

**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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THE TOTAL ARMY – EMBRACING AN OLD IDEA

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Tracing the "Total Army" concept from 1973 to the present, this paper discusses the political objectives along with the inter-service rivalries that have and continue to plague this policy. Over the years much has been accomplished under the guise of Total Army equality, however, much more is needed; specifically with regards to force structure, equipment modernization and the roles & missions for the Reserve Components.

In recent years the declining Defense budget and subsequent drawdown of military forces has brought the three components to engage in inter-service fighting. With the current stalemate in cooperation caused by the findings of the Quadrennial Defense Review, the time has come to move beyond the past.

Recommendations include revitalizing the Reserve Components Coordination Committee, the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee, and developing programs designed to change the parochial culture found within each component. These initiatives will engage the Leadership from the Active Army, Army National Guard, and the Army Reserve in open dialog and on an equal setting to discuss the issues effecting the Total Army.

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THE TOTAL ARMY - EMBRACING AN OLD IDEA

The need for an effective, efficient, and economical "Total Army" is more pronounced today than it was in 1973 when the Total Force Policy was enacted. Growing world tensions and uncertainty caused by the breakup of the Soviet Union have underscored the importance of a strong United States military. Adding to this challenge is the dwindling United States defense budget. As the President of the United States struggles to balance the budget, so struggles the Department of Defense (DoD) to balance force structure to meet operational requirements. Developed in 1973, the "Total Army Policy" was designed to meet just such a need.

Never fully implemented, the Total Army policy remains a goal without defined milestones for success. Recent disagreements between the Army's Active and Reserve components over this policy have created a polarized situation revolving around force structure issues. This research paper will address the Total Army policy from its beginnings to its present form, and offer several recommendations to bring the policy back in line. Building on the strength of combining an effective active force with an economical reserve force, the results will tie together the best of both to provide America with an efficient Total Army.

BACKGROUND

Enacted on 23 August 1973 by then Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, the Total Force policy called for the integration of the Active Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve into a homogenous whole. The policy memorandum further emphasized the fact that Army National Guard and Army Reserve forces are the initial and primary augmentation of the Active Army. As such, the Secretary of the Army is to provide for the manning, equipping, training, facilities, construction and maintenance necessary to insure that the selected reserve units meet deployment times and readiness required by contingency plans.¹

In the twenty-five years since its adoption this policy has served many roles to many people. It has not however; served this nation well with regard to providing the best national defense structure that money can buy. While the Total Force Policy has been part of the National Military Strategy language since its adoption, it has not been fully implemented to the satisfaction of all components.

Infighting between the components is varied by Service, but it is most pronounced within the Department of the Army. The Army National Guard, long seen as a politically motivated and dysfunctional State Militia, has taken the leadership of the Active Army to task on implementing this policy.

Striving for relevance with regard to force structure, roles & missions, and resourcing, the Army National Guard and the Army

Reserve have recently taken their fight to the press. This method, while seemingly achieving some gains in Congressional support, has drawn a line in the sand between the leadership of both components. The time has come to move beyond this rift and work together to fix the problems instead of highlighting them.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

It is my observation and opinion after serving 14-plus years as an enlisted soldier, regular Army officer and Army National Guard officer that the Total Army - isn't. In regard to the fight over the QDR (Quadrennial Defense Review), I feel the true issue isn't the cuts; it's that we still don't have a Total Army in spirit or in practice. For those who disagree, just compare what is happening within the Army (Active, Guard and Reserve) to what is taking place within the Total Air Force. In summary, the challenge and fight isn't the QDR, it is; the Total Army isn't; why not?²

-CPT Roderick J. MacBride
Iowa Army National Guard

From its inception in the early 1970's, the Total Force policy has created an increasing reliance on reserve forces within the Department of the Army. The ability of the Army to deploy large forces and conduct sustained operations is tied to the availability and accessibility of Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Availability of these units to mobilize and deploy is linked to unit readiness. This policy, enacted in the wake of Vietnam and during a period of military drawdown, revolves around three main objectives. First, it should provide an economical yet strong military force capable of meeting all national defense requirements. Secondly, it should maintain an available training

base of personnel while moving away from conscription to an all-volunteer force. Lastly, it should limit the ability of the Executive Branch to wage large military operations without either the consent of Congress or the support of the American people.

