STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

STRAIGHT LINE MANNING: A STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVE TO STABILIZE THE ARMY XXI FORCE

BY

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ABSTRACT

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During the post-Cold War Era, the United States Army has done a superb job maintaining combat readiness while downsizing thus preventing a return to the "hollow Army." During this era, the Army's OPTEMPO has increased dramatically due to a turbulent world. Deployment requirements have consistently dictated allocation of non-contingency forces to support MOOTW. This has resulted in significant instability in all lower ALO units. Meanwhile, the contingency force remains oriented on worldwide short notice deployments, a low probability scenario, and receives the highest force fill. This USAWC Strategic Research Project examines U.S. Army force instability and proposes some force manning alternatives to stabilize the Army as it enters the 21st Century.

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INTRODUCTION

The initiation of Operation Joint Endeavor (OJE) began with the preparation of the units scheduled to deploy. This involved individual, collective, and unit certification. On 12 December 1995, the commander of a Germany based Patriot battalion completed his closing remarks to twenty-six outstanding soldiers who were departing for Grafenwehr, Germany. These soldiers would later join up with several hundred other soldiers from among various other non-deploying OJE units. These soldiers would subsequently be processed and allocated to 1st Armored Division units for a nine month deployment.

The completion of this tasking left the battalion commander perplexed. His unit was scheduled for its own deployment to Saudi Arabia in early February 1996, only two months later. Each of these tasked soldiers was considered vital to his/her own subordinate unit. Each individual soldier or NCO was meeting a tasking for a specific rank and specialty, primarily common Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). These twenty-six soldiers represented four percent (26/653 assigned strength) of the battalion's strength. This group coupled with the current five percent non-deployable battalion strength, represented close to ten percent of the battalion strength not deploying to Saudi Arabia.

Several issues that surfaced in November 1995 further exacerbated the challenge. First, the bombing of the Saudi Arabia National Guard (SANG) Headquarters in Riyadh added to the complexity of the battalion's upcoming rotation. The resultant upgrade in the directed Threat Condition (THREATCON) increased the number of required security guards for each Patriot tactical site. These increased security guard numbers would total over forty-seven guards daily across seven individual tactical sites in which the battalion would operate during its deployment. These additional soldier requirements would be over and above the already stringent force requirements of each site to meet the Tactical Ballistic Missile (TBM) defense mission.

The second challenge was presented by the United States Army Europe (USAREUR) home station equipment policy. This policy dictated that deploying units maintain soldiers and leaders from each unit to maintain non-deploying, organic Modified Table of Organization Equipment (MTOE) at current standards vice placing the equipment in temporary storage configuration. This requirement increased the number of stay back soldiers needed since many of the medically non-deployable soldiers would be unable to work on MTOE equipment.

Finally, the allocation for deployment of a required non-organic direct support maintenance company from V Corps also brought its particular challenges. First, like the battalion, the company also provided individual soldiers to backfill the 1st Armored Division. The company was required to keep a complement of personnel at home station to maintain assigned area support coverage. This company also was in the midst of logistical management (SAARS-O) upgrades. The company deployment would significantly degrade its ability to support Germany fielding goals.[1]

Despite the implications of the above vignette, today's United States Army is at its highest operating posture in its history. Many critics have indicated that the Army is experiencing readiness degradation that is resulting in a downward spiral to the "Hollow" Army of the seventies. This is an unfair analogy given the enormous differences between the Army today and that of nearly three decades ago. Today, one issue remains inarguable -- all deployed forces, both forward deployed and deployed in Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), are operating at nearly flawless levels. It is the sum total of these forces that continues to be the envy of nation states across the globe.

The vignette does, however, highlight the personnel management challenges that the United States Army faces today. The Army is in the midst of the equivalent of a Major Theater War (MTW). The ongoing MOOTW resource requirements mirror those of a MTW. This conclusion can be drawn from the fact that units are simultaneously deploying, training to deploy for a MOOTW mission, or reconstituting after a MOOTW mission.[2] It is the unending

nature of these concurrent requirements, which creates the stressful environment in which the Army must operate.

The practice of personnel backfilling or billpaying to ensure that deploying MOOTW units are filled to authorization is prevalent across all facets of Army operations. It is this practice that is creating tremendous force instability and facilitating the growing rhetoric on Army readiness deterioration. Non-contingency force units are primarily experiencing these readiness downtrends as opposed to contingency force units.[3] Historically, non-contingency forces are the least resourced and retain the least flexibility to provide personnel resources to other units without suffering a significant detriment in their own readiness.

