

THE THIRD WAY NATIONAL SECURITY PROJECT



BOOTS ON THE GROUND:

Increasing the Size of the Army to
Meet the Missions of the 21st Century

*A Report on U.S. Army End Strength
by Third Way*

May 2005

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“I'm going to take a little risk here and
I'm going to tell you that, intuitively,
I think we need more people.
I mean, **it's just that simple.**”

-Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, 2003¹

Executive Summary

In the wake of 9/11 and the war in Iraq, the United States Army has been asked to shoulder enormous burdens with a force that remains almost unchanged in size since it was drawn-down following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The occupation of Iraq and other duties around the world have required the greatest sustained deployment of the American military since the height of the Vietnam War, but the Army has not been allowed to take substantive, permanent measures to grow larger to meet this challenge.² Moreover, despite a dramatic 37% increase in defense spending since 9/11, the Bush Administration has yet to request a permanent increase in size for our main fighting force.³ Consequently, the Army is facing the greatest mismatch between its mission and its manpower since the mid-1930s, when Army Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur, deeply concerned about the military's thin ranks and the lack of urgency in government circles about that state of affairs, remarked that “the secrets of our weakness are secrets only to our own people.”⁴

Years of post-Cold War downsizing reduced the Army from nearly 800,000 personnel in 1989 to 610,000 troops in 1992 to approximately 482,000

¹ Peter J. Schoomaker, "Transcript of Testimony of General Peter J. Schoomaker before the Senate Armed Services," United States Senate, July 29, 2003, available at: <http://www.army.mil/leaders/leaders/csa/testimony/29Jul03TestimonySASC.htm>, accessed April 21, 2005

² In early 2004 Gen. Schoomaker told a Congressional Committee that Secretary Rumsfeld had authorized a temporary, emergency increase of the Army's end-strength by 30,000 troops. Later that year Congress endorsed the Administration's plans to temporarily increase the size of the Army. See, Bradley Graham, "30,000 More Soldiers Approved by Rumsfeld," *Washington Post*, January 2004; Edward F. Bruner, "Military Forces: What is the Appropriate Size for the United States?" CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: May 2004

³ Jeffrey Chamberlin, *FY2005 Defense Budget: Frequently Asked Questions*, Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: July 2004. Note that the 37% increase refers to total national defense budget function outlays, including defense spending supplementals.

⁴ Mark Skinner Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations*, Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, DC: 1991

permanent, authorized active-duty soldiers today: a roughly 40% decrease in end-strength⁵ that accompanied a 300% increase in operational deployments.⁶

To be sure, this reduction in the size of the force does not equate to a reduction in its war-fighting effectiveness. The Army has leveraged the outstanding quality of its men and women in uniform and its next-generation technology to achieve degrees of precision, lethality, and mobility unheard of in the annals of warfare. Such prowess was displayed in the Army's campaign against a vastly numerically superior foe in the second Gulf War – a campaign carried out with just 50% of the ground forces of the first Gulf War.⁷ Indeed, "by any measure," one report states, "the Army performed superbly" in Iraq.⁸ Yet, as the situation in Iraq has shown, having a lean and lethal force capable of a lightning-fast march to Baghdad is not sufficient if the mission also calls for shaping the contours of the post-war peace. Long-term victory—winning the peace as well as the war—requires 'boots on the ground.'

After studying the data regarding the Army's force structure and personnel levels and reviewing the analysis of uniformed and civilian experts on the Army, this report finds four critical factors driving the need for the Army to increase its end-strength:

1

The Army's ability to meet potential future threats is increasingly imperiled.

The Army must be able to handle multiple, overlapping crises without compromising its ability to respond quickly or cannibalizing its garrisons against tyranny and aggression elsewhere in the world. But today, the Army is stretched to its limit. Roughly 75% of the Army's combat brigades are actively engaged in operations in Iraq or Afghanistan, are operating in support of those operations, are preparing to deploy to either nation, or have recently returned from the combat zone and are now standing-down for a short period of rest and recovery.⁹ In 2004, nine of the Army's ten divisions were deployed to, preparing to deploy to, or returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁰ Additionally, although the Army has looked to the Guard and Reserve to shore up its end-strength, those forces have little left to offer: of the Army National Guard's 350,000 soldiers, only 86,000 are now available for rapid deployment to Iraq or

⁵ "Active Duty Personnel: 1789-present," Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Department of Defense, Washington, DC: 1998; "The Soldiers Almanac," *Soldiers*, 1998-2005; *Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2006—Appendix*, Office of Management and Budget, The White House, Washington, DC: 2005

⁶ "Defense Report," Institute of Land Warfare, Association of the United States Army, Arlington: January, 2001

⁷ "Remarks by Vice President of the United States to the Heritage Foundation," May 1, 2003, available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030501-9.html>

⁸ John Gordon IV and Jerry Sollinger, "The Army's Dilemma," *Parameters*, Summer 2004

⁹ Lawrence Korb, "All-Volunteer Army Shows Signs of Wear," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 27, 2005

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

anywhere else around the world.¹¹ The Army Reserve has only 18% of its total deployable end-strength left for near-term deployments.¹² With this level of commitment, it is clear that the Army cannot be extended any further, no matter whether it is to handle a crisis on the Korean Peninsula, a confrontation with Iran, or any other emergency that requires a sizeable US ground force.

2

The Army is stretched so thin that it cannot rotate its troops through proper rest and training cycles.

Lt. Gen. Jay Garner (ret.) has warned that overuse of the Army has led the active-duty force to become “burned out.”¹³ The frequency of deployments for all soldiers has increased, troops have been drawn from vital duties elsewhere in the world, and, after 2003, “no Army division was available as a strategic reserve.”¹⁴ As a consequence, training has suffered. Elite training units are being drawn from the National Training Center for use in Iraq, fewer units are being allowed the opportunity to rotate through training facilities¹⁵ and, in late 2003, the Pentagon cancelled “Bright Star,” a “longstanding biennial multilateral exercise” in Egypt, due to “a lack of available troops.”¹⁶

3

Recruitment and retention are suffering as the total force feels the strain of sustaining the current level of global operations.

