

Operationalizing the Army National Guard: A Return to Tradition

**A Monograph
by
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14. ABSTRACT <p>The Army announced in the <i>2006 Army Posture Statement</i> that it had to operationalize the Army National Guard. The decision to operationalize the National Guard was necessary because the Army did not have enough active units to meet requirements for the War on Terrorism. Operationalization of the Army National Guard was a departure from the Cold War force structure. It was not, however, a revolutionary change for the nation's National Guard forces.</p> <p>The research initially focused on determining what was meant by the term "strategic reserve." That research revealed that numerous military commanders, both active and reserve, have used the term in reference to U.S. Army force structure. However, military policy documents and statutes do not define that term. The search for a clear definition of strategic reserve and its meaning for U.S. National Guard structure led to the discovery that the National Guard had only recently been constituted as a strategic reserve.</p> <p>The National Guard did not begin as a strategic reserve. The Guard also has experience as an operational force. The view that the National Guard was only a strategic reserve developed during the Cold War. After the end of the draft, the Department of Defense implemented the "Total Force Policy". That policy started the National Guard's movement back toward operational capability. The research explores the history of the National Guard as the nation's constitutional defense force and its subsequent development into a Federal Reserve. The history reveals that operationalization of the National Guard is not a radical venture for state controlled units. Rather, the Army's use of the National Guard as an operational force is a return to the tradition of state militias participating in the nation's defense.</p> <p>The National Guard serving in an operational role is not unique in the nation's history. The Cold War practice of maintaining separate strategic and operational reserve forces does not meet today's force demands. Security planners have yet to refine post Cold War force and mission definitions. Until the missions are redefined, it was only natural for the Army to use its reserves to reduce stress on active component forces. It is also a mistake to assume the Army suddenly made the reserves operational or that the National Guard has never served in an operational manner. While at times the Army resisted using the Guard, the Guard has a history of serving in an operational role. The Constitution specified that state based militias would serve as part of the country's main defense force. Operationalization of the National Guard is an extension of the policies Congress started under the National Militia Act of 1903. The Army is only continuing these practices with its <i>2006 Army Posture Statement</i> announcement. Finally, the United States has historically been unprepared for major long-term conflicts. The nation also tends to decrease active component strength following hostilities. These precedents foretell the same once significant combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan end. As such, equipping and training the National Guard for operational force capability potentially enhances its ability to perform both strategic and operational force functions in the future.</p>					
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Abstract

OPERATIONALIZING THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD: A RETURN TO TRADITION by MAJOR Jesse J. Kirchmeier, Army National Guard, 43 pages.

The Army announced in the *2006 Army Posture Statement* that it had to operationalize the Army National Guard. The decision to operationalize the National Guard was necessary because the Army did not have enough active units to meet requirements for the War on Terrorism. Operationalization of the Army National Guard was a departure from the Cold War force structure. It was not, however, a revolutionary change for the nation's National Guard forces.

The research initially focused on determining what was meant by the term "strategic reserve." That research revealed that numerous military commanders, both active and reserve, have used the term in reference to U.S. Army force structure. However, military policy documents and statutes do not define that term. The search for a clear definition of strategic reserve and its meaning for U.S. National Guard structure led to the discovery that the National Guard had only recently been constituted as a strategic reserve.

The National Guard did not begin as a strategic reserve. The Guard also has experience as an operational force. The view that the National Guard was only a strategic reserve developed during the Cold War. After the end of the draft, the Department of Defense implemented the "Total Force Policy". That policy started the National Guard's movement back toward operational capability. The research explores the history of the National Guard as the nation's constitutional defense force and its subsequent development into a Federal Reserve. The history reveals that operationalization of the National Guard is not a radical venture for state controlled units. Rather, the Army's use of the National Guard as an operational force is a return to the tradition of state militias participating in the nation's defense.

The National Guard serving in an operational role is not unique in the nation's history. The Cold War practice of maintaining separate strategic and operational reserve forces does not meet today's force demands. Security planners have yet to refine post Cold War force and mission definitions. Until the missions are redefined, it was only natural for the Army to use its reserves to reduce stress on active component forces. It is also a mistake to assume the Army suddenly made the reserves operational or that the National Guard has never served in an operational manner. While at times the Army resisted using the Guard, the Guard has a history of serving in an operational role. The Constitution specified that state based militias would serve as part of the country's main defense force. Operationalization of the National Guard is an extension of the policies Congress started under the National Militia Act of 1903. The Army is only continuing these practices with its *2006 Army Posture Statement* announcement. Finally, the United States has historically been unprepared for major long-term conflicts. The nation also tends to decrease active component strength following hostilities. These precedents foretell the same once significant combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan end. As such, equipping and training the National Guard for operational force capability potentially enhances its ability to perform both strategic and operational force functions in the future.

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Introduction

A Rand report released just prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks, addressed the difficulty defense planners had deciding how to position defense forces after the demise of the Soviet Union. Specifically, the study noted, “Changes . . . placed tremendous strain both on the machinery used for deliberative planning and on the policymakers who sought to strike a balance between strategy, forces, and resources.”¹ The shortage of ground combat forces available for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan indicate the difficulty policymakers face achieving this equilibrium. Long-term presence called for by stability operations placed a tremendous strain on the nation’s limited ground combat assets. In an effort to reduce that stress, the Army announced in the *2006 Army Posture Statement* that “by necessity” the reserve component had “become an operational vice a strategic reserve.”² The announcement means the Army will continue to rotate its reserve component into existing combat theaters. The proclamation also suggests the Army intends to use the reserve components (RC) in future contingency operations. Although the Army National Guard and Army Reserve expected and supported the pronouncement, the decision appears to violate the concept of a national strategic reserve military force. This may be true, but perhaps only in the Cold War sense of what constitutes a strategic reserve. As the “2006 Annual Report of the Reserve Force Policy Board” indicated, “The time when the reserve components functioned primarily as a strategic reserve is over.”³

John Podesta, Lawrence J. Korb, and Brian Katulis criticized the change. In a recent article they stated, “The National Guard has been forced to become an operational reserve,

¹ Eric V. Larson, David T. Orlesty, and Kristin Leuschner, *Lessons of Planning in a Decade of Change: Lessons from the Base Force, Bottom-Up Review, and Quadrennial Defense Review*, (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corp., 2001) xiii.

² U.S. Department of the Army, *2006 Posture Statement: A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities*, (Washington, DC, 2006), iii.

³ U.S. Department of Defense, *2006 Annual Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board*, <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/rfpb/documents/RFPB%20report%2006.pdf> (accessed January 15, 2008), 1.

leaving the homeland vulnerable.”⁴ Their critique implies two things. First, that the National Guard performing an operational role is unique. Historical evidence indicates this assertion is incorrect. Second, that the National Guard’s operational role makes it less capable of meeting homeland defense needs. While changes may not put the nation at greater risk, military leaders concede national defense concerns merit discussion. Operationalizing the reserves changed the existing Cold War national defense structure.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen indicated his desire to talk about the future of the nation’s strategic defense. In an address to officers attending the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College he said, “When we get to a point where deployment demands are not so high I think we have to have a pretty active discussion about strategic reserve and should we have one for the country and how robust should it be and what does it mean?”⁵ Admiral Mullen recognized the necessity for reserves with operational capability but signified leaders must still determine the final balance, mission, and roles of these forces. The difficulty of establishing those roles in an increasingly hostile post Cold War world is again challenging strategic planners.

Cultural, political, and global realities existing today dictated the Army’s need to “balance the RC as a strategic and operational force.”⁶ That balance may be unique to recent experience but historical research revealed the National Guard has more experience as an operational force than a strategic reserve. Cold War planning using the Guard as a strategic reserve instead of an operational force was the exception and not the rule. Under pressure from National Guard advocates, Congress sought to assert an operational role for the organized state

⁴ John Podesta, Lawrence J. Korb, and Brian Katulis, “Strategic Drift in Iraq,” http://www.americanprogressaction.org/issues/2007/strategic_drift.html (accessed on January 29, 2008).

⁵ Admiral Michael Mullen, “Remarks by Admiral Michael Mullen Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff” (Transcript by: Federal News Service, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, Tuesday, October 23, 2007).

⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, *2006 Annual Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board*, 4.

militias since militias became the National Guard in 1903.⁷ In effect, operationalization today is a return to tradition. It is also the culminating point in the National Guard's effort to maintain force structure and relevancy in a post Cold War world.

