

U.S. ARMY INTERWAR PLANNING:
THE PROTECTIVE MOBILIZATION PLAN

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Art of War Scholars

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ABSTRACT

U.S. ARMY INTERWAR PLANNING: THE PROTECTIVE MOBILIZATION PLAN,
by Major Robert F. Altman, II, 87 pages.

This thesis examines the case study of the 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan (PMP). It argues there is an alternative view in the current historical literature, that the 1939 PMP was a defensive plan designed to protect the United States and its periphery. Additionally it examines emergent themes that inform the US Army today as it endures austerity and competing security requirements. In short, the research highlights that the American political system and popular environment support Clausewitz's observation of a paradoxical trinity. More to the point, within the American system, in order to facilitate military success, it must be understood that policy is primal.

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ACRONYMS

GHQ	General Headquarters
MTCA	Military Training Camps Association
PMP	Protective Mobilization Plan
WPD	War Plans Division
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

War is more than a true chameleon . . . As a total phenomenon its dominant tendencies always make war a paradoxical trinity . . . The first of these three aspects mainly concerns the people; the second the commander and his army; the third the government . . . These three tendencies are like three different codes of law, deep-rooted in their subject and yet variable in their relationship to one another. A theory that ignores any one of them or seeks to fix an arbitrary relationship between them would conflict with reality to such an extent that for this reason alone it would be totally useless.

— Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*

On November 14, 1938, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt held a meeting with key War Department officials, the Army Chief of Staff General Malin Craig, deputy Chief of Staff Brigadier General George C. Marshall, and Major General Henry “Hap” Arnold, in addition to others, to discuss the state of the Army air forces. Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau was present and noted in his diary that the president remarked he was not sure that encouraging Hitler to make peace at Munich would save lives in the long run. The president also wondered whether or not a United States capability to produce 10,000 planes per year, and the sale of these resources to Europe, would have deterred Hitler from mobilization and subsequent occupation of the Sudetenland only months earlier.¹ On November 25, 1938, retired Army General John J. Pershing wrote to the president to express his concern over the situation of US Army

¹ Morgenthau diary as quoted in David Kaiser, *No End Save Victory: How FDR led the Nation into War* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 49-50.

ground forces. Citing his experience from World War I (WWI) he urged the president to address defense deficiencies sooner rather than later.²

On January 12, 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered a written message to the first session of the Seventy-Sixth Congress urging the legislative branch to move past political differences, and given the changing world situation, to establish an increase in appropriations needed for the national defense.³ Cautioning against fear or frenzy, President Roosevelt argued that either extremes, spending billions for an increase in capabilities, or a complete disregard for defense appropriations would be “equally sensational and untrue.”⁴ The president outlined what he thought was necessary to ensure an adequate defense of the homeland. President Roosevelt also referenced the experience General Pershing spoke of, highlighting the time it took the US forces to mobilize in support of the allies during WWI.⁵ Given the isolationist nature of the political and popular environment the president qualified his remarks arguing that the reference to the lack of preparation in 1917 did not imply that the administration expected a war in

² The letter from General Pershing to President Roosevelt mentioned a previous conversation to which the General was taking opportunity to summarize his “most important considerations” with respect to the status of air and ground forces. Franklin Delano Roosevelt. *F.D.R.: His Personal Letters; 1928 – 1945*, vol. 2, Elliott Roosevelt, ed. (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), 837-838.

³ A copy of the printed US House Congressional Record document, “An adequate National Defense as outlined by the message of the President of the United States.” War Department General and Special Staffs, War Plans Division, RG 165, General Correspondence, 1920-1942, National Archives, College Park, MD, box 183, file 4132, (331-332). Hereafter referred to as RG 165.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 331.

⁵ Congressional Record, RG 165, box 183, file 4132, 331.

Europe, rather the country was simply ill prepared then as it was in 1917; Roosevelt stated, “we must have forces and defenses strong enough to ward off sudden attack.”⁶

The political mastery that President Roosevelt wielded in guiding the United States towards its involvement in World War II (WWII) is fascinating,⁷ but this paper does not examine grand strategy or political leadership. This is a study of mobilizing an Army in an interwar period, or time of peace. The purpose of this paper is to offer new evidence on the Protective Mobilization Plans (PMPs), specifically the 1939 PMP.⁸ The reference to the political environment, and the initial quote from Clausewitz, illustrate the method, lens, and format, which the author has come to understand as an imperative in determining, examining, and executing strategy. As Clausewitz states in book three of *On War*, “Everything in strategy is very simple, but that does not mean that everything is very easy.”⁹ An alternate goal of this paper is to demonstrate the view of history, or a case study in military history through a view of political, military, and popular cultural means. Ultimately, the author expects that the interwar period of 1920-1941 will prove to be a worthwhile case study in strategy, specifically for mobilization; one that predicated

⁶ Congressional Record, RG 165, box 183, file 4132, 331.

⁷ For an excellent account on FDR and national strategic leadership see Kaiser.

⁸ It must be noted that mobilization plans and war plans differ. War plans such as the colored plans of WWII, e.g. Red, Orange, or Rainbow, provide actual contingency plans that posed how and where forces would fight. Mobilization Plans specifically deal with the mobilization of personnel and equipment. In other words, mobilization plans seek to plan for the procurement of who will fight and provide the necessary equipment. The two are often confused.

⁹ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed., Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 178.

upon the Clausewitzian variables of the government, the military commander, and the will of the populace.

The central question of this paper is, “how does the 1939 PMP inform security studies, and what gap does it fill in the historical literature?” This paper seeks to expose the 1939 PMP, using original archival research, as a successful case study in interwar mobilization of ground and air forces. More to the point, the initial hypothesis is that it was a successful plan due to an accommodation for the variables within Clausewitz’s paradoxical trinity. This question arises, and is important, for two reasons. First, there is a gap in the historical literature on the mobilization of the US Army in the interwar period, (1920-1941) which adequately addresses the 1939 PMP. Second, as the US Army draws down, strategic requirements remain and opportunities exist which the Army is uniquely suited to address.

A review of relevant literature and original archival research answers the central question and offers evidence for an alternate consideration of the PMP. The 1939 PMP has been unfairly criticized. There are two supporting points to this statement. First, the PMPs were never intended to act in an offensive capacity, rather they were a plan to mobilize and defend the homeland, and periphery, against an invasion of the United States and its forward operating bases. Second, the PMP, was more than just an army on paper, it increased the size of the US Army eight fold and provided a cadre, or force, that conducted the US Army General Headquarters (GHQ) Maneuvers of 1941,¹⁰ and fielded

¹⁰ The GHQ Maneuvers of 1941 also commonly referred to as the Louisiana Maneuvers took place over the course of four months and several states. The major training battles took place in Louisiana and North Carolina. These training maneuvers were comprised of Army Corps and Division size elements and the largest in the history

an Army of over one million personnel before the Victory Program¹¹ was approved in September of 1941.

This paper follows historical methods, both historical explanation and to a lesser degree historical evaluation, based upon primary source material gathered at the National Archives II in College Park, Maryland (1939 PMP) and various secondary source materials. This thesis does not focus on technological developments or innovations. It does not examine the Industrial Mobilization Plans of the period. It does discuss interwar mobilization planning and the War Department's problem of raising manpower in a national emergency.

Chapter 2 draws from histories of American military thought and the US Army by Russell Weigley, the National Defense Act of 1920, and the 1960 Indiana University doctoral dissertation of John W. Killigrew, "The Impact of the Great Depression on the Army 1929-1936" to illuminate the political, military, economic, and popular environment that shaped the conditions under which the 1939 PMP was developed.

Chapter 3 examines interwar planning in two periods. First, it briefly examines mobilization planning between 1920 and 1931; and second, mobilization planning

of the United States Army. For the most in depth look at the 1941 maneuvers see Christopher R. Gabel, *The U.S. Army GHQ Maneuvers of 1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1991).

¹¹ The Victory Program or Victory Plan was a plan for bringing the US Army into WWII and provided its operational concept throughout the war. See Charles Edward Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future and a Doubtful Present: Writing the Victory Plan of 1941* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, US Army, 2011). Jim Lacey, *Keep from All Thoughtful Men: How U.S. Economists Won World War II* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), offers a vehement counterargument to what the Victory program actually achieved.

between 1931 and 1938. It begins to introduce evidence for supporting point one of the overall thesis.

Chapter 4 examines the 1939 PMP archival documents and argues the PMPs were never intended to act in offensive capacity. Rather the objective was to mobilize and defend the homeland, and periphery, against a German invasion of the United States and its forward operating bases.

Chapter 5 examines supporting point two and explores the 1939 PMP as more than just an army on paper, but also the most complete mobilization plan following the Army's deployment in WWI. The evidence presented offers the view that it was the 1939 PMP, updated in February of 1940, in addition to the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, which produced the PMP Army and conducted the training maneuvers of 1941, ultimately providing a nucleus of the future expeditionary army.

Finally, chapter 6 considers the relevance of the PMP for the Army today and considers the need for additional research. It mentions correlations between the 1939 PMP and today, to inform the historical literature, and the security studies discipline as a case study that accommodates political, military, and civilian variables present in mobilization scenarios. It further emphasizes how the 1939 PMP Army informs the US Army today.

CHAPTER 2

THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF WAR

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . . To declare War . . . To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years . . . To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions . . .

— Article 1, Section 8, *US Constitution*

The central question of this chapter is: what were the conditions under which the 1939 PMP was developed? This is important because it sets the basis, or correct historical lens, by which to view the political, military, popular, and economic environments that shaped interwar mobilization planning. The central argument is that in spite of a growing international involvement, the United States' political, economic, and popular dimensions did not support an expeditionary Army; rather, it considered the existence of the Army primarily as a function of defending the homeland.¹²

There are three components that both establish context for understanding the 1939 PMP, and also support the chapter's argument. First, there is a noticeable historical trend both in a specific American historical view of its Army's purpose and the Army's view of itself. Second, reaction to WWI mobilization failures resulted in the National Defense Act of 1920 and attempted to improve Army structure. Third, in spite of previous

¹² Following the War of 1812, both War Department and military leaders began to dialogue as to whether or not the Army should remain a citizen Army or become a professional one. Following the Civil War Emory Upton championed arguing for an "expandable army." See Russell F. Weigley, *Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962) to trace the historical debate.

mobilization failures that precipitated updating defense legislation, the economic prosperity of the 1920s the Great Depression of the 1930's, the domestic agendas of Presidents Hoover and Roosevelt, and the American public were loath to endorse or accept legislation or appropriations that could be argued as supporting militarism. These three variables created the setting under which the 1939 PMP would evolve.

Historical View of the Army

The early American republic was formed at a time when Europe consisted of professional armies. The recent experience of England and the King's use of land forces in an attempt to regulate the colonists made the new nation nervous of standing and professional armies. This early experience informed the writers of the *Constitution of the United States* (hereafter referred to as the *US Constitution*), its early leadership, and popular thinking. As a result, the new nation chose a model of militia and of a citizen army.¹³

Article 1, Section 8, of the *US Constitution* grants Congress certain powers related to the defense of the nation. With respect to US foreign policy, major land forces did not exhibit expeditionary type operations until the Spanish-American war and WWI. Conversely, the US Navy found itself acting as a forward presence early in the nineteenth century. It participated in the Barbary wars and the opening of Japan to trade and the West in the early 1850s. One could argue that the United States historically has focused its efforts on seapower. While the foreign policy of the United States witnessed a shift in the massive forward deployment of troops in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

¹³ Weigley, *Towards an American Army*, ix.

centuries, the idea of mobilization and subsequent demobilization remained paramount. The idea that the US Army is a profession, one could argue, does not present itself in popular culture until after the Vietnam War. In each of its previous conflicts the US Army was a massive force raised from the citizenry.

While Army leadership since the early nineteenth century debated as to whether it should consist of an expansible army or maintain the citizen army model, it has maintained the belief and practice that the Armed Forces of the United States should be subject to civilian leadership. The idea of civilian control is arranged within the *US Constitution* through two measures. First, the Congress maintains the power of granting appropriations for the Army and as a result the Army is subject to Congress. Second, the president is assigned the responsibility of Commander-in-Chief, so the Army also finds itself subject to the executive branch. The framers of the *US Constitution* set these parameters on the Army based upon their own recent experience. There was a fear of standing and professional armies that might seek to usurp the government. Within the idea of liberal government, defense forces must be subject to the elected officials. This is reasoned in that militaries are rigid and require discipline whereas democratic systems require tolerance and the welcoming of debate.¹⁴

Within the American system, military leadership appeals to the legislative branch for appropriations, but seldom will it go outside the executive's budget guidance when requesting such funds. Following WWI and its mobilization failures the Army and the legislative branch attempted to lay the groundwork through the National Defense Act that

¹⁴ Richard H Kohn, "An Essay on Civilian Control of the Military," *American Diplomacy* 2, no. 1 (1997), accessed September 2, 2014, www.procon.org/www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/AD_Issues/amdipl_3/kohn.html.

would attempt to ensure proper annual funding and allocation of personnel cementing strong future readiness for the nation's defense.

