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**THE WAR BETWEEN THE ARMIES:
CONFLICT ALONG THE ROAD TO A TOTAL FORCE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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For the last century, the Army and the Army National Guard have been engaged in a costly political battle for missions and resources. Aided by a sympathetic Congress, the National Guard has continually countered unilateral Army proposals for force realignment and Guard end-strength reductions. The results have been a strategic mismatch in roles and missions and a growing antagonism between both parties. This paper will examine the roots of this dysfunctional relationship and then analyze the Total Force challenges associated with the post-Cold War era. Specific areas for review include: National Guard and Active Duty perspectives on national defense, political influence in determining roles and missions, implementing the Total Force Policy, and current Active/Reserve integration initiatives. The recommendations emphasize the need for integrated Active/Reserve operations and offer structural and command changes to improve working relationships.

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THE WAR BETWEEN THE ARMIES: CONFLICT ALONG THE ROAD TO A TOTAL FORCE

BACKGROUND

For the past century, we have witnessed the "Two Armies" of the United States military go their own ways trying to meet the manpower and mission challenges of each administration's National Security Strategy. These armies, the Active Army and the Army National Guard, are charged with ensuring our national defense and enhancing our vital interests in a fiscally responsible manner. In reality, what has transpired is a constant struggle for resources and influence with one army's gain usually at the expense of the other. Threat-based strategy was not the primary determinant in promulgating defense policy. In fact, manpower and equipment decisions were made with each army operating autonomously, often pitted defensively against each other. Basic tenets of military doctrine such as unity of command and unity of effort were conspicuously absent, and the effectiveness of the Total Army suffered.

Lacking strong and unified Department of Defense civilian leadership, the armies were left to themselves to do battle along a political Maginot Line, each side trying desperately to influence the internal balance of power. While other services found common ground and effectively integrated their Reserve components, the Army struggled with building a Total Force. The National Defense Panel described the situation best saying, "...the Army has suffered from a destructive disunity among its components, specifically between the Active Army and the National Guard. This rift serves neither the Army nor the country well."¹

This century-old war between the armies is rooted in varying perspectives and a structure inviting conflict not unity. History has clearly shown aggressive civilian leadership to be pivotal in steering these two monoliths toward unified operations. And, with fiscal constraints now demanding previously unheard of efficiencies, tremendous pressure will be exerted to continue to field an effective integrated force. Ultimately, a Total Army operating within a Total Force is the only acceptable solution to fulfilling the military's promise to the American public.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the serious and still unresolved problem of force integration, and to propose recommendations to make the Total Force a universal reality. Historical analysis is the method used to view the perceptions of the opposing armies as well as the ineffective command and oversight structures that have been in place since the early 20th century. The recommendations for change, if implemented, will enable the Army to move further down the integration path and execute the Secretary of Defense's standing order to fully integrate the Army and the National Guard.

THE ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM

This dysfunctional relationship between the Army and the National Guard is rooted in the fact that each service sees the other as a threat, with both players competing in a perceived zero-sum game. Originally conceived as complementary forces, these two armies have slowly diverged in method and spirit to the point of becoming peer competitors. And while healthy competition is normally a positive influence, unhealthy and unbalanced competition often leads to a caustic environment detrimental to all. The Army and the National Guard have spent the majority of their existence mired in unhealthy competition.

As the relationship between the expanding professional Army and the Reserve components changed, civilian leadership did not significantly alter the way decisions on roles and missions were made. Worse yet, they allowed the services to “fight it out between themselves”, often choosing sides for political not strategic reasons. Each army viewed the debate myopically and lacked the mutual trust and willingness to negotiate in good faith. Further, both players resorted to secrecy to cloak advantages and attempted to gain allies to favorably shift the balance of power. The overriding goal of total victory encouraged slash and burn tactics and blurred the normal rules of engagement.

With little strategic direction from administration officials, the Army and the Guard lined up their coalitions to fight the war between the armies. The Army aligned with the executive branch and the Guard aligned with its Constitutionally paired legislative branch. Rarely were the military adversaries forced to the negotiating table to address central issues--the indirect method was the preferred attack. The war would rage until Defense Department officials exercised their proper leadership role.

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Fundamental to resolving any conflict is to understand the dissenting perspectives. Each view is framed by different experiences and deeply held convictions that must be considered and woven into the solution. The civilian mediators throughout this conflict, perhaps because of administration turnover or pressing world events, have not thoroughly examined the root causes of the problem and thus have been unable to offer effective solutions.

National Guard Perspective

Steeped in history and public service, the National Guard sees itself as the rightful owner of national defense. Citizens in peace and soldiers in war, Guardsmen have long provided the critical link between society and the military and affirmed the intentions of the founding fathers

for a small standing army complemented by citizen-soldiers. With the vast majority of Guardsmen being part-time, their service stems not from career interests but from a deep devotion to the country and service above self. As the past president of the National Guard Association (the National Guard lobby) reflects, "There are no self-seekers in the National Guard."² Also, Guardsmen see their service as cost effective and efficient, an opinion echoed in the halls of Congress.