The Army's decision to operationalize the reserve seems like an extraordinary step. In retrospect, it is not. First, the very discussion Admiral Mullen alluded to is just starting to take place and the bipolar world's expectation of strategic and operational reserve forces may not meet today's requirements. Security planners have yet to revise post Cold War force and mission definitions. Until this discourse is complete, it was only natural for the Army to use its reserves to reduce stress on active component forces. Second, it is a mistake to assume the Army suddenly made the reserves operational or that the National Guard has never served in an operational manner. While the Army at times has resisted using the National Guard units; the Guard has a history of serving in an operational role. The Constitution specified that state based militias would serve as part of the country's main defense force.⁸ Operationalization of the National Guard is an extension of the policies Congress started under the National Militia Act of 1903. The Army is only continuing these practices with its *2006 Army Posture Statement* announcement. Finally, historically the United States has been unprepared for major long-term conflicts. The nation also tends to decrease active component strength following hostilities. These precedents predict the same once significant combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan end. As such, equipping and training the National Guard for operational force capability potentially enhances its ability to perform future strategic and operational force functions.

⁷ Elbridge Colby, *The National Guard of the United States: A Half Century of Progress*, (Manhattan, KS: MA/AH Publishing, 1977), (I) 2.

⁸ U.S. Constitution, art. 1, sec 8.

Organizationally, all of the Army's reserve maneuver ground combat capability exists in the Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) belonging to the Army National Guard.⁹ The BCT is the Army's ground maneuver force. The Army's decision to operationalize the National Guard suggests the nation no longer has a dedicated strategic ground combat reserve. There may be benefits as well as risks to this shift in force allocation. The imperative to put National Guard BCTs on an operational footing indicates planners failed to find the right force balance. The result of these miscalculations will likely demand the Army National Guard BCTs provide operational ground combat capacity as well as strategic depth. While extraordinary in recent experience, these missions suit the Citizen-Soldier tradition. Unfortunately, if history offers any guide, the Army National Guard will have to perform the additional tasks using the existing force structure.

Setting the Context

The Struggle to Define Strategic Reserve

The nation lacks contemporary definitions of strategic and operational reserve. Without clarification, it will be difficult to ascertain whether the National Guard is capable of serving as a strategic reserve as well as providing an operational force. It is necessary to know what the nation requires for each function. Outdated Cold War concepts may not adequately explain to military leaders and planners core prerequisites for military force capability. A concise definition of the terms sets the proper expectation and allows the National Guard to prepare its forces to meet that expectation. Unfortunately, the attempt to delineate these terms may not be so easy, as neither current Army publications nor Joint Doctrine formally define either concept. Consequently, to continue the discussion, a look at previous descriptions and historical context is necessary.

⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *2006 Game Plan: Accelerating Momentum*, (Washington, DC, 2006), Enclosure 6.

Prior to the end of the Cold War, Wolfram Hanrieder and Larry Buel in *Words and Arms: A Dictionary of Security and Defense Terms* described a strategic reserve as, “Uncommitted forces of a country or coalition of countries that are intended to support national security interests and objectives, as required.”¹⁰ A few years later, Edward Luttwak and Stuart Koehl said reserves were, “Forces deliberately kept out of battle, to subsequently relieve depleted units, meet sudden or especially strong attacks, or intervene offensively. Such reserves are termed TACTICAL, OPERATIONAL, or STRATEGIC [caps original], depending on the level of control.” They went on to state, “Strategic reserves may be of any size, but are controlled by the national command authority, as the ultimate contingency force.”¹¹ Cold War definitions suggested two important characteristics about strategic reserves. The first trait held employment control at the national political, not military, level. The second trait implied military training and existing force structure. Neither of these aspects, however, fully explains why planners viewed the National Guard as only a strategic asset. Active component forces could also meet strategic reserve requirements.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the *Dictionary of Military Terms: A Guide to the Language of Warfare and Military Institutions* defined the strategic reserve in terms of material. The book indicated a military reserve force is, “The portion of force that is held out of combat . . .” and “A military organization of people not on active duty . . . and available to be called to active duty when needed.” It further described reserve components as “nonregular military forces of the nature of a MILITIA [caps original], available to augment the regular forces in time of war or emergency.” Militia was the “Part-time military or paramilitary formations that are organized

¹⁰ Wolfram F. Hanrieder and Larry V. Buel, *Word and Arms: A Dictionary of Security and Defense Terms*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979), 121.

¹¹ Edward Luttwak and Stuart Koehl, *The Dictionary of Modern War*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 485.

and trained to serve in defense of a nation in time of emergency.”¹² Common themes among Cold War and Post-Cold War definitions included; military forces not immediately dedicated to combat, a mention of national control or national emergency, and the reliance upon a non-professional but trained military force. Descriptions do not portray size or relative strength of a strategic reserve, expected response time to meet contingency requirements, or combat capability once the nation employed strategic reserve forces.

Although the 2007 amended edition of JP1-02 *Department of Defense Dictionary of Associated and Military Terms* did not define strategic reserve, the concept of what constituted a strategic reserve was present in previous joint publications. *The Official Dictionary of Military Terms* compiled by the Joint Staff and published in 1988, recognized “United States Strategic Army Forces” and defined them as, “That part of the Army normally located in the continental United States, which is trained, equipped, and maintained for employment at the national level in accordance with current plans.”¹³ *The Dictionary of Military Terms*, published in 1995, retained that definition.¹⁴ The Department of Defense kept the same characterization before and after the Cold War until inexplicably removing it from JP 1-02. Under the Department of Defense definition, both active and reserve components could expect to receive a strategic reserve mission. Department of Defense officials could train and equip units from either component for National Command Authority use “at the national level in accordance with current plans.”

The official Department of Defense terminology manual is not the only military publication lacking a definition of strategic reserve. Neither of the Army’s two Capstone

¹² Trevor N. DuPuy, Curt Johnson, Grace P. Hayes, Priscilla S. Taylor, and John M. Taylor, *Dictionary of Military Terms: A Guide to the Language of Warfare and Military Institutions*, (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 2003), 169, 209, 237.

¹³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The Official Dictionary of Military Terms*, (Cambridge, MA: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1988), 381.

¹⁴ Charles Messenger and U.S. Department of Defense, *Dictionary of Military Terms*, (Mechanicsberg, PA: Greenhill Books, 1995), 398.

manuals, FM 1 *The Army* and FM 3-0 *Operations*, use the term strategic reserve or explain the requirement. Likewise, the corresponding Joint Staff manuals, JP 1 *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, and JP 3-0 *Joint Operations* omit any discussion of strategic reserve. Queries into the publicly available Department of Defense websites supply many documents, manuscripts, and speech transcripts that contain the term “strategic reserve”, but none clearly delineate what the phrase means in the context of United States national security. Without a clear understanding of what a strategic reserve is, planners cannot develop a force structure to meet the requirement. Additionally, leaders of the supposed strategic reserve organizations must speculate on how to train and equip their forces. The failure to codify strategic reserve may make it impossible to determine how operationalizing the reserve affects national security.

The discussion of what should constitute the strategic reserve is not limited to the post-Cold War world. In fact, President Eisenhower had the same difficulties determining what a proper strategic reserve should look like during his administration. In *The President and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*, Professor Herspring observed that Eisenhower selected Admiral Arthur Radford to replace General Omar Bradley as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff because Eisenhower believed that he and Radford had a common understanding of the nation’s security requirements. Specifically Herspring noted Radford felt America had overextended its ground forces and nuclear weapons would allow the nation to have those forces, “redeployed to the United States where they would be reorganized to form a smaller, highly mobile strategic reserve. . . .”¹⁵ The post World War II era is remarkably similar to the post Cold War era. Under budgetary pressure, Eisenhower had to protect American interests in Korea and Europe. Today, policymakers again contend with overextended ground forces, national security problems, and budget concerns.

¹⁵ Dale R. Herspring, *The President and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*, (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 93.

Despite the absence of a formal definition, the current concept of the National Guard's position in national security has started to change. Transcripts from the U.S. Army War College 2006 Strategy Conference remarked,

The Commission on the Guard and Reserves defines the strategic reserve as “. . . a pool of replacement manpower and capability to be employed in a large-scale conflict with a peer or near-peer military competitor . . .” Use of the reserves in an operational context—as in Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM—defines the new paradigm. The Commission then goes on to say, “Policymakers must strike an appropriate and sustainable balance between the operational and strategic use of the reserve components that will be necessary to achieve national security objectives in a long war.”¹⁶

The Commission recognized the reserve component's purpose during the Cold War is no longer applicable in today's environment. The reserves must now provide operational capability and strategic depth.

The statement in the footnotes of the conference transcripts clarified the Cold War purpose of the reserve component. Unfortunately, the clarification only appeared in the 90-day committee report issued on June 5, 2006. The final report issued on January 31, 2008 omitted the definition. While the final report does not specifically describe a strategic reserve, it noted the need to, “creat[e] new categories to cover possibilities from full-time active duty on a one-year-out-of-six rotational basis (Operational Reserve) to availability only in the event of mobilization (Strategic Reserve),” as a policy objective. The final report depicted the operational reserve force as individuals and units selected for rotational duty and strategic reserve force as those that are not.¹⁷ The Commission attempted to discuss the differences between operational and strategic reserves, yet admitted that initially all reserve component units would be in the operational force. The Commission linked the use of strategic reserve units to being, “activated as necessary during

¹⁶ John R. Martin, “Conference Report: A Nation at War”, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007) 79.

