and project power anywhere in the world.¹ Force projection applies to the entire Army, active and reserve components, based in or outside the continental United States, and supported by civilians.² As we move into an uncertain future, it remains imperative for the United States to maintain the capability to rapidly project superior forces any place in the world. Today's strategic environment possesses some serious challenges that will require American forces to fight and win two nearly simultaneous major theater wars. Force projection is vital to the security of the United States and to the stability of the world.

The Army has participated in numerous operations that successfully demonstrated the rapid movement of forces. During Operation JUST CAUSE, the armed forces rapidly assembled, deployed, and conducted opposed entry operations.³ The well-tailored force simultaneously seized multiple key targets in Panama, virtually eliminating organized resistance within a few short hours.⁴ The operation demonstrated the capability of the U.S. military to project forces rapidly against opposition while synchronizing multiple elements of combat power.⁵

DESERT SHIELD/STORM is another operation where the military was again called upon to respond to crisis. During this force projection operation the army supported by other services deployed a force equivalent in size to eight divisions and approximately 300,000 soldiers from the United States and Europe within six months.⁶ Although Operation JUST CAUSE and DESERT SHIELD/STORM differed in terms of the number and type of forces involved and duration of deployment, both were excellent examples of successful force projection operations.

Although JUST CAUSE and DESERT SHIELD/STORM are examples of successful force projection operations, future force projection operations will continue to challenge Army leaders. Early critical decisions set against uncertainty and friction will always exist. Strategic leaders and the commander of forces will routinely be required to plan and execute multiple concurrent activities. Unlike the examples previously mentioned, the lack of careful force

projection planning was the key to unsuccessful outcomes which occurred during the deployment of American forces at the start of the Korean conflict in 1950:

Lack of planning for conventional war in the new nuclear age, together with postwar occupation concerns and weak defense budgets, had left the U.S. Army understrength and undertrained to project forces quickly. Fortunately, the United States could project forces initially from Japan. But the four divisions under General Douglas MacArthur's Far East Command were severely undermanned, and the early U.S. response was perilously weak.⁷

The deployment of forces to Cuba during the Spanish-American War of 1898, offers some interesting insights and perspectives. Although force projection policies and techniques did not exist at the time, the process used to deploy forces to Cuba can be used as a foundation for today's strategic concepts. Although full of mistakes, the movement of forces to Cuba is an excellent process to review.

FORCE PROJECTION

Force projection operations is a very complex process. Outlined in FM 100-5, Operations, June 1993, is Army doctrine identifying stages on how the Army conducts force projection operations. These stages often overlap and can be adjusted according to the enemy situation. Force-projection operations do not end when forces arrive in theater. They end when the mission is complete and forces return to CONUS.⁸ Force projection is a process that normally consists of eight stages; mobilization, pre-deployment activity, deployment, entry operations, operations, war termination and postconflict operations, redeployment and reconstitution, and demobilization. This framework can be used to analyze the force projection of U.S troops to Cuba over one hundred years ago.

DECLARATION OF WAR

The Spanish-American War was fought in three separate locations – Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines – but the war in Cuba started as a conflict between rebels seeking complete independence from Spain. Over its ten year duration, the conflict created a tremendous amount of suffering and unnecessary death resulting from Spanish rule and oppression. After taking office, United States President McKinley expressed a desire to avoid U.S. involvement in Cuba. However, as the situation worsened, he urged an end to the needless suffering by requesting an armistice. Spain continued to exercise unlawful practices that violated the rules of war and failed to reach an agreement with the Cuban insurgents. The rebellion went on.

The battleship Maine was sent to Cuba on a friendly visit.⁹ Suddenly, on the evening of 15 February the Maine mysteriously exploded, killing 260 members of the crew.¹⁰ The explosion of the Maine outraged Americans although the actual cause of the explosion was undetermined.

Nevertheless, the Americans blamed the Spanish government and McKinley requested from Congress intervention in Cuba to stop the unending suffering and slaughter. Finally, on 25 April, war against Cuba was declared and "Remember the Maine" became America's battle cry.¹¹

WAR OBJECTIVES

The war objectives were simple and clear: America wanted to aid the Cuban rebels in obtaining their independence. This called for the complete withdrawal of Spanish forces from Cuba.¹² America hoped to stabilize the island and establish a democratic government that could be governed by the Cubans after a short period of US administration. America also wanted to protect its citizens in Cuba and relieve the suffering of innocent people that persisted throughout the country.¹³ There was no intention to absorb Cuba as a province of the United States. With these national objectives, US strategic leaders began to devise a wartime strategy.