Established in 1636 by the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Militia (formally changed to the National Guard in the late 1800's) is by far the oldest branch of the U. S. military. Specifically grounded in the Constitution (Article 1, Section 8), the Militia was *the* force established to defend the nation instead of a large standing army. It is the citizen-soldier Militia to which the following applies:

The Congress shall have Power...

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States, respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress....³

Standing as the preeminent land force for the majority of the nation's existence, the Militia was first complemented by a small, professional army during the War of 1812. This small cadre of approximately 2,500 regular soldiers stayed in existence until the Civil War when state loyalties proved too strong, causing regular soldiers to split ranks and align with their home-state Militias.⁴ States rights and Militia advocates quickly pointed to this dissolution as a major failing of a standing federal army.

For nearly 300 years, the National Guard was the preponderant force in colonial and national defense. Even at the turn of the 20th century when the Regular Army was greatly expanding, Reserve forces still outnumbered Active soldiers by a margin of four-to-one, and the thought of whether the Guard would supplant the increasingly expensive Army was seriously discussed in periodicals.⁵ WW I saw the temporary rise of the Regular Army beyond the Reserves, only to be quickly reduced to numbers less than Reserve end-strength in a few short years. WW II and the Cold War drastically changed the force mix in favor of the Active Army and marked the explosion in Defense Department bureaucracy. In 1989, the force structure

mix, reflecting a lessening of world tensions, returned to traditional levels favoring the Reserve forces.⁶

Clearly, from a Reserve perspective, the notion of a large standing army protecting the nation is the exception not the rule, and the idea of citizens guarding their way of life is self-evident—anything opposing this inherent duty of citizenship runs counter to our founding fathers' ideals. Guardsmen indeed have the right to defend the country and resent being marginalized by an intruding Active force.

The Active Perspective

The Active Army view, however, is that modern warfare has overtaken the “weekend warrior”, and a professional force is the only one capable of waging war effectively. Career officers feel duty bound to protect their profession by resourcing the army that offers the greatest capability. Reflecting long-standing Active Army sentiment, Major General Scales, former commandant of the Army War College, said, “Notwithstanding the proven abilities and great patriotism of our citizen-soldiers, skills such as these [managing maneuver forces] are best developed over many years of schooling, daily training and practical application. Modern ground combat is ‘Ph.D. warfare’ that cannot be mastered part time.”⁷

In addition, Guard claims of readiness have continually proven false as evidenced by the significant number of Guard commanders replaced during WW II, and the historically poor responses to mobilization exercises and actual call-ups⁸. Antiquated Guard equipment would also be a significant battlefield liability.

Retired General Ebbensen reflects another Army view when he noted that “The National Guard is looking for units they can keep on the rolls. It brings dollars into the state. It brings prestige into the state.”⁹ This perspective, that the Guard is kept around due to political patronage and not combat capability, runs throughout the Active officer corps. Army leaders openly question why the nation would spend significant money on second-rate soldiers.

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

With perspectives diverging at an early point in the Active versus Reserve dialogue, strong civilian oversight reinforced by a sound structure and a clear chain of command would have helped ameliorate the fermenting attitudes. However, what was allowed to exist was a cumbersome command structure blending decentralized militia rules with new, centralized Active Army procedures. More often than not, these different command methods clashed.

Secretary of War Elihu Root first attempted to legislate a solution by proposing the Militia Reform Act of 1903. The act was an attempt to invoke Army standards and command oversight

on the National Guard in an exchange for badly needed federal funding. Root negotiated at length with General Charles Dick, Commanding General of the Ohio National Guard and chairman of the Militia Committee in the U. S. House of Representatives, to reach a compromise acceptable to the Guard. The final result, the Dick Act, took on much more of a National Guard flavor than Root's original proposal and gave the Army only very limited input to Reserve activities.¹⁰ Root, acting mostly autonomously, lacked the political consensus required to establish the Army's primacy, and thus the chain of command remained unclear and tensions continued to mount. Follow-on legislation did gradually align the Reserve components more with Army interests, but fear of Active dominance prompted the Guard to keep its ties to the Army somewhat ambiguous.

Not bound by law and lacking the mutual trust to negotiate in good faith, the Guard maintained its autonomy as it had since colonial times. Under the command of the politically appointed Adjutants General, National Guard troops remained only loosely tied to Army standards and structure. Army directives and procedures were locally reviewed and tailored to fit into part-time training schedules. Standardization varied greatly across states with many states operating as their own independent army. The infrequent Active inspections of Reserve units proved marginally effective due to the lack of consensus on what rules applied to Reserve forces. Training and readiness were the state commander's responsibility though no Adjutant General would ever be a commander in combat. In fact, senior National Guard leaders are not required to be federally recognized military officers. Perhaps most troublesome to the Army Staff was the fact that National Guard leaders were not accountable to any senior Army commander. Unless federalized, only the governor issued binding orders and appointed or relieved senior National Guard commanders. Without fundamental change guaranteeing the combat capability of the Reserve components, the readiness of the Total Army could never be maximized and would remain suspect.

