

Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

Homeland Security and the Reserves: Threat, Mission, and Force Structure Issues

September 10, 2002

Robert L. Goldich
Specialist in National Defense
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Homeland Security and the Reserves: Threat, Mission, and Force Structure Issues

Summary

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, many have suggested expanding the use of the reserves, particularly the National Guard, for homeland security. If terrorism is a threat which is mostly *additive* to the threats to U.S. national security which existed before September 11, 2001, then reserve force structure might require few changes. If, however, policymakers believe terrorism should have a higher priority, displacing some existing overseas threats, then some existing force structure might have much less relevance to domestic operations, and would have to be altered.

Over the past two decades, the reserves have shifted much of their peacetime effort from training for wartime tasks to participating in current active force missions. Denying the active forces access to these reserve resources, due to a restructuring of reserves toward homeland security missions, most likely would reduce the readiness of U.S. forces, at least in the near term. Also, a force with mostly internal security responsibilities might not be an attractive prospect for potential recruits. At present, some reservists can be enticed to join or remain in the reserves by, among other incentives, real-world missions which are part of real overseas contingencies. On the other hand, homeland security duty could attract some recruits not drawn to foreign travel, but energized by participating in direct defense of American soil.

Some have suggested that reorienting the reserve components toward domestic duties could pose troubling questions for civil-military relations. The extent to which this becomes a major issue, now as before, will almost certainly depend on the extent to which the public views such a military presence as necessary and desirable. That, in turn, awaits the constant judging and rejudging of the degree of danger terrorism poses, and how domestic military deployments could mitigate that danger.

Adequate homeland security may not need forces of the size of the entire Army National Guard (360,000 personnel), let alone contributions from the other reserve components. It may well be that properly trained and resourced civil organizations will be more useful in such missions. Perhaps only a proportion of reserve forces could be so oriented, leaving the rest geared toward overseas contingencies.

Policy issues include the proper balance between the domestic and international aspects of an anti-terrorism war, the reserves' involvement in it, and the related priorities for programs and resources. For instance, transnational Islamic terrorism, although it has just demonstrated its ability to kill thousands of Americans, may well not have the staying power, secure bases, population base, and infrastructure of a potentially hostile nation-state. In coping with such a nation-state, whether it is linked with terrorism or not, the mobilization potential of reserve components configured for intense, modern conventional conflict could well be crucial—as it has been for many countries around the world, including the United States, since the era of modern industrial war began in the late 19th Century.

This report will not be updated.

Contents

Introduction	1
Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Territory: Another Worldwide Mission for the U.S. Armed Forces	2
New Missions on Top of Old?	3
The War on Terrorism and Active/Reserve Mission Differentiation	6
Reserve Support for the Active Forces in Peacetime	6
The Homeland Defense Mission and Guard and Reserve Recruiting and Retention	7
The Reserves, Homeland Security, and Civil-Military Relations	8
How Much Reserve Homeland Defense Force Structure is Enough?	9
Concluding Observations	10

Homeland Security and the Reserves: Threat, Mission, and Force Structure Issues

Introduction

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, many have asserted that “homeland defense” and/or “homeland security” are natural, ideal, or logical missions for the reserve components of the armed forces (including the National Guard),¹ and that reserve missions and resources should be substantially reoriented so as to emphasize homeland security. Several rationales for this assumption have been advanced, including the following:

- ! As the focus of contingency planning expands to include attacks on U.S. territory, reserve forces, because of their members’ long-term community ties, will be the most knowledgeable about local conditions, problems, and special circumstances.²
- ! Reserve units are stationed at small armories and other facilities at thousands of locations, in major urban and suburban areas as well as rural ones, around the country. Active force units—particularly those of the Army and Marine Corps—tend to be concentrated at large bases, often in areas removed from major population centers (to provide enough space for training).
- ! The statutorily-defined, and constitutionally-derived, status of the National Guard as the organized militia of each state (10 USC 311), as well as a federal military reserve force (10 USC 10105-07, 10 USC 10111-13) enables the Guard to be used within the United States without posing questions of improper military intrusion into civil affairs.

¹ In this report, the term “reserves” or “reserve components” includes the Army National Guard and Air National Guard, with both state and federal responsibilities, as well as the purely federal Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve. Also, only the Selected Reserve of each component is included—those units and individuals who commonly perform, and are paid for, 14-15 days of training each year—“summer camp”—away from their home areas and one weekend a month—“drill”—at local facilities.

