



TORCHBEARER ALERT



STRETCHED AND STRAINED, TOO: THE U.S. ARMY'S RESERVE COMPONENTS IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

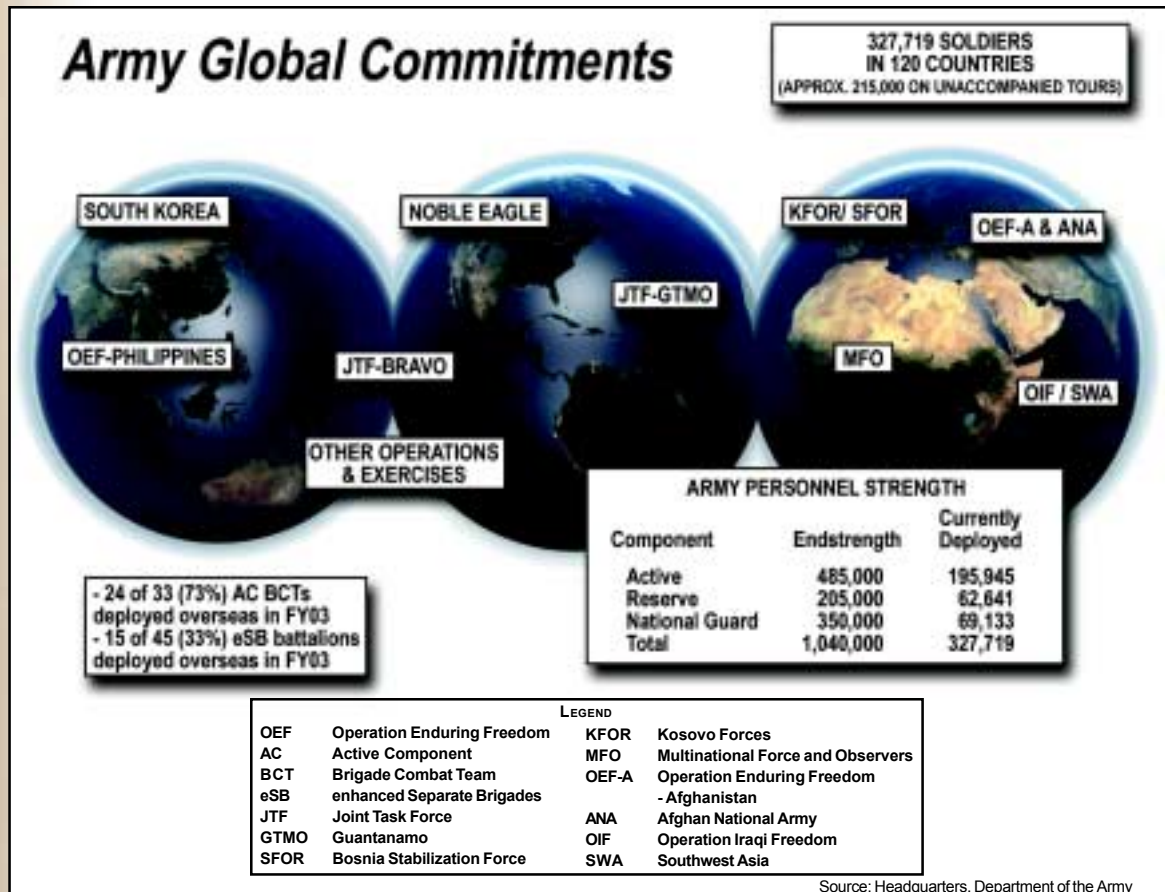
The type of war that we're in, the war on terrorism, is going to be something that is going to require long-term commitments of our armed forces. . . . The war on terrorism is a much longer, twilight struggle.

Anonymous Pentagon official as quoted in *The Los Angeles Times*, 12 July 2003, page 1

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

It is time to recognize that **the two reserve components—54 percent of The Army**—are just as stretched and strained in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) as the 480,000-plus active component. Recognition and understanding of this situation require some explanation. More than

cursory examination will reveal some imbalances in structure, strength, military occupational specialty (MOS) qualification and utilization. Moreover, the set of imbalances is causing impacts on the well-being and personal readiness of these soldiers, their families and units. There is no quick fix in the immediate future.



