

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE FAILURE OF THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW
TO FORMULATE A VIABLE DEFENSE STRATEGY BASED
UPON THE STRATEGIC RESERVE**

by

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This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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ABSTRACT

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The National Security Strategy outlines an ambitious military plan that focuses on transforming and maintaining a Force strength sufficient to dissuade potential adversaries while providing the President a wider range of military options. The Quadrennial Defense Review acknowledges the Department of Defense's responsibility in providing these options to the President as part of its Paradigm Shift in Force Planning. To underwrite its new force-sizing construct the Department of Defense mandate is to "maintain sufficient force generation capability and a Strategic Reserve to mitigate risks." Regrettably, the Quadrennial Defense Review fails to articulate the feasibility of how it plans to organize, resource, equip and employ the Strategic Reserve that is so critically linked to America's national defense.

Adjunct to the Quadrennial Defense Review's treatment of the Strategic Reserve is the Army's Vision and how it defines its role in the defense of the National Military Strategy . The Army's vision and role are underscored by a three-prong approach; people, readiness and transformation. Specifically within the element of Readiness the main objective is to fully integrate the Active and Reserve Component forces. This "seamless" integration while highly desirable to meet current operational requirements, directly impacts and impairs the effective employment of the Army Reserve Component in support of its mandate to provide a Strategic Reserve capability as outlined in the Quadrennial Defense Review Report.

The purpose of this research project is to address the Quadrennial Defense Review's failure to realistically provide a viable strategy for the employment of the Strategic Reserve in support of the National Security Strategy, and to refute the feasibility of the Army's capacity to provide a ready and relevant force capable of serving as the Nation's Strategic Reserve.

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THE FAILURE OF THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW TO FORMULATE A VIABLE DEFENSE STRATEGY BASED UPON THE STRATEGIC RESERVE

On 16 May 1940, Winston Churchill made a desperate trip to Paris, where he asked the French high command overseeing the hasty retreat of its forces in front of the German offensive through the Ardennes, "*Où est la masse de manoeuvre?*" ("Where are the reserves?") the answer was, "*Il n'y a aucune!*" ("There is none!")¹

HISTORIC USE OF RESERVE FORCES

Since Elihu Root Championed the formal inception of the United States Army Reserve through numerous legislative actions, beginning with the Dick Act of 1903, the Reserves have existed in one state of readiness or another to support the active Army in times of national crisis². Until 1989 and the fall of the Berlin wall, activation of the Reserve forces by America's senior civilian leadership has for the most part been tied to acts of war or major military combat actions. This consistent practice by previous political administrations dates back to 1916 when the Reserves were mobilized to squelch Francisco "Pancho" Villa during the Mexican uprising. It continued through two World Wars, "Policing" actions in Korea and to a very limited extent the war in Vietnam³. Although, the size, role and state of readiness of the Reserves has fluctuated severely at times, past National policy and more importantly National strategy, whether implicit or explicit, has activated those forces only under circumstances of national crisis.

Since the end of the cold war, and subsequent to the massive downsizing of our Army after Operation Desert Storm, such calculated and cautious employment of Army Reserve forces has gone by the wayside. Exhaustive utilization of the Reserve force during the intervening years, following the fall of the Berlin wall and today's current high operational tempo, has significantly deteriorated Reserve capability. This diminished Reserve capability is inconsonant with the goals of the National Security Strategy and in direct contravention of the Quadrennial Defense Review with regard to providing a viable Strategic Reserve.