MILITARY PREPAREDNESS

When war was declared the Regular Army was quite small, with an authorized strength of only 27,858 officers and enlisted men.¹⁴ Since the end of the Civil War, the Army had dwindled down to a frontier force designed only for the purpose of maintaining order in the western US territories – specifically, for protecting settlers from Indian attacks. Surprisingly, the troops of the Regular Army were equal to or superior to those of other major international powers in both physical fitness and individual marksmanship.¹⁵ Most US equipment was good, but troops went into action in uniforms not suited for tropical climates.

By 1 August the army rapidly expanded from 27,858 to 272,046 as a result of mobilizing the National Guard.¹⁶ Although the quality of each state's contingent varied considerably, the National Guard consisted of a moderately well trained and somewhat experienced force but, upon mobilization, it was not trained up to the standards of the regular army, nor was it well equipped.¹⁷

The U. S. Navy was in better shape than the Army. It consisted of four modern battleships, one second-class battleship, two armored cruisers, and several small cruisers.¹⁸ These ships constituted a powerful naval force.

The Spanish Army consisted of approximately 200,500 soldiers when war was declared. The reputation of the Spanish Army was not good due to the fact that they had too many officers – and average of one for every five men, and one general for every 236 soldiers.¹⁹ The officers tended to neglect the well being of their troops; food was usually deficient, barracks inadequate and the health of troops was usually poor.²⁰ The enlisted soldiers tend to lack motivation as a result of the harsh conditions. Despite these circumstances, the Spanish Army could fight. Officers led from the front and strangely the enlisted were able to endure hardship.

The Spanish Navy was regarded as an impressive force. In reality, the majority of Spain's warships were not in fully operational condition. Almost every ship was in urgent need of repair and lacked necessities such as sufficient coal, provisions of every kind and navigational

devices. Admiral Cervera sailed to Cuba with a handicapped fleet consisting of five armored cruisers, and three destroyers.²¹ His force was viewed by the Americans as modern, fast and formidable because the United States lacked current information about the Spanish fleet.

GEOSTRATEGIC FACTORS

There were some geostrategic factors considered as the United States prepared to go to war such as the effects of yellow fever. The Fifth Corps Commander, Major General Shafter, feared this disease more than he did the Spanish Army.²² Although the US was aware of yellow fever, potential effects upon combat readiness were not integrated into the planning process. Lack of planning resulted in U.S. forces having to deal with unknowns that affected operations and tactics. It was not taken into consideration that soldiers might find themselves exposed to unsanitary conditions as they became familiar with the culture and language of a foreign people.

The dense jungle and narrow roads hampered ground mobility in Cuba. Movement along these routes, combined with the tropical climate and hilly terrain, would make progress agonizingly slow. Most of the supplies in Cuba moved by mules or wagons drawn by horses. Wagons loaded with supplies would clog the narrow roads that were in extremely poor condition. Under these unknown circumstances, a shortage of supplies to front line soldiers would exist. Additionally, the dense vegetation and shortage of roads would cause the army to use Signal Corps balloons for observation and intelligence which would give away their position and tactical advantage.²³

Eventually, the largest threat to US soldiers would be disease. Malarial fever, in its many forms was the most prevalent disease in Cuba. Both regular and volunteer units would suffer tremendously during the entire intervention. Typhoid and yellow fever broke out rampantly leaving American forces to take drastic measures such as burning down the town of Siboney where the disease had virtually taken over.²⁴ Potable water would also be scarce and compounded the problems.

American planners did not account for the long lines of communication between Cuba and the United States. Most ships moved at an average speed of seven miles an hour.²⁵ Resupply shipments would need to be planned in advance to compensate for the long distance and travel time. The apparent lack of planning would lead to a scarcity shortage of food and other needed provisions.

WARTIME STRATEGY

Initial Strategy Development.