² See, for example, Senator Joseph Lieberman’s speech on “The Best Defense: Leveraging the Strength of Our Military to Protect the Homeland,” delivered before the Progressive Policy Institute Forum on *Making America Safer: Next Steps for Homeland Security*, June 26, 2002. Provided by the Senator’s office.

- ! The reserves, by definition, exist only to augment the active forces in time of crisis, and the threat of a terrorist attack within the United States is an obvious example of such a crisis.

At an even more fundamental level, this report examines the relationship between threat identification and U.S. military strategy, and the related issue—one dependent on the resolution of the first—of whether more reserve assets should be configured to deal with homeland security threats.

Before September 11, 2001, there was some movement toward redirecting reserve force structure to cope with homeland security issues.³ However, the reserves, like the active armed forces, have been organized primarily to fight conventional major theater wars (overseas conflicts of the same approximate size as the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars in terms of number of forces employed) and smaller contingencies (such as the deployments to Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, or Afghanistan). Massive attacks of any sort against Americans on American soil were almost totally absent in such essential statements of U.S. national military strategy until the early 1990s. Such terrorist attacks received somewhat more attention after the first World Trade Center bombing of 1993 and the bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Tanzania and Kenya later in that year, but they clearly were regarded as much less likely than conventional conflicts (the latter being framed throughout the 1990s as another attack on the Persian Gulf oil states by a resurgent Iraq and/or an attempt by North Korea to conquer South Korea and reunify the country under a Communist regime).

Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Territory: Another Worldwide Mission for the U.S. Armed Forces

The current Administration has not made explicitly clear whether it regards attacks on the United States itself as a threat which is mostly *additive* to the panoply of threats to U.S. national security which existed before September 11, 2001, or whether the threat to the American homeland has in fact *displaced*, to a major extent, the previous threats used for defining the missions, and therefore planning the size and structure, of the U.S. armed forces. This is a question of great long-term significance for the reserve (as well as the active) components. If the terrorist threat is additive, then the missions the existing reserve force structure is designed to perform, remain, and new forces must be organized to meet the new, terrorism-generated missions.

³ The most visible such move—although one involving few personnel—involves the activation of the Army National Guard’s Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams—WMD-CSTs—to facilitate the initial response of military forces to WMD incidents in the United States; 32 such teams, each with 22 personnel, have been authorized by the Congress since 1998. “The WMD-CST mission is to assess a suspected WMD event in support of the local incident commander; advise civilian responders regarding appropriate actions; and work to both facilitate and expedite the arrival of additional military forces if needed.” Department of Defense. National Guard Bureau of the Army and Air Force. *Weapons of Mass Destruction Fact Sheet*, 8 May 2002.

Statements of national policy regarding threats and resultant missions set a tone from which subsidiary, and more specific, decisions effecting the size and structure of the armed forces are derived. For instance, the George W. Bush Administration's first Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), published several weeks after the September 11, 2001, attacks, reoriented the hierarchy of purposes for which DOD sizes and shapes its forces. In enumerating four such purposes, it gave first priority to "Defend the United States,"⁴ followed by three other threats, all related to forward defense and overseas deployments. By contrast, the 1997 QDR which it replaced listed three threats, all related to overseas deployments and concerns, and none with homeland security.⁵ These differing emphases, over time, are cited not just in public—but, perhaps more importantly, in policy formulation debates within DOD—in support of or opposing concerns about more traditional overseas military threats, such as major theater wars (MTWs) in the Persian Gulf against Iraq or possibly Iran; and/or a possible North Korean attack on South Korea.

There are no indications – and very few suggestions – that U.S. foreign policymakers are abandoning, or should abandon, long-term American interests in maintaining a stable and democratic Europe, open Persian Gulf oil routes, and a restrained and less truculent China. Indeed, the ongoing discussion about a possible U.S. attack on Iraq, due to the Saddam Hussein regime's ongoing support for terrorism and efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction, suggest that new terrorism and old strategic competition can merge in the threat identification process. It would appear, therefore, that if only by default, the Administration assumes that coping with a major terrorist threat is yet another matter that will be on the permanent agenda of U.S. policymakers and therefore the American people. However, this has not yet appeared explicitly in public statements about U.S. national strategy and defense policy.

New Missions on Top of Old?