National Defense Act of 1920

The interwar required new legislation that provided for a regular army, a force complimented by the militia to avoid another mobilization failure. “The basic premise underlying this policy was the concept of organizing and maintaining a small professional force to serve as the nucleus for the mobilization of a large mass ‘citizen’ army.”¹⁵ The resultant cost of preparedness, or readiness however, was much higher than pre-war spending levels. So, while the legislative branch was keenly aware of a necessity to avoid future mobilization failures, President Wilson was still fighting for the support of Congress to pass and approve membership in the League of Nations. As it was largely a new body—the Republicans had taken control over both houses in the November 1919 elections—there was a certain amount of partisanship that would drive the hearings as opposed to a true desire to ensure future readiness.

Moving forward and drafting sustainable legislation would require committee members to choose sides between diverging Army thinking on the composition of its forces. Congress would be forced to choose between the proposal of Chief of Staff General Peyton March and the representative of the current American Expeditionary Forces in France, General John J. Pershing. Prior to his experience in France, General Pershing had aligned himself with those officers who favored a professional army and the requirement for universal military training of military aged male citizens for a long

¹⁵ John W. Killigrew, “The Impact of The Great Depression on the Army, 1929-1936” (Ph.D. diss., University of Indiana, Bloomington, IN, 1960), iv.

period of time.¹⁶ Following his experience, and observations in France, he altered his opinion on the capabilities of a citizen army. As such, he had no problem sending in his place, weeks ahead of his return to the states, Lieutenant Colonel John Macaulay Palmer, to speak on his behalf before Congress concerning post-war policies.

Palmer had previously served as General Pershing's Chief of Operations, and at the close of the war was a brigade commander in 29th Division. Like Pershing, Palmer was a graduate of West Point, US Military Academy class of 1892, and a professional who previously had supported Emory Upton's ideals of an expansible Army. However, Palmer's father had risen to fame in the Civil War and the rank of major general in the Army of the Cumberland and was a former citizen soldier. His father, who in the early 1900's served as a member of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, instructed him that often Congress desired a plan that was passable, rather than a perfect one that would not pass either house.¹⁷

Before Palmer or Pershing could return to Washington to testify, General March had already briefed the Congressional committees on a post-war plan for manning and

¹⁶ There were two major schools of thought at this time. The first and oldest argument was one that citizen soldiers trained through a universal training program would make the ideal defenders of a state. This thinking was championed by Chief of Staff General Leonard Wood—He was the only Medical Officer to serve as the senior Army leader—Wood was himself a citizen soldier, who argued that even General Washington admitted the value of the citizen soldier with requisite training. The second, championed by Emory Upton, argued for a professional army of a regulated and consistent size, one that would model the Prussian Army, and that given its constant training and readiness could equal the quick and decisive victories Prussia had in the Wars of reunification. Weigley, *Towards an American Army* is an excellent account of this historical debate.

¹⁷ Weigley, *Towards an American Army*, 228. This advice would certainly influence Palmer later in life as he briefed Congress on an alternative to March's Uptonian plan.

readiness that resembled Uptonian thought. General March requested roughly a half-million man regular Army and in spite of glaring pre-war mobilization failures during the Wilson administration, no legislator was happy with the Army proposal. Senator James Wadsworth Jr., Republican Senator from New York, and chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee was persuaded to hear the testimony of Palmer and later remarked, not only was the committee surprised to hear another proposal, one different from what the Chief of Staff had laid out, but also that the committee found it interesting that Palmer dissented with the Chief of Staff, Palmer asserted that March's plan "was not in harmony with the genius of American institutions."¹⁸ Palmer felt that the Prussian, or German system was a system for authoritarian states and one that was "designed to wage aggressive war."¹⁹ The cynical reader might argue that legislators would almost certainly choose a citizen army model from the standpoint of cost, and more to the point it was a politically expedient thing to do. While this cynicism towards the political process is well founded, Weigley states that Senator Wadsworth "wanted to give the country an effective army, but he did not believe that the goal was to be achieved by borrowing part of the organizational scheme of the defeated German Army."²⁰ Ultimately Congress was so impressed with Palmer that he was chosen to advise the writing of the National Defense Act.

¹⁸ Reorganization Hearings, S.2715 II, 1177, quoted in Weigley, *Towards an American Army*, 227.

¹⁹ Weigley, *Towards an American Army*, 231.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 226.

The legislation that passed both houses of Congress and signed into law on June 4, 1920 authorized a regular army force of 16,156 officers, to include warrant officers, 280,000 enlisted men to include Philippine Scouts, and National Guard and Reserve Force that was approximately 450,000.²¹ The National Defense Act did not address Universal Military Training as March, Pershing, and Palmer would have hoped, but it did authorize the Reserve Officer Training Corps. The American legislative and executive branches of government had chosen the citizen army model over that of the professional model. This choice precipitated the need for the PMPs.

The Political and Economic Environment in the 1920s

The political will that enabled the passage of the National Defense Act during the summer of 1920 was short lived. Just as quickly as the supported piece of legislation that was intended to provide for readiness of the land forces in a time of emergency had passed, the mood in Washington and around the country changed. As Weigley states in *History of the United States Army*, “The goals of the National Defense Act of 1920 broke down because Congress and the executive gave them lip service but little practical support.”²² It is certainly reflective of the political and popular environments for feelings supporting defense to change but it is curious that there was also a shift in the narrative from senior Army leaders. General Pershing, while speaking to the European Relief

²¹ United States of America War Office, *The National Defense Act* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, August 1921), 157, accessed February 28, 2014, <http://books.google.com/books?id=JKNAAYAAJ&pg=PA2&dq=national+defense+act+amendments+of+1920&hl=en&sa=X&ei=3MUQU7voM-bmyQHHkYDIaw&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAA>.

²² Russell F. Weigley, *The History of The United States Army* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), 400.

Council on December 30, 1920, and addressing the avoidance of future wars declared, “An important step would be to curtail expenditures for the maintenance of navies and armies.”²³ General Pershing was also quoted as having argued for support of the League of Nations. It is certainly acceptable that a former field commander might appeal to the international community to take steps in avoiding war, but it is also fair to say that almost as soon as the War Department and Congress had opportunity to prepare for future conflict, in a way keeping with American ideology, e.g. a citizen army, it would drastically cut the force under the banner of “economy of government.”²⁴

The next several years did see drastic reductions in manning levels for the Department of the Army. In 1921, the force was cut from a projected 280,000 to 150,000, and in the next year the Army was reduced to 137,000 personnel.²⁵ As to budgetary concerns following the National Defense Act, the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 outlined that the Secretary of War would provide projections for the next fiscal year to the Director of the Bureau of the Budget.²⁶ This budgetary structure caused a great deal of animosity for the Army in that the Director of the Bureau of the Budget would often modify the military budget before it reached the legislative branch for review.²⁷

²³ “General Pershing’s Plea,” *The New York Times*, December 31, 1920, accessed September 2, 2014, <http://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1920/12/31/103525841.html>.

²⁴ Weigley, *The History of The United States Army*, 400.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 401.

²⁶ Killigrew, 9.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

The 1920s also saw the emergence of a new military theory, strategic air power. As a result, in 1926, The Air Corps Act provided for an expansion of air corps personnel and “the procurement of over 18,000 serviceable aircraft.”²⁸ The Air Corps fell underneath the Department of the Army. Additionally, non-military requirements such as the Army Corps of Engineers’ domestic responsibilities, operation of the Panama Canal and the administration of the Philippines and Puerto Rico consumed large parts of Army appropriations.²⁹ In 1929 President Hoover asked then Chief of Staff General Summerall to look at areas in which it could reduce expenses. It had become general practice for senior military leadership to concern themselves with potential political criticism over an unwillingness to relinquish Army appropriations as opposed to maintaining the state of the force. In the end, the political establishment in the 1920s was able to ignore concerns over readiness, believing that war was a thing of the past, that prosperity was forever at the doorstep, and that military readiness was not of concern. According to popular view, isolationism was the best preparedness.

The Political and Economic Environment of the 1930s

Even as the National Socialists in Germany came to power and its government violated the Treaty of Versailles through rearmament, most Americans were aloof to foreign affairs, specifically those involving Europe. For most Americans the loss of over 50,000 lives in WWI did not make sense. The war to end all wars did not accomplish the expressed goals of the politicians who spoke in favor of it. To most Americans,

²⁸ Killigrew, 6.

²⁹ Ibid., 8.

involvement in international affairs was taboo and to them there was a historical precedence for avoiding it. This mood was evident in popular literature and it was certainly evident in domestic politics.³⁰ In his 1933 inaugural address President Franklin Roosevelt stated, “Our international trade relations, though vastly important, are in point of time and necessity secondary to the establishment of a sound national economy.”³¹

The isolationist position that President Roosevelt purported early in his first term was in many ways a political maneuver to secure support from Republican legislators.³² In return for opposition support of key domestic initiatives, Roosevelt went so far as to sign the Johnson Act in 1934, which prohibited lending to countries that were in default of their debts to the United States.³³ This would prove problematic for Roosevelt in the future when he desired that the United States become the arsenal for democracy.

Isolationism would maintain its hold on the United States through the 1930s. The legislative branch was so concerned with growing instability that it passed a series of Neutrality Acts. The first act passed in 1935. It prohibited the exporting of “arms, ammunition, and implements of war from the United States to foreign nations at war.”³⁴

³⁰ David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 385-387.

³¹ Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Inaugural Address of the President,” National Archives, March 4, 1933, accessed September 2, 2014, <http://research.archives.gov/description/197333>.

³² President Roosevelt had served as Assistant Secretary of the Navy and was highly literate in the foreign affairs of the United States.

³³ David Kennedy, 390-391.

³⁴ US Department of State, Office of the Historian, “Milestones: 1921-1936, The Neutrality Acts, 1930s,” accessed November 8, 2014, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/neutrality-acts>.

Additionally, it required US arms companies to retrieve export licenses as an attempt to regulate this act. Subsequent Neutrality Act Legislation would modify the initial prohibition of resources to belligerent nations in 1937, but arms sales remained unquestionable and illegal in the eyes of Congress until 1939.

The president's language throughout the 1930s was isolationist to a point. Throughout the periods in which hostilities seemed to grow closer to the United States, the last line of defense to isolationism was the employment of US ground troops. The president's radio address on September 3, 1939, following Hitler's invasion of Poland, reinforced the position of the United States to stay neutral.³⁵ The political and economic environments did not allow the Army of the interwar period to approach hostilities with the newest equipment. The early interwar senior Army leadership was averse to making a stand for readiness. As a result the Army planners were compelled to plan, not for another world war mobilization but rather, a much more limited defensive mobilization that fit the realities of the 1930s. In the end, the 1939 PMP would set into motion the Army that was originally intended to defend the continental United States, Panama, and the Philippines, and then ultimately became the expeditionary Army seeking the unconditional surrender of the Axis powers.

³⁵ Joseph Alsop and Robert Kinter, *American White Paper; the Story of American Diplomacy and the Second World War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1940), 103.

CHAPTER 3

PREPARATION AND PLANNING, PAINFUL GROWTH AND PROCESS

According to Marvin Kreidberg and Merton Henry, mobilization is defined as “the assembling and organizing of troops, material, and equipment for active military service in time of war or other national emergency.”³⁶ While they do mention mobilization as a basic premise for “successful prosecution of any war,”³⁷ they neglect to include the larger scope of a national mobilization that would include economic, industrial, political, and information resources that a given country should incorporate in the prosecution of war. This combination of all national resources would follow the observation of Clausewitz, mentioned in book 1, chapter 1, which contends there is a paradoxical trinity between the political, the populace, and the military that exists in war. Additionally, for the sake of reader clarity, it seems appropriate to define the difference between mobilization plans and war plans. Mobilization plans are those which mobilize the military instrument of power, whereas a war plan can be defined as an operational plan with specific strategic objectives. While this thesis does not examine economic or industrial mobilization in detail, this paper does attempt to portray the 1939 PMP as a historical case study that shows successful national strategy in the use of military force begins with an accommodation of the political environment, military leadership, and a nation’s popular support.

³⁶ Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army: 1775-1945* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1955), v.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Chapter 2 addressed the political and economic factors that set conditions for the military environment in which the 1939 PMP was developed. Prior to explaining the 1939 PMP though, the process, or metamorphosis of Army mobilization planning must be addressed during the 1920-1938 time frame. This chapter benefits largely from two works, Kreidberg and Henry's, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army: 1775-1945*, and Mark Skinner Watson's, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations*. This chapter separates the interwar time period prior to the 1939 PMP into two sections, mobilization planning following WWI to 1931, and mobilization planning from 1931 to 1939.