CLAUSEWITZ ON STRATEGIC RESERVE

Before further elaboration it is necessary to define, at least from a theorist's point of view, the meaning and value of the Reserve, especially in terms of the Strategic Reserve and its intended use. No work on theory and strategy would be complete without a compulsory review of Carl Von Clausewitz timeless work "On War." Clausewitz addresses several salient points while elaborating on the necessity of a Strategic Reserve. In spite of his eighteenth-century definition of a Strategic Reserve (a

capability we might refer to as an operational level reserve today) his precepts for what a pure Strategic Reserve entails still holds distinctively true in today's global environment. Accordingly, his first premise postulates that, "As a tactical reserve is held ready to counter an unforeseen tactical threat so too should a Strategic Reserve be held for when a strategic emergency is conceivable⁴." He further states, "It is an essential condition of strategic leadership that forces should be held in reserve according to the degree of strategic uncertainty⁵." Accepting the above premise, it is important to note that given the current strategic environment it is patently clear that our senior leadership indubitably believes that these are uncertain times and that America is engaged in a war of uncertain duration. While Clausewitz also opines on the ineffective use of the Strategic Reserve, his theory on ineffectual use of the Strategic Reserve and its application to our Reserves today will be addressed at a later point in this paper.

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF THE STRATEGIC RESERVE

History is replete with examples of calculated employment of the Strategic Reserve to counter threats of national importance and consequence. The following illustrations highlight just a few occasions when it was necessary for the National political and military leadership to take strategic military measures that held national survival in the balance.

A classic case for the employment of a Strategic Reserve was the use of the 21st and 23rd Finnish divisions during the Russo-Finnish winter war, November-March 1939. Russia commenced its attack on Finland after the Finns refused to cede naval basing rights and a large strip of land along the Karelian Isthmus. With more than 19 Soviet divisions, 800 tanks and 400,000 soldiers, Russia engaged Finland's 9 divisions, 100 tanks and 175,000 soldiers of which 80 percent were drawn from the Reserves⁶. Facing a superior force the Finns started to suffer heavy losses due to severe artillery ammunition shortages that impacted on their ability to conduct effective counter-battery fire. As a result, they failed to actively support their defending forces⁷. With casualties mounting daily, battalion and company strengths continued to decrease steadily as new reinforcements were hard to come by⁸. In response to this manpower drain, Finland decided to convert its two replacement / training divisions (21st and 23rd respectively) into combat units and position them behind III and IV Corps as a Strategic Reserve.

Ironically, Reserve forces of the 21st division were 75-80 percent clad in civilian clothes, lacked artillery regiments, and were armed with “just enough” automatic weapons to train yet not adequate enough to fight efficiently⁹.

Another example of the use of a Strategic Reserve was during the Korean conflict. According to Warden, “Lin Piao made a perfect decision on committing the Chinese – in the sense that China constituted a Strategic Reserve for the North Koreans – against MacArthur¹⁰.” Though arguably mercenary soldiers, the Chinese Army was programmed and postured as a last resort force in the defense of North Korea. The North Koreans, in light of overwhelming success by the Attacking United Nation’s forces, ultimately called upon the Chinese as a Strategic Reserve demonstrably conforming to Clausewitz’s definition of what a Strategic Reserve is designed to accomplish.

Warden also gives an exacting example of the utility of having a Strategic Reserve during the Air Battle for Britain. He notes that “in spite of brutal aerial bombing and combat air attacks, Air Marshall Dowding deliberately kept about one third of his fighter forces away from attacking German aircraft and restricted their participation in any combat action¹¹.” The significance of this decision by Air Marshall Dowding, given the horrific bombing campaign by the German Luftwaffe, cannot be underscored enough. Clearly, his decision to withhold aviation assets, labeled as a Strategic Reserve, facilitated the deception necessary to foil the Germans at the precise moment that the Germans felt they could administer the final coup de’ grace against the British Royal Air Force. The results of the allied aerial engagements by the Air Strategic Reserve on 15 September 1940, forced the Luftwaffe to abandon their air campaign plan and relegate their efforts to the inefficient night bombings of London.

The one common thread between these varied examples is the concerted effort and cost by senior leadership to designate a finite military resource and capability as a Strategic Reserve and then withhold the use of that force until military operations necessitate the use of all military force in order to counter the overwhelming threat that presents strategic consequences. Furthermore, it should be inherently clear in the examples cited that the use of a Strategic Reserve is not to be frittered away in support

of daily tactical or operational actions that result in the loss of the forces necessary to provide a Strategic Reserve capability.

