

**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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INTEGRATING THE ONE ARMY CONCEPT

BY

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ABSTRACT

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The pace with which integration begins and builds momentum is dependent upon the Army and Guard leadership actively addressing relevant issues. There are at least three scenarios for the future: what is possible, plausible, and preferable.

It will require both sides to sit with all their cards (face up) on the table - then work to find the common ground on the polarized issues. Their failure to do so, will confound the Army's attempt to remain relevant in the post-Cold War. More important, it will affect the Army's ability to serve as an effective instrument of national power.

The proposals to facilitate integration between the Active Army and the Guard are realistic and achievable. Although it is possible to implement several of them individually, a far greater impact, would be a package of integration initiatives. This would demonstrate the leadership's resolve and total commitment to achieve integration that will allow our nation's greatest landpower force to effectively shape, respond and prepare in concert with our National Military strategy. There remains a naive confidence that the leadership of the service and component will work to bring General Abrams' vision through its ultimate journey.

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PREFACE

During the preparation of this project, my research tends to corroborate what others have found when writing about the Army National Guard or other reserve components - namely, that the more substantive material published about the Army Guard appears in private and government organizations that are associated with the Guard. This dearth of information, unfortunately, makes it more difficult for the researcher to gather objective sources. Just as important, however, is the signal this cultural confinement of material to these sources sends to all members of America's Army. The assimilation or infusion of Guard subjects and authors into mainstream Army periodicals would do well to improve the education of all of the forces' members.

The occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of America's Total Force policy provides a useful benchmark to analyze the breadth and depth of integration between the services and its components. In particular, to determine the degree of integration of America's Army. Some 25 years later, it appears the relationship between the Active and Guard components still clamors for the full integration once envisioned by General Creighton Abrams and former Defense Secretary Melvin Laird.

Challenged by the post-Cold War global environment, characterized by its volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous nature, the Army is rapidly moving to adapt and align itself to the national strategy. The strategy's underlying premise is the U.S. no longer faces global threats on a regional basis, but rather, regional threats on a global basis.

Concurrently, the Army, along with the other services, contends with the political and economic fall-out in the aftermath of the post-Cold War. Faced with declining resources marked by force end strength ceilings, and a reduced DOD annual budget, the Active Army and Guard are competing to market their relevance and future roles. This in the context of a country that is inherently, far more focused on the domestic economic issues, than on the nation's defense.¹

At issue is whether the Army Guard and Active Army are ready and capable of effectively integrating into a One Army concept. Given the Total Force policy's past history and an uncertain future, can the Active Army and Army Guard become strategic partners, and will America's Army be an integral part of the nation's military instrument of power?

This paper describes the historical evolution of the Total Force policy, its application to the Army, and the successes and failures of the policy. It discusses the ends, ways, and means required to meet the spirit and intent of the Total Force policy.

The focus, however, is on specific recommendations and initiatives to improve upon the level(s) and type(s) of integrating the personnel, equipping, and training systems and organizational processes between the Active Army and Army Guard.

There are low or no-cost initiatives that, if implemented, would adhere to the mandate to integrate America's Army and restore the Army to the intent of the Total Force policy.

THE ORIGIN OF THE POLICY

"We have found in the total force a superb combination of federal or state governance; national or local representation; and professional or citizen-soldier competence, uniquely suited to America -- a state, a nation, and a democracy -- all of which reflect the diversity of a continent."²

The policy's origins are seeded in the "lessons learned" of the Vietnam War. Notably, the policy sought to redress the reasons why the American people failed to maintain support for U.S. military participation in the war. Public support sufficiently unraveled throughout America that the war became the pre-eminent, divisive societal issue in the late 1960's and early 70's. This fact was not lost on General Creighton Abrams, Chief of Staff of the Army. Never again would America go to war without support of the American people.

Consequently, he initiated unparalleled force structure changes to put enough combat support and service support in the National Guard to ensure that no future war

could be fought without their deployment.³ This action would force future administrations and Congresses to consider the implications of initiating subsequent calls for U.S. military intervention.⁴ In turn, the deployment of reserve units would provide a kind of barometer to measure the support of the American people.

