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THE U.S. ARMY ACTIVE COMPONENT ADVISORY SUPPORT TO THE RESERVE COMPONENTS 1903-1988

An Individual Study Project

by

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ABSTRACT

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In his final World War II report as Army Chief of Staff, General Marshall wrote to the Secretary of War that "probably the most important mission of the Regular Army is to provide the knowledge, the expert personnel, and the installations for training the citizen-soldier, upon whom, in my opinion, the future peace of the world largely depends." General Marshall's words ring true today; given the total force policy with over half the Army's combat power and two-thirds its combat service support units in the reserve components. Since their authorization in the National Defense Act of 1903, Regular Army advisors have been a vital link with the reserve components. This study reviews the advisory system from its inception in 1903 to today. It discusses the different missions, duties and responsibilities that have been associated with advisors as well as the organizational changes that have taken place. ←

ENDNOTES

1. Bennie J. Wilson, III, The General and Reserve in the Total Force, p. 46.

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THE US ARMY ACTIVE COMPONENT ADVISORY SUPPORT TO THE RESERVE COMPONENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Our traditional military philosophy has placed a large share of the burden of national defense on the "citizen soldiers". The vast dimensions of our international responsibilities have placed great strain on the muscles of our standing forces; their reinforcement when conflict comes, must arrive in less time and with greater readiness than ever before. That statement is equally applicable in the 1980's as in the 1890's. The victories as well as the ineptitudes of the Spanish-American War coupled with an ever increasing global involvement in international politics and trade, clearly punctuated the need for a rigorous reserve system more closely tied to the regular force.¹ Today, with over half of our combat power and almost two-thirds of our combat service support in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, the Reserve Component (RC) of our Total Force, we face the same enduring requirement to link the US Army's Active Component (AC) and RC elements as closely as possible.²

The vital linking of the AC and RC is performed, in large part, by active Army soldiers working as advisors and consultants to the RC's. This paper reviews the evolution of the U.S. Army Advisory System from its inception in the National Defense Act of 1903 through today.

ENDNOTES

1. Russell F. Weigley, History of the United States Army, p. 313.
2. William D. Clark, Reserve issues, p. 3.

CHAPTER II

THE RUDIMENTS OF THE ADVISORY SYSTEM

As the United States entered the 20th century, the mission to modernize/reform the Army fell on the shoulders of Secretary of War, Elihu Root.² He would have elected a first line reserve more responsive to federal control than the state military; however, political concessions driven by the National Guard Association of the U.S. resulted in the National Guard becoming the primary reserve force behind the Regular Army.⁴

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT OF 1903

The National Defense Act of 1903, known as the Dick Act for the Congressman and National Guard General from Ohio who sponsored it, initiated the beginning of stronger federal financial support of and interest in the National Guard. Federal appropriations increased from \$1,000,000 in 1903 to \$4,000,000 in 1908.³ The policy of giving states grants-in-aid in return for increased sponsorship of organized state militia units became an established doctrine and practice. The act not only provided for standardization between Regular Army and reserve units ("organization, training, equipment and arms as furnished and prescribed by the Army would thereafter be standard in the militia")⁵, it also provided for the use of Regular Army officers to advise reserve units. Advisors were assigned at the request of a governor.

That upon the application of the governor of any state or territory furnished with material of war may under the provisions of this Act or former laws of Congress, the Secretary of War may detail one or more officers of the Army to attend any encampment of the organized militia, and to give such instruction and information to the officers and men assembled in such camps as may be requested by the governor. Such officers shall immediately make a report of such encampment to the Secretary of War, who shall furnish a copy thereof to the governor of the state or territory.'

By 1911 seventy-three inspector/instructors were assigned to National Guard units and their presence "brought the Regular Army and militia in much closer touch than ever before, and for the first time enabled the War Department to determine the actual existing conditions in the individual units of the militia."³

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT OF 1916

The National Defense Act of 1916 strengthened the Federal role in the advisory system by providing the Secretary of War the authority to send Regular Army officers to National Guard units without a governor's request.⁴ The Act not only increased federal control over the National Guard, it also added the Enlisted Reserve Corps, Officers Reserve Corps and the Reserve Officer Training Corps to the military establishment.

