

# **21<sup>st</sup> Century Transformation: Has the Army Been Here Before?**

**A Monograph  
by  
Major Scott T. Kendrick  
Armor**



**School of Advanced Military Studies  
United States Army Command and General Staff College  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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## **Abstract**

### **21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TRANSFORMATION: HAS THE ARMY BEEN HERE BEFORE?**

by Major Scott T. Kendrick, U. S. Army, 52 pages.

The purpose of the monograph is to determine whether or not the Army has previously transformed under the same conditions and for similar reasons. If the Army has faced a similar situation, the monograph seeks to highlight the mistakes to avoid and lessons learned that can be applied today in order to improve the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation process. Additionally this monograph seeks to educate the officer corps on the difficulties and complexities of institutional transformation and dispel the natural fear and traditional military resistance to change by articulating the logic of the current Army transformation and the necessity to adapt in order to prepare for the uncertainties of the future.

This monograph illustrates the nature and challenges of Army transformation since the Civil War. The monograph thoroughly researches and describes four periods of Army transformation. These are the post-Civil War, Pre-WW II, post-Vietnam, and post-Cold War eras. It examines each period's changing security environment, advances in weapons technology, and the political and military culture and types of resistance. The monograph identifies the Army's basic problem or challenge of the period, and explains the Army's method and process implemented to adapt and solve the problem. The monograph also identifies the Army's key individuals that made significant contributions during each transformation.

The monograph concludes that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation is similar to the post-Civil War period of change. The way the Army created and used the formal military school system after the Civil War as an intellectual vehicle for enlightenment in how to organize and fight in the Industrial Age is analogous to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation creating and fielding the interim force in order to understand how to organize, equip, and prepare leaders for war in the Information Age. Both periods were also influenced by the defeat or dissolution of the only major threat to the United States. In both cases, the Army assumed different and unconventional missions shortly afterwards. The monograph recommends that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation campaign place more emphasis on incorporating into the Army's officer professional development program more combat training in urban terrain in order to prepare the officer corps and the force for the variety of uncertain and complex threats of the future.

## Table of Contents

|                                                                  | Page |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| I. Introduction.....                                             | 1    |
| II. The Nature Transformation .....                              | 6    |
| III. The Post-Civil War Period: The Era of Professionalism ..... | 13   |
| IV. The Prelude to World War II: A Race to Catch Up.....         | 23   |
| V. Post- Vietnam: The Rebirth of an Army.....                    | 31   |
| VI. Post–Cold War/Desert Storm: The Current Campaign.....        | 40   |
| VII. Comparison and Analysis.....                                | 47   |
| VIII. Conclusions and Summary.....                               | 51   |
| Endnotes.....                                                    | 53   |
| Bibliography.....                                                | 59   |

## Chapter I

### Introduction

“It was a sad day for the Army.”

-Ralph Peters, on the deployment of Task Force Hawk.

The US Army is embarked on a journey to transform itself from a forward-based heavy force prepared to defeat the massive land armies of the Soviet Union into a strategically deployable, agile, and relevant force capable of operating throughout the full spectrum of conflict. In the current security environment, a large heavy force standing as general deterrence to high-intensity combat is no longer sufficient. Today's potential crises and regional instabilities demand an immediate deterrence to prevent conflict and if required operate across the spectrum.<sup>1</sup>

The lessons of Task Force Hawk's inability to rapidly deploy and project relevant combat power into Kosovo during Operation Allied Force in the spring of 1999 have made a significant impact on America's political and military establishments. However, the Army's immense difficulty in deploying a capable warfighting force to northern Albania is only symptomatic of a much larger problem. Since the end of the Cold War, the Army has struggled with how to develop a strategically mobile force light enough to quickly project, but still maintain the operational lethality to deter a threat or win decisively. The failure of Task Force Hawk was just the most recent example of this problem, demonstrating yet again that the Army is still far from a solution. In response, General Shinseki, the Army Chief of Staff, has launched the Army on a path to transform itself into a deployable force fully capable of meeting the national strategic challenges and uncertainties of the new century.<sup>2</sup>

As America's Army maintains its posture and structure to deploy and fight two simultaneous major theater wars (MTW), CNN and BBC broadcast images of ethnic cleansing, famine, disease, brutality, fear, and mass flight portraying the hopelessness

and anguish of life in the world's varied and ambiguous war zones. These images influence Congress and the Administration to make decisions to send the Army to counter problems of these harsh contemporary realities. Deployments for missions such as humanitarian assistance, border and zone patrols, famine relief, and peacekeeping operations have required many Army units and soldiers throughout the 1990s, and will no doubt continue well into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The current National Security Strategy directs the Army to prepare for a two MTW scenario, but stretches the force's resources by requiring its commitment in international stability and support operations.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout American political, military, media, and academic cultures, there is a great debate over the US military's involvement in these stability and support operations. Many people argue this role is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Army. Other observers increasingly question whether it should be. Especially, when cast in the light of the broader strategy requiring the military to be prepared to simultaneously conduct two major theater wars.<sup>4</sup>

As the Army embraces the new realities and accepts the uncertainties of the post-Cold War security environment, it seeks to continue to have the forces and capabilities to contribute to the nation's defense and define its place in the future. However, the Army should recognize and understand that it has faced these types of challenges before. This is not the first time the Army has had to transform due to changing conditions or environments. Throughout the Army's history, it has had to seek new roles, adapt to new threats, quickly develop new capacities, change force structures, learn to develop and educate leaders, adopt new technologies, or even completely reinvent itself.<sup>5</sup>

Transformation of a large organization is a difficult and complex venture. Successful transformations require vision, sound purpose, and enormous energy to overcome institutional, political, cultural, and basic human resistance to change.<sup>6</sup> To complicate the current transformation, the Army's overwhelming successes in Operation

Just Cause in Panama, the Persian Gulf War, and the Cold War increases the overall resistance to change. The status quo of how America's Army "thinks" about contemporary and future war appears adequate. In a PBS interview, General Eric Shinseki stated that: "An army that fought and won a war decisively finds it even more difficult to undergo change. But this is the right step in order to prepare ourselves for future conflict and not saddle ourselves with preparing for the last war."<sup>7</sup> This professional and cultural resistance influenced by the success of the past, has diluted the Army's attempt at real change during the 1990s and resulted in merely gradual and marginal improvements.

The Army's experience with transformation is less than envious. After the conflicts of World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam, the Army executed rapid demobilization without first establishing a strategy or clear vision of the future. Demobilization became the Army's focus, and readiness sharply decreased. In each of these cases, America sidelined her Army, allowed it to shrink, and forced it to return to its pre-war state. Consequently, the Army's leaders have consistently faced difficulties in revitalizing its force after wartime.

Without a clear and immediate threat, there is typically no political or economic interest in changing the Army in response to an uncertain future. Resistance comes from internal sources as well; success in wartime causes the institutional culture to resist change. The trend is to nominate and lobby for incremental improvements based on the lessons learned from the most recent operations. America's Army is chronically guilty of preparing for the next conflict by focusing on and fixing the problems of the last war.<sup>8</sup> As the Army continues its transition from a forward-based, heavy-centric force to a strategically mobile force capable of immediate response, history confronts the process with similar political, philosophical, cultural, and resource problems that created obstacles to true change in the past.

This monograph examines, compares and analyzes four distinct case studies of Army transformation. These case studies are the post-Civil War Army, the period just before WW II, the post-Vietnam era Army, and the current transformation campaign. The paper seeks to determine the reasons for the transformations, what conditions and environment led the Army to initiate change, what type of changes had to occur, what were the types and sources of resistance to change, and to define the Army's central problem of each era.

Initially, the monograph highlights the Army's current situation in today's security environment, and then it follows that up with a description of the nature of transformation and describes the Army's general experience with change. Then the paper thoroughly examines the four case studies of Army transformation. Afterwards, it compares and analyzes the three previous cases with the current transformation effort in order to determine whether the Army has undergone change under similar circumstances for fundamentally the same reasons. Finally, the monograph summarizes the analysis and the research findings.

The paper uses six criteria to determine if the Army has transformed previously under the same conditions. These are: 1) The existing political and security environment of the transformation's era, 2) the state of the Army when the transformation began and proceeded, 3) the definition of the problem or what had to change, 4) what initiated or inspired the transformation, 5) the impact of time, 6) and the sources of resistance.

The ultimate purpose of this paper is to determine if the Army has had to face these same challenges of change before, and, if so, what lessons can be applied to today's effort to change to meet the requirements of the future. In the analysis of previous and current transformations, the monograph seeks to expose the Army culture's resistance to change and understand why it exists. In short, the paper's thesis is to determine whether the Army has previously faced similar circumstances. If it has, what can the Army learn

and apply from the previous experience.

## Chapter II

### The Nature of Transformation

“That’s a first rate idea,” said President Kennedy, “Now we must see whether we can get the government to accept it.”<sup>9</sup>

Deliberate organizational transformation is moving an institutional entity to a higher plane, leading and shaping it to become something qualitatively different in form and substance while retaining its essence.<sup>10</sup> Transformation is not simply achieving greater results through efficiency or doing operations faster at a lower cost. Transformation is understanding how the environment or marketplace has changed and then adapting to meet or get out in front of the new conditions in order to remain competitive. However, transforming an institution such as the Army is never easy and the effort will always face resistance. According to author Andrew Krepinevich: “Change never comes easy in large complex organizations, be they corporations or military organizations... The principal challenges to transformation today are much more intellectual challenges than they are resource challenges.”<sup>11</sup>

At the pinnacle of his authority in 1961, President Kennedy held more formal, visible power than any man on earth. However, he knew that presidential power trickling down the bureaucratic pyramid from the White House was not enough to put a plan into operation. Something more is necessary before a major decision involving change gains acceptance. In the government, like every large organization, an invisible kind of power exists, just as important and influential as the official power. Rafael Steinberg describes it as the power nested in an organizations’ informal structure known as the “Inner Face.”<sup>12</sup> Sociologist Charles Page of the University of Massachusetts describes the power of the Inner Face as:

This informal power “consists of rules, groupings and sanctioned systems of procedure...they are clearly and semipermanently established, they are just as “real” and just as compelling on the membership as the elements of the official structure, and they maintain their existence and social significance throughout many changes of personnel.”<sup>13</sup>

The Inner Face was what Kennedy referred to when he said he had to get “the government” to accept the idea for change. In relation to transformation, the Inner Face can represent the eclectic source of internal resistance, or when properly incorporated, the energy required for change.<sup>14</sup>

In periods of stability, prosperity, or security institutions naturally resist change. On the other hand, the organizational consciousness senses when the institution is sick, deficient, or declining and many times begins initiating internal transformation within its ranks.<sup>15</sup> In the most extreme cases, rapid or unforeseen changes and crises in the external environment pose the threat of extinction to the organization, whereby there is little argument to keep the status quo. In these instances, the corporation’s efforts to mobilize all its resources and efforts to change and adapt, becomes a race against time in order to survive.<sup>16</sup>

Experienced in the nature and difficulty in corporate change, Harvard’s John P. Kotter describes a conceptual path for successful transformation in an eight-step model.<sup>17</sup> Although the Army may not strictly subscribe to Kotter’s eight-step model, many of the Army’s past and present actions during its periods of change closely resemble many of the steps and the logical path Kotter advocates.

