

## The American Search For A 'Harmless' Army

By CARLTON B. SMITH \*

The American attitude of distrust toward a standing army is an elusive factor in the development of the nation's military policy. Presidents, Secretaries of War, Congress, and historians have all admitted its existence, but the exact influence of this "deep-rooted aversion to military establishments in time of peace"<sup>1</sup> cannot be exactly defined. Charles E. Merriam views this attitude as a conflict between military and democratic principles:

The military hierarchy involves authority from the top down, while the democratic systems are based on the consent of the governed from the grass roots up. The military principle develops the idea of discipline and unquestioning obedience. Democratic political society is based upon the consent of the governed, freely given.<sup>2</sup>

This aversion to a standing army created a dilemma because such an army was seen to be both essential and harmful. "A standing force," wrote James Madison, "is dangerous, at the same time that it may be a necessary provision."<sup>3</sup> The history of the development of the United States military policy became essentially a search for a peacetime army which could perform useful functions without posing a threat to the nation's democratic principles, a search which began with the close of the War for Independence and ended with the emergency of a variety of non-belligerent functions following the War of 1812. In 1831, the Secretary of War could boast that the army was "efficient without being expensive, and adequate to the exigencies of our service without being dangerous."<sup>4</sup>

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1. "Army of the United States," *North American Review*, XXIII (1826), 246. Hereafter cited as "Army," *NAR*.

2. Charles E. Merriam, "Security without Militarism: Preserving Civilian Control in American Political Institutions," in *Civil-Military Relationships in American Life*, edited by Jerome G. Kerwin (Chicago, 1948), 157.

3. Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist: A Commentary on the Constitution of the United States with introduction by Edward Gaylord Bourne* (New York, 1937). Hereafter cited as *Federalist*.

4. Annual Report of Lewis Cass, *American State Papers: Military Affairs* (7 vols., Washington, 1833-60), IV, 708. Hereafter cited as *ASP:MA*.

The United States drew two diverse traditions from the Revolution: a conservative tradition which looked to Europe for its example and urged the necessity of a professional army, and a revolutionary one which grew out of the enlightenment. The Continental Congress attempted to act in accordance with both traditions by attempting to create a professional army and at the same time raise the nation in arms.<sup>5</sup> In 1784, with mutinies and the monarchist tendencies manifested in the Newburg Addresses reminding them of the danger inherent in an organized body of armed men, Congress resolved that

standing armies in time of peace are inconsistent with the principles of republican government, dangerous to the liberties of a free people, and generally converted into destructive engines for establishing despotism.<sup>6</sup>

With the exception of eighty men, the Continental Army was voted out of existence; although cautiously re-established over the next five years, the Confederation lacked a standing army of any significance.<sup>7</sup>

When the nation met in constitutional convention, there was general acceptance of the principle that the chief reliance for defense should be placed upon the militia; and, almost all debate on military provisions concerned the question of how much control the central government should have over the states' militia.<sup>8</sup> Nearly forty years later, the *North American Review* commented that the founding fathers had placed control in the hands of the people

so that the military force of the country, instead of being the creature of an arbitrary and irresponsible will, should be the offspring of the same popular and deliberate legislation, which originates every other measure connected with the general good.<sup>9</sup>

5. Russell F. Weigley, *Towards an American Army: Military Thought from Washington to Marshall* (New York, 1962), 4, 8-9; Alfred Vagts, *A History of Militarism: Romance and Realities of a Profession* (New York, 1937), 77.

6. May 26, 1784, Chauncey W. Ford et al. (eds.), *The Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789* (35 vols., Washington, 1904-37), XXVII, 433; for accounts of the mutinies and a discussion of the Newburg Addresses, see Louis C. Hatch, *The Administration of the American Revolutionary Army* (New York, 1904), 179 ff, 142 ff.

7. Joseph C. Bernardo and Eugene H. Bacon, *American Military Policy: Its Development Since 1775* (Harrisburg, 1961), 60-63.

