

Brief History of the Army Reserve

THE TRADITION

The United States that gained its independence in the American Revolution chose to rely on a very small Regular Army augmented in time of crisis by militia or civilian volunteers. Whereas the National Guard evolved from the tradition of the decentralized colonial or State controlled militia system, the Army evolved from the reality that a significant portion of the nation's military reserve must be centrally controlled in times of peace and war by the Federal Government.



1916-1917 -- Mexico Border
First Army Reserve mobilization.

The concept for an American Federal reserve force was first proposed by General George Washington, Generals Frederick von Stueben, Henry Knox, and Alexander Hamilton during the formative years of the United States military establishment (1783-92). Due to the lack of a visible threat to national security, combined with the young republic's regional focus, only a paramilitary structure for Army reserve officer training materialized during the nineteenth century.

The private military academy, Norwich University, founded in 1819 by Captain Alden Partridge for training citizen-soldiers as officers, is considered the origin of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). Following this precedent and model, many other State and private military schools were founded, and the provisions of the Morrill Act (1862) for military instruction at State universities further supplemented this movement.

THE BEGINNING

Thousands of Army officers who served in the Civil War (1861-65), on both sides, and World War I (1917-18) received their military education in the reserve officer training programs of these institutions. Problems faced in mobilizing the Army for the Spanish-American War (1898-99) and the emergence of the United States as a world power at the beginning of the 20th century, with international commitments, pressured American political and military leaders to finally establish the Federal reserve force proposed by Washington and Hamilton. Initially, in 1908, Congress established the Medical Reserve Corps. Then, using its constitutional authority "to raise and support armies," Congress passed legislation in 1916 and 1920 creating the Organized Reserve Corps, which included the Officers Reserve Corps, the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and the ROTC.

THE EARLY YEARS

On March 9, 1916, Mexican rebels led by Pancho Villa attacked Columbus, New Mexico. All available troops were rushed to the U.S.-Mexican border, but there were not enough regulars to patrol the vast area. Thus, three thousand Army Reservists were activated. This was the first mobilization of the Army Reserve.

Following entry of the United States into World War I in April 1917, 89,500 officers from the Officers' Reserve Corps participated, of which one-third were medical doctors. More than 80,000 soldiers of the Enlisted Reserve

Corps served, with 15,000 assigned to medical units.

After the war, the Officers' and Enlisted Reserve corps were combined into the Organized Reserve Corps, a name that lasted into the 1950s. The years between the world wars were austere, with few opportunities for training. An opportunity for service, however, was created during the Great Depression. One of Roosevelt's New Deal programs, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), placed young men in barracks and military-style organizations to work in national forests and other outdoor projects. Between 1933 and 1939, more than 30,000 officers from the Organized Reserve Corps served as commanders or staff officers at the 2,700 CCC camps.



World War I -- Army Reserve soldiers served in every division of the American Expeditionary Force

WORLD WAR II AND KOREA

Reserve participation in the American defense effort began before the United States entered the war in December 1941. The Army began calling members of the Organized Reserve Corps to active duty in June 1940. In the year that followed, the number of Reserve officers on active duty rose from less than 3,000 to more than 57,000. During World War II, more than 200,000 members of the Organized Reserve served, providing 29 percent of the Army's officers. Twenty-six reserve divisions mobilized for World War II (1941-45), and roughly a quarter of all Army officers who served were reservists, of which over 100,000 were ROTC graduates.



World War II -- 200,000 Reserve soldiers served on every front.

Recognizing the importance of the Organized Reserve to the war effort, Congress authorized retirement and drill pay for the first time in 1948.

The Korean War saw more than 240,000 soldiers of the Organized Reserve called to active duty, comprising 64 percent of the total reserve component mobilization and involving 971 reserve units. That large number reflected the Army's need for organized, trained personnel in a short period of time. More than 400 Reserve units served in Korea.

While the Korean War was still under way, Congress began making significant changes in the structure and role of the Reserve. These changes transformed the Organized Reserve Corps into the U. S. Army Reserve (USAR). This new organization was divided into a Ready Reserve, Standby Reserve and Retired Reserve. Reserve units were authorized 24 inactive duty training days a year and up to 17 days of active duty (called annual training). The president was given authority to order up to one million Reservists, of all services, to active duty. These Congressional actions were directly related to experiences gained during the activation and subsequent service of Reserve units in the Korean War.

EVOLUTION

During the late 1950s, the Army Reserve became increasingly combat support and combat service support oriented. An Army reorganization of the period called for the Army Reserve and Army National Guard to provide supplemental forces to the active Army (the Army Reserve's role included individuals as well as units).

More than 69,000 Army Reservists were called to active duty in response to the Berlin Crisis of 1961. The call-

up lasted from September 1961 to August 1962 and was hampered by a number of problems, including old equipment, lack of equipment, shortage of unit soldiers, and difficulty locating individual soldiers. A subsequent reorganization of the Army's Reserve Component occurred in 1967 and 1968.

That reorganization resulted in an Army Reserve composed primarily of combat support and combat service support units, with combat arms units concentrated in the Army National Guard. The position of Chief, Army Reserve was established by federal statute, to be filled by a USAR general officer appointed by the president for a four-year term, with advice and consent of the Senate.

As the reorganization took place, American involvement in Vietnam escalated. The first Army Reserve units were ordered to active duty in 1968. There was no large-scale call-up for Vietnam, however, as President Johnson favored a minor role for the Army Reserve and other reserve forces. Ultimately, some 5,900 USAR soldiers comprising 42 units were ordered to active duty, and 3,500 soldiers in 35 units went overseas.