By relying more directly on the Reserve Components the Army could also depend on the support of the American people since commitment to combat or potential combat would have an immediate impact on thousands of American communities across the nation as the Reserve Components were mobilized to support the effort. For an appreciation of this factor, we only have to look at Desert Shield/Storm to see the support generated when "hometown America" was involved; contrast that with Vietnam, when attempts were made to keep the war away from the American public.³

-Philip A. Brehem

To achieve these objectives the Total Force policy incorporates three concepts for implementation. First, it draws all the Army National Guard and Army Reserve force structure into national contingency plans. This shift in policy is designed to capture the personnel and training costs savings that are inherent in the Reserve Components part-time status. Secondly, it establishes the Army National Guard and Army Reserve as the initial and primary augmentation for the Active Army. This shift in policy has ended the need for a conscripted force. Lastly, the Total Force policy has shifted unit missions and force structure from the Active Component to the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. This policy has created the requirement for Reserve Component mobilization to support any large or protracted military operation.

Today, the environment within which the Total Army Policy finds itself is one of distrust, back-room meetings, and parochial component interests. This current situation has prompted Secretary of Defense, William S. Cohen to address the problem directly to the leadership of the Army's Active and Reserve Components.

...Today, I ask each of you to create an environment that eliminates all residual barriers, structural and cultural, for effective integration within our Total Force. By integration I mean the conditions of readiness and trust needed for the leadership at all levels to have well-justified confidence that the Reserve Component units are trained and equipped to serve as an effective part of the joint and combined force within whatever timelines are set for the unit-in peace and war...⁴

-Hon. William S. Cohen

While this memorandum hints at the growing discord between the two Army components, the policy of Total Force integration is alive and moving forward within the other services. It is best demonstrated in the complete integration of the Active Air Force, the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve into a Total Air Force.

Within the Total Air Force, both the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve participate on an outwardly equal basis alongside their active duty counterparts. Whether operating in worldwide deployments or providing routine support, an individual flight crew is just as likely to be from the Reserves as from an active duty unit.

This, however, is not the case within the Army where there seems to be cultural barriers between the Active Army and its Reserve Components. Developed over the years from disagreements over budget cuts, readiness standards, personnel practices, and evaluator/evaluated relationships, the perception of the Reserve Components has remained negative. As the role of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve in the Total Army has grown, so has this preconceived bias. If this situation is allowed to continue to perpetuate itself, the cycle of long-term distrust will keep the two components apart on such key issues as equipment modernization, force structure allocation, and personnel end-strength.

INITIAL POLICY EXPECTATIONS

Based on the concept of leveraging all Army force structure into national contingency plans, the Total Army policy quickly became more than just an idea. Filling the bill as a plan for action, both the Active Army and Reserve Component leadership embraced the opportunity to use this policy and build it into mission planning. Incorporating the force structure within the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve into current contingency plans could fix, as then Army Chief of Staff General Edward C. Myers put it; "a hollow Army".⁵ The following interpretation of the Total Force policy by the Reserve Forces Policy Board in 1976 summarizes this policy most succinctly.

...The Total Force Policy implies an increased interdependence of active and reserve forces. It

absolutely requires that the availability and readiness of reserve forces must be as certain as the availability of active forces...⁶

-Reserve Forces Policy Board

The Active Component leadership saw this policy as an opportunity to capture cost savings from "Roundout" Reserve Component units. By establishing an affiliation of Brigade size Reserve Component units (Roundout) within the existing Active Component Divisional structure, it saw the possibility to increase readiness over current stand alone Reserve Component Divisions. Additionally, while reducing procurement cost dollars for the Active Army, it could potentially decrease the mobilization times for these Roundout Units.⁷

The Reserve Components, on the other hand, saw this policy as a first step towards acceptance by the Active Army as an equal partner.