This Strategic Research Paper will examine today's Army Force Posture both from a budgetary and personnel perspective. The paper then examines readiness degradation that points to force instability. The paper will then detail the current Army Force Management manning procedures highlighting the lack of resourcing of the Army's Below-the-Line Forces which most frequently provide the bulk of MOOTW forces in comparison with well resourced Army contingency forces.[4] Based on this analysis, this paper will propose some active force planning alternatives such as straight-line manning of the force to better enable the Army to meet post-20st century mission requirements while also

synergistically posturing the entire active Army for an evolution to the future Army XXI structure.

OVERVIEW

POST-COLD WAR PRESSURES

The United States Army has completed the final stages of the post-Cold War defense drawdown to 480 thousand in Fiscal Year 98.[5] However, the Army is still experiencing similar pressures as it did during the drawdown era. This is primarily due to two factors. The demands on manpower intensive peacekeeping and humanitarian operations (MOOTW) have increased so significantly that the Total Army has averaged approximately 150,000 soldiers deployed during FY 95-97 with no foreseen letup well into the 21st century.[6] The Total Army has nearly doubled the average number of deployed personnel from home in comparison to Cold War personnel tempo (PERSTEMPO), 1988 to 1990, to Post-Cold War PERSTEMPO, 1992 to 1997.[7] These deployment levels create training challenges for non-deployed units, which invariably provide support (I.E. billpayers) to deployed units during the entire deployment process. The exception to this rule is contingency force units, which remain well resourced in relation to the rest of the active Army.[8]

The second factor providing continual drawdown like pressure is the current United States government fiscal environment in

which the Army operates. Today and into the next century, the national discretionary, defense, accounts are being squeezed by non-discretionary, mandatory entitlements, and debt interest accounts.[9] This trend is not expected to change in the near future and, for that matter, will likely remain constant well beyond the achievement of the Army XXI structure.

HISTORICAL BUDGET PERSPECTIVE AND FUTURE TRENDS

Despite the pressure to increase MOOTW mission requirements while maintaining a ready contingency force, future Army budgets [Total Obligation Authorities (TOA)] are expected to remain constant. The current Program Objective Memorandum (POM) forecasts level constant dollar budgets in the coming years.[10] This constant budget will also likely keep force structure constant in the coming years.

History is very revealing when comparing the Army Total Obligation Authority (TOA), budgets, against active Army manpower levels. Figure 1 graphically depicts the Army per soldier cost from fiscal year (FY) 48 to fiscal year (FY) 99.[11] These costs were derived by taking each FY TOA in constant 1998 dollars and dividing by the active Army manpower FY endstrength. This per capita analysis displays an upward trend in cost to run the Army. Hence, the U.S. Army has cost significantly more to run over time. Technological advances, infrastructure costs, military pay,

and higher OPTEMPO are a few reasons that have driven this upward trend.

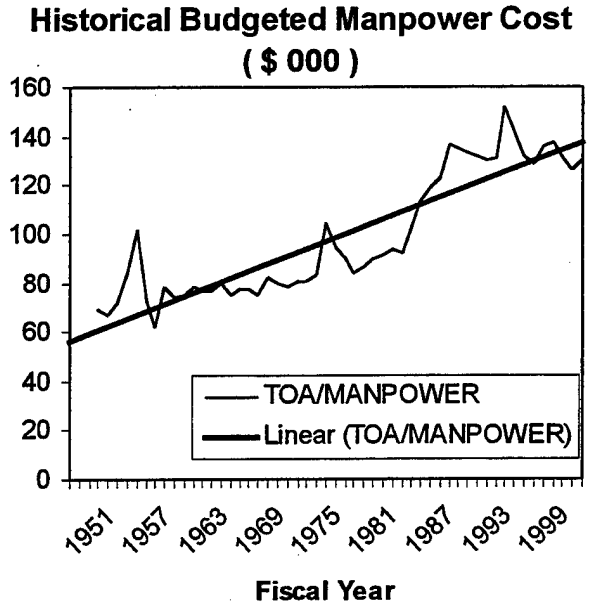

FIGURE 1

Equally revealing is the fact that today's per soldier cost mirrors the trends of the post Korean and 1970's "Hollow" Army timeframes. Clearly, these are times to which no one in today's Army would prefer not to return to.

