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FULL INTEGRATION: A LOOK AT HYBRID DIVISIONS

BY

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ABSTRACT:

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This paper provides a look at proposed Active Component (AC) and Army National Guard (ARNG) Hybrid Divisions. It examines the structure, integration and processes involved in creating and maintaining these divisions. This paper explores the advantages of creating the Hybrid Divisions by looking at cost savings, professional development opportunities and the possibilities for seamless integration.

This paper looks at trends with regards to Department of Defense budgets both current and projected. Focus is placed on downsizing, its effect on readiness and the need to provide a transitional force structure. Future requirements coupled with current world conditions provide opportunities to adjust force structure and continue modernization programs. Discussions on appropriate troop strength in the Active Army and in the Army National Guard are presented as are missions suited to both Active and Reserve components. Recommendations are made based solely on the author's assessment of the material researched for this paper.

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FULL INTEGRATION: A LOOK AT HYBRID DIVISIONS

This paper will look at the proposed divisional structure which incorporates an Active Army division headquarters and three enhanced National Guard brigades. This review will seek solutions to the following questions: 1) What are the savings that can be obtained by creating such a division? 2) What should the division structure look like in order to obtain maximum efficiencies and full integration? 3) How should a Hybrid Division be resourced? This paper will look at current strategies, force structure, and resourcing to determine if they provide the ways and means to reach the desired end state. This review will analyze the current trends and relevant available data to provide recommendations and reach specific conclusions.

WHERE WE ARE: POST COLD WAR:

Several studies have been conducted to determine the optimal force structure requirements, given declining defense budgets. The latest is based on the Bottom Up Review (BUR) and the force structure recommended by that review in 1993. This force has been designed to fight and win two nearly simultaneous major regional contingencies (MRC's). "The cost of the Clinton BUR force, measured by congressional appropriations of new budget authority in (Constant 1995 dollars), ranges from \$252 billion in FY95 (actual) to \$230 billion in FY99 (programmed). This means that U.S. defense expenditures remain at roughly 80 percent of the cold war average, and will do so for the foreseeable future."¹

The authorization for FY97 is \$244.4 billion and the Army's slice of the DoD pie is \$58.1 billion or 23.7% of the overall DoD budget.² Future authorizations put the Army's portion at approximately \$60 billion.³ This figure implies that there will be a

significant reduction in the force structure for the Army in the near future. The Army has already been targeted to cut twenty thousand soldiers from its force and efforts are underway to find ways to “buy back” the spaces that have been marked for reduction.

In order to retain those spaces the Army is faced with putting off its research and development and modernization programs. Given the current threat climate, is it wise to hold on to force structure when it is not needed or could it be augmented by less expensive reserve component forces? Is the base line force of 495,000 active soldiers the right level for right now? What about for the next ten years? Projections have been made that the United States will not have a near peer competitor for the next fifteen years. Should we be concentrating on preparing our Army for today’s contingencies or posturing to meet the future threat?

In the same light, are the baseline forces for the Army National Guard, (currently 367,000 soldiers), or that of the U.S. Army Reserve (currently at 210,000 soldiers)⁴ the right levels? Are there economies that can be obtained by reducing the Army National Guard and United States Army Reserve force structure? Given that the Army National Guard’s budget is less than 2.4% of the total DoD budget and less than 10% of the Army’s budget⁵ it is not likely that much would be gained by eliminating large portions of it. Numerous studies prove that it is cheaper to maintain reserve force structure than active force structure. Considering what the Army Guard has provided to the nation over its history it is a truly affordable strategic asset.

WHERE WE NEED TO BE

The Commission on Roles and Missions (CORM) has identified an existing shortfall within the Active Army. In its analysis, this shortfall appears to be in the Combat Support and Combat Service Support fields. The CORM estimates call for an additional 60,000 soldiers to meet the needs of the Army in both of those areas. This is not a new requirement, the Army has known for some time that it is short in those fields. "We analyzed the nondivisional support requirements in two U.S. plans for responding to regional conflicts for 17 types of units that were unresourced in the 1993 analysis. We found that the Army is short 338 units".⁶

There are presently two plans deal with the shortfall. The first is the Total Army Analysis 2003 (TAA 03) and the second is the Army National Guards Division Redesign proposal. Both are plans to provide or "buy back" personnel spaces equivalent to the number required to meet the shortfall.

