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# Operational Art in the Spanish American War: An Analysis of the American Way of War in a Major Regional Contingency

A Monograph  
by  
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## ABSTRACT

OPERATIONAL ART IN THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR: AN ANALYSIS OF THE AMERICAN WAY OF WAR IN A MAJOR REGIONAL CONTINGENCY by Major Russel D. Santala, USA, 53 pages.

This study examines the application of operational art during the conduct of the Spanish-American War. The evolution of the "American Way of War" appears to follow a direct path from the concluding campaigns of the Civil War, through the two World Wars, to the present while being modified by the influences of changing technology.

Through examination of the development of national objectives and the supporting military strategy, this study analyzes the linkage of strategic objectives with the tactical events which occur on the battlefield. Progressing from the conduct of the Spanish-American War, this monograph offers a comparison between the development of operational art, as practiced by the two armed services of the United States.

The study concludes with an assessment of the relative effectiveness achieved by the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy in reaching the strategic objectives defined by the McKinley administration. Included in the analysis of each service's operational success is an examination of measures used to institutionalize the intellectual component of operational art. The implications of this study are particularly relevant today, as the U.S. Army attempts to balance the potential demands of regional contingency operations, while fulfilling non-traditional roles (OOTW).

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Painted ships on a painted ocean. Imagine three great lines of transports with a warship at the head of each line, steaming in long lines, 800 yards from each other over a sea of indigo blue, real deep, such as I have never seen before...Hard it is to realize that this is the commencement of a new policy and that this is the first great expedition our country has ever sent overseas and marks the commencement of a new era in our relations with the world.<sup>1</sup>

The commander of the First Volunteer Cavalry, General Leonard Wood wrote these remarks to his wife, as America's first great overseas expedition was beginning. While in many respects the campaigns of the Spanish-American War marked a departure from those of the past, they also represented a continuation in the evolution of the practice of operational art by the American military instrument. The "new era" that General Wood spoke of could be one that defined the practice of operational art for the U.S. Army through the course of the twentieth century.

The post-Civil War historiography of American military strategy can be characterized as a survey of the overwhelming application of raw power. Furthermore, discussion of the American practice of the operational art often focuses on the influence of economic and industrial forces on its development. The evolution of the "American Way of War" appears to follow a direct path from the battlefields of northern Virginia, through the two World Wars, to the present while being modified only by the influences of changing technology. However, it was the results of the nation's first major regional contingency operation which provided the impetus toward institutional change within the American military establishment.

The entry of America into the Spanish-American War found the defense establishment caught in a period of transition. The Army had recently completed - to use a contemporary term - a period of Operations Other Than War (OOTW). Large scale military operations had last been exercised thirty-three years earlier during the Civil War. The organization of the Army was better suited for actions as a frontier army, than for the demands of modern conventional warfare. Opposite the current situation, the collective experience of the American Army was centered on operations outside the purview of large-scale conventional warfare.

This study examines the conduct of military operations during the Spanish-American War, but it has application to the current and future U.S. Army. Analysis of the practice of operational art proves meaningful, as the military again moves between conventional operations and OOTW, in support of limited national objectives and transitory political support. Through this examination, the study determines if the execution of operational art during the Spanish-American campaigns is a continuation of the form identified in the American Civil War, versus a modified form. Central to this research is the question: Did the U.S. campaigns during the Spanish-American War demonstrate effective application of operational art?

The answer to this question extends beyond the utility of historical curiosity in its scope. The study of the Spanish-American War attempts to establish a linkage between the operational thought of the American Army at the conclusion of the Civil War with that of the twentieth century. The examination of this era provides clues to

the further development of operational art for the U.S. Army.

## II. METHODOLOGY

Between the Civil War and the nineties there had stretched a complex and vaguely unsatisfactory period which even today we find it difficult either to remember or interpret. It was a period, as one of its historians has said, which lacked 'definiteness either of purpose or of progress; there was no unanimity of opinion as to the facts of economic life or as to national policy. Old political platforms were not applicable to new problems...The result was uncertainty, vacillation, and inconsistency.'<sup>2</sup>

The methodology used in this study explores two aspects of the Spanish-American War. The first aspect sets the context in which operational art existed at the time.<sup>3</sup> The second aspect examined in the study is the form that operational art took in its application. In theory, the objectives a nation seeks to achieve through the use of its military instrument, flow - from the highest level of the corridors of power, to the lowest level at the point of the bayonet - in one uninterrupted whole. National policy is translated into a national military strategy which is then interconnected with tactical events on the battlefield by the construct of operational campaigns.

The examination of the Spanish-American War follows what is termed the "strategy process."<sup>4</sup> To establish the context in which operational art then existed, the study traces the linkage of national objectives, through national military strategy and campaign design, to the battlefield. It is this linkage that defines the difference between the successful application of operational art and the practitioner of tactical craft.



The current definition of operational art is "the skillful employment of military forces to attain strategic/operational objectives within a theater through the design, organization, integration, and conduct of theater strategies, campaigns, major operations, and battles."<sup>5</sup> Operational art acts like the binding of a book. It bonds the introductory strategic chapters with the tactical body. The formulation of a complete set of ends, ways, and means is deemed the strategy process.<sup>6</sup> The essence of this process, at its most simplistic level, centers on decision-making. The process relies on the articulation of a set of national objectives and a determination to use of the military instrument in support of these objectives, this is otherwise known as the national military strategy. To achieve this end, the vehicle used by the military instrument is the operational campaign.

As defined by FM 100-5, the campaign is "a series of related military operations designed to achieve strategic objectives within a given time and space."<sup>7</sup> The campaign serves to support national policy by accomplishing objectives defined by the national military strategy.<sup>8</sup> Within a given space and time, the campaign represents the art of linking battles and engagements to strategic objectives, while providing a common framework and unifying focus for the conduct of operations.<sup>9</sup> The operational campaign elevates itself from the tactical level of war by focusing on achieving strategic aims through the aggregate successes of battles and engagements.

The strategy process, which merges these elements into a seamless framework, is influenced by external factors throughout its development

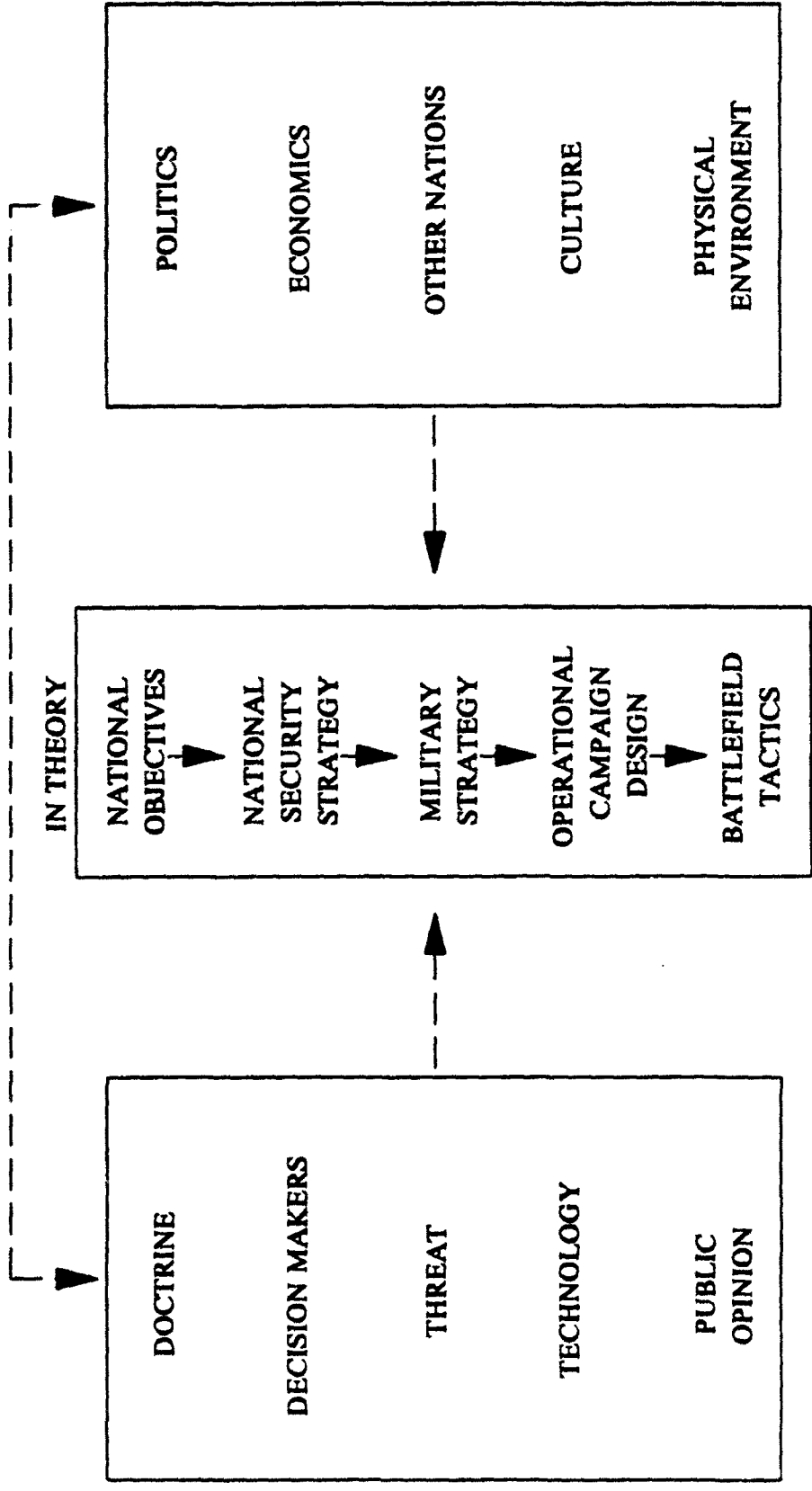
and execution. (Figure 1) This phenomenon creates a perplexing dilemma for the military planner in developing national military strategies and constructing campaigns because these external constraining factors serve to test the viability of planning at the national and operational levels. The sterile environment of the theoretical strategy process is therefore held hostage to the influence of factors outside the realm of pure logic. As historian T. Harry Williams observed:

Once a government has decided on a policy, it turns to strategy to achieve its objective. The government, to cite the American experience, informs the military of the objective and indicates the human and material resources it can make available. The military then takes over the planning and execution of a strategy to accomplish the policy; in effect, it takes over the running of the war. This is the concept of strategy that appeared in early modern writings on military theory and that prevailed in America's first wars. There was always, however, a gap between theory and practice.<sup>10</sup>

The form or direction that operational art took, beyond the measure of its existence, is the next area that this study explores. It is the expression, or form, of operational art that James J. Schneider focuses on in his analysis of Grant's 1864-1865 campaign.<sup>11</sup> In his study, Professor Schneider offers a model of the American practice of operational art which is characterized by the conscious use of deep extended maneuver.<sup>12</sup> According to Schneider, eight conditions are necessary for the "modern" expression of operational art: 1) the distributed operation, 2) the distributed campaign, 3) continuous logistics, 4) instantaneous communications, 5) operationally durable formations, 6) operational vision, 7) symmetrical enemy force, and 8) national capacity to wage war.<sup>13</sup>

# STRATEGY PROCESS

IN REALITY (CONSTRAINTS)



**FIGURE 1: THE STRATEGY PROCESS**  
 (Adapted from Dennis M. Drew and Donald M. Snow,  
 Making Strategy, Maxwell AFB, Air University Press,  
 August 1988)

The Schneider model was based on an examination of the latter stages of the American Civil War. Schneider's theoretical paper, offers a depiction of operational art, which in large part has been influenced by the advent of economic, technological, and industrial innovations. In expressing this view of operational art, Schneider contends that this practice of the art has been adapted by the respective militaries of the post-industrial western powers and continued throughout the twentieth century.

In a similar vein, others have characterized the American practice of war in terms defined by economic power. Among the most prolific writers on this subject is historian Russell F. Weigley. He believes that the ultimate Northern victory in the Civil War and the foreign policy of the United States in the remaining years of the nineteenth century were a manifestation of the rise in American economic power. He observed:

The American military might of 1865 had been in part an expression of an industrial and business growth which in the succeeding decades became so prodigious that it looked increasingly beyond even the huge American market and investment arena for places in which to sell and to make capital multiply.<sup>14</sup>

The traditional view of the evolution of the American practice of operational art is, in effect, a distillation of the Schneider-Weigley arguments. The argument combines the vision of Grant's successful campaign of 1864-1865 with the emergence of American economic might.<sup>15</sup> According to this viewpoint, this combination led American military leaders to believe "that the superior weight of military force that America could bring to bear against almost any rival could be their only sure military reliance."<sup>16</sup> Based on this argument, the

intervening years between the Civil War and America's entry into the First World War, therefore become a period of stagnation in terms of operational and strategic thought.

With this background, this study examines the campaigns of the Spanish-American War and their influence on the formation of American operational thought. Following the Strategy Process model, this examination traces the course of the Spanish-American War, from the national objectives to the battlefield. The study concludes with evaluations of the Cuban Campaign, the Puerto Rican Campaign, and the initial military operations in the Phillipines, to assess their impact on the contemporary and future practice of operational art.

### III. NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

We want no wars of conquest; we must avoid the temptation of territorial aggression. War should never be entered upon until every agency of peace has failed; peace is preferable to war in almost every contingency. Arbitration is the true method of settlement of international as well as local or individual differences.<sup>17</sup>

These remarks, contained in the 1897 inaugural address of President William McKinley, seemingly belong to a simpler era. A decade earlier, the attention paid to foreign affairs by the American electorate held little public interest, but America had since entered into new era which cast her interests far beyond her continental shores. Ultimately, the change in American interests propelled the nation into a war with Spain.

The America of the last decade of the nineteenth century was in the process of a fundamental change. The struggle to conquer the western frontier, which had marked the very essence of the American

experience, had come to a close by 1890.<sup>18</sup> With the settling of the continent, societal elements within the United States began to seriously examine the role the nation was to play on the world stage. Since the inception of the republic, economic growth had been spurred primarily through the export of agricultural products. A conviction was growing that American industry had matured to the point that it could dominate the world market.<sup>19</sup>

The combination of these movements led to the change of the traditional practice of American foreign policy. Proponents for the expansion of American business joined with Social Darwinists and with advocates of an American version of imperialism to undermine the foreign policy of the Republican administrations of the nineties.<sup>20</sup> The McKinley administration found itself attempting to follow a policy that had been invalidated by fundamental changes in the way Americans viewed their nation.

The inauguration of William McKinley did not usher in a new policy of overseas adventures. Quite to the contrary, McKinley entered office with a focus on the restoration of domestic economic prosperity and sought to avoid international entanglements. President McKinley focused on efforts to foster the economic recovery from the depression of 1893. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge described the views of the President-Elect towards Cuba: [McKinley] does not want to be obliged to go to war as soon as he comes in, for of course his great ambition is to restore business and bring back good times and he dislikes the idea of such interruption."<sup>21</sup>

In spite of McKinley's desires, the course of foreign events served to interrupt his policy. In 1895, a series of incidents had begun in Cuba that would place long held views of American interests in conflict with continued Spanish control of the area. Beginning in February 1895, Cuban insurgents began an active campaign to gain independence. The struggle was a continuation of an earlier decade-long effort, between 1868 to 1878, to overthrow Spanish rule which quickly took on savage characteristics. Using the perceived lessons of their earlier failure, Cuban insurgents began with a coordinated attack over the entire island which focused on the Spanish Army and economic targets.<sup>22</sup>

The insurgents sought two objectives in the conduct of their campaign. The first was to undermine indigenous support of the Spanish regime, by attacking the economic holdings of wealthy Cuban landowners, while promising an equitable redistribution of wealth to the landless poor. To this end, the insurgents began a policy aimed at the destruction of the Cuban sugar interests. Within a year sugar production was reduced by two-thirds.<sup>23</sup> The second objective was to build external support for their cause in the United States and precipitate at least political intervention on their behalf. News dispatches from American reporters created a false image in the United States that the insurgents constituted a regular force, and greatly overstated their early successes.<sup>24</sup> Both objectives were served by the Spanish response to the insurgency.