To initiate transformation, the leadership initially has to establish a sense of urgency after understanding a change in the market conditions and the resulting new competitive realities. Typically this requirement to change comes about through a crises, potential crises, or vast opportunity.<sup>18</sup> Previously, the Army transformed itself in all three conditions. In 1939, the Army reacted to the crises of an approaching world war. After Vietnam, the Army changed to meet the potential crises of war in Central Europe. After the Civil War, the Army had the opportunity to change because of a long period of peace and national security. Currently, the Army has an opportunity to transform itself because no peer competitor threatens the security of the United States.

The change in environment creates a “discontinuity” between the traditional methods of operation and what future demands. This requires the organization to

transform itself into something different, with an expanded capacity or greater capability, while maintaining its core values and essence.<sup>19</sup> Next, the organization should form a guiding coalition. This requires assembling a group with enough authority to lead the transformation effort. This coalition must be committed to the mission and work as a team. In the Army's case, General Shinseki nominated the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) as the guiding coalition.

In Kotter's third step, the organization has to create a vision to direct the transformation effort, and develop a strategy to achieve the goals described in the vision. In the Army's case, General Shinseki described his vision and framed a strategy for the Army transformation through a three phased plan designed to recapitalize the existing or "legacy" force, field an interim force, and develop the objective force.

In the fourth step, the leadership has to "sell" the vision to the organization or institution by using every available communication means to disseminate the new vision and the adopted strategy to achieve it. The guiding coalition has to begin influencing the organizations internal culture on the necessity to change, and the new "behavior" or concept that it will require.<sup>20</sup> The Army is communicating the Chief of Staff's new vision internally to the force and externally to the Department of Defense, Congress, and industry in order to convince the political and military establishment of the rationale behind Army transformation. Additionally, the Army has initiated its own media campaign to explain the transformation process and the reasons behind it with news releases and videos such as PBS' Frontline investigative report titled "The Future of War."

The fifth step in Kotter's change model is to begin empowering and authorizing subordinates to act on the vision in order for the organization as a whole to take ownership of the process. This step is key to removing obstacles preventing change. Typically, one of the most difficult steps of change is modifying the way the

organization “thinks” about how operations, processes, and procedures ought to occur. The organization has to take measures to change systems, structures, or subordinate organizations that will undermine, hamper, or delay achieving the vision.

According to Dr. Kotter, leaders have to encourage risk taking as well as nontraditional concepts, activities, ideas, and actions to generate momentum toward achieving the transformational vision.<sup>21</sup> The Army has attempted this by quickly establishing Ft. Lewis, WA as the headquarters of the initial interim brigades and initiating fielding with available vehicles and technology in order to create such transformational momentum.

After empowering the organization, Kotter’s sixth step is to plan for and create short-term and intermediate accomplishments and “wins.” Senior leadership has to plan for tangible and visible growth in capability or performance. An example of how the Army has accomplished this in the past was with digitization process of the Force XXI division. The initial experiments included a platoon of tanks linked together through a tactical intranet, then a company, followed by the integration of infantry and artillery units. After each experiment, the Army communicated the successes and advantages to the rest of the force, the American public, DOD, and Congress of using the new digitized command and control technology. This series of small victories led to the Division Advanced Warfighting Experiment (DAWE) in March 1997, which led subsequently to the decision to initially field a digitized division and then a corps.<sup>22</sup>

The organization’s leadership has to shape the conditions for creating these improvements and then recognize the subordinate leaders and organizations involved in their contribution toward the vision. These short-term victories gain and maintain momentum necessary to overcome the resistance to change. Additionally, these wins sway and convince the institutional culture and intransigent naysayers that the reason for the transformation or discontinuity actually exists and that the new vision and strategy is

the correct direction for the organization to proceed.

After securing initial victories and institutional momentum, the next step is consolidating the improvements and generating further change. Now that the strategy has the credibility, the organization's change champions continue to modify policies, systems, organizations, or processes that do not fit or contribute to the vision.

This includes assigning and promoting employees that have grasped and taken ownership for "the new way of doing business," so they can get into the fight and continually reinvigorate the process with new projects, processes, and capabilities. These change agents working in the mid levels of management are critical to the continual transformation process. They serve as standard bearers of the organization's new vision and can be convincing examples that ingrain the changing theory of operations or doctrine into the organizations' culture.<sup>23</sup>

The Army's designated change agents are its field grade officers in command and staff assignments. In terms of operational effectiveness, Army transformations have and will depend on lieutenant colonels and majors for its long-term success.

The eighth and final step of Kotter's change model is the institutionalization of the vision and the new approach or operational philosophy. As operations guided by the new vision produces rewards and success, the leadership must articulate these achievements and demonstrate how the new behaviors connect and link to the transformations' vision.<sup>24</sup> The Army's success in corps and division level operations near the end of WW II and Operations Just Cause in 1989 and Desert Storm in 1991 highlight the rewards and successes of previous Army transformations where the vision or new method becomes readily accepted and firmly ingrained in the culture.

As transformation takes root and flourishes, the organization accepts the change as the right technique or best method or system. Once this approach, system, or structure becomes the norm, then management has to create the means to perpetuate the changes

and ensure leadership development and quality training to seek further opportunities in the future. According to Dr. Kotter:

“...change sticks when it becomes “the way things are done around here,” when it seeps into the bloodstream of the corporate body. Until new behaviors are rooted in social norms and shared values, they are subject to degradation as soon as the pressure for change is removed.”<sup>25</sup>

However, the Army has not always followed a coherent plan such as the Dr. Kotter’s eight-step model when initiating sweeping changes. The history of Army transformation after wartime demonstrates that America has repeatedly made the same mistake of hastily demobilizing the force. After World Wars I and II, the Army’s civilian and military leadership have failed to create a suitable strategy or chart a logical course and direction for future capabilities and capacities based on anticipated requirements. One example of how the Army’s readiness deteriorated after winning an overwhelming victory, occurred shortly after WW II. In 1950, the North Koreans attacked South Korea. America responded by projecting a unit known as Task Force Smith from occupied Japan. The task force lacked relevant combat power to deter or defeat the North’s offensive. By July, the North Koreans almost forced the US Army off the Korean peninsula. According to General Sullivan, a former Army Chief of Staff, “The most powerful nation on earth, whose Army had been without equal only five years before, was able to hang on only by extraordinary heroism of a handful of men neither trained nor equipped to defeat the North Koreans.”<sup>26</sup> Throughout its history, the Army has lost the first battle in many of America’s wars. These initial defeats have demonstrated the Army’s general unpreparedness for the changed nature of warfare in a new era.

The Army has had to transform while at varying states of effectiveness and readiness relative to the security environment or the existing array of threats. Throughout its history, the Army’s readiness, capacity, and capability to make war has fluctuated like a sine curve. (See Figure 2-1.)

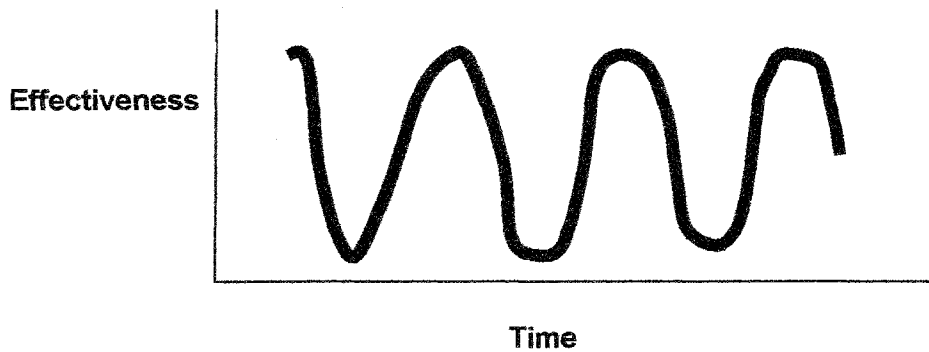


Figure 2-1 The Sine Curve<sup>27</sup>

The Army has attempted transformation from both the top and bottom of its readiness sine curve. Past international emergencies characterize the Army's rapid build-up from the bottom of the sine curve, while a perception of a favorable security environment and superfluous capacity describe the conditions when the Army has transformed from the top of the curve. The Army has yet to achieve a *steady path* where resources match the national security requirements, or where advances in capabilities (in the form of structure, doctrine, or equipment, etc.) match the demands of the changing nature of future warfare.

The following chapters discuss four case studies of Army transformation where a crises, potential crises, or opportunity has generated a campaign to change the force to meet the new and different challenges of the complex security environment.