TAA03 is Total Army Analysis from the present through the year 2003. It reviews the current Army structure and mission capabilities and assesses the Army's ability to meet future needs. This analysis also recommends changes to the Army's structure, resourcing, and distribution.

The Army National Guard's Division Redesign proposal is a plan to reorganize the Army National Guard. Its intent is to create a more efficient organization capable of handling missions that do not require Active Army assets. Missions like Operations Other Than War, Nation Building, and Peace Keeping are examples of missions that the

Army National Guard has performed successfully in the past and is seeking to take a leading role in the future.

Over the course of the last few months a number of speakers have addressed the U.S. Army War College and stressed how important it is to retain the force levels at 495,000 soldiers. They argue the impact of reducing the force and cite numerous examples and how devastating it would be if the Army goes below that number.

Many forget that the "Total Army" for personnel is closer to 1,071,000. The other 576,000 soldiers are found in the National Guard and United States Army Reserve. Why do we ignore these soldiers, why don't we include them into the big picture when we assess the abilities of our Army? Right now may be the best time to fully integrate them into Army operations. It may be possible to reduce the Active Component by forty thousand spaces. This figure is 8% of current force structure and would provide an annual cost savings equal to 4.6 billion or 76% of the entire Army National Guard budget. (This figure is an average based on the annual pay and allowance chart for an E-3 as published in the September 1996 Army Times)⁷. Also a reduction of this size would have a minimal effect on the Active Army's capability given the current missions and global threat.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED ENDSTATE

The Army National Guard proposal to convert two of their combat divisions into combat support and combat service support to fill the current shortfall within the Army structure leads to other creative ideas. The total number of positions that are affected by converting two divisions is approximately 56,000. That figure fits the CORM's estimate

on the required spaces to fix the CS and CSS fields within the Army. The objectives of the Army National Guard's Division redesign are to: 1) Reduce support shortfalls within the Active Army in time of mobilization; 2) Increase Army National Guard relevance by providing a needed service; 3) To achieve seamless integration with the Active Army.

The idea of seamless integration of the Reserve Components is not a new idea. In 1974 Army Chief of Staff, General Creighton Abrams fought for this integration. "They're not taking us to war again without calling up the Reserves".⁸ He firmly believed that the Reserves were an critical part of the Army and that the RC played a vital role in the Army's ability to fight and win an armed conflict. "One of the most fateful decisions of the war in Vietnam had been Lyndon Johnson's refusal to call up the reserves. All the Joint Chiefs, but especially Harold K. Johnson, the Army Chief of Staff, had found this a very traumatic thing, Johnson even coming close to resigning in protest- and at the end of his life describing failure to do so as his greatest regret".⁹ Now in the 1990's we have the benefit of history to help us cope with the redesigning of our Army. It is important that we recognize that history and not repeat the mistakes that were made.

Congress has required the Active Army to assign five thousand active soldiers to duty with the reserve component units under Title 11, U.S. Code. This can be achieved in a number of ways, by assigning them to duty as advisors, by creating regional training teams, detachments and even brigades to work with reserve units. Additional positions can be found within the Hybrid Divisions and the staffing of some of the positions within the Army National Guard's Enhanced Brigades.

The ability of the reserve components to provide critical support has been proven over the past decade. The reserve components have shown that they can and should be used to provide a strategic deterrent during a transitional phase for the Army. The transitional phase being modernization to meet the future requirements which could be the period from 2002 through 2010.

There are currently fifteen enhanced maneuver brigades within the Army National Guard. These brigades are tasked with providing forces to augment the Active component in time of war. A proposal has been presented to the senior levels within the Army and DoD to create two hybrid divisions out of the Active Component and six of the Enhanced National Guard brigades.