This lack of control and resulting double standards created dissension in the Army and eroded their confidence in Reserve forces. Furthermore, the Army was presented with the dilemma of resourcing but not directing a large portion of its combat troops. The path frequently chosen in retaliation for this command encroachment was to strangle the Guard into submission by directing discretionary dollars to Active-only interests. A common National Guard charge was, "The Pentagon's Active-duty generals find it in their political interests to keep the Guard underfunded--and thus undertrained--in order to argue against reliance on the citizen-soldier in times of crisis."¹¹ With civilian leadership unable or unwilling to alter this flawed structure, the two armies continued to split ranks, often at the expense of strategy-driven policies.

LACK OF REPRESENTATION IN THE TOTAL ARMY

Reminiscent of Early American charges against the King of England, the National Guard cried out against the closed Army bureaucracy that was unilaterally decreeing defense policy. Guard leaders found themselves constantly reacting to program and equipment decisions on which they were never consulted. Memorandums from the Army Staff announcing reductions in Guard end-strength were common and requests for new equipment for Reserve forces were rarely considered. The lack of rank (major general being the highest rank held in the Reserve components) guaranteed National Guard absence from critical policy debates, and poor communication channels between Active and Reserve officers made every contact prickly and unproductive. National Guard leaders vainly attempted to increase their stature and influence in the Department of Defense hierarchy, but absent war, administration officials were searching for ways to reduce general officer authorizations not inflate them. Even to a casual observer, this gross under representation of Reserve interests was a lightning rod for conflict.

POLITICAL POWER

Forgotten and out-ranked by the post-WW II Army Staff, the National Guard countered by unleashing a concerted lobbying effort to garner political and financial support. Exploiting their historic ties, the Guard solicited support from Congress through a grass-roots effort engineered by the National Guard Association. The burgeoning and increasingly bureaucratic Army Staff strengthened its ties with the executive branch and both arms of government soon found themselves embroiled in public debate over missions and force structure. In the end, Congress often resorted to the ultimate weapon, the power of the purse, to maintain Guard relevance and influence.

Soon, the National Guard Association and individual Guardsmen began to see the fruits of their political efforts and intensified their campaign to educate lawmakers on their needs. The National Guard Association began collecting dues and subsequently fielded professional lobbying and communication staffs. In all endeavors, maintaining end-strength and a combat mission were always clearly projected as overarching National Guard concerns.

The National Guard and Congress—The Source of Power

Political bedfellows since colonial times, the National Guard and Congress have worked hand-in-hand on national defense issues, response to natural disasters, and quelling civil disturbances. Enjoying a significant state role and deep community roots, Guardsmen are key long-term constituents to their elected officials. This quid-pro-quo relationship spawns an inherent advantage for Reservists in the politically charged struggle for resources.

Guardsmen, in chameleon-like fashion, are able to exercise the double standards of citizen-soldiers. This generally accepted practice allows National Guard members to carry out official military duties and still exercise full rights of political participation at the same time. Unlike their Active-Duty brethren who are restricted from most political lobbying activities, Guardsmen, donning their civilian cloak, enjoy much more discretion in influencing public policy. Politics are simply a way of life for Guard officers, and Guardsmen are notorious for "taking no prisoners" on the political battlefield.

The Army, by contrast, is the least politically adept of the armed services. Steeped in neutrality, restricted by statute, and transient by nature, the Army is tepid in the political arena and is no match for an aggressive adversary.¹² This political mismatch would prove crucial to the National Guard when post-Cold War budgetary constraints would draw Congress even deeper into the increasingly belligerent debate.

Created and chartered by Congress, the Reserve component continues to be the focal point for civilian control of the military. Encouraging liberal interpretations of the Militia Clause, the National Guard has aggressively argued for strong states rights and direct Congressional involvement in Reserve affairs. The resulting interventions add to the ever-present contest between the executive branch and the legislative branch for political dominance. Writes retired Army Colonel and Professor of Political Science at Hofstra University William Levantrosser, "Congress has shown a primacy of interest in the Reserve program and has exerted exceptional efforts to impress the executive branch of government with Congressional authority in this field."¹³ Following WW II, Reserve affairs became a favorite vehicle to demonstrate political clout.

This centuries-long relationship between lawmaker and citizen-soldier is epitomized by the number of Guardsmen who have served the government: 19 presidents, hundreds of congressmen, and every governor as Commander-in-Chief of the state National Guard.¹⁴ Until restricted by a Department of Defense directive issued in 1965, many served concurrently in government and the Reserves, often balancing significant conflicts of interest. While many elected officials fondly remember their Active service and often support military matters, they don't display the grass-roots zeal for the citizen-soldier agenda that prior National Guard legislators project. Reflective of this deep and mature relationship is this comment by a senior White House Staff member, "Citizen-soldiers are so solidly entrenched politically that no one in Washington dares challenge them frontally."¹⁵

Political Pressure Groups—The Tip of The Reserve Spear

Led by politically savvy Adjutants General, the National Guard, through the National Guard Association, wields political power like few organized groups. Woven into the fabric and politics of America, Guardsmen are based in thousands of communities with their armories often used for civilian activities. Effective grass-roots campaigns are easily launched from such a platform, and the ties to local, state, and national leaders are easily and regularly enhanced.

