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ARMY VS. NAVY: THE RACE TO FEDERALIZE THE MILITIAS

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Graduate Certificate in Maritime History.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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14. ABSTRACT During the Spanish American War, the United States mobilized not just the organized militias of forty-five states, but also the newly established naval militias of fifteen states. The war highlighted the increasing tensions between the U.S.'s militia-based system and the requirements of modern warfare. Both services responded by federalizing their militias, but the Navy took eleven years longer than the Army. The Navy's slower federalization was primarily due to its weaker political pull, the faster divergence of mission sets between the service and the militia, and the lower priority of the militia as compared to the Army.						
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Speak of the Army, and you call before you a body of men armed and trained. Speak of the Navy and we picture to ourselves ships armed and furnished with officers and crew. This is to say, while the former means men, the latter brings up the material instrument with which men work—a ship and her guns—rather than the man himself. But the world has personified a ship from the days of Homer down. The custom ought not blind one to the truth that the ship and her armament is, after all, but so much inert matter. It is the man, the brain of man, that is everything.

—Frank W. Hackett, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, June 2, 1900¹

The U.S.'s declaration of war upon Spain on April 25, 1898 marked the first significant test of its armed forces since the Civil-War ended in 1865. During that period, both the Army and Navy had suffered from neglect as the Long Depression, 1873-1879, and entrenched U.S. isolationism prevented modernization of U.S. forces and military policy. Undeterred, the U.S. Government looked to its traditional source of military strength, the citizen-soldiers of the militias. For the first time in U.S. History, the nation could call on not just the National Guard of forty-five states, but also the new naval militias of fifteen states.² With these forces and the rising power of American manufacturing, the U.S. was able to rapidly integrate men and equipment into the armed forces to carry the battle to Spain in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The results of the war shocked the international community; within four months, the U.S. had defeated Spain's fleets in the Atlantic and Pacific and gained control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. The rapid U.S. success, with remarkably few casualties, led future Secretary of State John Hays to describe the Spanish-American War as a "splendid little war."³

¹ Frank W. Hackett, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, "Address at the Opening of the NWC" Jun 2, 1900, Box 2 Folder 1, (addresses 1900-1903) Naval War College Archive, Newport, RI, 5.

² The 1916 *Militia Act* mandated the term National Guard when referring to the organized state militias. Prior to that, each state named their organized militias as they pleased. Many states, including New York, referred to their organized militias as the National Guard. This paper uses the term National Guard to refer to the organized militias of all the states, unless a state is specifically referenced, in order to more easily differentiate between the naval militia and the militia.

³ A.B. Feuer, *The Spanish American War at Sea: Naval Action in the Atlantic*, (Westport, Praeger Publishers, 1995) ix.

Despite its success, the war was not without missteps and lessons learned. The rapid merger of militia and active-duty forces highlighted the increasing tensions between the U.S.'s militia-based system and the requirements of the U.S. Army and Navy for modern warfare. By using the annual reports of the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy along with other primary and secondary sources, this paper will examine the federalization of the militias that occurred after the Spanish American War and why the Navy lagged eleven years behind the Army in the process.

While many books and dissertations cover the creation of the Army National Guard and the Navy Reserve that arose from the militias, few look deeply at the step of federalization that occurred following the Spanish American War. Because the National Guard can trace its roots directly to the militia there is more coverage for the Army. Yet these sources primarily exist to provide the history of the national guard and federalization is only a small step on that path. A few PHD dissertations such as Louis Cantor's *The Creation of the Modern National Guard: The Dicks Military Act of 1903* focus more exclusively on the political and military situation facing the Army and National Guard after the Spanish American War.⁴ These sources and provide an excellent analysis of the changing relationship between the National Guard and the Army.

Unlike the National Guard, the naval militias were, and remain, an obscure branch of the Navy. Interest in the naval militias mainly comes from sources concerned with the Navy Reserve. However, the naval militias are not a true predecessor of the Navy Reserve. Both organizations exist today as separate entities. In 1992, the center for naval warfare studies published *U.S. Naval Reserve: The First 75 Years*, which provides an excellent synopsis of the

⁴ Louis Cantor, "The Creation of the Modern National Guard: The Dicks Militia Act of 1903" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1963).

problems the Navy had in employing the naval militias in Spanish American War.⁵ It also provides some analysis of the competition between proponents of federalizing the naval militia and those wanting to focus on a true Naval Reserve. Even when naval militias are addressed specifically the topic is usually their creation, employment in the Spanish American War, or their decline due to the creation of a Naval Reserve. These papers address federalization to explain the naval militias' current status, but they don't focus on the struggle and compromise that made it possible.

The struggle to federalize the naval militia is also overshadowed by the dynamic changes for the Navy during that period. While the naval militias fought for recognition, they had to compete with headline grabbing topics such as the General Board, the creation of the Dreadnought battleship, The Great White Fleet, and the start of World War I. These topics took up much of the Navy's time, and they absorb much of the literature on the Navy about the era today. The result is that federalization of the National Guard and the naval militias is often overlooked in literature addressing the period. However, the background played an important role is advancing or slowing the progress of naval militia federalization.

Even though the Spanish American War was the first war fought with both the National Guard and the naval militias, historians have largely ignored the opportunity to compare and contrast the two organizations. Both organizations had to adapt to the lessons learned after the conflict. Literature concerning the Spanish American War does look at the accomplishments of the Navy and the Army holistically. However, literature on military policy remains largely stove piped, and addresses only the service that created the policy. However, the Army's and the

⁵ James E. Watters, Walt Johanson, and Mel Chaloupka, *U.S. Naval Reserve: The first 75 Years*. Advanced Concepts Department Naval Reserve Project. Naval Reserve Paper No. 1. (Newport: Naval War College Center for Naval Warfare Studies. 1992).

Navy's legislations and policies have significant impacts on each other and should be considered in tandem.

The Navy's slower federalization was primarily due to its weaker political pull, the faster divergence of mission sets between the service and the militia, and the lower prioritization of the militia as compared to the Army. This paper will first look at the roles of militias in American military strategy, the problems with the militia system the Army and Navy identified after the Spanish-American War, and the timeline for the solutions that each service found. Finally, it will examine how changing mission sets, service-specific priorities, and politics accelerated the divergence between the Navy and the militia system as compared to the Army.