The Army and the Army National Guard could create two divisions out of Active Army Division Headquarters and Army National Guard Enhanced Brigades. These hybrid divisions would be fully integrated with the Active Component. This would leave the Army with eight combat divisions. Under the current threat level these eight combat divisions backed up by the remainder of the reserve forces should provide the operational capabilities sufficient to meet U.S. needs for the immediate future.

Taking a look at current trends, "over the years from 1950 to 1989 the Army deployed ten times, over the period from 1990 to the present the Army deployed twenty-five times"¹⁰ Increased use of Army assets to provide for peacekeeping, humanitarian operations, disaster relief, and support to our nation has set the standard for future operations. The trend is that these operations will continue to increase and the Army will bear the largest burden. Where has the money for these operations come from? The

money has come out of existing Army dollars.

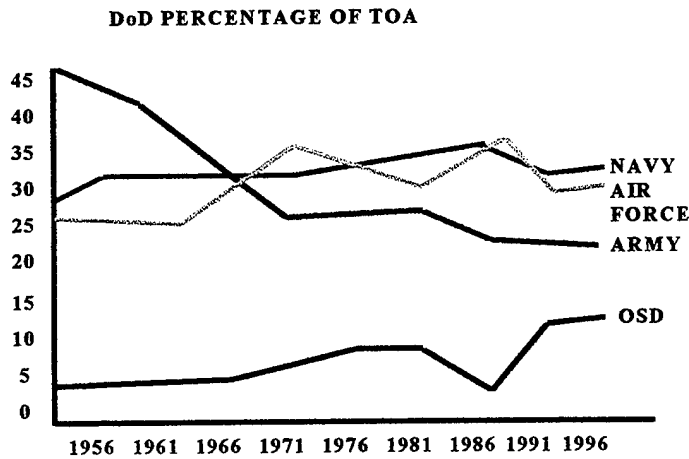


Figure #1. DoD percentages of the TOA

The chart shown in figure #1 depicts the DoD percentages of the TOA (Total Obligation Authority) over the past forty years.¹¹ The projections for the immediate future is that these trends will continue their downward slide. Since 1990 the Army budget has dropped from 27.8% of the DoD TOA to around 23.8% in 1996. This four percent represents a total of \$5.44 billion. The cost of the additional missions tasked to the Army over the past year have amounted to over \$3.4 billion.¹² The total \$8.8 billion in real reductions as felt throughout the Army cast doubts about the Army's ability to maintain an agile, flexible, survivable, and lethal force. How is the Army going to remain the preeminent land force if it has to risk tomorrow's abilities for today's force structure?

What has become apparent now are the "tactical" battles being fought over near term resources and force structure. Both the Army and the Army National Guard are defending TDA (Table of Distribution and Allowances) units while sacrificing readiness and modernization. Planners who are supposed to be thinking "future" solutions are in

fact too concerned with current force structure. The problem is exacerbated by the apparent willingness of the senior leadership on both sides to take any and all assignments regardless of the cost in dollars and troop morale.

A possible solution to this problem is to task the reserve components with the Operations Other Than War missions. It is possible to use Reserve Component units to accomplish many of the operations currently being handled by the Active Component. Operations involving Military Police, Combat Engineers, Logisticians, Aviation assets and Public Affairs personnel have been used with great success in the past. These successful missions have contributed to the experience base of the Army National Guard and provides credibility and continuity for future missions. There is no reason to think that this success would not continue.

The real challenge is in creating a rotational schedule that will allow the reserves to handle longer deployments while remaining within a three week annual training period. This would require over-lapping units, careful selection, and considerable prior planning before deployment. Funding considerations would have to be thoroughly reviewed. Additional Annual Training dollars would have to be included into the reserve budgets. One problem is that there is no way of knowing what type of operation would be needed or when it would occur. This would require the establishment of a special account that would provide contingency funds for these missions. A spin off benefit from this activity would be a thorough review of the mission prior to involvement.

It may be found that the United States would not want to take on certain operations. This decision is not a responsibility of the Armed Forces, it is clearly a

political one. Reason dictates that by the time the mission gets to the military it has already been reviewed and all political implications have been considered by our civilian leadership.