ENDNOTES

3. Richard B. Crossland and James T. Currie, Twice the Citizen: A History of the United States Army Reserve, 1908-1983, pp. 10-13.

4. Martha Derthick, The National Guard in Politics, pp. 22-27.
5. Ibid., p. 28.
6. U.S. Laws, Statutes, etc., Public Law 33.
7. Ibid., Sec. 19.
8. Report of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 1912, p. 34.
9. The National Defense Act approved June 3, 1916, as Amended, to January 1, 1945, Inclusive with Related Acts and Notes, Sec. 96, p. 127.

CHAPTER III
THE INTERWAR YEARS

The National Defense Act of 1920 reorganized the existing military districts into nine corps areas. Each corps area contained one or more Army corps composed of units from the Regular Army, National Guard and Organized Reserve. The requirement for Regular Army support to the National Guard and Army Reserve units increased proportionately. Commissioned and enlisted personnel were allotted to each corps area for assignment to the Army Reserve Component units. Each division headquarters was authorized three general staff officers, one adjutant, one supply officer, and five enlisted soldiers. Each regiment or equivalent was authorized one officer and one enlisted soldier.¹⁰ These were assigned "to perform duties of a continuing nature that could not be performed by reserve personnel."¹¹ The law also gave the corps area commanders training responsibility for the National Guard.

This was the first time that any element below the War Department was authorized to deal directly with state military forces. It's instructive to note that the usefulness of the corps area commander was dependent in large measure upon how cooperative the state adjutant generals were in his area. Thus a corps area commander and his advisors to National Guard units were at best coordinating liaison agents whose successes were in direct proportion to the cooperation they could obtain from the state governor, state adjutant general, and the senior commanders in the states. In some areas the most they could do was report to the War

Department on how closely National Guard units did or did not comply with policies and programs they had been directed to implement.¹²

The 1920 Act also provided each corps area with a training detachment, comprised of regular officers and non-commissioned officers, designed to train the Organized Reserve. However, the political and fiscal realities of 1920's and 30's cut manning levels to the bone. By 1927 the Regular Army had been reduced to 118,750 and the nine training detachments were eliminated. The Organized Reserve consisted of an Officers Reserve Corps of approximately 100,000 and the Enlisted Reserve Corps was practically non-existent.¹³ Some Officer Reserve Corps members conducted organized training during the interwar period in Citizen Military Training Camps. It was intended that regular officers would conduct the training; however, limited availability precluded their use; consequently, the Organized Reserve Officers trained themselves.¹⁴

During the interwar period, the National Guard advisory structure, though reduced in strength, remained essentially the same. The National Defense Act of 1933 made the National Guard a Reserve Component of the Army in peace as well as war. The Act's main effect was to bring tighter control of officer qualifications; otherwise, the Act did little to increase Army guidance/assistance to personnel or units in the state controlled organizations.¹⁵

ENDNOTES

10. Special Regulation Number 46: General Policies and Regulations for the Organized Reserves, pp. 5-7.
11. Ibid., p. 9.
12. John M. Palmer, America in Arms, pp. 163-175.
13. Weigley, pp. 399-402.
14. Crossland and Currie, pp. 37-41.
15. John K. Mahon, History of the Militia and the National Guard, pp. 174-175.

CHAPTER IV

POST WORLD WAR II

At the end of World War II, War Department planning envisioned an increase of Federal authority over the Army National Guard (ARNG) units and a corresponding upgrade of the advisor's authority. The Gray Board under Mr. Gordon Gray, Assistant Secretary of the Army, supported this view in its 1948 report. However, by that date the ARNG had reconstituted itself with a strength of 300,000 and perhaps represented too strong a force in the national and political structure to risk alienation of its support. 16

MILITARY DISTRICTS

From World War II thru 1958, Regular Army support to the Guard and Reserves was supervised and administered by military districts, the boundaries of which, when practicable, coincided with state boundaries. The chain of command went from the Department of the Army, thru the U.S. Continental Army Command (CONARC) and its subordinate Continental United States Armies (CONUSA's) to the military districts.

