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TODAY'S VICTORIES AND TOMORROW'S ARMY

by

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The Victories: The Last 20 Months

The events of the last 20 months have been simply breathtaking. The collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, Operation Just Cause in Panama and the most recent operation, Desert Storm. The military has been blessed with an outstanding team — General Colin Powell, our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. Brilliant leadership! And President Bush's strategic vision and leadership have been outstanding.

The Desert Storm *victory* was not the result of a seven-month conflict, or a 44-day air campaign, nor even a successful 100-hour ground campaign. Rather, the victory was a result of visionary changes begun in the 1970s by the Army leadership assisted by countless numbers of men and women through the intervening years.

There were five major thrusts or vectors initiated in the mid-1970s. They were:

- Total Force policy (active and reserve components);
- Training transformation;
- Doctrinal reformation;
- Volunteer Army;
- Modernization program.

Together, these were the seeds of victory harvested 15 years later on the battlefield of the Kuwait Theater of Operations.

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The Genesis of Victory

A word about each of these vectors:

The *Total Force policy* was an Abrams dictum. General Creighton Abrams, then Army Chief of Staff and a former Deputy for Reserve Forces, stated that the next time America went to war it would take its reserve forces. (Historian Bob Sorley recalls those days in an excellent article in the *Army War College* journal, "Parameters.") The Army Staff organized Army divisions with National Guard "roundout" combat brigades in each of six divisions. Combat support units in the reserve forces augmented regular units to provide sustainable combat forces. Reserve units accompanied active units on exercises around the globe — Reforger in Europe, Bright Star in Egypt, Team Spirit in Korea and Blazing Trails in Latin America.

In Desert Shield/Desert Storm, some 150,000 Army Reservists and Guardsmen rallied to the call to arms; as of 26 June 1991, some 30,000 of those called still serve. I believe that much of the support our forces enjoyed from their countrymen was in large measure due to the call-up of hometown American Guardsmen and Reservists. General Abrams' policy worked — and worked well!

The *training transformation* saw the rise of our Maneuver Training Centers: Fort Irwin — the National Training Center envisioned by General Paul Gorman; General Bill Richardson's Joint Readiness Training Center for light forces; and the newly-established Combat Center in Hohenfels, Germany. The tenets that make these training centers unique include force-on-force free play (no scripted events) and world-class opposing forces — the best Soviet Brigade in the world is located at Fort Irwin, California. It was transformed into an Iraqi Brigade when it appeared we would have to fight in Kuwait. In each of our training centers, detailed after-action reviews are held after each exercise, a form of self-critique unparalleled in any army or any culture.

The training transformation also included the widespread use of simulation, not only for aircraft, but for tanks and fighting vehicles. The necessary investments were made in fuel and spare parts to sustain a high tempo of peacetime training and operations so that soldiers and leaders could learn their craft. This training renaissance had as its credo: Leave the mistakes at the training centers so as to reduce casualties, should we have to go to war.

A *doctrinal reformation* was undertaken by the Army during this same period. The Active Defense, with its orientation on Europe, made its appearance in 1975. This doctrine gave way in 1982 to the AirLand Battle Doctrine with its emphasis on offense on a global scale. For the past decade the Army has trained to the requirements and standards of AirLand Battle Doctrine — Desert Storm was the result. *AirLand Operations* (FM 525-5) has just appeared (June 1991) as the draft doctrine to see the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force into the 21st century. As in Just Cause and Desert Storm, agility, depth, initiative and synchronization — plus overwhelming combat power — will enable the United States and coalition forces to terminate hostilities quickly with reduced casualties, wherever and whenever needed.