Mobilization Planning 1919-1931

The first mobilization plan that followed WWI determined a required number of officers and enlisted men based upon projection for either offensive or defensive war. This first mobilization study assumed that Congress would pass conscription legislation that would become law approximately "60 days after the declaration of war."³⁸ Additionally, this study projected a certain number of forces dependent upon mobilization days, or M-days, and those projected numbers of service personnel differed only between offensive and defensive war. For this paper, the number of projected soldiers available is not as important as introducing the M-day concept. M+ 1 or Mobilization Day+ 1 refers to one month following the actual mobilization date. The other annotation was noted by parenthesis and days, e.g. M+30 (days).³⁹ The criticism of

³⁸ Kreidberg and Henry, 383.

³⁹ Ibid.

this first study, or plan, was the lack of supply requirements, which rendered it non-practicable for procurement.⁴⁰ The one theme from the mobilization framework of 1920 that would endure was the organization of the United States into geographic corps areas.⁴¹ The First Corps Area was comprised of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. Second Corps Area was made up of New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. Third Corps Area included Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The Fourth Corps Area included Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas. Fifth Corps Area included Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Sixth Corps Area was made up of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois. The Seventh Corps Area consisted of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri. The Eighth Corps Area was comprised of Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. Finally, the Ninth Corps Area included California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington State.⁴² This organization of the United States homeland into geographic Corps Areas serves as evidence for mobilization planning that was defensive in nature.

Overall, the early 1920 mobilization planning history is hard to make sense of as the planning itself, and the resultant products were disjointed and at some points dysfunctional. In fairness to the US Army planners of the time though, within their

⁴⁰ Kreidberg and Henry, 384.

⁴¹ See appendix C.

⁴² Hawaii and Alaska were considered a part of the periphery; they were not yet admitted states.

context, they had never carried out this type of planning. It can also be said that the criticism placed upon WWI leadership and their mobilization process is unfair. A professor once remarked that to ask why America is so bad at strategy required a first question. Was America ever good at strategy to begin with? It is apparent to this author that in the 1920s US Army mobilization was a painstaking process, and that the War Department was forging new ground. The logic clearly stated is thus: if WWI was the first large-scale US Army expedition outside the borders of the United States, and by large-scale the implication is an entire US Army Infantry Division, and the 1920s was the first large-scale mobilization review process with an intent to develop large scale mobilization plans, then the criticism of the interwar period (1919-1941) mobilization planning processes and products must be placed in context.

What does clearly emerge from the early 1920s and the 1920-1931 mobilization time period are three key themes that affect the subsequent mobilization plans. First is the notion that planners were required to plan without foreign policy guidance and a realization that neither the political, nor popular environment supported the National Defense Act of 1920 manning levels. As a result, the mobilization planning process was a reactionary process. Second, that a defined mobilization rate and outline of mobilization were necessary. Finally, that there was a shift in the popular mindset from mobilizing for the offense abroad to mobilization for the defense of the homeland. Overall, General Pershing's role as Chief of Staff during the early interwar years was fortuitous for the Army based upon his experience and observation of pre-war mobilization difficulty.

Throughout the interwar years, there were seven different Army Chiefs of Staff. Of those seven, five played large roles in shaping the planning environment and the

organization of the US Army that would fight and win alongside the Allied forces.⁴³

Following his service as Commander, American Expeditionary Forces in Europe, General John J. Pershing assumed duty as the Chief of Staff on July 1, 1921. Within the Pershing Papers finding aid, from the National Archives, there is a note that a “noticeable gap” exists in personal papers while Chief of Staff,⁴⁴ as such historians are fortunate to have the papers of George C. Marshall, edited by Larry Bland, and the Marshall Biographies written by Forrest Pogue. Each of these offer, with certain reliability, what General Pershing’s tenure as the Chief of Staff looked like. More importantly, to General Pershing’s legacy, the key themes that emerge in the mobilization planning process during the 1920-1931 time period can be directly attributed to General Pershing’s tenure as Chief of Staff.

Upon his assumption of duties as Chief of Staff, Pershing ordered a mobilization plan to be completed by October 1, 1921 and reorganized his staff to mirror the organization that served him in Chaumont, France.⁴⁵ Pershing established five staff divisions, G-1 Personnel, G-2 Intelligence, G-3 Operations and Training, G-4 Supply, and War Plans Division (WPD).⁴⁶ As Pogue notes, the readiness enjoyed in 1921 was to

⁴³ See appendix B for Interwar US Army Chiefs of Staff.

⁴⁴ Library of Congress, Manuscript Division Staff, *John J. Pershing Papers A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress*, revised by Joseph K. Brooks (Washington, DC: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, 2013), accessed 9 December 2014, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/mss/eadxmss/eadpdfmss/2013/ms013112.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Kreidberg and Henry, 389. Staff organization in Forrest Pogue and Gordon Harrison, *George C. Marshall: Education of a General* (New York: Viking Press, 1963), 218.

⁴⁶ Pogue and Harrison, 218.

be short lived. It was becoming too convenient for members of Congress to use the militarism argument as an excuse to cut the Regular Army and its appropriations. While senior officers saw themselves as subordinate to civilian establishment and seldom-petitioned Congress or the president to reconsider, Pogue notes that Pershing challenged the reductions as being similar to the Germans who were forcibly disarmed.⁴⁷ Secretary of War John Weeks echoed the concern over cutbacks in his 1924 Annual Report of the Secretary of War to the President. Weeks argued that the department was not seeking expansion but a limited increase in appropriations and personnel to meet legal intent for the nation's self-defense.⁴⁸ Congress ignored the cautions of Pershing and Weeks, and subsequent Chiefs of Staff, and thus mobilization planners were forced to plan within a lean Army until the late 1930s.

Following the early studies on mobilization, the planners collaborated with the Army War College and the General Staff College for data.⁴⁹ The planners calculated potential manpower and replacement requirements factoring in casualties based upon WWI lessons.⁵⁰ Early planners also quickly came to consensus that the most important factors guiding a mobilization would be, "supply rate, recruitment rate, and the organization and training rate."⁵¹ Whether it was intuitive or the study of warfare in

⁴⁷ Pogue and Harrison, 220.

⁴⁸ Secretary of War, *Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1924* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924), accessed September 14, 2014, <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015024071543;view=1up;seq=33>.

⁴⁹ Kreidberg and Henry, 390.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 391.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

history the planners also agreed that the supply rate was most important. However, it was almost impossible for planners to generate options without knowledge of potential theatre requirements. More to the point, the consistent change in appropriations and personnel manning for the Regular Army meant calculations must be frequently revisited.

Additionally, early planning factors were based upon a twelve-army offensive operation. Very quickly twelve armies were reduced to six armies. Even with a reduction in field armies it was nearly impossible for the Supply Corps to speculate as to combat locations or conditions and as a result the Supply Corps found it almost impossible to project logistical requirements.⁵² The early mobilization planners were not altogether derailed by the lack of information; in 1922 mobilization planners continued to develop mobilization outlines based upon foreign contingencies.⁵³

The final theme emerging in early interwar mobilization planning was the shift from offensive to defensive planning. As planners wrestled with the complexities of ambiguous information from the political establishment and overseas operations that might mirror their recent experience mobilization planners considered lesser plans for alternate contingencies that required smaller forces or less than a total national mobilization. The next logical step was for planners to consider mobilization that would be required in defense of the continental United States. The defensive plan would emerge over the next fifteen years as the primary focus of planning. Whether it is a phenomenon of loss of memory or the domestic political environment that limited resources, or both

⁵² Kreidberg and Henry, 392.

⁵³ Ibid.

perhaps, it is interesting that as early as 1921 a shift in the nature of mobilization planning takes place.

Table 1. Review of Mobilization Plans, 1920-1931.

<u>Mobilization Plan</u>	<u>Kreidberg & Henry Criticism</u>	<u>Enduring Properties</u>
1920	Lack of logistical calculations	Zones of the interior; pg. 18
1921/1922	Personnel computations were off and Supply branches could not meet projected demands of the 12 army model	First Mobilization Outline; Shift from 12 field armies to 6 field armies
Special Plan Blue	Not a mobilization plan	Shift in thinking toward defense of the homeland
1923	Incorrect logistical assumptions	First complete plan
1924	No personnel or procurement studies for supplementary data	Local Mobilization concept that endures moving forward, e.g. reception and recruiting centers assigned to corps areas
1928	Inability to foresee mobilization of procurable industry items prior to M-day	An attempt to decentralize control from the GHQ
1931	Revision of 1928 plan	Incorporation of mobilization regulations

Source: Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1955), 377-423. Kreidberg and Henry offer in depth analysis of each of the early inter-war mobilization plans.

Mobilization Planning 1931-1938

In spite of his already larger than life persona, General Douglas MacArthur would experience some of the same frustrations as his predecessors with respect to Congressional appropriations and the lack of support for equipping the Army according to the 1920 National Defense Act. The mood of the staff regarding petitioning the

legislative and executive branches for increases in manning and appropriations was that it had largely become routine and dejecting. As a WPD memo noted, these were presented “not with any hope of obtaining immediate action, but so that those responsible would understand the condition and it should be remedied when possible.”⁵⁴ A story taken from General MacArthur’s memoirs maintains that soon after President Roosevelt had assumed the Oval Office, MacArthur went to visit the president regarding the state of the Army readiness. A heated exchanged ensued, during which MacArthur stated that when American boys were lying on the ground with an enemy boot on their necks the young men would curse Roosevelt. Such theatrics, if they occurred, must have been MacArthur’s attempt at persuading the president to see the necessity of enhancing Army preparedness. President Roosevelt, not one to be bullied, yelled and angrily insisted that MacArthur not speak to the President of the United States in such a fashion.⁵⁵

When General Douglas MacArthur assumed the role of Army Chief of Staff in November of 1930, the War Department planners were already completing a revision of the 1928 Mobilization plan. In addition to his having vehemently presented a case of inadequate means of executing the nation’s defense, the tenure of MacArthur as Chief of Staff included three major adjustments to mobilization planning concepts, which were embodied in a 1933 mobilization plan. These three concepts, a reduction of six field

⁵⁴ WPD Memo for COS, 19 April 33, WPD 3674, quoted in Mark Skinner Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Department of the Army), 26.

⁵⁵ The general also states in his memoirs that he apologized then ran out of the White House and threw up on the steps. Adapted from Thomas E. Ricks, *The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), 101.

armies to four field armies, general mobilization plans that fit any specific color plan or contingency, and massive recruiting pushes in front of selective service legislation would endure throughout the inter-war period.

As a part of the 1933 Mobilization Plan, within the mobilized organization, MacArthur directed that a GHQ, commanded by the Army Chief of Staff, and staff consisting of the WPD of the general staff would assume command of the Army effort on M-day. Subordinate to the GHQ, or GHQ, would be the field army headquarters. Within the field army headquarters the commander and staff would be the senior of the corps area commander and his staff. The field armies were responsible for geographic regions of two or three corps areas.

First Army consisted of the First, Second, and Third Corps Areas. Its area of operations included the “North Atlantic and northeastern frontier.”⁵⁶ The Second Army consisted of the Fifth and Six Corps Areas and its area of operations included the “Great Lakes and the central northern frontier.”⁵⁷ The Third Army included the Fourth and Eighth Corps areas and an area of operations that included the “Gulf of Mexico and southern frontier.”⁵⁸ Finally, the Fourth Army was made up of the Seventh and Ninth Corps Areas. The Fourth Army’s area of operations encompassed the Pacific Coast.⁵⁹ Ultimately there would be revisions to the question of command centralization at GHQ versus decentralizing command authority to Corps Area commanders, but General

⁵⁶ Kreidberg and Henry, 427.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

MacArthur was in favor of decentralization. Aside from the matter of command authority was the request for clarification from Brigadier General Kilbourne, Deputy Chief of Staff to MacArthur on the issue of mobilization regulations and the four-army structure following M-day.⁶⁰ The WPD's specific concern was over the utility of the WPD role as planners and then execution of the plan they had previously offered. One can infer that there was concern over WPD's ability to be objective in case of emergency, or in the common vernacular, being wed to a specific course of action. It seems noteworthy to mention only because of the nature and personality of MacArthur. It also gives an intimate view into the planning process. Brigadier General Kilbourne states towards the end of the memorandum that he and the other WPD planners "were not unable to accomplish the directive,"⁶¹ but rather they requested clarification from the Chief of Staff as to his reasoning and thoughts. This particular exchange only briefly highlights the tedious and grueling nature that mobilization staff work planning must have been.