SHARING THE BURDEN

The current annual costs for the operation of one each active Army Armored Separate Brigade is approximately \$234.8 million dollars. The annual cost for an active Army Mechanized Infantry Brigade is \$240.7 million dollars and the annual cost for a Light Infantry Brigade is \$203.9 million dollars. The same costs for similar National Guard Brigades are approximately \$51.6, \$52.9, and \$44.8 million dollars respectively.¹³ The approximate difference can be tripled for the division minus its headquarters. Comparisons between National Guard brigades and Active Army brigades show that Army National Guard brigades run an average of 22 - 23% of what it costs for Active brigades.¹⁴

In
Millions
of
Dollars

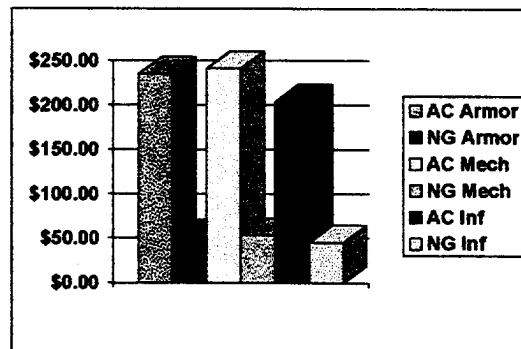


Figure #2. Cost comparison between AC/RC Brigades.

In saving \$1.44 billion dollars annually from the elimination of six active Mechanized brigades we could direct portions of it to Research and Development, equipment procurement and training; those areas that need to be addressed now and

through the near future. Over the next ten to twelve years we could see an approximate savings of \$14.4 to \$17.3 billion dollars. That amount is sufficient to fund the next the generation of tanks for the Army.

Taken as a whole, one Active Army Armor Division costs five times more than an identical Army National Guard Armor Division. With the hybrid division concept the cost would be slightly higher than a traditional National Guard division but it would be considerably less than its Active Army counterpart.

Saving \$1.4 billion dollars annually by reducing six Armor Brigades in the Active Army can be enhanced by shifting poor performing Army National Guard force structure to those states that can better support it. Further enhancements can be obtained by converting poor or weak units into force structure better suited to meet Army needs. Also, stronger enforcement of the required standards needs to be applied to Army National Guard Brigades. Closer attention must be paid to achieving essential troop strength, higher retention rates, and obtaining greater training results. Brigades that repeatedly fail to meet any one of the three critical areas must be reviewed for relocation, reorganization or elimination.

Any Army National Guard Brigades that are eliminated must have their resources redistributed to the remaining Army Guard force structure. This in turn would provide training and equipment dollars for the remaining units. It is important that the money saved from the reduction in force be placed back into the remaining force both AC and RC. The money should not be placed into a "general" fund, it needs to go directly to enhancing capabilities of remaining units.

Using the same figures as shown above for an Armored Brigade the total cost savings by eliminating three brigades is approximately \$154.8 million dollars annually. With the current \$230 million dollar shortfall in National Guard Pay and Allowance accounts the savings would go a long way in reducing future shortages. The elimination of even one Enhanced Brigade is an extremely sensitive issue. But again we must look at what is best for the Nation and what will help us prepare for the future.

The current number of Army National Guard Enhanced Brigades is fifteen. I am suggesting that a more affordable number of "E" Brigades is twelve. The reduction or conversion of three "E" Brigades would provide resource authorizations in personnel, both traditional Guardsmen and Full Time Manning, equipment, and training dollars to other units throughout the country. The reduction would also align the Army National Guard with the corresponding reductions recommended for the Active Component.

TRAINING

The main stumbling block for National Guard Combat units is their training time. No argument can be made against the claim that Active Component units are better trained. Obviously they have 30 days available to train versus the two days for most Army Guard units. It is important to note that even though the Active Army has 30 days available to train the actual number that they use is closer to sixteen. Other factors enter into the equation to further degrade the available training time. Constraints such as access to training facilities, equipment on hand, maintenance time, leaves & passes, medical and administrative requirements also impact on training time. Clearly units

stationed on active installations which have firing range and maintenance facilities enjoy a more training conducive environment.