## Chapter III

### The Post-Civil War Period: The Era of Professionalism

At the conclusion of the Civil War, the United States Army was the largest, most experienced, active armed force in the world. Within two years, the massive force that had vanquished the Confederacy was gone. Its citizen volunteers transitioned back to the farm and the factories. Even with the defeat and the unconditional surrender of the only major threat to the Republic, peace and stability did not materialize.<sup>28</sup>

The period of post-Civil War transformation began immediately following the war in 1865 and continued until the Spanish-American War. During this era, the Army conducted nontraditional stability operations in the South to restore the republic, supported western frontier expansion, and later in northern urban areas suppressed labor strikes. As these new long-term missions became routine, the officer corps began to look beyond Reconstruction and the Indian Campaigns to offer solutions for the future.<sup>29</sup> As the Army made advancements in military education, officer corps underwent a military renaissance marked by a rise in professionalism, an increase in the formal study of the art of war, and insistence on change.<sup>30</sup> This transformation era concluded with the Spanish-American War, when the nation recognized its influence as a world power and began to view its Army as an important mechanism for protecting its newly acquired empire.<sup>31</sup>

Beginning immediately after the Civil War until the early 1900s, America's Army changed from a large standing force organized for high-intensity conflict and driven by a strategy of annihilation in total war, to a small de-centralized constabulary force conducting support operations without a clear national strategy to guide it into the future.<sup>32</sup> The problem driving internal transformation of the post Civil War Army was one of *relevance and purpose*. The major obstacles to change were a clear national

strategy for its land force in peacetime, refusal of federal allocation of resources, and the Army culture's initial resistance to accepting its new role in the new security environment.<sup>33</sup>

As the North quickly demobilized, the remaining active force took on different roles and ambiguous missions, such as enforcing Reconstruction policy in the South, defending the Texas border against Mexico, sequestering or subduing Native Americans in the West, and suppressing labor strikes.<sup>34</sup> The Army did not necessarily agree with these policies, but it was what the country needed.

With the capitulation of the South, the Army embarked on Reconstruction or Nation building throughout the former Confederacy. This 19<sup>th</sup> Century form of peacekeeping/enforcement provided a stable environment for a return to normalcy and readmission of the South into the Union. The Army supervised and provided assistance to provisional (state) and local governments as they reestablished themselves. The Army's presence gave the Reconstruction policy credibility and a means to enforce it. The Army had not prepared the officer corps for their new roles and very few enjoyed serving in political and municipal authority capacities.<sup>35</sup> Obviously, the requirement for the Army to support Reconstruction was a nontraditional use of military force. Although, Reconstruction continued for the next twelve years, the Army faced great resistance over internalizing the campaign as a "real" or a worthy mission for the force.

In parallel with Reconstruction, the rest of the regular Army campaigned to take control of the Midwest from the Indians. These simultaneous campaigns stretched the Army thin. Not only did the force end strength suffer, so did the quality of the soldier. "Gone were the legions of fresh young men fired by a sense of mission to save the Union. The postwar regular ranks filled with recruits of a lower order of intelligence, physical fitness, and motivation."<sup>36</sup>

Initially, the Army operated largely in the trans-Mississippi west subduing Native

Americans. In a series of campaigns beginning in 1866 and culminating in the late 1870s, soldiers broke the power of the Plains Indians and confined them to reservations. As American expansion continued westward, the Army repeated the Indian subjugation process in the southwest in the early 1880s.<sup>37</sup>

Three characteristics set the western operations apart from traditional missions: identifying the enemy, ambivalence toward the mission, and fighting an unconventional and limited war.<sup>38</sup> The Army had great difficulty in determining between friendly and enemy Indians. The Native Americans bewildered the Army with their rapidity in changing from friend to foe to neutral.<sup>39</sup>

The national policy toward the Indians aroused conflicting emotions within the Army's ranks. In between conflicts with the Indians, soldiers frequently intermingled with tribes. The soldiers' familiarity with the Indians and mission requirements created diverging sentiments. The soldiers viewed the Indians with both admiration and disdain. Those who witnessed how brutal and hostile the Indians could be, considered them savage. In war, the Native American's religious rituals and cultural norms ordered his conduct of war. They did not subscribe to the sort of Rules of Engagement (ROE) that governed the Army's conduct of war. Instead, each Indian tribe had its own value system that rewarded plunder and permitted rape, torture, mutilation.<sup>40</sup>

On the other hand, many soldiers remained fascinated by the Indians' culture, character, and acumen as warriors. The close contact between the soldiers and Indians sometimes revealed the inequity, injustice, and deceit, of the white man's policy toward the Native Americans.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, ambivalence characterized the Army's stability mission supporting America's westward expansion.<sup>42</sup>

The Indian campaigns presented the Army with an unconventional enemy in terms of techniques (asymmetric) and aims of warfare (strategy). The Indians demonstrated great skill with stealth, horsemanship, agility, mobility, and weapons.<sup>43</sup> The Indian

fought only on his own terms and always exploited the terrain and natural habitat to achieve a marked military advantage. The Indians declined to fight unless they perceived to hold overwhelming odds. This caused the Army trouble in shaping conditions for decisive battles.<sup>44</sup>

The nature of limited warfare of the Indian mission after the Civil War made the Army not so much a small military, but a large police force.<sup>45</sup> Deployed in small, decentralized contingents throughout the frontier, the Army watched over the Indians and enforced the Nation's westward expansion until the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Army should have recognized the stability and support missions as its chief employment of the times. The experience should have led the Army to tailor organizations and doctrine adapted for this police-type function. Instead, the Army's professional culture resisted the requirement to adapt to a different type of war. Therefore, the Army continued to perform this unconventional mission with a conventional organization and methods used previously in the Civil War. The result was a record against the Indians that contained more failures than successes, and exposes a lack of willingness to accept and prepare for the changed nature of warfare. Political fiscal policy and Army traditionalist perpetuated this type of resistance in preparing for limited war until the conflict with the Spanish in 1898.<sup>46</sup>

The Army's leaders failed to recognize and accept stability and support operations against the Indians as the Army's primary function for the last portion of the 1900's. This mistake prevented the Army from institutionalizing these complex operations, which would be a critical part of limited warfare in the future. The perception was that the current or next small war or skirmish was the last, and afterwards Army leaders could proceed with the more palatable task of fixing the problems discovered in the previous war against the Confederacy.<sup>47</sup> Devising a special system for an apparently transitional mission and purpose never took hold with the military culture.

Additionally, the post-Civil War Army's size made enforcement of the pacification and settlement policy difficult to enforce. The Army simply did not have all the forces to comprehensively cover all the potential trouble spots. The Army found itself unable to project prompt application of force sufficient to meet probable contingencies. Therefore, the ambiguous and complex troubles that consumed the Army year after year was dealt with by essentially conventional Civil War strategies only slightly modified by the new security environment and special conditions of the police function.<sup>48</sup>

In parallel with the nontraditional missions of the post-Civil War era, the Army's officer corps initiated an internal military renaissance that led to an increased understanding of the future requirements of late 19<sup>th</sup> century warfare, and to a gradual improvement in capability.<sup>49</sup> The long term assignments and physical isolation of the Indian campaigns gave Army officers the chance to begin developing their own theories of war to counter the Indians and the role and requirements of the Army in the future.<sup>50</sup>

One of these officers, General George Crook, who campaigned endlessly on the frontier, had a unique view of the nature of warfare against the Indians. As his experience base grew, he began to develop and adapt his own theory and doctrine. General Crook recognized the advantages in using friendly Indians as supporting forces against hostile tribes. He successfully used Maricopas against Apaches in Arizona in 1872-3, and Crows against the Sioux in Wyoming in 1876.<sup>51</sup> His approach evolved, as he began turning differing clans within tribes against each other. General Crook used methods and techniques to adapt his forces to counter the special skills of the enemy. By turning a portion of the Indians' force against itself, Crook defeated the combatant Indian commander's will and his forces' morale through the psychological impact of discovering fellow kinsmen arrayed against them.<sup>52</sup>

The Army's internal resistance to adopting the Crook methodology came from many other senior generals such as General Sheridan.<sup>53</sup> Mainly, the resistance came in the

form of distrust of incorporating the Indians and a national policy that was unwilling to compromise. Thus, the Army continued to use the Civil War strategy of annihilation against the Indians.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, with conventional military force employing conventional methods from the last war, America's Army tried to control a diverse culture that failed to behave like a conventional enemy.<sup>55</sup>

The stability operations of the era rarely required warfare, but rather effective diplomacy and policing. In most instances, Army forces only needed to target and then separate the offending individuals or groups from the nonbelligerents in order to levy punitive measures. The conventional Army usually failed to grasp this and could rarely accomplish it. The result was that the Army dealt out punishment indiscriminately among the combatants and noncombatants alike.<sup>56</sup> Instead of Civil War cavalry, the Army needed the capability to quickly employ force that could differentiate between the belligerents and the innocent, overmatch the Indian's style of warfare, and then incorporate a fair and equitable system to determine punishment. The quick application of appropriate force and the perception of just punishment would have helped establish and maintain a more stable environment. The chosen strategy to annihilate a people reflected how senior military and civilian leaders failed to see the difference between total war and limited conflict.<sup>57</sup>

Throughout the last of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, America enjoyed a sense of security and economic prosperity, and didn't see the need to design a new strategy for the Army. Additionally, America's political leaders opposed the concept of a large regular Army. These conditions and attitudes led to a stagnation of the military in terms of preparing for the future.

The unwillingness to institutionalize the stability roles of enforcing Reconstruction or Indian policy and without a clear threat to the nation left the Army without direction or resources.<sup>58</sup> This latent period occurred at a time when professional growth and

advanced education of the officer corps became essential. "Advances in military technology... suggested that the conflicts of the future would be brief and decisive."<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the future demanded a higher level of competency from the Army's officer corps in a period of constrained resources.

