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## The Interchangeable Force vs. A Historical Reserve Force

The Active Navy Component has never really tried to fit the Naval Reserve into the war plans until, hopefully, recently. It is hard to describe the current integration plans as new. The current integration plans look very much like past attempts of “Total Force” jargon. The Department of Defense has been espousing a Total Force well over twenty years now. Total Force has been a way of life for a long time. Making a plan fit is much harder, as we all know, than developing the plan. Our current leadership has developed an ill-advised, in-house, “nice” plan to integrate the Naval Reserve using smoke and mirrors. The overall effort is to cut the Reserve Force so that resources will not have to be allocated. The realities are starting to hit leadership, and those people who want to remain in the Naval Reserve, squarely in the head.

What are the alternatives to current “transformational” integration efforts? No one really knows for sure, unless Congress gets involved, since the departments are not likely to listen. Here are some ideas:

- Establish a Congressional Commission to review bottom up and top down issues for the traditional Guard and Reserve Forces. This commission could establish the requirements for a new Guard and Reserve Force that will be positioned for 21<sup>st</sup> century emerging threats to our homeland security and national security. A fresh view from outside could address efficiency and effectiveness, show what forces are affordable, and show the waste that exists in the active force.

- A real zero-based review should be conducted, not one directed to a number by powerful personalities, but done with the idea of smart utilization of the Guard and Reserve forces.

- The Department of Defense needs to establish two cooperative categories of forces for Guard and Reserve members and units – a **Homeland Security Force** (that covers all territories and out to the limits of NORTHCOM Areas of Responsibility), and an **Interchangeable Force**. (This is a term used recently by Senator Inouye).

- a. **Homeland Security Force.** NORTHCOM is reviewing and establishing these requirements.

Required operating capabilities and programmed operating environments need to be established for a Homeland Security Force that includes Guard and Reserve units and individuals. Traditional thinking and overseas commitments have zapped the imperatives that we all felt after 9-11. With a truly designated Homeland Security Force, resources and equipment can be designated to this effort and, if needed, surged to the overseas requirements as an Interchangeable Force. Their primary thrust would be to defend and secure the homeland for the overwhelming existing and emerging threats that face our nation. Public law would have to be amended to allow Reserve forces to participate fully in homeland security – but it is time to do it. This needs to be addressed and accomplished soon. This Homeland Security Force should be joint homeland security forces in joint facilities with governors of the states retaining traditional power. It is obvious that our country has a requirement to use the Guard and Reserve Component at this time in overseas commitments. We must never forget that these forces are perfectly positioned to address, defend, respond, guard, and fight any homeland security situation. Operations plans and planning documents need to reflect the realities of this need and requirement.

- b. **Interchangeable Force.** Forget the traditional guard or reserve designation. The myth of weekend duty is long gone. Our military departments should redesignate forces from the traditional Guard and Reserve as the forces that will flow into the requirements and conflicts: peacekeeping when required; nation building when needed; and the myriad of duties that we are learning after Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraq Freedom, and after Bosnia. We cannot plan just for what we have done or what we have accomplished. We must plan for the emerging threats and unintended consequences management that the military is going to have for a long, long time.

- Elevate the position of the JCS Guard and Reserve Advisors to a level commensurate with the other three- or four-star ranks of JCS.

- Let those who have managed, trained, and paid traditional Guard and Reserve Forces continue to manage the forces and be force providers just like any other force provider. The management is not broken. The vision and use of Guard and Reserve forces is broken due to historical cultures.

- Establish through Congress, joint “Purple” money that is specifically there for joint operations that include homeland security operations, but also is there specifically for resourcing (procurement) of homeland security forces and interchangeable forces (Guard and Reserve forces).

- Increase funding for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Accounts (changing the name to Homeland Security Force and Interchangeable Force Account) to include a specific percent of the procurement budgets that is specifically there for frontline equipment for both the Homeland Security Force, and the Interchangeable Force. It is all about equipment!

- Establish the continuum of services and benefits of the traditional Reserve Component equally, as best they can be, to those of the Active Component once any member passes a certain number of days of either voluntary or involuntary mobilization. We have to get over the “it costs too much syndrome.” We either want to maintain our first-rate military force (which really would include the Guard and Reserve) and, thus, our world superpower status; or we don't.

We are at a time in history where we have to move beyond what was traditional. Moving on from tradition has to take place in the Active Component and the Reserve Component.

Having fresh new ideas of integration means change; but it does not mean only cutting people, units, and billets because the programmers need the money. I believe that innovation does not exist in the Department of Defense and, surely, does not exist within the Services. Innovation is not something that war fighters do well, or train for. Transformation does not mean only acquiring new technology so less manpower is needed. Our unknown and emerging threats will surprise us because we are a free and democratic society. Since the Active Component has been establishing the requirements forever and making all the rules for mobilization, it is time for a fresh look at a different kind of integrated Reserve Component. Approaching these Guard and Reserve forces as interchangeable forces and using them when needed would be a step ahead in providing for our national security and our homeland security.

Congress is addressing the FY 05 National Defense Authorization Act and the FY 05 Defense Appropriations now. I encourage you either to get involved in making your views known, or say good-bye to about 40,000 reserve billets and most of the hardware units in the Naval Reserve. It is in your hands and in Congress's. You can change it or let it happen. One thing is for sure, our national security is going to need a strong and viable Naval Reserve Interchangeable Force. ☪