DEFINING THE STRATEGIC RESERVE

With so much riding on the Department of Defense's ability to call upon a Strategic Reserve in times of National crisis one would assume that the roles, responsibilities and military capabilities of the Strategic Reserve would be clearly defined in both quality and quantity. However, nothing could be further from the truth.

To illustrate this conclusion, fully two years before the Quadrennial Defense Review was published the Department of Defense announced the results of its year long Reserve Component Employment 2005 Study¹². Among other issues, one of the primary directives of the study was to define the Strategic Reserve. The core of the study determined that a survey of post-Cold War Defense Department strategy and planning documents revealed that as of that date there was no official Department-wide definition that addressed the potential need or employment concept for a Strategic Reserve. The study further noted that potential requirements might exist for additional, relatively low-cost capabilities as a hedge against Major Theater of War risks in two mission areas. However, the study qualified that statement by stating that force requirement scenarios are based on the most likely conditions and threats versus most dangerous, and that operational plans do not comprehensively address post-conflict stages. Ironically, in light of current operations in Iraq, the study foreshadowed that while meeting these unanticipated or more demanding requirements would undoubtedly be accomplished with the assistance of allies or coalition partners, the need for additional U.S. forces remains a distinct possibility¹³.

A second issue addressed by the study concerned the mobilization challenges associated with responding to two near-simultaneous Major Theaters of War. The study indicated that exceptional demands would be placed on all military services, in particular the Army as it provides Total Force combat, combat service and combat service support capabilities critical to success. The obvious challenge is that such forces are not apportioned for in existing operations plans¹⁴. Furthermore, the situation will only intensify as the Reserves transform to a new mobilization methodology that mirrors the active force. No longer will the Reserves alert, mobilize, train and deploy. Rather,

reserve soldiers will be expected to train, alert and deploy in an identical manner as the active force model¹⁵. However, it must be emphasized that the reality of this aggressive mobilization concept cannot be actualized unless significant manpower, facilities and training dollar resources are applied towards it.

The study recommended that the Department of Defense determine the mission and requirements for a Strategic Reserve with respect to the overall U.S. defense strategy. It also concluded that a subsequent two-part study, conducted by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Threat Reduction and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, in conjunction with the Joint Staff, define the concept of a Strategic Reserve and subsequently determine the military requirements and possible force options associated with the Strategic Reserve mission¹⁶.

Two years after the release of the Reserve Component Employment 2005 Study a memorandum for the Reserve Component Coordination Council highlighted the fact that, "A remaining issue that continues to be worked is the impact of the missioning effort on the designation of a Strategic Reserve."¹⁷ According to the memorandum published for the Reserve Component Coordination Council, the eight National Guard Divisions are programmed to be missioned as follows: four (4) to Major Theater of Wars, one (1) to EUCOM, one (1) to SOUTHCOM and two (2) to the Base Generating Force¹⁸. The memorandum also stated that further work on this issue is to be deferred until completion of Quadrennial Defense Review-01. Compounding the Army National Guard missioning effort is that the memorandum does not designate any of the Army National Guard Divisions as a Strategic Reserve although, the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan does¹⁹. The net effect of these studies and conflicting planning documents is that there is no coherent singular definition of what constitutes our National Strategic Reserve nor is there agreement on how it will be resourced.

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

So what does the National Security Strategy state and how does it impact on the state of the Reserve force? In its September 2002 National Security Strategy document, the White House concluded, "Defending our nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the federal Government²⁰." Furthermore, "To defeat this threat we must make use of every tool in our arsenal – military power, better

homeland defenses....²¹” This document provides an overview of America’s international strategy and outlines its three goals in accomplishing its strategy as political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states and respect for human dignity²². Most importantly it notes that in order to achieve the aforementioned goals, the United States will, among other things, transform America’s national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century²³.