Until recently, the most demanding threats, and therefore the military missions that U.S. forces would have to be prepared to undertake to deal with those threats when war began, that U.S. forces should realistically plan to meet, according to policies adopted by the George H.W. Bush and Clinton Administrations, were two nearly simultaneous major theater wars. One, it was postulated, would be in Northeast Asia (i.e., a "second Korean War") and one in Southwest Asia (i.e., a "second Persian Gulf War"). As stated in the Clinton Administration's 1997 QDR,

⁴ *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (hereafter referred to as *2001 QDR*). Department of Defense, September 30, 2001: 17.

⁵ *Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review* (hereafter referred to as *1997 QDR*). Department of Defense. May 1997: 11-12. 10 USC 118 provides that such a review be conducted every four years "during a year following a year evenly divisible by four"—i.e., the year after each presidential election and during which a new Administration actually takes office.

national policy was that the United States should be able to fight and win both of these conflicts:⁶

As a global power with worldwide interests, it is imperative that the United States now and for the foreseeable future be able to deter and defeat large-scale, cross-border aggression in two distant theaters in overlapping time frames, preferably in concert with regional allies. Maintaining this core capability is central to credibly deterring opportunism—that is, to avoiding a situation in which an aggressor in one region might be tempted to take advantage when U.S. forces are heavily committed elsewhere—and to ensuring that the United States has sufficient military capabilities to deter or defeat aggression by an adversary that is larger, or under circumstances that are more difficult, than expected.

The current Administration modified relevant language in its first QDR, so that the Administration's stated view as to the required capabilities of U.S. forces were subtly—but definitely—decreased when compared to those levied by the Clinton Administration:⁷

For planning purposes, U.S. forces will remain capable of swiftly defeating attacks against U.S. allies and friends in any two theaters of operation in overlapping timeframes.

At the direction of the President, U.S. forces will be capable of decisively defeating an adversary in one of the two theaters in which U.S. forces are conducting major combat operations by imposing America's will and removing any future threat it could pose.

However, both of these broad statements of the required objectives of U.S. forces concluded that the same numbers and types of U.S. military units would be required to carry out the missions to attain those objectives:⁸

- ! Armored/mechanized and light infantry brigades and divisions;⁹
- ! Support units capable of sustaining the combat brigades and divisions around the world;¹⁰

⁶ 1997 QDR: 12.

⁷ 2001 QDR: 21.

⁸ See 1997 QDR: 29-32; and 2001 QDR: 22.

⁹ A brigade has between 3,000 and 5,000 soldiers, is commanded by a colonel or sometimes a brigadier general. A division has 10,000-15,000 soldiers, is composed of three brigades of infantry or armor; some combat aviation and artillery; and a wide range of support units; it is usually commanded by a major general. Headquarters, Department of the Army. *Organization of the United States Army*. Pamphlet 10-1. Washington, June 14, 1994: J-2.

¹⁰ Discussion about reserve roles in homeland security, it should be noted, frequently centers about the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Together they form about two-thirds of all Selected Reserve strength—about 64% of a total of 877,000 as of September 30, 2001. CRS Report RL30802, *Reserve Component Personnel Issues: Questions and Answers*, by Lawrence Kapp. Updated February 24, 2002: 4. They also include the (continued...)

- ! Tactical air forces capable of insuring air superiority in an overseas theater of operations;
- ! Airlift and sealift capability that can get U.S. air and ground forces to those theaters and sustain them in prolonged combat.

Therefore, an “additive” threat would tend to reinforce the continuing need for these kinds of combat forces and the support forces needed to sustain them in combat, and therefore that proportion of the total force already in the reserve component force structure, maintained to deal with the most demanding contingency that successive administrations, and DOD leadership, have faced.

A replacement mission geared toward reserve operations within the United States, on the other hand, would suggest that some of the forces just iterated could be reduced considerably, particularly airlift and sealift and those support forces needed for prolonged deployments overseas in austere theaters of war in underdeveloped and infrastructure-poor areas. It would also suggest that some existing forces necessary for combat in conventional conflicts overseas (such as infantry or armored divisions or brigades, or engineer, military police, and medical units) might have continued relevance in a homeland security-intensive environment and therefore could be retained, but they might need considerable restructuring to fit into the domestic American context. It is difficult to see how much of the Army reserve components’ current equipment, such as the tanks and infantry fighting vehicles of the armored and mechanized infantry brigades and divisions; the field artillery guns and rockets in combat brigades and divisions as well as in separate field artillery units; and the attack helicopters in aviation units, would have relevance to operations within the United States. Conversely, some support units found in the Army Guard and Army Reserve are ideal for homeland security and defense operations, such as military police, civil affairs, medical, construction engineering, intelligence, and transportation units.

