

combat land force is to be preserved. Having the best equipment in the hands of individuals alone is insufficient to make an army effective. King reaffirms, above all, readiness is what makes combat soldiers effective in battle.

Every Citizen a Soldier: The Campaign for Universal Military Training after World War II

By William A. Taylor

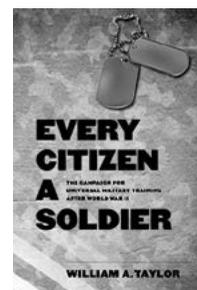
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As the American profession of arms seeks to reclaim its identity, it is encouraging to see the emergence of warrior-scholars. William Taylor is one, as an Annapolis graduate and former US Marine Corps officer who transitioned back into civilian society to pursue a career in academia. In *Every Citizen a Soldier*, Taylor appropriately examines familiar terrain – the US policy formulation process to address postwar national security through the preparedness of its military force to protect American interests. Ostensibly, his thesis is the US military’s drive to reduce the time to prepare individuals and units for war through a program of universal military training was subverted by political and social agendas.

For this reviewer, such an examination is particularly timely as the United States marks more than forty years since the end of conscription and the inception of the All-Volunteer Force with the termination of the Vietnam War. Since that conflict the US has been engaged in numerous military operations across the globe—from the heightened Cold War and a series of contingency of operations (Panama, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo) to the hybrid conflicts of the global war on terror spanning the range of military operations. As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey recasts the National Military Strategy with his focus on readiness, force structure, and modernization. Arguably, the latter two enable readiness of the joint force to fulfill missions directed by civilian officials in the White House and on Capitol Hill.

Taylor provides the context of experiences of the Second World War, which weighed heavily in the American psyche, especially as the nation imagined global threats could emerge after the Allied victory in 1945. During the war, it was apparent, as Taylor clearly presents, American society reconnected with its values and the national leadership held its citizenry responsible in supporting the war. He describes the three-fold challenges faced after the war: balancing national interests with individual liberty; determining the role of universal military training (UMT) and its impact on groups within American society; and defining the relationship of citizenry to its military.

Taylor provides a well-explicated precursor to the UMT efforts. Military historians will be familiar with the post-First World War Plattsburg Movement where American students and businessmen volunteered for basic military training under the command of then-former Army Chief of Staff General Leonard Wood. The movement’s success greatly influenced Wood and future generals whom he mentored—George C. Marshall and John Palmer—both who became the



College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2014
262 pages
\$39.95

foremost uniformed advocates for UMT. This legacy of the First World War became the National Defense Act of 1920, which reorganized the General Reserve (including the National Guard). However, a critical provision for compulsory military training of males between the ages of 18 and 21 was dropped from the bill. In hopes the world would not brook another conflict of a scale as the Great War, the United States followed George Washington's imperative for a "respectably defensive posture" (22) with a small standing army and reliance on mobilizing its citizenry for military operations.

Embroided in the Second World War in 1944, Army Chief of Staff General Marshall signed War Department Circular No. 347 to make UMT "the primary goal of the army's postwar establishment." (29) To Marshall, UMT was essential in developing military leaders, informing public opinion on military matters, minimizing the expense of a large standing army, and aligning democratic traditions with civilian participation in defense and a small standing force. Above all, Marshall and other uniformed advocates saw UMT as the way to improve military effectiveness.

It is easy to use contemporary professional vocabulary to frame the Army effort as a military campaign in its design, planning, and demonstration of a UMT program. The Army chief of staff provided the vision and strategic direction. The general staff performed estimates of friendly and opposing forces. Together, they developed concept of operations, and "scheme of maneuver" with lines of operation. It was clear to military leaders of the time that readiness of the force was absolutely essential for national security. In an Army that grew from 400,000 to 5.4 million between 1938 to 1942, it was important to shorten the time to train individuals and units for future wars. The Army identified early on supportive stakeholders, called "Friendlies"—as well as opposition groups to UMT. For this reviewer, the chapter "Pig in a Poke" was especially intriguing and illuminating in presenting the concerns of leaders from, labor, religious, pacifist, and minority groups. These groups clearly identified that military necessity had direct and, from their perspectives, undesirable consequences for American society.

In today's vernacular, the lines of operation included communication synchronization and strategic messaging across the War Department where senior officers were "on message" and set about to inform, shape, and build support for UMT in the public sector. Clearly, the goal was to build a constituency capable of influencing policy development. Not surprisingly, members of Congress levied charges of impropriety in civil-military relations against the War Department.

Taylor's analysis reveals, while senior military leaders had a very specific conception of UMT, President Truman had a broader vision for UMT as an instrument to shape American society. Shades of Clausewitz—in other words, the military instrument was adapted and subordinated to policy. In response, the military fiercely resisted changes to the core design of its program. The UMT's essential elements were to select men meeting entrance requirements, and train them to achieve individual and collective skills thereby effectively contributing to unit readiness. As Taylor contends, perhaps the fatal flaw inherent in the UMT structure was the maintenance of racial segregation for the sake of military effectiveness.

Elements of the UMT discourse foreshadow contemporary discussions of the US military and the Army. One can easily envision similar internal debates on Department of Defense force structure and capabilities needed to protect national security interests in an environment of global threats and domestic fiscal challenges. I expect the drive to develop the narrative for Strategic Landpower had similar elements of campaign design with its intent, lines of operations, and messaging. Despite the advocacy of iconic strategic leaders like President Truman and General Marshall, UMT was not enacted (defeated in 1948) and selective service was reauthorized by Congress in the summer of 1951. Subsequently, “large segments of American society remained untouched by military service.” (167) Again, the military necessity so clear to Army leaders did not resonate with civilians in the Executive and Legislative Branches. Other priorities subordinated the military instrument to civilian-derived policy.

Taylor has produced an immensely informative and insightful book for senior military professionals. His concluding chapter captures the critical responsibility of strategic leadership: “Senior army leaders grappled with the daunting challenge of crafting a postwar policy in the face of great uncertainty. Even as battles...still raged, they attempted to create a viable army that would stand the test of the unknown and be well suited to a democracy.” (168) Such challenges endure for our military leaders of today and Taylor’s work serves as important contribution to understanding the nature of policy formulation for the security of the Republic.