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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

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PRESENT MOBILIZATION SYSTEM FOR RESERVE COMPONENTS (RC) IS
INADEQUATE

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

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U.S. Army War College
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2 April 1990

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a capability is still needed today and I would not disagree. However, I believe that the current mobilization system should be one which also allows for use of the reserve components in cases short of war or major national emergency, without its present constraints. Even though the mobilization system has been changed by recent legislation to give the president more authority in use of the reserve components, in situations short of war and major national emergencies, it still lacks "feasible" procedures for use of the reserve components in today's most likely scenarios. This study sets forth the belief that the mobilization system needs to be changed to reflect the current threat environment and the more likely scenarios in which military forces will be committed, especially reserve component forces. The proposed change will be addressed by reviewing the present mobilization system and the changing role and use of the reserve components in today's Total Force.

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ABSTRACT

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The mobilization system that exists today is predominantly a reflection of the perceived needs for an expansion of forces that would support a war in Europe or some other major national emergency for which the current active force would not be sufficient. Such a mobilization envisions a massive buildup of forces such as occurred before the United States entered World War II. The mobilization for World War II ended with 89 combat divisions on active duty as compared to 18 divisions today. Some would argue that such a capability is still needed today and I would not disagree. However, I believe that the current mobilization system should be one which also allows for use of the reserve components in cases short of war or major national emergency, without its present constraints. Even though the mobilization system has been changed by recent legislation to give the president more authority in use of the reserve components, in situations short of war and major national emergencies, it still lacks "feasible" procedures for use of the reserve components in today's most likely scenarios. This study sets forth the belief that the mobilization system needs to be changed to reflect the current threat environment and the more likely scenarios in which military forces will be committed, especially reserve component forces. The proposed change will be addressed by reviewing the present mobilization system and the changing role and use of the reserve components in today's Total Force.



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PRESENT MOBILIZATION SYSTEM FOR RESERVE COMPONENTS (RC) IS
INADEQUATE

The term mobilization conjures visions of massive efforts to move the nation toward readiness for a major war. A momentous national decision is made and reserves are called, the draft resumed, gasoline rationed, civilian factories converted to military production, and the government takes control of communications, shipping and the like. That was mobilization as we knew it in the past and may describe a future mobilization. But it is neither the only nor, perhaps, the most likely type of mobilization that this nation must be prepared for in order to protect our national interests.1

I believe the best way to approach this subject is by addressing a few basic questions. The first of these questions asks, why was a mobilization system needed? The simple answer to such a question is "dollars", but a more extensive review is necessary. England provided the example for early America's militia, the citizen soldier. Developing America could not afford to have a standing army so it adopted the concept of the citizen soldier from England. England had an armed citizen's militia which it could use in peace or war. The American colonies, with limited economic means, found that it could provide for its frontier defense by forming such a militia. This initial militia was made up of volunteers; there were no formal units. This type of militia provided the only defense of Colonial America prior to the American Revolutionary War. The first permanent units of the militia were not organized until around 1636, but with these permanent-type units came a designation system, such as "minutemen", that established

a call-up process or system which called these units out for duty in a prioritized manner. 2

The American Revolutionary War caused the first active duty units to be formed, and they made up the Continental Army. The militia supported the Continental Army during the American Revolution in every battle from Lexington to Yorktown. Since the Revolutionary War there has been a standing army, but since the people and Congress have never been willing to finance a peacetime standing army sufficient to carry-out all possible wartime missions, the militia concept--called the Reserve Components today--has been maintained. 3

The second question asks, what has been the traditional purpose of our mobilization system? The present mobilization system is one which has evolved over many years as a result of many varied circumstances, but its main purpose has remained constant. The main purpose of the mobilization system is to mobilize reserve component units to augment or reinforce the active component forces when needed. For example:

The U.S. active component military forces are currently manned at a peacetime level. In the event of mobilization, wartime strength would be achieved by calling to active duty the Guard and Reserve Forces. 4

Such a scenario is presently based on general war/unlimited war, is focused on Europe, and sees the Soviet Union as the main threat. Such a scenario calls for massive mobilization of the reserve forces to reinforce the active

forces in order to meet such a threat. This was the mobilization scheme for World War II where at the end of the war there were 89 combat divisions on duty as opposed to 18 divisions today.

