
Defense Report

AUSA



The First Demand of Military Reductions: Facing Reality

In our headlong rush to cash in on the so-called peace dividend, there seems to be little or no thought given to what is really going on in today's world. Isn't anyone concerned about what the precipitous reduction in our defenses would do to the effectiveness of the remaining force or to the welfare of the people in the armed services?

Now that the budget and its implications for the defense program have been revealed, it appears that—for the Army in particular—the outcome is even worse than we might have imagined. The Army leadership is talking about reducing the active Army to 580,000—its size when the Korean War broke out. There are others in Washington who would reduce the Army even more.

Moreover, there is pressure to ignore the Army game plan, which reduces the force at a sensible rate, retains its effectiveness, and still insures fair treatment for the people in uniform.

Unfortunately, there are many who would simply slash immediately—not understanding or not caring about the consequences to the nation or to the people who wear its uniform.

To attempt to justify draconian cuts in our national security posture on the basis that the cold war is ended, really makes you wonder. Certainly, true peace and stability are far from being the estate in Europe today. The *hope* is there; but the *reality* is yet to come.

The domination of the Warsaw Pact has receded, but left in its wake are intense nationalism and some ancient feuds involving ethnic rivalries and territorial conflicts. Also, the Russian Army will continue to be the largest in the world—under any scenario, even arms control.

For our part, the U.S. Army has a good plan that would manage the reductions of our forces while preserving its quality and maintaining a high degree of readiness. In addition, the Army plan insures fair treatment for our high quality soldiers and their families by holding personnel turbulence to a minimum, by foregoing many costly transfers of equipment and by minimizing disruptions to training. In short, the Army plan would firmly back the moral commitment our government made when we asked these bright young soldiers to don their nation's uniform. Congress should promptly and fully support the Army's reorganization plan.