Each of the forty-nine districts was commanded by a general officer or senior colonel supported by a staff of advisors, ROTC instructors and administrative personnel. The commander or "Chief, Military District", as he was titled, was responsible for:

- a. Activation, coordination, supervision, training and inspection of the Army Reserve in his military district.
- b. Supervision of Army instructors on duty with reserve components in his military district.
- c. Effective utilization of instructor personnel under his command to prevent indiscriminate assignment of duties which might be detrimental to the National Guard of the United States or Army Reserve.¹⁷

Senior Army instructors (colonels) were assigned as follows: one per state (for National Guard units), one per district for Reserve units, one per division, Corps Artillery, Division Artillery and Engineer Brigade.¹⁸ The senior Army instructors were responsible for the supervision and coordination of the training of Army Reserve and ARNG units. Unit instructors were assigned down to battalion level and performed the day-to-day duties of advising and instructing unit personnel.¹⁹

CORPS (RESERVE) SYSTEM

In 1956 Headquarters CONARC initiated action to consolidate the forty-nine military district headquarters into fourteen U.S. Army Corps (Reserve) headquarters. The objectives of this change were to: overcome the limitations imposed by state boundaries, clarify and simplify the chain of command, achieve economy in operations, and accrue additional prestige for the Reserve Program through the assignment of Regular Army major generals as corps commanders.²⁰ The senior advisor, Army Reserve, in each state was redesignated as sector commander. He had command authority over all advisory personnel within a geographic area that conformed to Reserve unit

dispositions. Sector commanders were also given command authority over United States Army Reserve commanders (USAR) of non-General Officer Commands (GOCOM's) within their sector. The fifty-one sector commanders, supported by a seven man staff, were both supervisors and troubleshooters. Primarily, they supervised and assured that unit commanders, area commanders, and unit advisors understood and carried out instructions of the corps commander. The directives and instructions of the corps commander had to be in such detail as not to require the sector commanders to write implementing instructions because they were not staffed to do so.¹

Senior unit advisors, i.e. advisors to Reserve brigades or their equivalents, were designated area commanders. In addition to the performance of assigned advisory duties, area commanders were responsible for supervision of subordinate unit advisors, command and supervision of non-General Officer Command commanders, and advising the sector commander in matters pertaining to activation, inactivation, location, relocation, or redesignation of USAR units located within his area. Operations within area commands were adversely affected by a lack of administrative and unit supply technicians and civilian maintenance personnel. It resulted in a tendency for area commanders to become overly involved in detailed unit administration just as senior unit advisors became involved under the military district system.²

Senior advisors to USAR GOCOM's primarily performed advisory functions. Although they had supervisory authority over a limited

number of unit advisors, they did not have the command responsibilities associated with the sector commander.

USAR unit advisor personnel were responsible to their respective sector commander, area commander, or senior advisor, for:

- a. Attendance, unless excused by competent authority, at scheduled Reserve duty and annual active duty for training periods by the USAR unit to which assigned.
- b. Advising and assisting the USAR unit commander in matters pertaining to organization, administration, training proficiency, operational capability, and mobilization-readiness status of the unit. In the performance of this responsibility the relationship of the USAR unit commander is that of a staff representative of the appropriate sector commander, area commander,...

One of the accomplishments of the corps program was the extent to which corps were relieved of non-reserve related activities. The principle non-reserve related activities performed by advisors was personal affairs assistance to next-of-kin and line-of-duty and claims investigations. Although the program was to increase the number of advisors, it came at a time when personnel cuts were being made across the Army; consequently, 238 advisor spaces were lost.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ARMY RESERVE COMMANDS (ARCOM's)

In 1967 the Army Reserve was reorganized. Under Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, the "One Army" concept (the predecessor of today's Total Army) was instituted with the elimination of the

14 corps headquarters and the creation of 18 two-star Army Reserve Commands (ARCOM's). The ARCOM's were established as area headquarters with the mission "to insure attainment and maintenance of mobilization readiness of attached and assigned units".²⁵