What threat does the present mobilization system seek to counter or redress is the focus of the third question.

The fundamental assumption that continues to underlie our concept of reserve component mobilization assumes our primary threat remains a major conflict with the Soviet Union, most likely in Europe, and that a general mobilization analogous to 1940 will be necessary. 5

This statement by Lee Austin precisely states the main threat to which our present mobilization system is aimed, the Soviet Union. Since post World War II the United States and the Soviet Union have been the two superpowers of the world. Each nation has beliefs that are in opposition to the other, and each has the capability to pose a serious threat to the other. Therefore, the U.S. military system has always been structured against the potential Soviet Threat. The United States has a force structure that has been developed to counter a massive Soviet attack. Traditionally, the mobilization system for the reserve components is only directed at mobilizing the reserve components for such a threat.

A fourth question or issue deals with the forces that make up the reserve components. Title 10, United States Code, Section 261 (10 U.S.C. 261), says the reserve components of the Armed Forces are: The Army National Guard of the United States, The Army Reserve, The Naval Reserve,

The Marine Corps Reserve, The Air National Guard of the United States, The Air Force Reserve, and The Coast Guard Reserve.

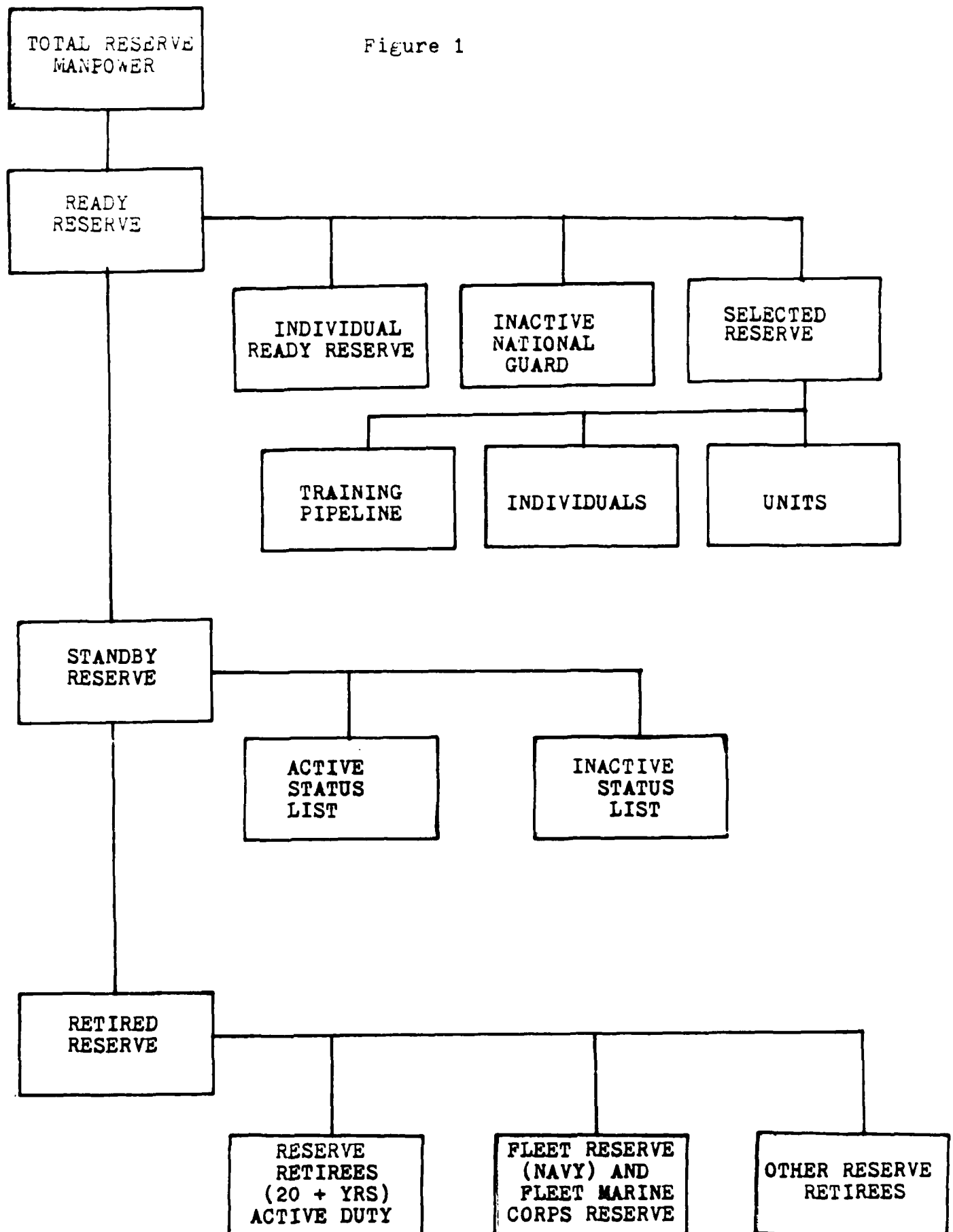
All reserve component manpower is assigned to one of three categories--the Ready Reserve, the Standby Reserve, and the Retired Reserve. (See Figure 1)