Three years later, then Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger formalized the initiative and implemented the Total Force Policy.⁵ The policy's basic tenet was that the Guard and Reserve would serve as the primary augmentees for the Active component in a military emergency. The desired outcome was to have fully trained, adequately equipped, and combat-ready Guardsmen and Reservists be the initial source of additional military manpower when U.S. armed forces must deploy and fight.⁶

Abrams and Laird grasped Clausewitz's theory of the trinity of government, military, and the people. They understood the successful prosecution of any war requires all three elements to be present. The most difficult element, as they witnessed first hand, was to sustain the people's support for any war. They instinctively knew that to cull populist support in future wars, it would require mobilizing and deploying National Guard units. Units, whose grass roots linked them to 3500 communities across America. Most important, they recognized activating the Guard would unleash a system of checks and balances on the federal branches of the government before the nation's leadership committed U.S. troops.

Twenty-five years later, the current senior military leader recognizes the fundamental impact of this critical grass roots' element, which still exists today in

America. It is squarely reflected in the recent comments of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Shelton.

"The public's perennially strong support for, and trust in, its military is often because so many Americans work or share a neighborhood with part-time soldiers...This traditional relationship between the civilian and military populace is a foundation of our national strength."⁷

An understanding of the policy's origins is essential because it serves as a rallying point for two long-standing camps: those who embrace the U.S. Constitution's wording on the creation and sustainment of what is now the Army National Guard, and others who contend that our forefathers' intent of a militia concept is out of date, and thus, irrelevant in the current strategic employment of the Army Guard. This division reflects the policy's progress over the past two plus decades, as well as the more substantive issue over the sizing and shape of future force structure.

SUCSESSES AND FAILURES

"the historic tension between the two American armies ...requires the effort to balance and harmonize their rival claims, in order best to assure both military security and a democratic polity, which has dominated the history of American military institutions."⁸

One distinguishing feature that denotes the relationship between the Active Army and the National Guard lies in the allocation of resources. It appears, the degree to which each component is resourced, largely determines their ability and willingness to

amicably co-exist. To some extent, it suggest a parallel case be made that the effect of resource allocation directly influences the degree of integration. This disparity is more obvious in contrasting the level of funding provided during the Cold War period with the more recent, past years' budget.

The Cold War Years

With the inception of the policy and through most of the Cold War, the Army National Guard force evolved from a strategic reserve force, to one in which its units, particularly, service support elements and round-out units were expected to deploy with 30-90 days after mobilization.⁹ The Guard's combat divisions were more or less relegated to a strategic reserve status. This is reinforced by the fact the U.S. did not engage any of the combat elements of the Army Guard during the Cold War.

In the first decade through 1980, "considerable rhetoric continued to be devoted to discussions of the merits of the Total Force Policy, but the effective integration of the active and reserve components was still much very much an allusion."¹⁰

From 1980-1990, under the Reagan and Bush administrations, all services saw a dramatic increase in defense spending. In this second decade, the Army Guard realized tremendous improvements in manning, training, and equipping capabilities of their units. Specific equipping policies increased the level of equipment on hand, within most units, to a record high of almost 90 percent.¹¹ Similarly, in the manpower arena, a series of new policies and symbolic presidential acts: reduced the long-standing military-civilian pay disparity, revived the G.I. Bill, with a net result of an enhanced public image of the military.¹²

Much of the successes the Guard enjoyed can be attributed to the proportional size and share of the slice of the defense budgets that reflected our national military strategy as a bi-polar doctrine of containment. For the most part, it appears the allocation of resources minimized the friction between the Active and Guard. Resultantly, most issues tended to focus on improving the readiness of Guard units to augment the active component.