Throughout the 20th century, the Reserve lobby was forced to the forefront as they defended Reserve interests against Active attacks. Well organized and highly effective, it soon became known in Washington as a hard lobby to defeat,¹⁶ and in fact, consistently emasculated attempts to reduce the end-strength and relevance of Reserve forces. Time after time, Army-initiated requests to reduce Reserve force structure were either denied or greatly scaled back. For example, just after WW I Secretary of War Lindley Garrison felt the citizen-soldier wrath when he was forced to resign after attempting to federalize the National Guard.¹⁷ Also, in 1965 Secretary of Defense McNamara announced a major restructuring of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve only to have it rescinded by Congress after Reserve lobbying groups made their case. And finally, the Clinton Administration, following the recommendations of the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review, attempted to downsize the Reserves, but the proposal was blunted by a well-orchestrated Congressional opposition. Few times in history has the Guard been unable to repel attacks.

On the offensive front, the National Guard Association and the Reserve Officer Association successfully lobbied Congress to increase the stature and influence of the Reserve components through initiating various acts and bills. Significant statutes that bolstered Reserve components include the Dick Act of 1903, the National Defense Acts of 1916 and 1920, and the Reserve Acts of 1952 and 1955.¹⁸ In addition, recent initiatives fielded by the National Guard Association are the very effective House of Representatives and Senate National Guard Caucuses and the National Guard Governor's Association. These three potent organizations aggressively build political support for Guard programs and dollars.¹⁹ Senator Bond, chairman of the 75-member strong Senate National Guard Caucus, describes the impact of the caucus:

Support has been most evident in the level of funding directed toward National Guard priorities and the cautionary signals that have been sent to the active component leaders who in times past might have raided National Guard accounts and relied less heavily on the Guard had there not been a firm base of support for Guard issues from all segments of the U.S. Senate. Senior Defense Department planners now understand that it is both foolish and ineffective to lobby or move ahead with long-range planning that does not include substantive National Guard involvement.²⁰

While the Army and the Department of Defense did win an occasional victory in the battles with the Reserve components, the National Guard Association and the Reserve Officer's Association clearly decimated their Active opponents in open political warfare. Around Capitol Hill, Reserve military interest groups continue to be the most powerful and politically connected pressure groups in operation.²¹ In the eyes of members of Congress, the Reserve associations influence votes and demand attention.

CIVILIAN CONTROL OF THE MILITARY—HANDS-OFF REPURCUSSIONS

From the turn of the 20th century, the Army and the National Guard continued to be locked in an escalating conflict. The Guard fought for maintaining end-strength and their historic combat role, and the Active Army argued for command and control of all combat troops and a minimal role for a minimally equipped National Guard. Readiness was questionable, and integrated Army operations were virtually non-existent. Incredibly, civilian leaders tolerated this destructive relationship, and policies based on politics not threats proliferated.

Highlighting this lack of civilian oversight of the military process was the annual release of the Department of Defense budget. Historically lacking in National Guard spending, the budget was regularly increased with additional National Guard dollars through the increasingly familiar Congressional add-on process. National Guard lobbyists convinced Congress to add money each year for Guard tanks, armories, and planes, thus prompting the Pentagon to reduce minimal Guard spending even further. This continual underfunding of the Reserve force was tracked by the National Guard Association in the 1970's and sent to Congress packaged as the National Guard Reserve Equipment Account (NGRE). Legislators used this account as evidence of Active indifference to Reserve needs, and also to formulate dollar amounts to add on to the administration's annual budget. This flawed policy relied on the goodwill of Congress to equip a significant portion of the force while opening the door for unapproved and unwanted programs to skip normal Defense Department channels and make it into Reserve inventories.²²

Mired in constant political controversy, the Defense Department was unable to build the political consensus required to enforce strategic manpower and mission decisions. At best, civilian control of the military was, "fragmented in operation...and blurred by the impossibility of separating military and civilian interests."²³ The National Guard capitalized on these prevalent weaknesses and continually used the system to their full advantage: Reserve component end-strength and missions prevailed, combat capability remained difficult to measure, and equipment decisions could be short-circuited around the normal acquisition process. This

stalemate was finally broken in the post-Cold War period by strong civilian leadership directing Army leaders to search for solutions to deal with a changing world.

THE TOTAL FORCE POLICY—ASSERTIVE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP

In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger was instrumental in redefining military strategy. The nation's dismal Viet Nam experience compelled him to ensure that the country would never go to war again without the Reserves and supporting will of the American people.²⁴ This bold step laid the foundation for a realistic National Military Strategy that embraced the realities of reduced defense budgets and manpower levels while still maintaining a capable force. The Reserve components would need to be full, capable partners in national defense.