The first category, the Ready Reserve, is the category that is primarily looked to for personnel who can be mobilized or ordered to active duty in all situations. The Ready Reserve is further divided into three separate categories--the Selected Reserve, the Individual Ready Reserve and the Inactive National Guard.

The Selected Reserve contains those units and individuals within the Ready Reserve that have been designated as being so essential to initial wartime missions that they have priority over all other Reserves. All individuals in the Selected Reserve are always in an active status and must be ready to mobilize within 24 hours. The Selected Reserve is further divided into three subcategories--Selected Reserve Units, Trained Individuals and the Training Pipeline. However, for this project it is not necessary to go into detail on each and every one of these subcategories. (See Figure 1)

The second major category is the Standby Reserve which has two subcategories--The Active Status List and The Inactive Status List. (See Figure 1) This category contains those individuals who have maintained their military

Figure 1



affiliation without being a member of the Ready Reserve. These individuals are not members of units and as such are not required to perform training. However, these individuals are trained in their specialties and can be used to fill manpower needs in specific skills. In time of war or national emergency these personnel can be involuntarily mobilized. In all other situations, they can not be involuntarily ordered to active duty without a finding by the Secretary concerned, and with the approval of the Secretary of Defense, that there are not enough qualified Reservists in the Ready Reserve who are readily available.

The third and last major category is The Retired Reserve. This category has three subcategories--the Reserve Active Duty Retirees, the Fleet Reserve (Navy) and Fleet Marine Corps Reserve and Other Retired Reservists. (See Figure 1) This category basically contains all personnel who receive retired pay based upon their military service, those entitled to such pay, but who have not elected to do so and are not voluntary members of the Ready or Standby Reserve.

The final question asks, which reserve component forces can be mobilized, for how long, and under what circumstances? This question can best be answered by looking at the six current basic types of mobilization that have evolved over the years. Each type of mobilization is based upon a given situation.

Any Level of Emergency--The Service Secretary concerned may order to active duty any member of the Ready

Reserve or Retired Reserve, under his Jurisdiction, for only 15 days without their consent, or for the duration of emergency with their consent. The Standby Reserve may only be ordered to active duty if they consent or if the Service Secretary concerned, with the approval of the Secretary of Defense, determines that there are not enough Ready Reserve members to accomplish the mission. The National Guard can not be used without the consent of the governor.

Domestic Emergency (Selective Mobilization)--This type of mobilization does not need discussion since it only involves "Domestic Emergencies" and forces can not be used for any other purpose.

Operational Mission Requiring Augmentation of Active Force (200K call-up)-- If the President determines that the active force needs augmentation for an operational mission, he may "call-up" by Executive Order, up to 200,000 members of the Selected Reserves (a subcategory of the Ready Reserve). The President can call them up for 90 days and then extend them for another 90 days, or for a total of 180 days. When the President elects this mobilization authority, the reporting requirements of the War Powers Resolution become effective and require the President to report such deployment of forces to Congress within 24 hours.

Partial Mobilization--This mobilization is based upon a contingency operation, war plan, or national emergency. The President must declare a national emergency by proclamation and issue an executive order to effect

mobilization in this situation. The Ready Reserve and Retired Reserve are subject to this mobilization and 1,000,000 may be mobilized for up to 24 months.