8. Howard White, *Executive Influence in Determining Military Policy in the United States in University of Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences*, XII (Urbana, 1925), 16.

9. "Army," *NAR*, 246.

Under the Constitution, Congress was authorized to "raise and support armies" (Article I, Section 8), but it was not required to do so. The matter was left entirely to the discretion of Congress. Hamilton firmly supported this congressional power and cautiously justified the maintenance of a standing army in peacetime as necessary for the nation's defense against British and Spanish invasion. Madison felt that even if a standing army which was entirely devoted to the central government were created, it could never become a serious threat because it would be held in check by the militia.<sup>10</sup>

Armed with the power to create a standing army and reminded of the necessity of such a force by continual Indian uprisings and civil disturbances, Congress established a War Department in 1789 and an army of 1,216 in 1790.<sup>11</sup> Measures enacted to provide for the military establishment were vociferously opposed by men like William Maclay, Senator from Pennsylvania, who asserted that "the Constitution certainly never contemplated a standing army in time of peace." It was not the size of the army that was important to Maclay but the principle which lay behind its existence. In modern terminology, we would say that he feared that the country would be escalated to war. The first error was the creation of the War Department which immediately demanded an army, and when the Secretary of War was given his army, Maclay was certain that he would incite a war in order to test it.<sup>12</sup>

Washington's views on the subject had been made clear prior to his assumption of the office of President. During the Revolution, he had attempted to build up a regular army and had felt that to place dependence upon the militia was "resting upon a broken staff;"<sup>13</sup> but following the war, he had had to reconcile his view with two American realities—a profound fear of a standing army and the lack of the necessary funds. Writing in 1783 to Alexander Hamilton, chairman of a congressional committee on fixing the peacetime military establishment, he outlined what was to become his administration's policy. Four elements were necessary for the proper defense of the nation: a standing army, a "well-organized Militia," arsenals for military stores, and military academies. Although conceding that

10. Hamilton in Nos. VIII, XXIV, XXV, and Madison in Nos. XLI, XLVI, *Federalist*, 49ff, 158ff, 164ff, 274ff, 321ff.

11. Bernardo and Bacon, *American Military Policy*, 73-74.

12. William Maclay, *The Journal of William Maclay: United States Senator from Pennsylvania, 1789-1791* (New York, 1927), 235, 227, 221, 171, 233.

13. Washington to Congress, September 24, 1776, in John C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799* (39 vols., Washington, 1931-44), VI, 110.

a "large standing Army" had always been considered a danger to liberties, he expressed his belief that one of moderate size (2,631 men) was "not only safe, but indispensably necessary." He justified its necessity by pointing to the need to garrison the frontier posts in order "to awe the Indians" and to prevent encroachments from Canada and Florida. Unfortunately, the nation was "too poor to maintain a standing army adequate to our defense."<sup>14</sup>

During the Federalist period, there was little difficulty in justifying the army. Several expeditions were undertaken against the restless tribes in Ohio, and the diplomatic situation led to a naval confrontation with France which was accompanied by a war scare. Legislation for the military establishment was based upon the executive's recommendations, and requests were generally granted<sup>15</sup> with one exception—adequate provision for a well-trained, well-regulated, national militia. The states, jealous of their control of the militia, restrained the national government from actively supervising the organization and training of its citizen army. Washington had reluctantly signed the militia act of 1792 and in every subsequent annual message urged the establishment of a "well-regulated militia" as though Congress had never acted on the matter.<sup>16</sup>

There was a marked change in attitude toward the military establishment when the Jeffersonians came to power in 1801. They harbored a greater distrust of a standing army, especially an army they associated with their Federalist rivals. Thomas Jefferson was a firm believer in the militia as the bastion of American defenses and urged that every man receive adequate military training. If chief reliance were to be placed upon the militia, it must be well trained, although the Jeffersonians did not go beyond simply recommending such action to the states; and if the army were to be small, it must be very good. A military academy was established at West Point.<sup>17</sup> The Jeffersonian Republicans placed great faith in the people and their representatives in Congress; during the administrations of Jefferson and Madison, executive leadership receded, and the Congress assumed control of military policy through increasingly powerful committees which by virtue of their specialization were better able than the legislature as a whole to modify, substitute, and reject executive rec-