In particular, past reductions in the strength and/or numbers of Army National Guard and Army Reserve¹¹ infantry and armored brigades and divisions have resulted in intense and often bitter disagreement and institutional infighting between the active Army on the one hand, and the affected Army reserve components and their professional associations—the Reserve Officers Association, the National Guard Association, and the like—on the other. This bitterness is not due solely to differing

¹⁰ (...continued)

overwhelming majority of both combat and support units which are relevant to creating and maintaining domestic security in terms of public order, public health, emergency food and shelter, and infrastructure repair and reconstruction. The other components are either too small or too specialized to drive policymaking on this issue, even though all have units and individual skills which could be useful, and have been used, for emergency relief and/or homeland defense purposes. For an enumeration of the percentage of each military service’s type of unit found in its reserve component[s], see *Reserve Component Programs. Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board*. May 2001: 4-8.

¹¹ The Army Reserve has not had any maneuver combat brigades—infantry or armored brigades—since the mid-1990s.

views about programs and resources. In the eyes of the organized reserve community, cuts in maneuver combat units threaten, or have damaged, the institutional legitimacy of the Army Guard and Reserve. They hold the strong view that the fundamental reason a military force exists is to fight. To the extent that its ability to fight is directly affected by the loss of combat force structure, any military service or reserve component thereof tends to see such loss as an attack on, and decrease of, its military legitimacy.¹² Recent past history unquestionably indicates that attempts to make such changes will generate intense **political** combat, at the very least.

A diametrically opposed point of view comes from a recent analysis by the Heritage Foundation. The Heritage report suggests that the heightened importance of homeland security demands that the entire National Guard be fundamentally restructured so that its **primary** mission is homeland security.¹³ The Heritage study and similar discussions elsewhere argue that the Guard's local ties and decentralized presence throughout the country makes it ideal for homeland defense missions. They assert that the responsibilities that the Guard and other reserve components have been given for current operations, rather than training for mobilization readiness, in fact compromises the need of the active forces for capable and well-trained reserve augmentation in case of overseas contingencies. Furthermore, they say, the extra post-mobilization training time that Guard units need makes them less useful than active duty units for overseas deployments, while the homeland security missions the Guard might face are likely to be less demanding, if no less important, than combat against an armed enemy outside of the United States. This approach, too, can be expected to generate intense political conflict.

The War on Terrorism and Active/Reserve Mission Differentiation

Reserve Support for the Active Forces in Peacetime

The issue of the extent to which the reserve should focus on homeland security is further complicated by the fact that over the past two decades the reserves have shifted much of their peacetime effort from training for wartime missions to performing actual peacetime operations in support of, or with, the active force. Some of these "peacetime" missions involve high-intensity operations up to and including actual combat. Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve aircraft regularly deploy to maintain the "no-fly zones" over northern and southern Iraq; reservists from all components have been involved in various kinds of counterdrug operations in Central and South America; and reservists are an integral part of U.S. operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the arduous and demanding combat operations in Afghanistan.

¹² For a more detailed discussion of this argument, see CRS Report 97-719F, *The Army Reserve Components: Strength and Force Structure Issues*, by Robert Goldich, updated July 15, 1997: 19.

¹³ Spencer, Jack, and Larry M. Wortzel. *The Role of the National Guard in Homeland Security*. Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1532. Washington, April 8, 2002.

To restructure reserve units toward homeland defense could, therefore, not only reduce their utility for wartime missions, but reduce the ability of the armed forces—active and reserve—to carry out existing peacetime missions, most of which are integral, high-visibility components of U.S. foreign policy. The active armed forces, especially the Army, have become so dependent on the reserve components to carry out their current operations, due to the progressive downsizing of the active force since the late 1980s,¹⁴ that denying the active forces access to reserve assets would severely curtail their operational capabilities. For instance, in FY2000, 64% of Air Force tactical airlift and 27% of strategic airlift aircraft were in the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve; even more striking, 44% of Air Force strategic airlift *crews* and 52% of other airlift and aerial refueling tanker aircraft *crews* were in the Air Force reserve components. Fully 58% of Army field artillery battalions, and 70% of all artillery units, were in the Army Guard.¹⁵ To the extent that substantial parts of these two kinds of units and personnel were eliminated or reorganized to perform tasks more suitable to prevention of and/or recovery from terrorist acts within the United States, the ability of the services to respond to major overseas contingencies could be considerably constrained.

