

# Personnel Mobilization for Sustained Large-Scale Combat Operations: The Future is in the Past

A Monograph

By

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## Abstract

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As the US Army transforms its organization and doctrine for great power competition in the twenty-first-century, it aims to support Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) as part of the joint force's execution of the National Defense Strategy and National Military Strategy. In doing so, army leaders express confidence in the force's ability to achieve strategic objectives in "weeks not months." The MDO concept's focus on achieving quick success ignores history, and minimizes the relevance of having a robust and functional mobilization support structure. However, the aforementioned strategy documents agree that adversaries in great power competition possess peer or near-peer capability with the United States in all domains. This monograph analyzes the US Army's response to aggression by the Communist Korean People's Army (KPA), and the subsequent requirement to rapidly expand US Regular Army endstrength from 591,487 in June 1950 to 1,552,000 in June 1951. Personnel mobilization and force expansion for enduring large-scale combat operations in Korea were principally army problems to solve; that remains true today. In 1946, fresh from victory in World War II, United States leaders placed great confidence in the US military's ability to respond to potential threats. They did so without fully understanding that the post-war force in no way resembled the massive organization fielded to defeat the Axis powers. Worse, immediate post-war mobilization planning followed an outdated paradigm, assuming a lengthy interval between the onset of hostilities and the first battlefield encounters. Thus, the mobilization plan proceeded deliberately, requiring three months just to prepare cadre and infrastructure, seven months to generate the first fully-trained individuals, and even longer to prepare units for combat. Luckily for the United States and its South Korean ally, the juxtaposition of D-Day with M-Day at the start of the Korean War was wholly mitigated by recalling approximately 640,000 trained World War II veterans to fight in the Korean war. Lacking a similarly robust, functional, and well-exercised mobilization support structure, today's US Army will not be able to execute a three-fold expansion of its Regular Army strength without cannibalizing units desperately needed in the combat theater.

# Contents

Acknowledgments .....	vi
Abbreviations .....	vii
Figures .....	ix
Introduction .....	1
Literature Review .....	5
Strategy.....	5
Concept.....	7
Doctrine.....	7
US Army Mobilization Since 2001 .....	10
Future Challenges of Mobilization and Rapid Expansion.....	11
Methodology .....	13
Gaddis: The Landscape of History .....	13
Background, October 1946 – June 1950 .....	15
Army Ground Forces Mobilization Plan 15497 .....	15
Defense Budget Turbulence .....	21
Universal Military Training (UMT) .....	23
Selective Service Act 1948.....	24
Division Force Structure .....	25
Calibrated Force Posture .....	26
Background Conclusion .....	27
Korean War Expansion and Mobilization June 1950 – August 1953 .....	28
D-Day Before M-Day.....	28
Initial Mobilization Response: 25 June 1950 – 31 August 1950.....	29
Expanded Mobilization: 1 September 1950 – 30 June 1951 .....	32
Mobilizing, Training, Fighting, Demobilizing (July 1951- August 1953).....	34

Korean War Mobilization and Expansion Conclusion.....	35
Post Korean War Adjustments .....	36
Strategy and Policy (1955-1956).....	36
Reserve Forces Act 1955.....	37
US Continental Army Command Mobilization Training Program (1958).....	38
Post-Korean War Adjustments Conclusion.....	42
Conclusion.....	43
Bibliography .....	47

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## Abbreviations

AGF	US Army Ground Forces
AVF	All-Volunteer Force
CATS	Combined Arms Training Strategy
CCF	Communist Chinese Forces
CONUS	Continental United States
DoD	Department of Defense
D-Day	Day on which an operation commences or is to commence
FECOM	US Far East Command
FY	Fiscal Year
FORSCOM	US Army Forces Command
IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
JP	Joint Publication
KPA	Korean People's Army (North Korean Army)
LSCO	Large-Scale Combat Operations
M-Day	Mobilization Day
MDO	Multi-Domain Operations
MOS	Military Occupation Specialty
NDS	US National Defense Strategy
NMS	US National Military Strategy
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Strategy
ORC	Organized Reserve Corps
SFAB	Security Force Assistance Brigade
UMT	Universal Military Training
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)



TRADOC US Army Training and Doctrine Command  
USCONARC US Army Continental Army Command  
ZI Zone of Interior (Continental United States)

## Figures

Figure 1. Army Strategy and Doctrine Mobilization Key Word Search.....	2
Figure 2. Replacement Training Center Flow Period $M + 121 - M + 365$ . ....	17
Figure 3. Division Order of Mobilization.....	19
Figure 4. Replacement Training Center Capacity $M - M + 240$ . ....	20
Figure 5. USCONARC Mobilization Training Capacity. ....	40
Figure 6. Fort Jackson Replacement Training Center Mobilization Capacity. ....	40
Figure 7. Fort Bragg Unit Training Center Capacity.....	41

## Introduction

The permanent army should not only always be upon a respectable footing, but it should be capable of being doubled, if necessary, by reserves, which should always be prepared.

—Antoine-Henri, Baron de Jomini, *The Art of War*

As the US Army transforms its strategy and doctrine for great power competition in the twenty-first-century, it aims to support Multi-Domain Operations as part of the joint force. In doing so, Army leaders express confidence in the force’s ability to achieve strategic objectives in “weeks not months.”<sup>1</sup> At the same time, however, those same leaders anticipate an exponential increase in battlefield lethality.<sup>2</sup> Despite the evolving character of war and the means used to wage it, it remains probable that conflict between near-peer competitors will not be resolved in weeks and perhaps not even in months. This likelihood of long-duration/high-lethality hostilities should push American strategic leaders to reconsider the importance of rapidly mobilizing potential combat forces into operationally ready formations. The following case study of the US Army’s response to the Korean War can inform modern mobilization planning in preparation for large-scale combat operations (LSCO). Moreover, this is the US Army’s problem to solve; since 1945, the US Air Force has never used the draft as a personnel source, while the US Navy and US Marine Corps have used it sparingly.

This study is vital because the Total Force (Regular Army, Army National Guard, and US Army Reserve) is now so interdependent that, in any future conflict, victory will require some level of mobilization. Despite this certainty, the US Army’s foundational documents, *Army Strategy - 2018* and the *Multi-Domain Operations Concept*, scarcely discuss mobilization.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of the Army, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018), 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vi.

<sup>3</sup> US Department of the Army, *Army Strategy* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018), accessed 10 October 2020, [https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/the\\_army\\_strategy\\_2018.pdf](https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/the_army_strategy_2018.pdf);

Figure 1 shows how many times the key words “mobilize,” “(de)mobilization,” and “total force” are mentioned in our national strategy documents, as well as in US Army strategy, concepts, and doctrinal documents.

Document	Published	Pages	Mobilize	(De)Mobilization	Total Force
<i>National Security Strategy</i>	2017	55	2	0	0
<i>National Defense Strategy</i>	2018	12	1	0	0
<i>National Military Strategy</i>	2018	6	0	0	0
<i>US Army Strategy</i>	2018	11	1	5	2
<i>Multi-Domain Operations</i>	2018	102	1	0	3
<i>ADP 3-0, Operations</i>	2019	102	4	4	0
<i>FM 3-0, Operations</i>	2017	311	5	15	0

Figure 1. Army Strategy and Doctrine Mobilization Key Word Search. Created by author.

The limited inclusion of mobilization in our guiding strategic policy and doctrine is striking. Still, it may simply be a reflection that the last US military mobilization and force expansion to support large-scale combat took place between 1950-1953. However, *Joint Publication (JP) 4-05* captures the strategic importance of personnel mobilization correctly, stating “responsive mobilization capability is critical to our national security...”<sup>4</sup> The varied actors and authorities involved in personnel mobilization make the process naturally complex. As Nassim Taleb warns, “complex systems are weakened or even killed when insulated from stress.”<sup>5</sup> Since seven decades have now passed since the army’s last rapid expansion and mobilization stress test, a critical review now can mitigate a future national security calamity resulting from the army’s inability to execute a rapid expansion and mobilization.

The US Army today faces strategic and fiscal challenges similar to those of the periods 1946-1950 and 1955-1958. War weariness, domestic politics, and fiscal constraints limited army

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US Department of the Army, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 4-05, *Joint Mobilization Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018), v – vii.

<sup>5</sup> Nassim N. Taleb. *Antifragile: Things that Gain from Disorder* (New York: Random House, 2014), 5.

endstrength to levels less than adequate for known requirements in 1946. Friction between the military departments generated by the National Security Act of 1947 distracted strategic leaders from crucial readiness issues in 1948, 1949, and 1950. Post-war American strategy remained undefined until the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, which caused the defense budget to oscillate between expansion and contraction multiple times each year.<sup>6</sup> In 1955, war weariness and fiscal constraints again directed budget and endstrength cuts on the Army. President Eisenhower's "New Look" strategy, based on massive atomic and then nuclear retaliation, favored the Air Force while directing the Army to mitigate mobilization risks by strengthening its reserve forces.<sup>7</sup> In 2021, the US Army's current strategy and projected operating concept are still under refinement; fiscal uncertainty stemming from economic woes and domestic spending in response to the pandemic threatens to force drastic cuts to all services; and a new presidential administration may impose significant organizational changes.

This monograph analyzes the US Army's response to aggression by the North Korean Communist Korean People's Army (KPA), and the subsequent requirement to rapidly expand US Regular Army endstrength from 591,487 in June 1950 to 1,552,000 by June 1951.<sup>8</sup> The first section analyzes the period October 1946 – May 1950. This section includes a review of the Army Ground Forces mobilization plan of 1946 as well as the strategic environment from 1946 to the start of the Korean War. The second section analyzes how the US Army mobilized and rapidly expanded its Regular Army endstrength from 591,487 in June 1950 to 1,552,000 in June

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<sup>6</sup> US Military Academy, Department of History. *Confrontation in Asia: The Korean War* (West Point, NY: The United States Military Academy, Department of History, 1981), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth W. Condit, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1955-1956*, History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, vol. 6 – (Washington, DC: Office of Joint History, 1998), 2-9, accessed 24 February 2021, [https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/History/Policy/Policy\\_V006.pdf](https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/History/Policy/Policy_V006.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Thomas E. Hanson, *Combat Ready? The Eighth US Army on the Eve of the Korean War* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2010), 13; Kathryn R. Coker, *United States Army Reserve Mobilization for the Korean War* (Fort Bragg, NC: US Army Reserve Command, 2013), 37, accessed 7 JAN 2020, [https://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Documents/historycorner/Korean%20War%20Pub\\_Revised%20June%2012-2013.pdf](https://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Documents/historycorner/Korean%20War%20Pub_Revised%20June%2012-2013.pdf)

1951. The focus in this section is how the army responded at the enterprise level to a previously-unforeseen requirement to expand the army rapidly in response to a situation where combat operations commenced (D-Day) prior to mobilization declaration (M-Day), and then sustaining the increased endstrength through July 1953. The third section examines lessons learned and adjustments to mobilization between 1955 to 1958. This section includes a review of strategic priorities that result from reliance on “massive retaliation,” the reforms included in the *Reserve Forces Act of 1955*, and the Army’s 1958 mobilization plan. This monograph concludes by offering recommended changes the Army should pursue immediately to improve its ability to rapidly expand to support large-scale combat operations that last longer than weeks or months.