14. May 2, 1783, *Ibid.*, XXVI, 374-376.

15. White, *Executive Influence*, 123.

16. Joseph McAuley Palmer, *Washington, Lincoln, Wilson—Three War Statesmen* (Garden City, New York, 1930), 122-123.

17. Sidney Forman, "Thomas Jefferson on Universal Military Training," *Military Affairs*, XI (Fall, 1947), 177-178.

ommendations.<sup>18</sup> Devoted to public economy, and noting that expenditures for the military establishment comprised about thirty per cent of the total budget, exclusive of payment on the debt, the Jeffersonian Congress reduced the size of the standing army from 4,051 in December, 1801, to 2,576 in February, 1805; expenditures for military services were reduced from more than \$2,500,000 in 1800 to less than \$713,000 in 1805.<sup>19</sup> There was a gradual increase after 1805 because of the war in Europe, but at the outbreak of the War of 1812, the nation's regular army had only 6,686 men.<sup>20</sup>

The War of 1812 wrought a great change in the American attitude toward a standing army. At the outset of the war, the regular army was "almost as heterogeneously organized, or disorganized, as when Steuben appeared at Valley Forge."<sup>21</sup> The militia was grossly inadequate for both defensive and offensive operations, the supply system was chaotic, and there was a marked absence of capable leadership.<sup>22</sup> By 1814, it was quite clear to Acting Secretary of War James Monroe that "a small body, well-trained, accustomed to action, gallantly led on, often breaks three or four times the number of more respectable and more brave, but raw and undisciplined troops."<sup>23</sup> William H. Crawford, Monroe's successor, similarly noted that it was not only expedient but necessary to create a military establishment in time of peace which could operate efficiently in war.<sup>24</sup> At the close of the war, the United States set itself to that task with a changed attitude: the standing army in peacetime was now deemed a necessary institution, the first line of defense; but like a vicious dog which might be useful to repel intruders, it must be kept on a strong leash and watched closely.

The transformation of the American attitude toward a standing

18. Leonard D. White, *The Jeffersonians: A Study in Administrative History, 1801-1829* (New York, 1956), 29, 37; Howard White, *Executive Influence*, 172-176, 185.

19. Reduction figures are actual, not authorized strength, *ASP:MA*, I, 155, 175. Military services do not include pensions and Indian affairs, *ASP:Finance*, II, 920.

20. Emory Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States* (Washington, 1912), 92.

21. William Addleman Ganoë, *The History of the United States Army* (New York, 1934), 116.

22. Lessons of the war are summarized in Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States, 1775-1945* (Washington, 1955), 59-60.

23. To William H. Giles, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, October 17, 1814, *ASP:MA*, I, 515.

24. To Richard M. Johnson, Chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs, December 27, 1815, *ASP:MA*, I, 636.

army is clearly reflected in an article published in the *North American Review* in 1826 that struggled with the dilemma that faced the nation in its search for a "harmless" army. The founding fathers were rebuked for throwing off the nation's armor at the close of the Revolution because a nation "in order to prosper, must be respected; and in order to be respected, it must be determined and prepared to defend itself." Noting the disadvantages under which a democracy labored in the "prompt and efficacious preparation for war" and recognizing the fact that as a government receded from despotism it lost military efficiency,<sup>25</sup> the author assured his readers that the United States had finally found the golden mean between the extremes of tyranny and total defenselessness. The military establishment was no longer to be "regarded with the prejudicial feeling of past days," but was "a settled system, founded on a true estimation of the permanent security and welfare of the country." Unlike a European army, however, it was not attached to a monarch and separated from the people; it was dependent upon the people and shared their habits and their sentiments and regarded itself "in every respect as a part of the great community."<sup>26</sup>

It was very important to the American people that their army be an army of the people, one that participated in the growth of the nation by performing useful functions. In this way, the expense of maintaining a standing army could be justified. The regular army was called upon to perform three basic functions: it stood as the first line of defense, acted as a police force to keep peace on the frontiers, and surveyed and supervised internal improvements. Although the origins of these functions may be traced back to the founding of the Republic, they assumed greater significance in the years following the War of 1812 and strengthened the opinion that a standing army could be a valuable asset instead of merely a dangerous necessity.