Recruitment levels in the active-duty Army as well as the Army National Guard and Reserves are falling dramatically. The active-duty force has failed to meet its recruiting targets for three months in a row and predicts that it will fail to do so once again next month.¹⁷ Enrollment in the Army’s Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) has dropped 16% over the past two academic years.¹⁸ In the midst of their largest deployment since

¹¹ Associated Press, “US Military May Face Shortage of Reserves,” *The Boston Globe*, January 25, 2005

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ George C. Wilson, “Army Stuck in a New Catch-22,” *National Journal*, Vol. 35, Issue 41, October 11, 2003

¹⁴ Edward F. Bruner, “Military Forces: What is the Appropriate Size for the United States?” CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: January, 2005

¹⁵ James Kitfield, “Army Troops, Budget Stretched to the Limit,” *GovExec.com*, September 8, 2003; Stephen J. Hedges and Mike Dorning, “Army Extends GI Combat Duty,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 3, 2004; Louis Sahagun, “Army Trainers to Become Fighters in Iraq,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 2004

¹⁶ Mark Thompson and Michael Duffy, “Is the Army Stretched Too Thin?” *Time*, September 1, 2003

¹⁷ Reuters News Service, “US Military Comes Up Short Again on Recruiting,” *HoustonChronicle.com*, May 2, 2005

¹⁸ Josh White, “Enrollment in the Army ROTC Down in Past 2 School Years,” *Washington Post*, April 24, 2005

1950,¹⁹ recruitment for the Guard and Reserves is also down. Just as efforts to recruit tomorrow's soldiers have become more challenging, so too has the Army's ability to retain today's troops. To keep active-duty troops, the Army has had to resort to 'stop-loss' orders, and the percentage of Army Reserve soldiers planning to remain in uniform after their tours expire has dropped by 13% in the past year.²⁰

4

The Army's historically high reliance on the Guard and Reserves is draining communities of essential first responders.

The call-up of so many Reservists has pulled first responders from their civilian careers as firefighters, police officers, paramedics/EMTs, and health care workers, straining budgets and leaving states and municipalities seriously understaffed in the event of a major terrorist incident.²¹ 44% of 976 surveyed law enforcement agencies reported losing critical personnel to the military.²² Additionally, many National Guard units that were deployed for homeland security missions following 9/11 have instead been deployed to Iraq.²³

Despite these increasingly serious strains, the Bush Administration has not indicated any desire to place the issue of force increase squarely before the upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review. Indeed, as Michèle A. Flournoy, a Principal Deputy Secretary of Defense under President Clinton, and now a Senior Advisor at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, remarked, "we are facing the risk of breaking the US Army, and it is not being treated as a central issue..... It is the elephant sitting in the middle of the room, and we need to start addressing it at the highest levels of government."²⁴

There is little doubt that the US Army must be significantly expanded without delay. Senior military officials—both those on active-duty as well as retirees—have joined the growing chorus of analysts calling for the Army's end-strength to be dramatically increased.

Given the alarming findings of this report, and based on the recommendations of a host of experts, Third Way calls upon Congress to pass legislation to increase the permanent, authorized end-strength of the Army by 100,000 to 582,000. To delay is to imperil the safety of our soldiers and to erode the very security of our nation and our interests abroad.

¹⁹ "Iraq: Troop Reinforcements," Background Question and Answer, *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 23, 2004, available at: http://www.cfr.org/pub7671/sharon_otterman/iraq_troop_reinforcements.php, accessed May 3, 2005

²⁰ *May 2004 Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members: Tabulations of Responses*, DMDC Report No. 2004-015, Defense Manpower Data Center, Arlington, VA: October 2004

²¹ Liza Porteus, "Reserve Call-Up Drains Nation's First Responders," *FoxNews.com*, February 26, 2003

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Nathan Hodge, "QDR Ignoring Crisis in the Army, Panelists Say," *Defense Daily*, April 13, 2005

“Beware the **12-division strategy** for the **10-division Army.**”

-Gen. Eric Shinseki,
Army Chief of Staff June 2003²⁵

Finding I: The Army’s ability to meet potential threats is becoming increasingly imperiled.

In September 2003, the question that had previously been the nearly exclusive province of military analysts inside the beltway appeared in a *Time* cover story. “What good options would George W. Bush have,” the article’s authors asked, “if...North Korea’s Kim Jong Il decided to test the resilience of the relatively small ‘trip-wire’ force...in South Korea?”²⁶

The questions do not stop there. Given that the Army barely has the manpower to occupy Iraq—a country of roughly 25 million people—what would happen if it were required to conduct operations in Iran – a nation of 69 million people? Or Pakistan – a nation of 159 million? Or Indonesia – a nation of 241.9 million?²⁷ The United States faces such a predicament because we presently have what is nearly the smallest active-duty Army to serve America for the last fifty-five years.²⁸ Indeed, even before the commencement of the Global War on Terror, the war in Iraq and the occupation that followed it, the Land Warfare Institute of the Association of the US Army issued a report warning that “the Army’s combat divisions, separate brigades and [Armored Combat Regiments] [are] stretched so thin with deployments that responding to the outbreak of a single major theater war would be problematic.”²⁹

Today, the problem is worse. Indeed, in a startlingly frank May 2005 classified report to Congress, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff acknowledged that because of the drain on its resources caused by deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, there is now a “moderate” risk that the military will lack the ability to

²⁵ Eric K. Shinseki, “Remarks (prepared) for the 34th Chief of Staff of the Army Retirement Ceremony,” June 11, 2003, available at: <http://www.army.mil/features/ShinsekiFarewell/farewellremarks.htm>, accessed April 23, 2005

²⁶ Mark Thompson and Michael Duffy, “Is the Army Stretched Too Thin?” *Time*, September 1, 2003

²⁷ Population data from the Central Intelligence Agency’s *World Factbook - 2005*, available at: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>, accessed April 25, 2005

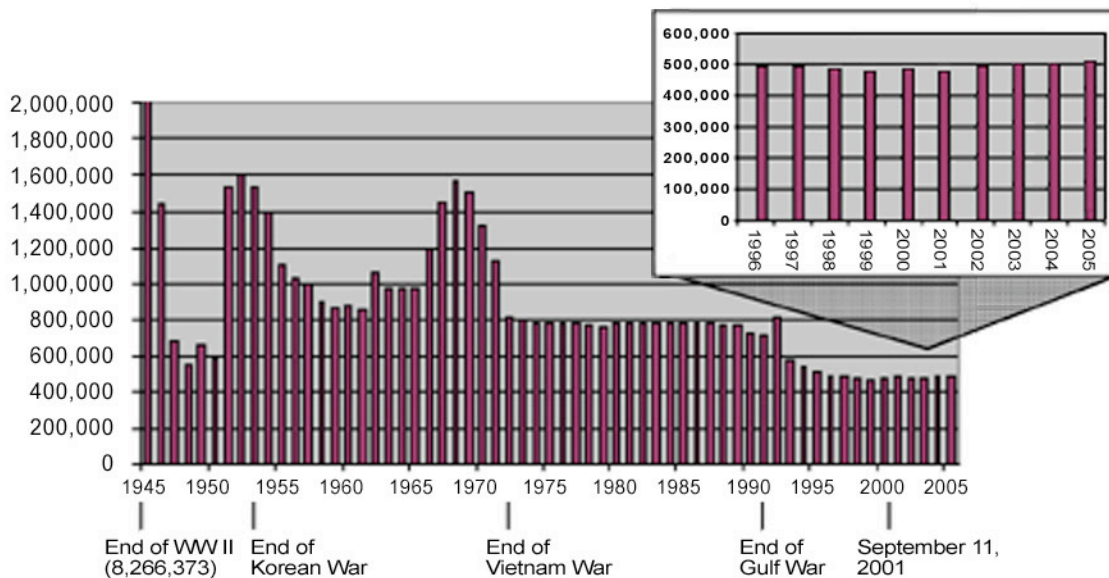
²⁸ “Active Duty Personnel: 1789-present,” Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Department of Defense, Washington, DC: 1998; “The Soldiers Almanac,” *Soldiers*, 1998-2005

²⁹ “Defense Report,” Institute of Land Warfare, Association of the United States Army, Arlington: January 2001

execute its missions.³⁰ This is not to say that the United States has suddenly become more vulnerable, but that, as the Chairman elaborated in the report, the military “may be unable to meet expectations for speed or precision as detailed in...current plans.” This, he continued, “may result in significantly extended campaign timelines, and achieving campaign objectives may result in higher casualties and collateral damage.”³¹ Coming from the man who serves as the President’s military advisor, that is not a statement which inspires confidence.

