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THE TOTAL FORCE POLICY: STRATEGIC SUCCESS FOR THE ARMY

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the strategic success of the Total Force Policy (TFP) within the Army. Since its conception in 1970, the TFP has enjoyed strong support from the Congress, National Command Authorities, and the Reserve Components themselves. Significant investments in manning, readiness and force modernization have transformed the Army into a cohesive, integrated force - capable of accomplishing United States national security objectives. Today, the TFP has become integral part of our National Security Strategy and a central element of Army doctrine. Although some cultural and structural barriers remain, the TFP has achieved its primary strategic objectives. The greatly expanded and successful use of all three Army components across the spectrum of military operations proves this point. The TFP will continue to play a significant role in shaping the future Army.

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A total force concept will be applied in all aspects of planning, programming, manning, equipping and employing Guard and Reserve Forces.

— Melvin R. Laird
Secretary of Defense

Since its conception in 1970, the goal of the Total Force Policy (TFP) has been to create an integrated, cohesive and cost effective force capable of accomplishing United States national security objectives. Moreover, the TFP relies on the ability to rapidly expand the standing army through mobilization of its reserve units and individuals. In this context, the TFP recognizes the key role of Reserve Components -- not only as an instrument of military power, but as an expression of national will.

TFP and the Army. Has the TFP been successful within the Army? At the Strategic level of analysis it has. During the period 1970 to 1973, the Total Force approach evolved rapidly from concept to doctrine. The Congress, National Command Authorities and Reserve Components supported the policy. As a result of that support, significant investments in resources; force structure; readiness and force modernization propelled implementation of the policy throughout all the services. Ultimately, the

TFP became a key component of U.S. National Strategy. For its part, the Army has incorporated Total Force as doctrine. As a result, the Army is more integrated today than ever before. Along with the other services, the Army has evolved into one of the world's finest fighting forces. The ultimate success of the TFP lies in the ability of the Reserve Components to meet the challenges of their increased role within the Total Force. In recent years, the Reserve Components have demonstrated their ability to perform this role across the spectrum of military operations. Accordingly, the TFP has been a strategic success for the Army.

GENESIS OF THE TOTAL FORCE - CONCEPT TO POLICY

In some respects, the TFP is the result of political and economic conditions of the 1970's. In particular, the Vietnam War and the end of the draft were catalysts for the development of the TFP. In the aftermath of Vietnam, Army budget documents reflect a decline in defense outlays. For example, during the period 1968 to 1978 total obligation authority for the Department of Defense decreased from $ 53 billion to $ 27 billion (constant FY 79 dollars). Additionally, in February 1970, the Gates Commission

provided its report concerning the feasibility of an "All Volunteer Army" and concluded that compensation could replace the draft as a means of manning the armed forces. Consequently, Secretary Laird realized these trends would force a reduction in the size of the Active Component following the end the Vietnam War. At the same time, defense planners changed the planning criteria for sizing the force from a two and one-half war strategy (as had been used prior to Vietnam) to a one and one-half war strategy.

Within this environment, Melvin Laird first introduced the Total Force Concept in a 1970 Memorandum to the Secretaries of the Military Departments. In it, he outlined the essence of the total force concept:

> Guard and Reservist units and individuals of the Selected Reserve will be prepared to be the initial and primary source for augmentation of the active forces in any future emergency requiring a rapid and substantial expansion of the active forces...[1]

Following Congressional approval, Secretary of Defense Laird stopped involuntary conscription in January 1973. The size of the standing army declined from 19 2/3 divisions in 1968 to 13 divisions in 1974. As an early example of TFP implementation, the standing army returned to 16 divisions in 1978 by incorporating a Reserve Component round out

brigade in four of these divisions. The number of Reserve Component divisions remained at 8. The Total Army of 24 divisions now relied more heavily on the Reserve Components than every before.