The Strategic Pause

“The geopolitical conditions and economic constraints no longer permit us to think of the Guard as merely the forces of last resort; we must recognize them as indispensable to our ability to defend the nation.”¹³

It is against this backdrop that the most recent Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the National Defense Panel Report (NDP), and the Report of the Commission on Roles and Missions (CORM) of the Armed Forces all cited the need to identify the future roles and missions for the Army National Guard in the post-Cold War strategic environment. While the other services and components compete for end strength and relevant missions to shape, respond and, prepare for the full spectrum of threats in the 21st century, the Army National Guard remains at the starting gate. The publicity surrounding the release of the QDR and NDP report only heightened the rift between the Active Army and the Guard. The rift reached its' apex by late summer. Last fall, Defense Secretary Cohen released a directive advising the entire Defense department, Active and Reserve, “to eliminate all residual barriers -- structural and cultural -- for effective integration within the Total Force.”¹⁴

In the interim, The Joint Reserve Strategic Plan published in 1996, responded to the Commission on the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces (CORM) tasking to review DOD policy on the Total Force. Specifically, the planners were asked to provide a product that would maximize the use of the Reserve Component and increase the level of integration between the Active and Reserve components.¹⁵

Of note, is an appendix of the plan, which lists more than 20 ongoing studies on various aspects of integration being conducted at the time the Joint Reserve Component Strategic Plan went to print.¹⁶ Interestingly, little has been published in military mainstream periodicals on the results of these projects.

Summarily, the reduction and shifting of present and future defense resource allocations, inextricably linked to the fact there is no clearly defined threat, has forced the Active Army and Guard to singularly assert their relevance at the expense of any attempt to integrate. Thus, the mandate for seamless integration.

THE ENDS

"the objective is to integrate the capabilities and strengths of the Active Component and Reserve Component units in the most cost-effective manner, i.e., one that provides the most military capability and flexibility possible within the limitations of the budget."¹⁷

The press for Active and Guard assimilation is being led by the Department of Defense and Congress. Desired is an end state of seamless integration. The success of the process and methods to achieve this objective relies upon the current climate, adequate resource allocation, and the ability to achieve consensus on the substantive

issues, particularly within the Congress, Department of Defense, and the services. There are, however, initiatives that can be implemented between the two components to materially cooperate, and vastly, improve the degree of integration.

Politics

“all politics are local”¹⁸

This paper is not a referendum on the politics involved inside the Capitol’s beltway, nor does it portend to extend blame on either the Active Army or Guard leadership for the current state of affairs. Nonetheless, the enduring legacy envisioned by General Abrams is not yet realized – and it won’t, until the senior leadership sits down and earnestly works through the resource issues that hamper One Army integration. Ideally, they will do this before it is congressionally mandated.

Like most democratic nations who want to maintain adequate military forces for peacetime deterrence and wartime defense, the U.S. Congress continues to examine a variety of issues. First and foremost, is the source and use of military manpower. The manpower issues include a shrinking recruiting base, the role of women in the military, and in the case at hand, both the peacetime and wartime roles of the Army National Guard in national defense.¹⁹

Questions regarding the size, shape, and use of the Army Guard most assuredly involve contentious military and political considerations. This is not surprising - military manpower systems have long been considered inherently political. One comment made by a non-attribution source is that the Army leadership needs to understand it

runs the Army in concert with the 52 other generals, who serve as The Adjutant Generals. Thus, there exists the real potential for any issues regarding Guard force structure and resource allocation to move far beyond the beltway to the states' capitols.

THE WAYS

In the interim, there are a number of initiatives and proposals to hasten the integration of the Active Army and Guard. The ones presented here may have the ability to immediately influence the scope of integration for the next generation of America's soldiers. For the most part, the proposals are either low or no-cost policy or systems changes. These recommendations cross functional areas, and represent only a small amount of the possible measures, to advance on achieving the objective. The most enduring changes will be those that can reshape the culture and values inherent in assimilating into One Army.

Integration through Education and Training

One of the more effective measures to merge the force is education. It portends to be a critical building block to the foundation of the One Army. The cross-fertilizing at educational venues - pre-commissioning, and professional military schools - is a start.

Pre-Commissioning Level

For integration to take root and branch out for the next generation of officers, suggest the venues consider starting indoctrination and experiential learning on One Army capabilities as early as the pre-commissioning phase of those officers' undergraduate education. This could be achieved by:

- Integrating positions on the faculty and staff at the United States Military Academy to include qualified National Guard officers.
- Assigning at least one qualified National Guard officer to the ROTC staff at each of the nation's top 400 major colleges and universities, as an instructor.
- Augmenting the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning to include qualified National Guard officers to serve as active participants in key cadre and instructor positions.