Full Mobilization--Congress must declare war or a national emergency. Under this type of mobilization all reserve component forces are subject to call-up for the duration plus six months. Under such a scenario all existing reserve component units and personnel would probably be mobilized.

Total Mobilization--This type of mobilization is the same as Full Mobilization except units and personnel beyond the existing total force structure would be activated and organized to prosecute a general war. 6

Thus far the mobilization system has been covered by discussing the need for such a system, its purpose, the threat which it has traditionally addressed, the forces which make up the reserve components, what reserve components can be mobilized, and finally, under what situations the reserve components can be mobilized.

The next issue concerns the role of the reserve components. It is my belief that the traditional role of the reserve components has undergone drastic changes, especially in the last two decades, and that they are no longer looked upon as being only a force to be mobilized en masse, but are expected to support and/or participate in all operational missions. This is especially true of certain types of units and of personnel with unique specialties, such as civil

affairs and psychological operations. These units and personnel are predominantly located in the reserve components.

The major change in the role of the Reserve forces probably began in 1973 with the end of conscription and the need to make the most effective use of available resources. These two factors led the Department of Defense to formulate the Total Force Policy. The objective of the policy was a balanced mix of Active and Reserve forces that fully utilized all available assets, while ensuring that maximum military capability was achieved at the minimum realistic cost. Today, this policy is a reality. 7

Today, the Reserve Components' contribution to the Total Force is significant and is growing steadily.

About 35 percent of the Total Force's end strength is provided by the Guard and Reserve. Over one-third of the combat divisions and more than 80 percent of the total combat support and combat service support forces for the Army are in the Reserve Components. 8

These numbers are even more critical for certain types of units and specialties. For example, The United States Army Reserve contains 89 percent of the Psychological Operations Units and 97 percent of the Civil Affairs Units contained in the Total Army assets. 9

The percentage of Total Force units is not the only change in contribution being made by the Reserve forces. This can be shown by a quotation from the White House in 1987. The quotation states:

The Total Force Policy established in the early 1970's places increased responsibilities on the reserve

components of U.S. forcesReserve Units perform important functions on a daily basis. Their priority for manning, training, and equipment modernization is not based on their peacetime status as forces [in reserve], but on the basis of their direct integration into the nation's operational plans and missions. 10

Recent remarks by General Colin L. Powell, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, illustrate a few of the Reserve Components' contributions. General Powell stated:

Since World War II, Reserve Components have played a key role in defending the United States against all manner of challenges. In Korea and Vietnam, the Guard and Reserve stood shoulder to shoulder with Active Force units against Communist aggression. In the crises involving Berlin, Cuban missiles, the Dominican Republic, the Pueblo, and numerous others which weren't big enough to get their own name, the militia was there. More recently, in Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, Operation Eldorado Canyon against Libya, and Operation Earnest Will in the Persian Gulf, Just Cause in Panama, all components of the Total Force contributed to mission accomplishment. 11

Regardless of the contributions made by the Reserve forces in recent years, there are still those who question the readiness of the Reserve forces. I believe there will always be some who use readiness to say that the Reserves are not ready to accept, or be given, more operational missions. However, the recent findings of the Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB), state the true facts.

Title 10, United States Code, Section 175(c) makes the Reserve Forces Policy Board, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, the principal policy adviser to the Secretary of Defense on matters relating to the Reserve Components. Recent findings of the RFPB were printed in The Officer, February 1990. Its overall finding was that the Reserve Forces are better

prepared than ever before. It specifically found that the Reserve Forces, as a result of the implementation of the Total Force Policy promulgated in 1973, had reached an unprecedented level of readiness. It further found that today's Reserve Components are full partners with the Active components and that they are an integral part of theatre operational plans, and successful combat operations can not be carried out without the Reserve Components. It went on to conclude, that when all indicators are considered, the RFPB believes that, although there are remaining challenges, the Reserve Components are entering the '90s in a better posture to mobilize and accomplish their mission than any previous period. 12

The resulting question after these findings has to be, what is the mission of the Reserve Components? This is a question that has to be the subject of a different paper; it is too extensive for this study. However, from previous facts and quotes in this paper, it seems that the Reserve forces are expected to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Active forces and as a result they have been written into almost all operational plans, with some units required to deploy before, or alongside, the Active forces.