The *Volunteer Army*, as most military audiences know, reached its nadir in 1979 when none of the services achieved its recruiting objectives. Senators Nunn and Warner led the passage of legislation to achieve wage parity in 1980 — the last time parity was achieved, by the way. The Army experimented with an educational stipend to attract higher-quality recruits in 1980 and extended those opportunities (known as the Army College Fund) nationwide in 1981. The Army's

"Be All You Can Be" advertising campaign focused on the high school graduate and those scoring in the upper half in their aptitude testing. After eight years of work, Congress passed the Montgomery GI Bill in 1987 to extend to all recruits in all services the opportunity to attend college in return for service in the armed forces. The high-quality men and women of all services — Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines — were of significant military advantage during Operations Just Cause and Desert Storm.

A *modernization program* in the mid-1970s, when procurement money was scarce, included what the leadership of the Army called "The Big Five" to demark the Army's priorities for acquisition of equipment. The designation of the Big Five harnessed Army military and civilian leadership to solidly support, fund and test — to see through to completion and fielding — the essential items of military equipment which were to enable AirLand Battle Doctrine to be fought as envisioned. As the years wore on, as civilian and military leadership changed and the items of equipment suffered through their birthing rites, the Big Five remained immutable. You know them as the Abrams M1 Tank, Bradley Fighting Vehicle and its scout version, AH-64 Apache, UH-60 Black Hawk and Patriot Air Defense Missile System. To this group you might add the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS). All of these systems distinguished themselves in combat in Operation Desert Storm. Those systems were cast in stone in the 1970s, and lieutenant colonels graduated to lieutenant general with these systems tattooed on their brains. Vision and persistence turned into reality.

Strategic Vision

Our leaders in the 1970s did well for us; they had a strategic vision of what could be, codified the vision and passed it on to their successors with vision intact. Strategic vision has two functions: First, it inculcates a sense of confidence throughout the organization that the strategic leaders are on top of things and know where they want to take the organization; second, it allows subordinate elements to align their own sense of purpose and direction with that of the strategic leadership, which is essential for building organization-wide consensus, loyalty and commitment.

The vision of the 1970s was tested on the desert sands of the Kuwait Theater of Operations. American forces fought and won, quickly and with few casualties. They won as envisioned.

Looking Ahead

If we can agree that the five vectors I have just described were important to the success of the American Army in Operations Just Cause and Desert Storm, then we can use this paradigm to set a course for tomorrow's Army.

Let's look at the challenges and the way ahead in each of these categories: Total Force policy, training, doctrine, Volunteer Army and Army modernization.

First of all, a maxim: If your weapon, your doctrine, your tactics went to war in Desert Storm, you can assume it has been compromised! The Soviets and other countries are taking apart what occurred there to assess the strengths and weaknesses in our technology, doctrine and tactics. They will make technological and operational adjustments to counter our strengths and exploit our weaknesses.

Major General Tom Tait is conducting a detailed after-action review for the Army, as was done by General Donn Starry after the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. We should all read his review carefully when it is published this fall.

Total Force Policy. It works! Some 150,000 Guardsmen and Reservists were called to duty; 30,000 remain on duty today. But we do need to refine Army expectations on reserve component combat unit proficiency, whether it be at platoon or brigade level. Then we should issue the necessary orders, to be effective 1 October 1991, and supervise to make those standards a reality. Readiness is an issue of standards met and maintained; leadership can make readiness routine.

By far, the most vexing issue is the personnel strength issue. The House of Representatives has said "no cut" in reserve strength in 1992. The proposed cut of 75,000 for 1992 was on a ramp set by Secretary Cheney to reach 550,000 Guardsmen and Reservists by 1995, when the active strength is destined to reach 535,000. The ramps were set to maintain the correct balance and complementary relationship between the active and reserve components (an Army division of approximately 40,000 soldiers, half in the active force and half in the reserve forces). Thus, the cut of 200,000 members of the reserve force is fully consistent with the elimination of 10 Army divisions.

If allowed to stand, the "no cut" policy could cost the Army as much as \$11 billion dollars over six years and create a readiness problem. This issue must be resolved, and resolved soon.

