Purdue
UNIVERSITY

# *Risking High Intensity and Managing Lower Intensity Conflicts via the Approach to Readiness for Mobilization Crafted by the Madison, Monroe and Adams Administrations, 1814-1829.*

**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS**
**Department of History**

# Peter J. Aschenbrenner Department of History Purdue University

## 1./ Introduction to Visioning Victory After High-Intensity Warfare.

**"Victory depends on the general's choice of the field of battle."**

**Bonum ducem convenit nosse magnam partem victoriae ipsum locum, in quo dimicandum est, possidere.**

**Vegetius, De Re Militari III, 13**
**(trans. in paraphrase)**

"War exists; the enemy is powerful; his preparations are extensive; we may expect his attacks from many quarters."

James Monroe to the United States Senate,
11 February 1815, ASPMA 604 at 605.

2./

# Paper to be delivered
# at the U.S. Army
# Historians Training Symposium,
# CMH Conference, 27-31 July 2015,
# Crowne Plaza National Airport Hotel,
# Crystal City, Alexandria, Virginia

# 3./ A War with a First and Second Half.

- This paper is divided into three parts.
- To begin I sum up official views of the state of the American military establishment at the watershed or cusp of the war. I define the watershed as occurring at (or slightly before) the 30 month mark from the outbreak of hostilities.

# 4./ This gives a range from the late spring, 1814 through the fall, 1814.

I emphasize that my focus cannot cover the ground that Kreidberg & Henry (1955) have addressed. [1]

# 5./ A Change in Thinking.

My focus is on the decided shift in thinking at the upper echelon in the Madison administration at the watershed of the Second War for American Independence.

6./ I call this process the militarization of the American military.

# 7./ Part II: Mid-War Assessment of Each Nation?s Operational Competence and Chances.

- Two actors played a significant role in their assessment of the military situation as it presented itself. One report is dated to November 5, 1814 the other to November 9.

# 8./ Taking Risks

- Both actors would achieve the highest civilian office in their respective nations. Both took considerable political risk with their assessments. One actor had secured a world-wide military reputation when he wrote his report. The other had a secure reputation all facets of national political life, including diplomatic service and was the anointed second-in-line at the time he wrote his report.

# 9./ On the British side

- While Monroe' report is couched in manpower/mobilization terms for the coming spring and summer campaigns against the British, his theme is operational competence: that is, how to build an army that can demonstrate a reliable deployment of defensive operational skills.
- But on the other hand, Wellington's report is couched in strategic terms, but Wellington's theme is also directed to operational competence. He details and deplores the waste of British operational superiority giving the multiple points at which force must be applied and, when successful, garrisoned to hold significant real estate for ransom at the bargaining table.

# 10./ Wellington to Castlreagh

Wellington to the British Secretary for War Castlereagh; on the American side, the report of James Monroe, acting  for the War Department, to Sen. Giles of Virginia in response to questions posed to him on behalf of the Senate.