Although the exact role or mission of the Reserve components is not easily defined in today's threat environment, it is clear that the national leaders are looking more to the Reserve forces as an asset to be used in securing our national interests. The operation in Grenada,

and more recently the operation in Panama (Just Cause), are clear examples of such reliance. Also, a recent statement by the Secretary of Defense, before The House Armed Services Committee, indicates such reliance. Secretary Cheney stated:

Especially with our Active forces shrinking, we must continue to improve our ability to mobilize the necessary national resources to meet all possible contingencies. To this end, we must support substantial Reserve Forces.... 13

The potential use of the Reserve forces also increases as we move from the traditional threat (Soviet Union), and the least likely to occur, to the most likely. The Secretary of Defense, in his annual report to the President, in January 1990, defined the most likely threat. He said, "low-intensity conflict continues to be the most likely form of violence involving U.S. interests." 14 It is in the low-intensity conflict environment that nation building becomes vital and it is the Reserve forces which possess most of the nation building assets. As stated earlier, the Reserve forces contain 97 percent of the Civil Affairs units in the current Total Force.

Thus I come to my basic concern. I believe that the Total Force Policy has resulted in a total force mix that can not operate efficiently or effectively, except as a total force. No longer can the Active force operate completely independent of the Reserve forces. Force structure policies have placed certain type units almost exclusively in the Reserve forces. This, and recent threat environment changes, have caused the Active forces to be

given missions which they no longer possess the capabilities to execute. Therefore, to accomplish the mission, especially nation building, the Active forces must somehow get assistance from the Reserve forces, and I contend that our present mobilization system does not properly address this dilemma.

I am not the only person who believes that our mobilization system, for today's threat environment, for the Reserve forces is inadequate. Colonel CK Turner, in his paper, A Mobilization Concept for the Future, states:

This current, almost exclusive, planning for a general mobilization for a European war seems to be in contradiction to the most logical scenario for a mobilization of reserve components. The most likely scenario for mobilization would be for a short duration or limited war or for some type of low-intensity conflict (LIC). The least likely scenario currently is a general or world war of the type fought by the United States in 1917 and 1941, wars which focused on Europe. 15

Colonel Turner goes on to say:

We need to plan for new mobilization systems which will permit the United States to be prepared for new contingencies in the Pacific and in Latin America. Thus it is incumbent on United States policy makers to plan ahead and develop a modernization concept for mobilization of our Reserve Components. 16

Senator Jeremiah Denton (R-Ala.), states:

What we must realize is the mobilization statutes in effect prevent optimal use of our Reserve Forces in a manner that would avert conflict, and in the alternative, dangerously hamper their timely and effective deployment for the purpose of repelling aggression. 17

LTC Dennis C. Barlow, in a paper entitled, A Campaign Planner's Guide for the Employment of Civil Affairs in Latin America, states:

Procedures need to be refined to empower reservists to provide the timely and professional support they seek to contribute to the Total Force. 18

These represent only a small sample of views. However, they illustrate my belief that the current mobilization system and/or procedures do not allow for the optimal use of the Reserve forces. I believe this situation can be corrected in one of three ways. The present mobilization system/procedures can be changed, the forces which are in the Reserve Components, which the Active forces must have, but do not have, can be placed in the Active force structure, or a combination of the first two.

I do not believe that the second is totally feasible and as a result I do not recommend it. My reasoning is as follows. Most of the units in the Reserve forces that would be needed in the Active forces can be organized and placed in the Active force structure. However, I do not believe that all of the needed units could be. The Civil Affairs Units are a good example. These units are made up of individuals who work in their specialties on a daily basis. For example, the Director of the Arts, Monuments, and Archives Directorate, in a Civil Affairs unit is and has been the curator for a national museum for the last 15 years. When this type of expertise is needed, it is the immediate expertise that is needed, not a person who is going to learn as he/she goes. How would the Active forces ever train someone in such diverse and technical skills? These are not skills that are learned solely in a school

house and they do not lend themselves to any type of on-the-job-training. Therefore, since all such units can not be placed in the Active force structure, this is not a total solution.

I believe the first possibility is the simplest, but it may also be very difficult to accomplish. The mobilization of the Reserve forces is always a political decision that can have far reaching consequences. "History has shown that such declarations, under conditions short of actual war, are politically abhorrent." 19 Regardless, since all data seems to indicate that Congress is willing to look to the Reserve forces to carry more of the burden for the nation's security, the time may be right to initiate some changes.