The Spanish efforts to counter the Cuban insurgency may be described as "gradualism." Each action by the insurgents was met by

a gradual increase in overall Spanish troop strength. Between 1895 and 1898, Spanish strength in the islands grew from 20,000 to 150,000 regulars and from 60,000 to 80,000 local militia.<sup>25</sup> Correspondingly, the measures used to defeat the revolution increased in scope and viciousness as the struggle continued. The brutality of the population control programs increased with each Spanish setback. Nonetheless, the Spanish government remained totally committed to the retention of her overseas possessions. Antonio Canovas del Castillo, the leader of the ruling Spanish conservative party remarked, "the Spanish nation is disposed to sacrifice to the last peseta of its treasure and to the last drop of blood of the last Spaniard before consenting that anyone snatch from it even one piece of its sacred territory."<sup>26</sup>

American national objectives were diametrically opposed to the continuation of Spanish rule. While Presidents Cleveland and McKinley worked to avoid a conflict from 1894 through 1898, the rise of American power would not consonance the presence of an external power within the hemisphere. In the short term, American domestic objectives sought to maintain an environment that would allow for the recovery of the economy following the depression of 1893. The long term national aspiration was to establish American hegemony over the Carribean basin and Latin America.

Beginning in the 1880's, an approach of "spirited diplomacy" began to formulate the long-term national objectives of the United States.<sup>27</sup> This policy envisioned American domination of the western hemisphere, the construction of an Isthmian canal, and economic expansion into the western Pacific region. Central to this program



was the linkage of foreign policy to the economic interests of the United States. For President McKinley, the dilemma of the Cuban crisis was in attempting to reconcile his short term objectives with a set of national ambitions that inevitably would lead to conflict with Spain.<sup>28</sup>

The security strategy that developed in support of this expansionist policy centered on the employment of a larger modern navy to open and maintain the flow of American commerce. This strategy has been closely tied to the naval theorist, Alfred Thayer Mahan.<sup>29</sup> Tapping in to the changing spirit of American culture, Mahan argued that national greatness and prosperity rose from sea power. Economic development demanded a large navy, a robust merchant marine, free access to foreign markets, and overseas possessions and bases.<sup>30</sup> To Mahan, changes in technology meant that American economic expansion was dependent on a modern battleship navy, and the unrestricted use of coaling stations to sustain their operations.

The writing's of Mahan did not directly shape the course of United States policy, but reflected the nature of competition between nations at the time. By 1890, at the zenith of Mahan's influence, the security strategy of the United States focused on the support of American economic interests throughout the world. American objectives came to reflect the beginning of a fundamental change in the balance of world power. Emerging from Civil War reconstruction and the closure of the frontier, American attention was inexorably drawn to expansion beyond its own borders.

#### IV. MILITARY STRATEGY

Excepting for our ocean commerce and our seaboard cities, I do not think we should be much alarmed about the probability of wars with foreign powers, since it would require more than a million and a half of men to make a campaign upon land against us. To transport from beyond the ocean that number of soldiers, with all their munitions of war, their cavalry, artillery, and infantry, even if not molested by us in transit, would demand a large part of the shipping of all Europe.<sup>31</sup>

In 1884, the Commanding General of the Army, General Philip H. Sheridan made this assessment of the security posture of the United States. By 1898, the two armed services of the United States had taken decidedly different courses in preparation for future war. The Navy, armed with strong support in Congress and the writings of Mahan, were aggressively continuing a program of expansion and modernization, which related directly to national objectives. For its part, the Army remained structured for operations on the defunct western frontier, and seemed lost in the zeal of self-examination brought on by the Uptonian reform movement.

To synthesize the unarticulated changes in national policy, the two services required either an organizational mechanism or a visionary thinker, to translate national interests into a coherent military strategy. At this time the dilemma facing military planners was complex, as it fell upon them to not only link tactical action to strategic goals, but to define the strategic political and military goals themselves. From Grant's 1864-1865 campaign through Sheridan's death in 1888, the Army was fortunate to have the leadership that could accomplish this task.<sup>32</sup> By 1890, however, with the end of the

frontier, and lacking the components necessary to define national military strategy, the Army began the Spanish-American War devoid of a plan to link its means with the nation's ends.

The Navy was faced with a similar dilemma in its support of national policy. In fact, one might argue that the Navy was at a greater disadvantage than the Army, because in the past it had not produced an admiral of Grant's caliber, in his ability as a strategic thinker. In the years leading up to the Spanish-American War, the Navy ultimately was successful in developing the visionary thinkers and the organizational innovation essential in preparing for its role in support of national interests.<sup>33</sup>

In the years preceeding the Spanish-American War, the two services took similar approaches in analyzing the problems of modern warfare, but reached distinctly dissonant findings in their conclusions. The disagreement derives from the fundamental difference between the intellectual component of naval and land warfare, as practiced by the two services. This difference led each service to define their future contributions to national defense in contrasting fashion.

At its most basic level, the intellectual component of the two services had largely been shaped by the nature of the physical environment in which they respectively operated and the available technology of the time. On land, the soldier is always confronted by obstacles which hinder his operation, while the sailor has freedom to maneuver in a relatively unrestricted manner at sea. This difference in physical environments produced a perspective in which problems were examined through contrasting parameters.

Coupled with the environment, the technology of the day shaped each service's view of how they contribute to affect national strategy. Within the two services, technology influenced the officer's abilities to make decisions and consequently affected the decision-making process. The technology of the period tied the Army officer to scrutiny by his superiors through the telegraph, while the Naval officer revelled in the "idealization of independent command."<sup>34</sup> Accordingly, the vision that developed within each service was markedly different.

Neither service benefitted from a comprehensive document that defined or outlined national policy or strategy. Instead, it was the responsibility of each service to interpret the future shape of warfare and recommend the role they were to play. The two services fell back on their comparative analyses of recent history, as well as service tradition to determine their strategies for the future. The intellectual tradition of the American Army centered on internal constabulary action and defense of the continental seaboard. Since the Monroe administration, American Naval policy was reflective of a world policeman whose purpose was "calculated to meet the needs of a secure continental power with extensive maritime interests."<sup>35</sup>

Prior to the Spanish-American War, the U.S. Army failed to develop a strategy to correspond with shifting national interests. By 1883, many within the Army community, including General W.T. Sherman, felt that the nation's confrontation with the Indian was drawing to an end, but the subtle changes in the direction of national interests were never appreciated.<sup>36</sup> The Army had neither the organizational

mechanism nor the visionary leader essential for the transition to a new strategy. In fact, given the force structure of the Army and its historic legacy, it is difficult to imagine any circumstances that would lead the organization to anticipate the shape of future requirements.

The military strategy of the U.S. Army remained centered on the continued use of the force in a defensive posture in response to external and internal threats to the republic. This is not to suggest that the Army was devoid of intellectual activity. The last three decades of the Nineteenth Century saw the rise of the professional military ethic and an education system that is still of great value to the modern force. Within the formal educational system, and through professional journals and societies, the Army examined the events of the American Civil War and other contemporary conflicts. However, the course of this examination was not geared toward extracting the larger issues of future operational or strategic considerations; instead, it served as introspective analysis of tactical and force structure questions.

At the center of the analysis was Emory Upton. From the end of the Civil War until his untimely death in 1881, Upton was at the forefront of this intellectual debate within the Army. Upton, who has been characterized as the epitome of a professional officer, used his analyses of the Civil War and the armies of Europe to recommend sweeping changes within the Army.<sup>37</sup> Central to his argument was a condemnation of the American militia system as being excessively expensive in terms of money, time, and lives.<sup>38</sup> While using his work

to advocate a larger expansible professional standing force, Army leaders "revealed no plans to use such a force in offensive operations overseas."<sup>39</sup>

Within the Army, the one innovation that offered potential for the preparation of overseas operations was the Military Information Division (M.I.D.). Created in 1889 under the auspices of the Adjutant General's Office, the M.I.D. was chartered to assess the geography, economy, and military strength of potential adversaries. Using reports prepared by U.S military attaches, the M.I.D. succeeded in collecting information and intelligence that would eventually prove useful in future operations in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Included in this information was a series of detailed maps.<sup>40</sup> While performing part of the functions of a modern General Staff, the M.I.D. was not resourced or chartered to conduct the detailed planning demanded of large-scale operations.<sup>41</sup>

During this time, the military strategy of the Army had not kept pace with the changes in national policy. The lack of an analytical mechanism, such as a general staff or a dedicated agency working toward the synchronization of political and military strategy, the Army was limited in its capability to recognize subtle changes in the national character. Failing to have an organizational remedy, the alternative for the Army was to find an individual of great vision, someone capable of seeing the potential role of the military in the future. Perhaps, if one of the giants of the Civil War had retained the office of Commanding General this would have been possible, but the leaders of the nineties saw the Army merely as a constabulary force not a

strategic one. Because of this, the Army responded to the crisis with Spain in an ad hoc fashion in 1898.