“The Active components - given appropriate authority to establish standards and conduct evaluations and inspections - should be held responsible for Reserve Component training readiness.”¹⁵ The mobilization of the Reserve Components during the Gulf War resulted in the identification of a major problem between the Active Army and the Army National Guard. The problem centered on the Army’s decision not to take the 48th Brigade into combat. The Army’s position was that the 48th Brigade was not combat ready.

Up to the time of mobilization the 48th Brigade had received inspections and evaluations confirming its warfighting capabilities. The Army evaluators consistently reported that the Brigade was ready to go to war. “The postmobilization performance of all units left little doubt that most AC evaluators had generally inflated 1-R reports and that skills had seriously eroded because of elapsed time since Annual Training.”¹⁶ Ready or not the issue boils down to who is ultimately responsible for certifying reserve component units. The responsibility has been given to the Active Component and rightfully so. With that responsibility comes ownership. No longer should the inspectors and evaluators be able to proclaim readiness and then reject the unit.

Under the hybrid division structure the HHC will have the responsibility for the conduct, inspection and evaluation of the training. During peacetime the Active Division headquarters would be responsible for all training support and readiness oversight for the three assigned Enhanced Brigades. Likewise during mobilization the Division

Headquarters would be the post mobilization validation and gaining command for the same three Enhanced Brigades. With this authority the Commanding General of the Division should indeed be able to maintain the training standards for the Brigades under his control.

The Army National Guard Enhanced Brigades receive the majority of the resources available to the Army National Guard. These resources include manpower and training dollars. Examples of this is the Enhanced Brigades full time manning. The "E" Brigades are currently staffed at 100% of required spaces and they receive 100% of required training dollars. They are fully equipped with the latest systems and receive priority on ranges and maintenance. This compares to other units which are classified C-3 where they receive 50% of full time manning, only 50% of their training dollars, and have equipment shortages.

This system of resourcing creates problems throughout the Army National Guard. Instead of resourcing by component or readiness status resourcing should be driven by Force Activity Designator(FAD)/Department of the Army Mission Priority List (DAMPL). If an Active Component unit is lower in FAD/DAMPL than an Reserve Component unit, the Active Component unit's share of resources should reflect that. Likewise, units within the Army National Guard must be resourced in the same manner. This resourcing would enhance units that are expected to be able to mobilize in support of Army combat units within the Time Phased Force Deployment List schedule.

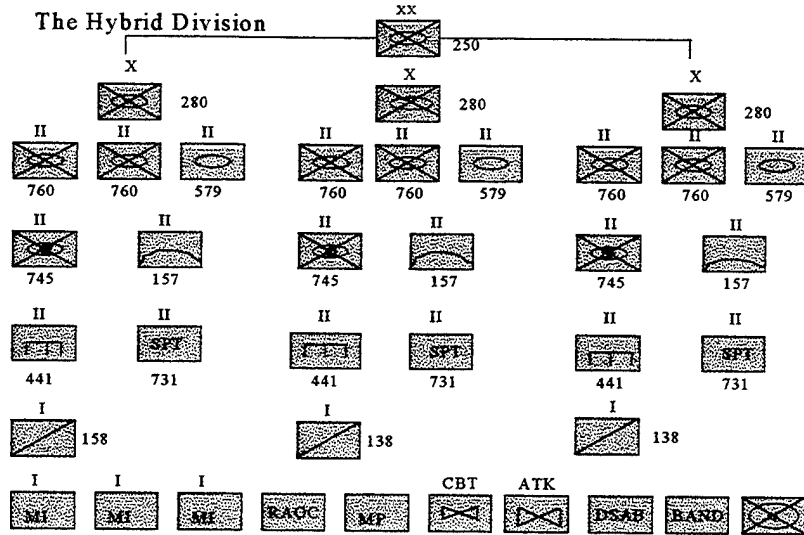


Figure # 3. The Hybrid Division Structure

If the Division Commander and his evaluation teams find that the Enhanced Brigades meet the training standards then it is their duty to report it so. If in fact the Brigades do not meet the standards then those same evaluators must report it and make the necessary recommendations to improve the units. It then becomes the Division Commander's responsibility to go after the additional resources needed to improve the Brigades. In this way the Active Component and the Reserves act together to fight for what is needed to maintain the appropriate readiness status.