The initial American strategic move was a blockade of the southern coast of Cuba. This effort was an attempt to prevent the Spanish from reinforcing and resupplying their force in Cuba. Additionally, there were hopes that the blockade would exhaust the enemy force sufficiently to avoid the need for extensive deployment of troops. The blockade had one serious disadvantage in that it imposed hardships on the native Cubans by ending all forms of

commercial exchange between Cuba and Spain. Although this strategy effected Cuban noncombatants, the adverse impact on the Spanish troops was considered enough compensation. Only a few vessels were able to succeed in getting past the American blockade.²⁶

While the Navy was conducting the blockade of Cuba and searching for the Spanish fleet commanded by Admiral Cervera, President McKinley and the War Department were refining America's strategy. Upon declaration of war, the Army was not prepared to execute a major expedition to the Caribbean. Under these circumstances, Major General Shafter, was given the mission to lead an expeditionary force of approximately six thousand soldiers to resupply the Cuban insurgents.²⁷ The intent of this mission was to get the army involved in the war but, not overcommit the forces. Eventually, this operation was suspended as Washington received notification of Spanish fleet movement and felt this strategy might become dangerous because of the risk of detection.

America's strategic leadership continued to seek a new strategy for operations in Cuba. Consideration was given toward a landing at Mariel which would position US forces to attack Havana where large portions of Spanish forces were located.²⁸ This plan was disregarded as the army was not prepared to execute a mission against the center of the enemy strength. It was also suggested that the army not move across the water until the navy neutralized the Spanish squadron that remained a threat.

Final Strategy.

President McKinley became frustrated with the leadership of the War and Navy Departments. It was obvious that they could not develop a strategy and arrange its execution. The Army and Navy constantly argued over strategy requiring the President to get more actively involved in tactical and logistical details. The Cuban campaign was a joint operation and required unity of effort by both services in order to be effective.

Admiral Cervera's arrival in Santiago was the event that influenced future strategy. The proposed operation in the vicinity of Havana was discarded and U.S. strategy focused on a landing near Santiago.²⁹ The Navy was directed to guard the US convoy consisting of approximately 25,000 soldiers on transports to the Caribbean. Additionally, the Navy had to destroy the Spanish fleet reported to be at Santiago. Fifth Corps commanded by Major General Shafter was immediately alerted and was told to launch an expeditionary force to Cuba and to move against Santiago. His secondary mission was to assist the Navy in destroying or capturing the Spanish fleet.

Although this was a joint operation the Army and Navy interpreted their missions differently. The Navy interpreted the land expedition as a design to help capture the Spanish squadron. This contradicted Army planning which sought the capture of Santiago as its central objective which it was hoped would lead to the surrender of the Spanish Squadron. The difference was that the Navy only concentrated on Cervera's ships, while the Army was focused

on the ships and the Spanish garrison.³⁰ Additionally, the execution of this strategy put a tremendous amount of pressure on General Shafter and the Army. With limited time to react, General Shafter made every effort to prepare V Corps for movement without unnecessary delay.

MOBILIZATION

Force projection begins with mobilization. This is the process by which the active military component is augmented by the reserve component as well as assembling and organizing, personnel, supplies, and material.

The United States was not prepared to mobilize the Army for war. The War Department wanted to slowly increase the Regular Army by 60,000 men.³¹ Instead of executing this plan, President McKinley requested 125,000 soldiers from the National Guard to augment the active army.³² In the final outcome this would be a mistake because the nation did not have the infrastructure in place to train or equip such numbers.

Soldiers preparing for service in Cuba mobilized to southern locations for training allowing them to become acclimated to subtropical heat but, training sites such as Camp Thomas located at Chickamauga Battlefield Park were not prepared to deal with the large volume of arriving troops.³³ Volunteer officers were needed to help control the chaos created by the large number of recruits. There were insufficient supplies weapons, ammunition, food and medical provisions available to meet required needs. New recruits often arrived with no changes of underwear, and some were without shoes or socks until supplies were made available. The shortage of knives and forks meant that men shared their equipment causing the spread of germs and disease.³⁴ The poor quality of rations and water proved to be detrimental to the good health of volunteers. Although there were a number of shortages, training remained focused on drill, marksmanship and field training. Life in training camp was miserable, but soldiers coped with the monotony as best they could.