Nonetheless, the question remained: was the TFP concept valid, or was it merely the product of fiscal and political constraints? To be sure, the TFP had its supporters. Congress welcomed the TFP as a means to provide the necessary force structure while containing costs. National Guard Bureau Chief, LTG LaVern E. Weber and other Reserve Component leaders had reason to embrace the TFP as well. For the Reserve Components, the TFP represented a clear increase in mission (i.e., not limited to major conflict). Additionally, the TFP held the promise of increased resources commensurate with the Reserve Component's expanded role. With Vietnam fresh in his mind, Army Chief of Staff General Creighton W. Abrams also supported the TFP. Abrams hoped that reliance on significant Reserve Component participation would prevent future commitment in a major contingency absent the support of the American people (national will). With so many key players in support, the concept soon became policy. On

August 23, 1973, Laird's successor, Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger wrote:

> Total Force is no longer a "concept". It is now the Total Force Policy which integrates the Active, Guard, and Reserve Forces into a homogenous whole.[2]

Despite its rapid ascendancy, the TFP would require perseverance and considerable investments of resources to achieve its ends.

SHORTFALLS IN THE TOTAL FORCE

In the early 1970's, the Reserve Components were far from the end state envisioned in the TFP. According to Stephen Duncan:

> When the nation ended its involvement with Vietnam and the draft ended, reserve recruiting and retention problems began to increase.[3]

Table 1 illustrates how Reserve Component end strength declined by more than 100,000 soldiers from 1974 - 1978.

Table 1 - Reserve Component End Strength 1974-1978 (000)

FY	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
ARNG	403	395	362	355	341
USAR	235	225	195	189	186
TOTAL	638	620	557	544	527

Significantly, the 1978 end strength of 527,000 was 85,000 less than the congressional floor of 602,000.

Additionally, while Reservists themselves did not play a major role in Vietnam, Reserve Component equipment saw significant use in that conflict. In 1970, the Reserve Components had only 58% of required equipment on hand. Critical shortages existed in medium tanks, self-propelled artillery, armored personnel carriers and electronic equipment. Recognizing the severity of the equipment shortfall, Congress appropriated more than $1 billion dollars from 1977 - 1980. Despite this investment, much of the Reserve Component's equipment remained obsolete and overall equipment fill had risen to only 69%. In March of 1981, LTG LaVern E. Weber, former Chief of the National Guard Bureau, estimated the cost of correcting critical Army National Guard equipment shortfalls at $ 2.6 billion. Table 2 illustrates key shortfalls in ARNG modernization[4].

Table 2 - ARNG Modernization Requirement

ITEM	Quantity	Cost ($M)
Aircraft	934	757.3
Tactical ADPE	74	111.0
Tanks	386	266.7
Trucks	2,960	144.4
Artillery	570	177.4
Radars	143	8.2
Air Defense	384	297.6
Carriers	3,574	295.9
Communications Multiple Configuration		594.0
Total Shortage		$2,652.5

General Weber concluded that these shortfalls severely impacted the readiness of the eight National Guard Divisions (1/3 of the Total Force).

> The overall readiness of those divisions is low and has not changed significantly in the last three years [because] equipment shortages prevent improvements in overall readiness.[5]

By the early 1980's, equipment shortages had become the most critical readiness limiting factor in Reserve Component units readiness. Table 3 (from the Reserve Forces Planning Board Report for FY 1982) reflects this fact[6].

Table 3 - Critical Factors Limiting Overall Readiness of the Reserve Components

COMPONENT	Most Critical Limitation	2d Most Critical Limitation
Army National Guard		
Combat Units	Equipment	Personnel
Combat Support Units	Equipment	Personnel
Combat Service Support	Equipment	Personnel
Army Reserve		
Combat Units	Equipment	Personnel
Combat Support Units	Skill Qual.	Equipment
Combat Service Support	Skill Qual.	Equipment

BUILDING THE TOTAL FORCE

In order to facilitate the increased reliance on the Reserve Component, Congress enacted Public Law 94-286 in 1976. This legislation enabled the President to order as many as 50,000 members of the Select Reserve to active duty for up to 90 days under conditions short of a declaration of

war or national emergency. Congress amended this statute during the Persian Gulf War to permit calling 200,000 members of the Select Reserve for up to 270 days. However, if the Reserve Components were to fulfill their new role, the Army would have to address Reserve Component shortfalls in manpower, equipment and training in order to improve readiness.