Through American history, our Army has grown to meet the demands of war and it has shrunk in times of peace. Yet neither the Administration nor the Congress have taken concrete steps to grow the Army to accommodate the tectonic shifts in our national security posture induced by 9/11 and the post-war situation in Iraq.

**Number of Active Duty Army Personnel By Year (1945-2005):
Negligible Change in End-Strength As A Result of 9/11**



Sources: "Active Duty Personnel: 1789 Through Present," Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Department of Defense, 1998; "DoD Active Duty Military Personnel Strength Levels: Fiscal Years 1950-2002," Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Department of Defense, 2002; "Key Activity Indicators: Operation and Maintenance Overview," Office of the Secretary of Defense, Department of Defense, Feb. 2004, 2005.

That is not to say that we did not react to 9/11 with a bigger military budget. Indeed, Pentagon spending grew by 37% above September 10th, 2001 levels.³² But the Army, which has become the principal mechanism for lasting force projection in some of the world’s most dangerous regions, is roughly the same

³⁰ Thom Shanker, "Pentagon Says Iraq Effort Limits Ability to Fight Other Conflicts," *New York Times*, May 3, 2005, quoting Gen. Richard B. Myers, *Annual Chairman's Risk Assessment*, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense, Washington, DC: 2005

³¹ *Ibid.* See, Mark Mazzetti, "Military at Risk, Congress Warned," *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 2005

³² Jeffrey Chamberlin, *FY2005 Defense Budget: Frequently Asked Questions*, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: July 2004

size now as it was during the post-Cold War “peace dividend” years of the mid-1990s.

By any measure, today’s Army is stretched thin. The National Military Strategy of the United States—an unclassified document produced by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that describes the overarching military strategy of the US armed forces—assigns the Army the task of operating with its sister services to:

- provide for homeland defense;³³
- deter aggression in four different regions around the world;³⁴
- conduct military operations in two overlapping but geographically disparate major campaigns;³⁵
- “win decisively” in one of the two campaigns before shifting focus to the next one, “even when”, as Chairman Myers wrote, the Army is “committed to a number of lesser contingencies.”³⁶

But with the Army currently deployed to 119 countries *other than* Iraq,³⁷ and with 24 of its available 33 active brigades already deployed overseas,³⁸ it is unclear where the Army would find the manpower to handle a sudden crisis without utilizing combat troops that were previously detailed to a vital mission elsewhere.

Indeed, of the Army’s current permanent, authorized end-strength of approximately 482,000 active-duty personnel:

- Nearly 136,000 of them (including combat and non-combat troops) are either in Iraq or are operating in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the region.³⁹
- 14,000 are engaged in reconstruction, peacekeeping and pacification operations in Afghanistan.⁴⁰
- Roughly 1,700 are keeping the peace in Kosovo.⁴¹
- Slightly more than 26,000 US troops are stationed along the Demilitarized Zone, facing off against a nuclear-armed, North Korean foe with a roughly 1,000,000-man army.⁴²

³³ General Richard B. Myers, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America: A Strategy for Today; a Vision for Tomorrow*, Department of Defense, Washington, DC: 2004

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ George C. Wilson, “Army Stuck in a New Catch-22” *National Journal*, Vol. 35, Issue 41, October 11, 2003

³⁸ William Matthews, “Numbers Clash: Hill Wants More Troops, but DoD Says End Strength is Fine,” *Armed Forces Journal*, February 2004

³⁹ As of December 31, 2004. Source: “Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Areas and by Country (309A),” Statistical Information Analyses Division, Department of Defense, Washington, DC: 2004.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Those situations account for approximately 178,000 troops; theoretically, then, this should leave approximately 304,000 soldiers to handle any other eventuality, anywhere in the world.

These numbers, however, do not tell the whole story. As the Director of the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) testified, only a fraction of the Army's strength is combat-ready and deployable at any given time. For example, of the approximately 482,000 active-duty Army personnel in service at the time of his testimony in late 2003:

- Approximately 110,000 were assigned to non-deployable billets (recruiters, instructors, administrative personnel attached to Army Headquarters, or State-side logisticians).
- At any one moment, approximately 68,000 were unavailable for deployment because they were in transit, in school, were injured or were sick.⁴³

This left the Army in 2003 with a ready-to-deploy active-duty force of close to 300,000 men and women, of which only 175,000 comprised combat units.⁴⁴ In 2005, therefore, with 178,000 troops committed abroad,⁴⁵ the Army has only about 126,000 active-duty troops available for use elsewhere, and only one-third of those are combat units.⁴⁶

On April 27th, 2005, Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee and described the actions that the Department of Defense has taken to increase this percentage of military personnel who are deployable and combat-ready. Such actions include transferring certain jobs—such as laundry service and food preparation—to civilian contractors.⁴⁷

On their face, such actions appear logical. Yet serious questions have arisen about the transfer of duties to contractors, namely concerning how contracts are awarded, the actual delivery of goods and services in a combat-zone, and 'law of war' issues surrounding the presence of ever-increasing numbers of forward-deployed civilians.⁴⁸ Additionally, as West Point Prof. Fred Kagan has

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Douglas Holtz-Eakin, *Statement of Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director of the Congressional Budget Office: The Ability of the US Military to Sustain an Occupation of Iraq*, testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, US House of Representatives, November 5, 2003

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ As of December 31, 2004. Source: "Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Areas and by Country (309A)," Statistical Information Analyses Division, Department of Defense, Washington, DC: 2004. Note that this number does not include the recent *temporary* end-strength increase of 30,000 troops recently agreed upon by the Secretary of Defense.

⁴⁶ Nicholas Confessore, "GI Woe," *Washington Monthly*, March 2003

⁴⁷ See, Donald H. Rumsfeld, "Statement of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld- Senate Appropriations Committee- Subcommittee on Defense, April 27, 2005" Department of Defense, Washington, DC: April 27, 2005, available at: <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2005/sp20050427-secdef1361.html>, accessed May 1, 2005

⁴⁸ On this latter issue, see, for example, Elizabeth Stanley-Mitchell, "Technology's Double-Edged Sword: The Case of US Army Battlefield Digitization." *Defence Analysis*, Vol. 17, No 3, 2001. See

noted, the Army may be harmed if in its attempt to boost its deployable combat-ready end-strength it outsources its “intellectual functions,” a move that, he warns, is “incredibly dangerous and damaging.”⁴⁹

In the final analysis, given the magnitude of threats that the US faces and the myriad of missions that the Army is expected to carry out, these armed forces-wide programmatic changes are no substitute for real and substantial measures to increase the Army’s end-strength.