However, many officers reflected on the Civil War and began to anticipate future conflict and how the Army should prepare for it. While America put her Army on the shelf, the officer corps found time to conduct its own renaissance that resulted in line and staff officers with much greater expertise, competence, and understanding of the art of war. One notable officer, Emory Upton, felt the Army had major shortcomings. General Upton felt that one of the Army's main problems was that in a national crisis, an officer corps, uneducated and ignorant of the modern art of war, attempted to employ untrained and undisciplined ranks of militia and volunteer citizens. A protégé of General Sherman, he traveled extensively to Europe and Asia to observe their large conscription armies. Upton came to greatly admire the Prussian system of organization, professional development, and ability to rapidly mobilize in anticipation of conflict. His document, *The Military Policy of the United States*, called for a powerful general staff, a European-like mass national army resourced through universal conscription, and graduate schools with the purpose of educating officers in strategy and the principles of the art of war.<sup>60</sup> Many senior leaders and officers throughout the ranks felt the same way, and advocated such reforms as Upton's "expansible army", but any initiative to adopt major reforms got nowhere in Congress prior to 1898.<sup>61</sup>

Within the means available, the Army continued its transition through professional education and intense lobbying to achieve marginal improvements. General Sherman began establishing graduate institutions that focused on warfighting. The first of these were the Artillery School at Ft. Monroe and The School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry at Ft. Leavenworth in 1881.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, senior officers modified the West

Point curriculum to better prepare junior officers' for warfighting as opposed to developing engineers. By the time of the Spanish-American War, almost every separate branch of the Army had its own institutional school.<sup>63</sup> In parallel with their formal education, Army officers continued their discussion of military reform and offered solutions for the anticipated wars of the future in professional literary journals.<sup>64</sup> The Army's new formal education system became the intellectual vehicle for military enlightenment that transformed the officer corps into the profession of arms known today. Through the renaissance of the post-Civil Era, the professional education system began to show how the beginnings of the Industrial Age would change the nature of warfare.<sup>65</sup>

As the 20<sup>th</sup> Century approached, the officer corps redefined itself as a profession along the lines of medicine and law.<sup>66</sup> However, the strategy of the Army's overall "defensive" purpose remained entrenched.<sup>67</sup> While the Navy began focusing on offensive fleet action and commerce raiding as opposed to coastal defense, no comparable change occurred in the Army.<sup>68</sup>

External to the Army, "...little was happening to raise questions about its traditional defensive mission- protection of the homeland and its outposts from external attack."<sup>69</sup> Still as, preparations for the Spanish-American War began, the Army officer corps, trained and prepared by its formal education system, began to demonstrate its new expertise. As early as 1895, the Navy, assisted by Army officers, began operational planning for war against Spain at the Naval War College. The Army's new leaders influenced the mobilization plans in terms of force structures. The Army wanted to employ only regular forces instead of citizen volunteers. The planning officers overcame traditional resistance and moved the War Department to ask Congress to authorize a standing force of over 100,000 soldiers.<sup>70</sup>

When planning began for America's intervention in Cuba, the executive branch was

unwilling to define the Army's mission. The Navy's role was clear; destroy the Spanish fleet, destroy merchant shipping, and attack her colonies. In contrast, the Army's mission would depend on the nature of the conflict. The Army might only supply and support the Cuban insurgents, or project an expeditionary force to engage in high intensity conflict, followed by stability operations.<sup>71</sup> Just as in the stability operations of the Indian Campaigns, the Army needed the capability to quickly mobilize, project credible combat power, apply appropriate force dependent on the situation, and also be able to operate across the whole spectrum of conflict.<sup>72</sup>

The expedition to Cuba revealed America's unpreparedness in terms of transportation infrastructure, capacity to mobilize, and to project combat power. The bare-bones budgets of the late 1900s had left the Army without adequate reserves of weapons and equipment for mobilization.<sup>73</sup> This deployment failure ultimately led to further transformation and improvements in mobilization prior to WW I. However, the new professional officer corps was correct in their advocacy of a larger standing Army. Graduate military education proved its worth leading up to the war with Spain and led to further professional training with the establishment the Army War College in 1901.<sup>74</sup>

The battles of the Spanish-American War in Cuba were too short and overwhelmingly successful to harvest new lessons about the conduct of modern warfare. Leadership experience in commanding large formations and cooperation with the Navy in conducting joint operations proved major weaknesses.<sup>75</sup> America's expedition to Cuba reaffirmed what the officer corps thought about the changing nature of war. That a standing ready army was paramount to the nation's security, and that colonial wars would be limited, brief, and decisive. "In the Spanish-American War, the first battles, were for all practical purposes, the last battles."<sup>76</sup>

The post-Civil War transformation followed the dissolution of the only peer competitor the U. S. military faced. During the transformation period, the Army

assumed responsibilities for unconventional missions it saw as temporary and invalid.<sup>77</sup>

Throughout the last part of the 1900s, America's national security remained unthreatened, therefore Congress limited military spending and constrained resources. Even so, the era provided an opportunity for the officer corps to change and achieve a level of professionalism that has remained with the force ever since.

## Chapter IV

### The Prelude to World War II: A Race to Catch Up

“For twenty years, we had all the time and almost none of the money,  
today we have all of the money and no time.”

-General George Marshall, summer 1940.

On the eve of World War II, the Army found itself without a single division prepared for combat. In 1939, the Army's strength stood at 175,000 and ranked 19<sup>th</sup> among the armies of the world. As Hitler's modern mechanized Wehrmacht quickly dashed across Poland, America's underequipped and undermanned Army practiced obsolete tactics with antique weapons. The Army lacked not only a grasp of the nature of mechanized warfare, but also planes, tanks, wheeled vehicles, artillery and anti-aircraft guns, fire-control equipment, and heavy machine guns as well. On its own initiative, America rendered itself more militarily impotent through the Defense Act of 1920, than Germany was under the limitations imposed by the Treaty of Versailles.<sup>78</sup>

The Army's race to transform itself to meet the Axis threat began on September 1 1939, General George Marshall's first day as Chief of Staff and the first day of WW II. As, General Marshall built consensus in Washington for increases in resources, other senior officers began experimenting with organizations and doctrine to determine how America would conduct warfare in the mechanized era. Previously in the 1920's and 30's, the Army only slowly came to understand mechanized warfare. Additionally, political isolationism and intransigent military traditionalism slowed the Army's attempts to organize and train for mechanized war.<sup>79</sup>

With the outbreak of war in Europe, now the Army's transformation process took form and gained momentum. The United States' rearmament policy provided the resources and industrial might that began producing the new weapons of war, while initial entry depots filled with recruits. The transformation and preparation continued until 1943 when the Army would face its first test in North Africa at Kasserine Pass.<sup>80</sup>

At the outset of hostilities, the Army faced the monumental task of expanding and modernizing immediately. The complex issue of mobilization was as broad as it was deep. The fundamental problem that drove the WW II Army transformation was a *lack of capability* in the form of doctrine, organization, equipment, and trained soldiers. The United States had allowed the Army to atrophy since demobilization after WW I, and now simply lacked the comprehensive capacity to conduct modern mechanized war.<sup>81</sup>

Throughout the interwar period, economic depression, isolationism, and a false sense of security contributed to the Army's stagnation and incapacity. The allied victory in WW I created a sense of complacency within the military culture that resisted imaginative ideas and experiments to advance doctrine, structure, and equipment. Later, disillusionment with the country's involvement in WWI and aversion to future foreign entanglements, led to America's withdrawal into National isolationism. Additionally, the United States perceived its national security lay behind the veil of protection provided by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.<sup>82</sup> Therefore, Congressional expenditures and authorized manpower levels for the Army curtailed training and deferred the development and acquisition of modern weapons and equipment.

The nation's divisive issue before WW II was whether or not America should respond to the expansionist actions of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, and imperialist Japan.<sup>83</sup> At the National level, America's rearmament policy was a military, political, and foreign policy issue that ideologically fractured both the War Department and the country as well.

First, the Roosevelt Administration's focus during the 1930's was on pulling the country out of the great economic depression. The foreign policy debate involving US intervention or continued isolation remained subordinate to solving America's domestic economic problems. The minority or Internationalists, who felt that America's armed forces were woefully unprepared for the future, waged the rearmament debate with the

Isolationists, who argued that the US had no business involving itself against the Axis aggression. Although Roosevelt favored the Internationalists, he was intent on maintaining consensus for his domestic programs of the New Deal. Therefore, Roosevelt initially refused to challenge the Congress' Isolationist majority. The Isolationists hesitated to authorize Roosevelt any resources that could later be used in a foreign war. In 1938, the Roosevelt Administration and Congress compromised with a vague rearmament policy that would enable America to defend her neutrality should war occur.<sup>84</sup>

Within the Administration, debates raged over what type of rearmament should proceed. As a former Secretary of the Navy, Roosevelt favored 19<sup>th</sup> Century Mahanian strategic naval and geopolitical doctrine, as well as the more contemporary theories of the value of strategic air power. He advocated a massive increase in the production of aircraft to counter Axis air power, demonstrate US resolve, and supply Britain and France with additional capability. Others, including General Marshall, disagreed, favoring a balanced military build up of naval, land, and air forces.<sup>85</sup>

Within the leadership of the War Department, matters were even worse. Problems over how America should respond to German and Japanese expansionism manifested themselves in the intense personal conflict between Secretary Woodring and Assistant Secretary Johnson. As he did with other bureaucracies, Roosevelt nominated men to the two top positions at the War Department who disagreed with regard to policies. The isolationist Woodring cautiously warned against foreign involvement while Johnson aggressively argued for intervention.<sup>86</sup> The two men simply could not work nor coexist together. To make the situation worse, Assistant Secretary Johnson felt FDR had promised him the Secretary's job, but Woodring had no intention of retiring. Every issue became a politicized struggle that polarized the entire department in Washington. Therefore, a virtual stalemate and private state of war existed at the top of the War

Department.<sup>87</sup>

Within the uniformed ranks, the officer corps had difficulty in visualizing, the changed nature of warfare. According to author William J. Woolley:

“Coming to terms with the industrial revolution caused a crises of some sort in nearly every modern army. For most, the crises was introduced by the machine gun, which mechanized the production of firepower. The resultant increase in the firepower of the defense overturned most of the Napoleonic tactical principles that had been so laboriously worked out over the previous century. But the mechanization of movement made possible by the gradual military adaptation of the principles of automotive transport threatened to revolutionize all aspects of warfare. As a result, during the decades separating the two world wars, the major source of military controversy in nearly every modern Army was the issue of introducing the internal combustion engine into warfare on the ground and in the air.”<sup>88</sup>

As for the Army transformation, the debate centered over the method of employment and organizational structure for the tank. Within the Army, a radical minority concluded that mechanization revolutionized warfare and mechanized forces should replace the traditional combat arms. They argued the virtues of J.F.C. Fuller and Liddel Hart in that the new mechanized forces could fight “innovative and strategic forms of warfare.”<sup>89</sup> In opposition, the traditionalists felt mechanized weapons served only a supporting role at the more conventional tactical level of war.<sup>90</sup> A similar debate continued over the best role for aircraft. Many backed the Mitchell doctrine of strategic bombing to destroy the enemies’ war-making capacity and break his national will to fight. Others felt the integration of air power to support tactical maneuver was the best use of airplanes.