One other factor contributes to the positive impact that Hybrid Divisions can have on the whole of the Army. This factor is Air and Sea lift capabilities. The United States does not have enough capability to transport all of the Army's early deployable assets. This means that there is a built in delay and that delay is about ninety days. This ninety day delay time is the same amount of time that the Army National Guard Enhanced Brigades need to train-up and deploy. Two questions arise from the lack of lift capability, if the Active Army cannot move their follow on units for ninety days, why not

use the reserves? Also, is it wise to retain costly Active Component force structure that cannot be deployed until late into a contingency?

INTEGRATION

Current Combat Division structure shows a culture gap between the Active Army and the Army National Guard. Enhanced Brigades are made up of National Guardsmen and the Division Headquarters are all Active Army soldiers. The hybrid divisions would bridge this culture gap by incorporating Active Army Officers and Enlisted soldiers into the Enhanced Brigades. Key positions could be filled by AC members on a rotational basis.

Within the Divisional headquarters key positions could be filled by Army National Guardsmen. This cross pollination would improve communications, create climates for better understanding and provide opportunities to expand operational efficiencies beyond what is currently expected. "It is likewise much to be wished, that it might be made agreeable to Officers who have served in the Army, to accept Commands in the Militia; that they might be appointed to them so far as can be done without creating uneasiness and jealousy..."¹⁷

Currently there is a shortage of MTOE force structure to provide command and operations positions within the Active Army. The proposal made by the Army National Guard is to place competent officers into those positions within Army Guard units to provide the professional development needed for advancement.

A possible strawman would be: Positions that could be made available within the Hybrid Divisions Enhanced Brigades are: One Brigade Commander or Deputy Brigade

Commander; One Battalion Commander; Two Battalion Executive Officers; One Brigade S-4; Three Battalion S-3's; Three Battalion S-4's; and One Brigade Maintenance Officer. The same selection criteria would be used for AC and Guard units. The commanders would be DA select and the Executive Officers and the S-3's would be Military Education Level-4.

The program would be based on state requirements where the Adjutant General of the receiving state identifies the position and notifies PERSCOM. PERSCOM would then nominate the Active Component officer. The Adjutant General of the receiving state would offer a National Guard commission to the AC Officer who would then request permission to accept it from the Department of the Army. If the Department of the Army approves his request the officer is assigned to the position.

This program would require rotations. This would allow AC soldiers to gain the experience without blocking the traditional Army Guard soldiers from advancement. The recommended rotation time for an Active Army soldier is twenty four months with a return to an Active Army assignment. As a result of rotations one AC officer would not backfill another AC officer in the same position.

The Active officers assigned to the National Guard positions would be given Army National Guard commissions within the appropriate state. This would eliminate authority issues that may arise during the individuals rotation period. Commissioning in the Army National Guard would not require the soldier to give up his or her Army commission. The experience gained by the Active officer would improve their

understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within reserve components. The time spent would also help to close the cultural gap between the two organizations.

Title 32, United States Code outlines the concept by stating: “The Secretary of the Army shall detail commissioned officers of the Regular Army to duty with the Army National Guard of each State and Territory, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia... With the permission of the President, an officer so detailed may accept a commission in the Army National Guard or the Air National Guard, as the case may be, terminable in the President’s discretion, without prejudicing his rank and without vacating his regular appointment.”¹⁸

Some of the concerns that may come out of this program is that the Army won’t send its competitive officers, or that the Army Guard won’t accept those that the Army sends. Any and all objections can be settled by trying the program out. Both the Army and the Army National Guard stand to gain from this kind of interaction. The benefits that are immediately apparent are: The access to more force structure for Active component professional development; Improved readiness in Army National Guard combat units; and a reduction in the cultural gap between the two components. Each benefit adds additional value to America by strengthening the total force and by providing a bridge from the present to the future.