The Total Force Policy, introduced in 1973, was a watershed proposal in that the Reserves were entrusted with critical roles and missions, thus ensuring their future and relevance. Different branches of the military embraced the policy with varying degrees of enthusiasm, but all began to restructure for the future. Strong civilian leadership influenced a significant paradigm shift within the Army, finally opening the door to change.

While strong in intent, the policy left a void in structure to carry out the task. Funding avenues and decision chains, along with command and control lines, remained unchanged. Reserve forces still had very limited senior officer influence in Total Force decisions. And, the Adjutants General maintained direct control of Guard combat forces. To those looking closely, only the packaging had changed with the unveiling of the Total Force initiative. Substantive changes in daily operations would take strong mutual effort and trust—difficult to find in the Army due to the jaundiced past.

Post-Cold War Tensions and Realities

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States shifted gears to produce the much-vaunted peace dividend. Defense budgets contracted and the practice of fielding a large army became unaffordable. As has historically been the case in times of such upheaval, the question of what branches and missions would survive soon became hotly contested.

Indicative of this destructive tension was the situation of the Army National Guard's use during Desert Storm. Unlike the Air National Guard, Army National Guard combat forces were not initially deployed to the theater. Only after significant Congressional and National Guard pressure was applied were units notified to mobilize and prepare for Army administered combat readiness evaluations. According to retired Major General James Delk, Deputy Chief of an Inspector General team that assessed the Guard brigades' mobilization and training, the Army

was guilty of "deception and bad faith."²⁵ Specifically, he observed and recorded the following: training assessments were retroactively downgraded; important decisions were made using skewed reports based on highly biased, incomplete data; the National Training Center (NTC) staff was told that "it was important to show why the [Guard] roundout concept was not feasible"; bad news about Guard units was released--good news was very carefully controlled; comparative data favoring Guard units was withheld from the IG team; redundant training was forced on the units, thereby lengthening training time; and, the Active-Duty unit that replaced the 48th [Guard unit], was by every account, far less combat ready. The Army Staff deflected the entire issue by refusing to respond to the allegations; however, Lewis Sorely, a renowned military author and third generation West Point graduate, independently investigated the allegations and was startled by the Army's inability to counter the accusatory report. He writes, "These are not matters of personality or factional self-interest, but of tactical and strategic import. We ignore them at our own peril."²⁶

Continuing this trend, the Army sent forth a proposal in 1992 to unilaterally cut 100,000 Reserve troops from the roles. This "Base Force" model assumed Active forces would carry the load in future conflicts. Congress did not agree. In fact, Congress, lobbied by the National Guard Association, quickly blocked the proposal and issued a firm warning about placing too much power and trust in a large standing army.²⁷ In the eyes of the Guard, this was yet another Army campaign to monopolize national defense.

Coping with budget realities, the Bottom Up Review of 1993 proposed even more reliance on the Guard and Reserve, rejecting proportional cuts in Reserve forces as Active military units were being downsized. Secretary of Defense William Perry issued his "Increased Use Initiative" in 1996 to find ways to spread increasingly thin defense dollars by including Reserve elements in peace operations.²⁸ The fiscally based advantage to the improving but still, according to Active opinion, marginally effective combat units of the Guard, planted new seeds of dissension in Army ranks--the battle for resources became increasingly belligerent.

In 1997, as the budget noose continued to tighten, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was released and concluded that the U.S. could trim forces even further, including reducing the need for a large strategic reserve. Senior Army leaders again unilaterally proposed that the National Guard shoulder the vast majority of the personnel cuts. Pointing to a flawed structure that allowed an "equal" partner to be excluded from critical decisions, the National Guard disputed the proposed plan and influenced the Congressional chartering of the National Defense Panel (NDP), which attempted to reconcile the disparate findings and recommendations of the QDR.²⁹

The NDP found fault with many of the QDR recommendations and proposed a comprehensive plan to check parochialism and level the playing field. Aimed at the heart of the matter, the NDP proposals offered both sides victories in the battle: The Army would gain control of the training and combat readiness of Guard combat units, and more Guard units would convert to support roles. On the other side, the Guard would still maintain a significant combat role, though under the direct auspices of the Army, and broaden the disaster response mission under the direction of the Adjutants General. Missions would become clear and more evenly distributed, and the realigned chain of command would assure accountability. The National Guard embraced the NDP recommendations while the Army, claiming many assumptions were unrealistic and unfocused, dismissed them.³⁰

Shortly after the release of the NDP, Secretary of Defense William Cohen took a strong stand on integrating the forces and issued a crisply worded memorandum to all services directing full integration of the Reserve and Active components. Citing lingering cultural and structural barriers, Cohen singled out the Army and the Army National Guard as the main perpetrators needing to solve their problems and get on with the business of defending the nation. Specifically, he outlined four basic principles to eliminate these barriers: 1) Clear ownership of the Total Force by senior leaders; 2) Clear missions for each unit; 3) Commitment to resources; and 4) Dedication to the readiness of the entire Total Force.³¹