¹⁷ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st Century Operational Force: Final Report to Congress and the Secretary of Defense*, (Washington, DC, 2008), 342-343.

times of war or national emergency to augment the active component and operational reserves.”¹⁸

The report also stated that eventually some units could be in the Strategic Reserve Force and compared those units to today’s traditional “39-day” units.¹⁹ Regrettably, this sounds suspiciously like the tiered readiness scheme of the Cold War. Under the tiered readiness plan, certain reserve component units received more funding for equipment and training than others. Units higher on the scale were to be able to deploy more quickly. Units lower on the scale received less training and lacked modern equipment. Under tiered readiness policy, portions of the reserve component were non-deployable and required significant post-mobilization training and equipment upgrades to become ready.

Currently, the Department of Defense does not concisely define strategic reserve. During the Cold War, the nation planned to use its strategic reserve to respond to a Warsaw Pact attack in Western Europe. Without a peer competitor, the United States lacks a clear purpose for a strategic reserve. The nation’s top military advisor admitted policymakers must develop guidance concerning the strategic reserve. Without clearly delineating strategic reserve force requirements, it will be difficult for military planners to structure the National Guard to meet those responsibilities.

Operational Force or Operational Reserve

However unclear the expectation is for a strategic reserve, it is becoming obvious military leaders no longer see the nation’s Army reserve component as a significant part of the strategic reserve force. At the 2007 Association of the United States Army Convention General George Casey, the Army Chief of Staff, noted, ““Our reserve components are performing magnificently, but in an operational role for which they were neither designed nor resourced . . . they are no

¹⁸ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, 346.

¹⁹ Ibid.

longer a strategic reserve, mobilized only in national emergencies. They are now an operational reserve deployed on a cyclical basis,' enabling the Army to sustain operations."²⁰ Admiral Mullen appeared to agree with General Casey. A recent *New York Times* article noted, "He [Mullen] described the Air Force and Navy as America's 'strategic reserve,' ready to carry out a full range of combat operations beyond Iraq and Afghanistan."²¹ Both Admiral Mullen and General Casey no longer view the National Guard as a strategic asset. In fact, they appear to accept that the Army's reserve components are no longer even part of the nation's strategic reserve.

Lieutenant General James Lovelace, the former Army Chief Operations Officer, agreed with Mullen and Casey's assessment of the Army's reserve component role. During his testimony to the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, he stated:

During this period of time that extended through the 1990s, Reserve Component equipping and mobilization policies were framed based on assumptions that in times of crisis, there would be sufficient warning and time to mobilize, fill the ranks, and then get the country on a war footing to fill any material shortages. This strategy assumed that the Active Component would be large enough to sustain the fight with forward deployed forces, first deployers, and pre-positioned stocks, until the strategic reserve was committed to the theater of war.²²

LTG Lovelace is pointing out two assumptions in the Cold War strategy that are no longer valid. The first was that there would be adequate time to man, equip, and train the reserve component. Cyclical deployments demand that reserves reduce post-mobilization training to meet the theater's unit rotation schedule. Second was that the active component was large enough to meet the strategic requirement. The Army's decision to operationalize the Guard proved that the active

²⁰ Donna Miles, "New Agreement to Help Balance Active Army, National Guard," Armed Forces Press Service, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=47758> (accessed on 15 January 2008).

²¹ Thom Shanker, "Joint Chiefs Chairman Looks Beyond Current Wars", *New York Times*, October 22, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/22/washington/22mullen.html?_r=1&n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/Organizations/D/Defense%20Department&oref=slogin (accessed on 15 January 2008).

component is not large enough. Planners must now consider part of the National Guard force a “first deployer” and equip them accordingly.

The movement towards operational force did not begin with operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves “Second Report to Congress” stated that, “Dr. David S. C. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, described how the shift from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve has gradually taken place since the 1990 involuntary mobilizations for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.”²³ Clearly, leaders recognized the need for reserve component movement toward operational capability. However, the Army could not operationalize the reserves until the Soviet Union no longer posed a military threat.

While determining what is necessary for the “strategic reserve” may be difficult, identifying “operational force” characteristics has its own set of challenges. JP 1-02 does not define “operational force”. It does describe an operational reserve as “an emergency reserve of men and/or materiel established for the support of a specific operation.”²⁴ Perhaps not wanting to admit that an “emergency” exists, recent Department of Defense statements and documents use the term “operational force” instead of operational reserve when referring to the posture they wish the reserve component to reach. The term operational reserve carries its own baggage. Looking beyond the JP 1-02 definition, the term operational reserve connotes a combat force at the Corps level or above for use during a campaign. Unfortunately, many Department of Defense officials still use the terms operational reserve and operational force interchangeably when talking to the

²² Lieutenant General James J. Lovelace JR, “Statement by Lieutenant General James J. Lovelace, JR. Deputy Chief of Staff, G3 United States Army Before the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves” (Statement, Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, April 12, 2007), 3.

²³ Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Second Report to Congress: Strengthening America’s Defenses in the New Security Environment*, (Washington, DC, 2007), 10.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *JP 1-02: Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, (Washington, DC, 2007) 395.

press. These statements may be obstacles preventing a succinct differentiation between the two expressions. The confusion may also prevent an accurate determination of what the nation needs from an operational National Guard force.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Thomas Hall, attempted to clarify the new meaning. Citing agreement with the Joint Staff concerning a working definition, he recently penned, “The operational reserve is the total Reserve Component structure which operates across the continuum of military missions performing both strategic and operational roles in peacetime, wartime, contingency, domestic emergencies, and homeland defense operations.”²⁵ Here Secretary Hall noted the need for both strategic and operational capability. Secretary Hall’s statement means that some national leaders expect the Guard to plan for operational competence and still provide strategic depth. Secretary Hall also changed the JP 1-02 definition of operational reserve. Unfortunately, the working definition does still not explain the difference between operational reserve and operational force.

Possibly the best indication of what the Army means when it refers to an operational force is found in the *2006 Army Posture Statement*. The document’s discussion about force rebalancing indicated the need to “create the right mix between operational forces and institutional structures.”²⁶ The statement implies that anything outside the Army’s administrative and training organizations are part of the operational force. The *2006 Army Game Plan* declared that the reserve component transition from strategic reserve to an operational force required the Army to train, equip, and staff the reserve component to be operationally ready, organize the reserve component like the active component to permit easier integration; and provide

²⁵ Thomas F. Hall, "Sustaining an Operational Reserve," *The Officer* 83, no. 10 (2007): 24.

²⁶ U.S. Department of the Army, *2006 Posture Statement: A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities*, 9.

deployment predictability.²⁷ Secretary Hall strengthened the *2006 Army Game Plan* pronouncement saying, “The services must organize, resource, equip, train, and utilize” the reserves “to the same standards” as the active forces.²⁸ Using the Army and Secretary Hall’s descriptions, a strategic reserve could also be an operational force and both active and reserve units could meet the requirement. Department of Defense pronouncements implied the National Guard would have to perform both strategic and operational reserve missions, but promised increased capacity to do so.

Despite the nebulous terminology, reserve leaders have accepted their new roles in the post Cold War national security setting. Lieutenant General Jack Stultz, head of the United States Army Reserve recently said, “The difference between a strategic reserve and operational force is that the Army Reserve will follow a more predictable routine.” He continued, “If we’re going to be an operational reserve, we’ve got to look outside of the box that we’re living in right now. We are no longer a one-weekend-a-month, two-weeks-in-the-summertime force. What we are now is an operational reserve. That means on a predictable basis you will be expected to be called up and mobilized to deploy to defend your nation.”²⁹ In his statements, Lieutenant General Stultz warned Citizen-Soldiers to prepare themselves for continuing deployments. Part-time military duties will no longer be the norm, but the exception.

Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard, agreed. In a recent article for *Joint Forces Quarterly* he wrote, “We are developing maximum readiness across the full spectrum of national security requirements—from a full-scale war fought overseas to myriad

²⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *2006 Game Plan: Accelerating Momentum*, enclosure 16.

²⁸ Hall, 24.

²⁹ Staff Sgt. Christine L. Andreu-Wilson, “Army Reserve Transforms in Unstable Climate,” Armed Forces Press Service, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=46980> (accessed on January 23, 2008).

homeland security missions.” Discussing the Guard’s ability to respond to state needs during Hurricane Katrina, Blum stated,

The Guard successfully accomplished all of these missions while conducting close quarters combat (including seven infantry brigades and Special Operations Forces) in Iraq and Afghanistan, international peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo, and counterdrug border support in the United States. Simultaneously, the Guard was responding to Governors’ calls for homeland security operations and minimization of suffering in the face of natural and manmade disasters.³⁰

Lieutenant General Blum felt the Guard is capable of providing expeditionary and homeland defense requirements. He recognized the breadth of tasks the Guard must perform in the modern world.