In transforming training, doctrine and organization, the Army could not make any advancement before 1939 due to insufficient manning and lack of enough modern equipment to even experiment with in order to formulate techniques for employment. The results of under-resourced maneuver training during the late 1930s mistakenly validated already obsolete tactics in use by tactical commanders.<sup>91</sup>

The cognitive dissonance felt by many officers came from the tension between maintaining the traditional values of professionalism, courage and a resistance to accepting the “automation” of warfare. Even General George Patton vacillated between the conservative camp, who argued for maintaining the horse cavalry, and the

mechanizationists camp, who advocated modernization to prepare for future warfare. General Patton initially favored mechanization, but later felt that men conducted war, not machines and focus should be on maintaining traditional “romantic” values of the officer corps.<sup>92</sup>

With mechanization, General Patton saw senior leaders becoming too concerned for their own personal safety. He felt the culture becoming “soft” and favoring an overly academic approach to warfare as opposed to the timeless traits of courage and ‘guts’ that leaders had to demonstrate in any form of conflict. General Patton along with most of the officer corps had difficulty in making the mental adaptations required to see how mechanization was going to change warfare.<sup>93</sup>

In 1928, as deputy to Chief of Cavalry, General Patton initially defended the role of horse. As he witnessed more experimentation and large training exercises involving mechanized vehicles and organizations, General Patton recognized how industrialization had changed the nature of warfare and he firmly adopted the “mechanizationists” perspective. By 1940, General Patton became one of the Army transformation’s biggest advocates as he formed a vision of warfare that was more mobile, strategic, and fully mechanized.<sup>94</sup>

The Louisiana and Carolina maneuvers in 1941 experimented with equipment, organizations, and techniques. The exercises demonstrated to the Army what effort and resources it would require to transform the force into a modern, mechanized organization. The results and lessons of the experiment helped the Army’s leaders to formalize a vision and create a strategy to execute the transformation process. This process shaped the force that would fight in North Africa and Europe.

The 1941 maneuvers exposed many weaknesses and provided essential training experience. For example, because the initial armored division design lacked infantry and artillery capability, the maneuver battalions had to assault defensive positions

without suppressive fires. The Army's initial doctrine resembled traditional cavalry tactics. Commanders placed emphasis on speed to outflank and close with the enemy as opposed to a methodical combined arms approach.<sup>95</sup> Since the antitank guns of the era overmatched the direct fire capability of the tanks, the "cavalry type" attacks repeatedly failed. These unsynchronized and unsupportable tactics exposed problems with organization, command and control, equipment, and doctrine.

The exercises allowed the Army to incorporate changes that made the division a more balanced force by increasing the number of infantry battalions and centralizing control of the artillery through a divisional artillery headquarters.<sup>96</sup> The Army also added a large supply battalion to execute the additional logistics requirements of mechanized warfare.<sup>97</sup> The Army began evolving toward a more combined arms approach to tactics. Still, the complexities of close air support and air defense remained unsolved. However, the Louisiana and Carolina maneuvers proved invaluable in the Army's transformation effort toward attaining the capability to conduct mechanized warfare.<sup>98</sup>

Prior to World War II, the Army faced comprehensive resistance to change from every direction. After entering the war, America and her allies placed enormous pressure on the Army to join the fight as soon as possible. As the Army raced to transform itself into a mechanized force, President Roosevelt decreed that he wanted Americans fighting Germans by the end of 1942. The Army would get its chance to test the validity and quality of its transformation effort in early 1943 against Erwin Rommel's experienced and agile Afrika Korps at Kasserine Pass.

After the Operation Torch landings in Algiers, Oran, and Casablanca in November 1942, American forces faced only weak French resistance. These brief clashes failed to prepare the Army for the tempo and violence of mechanized warfare. During the Tunisia campaign, the Afrika Korps' 5<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division gave the U. S. Army its first

severe lessons in modern warfare. Kasserine Pass was a battle that centered on controlling several key passes in central Tunisia. The Axis forces consistently outmaneuvered and out flanked the Americans, who operated in small and scattered units across the battlefield. The Army could not concentrate its combat power, while the Germans reacted rapidly and effectively to the situation. "The series of operations known as the Battle of Kasserine Pass- from the start... to the final act... was a disaster for the U. S. Army."<sup>99</sup>

The battle exposed many American weaknesses, such as trouble with command and control, synchronization, intelligence, and use of its own equipment. In the face of a capable enemy, the reactions of the allied commanders were slow, cautious, and characteristic of WW I operations.<sup>100</sup> They issued orders that were vague and imprecise. These commanders either ignored the responsibility or lacked the professional ability to coordinate large units in combat. Additionally, they could not delineate and assign responsibilities throughout the framework of the battlefield.<sup>101</sup> This caused problems in massing defensive fire, defining boundaries, and planning military police operations such as traffic control and handling of prisoners of war.<sup>102</sup>

The Army had great difficulty in coordinating close air support and defending itself from enemy air attack. At Kasserine Pass, close air operations resulted in fratricide by allied planes and anti-aircraft artillery. Some regarded the poor air-ground coordination the most disappointing aspect of the Army's North African campaign.<sup>103</sup> The Army had faced this problem before during the Louisiana Maneuvers, but had failed to find a solution. This highlighted the complexity of 1940s warfare, and how the Army had yet to really understand all the requirements, much less have the *capability* to integrate and orchestrate it all.<sup>104</sup>

Despite the tragedy and initial Army failures at Kasserine Pass, the battle provided a benchmark of what it would take to succeed in modern warfare. The Army

now understood the direction its transformation campaign needed to pursue.<sup>105</sup> As author Martin Blumenson summarizes the transformation process prior to Kasserine Pass: “The entire mobilization process, including the organization and training of the U. S. Army, was hasty, largely improvised, and saved from disaster by the stability and intelligence of leaders like Marshall...”<sup>106</sup>

Although the 1941 maneuvers revealed many deficiencies such as organizational structure, combined arms integration, doctrine, and integration of close air support, America’s crash transformation program gave the Army’s field forces a semblance of preparedness. Ultimately, the lack of time affected every facet of the change process. Individual soldiers, units, and leaders simply did not have the opportunity to acquire proficiency in the doctrine, weapons, and equipment, and skills required for the modern warfare of the 1940s.<sup>107</sup>

Organizational commanders and their staffs were still largely in tune with the time and space factors that had prevailed in the previous war. Their lack of training and experience prevented them from adjusting to the accelerated tempo and increased distances of the battlefield. The inexperienced tactical leaders failed to comprehend the necessary speed of reaction so well understood by the seasoned German commanders.<sup>108</sup>

Through the mechanization transformation or “race to catch up”, the Army had achieved the potential and capability to fight 1940s warfare. However, it took the reality and the adversity of Kasserine Pass to further frame the problem of modern war and enable the Army to continue to develop the capacity to successfully wage it.<sup>109</sup>

## Chapter V

### Post-Vietnam: The Rebirth of an Army

“...If Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, then Desert Storm was won on the playing fields of Fort Irwin...”<sup>110</sup>

After America's long tribulation in Vietnam, the regular Army was exhausted. Just like the periods following WWI and WWII, America's demobilization of the Army proceeded far too rapidly to maintain readiness. The Vietnam War depleted and decimated the noncommissioned officer ranks; while leaving the officers little experience in training and conducting operations beyond those demanded by the conditions of Southeast Asian battlefields. The modernization of armor and mechanized forces had fallen a generation behind that of the Soviet Union. Poor discipline, drug and alcohol abuse, and racial tension proliferated the ranks; and the reserve forces remained mostly untrained.<sup>111</sup> Additionally, America's political, military, academic, and media cultures began to question the traditional values of the Army institution as well as raise suspicions over its state of preparedness. The years immediately following the Vietnam War were a very difficult period for the Army.<sup>112</sup>

The Army's transition following Vietnam was a comprehensive and deliberate effort to completely reinvent itself. The period really began upon completion of demobilization and the ending of the draft in 1973, and continued until 1991 when the Army that prepared to defeat the Warsaw Pact in Europe faced its test during the Gulf War. In 1991, the Army would validate its transformation effort against the Iraqi army. The post-Vietnam transformation began as the Army's formal leadership structure, as well as its “Inner Face” (described in Chapter 3), recognized how sick the institution was and initiated the effort. As America healed and recovered following the civil, political, and economic turmoil of the early 1970s, so did the Army. The transformation slowly took hold in the 1970s, gained momentum in the early 1980s, and culminated

with the successful conclusion of Operation Desert Storm.

While the unconventional war in Vietnam consumed United States, the Soviet Union made significant improvements in their conventional war-making capacity in terms of quality and quantity of systems. To counter the threat in Europe, the Army would have to qualitatively improve its forces to meet the increased conventional capabilities of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Following demobilization, the Army suffered from inferiority, obsolescence, and a lack of quality in almost every aspect including equipment, training, and quality of enlistees.<sup>113</sup> At one point in the early 1970s, America's NATO allies had almost given up on the Army's commitment and readiness to help defend Europe.<sup>114</sup>

The 1973 Israeli-Arab Yom Kippur War demonstrated the changed nature of mechanized war in terms of tempo and advances in antitank and antiaircraft weapons systems. "This short war shocked Army leaders into a new sense of awareness of the speed and lethality of the modern battlefield."<sup>115</sup> In this brief but violent conflict, the war claimed more tanks as casualties than the Army had forward deployed in Europe.<sup>116</sup> The Army recognized that the United States was not prepared to conduct the style of modern warfare that successful operations required.<sup>117</sup>

Several senior leaders played significant roles in the Army's post-Vietnam transformation, such as James Schlesinger, Creighton Abrams, and William DePuy. James Schlesinger became Secretary of Defense in 1973. He previously worked at the RAND Corporation, well known as a strategic and military affairs research firm. Armed with his RAND experience, Secretary Schlesinger saw the imbalance of conventional forces in Europe as a critical shortcoming. During the Vietnam War, the United States and her allies relied on nuclear weapons as a general deterrent against the Warsaw Pact in central Europe. He was determined to turn the situation around and create "...a stalwart conventional defense in Europe."<sup>118</sup> Schlesinger understood the enormity of the

task and understood his initiative would take time given the "...dreadful condition of the U. S. Army at the time."<sup>119</sup> Regardless, Secretary Schlesinger provided a vision and direction for the Army to focus on Europe and winning a war against the Warsaw Pact. He established a sense of urgency and went to the Administration and Congress to secure resources for the Army's revitalization.<sup>120</sup>

The uniformed leadership that inspired the Army's transformation after Vietnam included senior officers who had witnessed demobilization after WW II and Korea. They understood the poor state of Army readiness as well as the gravity and complexity of the situation. These senior officers along with many others understood how sick the organization had become. In the early 1970s, they set out to save the Army from within.<sup>121</sup>

According to General Creighton Abrams, the Army's Chief of Staff, the Army suffered from "...deep-seated cynicism, a perception of widespread dishonesty in determining readiness, incompetence to handle the demands of peacetime, and excessive favoritism and self-serving behavior on the part of many officers."<sup>122</sup> General Abrams had previously experienced the effects of demobilization and its disastrous consequences. He repeatedly told others that "We have paid, and paid, and paid again in blood and sacrifice for our unpreparedness. I don't want war, but I'm appalled at the human cost that we've paid because we wouldn't prepare to fight."<sup>123</sup> General Abrams knew that the Army was struggling for its very existence as a viable force.