The primary function of any military establishment is defense. The United States had always placed chief reliance for the performance of this function upon the militia; to a certain extent, this policy was continued after the War of 1812. Monroe declared in his first inaugural address that the safety of the nation depended upon the militia.<sup>27</sup> In planning the Atlantic defenses, the Corps of Engineers optimistically calculated in 1826 that in one day at least 10,000

25. "Army," *NAR*, 251-252.

26. *Ibid.*, 274-275.

27. James D. Richardson (comp.), *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, 1897), I, 577.

men could be prepared to defend New York; in eleven days, more than 135,000 militiamen could be concentrated there.<sup>28</sup> Like the feudal army, the militia was "an aggregation of individuals who considered themselves equal" and were expected to melt away after the battle had been won.<sup>29</sup> The American militiamen would know how to return to peaceful occupations where, as civilians, they would serve to check any military inclination which might "usurp the liberties of their country." A committee of the House of Representatives saw the militia as

the bulwark of our civil and individual liberty. Directed by our public sentiment, it will guard us from the oppression of power; regulated by wisdom and patronized by the government, it will secure us from anarchy; officered, trained and supported by the States, it is the guaranty of their sovereignty and Union . . . an impenetrable barrier to the invader.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the praise heaped upon the militia, there was an increasing awareness that it was not adequate to the defense needs of the nation; the praise of the militia seemed more obeisance to an ideal than acceptance of reality. The same committee that eulogized it reported in frustration that "committee after committee has been appointed, reports have been made, and bills have been reported, but still it must be admitted that much remains to be done."<sup>31</sup> In 1826, Secretary of War James Barbour invited suggestions from the country's leaders and submitted the replies for evaluation to a board headed by General Winfield Scott.<sup>32</sup> The board found that the militia was too large, lacking in arms, and untrained; their recommendations, neither the first nor the last of such a set of proposals, went unheeded.<sup>33</sup> There was growing recognition of the problem by congressional committees, but nothing resulted beyond unheeded recommendations. In 1829, the House Committee on the Militia presented a plan for reorganization, and in 1830, the House Committee on Military Affairs submitted a bill on the militia with no result.<sup>34</sup>

28. *ASP:MA*, III, 301.

29. Vagts, *A History of Militarism*, 39.

30. Report of the House Committee on the Militia, February 27, 1827, *ASP:MA*, III, 601.

31. *Ibid.*

32. Correspondence concerning the investigation is in *ASP:MA*, III, 388-488.

33. Report of the Board of Inquiry, November 28, 1826, *Ibid.*, 388-393.

34. Committee Reports dated February 4, 1829, and January 27, 1830, *ASP:MA*, IV, 86-87, 266-269.

The states jealously guarded their control of the militia, and the national government was frustrated in every attempt to bring order to the system. The War Department maintained only two points of contact with the militia: the furnishing of arms and the gathering of annual returns. Under the act of April 3, 1808, which provided for the arming and equipping of the militia, the Ordnance Department was to procure and distribute approximately \$200,000 worth of arms and equipment every year to over one million militiamen.<sup>35</sup> Once distributed, this equipment, which was sufficient to arm less than ten per cent of the men, came under the care of the states and was soon unfit for use.<sup>36</sup> The War Department was never exactly certain of the militia's size or state of preparedness because returns were seldom complete, if submitted at all.<sup>37</sup>