Model of Success

Pointing to the Air Force and the Air National Guard partnership as a model of success, Defense Department leaders applied pressure to Army and Army National Guard leaders to mirror their sister service and produce an integrated team. Even more directive was Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson, a longtime Guard proponent, when he said, "The Army staff can learn a valuable lesson by taking a short walk around to see how a Total Force—the Air Force—provides America with a reliable and cost-effective armed service that works."³²

Notwithstanding the structural shortcomings of the new policy, the Air Force and the Air National Guard took the Total Force Policy to heart when it was first published in 1973. The Air Force fully embraced its Reserve components, offering both resources and critical missions while integrating the same readiness measurement system used in the Active force. "One Air Force--One Standard" became the mantra and drew all components closer as each relied on the other. Demonstrating mutual trust and respect, the Air Force and the Air Guard solved disagreements behind closed doors and maintained a cordial, cohesive relationship. Air National Guard Director Major General Weaver said, "It doesn't get any better than this. The Air

Guard has been on the ground floor for the development and future of the Total Force...The Total Force works in the Air Force because of trust and respect."³³

Where We Are Today

With a diminished threat and fiscal constraints pushing civilian leaders to make the Total Force a reality in all branches, the Army and the National Guard are slowly being fused together. Secretary Cohen's clear, unequivocal order directing full integration of Reserve and Active forces forced the Army and the Guard to begin to fall in line.

In response to this new directive, Army Secretary Louis Caldera saddled the Army leadership by saying, "While we accept the Defense Department's leadership, making the Total Army work is something we must do within the Total Army ourselves."³⁴ Army leaders were charged with embracing the Reserve component, albeit involuntarily. Former Army Chief of Staff General Dennis Reimer led the effort by pledging to aggressively integrate the force, and his successor General Eric Shinseki promises even more. To date, the integration efforts include: The Enhanced Brigade concept that places select Guard combat brigades under the direct control of parent Active divisions; an agreement to initiate a two-year test of two fully integrated Active and Reserve combat divisions; an initiative to team several Active divisions with several Guard divisions so that they share training equipment and mission expertise; a commitment to transform (shifting to lighter, more mobile forces) Guard combat units concurrently with the Active force transformation; the decision to allow the 49th Army National Guard Division to command all of the U.S. forces in Bosnia; the assignment of two general officers (one Reserve and the other National Guard) to advise the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Guard and Reserve related issues;³⁵ and finally, the decision to assign missions to the majority of National Guard combat divisions that fully integrated them into actual war plans. For the first time, more substance than rhetoric is being incorporated into integrating the Total Army.

While the initial stages of integration appear to be promising, both sides are still rooted in the past. Trust and respect are in their infancy, and structural barriers are still looming, ready to trigger disputes. Underneath the current Total Army veneer worn by top leaders lies a generation of Army officers who have only seen the National Guard win political wars at the expense of their institution. Even as they are ordered to extend an olive branch, they will continue to see the Guard as a threat.

National Guard officers, seeing the sometimes-easy victories on Capitol Hill as a replacement for training and true combat readiness, have made poor excuses for not maintaining expected standards. Also, structural barriers such as command and control

mismatches, skewed resource channels, improving but still unclear roles and missions, lack of integrated Active/Reserve career paths, and unbalanced representation at the senior levels need to be addressed. The Total Army has to finish the integration process by negotiating as peers not adversaries, and by solving problems internally using the Air Force and Air National Guard model.

SOLUTIONS FOR A TOTAL ARMY—A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

For the first time in a century, the Army and its Reserve components are moving towards a seamless existence. Unfortunately, it took strong civilian leadership to initiate the process and, most likely, will continue to require strong civilian oversight to see it through. Towards that end, the current momentum towards a Total Army will quickly wane if the following recommendations are not implemented: 1) alter the current perceptions of the Army and the Army National Guard; 2) establish a functional chain of command; 3) align forces with proper missions; 4) increase senior Reserve Officer representation in funding and manpower decisions. Addressing these recommendations offers opportunities for military and civilian leaders to be partners in resolving still contentious issues and steer the Army and the National Guard toward the unequivocal end-state of a Total Army within a Total Force.

NEW PERCEPTIONS

The most important requirement to enable full integration is to alter current perceptions. Generations of conflict have created a culture of disdain and confrontation. With the apparent commitment of senior officers established by firm civilian leadership, both organizations now must follow suit—voluntarily. Emphasizing the synergy of the Army and the National Guard working in unison will give soldiers a view of the inevitable future. Offering to the entire force the Army National Guard Director's vision to "imagine the organization we could become if we worked for a common goal"³⁶ would ignite enthusiasm and hasten unification. Leadership is compelled to "sell" this official policy of the United States of America and dispel the notion of each organization being a threat to the other.