In terms of its preparation for the war with Spain, the successful attempt by the Navy, in translating national objectives into military strategy, is rooted in technological changes. The final three decades of the Nineteenth Century was a period of radical development in naval architecture.<sup>42</sup> Because of these innovations, many within the Navy began to question the long held view of American naval warfare that was founded in the age of sailing ships. The traditional view was centered on a reliance upon coastal fortifications and the use of long range commerce raiders.

To resolve this debate, and to shape future naval strategy, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce founded the Naval War College in 1884.<sup>43</sup> While resisted by traditionalists within the Navy, the War College would provide a laboratory for experimentation with naval technological developments, while offering the first opportunity for the study of large scale naval maneuvers, both academically and practically. In this capacity, the War College developed into the mechanism whereby naval strategy would be crafted in support of American interests. Additionally, the intellectual environment of the college brought to the forefront the naval theorists required to tie ends to means.

The preeminent naval thinker associated with the Naval War College was its second president — Alfred Thayer Mahan. His writings on the nature and role of naval warfare were a reflection of a movement within the Navy which advocated a break from the limited role United States naval forces had played in past wars. More importantly, his view of

the capabilities of an expanded American Navy complimented the larger movement in United States foreign policy which saw a greater role for the nation on the world stage.

In his magnum opus, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, Mahan identified the factors that make a nation a great sea power and concluded that the United States possessed that potential. Mahan's writing recognized that expanding overseas markets was in the national interest. To achieve this overall goal, Mahan offered the strategy of sea power and provided three strategic objectives that would place the United States on the road to maritime supremacy. His analysis advocated the acquisition of overseas bases, the expansion of naval and merchant shipping, and the completion of the Central-American canal.<sup>44</sup> For Mahan, the definition of sea power was not solely the size of fleets, but also included the economic and political benefits to be gained from command of the sea.

By 1890 with the publication of his great work, Mahan had articulated the relationship between naval strategy and the pursuit of economic and political goals, and had captured the spirit of American commercial expansionism. His theories broke with the defensive nature of past American naval strategy, by advocating the capability to gain command of the sea through decisive offensive action conducted by large fleets. While visualizing the potential of naval battles, Mahan took a wider view of naval strategy, which offered the capacity to achieve national objectives in times of war or peace. In linking naval strategy or sea power to the economic and political elements of national power, he wrote:



'Naval strategy has indeed for its end to found, support, and increase, as well in peace as in war, the sea power of a country;' and therefore its study has an interest and value for all citizens of a free country, but especially for those who are charged with its foreign and military relations.<sup>45</sup>

Beginning in 1894, the Naval War College took on the task of revising the national strategy and planning for potential operations against Spanish possessions in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.<sup>46</sup> Supported by the theoretical grounding of Mahan's writings, these different plans recognized the increased likelihood of conflict with Spain, based on the changes in national interests. The process used in plan development included extensive war gaming, which was performed by War College students and augmented by officers from the Office of Naval Intelligence.<sup>47</sup>

The continued refinement of Navy plans lasted until the outbreak of hostilities in 1898. Various courses of action were examined and evaluated, to include: a U.S. attack on Spanish home waters, a U.S. attack on Spanish possessions in the Pacific Ocean, a U.S. attack on Cuba and Puerto Rico, and other combinations of options. The assessment of these courses of action led naval planners to favor U.S. operations in the Caribbean Sea, with the Spanish left to deal with extended lines of communication.<sup>48</sup> The offensive orientation of all courses of action that were considered reflect the acceptance of naval doctrine as expressed by Mahan.

The development of naval plans was not solely a regurgitation of Mahan's theories. The process, while adopting much of Mahan's precepts, was also influenced by the political realities of the time. Mahanian purists at the Naval War College objected to the proposal of a

simultaneous strike in the Caribbean Sea and in the Phillipines. In their view, this course violated the "principle of concentration upon a single decisive object."<sup>49</sup> However, the importance of political considerations would lead the Secretary of the Navy to overrule the objections of the Mahanian zealots.<sup>50</sup>

Navy planning was not restricted to action against Spain. The Navy continued to review plans for the defense of the continental United States against the potential threat of Great Britain. The addition of the Spanish contingencies reflected the Navy's proactive approach to planning, which evolved from the creation of the War College and the shifts in foreign policy. This intellectual activity was not limited to the confines of naval academia; rather it denoted a level of understanding of the strategic process adopted by the naval service. For example, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, requested that the Naval War College war game the following scenario:

Japan makes demands on Hawaiian Islands.  
This country intervenes.  
What force will be necessary to uphold the intervention,  
and how shall it be employed?  
Keeping in mind possible complications with another Power  
on the Atlantic Coast (Cuba).<sup>51</sup>

The different intellectual approaches of the two services led to contrasting solutions. In the two decades preceeding the War with Spain, each of the armed services of the United States was striving to define their future role in national defense. Both services were attempting to reform their force structure through a justification based on their respective contributions to the nation's interests. In pursuit of this end, the Navy was successful because it had based its

strategy and structure in terms of the new set of emerging national strategic and economic goals. The Army never succeeded in its attempt to extrapolate these same changes. Consequently, the Army failed to gather enough domestic political support to carry through the internal reforms proposed by Upton and others. More importantly, the Army lagged in appreciating the importance of changes in national policy with respect to future employment of its forces.

Through the institutionalization of a strategic intellectual process, the Navy was able to capture valuable political support for an expansive modernization program.<sup>52</sup> The Navy thus began to change the balance of power between the services, a shift which continued through the next century. This achievement involved the translation of national interests into a viable military strategy, which was then linked to domestic political support for Naval reform programs. In this respect, the Navy was building a relationship that would not culminate until the latter half of the next century.

The different approaches to developing military strategy between the services was highlighted by the outbreak of the War with Spain. To put it bluntly, the Army had no approach, except for the personal abilities of the Secretary of War and the Commanding General. On the other hand, the Navy had begun to develop an institution that evaluated the implications of the the use of military force in support of national objectives. The employment of the naval instrument in the Spanish-American War reflected the "continuity of ... naval policy."<sup>53</sup>

## V. OPERATIONS: THE ROAD TO WAR

I suppose the United States will always be unready for war, and in consequence will always be exposed to great expense, and to the possibility of the gravest calamity, when the Nation goes to war. This is no new thing. Americans learn only from catastrophes and not from experience.<sup>54</sup>

A catastrophe of the nature that was described by Theodore Roosevelt befell the armed forces of the United States on 15 February 1898. With a bright flash and a sudden explosion, the battleship Maine was sunk in Havana harbor. The sinking of the Maine under contentious circumstances was not the singular event that propelled the United States to war with Spain. Instead, like an explosion in a Sarejevo marketplace, it focused national attention in time and space on a continuing problem.<sup>55</sup> In this case, the continuing problem was the insurgency in Cuba and Spanish attempts to quell the revolt.

The quandry that faced the McKinley administration was how to compel the Spanish government into making concessions to the Cuban insurgents, while avoiding direct military action by the United States. This diplomatic sleight of hand was being attempted by a nation that increasingly favored overt military action in the weeks following the loss of the Maine. Further constraining McKinley in his effort to avoid conflict, elements within the administration were actively pursuing a course of action that catered to jingoist newspapers and others that favored war. Fearing additional pressure, McKinley delayed the release of the investigation into the sinking of the Maine because it fixed blame on "external sources," which implied Spanish culpability in the incident. As Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt confided on 6 March 1898:

We are certainly drifting towards, and not away from, war; but the President will not make war, and will keep out of it if he possibly can. Nevertheless, with so much loose powder around, a coal may hop into it at any moment. In a week or so I believe we shall get that report; if it says the explosion [on the U.S.S. Maine] was due to outside work, it will be very hard to hold the country...<sup>56</sup>

Despite the best efforts of McKinley, his attempts to defuse the growing crisis were conducted in an environment where diplomatic entreaties could not reconcile the two parties. The Spanish government would not accept any proposal that granted more than a limited Cuban autonomy because of domestic political pressure. The Spanish government and army viewed their colonies as a measure of the vitality of their culture. Political power within Spain relied on the support of the army and the army remained committed to the maintenance of empire.