## Literature Review

### Strategy

The 2017 *US National Security Strategy (NSS)*, 2018 *US National Defense Strategy (NDS)*, 2018 *US National Military Strategy (NMS)*, and 2018 *Army Strategy* each provide insight on mobilization objectives, assumptions, and assessments of changing environments.<sup>9</sup> Taken together, the strategies acknowledge that future conflict with peer adversaries requires a resilient joint force capable of rapid mobilization.

The 2017 *NSS* changed azimuths from its predecessors by proclaiming a change in the strategic environment from regional competition to great power competition. After discussing the potential impact of armed confrontation between peer or near-peer militaries, the *NSS* assessed that overconfidence in technology fueled a false assumption that “all wars would be fought and won quickly, from stand-off distances and with minimal casualties,” implying a need for organizational resilience. Further, the *NSS* declared it a priority of the Donald Trump Administration to reverse pre-2017 decisions to reduce the size of the joint force. The 2017 *NSS* directed the military to prioritize “field forces capable of operating in sufficient scale and for ample duration...”<sup>10</sup>

The 2018 *NDS* predicted that “the fully mobilized Joint Force will be capable of: defeating aggression of a major power, deterring opportunistic aggression elsewhere; and disrupting imminent terrorist and WMD [weapons of mass destruction] threats.”<sup>11</sup> This prediction

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<sup>9</sup> Office of the President of the United States of America, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2017), 2, accessed 18 December 2020. <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>; US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy: Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2018), 5; US Joint Chiefs of Staff, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2018), 2; US Department of the Army, *The Army Strategy*, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Office of the President, *National Security Strategy*, 27-29.

<sup>11</sup> US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy*, 5.

makes “the fully mobilized” force a critical prerequisite to success. If full mobilization of all components is not possible due to lack of time or other resources, how then can the joint force achieve the stated goals? The *NDS* nests within and expands on the environmental assessment of great power competition found in the *NSS*, foreseeing that competition with “strategic competitors” will present increased challenges in all domains.<sup>12</sup> The *NDS* adds an assessment that the United States homeland can no longer be considered a “sanctuary.”<sup>13</sup> Each of those conclusions leads to significant challenges for mobilization plans. The 2018 *NMS* envisions a “joint force capable of defending the homeland and projecting power, now and into the future.”<sup>14</sup> Other than the objective of projecting power, the *NMS* does not mention mobilization. The section on endstrength growth focuses on building and strengthening allies’ and partners’ capabilities and capacities.<sup>15</sup>

The 2018 *Army Strategy*’s plan for “national level mobilization, reconstitution of combat capacity, and defense industrial base expansion,” for large-scale contingencies rests on inadequate and unconfirmed assumptions. Its two priorities to support rapid expansion, security force assistance brigades (SFABs) and reserve component mobilization exercises, address symptoms of inadequate enterprise-level resilience, but offer no cure for the disease of an overstretched and brittle force. Each of the army’s six SFABs’ design includes the capacity to “expand rapidly to a full brigade combat team” if necessary.<sup>16</sup> National-level mobilization and defense industrial base expansion are critical mobilization assumptions in the *Army Strategy*, but they do not align with the stated priorities found in other national-level strategic guidance documents.

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<sup>12</sup> US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy*, 5.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Joint Staff, *National Military Strategy*, 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>16</sup> US Army, *Army Strategy*, 6-8.



## Concept

The *Army Strategy* identifies the Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) concept as the foundational concept for “establishing overmatch with adversaries.” The MDO concept informs planning for modernization and organization to achieve an objective “Army 2028” force.<sup>17</sup> One of the three tenets of MDO is calibrated force posture, defined as “the combination of capacity, capability, position, and the ability to maneuver across strategic distances.”<sup>18</sup> One assumption in the MDO concept holds that calibrated force posture can create opportunities to defeat an enemy in “weeks rather than months.”<sup>19</sup> The *NSS* explicitly calls out such “overconfidence” in the power of precision technology, creating cognitive dissonance between the two documents. Moreover, the MDO concept’s focus on achieving quick success deliberately minimizes the relevance of having a mobilization support structure. However, the aforementioned strategy documents all agree that adversaries in great power competition possess peer or near-peer capability with the United States in all domains. With the universal agreement in *NSS*, *NMS*, *NDS*, and *Army Strategy* of the reality of competition in all domains, how can the Army’s MDO concept, grounded as it is in an overconfidence bias for short wars, properly guide the army to develop the right future force? The MDO concept as written has a near-complete disregard for the challenging process of mobilization.

## Doctrine

Joint Publication (JP) 4-05, *Joint Mobilization Planning*, links mobilization to national security, details mobilization roles and responsibilities, and provides considerations for planning and executing joint military mobilization, demobilization, force expansion, use of volunteers, and

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<sup>17</sup> US Army, *Army Strategy*, 1, 7.

<sup>18</sup> US Army, *The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028*, 31.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

Presidential Reserve Call-up.<sup>20</sup> JP 4-05 identifies “manpower” and “industrial base capacity” as the two most critical mobilization resources. The five tenets of successful mobilization include objective, timeliness, unity of effort, flexibility, and sustainability.<sup>21</sup>

JP 4-05 outlines and defines the levels of mobilization, military commitment, and the corresponding legal authorities, and lists seven mobilization levels starting from involuntary call-up for a period of fifteen days up to total mobilization, which includes force expansion (see Figure 2). The top three levels are important to define for this monograph. Partial mobilization requires a presidential declaration of national emergency and makes up to one million members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) available for up to twenty-four consecutive months. Congress exercises sole legal authority to allow full mobilization in time of war or national emergency. Full mobilization allows all existing reserve forces to be mobilized and placed in federal service. Total mobilization is the level at which personnel requirements requiring force expansion exceed peace-time authorizations.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 4-05, *Joint Mobilization Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018), v – vii.

<sup>21</sup> Joint Staff, JP 4-05, V-4, II-1.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, IV-8-9.

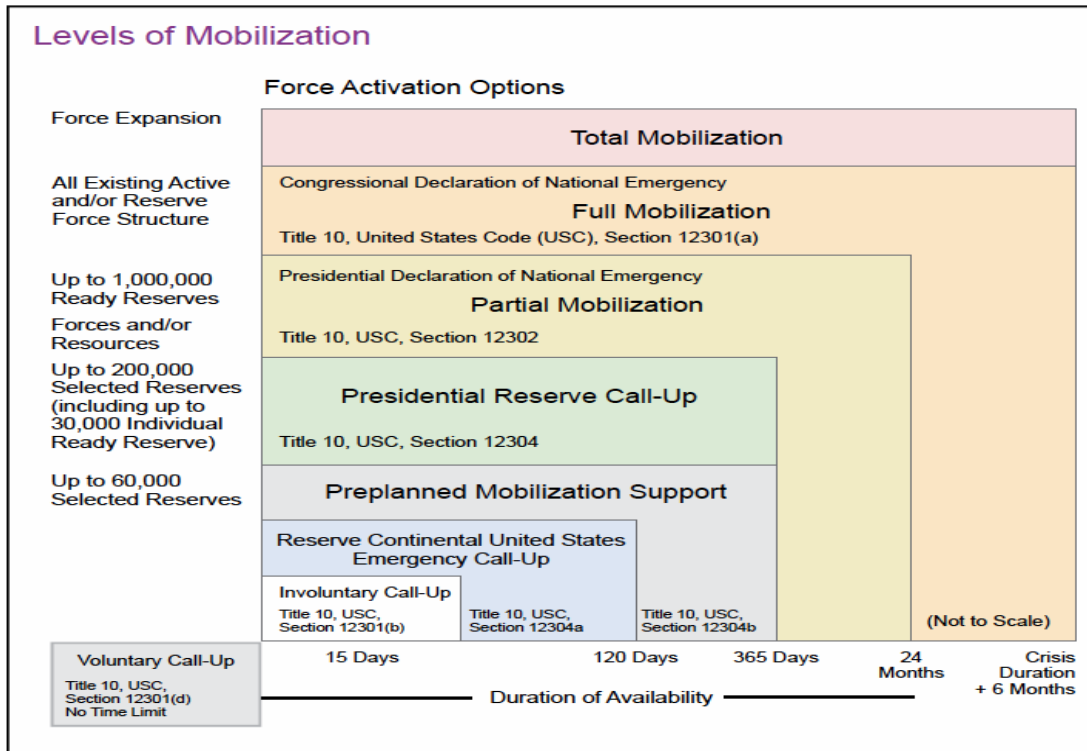


Figure 2. Levels of Mobilization. US Department of Defense, Joint Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 4-05, *Joint Mobilization Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2018), I-8.

Army Regulation 500-5, *Army Mobilization*, provides direction to army leaders and delineates roles and responsibilities. The three most critical leaders in the US Army mobilization process identified in the regulation are the Army Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS) G-3/5/7, the Commanding General (CG) US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), and CG, US Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The DCS G-3/5/7 responsibilities include: develop army mobilization and operations policy; guidance; planning assumptions for mobilization; and expansion of forces beyond previously-approved force structure. The CG, FORSCOM, serves as the US Army's principal executive agent and supported command within the continental United States (CONUS) for unit mobilization and is also responsible for replacement training center operations. The CG, TRADOC, is responsible for developing individual mobilization training, and expansion of the training base. Another critical responsibility for CG, TRADOC, is to

coordinate all mobilized IRR personnel processing to include skill assessment and certification or refresher training.<sup>23</sup>

Army Regulation 600-8-111, *Army Mobilization, Manning, and Wartime Replacement Operations*, provides policy and guidance for filling the US Army's personnel requirements during war, crisis, or national emergency.<sup>24</sup> The regulation identifies the IRR and retired soldiers as the primary sources for trained individuals to fill personnel requirements in an emergency force expansion.<sup>25</sup>

## US Army Mobilization Since 2001

Pursuant to a presidential declaration in 2001, the army currently possesses the legal authority to execute a partial mobilization of reserve forces. The partial mobilization authority allows for the mobilization and federalization of up to one million drilling Guardsmen and/or reservists for a period of up to twenty-four months.<sup>26</sup> Between 2001 and 2015, the US Army's reserve components mobilized more than 800,000 soldiers for service both within the United States and around the world.<sup>27</sup> At one point in 2005, National Guard brigades constituted fifty

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<sup>23</sup> US Department of the Army, Army Regulation (AR) 500-5, *Army Mobilization* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2015), 5-8.