The faith in militias and their fighting spirit was nothing new to America, and the militia's record of victory gave proponents reason to believe it could work again against Spain. Since the founding of the original British colonies, militias had formed the backbone of military might in North America. Laws requiring compulsory militia service date back to the seventeenth century, over one hundred and fifty years before the founding of the United States.⁶ The militia's prominent role in the American Revolution enshrined the legacy of the militia, and the image of the brave civilian with a musket above the fireplace, ready to defend his nation, was established in the American military mythos. Thomas Jefferson was a huge proponent of the militia and stated during his inauguration address that "The maintenance of a well-disciplined militia is our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war."⁷ To ensure its continued role and availability, and to avoid the dangers of a standing Army, the U.S. Constitution explicitly endorses militias. The original 1788 ratification made the President the Commander and Chief of

⁶ Cantor, "Creation of the Modern National Guard", 3.

⁷ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1914), 32.

the militias when called into service, but gave Congress power over the "organization, arming, and disciplining" as well as the power to employ them to "execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasion."⁸ The Militia Act of 1792 codified land militias into law by requiring each state in America to legislate a militia that could be called upon by the President.

The Navy's versions of the militia during the Revolutionary War were the colonial navies of several states and the privateer. Colonial navies belonged to individual states and were not associated with the federal Continental Navy. These navies mainly focused on protecting trade and taking British ships for prize money. Both privateers and state navies were quickly disbanded after the Revolutionary War, leaving the fledgling US Navy solely responsible for maritime warfare. In response, President Jefferson submitted a Naval Militia Plan to Congress that would require seafaring tradesmen to muster into naval militias that could be used by the Navy in case of war in 1808.⁹ Despite several attempts, the legislation failed to pass Congress, and U.S. militias remained solely land-based for nearly a century.

The U.S. may never have had a naval militia except for a successful grass-roots campaign in the late 1880s that led to the "New Navy" movement. After the Civil War, the Navy was largely neglected as the nation struggled through reconstruction and the rebuilding of the southern states. By the 1880s, the U.S was becoming an economic superpower, but was still reluctant to invest in the Navy. Congress' intentional stunting of the armed forces rankled many officers in the Navy. In 1885, Secretary of the navy William C. Whitney summed up their feelings by saying: "There is no other nation that has so much of the material of war that is so

⁸ U.S. Constitution, Article 1, section 8.

⁹ Congress, *Bill for Establishing Naval Militia*. December, 1805. Manuscript/Mixed Material. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mtjbib015471/>.

little prepared to utilize it; that has so much of personnel available and that is so utterly without authority of law to employ it."¹⁰ In response, active duty officers of the U.S. Navy and their advocates started a campaign, calling for the modernization of the Navy as a symbol of the growing power of America. With the closing of the West by the transcontinental railway and the fulfillment of manifest destiny, the idea of expanding the U.S. by ocean caught in the popular imagination.¹¹ Against this background, patriotically minded mariners banded together to lobby their states to create their own naval militias. In 1889, Massachusetts became the first state to rise to this challenge and independently created and funded their own Naval Militia to supplement their National Guard. The trend spread through the states of the East Coast and Great Lakes, encouraged by the Navy and eventually partially supported by Congress.

While the National Guard and newly minted naval militia forces served admirably during the Spanish-American War, their rapid integration into the active-duty body highlighted many problems with the U.S.'s militia centric strategy. Annual reports from both the Secretary of War and the Navy discuss many friction points between the State Defense Forces and the standing military. While some were unavoidable due to the unprecedented increase in forces, many of the problems were systemic, including legal status, training, and administration.

Both the Army and the Navy struggled to deal with the exponential growth in size and mission sets the Spanish-American War required of them. The main occupations of active duty Army troops before the Spanish American War were drilling and putting down Native American uprisings. In a rare moment of brutal honesty, the Secretary of War reported in 1898 that the

¹⁰ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1885), XXX

¹¹ Craig Symonds, *The U.S. Navy A Concise History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 61.

entire Army consisted of only "25,000 men" with a "small amount of ammunition."¹² Adding to that, eighteen percent of the Army's active-duty commissioned officers were detached from the Army on extended leaves of absence, many due to injuries and disabilities that left them unfit for service.¹³ President McKinney's initial call for 150,000 volunteers, followed by a second call for 75,000 more, caused the Army to balloon over eight hundred percent in only a few months. The sudden expanse stretched the Army's capacity to feed, pay, and equip its new members.

The Navy was also unprepared for the onslaught of the Spanish-American War. Immediately prior to this conflict, the Navy had been primarily used as diplomatic envoys and peacekeepers in South America. Congress had limited the manpower of the Navy to a maximum enlisted strength of 12,500.¹⁴ This low number hampered the service's ability to man their ships. To compensate, the Navy relied heavily on foreign-born sailors to fill its ranks before the New Navy movement.¹⁵ At the height of the Spanish-American War buildup in August 1898, the Navy enlisted 24,123 men, enough to man the 128 additional ships the Navy had purchased.¹⁶ Doubling the fleet required the Navy to pull many ships out of mothballs and to arm ships that had not been designed as warships. The resulting fleet strained the Navy's resources and was poorly equipped and manned.

However, before the problems of how to deal with the sheer size of the military build-up, the militias and the armed forces had to figure out how to legally incorporate themselves into a unified fighting body. The Army already had legal precedents and historical examples to guide

¹² U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1898), 4.

¹³ U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1897), 11.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1898), 23.

¹⁵ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1885, 198.

¹⁶ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1898, 23.

them. As tension with Spain mounted, the Army sat down with the state governments and with the National Guard to prepare the force structure for the coming fight. Together they decided to create a second organization called the volunteer army that the state's militia would be enlisted into. Each State was given a quota of regiments and units it could provide which was dictated by the federal government with inputs from the Army. Unfortunately, the Navy had no legal authority to call up the naval militia since they were state-funded, organized, and created. Since they made up a large portion of the available manpower, The Navy was left in a bind and appealed to the States for help. The 1898 Secretary of the Navy's report praised the response of the state governors who "patriotically granted them [naval militia members] leaves of absence or permitted them to resign from the State organizations in order to enlist in the Navy."¹⁷ Without this selfless gesture, the Navy would have been left without the 4,000 naval militia members who rushed into the Navy.¹⁸ With this workaround in place, the Navy sent special recruiters to all naval militia headquarters to examine and quickly process the volunteers into the Navy.