This early intervention could eliminate counter-productive bias at the source. The ability to indoctrinate cadets with a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental roles of each service and component, may reduce the ignorance and confusion about the nature of our two-Army nation. Ideally, the curriculum lays a foundation that minimizes the cultural barriers that currently affect the relationship.

Because their respective training programs lend themselves to it, schedule USMA and ROTC cadets for two weeks of their summer to observe and interact with Guard units during Annual Training. This provides the cadets a sort of "just in time" experiential learning program comparable to those in place at the Military Academy.

Professional Military Education

All levels of PME need to improve the depth of their curriculum to provide a better forum for the instruction on reserve component issues. Programs of Instruction (POI) should incorporate fundamental learning objectives into the courses. Augment all courses by assigning qualified Guard officers to serve on staff and faculty.

At the Officer Basic Course this entails assimilation of Guard officers at each of the branch's schools. This visibility is important. First, because a portion of the student body in every Basic course taught, are Second Lieutenants who hold reserve commissions. Completion of the resident Officer Basic Course is a prerequisite for them to retain their commissions. Second, it helps provide further officer development by expanding on the Active-Guard linkage from the undergraduate/OCS level to prepare for an officers' initial assignment.

Guard officers should augment the staff and faculty at the Officer Advance Courses, Combined Arms Services School (CAS3), Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College. To a small degree this is already being done by assigning a Liaison Officer to each of the schools. In some cases, they also serve as a member of the faculty. Increasing the number of qualified Guard officers furthers the process of integration at all levels of the Army's PME program. It reinforces the respective roles and missions of the One Army components, accentuating the strengths and minimizing the differences between Active and Guard capabilities.

Training

Training oversight of Guard units rests with the Active Army. Congress has authorized the allocation of 5000 Active component soldiers for the entire Reserve component to assist in this mandate. What follows are a few initiatives worth exploring to improve upon the degree of integration of One Army - some have already started, but warrant further increased use. The range of proposals encompass primarily tactical and organizational level benefits.

At the tactical level require all active army Lieutenants, once commissioned, to spend two weeks annually with a Guard unit during its' Annual Training period. The officer serves in an observer role and functions at the platoon level to work with the leader to execute the training plan. This Annual Training assignment does a few things. First, it provides experiential learning for both, the Active and Guard lieutenants. Second, it will probably produce a better Annual Training period for the Guard lieutenant . Third, the assignment reinforces the cultural and educational similarities of the two components. Ideally, the Lieutenant gains an insight into, and an understanding of the tremendous effort required to maximize the training value. Additionally, it serves to cultivate important relationships at a formative period in both junior officers' careers.

At the organizational level change the current policy of a single National Training Center (NTC) rotation every eight years for each enhanced brigade. With its current fifteen brigades, this opportunity to train at the NTC or similar maneuver exercise facility seriously diminishes the closest wartime simulation, short of combat these units will

experience. The change to allow four rotations a year would provide a four year cycle between the brigades' rotation and is much more realistic.

Recommend increasing the number of Guard units for OPFOR rotations at the NTC. Its first use occurred last year, and the comments from the "use quote", warrant a serious look at their use. Their use could reduce the PERSTEMPO of the AC OPFOR units that traditionally support the NTC. This would provide the AC units an opportunity to participate in other exercises, professional schooling, as well as time at home station.

Operational Aspects

Make SOUTHCOM a Guard command. For the past several years, the Guard has played an increasingly active role in conducting missions in the Southcom AOR. Currently, Guard units and personnel constitute the highest percentage of military personnel in the command's AOR at any given time. This integral involvement has precipitated a number of mil to mil contacts via the Guard's State Partnership Program, which continues, as well, to reinforce the Guard's visibility and its contributions to our American neighbors. Giving Southcom to the Guard would clearly articulate the breadth of integration within One Army, and provides an unparalleled opportunity to meld the Active and Guard interoperability.

A second proposal would require all of the CINC's OPLANS to contain a completed Appendix 5. This was a finding from the group working the Joint Reserve Component Strategic Plan. The present situation merely signals a continuing defensive Active Army posture that undermines any effort of integration.