The second of three concepts directly attributed to General MacArthur was his directive that mobilization plans not be specifically tied to any one color plan and that based upon political and economic variables affecting readiness, the mobilization of the Army as a whole should be considered in three different stages. Color plans were the actual contingencies directing a certain course of action against a certain enemy. General MacArthur envisioned a simpler approach, one that would include general mobilization for all contingencies. Under this concept the mobilization plans would provide a common

⁶⁰ Memorandum for COS dated 14 June 1934. Sub: Unit Mobilization Plan, War Plans Division; and Unit Plan, GHQ, WPD 1199-190, NAII in RG 165.

⁶¹ Ibid.

framework of troops, supply, and equipment regardless of the specific threat. As such, General MacArthur envisioned Mobilization stage 1 as mobilizing 118,000 enlisted men, Mobilization stage 2 with 165,000 men, and Mobilization stage 3 with the full complement, as outlined in the National Defense Act of 1920, of 280,000 enlisted men.⁶² MacArthur knew that Mobilization stage 3 was impossible and that Mobilization stage 1 would take more than six months to accomplish so he advocated for Mobilization stage 2. He felt it more of a realistic sell to the legislative branch and at the least he could support one division in one of the four field armies. It would provide at least nine infantry battalions in addition to providing for more anti-aircraft regiments and the strengthening of the garrison commands in Hawaii and Panama.⁶³ This concept would endure with only minor modifications in subsequent mobilization plans.

The final enduring concept that General MacArthur introduced was the push for heavy recruitment and a large number of volunteers from the populace in the event of mobilization. It is certainly evident in the 1939 PMP that will be reviewed in the next two chapters but MacArthur favored volunteers in mass over conscription that a selective service act would bring. Whether it was because conscription was outside the Army's control or because MacArthur favored volunteer troops is debatable. It certainly follows MacArthur's personality that he would prefer volunteers and not be dependent upon the legislative process required for conscription.

Several modifications were to be implemented upon General Malin Craig's assumption of the role as Chief of Staff of the Army. Almost immediately Craig, who had

⁶² Watson, 26-29.

⁶³ Ibid., 29.

previously served in the WPD under General Pershing, began to place his mark on what would become the PMPs. While WPD was working on practical mobilization tests in 1936, Craig reviewed the 1933 plan and its criticisms. He considered dismissing the 1933 plan altogether but, understanding the elaborate work that went into the planning process and forthcoming new tables of organization from the Assistant Secretary of War, General Craig decided to postpone a dismissal.⁶⁴ Following the studies outlining extraordinary costs associated with mobilization, approximately two trillion dollars (1936 dollars) at only M+9 months, General Craig decided not to wait for the final revision and procurement studies.⁶⁵ On December 16, 1936 General Craig directed that all work on revisions to 1933 mobilization plan be stopped and that a new “Protective Mobilization Plan”⁶⁶ be implemented. This would ultimately set the stage for the PMP of 1939.

In many ways the mobilization planning products that came out of the 1935-1939 period of planning yielded the greatest gains. The gains included more realistic plans, but the more realistic plans were a factor of a slow change in the political environment. The greatest changes would not occur until late 1938 and 1939, well into the 1939 PMP period, but the changing landscape internationally and at home were positive factors nonetheless. General Malin Craig was the benefactor of this environment and he left a noticeable mark on the WPD because in large measure he was the Chief of Staff that would finally get the Army to a worthy product.

⁶⁴ Kreidberg and Henry, 474.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 475.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

A REALISTIC PLAN

The Protective Mobilization Plan (PMP) provides for the mobilization of a moderate, balanced force for the defense of United States territory. It provides initially:

- (1) A force of moderate size progressively available for operations in the field beginning on M-day.
- (2) Harbor defense troops.
- (3) Reinforcements for overseas garrisons.
- (4) Certain other troops either for use as cadres to expedite the mobilization of additional forces or, if necessary, for immediate use.
- (5) The installations necessary for the mobilization and maintenance of the troops to be mobilized.

The plan also provides for the mobilization of certain essential corps, army, and GHQ Reserve troops, additional harbor defense troops, reinforcements for overseas garrisons, replacements, and zone of the interior personnel.

— 1st Corps, “1st Corps Area 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan”

The PMP that materialized in the fall of 1939 was the result of many factors. The final mobilization plan that would carry the interwar army into the Louisiana Maneuvers and ultimately into North Africa and Europe was the result of War Department planning that evolved over a nineteen year period, a popular distaste for war, a political environment that largely denied appropriations and material to make mobilization planning concrete, and a fear of invasion from a growing threat. In short the US Army’s plan that emerges in late 1939 is reactionary. The 1939 Mobilization Plan was the result of events that drove it. What is remarkable about the 1939 Mobilization Plan is that it was designed to defend US territory. This included the continental United States, and periphery.⁶⁷ More remarkable than its role as a defensive plan is the incorrect and

⁶⁷ “Periphery” includes the US overseas bases in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Panama and the states of Alaska and Hawaii.

common assumption that the Victory Plan took the United States from the (nineteenth) largest army in the world and radically transformed it overnight into the fighting force that served in North Africa, Italy and into Europe. To be fair, the 1939 PMP did not accomplish these on its own either. The point made is that seldom, certainly in the evaluation of WWII, is a scholar able to point to monocausal relationships. The 1939 PMP was reactionary, but that is an underlying sub-point throughout the entire thesis presented and that point is that interwar planning, in the case of the United States, could not prepare the perfect professional Army that would be ready to sail overseas and crush the Nazi regime. The value of the 1939 PMP was its culminating as a process that directed it to meet the need of mobilization in the continental United States to prepare against a perceived probable invasion of the North or South American continents by Nazi Germany. The previous chapter expresses the evolution of interwar mobilization plans and this chapter contends that the 1939 PMP was the most complete of US Army mobilization plans during the 1920-1939 period. Furthermore, it was the last complete mobilization plan prior to the United States entrance into WWII.⁶⁸

Process of Planning

A review of day to day routing slips throughout the archival documents from the War Department Planning staff during the interwar period of 1920-1939 reveal an interesting anecdote. During the interwar years several future general officers served as majors within the War Department and specifically in the WPD. Noted future officers included Craig, Marshall, Gerow, Eisenhower, and Ridgway just to name a few. The

⁶⁸ The 1940 PMPs in most cases were never named such, rather they were submitted as the 1939 PMPs with requisite revisions.

anecdote does not presume causality for accession to the general officer level but rather another point emerges about what life must have been like for those serving as field grades in the War Department. In short, it was not desirable duty. As Colonel Eisenhower remarked in personal correspondence between he and BG Gerow, “I feel that I am fully capable of command in the field and would rather not serve in the War Department again. If you can I would be grateful for you to withdrawal my nomination to your staff.”⁶⁹

A review of multiple archival documents establishes that the planning process must have required immense patience as draft after draft, submission after submission, and revision after revision, would have been sent back and forth between the War Department and multiple corps areas, nine to be exact, multiple service branches, and an unknown number of National Guard units. Additionally, the mobilization planners would have worked with the Secretary of War to ensure coherency in the area of procurement and troop basis. A review of distribution lists infers the process of writing mobilization draft plans, let alone final products would have been an exercise in meticulous staff work.

According to multiple staffing documents found in Records Group 165 files 1199 and 4274, under Chiefs of Staff Craig and Marshall, within the WPD, there were three different sections responsible for compiling the mobilization plans. They were the Plans section, the Operations section, and the Staffing and Projects section. Drawing from previous planning years, a process of annual mobilization planning review emerges as revisions were made and subsequently approved. These are noted in several separate 1939 PMP documents throughout Records Group 165, WPD General Correspondence,

⁶⁹ Letter from Colonel Eisenhower to BG Gerow in Pre-Presidential Papers, Eisenhower Library and Archives, Wichita, KS.

1920-1942 files. A simple inference would offer the following as what the process of review and updates to publication might have looked like:

1. Chief of Staff Review of current annual plan
 - a. Comments and direction for change
2. War Department Planners action the change and distribute guidance to subordinate commands and units.
 - b. Subordinate Commands and Units acknowledge receipt of guidance and comply. Upon completion of the revision, the updated information is returned to the War Department.
3. War Department Planners revise mobilization plans and submit for review and approval.
4. Chief of Staff of the Army approves or rejects for specific changes.

One might also consider the time in which it would have taken for these cycles to complete when, in the case of units not co-located in Washington, DC there would have been delay in response due to timeliness of the post and courier means of communication. While not necessarily the single cause for any one general officer's success it must have certainly played a role in their professional development. At least four of these officers would become future Chiefs of Staff of the Army, one of whom would further become Secretary of State, and another would become President of the United States.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Some presidential scholars maintain that President Eisenhower's administration of his National Security Council was one of the two best aside from President George H.W. Bush.

Structure and Format of the Plan

At first glance, an attempt to make sense of the multiple PMP documents is a task that proves daunting. Kreidberg and Henry likened their review of the 1938 PMP to that of putting the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together.⁷¹ To understand the structure of the PMPs one must first understand the pieces.⁷²

The 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan (All Inclusive)
War Department Protective Mobilization Plan - Overall Purpose - Formatting guidance - Mobilization Regulations
Subordinate Protective Mobilization Plans - Corps Area Service Command Plans - Branch Chief Specific Plans -Branch (Arms) & Service Chief Overhead Annexes - Installation Chiefs Overhead Annexes

Figure 1. 1939 PMP Contents

Source: Created by author.

The 1939 PMP in its entirety was comprised of a War Department PMP, Subordinate Plans that included the Corps Area Commands and Branch Specific Plans,

⁷¹ Kreidberg and Henry, 479.

⁷² Kreidberg and Henry were correct in their assessment of earlier versions as fragmented. For either lack of access (classification) or some other impediment to their research, their exposition of the 1939 is somewhat incomplete. Their analysis of the 1939 PMP lacks the Subordinate plans of which the April 1939 versions contained 27 annexes and the War Department’s September 1939 revision.

and Overhead annexes from different branches providing personnel requirements for War Department mobilization tables.

Under the Protective Mobilization concept the War Department PMP acted as the outline for subsequent plans. Additionally it provided mobilization regulations and supplementary instructions for subordinate plans and annexes. Each component of the plan followed the following format: five sections which are best described, save Section I with each respective mission statement, as executive summaries of detailed information for subordinate planning that would be annotated in detail in the twenty-seven annexes. Of note, in the outline memorandum for subordinate units was provision for flexibility when needed. The memo stated, “Necessary adaptation to meet special conditions are authorized.”⁷³

Sections I–V

Section I was titled General Provisions; it contained the nature and purpose statement of the plan, the mission statement as it related to the specific agency publishing the plan, e.g. the First Corps Area or the Quartermaster General, the units and individuals to be mobilized, an explanation according to agency and regulation for the preparation of plans, and a note on internal security when applicable.⁷⁴

Section II was titled Personnel and Related Subjects; it contained a reference to mobilization regulations, primary personnel procedures that included requirements,

⁷³ Memorandum from the Adjutant General to Army Commanders, Corps and Department Commanders, Chiefs of Arms and Services, Chief of the National Guard, CG GHQ Air Force, etc., 25 October 1939, in RG 165.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

allotments and procurements, classification and assignments, e.g. officer candidates and nurses, information regarding reclassification, re-assignments, promotions and separations, and finally other personnel mobilization procedures that included reporting of morale and nonspecific matters.⁷⁵

Section III was titled Military Intelligence and Related Subjects. Subordinate planners were directed to cover these in detail, when applicable, under annex 6.⁷⁶

Section IV was titled Organization and Training and Related Subjects; it was to contain an applicable mission statement, prioritization of units, method of control, organization of such units, annotation of Regular Army units, both active and inactive, and National Guard units both active and inactive. Additionally, it called for annotation of cadres, training of the cadre, and troop movements.⁷⁷

Section V was titled Supply and Related Subjects. This section required reporting in annex 10 for supply and annex 24 under fiscal estimates.⁷⁸

Annexes 1 -27

Each of the following annexes provided specific guidance under each of the annex headings for Corps Area Commanders, Branch Chiefs (also referred to as Chief of Arms) and Services. Additionally, included in the outline was an attached format for Branch

⁷⁵ Memorandum from the Adjutant General to Army Commanders, Corps and Department Commanders, Chiefs of Arms and Services, Chief of the National Guard, CG GHQ Air Force, etc., 25 October 1939, in RG 165, 4.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Chiefs and Services to report on personnel, type and number required, during each mobilization period.

Table 2. 1939 Annexes and Titles.