General Abrams focused his efforts on the quality of the Army's personnel and a comprehensive strategy to reach Secretary Schlesinger's vision on returning credibility to the forces in Europe. General Abrams improved the quality of personnel through equal opportunity and sexual harassment policies, along with ethnic sensitivity and awareness training. He also established a zero tolerance policy for illegal drugs, and implemented regular unit urinalysis tests for deterrence and adherence. Additionally,

the Army established a weight control program, and also included physical fitness as a discriminator on officer and NCO efficiency reports.<sup>124</sup>

General Abrams followed Secretary Schlesinger's direction by building consensus for predictable force levels. With the famous "handshake agreement", Secretary Schlesinger guaranteed the active Army manpower levels would remain stable at 785,000. With this agreement, Abrams formulated the Total Army Concept where the National Guard and Army Reserve would share the burden with the active force during wartime. America would no longer ask the active army to fight alone. Additionally, the Army successfully communicated its urgent need for equipment modernization to Congress. After years of neglect in research and development (R&D) and acquisition, the Army said it needed five new systems. The Army called these the "Big Five" which included what is currently the M1 tank, Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, Apache attack helicopter, Blackhawk utility helicopter, and the Patriot air defense system.<sup>125</sup>

Under the Total Army Concept, the Army replaced the Continental Army Command with two new commands called the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Forces Command (FORSCOM). TRADOC's purpose was to "...look to the future, so that the Army would never again be caught unaware of the changing nature of war."<sup>126</sup> FORSCOM became responsible for implementing the new concept through ensuring and overseeing the training readiness of all Army units to include reserve and guard units within the continental US.

General William DePuy was TRADOC's original commander. Intelligent, experienced, and pragmatic, General DePuy proved influential in almost every facet of the Army's post-Vietnam era. General DePuy used doctrine and uniform training standards as the *quality* cornerstones for the Army's transformation. His catalyst was "the shock of the rapid operations and massive lethality of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War."<sup>127</sup> This short conflict revealed the reality of the changed nature of war in the

1970s. In the past, the Army had lost many of its first battles, but had recovered to later annihilate its enemies. As highlighted by the Arab-Israeli conflict, losing the first battle in a war against the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe could very well mean losing the war.<sup>128</sup>

This galvanized the Army and created the sense of urgency necessary to overcome political and economic resistance to reform. General DePuy's ideas led to changes in three distinct areas that would enable the Army to fight outnumbered and win its first and subsequent battles of the next war. These were training, mobility, and command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I).<sup>129</sup> Armed with the lessons of the Yom Kippur War, TRADOC established how the Army would organize and fight when equipped with the new combat systems. Additionally, TRADOC established training standards that Army units would have to achieve in order to be successful in a future war against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

The principal document General DePuy influenced was the 1976 edition of Field Manual 100-5 (the Army's "how to fight" manual). Always the pragmatist, General DePuy felt the Army would have to fight outnumbered and win. The 1976 FM 100-5 conveyed the active defense doctrine. Following its publication, the manual inspired a decade of debate and intense thinking within the Army culture about what the modern battlefield was and how the force could best prevail on it. The new emphasis was on "coming as you are" to war.<sup>130</sup>

The issue of doctrine gained momentum and importance. In 1981, the concept of AirLand battle replaced the active defense doctrine. The Army taught itself more about the expansion of the modern battlefield and formally integrated the Air Force into its operational concept of how the Army executed campaigns and battles. The Army published AirLand battle doctrine in 1982 and again in the 1986 version of FM 100-5. AirLand battle emphasized maneuver and the use of long-range firepower to attack the

enemy throughout the battlefield's depth.<sup>131</sup>

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, TRADOC developed new and innovative ways to train. The most remarkable may be the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES), which enabled realistic combat training. The MILES system allowed commanders and their units to gain an understanding of the tempo and lethality of modern combat. In the 1980s, TRADOC created three combat training centers (CTCs) in California, Arkansas (later moved to Ft. Polk, LA), and Germany, which extensively used the MILES training equipment and pitted a rotational brigade sized unit against a permanent opposing force. Permanent party officers and NCOs acted as observers to help train the units' leadership and ensure they harvested all the relevant lessons. Training continues at these state-of-the-art facilities today. The quality of training provided by these centers has made them the envy of Armies around the world

Initially, units adhering to the prescribed TRADOC standards in areas such as weapons qualifications could not achieve them with the existing facilities. Following this, the Army vastly improved the quality and capacities of many homestation and CTC training facilities throughout the 1970s and 80s. For example, the Army developed combined arms live fire ranges, which allowed tanks, Bradleys, artillery, attack helicopters, and close air support to exercise simultaneously. Additionally, the Army experimented with combat simulations in the form of the Simulation Network (SIMNET). SIMNET is a virtual reality simulator that links whole units together to fight against other units on an computer-generated battlefield. The SIMNET venue allows staffs to plan operations and units and crews to execute them. Observer/controllers could now observe, record, play back, and examine the entire process in order for the unit to get a quality after action review (AAR) on their performance.<sup>132</sup>

By the mid-1980s, the Army had new doctrine, equipment, and quality venues to train individuals and units in force-on-force simulation engagement exercises and live

fire exercises. "Thus, with a combination of simulations using computer-assisted scenarios, actual live (fire) training using simulated enemy targets on ranges, and force on force using MILES, the U. S. Army gained combat experience without having to fight a war."<sup>133</sup> What the Army lacked was a method to train commanders and staffs in planning, synchronizing, and controlling AirLand Battle operations. The solution to this was the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). Developed in 1987 at Ft. Leavenworth, BCTP provided a method to train corps and division staffs. The training centered on a computer-assisted wargame. The commanders and staffs planned and executed a mission against a determined enemy. The rotational staffs learned to adapt to the changing situation as it unfolded and played it out on the computer. Now the Army could conduct quality training at each echelon of tactical organization.

As TRADOC defined how the Army's organizations would fight and the standards they had to achieve, FORSCOM developed the strategies to achieve those readiness standards. As the first commander of FORSCOM, General Walter Kerwin knew how to build *quality* into successful teams and organizations. He is responsible for integrating a comprehensive training strategy that included the new volunteer active force, the National Guard, and the reserves.<sup>134</sup> The total force would strive to achieve the same standards. FORSCOM oversaw the tough and realistic training dictated by TRADOC. In this manner, TRADOC and FORSCOM worked together to improve the *quality* of the Army's readiness.<sup>135</sup>

After the draft ended, the quality of enlistees dropped dramatically for the next several years. The Army faced many challenges training qualified soldiers to operate the Army's newest technologically advanced equipment. However, the Army slowly changed its ability to draw quality enlisted soldiers and officers. General Maxwell Thurman, felt America's youth wanted a challenge and he developed a media campaign that offered one. This philosophy apparently worked, by the late 1980s well over 90

percent of all enlistees were high school graduates.<sup>136</sup> In the for college students in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), accession for active duty became very competitive.<sup>137</sup>

As the quality of the Army's personnel increased, TRADOC took measures to improve the formal education and professional development throughout the 1980s. At Fort Leavenworth, the Army added the Combined Arms Services Staff School (CAS3) and the School for Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). CAS3 focused on integrating officers from different branches and teaching them to work as members of a brigade or division staff. SAMS developed officers in the operational art of campaign planning. The Army established the Noncommissioned Officers Education System (NCOES), where in conjunction with every promotion, sergeants would receive formal education germane to their new rank.<sup>138</sup>

The Army also improved the promotion system for NCOs and the command selection boards for officers. For the officers, centralized selection boards determined future battalion commanders, and, for NCOs promotion boards selected SFCs through SGM. Previously, many soldiers felt selection and promotion depended on local favoritism. With the central selection process, the Army chose the "best qualified" soldiers and officers for promotion and command. The process improved the quality of those selected and established a sense of equity and fairness for the promotion system.<sup>139</sup>

As the concept of AirLand Battle matured, the Army continued to refine its tactical organizations. The Army first implemented the Division and Corps 86 designs and then followed with the Army of Excellence. These new organizations incorporated the new "Big Five" weapons systems and trained under the new doctrine. The most contentious issue with organizations revolved around the Apache attack helicopter. The conservative ranks wanted most of the attack helicopters assigned to the division-level. The senior officers that truly understood AirLand Battle doctrine felt that the Army needed to

organize the preponderance of attack helicopters within corps aviation brigades in order to focus on and conduct sustained deep attacks in the enemy's rear areas. Eventually, the new doctrine drove the Army's decision to place attack helicopters in corps-level aviation brigades. This ensured corps commanders had the combat power to execute the Army's concept for deep fires.<sup>140</sup>

The Army also created or improved other organizations that could operate outside the realm of high intensity conflict in Europe. The Army established the light division that could be relatively easily deployed and operate in restricted or urban terrain. The Army found great utility in employing the light division in South America and during Operation Just Cause. Additionally, the Army expanded its special operations forces and allocated to them many new resources. By the late 1980s, the Army's division organizations reflected AirLand battle doctrine and routinely practiced combined arms training in order to execute it.<sup>141</sup>

By 1991, the Army reached its zenith in its preparedness to fight high intensity conventional warfare. During the Gulf War, the Army's XVIII and VII Corps easily defeated the Iraqi Republican Guard and many other mechanized divisions in only four days. Operation Desert Storm was something of a final exam for the Army's post Vietnam transformation centered on quality. During the Gulf war, "...something unique happened. For the first time in the American military record, U. S. troops won the first battle of a war and did so with minimal losses."<sup>142</sup> The Army's transformation from the nadir of the early seventies to the highpoint of professional excellence demonstrated by the force during the Gulf War highlighted how the institutions' culture can initiate and perpetuate organizational change from within.