The Homeland Defense Mission and Guard and Reserve Recruiting and Retention

It is not clear that a force with exclusively internal security responsibilities would be an attractive prospect for potential recruits. At the present time, prospective Guardsmen and federal reservists can be enticed into the Guard and Reserve by, among other incentives, real-world missions, for real overseas contingencies (the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, now Afghanistan). If members of a future homeland security-dominated reserve component faced the prospect of their entire enlistment—or career of 20 years or more—within no more than a few hundred miles of their home, many might well vote with their fingers—by not signing their enlistment contracts in the first place. Prosaic homeland security duties may be much less an incentive than more exotic operations overseas.

Conversely, family and/or civilian career problems could make service in reserve units that will never deploy overseas attractive to many current and prospective reservists. The opportunities for homeland security duty could attract recruits who might have viewed foreign military deployments with skepticism, for either practical or ideological reasons, but for whom defense of American soil would be an obvious mission worth supporting. There is no reason to think that these same general attitudes would not be as present in the purely federal reserve components. Interestingly, recent studies by several contract research organizations indicate that

¹⁴ Active force military personnel strength dropped from 2,174,000 in FY1987 to 1,387,000 in FY2002—a 36% decline.

¹⁵ *Reserve Component Programs. Fiscal Year 2000 Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board.* Washington, May 2001: 4,7. For a more detailed description of how the Army has moved so much of its total artillery force structure into the reserve components, see Bilo, BG Bill, U.S. Army (Ret.). “Guard Core Competency: More than 70 Percent of Army’s Field Artillery is in the Army National Guard.” *Armed Forces Journal International*, February 2001: 16-17.

“deployments” *per se* cannot be characterized as having a positive or negative effect on retention; other factors make such generalizations questionable.¹⁶

The Reserves, Homeland Security, and Civil-Military Relations

Some have suggested that a fundamental reorientation of National Guard and/or all reserve components—one conceptual and doctrinal as well as force structure and equipment-oriented—poses troubling questions for civil-military relations in the United States. In response to a speech by Senator Joseph Lieberman which contained proposals that appear to envision such a reorientation,¹⁷ two of his colleagues—Senators Patrick Leahy and Christopher Bond—reportedly questioned the effects of expanded use of the National Guard for homeland security.¹⁸

The letter from the co-chairmen of the National Guard Caucus stated that giving the Guard such responsibility for preventing and responding to [homeland security] threats “would severely detract from the Guard’s ability to sustain its longstanding mission to serve as the nation’s primary military service.”

Leahy and Bond said a provision to turn the Guard into more of a “domestically oriented, federally controlled constabulary force” is “troubling,” and would “violate longstanding conventions against inordinate involvement of the military in civilian affairs.”

The reported concerns of Senators Leahy and Bond clearly reflect continuing political sensitivity—which derives from public caution—to the involvement of the armed forces in domestic security control, intelligence, and enforcement operations. Such feelings have traditionally been much weaker when the National Guard, rather than the active Army, has been involved, due to the explicit constitutional status of the Guard as the militia of each state, as well as a federal military reserve force. Nonetheless, the public, when it sees National Guardsmen uniformed, armed, equipped, and commanded just like the active Army, tends to view the Guard’s presence, at least to some degree, as having the same implications as that of the active Army. Although the completely federal reserve components have no such history of state and local identification, it would seem logical that their local basing and recruiting would generate the same positive identification among local civilians as does the National Guard.

¹⁶ This was the impression left with the author when he attended a *Conference on the Effects of PERSTEMPO on Retention*, organized by Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) David S.C. Chu and the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), held at IDA in Alexandria, VA on October 10, 2001.

¹⁷ See n. 2, above.

¹⁸ Mitchell, Charlie, and Geoff Earle. “As Lieberman Circulates His Homeland Security Draft.” *National Journal Congress Daily PM*, July 19, 2002, available online at [<http://nationaljournal.com/pubs/congressdaily/>].

How Much Reserve Homeland Defense Force Structure is Enough?

Adequate homeland security may not require military forces of the approximate size of the entire Army National Guard (360,000), let alone contributions from the other reserve components. For example, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks, it appears that civilian police, fire, and rescue organizations may be more useful for recovery after an attack than troops. Some medical, engineering, and other logistical support reserve units assisted in the World Trade Center recovery effort, but the number of reserve component units in the immediate vicinity of New York City almost certainly greatly exceeded the demand for them. In the aftermath of 9/11, thousands of Army National Guard infantry and military police units were deployed to guard various public facilities, airports being the most conspicuous. They were progressively withdrawn as various civilian forces were able to take their place.