THE BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

Army Vision 2010 identifies the land force that will be required in the 21st century: “*Army Vision 2010* foresees a capabilities-based Army with the proper mix of heavy, light, and Special Operations Forces (SOF) focused on the Euro-Middle East and

Asian Arc regions of the world - a force trained, ready, and equipped to conduct full spectrum operations, to do what needs to be done across the entire spectrum of crisis.”¹⁹

Full spectrum operations as stated in the “*Army Vision 2010*” must also include **joint** operations as the new national military strategy. The Army no longer goes into combat without airpower and seapower. Just as important as the Air and Sea powers are to the Army, the National Guard and USAR play a major role in the new national military strategy. Without the reserves the Army would not be able to meet the needs of the country and the dependence on the Army is increasing not decreasing. The strategy of a smaller, fully integrated, highly mobile force is the strategy of the future. The force that we must field has to be capable of producing the desired results of power projection anywhere in the world.

The demand on the military is to produce the best product for the least amount of money. The Army’s Active and Reserve components have the finest soldiers in the world in its ranks. We enjoy the most advanced technology the world has seen, our equipment is state of the art. We will not be able to maintain this edge, however, if we continue to hold onto ideals that trade mass for quality, numbers in place of improvements. Fortunately technologies exist that can improve the training environment for individual soldiers and units and Army leadership seems to have finally grasped the fact that we all will bare the burden of downsizing.

The Hybrid Divisions are the way to provide the Army and the Nation with a force capable of responding to any crisis. Hybrid Divisions also provide time for the Active Army to create the Army of the future as envisioned.

RECOMMENDATION

I have discussed the strong points for the adoption of the Hybrid Division concept. I have pointed out advantages to both the Active Army and the Army National Guard with the creation of these two divisions. I have also suggested that a new look at the Enhanced Brigades be taken with the intent of weeding out the poor performers. All of this has been directed at achieving significant cost savings for the Army and the Army Guard. My final recommendations are:

- 1) The elimination of two Active Army divisions, except the Headquarters elements.
- 2) The alignment of six Enhanced Army National Guard Brigades under the remaining Active Component Headquarters.
- 3) The adoption of the Army National Guard's Combat Division Redesign proposal.
- 4) The initiation of the "Seamless Integration" concept which allows Active Officers to serve in positions within Army National Guard units. Also the integration of National Guard Officers into position within the Active Component Divisional Headquarters of the Hybrid Divisions.

The endstate that I perceive by creating these two divisions and by taking the other steps as have been outlined is one in which the Army can modernize its units, fund research and development, and train all its soldiers to the standards required in the year 2010. This endstate produces integrated and relevant forces capable of meeting the

challenges now and through the near future in both the Active Component and in the Army National Guard.

The remaining issue is when to implement the proposal, the elimination of TDA spaces would take approximately two years to complete. Personnel within those spaces would need to be placed where there are openings in existing units or be allowed to exit the military. The equipment within those organizations effected would need to be redistributed among remaining units or be detailed to Foreign Military Sales. Portions of the budgets allocated to the units being eliminated would need to be distributed to those remaining to improve readiness.

“There are three different ways of looking at sustaining the current Total Force in the future. Obviously, it is not all that easy; What is right from a military perspective must merge with what is acceptable to the myriad interest groups involved in change.

It seems evident that the active force really needs to scrub some of its long-standing policies and programs, more or less taken for granted, for the reserves. The most pervasive problems are those associated with the differences in relative importance of various resources; dollars and people are most important for the regular Army, but time is the critical resource for the reserves.”²⁰

Those of us in the Army both Active and Reserve are at a point in history where we must make the hard decisions. We have an opportunity to place ourselves, future soldiers and our nation in a more secure position in ten to fifteen years by making the right choices now. Its much like setting aside money for your child’s future, if you don’t do it now, tomorrow may be too late.

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