The basic concept of a Total Force has in itself provided a new sense of purpose. Guardsmen and Reservists now see growing evidence that they will be called and have a role to play in future emergencies.⁸

-Charles E. Heller

Not since the 1903 Dick Act or the National Defense Act of 1916 had there been an attempt to modernize and restructure the Reserve Components more in line with the Active Army.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

From its inception the Total Army policy has evolved to meet several different political agendas ranging from military

drawdowns to Defense budget savings, but it has not created a "Total Army". One of the main reasons for this is the perceived inequity in missions and resourcing. An honest broker is needed within DoD to put this policy on the correct path within the Army.

Current oversight of the DoD's Total Force policy since its conception, has been delegated to each Service Secretary for implementation. Enforcement of this policy requires the Army's Service Chief to among other things man, equip, and train the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. To support the concept, resourcing decisions are made to insure that readiness levels will meet the criteria required by contingency plans. The top three resourcing requirements are procurement (modernization of equipment), operations and maintenance (training and maintenance), and unit force structure (manning).

PROCUREMENT

One of the keys for the Reserve Components to remain relevant on the modern battlefield is equipment modernization. Today more than ever, the environment within which our military forces operate demands the latest in state-of-the-art technologies. Any unit that is not capable of employing modern tactics and techniques because of equipment shortages is vulnerable and therefore not relevant. These equipment shortages are not new to the Reserve Components.

Initial programs to equip the Reserve Components with modernized equipment have revolved around cascading older, yet more modern, pieces of equipment than what the Reserve Components have on hand, from the Active Component. This transfer of equipment takes place once the Active Component units are fielded with newly procured equipment. While this has provided many Army National Guard and Army Reserve units with "modernized" equipment with which to train, the program has often been suspended over the years due to Foreign Military Sales and cross leveling requirements within Active units. During this period the perceived inequity of resource allocation has built-up a sense of distrust between the Active and Reserve Components.

Beginning in the early 1980's Congress began to authorize and appropriate procurement funds that were dedicated solely to the Reserve Components. While this Dedicated Procurement Program (DPP) has added to the overall Reserve Forces modernization program, it also has fallen prey to in-fighting within the Total Army and at times both components have taken adversarial positions with regards to what should or could be purchased by the Reserve Components. Other programs like DoD's "First To Fight Policy"⁹, which mandates equipment allocation based upon a Units Force Activity Designator (FAD) and Department of the Army Master Priority List (DAMPL), are also not working.

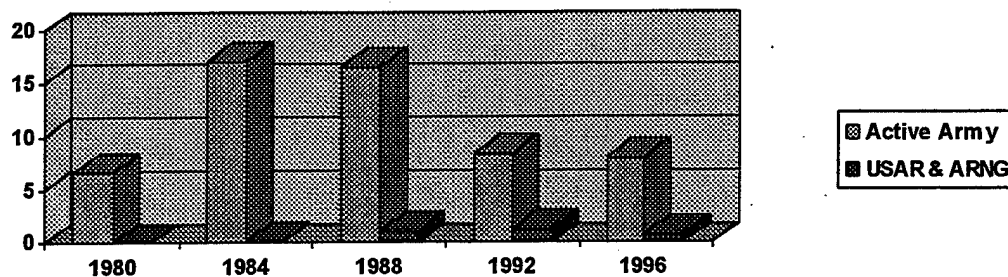


Figure 1 Annual Procurement Budget (Billions)¹⁰

The current Reserve forces procurement program entitled "National Guard and Reserve Equipment and Appropriation Program" (NGREA), may be on its way to losing its support on Capital Hill. A new policy announced in Secretary Cohen's recent "full integration" memorandum indicates that the NGREA program may be targeted, forcing the Reserve Components to compete within the current DoD program, planning and budget process. While this sounds like the right course to take, current Department of Defense funding levels are frozen and the Reserve Component equipment modernization program is more likely to decline rather than expand.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Over the years many roles and missions have been transferred from the Active Component to the Reserve Component. Ranging from combat, combat support, and combat service support units, Reserve Component force structure has not received the adequate resources necessary to keep pace with its mission requirements. Due mostly from changes in equipment modernization and wartime mission

requirements, the Reserve Components have been losing ground on resources since 1980.