Manpower. In order to reverse declines in end strength, the Reserve leadership lobbied Congress for appropriations to fund enlistment and reenlistment bonuses. These efforts succeeded with an initial appropriation of $3 million for FY 77 and additional $25 million in FY 78. In 1985, Congress enacted the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). This educational assistance to qualifying officers, warrant officers and enlisted soldiers was designed to encourage membership in the Selected Reserve. By 1990, Congress was appropriating approximately $ 200 million in enlistment and education incentives for the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. These programs proved successful. As shown in Table 4, Selected Reserve Component end strength increased from 527,000 - 770,000 (an increase of nearly 250,000) during the period 1978 - 1988.

Table 4 - Reserve Component End Strength 1978-1988 (000)						
FY	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988
ARNG	341	367	408	434	450	459
USAR	186	207	257	275	301	319
TOTAL	527	574	665	709	751	770

Full-time Support. Full-time support (FTS) personnel provide administrative, logistical, operational and training support to Reserve Component units. These critical functions ensure continuity and stability that improves unit readiness. As shown in Table 5, Reserve Component Full-time manning increased from 37,000 to 82,000 during the period 1975 to 1990.

Table 5 - Full-time Support Personnel 1975-1990 (000)				
FY	1975	1980	1985	1990
ARNG	29	33	46	55
USAR	8	17	30	27
TOTAL	37	50	76	82

Training. In 1974, the Army standardized training requirements for active and reserve units by publishing new Army Training and Evaluation Plans (ARTEP) for all combat, combat support and combat service support units in the Army. In addition, the Army established its *Roundout* and *Affiliation* programs to improve the deployability of Reserve Component units through Active Component assistance in training. By the end of FY 1975, 89 Reserve Component

battalions were affiliated with Active Component Divisions. Of these, 24 battalions were designated to round out under-structured Active Component divisions.

Reserve Component units increased their emphasis on combined arms, joint service, and overseas training to improve the quality of training.

> In 1980, 400 National Guard and reserve units had trained in countries other than the United States. In 1988, 3,536 reserve units or cells, trained overseas. More than 82,000 reservists trained at locations in Germany, the Middle East, Norway, Central America and elsewhere.[7]

Reserve Component battalions began routine rotations through the National Training Center (NTC) and Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC). More recently, the Reserve Components have increased their readiness through the use of Battle Command Staff Training (BCST), increased use of simulations, LANES Training and distance learning. From 1996 to 1997, battalion and brigade headquarters undergoing BCST training increased from 167 to 277. Reserve component companies undergoing LANES Training increased from 405 to 567 during the same period.

Equipment. As previously noted, equipment shortfalls were a major limiting factor in Reserve Component readiness. Accordingly, on June 21, 1982, Secretary of Defense Casper

Weinburger issued a Memorandum to the Service Secretaries and Chairman of Joint Chiefs. This memorandum reflected President Reagan's endorsement of the TFP and included new policies concerning equipping of the Reserve Components.

> The long-range planning goal of the Department of Defense is to equip all active, Guard, and Reserve units to full wartime requirements…
>
> …units that fight first shall be equipped first regardless of component.
>
> You must ensure equipment compatibility among Guard, Reserve and active units which will service together on the battlefield…[8]

Ultimately these principles were codified in DOD Directive 1225.6, "Equipping the Reserve Forces," dated November 2, 1992. According to this revision of the directive:

> The priority for the distribution of new and combat serviceable equipment, with associated support and test equipment, should be given to units scheduled to be deployed and/or employed first, irrespective of component. Equipment priorities for the Ready Reserve units will be established using the same methodology as regular units having the same mobilization mission or deployment requirements.[9]