<sup>24</sup> US Department of the Army, Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-111, *Army Mobilization, Manning, and Wartime Replacement Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office, 2019), 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>26</sup> Olen C. Bridges and Andree Navarro, "Mobilizing for Major War," *Parameters* 47, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 88, accessed 16 November 2020, <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol47/iss2/10/>.

<sup>27</sup> Office of Army Reserve History, "Our History: Post 9/11," accessed 8 January 2021, <https://www.usar.army.mil/OurHistory/SinceSept11/#:~:text=Since%202001%2C%20more%20than%20300%2C000,include%20every%20major%20combat%20zone.&text=As%20an%20enduring%20operational%20force,missions%20at%20home%20and%20abroad;Office%20of%20Public%20Affairs,National%20Guard%20Bureau,About%20the%20Army%20National%20Guard,> accessed 8 January 2021, [https://www.nationalguard.mil/Portals/31/Resources/Fact%20Sheets/ARNG%20History%20Fact%20Sheet%20\(Dec.%202017\).pdf](https://www.nationalguard.mil/Portals/31/Resources/Fact%20Sheets/ARNG%20History%20Fact%20Sheet%20(Dec.%202017).pdf).

percent of the US Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) in Iraq.<sup>28</sup> By August 2006, all thirty-four reserve component BCTs had exhausted their available mobilization time under existing law.<sup>29</sup>

The Regular Army also faced significant personnel staffing pressure supporting global operations in the first decade of the war on terrorism. In response, the Regular Army employed the force-shaping involuntary extension or “stop-loss” measure extensively. Between 2001 and 2008, the army issued 58,300 stop-loss orders, extending individuals beyond their end of term of service date.<sup>30</sup> For Fiscal Year 2009, faced with even greater staffing challenges, the army issued 61,700 stop-loss orders, more than the previous seven years’ total.<sup>31</sup> While offering immediate relief, such practices cannot be used as an enduring solution. Unfortunately, their previous success helps blind senior leaders to the cognitive gaps in the MDO concept.

## Future Challenges of Mobilization and Rapid Expansion

Supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan certainly tested the army’s capacity to sustain partial mobilization for more than a decade. However, significant questions remain regarding the army’s ability to expand rapidly. The army’s focus on MDO and faith in short-duration conflict present additional challenges to preparing for force expansion in the near future. Joseph Whitlock expressed concern similar to that described in the *NSS* regarding overconfidence. In his view, the army’s MDO concept “ignores the mobilization problem” by simply assuming it can project forces into the desired location on time. He also points out that the MDO concept seems to embrace a change in the character of war toward increased lethality, but fails to consider and adjust to the reality that the army has lowered its Regular Army personnel

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<sup>28</sup> Office of Public Affairs, “About the Army National Guard.”

<sup>29</sup> Forest L. Marion and Jon T. Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force: The Evolution of the Guard and the Reserve* (Washington, DC: Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2018), 157.

<sup>30</sup> Matthey Ivey, “The Broken Promises of the All-Volunteer Military,” *Temple Law Review* 86, no. 3, (2014): 548, [https://www.templelawreview.org/lawreview/assets/uploads/2014/08/Ivey\\_ForPub.pdf](https://www.templelawreview.org/lawreview/assets/uploads/2014/08/Ivey_ForPub.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 548.

strength, reduced its forward-stationed ground forces in favor of a rotational model, and relies heavily on the reserve components as an operational reserve.<sup>32</sup>

US Army Chief of Staff General James C. McConville seeks to move the army beyond industrial age mentalities to compete in the information age.<sup>33</sup> General McConville's focus on changing the army's talent management process has brought significant change to individual career patterns, but has had nothing to say about the challenge of a rapid expansion to meet an emergency. With initial entry training for enlisted armor and infantry recruits increasing to twenty-two weeks, the challenge of sourcing personnel expansion with large numbers of young men and women with no previous military experience becomes even more difficult.<sup>34</sup>

In December 2020, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, provided an assessment that the character of warfare is changing. One of the changes General Milley predicted is tanks operating autonomously, without human crews.<sup>35</sup> The development of autonomous platforms may significantly alter the concept of mobilization and force expansion in the future. However, General Milley also noted the likelihood of significant Department of Defense (DoD) budget cuts in the near future. If those occur the question then becomes, what will the US Army do if the budget cuts cause a reduction in military endstrength before that loss can be offset with autonomous machines? Could such an outcome influence the army's mobilization network in a more significant way?

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<sup>32</sup> Joseph Whitlock, "The Army's Mobilization Problem," *The War Room*, US Army War College, 3 October 2017, accessed 10 November 2020, <https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/armys-mobilization-problem/>.

<sup>33</sup> Michelle Tan, "Putting People First: McConville Looks to Revolutionize How Soldiers Serve," *Association of the US Army*, 3 October 2019, accessed 10 December 2020, <https://www.ausa.org/articles/putting-people-first-mcconville-looks-revolutionize-how-soldiers-serve>.

<sup>34</sup> US Army, *Army Strategy*, 5.

<sup>35</sup> John Grady and Sam LaGrone, "CJCS Milley: Character of War in Midst of Fundamental Change," *USNI News*, 4 December 2020, accessed 8 January 2021, <https://news.usni.org/2020/12/04/cjcs-milley-character-of-war-in-midst-of-fundamental-change>.

## Methodology

### Gaddis: The Landscape of History

This monograph will employ the historical case study approach outlined by John L. Gaddis' book *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past*. Gaddis argues that unlocking insights through historical analysis requires the historian or researcher to view history as a landscape. When viewing the landscape, the researcher needs to stand above events and achieve a "wider view" of events, that is, a more informed perspective than is possible in the present. Gaddis' method directs researchers to "smooth over the details, to look for larger patterns" all with the purpose of identifying significant lessons for the future. After doing so the historian or researcher is closer to having enough insight to distill the landscape, creating a "package" for others to learn from the events and process.<sup>36</sup>

When applying Gaddis' method to Korean War mobilization, this monograph will examine the US Army mobilization plan in 1946 and the US strategic environment between 1946 and 1950. Then assess the US Army's execution of mobilization and expansion in 1950-1951, followed by identifying impacts of sustaining mobilization through July 1953. Finally, the monograph concludes by reviewing the Eisenhower Administration's "New Look" strategy, the 1955 *Reserve Forces Service Act*, and lastly examines the 1958-59 Army mobilization plan.

As Gaddis puts it, "we know the future only by the past we project into it."<sup>37</sup> In the end, after critically applying Gaddis' analytical method to the mobilization plan before the Korean War, the execution of mobilization and expansion between 1950 and 1953, and the updated plans following the Korean War, this monograph aims to identify measures that will mitigate the friction of a future US Army mobilization effort in support of LSCO, and to provide informed

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<sup>36</sup> John L. Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 5-8.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

recommendations for US Army mobilization in a post-industrial age.



## Background, October 1946 – June 1950

### Army Ground Forces' *Mobilization Plan 15497*

This case study's first step is to review the US Army Ground Forces (AGF) *Mobilization Plan 15497*. Created in 1942, AGF oversaw the US Army's mobilization during World War II, and also executed the army's demobilization after the war's end. AGF updated the army's mobilization plan and published *Mobilization Plan 15497* in October 1946.<sup>38</sup> The AGF 1946 mobilization plan is chosen for further study because it was the last AGF update prior to June 1950.

*Mobilization Plan 15497* provided the framework to expand US Army units in the continental United States in the event of major war. The personnel numbers were informed by authorized strengths outlined in various War Department Troop Basis summaries published earlier that year. The base document also highlights critical assumptions, timing and readiness goals, priorities for training, and guidance for processing re-inductees versus non-prior service inductees. Mobilization activities in the first three months would be decentralized, with the eight regionally-distributed numbered field armies developing their own mobilization operations plan. The field armies were directed to include National Guard units in their mobilization plans. Transition to centralized execution would occur after three months when additional infrastructure, trained cadre, and other overhead would support such a shift.<sup>39</sup>

Three foundational requirements would largely determine whether or not the mobilization plan would meet its throughput objectives. First, the plan relied upon the availability of a large pool of previously-trained personnel to meet immediate requirements. Second, the plan assumed that the declaration of mobilization day (M-Day) would precede the commencement of operations

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<sup>38</sup> US Army Ground Forces, *AGF Mobilization Plan 15497* (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters Army Ground Forces, 1946), 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-6, 17.

(D-Day) by at least three months, time that would allow the training infrastructure to become operational. Third, all National Guard units would immediately federalize on M-Day.<sup>40</sup>

Preparing infrastructure and cadre would take at least ninety days; AGF plans forecast full operational training capacity seven months after M-Day. The plan called for all inductees in the first four months of mobilization to be assigned directly to units; first-time inductees would receive an eight-week basic training from their unit, while re-inductees would receive “little or no basic training.” New inductees arriving at replacement training centers between M + 91 and M + 180 would complete a thirteen-week basic training. Those arriving after M + 181 or after would receive a seventeen-week basic training.<sup>41</sup>

The AGF plan included a breakdown of anticipated personnel input and output at the respective army camps, as well as by each combat arm. In total, replacement training centers would receive 338,000 combat arms trainees (cavalry, infantry, field artillery, anti-aircraft artillery, and armor) between the fifth and twelfth months of mobilization, an average of 42,250 each month. The AGF mobilization plan forecast a total of 2,142,500 soldiers mobilized in one year, of whom re-inductions would account for 1,267,000. New inductees would comprise a scant 332,500 of the total.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> US Army Ground Forces, *Mobilization Plan*, 3-5, 17.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 67.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, 19.

REPLACEMENT TRAINING CENTER FLOW BY COMBAT ARM BY PERIOD

COMBAT ARM *	MOBILIZATION PERIOD							
	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
CAV	800	800	800	800	800	800	1600	1600
INF	18000	19200	21800	22000	29600	44800	24400	22200
FA	4800	6400	7200	8000	8800	13600	8000	7600
AAA	3200	3200	4800	4000	5600	8000	4800	3800
ARMED	1600	2400	2400	3200	3200	4800	3200	3000
TOTAL	29000	32000	40000	38000	48000	72000	42000	37000

\*Percentage allocation of replacements to combat arm computed from percentage of particular arm to another in the detailed mobilization plan of units, and taking into consideration the loss factor, by arm, for World War II.