As previously mentioned, the Navy, unlike the Army was better prepared for war and could mobilize more easily. Since 1880 the Navy had increased public awareness of the importance of sea power. Naval leaders such as Captain Alfred Mahan led this effort with his most notable publication *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*.³⁵ As a result, Congress approved the construction of a series of modernized warships. By the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the Navy had an impressive fleet lacking only destroyers – a new category of warship.³⁶ During mobilization, the Navy continued to upgrade the fleet by procuring cruisers, and torpedo boats. The Navy was also looking ahead by developing contingency plans in the event of war with other nations. It is interesting to note, by the time of the Spanish-American war, the Navy already developed plans for a war with Spain that envisioned a naval blockade of Cuba, elimination of the Spanish fleet, and a series of expeditions to land troops in support of Cuban insurgents.³⁷

PRE-DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

Pre-deployment activities follow mobilization. This stage involves the continuous training and equipping of soldiers, the development of force and the establishment of command relationships. Continuous planning and the equipping of soldiers is critical during this phase. During this stage, General Shafter was confronted with numerous logistical issues which challenged the preparation of his force.

The largest problem to overcome was providing the troops with modern rifles and fitting them with khaki uniforms suited for the tropical climate. Nearly everything was short in supply and some items did not exist. There were enough modern Krag-Jorgenson rifles and carbines to arm only a limited number of troops. Most of the Army had to deploy with the old Springfield single shot rifle. Wool uniforms needed to be replaced by khakis. Some volunteer units such as the Rough Riders had these lightweight uniforms by the time they sailed for Cuba.³⁸ To insure the rapid outfitting of organizations designated for deployment to Cuba, the Quartermaster and Ordnance Departments gave these units first claim on scarce supplies.

During this phase General Shafter continued to tailor V Corps and prepare for deployment to Cuba. General Shafter organized his force into three divisions: two divisions consisted of three infantry brigades and the other comprised three Cavalry brigades.³⁹ Each division had volunteer units integrated within the organizational structure. All of these units focused on the final preparation to deploy.

Preparations were made at the port of embarkation for vessel loading. Some chartered ships arrived at port needing modification in order to accommodate soldiers, horses and mules. Additionally, the Army laid railroad tracks onto piers to ease vessel-loading operations. Still, most of the loading had to be done by stevedores who had to carry provisions on their backs up steep ramps onto vessels.

Although General Shafter executed and completed pre-deployment activities, his force deployed without the benefits of modern equipment. The modern technology afforded by new rifles would have increased the combat efficiency of V Corps.

DEPLOYMENT

The deployment stage of force projection involves the effective use of limited transportation assets to lift personnel, equipment, and supplies to the theater of operations. At that time, the V Corps movement to Cuba was the largest military expedition that had ever left United States soil. This stage was extremely confusing and chaotic. No US Army officer had any experience in preparing for major overseas movement.

On 31 May Major General Shafter, received his final instructions from the War Department ending with "When will you sail?"⁴⁰ Soldiers and equipment deploying to Cuba embarked from Port Tampa Florida. The port facility was not well suited for the embarkation of soldiers and supplies. Port Tampa had only modest marshalling facilities, warehouse space, wharf capacity and limited railroad capability. The nine miles between Tampa proper and the

port were served by only a single-track one-way railroad system.⁴¹ These constraints made the management of supplies extremely difficult. Freight cars clogged rail facilities while hundreds of other rail cars stood idly by in lines stretching hundreds of miles north. Many of the freight cars were dispatched from the War Department without bills of lading describing their contents. It became necessary to physically open each railcar to see what each one contained.⁴² This was time-consuming, and no easy task.

There was only enough initial sealift to transport 17,000 of Shafter's 25,000 men. Even with this shortage, regiments were still brought from their camps to the vicinity of Port Tampa. These movements were also poorly organized. Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt of the Rough Riders (1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment) jotted in his diary: "Worst confusion yet. R.R. system is utterly mismanaged. No military at head. No allotment of transports. No plans."⁴³ Trains loaded with soldiers attempting to move into Port Tampa only added to the congestion. The trains were unloaded wherever they happened to be with no regard to the soldiers' designated destination. Soldiers that finally made it to the pier stood for hours before they were put aboard ships. Because no arrangements had been made in advance, regiments hustled as best they could to find space on ships or be left behind. Colonel Roosevelt seized the transport *Yucatan* for his Rough Riders in order to deploy his regiment.⁴⁴

Once aboard the ships troops began to suffer. Only minor modifications to ships were made to accommodate soldiers as they were only supposed to be on board for approximately three days. Soldiers were placed in crowded quarters with tasteless cold food and nauseatingly warm water. The poor food and stifling heat coupled with seasickness weakened many of the soldiers before they ever arrived in Cuba. Eventually, the unpleasant conditions created an outbreak of malarial diseases among many of the soldiers. Colonel Roosevelt wrote angrily: "We are in a sewer; a canal which is festering as if it were Havana harbor"⁴⁵

Unfortunately for the embarked troops, movement to Cuba was delayed for several days leaving soldiers suffering aboard the transports in Tampa Bay. The delay occurred because the Navy reported that Spanish vessels had been sighted. Logistically, however, this delay proved to be beneficial to General Shafter allowing needed supplies and equipment to be loaded. Once final clearance was given to sail, it took General Shafter's force approximately five and one-half days to reach Cuba.⁴⁶ General Shafter continued to plan for the execution of landing operations.