Annex 1	Outline of Mobilization
Annex 2	War Department Overhead
Annex 3	Units and Individuals to be Mobilized
Annex 4	Recruiting
Annex 5	Unit Cadres
Annex 6	Military Intelligence
Annex 7	Training
Annex 8	Officer Candidates
Annex 9	Troop Movements
Annex 10	Supply and Related Subjects
Annex 11	Provisions for internal Security
Annex 12	Welfare and Recreation
Annex 13	National Guard
Annex 14	Adjutant General
Annex 15	Inspector General
Annex 16	Judge Advocate General
Annex 17	Quartermaster
Annex 18	Air Corps
Annex 19	Engineers
Annex 20	Ordnance
Annex 21	Signal Corps
Annex 22	Chemical Warfare Service
Annex 23	Medical
Annex 24	Finance
Annex 25	Agencies responsible for preparation
Annex 26	Number and Designations of Annexes
Annex 27	Distribution of Corps Area/Branch PMP

Source: Created by author using information from Memorandum from the Adjutant General to Army Commanders, Corps and Department Commanders, Chiefs of Arms and Services, Chief of the National Guard, CG GHQ Air Force, etc., 25 October 1939, in War Department General and Special Staffs, War Plans Division, RG 165, General Correspondence, 1920-1942, National Archives, College Park, MD.

A brief review of the literature and archival documents regarding previous interwar mobilization plans, 1920-1935, and the PMPs 1936-1939 confirms the notion that the 1939 PMP, certainly the fall 1939 revision, was the most detailed, realistic and complete of all interwar plans.⁷⁹ While guidance in the formatting is thorough further review of the specific plan components highlight its detailed and specific nature.

Components and Themes

Within the specific 1939 PMP subordinate plans several themes emerged that evidenced a common thread of concern and necessity with respect to defense of the homeland. First, that the purpose of the Mobilization Plans was defensive, second, that recruitment required specific attention to detail if mobilization goals were to be met, and third that training of the Initial Protective Force must receive more than just mention on paper.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ In fairness it is possible that portions of mobilization testing documents and early editions of PMPs were destroyed or are yet to be located in archival holdings. There are at least two memorandums in RG 165 directing destruction of superseded plans.

⁸⁰ The National Archives at College Park, Maryland houses both Records Group 165 and 407 which contain the majority of documents on Interwar Mobilization Planning. Specifically, Records Group 407, Office of the Adjutant General Central Files 1926-1939, AG 381, boxes 48-61 contain the 1939 Protective Mobilization Plans. Within these files were the following subordinate plans: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 7th Corps Area Plans. There was an original document in RG 165 file 1199 stating that the 4th Corps Area Plan was filed in a safe but it had no heading and gave no indication as to which office generated the note. There was no evidence for 8th and 9th Corps Area plans within RG 407, AG 381, boxes 48-61. Additionally, RG 407 contains the Infantry, Cavalry, Signal, and Coastal Artillery Branch Chiefs Annex 2 to the 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan, Reports on Personnel and War Department Overhead. The Quartermaster General, Surgeon General, Adjutant General, Chief of Chaplains, Chief of Engineers, and Finance Chief also submitted subordinate plans to the 1939 PMP, also in RG 407.

The language explaining the purpose of the PMP was similar throughout the subordinate plans. The purpose of the plan, minus the branch specific exceptions that were only different to accomplish support for the overall War Department or Corps Area plans, as noted in the introduction, was to provide for the nation's defense in the event of an emergency.

It specifically stated:

The Protective Mobilization Plan (PMP) provides for the mobilization of a moderate, balanced force for the defense of United States territory. It provides initially:

(1) A force of moderate size progressively available for operations in the field beginning on M-day.

(2) Harbor defense troops.

(3) Reinforcements for overseas garrisons.

(4) Certain other troops either for use as cadres to expedite the mobilization of additional forces or, if necessary, for immediate use.

(5) The installations necessary for the mobilization and maintenance of the troops to be mobilized.

The plan also provides for the mobilization of certain essential corps, army, and GHQ Reserve troops, additional harbor defense troops, reinforcements for overseas garrisons, replacements, and zone of the interior personnel.⁸¹

The overarching premise for the PMP was that upon a declaration of emergency, or on mobilization day (M- Day) a certain number of the Initial Protective Force would be expected to be trained, equipped and ready. At different intervals assigned by the planners the force would grow. The Initial Protective Force outlined in the 1939 PMP

⁸¹ Nature and purpose of the plan as reflected in the 1st Corps Area 1939 PMP in Office of the Adjutant General, RG 407, Central Files 1926-1939, 381, "Mobilization Plans 1939," National Archives, College Park, MD, box 48. Hereafter referred to as RG 407.

was to produce ~ 270,000 Regular Army troops and ~160,000 National Guardsmen between M-Day and M30. The next period of thirty days was to grow the Army to approximately 500,000 and by the sixth month mark there was to be a force of approximately 1,000,000 men ready and equipped for combat.

Further evidence to the PMP as a defensive plan exists in the subordinate plans and their plans with respect to military districts. As previously mentioned in an earlier chapter, the United States was divided up into specific Corps Areas to manage unit maneuvering (see figure 2).

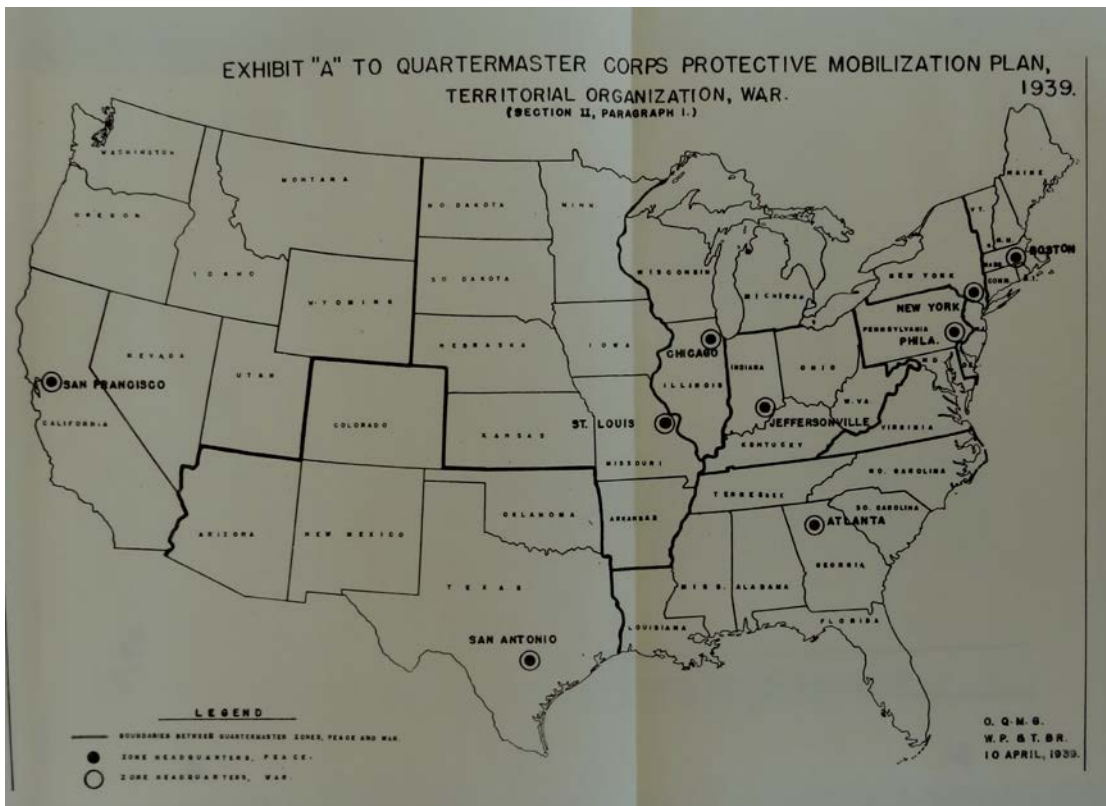


Figure 2. Quartermaster Corps Organization, 1939

Source: Quartermaster Corps 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan, in Office of the Adjutant General, RG 407, Central Files 1926-1939, 381, "Mobilization Plans 1939," National Archives, College Park, MD, box 48.

This particular figure was found in the Quartermaster Corps 1939 PMP and demotes differing zone headquarters for logistics in a time of war on the continental United States.⁸²

In addition to its purpose as defending US territory the PMP required an extensive recruiting plan to meet the required numbers of troops for mobilization. The 1939 PMP was the most complete of the interwar mobilization plans and the recruitment details provide evidence for its completeness.

An evaluation of the 1st Corps Area recruiting annex shows the planning was extensive. The 5th Corps Area plan maintained twenty-two- separate supporting appendices to the annex. These included: Organization Charts, Recruiting Districts, Allocation of State Quotas, State Quotas compared to the male population, Initial State quotas for arms and service, Volunteer expectancy procurement based upon initial requirements, Processing and assignment charts, Recruiting Stations to be established on M-Day in the 1st through 6th Districts,⁸³ Tables of Organization, Allocation for Recruiting Personnel, Essential Quartermaster and Medical Supplies, Legal Consent for the enlistment of minors, Statement of Character and Marital Status, Applications for enlistment, Daily Reports for enlistments of both Regular Army and National Guardsmen, and finally Regulations and forms required during recruitment.⁸⁴

⁸² Quartermaster Corps 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan, in RG 407, box 48.

⁸³ The 1st Corps Area recruiting districts included Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

⁸⁴ 1st Corps Area 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan, in RG 407, box 48.

The overall intent for the recruiting plans were to enlist and process volunteers before M+61, or sixty-one days following mobilization. The recruitment plans while thorough did allow for slight modification in form. The planners understood the vast need of skills that would be needed in the event of emergency that great lengths were taken to ensure even the recruitment of individuals with specialized skills. Within various components of the 1939 PMP pre-planned radio messages existed to alert the local populace in which districts specific skill sets were needed. Other portions of the PMP even planned the execution of rail transportation and signals and communication plans (see figure 3).

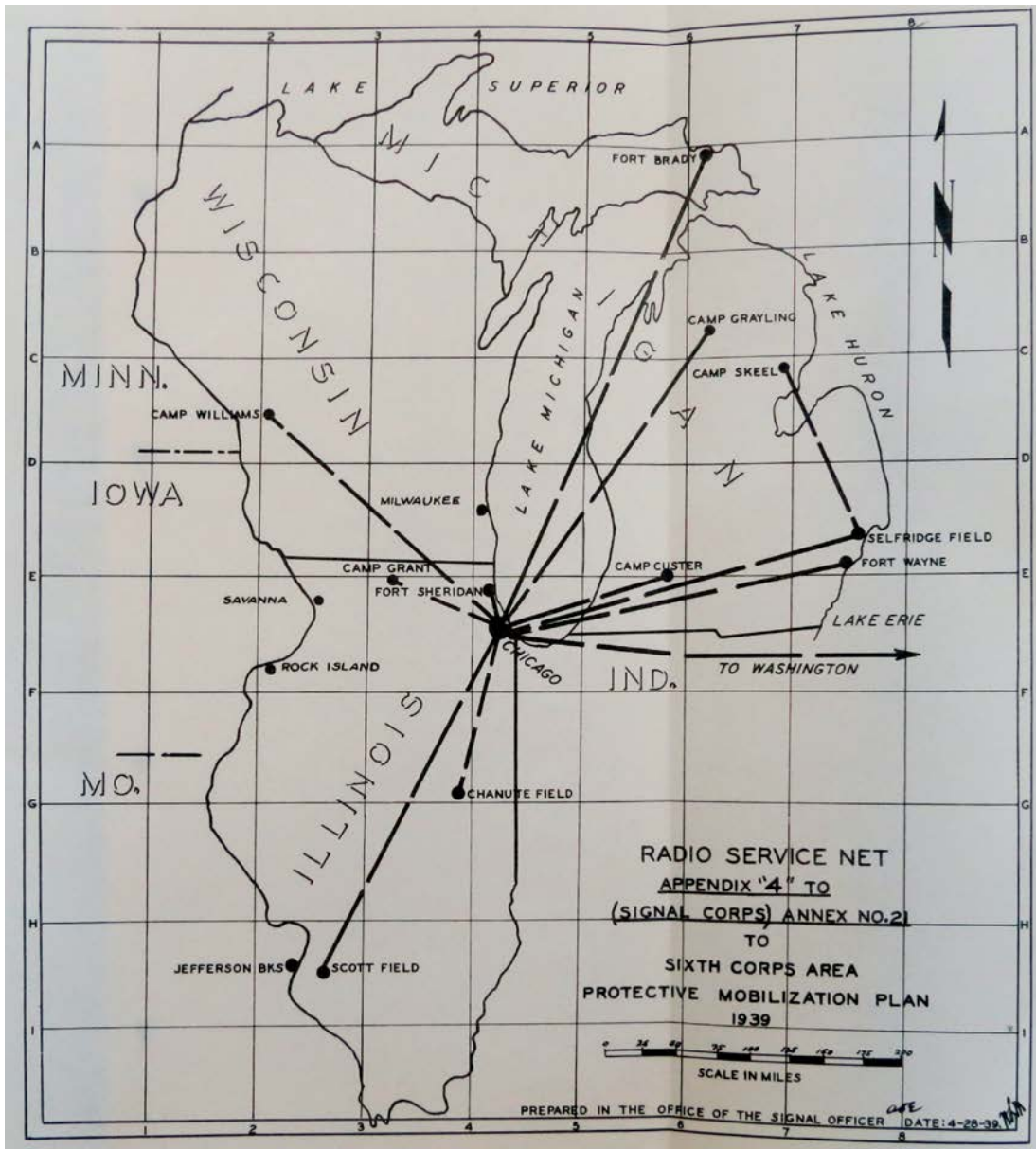


Figure 3. 6th Corps Area Signal Plan, 1939

Source: 6th Corps Area 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan, Signal Corps Annex, in . Office of the Adjutant General, RG 407, Central Files 1926-1939, 381, "Mobilization Plans 1939," National Archives, College Park, MD, box 51.