Figure 2. Replacement Training Center Flow Period M + 121 – M + 365. US Army Ground Forces, *AGF Mobilization Plan 15497* (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters Army Ground Forces, 1946), 1.

The mobilization plan's third annex, "Phased Troop Basis," provided details for Regular Army units' phased deployment from the "Zone of the Interior" (ZI), as the continental United States was then called, to an overseas theater. The cascading chart of personnel expansion starts with army and corps headquarters (HQs), moves down to divisions, and provides details down to battalion, company, and detachment. In the first six months, projected units ready to deploy included one field army and one corps HQs, two infantry divisions, and one armored division. The pace changed significantly between the sixth and the twelfth month. In that period, mobilization would produce two additional army HQs, six more corps HQ, nineteen infantry divisions, and five armored divisions. Under certain circumstances, some units would deploy overseas at reduced combat readiness but were to be assigned only "defensive roles at outlying bases." The mobilization focused on Regular Army units; National Guard (NG) and Organized Reserve Corps (ORC) mobilization plans would only be developed following activation.<sup>43</sup>

Figure three shows that AGF planners accepted that 2d Infantry Division would be the only non-airborne infantry division above fifty percent of its authorized strength of 15,936

<sup>43</sup> US Army Ground Forces, *Mobilization Plan*, 22-23, 2-3.

personnel on M-Day. Eleven infantry divisions would start mobilization at 1,993 personnel, just thirteen percent of authorized strength. The average M-Day personnel strength of the first twenty-nine infantry divisions to mobilize would have been twenty-four percent (3,897 of 15,936 authorized). In the following figure the symbol (s) indicates the month available to deploy.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> US Army Ground Forces, *Mobilization Plan*, 21-22.

20	DIVISIONS	6	7	7	69	64	16096	15956	6	CAMP POLE, LA	21	313	15	329	CD	
21	Infantry	24	7	769	44	16096	15956	None	FT Lewis, Wash	12706	3230	1993	797	0020		21
22		34	40					None	Camp Comball Ky	7005	8831	1993	797	11121		22
23		34	40					None	Ft Ord, Calif.	3350	12966	1993	797	13385		23
24		29	29					None	Ft Meade, Md	3760	12166	1993	797			24
25		35	35					None	Camp Carson, Colo	3600	12386	1993	797			25
26		1A	1A					None	Ft Lewis, Wash	16735	1993 18943	1993	797			26
27		2	2					None	Camp Comball Ky	16735	1993 18943	1993	797			27
28		3	3					None	Ft Devens, Mass	4800	11266	1993	797			28
29		43	43					None	Ft Dix, NJ	3226	12710	1993	797			29
30		42	42					None	Camp Edwards, Mass	3026	12911	1993	797			30
31		28	28					None	Camp Rucker, Ala	3050	12866	1993	797			31
32		48	48					None	Camp Atterbury, Ind	2495	13441	1993	797			32
33		38	38					None	Cp Breckinridge, Ky	5226	12710	1993	797			33
34		27	27					None	Camp Polk, La	3726	12211	1993	797			34
35		31	31					None	Camp Polk, La	3726	12211	1993	797			35
36		31	31					None	Ft Custer, Mich	4839	11087	1993	797			36
37		46	46					None	Camp Chiwaukee, Ark	5130	10908	1993	797			37
38		33	33					None	Camp Mc Coy, Miss	3125	12811	1993	797			38
39		32	32					None	Ft L. Wood, Mo.	3360	12686	1993	797			39
40		34	34					None	Ft McClellan, Ala	2850	13286	1993	797			40
41		30	30					None	Ft Jackson, SC	2146	13791	1993	797			41
42		51	51					None	Camp McCain, Miss	5550	10586	1993	797			42
43		39	39					None	Camp Maxey, Tex.	5400	10536	1993	797			43
44		45	45					None	Camp Forrest, Tenn	2740	12276	1993	797			44
45		44	44					None	Camp Wallace, Tex	3925	12011	1993	797			45
46		41	41					None	Cp San Luis Obispo	2485	11441	1993	797			46
47		52	52					None	Camp Waite, Calif	3060	12886	1993	797			47
48		53	53					None	Camp Horne, Tex.	3765	12711	1993	797			48
49		37	37					None	Camp White, Ore	2980	13156	1993	797			49
50		47	47					None	Cp Van Dorn, Miss	2940	13443	1993	797			50
51		56	56					None	Camp Retzer, Ark	2146	13791	1993	797			51
52		52	52					None	Ft Meade, Md	3760	12166	1993	797			52
53		48	48					None	Ft Meade, Md	3760	12166	1993	797			53
54		AUS	AUS					None	Camp Carson, Colo	3600	12386	1993	797			54
55		AUS	AUS					None	Ft Lewis, Wash	16735	1993 18943	1993	797			55
56		1A	1A					None	Camp Comball Ky	7005	8831	1993	797			56
57		1A	1A					None	Ft Devens, Mass	4800	11266	1993	797			57
58		43	43					None	Ft Dix, NJ	3226	12710	1993	797			58
59		26	26					None	Camp Hood, Tex	1548	10904	1993	797			59
60		61	61					None	Camp Hood, Tex	1548	10904	1993	797			60
61		62	62					None	Ft Braxer, Mo	2616	10904	1993	797			61
62		49	49					None	Camp Hood, Tex	1548	10904	1993	797			62
63		60	60					None	Ft Devens, Mass	4800	11266	1993	797			63
64		64	64					None	Camp Comball Ky	7005	8831	1993	797			64
65		1	1					None	Camp Comball Ky	7005	8831	1993	797			65

Figure 3. Division Order of Mobilization. US Army Ground Forces, AGF Mobilization Plan 15497 (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters Army Ground Forces, 1946), 22-23.

The fourth annex, "Replacement Training Centers for AGF," detailed the anticipated branch-immaterial basic training load at each of the fourteen planned replacement training centers. Seven of the fourteen were in operation at the time of the plan's publication, and those seven were assumed to be active on M-Day. The other replacement centers would gradually become operational, reaching full capacity at the seventh month. AGF planners projected an average trainee capacity of 38,000 for the first month. This number would increase by 2,000 – 5,000 for each of the first six months, ending month six with a load of 56,000. Just as in the division-and-above mobilization plan, throughput increased significantly from month seven onward. Throughput projections reached 142,000 in month nine, and peaked in month eleven at 181,500.<sup>45</sup>

PERIOD	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII		VIII	
INPUT	13,000		15,000		17,000		17,000		17,800		22,000		28,000		47,000	
TOTAL TRAINING LOAD	28,000		38,000		48,500		48,500		51,400		64,900		87,500		118,500	
TOTAL OVERHEAD	15,000		15,000		15,000		15,500		18,400		17,440		18,480		46,880	
	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead	Load	Overhead
Op. Panama, Tex.									3800	970	3200	970	6400	1920	8500	2530
Pt Jackson, S. C.	6400	1610	5920	1610	7200	1920	7800	1920	7800	1920	7200	2160	8800	2540	10400	3110
Fort Bragg, N. C.	5600	1510	6000	1610	7700	2050	8200	2080	8000	2080	8300	2400	8900	2540	10400	3120
Fort Ord, Calif.	8400	1870	6400	1970	8400	1870	8400	1770	8400	1710	8400	1920	8300	2640	10400	3140
Fort Knox, Ky.	8400	1870	8400	1870	8400	1870	7400	1890	7400	1960	7400	2320	8800	2640	10400	3120
Camp Croft, S. C.									1700	710	6200	970	4800	1440	6400	1920
Camp Wheeler, Ok.											2400	830	2600	1680	7800	2180
Camp Weikard, Tex.											2700	900	3400	1680	7200	2180
Op. Livingston, Ala.													1800	970	6800	2040
Fort Ord, Calif.							1800	680	3800	970	3800	970	4800	1440	7800	2180
Camp Gordon, Ga.													2400	940	6400	1920
Fort Lewis, Wash.	6400	1670	6400	1670	6400	1670	6400	1710	6400	1710	6400	1920	8200	2490	9800	2880
Fort Dix, N. J.	5400	1460	5800	1480	5800	1480	5800	970	4800	680						
Op Roberts, Calif.									3800	970	3100	970	3200	970	4800	1440
Pt McClellan, Ala.	3800	770	3400	770	3200	970	3200	970	3200	970	3200	970	3200	970	6400	1920
TOTAL	88,000	10,280	88,000	10,280	92,000	11,410	88,000	12,380	91,200	14,840	88,500	17,200	87,500	25,480	118,500	38,820
TOTAL OUTPUT	10,880		13,680		11,700		11,280		15,800		7,800		5,786		14,840	

The AGF 1946 mobilization plan reflected lessons learned from World War II

<sup>45</sup> US Army Ground Forces, *Mobilization Plan*, 22, 67.

mobilization. The plan's strengths included initial decentralized execution, unit mobilization priority, and clear expectations for personnel input and outputs by location and skill. Two primary weaknesses, though, remained unmitigated. First, the plan focused only on total mobilization and expansion of the army, *a lá* World War II. With an output goal of over 2.1 million soldiers at M + 365, AGF's plan did not discuss how a scaled-down mobilization might be accomplished. Second, the 1946 plan absolutely depended on more than 1.2 million re-inductees. In 1947, trained personnel remained abundantly available; the plan offered no suggestions regarding what changes might be required as the veteran demographic aged out of eligibility. Another consideration seemingly unappreciated in the mobilization plan was the expected reaction from a democratic society to a strategy that asked men who had already fought for their country to fight twice before others would fight for the first time.

## Defense Budget Turbulence

President Harry S. Truman invested significant effort to drive defense spending down to a level he considered reasonable for a peacetime environment. President Truman, a veteran of World War I, believed that the Pentagon was flush with "waste and duplication."<sup>46</sup> In *The War for Korea 1945-1950: A House Burning*, Allen Millet characterized Truman's view as wanting "to run the DoD like his failed clothing store: on the cheap."<sup>47</sup> In addition to President Truman's pressure to reduce federal expenditures, World War II demobilization, the concept of Universal Military Training (UMT), and the US atomic monopoly all contributed to a turbulent planning environment for army leaders.

Between V-E Day and the North Korean attack across the 38th Parallel, the US military's

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<sup>46</sup> Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: American in Korea 1950-1953* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 11.