ENTRY OPERATIONS

In current doctrine, deployment is followed by entry operations. This stage is normally characterized by an opposed or unopposed entry into a hostile area. Detailed planning and coordination is pivotal to the success of entry operations. General Shafter conducted entry operations by coordinating closely with the Navy and Cuban insurgents.

General Shafter planned for an opposed landing. Upon arrival at Santiago he coordinated strategy with the commander of the U.S. Naval Forces, Admiral Sampson. They both agreed to a landing at the town of Daiquiri 14 miles east of Santiago De Cuba. This

location was selected to prevent Shafter's forces from being engaged by the large Spanish force at Santiago. The Navy would provide diversionary bombardments while Cuban insurgents attacked a company-sized Spanish force located near the landing site.

The landing operation on 22 June could have been a disaster. The Spanish could have concentrated their forces and easily stopped the invasion. Instead, they pulled out before trouble began. This proved fortunate for the American forces. The landing for V Corps proved to be a difficult task. There were not enough landing craft to land a force of 17,000 soldiers and equipment. The force only brought one tug, three steam launchers and two barges.⁴⁷ Lifeboats were used to supplement the shortage of landing craft. Landing by boat through heavy surf and bobbing next to the pier was dangerous business. The task of getting the men, ammunition and provisions ashore was not easy. Many of the horses and mules were thrown overboard from transports with hopes they could swim ashore.⁴⁸

Despite the landing difficulties experienced by the American troops, approximately 6,000 soldiers made it ashore the first day.⁴⁹ The landing was completely unopposed. Eventually, Major General "Fighting Joe" Wheeler's dismounted Cavalry Division and Brigadier General Lawton's 2nd Division disembarked with orders to advance westward on Siboney which offered a better location for landing the rest of V Corps.⁵⁰ The Spanish also vacated Siboney making it easy for American troops to come ashore in small boats. Siboney eventually became the main supply depot for the Santiago operation.

OPERATIONS

The operations stage starts with movement against the enemy and combat. It is crucial that commanders in theater have sufficient combat power and logistics assembled to conduct operations. General Shafter conducted operations in Cuba by engaging the Spanish at Las Guasimas followed by a campaign to seize Sanitago.

First Contact at Las Guasimas.

Before conducting major operations, General Shafter's intent was to wait until his entire force had come ashore so that he would have sufficient combat power. This did not occur. On 23 June, Major General Wheeler, who landed first, sent his 2nd Brigade on a reconnaissance in force toward suspected Spanish positions at the Las Guasimas ridge.⁵¹ This was against the intentions of General Shafter.

Brigadier General Antonio Rubin, the Spanish commander at Las Guasmias was directed to fight a delaying action allowing time for the Spanish to prepare defenses around Santiago. His force outnumbered the Americans by 2:1.⁵² Once the Americans came under fire and were aware of the enemy location along the ridge, they organized and advanced against them under covering fire. Initially, the American assault was inconclusive but, eventually prevailed.

Once the encounter at Las Guasimas concluded, General Shafter's men slowly advanced to a position near the Spanish defensive line. General Shafter ordered Major General Wheeler not to conduct another reconnaissance in force or engagement until the entire expedition was off-loaded and capable of conducting combat operations.⁵³ From General Wheeler's location, he could observe the Spanish strengthening their defenses on the high ground at El Caney and San Juan Hill. He also could see Kettle Hill located to the right of San Juan Hill being prepared for defense.

Plan of Attack.

After surveying the enemy positions, General Shafter and his subordinates planned a two-pronged attack. Brigadier General Lawton's Second Division, supported by an Independent Brigade, would attack the fortified village of El Caney. Once El Caney was taken, General Lawton was to attack the Spanish left flank at San Juan and Kettle Hill. Concurrent with the attack on El Caney, Brigadier General Kent's First Division supported by Brigadier General Sumner's Cavalry Division would launch a frontal assault against the heights at San Juan and Kettle Hill. If all went well, the Americans would seize the heights and continue on to Santiago, approximately one mile away.