A final theme of great importance within the 1939 PMP was that of Training. Naturally, following recruitment Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers of the

Regular Army were to act as cadre in the training of new recruits. While some Corps Area plans noted their training annexes as to be determined by specific guidance from the War Department others, such as the 5th Corps Area were extensive.

The 5th Corps Area training plan, annex 7, provided guidance on the prioritization of units to be trained, e.g. those Regular Army units expected to be involved in early operations, and those Regular Army units activated on M-day who would train intensely to prepare for future involvement in emergency operations.⁸⁵ The 5th Corps Area training annex also provided direction for the establishment of reception centers, specific courses of schooling for enlisted non-specialty and specialty troops. The first of the specialty schools planned under the 1939 PMP was to be taught at Fort Sill, Oklahoma from the period of M+30 to M+105. Following this period the specialty schools would be moved to Fort Knox.

While these themes emerged as positives with regard to realistic and complete planning in the case of the 1939 PMP, it also highlighted shortages of equipment, and shelter that would overwhelm the PMP Army in case of emergency mobilization.

Summary and Transition to Implementation

The 1939 PMP did provide great value for the US Army as an organization. It suggested a realistic defensive mobilization plan based upon a growing threat in Europe. It began to expand the US Army towards the 1920 National Defense Act levels and it took thorough measures to account for the day in and day out necessities of growing an Army as opposed to just assigning a troop basis and calculations on paper. However,

⁸⁵ 5th Corps Area 1939 Protective Mobilization Plan, Annex 7 (Training), in RG 407, box 48.

while the 1939 PMPs accomplished a great deal of good for an Army that ranked seventeenth in size in the world, it also highlighted several deficiencies. In the next chapter the discussion of implementing the PMP in 1940 and into 1941 addresses these in some cases. While some claim that the interwar planning was insufficient it was not wholly due to a failure of planning or an attempt thereof. The very lean Army of 1939 was quite frankly a product of the American system.

CHAPTER 5

TURNING PLANNING INTO REALITY

I wish to again point out that in preparation of the estimates, maintenance and personnel have been restricted in every possible way in order to provide for the maximum augmentation in armament, equipment, and facilities required in an emergency. Nevertheless, the amounts included for the latter purpose will meet in small part only, the deficiencies existing in a great number of items that would be of cardinal importance in the event of an emergency.

— General Malin Craig, “Testimony before the Military subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, House of Representatives on the War Department Estimates for Fiscal Year 1940”

As events in Europe continued to give defense professionals great concern, the American political environment remained adverse to military build-up. While President Roosevelt pushed for whatever military expansion his political capital would afford the US Army struggled to raise the required personnel and appropriations to meet that of its Initial Protective Force. As General Craig, the Army Chief of Staff responsible for a shift to the Protective Mobilization concept, explained in his brief to the Military subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee for the House of Representatives, severe deficiencies existed in the application of the PMP. There were at least three factors that allowed for a closing of the gap between the deficiencies of January 1939 and the PMP Army that conducted the Louisiana Maneuvers. These were the fall revision of the 1939 PMP, the updates to the 1939 PMP that became the 1940 PMP, and the Selective Service Act. Not only was the 1939 PMP originally defensive in nature, but it is also the link between the inter-war Army and the Army that participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers and eventual operations in North Africa.

1939 PMP Fall Revision and 1940 Updates

War Department planners continued to refine the original 1939 PMP that was effective on April 10, 1939. Following summer and fall revisions⁸⁶ in October of 1939, the Adjutant General published a memorandum to the Corps Area and Installation Commanders, Commandants of the Army War College and Command and General Staff School, and the Superintendent of the United States Military Academy⁸⁷ to update their plans to include a estimation of costs section. The memorandum stated:

The preparation of the Protective Mobilization Plan having now reached a point where its details are fairly well defined, it becomes necessary to prepare estimates of cost thereunder in order to:

- a. Have such estimates ready at any time for submission to Congress.
- b. Have essential details of fiscal administration prepared in advance.⁸⁸

In addition to this memorandum highlighting the improvement to the PMP planning process itself, with respect to level of detail, it also highlighted the planners' understanding of the political process and its effect on future appropriations. These estimates required subordinate units and their planners to prepare estimates that include a number and type of supply item required and the amount that would be required for each

⁸⁶ Subordinate Commanders, Branch Chiefs and Installation Commanders continued to update their products to the 1939 PMP throughout the fiscal year 1939 and into 1940. Many of the 1940 PMP products remained 1939 PMP in title. As was the case for most of the Subordinate Protective Mobilization Plans, changes were updated annotated in the planning documents with memoranda attached to the inside covers of the 1939 PMP. RG 407, AG 381, boxes 48-61.

⁸⁷ An additional point of evidence for the 1939 PMP was the requirement for the Military Academy and the US Army War College to produce protective mobilization plans requiring mobilization in the event of an emergency to defend the homeland.

⁸⁸ Outline of Subordinate Protective Mobilization Plans Memorandum, 25 October 1939. RG 165, file 1199-228.

period during the mobilization, e.g. M-30M and 31M-120M. These items were as specific as the cost of stationery, office supplies, maintenance of motor vehicles, the purchase of fuel, the cost of light, power, water, and commercial telephone service. These were just a few of the specified planning factors that the War Department directed subordinate elements to plan for. This level of detail had not previously been directed in earlier PMPs. The February 1940 update to the 1939 PMP also specifically included the mention of overseas garrisons, or periphery, of US interests. These included Hawaii, Panama, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. In this way, the 1939-1940 Protective Plans were the most complete plans to date.⁸⁹

1940 Selective Service Act

Two continuous themes run throughout the examination of the PMP and interwar planning in general. As previously discussed both economics and policy hold great weight in the development of interwar years and mobilization planning. This was certainly evident as the events in Europe gave cause for concern in the United States.

Even with a complete plan such as the 1939 PMP the question of procuring adequate manpower remained. Ultimately the Selective Service Act of 1940 would provide the personnel that provided X numbers to fill shortages. The Selective service Act was an element of the political process. It began with concerned citizens.⁹⁰ As the

⁸⁹ Overseas garrison troop numbers were listed at 50,002 in June of 1939. These numbers included both regular Army officers, enlisted men, and the Philippine Scouts.

⁹⁰ Given the close relationships between the civilians who proposed the 1940 legislation and the White House, and War Department, it is not outside the realm of possibility that the impetus that appears to begin with concerned citizens may have originated elsewhere.

measure gained momentum it became a product of the legislative process. Upon its passage into law the Selective Service Act and its implementation provided the actual substance in manpower for the 1939 PMP.

Prior to a review of the Selective Service Act and its onset as an idea among concerned citizens, the legislative process that followed, and the peacetime draft that produced the manpower for defense of the homeland, one must try to gain a sense of the popular environment during the fall of 1939 and the spring of 1940. In a sense, the casual reader and historian alike must remember the context of the time. In short, aversion to any US involvement in another European war was fierce.

Following Hitler's invasion of Poland in September of 1939, the US President Franklin Roosevelt addressed a special session of Congress urging the repeal of the embargo provisions in the US Neutrality Laws. The president established in his opening statement that the necessity for a special session required action to preserve peace and the sound foreign relationships of the United States. His choice of words were masterful in that he petitioned both houses to consider measures that would reinforce the neutrality of the United States and yet keep it out of war.⁹¹ Not only did he argue that a repeal of the embargo provisions would prevent the United States from being drawn into war, he also argued that materials sent abroad for assembly was a missed economic opportunity at home.

⁹¹ Franklin D. Roosevelt, "132 – Message to Congress Urging Repeal of the Embargo Provisions of the Neutrality Law," The American Presidency Project, September 21, 1939, accessed November 10, 2014, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15813>.

On October 26 after several weeks of harsh debate, the Senate voted 63-30 to pass legislation that allowed belligerent nations to purchase arms from the United States on a cash and carry basis. Cash and carry meant that belligerents purchasing arms and materials from the United States could not do so on credit, rather they must by US law pay upon receipt of goods. This allowed the US populace and legislators to rationalize the morality of supporting the victims of aggression while remaining neutral.

In March of 1940 US public opinion was still very much opposed to war. One poll held that ninety-six percent of Americans were opposed to war with Germany.⁹² On April 3, the US House of Representatives Appropriations Committee cut the Defense budget by ten percent⁹³ and a May 8, 1940 letter to *The New York Times* by John D. Moore suggested that if world leaders would only speak with one another, which was well within their capabilities, then there was a chance for peace.⁹⁴ While large portions of the American citizenry hoped against the US eventual involvement in war on the continent of Europe, there were those who saw the signs in Europe pointing to an inevitable conflict.

On the same day that John Moore's letter to the *Times* suggested peace was still achievable a group of professionals met at the Harvard Club of New York to consider plans for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Plattsburg training camp movement.⁹⁵ This

⁹² Hadley Cantril and Mildred Strunk, *Public Opinion, 1935-1946* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 970-971.

⁹³ J. Garry Clifford and Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., *The First Peacetime Draft* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 8.

⁹⁴ John D. Moore, "Opportunity for Peace Seen," *The New York Times*, May 8, 1940, accessed November 2, 2014, <http://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1940/05/08/issue.html>.

⁹⁵ Clifford and Spencer, 14.

group of men made up the Executive Committee of the Second Corps Area, Military Training Camps Association (MTCA).⁹⁶

The Plattsburg training camps were first assembled in the summer of 1913 at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and Monterrey, California. These camps were held for high-school and college students at the urging of General Leonard Wood, the US Army Chief of Staff.⁹⁷ Two hundred and twenty-two men attended the first training camps in 1913. These students paid for their transportation to and from the camps, their clothing, and their food. In return “they received basic military training in drill, tactics, sanitation, care of troops, and rifle practice.”⁹⁸ The idea of training was so well received among the nation that four more camps were held in 1914. In 1915, the camps were expanded to include young businessmen in their twenties and thirties at Plattsburg Barracks in New York, thus the camps became known as the Plattsburg movement. The appropriations for such training of civilians did not exist in the War Department budget yet for each of these years training was funded through private donations. Congress appropriated funds for the training in 1916 and the program received a basis in the National Defense Act of 1916. The alumni created the MTCA for the purpose of promoting similar training in the future. These camps were an early model for what later became known as the Reserve Officer Training Corps. According to Kreidberg and Henry the greatest contribution the Platttsburger’s made was to “arouse awareness and support for preparedness.”⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Clifford and Spencer, 14.

⁹⁷ Kreidberg and Henry, 213.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

The men who met that day at the Harvard Club are not well known today; however, at the time they were influential leaders in law, journalism, medicine, and business. Through their association as alumni, law partners, or previous military service, these men were associated with national leaders and they hoped to replicate the awareness and support that the original Plattsburg volunteers had achieved.¹⁰⁰

As the executive committee met to plan an anniversary dinner or participation in a parade one of the MTCA committee members, Grenville Clark, co-founder of the Wall Street law firm Root, Clark, Buckner, and Ballantine, suggested they do something more practical for the country, something that would honor the memory of the Plattsburg Training Camps, but something that would support the undermanned US Army officer corps. Clark suggested the MTCA start a campaign for peacetime conscription, after all Plattsburg alumni were historically supportive of universal military obligation.¹⁰¹ Clark's fellow committee members agreed with the proposition for conscription and determined that a larger meeting to discuss support, define goals, and gather resources was necessary. Clark would chair the meeting and the date was set for May 22, 1940.¹⁰²

On May 10 Germany invaded France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Holland. Just six weeks later France would surrender and Western Europe would fall to the German

¹⁰⁰ Clifford and Spencer, 15.