What is the Army to do? It has traditionally looked to the Guard and Reserve to shore up its end-strength, but, drained by overuse in Iraq, those forces have little left to offer: of the Army National Guard’s 350,000 soldiers, only 86,000 are now available for rapid deployment to Iraq or anywhere else around the world.⁵⁰ Additionally, as the GAO warned in April 2004, the Army National Guard was never designed to be a rapid reaction force but one intended to serve as a follow-on force.⁵¹ As for the Army Reserve, it has only 18% of its total deployable end-strength left for near-term deployments.⁵² Indeed, according to the Congressional Research Service, after the Pentagon initiates the next major troop rotation this summer “the reserves [will be] pretty well shot.”⁵³

According to the Congressional Research Service, after the Pentagon initiates the next major troop rotation this summer, “the reserves [will be] pretty well shot.”⁵⁵

Given the reality that these numbers describe, the Army is imposing strains upon its forces to such an extent that the current Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Richard Cody, made explicit mention of the problem when he testified in 2004 before the House Armed Services Committee: **“Are we stretched thin with our active and our reserve component forces right now? Absolutely.”**⁵⁴

also, Andrew F. Krepinevich, “The Thin Green Line,” CSBA Backgrounder, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Washington, DC: August 2004

⁴⁹ Fred Kagan, comments at “The Future of the United States Army,” conference convened by the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC: April 11, 2005

⁵⁰ Associated Press, “US Military May Face Shortage of Reserves,” *Boston Globe*, January 25, 2005

⁵¹ Janet A. St. Laurent, *Statement of Janet A. St. Laurent, Director Defense Capabilities and Management, General Accounting Office*, testimony before the Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives, April 29, 2004

⁵² Associated Press, “US Military May Face Shortage of Reserves,” *The Boston Globe*, January 25, 2005

⁵³ Associated Press quoting Robert Goldlich of the Congressional Research Service in *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Gen Richard Cody, testimony before full committee hearing to receive testimony on Army and Marine Corps troop rotations for Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 and Operation Enduring Freedom 6 and the mobilization of the Army’s Individual Ready Reserve, House Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC: July 2004

This is an extraordinary admission for an active-duty General to make, let alone the second-ranking officer in the Army. Retired Flag officers are under no restrictions from pronouncing upon policy or identifying problems, and so retired Gen. Barry McCaffery, a division commander during the first Gulf War, was even blunter in his assessment. The pace and intensity of the current operational deployments, he said, risk “damag[ing]” the active force “significantly” or “even break[ing] it in the next five years.”⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Associated Press quoting Robert Goldlich of the Congressional Research Service in Associated Press, “US Military May Face Shortage of Reserves,” *The Boston Globe*, January 25, 2005

⁵⁶ James Kitfield, “Army Troops, Budget Stretched to the Limit,” *GovExec.com*, September 8, 2003

“The active-duty Army “has already been burned out” by trying to do too much with too few, and “the reserves are going to be burned out” by repeated activations.”

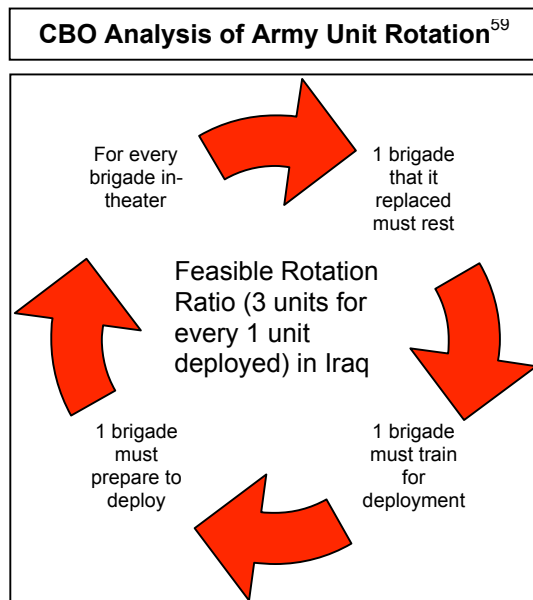
-Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, (ret.), 2003⁵⁷

Finding II: The Army is stretched so thin that it cannot rotate its troops through proper rest and training cycles.

Given the Army’s small size and its current commitments around the globe, the Pentagon has had to strain the existing force to meet the requirements of its mission in Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea and elsewhere. This has had a severe effect upon the training and readiness of the active-duty Army, as well as the Guard and Reserve.

The unforgiving calculus of troop rotation hampers the Army’s ability to send all of its fit, combat-trained personnel into the field at any given time. For every unit deployed in combat, there must be one unit resting and preparing to replace the deployed unit. Even this simplified 1:1 relationship results in the following proposition: that “only a fraction of...available units will be in the theater at any given time, with other units in various phases of a recover/ train/ prepare/ deploy cycle.”⁵⁸

The CBO’s calculations are even starker. As the CBO’s Director testified before the House Armed Services Committee, the real rotation ratio for the Army should be closer to 4:1 or greater.⁶⁰ That allows one unit to be resting, one training, and one preparing for deployment for each unit that is deployed in-theater.



⁵⁷ George C. Wilson. “Talking About Defense- Army Stuck in a New Catch-22,” *National Journal*, September 11, 2003

⁵⁸ Douglas Holtz-Eakin, *Statement of Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director of the Congressional Budget Office: The Ability of the US Military to Sustain an Occupation of Iraq*, Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, US House of Representatives, November 5, 2003

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* See also: Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Thin Green Line*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Washington, DC: August, 2004

When such a ratio cannot be sustained, the CBO warned in 2003, there is a “potential for adverse effects on the quality of the force.”⁶¹

Some senior military commentators believe that these “adverse effects” are already upon us. Lt. Gen. Jay Garner (ret.), for example, has remarked that “the active-duty Army “has already been burned out” by trying to do too much with too few.”⁶² What does Garner mean? When the Army is forced to violate its own best practices of troop rotation in order to compensate for its scarce manpower, rest and training suffer. Consider:

Rest

- Since the invasion of Iraq began, no active-duty Army combat unit has spent more than a year at home after being deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq.⁶³
- 63% of active-duty Army personnel have been deployed for combat, and nearly 40% of those soldiers were re-deployed into a combat zone after a brief rest following their first tour of duty.⁶⁴
- The 3rd Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division left Afghanistan in 2003, spent six months at home, and then was dispatched to Iraq to relieve the 3rd Infantry Division, elements of which had been in the region for nearly a year.⁶⁵ The 82nd Airborne’s deployment was extended through March of this year.
- The men and women of the Maryland Army National Guard have been mobilized three times in the past three years.⁶⁷

“... to maintain two divisions in Iraq for several years will require roughly all the ground forces [that] the United States now possesses simply due to demands for troop rotations...”