The Battle of El Caney.

The American plan quickly ran into difficulty on 1 July. Spanish forces proved themselves to be tough adversaries. Although they had no artillery, they caused significant casualties with their smokeless powder Mausers. Although the Americans had artillery, General Lawton's force of approximately 6,500 men was pinned down for several hours. In an effort to return fire against the tenacious Spanish forces, American troops routinely gave away their positions while firing obsolete weapons which created smoke with every shot.

Fortunately, the American artillery found the range on the blockhouse that was the key to the Spanish defense. Once the fort was reduced, General Lawton was able to commit the preponderance of his force to overwhelm the Spanish troops. It turned out to be a costly operation. Five hundred Spaniards inflicted 441 casualties against a much larger force.⁵⁴

Kettle Hill and San Juan Hill.

The fight at El Caney was still in progress when the main body of General Shafter's force began their assault on the San Juan Heights. The Americans had approximately 8,000 troops against a significantly smaller Spanish force.⁵⁵ General Shafter directed Generals Kent and Sumner to deploy their divisions across the San Juan River. As the Americans negotiated rough terrain and reached the ford of the river, they came under heavy fire from the heights. In an effort to find additional roads to deploy the force an observation balloon was utilized. The observation balloon highlighted the American movement and made the force an easy target for the Spanish.⁵⁶

The American troops finally got into their attack positions with General Sumner's Cavalry Division facing Kettle Hill and General Kent's 1st Infantry Division facing San Juan Hill. Immediately General Sumner's cavalry led by Roosevelt's Rough Riders advanced and charged up Kettle Hill, seized the crest and cleared the hill of defenders. This put U.S. soldiers in an excellent position to support General Kent's Division as it advanced up the southern slopes of San Juan Hill. Direct fire by a Gatling Gun battery combined with a frontal assault broke the Spanish will to fight on San Juan Hill, enabling General Kent to overrun the enemy forces.

Once again, casualties were high. Shafter's V Corps lost approximately 205 killed and 1,177 wounded with Spanish losses amounting to 590 killed and wounded.⁵⁷ By the end of the battle, American soldiers had seized and secured the hills and positioned themselves for a potential counter attack which never materialized.

THE SIEGE OF SANTIAGO

The American victory at San Juan led to the siege of Santiago and destruction of the Spanish fleet. General Linares, commander of all Spanish forces in Cuba, wanted to absorb the resources of the Spanish fleet into the defense of Santiago. The Spanish Governor General, fearing the Spanish fleet might be captured ordered Admiral Cervera to depart Cuba. Once the Spanish fleet emerged from Santiago harbor on 3 July, the US Navy completely destroyed Cervera's force.

The American forces in Cuba continued the siege of Santiago by surrounding the city and cutting off its fresh water supply. The Spanish surrendered the city on 17 July.⁵⁸ General Shafter accomplished all aspects of his mission. The Spanish fleet had been destroyed and Santiago captured. The Santiago Campaign ended active combat operations in Cuba.

WAR TERMINATION AND POSTCONFLICT OPERATIONS.

Following the operations stage is war termination and postconflict. This stage normally occurs once hostilities cease to exist. During this phase deployed forces transition to a period of postconflict operations by being reinforced, providing humanitarian assistance and establishing a temporary government. The Spanish capitulation meant General Shafter could execute war termination and postconflict operations.

With the capture of Santiago and the outlying garrisons offering no resistance, General Shafter felt his position in Cuba was secure. After peace terms were concluded, arrangements were made to assemble the Spanish prisoners into camps outside Santiago and at Guantanamo.⁵⁹ The War Department immediately made transportation arrangements for the return to Spain all the Prisoners of War.

Personal relations between the Spanish and Americans were cordial. General Shafter treated the defeated Spanish commander with respect and praise. In contrast, the Cuban insurgents felt humiliated by General Shafter. Upon the surrender of Santiago, General Shafter did not allow the insurgents to enter the city because he wanted to prevent possible public

disorder and reprisal.⁶⁰ Discontented Cuban insurgent leader Calixto Garcia announced the withdrawal of his forces from joint military operations with the Americans.⁶¹ General Shafter eventually appointed Leonard Wood as the military Governor of Santiago.⁶²

The American soldiers experienced only marginal improvement in their living conditions after the surrender of Santiago. They continued to suffer from the tropical climate, lack of medical care and poor diet. During the days following the capitulation of Santiago, there was a steady spread of disease, mainly malaria, typhoid and dysentery. Approximately half of the American force became ill as a result of the harsh conditions.