The impacts of these policies became evident in the budget. For fiscal years 1992 to 1994, Congress appropriated a total of $ 9.1 billion dollars for new National Guard and Reserve equipment. These funds included appropriations for: Multiple-Launch Rocket System (MLRS),

H-60 Blackhawk helicopters, heavy equipment trucks, 2 ½ ton trucks extended service program, AH-1 Cobra helicopters, M577 command post carriers, C-130 aircraft, HM53 minesweeping helicopters, and major capability upgrades to HH-60H and SH-2 helicopters. In recent years, redistribution from Active Component units has been a major source of Reserve Component equipment. However, this source is declining due to the end of equipment retrograding from Europe. In keeping with the TFP, however, the FY 1999 Army budget contains funds for modernizing major equipment systems within the Reserve Components on a "first to fight" basis. Modest procurement and equipment redistribution will improve Reserve Component readiness, but equipment compatibility will remain a problem, particularly for communications and logistical support equipment.

INTEGRATING TODAY'S TOTAL FORCE

Despite all the investments in personnel, training and force modernization, the Army has continued to wrestle with cultural and other differences that still exist between its components. As recently as 1997, the Report on the National Defense Panel concluded:

> ...the Army has suffered from a disruptive disunity among its components, specifically between the Active Army and the National Guard.[10]

National Guard and Reserve Component units are community based and most training is conducted in local training areas far from Active Component installations. Because Active and Reserve Component units do not regularly train together, individual perceptions are frequently based on experience long past or outright myths. The Reserve Forces Policy Board conducted a survey in which Active duty officers were asked to provide their candid opinions about the Reserve Components. In response to the question: "What do Reservists bring to your service?," one officer replied: "A local armory to play bingo in." As noted by the Honorable Charles Cragin, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, these deep seated beliefs are among the most difficult to overcome in any organization.[11]

Nonetheless, the Army leadership is clearly and robustly engaged in addressing the issues related to force integration within the Army. In August 1998, LTG Thomas Burnette, Army Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations presented a briefing that outlines ongoing force integration initiatives. These initiatives encompass four broad categories of Army activities: operations, training, force

structure and modernization. Specific examples are shown in Figure 1. All of these initiatives pose significant opportunities to further the cause of seamless integration. Reserve and National Guard Support of operations such as Joint Endeavor/Joint Guard are critically important. These missions provide the Reserve Components the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to accomplish wartime missions in a military operation other than war environment. Homeland Defense and response to Weapons of Mass Destruction are missions of increasing prominence within the National Security Strategy. Designation of the Reserve Components to play a key role in these areas implies additional resources commensurate with their responsibilities. These training initiatives should improve standardization of professional development; elevate the readiness of high priority of Reserve Component brigades commensurate with their Active Component counterparts and deployment timelines; and, foster better working relationships between the components. The force structure initiatives are possibly the most important of all - and the most ambitious. New, multi-component units would provide spaces for individuals from different components to serve in the same unit. Some of these would be "flagged" as Active Component units while others would be

Examples of Integration

- Operations
  - Support of Rotational Missions -- Joint Endeavor / Joint Guard
  - Homeland Defense, WMD, etc
- Training Support
  - Total Army School System
  - Combat Training Centers (eSB rotations)
  - Support to Organizational Training
  - Teaming Concept
- Force Structure
  - Multi-Component Units (working options for Light Infantry, MLRS)
  - Integrated AC/ARNG Divisions
  - Total Army Division XXI
  - Converting 12 Bdes to CS/CSS (ADRS)
- Modernization
  - $21.5B 1992-1998; $840m in new procurement in FY99
  - 49 AR Bns equipped with M1 or M1A1

SECDEF Principles
- **Responsibility**
- **Mission**
- **Readiness**
- **Resources**

One Team, One Fight, One Future

Figure 1 - Force Integration Initiatives

"flagged" as Reserve Component Units. Most significant of all is the AC/ARNG Integrated Division study. This pilot project incorporates three Army National Guard brigades under an Active Component headquarters. Highlights of the study are shown in Figure 2. Initially, two integrated divisions (one heavy and one light) will be established as shown with Active Component at Fort Riley and Fort Carson respectively. Each division will consist of three Separate ARNG enhanced brigades as shown.