<sup>47</sup> Alan R. Millet, *The War for Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2005), 234.

annual budgets oscillated between growth and contraction. The Army Fiscal Year (FY) budgets followed a similar back-and-forth pattern. President Truman openly prioritized funding the air force and navy as being a better investment than ground forces in the atomic age. Between 1946 and 1950, the US Army's budget swung from contraction to growth and back to contraction again. The US Army's FY 1947 (1 July 1946 – 30 June 1947) budget was \$5.3 billion. It fell to \$4.6 billion 1948, before rising to \$6.02 billion in 1949, and then contracting to \$4.27 billion in FY 1950. This unpredictable movement year to year on budget wreaked havoc on the Army's ability to forecast personnel, equipment, and training requirements. Truman requested just thirteen billion dollars for the total Department of Defense budget for FY 1950; Congress instead allocated \$14.34 billion. In response, Truman signed the budget authorization but "impounded" the \$1.34 billion difference and directed the services to limit expenditures to his requested amount of \$13 billion. Worst of all, none of the above budget determinations resulted from an attempt to match budgets to requirements.<sup>48</sup>

Along with a declining budget, army personnel strength shrank precipitously with the World War II demobilization. Following the war, Truman saw rapid demobilization as part of the nation's character, stating, "No people in history have been known to disengage themselves so quickly from the ways of war." In an April 1946 press conference, Truman called the completed demobilization of seven million uniformed personnel "the most remarkable demobilization in the history of the world, or 'disintegration' if you want to call it that."<sup>49</sup>

In 1947, US Army endstrength authorization stood at 684,000.<sup>50</sup> In tandem with the army budget cuts, personnel authorizations fell in 1948 to 667,000; 651,000 in early 1949; and 591,000

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<sup>48</sup> William W. Epley, "America's First Cold War Army 1945-1950," *AUSA Land Warfare Paper*, no. 32, August 1999, 17-23, accessed 16 December 2020, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a383639.pdf>.

<sup>49</sup> Marion and Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force*, 30.

<sup>50</sup> Richard W. Stewart, *The United States in a Global Era, 1917-2008*, American Military History series, vol. 2 – (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2009), 205.



by June 1950.<sup>51</sup> Actual strength in 1948 was significantly lower than the authorized strength. The failure to adopt Universal Military Training and shortfalls in recruitment led to an actual strength of only 538,000, a shortfall of 128,000 from the budgeted endstrength.<sup>52</sup> The continual budget oscillation, reduced personnel authorizations, and even lower actual staffing levels together significantly threatened any successful execution of the rigid AGF mobilization plan.

## Universal Military Training (UMT)

Universal Military Training offered a possible solution to the problem of how to maintain a pool of trained personnel to support the AGF mobilization plan. UMT first emerged as a potential solution for rapid mobilization following World War I. The demand for a four-million man expeditionary army was unforeseen before April 1917. Following the war, UMT became the centerpiece of arguments for improving mobilization laws and regulations.<sup>53</sup>

President Truman communicated a preference for UMT to his cabinet on 17 August 1945, and at the same time showed disdain for the draft process as “important for long-run military security.”<sup>54</sup> President Franklin D. Roosevelt broached the idea of UMT in his final State of the Union address but offered few details; President Truman filled in the gaps during an address to a joint session of Congress in October 1945.<sup>55</sup> Truman’s UMT plan called for males to complete a year of “defense training” upon graduating high school or upon turning eighteen years old. Trainees would receive basic military instruction and education on citizenship, morality,

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<sup>51</sup> Epley, “America’s First Cold War Army,” 11.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>53</sup> John M. Kendall, *An Inflexible Response* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1983), 29.

<sup>54</sup> George O. Flynn, “The Draft and College Deferments During the Korean War”, *The Historian* 50, no. 3, (May 1988): 371, accessed 10 November 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24447108>

<sup>55</sup> John Sager, “Universal Military Training and the Struggle to Define American Identity During the Cold War”, *Federal History* 5, (2013): 57-74, 60, accessed 13 December 2020c [http://shfg.org/resources/Documents/FH%205%20\(2013\)%20Sager.pdf](http://shfg.org/resources/Documents/FH%205%20(2013)%20Sager.pdf)

hygiene, vocational skills, and basic education.<sup>56</sup> After completing initial training, the graduates would serve six years in the non-drilling inactive reserve, available for recall in the event of war.<sup>57</sup> Over time, UMT would provide a reliable pool of trained personnel while maintaining the American tradition of a small standing army. For Truman, probably the most attractive benefit of UMT would be the cost savings from having a small Regular Army.

Truman received strong support for UMT from army leaders, who estimated UMT could provide three million trained men by 1958.<sup>58</sup> Despite support within his cabinet and the Pentagon, the UMT concept enjoyed very little support in Congress. Clay Blair bluntly asserted, “the UMT had no chance of being approved in peacetime.”<sup>59</sup> Terrence Gough characterized UMT simply as “infeasible.”<sup>60</sup>

## Selective Service Act 1948

The legal authority for compelling citizens to serve in the military following World War II fell victim to the same turbulent environment surrounding defense budget and strategy decisions. The Wartime Selective Training and Service Act expired in March 1947, and at the same time, Soviet attitudes became increasingly aggressive. The Soviets overthrew the non-Communist Czechoslovak government in March 1948. Fearing further Soviet aggression in Europe, US Army Chief of Staff Omar N. Bradley pushed Truman to request a reinstatement of the draft.<sup>61</sup> Congress, eager to formally reject the UMT concept, reinstated the draft with the

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<sup>56</sup> Brian M. Linn, *Elvis's Army: Cold War, GI's and the Atomic Battlefield* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 30.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>58</sup> Hanson, *Combat Ready*, 14.

<sup>59</sup> Blair, *Forgotten War*, 7.

<sup>60</sup> Terrence J. Gough, *US Army Mobilization and Logistics in the Korean War: A Research Approach*, The US Army in Korean War series (Washington, DC: US Army Center for Military History, 1987), 21.

<sup>61</sup> Blair, *Forgotten War*, 38.

*Selective Service Act of 1948*. Truman signed it on 24 June, the same day the Soviet Union closed Berlin's ground transportation routes to the west.<sup>62</sup>

The *Selective Service Act of 1948* required males aged eighteen to twenty-six to register for the draft, with inductions possible at age nineteen. The service commitment for those chosen and qualified to serve was twenty-one months, followed by five years of non-drilling reserve time or three years in a drilling unit of the National Guard or Organized Reserve. The 1948 Act allowed men who enlisted in the National Guard before 18.5 years old a deferment from service in the Regular Army, provided they participated in National Guard unit training. The *Act* was a boon to National Guard accessions, at the same time reducing the available pool of new inductees for the Regular Army. In addition to outlining induction parameters, the *Act* also provided the president the legal authority to access the reserves. Specifically, without a declaration of war or national emergency, the president could order reservists to active duty without their consent for twenty-one months.<sup>63</sup>

## Division Force Structure

The AGF mobilization plan assumed forward-deployed units at full strength. The combination of reduced budgets, occupation duty missions, and the predominant view that M-Day would precede D-Day contributed to a decision by the Department of Army to set the peacetime strength of even overseas divisions at 12,500, a much lower strength than the combat authorization of 18,900.<sup>64</sup> Often the on-hand strength of US Army units fell well below the 12,500 peacetime ceiling. The Eighth US Army in Japan was no different. On 25 June 1950, the first day of the Korean War, Eighth Army aggregate personnel strength equaled about ninety-three percent of the peacetime authorization, resulting in division personnel strength averages of

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<sup>62</sup> Marion and Hoffman, *Forging the Total Force*, 32.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>64</sup> Hanson, *Combat Ready*, 14.

11,625, with a deficit of roughly 7,000 soldiers per division to reach combat strength.<sup>65</sup>

The Eighth Army infantry divisions' combat readiness arguably rated worse than the personnel numbers show, due to a lack of new equipment appropriations, personnel turnover, and personnel imbalance. James Schnabel termed the imbalance of support personnel over combat personnel as "excessive."<sup>66</sup> Reaching the 12,500 personnel cap came at the cost of three rifle battalions, six heavy tank companies, three field artillery batteries (105mm), three anti-aircraft artillery batteries, and 100 anti-tank guns (90mm) per division.<sup>67</sup> Adding to this challenge was the average annual turnover rate of personnel throughout FECOM of 43 percent.<sup>68</sup> Millett labeled the turnover of personnel the "greatest villain preventing the Eighth Army from being combat-ready."<sup>69</sup>

## Calibrated Force Posture

In June 1950 the Regular Army included 591,000 personnel, the vast majority organized into ten divisions.<sup>70</sup> Four of those divisions were in Japan, two were in Europe, and the remaining four divisions were in the ZI. Army personnel in FECOM totaled roughly 108,000; their assessed response time to deploy from Japan to Korea via air or sea was estimated at one to two weeks, compared to the expected response time for US-based divisions estimated at two to three months.<sup>71</sup> Arguably on the eve of the Korean War, the army could respond faster in FECOM than any other overseas theater.

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<sup>65</sup> James F. Schnabel, *The United States Army in the Korean War, Policy and Direction: The First Year* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2009), 54.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>68</sup> Blair, *Forgotten War*, 49.

<sup>69</sup> Millett, *A House Burning*, 81.

<sup>70</sup> Epley, "America's First Cold War Army", 23.

<sup>71</sup> Department of History USMA, *Confrontation in Asia*, 8, 153.

## Background Conclusion

The years between World War II and the Korean War were marked by turbulence and uncertainty, but the army's guiding paradigms remained largely intact. Preparing for another total war, the *AGF Mobilization Plan* relied predominantly on trained veterans to meet the personnel demand inherent in mobilization and expansion. The rigid plan did not consider a time where a large pool of trained personnel would be unavailable. The concurrent turbulence in army budget allocation and endstrength were antithetical to the programmed personnel expansion found in the 1946 mobilization plan. UMT, seen as the key to creation of a perpetual pool of trained personnel, never gained congressional support. The army's decision to cap division endstrength below sixty-seven percent created a massive deferred demand for individual and small unit replacements to allow the divisions to fight as designed. In June 1950, the army's ability to mobilize and respond rapidly relied overwhelmingly on war being in proximity to its large concentration of forces in Japan and Europe as well as the large pool of trained veterans.

## Korean War Expansion and Mobilization June 1950 – August 1953

### D-Day Before M-Day

On the morning of 25 June 1950, the Communist Korean People's Army (KPA) crossed the 38th parallel and invaded the Republic of Korea. Discussion in President Truman's cabinet centered on the appropriate response. General Omar Bradley, since 1948 the presiding officer of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, advised Truman, "we must draw the line somewhere [and Korea] offered as good an occasion for drawing the line as anywhere else."<sup>72</sup> On the day of the attack, Truman directed his representative in the United Nations (UN) to propose a resolution to the UN Security Council demanding an immediate end to hostilities and withdrawal of the KPA to the north. The resolution passed, but North Korean forces continued their attack. Two days later, the Truman Administration presented a second UN resolution, to provide air and naval support to the Republic of Korea. This resolution also passed, with fifty-three member states signifying support, twenty-nine of which offered specific assistance.<sup>73</sup> On 30 June, Truman authorized General MacArthur to employ American ground forces in Korea. The next day, elements of 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division deployed from Japan to Korea. Lieutenant Colonel Charles "Brad" Smith led this task force of 540 soldiers.<sup>74</sup> In just days, North Korean aggression and the subsequent US response had shattered all existing army mobilization planning assumptions, especially that M-Day would precede D-Day.