More important, it would provide direction to the Guard leadership and field grade commanders to allow them to resource, plan, and conduct training appropriate to an assigned CINC mission. It could improve the accessibility of the RC units - a chronic complaint - by increasing their availability to mobilize and deploy to a specific theater of operations. Lastly, a completed Appendix 5 sends a One Army message of the need to integrate both the combat and combat support roles that exist within the RC inventory.

Personnel Assimilation

Another area that warrants attention is the assimilation of personnel systems, and other initiatives to build the requisite degree of integration between the two components. It appears little interaction has occurred in the past, and an array of possibilities exists from top to bottom. Some of these proposals are not new, but nonetheless should be considered in the journey to seamless integration.

First, elevate the Chief of National Guard Bureau position to a four star billet and give her/him a seat on the Defense Resources Board as well as the Joint Requirements Oversight Council. Uniquely, the Chief, NGB serves as the senior Guard officer for both, the Army and Air Guard forces. In the case at hand, the Chief's rank puts him at a disadvantage when working with the Active Army leadership. It limits his effectiveness to influence and contribute to the One Army. A four star billet would properly assimilate the Chief, NGB into the highest levels of decision-making and empower him to facilitate the Guard's transformation to a seamless organization.

An effort, last fall, to make the Chief a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff failed passage by Congress. A compromise did provide a two star Guard advisor to the CJCS, but will probably be of limited value. A recent article indicated Senator Stevens, R-Alaska, intends to introduce a revised bill this year.

Another proposal revives the former "Captains to Europe" program. Albeit, the numbers of units and troops assigned to Europe has dropped in the post Cold-War period, accessing Guard captains for a three year overseas assignment provides another assimilation opportunity. For one, it provides a Guard officer with the requisite experience and knowledge to return to his reserve unit and effectively train his/her unit. Second, it allows PERSCOM additional assets to fill vacancies, perhaps alleviating any PERSTEMPO concerns at the junior officer level.

Initiated in 1981, the original program redressed the shortfall of active duty officer accessions. The program died in 1988, ostensibly due to a lack of funding. The resurrection of this extremely worthwhile program would serve to further integrate and reinforce a One Army.

Provide Active Army officers more opportunities to command Guard battalions and brigades. These officers would learn first hand about the capabilities of Guard, and channel them to improve their interoperability with their AC counterparts. Given the shortage of field grade commands, it provides another venue for board-selected AC officers to assume command. The first instance of this has already happened. In Louisiana, an Active Army LTC assumed command of a Guard battalion. The Guard

continues to accommodate this integration - NGB recently asked each state and territory to forward a list of units available for potential Active Army commanders.

The Active Army should require a two year tour of duty with a Guard unit, headquarters, or State Area Command, mandatory for promotion to Colonel. Although past emphasis focused exclusively on joint assignments, an equivalent mandate is needed to require all officers to serve with a reserve component organization. Perhaps the stigma of a reserve tour of duty as non-career enhancing assignment will diminish.

More important, it seems to make sense that an officer should know how his/her service and its components operate, before they function in a joint assignment. Trying to fulfill both the RC and Joint duty assignments, however, may require policy changes to include increasing time in grade, extending the total length of commissioned service by grade, and adjusting a later retirement age.

Select qualified Guard officers for opportunities to serve in primary staff positions from MACOMS to DA staff. Combined with the above proposal, it begins to blend the forces at all levels, and provides the Active Army with the talent resident within the Guard officer corps. Ideally, these slots would come from a congressional account that affected neither AC nor Guard officer personnel authorizations.