With the increased cases of malarial fever affecting V Corps, General Shafter requested the redeployment of his force back to the United States. There was no time to rotate a few regiments or even a division at a time. General Shafter needed the entire V Corps to be evacuated at once as disease began to turn his force into an army of convalescents. In his official communication to the War Department he wrote, "In my opinion there is but one course to take, and that is to immediately transport V Corps and the detached regiments that came with it to the United States. If that is not done, I believe the death-rate will be appalling."⁶³ Washington remained stubborn and initially refused the redeployment of V Corps back to the US.

To assist General Shafter in his dealing with Washington each general signed a document known as the "Round Robin." This bluntly written document basically stated, "the Army must be moved at once or it will perish."⁶⁴ Unfortunately for General Shafter, he was blamed for this document being leaked to the press and the American people. Right or wrong, the document worked. General Shafter prepared his soldiers for evacuation and redeployment would commence as soon as transportation was made available.

REDEPLOYMENT AND RECONSTITUTION

The next stage of force projection is redeployment and reconstitution. The reorganization of units and redeployment of soldiers to home station is the primary objective of this stage. American soldiers executed this by redeploying to Montauk Point, Long Island.

On 7 August transports began to arrive to take the V Corps back to the United States. The voyage home was uncomfortable for the large number of sick soldiers as they were packed into tight areas onboard ships with limited water and rations. Theodore Roosevelt wrote to Senator Lodge, "we did not have good water; and we were so crowded that if an epidemic had broken out, we should have had literally no place in which to isolate a single patient."⁶⁵

The final destination for V Corps soldiers was Camp Wikoff located at Montauk Point. Unfortunately, the War Department did not make the proper arrangements at Camp Wikoff for the reception of soldiers returning from Cuba, and the camp lacked adequate housing, food and medical facilities. The War Department made every effort to put Camp Wikoff in order and General Wheeler arrived early from Cuba and took command. He made full use of his authority, buying special foods for sick men, hiring doctors and nurses, and building necessary facilities.

DEMOBILIZATION

The final stage of force projection is demobilization which involves the transitioning of units and individuals from an active to a pre-mobilization posture. After experiencing the hardships of war, the soldiers of V Corps began to return home, having completed their mission in less than one year.

On 3 October, V Corps was disbanded at Camp Wikoff. General Shafter was pleased with the performance of his troops given the short amount of time he had to assemble his force, deploy, fight a major campaign and redeploy. Of the 21,000 men that passed through Camp Wikoff, 257 died, mostly from disease.⁶⁶ As men recovered their health, they were allowed to leave for home. Serious cases of illness were transferred to hospitals in New York and other cities. Regular units returned to their peacetime locations while volunteer soldiers returned home where they were well received.

CONCLUSION

There is a correlation between modern doctrine and the historical process that was used to project forces to Cuba. Although doctrine did not exist in 1898 to the extent that it does today, the deployment of forces to Cuba validates today's doctrine. The deployment covered each stage of force projection outlined in FM 100-5 and the use of the fundamentals required to project military power. Some stages overlapped and were executed better than others. Force projection was not easy in 1898 as the entire process involved confusion, struggle and hardship.

There are some significant lessons that can be learned from the historical events that took place in 1898. America must anticipate training and logistical requirements needed to project a lethal force. The events of 1898 demonstrated that the U.S. was neither ready for war nor positioned to train and equip soldiers during the mobilization and pre-deployment phases. Highly motivated soldiers were sent into battle with inferior weapons to those of the Spanish. Even though the American troops outnumbered the Spanish, they suffered a much higher casualty rate than what should have been expected. America must remain on the cutting edge of technology in terms of developing modern equipment and be capable of rapidly supplying the force regardless of the contingency. Additionally, designation of key mobilization facilities is vital to the activation and movement of reserve component units.

In 1898, General Shafter lacked the sealift needed to transport his entire force and supplies. Additionally, V Corps experienced re-supply problems throughout the Cuban campaign. The U.S. also did not anticipate the impact of having long lines of communication between the United States and Cuba as well as supporting power projection to the Philippines. Transportation is the key element to force projection. Adequate sealift and airlift is essential to sustain and expeditiously move the force to meet global reach requirements highlighted by the national military strategy. With the requirement of responding to two nearly simultaneous theater wars, America's leadership cannot afford to experience transportation shortfalls.