- Michael O’Hanlon,
CSIS, 2003⁶⁶

⁶¹ Douglas Holtz-Eakin, *Statement of Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Director of the Congressional Budget Office: The Ability of the US Military to Sustain an Occupation of Iraq*, Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, US House of Representatives, November 5, 2003

⁶² George C. Wilson, “Army Stuck in a New Catch-22” *National Journal*, Vol. 35, Issue 41, October 11, 2003

⁶³ Lawrence Korb, “All-Volunteer Army Shows Signs of Wear,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 27, 2005

⁶⁴ Mark Benjamin, “How Many Have Gone to War?” *Salon.com*, April 12, 2005

⁶⁵ James Kitfield, “Army Troops, Budget Stretched to the Limit,” *GovExec.com*, September 8, 2003

⁶⁶ Michael O’Hanlon, “Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Future of the U.S. Military,” Brookings Institute *Iraq Memo* series, June 19, 2003

⁶⁷ Lawrence Korb, “All-Volunteer Army Shows Signs of Wear,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 27, 2005

Training

As a result of the Army's desperate need for every available man and woman to be deployed, the Army has scaled back training opportunities for some of its units (in order to rush them to the field) and it has cancelled some of its scheduled training exercises. For example:

- In 2003, the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division returned to its base in Germany from an extended peacekeeping deployment in the Balkans. Instead of getting an opportunity to engage in a significant retraining period for the kind of close combat that typifies operations in Iraq, the brigade was immediately directed to begin to prepare for deploying to Iraq in March of 2004.⁶⁸
- The Army has scaled-back on its deployment of units to the Joint Readiness Training Center in Louisiana.⁶⁹
- In a decision likened to “eating [the] seed-corn” by military historian Col. Ken Allard (ret.),⁷⁰ the world-famous “Aggressor/Opposing Force Units” of the Army's National Training Center, who role-play foreign units and exist to provide vital testing and training for US troops, have themselves been withdrawn from their home deep in the California desert for deployment to Iraq in 2004. They were replaced by National Guard units.⁷¹
- “Bright Star,” a multi-national desert warfare exercise conducted every two years since 1981 (that Secretary Rumsfeld himself described as “one of our most important exercises”), was cancelled in 2003 due to lack of available US forces.⁷²

“What [the Army] has done
is literally sat down **and**
eaten the seed corn...”

- Col. Ken Allard (ret.), 2004

There are historical comparisons for this military state of affairs. As Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.) notes, America has previously downsized its Army and then demanded too much from it shortly thereafter: “[w]e as a nation have done [this] before at the peak of our power,” McCaffrey warns. **“We broke the Army after World War II and paid for it in Korea. We broke the Army after Vietnam and paid for it with the ‘hollow force’ of the 1970’s.**

⁶⁸ James Kitfield, “Army Troops, Budget Stretched to the Limit,” *GovExec.com*, September 8, 2003

⁶⁹ ibid.

⁷⁰ Stephen J. Hedges and Mike Dorning, “Army Extends GI Combat Duty,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 3, 2004

⁷¹ Louis Sahagun, “Army Trainers to Become Fighters in Iraq,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 2004

⁷² Esther Schrader, “Pentagon Scales Back Training Exercises Abroad,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 16, 2003

We are doing it again, with an Army that is overcommitted and under funded.⁷³

To be clear, Third Way is not suggesting that we are now facing a crisis of quality like the 'hollow force' of the 1970s. The soldiers serving today are among the finest ever to wear the uniform. The problem is that there are simply not enough of them.

⁷³ James Kitfield, "Army Troops, Budget Stretched to the Limit," *GovExec.com*, September 8, 2003

**“What keeps me awake at night is
what will this all-volunteer
force look like in 2007?”**

- Gen. Richard Cody, Vice Chief
of Staff of the Army, 2005⁷⁴

Finding III: Recruitment and retention are suffering as the total force feels the strain of sustaining the current level of global operations.

It is now clear that the strain placed upon the men and women of the US Army caused by deployments that are too long and too frequent is depressing the Army's ability to recruit and retain qualified individuals for active duty as well as the National Guard and Army Reserve.

Recruiting

In April 2005, the Army missed its monthly recruiting goal by 42%⁷⁵ and is now 15% behind its year-to-date recruiting target.⁷⁶ This is not an anomaly:

- In February, the Army missed its recruiting goal by 27% — the first time that it had failed to meet its monthly recruiting target since mid-2000.⁷⁷
- In March, the Army fell more than 30% short of its recruiting target.⁷⁸
- The Army predicts that it will fail to meet its May 2005 recruiting goals as well.⁷⁹
- The Army's Recruiting Command reports that female enlistment has dropped by 13% over the last 5 years and continues to decline this year.⁸⁰
- Enrollment in the Army's Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) has dropped by more than 16% over the 2003 and 2004 academic years.⁸¹

At a time when the Army cannot execute its assigned mission in Iraq without major assistance from its Guard and Reserve components (40% of all forces

⁷⁴ Richard A. Cody, "Testimony of General Richard A. Cody, Vice Chief of Staff of the United States Army, before the House Armed Services Committee (as prepared)," United States House of Representatives, February 2, 2005

⁷⁵ T. Trent Gegax, "Military: Blues, But Not Green," *Newsweek*, May 16, 2005

⁷⁶ Reuters News Service, "US Military Comes Up Short Again on Recruiting," *HoustonChronicle.com*, May 2, 2005

⁷⁷ Associated Press, "Army Expects to Miss Recruiting Goals Again," *CNN.com*, March 23, 2005

⁷⁸ Associated Press, "Army Recruiting Short Again In March," *CNN.com*, April 5, 2005

⁷⁹ Reuters News Service, "US Military Comes Up Short Again on Recruiting," *HoustonChronicle.com*, May 2, 2005

⁸⁰ Associated Press, "Waning Enlistment: Fewer Women, Blacks, Answer the Army's Call," *Detroit Free Press*, March 9, 2005

⁸¹ Josh White, "Enrollment in the Army ROTC Down in Past 2 School Years," *Washington Post*, April 24, 2005

operating as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom are Guard or Reserve),⁸² these active-duty recruiting numbers describe only part of the problem. Guard and Reserve recruiting is suffering, too. For example:

- Army National Guard recruiting lagged a full 25% behind its target level in early 2005.⁸³
- The Army Reserve missed its March recruiting goal by almost 50% and has not met a monthly goal since late 2004.⁸⁴

In an attempt to find more recruits, the Army has relaxed its recruiting standards. For example, the Army Guard and Reserve have increased the maximum age of recruits to 39 years old.⁸⁵ The Army has also recently mandated that only 90% of new recruits must be high school graduates, a drop of 2%.⁸⁶ Moreover, the Army has decreed that up to 2% of recruits can be accepted into the force even if they score in the lowest acceptable range on the Army's entrance exam.⁸⁷ By April 2005, the number of high school drop-outs accepted into the Army's ranks had almost doubled: comprising 9% of the total pool of recruits.⁸⁸ These decisions could bode ill for the Army's goal of transforming into a future warfighting force even more dependent upon individual soldiers' use of next-generation digital technologies.