Strength decisions affect every aspect of the personnel system. Recruiting objectives, Reserve Officer Training Corps enrollment, retention standards and bonus needs, promotion opportunity, pay and allowances, training base capacity, professional schooling opportunities — all are dependent upon the active and reserve component strength decisions that will be reached by Congress.

Quality management that is fair and agreeable to soldiers, families and communities can be realized with an appropriate long-range view of strength management. Year-to-year strength determinations, on the other hand, will exacerbate good management and will be wasteful.

Solid five-year planning can reduce the anxiety of our quality soldiers and their families, both active and reserve, while promoting the efficient management Congress should expect from the services. Congress recognized the need for this concept for quality personnel management when it directed the Army to size its active duty strength and retention programs for both officers and enlisted to meet a goal of 520,000 for 1995. This wise language was contained in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 1991.

Whatever the outcome of the strength deliberations for the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve, Congress must enact strength goals for active, Guard and Reserve for 1995, as was done in the Defense Act for FY 1991. That done, Congress can expect quality management, fair treatment of soldiers and families, and fiscally responsible budgeting for personnel programs. Most of all, Congress can expect a trained and ready Army — active, Guard and Reserve — to meet the national security needs of the nation.

Failing this, we will continue inefficient and wasteful practices in the strength management of the reserve forces. Year-to-year strength decisions will lead to marginal changes in the strength of units to meet strength goals, a practice that can lead to hollow, costly and unready reserve units. We do not have to have it that way.

Training Vision. With respect to training vision we must move toward a truly integrated joint *National Training Center*. Such a center would include all four services, including the Navy's Over Blue Water training units, now located at Mirimar Naval Air Station.

The composition of the new expanded National Training Center concept would be an analogue to a theater of war. All echelons, individual combatant to CINC, would be "in the fight" in the expanded terrain space made by linking the services' independent air and ground maneuver areas. The simulation can be networked to U.S. forces and to our allies worldwide.

In addition, validation for simulations and training techniques using such systems as Tactical Engagement Simulation (TES), virtual TES (SIMNET-like virtual battle), and equipment-in-the-loop simulation can be interlinked in a multi-echelon battle simulation.

The current service-unique centers can be transformed into a joint system so that Marine Corps aviation forces can fly over and support Army 24th Division forces operating at Fort Irwin with integrated, instrumented weapons effects.

The elements envisioned to be party to this evolutionary concept would include: the Air Force's RED FLAG at Nellis Air Force Base; the Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin; the Marine Corps' Land Maneuver Area at Twenty-nine Palms; Yuma Proving Ground; and the Navy's "Strike University" at Fallon Naval Air Station plus the PACFLT Top Gun "work-up" exercises at San Diego.

The way ahead for realistic joint training will be not *where* you are, but *what battle* you are fighting. Such an integrated training center will permit all services to mix and match units for contingency readiness/sustainment training. Units will be conditioned for deployment to a specific theater. We will be able to evaluate new tactical concepts and weapons on a joint basis and ultimately build interoperability with selected allies. Global positioning systems, satellite communications and packet switching are but a few of the in-being technologies available to put together the requisite architecture.

I hasten to add that I am not recommending the JCS take over Fort Irwin — rather, the JCS must assure interoperability of the training engagement systems and encourage joint training of the nature found at Fort Irwin, not the meaningless joint deployment exercises that fail to employ the proper instrumentation and weapons effects systems now extant in the services. We must deliberately design a theater training subsystem to meet the CINCs' requirements and emphasize rapidly reconfigurable, readily tailorable threat and terrain data bases to fit contingency planning and contingency exercises. Within the next five years I can envision the CINC in Tampa, a field army headquarters at Atlanta with a corps headquarters at Fort Bragg and troops on maneuver at Irwin, Nellis, Fallon, Twenty-nine Palms and in the Persian Gulf, all connected by satellite communications using a mix of actual units and a "virtual" SIMNET-like battlefield on which to practice contingency operations.