This transformation, specifically of American military strength, “must be to create capability to decisively defeat any adversary if deterrence fails.²⁴” It expands this goal by saying that American forces need to be prepared for continued deployments to remote places, via transformed maneuver capability and expeditionary forces. Additionally the military must be capable of defending the homeland, maintaining near-term readiness and providing the President with a wider range of military options²⁵. Adding additional complexity to these goals is the expectation, by our governmental leadership, to execute these expanded missions on a military budget that is approximately one third of its historical average when compared to the Gross Domestic Product over the past 60 years²⁶.

At this point it is important to note that although the National Security Strategy was published fully a year later than the Quadrennial Defense Review Report, it was influenced in part, if not in whole (with respect to Department of Defense issues), by the current administration’s Secretary of Defense. In spite of this, it appears that there are glaring discrepancies between the directives of the National Security Strategy and those contained in the Quadrennial Defense Review. These discrepancies will be addressed individually as they pertain to the goals of the National Security Strategy identified above and then collectively as they relate to the Strategic Reserve.

QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW REPORT

The National Security Strategy directs that the Military be prepared to continue short notice deployments in order to defeat any adversary if deterrence fails²⁷. While the operational necessity to execute this mission is logically evident, the means to do so have been severely impaired as noted in the Quadrennial Defense Review. In elaborating on the State of the U.S. Military, the Quadrennial Defense Review makes some striking statements with respect to personnel readiness. For example, it

highlights that while “first to fight” forces have sustained a similitude of readiness, it has been at the expense and readiness of non-divisional, institutional and Reserve Component units²⁸. As if to further drive a stake into the desired military deployment options mentioned by the National Security Strategy, the Quadrennial Defense Review stresses that the reduction in military personnel, increase in operational demands and economic demand for workers in the private sector has resulted in a growing reliance on the Reserves²⁹. The resultant effect of current operations and peacetime forward deterrence missions that are stressing the active Army on a daily basis has a corresponding thirty-three percent increase in Reserve force requirements³⁰. Surprisingly, the Quadrennial Defense Review acknowledges that force structure has been significantly reduced and the ability to provide the Reserve personnel strength necessary to support viable deployment options as outlined in the National Security Strategy has been seriously compromised.

The reduced state of Reserve personnel readiness within the Military, as noted in the previous paragraph, diametrically impacts on the Army's ability to transform maneuver units while simultaneously maintaining near-term readiness. Yet, this addresses only one element of Reserve readiness as outlined in the Quadrennial Defense Review. The Quadrennial Defense Review refers to numerous examples of reduced (if not failed) equipment and facility readiness standards. It points out that many major systems (most notably legacy force systems) are approaching the end of useful service. In turn, this amounts to reduced mission capable rates, increased operating costs and increased frustration by those charged with maintaining these systems³¹.

The Quadrennial Defense Review also clearly states, “...Legacy forces critical to DoD's ability to defeat current threats must be sustained as transformation occurs³².” Since the preponderance of Reserve equipment resides in the Legacy force, Reserve Component relevancy to current and future military operations is directly tied to the effectiveness and interoperability of its major weapons systems. Ironically, the rift will likely increase between Legacy and Objective force equipment since the recapitalization of all elements of U.S. forces since the Cold War has delayed force modernization for too long. The real angst noted in The Quadrennial Defense Review is that without a

significant effort, Legacy Force structure will not only continue to age but will also become operationally and technologically obsolete in the near future³³. With fifty-four percent of Army structure residing in the Reserve components,³⁴ and only six percent³⁵ of the Army budget programmed to support it, turning the tide on Legacy force readiness is indisputably a daunting, if not impossible, task.

The Army has also suffered from infrastructure under-funding and neglect in the institutional and operational Army. With a cost of \$60 billion dollars to reverse this deterioration of infrastructure across the services, and given that facility sustainment has historically been funded to only 75-80%, the odds of recapitalizing infrastructure to even near industry standards are quite slim³⁶.

Even loosely interpreted, near-term readiness for the Army can only imply that combat readiness for the operational Army (Divisional and select Corps units) will be at the continued expense of the institutional and most pointedly Reserve Component units. The bottom line is reduced readiness across the Reserve force in the areas of personnel, equipment, and facilities. Unfortunately, this trend will only continue under current conditions and may in fact be exacerbated by transformation and multiple real-world operational requirements.