Yet, even as the Army and the Navy expressed gratitude for the sheer number of patriotic volunteers, they were both gently reproachful of the quality of many of the new recruits. The Army's system of accepting only militia units of the type and quantity they requested from each state was extremely efficient. The militia units, now part of the U.S. Volunteer Army, stayed together while the active duty Army consolidated the pre-set units into brigades, regiments, and so on. As part of this strategy, the Army would only accept National Guard units that were at full strength. Some units struggled to fill their numbers and turned to lower standards or heavy-handed tactics to bring their units up to full strength.¹⁹ While the Army's official reports were

¹⁷ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1898, 19-20.

¹⁸ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1898, 19-20.

¹⁹ Cantor, "Modern National Guard", 122.

carefully couched, some disapproval seeped through. Describing an expeditionary force to Puerto Rico at the onset of the war, the Secretary of War stated, "It contains 14 of the best-conditioned regiments of volunteers... Yet these have never been under fire. Between 30 and 40 percent are undrilled, and in one regiment, over 300 men had never fired a gun."²⁰ Even for those volunteer soldiers who were trained by their militias, the standard armament of the Militia was a bolt action single loader Springfield rifle, which the Army considered obsolete.²¹ These mismatches in training and equipment between the National Guard and the Army caused the Secretary of War to suggest that "a more intimate relation can wisely be established between the militia and the National Government."²² The Army felt the average National Guard member needed additional training and better equipment to be ready for war.

Like the enlisted soldiers, the National Guard officer corps had problems. Since state governors oversaw putting the militia units together and commissioned all of their officers, a few governors used this power to reward their political supporters with commissions. As a result, some units had officers with no military experience.²³ The Army had no power to reject these commissions and did its best to train the officers they were given. The need for increased militia officer training caused the Army to suggest to Congress that militia officers should be allowed to attend the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, arguing that spreading military instruction throughout the U.S. would more than cover the cost to the taxpayer.²⁴ While this suggestion was not adopted, it highlights the need for increased professional military education for the officer corps of the militia.

²⁰ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1898, 12.

²¹ War Dept, Sec of War 1897, 79.

²² U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1899), 565.

²³ Cantor, "Modern National Guard", 117.

²⁴ War Dept, Sec of War 1899, 582.

The Navy also suffered from what it saw as sub-standard recruits. While the Navy was able to examine and choose its volunteers, it had a smaller pool of pre-trained personnel to choose from. Prior to the Spanish-American War, the Navy had annually provided a two-week training cruise for the naval militias on older or decommissioning warships. However, attendance by the naval militias was voluntary, and many states were unable to attend. Reports from the cruises were sent back to the Navy to assess the general strength of the unit. The general feedback was positive, but as the Secretary of Navy tactfully reported, "Some states take a deeper interest in the work than others."²⁵ Unfortunately, the Navy had no direct influence over the naval militia's training outside of the annual cruise they provided. As a result, the Secretary of the Navy, while praising of the spirit and determination of the recruits, noted that they "lacked the experience in gunnery, navigation, and the habits of the sea which are essential to immediate efficient service in the Navy."²⁶ Despite these deficiencies, the Navy assigned enough naval militia forces to the auxiliary cruisers *Yankee*, *Dixie*, *Prairie*, and *Yosemite*, that only the commanding, executive, and navigating officers were active duty.²⁷ The exploits of these four ships did much to boost the naval militias' spirit, but most men were assigned to shore duties or auxiliary crafts. The Navy did not want to put the untrained naval militia members into the front lines without more training.

The Army moved more quickly than the Navy to address the issues identified during the Spanish American War. Congress, at the urging and recommendation of the Army, passed The Militia Act of 1903 less than four years after the war, The Act made the National Guard a federal

²⁵ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), 70.

²⁶ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1899), 20.

²⁷ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1899, 20.

arm of the Army during times of war, and gave the Army broad oversight of the militias. In his 1903 report, Secretary of War Elihu Root described the Act as a "series of provisions designed to promote the strength, efficiency, and prosperity of these militia organizations; to make them and the Regular Army a homogeneous force."²⁸ As part of the legislation, states militia received a million dollars to help pay for arms, instruction from active duty officers, and supplies.²⁹ However, the funds were contingent on the militia passing an annual inspection from active duty officers specially trained and designated for the purpose. The Act also required militia forces to drill a minimum number of times per year, including a set number of days. Within a few months, the Army had inspected the militias of every state reporting their numbers, assessing their weapons, and reviewing their attendance records. The inspections electrified the militias, causing complete structural reorganizations in several states and the issue of 88,031 magazine rifles and carbines.³⁰ Additionally, the Act allowed for a volunteer force to be created for actions deemed outside of the scope of the militias. While militia commissions would still be handled by the state governor, commissions in the volunteer force would require an examination and recommendation by the Army.³¹ The Militia Act of 1903 solved most of the problems that the militia and Army encountered during the Spanish-American War, and its enactment strengthened both organizations.

Despite the earlier success of the Army, the Navy took eleven years longer to follow suit, only making than the naval militias a federal arm of the U.S. Navy in 1914. While the Naval Militia Bill of 1914 was not as well funded as the Militia Act of 1903, it accomplished several of

²⁸ U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), 14.

²⁹ War Dept, Sec of War 1903, 15.

³⁰ War Dept, Sec of War 1903, 17, 20.

³¹ War Dept, Sec of War 1903, 15.

the same purposes. The resultant Act made the naval militias of every state part of the Navy during times of war. Now, the President, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, could legally integrate the naval militias into the Navy in order to repel invasion, execute law, or suppress insurrections, just like the National Guard. Additionally, the Act mandated standardized exams for enlisted and officer promotions within the naval militia and developed a common set of training requirements.³² For the first time, the naval militias received legal protections and privileges comparable to those enjoyed by the National Guard for the previous decade. Fifteen years after their heroics in the Spanish-American War, members of the naval militias were finally an official part of the U.S. military. For many members, it had been a long and frustrating wait.

It is remarkable that the Navy took considerably longer than the Army to solve similar problems with similar legislature. Using the Army's legislation as a guide, the process should have taken less than eleven years for the Navy. The next portion will look at the many reasons why it took longer, including the complicated relationships between the Army, Navy, militias, state governors, and the federal government. Most of the reasons involved changes in the mission sets of the Navy and naval militias, the priority that services put on federalizing the militias, and the political pull of each organization. However, many factors were influenced by events, opinions, and decisions that occurred well before the start of the Spanish American War. The confluence of modern changes and historical biases slowed the federalization of the naval militias.