The data in Figure 2 depicts trend forecast in constant FY 98 dollars for the outyears of FY 00, FY 05, FY 10, and finally, FY 25 as the Army After Next (AAN) force is envisioned to be implemented. Two cases are considered; first, the case of constant force structure and secondly, the case of constant Army

TOA. Both cases show the reciprocal effect of a constant variable on the other.[12]

TREND FORECAST

CONSTANT FORCE STRUCTURE

FY	FS	ADJUSTED TOA
2000	480K	$66.6 BILLION
2005	480K	$70.2 BILLION
2010	480K	$73.8 BILLION
2025	480K	$84.7 BILLION

CONSTANT ARMY TOA

FY	TOA	ADJUSTED FS
2000	$61.1 BILLION	450.5K
2005	$61.1 BILLION	427.3K
2010	$61.1 BILLION	406.4K
2025	$61.1 BILLION	354.3K

FIGURE 2

In the case of constant force structure (Figure 2), Army TOA will have to increase at an approximate rate of 1.4 percent to parallel the historical trends in Figure 1. More importantly, Figure 2 analysis also clearly demonstrates that intense pressure will be placed on Army manpower levels given constant Army budgets into the 21st century. Manpower levels will possibly come under scrutiny due to increased modernization and infrastructure cost to pay for the Force XXI (digitized) and AAN forces along with the replacement of current major weapon systems as they approach the final years of useful life. In this case, force structure reductions would have to occur at an approximate one percent annual rate to parallel historical trends.

Either case is intolerable if the Army is to remain viable in the future. The clear meaning is that the Army must maximize the use of a probable future constant budget while minimizing force reduction pressures to pay for future force modernization and other costs.

READINESS DEGRADATION INDICATING FORCE INSTABILITY

As mentioned previously, United States Army forces have exceeded expectations in all contingency and MOOTW operations in the 1990's. This success has been expensive due to the secondary force instability effects these operations have created. Rhetoric regarding force instability began as early as 1994 following Senator McCain's 1994 article on "Going Hollow: The Warnings of the Chiefs of Staff" and have continued to the present day.[13]

General Sullivan, then the Army Chief of Staff, indicated in McCain's publication that the average soldier spends approximately 138 days a year away from home station and that this situation would not improve in the future. He also indicated that extended deployments, many on short notice, were often occurring back-to-back or with limited time on station and were significantly impacting soldiers, (their units), and their families. During Congressional questioning, General Sullivan indicated the various factors of force turbulence (instability) with which commanders in the field were concerned. These factors

were separations, externally directed moves, internal redistribution, borrowed military manpower and special duty requirements, and cross leveling to meet deployment requirements as well as other factors.[14]

Although these factors were present during the midst of the Post-Cold War drawdown in the Army, they have failed to disappear. A GAO report published in April 1996 indicated readiness rates across the Army were relatively stable but that 36% of the Army's high deploying units were experiencing reduced readiness. High deploying units were defined as special forces, Patriot air defense, psychological, military police, and CSS units.[15] Of significance with the exception of Special Forces units, the other forces were primarily Army Below-the-Line forces, which are resourced significantly less compared to the Above-the-Line Forces.[16]

The January 19, 1998 U.S. News and World Report article: "Spread Too Thin" indicated that this instability (turbulence) has occurred beyond the drawdown era. This article concludes that readiness is on a downturn and that shortfalls in training, readiness, and manpower often feed on one another, multiplying the impact of each. The article further indicates that the Army is particularly vulnerable to ripple effects that begin with personnel shortfalls and forces the Army to stitch units together in order to field the appropriate force to deploy.[17]

The article called "Military Readiness 1998: Rhetoric and Reality" by Congressman Spence, Republican-South Carolina, indicates similar views and concludes that indicators are prevalent that long term systemic readiness problems are far greater than they were in 1994. The article also highlights that military forces are "doing more with less" and reflects a reality that resourcing, training, and equipping may only be adequate to carry out current low-intensity contingency missions vice more demanding high-intensity wars.[18]

Finally, a March 9, 1998 "Army Times" article summarizes current force instability realities. Testimony to the Senate Armed Services Readiness Sub-committee concluded that the burden of operating at higher OPTEMPO during times of a smaller budget and reduced force is falling on those who remain behind. Army Colonel Thomas Matthews, commander of the 101st Airborne Division's 101st Aviation Brigade said, "We are doing more with less." He also indicated that while his early deploying (contingency) unit has priority for personnel, he senses the strain felt by the rest of the Army.[19] Colonel Matthew's testimony is significant since it presents indications that all forces are feeling the strain and not just isolated to Below-the-Line forces.

ARMY M-FORCE ANALYSIS

The implications of the preceding sections indicate a series of themes. First, Army TOA and force structure will remain constant (best case) well into the 21st century or until some unforeseen development occurs to change present day opinions regarding Army resourcing among U.S. citizens, Congress, and the president. Second, the U.S. Army continues to accomplish directed missions beyond expectations, however, to the detriment of unit readiness due to varying factors including personnel instability. The question, which arises, is how to resolve personnel and unit instability while maintaining a force capable of executing the two MTW defense strategy while also meeting current MOOTW missions. Given that budget and force structure levels are going to remain constant, an internal Army strategic solution must be pursued.

ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The approach to study an internal strategic force development solution to the Army instability dilemma consisted of three tasks:

1. Acquire and manipulate a representative Army personnel authorization database to understand where major instability problems are occurring across the Army.

2. Determine alternative policy to man the force.

3. Understand the significance and implications of manning the force differently.

First, the Structure and Composition System Army (SACS) 9706 Master Force (M-Force) was obtained. This database is based on the results of Total Army Analysis-2003 (TAA-03) and is locked at 9706. TAA-03 is the process that formulates the Total Army's approved force structure by Component [COMPO-1 (active), COMPO-2 (National Guard), COMPO-3 (Reserve), and COMPO-4 (unresourced)]. This force structure is first driven by the National Military Strategy that defines the above-the-line ("operating") forces. These forces include divisions, armored cavalry regiments, Special Forces groups, and selected separate brigades. The Army, led by the Department of the Army DCSOPS, then conducted the biennial TAA to build a force capable of fighting two near simultaneous MTW's. Throughout the TAA process, the Army's below-the-line ("support") forces are generated which are comprised of Echelon Above Division/Echelon Above Corps (EAD/EAC) forces. These forces are deemed necessary to support and sustain specified divisions and non-divisional combat forces. Additionally, general support (TDA) forces are formulated and also categorized as below-the-line forces.[20]

TAA forces are then prioritized given inherent resource constraints by assigning Authorized Levels of Organization (ALO) to man and equip units most likely to be the "first to fight". It is the ALO process that translates wartime mission

requirements to resource constrained authorizations. As an example, most above-the-line forces are designated ALO-1, which provides authorizations at 100% of wartime requirements. Most below-the-line forces are designated ALO-2 or ALO-3, which provides authorizations at 90% and 80% of wartime requirements, respectively.[21]

Personnel priorities for distribution are then derived by assignment of Personnel Priority Group (PPG) codes. This is also termed the process that fills "spaces with actual faces" since this process accounts for actual available forces instead of mere authorizations. Figure 3 depicts conceptually how forces are distributed.[22]

PROGRAM PRIORITY GROUPING (PPG) DISTRIBUTION

PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3
PPG-1 UNITS	PPG-3 UNITS	PPG-4 thru PPG-9 UNITS
(100% MOS/Grade) Fill: Approx 108% --75th Ranger Regt. --Directed Mil Overstrength (DMO) Positions. --National Training Center. --AC/RC. --Drill Sergeants. --Recruiting. --JSO Positions. --ETC.	100-98% Aggregate Fill: 100% --Contingency Force 82d Airborne Div 101st Air Assault Div 3rd Inf Div 1st Cavalry Div 3d ACR --2d Inf Div --Force Pkg 1 Spt Forces	Fair Share Fill: Balanced According to Auth --1st Armor Div --10th Inf Div --25th Inf Div (Lt) --1st Inf Div --4th Inf Div --2d ACR --Rem Force Pkg Spt Forces --TRADOC
PPG-2 UNITS		
(100% by MOS) Fill: Approx 103% --1st SFG --3d SFG --5th SFG --7th SFG --10th SFG		

FIGURE 3

The M-Force COMPO-1 (active force) database inclusive of all Army forces was manipulated to provide data necessary to assess the current levels of force manning and, subsequently, to assist in providing future force manning alternatives. The Trainee, Transient, Holdee, and Students (TTHS) account which comprises

approximately 12 to 13 percent of the total Army strength was excluded from subsequent analysis. TTHS levels average between 61 and 63 thousand soldiers at any time given today's Army end strength.[23]

To begin assessing the partitioning of the force, the databases were divided into above the line, EAD/EAC, and TDA files to account for those types of forces. Figure 4 illustrates the partitioning of those forces. This force breakout is based on total wartime requirements of 469,648 soldiers with Army authorizations of 427,266 soldiers, once again based on the 9706 timeframe. When assessing aggregate authorizations to total requirements, the Army is resourced at 90% of wartime requirements with the majority of this 10% shortfall absorbed by below the line and TDA forces.

