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## Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802

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official national policy toward military service. Our country is buying volunteers and talking peace, and the Russians are propagandizing and rationalizing a conscripted nation in arms. Each has its special problems, but the long-term results seem predictable. In any event, Dr. Goldhamer has given us a tool with which to assess the Soviet military system from the troop level, and we are left to ponder, *inter alia*, the Russian conscript who gets 5 rubles a month pay and our volunteer who is paid 50 times as much. This is a legitimate concern for, no matter how ineptly led or poorly motivated politically, history bears abundant testimony to the endurance and courage of the Russian soldier.

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Kohn, Richard H. *Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802*. New York: The Free Press, 1975. 443pp.

When Richard Kohn set out to write this book, he sought to find out how and why the American Military Establishment took form in the immediate decades following the Revolutionary War. That task led him to answer yet another question: "Why would a nation that began in 1783 with patent anti-military traditions, with the almost universally held belief that standing armies posed an unacceptable danger to liberty and republican government... begin to create a national army and actually possess a complete military establishment within twenty years of independence?" To be sure, the latter question is more difficult given deep-seated American fears of militarism that extended far back into English history, fears that even surfaced now and then in the Revolution. While sensitive Europeans feared standing armies in peacetime, complained Washington, Americans were equally

prejudiced against their own army in wartime. Dr. Benjamin Rush expressed alarm that Washington himself might use the Continental Army to assume an American throne as George I, successor to George III.

In some new nations—in the Third World, for instance—the army has had a continuing role to play after the winning of independence. The reason is that such states have lacked a tradition of civilian politics and self-government. Consequently, the military has served as a kind of bureaucracy; its officers, often graduates of St. Cyr and Sandhurst, have had professional training in organization and administration that are frequently absent in societies not much above the primitive level. Such an explanation, however, is not helpful for America, where well-educated civilian leaders were able to use their considerable political experience to overcome stumbling blocks inherent in any transition from colonialism to independence.

Kohn's explanation, in essence, is that the postwar military system came into existence in piecemeal fashion, each part being added as a result of national crises and emergencies, beginning with Indian problems in the Confederation period and continuing through the quasi-war with France in 1798. Even though it took nearly two decades to build a military system that would exist with relatively little change until the Root reforms of 1903, Kohn convincingly argues that the blueprint of that system was laid down as early as 1783 by Washington, Hamilton, Pickering, Knox, and others. These men were generally committed to a stronger form of government than the one that existed under the Articles of Confederation. As nationalists in the 1780's and as leaders of the Federalist Party in the 1790's, they worked to expand the power of the central government in the military sector as well as in other areas.

Were the Federalists militarists in the 18th century meaning of that term? Did

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they seek a standing army for America, with all the political implications that the word implied? Perhaps Kohn's evidence can be read two ways. At times, at least, he sees a considerable threat from some of the Federalists. As he says, "I became convinced that at no other time in American history—save perhaps the Reconstruction years and the era of the Cold War—had militarism so seriously threatened the United States." Perhaps he is correct, although this reviewer is not fully persuaded. But it is true that the Hamiltonian wing of the party was heavyhanded in its desire to solve national problems, both internal and external. If the book has a hero, it is probably President John Adams, who stood up to the Hamiltonians, and who, according to the author, was a more skillful politician than is generally recognized.

If the Federalists' divisions within their own party and their overreaction to the crisis of 1798 paved the way for their eventual demise, they nevertheless left the country with sound, well-developed military institutions—frontier and coastal fortifications, a small army, a navy and marine corps, and centralized agencies of control. By the end of the decade even the opposition Republican Party could agree with the Federalists that regular forces were necessary. The wars of the French Revolution were demonstrating that the nature of warfare was changing, that experienced soldiers and professional officers were essential at all levels of operations. The militia, as Jefferson conceded in his inaugural address, could not be the Nation's first line of defense in wartime.

Scholars may question some of the author's conclusions, but none can fairly deny that he has given us an exceedingly important book. Nor should one quarrel with his overall assessment of the era: "At no other peacetime period in American history, with the... exception of 1865-1877

and the post-1945 years, did military affairs exert more influence on national life than during the twenty years after independence when the American military establishment began."

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Millett, Allan R. *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975. 499pp.

Professor Allan R. Millett's *The General* is an important and convincing book. It is a kind of double-barreled biography. It deals not only with a distinguished officer now virtually forgotten, Gen. Robert L. Bullard of World War I fame, but also with an institution, the U.S. Army. Using Bullard's life as the point of departure and as the focus, detailing his activities and his career development, Professor Millett has described the institutional context within which Bullard performed.

Born in Alabama, Bullard graduated from West Point and served on active duty from 1885 to 1925. His service spanned the years when the Army engaged in Indian fighting and patrolled the West, fought against Spain and Filipino insurrectionists, guarded the border along Mexico, and participated in the First World War. From scattered detachments on duty in isolated posts, the Army grew into the modern force that competed successfully on the battlefields of the western front in France.

The changes involved in transforming an antiquated and fragmented military service into an integrated and balanced entity were many. But the overwhelming pressure that pushed the alterations in Army concepts and procedures, according to Millett, was the drive to professionalism.

During the years of Bullard's service, the Army instituted a series of reforms