

# The american army and the reservist system

[History](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

of The American Army and the Reservist system The American army has always followed a pluralistic system whereby there are soldiers who are professionals and those that are reserve soldiers. The reserve soldiers are recruited in times of need. There have been debates in the recent past as to whether this system of plurality is the best for the security of the United States of America. This has become an issue especially in the wake of the wars that have been happening in Iraq and Afghanistan. For many Americans, these wars have been situations which have happened earlier as well, notably in Vietnam. This paper shall seek to look at the differences in the use of reservist soldiers in the American army, before and after 1917. This analysis shall take into account the advantages that the reservist policy has had following the year of 1917 and the reasons for it. During the wars in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, reserve soldiers were used in order to supplement the army's workforce. In some situations, this ploy worked; it was never, however, a ploy that was completely successful. There were many loopholes that led to greater workloads for the professional soldiers. In the war against England in 1812, America employed its own army that consisted of a large number of regular or professional soldiers. There were also, however, reservist soldiers in the army. They were mostly employed for the purpose of protecting forts within the nation. This meant that there was a hierarchy within the army and the feudal mindsets of the soldiers in the upper echelons was prominent. This was however, one reason as to why the reservist system was not a great success at this point in history. Another point of time when the reserve soldiers were employed was the wars with the Indians during the period that stretched from 1865 to 1890. These wars were fought with the help of the army and people who

<https://assignbuster.com/the-american-army-and-the-reservist-system/>

were residents of the areas that were affected by the war. The wars would affect the residents the most and as a result of this, they would participate as reservist soldiers in these wars. Another reason as to why the system of fighting wars using reservist soldiers was not successful was the fact that the practice of using enslaved African Americans was also common. This practice obviously backfired as far as the states of the South were concerned as the urge to run to the North where slavery was not prevalent, was understandably, strong. This led to runaways during the wars that took place during this time. The sad fact is however that these people were not always counted as a part of the army until the Civil War had taken place and slavery was abolished in the whole of the United States of America. One of the most important instances of the reservists being sent to war was the Vietnam War of the sixties. This was a long drawn out war, much more so than the Americans had expected it to be. After the election of John F. Kennedy as the president of America, the program of increasing the number of military personnel was put in place. This meant that able-bodied people of America would have to enlist for a war that they may not even have supported. This system was however, more successful at this point of time as there was also a certain amount of support for the war in the initial stages. War also became a means of providing employment to the youth, as certain critics have pointed out. There were dissenters even at that point of time, though. The most famous instance that comes to mind is of course, that of Muhammad Ali, who refused to enlist in the war. Despite such instances, the process of using reservists succeeded to a large extent. This was the case even in the Korean War. The situation during the Iraq war has been grave as well. Towards the beginning however, this war too was fought for the avowed

<https://assignbuster.com/the-american-army-and-the-reservist-system/>

purpose of returning democracy to nations that had been subjugated by tyrannical dictators. This was the reason why many enlisted. Later on, however, with the revelation of many unsavory details regarding the war, recruitment fell (Walsh n. p.). This however, does indicate the fact that the use of reserve soldiers has been a viable policy for governments following the First World War. The pluralistic policy of the American army has been more effective in this era than in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Works Cited Walsh, David. "Opposition to Iraq war hitting US military recruitment". World Socialist Website online. 12 March 2005. Web. 9 December 2013.