The national government had little to do with the training of these units beyond making field manuals available upon request. The little training that was received was obtained at the periodic muster which was rapidly becoming an American joke. One editor challenged "any man to look five minutes upon a company of New York irregulars without laughing."<sup>38</sup> The militia itself realized its incompetency. Many companies made no pretense at military efficiency; in fact, they seemed "to do all they can to make it ridiculous."<sup>39</sup> The militia muster was condemned more for providing "a day of dissipation" and contributing to the corruption of public morals than it was for not providing military training.<sup>40</sup> Officers of the regular army coupled the word "militia" with profanity to verbally chastise their men, and to be ordered to command such a unit was considered one of the great hazards of a military career.<sup>41</sup>

As a consensus developed that the militia was inadequate to the nation's defense, more dependence came to be placed upon the stand-

35. For example, see the annual report of the Ordnance Department for 1828, *ASP:MA*, IV, 37.

36. Report of the House Committee on Military Affairs, March 10, 1824, *ASP:MA*, IV, 37.

37. For example, see the Adjutant General's report of militia returns for 1826, *ASP:MA*, III, 237-240.

38. *New York Journal of Commerce*, October 26, 1830, quoted in Richard L. Watson, Jr., "Congressional Attitudes toward Military Preparedness, 1829-1835," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXXIV (March, 1948), 612.

39. Frederick Marryat, *Diary in America*, edited by Jules Zanger (Bloomington, Indiana, 1960), 144.

40. For example see Richard Harwood, Adjutant General of the Maryland Militia, to Governor Joseph Kent, August 1, 1826, *ASP:MA*, III, 395.

41. William T. Hagan, "General Henry Atkinson and the Militia," *Military Affairs*, XXIII (Winter, 1959-60), 191-197.



ing army. The militia was certainly harmless in peace, but in war it would be "as useless as an expensive fleet of ships of the line on top of a mountain."<sup>42</sup> In 1820, Calhoun pointed out that the country needed an army capable of meeting European armies in battle, something experience had proven the militia could not do; and in 1831, another Secretary of War deplored the lack of public confidence in the militia and noted that while not the most important element in the nation's defense, it was "a valuable auxiliary" to an "indispensable" regular army.<sup>43</sup>

To provide for the defense of a 9,000 mile frontier,<sup>44</sup> President Monroe called for the construction of fortifications, and Secretary of War Calhoun, condemning existing works as "wholly insufficient," set out to accomplish the task.<sup>45</sup> More than six million dollars was spent from 1817 to 1830 in constructing a chain of coastal fortifications from Eastport, Maine to St. Augustine, Florida.<sup>46</sup> Forts were built on the inland frontier also, but they were neither as elaborate nor as costly. Weakly fortified, they were aimed only at providing protection from Indians and were usually the work of officers of the line and the men under their command.<sup>47</sup> The defensive task of the standing army was "to garrison and preserve our fortifications and to meet the first invasions of a foreign foe,"<sup>48</sup> but its size did not permit it to successfully fulfill its mission. Although the concept of the regular army as the first line of defense was gradually accepted, there was great reluctance to increase its size. In 1829, it stood at 6,169 men, the largest it had been since the reduction of 1821, and these men were assigned to forty-two different posts.<sup>49</sup> Before the reduction of 1821 and before the construction of large numbers of fortifications, Calhoun had pointed out that the army was large enough to keep the forts in a state of preservation but much too small to defend them.<sup>50</sup> The situation grew worse; by 1830, two-thirds of the coastal defenses were guarded by

42. General Edmund Gaines to General Jacob Brown, December 2, 1826, *ASP:MA*, IV, 134.

43. Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1820, *ASP:MA*, II, 188; Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1831, *Ibid.*, IV, 712-713.

44. *Ibid.*, I, 791.

45. First Inaugural Address, in Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, I, 576; Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1817, *ASP:MA*, I, 669.

46. *ASP:MA*, III, 248; IV, 306.

47. Henry P. Beers, *The Western Military Frontier, 1815-1846* (Philadelphia, 1935), 103.

48. James Monroe, First Inaugural Address, in Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, I, 576.

49. *ASP:MA*, IV, 157-159.

50. Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1817, *Ibid.*, I, 669.

no more than one company of about sixty-one men.<sup>51</sup> The army was simply too small to defend the nation. In many respects, it could be called an invisible army, and this was what America desired. If an onerous standing army were to be forced upon her by necessity, she preferred that it remain as inconspicuous as possible. What danger was an army which was scattered over thousands of miles of frontier? There is little cause to fear that a nation with its major military force out of sight would succumb to militarism and the subversion of liberty which often accompanies it.<sup>52</sup>

Although overburdened with its defensive responsibilities, the army was called upon to perform its traditional duty of pacifying the Indians. In the years following 1815, this task took on new dimensions as the flow of white settlers greatly increased and the government's Indian policy acquired a semblance of clarity. United States Indian policy had never been very clear, but it did have one consistent principle underlying it: the Indian must not be allowed to check the westward expansion of the American people. Indian policy was a curious mixture of the regulation of trade, the civilization of the tribes, the cession of land and removal beyond the Mississippi, and the military control of the Indians. Responsibility for the implementation of this policy was divided among several agencies, all working separately but under the nominal command of the Secretary of War. There were Indian agents who reported through the Superintendents of Indian Affairs, the military which had its own chain of command, and until 1822, the factors of the government trading posts who reported to the Superintendent of Indian Trade. These three agencies were in constant conflict, and the problem was further clouded by the fact that government policy statements were inconsistent and often ran counter to the action which had been initiated.

The government had maintained Indian agents since the ordinance of 1786. In 1795, this policy was supplemented by the establishment of federal trading posts designed to strengthen governmental influence over the Indians. These posts or factories were greatly weakened by the War of 1812, and after 1820, the private companies launched an all-out drive to eliminate this competition. With the sympathy of a majority of Indian agents, a campaign against the factories led by Senator Thomas Hart Benton and backed by the politically powerful American Fur Company succeeded in

51. *Ibid.*, IV, 306.

52. Leonard D. White, *The Jacksonians*, 189; Vagts, *A History of Militarism*, 67.

abolishing the office of Superintendent of Indian Trade in 1822.<sup>53</sup> Calhoun tried to fill the void with the creation by executive order of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Finally, in 1832, Congress authorized a Commissioner of Indian Affairs to coordinate the government's relations with the various tribes.<sup>54</sup>

Ultimately, however, the responsibility for frontier peace and the enforcement of trade regulations fell upon the army. Its officers were sensitive about taking orders from civilian officials, often requiring direct orders through their own chain of command before they would take the action requested by an agent. There were sufficient reasons for such caution because the proper enforcement of the law often brought down the wrath of a powerful trading company in the form of a successful civil suit in the territorial courts against the enforcing officer.<sup>55</sup> Although hopelessly weak, the army was the only force on the frontier capable of making an effective effort to enforce the laws of the United States, acting to prevent intertribal warfare, and pacifying the Indians with a display of strength.<sup>56</sup> The army's role as a pacifying agent on the frontier was greatly increased following the War of 1812 with the emergence of removal as the principal aspect of the government's Indian policy.

The Senate Committee on Public Lands revived the pre-war position that the Indians should be removed to facilitate the consolidation of white settlements. President Monroe expressed his sympathy with such removal "on conditions which shall be satisfactory to themselves and honorable to the United States," feeling that "an attempt to remove them by force would . . . be unjust."<sup>57</sup> Little progress was made until the Jackson administration. "The time seems to have arrived," wrote Jackson's Secretary of War, Lewis Cass, "when a change in our principles and practice is necessary."<sup>58</sup> Under pressure by Georgia, on whose lands the largest "pocket" of Indians resided, a restatement of the old policy was made; removal treaties were signed, and the army was assigned the task of enforce-

53. Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1962), 88-89; Royal B. Way, "The United States Factory System for Trading with the Indians, 1796-1822," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, VI (1919), 220-235.

54. Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 57-60.

55. *ASP:MA*, IV, 153; Prucha, *American Indian Policy*, 60, 64.

56. *ASP:MA*, III, 216, 331.

57. Report dated January 9, 1817, *ASP: Indian Affairs*, II, 123-124; Special Messages of January 27, 1825, and March 30, 1824, in Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, II, 850, I, 804.

58. Lewis Cass, "Removal of the Indians," *NAR*, XXX (1830), 76.

ing them. While eventually utilizing force, the Jacksonians disavowed such intentions. "Nothing of a compulsory course . . . has ever been thought of by the President," asserted Secretary of War John Eaton in an attempt to reassure those of tender conscience.<sup>59</sup> Significantly, Eaton's annual report of that year advocated peaceful removal without once using the words "educate" or "civilize."<sup>60</sup> In his first annual message, Jackson urged congressional action, and in May, 1830, Congress duly enacted a removal bill authorizing the necessary allocation of western lands, "assistance" to the Indians in removing, and "protection" at their new location. Military protection of the immigrant Indians became an essential part of removal because the western tribes often resented the eastern intruders; the situation was inflamed further by the government's practice of furnishing arms to those who agreed to remove.<sup>61</sup>

The regular army proved to be an essential tool in the implementation of this new approach to the old removal policy, and it became even more useful when resistance arose. In 1832, the army was called upon to pacify rebellious tribes in the Blackhawk War; and, in 1835, hostilities broke out in Florida where the Seminoles staunchly resisted removal. The Florida campaign, involving over 60,000 men and more than a hundred million dollars, continued until the War Department announced its conclusion in 1842.<sup>62</sup> With the unsettled conditions in Indian relations, the army was usefully occupied on the frontier where it could scarcely be considered dangerous to American liberties.

The third function the standing army was called upon to perform following the War of 1812 was the preparation of surveys, plans and estimates for internal improvement projects, and in many cases the actual supervision and construction of such projects. The idea of utilizing the army in this manner was not new. On the eve of the war, John Randolph of Roanoke had suggested that Congress give the army some reason for existence by authorizing its employment in "the construction of roads, canals, or other works of public utility."<sup>63</sup> Following the war, the necessity of improving the nation's

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59. To Rev. Eli Baldwin, August 25, 1829, quoted in Francis Paul Prucha, "Thomas L. McKenney and the New York Indian Board," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVIII (March, 1962), 647.

60. Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1829, *ASP:MA*, IV, 154-155.

61. Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, III, 1019; *ASP:MA*, VII, 784.

62. Upton, *The Military Policy of the United States*, 160, 190, 192.

63. January 10, 1812, *Annals of Congress*, 12th Congress, 1st Session, I, 719-720.

transportation system was all too evident, and demands that the national government take action increased. A committee of the Senate reported that internal improvements required government attention under the general welfare clause of the Constitution; and, when the Second Bank of the United States was chartered, Representative Calhoun pushed through a bill designed to use the money derived from the bank for the benefit of road and canal construction; it was vetoed by President Madison as unconstitutional.<sup>64</sup>

In 1819, Calhoun, now Secretary of War, returned to the fray and argued that there was no country in the world "to which a good system of military roads and canals is more indispensable than to the United States." Justifying the need on purely military grounds, he pointed out that because the nation was opposed to the principle of a standing army and placed chief reliance on the militia, facilities had to be provided for the rapid assembly of that force. The lack of such facilities had been amply demonstrated in the war. Incidental to this purely military objective, such improvements would greatly promote the general prosperity of the nation, and Calhoun expressed the willingness of the army to participate in such a program.<sup>65</sup> Monroe had tried to make his position clear in his first annual message: internal improvements conducted by the federal government, no matter how essential, were clearly unconstitutional; a constitutional amendment would have to be adopted to allow national action.<sup>66</sup> By 1822, this position had evolved to the point that Monroe felt Congress had the authority to finance improvements of national value as long as the government did not establish control over them.<sup>67</sup> Finally, in 1824, he assented to the General Survey Act which authorized the President to secure surveys and plans for routes which were to be used by Congress in its selection of projects worthy of receiving federal aid.<sup>68</sup>