## Chapter VI

### Post Cold War/ Desert Storm: The Current Campaign

“We’re dealing with Cavalry and Indians again...”

-Ralph Peters, interview from *Frontline: The Future of War*

At the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War, the United States Army was the most capable, most experienced, active armed force in the world. Within two years, the massive force that had vanquished Iraqi expansionism and guardedly watched the implosion of the Soviet Union and her armed forces was gone. Many of its volunteer ranks transitioned back to civilian life. Even with the liberation of Kuwait and dissolution of the only major threat to Europe and the Republic, peace and stability has not materialized. On the contrary, after Desert Storm, and the end of the Cold War, America has directed the Army to take on many nontraditional roles and missions in order to create stability around the world.<sup>143</sup>

Beginning with the end of the Cold War, America’s Army initiated another transformation from the Industrial Age force that defeated Iraq into an Information Age force prepared for the varied and ambiguous threats of the future. The current transformation campaign began in 1991 with another period of demobilization, and continues today as the Army seeks to create an adaptive and flexible force. After the Gulf War, the Army went from a large, forward-based force organized for high-intensity conflict and driven by the operational concept of AirLand battle; to a much smaller force conducting stability support operations around the world unguided by experience, doctrine, or an appropriate national strategy to guide it into the future.<sup>144</sup>

The Army’s transformation of the post- Cold War era centers on *relevance and purpose*. Although, the Army’s senior leaders managed the 1990s downsizing that kept the force adequately prepared for high intensity combat, the probability of fighting another large traditional tank battle has decreased drastically since the conclusion of Desert Storm. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, however, there has been a

global rise in a variety of smaller scale instabilities that will increasingly require the Army to quickly deploy and apply prompt and appropriate force in order to prevent conflict. Unfortunately, the Army is primarily postured to win a conventional war that probably will not occur (purpose), but faces difficulty in responding to the small, but complex conflicts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century security environment (relevance).<sup>145</sup>

One of the issues is how the active force is organized. The Army can deploy either light or heavy forces. America can project the light forces anywhere in the world very quickly, but their effectiveness is limited and they lack mobility. The Army's heavy forces are very capable, but it takes an extended length of time to deploy them and they require an enormous logistical effort for sustainment. Contemporary and future operations require significant capability across the spectrum of conflict that can be quickly deployed. This type of capability simply does not exist right now. Therefore, the Army has an operational shortfall that threatens to make the current force irrelevant.<sup>146</sup> However, General Shinseki's vision and concept of the interim force addresses the operational gap in capability, because according to MG Dubik, "...this army wants to stay relevant to the strategic environment."<sup>147</sup>

Without a traditional peer competitor to focus on, the Army has difficulty in defining its purpose in the post-Cold War era. Although the National Military Strategy directs the Army to prepare for near simultaneous major theater wars, America's foreign policy has increasingly stretched the Army thin through participation in long-term stability and support operations.<sup>148</sup>

The two best examples that explain the Army's need to transform are the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division's deployment to Saudi Arabia in 1990 and Task Force Hawk's deployment to Albania in 1999. In 1990, Saddam Hussein occupied Kuwait and threatened Saudi Arabia. When America decided to intervene, one brigade from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division was the only Army unit that could respond. The Army's heavy

forces would take much longer to arrive. Although they deployed in a matter of days, the airborne unit lacked mobility and adequate anti-armor capability. In short, if the Army forces had to fight the Iraqi mechanized forces, they would have done so at great risk.<sup>149</sup>

In 1999, the Army wanted a deep attack capability for operations in Kosovo. Therefore, the European Command created Task Force Hawk around an attack helicopter battalion. However, the logistical and security requirements made the task force ranks swell to more than 5000 soldiers, creating a strategic deployment problem. Further complicating the issue was the poor infrastructure of Albania, and the massive humanitarian relief operation competing for what airfields and roads did exist.<sup>150</sup>

The deployment took much longer than anticipated and “when the unit finally did deploy, it could not project the type of combat power that the Kosovo conflict demanded.”<sup>151</sup> The immediate lesson the Army has learned since Desert Storm is that it simply does not have an organization that is rapidly deployable, and that has an adequate range of capabilities to deal with today’s infinite variety of threats.<sup>152</sup>

In the decade between the Army’s deployments to Saudi Arabia and Albania, America’s foreign policy expanded the Army’s commitment in international stability and support operations. The Army intervened in Humanitarian Assistance (HA) operations in northern Iraq in 1991 and Somalia in 1993. It deployed to Haiti to create stability and restore a democracy in 1994. In 1995, the Army deployed to Bosnia to implement a peace agreement. Each Army deployment in the 1990s has several similarities that will most likely continue in future conflicts. First, these operations took place where the infrastructures were underdeveloped. Second, the situation presented a variety of threats. Third, the threats were both conventional and asymmetric. Finally, the operations were all difficult to project and sustain combat power to because of the long logistics lines and immature port, airfield, and road infrastructure.<sup>153</sup>

In each instance, the Army did not have an optimized organization that could apply prompt and appropriate force, or that had the inherent flexibility to deal with ambiguous and changing situations. Therefore, the Army had to mix and match capabilities from different existing units to create an ad hoc organization tailored for a particular deployment. The Army's operational gap between the light and heavy forces has caused the Army to employ a conventional force, trained for conventional warfare, to address unconventional problems and threats.<sup>154</sup>

In the future, the Army will face adaptive, changing, and evolving threats capable of integrating asymmetric strategies and digitized information-based capabilities in large urban areas in order to offset America's technological advantages in firepower, maneuver, communications, and intelligence collection. Military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) are very challenging and difficult, and the Army has avoided them when possible. Future threats will operate from urban areas seeking physical as well as political sanctuary through societal constraints of rules of engagement (ROE) and international constraints derived from media exposure.<sup>155</sup>

Future enemies will use both conventional and asymmetric warfare, involving information operations (IO); weapons of mass destruction, psychological operations (PSYOPS), and direct action where U.S. forces are predictable or weak, such as air and seaports of debarkation (APOD/SPOD). Asymmetric enemies will not organize or behave like conventional forces. The threats of tomorrow will be difficult to template because the nature of their operations will appear patternless.<sup>156</sup>

The future threat environment will have tremendous influence on the planning and execution of Army operations. The environment will be ambiguous, ever changing, and chaotic. America's soldiers will face capable and determined enemies. The Army cannot afford to continue to try to solve these unconventional conflicts with the existing conventional organizations and doctrine.

The Army's current transformation is occurring in primarily two dimensions. First, the force is changing in technological terms from the Industrial Age to the Information Age. Second, the Army's operational environment is changing from a bipolar security environment with a single and well-known threat to an unpredictable multipolar world with a seemingly infinite variety of threats.<sup>157</sup> Transformation addresses how to take information-based technologies and apply them to uncertain threats of the future.<sup>158</sup>

To this point in the current transformation, the changes and requirements of the world security environment have outpaced the capabilities achieved by the short term/intermediate transformational goals of the Force Projection Army. Prior to the interim force's deployment concept, the Army's ambitious advancements in projecting combat power have achieved only marginal improvements. These incremental increases in capability have been in the areas of deployment doctrine, reserve equipment pre-positioning, modernization of strategic airlift, global digital command and control systems, more flexible reserve call-up policies, and pre-packaged and ready logistics packages.<sup>159</sup> The Army accomplished these improvements in capability with the means available. The Army achieved this without much resistance because it did not seek to change organizational structures (other than marginal changes of the limited conversion division (LCD), which the force is at best ambivalent about), and the roles of individual branches.

The Army has reached a point of diminishing returns in its quest to remain relevant in the post-Cold War security environment.<sup>160</sup> General Shinseki's transformation plan looks beyond the current technology and means available today by focusing on requirements and capabilities the Army needs for the long-term future. His plan proceeds through three Axes, the legacy force, the interim force, and the objective force. The legacy force axis focuses on current readiness and re-capitalization of the existing Cold War era systems. The objective force axis is conceptual and based on future requirements discovered through futuristic wargames, advanced

technology demonstrations, and lessons learned through the experience of the interim force. The interim force axis serves two purposes. First, it fills the current operational shortfall between the Army's light and heavy forces. Second, the interim force serves as an intellectual vehicle for military enlightenment that will demonstrate over time what capabilities an Information Age force in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century must have to succeed in the post-Cold War era.<sup>161</sup> According to MG Dubik:

“ The equipment side of change is the easy side. The non-equipment stuff is the hard part, and that's what takes time. We're talking about changing the way people think, changing the way people are organized, changing the way people will fight. That takes time. Human beings don't change in an instant. You can change a piece of equipment by issuing it, but you can't change a person's mind in an instant. So the interim force helps us. Besides satisfying the near term requirement of deploying quickly with large combat punch, it helps us get at the non-equipment aspects of the future.”<sup>162</sup>

The interim force experience will not only expand the Army's capabilities in the near-term, but also lead the way to how the objective force should be organized, equipped, and trained. The interim force is not only an operational unit, but also a test facility to tell us how to prepare the force as a whole for the future. Although, Army transformation is recognized by a radical change in organization and equipment, the transformation process should include changing doctrine, training, education, and leader development.<sup>163</sup> The interim force should be the cornerstone of a holistic transformation process.