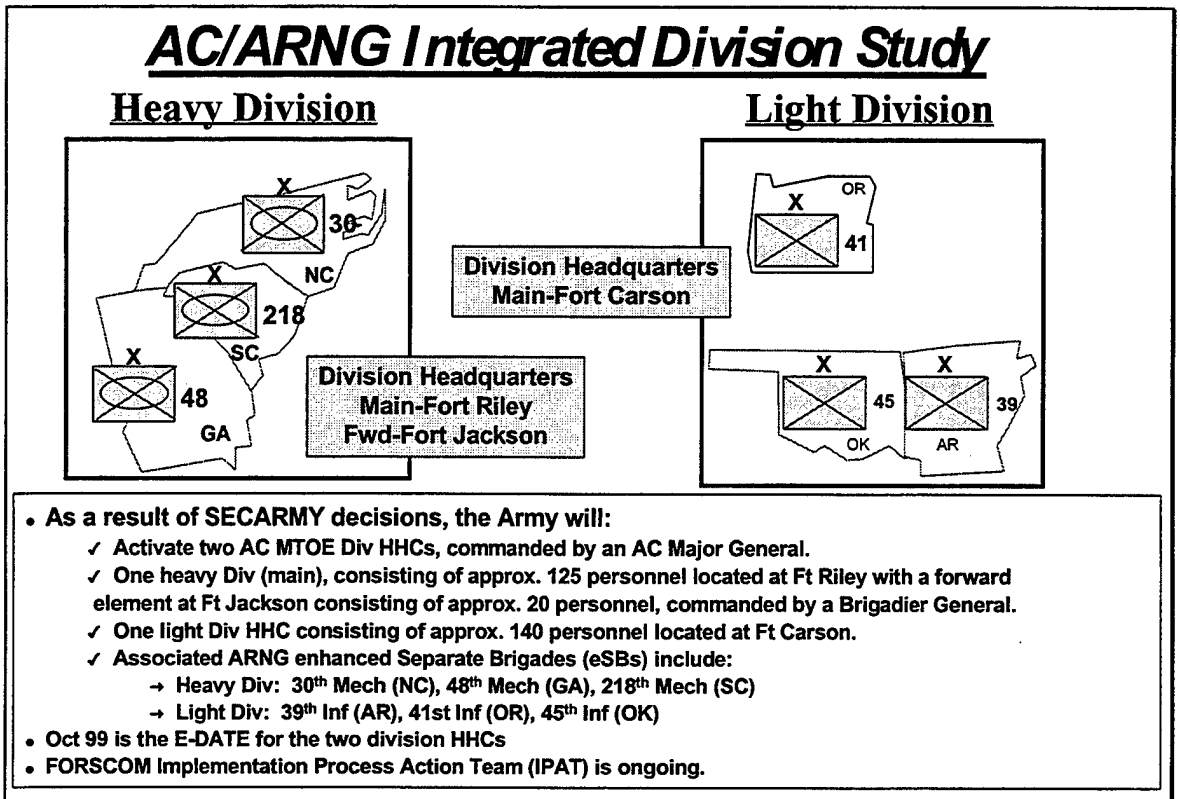

Figure 2 - AC/RC Division Redesign Study

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE TOTAL FORCE

National Strategy. A significant indicator of the strategic success of the TFP lies in its incorporation within the National Security Strategy:

> The U.S. military plays an essential role in building coalitions and shaping the international environment… These important efforts engage every component of the Total Force: Active, Reserve, National Guard and civilian.[12]

The National Military Strategy has a similar theme in its version of the TFP:

> The Total Force requires the unique contributions of its Active and Reserve Components and its civilian employees. All elements of the Total Force must be appropriately organized, modernized, trained, and integrated.[13]

Common themes that run throughout the above definitions include: reliance on reserve forces as the *primary augmentation* for the active forces; and, *integrated use* of all available personnel - active, reserve, and civilian.