The army had not remained inactive. Prior to the War of 1812, transportation facilities had been constructed as they were deemed necessary, as during the campaign against the Indians in the 1790's. After the war had demonstrated a serious lack of transportation capability, orders went out to open military roads as rapidly as possible. Responsibility for road construction fell primarily upon the

64. Report dated February 6, 1816, *ASP:Miscellaneous*, II, 283; Veto Message, March 3, 1817, in Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, I, 569-570.

65. *ASP:Miscellaneous*, II, 534-536.

66. Richardson, *Messages and Papers*, I, 587.

67. Special Message, May 4, 1822, *Ibid.*, I, 713-752.

68. Richard Peters *et al.* (eds.), *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America, 1789-1873* (Boston, 1848-1873), IV, 22-23.

Quartermaster Corps which industriously applied itself to the improvement of transportation in the territories. By 1830, for example, five roads had been completed in Florida, the longest covering 367 miles between Pensacola and St. Augustine. The Corps was occasionally assigned specific river and harbor projects such as the construction of a breakwater at the mouth of the Delaware River.<sup>69</sup>

The chief burden of the increased demand for the army's aid in internal improvement projects fell upon the Corps of Engineers whose expenditures in that area rose precipitously from less than \$53,000 in 1825 to nearly \$1,500,000 in 1835 without a similar increase in the size of the Corps.<sup>70</sup> Jackson's avowed opposition had little effect on the program, and in fact, his administration spent more on internal improvements than any previous administration.<sup>71</sup> The only noticeable effect was a slight drop in the number of projects underway from a high of eighty-nine in 1829 to fifty-four in 1830, after which there was a gradual increase.<sup>72</sup> In a typical year (1828), army engineers were constructing fourteen fortifications, and had thirty-seven civil construction projects underway—four roads, thirteen river projects, and twenty harbor projects. Besides this, they had completed or were in the process of completing eight surveys which had been specifically authorized by Congress and twenty more surveys authorized by the President under the Survey Act of 1824 which included seven canals, five river projects, three railway surveys, three roads, and three designed to determine the advisability of a canal or railroad.<sup>73</sup>

The army was not merely constructing fortifications, barracks, and storehouses, but was playing a leading role in the development of internal improvements; its soldiers were not massed on the seaboard waiting passively for war but were busily engaged in an attempt to bring peace to the frontier. The attitude toward America's standing army had changed since 1815, and as Secretary of War Porter observed in 1828, it was no longer seen

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69. Harold L. Nelson, "Military Roads for War and Peace—1791-1836," *Military Affairs*, XIX (Spring, 1955), 14; Erna Risch, *Quartermaster Support of the Army: A History of the Corps, 1775-1939* (Washington, 1962), 212-218.

70. Annual Reports of the Corps of Engineers for 1825 and 1835, *ASP: MA*, III, 141-142, IV, 661-664.

71. Raymond H. Pulley, "Andrew Jackson and Federal Support of Internal Improvements: A Reappraisal," *Essays in History*, IX (1963-1964), 48-59.

72. By 1834, the engineers had seventy-eight projects underway, *ASP: MA*, V, 385-392, 424-427.

73. *Ibid.*, IV, 12-17.

in the light which standing armies in time of peace have usually been regarded—as drones who are consuming the labor of others—but as a body of military and civil engineers, artificers, and laborers, who probably contribute more than any other equal number of citizens, not only to the security of the country, but to the advancement of its useful arts.<sup>74</sup>

Although much too small to perform with maximum efficiency its three basic functions of defense, Indian control, and construction, the standing army had convinced the American people that it was both useful and harmless. It had justified its existence without pointing to an external threat; it had won its place as a valuable and loyal servant of American democracy.

74. Annual Report of the Secretary of War, 1828, *Ibid.*, IV, 2.