Reserve component leaders understand the need to position their forces to accomplish missions strategic in scope and operational in nature. Strategic planners have not succinctly defined strategic reserve, operational reserve, and operational force. However, the concept of an operational force posture promises to provide the reserve components with expanded capability. Director of the Army National Guard, Lieutenant General Clyde Vaughn noted, “The Army has pledged to boost Guard spending by \$23 billion through 2011.”³¹ A better-equipped and trained National Guard should enhance national security even if the Guard’s structure does not change or declines.

Return to Tradition

From State Militia to Federal Reserve

All the concern and discussion about the National Guard’s shift from a strategic reserve to an operational force is somewhat out of place. The National Guard did not begin as a strategic reserve. The Guard is also not new to the operational force mission. Those views developed

³⁰ H. Steven Blum, "The National Guard Transforming to an Operational Force." *JFQ: Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 43 (2006): 13-14.

during the Cold War. Traditionally, the Guard draws its roots from the militia. The U.S. Constitution based the nation's defense upon the militia force instead of a professional standing army. Under pressure from Guard promoters, Congress enacted laws at the start of the 20th Century that expanded the militia's constitutional roles. That expansion solidified the country's ability to use the National Guard beyond territorial limits. By making the Guard an operational force, the Army has returned the National Guard to its historical position only briefly interrupted by the Cold War.

The National Guard inherited the constitutional role of the state militias. Renee Hylton wrote, "Today's National Guard is the direct descendent of the militias of the thirteen original English colonies." She also noted that the National Guard is, "The oldest component of the armed forces of the United States."³² Cantor went further by suggesting the constitutional authority reserved for the states to train the militia and appoint its military officers served as a check on regular forces.³³ These Constitutional rights are especially significant because they form the basis for a state controlled militia acting as the nation's primary defense force. The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations noted that at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, "the majority of the convention's members wanted to rely on the state militias as a federal defense force to avoid maintaining a large standing army."³⁴ Their study also described the constitutional powers assigned to Congress under article 1 section 8. Those powers include "calling up the militia to execute laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions"

³¹ Clyde Vaughn, "Army National Guard: An Integral Part of Army Strong", *Army* 57, no. 10 (2007): 135.

³² Renee Hylton, *Citizen Soldiers: An Illustrated History of the Army National Guard*, (Washington, DC: National Guard Bureau, Historical Services Division, Office of Public Affairs, 1994) 3.

³³ Louis Cantor, *The Creation of the Modern National Guard: The Dick Militia Act of 1903*, (Ann Arbor, MI, University Microfilms Inc., 1987), 10.

³⁴ Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, "The National Guard: Defending the Nation and the States", (Washington, DC, 1993), 7.

and “provide[ing] for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia.”³⁵ The phrase “calling up the militia” suggests a reserve status for state organizations. At the time framers debated constitutional structure, however, the militia was “the only military force in the nation.”³⁶ Suspicious of monarchical standing armies, the framers intended for the state controlled militia to serve as the major part of the country’s first line of defense.

Alexander Hamilton, an ardent supporter of a standing army, recognized the value of a state controlled militia. In Federalist No. 29 he argued, “What reasonable cause of apprehension can be inferred from a power in the Union to prescribe regulations for the militia and to command its services when necessary; while the particular States are to have the *sole and exclusive appointment of the officers?*”³⁷ Hamilton saw the need in this particular paper to reiterate to those afraid of a strong central government that the states would control the militia by having the authority to appoint its officers. While most of his discourse in Federalist No. 23 through 29 supported the notion of a professional military, his reinforcement of the rights the Constitution granted the states in article I, section 8 acknowledged the shared federal and state authority over military power.³⁸

Mutual control of the militias satisfied most state militia advocates, but Federalists still sought to make what Washington termed “the National Militia” or “a national organization of citizen-soldiers responsible . . . to the federal government.”³⁹ President Washington and Secretary

³⁵ Ibid., 8.

³⁶ William H. Riker, *Soldiers and the States: The Role of the National Guard in American Democracy*, (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1957), 12.

³⁷ Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist Papers by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay*, (New York: Bantam, 1982), 141.

³⁸ Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 7.

³⁹ R. Ernest Dupuy, *The National Guard: A Compact History*, (New York: Hawthorn Books Inc., 1971), 29 – 30.

of War Henry Knox wanted to “create from the diverse militias a workable national reserve.”⁴⁰ While these efforts failed, Congress did pass The Uniform Militia Act of 1792. That act required all able-bodied men to enroll in an unorganized militia that mustered annually but remained under state control.⁴¹ This unorganized militia spawned volunteer organized militia units that met, trained, and received some state support. These organized units became the foundation for today’s National Guard.⁴² Unfortunately, the Uniform Militia Act of 1792 also created confusion about what constituted the organized or volunteer militias and the unorganized or enrolled militias. The organized or volunteer militias were the predecessor of the National Guard. The unorganized or enrolled militias were the pool of untrained men eligible for military service and were the forerunner of U.S Volunteer Regiments and later Selective Service inductees.⁴³ The enrolled militia did not exist at the national level until 1792. Even so, the states maintained control over both organized and enrolled formations.

A few years after the Constitution’s ratification, Congress adjusted militia duties to check Federalist efforts to expand the professional or Federal Reserve force. The Calling Forth Act in 1792, passed just six days prior to the Uniform Militia Act increased Presidential power to use the state militias for federal service. To repel invasion, Congress added, “The wording ‘imminent danger of invasion’ [which] gave the President latitude of judgment and the inclusion of ‘Indian tribe’ justified the Presidential use of the militia for frontier protection.”⁴⁴ This statutory adjustment allowed the President to use the militia for defense on the “frontier”, or beyond the

⁴⁰ John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, (New York: Macmillan, 1983), 53.

⁴¹ Mahon, 53 and Jim Dan Hill, *The Minute Man in Peace and War*, (Harrisburg, PA: Telegraph Press, 1964), 10.

⁴² Hill, 10-11.

⁴³ Hill, 187.

⁴⁴ William W. Epley, *Roles and Missions of the United States Army: Basic Documents with Annotations and Bibliography*, (Washington, DC, 1991), 79.

nation's borders. It was also the first step toward an expeditionary role for the National Guard. Most states did not oppose the increase in Presidential authority since they viewed it as a necessary component of national defense.⁴⁵ The Uniform Militia Act and Calling Forth Act of 1792 governed state militias for the next 111 years. Nevertheless, Congress had just begun to modify the militia's roles in national defense.

Legislative Evolution of the National Guard into an Expeditionary Force

The struggle to redefine militia responsibilities in the modern era began almost immediately after Congress passed the Militia Act of 1903. The National Militia Act of 1903 “converted the volunteer militia into the National Guard.”⁴⁶ It also set the conditions for repeated legislative battles brewing since the end of the Civil War between proponents of state controlled militia and advocates for a Federal Reserve.⁴⁷ Ironically, the National Guard usually supported legislative actions that pushed it toward operational capability while the Army and supporters of a professional military and the Federal Reserve concepts opposed these efforts. The result was a series of updates to the 1903 Act that legally allowed the National Guard to assume an operational role.

The Militia Act of 1903, also known as the Dick Act, replaced the “nearly always misunderstood Militia Acts of May 2 and May 8, 1792.”⁴⁸ The Militia Act of 1903 was the result of Secretary of War Elihu Root's efforts to achieve militia reform following “[t]he disorderly

⁴⁵ Cantor, 18.

⁴⁶ Michael D. Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War: The Army National Guard 1636 – 2000*, (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2003), 144.

⁴⁷ Charles E. Heller, *The New Military Strategy and Its Impact on the Reserve Components*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002) 5-6.

⁴⁸ Hill, 186.

mobilization and logistical failures of 1898.”⁴⁹ Root realized he needed Congressional support to accomplish any changes. Root gained the confidence of the National Guard Association and important members of Congress that were Guardsmen. Due to his “careful cultivation of support, a militia bill moved through Congress without significant opposition.”⁵⁰ While The Militia Act of 1903 did not fully support either the National Guard or Federal Reserve advocates, the law had, “many important provisions upon which a general agreement was reached.”⁵¹ The Militia Act of 1903 specified the National Guard was the Organized Militia, offered unit protections against replacement of state appointed officers, and limited use of enlisted men to fill U.S. Volunteer Regiments. The Militia Act of 1903 removed the frontier protection language found in the Calling Forth Act of 1792 and offered the National Guard federal recognition.⁵² Unfortunately, the Militia Act of 1903 placed a nine-month limit on Federal service. That limitation left state units susceptible to destruction by those who wanted a heavier reliance upon U.S. Volunteer Regiments.⁵³ The Militia Act of 1903 provided the states aid to train and equip their troops under federal oversight but left in place, “a blueprint . . . of the Volunteer Army concept which was calculated to eliminate the National Guard.”⁵⁴ Consequently, Congress and National Guard advocates worked tirelessly over the next thirty years to destroy that blueprint.