The Cuban insurgents sensed the increasing chance of U.S. intervention and would brook no compromise in the interim. The American public was exposed to reports of the excesses of the Spanish counter-insurgency program. Robert M. Morse, a friend to the Secretary of the Navy John D. Long, wrote "...to-day [sic] our greatest danger as a people is in the existence of this braggart and jingo spirit which is ready to insult other governments and nations and to threaten war and perhaps go to war."<sup>57</sup>

From the end of March through 10 April 1898, frantic efforts continued by both parties to either reach a mutual accommodation or find a third party to mediate the growing crisis. Spain turned to the imperial powers of Europe in an unsuccessful attempt to find an ally that could pressure the United States to cease meddling in the internal

affairs of the Spanish Empire.<sup>58</sup> The diplomatic position of the two nations was irreconcilable based on the dynamics of internal political pressures in each country. On 11 April 1898, President McKinley sent a message to Congress which requested authority to intervene in Cuba.<sup>59</sup>

The authorization of McKinley's message was approved on 19 April 1898. The United States was not yet at war, however. The joint resolution called for Cuban independence, the immediate withdrawal of Spanish forces from Cuba, and approved intervention, if necessary. On April 23d, two days after the American Navy had begun a blockade of the northern coastline of Cuba, Spain declared war on the United States. President McKinley called for a Congressional declaration of war on the 25th of April, which was postdated to 21 April 1898, based on the beginning of the naval blockade action.

In the months and weeks preceding the initiation of war, the two American armed services had not been idle. The Navy had the advantage of anticipating what it would be asked to accomplish in the event of war. The Army, because of shortfalls in the planning process and the lack of clear political guidance from the President, had difficulty in focusing its preparations. Prior to his appointment as the Commander of the Asiatic Fleet on 21 October 1897, Commodore George Dewey had been briefed on the plan to attack Spanish forces in the Phillipines in the event of war.<sup>60</sup> During January 1898, Secretary Long had ordered the concentration of the Atlantic fleet, and began a program to reprovision the fleets in preparation of anticipated action.

On the 9th of March 1898, in the immediate after-effect of the sinking of the Maine, a special appropriation known as the Fifty

Million Bill passed Congress and was signed by the President.<sup>61</sup> The bill called for a \$29 million allotment for use by the Navy with the remainder going to the Army. The Navy used its funds to complete the financing of the additional 128 ships which were added to the force during 1898. Thanks to the well developed plans that had been produced over the previous four years, the Navy stood prepared to become the leading player in the conflict. This position arose from the nature of the theater in both areas of operations and the lack of Army preparedness. Secretary Long commented that the Army, was unprepared for assault or occupation duties and that it was "ready for nothing at all."<sup>62</sup>

With its funds from the Fifty Million Appropriation, the Army began construction on 90 new emplacements for heavy guns along the northern Atlantic coast of the United States, but did not take steps to prepare for an offensive war or for the rapid expansion of the force.<sup>63</sup> Secretary of War Russell A. Alger would argue, after the fact, that the Army was restricted by Congress from pursuing a course to put the Army on a war footing.<sup>64</sup> Certainly, neither service received clear guidance from either Congress or the administration as to the nature of the war it would be called upon to conduct. The organization of the Army staff and bureau system was such that no agency had implicit responsibility for mobilization or war planning, and the Army lacked the "great man" needed to overcome this shortfall.

On 9 March 1898, the date of the approval of additional defense funding, the regular Army consisted of 28,747 officers and men, spread throughout the country in company-sized formations.<sup>65</sup> Having gained

great experience in small unit actions during the Indian Wars, these units suffered from the demands of frontier service in terms of their disposition in pennypacket numbers at small forts and encampments. Because of the influence of political pressure, the leadership of the Army had not been successful in their efforts to consolidate the force at several large forts. As a result, the Army entered the Spanish-American War with scant practical experience at regimental-sized maneuver. Knowledge of corps and division movement and command was garnered from Civil War veterans who had been junior witnesses to the last use of large formations in the American Army.

Secretary Alger began concentrating available forces on the 15th of April 1898. He ordered all available regular forces to begin movement to four locations in the southern United States: New Orleans, Tampa, Mobile, and Chickamauga.<sup>66</sup> The Secretary believed that these locations would serve to position the force for rapid deployment to Cuba and begin to acclimate them to the rigors of operations in the tropics. At the same time, the Army began urging Congress to expand the regular force "to 104,000 men by filling the existing companies and creating three-battalion infantry regiments of twelve companies each."<sup>67</sup> To undercut the problems associated with the use of state militia, the Army asked Congress to call for a volunteer force that would operate under a federal charter.

The expansion program approved by Congress was a compromise between the Army position and the political influence of the National Guard. The Acts of 22 and 26 April 1898, increased the regular force to 64,719 officers and men by filling the ranks with volunteers and



approving the structure of the infantry regiment, as proposed by the Army.<sup>68</sup> Congress mandated that any militia formation that offered its service in mass would be accepted, and authorized states to raise new formations, with officers appointed by the respective Governor. Congressional action authorized the Secretary of War to form specialized federal volunteer units. This arrangement led to the creation of some memorable units, such as the 1st Volunteer Cavalry Regiment (Rough Riders) and ten regiments of infantry, whose ranks were filled with men allegedly possessing resistance to tropical diseases. These regiments became known as "the Immunes."<sup>69</sup>

Congressional action provided for the creation of brigades, divisions, and corps within the Army. This organization allowed for a structure of three regiments per brigade, three brigades per division, and three divisions per corps. Army reformers hoped to use the action to implement the expansible structure proposed by Upton. Their vision was to use a small regular cadre as the base for a rapid increase in the size of the Army. Drawn from Civil War experience and analysis of European armies, the full menu of reforms, however were not completed until after the war.

As events unfolded, the two corps that would play key roles in the war were the XIII Corps commanded by General Wesley Merritt, and V Corps commanded by General William R. Shafter. Shafter's force constituted the bulk of the regular Army. Organized into three divisions (two infantry and one dismounted cavalry) with 14,412 regulars and 2,465 volunteers.<sup>70</sup> Under the best of circumstances, an expansion of this magnitude would be difficult. Lacking the authority

to control the basic structure of the expansion and simultaneously preparing for operations beyond the scope of pre-war planning, the Army was operating on an ad hoc basis, responding to changes in circumstances as they occurred.

On 20 April 1898, President McKinley held a meeting with the senior leadership of both services. The topic of discussion was the military plan to subdue Spanish resistance in Cuba. At the center of this discussion was the proposal by Rear Admiral William T. Sampson, Commander of the Atlantic fleet, to directly attack the city of Havana by naval forces alone. Sampson believed that with his modern battleships, the Navy possessed the ability to reduce the fortifications of the city and compel the garrison to surrender by threat of bombardment.<sup>71</sup>

Political and military leaders who were present agreed on the objective of the plan. Havana was the political capital of the Spanish administration in Cuba and the center of the Spanish military structure, what the German military theorist Carl von Clausewitz would call the center of gravity on the strategic level. Initially, Navy Secretary Long did not favor the plan, as it placed the limited number of armored ships at risk before the Spanish fleet had been destroyed. The operational level center of gravity was the Spanish fleet, ignoring it placed the overall goal at risk. However, Secretary Long was won over by the prospect of achieving a rapid and inexpensive victory, with the Army playing an ancillary role.<sup>72</sup>

The strategy adopted by McKinley was shaped by the arguments of the Commanding General of the Army, Major General Nelson A. Miles.