Doctrinal Vision. The draft publication *AirLand Operations* has just been issued by Headquarters, TRADOC and is out for worldwide use. It adds the concept of operations on the nonlinear battlefield to the engrained truths of joint operations, coalition operations and the projection of overwhelming combat power at decisive locations. This new document is a logical extension of the AirLand Battle Doctrine of 1982 and 1986.

As a natural outgrowth of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation, joint doctrine is being written in abundance. Contingency operations with power projection from CONUS-based forces will be the baseline for future doctrine wherein Europe is but the most demanding contingency. These operations will be characterized by quick response focused on early resolution and minimum casualties on both sides consistent with safeguarding the lives of American fighting personnel. Timely and detailed intelligence with improved human intelligence collection capability will be required. U.S. intelligence capabilities, coupled with the ability to deny any foe the ability to see the battlefield, are a national competitive advantage given the advances in technology found in the United States.

The rapid projection of forces from CONUS, either for forced entry or permissive entry into the objective area, must be rehearsed in a series of joint exercises. Light, SOF and yes, even heavy forces conducting frequent, no-notice JCS exercises will be the norm.

Volunteer Army Vision. It works! Even naysayers must be impressed by the serious, articulate, purposeful soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines that dominated the television for the past six months.

In late June, the Army's personnel strength was 765,000, of whom 30,000 were reservists called to duty in Desert Storm. The President's 1992-1993 Budget now before Congress recommends an active duty strength of 660,000 for 1992 and 618,000 for 1993. For the reserve forces, the President's Budget recommends a reduction of 75,000 in 1992 and 42,000 more in 1993.

The heart of the issue now on the table is language contained in the House Appropriation bill concerning no "involuntary" separations of the active component for 1992. That bill goes on to say "attrition, reduced accessions, and early outs" will be used to manage the force in 1992. If personnel reductions are to be realized then some principles must pertain. We must maintain a *ready* Army, for that is the purpose of the Army, and we must manage qualitatively, not just quantitatively. That means we must manage by career field. A properly manned (or personed) infantry, armor, aviation or maintenance unit is the objective function, not a unit with only sergeants and not enough first-termers to carry out the full range of missions that may be assigned to their unit. In other words, we must not tolerate "hollow units."

Therefore, some new tools will be required. One of those is the "selected early annuitant" policy for those officers and NCOs with more than 15 years' service. This solid, thoughtful Army proposal would include a 2.5 percent retirement pay for each year of service for those soldiers who have over 15 years' service. Health care and exchange privileges for life would be included. This policy would be invoked from now until 1995 to ease the burden on those who will have to leave the Army as we draw down. Some say this is too generous to take care of those who have *won* the Cold War, *won* Operation Just Cause, *won* Operation Desert Storm. I say it is only right and honorable that we take proper care of the *winners* and their *families*!

Incidentally, there are precedents for temporary invocation of one-time changes to our retirement system: In 1922, to provide for a reduction in strength of the Army, there was a one-time minimum-10-years retirement authorization to reduce strength residual from World War I. In 1935, voluntary retirement after 15 years of service was invoked to reduce the Army's World War I officer "hump." It is time to gain congressional authority to do it again.

We know that this is an "Army issue" because the Army is taking the largest personnel cuts of any service. This is an issue just like the all-volunteer force — as goes the Army, so goes the volunteer force. As goes the Army's reduction, so goes the Defense Department's reduction in strength. It is a fair and morally correct solution to a serious responsibility we have to protect the troops and their families who served the Republic when it counted. We need this courageous legislation and we need it during this session of Congress.

Vision of Modernization of the Army. We Americans are the unquestioned, world-class leaders and practitioners of providing quality equipment to our quality soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines. In Desert Storm, we demonstrated that we own the skies and we own the night. Simply put, our soldiers are the best-equipped soldiers in the world. And they should be! It is a moral obligation for us to keep it that way. They are the most precious asset of the United States. They are the sons and daughters of America.