Superimposed on the Active component's symbiotic reliance on the Reserves is the Reserve component's increased role in protecting America within its borders. The Quadrennial Defense Review noted, "protecting the American homeland from attacks is the foremost responsibility of the U.S. Armed Forces and a primary mission for the Reserve Components³⁷." The specified task of training federal, state and local responders on counter terrorism is placed squarely on the shoulders of the Reserve components. The implications of this directed task are enormous. With the advent of the Office of Homeland Security as a separate agency and not subordinate to the Department of Defense, one can only surmise that command and control, and support responsibilities of the Reserve components to two separate cabinet agencies may only serve to further stretch limited Reserve capabilities.

THE ARMY VISION AND ITS IMPACT ON PROVIDING A STRATEGIC RESERVE

ARMY VISION

In narrowing the scope of Reserve Component capabilities necessary to establish a Strategic Reserve, the Army (with respect to other Service Components) is arguably the most challenged in its ability to provide an enhanced force capability. Furthermore, in the Quadrennial Defense Review, discrepancy exists between what the Army Vision implies as a viable readiness capability, with respect to the Reserve Components, and reality. A perfunctory review of one of the Army Vision's three interdependent elements, Readiness, will provide clarification for this point.³⁸

ARMY READINESS

The element of readiness contained in the Army's Vision states that, "Nonnegotiable readiness, the foundation of our contract with the American people to fight and win the Nation's war, hinges on the well-being of our people³⁹." The Army's Vision further expounds on readiness by stating that, "Readiness remains the Army's top priority in fulfilling the nonnegotiable contract with the American people to fight and win the Nation's wars – decisively. Readiness means the Army must be prepared to perform a wide range of worldwide missions – to defend the United States and its territories; to support national policies and objectives; and to defeat adversaries that endanger the peace and security of the United States and our allies⁴⁰." This level of directed Army readiness translates into an exhaustive list of Army operational requirements. Given current active and reserve force deployments, mission demands at home and abroad and reluctance by UN/NATO allies to provide troop support in Iraq, the Army must except risk in readiness in order to execute its "list" of readiness objectives.

One of the means available to mitigate risk and accomplish this desired state of readiness is addressed in the Army's Vision under, "Objectives, Successes, and The Way Ahead" which serve as a method of defining and ensuring that readiness goals are met. In order to assess the Army's ability to construct a viable Strategic Reserve it is necessary to review and evaluate one of the most relevant (as it bears on the Strategic Reserve) readiness objectives identified. This readiness objective is referred to as AC/RC Integration, and it is defined as "(to) Fully integrate the Active and Reserve Components."⁴¹ This may, in fact, ostensibly be the salient issue that undermines the Army's, and conceivably the Department of Defense's, ability to generate a Strategic Reserve.

AC/RC INTEGRATION

There has been a concerted effort, at least since the early 1970's, to inextricably tie the Active Forces to their Reserve component counterparts. To this end, numerous academic works have been compiled which have addressed the issue of the Army's AC/RC integration initiatives. Clearly, the underpinning argument for the majority of the works written on AC/RC integration by America's senior civilian and military leadership is that integration is highly desired and working well. Examples, as cited by LTC Lawrence Smith in his Strategic Research Project include Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger statement that, "The Total Force is no longer a 'concept.' It is now the Total Force Policy, which integrates the Active, Guard and Reserve into a homogenous whole⁴²." Former Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen stated "Our goal, as we move into the 21st century, must be a seamless Total Force that provides the NCA the flexibility and interoperability necessary for the full range of military operations...We must continue to work towards the principles of Total Force and achieve full integration of the Reserve and Active Components⁴³." Our current and past two Army Chief's of Staff have also mirrored these sentiments in their guidance and intent to Army leaders across the components.