Terrorist attacks on the United States by definition do not involve organized military units taking part in a conventional military operation, and therefore would not need larger ground combat units to neutralize them. If terrorist infrastructures and bases exist in foreign countries, as has been the case in Afghanistan, then the long-established forces maintained for conventional conflicts would be those needed to attack and destroy terrorist facilities, rather than specifically terrorism-oriented units. Finally, as the Army begins to incorporate terrorism-related concerns into its long-term force planning, it appears that the changes it is making in future force structure will involve comparatively few units with small numbers of personnel, however crucial their functions.¹⁹

In short, it is not clear that a wholesale conversion of reserve force structure to units specifically targeted for counterterror operations would be necessary, given the nature of the terrorist threat within the United States. Perhaps merely a sizeable minority of the reserve components could be so oriented, leaving the rest to be oriented toward overseas contingencies as before. The fact that for both homeland defense purposes (Operation Noble Eagle) and combat operations in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom), DOD has had to mobilize a maximum number of 94,000 reservists on active duty at any one time (a figure which has dropped to 84,000 already), compared to total Selected Reserve strength of about 875,000, indicates that larger numbers of reserve forces may be irrelevant to the counterterror war at this point.²⁰

¹⁹ For example, see Scully, Megan. "Total Army Analysis focuses Reserves on homeland security." *Inside the Army* June 17, 2002: 12. at [<http://www.OutsideDefense.com>].

²⁰ Figures obtained from daily and weekly compilations e-mailed to CRS by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs).

Concluding Observations

This report has identified several questions related to current and future missions of the U.S. armed forces which probably need to be factored into decisions about orienting the reserves toward homeland security issues. One of these issues—the possible improper intrusion of the military into civilian affairs and damage to the subordination of military force to civilian authority—has been discussed fairly often since September 11, 2001.²¹ This is, of course, a long-standing theme and concern of Americans in various contexts throughout our history. Other aspects of the relationship between the reserves and threat perception have not been discussed as thoroughly, perhaps because in the emotional aftermath of September 11, 2001, it is taken as a given by top U.S. policymakers that combating terrorism is, naturally, the top priority of U.S. foreign and defense policy.

History offers reminders about perceptions and priorities. There is little question that, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and throughout American participation in World War II, that American popular opinion was much more supportive of fighting Japan than Germany. Even before Pearl Harbor, however, as well as after it, there were no doubts on the part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his Administration that Germany was the enemy against which the United States had to devote most of its military resources. “Germany first” was the major strategic decision of the United States in World War II, because Germany was by far the militarily, economically, and technologically stronger of the two major Axis powers,²² and therefore posed the greatest long-term threat to American security and survival.

Similarly, as the Congress contemplates action on the reserve components and the war against terrorism, it may not be the case that the anti-terrorism war, and the reserve components’ involvement in it, should automatically get first priority—or all priority—in programs, resources, and ideas. Threats less emotional, but more dangerous in the long term, could conceivably be at least as important, if not more so, and decisions about the size and structure of the reserve components should not neglect such threats, if so identified. In particular, a cautionary note about the anger and fear felt by Americans regarding further transnational Islamic terrorist attacks on American soil might be in order. Such groups and movements clearly have the ability to kill many thousands of Americans. They have just done so. It seems less likely, however, that they have the staying power, secure bases, broad population base, and physical infrastructure of a potentially hostile nation-state. Indeed, as al Qaeda did in Afghanistan, terrorist movements may only realize their full potential in entering into a symbiotic relationship with a nation-state, to the point where counterterrorist action can only proceed when the nation-state involved has been neutralized as a supporter of terrorism—as the United States did in Afghanistan in late

²¹ A recent examination of such concerns is in Owens, Mackubin Thomas. “Soldiers Aren’t Cops: the case against domesticating the military.” National Review Online, August 1, 2002, 9:00a.m., at [<http://www.nationalreview.com/owens/owens080102.asp>].

²² Morton, Louis. “Germany First: The Basic Concept of Allied Strategy in World War II,” in Kent Roberts Greenfield, Editor. *Command Decisions*. Washington, Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1960: 11-47.

2001 and early 2002. In coping with such a future nation-state, whether linked with terrorism or not, the mobilization potential of reserve components configured for high-intensity conventional conflict could well be crucial, as it has been for many countries around the world, including the United States, since the era of modern industrial war began in the late 19th Century.