Under immense pressure to fill the ranks, the Army's recruiting command has also reversed a long-held policy that dismissed its recruiters upon confirmation that they had committed a serious "impropriety" such as doctoring a substandard recruit's high school diploma or helping them cheat on the entrance exam. "My shift in thinking," said Maj. Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, the Chief of Army Recruiting recently told a journalist, "was that if an individual was accused of doctoring a high school diploma, it was an open-and-shut case. It still may be, but now I look at [that] person's value to the [recruiting] command first."⁸⁹

These may be some of the most serious signs of structural stress upon an Army that has, in the last 25 years, prided itself upon the quality of its recruits. As Lawrence Korb—a former Assistant Secretary of Defense and current member of the non-partisan Council on Foreign Relations—notes, in order "to conduct combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as meet the other commitments for ground troops around the globe, the Pentagon has been forced

⁸² H. Steven Blum, "CNGB Executive Summary," in *2006 National Guard Posture Statement*, Office of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, National Guard Bureau, Arlington, VA: 2005

⁸³ Mark Benjamin, "How Many Have Gone to War?" *Salon.com*, April 12, 2005

⁸⁴ Associated Press, "Army Recruiting Short Again in March," *CNN.com*, April 5, 2005

⁸⁵ Associated Press, "Army Eases Age Limit for Guard, Reserve," *Washington Post*, March 23, 2005

⁸⁶ Eric Schmitt, "Its Recruitment Goals Pressing, the Army Will Ease Some Standards," *New York Times*, October 1, 2004

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Michael Killian, Deborah Horan, "Army, National Guard Fail to Meet Recruitment Goals," *Chicago Tribune*, April 12, 2005.

⁸⁹ Damien Cave, "Army Recruiters Say They Felt Pressure to Bend Rules," *New York Times*, May 3, 2005

to violate the policies that have been established during the past 30 years to retain high quality people in the [Army].⁹⁰ If the Army were bigger—if deployment tempos could be decreased and if rest-times after deployments could be increased—it is certain that these numbers would improve.

Retention

Faced with a growing need for troops and a shrinking supply of enlistees, the Army has instituted policies such as ‘stop-loss,’ which has prevented 40,000 soldiers from departing the service at the end of their previously agreed upon tour.⁹¹ While ‘stop-loss’ may provide the Army with more troops in the short-term, it is deeply damaging to long-term recruitment and retention efforts, as it signals to some prospective recruits that any enlistment may in fact turn into a series of indefinite tours.⁹²

“There’s a potential for a catastrophic fall off. ... How many people in these units want to deploy one [out of] three years for the next half decade?”

- Michael O’Hanlon, CSIS, 2003⁹³

The situation is even worse in the Guard and Reserves, where retention is suffering substantially.⁹⁴ The percentage of Army Reserve personnel who plan to remain in the military after their tour of duty ends has shrunk from 73% to 66% over 2004.⁹⁵ For those who served in Iraq, the *Army Times* reports, the story is even worse. Indeed, “fewer than half of Army Reserve personnel who serve/served in Iraq say that they are “likely” or “very likely” to remain in the Reserves.”⁹⁶

When asked to list reasons why they will leave the service:

- 71% cite family burdens.⁹⁷
- 57% cite too many activations and/or deployments.⁹⁸

⁹⁰ Lawrence Korb, “All-Volunteer Army Shows Signs of Wear,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 27, 2005

⁹¹ Lee Hockstader, “Army Stops Many Soldiers From Quitting,” *Washington Post*, December 29, 2003; Reuters, “Army Orders Further Involuntary Troop Call-Up,” *Reuters.com*, March 23, 2005

⁹² Associated Press, “Army Delays Retirements for Iraq-bound Troops: ‘Stop-loss’ Order Requires Soldiers to Deploy Before Leaving Service,” *MSNBC.com*, June 2, 2004

⁹³ Quoted by Seth Stern, “Iraq Effect Shakes National Guard,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, September 18, 2003

⁹⁴ *May 2004 Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members: Tabulations of Responses*, DMDC Report No. 2004-015, Defense Manpower Data Center, Arlington, VA: October 2004

⁹⁵ Vince Crawley, “Pushed Too Far? Low Morale Spurs Retention Worries in the Reserves,” *ArmyTimes.com*, September 7, 2004

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *May 2004 Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members: Tabulations of Responses*, DMDC Report No. 2004-015, Defense Manpower Data Center, Arlington, VA: October 2004

- 65% cite lengthy activations and/or deployments.⁹⁹

Moreover, in a force in which 56% of all soldiers are married, their spouses' opinions matter significantly. It is therefore worrisome that 45% of spouses identify the rate of activations/deployments to be the main reason that they view participation in the Guard and/or Reserve negatively.

There is no easy solution to this problem. With its structure stressed by overuse, ***the Army must either be used less or its end-strength***

“Fewer than half of Army Reserve personnel who serve/served in Iraq say that they are “likely” or “very likely” to remain in the Reserves.”

- *Army Times*, 2004¹⁰⁰

must be increased. Given that the immediate withdrawal of the Army from its many duties around the world is not in the best interest of this country, the way forward is clear: the Army's end-strength must be increased.

This conclusion, however, poses a classic 'chicken vs. egg' conundrum: if the size of the Army is negatively impacting recruitment and retention, and the best way to alleviate this

problem is to increase the end-strength of the Army, where will the Army find the men and women to add to its ranks? The solution is to couple any increase of end-strength with an innovative recruiting strategy that not only topples the barriers that prevent or dissuade many Americans from serving, but that also reassures them that a re-sized force will allow normal rotations and deployment schedules.

There are a number of steps that should be considered to increase recruitment and retention, including education incentives, re-tooling and adjusting pay and enlistment bonuses, and investigating time-of-service options.¹⁰¹ Still, the primary obstacle to recruitment and retention is the over-use of our soldiers. Until today's troops and tomorrow's recruits see their government make major commitments to ending the trend of increasingly frequent and long deployments, the 'vicious cycle' of dwindling numbers of troops resulting in fewer and fewer recruits will not be broken.

This much is certain: Americans will answer the call to service if military recruiters are able to assure prospective recruits that their deployments will be less burdensome and their tours of duty more predictable.

⁹⁸ ibid.

⁹⁹ ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Vince Crawley, "Pushed Too Far? Low Morale Spurs Retention Worries in the Reserves," *ArmyTimes.com*, September 7, 2004

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Cindy Williams, ed., *Filling the Ranks: Transforming the US Military Personnel System*, The MIT Press, Cambridge: 2004

“Unless the [Defense Department], Congress, and the States work closely to address these challenges, Guard units may continue to experience a high pace of operations and declining readiness that could affect their ability to meet future capabilities both at home and overseas.”