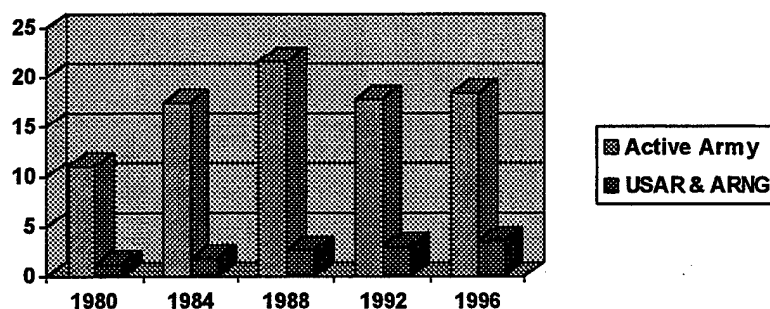


Figure 2 Annual Operations and Maintenance Budget (Billions)¹¹

Currently the annual funding shortfalls ("do more with less") for FY98 has the Army National Guard starting the year with a \$743 Million shortfall associated with readiness requirements.¹² This situation shows no indication of reversing itself as more missions are passed to the Reserve Component without the requisite resourcing.

To counter this trend the Reserve Components have relied on Congress for Congressional plus ups to maintain minimum levels of unit readiness. This hand to mouth approach is showing signs of losing support in Congress. This will increase tensions between the components, as the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve compete for already scarce DoD resources.

PERSONNEL END-STRENGTH

Born during a period of downsizing, the Total Force Policy has come full circle in impacting personnel strength in each component. As budget cuts continue to impact the Armed Forces,

current DoD budget cutbacks have shifted more operational requirements into the comparatively cheaper Reserve Components, as their relative importance continues to increase. All contingency operations planning must involve plans for the mobilization of reserve force personnel and units. The ability of the Army to conduct military operations on a large scale, or on a sustainable basis, is tied to the availability and accessibility of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. Recent structural changes and increased readiness requirements are continuing to improve the accessibility of the reserve forces as an equal partner in the Total Army.

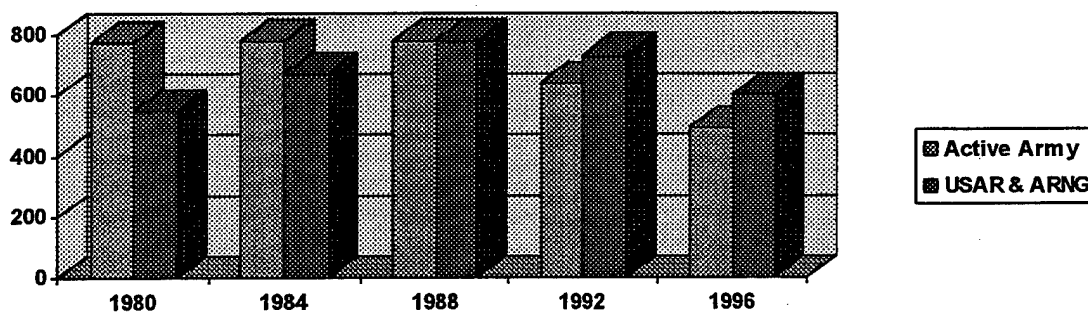


Figure 3 Annual Personnel End-Strengths (Thousands)¹³

FORCE STRUCTURE

The implementation of the Total Force policy has placed a significant amount of the Army's force structure in the Reserve Components. Because of this, mutual support is required between the components to sustain the Total Army mission. Due to the current force mix between the components, the Army is limited in

its ability to conduct either large scale or protracted military operations without reserve forces.