One of the earliest and strongest factors that by contrast benefitted the National Guard was its larger size and longer history. These factors gave it more pull with Congress than the

³² Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1914, 33.

fledgling naval militias. From the inception of the U.S., Congress had required every state to establish a land militia. Because of this early decision, every member of Congress had constituents that cared about and would be affected by the legislation proposed for the National Guard. Additionally, since the state governor was the commander of the organization, the militias found a ready champion to carry many of their problems to Congress. State militias soon realized their political potential. In 1879, they banded together to create National Guard Associations as a centralized voice for the militia to Congress.³³ The National Guard Associations grew into far-reaching organizations that held annual conferences to discuss matters of importance to the militia. Secretary of War Root openly acknowledged in his 1903 annual report that the main points of the Militia Act of 1903 had been hashed out by National Guard Associations and the War Department in a 1902 conference, before being proposed to Congress.³⁴ Additionally, the National Guard Associations had a direct conduit to Congress via the Standing Committee on the Militia. The committee had been created in 1835 specifically to aid in militia affairs and was influential in passing the 1903 act; ironically, after the passage of Militia Act, the committee became largely redundant, and in 1911 it merged into the house committee on military affairs and was unable to assist the naval militias.³⁵ It also did not hurt that Congressman Charles Dick, who chaired the House Committee on the Militia starting in 1901, was a Major General in the Ohio National Guard and the President of a National Guard Association.³⁶ For this reason, many in Congress commonly referred to the Militia Act of 1903 as the Dicks Act, in recognition of his role and efforts in bringing it to fruition. With these

³³ Cantor, "National Guard", 59

³⁴ Sec of War, 1903, 13.

³⁵ United States. National Archives and Records Administration. Guide to the Records of the United States House of Representatives at the National Archives, 1789-1989. Bicentennial ed. (Washington, DC, 1989). H. Doc.100-245, 100th Cong., 2nd sess. 48.

³⁶ Cantor, "National Guard", 189-190.

connections, the National Guard was a political power, perhaps even more powerful than the Army at certain points in this time period due to the Army's small size. The National Guard's political power ensured that proposed legislation, like the Militia Act, received prompt attention.

While the National Guard enjoyed a rise in political power in the 1880s, the Navy was fighting Congress for parity with the Army. A pervasive opinion existed in the federal government that the Navy, especially for the enlisted, was a profession and not a true armed service. Congress considered sailors mariners who had simply chosen the Navy vice the merchant marine. Because of that, Congress felt no need to legislate additional benefits for them as it did for soldiers and marines. On February 14, 1885 Congress passed an act allowing soldiers in the Army and marines in the Marine Corps with 30 years of service to retire with seventy-five percent pay, but sailors in the Navy were excluded.³⁷ The next five years of annual reports from the Secretary of the Navy included recommendations of various length for Congress to amend the resolution in order to add enlisted sailors. Yet, in 1895, sailors were still petitioning Congress to allow Navy enlisted to retire.³⁸ Even as late as 1904, the Congressional Medal of Honor was reserved exclusively for officers and enlisted in the Army.³⁹ Congress clearly did not think highly of their sailor's fighting spirit if no one in the Navy was even eligible to receive the nation's highest award for gallantry. Congress's traditional view of the sailor as a mariner instead of a warrior reduced its willingness to support legislative action on manpower for the Navy and by extension the naval militias, which slowed down the federalization process.

³⁷ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1885, 196.

³⁸ W. McAdoo Acting Secretary of the Navy, "Petition," House, *Enlisted Men on the Navy Retired List.*, 53rd Cong., 3rd sess., Jan 11, 1895, <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/pur1.32754082431820> .

³⁹ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904), 9-10.

Congress's lack of support for sailors extended into limiting their pay and allowances as well. While Congress issued uniforms to soldiers and marines who enlisted, sailors were required to pay for their uniforms out of their pay. Congress passed legislation in 1872 that allowed soldiers to deposit their pay with the Army and earn guaranteed interest on the deposit, but sailors were not added despite continued requests until well after 1885.⁴⁰ Congress's low opinion of the enlisted sailor were not helped by many well-meaning remarks from the Navy, such as Secretary of the Navy William C. Whitney's report in 1887: "Seamen as a class are as patriotic as any other citizens, but in the matter of pay and prize money they are apt to lay aside sentimentality."⁴¹ These types of remarks, while meant to highlight the difficulty in competing with the civilian labor market, reinforced Congress's opinion that the average sailor was money-grubbing and fickle. It would take proven heroics and time to change Congress's opinion of the Navy, and make it a priority for their legislation.

Another reason for congressional indifference was that the Navy employed many foreign nationals. This decreased the number of constituents that were concerned about the Navy and made it seem like less of an American force. Throughout the 1880's the Secretary of the Navy's annual reports consistently contained pleas to Congress for support in attracting American sailors, culminating in Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy's impassioned request that Congress not endanger the fleet by placing it "in the hands of mongrel crews"⁴² Despite these pleas and attempts at reform, 3,156 of the 7,516 total enlisted men in the Navy were not U.S. citizens in 1890.⁴³ While there was an evident desire from the Navy to reform the enlisted

⁴⁰ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1885, 197-198.

⁴¹ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1887), 44.

⁴² Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1899, 24.

⁴³ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1890), 124.

manning policies and dependence on foreign sailors, Congress was slow to recognize manpower as a valid concern for the Navy. Foreign sailors in the Navy were not even eligible for citizenship after their terms of service, unlike in the Army and Marine Corps.⁴⁴ If the Navy could continue to recruit from the established pool of mariners created by the merchant marine, Congress did not feel rushed to pass legislation that would aid these sailors who were merely doing their job. The big Navy movement and Spanish-American war increased the public opinion of the Navy as a service. Still, the sailor remained a second-class fighting man when compared to the soldiers and marines. These long-held notions about the availability and valor of sailors hampered calls to federalize the naval militias as a reserve of warriors for the Navy.

After the Navy's desperate attempts to attract domestic manpower in the 1880s, the spontaneous establishment of naval militias in several states during the 1890s was a cause for celebration; however, the Navy struggled to find roles and training for the naval militias that would benefit both their state and the Navy, which led to strained relationships. Secretary of the Navy Stephen Benton Elkins stated in 1892: "The creation of the naval militia is one of the most important steps in our recent naval progress."⁴⁵ Every annual report of the Secretary of the Navy to Congress in the 1890s is filled with praise for the advances the naval militias were making, and for the benefit both to the states and to the Navy that they could provide during a time of war. However, the Navy's opinion on how to train and employ the new naval militias—as generalists or specialists—swung wildly. Early suggestions in 1890 and 1891 recommended specialization, with efforts on recruiting and training electricians to provide the Navy with a

⁴⁴ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1885, 196.