A CONCEPT TESTED

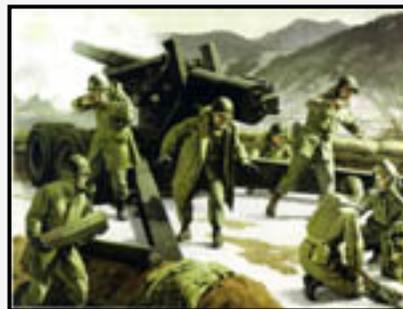
The end of the draft coincided with announcement of the Total Force Policy in 1973. That policy called for the United States to maintain an active duty force capable of maintaining peace and deterring aggression. Those forces would be reinforced, when necessary, by a well-trained, well-equipped Reserve Component. The effect of an all-volunteer active Army and the Total Force Policy was a shift of some responsibilities and resources to the Army Reserve.

Both unit and individual Army Reserve manpower declined from 1973 to 1978. Readiness improved during the 1980s when more emphasis was placed on training, recruiting and retention.

In 1983, volunteers from Army Reserve civil affairs units deployed to Grenada in support of Operation Urgent Fury to help rebuild that island nation's infrastructure. Six years later, Army Reserve provisional military police and civil affairs units, composed of volunteers, helped restore order and services in Panama during Operation Just Cause. Each deployment was significant in that the active Army simply could not provide enough qualified personnel for those specific tasks, given its other responsibilities. The use of USAR volunteers was necessary because no presidential call-up authority was in place.

A CONCEPT PROVED

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990 led to the largest call-up of Reserve Component personnel since the Korean War. More than 84,000 Army Reservists provided combat support and combat service support to the Total Force in Southwest Asia and site support elsewhere. Of that number, over 40,000 served in Southwest Asia. Included in the call-up were 20,000 members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) who filled vacancies in units or performed other specialized duties. During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Army Reserve provided transportation, medical, civil affairs, postal, engineer, military police, maintenance, linguistic and other types of support. The validity of concentrating the support mission in the Army Reserve was clearly proved by the successes of these units. Army Reserve soldiers were among the first Reserve Component personnel called to active duty, and were among the last to leave the desert, with units and volunteers preparing equipment for retrograde to the United States or Europe long after the conflict ended.



Korean War -- Nearly 1,000 units were mobilized. Seven soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor.



Vietnam War -- 42 units were mobilized in 1968, with 35 going to Southeast Asia

A key step in the continued development of the Army Reserve took place in 1991 with establishment of the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) in Atlanta. The USARC has responsibility for command and control of Troop Program Units nationwide and the 65th Army Reserve Command in Puerto Rico. The Chief, Army Reserve commands the USARC, and also serves as Deputy Commanding General for Reserve Affairs, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM).

In 1992, volunteer USAR soldiers provided postal, logistical and other assistance in support of American relief operations in Somalia (Operation Provide Hope).

When the United States intervened to help restore democracy in Haiti in 1995, an Army Reserve transportation detachment was one of the first units ordered to active duty. Another early-deploying Army Reserve contingent was an airborne-qualified civil affairs unit that was prepared to jump into Haiti in event of an assault. USAR soldiers were among the first forces into Haiti and the last to leave in 1996. Overall, about 350 Army Reservists from 17 units served in Haiti.

A mixed battalion of Army Reserve, active Army, and Army National Guard soldiers deployed to the Sinai in 1995 as part of the American contribution to the Multinational Force Observer (MFO) Sinai Peacekeeping Operations in Egypt. The 41 Army Reserve volunteers included engineers, military police, ground surveillance radar specialists and others, primarily from the Individual Ready Reserve.

THE PRESENT

In December 1995, the president authorized the call-up of Reserve Component forces as part of America's support to the NATO peacekeeping forces in the Bosnia-Herzegovina area. Within a short period of time the Army Reserve provided civil affairs, postal, medical, engineer, transportation, psychological operations and firefighting units, the first arriving in Bosnia in mid-January 1996. The initial manpower ceiling from the Reserve Component was 3,888, with soldiers activated for up to 270 days. In May 1996, the ceiling increased to 7,000 to allow overlap of deploying and redeploying units and individual soldiers. The majority of Army Reservists ordered to active duty served as backfill for active Army soldiers in Germany, but substantial numbers pulled duty in Bosnia and Hungary.

Today, the Army Reserve has almost 40 percent of the Army's combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) units. With over 92 percent of those units assigned a role under Army regional operational plans, the USAR is positioned to support almost any type of mission worldwide.

Following the terrorist attack on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld requested and President Bush approved (on Sept. 14, 2001) a Partial Mobilization of Reserve Components.

Army Reserve units and individuals are supporting both Operation NOBLE EAGLE and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Operation NOBLE EAGLE refers to U.S. military operations in homeland defense and civil support to federal, state and local agencies in the U.S. Operation ENDURING FREEDOM is the name associated with the war on terrorism outside the United States.

THE FUTURE

America's National Strategy will continue to rely heavily on Army Reserve participation. Since end of the Cold War, Army overseas deployments have increased 300 percent. Each year, approximately 20,000 Army Reserve soldiers deploy to some 50 countries worldwide in support of military operations.

The shift in our National Military Strategy from full to partial mobilization, which prompted a reorganization of USAR training divisions into divisions (institutional training) and divisions (exercise), will enhance peacetime and operational readiness. In logistics, Army Reserve initiatives will increase equipment-on-hand, expand the use of commercial practices and dealer networks, and improve capabilities through technological advancements.

The Army Reserve of the 21st century, with its core competency firmly planted in combat service support, will be a more relevant and better trained cornerstone of our nation's defense. While managed change is still in the Army Reserve's future, the basic values of its soldiers - duty and selfless service - will remain steadfast.



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