General MacArthur's first request to the US Joint Chiefs for reinforcements asked for two infantry divisions. He soon revised the request to a field army of four divisions, an airborne regimental combat team, an armored group of three medium tank battalions, and 30,000 fillers to

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<sup>72</sup> Blair, *Forgotten War*, 72.

<sup>73</sup> Stewart, *The United States in a Global Era*, 228.

<sup>74</sup> Alan R. Millet, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951: They Came from the North* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2010), 137.

bring Eighth Army units to their wartime strength.<sup>75</sup> MacArthur's request totaled more than 75,000 soldiers. At the time, the 82d Airborne Division was the lone ready division in the ZI. The DoD possessed no viable option to support MacArthur's request. In 1983, Colonel John Kendall, researching Korean war mobilization, bluntly stated that the army's mobilization concepts in June 1950 "did not in the least fit the Korea situation."<sup>76</sup>

### Initial Mobilization Response: 25 June 1950 – 31 August 1950

On 30 June, President Truman signed an extension of the 1948 *Selective Service Act*, which pushed the expiration date out to 9 July 1951. On 1 July the army extended all current enlistment contracts by one year. On 6 July, the president approved Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson's request to raise the army's authorized strength from 630,000 to 680,000. On 14 July the president approved another requested personnel increase, this time to 740,500. Five days later Johnson secured a third increase; the army's authorized strength now stood at 834,000. On 3 August, the US Congress removed the existing limitations of the army's size at the president's request. On 10 August Truman approved an increase to 1,081,000 and approved federalizing four National Guard divisions and two Guard regimental combat teams.<sup>77</sup>

The growth in trained personnel could not keep pace with presidential decisions. The four federalized divisions needed nine months to prepare for combat. General J. Lawton Collins, the US Army Chief of Staff, visited MacArthur on 10 July and informed him that his request for a field army and four divisions could not be approved. Instead, he should plan to have his four divisions brought to full strength and to receive one additional army division, an army regimental combat team, and a marine division.<sup>78</sup> Faced with this reality, General MacArthur and his

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<sup>75</sup> Gough, *US Army Mobilization and Logistics*, 26.

<sup>76</sup> Kendall, *An Inflexible Response*, 158-166.

<sup>77</sup> Gough, *US Army Mobilization and Logistics*, 1-2.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

subordinate commanders began reallocating their four understrength divisions to make three near full-strength divisions. Eighth Army chose to cannibalize the 7th Infantry Division in order to strengthen the other three divisions.

On 19 July the Department of the Army authorized full combat strength for all FECOM divisions.<sup>79</sup> To fill this requirement, the army levied Regular Army units in the ZI to provide 50,000 personnel of their available 140,000.<sup>80</sup> The army also prepared two Regular Army divisions for deployment to Korea, levying non-deploying units to bring the identified infantry divisions to combat strength. The moves came at a cost, as entire units were levied out of existence. Conrad Crane provides an example of this from September 1950 at Fort Lewis, Washington. The post adjutant general levied a recently federalized National Guard artillery battalion for forty percent of its enlisted personnel. The levied personnel then joined units deploying earlier than their Guard battalion, to include non-artillery units. The adjutant general then levied other Fort Lewis personnel—to include musicians, firefighters, and recent basic training graduates—to replace the losses in the artillery battalion.<sup>81</sup> Kendall argued this created a “come as you are” mobilization process.<sup>82</sup>

The 2d Infantry Division sailed for Japan on 17 July. Two weeks later, on 31 July the division landed instead in Korea. The 3d Infantry division sailed from San Francisco on 30 August. Deploying the 2d and 3d Infantry Divisions significantly lowered the army’s available personnel to train inductees. Three months later, Lieutenant General Charles L. Bolté, the US Army G3, estimated that it would take until at least July 1951 to regenerate the group of CONUS

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<sup>79</sup> Schnabel, *United States Army and Korean War*, 89.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>81</sup> Conrad C. Crane, et. al, ‘*Come as You Are*’ War: *US Readiness for the Korean Conflict*, (Carlisle, PA: Historical Services Division, US Army Heritage and Education Center, n.d.), 33, accessed 17 October 2020. [https://ahec.armywarcollege.edu/documents/U.S.\\_Readiness.pdf](https://ahec.armywarcollege.edu/documents/U.S._Readiness.pdf).

<sup>82</sup> Kendall, *An Inflexible Response*, 166.



Regular Army units considered the army's "general reserve."<sup>83</sup>

The immediate personnel challenges remained, and the army turned to the Selective Service, Organized Reserve Corps (ORC), and the National Guard for a solution. On 27 July the army amended its draft call request up from 20,000 to 50,000, with inductees required no later than 30 September. After receiving an insufficient response to a request for volunteers, the army involuntarily recalled 30,000 enlisted men from the ORC's volunteer and inactive reserve categories on 3 August, leaving units in a paid drill status intact. This recall was quickly followed by an involuntary recall of 7,862 officers (lieutenant and captain) on 10 August. Thirteen days later the army announced another involuntary recall of 77,000 ORC members. The decision to mobilize National Guard divisions was less straightforward. Army leaders debated whether the National Guard should activate for anything less than total war. Also weighing on decision-makers was the potential impact on the national economy, and which states would provide the units. Ultimately, on 10 August President Truman approved calling four National Guard divisions and two regimental combat teams to federal service. To minimize potential political and economic impact, divisions were chosen from four different regions: Pennsylvania (28th Infantry Division); California (40th Infantry Division); New England (43d Infantry Division); and Oklahoma (45th Infantry Division), as well as South Dakota and Tennessee (196th and 278th Regimental Combat Teams, respectively).<sup>84</sup>

As the mobilization gears continued to churn in the United States, the fighting raged in Korea. Eighth Army casualties (wounded and killed in action) totaled 7,859 between 1 July and 5 August, while individual replacements to FECOM in the same period totaled only 7,711.<sup>85</sup> To turn the war in favor of the UN forces, MacArthur planned a turning movement, striking at what he estimated to be an overextended KPA. His attack would consist of a two-division amphibious

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<sup>83</sup> Gough, *US Army Mobilization and Logistics*, 5, 28.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-8.

<sup>85</sup> Schnabel, *United States and the Korean War Policy*, 128.

landing at the port of Inchon, west of Seoul. For the attack, MacArthur would have the US Army's rebuilt 7th Infantry Division and the 1st Marine Division. For additional personnel, MacArthur turned to the South Korean people. He struck an agreement with South Korea's president, Syngman Rhee, and soon 8,600 Korean "augmentees" were shipped to Japan for two weeks of training with the 7th Infantry Division. The challenge of integrating the quickly-nicknamed KATUSA's (Korean Augmentees to the US Army) was exacerbated by their "practically non-existent" knowledge of English or military training.<sup>86</sup>

### Expanded Mobilization: 1 September 1950 – 30 June 1951

In the third month of the war, mobilization objectives stabilized and the infrastructure capacity improved. On 1 September the 40th and 45th Infantry Divisions were federalized, and the 28th and 43rd Divisions followed four days later. The divisions, much like the Regular Army divisions, started at under fifty percent strength.

Efforts to fulfill the personnel expansion requirements were slowed by the lack of awareness of individual personnel readiness within the reserve components. On 30 June the army knew the ORC stood at 600,417 personnel, 416,402 in the Inactive and Volunteer Reserves, and 184,015 in organized reserve units. However, the readiness of individuals in the reserves was a mystery. To reduce expenses, the Army suspended the requirement for reserve member periodic physicals in 1947. They kept minimal records on reserve officers, and enlisted soldiers' records were "virtually non-existent." As a result, large numbers of recalled reservists proved to be physically unfit, and for many others active service caused economic hardship.<sup>87</sup> A significant number of selective service deferments further exasperated the army's ability to meet the personnel demands in FECOM and elsewhere. Over an eight-month period starting in August

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<sup>86</sup> Gough, *Mobilization and Logistics in the Korean War*, 47.

<sup>87</sup> Schnabel, *US Army and the Korean War*, 122.

1951 the Selective Service delivered 490,000 inductees. In the same period 5,257,000 men were granted deferments based on either dependency (a father or husband) or their job.<sup>88</sup>

To quickly meet the personnel requirements the Korean War demanded, the army turned to the large pool of trained World War II veterans. Later in 1951, Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall praised those veterans for their compliance with their induction calls. He stated, “providing combat-ready reinforcements...could only be accomplished by extensive calls for additional service from the veterans of World War II.” In all, roughly 640,000 World War II veterans served again in the Korean War, the vast majority by means of involuntary induction.<sup>89</sup>

After the successful Inchon landing on 15 September, combined with further success against retreating North Korean forces, MacArthur’s optimism became contagious. The June objective of restoring the pre-war borders evolved into annihilation of the North Korean Army and reunification of Korea under the Rhee government. As UN forces marched north towards the Yalu River, the Defense Department directed army leaders to review existing force requirements; as a result, November’s individual replacements were canceled. UN “sending states” contributions were also reduced. Greece had promised a brigade, but supplied only a battalion. France deployed a battalion in late 1950, but as attention shifted to defense of Indochina against the Viet Minh, would not replace it once it completed its tour of duty.<sup>90</sup> Such decisions would prove costly only weeks later, when Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong, confident that his troops could change the outcome of the war, committed 400,000 of the Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) to the cause.<sup>91</sup> Within weeks, UN forces retreated south of the 38th Parallel.

The Chinese intervention changed the war, and on 16 December President Truman formally declared a national emergency. Truman also announced that the armed forces would

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<sup>88</sup> Flynn, “The Draft and College Deferments,” 382.

<sup>89</sup> Marion and Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force*, 41.

<sup>90</sup> United States Military Academy, Department of History, *Confrontation in Asia*, 39.