Port and rail facilities are also critical crucial assets needed to project a force. General Shafter could only load a limited part of his force at a time because Port Tampa lacked adequate capacity to handle his requirements. Port capacity and suitable rail lines must always remain in the forefront of strategic level planning. Without proper port facilities projecting a force to any part of the globe can easily get stalled.

The Cuban Campaign demonstrates the importance of joint planning, coordination and execution of all major operations. Landing operations into Cuba were adequately executed because the Navy and Army worked together. General Shafter may have experienced fewer losses by coordinating with the Navy and allowing them to bombard San Juan and Kettle Hill (which was achievable at the time) instead of taking it with a pure ground assault. Being knowledgeable of the capabilities that each service brings to war is necessary for all leaders to understand. The U.S. cannot afford to lose unnecessary lives as a result of poor planning and coordination.

Medical supplies and support is a force multiplier. General Shafter was not well equipped or supplied with the medical assets he needed to conduct operations. During the entire campaign, he suffered numerous non-battle losses to disease which had a negative impact on combat effectiveness. America must be aware of the medical requirements that each region of the world dictates. Soldiers must never be sent into harm's way without receiving proper immunizations and medical support in terms of accompanying units and hospitals.

The U.S. soldiers that served in the Cuban Campaign accomplished their objective. Regardless of their shortcomings, they executed the fundamentals and stages of force projection. Their experience serves as a reminder that the United States must be able to concentrate, employ and sustain combat power at a speed and tempo that adversaries cannot match.

Word Count = 6,401

ENDNOTES

¹ Department of the Army, Operations, Field Manual 100-5 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, 14 June 1993), 3-1. This FM is currently under revision and will be republished as FM 3-0.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., 3-2.

⁷ Ibid., 3-8.

⁸ Ibid., 3-7.

⁹ Frank Freidel, The Splendid Little War (Boston: Little Brown, 1968), 8.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² David F. Trask, The War with Spain in 1898 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 56.

¹³ Ibid., 52.

¹⁴ Albert A. Nofi, The Spanish American War, 1898 (Conshohocken, PA: Combined Books, 1996), 98.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 100.

¹⁷ Ibid., 99.

¹⁸ Ibid., 64.

¹⁹ Ibid., 102.

²⁰ Ibid., 103.

²¹ Ibid., 80.

²² Donald M. Goldstein, Katherine V. Dillion, Michael J. Wenger, and Robert Cressman, The Spanish American War: The Story and Photographs (Washington, London: Brassey's, 1998), 86.

²³ Ibid., 107.

²⁴ Ibid., 149.

²⁵ Freidel, 72.

²⁶ Trask, 110.

²⁷ Ibid., 162.

²⁸ Ibid., 163.

²⁹ Ibid., 172.

³⁰ Ibid., 176.

³¹ Ivan Musicant, Empire by Default: The Spanish American War and the Dawn of the American Century (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998), 244.

³² Ibid.

³³ Richard A. Sauers, Pennsylvania in the Spanish American War: a Commemorative Look Back (Harrisburg, PA: Capitol Preservation Committee, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1998), 14.

³⁴ Ibid., 15.

³⁵ Nofi, 64.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 65.

³⁸ Goldstein, 35.

³⁹ Ibid., 83.

⁴⁰ Musicant, 271.

⁴¹ Freidel, 60.

⁴² Goldstein, 79.

⁴³ Freidel, 64.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 67.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 70.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 72.

⁴⁷ Nofi, 121.

⁴⁸ Freidel, 87.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 88.

⁵⁰ Goldstein., 88. Wheeler was a Lieutenant General in the Confederate Army at the age of 29.

⁵¹ Ibid., 94.

⁵² Ibid., 95.

⁵³ Ibid., 97.

⁵⁴ Sauers, 56.

⁵⁵ Golstein, 104.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 107.

⁵⁷ Sauers, 56.

⁵⁸ Goldstein, 152.

⁵⁹ Joseph Smith, The Spanish American War: Conflict in the Caribbean and the Pacific (London and New York: Longman, 1994), 160.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 161.

⁶¹ Ibid., 162.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 165.

⁶⁴ Musicant, 649.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 650.

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