The sector and subsector commands were eliminated and all command functions over USAR units were removed from the advisory system and assigned to ARCOM or GOCOM commanders. The USAR advisors were reorganized into twenty-seven advisory groups that were directly responsible to their respective CONUSA's.²⁶

In the early 1970's, CONARC expressed concern over the quality of Army advisors. Educationally they were below the Army average. Only 29% of the captains and less than 50% of the colonels assigned as advisors possessed college degrees, while the Army averages were 49% and 97% respectively. Additionally, only 37% of the lieutenant colonels assigned to advisor duty were Command and General Staff Course graduates compared to the 59% Army average.²⁷

ENDNOTES

16. Mahon, pp. 201-203.
17. U.S. Department of the Army, Special Regulation 135-305-1, pp. 3-4.
18. U.S. Department of the Army, Army Regulation 611-50, p. 3.
19. Special Regulation 135-305-1, p. 5.
20. Mahon, pp. 230-232.
21. Headquarters, United States Continental Army Command, Status Report United States Army Corps (Reserve) Program, pp. 1-3.
22. Ibid., p. 6-8.

23. Ibid., p. 13.
24. Ibid., Incl. 5.
25. Crossland and Currie, pp. 177-179.
26. Department of the Army -- DARC-PR. Letter to Chief of Staff, Continental Army Command, Tab A, 7 August 1972.
27. Crossland and Currie, pp. 222-224.

CHAPTER V

THE IMPACT OF OPERATION STEADFAST

The advisory system was upgraded as part of a 1973 Army reorganization titled Operation STEADFAST. Operation STEADFAST dissolved CONARC and created Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and U.S. Forces Command (FORSCOM). The CONUSA's became subordinate to FORSCOM and were relieved of responsibility for active forces and installations. They were given the mission of improving the readiness of the National Guard and USAR units and mobilization planning.⁴⁴

While the Operation STEADFAST plan for the management of the Reserve Components kept intact the existing personnel and logistical management systems for the RC's, major changes were made in the structure of the advisor effort, the training management system, and the command lines in the Army Reserve. The plan established nine Army readiness regions (ARR), each commanded by a major general. The primary mission of the readiness regions was to assist RC commanders in identifying training requirements and to help determine the most effective resource to satisfy those requirements.⁴⁵ The readiness region concept was designed to improve training management through application of specialized resources and skills according to need and priority. The ARR's were not in the chain of command between the CONUSA and the USAR, nor were they in the ARNG command structure. They were an extension of the CONUSA headquarters. Each region commander acted

as the CONUSA deputy for training and readiness of RC units within his region.

The ARR's advisory/assistance functions were organized in three echelons:

- a. Advisors with major elements.
- b. Readiness groups (RG) with organic mobile assistance teams for support of units in their geographical area.
- c. Readiness coordinators served on the staff of the region commander and coordinated region wide assistance efforts.

The dedicated battalion advisors were deleted from all but a few selected units to provide the manpower spaces to form the ARR headquarters. Some selected battalion-sized units, by virtue of their unique nature, mobilization priority, or geographical isolation, continued to have battalion advisors assigned. Brigade level units, divisions, separate GOCOM's, ARCOM's and state headquarters retained their dedicated advisors. Senior/unit advisors' functions and responsibilities were:

- *- Principle point of contact between RC commanders and the ARR.
- Assist units in establishing, achieving, and sustaining unit readiness and monitor and evaluate readiness reports.
- Assist the appropriate readiness coordinator in determining the readiness posture of units.

- Coordinate assistance from RG branch and functional teams.
- Assist units in securing training facilities, transportation and other training assistance through the ARR.
- Supervise advisors assigned to subordinate RC elements.