It appears we have indeed integrated our active and reserve forces, perhaps too well. Integration, for the purposes of this research, implies one of two meanings, to seamlessly transition Reserve Forces to active duty during times of crisis, or to utilize the Reserves as an extension of the Active Component on routine missions and operational objectives. Regardless of the definition, the fact is that the last fifteen years have resulted in unprecedented and extensive use of the Reserve Components. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has even echoed concern over whether we have gone too far in "taking the Reserves with us.⁴⁴" What started as a simple initiative by Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird in 1970 to create a Total Force, that tied America's grassroots communities to its fighting forces, has transformed through force reductions, budget cuts and increased demands on the military, into a policy of operational necessity. It is doubtful that when Secretary Laird championed this initiative he envisioned the employment of the citizen-soldier at the frequency and duration that occurs in today's operational environment.

RESERVE COMPONENT UTILIZATION

Ironically, the success the Army has experienced at integrating Reserve Components into a total force has had a profound negative impact on its current ability to provide the forces necessary to generate a Strategic Reserve. In the past fifteen years the Reserve Components have played a key role in military actions like Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Operation Uphold Democracy, Operation Joint Endeavor (now Joint Guard), Operation Enduring Freedom and most recently Operation Iraqi Freedom. They have also been intrinsically tied to state and federal military operations in support of major natural disasters like hurricanes, floods, forest fires and earthquakes, as well as, riot control, drug interdiction and Homeland Defense.

Due to the extensive and inextricable use of the Reserve Components over the past decade, operational readiness (personnel, equipment and training) of designated Strategic Reserve forces would remain problematic even if planning documents were aligned in a cohesive manner with respect to allocating resources and allotting Army forces. The consequential effect is that although, AC/RC integration is arguably an overwhelming success as envisioned by its founding architects, the Army no longer has the ability to execute one of its primary historical Reserve Component missions, that being to muster forces to serve as the Nations Strategic Reserve. Regrettably, the risk as Clausewitz postulated, is that when it is necessary to have a viable Strategic Reserve to counter an unforeseen strategic threat, none will be available.

CLAUSEWITZ'S CONCLUSION ON STRATEGIC RESERVE EMPLOYMENT

Clausewitz's view on the Army's broad and eclectic use of the Strategic Reserve (read Reserve Component) was that "its value will decrease the less specific its intended employment⁴⁵." The operational tempo over the past fifteen years has necessitated the Army's Active Component to call upon its Reserve Component forces more than at anytime since its inception. Compound this by the reduced state of readiness within the Reserve components, antiquated legacy force systems and personnel shortfalls, and it becomes quite evident that the Quadrennial Defense Review is found lacking with respect to realistically meeting its requirements as put forth in the National Security Strategy. One can only surmise by the conflicting and intertwined purpose of the Reserve Components as addressed in the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Army's Vision, that its originators failed to heed the conclusions of Baron Von

Clausewitz in that, “a Strategic Reserve becomes less essential, less useful and more dangerous to use, the more inclusive and general its intended purpose⁴⁶.”

FALLIBILITY OF THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW AND ARMY VISION IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

Both the National Security Strategy and Quadrennial Defense Review address the need to provide a wider or richer set of military options. The primary means of providing this flexibility is the extensive utilization of the Reserve Components across the full spectrum of military operations, most notably homeland defense, small-scale contingencies and major combat operations. The dichotomy of this premise is that while the Quadrennial Defense Review specifically directs that “...DoD will maintain sufficient force generation capability and a Strategic Reserve to mitigate risks,⁴⁷” it also either acknowledges or directs consumption of that same force in current or planned near-term and future operations. The Army Vision, and the Army’s intent to seamlessly integrate the Reserve Components, only serves to further exacerbate this dilemma with its desired and directed all-inclusive utilization of the Total Force.