Miles' military logic would be repeated ninety-two years later by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin L. Powell, in refuting the air-only option proposed for U.S. operations in the liberation of Kuwait.<sup>73</sup> The argument centers on the limitations of options left open to the strategic commander if the single service operation fails. In the case of the proposed attack on Havana, Miles contended that the Army would not be prepared to sufficiently support the Navy if large ground operations became necessary at an early stage of the war. The Commanding General stressed that should any unforeseen loss to the Atlantic fleet occur, the Spanish Navy would then hold a numerical advantage which would severely impact on the ability to introduce additional U.S. troops on the island.<sup>74</sup> Miles further argued that Cuba was entering its rainy season, from late spring through the summer months. By delaying attack until fall, the ability of the Army to maneuver would be improved, and the effects of disease from the oppressive Cuban climate would be lessened. Impressed with the strength of Miles' arguments, McKinley opted on a strategy that called for the sustained blockade of Cuba, and allowed the Army to continue to prepare for a full scale invasion following the rainy season. In the interim, the Navy would destroy the Spanish fleet and the Army would conduct small disruptive raids against Spanish troops on the island and support the Cuban insurgents with arms and supplies.

## VI. OPERATIONS: CONDUCT OF THE WAR

Up to this point every thing [sic] relates to a first plan of operations; but no plan can provide with certainty for that which is uncertain always - the character and the issue of the first conflict.<sup>75</sup>

As Baron Jomini suggested, there is frequently a gap between the planning conference and the battlefield. Similarly, the conduct of the War against Spain began with the original war plans, but its execution rapidly became a prisoner to events within the theater of war. Soon after the initiation of a state of war, the first phase of the planned campaign was to begin with the incursion of a small force of regular troops onto the island of Cuba. On 29 April 1898, Brigadier General Shafter was ordered to take a force of 6,000 men from Tampa, Florida, under naval escort and land on the south coast of Cuba near Cienfuegos. Upon successful landing, Shafter would link up with a rebel army in central Cuba. As outlined by General Miles, this force would be extracted within a few days, after conducting a reconnaissance in force and sustaining the morale of the insurgents.<sup>76</sup>

The same day that Shafter received his orders, the Commander of the Spanish naval squadron that had massed at the Portugese Island of Cape Verdes, Admiral Pascual Cervera, sallied from the port to an unknown destination with "four armored cruisers and three torpedo destroyers."<sup>77</sup> This action sent shock waves through American naval planners. Cervera had located his squadron at Cape Verdes for reasons that were rapidly becoming clear to the U.S. Navy. From that location, the Spanish ships could be repositioning to secure the Canary Islands from an anticipated American strike, sailing to break the

blockading forces around Cuba, or launching a raid along the Atlantic coast of the United States.<sup>78</sup> Shafter's expedition was postponed, and then cancelled, as the Navy could not spare the escorts needed for the troop transports.

A second event occurred on the heels of the sailing of the Spanish Atlantic squadron, which changed the joint plan of operations. On the 1st of May 1898, the U.S. Asiatic squadron, under the command of Commodore George Dewey, attacked its Spanish counterpart in Manila Bay. Within a few short hours, Spanish power in the Phillipines theater was completely destroyed. Designed as a supporting attack to divert Spanish naval assets away from the Caribbean, the U.S. Navy found itself in control of the waters around the archipelago, and the capital of Manila was at its mercy. Official reports from Dewey reached Washington D.C. on 7 May, but these served only to confirm the magnitude of the victory that the more timely news services had reported as early as 3 May.<sup>79</sup>

The news of Dewey's triumph caught the McKinley administration unaware. The Navy had, quite frankly, never considered the possibility that success in the Phillipines would come so cheaply and easily. Planning had focused on the Cuban theater, and accordingly, the Army had not considered diverting any portion of its limited forces in that direction. Secretary Alger and General Miles could read the handwriting on the wall, and immediately began to develop a plan calling for the dispatch of 5,000 troops from San Francisco to Manila.<sup>80</sup> By the end of May, the first 10,000 of the 20,000 men in VIII Corps arrived at Manila under the command of Brigadier General

Weasley Merritt. President McKinley's guidance to Merritt was twofold: First, complete the "reduction of Spanish power" in the islands; and secondly, reestablish order and security throughout the Phillipines.<sup>81</sup>

Besides redirecting a portion of the Army, success in the Phillipines and a new assessment of Cervera's intentions combined to alter operational plans. Because of the unexpected results of the Phillipines operation and the estimate that Cervera's squadron had returned to defend Spanish waters, President McKinley was emboldened to reexamine the strategy of the 20 April meeting. The fear of the sudden appearance of Cervera's fleet had been debunked by naval planners who, using simple time and distance factor analysis, determined that if the Spanish Navy was bound for the Caribbean or the Atlantic coast they were long overdue. Over the objections of General Miles, the President directed that a joint assault on Havana would be conducted to seize the Cuban capital in a coup de main from its land approaches, using a vanguard of regular troops.<sup>82</sup> Execution would begin as soon as the troops were ready.

In their calculation of the sailing time of the Spanish squadron, U.S. naval planners had failed to factor in an one important variable—friction. Cervera's ships appeared off the island of Martinique on 13 May and slipped into the harbor of Santiago de Cuba on the 19th. Consequently, invasion plans were altered again. Having identified the location of the Spanish ships, the Navy concentrated the main body of the Atlantic fleet off the entrance to Santiago. Naval planners were concerned that given the right weather conditions, Cervera could slip

the blockade. The Navy proposed that in a joint operation with the Army against Santiago, the Spanish threat in the Caribbean could be eliminated.

In a series of meetings on 26 and 27 May 1898, McKinley and the senior leaders of the two services redefined the overall strategy. While the overall strategic ends remained unchanged, the means shifted. In what a later generation of planners could call phasing, the new operational scheme emerged over the two day period. Five operational objectives were defined in an ordered structure, to gain the overall strategic end: First, the blockade over the island of Cuba would continue to prevent resupply of Spanish forces; second, command of the Caribbean Sea would be gained through a joint attack on Santiago, allowing for the destruction of Cervera's squadron; third, the island of Puerto Rico would be seized, to block the introduction of additional Spanish naval forces, and to secure the eastern approaches for the proposed canal construction; fourth, a combined ground operation would be conducted to complete the destruction of Spanish forces in Cuba; and fifth, the U.S. would assist in establishment of the Cuban national government.<sup>83</sup>

The overall execution of the campaign was constrained by time and resources. Time was a serious concern because of the complexities involved in sustaining the readiness of ships conducting an extended blockade, fear that the Spanish squadron be given the opportunity to sortie from the harbor at Santiago, and domestic public pressure that insisted on quick progress in the war. A limited number of transport ships and escorts restricted the ability to conduct amphibious landings

within the theater. On 28 May 1898, 600 marines seized Guantanamo Bay, east of Santiago, to use as a logistics base for the ships maintaining the blockade.<sup>84</sup> The action at Guantanamo resolved the problem of maintaining the blockade in the short term. The most critical phase of a campaign, which took place predominantly in a maritime theater, was to follow.

The joint operation to attack Santiago, which took place on 22 June 1898, ultimately proved to be the decisive component of the operational plan. The aim of the operation was to gain control of the seas through the destruction of the Spanish naval squadron. However, problems immediately arose, due to lack of cooperation between the services, even as the lead elements of V Corps, under the command of Brigadier General William R. Shafter, attempted to execute their landing. Shafter took the broadest possible interpretation of his mission while the Navy, faced with the problem of maintaining its ships at sea, was demanding direct action. The War Department orders to Shafter, issued on 31 May 1898, stated:

proceed...to vicinity of Santiago de Cuba...land your force at such a place east or west of that point as your judgement would dictate...move it on to the high ground and bluffs overlooking the harbor or into the interior, as shall best enable you to capture or destroy the garrison there, and cover the navy as it...removes torpedoes, or, with the aid of the navy, capture or destroy the Spanish fleet...<sup>85</sup>

The city of Santiago lies at the apex of a large bay, approximately five miles from the entrance to the bay. The defensive batteries and the naval mine fields that shielded Cervera's squadron are situated at the mouth of the bay and not at the city itself. Shafter's force conducted an unopposed landing 17 miles east of the



bay, at Daiquiri. The fundamental disagreement between the commander of the blockading Atlantic fleet, Admiral Sampson, and General Shafter was the line of operations that the ground forces would pursue. In Sampson's view the focus of the operation remained the destruction of the Spanish fleet. Shafter believed that the garrison defending the city was the key to the operation. He stated that "some of the naval officers suggested that...the first thing to do was to drive the Spanish troops from Morro and Secapa batteries, thus enabling the navy to remove the mines in the harbor...I regarded Santiago, and not Morro, as my true objective, the latter necessarily falling with the former."<sup>86</sup>

Shafter's view reflected a lack of understanding of the operational intent of the campaign. Fortunately, the condition of the enemy garrison would prove the argument to be largely semantic. General Arsenio Linares commanded the 12,000 man garrison in the vicinity of Santiago. By the time V Corps landed, the Spanish forces were in fact completely isolated by an insurgent army and the naval blockade. While still a cohesive force, the garrison had no capability to conduct a sustained defense of the area. On 24 June 1898, the lead elements of Shafter's cavalry division had a sharp skirmish with Spanish forces at Las Guasimas, which was significant in that it marked the only action outside of the main defensive lines of Santiago proper.