Inasmuch as race and gender integration have been directed, trained for, and implemented with zero tolerance, so too must Total Force integration be administered. The Chief of Staff of the Army and the Chief of the National Guard, along with the Adjutants General, are challenged to go on record publicly demanding strict adherence to this policy and then demonstrate swift, stern punishment for anyone not following orders. Several venues in which increased interaction between components can be achieved include: A robust Active/Reserve command exchange program where officers are promoted not punished for taking exchange

tours; increased integrated deployments scheduled much like the Air Force Aerospace Expeditionary Force (Reserve forces are regularly scheduled for operational deployments and war-game exercises with significant lead time to plan and equip forces); and, regular readiness evaluations administered by integrated inspection teams demanding jointly established levels of readiness (potentially tied to a tiered readiness system presently under discussion).

Adopting these initiatives will meld a true Total Force by facilitating a shared perspective. Active members will get an appreciation for the demands that two careers impose on citizen-soldiers, and they will be able to evaluate first-hand better ways to utilize their brothers-in-arms. Conversely, Guardsmen will gain capability and better anticipate ways of adding value to the Army while also relieving the current deployment strain. In short, this age-old feud will only be resolved by professional contact in team-building environments--integration must be the order of the day, implemented with zero tolerance.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

The concept of combat troops not responsible to or commanded by a combatant commander in peacetime as in wartime flies directly counter to age-old rules of war. The continued practice of the politically appointed Adjutants General having final authority over the training regimen of National Guard combat troops will ensure disparate training standards and threaten Total Force combat capability. While Army oversight of Guard troops is moving forward with the Enhanced Brigade concept and division teaming, not enough is being done to fundamentally reform a system that has continually produced dismal combat training readiness. Integrating maneuver and fire elements requires closer coordination than other support missions and demands a comprehensive training program mirroring combat operations.

Guard combat troops should be commanded and trained by the Army combat chain of command with, at most, an advisory role for the 54 Adjutants General. Active Army leaders must commit to resource and exercise Guard troops properly and demand a level of combat capability commensurate with the threat and within reach of traditional soldiers. National Guard combat commanders should be rated by senior Active commanders, and must also commit to continually hone their skills during regularly scheduled exercises and periodic Active-Duty training and command tours. Simply stated, the Army must set realistic expectations for a blended force, and the Guard must live up to them. Close civilian oversight is essential in mediating potential conflict.

ROLES AND MISSIONS

To balance the loss of influence by losing direct command of Guard combat troops and to use other Guard troops more in their familiar domestic role, the Adjutants General and the National Guard Bureau should actively seek to administer the increasingly important Homeland Defense mission. By aligning state forces with state-focused missions, unity of command and mission effectiveness are enhanced while funding sources (state versus federal) are more easily justified and potentially more forthcoming. Moreover, this mission would be a prime opportunity for National Guardsmen to direct Active forces and further strengthen the growing professional bond. Offering key victories to both components, following through on this National Defense Panel proposal would be a key pillar in building the Total Army.

Another recent proposal to ensure Reserve force relevance and inclusion in day-to-day defense activities is the initiative to assign a significant portion of Army Aviation to the National Guard. Proposed by Major General Phillip Oates, the Adjutant General of Alaska, this approach would capitalize on the significant operations and maintenance experience found in the Guard aviation community. Also, it would demonstrate an Active embrace of the Guard by trusting it with a critical and relevant mission. This approach would also help solve the current problems in both Active and Reserve Army aviation caused by equipment shortages and permanent maintenance groundings.

Successfully demonstrated in the Air Force, significant Reserve participation in training and operational missions for both Active and Reserve pilots allows for enhanced force flexibility and deployability. Also, it provides a conduit through which Active and Reserve integration can grow and thrive.

SENIOR OFFICER REPRESENTATION

Possessing 55 percent of the troop strength in the Total Army, the Reserve components are woefully under represented in federal equipment and manpower decisions. National Guard leaders have claimed for years that they have been frozen out of critical budget meetings because of a lack of senior Reserve general officer representation on the policy panels. This lack of senior representation is cited as the key impediment to properly equipping and assigning missions to the Reserve forces. National Guard leaders are warranted in pressing for increased senior officer representation to levels commensurate with their mission share.

Republican Ted Stevens of Alaska, the powerful chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, recently highlighted this structural flaw and proposed that the Joint Chiefs of Staff expand to include a four-star Reserve general. Also, several others in the Senate's National

Guard Caucus recommend four-star Reserve representation on the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, a high-ranking Pentagon panel that reviews the services' long-term weapons plans.

Though strongly opposed by the Army staff and initially defeated in its first legislative debut, the Stevens Bill warrants serious consideration if the quest for a Total Army is to be realized. Addressing Guard interests in the Pentagon instead of through political maneuvering would add a formal, strategic review to programs and policies that has been previously missing. Moreover, the basic issue of fair representation for the majority shareholder in defense begs for a realignment in the decision matrix. A continued monopoly by the Active Army Staff will subvert any chance of true integration. National Guard leaders, if given representation at the decision table, must be able to speak with one voice for Guard interests. State-focused Adjutants General operating autonomously in the political arena, as they have in the past, would do grave harm to the newly found influence.