¹⁰¹ Executive Committee, Second Corps Area, MTCA, "Minutes of Meeting of May 8, 1940," Grenville Clark MSS, Baker Library of Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH, quoted in Clifford and Spencer, Jr., 14. The concept of Universal Military Training was desired by General John Pershing and Colonel John Palmer for inclusion into the National Defense Act of 1920; due to lack of threat and necessity in the eyes of many politicians Universal Military Training was left to wither as the National Defense Act of 1920 passed through the Congress.

¹⁰² Clifford and Spencer, 24.

Armed Forces. American sentiment still remained largely isolationist. Even as Hitler's conquest of Europe was dastardly in the eyes of most Americans the idea of sending American troops to fight in another European war was out of the question. Many legislators began to vocalize support for aid to the European democracies but when it came to the idea of mobilizing American troops the only politically acceptable position was that of national preparedness.¹⁰³

The MCTA was uniquely prepared as an organization to gather support in Congress and to educate the public on an eventual draft bill. The 1920 National Defense Act had authorized the Secretary of War to maintain training camps. As such those who were involved with the formulation of military policy knew and respected the MCTA as a legitimate organization and the sensible conduit for pushing conscription.¹⁰⁴ Grenville Clark's planning committee was tasked with inviting key personnel that would aid the effort to generate support for and advise the development of the forthcoming legislation. These key individuals were invited to attend the May 22, 1940 meeting and included: Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of War; Lewis Douglas, a former congressman; General John O'Ryan, a division commander in WWI and advocate for the National Guard; William Allen White, an editor from Kansas; and Brigadier General (Retired) John McAuley Palmer, former Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations to General Pershing and contributing author of the 1920 National Defense Act.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Clifford and Spencer, 10.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 25.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

While Secretary Stimson and Generals O’Ryan and Palmer would intuitively provide legitimacy for the planning committee among the military establishment and the War Department, the committee understood that this proposal would require alignment with the Roosevelt administration. As such, Grenville Clark, who had served alongside Franklin D. Roosevelt as a law clerk, from 1906-1908, in the office of Carter, Ledyard, and Milburn,¹⁰⁶ sent the president a note requesting his advice on compulsory military training, whether or not it was politically advisable, and whether or not the administration could support it. The president responded in two days and carefully remarked that there should be strong public support for some type of service for able men and women and that presenting such ideas are political and must secure the use of Congress.¹⁰⁷

On May 22, 1940 approximately one hundred well respected and concerned citizens met to discuss resolutions that should be brought before the Congress concerning national defense. The group that grew out of this meeting and was charged with specific oversight for preparation and development of the Selective Training and Service Act was labeled the National Emergency Committee of the Military Training Camps Association.¹⁰⁸ While the National Emergency Committee immediately sent Brigadier

¹⁰⁶ Clifford and Spencer, 21.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 26. Clifford and Spencer’s presentation of the Presidential response is striking. One could easily gather that President Roosevelt was carefully and artfully giving the committee direction on how to proceed all the while crafting his remarks to avoid political disturbance.

¹⁰⁸ Clifford and Spencer, 28-30.

General (Retired) Palmer to speak with the War Department and the General Staff on its behalf,¹⁰⁹ sponsorship of legislation in the Congress would be a bit more problematic.

As German troops marched into Paris, in June 1940, the US political environment seemed fully ready for the introduction of the Selective Training and Service Act. A careful review of the legislative process it took during the summer of 1940 reveals that it was not a sure bet. Sponsorship in the House of Representatives came by Congressman James Wadsworth. This was the same James Wadsworth who previously served as Senator from New York and heard the testimony of then (Colonel) John McAuley Palmer regarding proposals for the Army make-up to include Universal Military Training. While Wadsworth consistently rejected the Roosevelt domestic agenda, he opposed many of his fellow Republicans on the matter of isolationism. Sponsorship in the Senate came from a more unlikely individual, Senator Edward Burke of Nebraska. Although a Democrat, Burke opposed the New Deal policies of the Roosevelt administration and had worked alongside Greenville Clark in opposing President Roosevelt's 1937 proposed legislation that would allow an incumbent president the power to appoint additional justices to the Supreme Court. Senator Burke had recently lost his re-election primary in his home state of Nebraska. As a result the National Emergency Committee had not originally considered Burke a potential sponsor as they were aiming for a bipartisan measure.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ General Palmer had advised the committee to liaise with and consider advice from what professional soldiers were thinking with respect to its war plans. General Palmer's experience as a senior military aide to the Senate Armed Services Committee had given him unique perspective on balancing the bureaucracy of the Army with that of the legislative process. It was far better for the NEC to win over and include the War Department mobilization planners than simply to move forward and introduce legislation on genuine concern alone.

¹¹⁰ Clifford and Spencer, 86.

On June 20, 1940 the Selective Training and Service resolution was introduced in the Senate as S-4164 and the following day into the House as H.R. 10132.¹¹¹ The major argument for conscription was that the state of the Army to defend the United States against the threat of invasion was dire. Since the passage of the National Defense Act of 1920 the Army had repeatedly been forced to operate well below the levels at which the law allowed. Ammunition, weapons, and equipment that were held over from WWI had either been used up in training or had since passed serviceability. Within the PMPs there was only allowance for one armored division and the US Army was currently the seventeenth or eighteenth largest Army in the world depending on the source cited for argument. When asked by Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, if it was true that he could only field 75,000 fully equipped troops, Chief of Staff of the Army General George C. Marshall replied, “That’s absolutely wrong.”¹¹² When asked how many he could field, General Marshall curtly replied, “80,000.”¹¹³ This was paltry in comparison to the planning figure of 240,000 active duty personnel, not to mention the 400,000 National Guard soldiers that were determined necessary according to the National Defense Act of 1920 and the PMP’s desired Initial Protective Force.

General Marshall would testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 12 July 1940.¹¹⁴ His support of the draft legislation was due to shortfalls of available

¹¹¹ Clifford and Spencer, 87.

¹¹² Henry Morgenthau Jr., Presidential Diary, 10 May 1940, Henry Morgenthau Jr., MSS, FDR Library, quoted in Clifford and Spencer, 11.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Senate Committee on Military Affairs, 76th Cong., 3rd sess., Compulsory Military Training and Service Hearings on S. 4164.

troops. He maintained that the Army required its full complement of authorized National Guardsmen for training of new recruits—volunteer or conscripted—and to have four National Guard Divisions, “as quickly as we can get them” to be prepared for any national emergency.¹¹⁵

The isolationist counter-argument was that a volunteer army would work. This argument did not account for immediate employment of troops to counter an invasion from a superior invasion force. The isolationist legislators in Washington would vehemently argue over the next two months that if allowed to work and heavily publicized when needed a volunteer force was more desirable and sufficient for national defense. Additional arguments included that the president was attempting to secretly drag the United States into war. The president was non-committal publicly on the legislation until later in the summer. For President Roosevelt in an election year he could ill afford to give his opponents any type of ammunition. In spite of reasonable arguments on both sides of the political spectrum, and measures to delay a vote on the bill, the Senate passed the resolution on August 28, 1940 with fifty-eight votes for and thirty-one against. The bill passed the House on September 7, 1940 with a margin of 263 votes for and 149 against. President Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Act into law on September 16, 1940.

It was fortuitous for the Army, eventually the nation, that a group of concerned citizens brought the cause of conscription to the attention of Congress and the public. It was a measure that was absolutely necessary for the PMP’s implementation. Grenville Clark writing to Secretary Stimson stated that the measure was absolutely necessary to

¹¹⁵ See note 18 in Watson, 192.

counter Hitler, “much more needs to be done to that end but without this I don’t think we’d have got to first base.”¹¹⁶ The Selective Service Act would initially provide up to 900,000 able bodied males annually, ages twenty-one to thirty-five for service of up to one year. Later revisions would expand the military service age from eighteen to forty-five. As Forrest Pogue notes in his biographical series on General Marshall, “It was the Selective Service Act that made possible the huge Army and Air Force that fought in World War II.”¹¹⁷

Mark Skinner Watson in the US Army official history of WWII (Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations) writes that the passing of the Selective Service Act took place a year before the attack on Pearl Harbor and provided an opportunity to begin necessary training and necessary procurement for the Army. While initially categorizing this as having been delayed, Watson does acknowledge this as having been unprecedented. This in fact was the first time in the history of the United States that a peace-time draft was passed into law. More to the point, as Watson also notes, there was no ability to measure a year of preparation in dollars or soldiers’ lives.¹¹⁸ A counter-point to the argument of draft legislation having been delayed is that there was no political appetite in the United States for such measures prior to Nazi-Germany’s invasion of France and the Western European low country.

¹¹⁶ Clark to Wadsworth, 17 September 1940, Wadsworth family MSS, quoted in Clifford and Spencer, 225.

¹¹⁷ Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Ordeal and Hope* (New York: Viking Press, 1966), 62.

¹¹⁸ Watson, 197.

The impact of the Selective Training and Service Act, and the induction of the National Guard and Reserves, with respect to manpower was immediate. The PMP Army prior to the legislation, in 1939, consisted of 188,565 soldiers. This included 13,039 officers, 775 warrant officers, 672 Army nurses, and 174,079 enlisted personnel. Three months after the legislation passed those numbers had increased three times over. In December of 1940 US Army strength was listed at 620,774 total soldiers. This included 47,930 officers and 572,844 enlisted men. By June 30, 1941, even before the Victory Program was implemented, the US Army listed its strength at 1,460,998. This was an increase of almost eight times its size in 1939.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Watson, 16, 202.

CHAPTER 6

THE 1939 PMP AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR TODAY

The original purpose of this thesis was to examine the case study of the 1939 PMP, and in addition to arguing for an alternative view in the current historical literature, to determine whether or not there were emergent themes that would inform the US Army today as it endures austerity and competing security requirements. In the end, the 1939 PMP does just that. This chapter discusses emerging themes, their implications, how the 1939 PMP informs the Army today, further research that is needed, and it ends with brief concluding remarks.

Emergent Themes

In the late 1930s and early 1939 the political environment in Washington, DC was hostile to any mention of US militarization and expansion. The popular environment would not tolerate US Army forces deployed to support a European war. In 2014 the political environment is one in which decisions to cut defense spending are a political choice. The first theme that emerges is that in military mobilization planning, as it relates to manpower, is that among the political and popular environments, the political is primal.

A second emerging theme is the similarity between the two periods. In fairness, differences must also be noted. One such noticeable difference in the two time periods is the US position in the international environment in 1939 versus that of its role today. In 1939 the United States was a rising power and had the luxury of taking isolationist and neutral positions. In 2014 that is not the case. While the United States is a declining

power, relative to its prior self, it remains the primary power capable of countering global threats. The most notable similarity is that of a political environment in which it is politically convenient to cut defense appropriations, especially the Army, because of its lack of a constituency; unknown future mission requirements in both time periods cast doubt on the US Army's readiness and capabilities.

A third and final emergent theme, is what the Army can do based upon historical evidence if forced to downsize beyond current projections. The Army has recovered in the past, relative to other services, in a national emergency, to fight and win the nation's wars. The government of the United States assumes great risk and must be cautioned from its inferences as the PMP Army of 1939, 1940, and 1941 did not have the capability to fight and win a protracted conflict.¹²⁰ After all, the PMP Army's primary purpose was to defend the homeland while today's army is a foreign policy tool. It is specifically charged with fighting and winning the nations wars.

Implications

The 1939 PMP was a plan to defend the homeland and periphery against invasion. The primary purpose of the plan was to produce personnel. It did not describe how the Army would necessarily fight, but rather it defined administrative areas, or areas of operation and control, the means of personnel procurement, training, communication, and logistical considerations amongst others. Is it wise for the United States to accept this risk?

¹²⁰ A study of the 1941 U.S. Army GHQ Maneuvers reveals that even though the PMP Army grew eight fold, between the years of 1939 to 1941, it was severely limited in its ability to train with weapons or equipment. In some case soldiers trained with wooden models and trucks marked on the side with the word "tank." See Gabel.

The 1939 PMP, aided by the 1940 Selective Training and Service Act, did grow the Army from approximately 240,000 to 1.4 million in less than a two-year period. But this is not necessarily a recipe for success. The short term political gain of ‘billing’ the Army would most likely result in lives lost in the face of protracted conflict. The US popular environment is less likely to stomach these losses. And while the 1939 PMP Army did expand, it did so on the back of conscription. As Elliot Cohen notes in *Citizens and Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service*, the United States has historically struggled to answer the needs of manpower in a consistent and durable system of military service.¹²¹ Perhaps a return to the national debate of universal service is warranted. But this is also unpopular amongst the average US citizen. According to a 2011 Pew Research poll, 74 percent of the American public does not think a draft is necessary.¹²²

How the 1939 PMP Informs the Army Today

A precedent has been set that is similar to today’s army and is inherent within the historic American Way of War: build up to meet a threat and then to downsize after a threat is eliminated. However, the political establishment enjoys the benefits of an all-volunteer service and it must carefully decide in conjunction with Army leadership the

¹²¹ While some of the conditions under which Eliot Cohen findings have changed, the Cold War is over, the requirement for the United States to fight irregular, or small wars, remains. As such a review of manpower procurement following large scale drawdown precipitates a return to the debate of universal military service or conscription. Cohen’s work discusses the context of the American manpower debate. See Eliot A. Cohen, *Citizens and Soldiers: The Dilemmas of Military Service* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985).