FORCE
PARTITIONING/ MANNING POSTURE

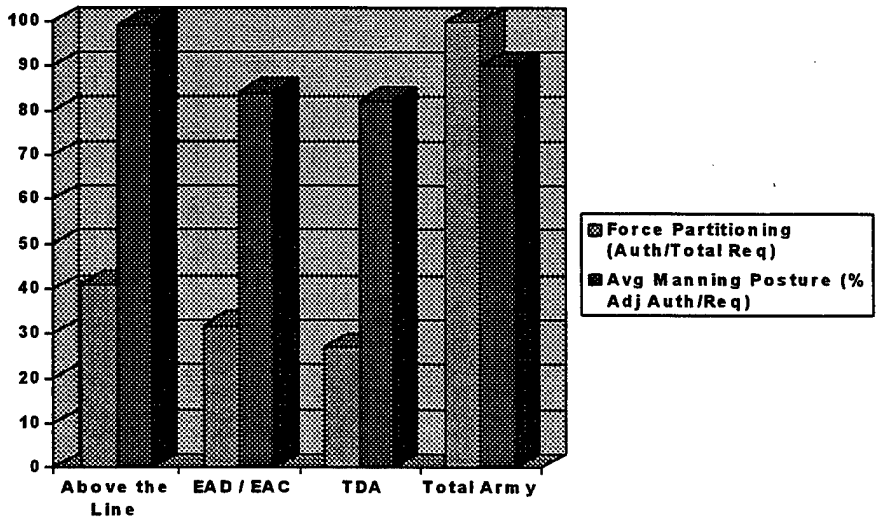

FIGURE 4

By applying the distribution rules in accordance with Figure 3, the data in Figure 4 also illustrates the average manning posture after the forces have been prioritized and distributed according to authorized strength. The driving factor behind this distribution is a focus on meeting the contingency needs to support a two, near simultaneous, MTW strategy. Less evident is the ongoing failure of this distribution scheme to support and man all units conducting the myriad of MOOTW missions adequately. This flaw is the strategic basis for force instability.[24]

It is important to note that Figure 4 manning levels are averages by unit. These manning levels are dynamic and vary on a day-to-day, major training event to downtime period, and deployment to non-deployment basis. Manning levels of any given unit vary much like a sine wave function. Figure 5 illustrates the conceptual manning phenomenon over time of a given unit as a function of manning priority. As the figure indicates, the amplitude (variation) of lower priority units is far greater over time than variations among higher priority units. This phenomenon highlights that force turbulence rests largely on the shoulders of lower priority units which translates primarily into our below-the-line/TDA forces being called upon to accomplish today's MOOTW missions and the myriad of other mission requirements while remaining poorly resourced.