<sup>91</sup> Millet, *They Came from the North*, 298.

expand from 1.5 million personnel to 3.5 million.<sup>92</sup> The following month President Truman signed an executive order providing an incentive to volunteer for men aged eighteen to twenty-five: by volunteering, men would only have to serve twenty-one months instead of three years for draftees. Later in June, as the 1948 Selective Service Act extension neared expiration, Truman signed the Universal Military Training and Service Act. The UMT Service Act lowered the draft age from nineteen to eighteen, extended selective service to 1 July 1955, and established a commission to generate a UMT program outline. In March 1952, Congress acted on the UMT commission's recommendations. In a 236 to 162 vote, the House of Representatives recommitted the bill to the Senate Armed Services Committee, which killed the initiative supported by President Truman.<sup>93</sup>

As the Korean War approached the end of its first year, the total number of recalled reservists, federalized guardsmen, and draftees stood at roughly 853,000. The Army recalled 173,496 individual reservists, 34,225 reservists in troop units, 95,000 National Guardsmen, and drafted 550,397 through selected service.<sup>94</sup>

### Mobilizing, Training, Fighting, Demobilizing (July 1951- August 1953)

On 1 July 1951, Gen. Ridgway invited his North Korean and Chinese counterparts to begin negotiations for a cease-fire.<sup>95</sup> At the same time, FECOM revised the individual replacement standards. Under a “constructive months of service” (CMS) process, soldiers would earn points for each month of service as well as for where that service was performed. Soldiers on the front line or close to the front would receive four points each month, soldiers in rear areas, two points; additional points accrued for wounds and decorations of valor. After earning thirty-six

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<sup>92</sup> Marion and Hoffman, *Forging a Total Force*, 38.

<sup>93</sup> Gough, *US Army Mobilization and Logistics*, 11-12, 15.

<sup>94</sup> William M. Donnelly, “‘The Best Army that can be Put in the Field in the Circumstances’: The US Army, July 1951-1953,” *Journal of Military History*, 71, (2007): 815.

<sup>95</sup> Millett, *They Came from the North*, 456.

points, soldiers became eligible to rotate back to the United States. Following implementation of this policy, the monthly turnover rate for Korea as a whole in FY 1951 would average 29.6 percent.<sup>96</sup>

Individual rotation in the summer of 1951 meant the army was now executing mobilization, training, fighting, and demobilization simultaneously. The stresses of doing so would build steadily into 1953, by which point the pool of eligible veterans as well as most of the recalled reservists and federalized guardsmen would no longer be available. The Fiscal Year 1953 projection from the US Army G-1 projected a personnel loss of 740,000, but projected gains were only 650,000. At the same time, personnel turnover increased to 56.5 percent in FY 1953. William Donnelly assessed that the high turnover rate negatively impacted leadership, quality training programs, endstrength, global force requirements, and force generation capacity.<sup>97</sup>

## Korean War Mobilization and Expansion Conclusion

Prior to 30 June 1950, the army prepared for total war. The Korean War proved that limited war was not only possible in the atomic era, but also that limited war was more probable. World War II veterans provided critical trained manpower in the first twelve months of the war. In the second and third years of the war the army found itself conducting large-scale combat operations while still mobilizing, training, and demobilizing. Sustaining mobilization was difficult and by 1953, most draftees had no previous military experience; meanwhile the army steadily lost institutional experience owing to the individual replacement policy. The army had added eight divisions in the first ten months of the war, and later added two more. The time to reflect on the experience and prepare for future mobilization was now at hand.

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<sup>96</sup> Donnelly, "The Best Army that can be Put in the Field," 818.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 815.

## Post Korean War Adjustments

### Strategy and Policy (1955-1956)

As Gaddis directs us to view history as a landscape, the next step in reviewing adjustments and lessons from Korean War mobilization is to review the Eisenhower Administration's post-war strategy. The primary source for this review is the *Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1955-1956*.<sup>98</sup> Following the Korean War, President Dwight D. Eisenhower directed a reduction in defense funding to better align such spending with a peacetime environment. He also based the "New Look" strategy on massive nuclear retaliation. The strategy prioritized the navy and air force over the army in a way similar to what Truman had done before the Korean War. Critical to the strategy was an ability to employ "nuclear - air retaliation power." The strategy promised a balanced budget and strong economy, capable of transitioning and supporting war if necessary. A strong mobilization base was identified as an essential element of national security. Regarding force design, President Eisenhower observed that "we should base our security upon military formations which make maximum use of science and technology in order to minimize the number of men."<sup>99</sup> By 1957 the Eisenhower Administration strategy pushed the air force budget to \$16.5 billion, nearly as much as the army (\$7.5 billion) and navy (\$10 billion) combined.<sup>100</sup>

In 1955, his final year as army chief of staff, General Matthew B. Ridgway objected to President Eisenhower's "New Look" strategy. He argued the strategy wrongly assumed that any future war would be total and involve large-scale employment of nuclear weapons. Explaining his position in his memoirs, Ridgway stated, "Korea taught us that all warfare from this time forth

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<sup>98</sup> Kenneth W. Condit, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1955-1956*, History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, vol. 6 – (Washington, DC: Office of Joint History, 1998), 1, accessed 24 February 2021, [https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/History/Policy/Policy\\_V006.pdf](https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/History/Policy/Policy_V006.pdf)

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-9.

<sup>100</sup> Ingo Trauschweizer, *The Cold War US Army: Building Deterrence for Limited War* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 29.

must be limited. It could no longer be a question of whether to fight a limited war, but of how to avoid any other kind.”<sup>101</sup> Fundamentally, Ridgway believed wars were won by men, not machines.<sup>102</sup> Despite this objection, President Eisenhower’s guidance remained unchanged; Regular Army endstrength would be cut, and reserve forces combined with a responsive mobilization enterprise would mitigate the risk. Army endstrength quickly fell from 1,404,000 in 1954 to 1,025,000 in 1956.

The rigid New Look strategy limited American options to respond to Soviet aggression to anything but rapid escalation, casting doubt on the wisdom of months- or years-long mobilization plans. The importance of mobilization remained a frequent topic of discussion among the service chiefs; the army and navy pushed for war plans laying out branch and sequel plans lasting up to D + 48 months, while the air force argued for plans covering only a year. Air force leaders argued that, due to America’s nuclear capability compared to that of the Soviets, a war would not extend past a year. As a result, mobilization growth past M + 6 should not be considered relevant to future war plans. The chairman of the joint chiefs chose a horizon nearly in the middle of service chief recommendations, at D + 30 months. Internal to the planning horizon, D-Day and D + 6 months would serve as important benchmarks. In the army’s case, it would consist of seventeen divisions on D-Day, expand to twenty-eight divisions at D + 6, and up to eighty-two divisions on D + 30.<sup>103</sup>

## Reserve Forces Act 1955

The next focus area for reviewing the landscape is to review legislation that impacted mobilization planning, specifically the *Reserve Forces Act of 1955 (RFA ‘55)*. *RFA ‘55* amended the 1952 *RFA* and became law on 9 August 1955. The law’s stated purpose was, “[t]o provide for

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<sup>101</sup> Burton I. Kaufmann, *The Korean Conflict* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 70.

<sup>102</sup> Traushweizer, *The Cold War US Army*, 33.

<sup>103</sup> Condit, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy*, 27-30.

strengthening of the Reserve Forces...”<sup>104</sup> To strengthen the reserves and nest with the president’s strategy, the armed forces reserve endstrength authorization rose to 2.9 million, up from the 1.5 million authorized in 1952. Of that 2.9 million total, the army’s reserve component authorization equaled roughly fifty percent: one million in the US Army Reserve and 440,000 in the Army National Guard. To reduce the number of understrength reserve divisions that would expand if mobilized, the number of such divisions fell from twenty-five to ten.<sup>105</sup>

As noted earlier, one of the challenges to mobilization during the Korean War resulted from the army’s lack of visibility regarding which individual members were fit for combat. Another awareness gap resulted from a lack of knowledge regarding reserve unit training status. *RFA ’55* focused on correcting both of those issues. It specifically directed each cohort to “provide a system of continuous screening of units and members of the Ready Reserve.” The screening’s purpose was to ensure “no significant attrition would occur to those members or units during a mobilization.” To create a better awareness of reserve training status, *RFA ’55* mandated the Secretary of Defense to submit an annual report to the President and Congress. The report would summarize the previous fiscal year’s reserve training and other efforts to strengthen the reserves.<sup>106</sup> *RFA ’55* also mandated active participation in reserve training for Ready Reserve forces.<sup>107</sup>

## US Continental Army Command Mobilization Training Program (1958)

In 1948, AGF transformed into Army Field Forces (AFF). The mission of AFF in 1948 was “general supervision, coordination, and inspection of all matters pertaining to the training of

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<sup>104</sup> Reserve Forces Act of 1955, Public Law 84-305, *U.S. Statutes at Large 69* (1955): 598-604, accessed 15 January 2021, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-69/pdf/STATUTE-69-Pg598.pdf>.

<sup>105</sup> Stewart, *The United States in a Global Era*, 267.

<sup>106</sup> Reserve Forces Act of 1955, 598-600.

<sup>107</sup> Stewart, *The United States in a Global Era*, 266.



all individuals utilized in a field army.”<sup>108</sup> In 1955 AFF transformed into US Continental Army Command (USCONARC).<sup>109</sup> USCONARC’s responsibility included oversight of the six numbered continental armies, Regular Army and reserves’ training, preparing the future army, and defending the United States.<sup>110</sup> The plan in focus for this study is USCONARC’s *Mobilization Plan Fiscal Year 1958-1959*, dated 19 September 1958.

The *USCONARC Mobilization Plan* was an expansive document that covered replacement training centers, service schools, unit training centers, and corps and divisions maneuver areas. The plan prioritized rapid expansion, with most training centers to begin training on or before M + 1 (month). The plan commonly projected full operational capability in the third month of mobilization. Nearly all unit and replacement training centers would operate at peak capacity by M + 6. Early inductees (M + 1 to M + 6), anticipated to initially number 92,279, would undergo an eight-week basic training as the anticipated number would rise to 261,160 at M + 6. Service school operations would follow a similar pattern, with 53,562 soldiers in training in M + 1, rising to 160,197 at M + 6.<sup>111</sup>

Under this plan, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, figured prominently as a replacement training center for infantry. Fort Jackson provided support for an eight-week basic combat training course and several advanced individual infantry training courses. The planned capacity of Fort Jackson basic training was zero on M-Day, 11,538 at M + 1, and peaked at M + 6 with a load of 21,000.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Crane, ‘*Come as You Are*,’ 27.