- Janet St. Laurent, Director of Defense Capabilities and Management, GAO, 2004¹⁰²

Finding IV: The Army’s historically high reliance on the Guard and Reserves is draining communities of essential first responders.

A substantial percentage of the men and women who serve in the Army National Guard and Reserves are also many of this nation’s most vital first responders. For example:

- 9% of police officers in Little Rock, Arkansas are reservists or National Guard members.¹⁰³
- Of the 414 officers in the Montgomery, Alabama Police Department, 74 are members of the Reserve or Guard.¹⁰⁴
- Of the 528 members of the Colorado State Patrol, 52 are reservists.¹⁰⁵
- In Texas, 763 employees of the prison system are reservists or members of the National Guard.¹⁰⁶

There is an understandable logic underlying this assumption. Like the Army, police and fire departments look for physical fitness, courage, intelligence, and selflessness in their recruits. In the wake of 9/11, through their service as first responders, these men and women are now asked to protect our shores, our industries, our communications, our power networks and our people from the terrorist threat.

The widespread call-up of these first-responders to fulfill the enormous personnel requirements of the war in Iraq, however, has eroded the ability of cities and towns across the country to prepare to respond to a future terrorist attack.¹⁰⁷ It has also affected their ability to respond to and prevent conventional crimes and

¹⁰² Janet A. St. Laurent, “Testimony of Janet St. Laurent, Director of Defense Capabilities, GAO: Observations on Recent National Guard Use in Overseas and Homeland Missions and Future Challenges,” before the Committee on Government Reform, United States House of Representatives, April 29, 2004

¹⁰³ Little Rock Police Department, April 27, 2005

¹⁰⁴ Liza Porteus, “Reserve Call-Up Drains Nation’s First Responders,” *FoxNews.com*, February 26, 2003

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

emergencies. How will Wilmington, Delaware, for example, maintain its law enforcement standards and preparedness if the roughly 100 members of the 280 member-strong police force who are reservists and Guard members are suddenly called to military duty?¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the International Association of Fire Chiefs estimates that approximately 75,000 firefighters nation-wide were lost to call-ups in 2003.¹⁰⁹

For fire and police departments—many of which are already facing shrinking budgets and trying to make do with fewer resources—the deployment of so many reservists and Guard members is another serious hurdle to their attempt to serve and protect their communities. Indeed, according to the Police Executive Research Forum, 44% of 976 law enforcement agencies surveyed in the early stages of Guard and Reserve call-ups reported losing personnel to the military.¹¹⁰ “It’s like a triple squeeze,” said a National League of Cities spokesperson. “The reserve call-ups for some of these cities and towns is just one more blow.”¹¹¹

44% of 976 law enforcement agencies surveyed... reported losing personnel to the military.

In addition to severe manpower and safety concerns, there are serious budgetary implications to such call-ups. Many empty billets in fire and police departments vacated by deployed Guard members or reservists must be covered by existing personnel working expensive overtime shifts, or by temporary hires who do not have the experience of the deployed individual. As one respondent to an International Association of Fire Chiefs poll stated: “as with the [first] Gulf War...and again in 2001-2002 immediately following the terrorist attacks, we covered our staffing shortages with overtime that was not budgeted. The downside...is that to meet our budget bottom line, other programs, projects, and purchases were deferred. While we support our reservists, the impact [of their departure] is certainly felt in our organization.”¹¹²

How much does it cost departments to lose critical personnel to Reserve and Guard mobilizations? Take terrorist Target Number One—New York City—as an example.

According to a report issued by Senator Charles Schumer (based upon data from the New York City Fire and Police Departments), it costs the city \$990 per week when a reservist is activated and becomes unavailable to fulfill his obligations as

¹⁰⁸ Wilmington Police Department, April 17, 2005

¹⁰⁹ Liza Porteus, “Reserve Call-Up Drains Nation’s First Responders,” *FoxNews.com*, February 26, 2003

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² International Association of Fire Chiefs, “Military Reserve Call-Up Effects on America’s Fire Departments- IAFC Member Survey,” January 23, 2003, available at: www.iafc.org/downloads/milsurveyresults.pdf

a police officer. It costs the city \$4,635 when a reservist is activated and can no longer serve as a firefighter. Currently, there are 225 New York City firefighters and police officers activated for a total cost to the city of \$316,485 per week, or \$16.5 million annually.

COSTS WHEN RESERVISTS ARE ACTIVATED (NYC)					
Organization	Total Number of Reservists	Reservists On Active Duty	Cost per Week per Reservist	Current Cost Per Week	Potential Cost Per Week
New York City Police Department	1192	212	\$990	\$209,880	\$1,180,080
New York City Emergency Medical Technicians	68	10	\$1,275	\$12,750	\$86,700
Fire Department of New York City	220	23	\$4,635	\$106,605	\$1,019,700
Suffolk County Police Department	107	15	\$1,870	\$28,050	\$200,090
Nassau County Police Department	61	4	\$1,389	\$5,556	\$84,729
New York State Police	276	10	\$983	\$9,830	\$271,308

For the purposes of this chart, both National Guardsmen and military reservists are called "reservists." Both organizations receive comparable salaries while on active duty. The "cost per week per reservist" is determined by subtracting the weekly average reservist salary of \$765 from the weekly expense incurred by a department in covering the wages and fringe benefits of the typical reservist first responder.

Source: Office of Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-NY), "Schumer: Reservist Call-ups Could Take Hundreds of NYC and LI NYPD, FDNY, EMT Off the Streets, Cost Area Millions of Dollars," February 3, 2003, available online at http://schumer.senate.gov/SchumerWebsite/pressroom/press_releases/PR01445.html

In a time of budget crises and austerity measures, the police and fire departments can ill-afford the cost of such a widespread call-up of reserves and Guard Members. Indeed, if all of the reservists who serve in the NYPD and FDNY were called to duty, it would cost New York City \$2.2 million per week and \$114.4 million annually: not an unthinkable possibility in a time of extended unit deployments.

The problems that states face when their National Guard is called up and deployed in its entirety do not begin and end with budgetary woes. While the Reserves are designed to back-fill the capabilities of the active-duty force, the Guard fulfills an important constabulary and disaster relief role on the state level as well. Over-reliance upon the Guard comes at a steep price as the other missions that it was designed to fulfill, such as homeland security and natural disaster response, are neglected. States such as Florida depend heavily upon the Guard to perform relief missions in the wake of devastating hurricanes. Other states, particularly in the West,

“While the high use of the National Guard since September 11 [2001] has led to declining war-fighting readiness of non-deployed Army and Air Guard units, **the decline is most significant for the Army Guard.** To meet wartime needs, the Army Guard has had to take personnel and equipment from units that had not been activated to ready others for deployment.”