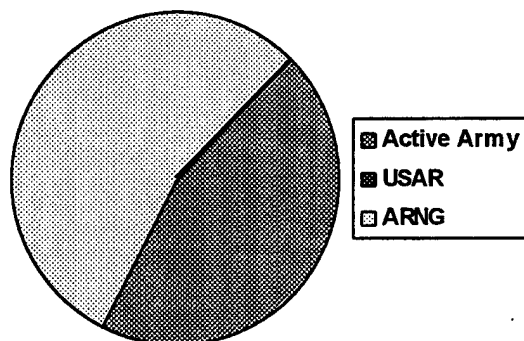


Figure 4 Total Combat Units¹⁴

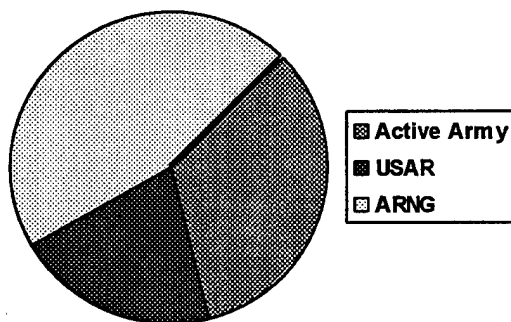


Figure 5 Total Combat Support Units¹⁵

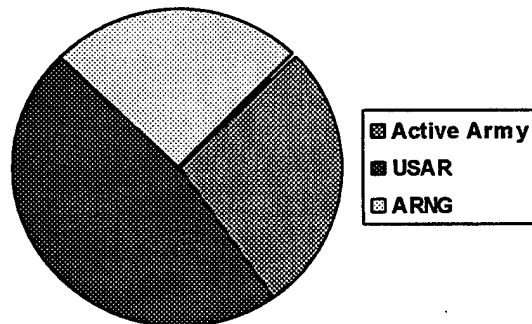


Figure 6 Total Combat Service Support Units¹⁶

Not only is this true from an operational tempo perspective, but also from the limited quantity of certain combat support and combat service support units that are predominantly found in the Reserve Components. Examples of this are illustrated in the following areas:

- 100% of the Army Rail Battalions.
- 100% of the Army Enemy Prisoner Of War Brigades.
- 96% of the Army Civil Affairs Units.
- 96% of the Army Psychological Operation Units.
- 95% of the Army Legal Units.
- 70% of the Army Chemical Brigade/Battalions.
- 65% of the Army Petroleum Groups.
- 64% of the Army Medical Groups.
- 62% of the Army Corps Support Groups.
- 58% of the Army Water Supply Battalions.
- 57% of the Army Hospital Units.
- 55% of the Army Terminal Battalions.
- 50% of the Army Maintenance Battalions.

List 1 High Density Reserve Component Units¹⁷

The transfer of these units, and in some cases entire missions, to the reserve components has made it imperative that deployment plans include early mobilization of these and other essential reserve units.

Nowhere is the reliance that the Army places on its Reserve Components more evident than in the Persian Gulf conflict. During Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Reserve Component transportation terminal units were among the first units activated just days after President Bush directed U.S. Forces to deploy to Southwest Asia. Their mission was to handle the embarkation of deploying Active divisional units. More recently, military operations in Bosnia have highlighted the need for the

mobilization of Reserve Component civil affairs units to relieve over-committed Active Army personnel.

While these examples highlight the Army's reliance on the Reserve Components, mobilization and gaining Federal control of Army National Guard and Army Reserve units is a political decision requiring Presidential and Congressional action. There are several ways the Reserve Components can be accessed:

- Selective Mobilization of Reserve Component Units and the resources needed for their support to meet the requirements of an operational mission. Requires Congressional and/or Presidential action.

- Presidential Selected Reserve Call-Up is limited to 200,000 reserve personnel for up to 270 days. This is accomplished by the President signing an Executive Order and notifying Congress of this action.

- Partial Mobilization is limited to one million soldiers for up to 24 months. This is accomplished by Congress directly or the President declaring a national emergency and signing an Executive Order.

- Full Mobilization involves all reserve personnel and units for an indeterminate period of service. This requires a congressional declaration of war or national emergency.

- Total Mobilization involves not only all current reserve personnel and units, but additional units are created. This requires a congressional declaration of war or national emergency.

List 2 Reserve Component Mobilization Criteria¹⁸

CHALLENGES

Current personnel end strengths along with the roles and missions for Reserve Component force structure remain at the forefront of discussions within the Department of the Army.

Issues on the table include: the mobilization and deployment times for Reserve Component units, acceptance of the Army National Guard's State Mission, Army National Guard Divisional structure, combat roles for the Army Reserve, and maintaining eight Active Army Divisions are only a few of the issues. Working these issues, while simultaneously trying to cut the overall Defense budget has highlighted the need for increased cooperation between the components. This, however, has not been the case.