⁴⁵ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1892), 45.

trained electrical engineering corp.⁴⁶ When that proved overly specific, the Navy focused on missions such as coastal signaling and manning for the auxiliary force.⁴⁷ The Navy prioritized these roles for the naval militias so that they could take them over them during times of war, allowing the active duty sailors in those jobs to head to sea. This strategy worked well during the Spanish American War, and the Navy used a majority of the naval militia forces in the signaling corps and auxiliary corps. However, these roles were of little benefit to the states that were meeting most of the cost of the militias. The lack of an agreed upon and mutually beneficial role that the naval militias would provide both to the states and the Navy prevented early cooperation efforts at federalization.

Without a definite role or plan for the naval militias, the Navy's yearly training cruises offered the naval militia a general focus on seamanship, navigation, signaling, and gunnery. While these cruises were useful in enhancing the naval militia's maritime acumen, they were conducted under Navy leadership, on Navy equipment, and where the Navy desired. While some cruises, such as the first New York Naval Militia (NYNM) cruise in 1891, took place in an area the Adjutant-General of New York considered to be vital to defend New York Harbor, many were focused on blue water sailing further out to sea.⁴⁸ As the naval militias developed, there was an increased backlash against the Navy's habit of forcing training on the Militias that they didn't need for their state missions. In 1900, a year after the Spanish American War, the NYNM turned down the Navy's annual cruise for the first time. Its annual report cites the governor's approval to turn down the training to focus instead on giving "our men instruction in home

⁴⁶ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1890, 30.

⁴⁷ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1895), 49.

⁴⁸ State of New York, *Annual Report of the New York Adjutant-General*, (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co, 1891) 397-401.

waters under their own officers."⁴⁹ The continued existence of the naval militias required them to be more than a pool of bodies for the Navy. The naval militias needed to be useful to their state as well. Unfortunately, the required skills and training that the naval militias needed when employed by their state governors differed greatly from the skillset required by the Navy. For the naval militias to be federalized, both the Navy and the state governors needed to be satisfied with the roles and training of the naval militias. Finding common ground for the naval militias disparate roles took time and discussion, which bogged down the federalization process.

Another area where the Navy and the naval militias tried and failed to unify was on equipment. The naval militias were all woefully ill-equipped and funded. While they were able to find local benefactors and received state funds, they often relied on the Navy. However, the Navy was not always sure how to best equip the naval militias. In 1891, the Navy suggested mass conversion of smooth-bore single turret monitors so that the naval militias could use them for the defense of harbors. While the report openly admitted that these types of ships were obsolete, it expressed hope that the monitors' shallow drafts and small target silhouettes would compensate for their lack of firepower and allow them to play at least a deterrent role.⁵⁰ Naval militias were less interested in monitors and more interested in weaponry, such as cannons and torpedoes, that could be used to defend harbors. The NYNM's organization in 1891 reflects this desire by aligning their forces into three regiments of artillery and one regiment of torpedoes.⁵¹ The Navy was eager to supply the naval militias with surplus and obsolete guns, boats, and artillery that it still had in supply so that the naval militias could train themselves. However, by

⁴⁹ State of New York, *Annual Report of the New York Adjutant-General*, (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co, 1900), 229.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1891), 459-460.

⁵¹ New York, *Adjutant-General* 1891, 149.

1896 the Assistant Secretary of the Navy William McAdoo openly admitted that the Navy had largely run out of its older equipment to supply the naval militias and that increased funds would need to come from Congress.⁵² The same year, both the Navy and the NYNM proposed building torpedo boats for the exclusive use of the naval militias to Congress, giving rise to hopes that the naval militias may have found their niche.⁵³ In 1897 the NYNM even had one whitehead torpedo in their inventory.⁵⁴ Unfortunately, Congress never approved the funding, the torpedo was returned to the Navy, and no torpedo boats were ever added to the naval militias for their exclusive use. The naval militias would still be the recipient of Navy hand-me-downs, especially following the drawdown after the Spanish American War. However, with the exponential increase in the size, complexity, and expense of naval weaponry around the end of the nineteenth century, the naval militias grew increasingly unable to use these cast-offs. As the gulf between the equipment requirements for the two forces increased, so did the difficulties in figuring out how to meld the two organizations into one federal force.

The Navy's rapid change in equipment was part of a more significant shift in focus from defensive to offensive operations that further decreased the value of the naval militia to the Navy. During the 1880s, a strong contingent of Congress members who were anti-imperial or proponents of a purely defensive navy ensured that new Navy ships were limited by congressional statute to a maximum tonnage or maximum range to force the Navy to remain a defensive force. When the naval militias began to be formed in 1891, the Navy was still operating as a defensive military organization. Because of this, the naval militias were a natural

⁵² State of New York, *Annual Report of the New York Adjutant-General*, (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co, 1896), 112.

⁵³ New York, *Adjutant-General* 1896, 47.

⁵⁴ State of New York, *Annual Report of the New York Adjutant-General*, (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co, 1897), 364.

addition to the Navy's mission. In 1896, the Naval War College developed an elaborate coastal defense plan for the Navy that relied heavily on the naval militias. The plan utilized the naval militias to implement and man a secondary "mosquito fleet," that would guard the coastline against invaders.⁵⁵ The plan allowed the naval militias to combine their local knowledge and commitment to their state with the Navy's role of coastal defense.

Unfortunately for the naval militias, the Navy grew to accept the view of Alfred Mahan that the primary purpose of a navy was to concentrate and defeat the opposing fleet in a decisive offensive battle; coastal defense was antithetical to that mission. In 1892, the *Iowa* (BB-4) was approved by Congress to the Navy requirements, resulting in the United States' first offensive capable warship.⁵⁶ Others like President Theodore Roosevelt joined in the push for a Navy capable of performing offensive missions. He used his speech at the 1908 Naval War College commence to emphasize in his flamboyant style that "no fight was ever won yet, except by hitting!"⁵⁷ The Spanish American War created a fear on both the east and west coast that the Spanish Fleet would bombard America. While the Navy largely stuck to its principle of concentrations, it did keep one squadron off the east coast. Captain Caspar Goodrich, a former Naval War College president, described the retention of the squadron as a "concession to popular clamor" and hoped that the relief felt after the defeat of the Spain fleets would convince the nation that "in the Navy lies our true coastal-defense."⁵⁸ As the Navy increasingly organized and trained to fight overseas threats, the Naval Militia remained focused on the coastal defense of

⁵⁵ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1896), 23-24.