Some will say that our weaponry is good enough for the next ten years, that we should wait for the armor system modernization program to come along at the end of the 1990s and into the 21st century. I think not!

Analysis shows that, as we proceed down the parity curve where, for example, the Soviets have 20,000 tanks and NATO has 20,000 tanks, whatever force we may have *must* maintain a modernization advantage over our potential adversaries. Conventional forces in Europe (CFE) talks appear conclusive. But if force parity is good at a level of 20,000 tanks, others will argue that parity at 15,000 or 13,000 will be equally good. Whatever the outcome, analysis tells us that the smaller the force, the more modernized it should be. Or, stated another way, the U.S. and NATO cannot be at a modernization disadvantage.

Frankly, our \$6 billion per year budget for research and development is reasonable. But the annual \$8 billion we have for Army procurement is simply too low to keep our Army properly equipped. Congress, at least the House, has already recognized this and added \$1.4 billion to the Army procurement budget for 1992.

Our procurement budget needs about \$12 billion (not \$8 billion) to keep Army forces in a posture of continuous modernization. Since the budget agreements of last fall have fixed the top line of the DoD budget, that \$4 billion will have to come from some other DoD source. To put it straight, the successes of Just Cause, Desert Storm and yes, maybe even the ending of the Cold War, have been victories of the conventional forces. Perhaps it is time for strategic forces to "give at the office."

And what is to be bought with that needed \$4 billion? Well, we need to designate the new Big Five weapons systems. The new Big Five for the 1990s could include:

- Block II Abrams with its equally improved Bradley;
- Line-of-Sight Anti-Tank Missile (LOSAT);
- Fibre Optic Guided Missile (FOG-M);
- ATACMS Block II, Longer-Range Missile — and in large quantity;
- Light Helicopter (Commanche);
- A vastly improved Anti-Tactical Ballistic Missile;
- Identification-Friend-or-Foe equipments.

What is the end game? It is to keep the conventional force — the force that not only deters, *but fights and wins* — the most high-tech, modernized force it can be. In combat, American lives will be saved. We know that our investments in the world's finest equipment and weaponry saved lives on both sides and shortened both conflicts in Just Cause and Desert Storm. The equipment designed and procured for the AirLand Battle Doctrine is best characterized by the defeated Iraqi soldier who never saw the Apache or M1A1 or Bradley Fighting Vehicle which engaged and destroyed his tank.

And what action need be taken? When the fiscal guidance is issued this fall, Army procurement and the Army top line must be increased by \$4 billion per year throughout the new POM period! *Easily done* with a stroke of a pen!

Conclusion — Five Agenda Items:

- Fix the strength of active/reserve this year for end 1995.
- Provide the road map for quality joint training at our "National Training Centers."
- Complete our doctrinal thrust for AirLand Operations.
- Provide our "winners" with the 15-year *selective early annuity*.
- Provide \$4 billion to fix Army procurement.

With a smaller Army we must be the best Army we can be. Action on this agenda will help!

Lest We Forget

Quality people armed with quality equipment trained to uncompromising standards by quality, caring leaders can accomplish the nation's national security tasks. Strong leadership and support are crucial. At the victory celebration in Washington, D.C. on 8 June, President Bush placed the 170th and 171st combat streamers on the Army flag, emblematic of the victories in the Desert Shield/Desert Storm campaigns. Whenever that flag passes, each American can proudly say that the country provided the wherewithal — the people, equipment, training, leadership and support — to ensure that victory. There will be a 172nd battle streamer in the future. We do not know when. But your wisdom, leadership and support will, in large measure, dictate our readiness when that time comes.

(This essay was extracted from a speech General Thurman delivered on 26 June 1991 upon his acceptance of the Commander-in-Chief Award from the George Washington Chapter of AUSA. General Thurman is presently a Senior Fellow of the AUSA Institute of Land Warfare.)