¹²² Pew Research, “War and Sacrifice in the Post-9/11 Era,” October 5, 2011, accessed November 26, 2014, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/10/05/war-and-sacrifice-in-the-post-911-era>.

best 'way ahead.' It must ensure that it does not reduce the Army's ability to execute its potential and required missions. As Clausewitz observed, strategy is simple but it is not always easy.

It seems that where the United States is in a much better place than the Army of 1939, what can the US Army of today be reasonably expected to do operationally, and what is it credible for? What can it be relied upon to do with great certainty? Clausewitz said that the most important thing military and political leaders do, is to determine what type of war, or conflict, that they were embarking upon. In the present it should be a good warning to those in Washington clamoring for the US Army to become involved in a ground campaign against Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. This may not be out of the question, but what the 1939 PMP shows us is that you can only do so much based upon what Congress appropriates. Decisions must be made whether or not to modernize equipment and spend dollars on research and development, on realistic platforms, a large force, or some combination of the two. The military is likely to set itself up for shortfalls, based on organizational theory, and the fact that the Army is a bureaucratic entity, it will more than likely hang on to missions and a force structure that it cannot man. The Army could be helped to avoid the problem that plagued the War Department between WWI and WWII of a skeleton force or obsolete equipment if current policy makers considered other alternatives. This would include either an adjustment of strategy and requirements, or an honest look at other budgetary items, the cutting of which, would allow for the maintenance of a credible force. As the overall theme of *Thinking in Time: The Uses of*

*History for Decision-makers*¹²³ alludes to, policy makers and senior defense officials must carefully analyze historical examples to avoid making similar mistakes of the past.

Need for Further Research

Upon completion of this project it became apparent that additional time in the National Archives at College Park, Maryland would be useful. Specifically, it would allow for research concerning other possible versions of the 1939 WPD PMP. This need arose after identifying discrepancies between original document research and that of the scholarship of Kreidberg and Henry. What was distinguishable from different documents and their corresponding dates is that there must have been at least two revisions made to the 1939 PMP they wrote of. It would also benefit the scholarship of this period to review the documents from earlier interwar years, most notably the 1920s, within the RG 165 and RG 407 files. This could provide an additional view of the early mobilization planning outside of Kreidberg and Henry.

In addition to another trip to the National Archives it became apparent that a visit to the following libraries would be helpful in the pursuit of this topic past this master's thesis. Those included the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library in New York, to view President Roosevelt's Papers, the campus of Yale University to view the Secretary Henry Stimson diaries, and a visit to the George C. Marshall Library in Lexington, Virginia to view the papers of Malin Craig. Frequently, throughout examination of the PMP documents, the question arose as to whether or not personal accounts of the planning process may exist, in spite of classification at the time, which might reveal other insights.

¹²³ See Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986).

Perhaps a review of General Ridgway's personal papers (who served as a major in the 1939 WPD) would be warranted. This would have added to the planning process section aside from inferences made from multiple staff memorandums and the author's limited staff experience.

Additional questions included whether or not there might be daily reports available from any number of the recruiting stations that in-processed the majority of the soldiers who made up the PMP Army. A review of the subject of the 1940 Selective Training and Service Act begged the question as to whether or not the All-Volunteer Force was in some ways less consistent than universal service with American values. Certainly there is no questioning the values of those who have served within the All-Volunteer Force but more to the point, what about the growing gap in civil-military relationships? What about the growing percentage of the population who does not, or cannot, identify with those of us serving in the last two decades? Perhaps under the realized need of contingency in a national emergency, and the debate that follows, we can address the social question of civil-military relations as well.

Finally: the overarching question that remains following this thesis is this: what case studies could inform the observation of Carl Von Clausewitz as a theory for successful strategic planning? Specifically, consider his observation that within war there exists a paradoxical trinity between the people, the government, and the military commander. An equally important question is whether or not our political system in America allows for such a theory's implementation.

Conclusion

What the author hoped to achieve at the outset became different in some ways than expected. While the author did find evidence supporting the overarching thesis that the 1939 PMP was a defensive plan for the protection of the homeland and periphery, and while the evidence points to the 1939 PMP providing a framework for growing the size of the Army eight fold in just two years, the author had secretly hoped to find the 1939 PMP as the sole link between the interwar period and troop deployments to North Africa. This was perhaps a bit naive but in the end it was not the case. The author fell victim to his own view of the PMP as defensive. Once the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States entered the war, there would be no defensive force. The Army was to be an expeditionary one.

Paul Kennedy offers a logic that nicely fits this experience in original research; his text *Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War*¹²⁴ he argues that in the case of WWII no one link or cause offers a case for victory. Rather, multiple variables and events contributed to the outcome of allied victory. In short, the research highlighted that the American political system and popular environment support Clausewitz's observation that there exists a paradoxical trinity and that within the American system, in order to facilitate success it must be understood that policy is primal.

¹²⁴ Paul M. Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War* (New York: Random House, 2013).

APPENDIX A

STRENGTH OF THE US ARMY, 1919-1941

16

CHIEF OF STAFF: PREWAR PLANS AND PREPARATIONS

TABLE 1.—STRENGTH OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY:
1919-1941^a

Year	Total	Officers			Enlisted Men
		Commissioned Officers	Warrant Officers ^b	Army Nurse Corps ^c	
1919.....	846,498	77,966	37	^d 9,616	758,879
1920.....	201,918	15,451	68	^d 1,551	184,848
1921.....	228,650	13,299	1,159	851	213,341
1922.....	147,335	13,248	1,153	828	132,106
1923.....	131,959	11,820	1,086	705	118,348
1924.....	141,618	11,655	1,065	675	128,223
1925.....	135,979	12,462	1,030	725	121,762
1926.....	134,116	12,143	1,327	673	119,973
1927.....	133,949	12,076	1,263	681	119,929
1928.....	135,204	12,112	1,208	699	121,185
1929.....	138,263	12,175	1,138	734	124,216
1930.....	138,452	12,255	1,089	807	124,301
1931.....	139,626	12,322	1,028	809	125,467
1932.....	134,024	12,314	973	824	119,913
1933.....	135,684	12,301	926	669	121,788
1934.....	137,584	12,283	869	609	123,823
1935.....	138,569	12,043	825	603	125,098
1936.....	166,724	12,125	784	603	153,212
1937.....	178,733	12,321	794	625	164,993
1938.....	184,126	12,522	782	671	170,151
1939.....	188,565	13,039	775	672	174,079
1940.....	267,767	16,624	763	939	249,441
1941.....	1,460,998	93,172	931	5,433	1,361,462

^a Represents actual strength of the active Army as of 30 June of each year. Includes Philippine Scouts. Does not include cadets at the U. S. Military Academy, field clerks, or contract surgeons.

^b Effective 29 April 1926, 367 Army and QM field clerks were brought into the Army as Warrant Officers.

^c Included as officer personnel in this table for comparability with later years. On 4 June 1920, Army nurses were given simulated or relative commissions applicable only to the Army Nurse Corps. On 22 June 1944 they were given temporary commissions, and on 16 April 1947 were commissioned in the Regular Army.

^d Data are from WDGS, Statistics Branch, "Strength of Military Establishment, June 30, 1914 to June 30, 1926," Special Report No. 196, revised, 22 Jan 27.

Source: Annual Reports of the Secretary of War, 1922-1941; Annual Reports of The Adjutant General of the Army, 1919-1921; also Department of the Army, Strength of the Army (STM-30), 1 Jul 48.

Source: "Strength of the United States Army 1919-1941," quoted in Mark Skinner-Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Department of the Army, 1950), 16.

APPENDIX B

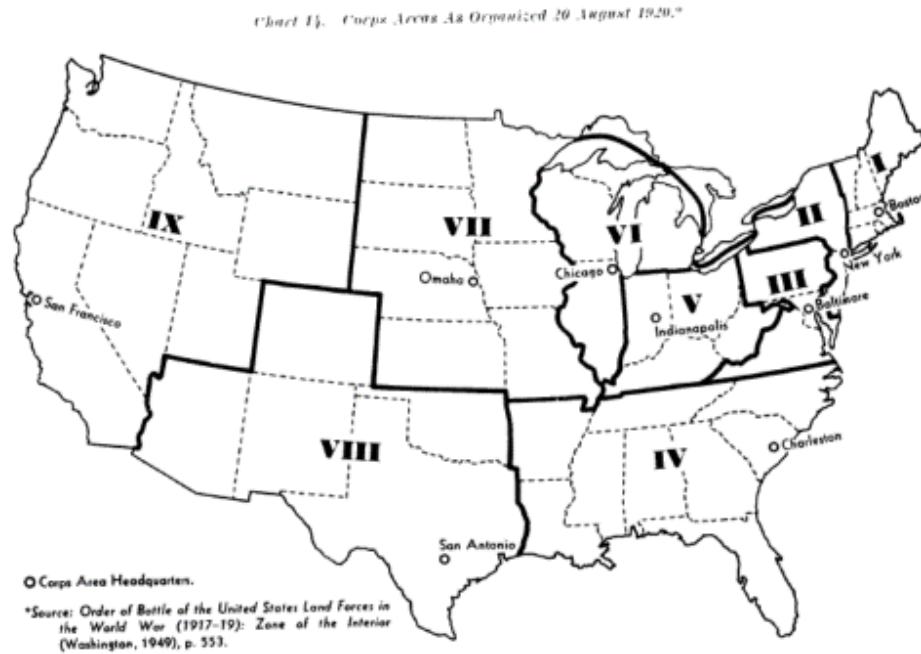
US ARMY CHIEFS OF STAFF, 1918-1945

General Peyton C. March	19 May 1918–30 June 1921
General of the Armies, John J. Pershing	1 July 1921–13 September 1924
General John L. Hines	14 September 1924–20 November 1926
General Charles P. Summerall	21 November 1926–20 November 1930
General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur	21 November 1930–1 October 1935
General Malin Craig	2 October 1935–13 August 1939
General of the Army, George Catlett Marshall	1 September 1939–18 November 1945

Source: US Army Chiefs of Staff names and dates of service, noted in Mark SkinnerWatson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Department of the Army, 1950), ii-28.

APPENDIX C

UNITED STATES CORPS AREAS



Source: “Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War (1917-1919): Zone of the Interior (Washington, 1949),” 553, quoted in Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army, 1775-1945* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1955), 386.

APPENDIX D

MOBILIZATION OUTLINE, 1922

I. 1st Phase—M-day to M+4 (taken down into three subphases).

(A). M-day to M+1:

1. All units of the following categories called to service and begin mobilizing.
 - (a) All active Regular Army units.
 - (b) All National Guard units.
 - (c) All corps units of the Organized Reserves pertaining to the first three field armies.
 - (d) All Organized Reserve harbor defense units.
 - (e) All anti-aircraft units pertaining to the first three field armies.
 - (f) All remaining observation, pursuit, attack, and Airship elements pertaining to the first three Field Armies.
2. Expansion of General and local recruiting begun.
3. Preparation of Reception and Replacement centers begun.
4. Work on additional shelter begun.
5. Foreign garrisons increased to war strength in accordance with approved projects.

(B). M+1 to M+2:

1. All units continue mobilizing in accordance with priorities established for the particular emergency.
2. Reception and replacement camps completed.
3. Work on additional shelter continued.
4. Replacement training begun in accordance with rates and priorities established for the particular emergency.
5. Organization begun of such Zone of Interior units and installations as may be designated by the War Department.
6. Draft becomes available.
7. Divisional units (cadres), organized reserves, warned for service.

(C). M+2 to M+4:

1. All units continue mobilizing in accordance with established priorities.
2. Divisional units (cadres), Organized Reserves, called to service and begin training.
3. Replacement training continued in accordance with established rates and priorities.
4. Zone of Interior organization continued.
5. All remaining Organized Reserve units (cadres) warned for service.

II. 2d Phase—M+4 to

1. All remaining Organized Reserve units (cadres) called to service and begin mobilizing in accordance with established priorities and as shelter becomes available.
2. Inactive Regular Army units reconstituted.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ “Mobilization Table from Memorandum, COS, 23 June 22, subject: Outline of Mobilization, WPD 1028, DRB, TAG, quoted and displayed in Kreidberg and Henry, 393.

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