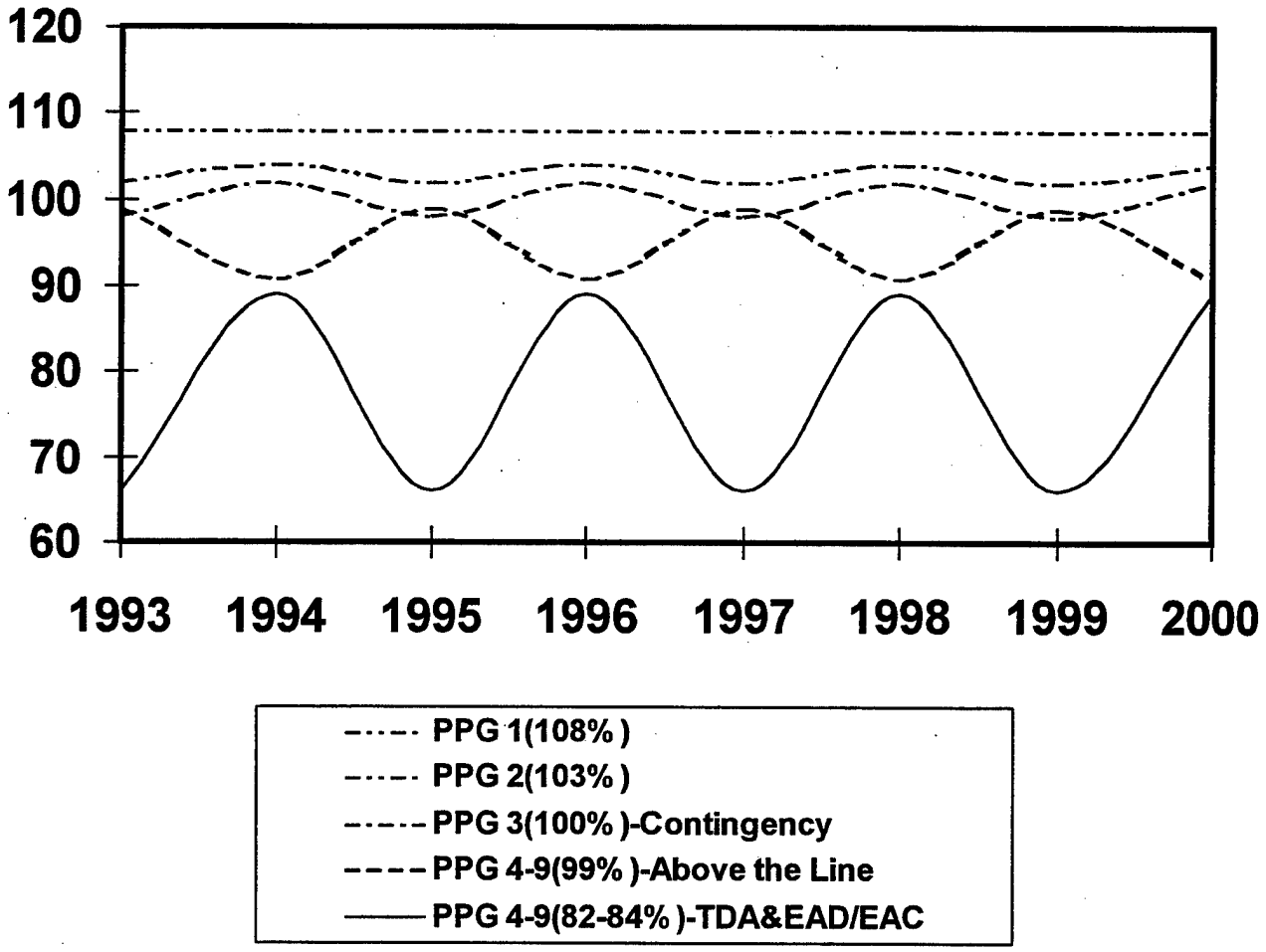

FIGURE 5

FUTURE FORCE PLANNING ALTERNATIVES

When pursuing an Army Force Planning strategic solution to resolve force instability, there is no single, clear strategy to follow. The United States Army's continual shift between a contingency focus to a MOOTW focus makes optimal solutions difficult, if not impossible, to implement. The ongoing shift

from a threat-based force to a capabilities based force further complicates the equation. Finally, any force planning solution must evolve with a zero sum approach in mind. For these reasons, two near term alternatives are proposed as possible strategic solutions to resolve force instability:

1. Revised PPG-3 Straight Line Manning
2. Revised PPG-4 Straight Line Manning minus 82d Forces

ALTERNATIVE 1: REVISED PPG-3 STRAIGHT LINE MANNING

This alternative essentially breaks the current paradigm of manning the contingency force at near 100 percent levels. The concept would distribute Army forces equally after the high priority, by law or by policy, units receive their authorized fill of forces. These high priority units are partitioned in PPG-1 or PPG-2 categories as noted previously in Figure 4. These forces comprise 9.4 percent (40129 / 427266) of the 9607 COMPO-1 M-Force authorizations. Figure 6 depicts the force manning levels according to PPG-1, PPG-2, and a revised PPG-3 (rest of the force) category.