War Department executives and Army leaders raised concerns that initiated the first update to the 1903 legislation. Followers of Emory Upton, these officials advocated a larger

⁴⁹ Jerry Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia 1865 – 1920*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 108.

⁵⁰ Cooper, 109.

⁵¹ Colby, (II) 10a.

⁵² William W. Epley, *Roles and Missions of the United States Army: Basic Documents with Annotations and Bibliography*, (Washington, DC, 1991), 120.

⁵³ Hill, 189.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

professional force and wanted to create a Federal Reserve free of state control.⁵⁵ Upton was a former Civil War Regular Army Officer that felt, “America needed a robust national reserve under direct, federal control to support a larger Regular Army led by professional officers.”⁵⁶ Many of the nation’s professional officer corps agreed with Upton’s philosophy. These viewed contradicted those of the National Guard Association and members of Congress in the National Guard. The Militia Act of 1903 directed that the president use state militias before volunteers for any constitutional grounds. The act also put time and geographical limits on the militia’s federal service.⁵⁷ Many militia opponents felt these constraints put national security at risk. Congress responded by passing the National Militia Act of 1908. With the full support of militia advocates, the 1908 Act removed the geographical and length of service limits of militia units serving in a federal status. It also required, “the Organized Militia, or National Guard to be called-up before the Volunteers for any reason.”⁵⁸ Guardsmen had received their first legislative guarantee beyond the Constitution that they would be in the forefront of the county’s defense. By eliminating the requirement that the National Guard be used within the U.S. territorial border, Congress positioned the National Guard to be an overseas reaction force.

The 1908 Act did not quiet critics. In February 1912, National Guard opponents received help from inside the Taft Administration. Attorney General George W. Wickersham, with full concurrence of Army leadership, decided the 1908 Act was unconstitutional. He felt the Constitution organized the militia for national defense and, therefore, the Army could not use it outside the country’s boundaries. The Army adopted the same policy toward the militia. In August 1912, the War Department issued the doctrinal pamphlet *Organization of the Land Forces*

⁵⁵ Doubler, 150 - 151.

⁵⁶ Doubler, 140.

⁵⁷ Mahon, 140.

⁵⁸ Hill, 203.

of the United States. That pamphlet adopted Wickersham's restrictions on the militia.⁵⁹ This procedure frustrated efforts by Guard proponents to ensure Federal Reserve supporters did not gain the upper hand in policy discussions. Over the next four years, the debate continued within political and military establishments concerning the roles, size, and use of the regular, reserve, volunteer, and militia forces. These deliberations required further legal clarification.

In 1916, President Wilson chose to support militia proponents instead of War Department officials. Wilson's decision induced Congress to pass the National Defense Act of 1916. The National Defense Act of 1916 enacted legislation that facilitated the use of militia forces in a way that pleased its supporters. The 1916 Act allowed the president, in times of national emergency, to draft National Guardsmen into the regular forces while still serving in their National Guard units.⁶⁰ Under the National Defense Act of 1916, Congress was able to bypass the perceived Constitutional restraints on the use of the militia.⁶¹ The Act also allowed the president to, "mobilize the National Guard for the duration of the emergency."⁶² The National Defense Act of 1916 gave National Guard proponents what they wanted, organization under state control. The Act also quieted critics by allowing federal access to National Guard units in times of national crises. Unfortunately, federalized Guardsmen serving outside the national boundaries officially served in the Regular Army. Once the national emergency was over, the Army could discharge those drafted into regular service from a National Guard unit. This is exactly what happened at the end of World War I as the nation demobilized following Germany's surrender. In addition, lack of trained men forced the Army to use National Guard personnel as individual fillers in Regular Army formations. Army leaders felt they should use reserve and National Guard forces to

⁵⁹ Mahon, 142.

⁶⁰ Doubler, 158.

⁶¹ Heller, 6.

⁶² Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 10.

meet the needs of the commander. From the Guard's perspective, the Army violated the Militia Acts and made it very difficult for the states to reconstitute their forces.⁶³ The stage was set for another confrontation.

An amendment to the National Defense Act of 1916 passed in 1920 sought to close loopholes in previous legislation and solidify state control over the reserves. The amendment prevented the wholesale discharge of federalized National Guardsmen. The amendment also assured the Guardsmen return to their state upon release from federal duty. The legislation rejected the notion of a large standing force by favoring a small active component reinforced by National Guard units and individuals in the Organized Reserve.⁶⁴ Legally, the Congress made the National Guard operationally legitimate. Congress ensured that Guard units deploy and return together. Additionally, both the 1916 Act and the 1920 amendment reinforced the concept that the Guard was the "first federal reserve" or "first line of reserve" for regular forces.⁶⁵

Proponents of a large professional force and Federal Reserve and those who advocated for the National Guard would continue to battle beyond 1920. Conscious of the problems experienced by the National Guard following World War I, Franklin Roosevelt's administration sought to clarify any misconceptions about the Guard's status. After prodding by National Guard Association representatives, Roosevelt supported another Congressional amendment to the National Defense Act of 1916. Passed in 1933, this amendment designated the National Guard as a reserve component of the United States. The amendment also directed that units would remain intact while in federal service. More importantly, the amendment provided the president the authority to order these units into federal service anytime Congress declared a national emergency. The 1933 amendment, "made it unnecessary ever again to bring the Guard into

⁶³ James E. Taylor, "Integration of the Army National Guard in Force Projection Operations - A Concept for a New Millennium" (monograph, US Army Command and General Staff College, 1999), 3.

⁶⁴ Doubler, 188.

federal service by dissolving its units and drafting members as individuals.”⁶⁶ Under these legal provisions, the National Guard entered World War II.

Little further legislation followed the 1933 amendment. However, nothing of note followed demobilization after World War II. The National Guard enjoyed the legal foundations that protected its units and members. Following the Korean War, Congress passed the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 and amended it in 1955. The Armed Forces Reserve Act addressed issues associated with the Korean War mobilization. The act and its amendment established the Ready Reserve force structure and size, guaranteed reserve component access to draftees, set six-year obligations for enlistees, and authorized state militia forces to replace mobilized National Guard units.⁶⁷ Congress intended to provide effective procedures for reserve utilization during national emergencies. Even though the new laws fixed the problems encountered during World War II and Korea, they did not necessarily prepare the reserves to respond adequately during the Cold War.⁶⁸ Fortunately, the nation would not need to use National Guard combat strength in the interim. Few National Guardsmen served in Vietnam and the 1991 Gulf War occurred after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Oddly, the final legal challenge to federal use of the National Guard came from within. In 1952, Congress authorized the President to activate National Guard units for federal service in non-emergency situations..⁶⁹ With gubernatorial consent, the statute allowed the Army to use National Guard units outside the U.S. on federal training missions for a maximum of 15 days.

⁶⁵ Epley, 136-137.

⁶⁶ Mahon, 174.

⁶⁷ Abbott A. Brayton, "American Reserve Policies since World War II." *Military Affairs* 36, no. 4 (1972): 140.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁶⁹ Rossum and Tarr, "American Constitutional Law: *Perpich v. Department of Defense*," http://www.wadsworth.com/politicalscience_d/templates/student_resources/0312184506_rossum/cases/cases/ac2_03.htm (accessed on February 6, 2008).

Contra operations in Central America caused several governors to withdraw that consent. Congress responded and passed the “Montgomery Amendment” to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1987. The Montgomery Amendment removed the requirement for gubernatorial consent. After the Department of Defense ordered members of the Minnesota National Guard to training duty in Honduras, the governor of Minnesota, Rudy Perpich, challenged the law.⁷⁰ The Supreme Court responded by ruling, “that the gubernatorial consent requirement of the 1952 Act was not constitutionally required and that its partial repeal by the Montgomery Amendment was therefore constitutionally valid.”⁷¹ The Supreme Court ruled that Guardsmen on federal active duty ceased to be in the state militia as defined by the Constitution. This ruling cemented the National Guard as a federal asset in times of need without regard to the state’s political desires or location of the federal duty.