CONCLUSION

The beginning of the 21st century brings us to a point in our country's history where the need for military effectiveness is rivaled only by the demand for military efficiency. The post-Cold War peace dividend is being realized through shrinking defense budgets as the administration, Congress, and the American people demand strict accountability in defense spending. History has shown that the lack of unity between the Army and the National Guard was a major impediment to effective national defense. Unilateral initiatives by the Active Army countered by the political might of the National Guard leaves us in a current state of military disrepair.

While significant progress has been made in moving the two armies toward unified operations, much is left to be done before the Total Army is a reality. Strong civilian leadership is the linchpin to a universal Total Force and must stay actively engaged in the process—the President and the Secretary of Defense must demand compliance from the services as well as from the Congress.

Both the Active Army and the Army National Guard have much to offer to national defense; the response, expertise, and professionalism of the Active Army combined with the capability, cost effectiveness, and influence of the National Guard is an option enjoyed only by the United States. Recognizing this, the National Military Strategy for the future must bring an end to the war between the armies. Threat-based strategy and unified operations are the targets for the 21st century—just as they have been for all great armies of centuries past.

Word count = 7,141

ENDNOTES

- ¹ National Defense Panel, Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century (Arlington, VA: December 1997), 52.
- ² Martha Derthick, National Guard In Politics (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), 4.
- ³ U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8.
- ⁴ Bennie J. Wilson, The Guard and Reserve in the Total Force (Washington, D.C.: NDU Press, 1985), 18.
- ⁵ Derthick, 16.
- ⁶ Martin Binkin and William W. Kaufmann, U.S. Army Guard & Reserve: Rhetoric, Realities, Risks (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1989), 65.
- ⁷ Pat Towell, "Budget Crunch Has a Service at War With Itself," Congressional Quarterly 56, no. 1 (3 January 1998): 8.
- ⁸ Derthick, 78.
- ⁹ Towell, 7.
- ¹⁰ Wilson, 31.
- ¹¹ Peter Bacque, "Guard Battles Cuts to Stay Sharp," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 January 1998, p. 1.
- ¹² Towell, 7.
- ¹³ William F. Levantrosser, Congress and the Citizen-Soldier (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1967), 226.
- ¹⁴ Roger C. Schultz, Army National Guard Fiscal Year 2001 Posture Statement, (Arlington, VA: Army National Guard Director's Staff Group, 2001), 2.
- ¹⁵ Binkin and Kaufmann, 33.
- ¹⁶ Derthick, 6.
- ¹⁷ Derthick, 36.
- ¹⁸ Wilson, 22.
- ¹⁹ "Guard's Vigilant Watchdog in the Senate," available from <http://www.ngaus.org/ngmagazine/bond300.asp>; Internet: accessed 12 November 2000.

²⁰ "Guard's Vigilant Watchdog in the Senate," available from <http://www.ngaus.org/ngmagazine/bond300.asp>; Internet; accessed 12 November 2000.

²¹ Derthick, 6.

²² "Guard's Vigilant Watchdog in the Senate," available from <http://www.ngaus.org/ngmagazine/bond300.asp>; Internet; accessed 12 November 2000.

²³ Levantrosser, 117.

²⁴ Wilson, 46.

²⁵ "Were Guard Combat Units Unjustly Excluded from Gulf War? Long-Time Army Insider Says It's Time to Find Out," 1 May 1998; available from <http://www.ngaus.org/newsroom/release498.asp>; Internet; accessed 7 February 2001.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "Guard's Vigilant Watchdog in the Senate," available from <http://www.ngaus.org/ngmagazine/bond300.asp>; Internet; accessed 12 November 2000.

²⁸ William J. Perry, "Reserves Meet Need," The Officer (February 1996): 25.

²⁹ Edward J. Philbin, "NDP Report: At Least an Attempt at Unilateral Rationality," National Guard Magazine no.1 (January 1998): 5.

³⁰ "Expand Guard's Duties – It Can't Do Its Main Job," USA Today, 15 December 1997, p. 22.

³¹ Brian R. Calvert, "Force Integration: A Progress Report on Cohen's Memorandum, One Year Later," National Guard Magazine no. 11 (November 1998): 18.

³² Brian R Calvert, "Army Chief Extends Olive Branch," National Guard Magazine no. 10 (October 1998): 20.

³³ Calvert, "Force Integration: A Progress Report on Cohen's Memorandum, One year Later," 19.

³⁴ Calvert, "Army Chief Extends Olive Branch," 22.

³⁵ General Accounting Office, Force Structure: Army is Integrating Active and Reserve Combat Forces, but Challenges Remain (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, 18 July 2000), 4.

³⁶ Calvert, "Army Chief Extends Olive Branch," 22.

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