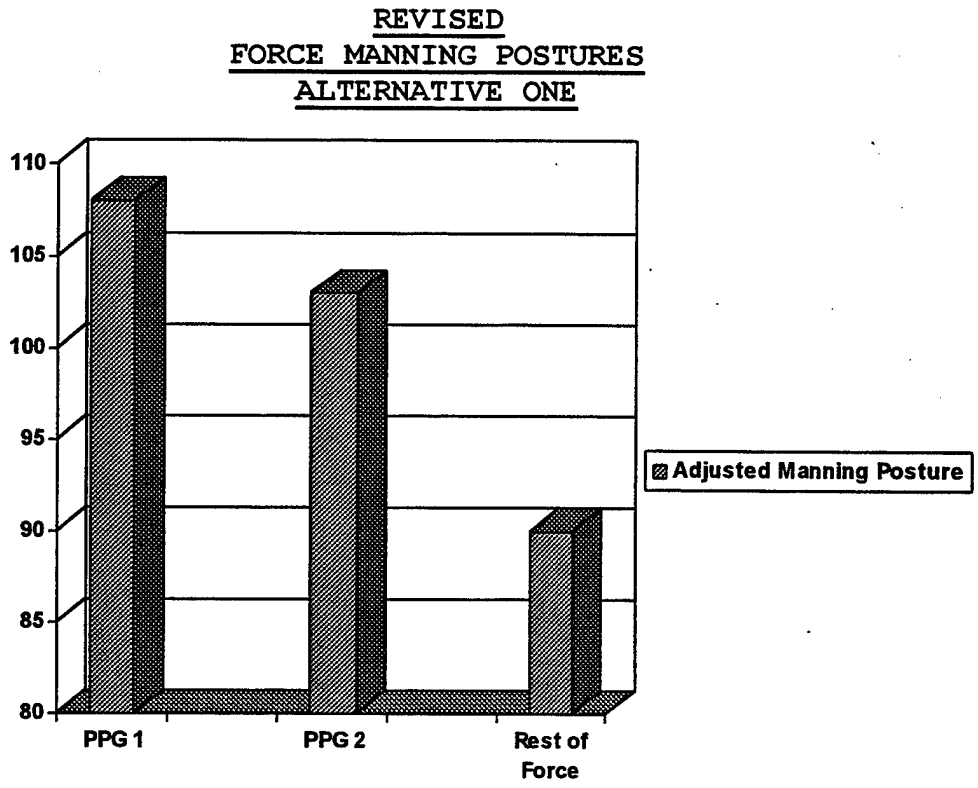

FIGURE 6

ALTERNATIVE 2: REVISED PPG-4 STRAIGHT LINE MANNING MINUS 82d FORCES

This alternative dictates the reclassification of all contingency forces minus the 82d Airborne Division into PPG-4. The 82d Airborne Division would maintain its PPG-3 designation. The remainder of the contingency force would receive equal distribution along with the rest of the PPG 4-9 units. In this alternative, PPG-1, PPG-2, and PPG-3 units would comprise 12.5 percent [40129 (PPG-1/PPG-2) + 13120 (82d Authorized Aggregate Strength) / 427266] of the 9706 COMPO-1 M-Force. Figure 7 depicts the force manning levels according to this concept.

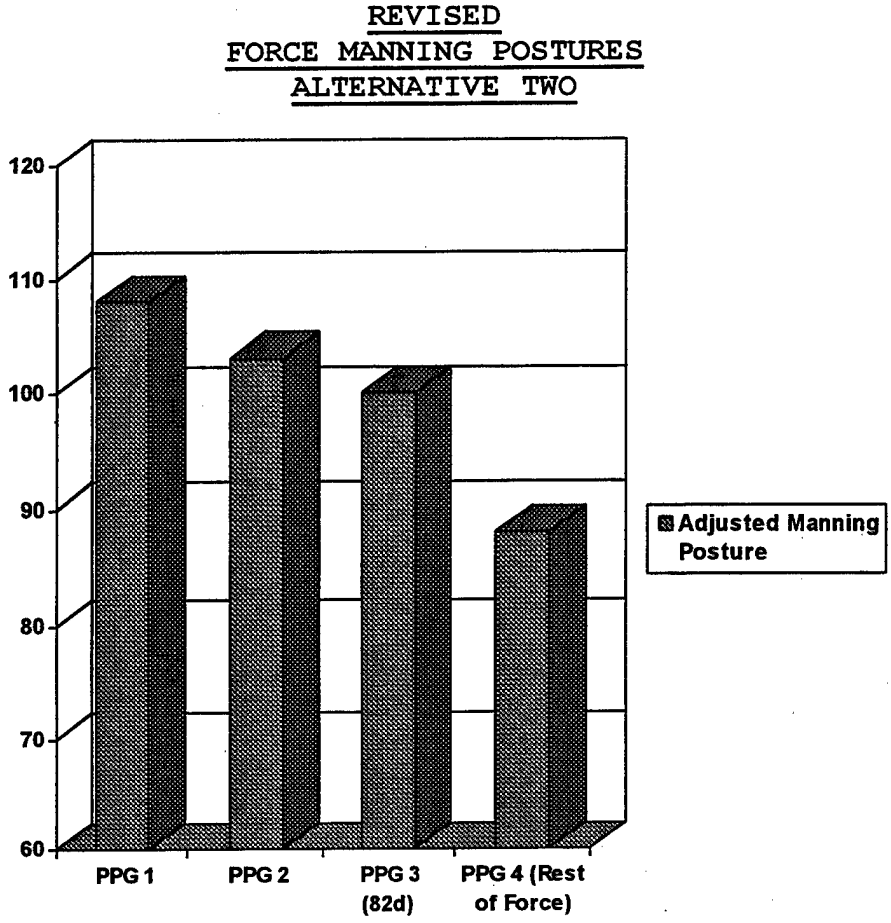

FIGURE 7

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

Near term implementation of either alternative is challenging. Numerous force realignment actions, primarily focused on filling combat support/combat service support shortfalls, would have to be accomplished. These realignment actions would require many years due to recruiting adjustments and training base changes while continually supporting mission requirements. Special care would have to be taken so as not to

"break" the force as initiatives were being undertaken to "stabilize" the force. Despite these challenges, many synergistic benefits would parallel implementation of either alternative.

a. Reserve Component Integration. Extensive reserve component backfill would be required to fill shortages created under either alternative. This backfill process could either be accomplished with individual replacements or by using the round out concept of filling out active units with subordinate reserve elements. Given the hesitancy to deploy round out brigades to Operation Desert Shield/Storm, round out units at lower echelons would likely be the prudent implementation concept. Lower echelon reserve component unit training would most assuredly require less resourcing. Finally, reserve component integration into active units would continue to mitigate the strife between the active and reserve component armies.