- Janet St. Laurent,
Director of Defense Capabilities and
Management, GAO, 2004¹¹⁴

depend upon the Guard and its unique capabilities to help contain wildfires that threaten some of this country’s largest forests. The deployment of the Oregon National Guard to Iraq, for example, has cut that state’s usual number of forest firefighters in half. To deploy the Guard so extensively erodes the states’ capacity to respond to natural and manmade catastrophes.¹¹³

¹¹³ Angela Galloway, “Governors Say War is Draining the States: Guard Call-Up Hurts Emergency Resources, Federal Officials Told,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, July 20, 2004

¹¹⁴ Janet A. St. Laurent, *Statement of Janet A. St. Laurent, Director Defense Capabilities and Management, General Accounting Office*, testimony before the Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives, April 29, 2004

“The...question isn’t whether the 1st Cavalry is going to get run out of Baghdad – it’s not. The...question is, if you’ve got 70% of your combat battalions in the US Army deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq, South Korea and elsewhere, can you maintain this kind of... presence in that many places? The answer is no. But **if we take action now to increase the size of the Army...we’ll be able to handle this global reach.**”

-Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.), 2004¹¹⁵

Conclusion and Recommendations

As the United States Army has attempted to fulfill its multitude of missions around the globe with resources shaped and determined by pre-9/11/pre-war in Iraq thinking, it has been forced to engage in a dangerous balancing act. Indeed, although the Defense Department’s budget has increased by more than 37% since late 2001, the Army’s permanent, authorized end-strength since that date has remained virtually level.¹¹⁶ Our nation can ill-afford to continue to starve the Army of the manpower it so desperately requires. Therefore, **Third Way recommends that Congress act to pass legislation to increase the permanent, authorized end-strength of the US Army by 100,000 to 582,000 troops.**

An increase of 100,000 troops has been endorsed by a number of senior retired Army officers as well as policy experts. For example:

- Gen. Wayne A. Downing (ret.), a former Commander-in-Chief of the US Special Operations Command, a former member of the Bremer Commission, Deputy National Security Advisor for Combating Terrorism, and a long-serving infantry officer, said on NBC’s *Meet the Press* in December 2004 that “...the Army...cannot take on the missions that they have now and that we can foresee for the foreseeable future. ...We've seen this thing probably for clearly for over a year. ...[T]he world has changed and you can't make the world into what you want it to be. You've got to accept the world for what it is and you've got to anticipate the missions that you have. **The only prudent thing to do is plus up the Army. Now, what should that number be? Certainly 100,000 rings fairly true with me.**”¹¹⁷
- Maj. Gen. Robert Scales (ret.) has warned that the degree to which the Army is overstretched imperils its ability to “transform itself and fight a

¹¹⁵ Morton Abramowitz, Richard Lugar, and Barry McCaffrey, “What Should Bush Do?” *Time*, April 11, 2004

¹¹⁶ Jeffrey Chamberlin, *FY2005 Defense Budget: Frequently Asked Questions*, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: July 2004

¹¹⁷ “Transcript for December 12,” *Meet the Press with Tim Russert*, December 12, 2004, available at: <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/6702005/>

war at the same time” and he has stated that he believes that **“decision-makers should start to think about boosting the size of the active-duty Army by at least 100,000.”**¹¹⁸

- Lt. Gen. Buster C. Glosson (ret.) and Col. Robert Killebrew (ret.) both signed their name to a recent letter from the Project for a New American Century **that requested the Congress to act to increase the Army’s end-strength “by 25,000 troops a year for the next several years.”**¹¹⁹ The letter read, in part, that “[t]he United States military is too small for the responsibilities we are asking it to assume. Those responsibilities are real and important. They are not going away. The United States will not and should not become less engaged in the world in the years to come. But our national security, global peace and stability, and the defense and promotion of freedom in the post-9/11 world require a larger military force than we have today. The administration has unfortunately resisted increasing our ground forces to the size needed to meet today’s (and tomorrow’s) missions and challenges.”¹²⁰
- Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.) wrote that, **“We need 80,000 or more troops added to the US Army.”**¹²¹
- Prof. Fred Kagan—a military historian at the United States Military Academy at West Point—supports an increase of 100,000. During an American Enterprise Institute conference on the future of the US Army held in April of 2005, he stated that: **“I personally think we probably need another 100,000 or so soldiers in the active force... We have used the [non-operational field units], especially the military educational establishment, as bill payers for the inadequacy of the active force, and the education and intellectual side of the Army has suffered very, very badly.”**¹²²

The Army estimates that it would cost approximately \$2 billion per year for a 10,000 troop increase. Even if we estimate the cost, therefore, of a 100,000 troop increase at \$20 billion per year,¹²³ this number represents less than 5% of the total Department of Defense FY06 discretionary budget authority. **Indeed, this**

¹¹⁸ Nathan Hodge, “QDR Ignoring Crisis in the Army, Panelists Say,” *Defense Daily*, April 13, 2005

¹¹⁹ See, “Letter to Congress on Increasing US Ground Force,” Project for the New American Century, January 28th, 2005, available at: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/defense-20050128.htm>

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Morton Abramowitz, Richard Lugar and Barry McCaffrey, “What Should Bush Do?” *Time*, April 19, 2004

¹²² Fred Kagan, “The Future of the United States Army: Panel II: Force Size, Force Structure, and Force Posture,” American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC: April 11, 2005

¹²³ Lawrence Korb, “Six Steps to a Safer America,” Center for American Progress, January 29, 2004

would be a mere fraction of the 37% overall increase in the defense budget since September 11, 2001.¹²⁴

In Third Way's view, the cost of such an increase should not stand in the way of attempting to relieve the current operational strain upon the United States Army. **Indeed, the issue is not whether we can afford this increase, but whether we can afford the consequences to our all-volunteer force if we fail to undertake it.**

In his 2003 farewell address to the Army on the occasion of his retirement, Gen. Erik K. Shinseki, the 34th Chief of Staff of the Army, cautioned politicians and the Army leadership alike to "beware the 12-division strategy for a 10-division Army." He continued, by saying that "our Soldiers and families bear the risk and the hardship of carrying a mission load that exceeds what force capabilities we can sustain, so we must alleviate risk and hardship by our willingness to resource the mission requirement."¹²⁵

The requirement for the Army to not only 'sprint,' but also enter into long-term efforts—'marathons'—whether in an extended peace-keeping mission in Sudan or in a combat operation in any of the world's trouble spots—is not fading with the new realities of the post-Cold War era, it is growing. With the Army's end-strength at a historically low level, however, the Army's ability to meet this requirement is profoundly undermined. In order to enable our Army to best serve the national security interests of the United States, the Army's permanent, authorized end-strength must be increased by 100,000. Only then will it be able to meet the security challenges of the 21st century now without threatening its capacity to do so in future years.

¹²⁴ Jeffrey Chamberlin, *FY2005 Defense Budget: Frequently Asked Questions*, CRS Report for Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC: July 2004; Note that the 37% increase refers to total national defense budget function outlays including defense spending supplementals.

¹²⁵ Eric K. Shinseki, "Remarks (prepared) for the 34th Chief of Staff of the Army Retirement Ceremony," June 11, 2003, available at: <http://www.army.mil/features/ShinsekiFarewell/farewellremarks.htm>, accessed April 23, 2005

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