Under the present system, the President has the authority to call-up 200,000 Reserve component soldiers for an operational mission. As stated earlier, this is a political decision and presidents in the past have been reluctant to exercise such authority short of actual war or national emergency. I would suggest that the President, by executive order, delegate his 200,000 call-up authority. The call-up authority would be delegated to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and to the commanders of the combatant commands, i.e., the Commanders-In-Chiefs (CINCS).

The authority delegated to the CINCS would be the authority to use those Reserve component soldiers assigned to the CINCS, in their theatre, for executing their assigned missions. Also, the use would be further restricted by a

required "finding", by the CINC, that he could not successfully accomplish his assigned mission without the units and/or personnel from the Reserve components.

The authority delegated to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff would be the authority to assign Reserve component units and/or personnel to a particular CINC in order for that CINC to execute an assigned mission. These would be Reserve component units and/or personnel that are not already assigned to that particular CINC. The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff would have the authority to take such action only after he had a "finding", from the concerned CINC, that he (the concerned CINC), did not have the required units and/or personnel or specialties in his assigned Active forces to accomplish the mission.

A typical scenario might be as follows. The USCINCSO is directed to execute an opplan in his Area of Operations. One of the follow-on missions assigned to the CINC is that of nation building. The CINC determines that to accomplish the nation building mission he will need various Civil Affairs specialists. He asks if the Active forces assigned to him have these capabilities and in the required numbers. His answer is negative and he is told that only the Reserve forces have the required specialties and in the required numbers. At this point, after finding that he does not have the required forces in the assigned Active forces, the CINC should be able to go to the list of assigned Reserve forces and if he has an assigned Civil Affairs unit, use them to

execute his assigned mission. If he does not have an assigned Civil Affairs unit then he must submit his finding, in writing, to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, who in turn can take Civil Affairs assets from the Reserve components and assign them to the concerned CINC so that he can execute his mission.

In such a scenario, the Reserve forces could be used for a total of 180 days, the same as if the President had called the forces up. I believe this would be a much more practical system than we have presently. It takes the president out of the direct decision loop (president would still be ultimately responsible however), and thus reduces the potential for a political environment that would result in no decision being made, at least not in a timely manner. Such a system also addresses the problem that is inherent in our present system. Under the present system we assign Reserve forces to the CINC and the CINC task organizes these forces in a manner that will allow him to execute his assigned missions. These Reserve forces train in his theatre to be ready to perform their missions when called upon and then when the CINC actually needs them for an actual mission, he has no authority to use them.

This was the actual situation in Panama during Operation Just Cause. The USCINCSO needed Civil Affairs assets that the Active forces did not have, and the president would not call-up the Reserves, so the USCINCSO had to ask for "volunteers" from the Reserve components. In

the end the USCINCSO got enough volunteers to get the mission done. However, I contend that this is not the way the army should be run. The successful accomplishment of a valid military mission, assigned by the National Command Authority (NCA), should not rest upon the availability of volunteers. This time it worked, but how about the next time. Will enough people volunteer, will they possess the required specialties, will they be the right persons, will they have the correct grade, and will they be able to stay for the duration? I do not want to be responsible for the results if the answer is no.

I also do not believe that a combination of the first two is the answer. As long as there is a Reserve force unit or person that is needed and must be activated by a Presidential call-up, the problem with the current mobilization system/procedures remain.

In conclusion, I believe, due to many varied reasons, that our Total Force Policy and its implementation has caused a Total Force to be developed that is very effective as a Total Force, but when operating in any other type mode, is not capable of executing all required missions. We have allowed certain type units and capabilities to be placed almost exclusively in the Reserve Components. In itself this is not bad, but when coupled with the failure to provide a speedy and effective procedure for using these Reserve Components, it is.

I have attempted to bring to light what I see as a

serious shortfall in the nation's ability to fully use its Total Force. This is an area that needs to be fully reviewed by the experts in the field and by our national leaders. A decision must be made as to the composition and use of our Total Force. If the Reserve Components are to be a realistic part of the Total Force and be relied upon, then our national leadership and the American people in general, must accept and approve of the fact that our Reserve Forces must be readily available, but also that they will in fact be used.

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