However, not everyone in the force has bought into the transformation's concept. The institutional army is an extraordinarily conservative and often myopic organization that clings desperately to the safety and comfort of the past. General Shinseki has initiated the transformation campaign while facing tremendous internal and external resistance from opposite sides. On one hand, the Army's Chief of Staff faces internal resistance from branch parochialists comfortable with their current organizations and contribution toward conventional warfare. According to Ralph Peters, “...those who have their careers invested in heavy metal, will certainly fight him tooth and nail.”<sup>164</sup> On the other hand, General Shinseki faces external

political and economic resistance from Congress and corporate military industrialists interested in defending constituencies and perpetuating Cold War era contracts.<sup>165</sup>

The philosophy of the interim and objective force now challenges the deeply entrenched conservative views of individual branches and officer corps. The transformation has created great anxiety and apprehension as the process struggles with how the future Army will fight, prepare, train, organize, and develop leaders, not just what vehicles and equipment the force will employ. The current Army transformation challenges the individual heavy force, air assault, or airborne leader to make an intellectual transformation or “mental leap” in order to participate and contribute.

In the post-Cold War era, the Army is increasingly faces more unconventional operations involving complex problems and a broad array of ambiguous threats. Through the 1990s, the Army has had the luxury of time and relative peace to try and to solve its force projection and doctrinal problems. However, the Army did not pursue overhauling its traditional organizations or successfully adapt its doctrine to the new security environment. The result is marginal increases in the forces’ ability to quickly deploy and a continuing shortfall in capability between the light and heavy forces. General Shinseki’s plan seeks to permanently resolve this problem.

As the Army seeks to maintain its current readiness and prepare for the long-term, the interim force axis of the transformation plan will add to the current readiness and show the Army how to prepare leaders and organizations for the future. The interim force will enable and help define the objective force. In the mean time, the Army will face continued political, military, economic resistance. However, as General Shinseki states: “An army that fought and won a war decisively finds it even more difficult to undergo change. But this is the right step in order to prepare ourselves for future conflict and not saddle ourselves with preparing for the last war.”<sup>166</sup>

## Chapter VII

### Analysis and Comparison

The conditions of the post-Civil War transformation are strikingly similar to the conditions that exist during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation. The fundamental reason for change is the same; the post-Civil War and post-Cold War Army both faced a problem over *relevance and purpose* in a new security environment that demanded a different intellectual approach than the previous war required. Additionally, the post-Civil War and 21<sup>st</sup> Century missions and operations are alike in many respects. For instance, the peace implementation mission in Bosnia is comparable to Reconstruction. In both cases, the Army had to assume responsibilities for missions it had never trained for.

The post-Civil War and post-Cold War eras have many common characteristics. First of all, both transformations followed the dissolution of the only major threat to the republic (The Confederacy and Soviet Union). Second, both transformations began while the Army was at the top of its effectiveness sine curve (See Figure 1.) Third, both occurred while America enjoyed a period of relative national security and therefore had the luxury of time to pursue a deliberate transformation. Fourth, the nature of warfare and the uncertainties of the security environment are very similar in both the post-Civil War and 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation eras. Today, just like it did after the Civil War, the Army faces a variety of ambiguous and unconventional missions.

Fifth, for the ten years since beginning the current transformation, the Army made the same mistakes it did after the Civil War in not recognizing that stability and support operations are the business of the day. As author Ralph Peters explains:

“The other problem we face is that it’s not only the first battle of the next war. We are in an age of conflict after conflict, intervention after intervention and they’re not going to stop. If you study the history of the nineteenth-century army fighting the Indians of the Southwest and Northwest, ...every one of those was the last one. In other words, there would be no more Bosnias, no more Kosovos. They’re all the last one. The bad news is we are in for a nearly endless stream of these.”<sup>167</sup>

In each era, the Army initially failed to institutionalize these new missions and adapt to the different nature of war, and therefore tried to use conventional organizations and techniques to solve these unconventional problems. Just like today, what the Army needed during the Indian campaigns, and while operating in America's new colonies during and after the Spanish-American Civil War, is the capability to quickly project adequate combat power and then apply the appropriate force necessary to deter or decisively win and end the aggression or conflict.

In order to learn "how" to prepare and plan for the future, in both eras the Army used analogous means of discovery to grasp the new realities of the changing security environment. During the post-Civil War period, the Army created a formal education and school system to increase the officer corps' competency and understanding of warfighting in order to succeed in the Industrial Age. Similarly, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation is using the interim force as the intellectual vehicle to enlighten and understand how a force must be organized, trained, and equipped in order to succeed in the Information Age.

Finally, in both the post-Civil War and 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformations, the Army's internal leadership recognized the need to change in order to prepare for future conflict. In both cases, no authority outside the Army directed it to change its organization or doctrine. However, both transformation eras faced the same type of traditional cultural resistance from those that are comfortable with the status quo and prefer to focus on fixing the deficiencies of the last war instead of addressing the anticipated operational shortfalls of the future.

The crises of WW II and the apparent invincibility of the German military led to the Army's crash transformation program to create and develop the *capability* and *capacity* to wage mechanized warfare. The Germans quickly became a powerful threat that incorporated the latest technology of the Industrial Age to rapidly defeat their

weaker European neighbors. With General Marshall's vision and transformation strategy, the Army used the division structure based on new mechanized equipment as the vehicle for change in order to compete on the battlefield with the Germans. The Army incorporated the lessons of large-scale training exercises to determine organizational structure, equipment, and new doctrine.

After years of external political, economic, and internal military resistance to change, the Army suddenly had to mobilize, modernize, and expand immediately from the bottom of its effectiveness sine curve. The compression of available time coupled with the complexity and enormity of the problem prevented the Army from being fully trained and ready for its first battle against the Afrika Korps.

The potential crises faced by the Army defending Central Europe against the Soviet Union led to a transformation to improve the *quality* of the force during the 1970s and 80s. While the Vietnam War incapacitated the Army, the Soviets had made qualitative as well as quantitative increases in their ground combat forces. This increased threat to Europe provided the vision and direction for the Army to execute a comprehensive transformation to improve overall quality. Following Vietnam, the Army leadership recognized the perilous situation that existed with its forces' readiness and morale. As it initiated changes, the Army faced relatively little internal or external resistance in its effort to reinvent itself because America's political and military leadership recognized the inferior state of the force. America's nuclear deterrence policy, however, created a strategic balance of power that allowed time for the Army to make qualitative operational and tactical improvements in doctrine, organizations, equipment, training, professional education and leader development.

The Army's post-Vietnam transformation differs from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation in that it began at the bottom of the effectiveness sine curve, and focused on building a force capable of defeating the specific threat of the Soviet's conventional

ground forces. After close analysis, the post-Vietnam transformation more closely resembles the pre-WW II transformation, in that the Army sought to improve its capabilities across a broad front in order to defeat a specific, but very capable threat. The difference between the two is that post-Vietnam transformation wasn't bound by the same time constraints as the pre-WW II effort and America was not in a state of declared war.

The Army used doctrine as the cornerstone for developing organizations and capabilities in order to create a force capable enough to defeat the numerically superior Soviet threat. Doctrine influenced military education, training standards, modernization requirements, and command and control requirements. Over a period of seventeen years, the Army developed into the most capable and lethal force in the world. Although prepared to fight in Central Europe, the post-Vietnam era Army validated itself in Panama and Iraq, where the Army performed magnificently. The post-Vietnam transformation vastly improved the Army's quality and made it a viable force once again. In the realm of conventional high intensity conflict, America's Army achieved an asymmetry that it still enjoys today.

All the Army's transformations since the Civil War have commonalties, such as capable and experienced senior leadership as well as a necessity to adapt and prepare for the future. Nonetheless, the conditions that the Army operated in and the fundamental reasons for change are the most similar between the post-Civil War and the post-Cold War eras.

## **Chapter VIII**

### **Conclusions**

As the Army transforms itself to overcome the problems of strategic mobility, and deal with the complexities and uncertainties of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the officer corps and the force should recognize that the Army has undergone sweeping change before. In the past, the Army has transformed to meet new threats and changing security environments, and later performed with distinction. The ultimate results led to decisive victories such as in WW II and Desert Storm.

On the other hand, the Army has undergone periods when it needed to change, but failed to overcome the political or military resistance. For example, the Army officer corps realized during the period leading up to the Spanish-American War that the Army needed a larger standing force and the capacity to project that force to regional conflicts outside the continental United States. Political resistance, however, prevented real change and adaptation to occur. The result was that the Army faced great difficulty in quickly mobilizing a credible force, and the Navy had a tough time projecting the force to Cuba and the Philippines.

Since the Army currently has the opportunity to experiment and deliberately transform, it should continue to prepare for the future of war along the lines General Shinseki has articulated to civilian and military leaders and the American public. As for the Army's officer corps, it should study the past and previous transformations, and focus on preparing for the varied threats of the future instead of championing the recent, but possibly irrelevant contemporary victories. Although the resistance to change is natural, the Army's officer corps has no reason to fear transformation because the process is justified, addresses current operational shortfalls, and will help define the objective force.

The Army should expand the scope of its 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation. The current

transformation is best known for developing a strategically deployable interim force that fills the operational gap between the Army's light and heavy forces. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century transformation has not yet generated a lot of momentum in the areas of leader development and training for the anticipated threats and environments of the future. For example, the heavy forces continue to train to fight a soviet style mechanized force at the National Training Center in California. Unit Mission Essential Task Lists still don't put enough focus on stability operations even though that is the most likely mission of conventional forces in the near term future. Additionally, the Army's premier training venues don't currently have the infrastructure to prepare large units for urban combat, which is the most likely terrain on which the Army might fight the next battle on.

In the end, Army transformation is not an incrimination of the status quo; it is a necessary and logical process to fix an operational shortfall and evolve with the times. According to General Shinseki: "Otherwise, we will go through transformation at some later date when the risk is much higher. If our history of first battles is any suggestion, that may come on the eve of the next war and that would be unfortunate."<sup>168</sup> Many officers have argued the limitations of wheeled vehicles relative to traditional combat vehicles, or whether the stability or peacekeeping operations are valid missions for the Army. Regardless of what the military culture and officer corps thinks is a worthy mission, transformation prepares the force for the future. As its process and goals challenge what the corps is professionally comfortable with, Army Transformation continues to focus on what America needs and the current world security environment demands.

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- <sup>6</sup> John P. Kotter, "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail," *Harvard Business Review on Change*, pp. 1-20.
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