Therein lies the inherent fallibility of the Quadrennial Defense Review as it supports the National Security Strategy with respect to mitigating risk through the use of a Strategic Reserve. The National Security Strategy states “ We will maintain the forces sufficient to support our obligations...⁴⁸” The Quadrennial Defense Review concedes the necessity to organize, train and equip such a force. It goes even further in acknowledging the need for a Strategic Reserve force, as described by Clausewitz, by stating, to... “Decisively defeat an adversary would likely require substantial reinforcement even after transformation⁴⁹.” The fundamental concern remains that the Department of Defense, and more specifically the Army, intends to leverage the use of its Reserve Components in order to support the Nation’s “obligations” during the simultaneous execution of its transformational strategy. On the one hand the Quadrennial Defense Review cites case-after-case where Reserve Component utilization and the condition of the legacy force are in a state of distress. Yet, in the same breath those in leadership positions intend to underwrite transformational and operational requirements through continued and extensive use of these very same beleaguered forces.

To leverage strategy on a capability that arguably does not exist, has not been defined, and at best hinges on forces that are under-funded, preponderantly outdated and quite possibly operationally culminated is pure folly. What is represented as moderate operational risk by the Quadrennial Defense Review based on current force structure is in actuality faulty logic, that assumes away the fulcrum for the desired shift in force structure in support of the President's request for a richer set of military options. A fulcrum that is better known as the Strategic Reserve.

RISK MITIGATION FOR THE STRATEGIC RESERVE

While the Quadrennial Defense Review may prescribe the Strategic Reserve as the panacea for how the Department of Defense intends to leverage current military operations during this period of transformation, it cannot simultaneously minimize the risk associated with it⁵⁰. This does not mean the risk should be redefined (as statisticians are prone to do) to fit neatly within the framework of the Quadrennial Defense Review; rather it should strive to apply threat and empirical statistical analysis to evaluate and address the policy discrepancies.

First and foremost, a comprehensive Strategic Reserve study across the services and components must be directed and more significantly be completed. At minimum, findings should address the need and relevance of a Strategic Reserve (vice an Operational Reserve). If it is determined that one is required, the following should then be determined; What should it look like? What is the appropriate force mix? What are the trigger events that will determine when and how it should be employed? And at what levels will it be resourced to achieve readiness?

Secondly, new, uncompromising and unbiased metrics must be applied against readiness reports to truly assess the readiness posture of Active and Reserve Component forces. Current unit readiness status reports do not provide the realistic analytical data necessary to evaluate current force readiness due to the extensive operational usage of all Army component forces, enactment of personnel stop-loss measures and varied states of force transformation. Furthermore, only when comprehensive fully integrated readiness standards (e.g., active/reserve readiness per AR 220-1, impact of echeloned transformation across the components, infrastructure

availability and budget constraints) can be evaluated in a singular, holistic manner can the feasibility of designating a viable Strategic Reserve force be determined.

The stark reality facing the need for a Strategic Reserve can best be determined through the eyes of our enemies. If enemy intelligence on the battlefield concludes that American forces are over extended and/or culminated with no practicable means of bringing a strategic core of trained and ready reserves to bear – what better time to strike? To this end Strategic Reserve requirements must not only address a capabilities based force but take threat-based considerations into account as well.

America's senior leadership should not continue to accept risk by ignoring the under funded and ill-equipped Reserve Component, and neglecting the glaring discrepancies between various plans and documents that direct the utilization of the Strategic Reserve. In the end, the conflict between National strategy, policy and planning documents must be resolved. A coherent plan for the resourcing and employment of the Strategic Reserve must be developed, approved and integrated throughout National and Military Strategic and operational documents, plans and policies. Only then can America mitigate risk through the employment of a viable Strategic Reserve as purported by the Quadrennial Defense Review.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Colonel John A. Warden, *The Air Campaign Planning for Combat*, National Defense University Press Publication, 1988, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/warden/ward-toc.htm>, accessed 0458 am, 14 October 2003.

² 2001 Reserve Forces Almanac, 27th Annual Edition, Uniformed Services Almanac INC., 133.

³ Ibid, p. 134.

⁴ Michael Howard and Peter Paret, *Carl Von Clausewitz, On War*, Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 210.

⁵ Ibid, p. 210

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