Doctrine. National and military strategy drive Army doctrine. Accordingly, the TFP is in the process of becoming fully integrated within Army Doctrine. Two fundamental documents that drive Army doctrine are: FM 100-1, *The Army*, and FM 100-5, *Operations*. FM 100-1 details the strategic role of the Army in accomplishing national military objectives. FM 100-1 recognizes the key role played by the Reserve Components:

> The reduction in Army strength… demands increasingly active cooperation between the Active and Reserve Components…
>
> While the Reserve Components increase the mobilization potential of the Army, they also provide substantial forces to respond to missions and contingencies short of wartime mobilization.
>
> There must be a high degree of compatibility between the Active and Reserve Component training and equipment to build a seamless organization.[14]

FM 100-5, flows from FM 100-1 and provides direction on warfighting based on current capabilities and threats. Moreover, FM 100-5 addresses the integration of Army capabilities and the TFP:

> To meet future missions with a smaller force, the US Army conducts operations as a total force of the active component, reserve components, and civilians acting in concert with other services and allies. The TFP engenders public support in any operation requiring force projection from operations other than war, through war, to postconflict activities.[15]

EMPLOYING THE TOTAL FORCE

The Persian Gulf War. In terms of combat operations, the TFP was untested until the Persian Gulf War. During this conflict, 200,000 reservists served on active duty -- either voluntarily or as a result of involuntary call-up. Title 10, USC, Section 673b provides the authority for such a Presidential Selected Reserve Call-up (PSRC). Although two Active Component divisions deployed without their affiliated Reserve Component roundout brigades, two Reserve Component combat brigades (including the 142d Field Artillery Brigade, Arkansas Army National Guard) deployed and performed well. The Gulf War demonstrated that Reserve Component units could deploy early and perform their

missions. In a GAO Report to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Mr. Richard O. Davis offered the following comments supported this conclusion:

> ...many reserve component combat and support units that were deployed for the war demonstrated their ability to perform to standard with little post mobilization training.[16]

Military Operations Other Than War. In recent years, Reserve Component units have conducted humanitarian assistance (Somalia), peacekeeping (Bosnia), nation building (Latin America), military to military assistance (National Guard State Partnership Program) and other military operations other than war. Today, the Reserve Components account for more 25% of the forces in Bosnia. Increased emphasis on peacekeeping, drug interdiction, weapons of mass destruction and disaster relief have dramatically increased the OPTEMPO of the active component forces. Currently, the Active Component cannot accomplish these missions without the active participation of reserve component forces. Reserve Component participation in these activities has provided a significant, rapidly increasing Active Component PERSTEMPO offset. Table 6 shows this increase.[17] During the period 1994 - 1996 the Reserve Component PERSTEMPO

offset increased from 2.8 million mandays to 7.3 million mandays.

Table 6 - AC PERSTEMPO Manday Offsett (1994-1996)			
FY	1994	1995	1996
ARNG	1,771,227	1,803,903	2,411,710
USAR	1,110,261	1,831,304	5,846,427
TOTAL	2,881,488	3,635,207	7,257,127

TODAY'S TOTAL ARMY

Force Structure. At present, approximately 54% of the Army's total strength resides in the Reserve Components. This is an extremely significant percentage of the Total Army and continues a trend that has accelerated over the past ten years. In addition to the FY 99 end strength, Table 7 shows that the Reserve Component slice of the Total Force structure has increased significantly during the period FY 89-99.