The advance of V Corps followed a line of operation to the northwest, from the beachhead oriented on the city. The tact the Navy had suggested was directly west to the mouth of Santiago Bay. As each brigade disembarked from transports, they began movement toward the

interior. Following the action at Las Guasimas, Shafter paused the uncoordinated advance of his corps to allow time to prepare for a deliberate three division attack on the defenses of Santiago.<sup>87</sup>

On 1 July 1898, V Corps attacked at three points along the high ground east of Santiago. Division-sized supporting attacks were launched toward El Morro at the entrance to the bay, and San Juan Hill to divert Spanish forces from the main effort. The corps main attack was launched at El Caney. Shafter believed that the main attack would quickly overwhelm the lightly held defenses at El Caney, and open a gap for an exploitation that would carry into the city.

At the end of the day, V Corps had gained possession of the ground, but the ferocity of the battles had shaken the confidence of Shafter. The V Corps commander considered a withdrawal in the face of the strength of the Spanish resistance. Shafter's pessimistic situation reports to Washington were answered within twenty-five minutes of receipt, and reinforcements were promised if V Corps stayed the course.<sup>88</sup> For the Spanish forces, the situation was far worse. Their fierce defense had decimated the combat power of their units and their ammunition supply was running low. General Linares assessment was the situation was hopeless, and based upon this, Admiral Cervera was ordered to sortie from the harbor.<sup>89</sup> On 3 July 1898, Cervera's squadron began its death run, which ended the question of sea control.

The destruction of the Spanish fleet left both sides to question the utility of continuing the siege of Santiago and the future conduct of the war. The nature of the remainder of the conflict reflected the

importance of the sea control phase of the campaign. American forces gained the freedom of action to strike the Spanish forces and possessions of their own choosing. Once the American Navy gained undisputed control within the theater, a mood of inevitability overtook both sides.<sup>90</sup> The U.S. continued to pursue the war as outlined by the meetings of 26 and 27 May 1898, including the invasion of Puerto Rico on 25 July 1898. The Spanish government, largely due to domestic politics, would continue military resistance, in spite of the privately held view that the war was already lost. On 18 July 1898, the Spanish government sued for peace.<sup>91</sup> Negotiations were concluded on 12 August 1898.

#### VII. CONCLUSIONS

Everything depended on the initiative being seized with decision and rapidity. Its moral and physical importance justified the utmost risk, and such was the conformation of the sea which the American army had to pass, that a strictly defensive or covering attitude with their fleet could reduce the risk almost to security.<sup>92</sup>

Sir Julian Corbett castigated the performance of the U.S. Navy for what he believed was blind adherence to a doctrine of the decisive naval battle at the expense of the overall object of the war. While the conduct of the Spanish-American War is not a model of efficiency, the performance of the two services was not at odds with the political goal defined by the McKinley administration. Given the nature of the theater of operations, the outcome of the war was largely a result of the successful transition of the U.S. Navy from an organization oriented on coastal defense into a power projection

force. The U.S. Navy demonstrated that it had become the standard bearer of the American practice of operational art, but this was a new form of the art distinctive from the legacy of Grant.

As defined by the 1993 version of Field Manual 100-5, the conduct of the Spanish-American War met the conditions to be considered operational art.<sup>93</sup> The strategic objective of Cuban independence was gained by crafting a campaign which isolated the theater, gained control of the sea, and then reduced the Spanish Army. It was the aggregate result of the destruction of the Atlantic and Pacific fleets combined with the operations of the insurgent army and the U.S. Army, that compelled the Spanish to seek a settlement.

The Spanish-American War brought the American Navy of age. The efforts of naval reformers focused the Navy on its potential for contribution to a nation in the midst of a transformation. While the U.S. Army waited for direction, Mahan and others examined the evolving geo-political landscape and the role the Navy would play in that environment. The combined effect of these forward thinkers, and the organizational innovation of the Naval War College, shaped the long term development of American strategy and goals. When war arrived, the Navy had assumed the position as the nation's pre-eminent armed force and did not relinquish that role for fifty years.

Consequently, the evolution of the "American way of war" would be shaped by the dominance of the naval arm and its service traditions. The distinction between the Naval model of operational art and Grant's model, as expressed by Professor Schneider, relates to the durability of the operational formation. Grant's methodology arose from the

inability of ground forces to achieve a strategic object using the vehicle of the individual battle. Armies had become too large and the battlefield too expansive to achieve strategic success in a single battle. However, the Spanish-American War revitalized the concept of the decisive battle. If there were opponents to a strategy of capital ship warfare, the results of the war invalidated their arguments in the eyes of the U.S. Navy. Mahan not Grant became the prophet of the American military tradition. The operational object was command of the seas, and the means was the decisive battle between main battle fleets.

The price the American Army paid for performing operations as a constabulary force in the years following the Civil War was to be woefully unprepared for the next conventional war. In spite of making a concerted effort to study the changes in land warfare through its educational institutions, the demands of the frontier did not afford the Army the opportunity to practice large unit maneuvers. The difference in the scope of studies between the Naval War College and the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry reflected the inherently tactical orientation of the Army. When the Army rapidly expanded its force structure, the institutional knowledge to command large formations had atrophied.

While the Navy was successful in linking naval strategy to long term national interests, the Army misread the implications of domestic politics in determining the structure, and consequent strategy, of the Army. By embracing Upton, senior leaders of the Army attempted to marginalize the contribution of the national guard during the War with Spain. In following this course, the Army succeeded in alienating

potential supporters in Congress. Additionally, the pre-war force structure stood at a level where the regular force was incapable of meeting worldwide commitments. Initial plans by the Army called for operations using only regular formations; however, as the war unfolded the use of national guard and volunteer formations were required to meet the demands of the war. In the first decade of the Twentieth Century, a series of reforms were instituted to correct deficiencies that were accentuated by the war. The tension between the regular and the militia may have culminated during this period, but its legacy remains.

In the final analysis, the Spanish-American War added to the evolution of the American practice of operational art. The war brought the influence of the Navy to the forefront of American strategy and was a snapshot of the future wars this nation would fight. The conduct of the war foretold what has become the hallmark of the American armed services — joint operations. It was also an example of the continued American tradition of warfare which relies on the citizen-soldier ideal. The War with Spain reoriented the American Army. The new possessions and responsibilities resulting from the war were a tremendous challenge to a force that had languished for years in its capacity of a national police force. The reforms that followed the war would create a modern force and provided the intellectual underpinnings which would prove themselves in the wars of a new century.

#### ENDNOTES

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14. Russell F. Weigley, The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 169-170.
15. W.W. Rostow, The Stages of Economic Growth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 111. Rostow describes the linkage between the stages of economic growth and military affairs.