CURRENT STATUS

Utilization statistics for these soldiers since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States reveal:

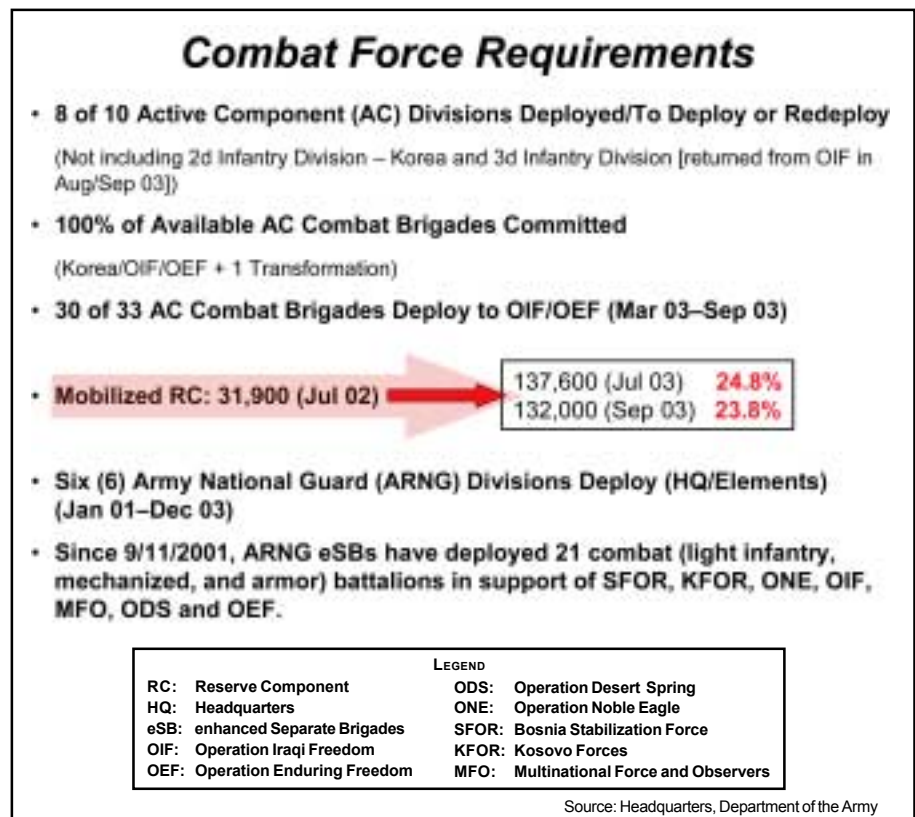
Almost 330,000 of the 1.04 million soldiers in the Army are deployed away from home and family in 120 countries around the world. The active component has nearly 200,000; III Corps at Fort Hood, Texas alone has 30,000.

Currently more than 130,000 Guard and Reserve soldiers are deployed; approximately 29,000 National Guard soldiers—infantry, signal, transportation, military police—are serving in Iraq and Kuwait; more than 10,000 Reserve soldiers are in Kuwait, Afghanistan and Iraq.

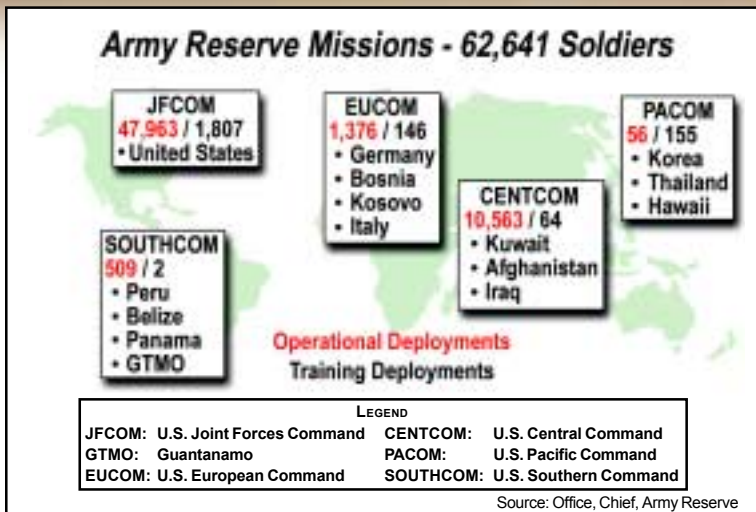
Since the 2001 attacks, the National Guard has mobilized almost 210,000 of its 350,000 soldiers at one time or another. Two brigades of National Guard soldiers—about 9,000 soldiers from Arkansas and North Carolina—have already been alerted for Iraq for Fiscal year (FY) 2004. Bosnia, Kosovo and the Sinai remain requirements for National Guard soldiers at this time.