Militia and National Guard proponents successfully gained the upper hand in the legal decisions. Army professionals sought to use the reserves as a pool of somewhat trained and equipped men who could be rapidly mobilized as individuals during an emergency. National Guard advocates sought to keep units together and train them accordingly. While either concept supported the notion of a strategic ground combat reserve, National Guard supporters set the conditions for the current operationalization of the reserve force. Congress had solidified the National Guard’s organizational structure and protected its existence. Consequently, the National Guard legally expanded beyond its original role as a first defense against invasion and insurrection, and the enforcer of laws. The legal victories set the stage for an operational role and the National Guard lobby ensured the Guard survived to perform the operational mission.

⁷⁰ David J. Scheffer, “Perpich v. Department of Defense”, *American Journal of International Law* 84, no.4 (1990): 915.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 917.

Planning for Operational Capability and Strategic Depth

Prior to the beginning of the 20th Century, the state militias provided a large part of the nation's military strength. The President called-up the state militia or National Guard for federal duty in virtually every military excursion up to and including the Korean War. Under the Articles of Confederation, Washington used state militia units furnished by New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia to end the Whisky Rebellion in 1784.⁷² William Henry Harrison defeated Indians at the battle of Tippecanoe using an Indiana militia force.⁷³ More than 100,000 militiamen served in the War of 1812, including Jackson's Tennessee militia who helped to defeat the British at New Orleans.⁷⁴ Roughly 70 Regiments of volunteer and organized militia including more than 73,000 troops, served during the Mexican War.⁷⁵ Although not always suited for the mission, the militia fought outside the borders of the United States. By the time Congress enacted the Militia Act of 1903, the state militias had also seen action in the Civil War, Spanish-American War, and various battles in the western frontier against native tribes.⁷⁶

Early 20th Century laws established National Guard structure using "the prevalent theory of mobilization which constituted the only military policy of the time . . . that the Regular Army formed the first line of defense, the Militia (National Guard) the second line, and the Volunteers the third line."⁷⁷ Immediately after World War I, planning figures indicated, "Regular divisions were supposed to be ready in twenty days after a call, the Guard thirty days, and the Organized

⁷² Dupuy, 31 – 32.

⁷³ Doubler, 83.

⁷⁴ Mahon, 67.

⁷⁵ Hill, 24–25.

⁷⁶ Doubler, 115-123.

⁷⁷ Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775 – 1945*, (Washington, DC, 1955), 179.

Reserve in sixty.”⁷⁸ The ten-day difference between Regular Army and Guard divisional deployments suggests the Army planned to use the National Guard in an operational capacity.

The Army experienced problems during the mobilization of the National Guard for General John Pershing’s Mexican Border expedition and World War I. These mobilization issues initiated planning in the War Department that relied more heavily upon Regular Forces. Aide to Chief of Staff General Pershing, Colonel John McAuley Palmer, intervened and influenced interwar planning. Colonel Palmer realized that Regulars were much more expensive than Guardsmen and Reservists. In a memo to General Pershing, Palmer argued that, “no organization should be maintained in a higher-priced category if it can be safely maintained in a lower-priced category and mobilized therefrom in time to meet the requirements of an emergency.”⁷⁹ Palmer’s influence ensured National Guard combat strength would remain part of the immediate response for national emergencies. More importantly, cost, rather than a mistrust of a large professional standing army, became the deciding factor that determined force structure.

As a consequence of Colonel Palmer’s intervention, the National Guard suddenly became more important to national security. Planning in the mid 1920s through early 1930s assumed National Guard formations would be ready for theater of operations between Mobilization Day (M-Day) and M-Day+10.⁸⁰ Protective Mobilization Plans in the late 1930s designated National Guard divisions part of the Initial Protective Force, or the first line of defense. The 1939 Plan presumed that at the end of M+1 eighteen National Guard infantry divisions but only four Regular Army infantry divisions would be ready to fight.⁸¹ Planners assumed a rush volunteers and 30 days before hostilities commenced to make their projections work. These figures hardly

⁷⁸ Mahon, 173.

⁷⁹ Kreidberg and Henry, 394.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 442-443.

⁸¹ Ibid., 486.

support the notion of the Guard as the nation's strategic reserve. Interwar projections counted on the Guard as an operational, even tactical asset. Congressional activity had removed the legal restrictions for federal use and financial considerations determined mobilization-planning criteria.

The extent and length of the struggle during World War II tested the entire mobilization system. Prewar plans suggested an operational role for National Guard divisions. Army use hinted at the need for strategic depth. Incrementally, beginning in early September of 1939, the War Department sought to increase both Active and National Guard authorized strength.⁸² In the fall of 1940, Congress declared a national emergency and authorized the president to federalize the National Guard. From September 1940 to June 1941, the president ordered all National Guard units including its divisions into active duty.⁸³ However, prewar planning estimates concerning the time it would take to ready divisions turned out to be grossly optimistic.. Lack of manpower, equipment, and training sites considerably lengthened post-mobilization training times. Mahon said, "The time when a division entered combat seems to have been regulated less by the division's readiness than by chance of the theater to which it was sent." He also stated that Organized Reserve divisions took an average of 22 months, Regular divisions 24, and National Guard 28 months to reach combat.⁸⁴ Assumptions about post-mobilization training and equipment deliveries were not realistic during interwar planning.

Once in federal status, the Army used National Guard formations and personnel as one might expect of a strategic reserve force. Individuals ended up in Active Duty units, because Guard divisions became a primary source for replacements. The Army also purged the majority of National Guard officers above the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, citing age and performance

⁸² Kreidberg and Henry, 554 - 555.

⁸³ Mahon, 180.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 187.

issues.⁸⁵ Additionally, divisions reorganized from square to triangular formations. The change required the reassignment of select separate infantry regiments outside their traditional National Guard divisions. Of course, Guard proponents saw these actions as an indication of the Army's effort to degrade the National Guard's unit strength and undermine the Guard's independence.⁸⁶ In truth, however, the Army utilized National Guard resources to build long-term combat strength. The Army moved trained individuals into the active divisions most likely to see early combat. It replaced suspect officers with those Army leaders trusted. Finally, the Army reformed Guard divisions based upon the needs perceived by military commanders. While these actions may have violated the traditions of the National Guard, they served the greater purpose of allowing the nation to build ground combat power more rapidly.

Some may consider the early National Guard and Army Reserve the nation's strategic reserve forces; the facts do not necessarily support that assessment. First, the long-standing policy of using the Regular Army and National Guard to buy time to raise a volunteer army does not indicate that the Army expected the Guard would provide strategic depth. Prior to World War I, "The State Militia was still considered the second line of defense . . ."⁸⁷ Second, the proportion of Guardsmen to the overall effort in the World Wars was comparatively small. There were only 181,000 National Guardsmen available for service when the U.S. declared war on Germany in World War I. By the time of the armistice, 2,000,000 men served in the American Expeditionary Force and almost 3,900,000 were in the Army.⁸⁸ The numbers in World War II are even more dramatic. The nation mobilized roughly 300,000 Guardsmen against a total troop strength of 10,420,000.⁸⁹ By sheer numbers, the Guard provided little strategic capacity. Prior to Korea, the

⁸⁵ Taylor, 3-4.

⁸⁶ Doubler, 203.

⁸⁷ Kreidberg and Henry, 186.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 374-375.

⁸⁹ Doubler, 212, and Kreidberg and Henry, 706.

nation used the Guard units in an operational capacity even though the Army often treated units and individuals like strategic reserves.

If the Army's treatment of National Guard units in the Second World War foreshadowed a strategic role, the Korean War was the demarcation point. The Guard's ability to provide strategic depth and operational capability started to become fully evident during that conflict. The nation mobilized roughly one-third of the National Guard, including eight divisions, for Korea. Only two Guard divisions and various separate units actually served in theater. The Army sent two other divisions to Germany and put four on stateside duty as a "strategic reserve."⁹⁰ Again, the Army took experienced individuals from Guard units and used them to fill shortages in deploying Regular Army divisions.⁹¹ True to form, the Army used the depth the reserve components provided to build combat strength more quickly. Conversely, the Army specifically designated entire National Guard divisions as a strategic deterrence asset while it deployed other Guard units into a combat theater. The Army had set the stage for the Guard's first true strategic reserve role during the Cold War. The Korean Conflict proved the Guard could be an operational and strategic force at the same time.

It is difficult to discern exactly why the Army relegated the National Guard to a strategic reserve status following the end of hostilities in Korea. Planning immediately after World War II called for, "Twelve Regular divisions supported by thirteen ready National Guard divisions, [which] in the Army's opinion, provided an optimum proposal for preparedness within reasonable financial boundaries."⁹² These thirteen Guard divisions were to be ready to deploy within six months. Completed in April 1950, David Fautua noted that National Security Council paper 68 (NSC 68), "change[d] the dominant national military policy, which was based primarily on

⁹⁰ Doubler, 234 - 235.