Equipping the Guard

"It is morally indefensible to assign important missions to reserve units in order to achieve cost savings, and then fail to give those units the resources that permit successful performance."²⁰

The compatibility and interoperability of equipment is a primary way to integrate the Guard and the Active component. This particular issue has daunted the Guard leadership since the advent of the Total Force Policy. DOD directive 1200.02 mandates a policy of "first to fight, first to equip." Because of the inclusion of some Guard units to respond early, it is imperative that the resourcing of designated priority Guard units be similarly equipped as the AC units they are reinforcing or supporting. This issue inextricably links itself to the budget process, PPBES, that both service and component rely on for funding requirements. In the past each has submitted their own budget. The Active Army, however, has tended to think that any dollars appropriated to the Guard are "lost" dollars to the service. Consequently, year after year, Congress has stepped in and authorized a supplemental bill to pay for equipping the Guard units. Over time, this resulted in the Active Army in not bothering to submit Guard budget items. Additionally, the scarce resources at hand have further alienated the service and component. Ideally, striking some form of compromise to submit the budgets side by side for congressional consideration and approval.

The inclusion of the Chief, National Guard Bureau on the Defense Resource Board would further balance the perceived and in some cases, real shortcomings of the budget process and subsequent appropriations. Whatever the measures taken, they need to consolidate the resourcing of the Active and Guard alike. Failure to establish this common ground and sense of cooperation could eventually result in the other services mounting a congressional attack to reduce the share of the Army/Guard annual budget.

THE MEANS

"By the end of this decade, however, defense spending is expected to drop below three per cent of GDP."²¹

The crux to the issue of integration resides in the allocation of resources. The One Army objective "is to integrate the capabilities ... of the Active and Reserve Component units in the most cost-effective manner."²² In terms of force structure mix, it is Congress who essentially directs the size and shape of the components.²³ Thus, it is beyond this paper's focus to attempt to resolve the substantive, albeit, divisive issue of what is the ideal force. What can be briefly addressed though, are the resources required to support this paper's proposals to increase the breadth and depth of integration.

The majority of the proposals are low, or no cost alternatives and could be resourced within existing budgets. A primary consideration is the authorization to form central manpower accounts to control the numbers of active and Guard personnel who are assigned to "integrated positions" under the One/Total Army concept. Less tangible, though as important, is the commitment of the senior leadership to begin the process of integration - to start the journey to One Army.

CONCLUSION

"...a history of the United States Army must be, however, a history of two armies, and of an awareness of the special strengths that in the past the United States has drawn from its dual military traditions. Such an awareness is the first requisite to our finding the means of overcoming the difficulties that stand in the way of perpetuating both traditions, and thus perpetuating the special combination of military strength and vigorous respect for democracy that only the duality of our military inheritance can offer."²⁴

The pace with which integration begins and builds momentum is dependent upon the Army and Guard leadership actively addressing relevant issues. There are at least three scenarios for the future: what is possible, plausible, and preferable.

The possible scenario evolves around Congressional involvement to resolve by legislation, those issues the Army and Guard leadership cannot decide amicably. Foreseeable, the mandates will shift the resources away from the Army, further reducing both the end strength, and funding for modernization programs. The "lost share" will go to the other services to underwrite their modernization requirements.

The plausible scenario is the other services will not sit idle while the Army continues to hold on to its current policies. They will increase their political leverage to gain Congressional support to shift the missions and resource allocations, thereby severely diminishing the role of the landpower force.

The preferable scenario is where the Army and Guard leadership work with the civilian leadership to address the "hard to decisions" to shape the future force. It reflects integration will provide economies of scale and reduce redundancy. It will be as close to the ideal force as there can be.

It will require both sides to sit with all their cards (face up) on the table - then work to find the common ground on the polarized issues. Their failure to do so, will confound the Army's attempt to remain relevant in the post-Cold War. More important, it will affect the Army's ability to serve as an effective instrument of national power

The proposals to facilitate integration between the Active Army and the Guard are realistic and achievable. Although it is possible to implement several of them individually, a far greater impact, would be a package of integration initiatives. This would demonstrate the leadership's resolve and total commitment to achieve integration that will allow our nation's greatest landpower force to effectively shape, respond and prepare in concert with our National Military strategy. There remains a naive confidence that the leadership of the service and component will work to bring General Abrams' vision through its ultimate journey.

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ENDNOTES

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- ⁸ Russel F. Weigley, History of the United States Army, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), vi
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- ¹⁶ Ibid., Appendix D
- ¹⁷ Duncan, 166
- ¹⁸ Anecdotal quote attributed to former Speaker of the House, Tip O'Neill
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