Table 7 - FY 89-99 Army Force Structure			
	Army 1989	Army 1999	End Strength(99)
Active Component	5 Corps 18 Divisions	4 Corps 10 Divisions	480,000
National Guard	10 Divisions 23 Brigade Equivalents	8 Divisions 15 Enhanced Brigades 3 Theater Defense Brigades	367,000
USAR	29 Command & Control HQs/Training Divisions	10 Regional Support Commands 7 Training Divisions	208,000

Warfighting Missions. During the past several years, there has been a shift in emphasis on warfighting missions within the Reserve Components. The National Guard is transitioning towards a greater combat role while retaining a balanced force. The Army Reserve is transitioning towards an increased combat service support role. Together, the Army National Guard and Army Reserve contribute significant percentages of all types of units in the Total Force. For some types of units, the Army relies almost exclusively on the Reserve Component. Table 8 reflects the high Reserve Component percentage for specific type units in the Total Force.

Table 8 - ARNG/USAR Contribution to the Total Army (FY99)		
Type of Unit	National Guard	Army Reserve
Combat Units	55%	
Combat Support Units	46%	20%
Combat Service Support Units	25%	47%
Field Artillery	63%	
Air Defense	46%	
Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations		98%

A Cohesive, Integrated Force. By any measure, today's Total Army is among the most cohesive and integrated

fighting force in the world. The Army now relies on all three components to accomplish its missions and it employs all three in increasingly significant roles across the spectrum of military operations. The Persian Gulf War was a defining moment for the TFP. It demonstrated that the Reserve Components could perform successfully on the high intensity end of the military spectrum. The increasing use of the Reserve Component in military operations other than war has demonstrated that the Reserve Component can successfully perform these missions as well. The TFP has realized its vision of a Reserve Component that is the principle and primary augmentation for the Active Component. Thus, at the strategic level, the TFP has accomplished its principle objectives within the Army.

THE FUTURE OF THE TFP

Towards the Army After Next. As the Army transitions towards Force XXI and the Army After Next, the TFP will continue to be relevant factor in its development. Those forces that brought about the Total Force Concept in the beginning will continue to exert their influence in the future. The Total Army of the future is likely to be smaller, lighter and less expensive than the Army of today.

The United States National Security Strategy will continue to be one of global engagement. High operating and personnel tempo demands on the Active Component will continue to require increased utilization of the Reserve Components. Accordingly, the Active Component's reliance on the Reserve Component will continue to increase.

Future Role of the Reserve Component. As the Total Army continues to get smaller, Reserve Component involvement in existing peacekeeping, nation building, and similar missions is likely to increase. As an example, in 1998 the Army Chief of Staff, General Dennis J. Reimer, announced that the 49th Armored Division, Texas Army National Guard would relieve the 1st Cavalry Division in Bosnia. Additionally, the National Defense Panel (NDP) has recommended that the Army National Guard assume the entire United States Army South (USARSO) mission in Latin America. Furthermore, the National Defense Panel identified possible (future) Homeland Defense missions for the National Guard, such as:

a. Domestic anti-terrorism and response to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

b. National Missile Defense.

c. Information Warfare.

CONCLUSIONS

When the Department of Defense adopted the TFP in 1973, the Army's Reserve Components had significant shortfalls in manning, equipment, and overall unit readiness. The TFP offered a systematic, comprehensive approach towards providing more Army for fewer dollars. The Congress and National Command Authorities supported the TFP with increased resources for the Reserve Components. The Army and Reserve Component leadership converted those resources into improved readiness. The Persian Gulf War proved the Army's Reserve Components were ready and able to accomplish the wartime missions when required.

While acknowledging that cultural and structural barriers remain, the strategic success of the TFP within the Army is undeniable. The Army now employs all of its components across the spectrum of military operations in support of United States National Security Strategy. The Army leadership continues to consider "all aspects of planning, programming, manning, equipping and employing Guard and Reserve Forces" as it transitions towards the Army After Next. In his 1998 Annual Report, Secretary of Defense Cohen identified several initiatives to guide the Army

leadership in the right direction. The TFP has been and will continue to be a positive force for change in the Army. As Secretary Cohen notes:

> An integrated Total Force is the key to achieving the goals of shaping, responding and preparing now for the challenges and opportunities confronting the nation today and tomorrow.[18]

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