While the National Military Strategy acknowledges the reliance the Army places on the Reserve Components,¹⁹ a number of challenges preclude their full integration. Recent proposed force structure changes and the perceived exclusion of the Army National Guard from the Quadrennial Defense Review decision process,²⁰ highlight the challenges. This situation has fueled the distrust that has grown between the Active and Reserve Components.

Concerned with their exclusion from the latest round of personnel cuts, the Army National Guard has taken its case to the public through the National Guard Association of the United States. This association has not only sought support from each of the State Governors; it has published a series of articles openly challenging the leadership of the Active Army. Publishing such articles as; We Don't Like It and We Won't Take It,²¹ An Appeal To the Commander-In-Chief,²² and Who Can We Trust?,²³ many

in the Army National Guard have taken off thier gloves with respect to addressing their dissatisfaction.

In addition, a majority of State Governors have endorsed a letter to the Secretary of Defense addressing their concerns.²⁴ Among the topics discussed is the Quadrennial Defense Review.

...The Constitution is quite clear regarding the importance of a strong militia (National Guard) during peacetime with a small federal army. This makes not only economic sense, but provides an alternative to the force- planning model used by the Department of Defense during the QDR...²⁵

-Michael O. Leavitt, Governor, Utah

Bringing the disagreements over the Quadrennial Defense Review out in the open, stands to jeopardize continued implementation of the Total Army policy.

Forced to address the issue, Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis Reimer, has acknowledged the situation in a published interview:

...Over time, but particularly during the past six months, as we've done the negotiations on the Quadrennial Defense Review and tried to keep the Army balanced, issues have come between us (Active and Guard leadership). We've taken different approaches to these issues, and a rift has developed...²⁶

-General Dennis Reimer

Concerned with the growing rift between the components, Secretary of Defense William Cohen recently re-emphasized his desire for a "seamless Total Force." In a memorandum to Department of Defense leaders, Secretary Cohen outlined his four basic principles for Total Force integration:

- 1) Clearly understood responsibilities and process ownership;
- 2) Clear and mutual understanding of roles & missions;
- 3) Commitment to provide the necessary resources;
- 4) Leadership that will insure overall unit readiness.²⁷

In addition to establishing these principles, Secretary Cohen directed the leadership of the three components to meet in an "off-site" to work out difference on key Quadrennial Defense Review issues. The first off-site, held in June of 1997, brought all three Army components together to discuss the proposed Quadrennial Defense Review force structure cuts. While the majority of the cuts were delayed until 2003, there was some agreement and progress made on other issues.

As part of the "off-site" Lieutenant General Edward D. Baca, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, identified 11 principles designed to make the Total Force policy work. These principles prescribe that:

- 1) C-3 be the baseline readiness for all Army Guard units;
- 2) Army Guard unit structure must mirror the Active Component;
- 3) Army Guard Modernization must mirror the Active Component;
- 4) Division redesign and integration be fully resourced;
- 5) Army Guard forces be fully missioned, resourced, and relevant;

- 6) The unique mission of the Army Guard must be recognized, with adequate forces provided for domestic emergency responsibilities;
- 7) Readiness be the basis for force assignments;
- 8) The Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee and the Reserve Components Coordination Committee process be revitalized;
- 9) Guard lineage and flags be maintained;
- 10) The decisional process include the Adjutants General Force Structure and General Officer Steering Committees, as employed during the National Guard Division Redesign effort;
- 11) The civilian Army secretariat oversee the entire process.²⁸

As a result of the "off-site" process, there have been far fewer public airings of disagreements as the process of rebuilding trust and cooperation continues.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Total Army Policy is a workable concept that, given a chance, can and will work. To make the concept a reality, several measures should be taken to offer a good degree of potential success in bringing the Components together to resolve the current issues. Secretary of Defense Cohen's basic principles provide a good framework within which to address the issues of open dialog, resource allocation, and cultural change within the Army. These solutions must revolve around honest self-assessment and a commitment to do what is best for the country.

a. Revitalize Joint Committees.

Choosing the right forum to begin the dialog is as easy as reviving already established working groups. The National Guard Association has recommended that both the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee and Reserve Components Coordination Committee process be revitalized. These two working groups, designed for discussions among the three components, have lost active support over the past few years. By re-structuring the meetings to bring the three components together in these joint sessions could provide the first step in building cooperation as it has in the past. Once trust and ownership in the process has been re-established equally by all components, restructuring "America's Army" can progress more smoothly. The hard decisions on force structure cuts will not be any easier, but it will keep future policy recommendations within the Department of the Army verses the halls of Congress.

b. Address the "Culture" within the Components.