The second echelon in the ARR's, the RG's, were functionally organized to compliment the number and type of units within their support area. Commanded by a colonel the RG's were composed of branch teams, armor, infantry, artillery, etc., and functional teams, maintenance, administration, supply, etc. The teams provided the hands on training to the RC units within the RG's area of responsibility. The RG's functions included:

- Providing branch and functional team assistance.
- Assisting in establishing and achieving appropriate training level of objectives.
- Assisting in achieving and sustaining individual and unit readiness.
- Evaluating readiness status of units on a continual basis.
- Reporting reasons and recommending action for units that cannot attain pre-mobilization training objectives.
- Assisting in securing training facilities, transportation, and other training assistance.
- Providing guidance and assistance in ammunition

forecasting.

- Directing, supervising, and administering MAIT program.
- Employing administrative specialists to provide advice, assistance, and instruction as needed.
- Maintaining liaison and conducting visits to senior ARNG and USAR commands.³¹

The Readiness Coordinators (RC's) were the account executives of the ARR's. Within each ARR Headquarters 8-15 RC's, one for each six to eight battalion equivalents in the region, coordinated the support activities for his assigned units. The RC's responsibilities were as follows:

- *- Supervision of ARR assistance efforts to RC units and activities under his cognizance.
- Maintenance of information on readiness of units/activities under his cognizance and actions required to improve readiness.
- Ensuring arrangements for participation in mutual support programs.
- Provide coordination and assistance in establishing and maintaining appropriate affiliation agreements.³²

The revamped advisory system not only provided a more functional structure, it also improved the quality of advisory personnel. Initially from the commanding general on down, the Army assiduously went for good people. The region commanders were,

for the most part, well-established major generals of the line with good troop leading track records."³³ There was, however, some justifiable apprehension to the new system. "There has been a reluctance on the part of some adjutants general and some ARCOM commanders to 'let the ARR people in'. One senior general was heard to say, 'Why should we start getting used to the help we might get from a readiness region when they (the Active Army) might do away with them in a few years?'"³⁴ That general's concern came to pass in the early 1980's.

ENDNOTES

28. Jean R. Moenk, Operation STEADFAST Historical Summary, pp. 31-32.

29. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Operation STEADFAST Detailed Plan, Book I, Vol. I, pp. I-1 - I-2.

Ibid., pp. I-2 - I-4.

30. U.S. Department of the Army, Army Pamphlet 135-3, pp. 5-6.

31. Ibid., pp. 5-7.

32. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

33. Joe E. Burke, Colonel, National Guardsman, p. 36.

34. Ibid., p. 37.

CHAPTER VI

THE ADVISOR SYSTEM OF THE 1980's

The missions and responsibilities of the RG's and dedicated advisors remain essentially the same as stated under Operation STEADFAST in 1973. However, the number of personnel allocated to those duties has dropped significantly in the 1980's.

In 1983 the nine ARR's were eliminated as part of a reorganization designed to streamline the RC command and control structure. Additionally, the number of CONUSA's went from three to five with the addition of Second Army at Fort Gillem, Georgia and Fourth Army at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. Considering the fact that the ARR's were established from spaces created by the elimination of dedicated unit advisors below brigade level; the elimination of the ARR's represented an actual loss of approximately 200 personnel from the advisory system.³³ Moreover, the advisory system has not been spared the personnel cuts of 1988. One hundred and seventy-five (175) advisor spaces have been cut leaving only 178 dedicated advisors in support of the entire RC force. On the plus side, there currently, are 29 readiness groups filled at 100% strength with 832 officers, 70 warrant officers and 223 enlisted personnel; however, the additional personnel cuts projected for FY 88 and 90 may cut as many as 225 additional spaces from the advisory system.³⁴

It is clear that the advisory system has ebbed and grown in a cyclic manner since its inception in 1903. The near term

projections indicate the current ebb will continue; however, history portends the system will be revitalized to insure the continuing growth of the Total Army.

ENDNOTES

35. U.S. Army Forces Command, FORSCOM Concept Plan, CONUS Reserve Component Command and Control Reorganization, pp. 2-4.

36. Peter Arnold, Chief of Force Development for Manpower, Headquarters Forces Command, PHONCON, 23 February 1988.

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11. U.S. Army Forces Command, FORSCOM Concept Plan, CONUS Reserve Component Command and Control Reorganization. Fort McPherson, Georgia: 1 June 1983.
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