The Army Reserve has mobilized about 85,500 since September 2001. They are using their civilian-acquired and maintained skills in key specialized capabilities—medical, chemical, military police, and transportation. A recent Congressional Budget Office (CBO) study found that The Army's goal of keeping the same number of soldiers in Iraq and limiting tours of duty there to one year while maintaining its current presence in the world was impossible without activating more reserve component units/soldiers.

The nature, frequency and duration of reserve component activations have had an impact on soldiers' personal readiness, on the well-being of soldiers and their families and on employer support. While slightly more than 50 percent of the active component Army is married, 74 percent of reserve component soldiers have at least one dependent and 50 percent have two



or more. About half of them work for companies with 1,000 or fewer employees; 15 percent of those work for companies employing less than 50 employees, where the impact of mobilization is more heavily felt. A recent survey of reserve component soldiers and their employers by Goldman Sachs found that these soldiers felt their military service had a direct impact on their civilian careers that was less than favorable. Nearly a third of them were not sure that their jobs would be waiting for them when they came off active duty. Half believed that there would be a negative effect on pay and promotion.



Issues to be addressed include:

(1) **Restoring predictability into the lives of reservists, their families and employers.** Policy and programs must change.

(2) **Reforming compensation and entitlements.** Special pays, bonuses, student loan repayment, health and dental care and commissary privileges are some of the key entitlement areas for addressal. Major reform is needed.

(3) **Rebalancing the force** to align structure with endstrength and build each component with the right mix of units and specialties.

(4) **Adopting a “train, mobilize, deploy” model** for reserve components.

(5) **Building a rotational force** so no reserve component soldier is mobilized for more than one 9-12 month period in a 5-6 year time frame.

WHAT IS NEEDED

The clarion call for reserve component soldiers is to have their benefits match those of their active component counterparts since they are activated so frequently and for periods of up to two years. These soldiers feel they are entitled to better health care, education and retirement benefits, as a minimum. Extending TRICARE to reservists, whether mobilized or not; allowing mobilized reservists to place their children in Department of Defense (DoD) schools overseas on a space-available basis; giving drilling reservists full monthly hazardous-duty pay instead of daily, prorated payments; and lowering the retirement age from 60 to 55 years of age are just some of the major issues.

For many reserve component members, extended call-ups are an extended hardship on the home front. Spouses labor alone to raise children, employers limp along short-handed, and families often suffer significant financial stress as some soldiers take a pay cut when they give up civilian wages for Army pay.



AUSA believes in The Army—active, Guard and Reserve. It must be a well-trained and well-led organization that is easily integrated into the joint force. The Army must be a balanced force, modular in design, capable of operating across the full spectrum of operations, and with parity of entitlements for all soldiers regardless of component.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

AUSA, working with the Reserve Officers Association (ROA) and the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), has been a strong voice for action to:

- a. **increase Army endstrength** to meet the high operational tempo that shows little sign of abating in the continuing GWOT;
- b. **improve full-time manning** to increase reserve component readiness;
- c. **increase defense spending** to preempt balancing the operational tempo of reserve component units on the backs of active component units and vice versa.

To get the latest information on these issues, click on the the Legislative Action Center icon on the AUSA website at www.ausa.org. Should you wish to contact your elected officials, just follow the instructions.

It's time to recognize that The Army's reserve components—the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve—are just as stretched and strained as the active component. This places an enormous burden not only on individual citizen-soldiers but also on their families, employers and communities and, particularly for the Guard, on the state and local governments who depend on their skills and dedication.



Lieutenant Colonel Michael Rorex of 926th Engineer Group, a Reserve unit from Montgomery, Alabama, attached to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), plans for future operations in Mosul, Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Soldiers from the 115th Military Police Company, a National Guard unit from Cranston, Rhode Island, patrol the perimeter during a raid in Falluja, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Voice for the Army—Support for the Soldier

www.ausa.org