b. Contingency Flexibility. Either alternative would provide a more flexible contingency force ready for deployment. First, with the active straight-lined manned force, most units would be postured for deployment given equal readiness and training standards. The recent announcement to deploy elements of the 1st Cavalry Division to Bosnia is an example of the changing environment in which the Army operates and why contingency flexibility will be even more important as the Army enters the 21st century.[25]

Secondly, the fielding of future digitized and AAN forces may dictate a refinement in doctrine to use the most modern forces in follow-on conflict phases vice the initial halting phase. Today's Army is clearly the most dominant in comparison to any potential global adversary. Any current United States Army force, even less modern, deployed during the halting phase coupled with its inherent air support is likely to halt any adversary in future conflicts. More modern forces would then better used for follow-on operations in the future.

c. Mitigation of OPLAN Redundancy. Straight-line manning would ensure that more forces were ready for rapid deployment instead of the sequential model in use today. Units across the army could be apportioned to various OPLANs with a significant reduction in redundancy. Additionally, turbulence during deployments would be further reduced given straight-line manning which, in turn, can minimize the creation of "hollow" stayback units.

d. Training Efficiency. Straight-line unit manning across the force creates a higher probability for a better return on the training investment due to a higher percentage of soldiers available for training. This will reduce the need for repetitive training and will facilitate a faster transition to collective events. Higher readiness levels would be a result due to the potential for enhanced training management efficiency.

e. Enhanced Infrastructure and Regional Logistical Support. Straight-line manning across the force will enhance infrastructure and logistical support to all Army forces operating in garrison. Today's logistical force levels are well below either of the potential straight-line levels. These forces are challenged to provide garrison support vital to unit operations and the quality of life of soldiers and family members. This problem is further exacerbated when local units deploy and these units are tasked to provide MOS specific soldiers often vital to infrastructure/logistical operations. Simply put, garrison operations would be more stable for support of the force with straight-line manning.

f. Training Base Stability. Training and Doctrine Command's (TRADOC) mission execution is vital to the well being of the Army today. As the Army enters the 21st century, the importance of its mission accomplishment will likely escalate. Due to this, increased manning of TRADOC units will benefit Army operations especially as the digitized and Army After Next forces are fielded. Doctrine, leadership and soldier training, force development, and combat developments are only a few of many TRADOC functions likely to benefit from increases in personnel fill.

g. Political Leverage to Preserve Future Force Structure. Future force structure and Army budgets will be challenged for reasons discussed in previous sections. These reasons dictate

that senior, military leaders must strategically plan today the best means to counter the desires of the politicians to reduce force structure and budgets. Additionally, implementation of straight-line manning begins to create the framework for the ongoing initiative to reduce division force structure ("spaces") while prepositioning soldiers ("faces") in proper future positions. This prepositioning strategy would quench the thirst of politicians for "seizing the moment" to reduce force structure as this transition occurs. Finally, manning levels in both alternatives given this strategy would increase as force structure of Army XXI divisions is reduced.

CONCLUSION

The future United States Army will face an ambiguous and turbulent global environment. Given this future world, the Army will repeatedly be called upon to execute MOOTW missions to **shape** regional environments. Other non-combat missions will also remain prevalent given the simple fact that America's Army is the best structured force and able to accomplish these type missions.

Ongoing MOOTW missions, along with future asymmetric combat operations, dictate a force equally capable of meeting future requirements. This force must meet these requirements while **preparing** for a Revolution of Military Affairs (RMA) and transitioning to the future Army After Next. Future

modernization must equip a force able to carry out future national security objectives but not at the expense of force structure.

In order to be **responsive** to future operations today and tomorrow, stability of the force will be critical during the evolutionary process. Current readiness must remain high. The Army must maintain its top personnel with a proper quality of life and well-managed PERSTEMPO.

Adoption of a straight-line personnel manning policy minus the 82d Airborne would provide a optimal force able to deploy rapidly, to meet ongoing MOOTW missions, to transition to the Army XXI force structure, to maintain high readiness levels, and to train more effectively for the future. Finally, this alternative best provides a minimal risk force able to react to tomorrow's turbulent environment.

Given implementation, this force structure could also make use of reserve component soldiers filling remaining unit wartime requirement shortfalls. The specific implementation plan to pursue requires more analysis based on the results of TAA-05. Once implemented, this force would better posture the Army to meet ambiguous mission challenges and to remain flexible to respond to any future direction that an RMA may take.

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