While bringing the Total Army's leadership together can solve many short-term problems, changing the culture within the Army's rank and file is the only way to ensure long-term success. To effect this change, increased involvement of the Reserve Components in all service schools and pre-command courses is required. Another step in the right direction is the incorporation of Reserve Component Commanders into all Battalion, Brigade, and Division Commanders conferences. Bringing everyone

into the process on an even footing keeps all interested parties part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

c. Validate current Readiness Assessments.

Key to involving the Reserve Component force structure into policy decisions is the establishment of valid readiness assessments and reliable deployment data. Understanding the uniqueness of the Reserve Components while developing readiness plateaus that are relevant for contingency plans can help.

d. Develop a single focus on force structure design.

Build a single focus force structure model that can meet State requirements while maintaining the suitability required to operate effectively on the battlefield is a must. Currently the Army deploys and fights under a Divisional force model. Restructuring the Reserve Components into combat support and combat service support unique structure or into Separate Enhanced Brigades does not resemble the Active Army.

e. Joint training opportunities.

Maintaining "like" structure between the components is a must. It will not only facilitate current doctrine, it will also allow for increased Joint training opportunities. As the Active Army continues to deploy regularly in support of United States Foreign Policy, the need for interoperability with the Reserve Components is an operational necessity. Addressing the Army National Guard's 11 principles in this fashion can go along way in meeting these operational deployments. At the same time it

will create an efficient and trained State militia capable of handling Local and State emergencies.

f. Exercise Reserve Component Call-up.

Exercise the different options available to access the force structure within the Reserve Components for operational missions. By reaching out to all corners of America to build forces for an operation, this will in-fact test the "pulse" of the American people. Incorporating willing team players into the game goes along way at building hometown support or addressing increases in the budget.

Perhaps the best approach at involving the public, and determining when enough is enough, is through activation of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve in support of contingencies. The current personnel issues associated with increases in operational tempo can best be addressed in this way. If the mobilization of the Reserve Components becomes the trigger to whether military involvement is appropriate, either fewer missions or larger defense budgets are sure to follow. The disruptions caused by frequent deployments have had a way of motivating local politics and facilitating national policy debates. The current personnel levels within DoD will not support much more involvement of the United States Military in overseas deployments.

Commitment to these policy changes and providing the necessary resources to maintain them is paramount. Speaking with

a single voice, the leadership of the Total Army has the ability to make these improvements. Moving beyond the tit-for-tat that is currently being played out in the press is a must. At the same time, drawing upon the strengths from all components will ensure the process is sustained.

CONCLUSION

The strategic and economic considerations that brought about the adoption of the Department of Defense's Total Force policy in 1973, are still relevant in 1998. Today, during a time of intangible world threats and growing domestic challenges, meeting the objectives of the original policy will require a cultural change in implementation.

Shifting roles & missions from the Active Component to the Army National Guard and Army Reserve and capturing the cost savings, makes fiscal sense. Basing the size and mix of forces allocated to each component upon national interests, not parochialism, is the correct approach. The current process of determining and implementing policy within the Army needs to incorporate all components into the decision cycle.

Based not only on past United States military history, but also on current operational demands, the Reserve Components are a relevant force. Poised not only to react to State emergencies, the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve are structured to augment all national contingency plans. Uniquely missioned and strategically located in all 54 States and Territories, the

Reserve Components make up over 50% of the Total Army. Capturing and incorporating this resource will increase the effectiveness of the United States in applying military power.

Maintaining the current all volunteer military force and a smaller active federal force are not only fiscally smart, but it also reinforces the democratic process. Any involvement of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve in defense planning or mobilization involves the American people. Involvement in the process, either directly through members of the Reserve Components, or indirectly through Congressional and/or State Legislators, will generate national support.

The Total Force policy is good for both America and the American people, and should remain in effect. Incorporating the identified changes will support the "One Army Concept" and will provide a cost effective, ready and viable Force in support of the National Security Strategy.

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