⁹¹ Ibid., 233-234.

strategic air power, to incorporate the Army's argument for a balanced-forces approach.”⁹³ The authors of NSC 68 identified a gap in nation’s ability to respond to a limited or local war under the “political-military strategy” of “deterrence under strategic air power [that] was primarily aimed at preventing a general war.”⁹⁴ NSC 68 policy allowed the Army to set force structure to respond to limited wars. Palmer’s premise during the interwar period concerning use of less expensive reserves over active forces again entered into the equation. The premise noted the “financial boundaries” the Army faced in initial planning. Accordingly, the plans called for thirteen Guard divisions in the envisioned twenty five division structure. The National Guard should have been a large part of the limited war response. Nonetheless, as the Cold War progressed, the Guard found itself consigned to the role of strategic reserve.

The Korean War signaled the Guard’s change toward strategic reserve status. In the early 1960s, the troubles associated with mobilizing Guard units for the Berlin Crisis concluded the conversion. President Kennedy’s decision to mobilize part of the National Guard for the crisis caused problems. The lack of a legitimate national emergency combined with the feeling there was not a viable mission for Guardsmen to perform, put political pressure on the Kennedy Administration.⁹⁵ National Guard mobilization demanded that Guardsmen, their political proponents, and their families perceive a threat to nation’s existence. The Berlin Crisis signaled that mobilization without combat appeared to be socially unacceptable. The Berlin Crisis may have been “the first instance in which the Guard had been partially mobilized as a tool of foreign

⁹² David T. Fautua, “The “Long Pull” Army: NSC 68, the Korean War, and the Creation of the Cold War U.S. Army”, *The Journal of Military History* 61, no. 1 (1997): 108.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 95-96.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁹⁵ Taylor, 5.

policy.”⁹⁶ The crisis also showed that Americans were not interested in using their community-based organizations without an immediate threat.

Strategic Reserve Posture Initiates the Total Force Policy

Not surprisingly, lack of popular and political support played in role in the decision to forego mobilization of the National Guard for duty in Vietnam. Although in previous conflicts the Army had relied heavily upon its reserve components, President Johnson would not pursue mobilization during the Vietnam War. Vietnam followed the disastrous attempt by President Kennedy to use reserves during the Berlin Crisis.⁹⁷ President Johnson was determined to shelter the National Guard from large-scale deployment to Southeast Asia. His actions may have undermined public acceptance of the war. The military’s negative experiences during Vietnam drove actions that redefined the active component’s relationship with the reserves. The adoption of an all-volunteer force compelled the Army to change its structure and integrate the reserves.⁹⁸ The new policy, known as the Total Force Policy, generated the need for the National Guard’s return to operational force status.

Kennedy’s political difficulties with partial mobilization probably influenced President Johnson’s decision to limit Army Guard participation in Vietnam. Johnson had to decide whether to mobilize the Guard and keep the American people involved in the war. However, he also did not want to invite increased congressional inquiry or send the wrong message to the Soviets and China by using the nation’s strategic reserve.⁹⁹ In the end, Johnson chose to fight with conscripts instead of the National Guard. Even though after the Tet offensive in January 1968, the Army

⁹⁶ Mahon, 229.

⁹⁷ Brayton, 141.

⁹⁸ Taylor, 5.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

called 12,234 Guardsmen to active duty, only 2,729 actually served in Vietnam.¹⁰⁰ Johnson wished to avoid the upheaval caused by the Guard's mobilization during the Berlin Crisis. To do this, he relied upon the draft to keep the American population involved in the war. Unfortunately, his decision did not maintain popular support. It also signaled to the North Vietnamese a lack of U.S. resolve.¹⁰¹ The side effect of Johnson's decision cemented the Guard in the collective planning psyche as a strategic reserve. More importantly, it illustrated how a force viewed strictly as a strategic reserve, when not committed, indicated to a potential enemy the lack of national resolve.

The Guard's return to an operational footing and a more traditional role at the forefront of the nation's defense started after the Vietnam War. By the early 1970s, "Reserves had come to be viewed as a doomsday force-of-last-resort, only to be called up when the Soviets charged the Fulda Gap."¹⁰² Vietnam changed two things about the Army. First, the nation ended conscription and established an all-volunteer force. Second, the Department of Defense adopted the Total Force Policy that "was to become part of a post Viet Nam era strategy for dealing with changing national policies that called for reductions in military spending and the end of conscription into military service."¹⁰³ The Total Force Policy supposedly integrated active and reserve components so completely that the nation could never go to war again without the Reserves.¹⁰⁴ The Total Force Policy also sought to prevent the over-utilization of the Active force. Many suggest the

¹⁰⁰ Renee Hylton and Robert K. Wright, *A Brief History of the Militia and the National Guard*, (Washington, DC, 1993), 37.

¹⁰¹ John B. Alexander, *The Changing Nature of Warfare, the Factors Mediating Future Conflict, and Implications for SOF*, (Hurlburt Field, FA: The JSOU Press, 2006), 4.

¹⁰² Chris Downey, "Total Force Policy and Effective Force", (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2004), 2.

¹⁰³ Timothy I. Sullivan, "The Abrams Doctrine. Is It Viable and Enduring in the 21st Century?", (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College, 2005), 2.

¹⁰⁴ James Jay Carafano, "The Army Reserves and the Abrams Doctrine: Unfulfilled Promise, Uncertain Future," <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/hl869.cfm#pgfId-1134176> (accessed on 10 February 2008).

Department of Defense designed the policy to ensure public support for military endeavors, and provide a ready, relevant reserve component.¹⁰⁵ The Total Force Policy effectively started the Guard's reorientation toward an operational role. The issues associated with the Berlin Crisis mobilization had put the Guard on a course of strategic reserve obsolescence. The Total Force Concept pushed the Guard back on the path toward being part of the nation's first line of defense.

The first important test for the Total Force Policy occurred during Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield. As part of force restructuring, the National Guard owned a number of brigades meant to complete or "round-out" active duty divisions. Out of necessity, senior military leaders were happy to use National Guard and Army Reserve support units. Nevertheless, they opposed the mobilization and deployment of National Guard round-out brigades. In response to political pressure from Guard proponents, senior military leaders acquiesced and the Department of Defense finally mobilized three of those brigades.¹⁰⁶ None of the brigades actually made it to combat, but their mobilization continued the Guard's movement back toward operational relevance. The Guard lobby again energized itself and succeeded in getting the desired outcome. In the end, political pressure trumped the military commander's recommendation.

Desert Storm continued the Guard's return to operational capability. The Army accelerated operational use of its reserves through the 1990s. Following the Gulf War, the Army National Guard sent forces to Haiti and the Sinai in 1994, and the Balkans in 1995. In 2000, a National Guard division served as the Headquarters for Bosnia peacekeeping operations.¹⁰⁷ During the period from September 2001 to November 30, 2007, 254,894 Guardsmen served in

¹⁰⁵ Sullivan, 4.

¹⁰⁶ Stephen M. Duncan, *Citizen Warriors: America's National Guard and Reserve Forces & the Politics of National Security*, (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1997), 35-71. Duncan, who was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs at the time, discusses in detail the policy fight that occurred over the use of Guard combat brigades for Desert Storm.

¹⁰⁷ Doubler, 352-367.

Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁰⁸ For the past seventeen years, the Guard has consistently had units as large as divisions serving in peacekeeping, nation building, stability or combat operations. The Army's announcement that its reserve component was now an operational reserve was not so much a new proclamation, but a statement of recognition. The Guard had returned to its traditional place as part of the country's first line of defense.

Historical Desire for a Peace Dividend

The Department of Defense's "Total Force Policy Report to the Congress" issued in December 1990 recognized, "Regional conflicts and crises--often erupting with very little warning--are the most likely future threats."¹⁰⁹ The report also noted,

Reserve forces should continue to support and assist the deployment of active forces in regional contingencies, especially larger ones and those of long duration. During extended crises or sustained operations, the reserve components should be capable of providing some combat capability and substantial support capabilities to augment the active force. Their role could include providing a contingency rotation base, to permit recycling of personnel who are deployed for longer-term contingencies or to compensate for forces drawn down from other theaters.¹¹⁰

This report was a precursor to General Colin Powell's Base Force and Defense Secretary Les Aspin's Bottom Up Review. The "Total Force Policy Report to the Congress" sought to reduce force structure in an effort to lower military spending. Importantly this report recognized the nature of future conflict and identified the need for reserves to provide "combat capability" and a "contingency rotation base". Both of these predictions correctly assessed the current operational requirements that have compelled the Army to assign the National Guard operational roles. The report incorrectly forecasted less need for rapidly deployable assets but acknowledged,

¹⁰⁸ Michael Waterhouse and JoAnne O'Bryant, "National Guard Personnel and Deployments: Fact Sheet," Congressional Record Service, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22451.pdf> (accessed on 11 Feb 2008), 3.