⁵⁶ William McBride, *Technological Change and the US Navy, 1865-1945*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2010), 43.

⁵⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, "Address to the Naval War College," Speech, Newport RI, July 22, 1908. Naval War College Archive Box 2 Folder 3, addresses 1906-1913, 1.

⁵⁸ Capt. C.F. Goodrich, "Points in Coast-Defense brought out in the War with Spain," Lecture, Newport RI, CA 1900. Naval War College Archive Box 1 Folder 33 Guest Lectures, 7.

their State. The Diverging roles of the Naval Militias and the Navy made joining the two organizations together difficult. Federalizing the naval militias would have forced the Navy to remain tied to the mission of coastal defense. The Navy had just fought to free itself of that mission in the Spanish American War and did not want to be pulled back by the naval militias.

While the Navy basked in its new role and victory in the Spanish American War, the Army was gearing up for a second war in the Philippines that would require additional volunteers and cooperation with the National Guard. While the Navy's role in the Spanish American War was finished in six months, the Army-centric Philippine War lasted from 1899 to 1902. In 1900, after the Navy had released its volunteers, the composition of Army forces in the Philippines consisted of 987 active duty officers, 1,380 volunteer officers, 41,527 active duty soldiers, and 30,200 Volunteer soldiers.⁵⁹ However, the volunteers' term of service lasted only from March 1899 to July 1901. To compensate for the departure of over 30,000 troops, Congress passed an act in February 1901 that permanently increased the number of standing regiments in the active duty Army to allow a force of up to 100,000 enlisted.⁶⁰ As part of the expanded structure, the Army added 298 staff officers and 837 first and second lieutenants. Secretary of War Elihu Root goes out of his way in his 1901 report to point out that the staff positions were almost all filled by "deserving officers who had held staff positions in the volunteer force."⁶¹ Even for the first and second lieutenant positions, service in the Army or volunteer force was required to apply. Since the Army had only a little over three thousand officers, the inclusion of hundreds of prior members of the National Guard ensured that a significant portion of the Army

⁵⁹ U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), 4.

⁶⁰ U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), 7-8.

⁶¹ War Dept, Sec of War 1901, 9.

understood and supported the role of the militias. This familiarization provided a useful tie between the two organizations. While the Navy and the naval militias became increasingly unique and separate entities during this period, the Army and the National Guard underwent a unique blending period that contributed to the rapid federalization of the National Guard.

Spurred on by the experience of the Philippine War and the growing connection with the National Guard, the Army championed reforms to the militia system in order to benefit itself both during times of war and peace. Secretary of War Root, in his first annual report in 1899, suggested the need for a new militia system that would craft the regular Army and the National Guard into a "homogeneous body, using the same arms, familiar with the same drill, answering to the same ideas of discipline, inspired by the same spirit, and capable of equal and even performance."⁶² However, as the Army gained increasing publicity and funding from the Philippine War, Secretary Root changed his vision for the relationship between the Army and National Guard. Instead of a homogenous force, Secretary Root championed a counterbalancing force. The National Guard would be assigned the majority of low skilled jobs, while the regular Army would counterbalance with a focus on technical and skilled work such as engineering and artillery.⁶³ Then in 1901, after a substantial increase in the Army's standing size, the National Guards are referred to as first reserves.⁶⁴ Nearly every year Secretary Root found a way to advocate for a way that the Army and National Guard could mutually support each other. In 1902, in an overwhelming show of support, Secretary Root spent six pages advocating for the proposed Bill to federalize the National Guard and nine pages on the ongoing war in the

⁶² War Dept, Sec of War 1899, Vol 1 pt 1, 53.

⁶³ War Dept, Sec of War 1900, 55.

⁶⁴ War Dept, Sec of War 1901, 27.

Philippines.⁶⁵ When the Bill passed in 1903, the Army was drawing down from the Philippine War and searching for peacetime roles to justify its increased size. The federalization of the National Guard allowed the Army to move into the role of inspector and trainer for the National Guard.⁶⁶ In this role, the Army was able to provide equipment and training to the states without cost, ensuring their future, as well as the continued need for a larger Army during peacetime. These annual changes show that the upper echelon of the Army was willing to adapt and find complimentary roles for the National Guard, an attribute necessary to ensure quick federalization.

While the Army continued to find win-win solutions, the Navy struggled to find incentives for the naval militias and their state governors to support federalization. Naval militias were not required by law; the Navy could only incentivize states to maintain naval militias and to support their federalization. However, the Navy funded the naval militias poorly, leading several states to statutorily remove their militias as a state organization or simply mustering them out and letting the naval militia lapse as an active organization. Several states shuttered their naval militias between the Spanish American War and 1914, including the naval militias of Virginia in 1900, Florida in 1901, Oregon in 1902, District of Columbia in 1905, and Georgia in 1911.⁶⁷ State governors paid most of the cost of maintaining the naval militia and did not necessarily want interference from the Navy. In 1904 the state of New York spent \$42,246 on maintaining the NYNM.⁶⁸ The same year the Navy appropriated only \$7,181 to the sustainment of the

⁶⁵ U.S. War Department, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), Vol 1 pt 1, 11-20,34-50.

⁶⁶ War Dept, Sec of War 1903, 16-17.

⁶⁷ United States, *United States Congressional Serial Set Vol 4915* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office,), Doc 435, 52.

⁶⁸ State of New York, *Annual Report of the New York Adjutant-General* (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co, 1904, 84.

NYNM.⁶⁹ Since state governors were covering over eighty-three percent of the cost of their naval militia, the Navy had little leverage with these governors to force them to support their proposed bills.