16. Russell F. Weigley, "American Strategy from Its Beginnings through the First World War", Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 440.
17. William McKinley, Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States: From George Washington, 1789, to John F. Kennedy, 1961 (Washington D.C.,: Government Printing Office, 1961), 174.
18. Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1986), 1. Turner's views have been challenged by some modern historians. See Richard White, It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).
19. George Brown Tindall, America: A Narrative History, Volume 2 (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1984), 868.
20. Ibid., 869. Brown cites Darwin who commented: "the more energetic, restless, and courageous men from all parts of Europe having emigrated during the last ten or twelve generations to that great country [United States]...
21. David F. Trask, The War with Spain in 1898 (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1981), 13. McKinley was supported in his belief that an active U.S. role in Cuba would disrupt economic recovery by many business leaders and groups. See A.B. Farquhar to McKinley, 12 February 1898, William McKinley Papers, Number 2130, Library of Congress Presidential Paper Microfilm, Series 1, Volume 3.
22. Ibid., 3-4.
23. Ibid.
24. Charles H. Brown, The Correspondent's War: Journalists in the Spanish-American War (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), 23. Diplomatic reports to the administration stated that large elements among the insurgents favored U.S. annexation of the island. This view may have been expressed to encourage U.S. intervention. See L.P. Morton to McKinley, Ltr., 18 March 1898, William McKinley Papers, Number 2274, Library of Congress Presidential Paper Microfilm, Series 1, Volume 3.
25. Trask, The War with Spain in 1898, 7. An interesting comparison is the similar approach taken by the Cuban insurgents of the 1890's and the Castro insurgency. Furthermore, the Spanish counter-insurgency program bears strong similarities to twentieth century efforts by France and the United States.



26. Ibid., 6. Because of the dynamics of its internal politics, the Spanish government was not disposed to accept any effort by the United States to broker a peace. At this time, overseas possessions were the "coin of the realm" of western European nations, serving to define the relation of one nation-state to another.
27. T. Harry Williams, A History of the United States Since 1865 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 187.
28. McKinley, Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States, 174.
29. The modernization of the U.S. Navy was a not an easy process. Like all innovation it was resisted by elements within the institution who clung to more traditional views of naval warfare. The construction program which introduced "modern" capital ships to the order of battle began in 1883. The technological change combined with an intellectual revolution within the Navy to produce a modern force by the turn of the century. See Kenneth J. Hagan, This People's Navy: The Making of American Sea Power (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 185-189.
30. Alfred T. Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987), 28.
31. War Department, "Report of General Phillip Sheridan", Annual Report of the Secretary of War (Washington D.C.,: Government Printing Office, 1884), 4.
32. Russel D. Santala, "The Ute Campaign of 1879: A Study in the Use of the Military Instrument," (Fort Leavenworth: Command and General Staff College, 1993), 98.
33. Hagan, This Peoples Navy, 226-227.
34. Carl H. Builder, The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989), 18.
35. Hagan, This Peoples Navy, 95.
36. William R. Roberts, "Reform and Revitalization, 1890-1903", Against All Enemies: Interpretations of American Military History from Colonial Times to the Present (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 197. Attempts to expand the size of the Army were in the context of a national military experience which had never needed a large standing force for defense. The one case of using large armies was the anomalous Civil War.
37. Stephen E. Ambrose, Upton and the Army (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992). Ambrose provides an overview of Upton's career and his contributions to the U.S. Army.

38. Ibid., 132.
39. Roberts, "Reform and Revitalization, 1890-1903", 202.
40. Graham A. Cosmas, An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), 31.
41. The War Department operated under the bureau system, instead of a general staff system. The authority of the Commanding General was undercut by the power of the respective bureau chiefs. It has been characterized as a system better suited for peace than war. One commentator refers to "each bureau was a separate island, and the only bridge to the mainland terminated in the Secretary's [of War] office." See J.D. Hittle, The Military Staff: Its History and Development (Harrisburg: The Military Service Publishing Co., 1949), 174-175 and Vernon Pizer, The United States Army (New York: Frederick Praeger, Inc., 1967), 52.
42. Hagan, This People's Navy, 184.
43. Ibid., 189.
44. Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 33-34.
45. Ibid., 23.
46. Patrick E. McGinty, "Intelligence and the Spanish-American War", (Washington D.C., Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Georgetown University Graduate School, 1983), 72.
47. Ibid., 73.
48. Ibid. A shortfall in pre-war naval planning was the integration of the Marine Corps. In 1886, the Navy Department published a manual entitled Naval Brigade and Operations Ashore. However, the large scale employment of Marines in amphibious operations was not envisioned. During the nine week interval between the destruction of the Spanish Pacific squadron and the arrival of Army troops, Admiral Dewey commented on the need to integrate Naval operations with Marine capability. See William F. Atwater, "United States Army and Navy development of joint landing operations, 1898-1942", (Winston-Salem: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Duke University, 1986), 7-14.
49. Ronald Spector, "The Triumph of Professional Ideology: The U.S. Navy in the 1890's", In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1984 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1984), 178.
50. Ibid., 179. Secretary Long believed a strong naval presence in the Pacific was warranted with the question of Hawaiian annexation unresolved.

51. Elting E. Morison, ed., The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 618.
52. Hagan, This People's Navy, 210. The Navy Department used the products of the Naval War College to garner support in Congress for the modernization program.
53. Morison, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. 1, 623.
54. Theodore Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), 204.
55. The recent mortar attack on a Sarajevo marketplace had a similar effect to the sinking of the Maine. Both events were widely reported in the popular media and stirred strong reaction in the American public.
56. Morison, The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. 1, 789. Prior to the publication of the official inquiry into the Maine disaster, inflammatory reports were already circulating. A physician wrote to the administration, "twenty-three dead Americans were carried in a sort of triumphal procession through the streets of Havana for the edification and enjoyment of the Spanish population, to whom the occasion afforded as much pleasure as a bull-fight." See H.D. Geddings to E.R. Moses, Ltr., 18 February 1898, William McKinley Papers, Number 2180, Library of Congress Presidential Paper Microfilm, Series 1, Volume 3.
57. Trask, The War with Spain in 1898, 31.
58. Ibid., 45-46.
59. Ibid., 52.
60. Hagan, This People's Navy, 212.
61. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 73.
62. Hagan, This People's Navy, 217. Historian Walter Millis commented that "[the Army had] no plan of mobilization, no higher organization, no training in combined operations, no provision for the assembling or transportation of an overseas expedition, or for the handling of any large body of troops whatever...there had been no brigade formation of troops in the United States for thirty years." See Walter Millis, The Martial Spirit: A Study of Our War with Spain (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931), 152.

63. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 83. On 16 March 1898, at an address to Civil War veterans of II Corps, General Miles commented that "Uncle Sam had fired a gun up at the capitol the other day - a fifty million dollar gun...[and in the event of war] we would be ready to make the conflict short, sharp, and decisive." See General Miles address to II Corps banquet, 16 March 1898, William McKinley Papers, Number 2263, Library of Congress Presidential Paper Microfilm, Series 1, Volume 3.
64. Russell A. Alger, The Spanish-American War (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1901), 9.
65. Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1967), 295.
66. Alger, The Spanish-American War, 15.
67. Weigley, History of the United States Army, 295-296.
68. Ibid., 296.
69. Ibid., 297.
70. Ibid., 306.
71. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 106.
72. Ibid., 107.
73. Bob Woodward, The Commanders (New York: Pocket Books, 1991), 329. The basis of joint operations is the synergistic effect obtained through the different capabilities of the services. Since the Spanish-American War, a recurrent theme is the tension between the utility of joint operations and the dominance of one armed service.
74. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 106.
75. Antoine-Henri Jomini, The Art of War (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1971), 324.
76. William R. Shafter, "The Capture of Santiago de Cuba", The Century Magazine LVII (February 1899): 612.
77. Alfred T. Mahan, Lessons of the War with Spain and Other Articles (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1899), 101.
78. Victor M. Concas Y Palau, "The Squadron of Admiral Cervera", Office of Naval Intelligence, War Notes Number VIII (Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, 1900), 28. The Navy found itself turning away from operations in the littoral areas which had been its lifeblood and focusing on operations as a blue-water force.

79. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 118.
80. Ibid., 119.
81. Ibid.
82. Trask, The War with Spain in 1898, 165-166.
83. Nelson A. Miles, "The War with Spain", North American Review 6 (May 1899): 523-524.
84. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 178.
85. Alger, The Spanish-American War, 64.
86. Shafter, "The Capture of Santiago de Cuba", 617.
87. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 213.
88. Ibid., 216.
89. Hagan, This People's Navy, 224.
90. Cosmas, An Army for Empire, 224.
91. Ibid., 242.
92. Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988), 168.
93. The practice of the military art involves an operational and logistical dimension. The scope of this study only scratches the surface of the logistical problems confronted during the campaign.

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