¹⁰⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, "Total Force Report to the Congress", (Washington, DC, 1990), 57.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

“Retaining forces in the reserve components rather than on active duty becomes an attractive option because of the cost savings that such steps can generate.”¹¹¹ The analysis accepted the inevitable post Cold War drawdown.

The Base Force and Bottom Up Review were attempts by military leaders to reduce forces and take advantage of the “peace dividend”. General Powell’s Base Force wished to shrink forces commensurate with an expected 25 percent reduction in the budget over five years.¹¹² Secretary Aspin’s Bottom Up Review called for larger decreases. Aspin felt the Base Force used the Cold War model planning structure and the Defense Department could make greater cuts. He sought to reduce strength an additional 233,000 troops and \$131.7 billion. He intended, “to use resources freed by the end of the Cold War to help at home.”¹¹³ Aspin noted President Clinton felt it was more important to rejuvenate the economy.¹¹⁴

Planning to reduce active component forces after the Cold War was not unique to the American experience. The Regular Army dropped from 846,000 troops in 1919 to 188,000 in 1939. The Army increased slightly to 267,000 in 1940 in preparation for World War II.¹¹⁵ Between World War II and the Korean War, the Regular Army shrunk to 10 divisions and the budget in the summer of 1950, provided for an Army only 630,000 troops. In order to keep its ten-divisions, the Army cut the authorized strength of its units by a third.¹¹⁶ To compensate, the Army had to increase the National Guard to 27 divisions and the Army Reserve to 25 divisions. To keep reserve component divisions staffed, Congress passed the Selective Service Act of 1948

¹¹¹ Ibid., 27.

¹¹² Lorne S. Joffe, *The Development of the Base Force 1989-1992*, (Washington, DC, 1993), 9.

¹¹³ John T. Correll, “Legacy of the Bottom Up Review” *Air Force Magazine* 86, no. 10 (2003): 55.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 56.

¹¹⁵ Kreidberg and Henry, 379.

¹¹⁶ Fautua, 99.

that allowed the reserves access to conscripts.¹¹⁷ After Korea, Eisenhower fought to reduce troop strength and cut the military budget so as not to operate at a deficit.¹¹⁸ Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird noted that following Vietnam, “Our conventional war-fighting capabilities dropped by one million active-duty personnel, and we were forced by the end of conscription to move from a so-called ‘two-and-a-half’ to a ‘one-and-a-half’ war basis for planning.”¹¹⁹ In the post Dick Act era, following every large-scale conflict the nation had reduced active duty troop strength and sought to decrease military budgets. The constitutional framer’s reliance upon the state militias for national defense was out of suspicion of a large standing army. Suspicion of a large Federal Army is no longer the determining factor. Palmer recognized in the early 1920s that the nation should not pay for forces that are more expensive over less expensive forces if the risk is not significantly greater. His dictum has now become the main dynamic in military budgetary planning.

Evidence is starting to accumulate that the Army can expect the same at the end of major unit involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gordon Lubold noted, “Challenges – a potential recession, a huge budget deficit, and rising entitlement spending – threaten to elbow defense priorities aside.”¹²⁰ He also reported that between fiscal year 2010 and 2013 Congress would cut the Department of Defense budget by 1.5%.¹²¹ Historically the National Guard has assumed a larger role in post conflict defense. The Guard’s ability to maintain Congressional support for its force structure suggests that once cuts become evident, the Guard will assume that role once again.

¹¹⁷ Brayton, 140.

¹¹⁸ Herspring, 90.

¹¹⁹ Melvin R. Laird “A Strong Start in a Difficult Decade: Defense Policy in the Nixon-Ford Years”, *International Security* 10, no. 2 (1985): 8.

¹²⁰ Gordon Lubold, “Record U.S. Defense Spending, but Future Budgets May Decline”, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0206/p02s02-usmi.html> (accessed on 11 Feb 2008).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

One might expect an increased role might come with additional troops but that is not necessarily the case. Since the end of World War II, Guard force size has remained relatively constant. From a post war low of 88,000 in 1947, recruiting increased numbers to 288,000 the next year. Since 1955, numbers have fluctuated between 318,000 and 444,000. Since the Base Force and Bottom Up Review set new force structure guidelines in the early 1990s, Guard strength has settled in the 350,000 range.¹²² After removal of significant forces from Iraq, it is unlikely Congress will increase National Guard strength following an expected reduction in the active component . As previously noted, the only time Army National Guard strength increased was during the Korean War. Most of that increase was due to mobilized units in federal status. Once the Army National Guard achieves full operational capacity, it will have to meet all of its responsibilities with the same number of forces. The Army National Guard constitutes roughly 38 percent of the Army's total force but only consumes 12 percent of the Army's budget. In a budget-constrained environment, the country will rely upon Guard assets for a larger portion of the national defense.¹²³

Conclusion

A few recommendations have emerged during the course of this study. First, the Department of Defense should concisely define its expectations for the strategic reserve, operational reserve, and operational force. Too many competing descriptions of the terms prevent planners from balancing force structure correctly. Second, the Army must fully integrate the National Guard into the defense structure. To do so, it is essential the Army secure the funding to equip and train the National Guard. The National Guard's naturally close relationship with Congress may help the Army attain needed funds. Finally, the Department of Defense ought to

¹²² Doubler, 249, 276.

¹²³ National Guard Bureau, "Army National Guard Fiscal Year 2006 Financial Report" <http://www.arng.army.mil/fs/2006/index.htm> (accessed on February 11, 2008).

look beyond the War on Terror and prepare for the inevitable funding cuts. The Guard must position itself to accept more responsibility once the active component reduces in size.

As military thinkers struggle to balance the force structure required to meet the nation's future security needs, a few things become evident. The Cold War design is not applicable in the current environment. During the Cold War, the nation relied upon warning signs of a Warsaw Pact attack and could trade space for time in Western Europe. Today's opponent does not provide such notice. It may be impossible to know when an asymmetric enemy has planned to strike. The Army must posture its Reserves to respond more quickly. Leaders have yet to establish the requirements for strategic and operational forces. Regardless, the reserve component must be reliably and predictably available on short notice. The Cold War reserve component design may serve as an adequate model should a peer competitor arise, but it does not fit within current constraints.

Historically, the Army prepared the National Guard to serve as a strategic asset, but planned to use it in an operational capacity. Lack of funding left the reserves, "partly-manned, partly-trained, poorly-equipped" and "not capable of rapid mobilization."¹²⁴ The Army often sent trained Guardsmen to active component formations to fill vacancies while it used National Guard formations as building blocks to increase combat strength more rapidly. Contradicting the Army's preparation of the reserve component, planners often designated the National Guard as a significant portion of the nation's first response. The Army rarely used the National Guard as planned. Operationalization of the Guard force may finally force coordination between planners, trainers, and commanders.

Traditionally, the National Guard lobby sought to protect itself from the turmoil caused by the Army's strategic use of Guard formations. While the Army tried to meet the Congressional mandate to keep National Guard units intact, they did not always meet the spirit of those laws.

Thus, following nearly every major mobilization, Congress passed more laws to ensure National Guard units could return home and reconstitute. The resulting legislation firmly postured National Guard units as operational rather than strategic assets. Only during the Cold War did the Army relegate the National Guard to a standby strategic reserve status. Previous planning models used significant portions of the Guard structure as first responders. Political sensitivities cemented the Guard's strategic Cold War status. Additionally, at no other time did Guard proponents not clamor to "get into the fight". Accordingly, the Cold War model is an anomaly. Operationalization returned the Guard to its Constitutional tradition as part of the country's main defensive force. Operationalization also recognized the outcome of more than 100 years of Congressional efforts to keep the National Guard a viable national institution.

The framers gave defensive responsibilities to the state militias out of their suspicion of a regular army. That suspicion no longer focuses the force design conversation. Budgetary pressures force planners to moderate military costs. Even though the President's fiscal year 2009 budget request is the largest in history, senior officers "recognize the budget will come down."¹²⁵ The Guard provides more than one third of the Army's force, but uses only 12 percent of the Army's budget. The cost savings will again play into force metrics. The Army historically loses troop strength following a war, but the Guard's size stays relatively constant. The stability of the Army National Guard's size plus the expected budgetary pressures means Guard will assume more responsibility once Army strength declines. Operationalization now provides a better-equipped and trained force later.

The challenge for the National Guard is not whether it can fulfill both operational and strategic roles. It has proven it can do so. The Guard's challenge is whether it can adapt to the asymmetric threat, meet its state mission mandate, and provide for the common defense. If

¹²⁴ Brayton, 141.

¹²⁵ Lubold, "Record U.S. Defense Spending, but Future Budgets May Decline".

history provides any predictions, the National Guard is quite capable of being both an operational and strategic force. Unfortunately, history also shows that the Army National Guard may have to do so with existing force structure. An operational force providing strategic depth is not a new mission set for the National Guard.

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