<sup>109</sup> Stewart, *The United States in a Global Era*, 262.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

<sup>111</sup> US Continental Army Command, *USCONARC Mobilization and Training Plan - 1958* (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters US Continental Army Command, 1958), 5.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

Objective	Work Unit	Est Workload (thousands)					
		M/1	M/2	M/3	M/6	M/9	M/12
a. Fld ex & fld maneuvers	Pers	1,427	1,607	1,607	29,739	122,296	208,933
b. Army svc sch tng	Stu	53,562	72,828	100,415	160,197	158,833	158,772
c. Repl tng	Trn	97,279	146,162	180,389	261,160	254,548	254,548
d. Tng in AFSWP	Trn	631	797	555	531	141	188
e. Trp tests	Tests				NONE		
f. Extension crs tng	Part				NONE		
g. Tng in civ institutions 1/	Stu	1,050	1,250	1,653	5,000	5,000	5,000
h. Tng in sch and/or fac of other svc 1/	Trn						
i. Unit tng at cl I instl:	Pers						
Asg CG USCONARC:		573,227	627,160	710,905	609,247	634,751	629,779
Asg other DA agencies:		88,593	92,954	98,319	64,735	53,957	38,855
Total		661,820	720,114	809,224	673,982	688,708	668,634

Figure 5. USCONARC Mobilization Training Capacity. US Continental Army Command, *USCONARC Mobilization and Training Plan - 1958* (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters US Continental Army Command, 1958), 5.

Infantry  
REPLACEMENT TRAINING CENTER  
Ft Jackson, S.C.

I Phased Inputs and Training Loads (Non-Cumulative)

TYPE TRAINING	'TYPE INPUT' WKS'	'& MOS LOAD' TNG'	M-DAY	M+1	M+2	M+3	M+6	M+9	M+12
				Month	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months
BASIC COMBAT TRAINING (Load)	BCT	8		11538	12023	11449	21000	21000	21000
AIT AND REFRESHER TRAINING									
'MOS NR'	TITLE								
111.0	Light Weapons								
111.1		AIT Input	8		180	180	180	180	180
111.7	Infantryman	Ref Input	2	1458	362	28	28	28	28
		MOS Load		1689	921	374	374	374	374
112.0	Heavy Weapons								
112.1		AIT Input	8		120	120	120	120	120
112.2	Infantryman	Ref Input	2	92	248	148	148	148	148
112.7		MOS Load		266	367	314	314	314	314

Figure 6. Fort Jackson Replacement Training Center Mobilization Capacity. US Continental Army Command, *USCONARC Mobilization and Training Plan - 1958* (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters US Continental Army Command, 1958), 318.

Phased Monthly Loads (Non-Cumulative)

BRANCH	M-DAY	M+1	M+2	M+3	M+6	M+9	M+12	M+15
		STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH
IG	508	508	508	508	0	0	0	0
MD	911	897	684	752	1899	2049	1995	795
MI	490	579	579	608	352	21	21	21
MP	668	668	668	668	0	0	0	0
OD	961	2941	2193	2172	1121	1460	1458	1063
PI	0	87	197	106	0	0	0	0
PW	514	1440	1440	1499	985	828	828	671
QM	513	3699	3699	3699	2836	2513	2578	2169
SC	1192	1337	290	290	290	290	290	2125
SF	1004	7075	4246	5613	6300	6506	1753	1151
TC	639	10529	10545	13746	6050	10016	10763	9046
TOTAL	27162	78013	76917	69946	58585	61311	46988	46432

64

U. S. CONARC  
UNIT TRAINING CENTER  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Phased Monthly Loads (Non-Cumulative)

BRANCH	M-DAY	M+1	M+2	M+3	M+6	M+9	M+12	M+15
		STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH	STRENGTH
ASSIGNED CG, USCONARC								
AB	11486	11486	11486	0	0	0	0	0
IN	0	13748	18000	18000	31748	27496	13748	13748
***	1142	1142	1142	1142	0	0	0	0
HQ	328	656	656	656	0	0	328	0
AA	704	704	704	0	0	0	0	0
AB	510	510	510	510	510	510	510	510
AG	13	82	69	163	168	30	55	80
AR	719	4378	4378	4378	0	0	0	0
AV	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
CM	866	1697	2028	2172	2154	1265	1830	1826
EN	1528	6928	6086	5908	2459	6209	7783	10216
FA	2393	6849	6736	7314	1671	2076	3006	2969
FI	31	31	31	0	0	0	0	0

63

Figure 7. Fort Bragg Unit Training Center Capacity. US Continental Army Command, *USCONARC Mobilization and Training Plan - 1958* (Fort Monroe, VA: Headquarters US Continental Army Command, 1958), 131-132.

Unit training centers followed a similar rapid expansion path between M + 1 and M + 3, peaking at M + 6. Representative of this growth pattern is Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The *USCONARC Mobilization Plan* calls an M-Day strength of 27,162 personnel with growth to 78,013 personnel at M + 1. Infantry unit training at Fort Bragg expands from zero on M-Day to 13,478 on M + 1 and 31,748 at M + 6.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>113</sup> US Continental Army Command, *USCONARC Mobilization and Training Plan*, 131-133.

## Post-Korean War Adjustments Conclusion

Following the Korean War, the army once again faced reduced budgets and endstrength. President Eisenhower's focus on economic strength, reliance on massive nuclear retaliation, and dependence on rapid personnel mobilization to support another world war scenario all shaped USCONARC's *Mobilization Plan* design. The service chiefs agreed that, once begun, mobilization must be executed as rapidly as possible, emphasizing the first six months of the process. The key legislative adjustment following the Korean War was the *Reserve Forces Act of 1955*. *RFA '55* directed reserve screening to reduce individual attrition during mobilization and also required the services to report their efforts on strengthening the reserves. The USCONARC plan significantly enhanced measures to establish unit training, replacement training, and service training. Cumulatively, these strategy, policy, and authority changes facilitated the adoption of an informed and improved army mobilization plan in 1958.

## Conclusion

Personnel mobilization and force expansion for the Korean War were principally army problems to solve, and this is still true today. In 1946, fresh from victory in World War II, United States leaders placed their confidence in the US military's ability to respond to potential threats. They did so without fully understanding that the post-war force in no way resembled the massive organization fielded to defeat the Axis powers. President Truman nevertheless accepted this situation out of fealty to the American tradition of a small peacetime standing army. Even with a Regular Army of more than 591,000 soldiers in 1950, its readiness in no way resembled what it had been just five years before. The decision to staff most Regular Army combat divisions between one-third to two-thirds of their combat strength, combined with mostly lower endstrength and readiness in the reserve components, created nearly insurmountable obstacles to successful mobilization. Worse, immediate post-war mobilizations envisioned only total war. The mobilization plan was gradual, requiring three months to prepare cadre and infrastructure, seven months to generate the first fully-trained individuals, and even longer to prepare units for combat. The juxtaposition of D-Day with M-Day at the start of the Korean War was wholly mitigated by recalling approximately 640,000 trained World War II veterans to fight in the Korean war. Their criticality to the success of the United Nations campaign during the first six months of war cannot be overstated.

The role the trained veterans played in Korean War mobilization was obvious to military leaders at the time. Following the war, reserve forces received renewed congressional attention as well as greater emphasis in the updated national strategy. These measures reflected the guidance from President Eisenhower to the Department of Defense, to prioritize technology and reduce personnel requirements. In response, the air force chief of staff argued that no future war would last more than a year, and mobilization was unlikely to be decisive in a conflict centered on nuclear exchanges. Still, army and marine leaders recognized that the first six months of

mobilization would be the most critical. The army updated its mobilization plan in 1958. Army mobilization would now start in the first month. Training center capacity would peak by the third month of mobilization—a stark contrast to the 1946 plans that required three months just to prepare to receive trainees.

The army of 2021 finds itself in an environment similar to that of both 1946 and 1955. There is fiscal uncertainty, and budget and army endstrength cuts are highly probable. Once again, the army risk mitigation strategy relies heavily on technology to offset personnel cuts. Considering the current environment, the army must act now to harden the army's mobilization enterprises. First, the army must update its strategy and MDO concept to account for protracted war. Second, the army must aggressively expand the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) to meet personnel demands of Regular Army divisions. Third, the army must double the number of Regular Army SFABs.

The army's strategy and planning documents must acknowledge the possibility of war lasting longer than a few weeks. *Multi-Domain Operations in 2028* governs every decision made in Washington, DC, to move the army into the future, at least to 2035. However, the concept fails to account for fiscal austerity, the likelihood of long-duration conflict, and a largely US-based force posture. An updated MDO concept that addresses the aforementioned realities would better guide for the army on its future path—and serve as a more credible message to potential adversaries.

Secondly, the army must expand its pool of trained personnel by strengthening the IRR to meet projected Regular Army personnel demand. The IRR should be incentivized and expanded to boost both overall numbers and their readiness for assimilation into a deploying unit. An improved and capable IRR becomes even more critical in a resource-constrained environment. Any cuts to Regular Army endstrength must be offset by additional authorizations in the IRR. Further, the skills and units that the expanded IRR should prioritize are combat arms skills and units that can readily “plug into” Regular Army divisions. Doing so supports the units most likely

to be the first to respond to conflict and the first to require individual replacements. The IRR critical skills list must be reviewed annually to ensure the IRR pool aligns with projected future personnel requirements. In addition, expanding the IRR is certainly more politically and socially acceptable than alternatives like UMT, as President Truman once envisioned, or a return to conscription through Selective Service. Nearly every effort to implement or resurrect those programs has been an effort in futility, with no practicable likelihood of congressional approval. Never mind that the army is ever more selective in accessing new recruits when considering mental and physical aptitude. This selectivity inherently makes any “universal” program wildly inefficient, potentially consuming significant organizational energy for minimal return. Instead, by recruiting and conducting both screening and training of individuals, the army can maintain high standards and better position itself to respond rapidly, in the first six months of conflict.

Third, the army must expand from five to ten Regular Army SFABs, and assign one to each division. Currently, the army has five Regular Army SFABs and one National Guard SFAB. The SFAB’s current role includes training and integrating foreign partner forces and building partner capacity, but each is also capable of expanding to become a Regular Army brigade combat team. This flexibility would provide division commanders with credible options tailored to their mission and personnel needs. The ability of SFABs to integrate trained personnel mobilized from the IRR and provide relevant refresher training could be decisive for the commander. This capability also builds “anti-fragility” into a training enterprise based on fixed facilities. SFABs could provide the ability for flexible and resilient training centers at the parent divisions’ installations or at an expeditionary location.

There is strong agreement that the army and the joint force as a team face an uncertain future of great power competition marked with potentially increased lethality. The time is now for the army to lead the joint force to prioritize mobilization. The army must update its strategy to account for long-duration conflict, expand and strengthen the IRR, and provide each combat

division with an SFAB. These three actions can increase the army's anti-fragility, ensuring it can respond to any unforeseen events and still complete the army mission to win the nation's wars.



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