Money was not the only way that the Navy supported the naval militias, it did loan vessels to various state militias and could have attempted to use them as leverage. However, the states had to cover most of the repair costs. The USS *Aileen*, a pleasure yacht converted to a gunboat during the Spanish American War, on loan to the NYNM in 1904, required \$18,865 for maintenance.⁷⁰ To convince state governors to support the Naval Militia Act, the Navy added additional appropriations to the proposed Naval Militia Bills. The Bill explicitly called out "stores, supplies, and equipment of all kinds for the repairing, maintaining, and operation" as covered expenses during a different appropriation type and increased the total appropriation to the naval militia to \$200,000.⁷¹ These additional payments increased the interest of the state governors that had naval militias, but also made the Bill more expensive and less popular with other state governors. In 1906, the House Naval Committee, which considered all proposed bills, had three members from states without a naval militia.⁷² The Navy had to carefully craft the Naval Militia Bill to be attractive enough to states who wanted more money for their naval militias, but not so expensive that it would create opposition. These careful calculations made federalization challenging to achieve for the Navy.

Just as the Navy had to balance the competing desires of states, they also had to balance the desires of the members of the naval militias and the Navy when attempting federalization.

⁶⁹ U.S., *Serial Set Issue 4915, Doc 435, 53.*

⁷⁰ New York, Adjutant-General 1904, 84.

⁷¹ *Naval Militia Act of 1914*, HR 8667, 63rd Cong, 2nd Sess, *United States Statutes at Large Vol 38 CH 21*(16, February 1914): HR 8667, 283-284.

⁷² U.S., *Serial Set Vol 4915, Doc 435, 18.*

Unlike the Army, where officers of the National Guard had fought alongside active duty counterparts and seen them commissioned into regular service, Navy officers were skeptical of the officers of the naval militia. Lieutenant A. P. Niblack of the United States Navy spent a summer training the naval militia and expressed the popular opinion of Navy officers in his report that "the rank given in the naval militia is a State affair and in no way concerns the Navy."⁷³ Active Duty officers feared they might be forced to serve under higher ranking, but less experienced naval militia officers if the naval militias were given reciprocal ranks with the Navy. Naval Officers had some pull with the public and Congress and were not likely to support the federalization of the naval militias without protections for themselves.

However, the Dicks Act of 1903 allowed officers of the National Guard to retain their rank when federalized. The naval militias were firmly imbedded with the National Guards of their states and were aware of this provision. The New York National Guard even appointed the NYNM chief of staff to a fourteen-member board tasked with reviewing an early proposal of the Dicks Act and advising the Governor on its impacts.⁷⁴ It was natural that the naval militias would want this benefit for themselves, instead of being forced into service with whatever rank the Navy chose for them during times of war. For many patriotic individuals of the naval militias, the main benefit of the Act was guaranteed entry into the Navy. The naval militias were not likely to support federalization without some sort of protection and recognition of their considerable peacetime efforts.

To overcome these contradictory stances, the Naval Militia Act was forced to adopt very specific verbiage on command relationships and leave other areas conspicuously vague to gather

⁷³ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1896, 122.

⁷⁴ State of New York, *Annual Report of the New York Adjutant-General* (New York: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co, 1903), 435.

support. The 1914 Naval Militia Act did allow officers and enlisted of the naval militia to retain their ranks when transferred to the Navy. However, to ensure fair reciprocity, examination for ranks had to be standardized amongst the naval militias and approved by the Navy.⁷⁵ The Act recognized the difficulty of that task and left out the verbiage for the standards and criteria. Instead, a board appointed by the Secretary of the Navy would work out the details for the qualifications at a later date. Additionally, officers of the naval militia entered into the Navy underneath active duty officers of the same rank, could not command ships even if they were the senior officers, and could not make up a majority of a board presiding over the court-martial of an active duty officer.⁷⁶ Despite the lower price tag and narrower applicability of the 1914 Naval Militia Act it was around a third longer than the 1903 Dicks Act (seven pages compared to five pages). The compromises required to ensure large scale support of the Naval Militia Act took longer for the Navy to work out than the Army, which delayed the federalization of the naval militia.

However, the Naval Militia Act was not the only, or even the primary, legislation that the Navy was attempting to build support for after the Spanish-American War. Part of the reason the Navy was slow to federalize the naval militias was that their focus was predominantly on the rapid modernization of the fleet and its own personnel system. Politically, the Navy's Officer Corps was recovering from the conflict between traditional line officers and officers of the newly created Engineer Corps. Engineers were primarily responsible for the steam engines onboard ships but held a commission as naval officers. Many older line officers resisted the introduction of engineers and saw their inclusion into the wardroom as watering down the warrior spirit of the

⁷⁵ *Militia Act of 1903*, 57th Cong, 2nd Sess, *United States Statutes at Large Vol 33* CH 196, (21, January 1903) 284.

⁷⁶ *Militia Act*, 57th Cong, 2nd Sess, 285.

Navy with men who knew science but not war. Several professional naval organizations were established, including the Line Officers Association and the American Society of Naval Engineers, for the express purpose of lobbying Congress to support of their visions for the Navy. The division was heated enough that in 1890 the Secretary of the Navy warned the Senate Naval Affairs committee of "organizations among naval officers not authorized by the Navy Department."⁷⁷ The struggle continued until 1899, when the Amalgamation Act fused the Engineering Corps into the Line Officer Corps.⁷⁸ These divisions kept the Navy fully occupied solving its own personnel administration issues before it could turn to the naval militias.

At the same time, the Navy was fighting for the establishment of a General Staff to exercise administrative duties for the Navy and advise Congress. Advisory boards up until this point has been ad hoc organizations without a standardized form and at times did not represent the actual desires of the Navy at large. Due to political pressures both internal and external, the Navy chose to establish the General Board by a Navy General Order in March 13, 1900. The board was purely advisory, and the Secretary of the Navy's report for that year describes its purpose as: "To consider questions relating to the efficient preparation of the fleet in case of war."⁷⁹ After the Navy established the General Board, it reiterated nearly every year in its annual reports the benefits of the board and how much more efficient it would be if it were established by congressional legislature instead of just a General Order.⁸⁰ It would take until 1916 for Congress to officially recognize the board despite continued pressure from the Navy. These

⁷⁷ Peter Karsten, "The Naval Aristocracy: United States Officers from the 1840's to the 1920's: Mahan's Messmates," PhD diss., (University of Wisconsin, 1968), 450.

⁷⁸ McBride, *Technological Change*, 36.

⁷⁹ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1900, 19.

⁸⁰ U.S. Department of the Navy, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1901), 584.

contested legislative issues occupied the Navy's attention and left it little political capital to spend on federalizing the naval militias.

In addition to administrative issues, the Navy was preoccupied—perhaps obsessed—with creating a modern fleet, capable of rivaling any in the world. Ship construction was the driving force in the Navy during the early 1900s, and the naval militias were simply not a high priority. An example of the importance of the naval militias to the Navy can be seen in their budget. In 1904 the Navy's budget was \$167,609,697.⁸¹ That same year the Navy allocated only \$60,000 for all the naval militia, which had to be split amongst the eighteen different states.⁸² Spending on the naval militias made up only 0.0358 percent of the Navy budget. Meanwhile, the Navy fought so hard for new ships that battleship and naval construction took up an average of seventeen percent of the annual federal budget from 1898 to 1905.⁸³ For the Navy, the marginalization of the naval militia was not an oversight but a choice. Secretary Long expressed his view to Congress that: "Naval wars in the future will be short and sharp. It is morally certain that they will be fought out to the end with the force available at the beginning."⁸⁴ The Navy's tactic was to get the ship first, and then figure out how to man it later. Despite their importance as a reserve force, the Navy was too focused on acquiring capital assets to give the naval militias the focus and support needed to get the Naval Militia Act passed through Congress.

As the Navy's fleet grew during the 1900s, so did enlistments, and subsequently the number of retired or discharged veterans who were available as a naval reserve. This pool of manpower quickly became more desirable to the Navy than the naval militias. Part of the reason

⁸¹ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1904, 966

⁸² Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1904, 37.

⁸³ McBride, *Technological Change*, 39.

⁸⁴ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1899, 5.

for increased desirability of veterans over members of the naval militias was that they already had extensive training onboard the Navy's increasingly technical platforms and indoctrination into naval culture. Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels eloquently extolled their virtues to Congress, claiming that naval veterans "never lose their love for the Navy or forget its training or lose the value of its discipline."⁸⁵ Not only were veterans seen as more qualified for immediate naval service by the Navy, but they were also more numerous. In 1914, the Navy calculated that 38,000 veterans had served a full four-year enlistment and then left the service in the last ten years. By comparison, in 1916 there were only 8,517 active members in the naval militias. The Navy was willing to federalize the naval militias, but it increasingly turned its attention the creation of the Navy Reserve. Because the naval militias were not the Navy's desired end state, they did not get the political backing or prioritization they needed for federalization.

They Navy did not see the new focus on a naval reserve as an abandonment of the naval militias, but as a return to its long-held plan for manpower management. Secretary of the Navy Whitney called for the creation of a reserve force in his 1887 annual report, prior to the creation of any naval militias.⁸⁶ From that year on, explicit or implicit requests for a naval reserve are in almost every annual report to Congress. One exception is 1891, the year that naval militias were first given federal funding by Congress. However, the calls for a reserve force returned the next year in 1892. Interestingly the naval reserve section of the annual report followed directly after the naval militia section in almost all the annual reports in the 1890s. Even after the Naval Militia Act had passed in 1914, The Secretary of the Navy continued to push for a reserve. The continued calls for a naval reserve show that the establishment of the naval militias was an

⁸⁵ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1914, 34.

⁸⁶ Dept of Navy, Sec of Navy 1887, XXXIX.

intermediary step and a useful ally for the Navy in its larger push for a true naval reserve. Even before the Naval Militia Act was passed, the Navy proposed a bill to Congress for the creation of a Navy Reserve. When the bill for a naval reserve proved to be unpopular, the Navy inserted wording into the Naval Militia Act that referenced a future naval reserve. The language of the Bill ensured that the Navy Reserve would also get the benefits of rank standardization through examination and the opportunity to volunteer before the general public, just like the naval militias did.⁸⁷ After securing the legal foothold for the Navy Reserve in the Naval Militia Act, the Navy craftily established the Navy Reserves by General Order, which did not require congressional approval. The Navy waited only eleven months after the federalization of the naval militias to move forward with the in-house creation of the Navy Reserves. While the Navy and the naval militias did get what they wanted in the end, the Navy's attempts at pushing two manpower solutions—federalizing the naval militias and creating a naval reserve—through Congress simultaneously slowed the approval process and created confusion as to what the Navy really desired.

The naval militias were the reserve force the Navy never really wanted. Supporting the naval militias offered the Navy a way to short cut congressional approval and get the manning that the Navy needed to support the growth of the “new Navy” movement. However, this marriage of convenience became increasingly strained as changes in technology and mission caused the naval militias and the Navy to become more and more incompatible. Instead of the naval militias becoming a steppingstone to a naval reserve as the Navy desired, they became a stumbling block for the Navy. Congress delayed action on the Navy Reserve until the naval militias were federalized, preventing the Navy from advancing their main desire. Additionally,

⁸⁷ *Naval Militia Act*, 63rd Cong. 2nd Sess. 284, 289.

supporters of the Navy's original naval reserve push became involved in their local naval militias and soon developed divided loyalties. Captain J.W. Miller, who established the NYNM and commanded it from 1891 until after the Spanish American War, is an example of this phenomenon. Capt. Miller wrote a small history of interest in the NYNM into his first annual report to the New York Adjutant-General. That history shows that the group that would become the NYNM started out to trying to promote a national naval reserve. However, after five years without any results "those who had been interested in the unsuccessful attempt to secure national legislation turned their attention to the state legislation."⁸⁸ Capt. Miller mentions several times during his first report the importance of a national naval reserve and his hope that the creation of New York's as well as other states' naval militias would hasten its adoption. Yet, by the end of the first five-year enlistment period for the NYNM in 1896, there was only one obscure reference to a national reserve in the annual report to the New York Adjutant-General. The focus of the report, and the NYNM, was the defense of New York Harbor. While members of the naval militia never lost their love for the Navy or revoked their support for creating a Navy Reserve, many of the original supporters became primarily focused on the naval militias.

While the Navy struggled to align the interest of all the stakeholders in the naval militias, The Army was able to find ways to integrate the National Guard that were mutually beneficial to both organizations. Securing the support to federalize a state defense force required both the Service, the militia, the state, and the federal government to all see the legislation as beneficial. The National Guards larger size, established nature, and closer alignment with the Army's needs allowed it to adapt while still fulfilling all its obligations. By contrast the naval militias did not want to be just a pool of bodies the Navy could dip into when they needed. They wanted a role of

⁸⁸ New York, Adjutant-General 1891, 391

their own, and the Navy struggled to find an acceptable solution. The unique mission, warfighting style, and capital-intensive nature of the Navy made integration with a militia difficult at the turn of the twentieth century, and it remains so even today. While the Army and Air Force both have a Reserve and National Guard, the Navy is unique in having only a Reserve.

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