



WASHINGTON UPDATE



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ROADBLOCKS STALL DRAWDOWN as Congress anguishes over the FY 1992 DoD budget a month after the fiscal new year began. The final authorization conference agreement is pending, with the appropriations conference yet to come. In the meantime, essential defense funding for FY 1992 is based on a congressional continuing resolution authority which was recently extended to Nov. 14. Don't expect an appropriations bill until then, and it could slip further.

The services have sent their FY 1993 budgets to DoD, where they are being updated for submission to Congress next January. The DoD budget is hostage to final action on the FY92 budget and especially to the restrictive language pertaining to denial of planned reserve reductions and a ban against involuntary separations of active force personnel. These could directly counter the transition plan, particularly for the Army.

The Army FY 1993 budget will face some very tough decisions, the major problem being a reported shortfall of about \$2 billion in order to fit the program within the final limit of \$67.7 billion in budget authority. How this will come out is still conjecture. The results of FY 1992 budget language will have a direct impact. Some reported considerations to meet the shortfall include accelerating personnel drawdowns, accelerating the movement of forces from Europe, more rapid retirement of older combat equipment and further cuts to the Army modernization program — none of which are very attractive solutions.

Some Army systems which may be vulnerable include the Anti-Satellite Weapon (ASAT); ASM Block III tank; TOW Sight Improvement; LAMP-H tank transportcraft; and Air Defense Anti-tank System (ADATS). The Army is also reported to be considering shifting planned Europe troop cuts from FY93 and FY94 to FY92 and FY93 to save money in the later years.

SEC ARMY, CHIEF OF STAFF SPEAK TO AUSA.

In his keynote address to the 37th Annual Meeting of the Army's professional association, Army Secretary Michael P. W. Stone had high praise for the Desert Shield/Desert Storm performance of all members of the Total Army family, from the front-line soldier to every person — in uniform and out — who led, supported, supplied or assisted him in any way from all over the world. Speaking to the dramatic changes that are taking place in the Army, Secretary Stone said that the reduction of Army forces in Europe (from 210,000 now to 92,000 by 1995) means that the leadership is considering alternatives to full-time stationing there. "We are looking at short-term rotations of brigade- and battalion-sized units, periodic deployments of reserve component units, and other approaches," he said.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan also honored soldiers, civilians and their families for all they did to achieve the desert victory. In his first "State of the Army" address, Gen. Sullivan promised that there would be no compromise in soldier quality, training, readiness or warfighting effectiveness as the Total Army is decreased in size from 28 to 20 divisions because of a strength cut of almost one-third. Vowing that the Army would see "no more Task Force Smiths" (referring to the commitment of unprepared, poorly trained and ill-equipped troops at the start of the Korean War), Gen. Sullivan outlined the four major challenges facing today's Army and explained how the Army is meeting them. Those challenges: (1) to maintain the edge; (2) to reshape the force; (3) to provide resources; and (4) to strengthen the Total Force.

For the first time ever, both speeches were broadcast live around the world via the Soldiers Radio Satellite Network. AUSA members may obtain copies of the speeches by calling 1-800-336-4570, extension 308.

FOURTH U.S. ARMY STACKS ARMS as part of the Army's continuing drawdown. Gen. Edwin H. Burba, commander of Forces Command, presided over the Sep. 27 inactivation ceremony at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. Activated in 1932 in Omaha, Nebraska, Fourth Army relocated to the Presidio of San Francisco, to San Jose, California, back to the Presidio, and to San Antonio, Texas, before its deactivation in June 1971. Reactivated in 1984 at Fort Sheridan, Fourth Army commanded Army Reserve units in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. It was also responsible for the mobilization, deployment and training of Army National Guard units in those states.

U.S. Army Reserve Command, in Atlanta, Georgia, will assume command and control functions for Fourth Army's Reserve units. First U.S. Army, at Fort Meade, Maryland, will assume Fourth Army's mobilization, deployment, training and operations responsibilities.

DOD RELEASES CLOSING SCHEDULE for bases recommended by the 1991 Base Closure and Realignment Commission. First on the list for the Army is Fort Devens, Massachusetts, home of the 10th Special Forces Group. The tentative schedule calls for the 10th SFG's move to Fort Carson, Colorado, to begin in 1992 and be complete by 1993; Fort Devens will officially close in June 1996. The 7th Infantry Division (Light) will move from Fort Ord, California, to Fort Lewis, Washington, in 1993 and 1994; Ord is scheduled to close in September 1996. Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, will close in July 1997; Sacramento Army Depot, California, and Harry Diamond Laboratories in Woodbridge, Virginia, are now slated to close in September 1997.

STICK TO BUDGET AGREEMENT, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney urges, as some in Congress seek to revise last year's Budget Summit Agreement between Congress and the White House. Major changes in the Soviet Union, coupled with President Bush's plan to reduce the U.S. nuclear arsenal, have prompted such influential legislators as House Speaker Tom Foley (D-WA), House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO), Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME), Senator Paul Simon (D-IL) and Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) to call for even deeper cuts in the defense budget. (Under the original agreement, the defense budget is set at \$291 billion for FY 1992.)

ARMY OUT OF NUKE PICTURE as a result of President Bush's plan, announced Sep. 27, to make unilateral cuts in the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Under the president's initiative to eliminate land-based tactical nuclear weapons, the Army's nuclear artillery shells and nuclear warheads for Lance short-range missiles will be withdrawn from Army units and eventually destroyed. Although the Army's atomic weapons have long been considered essential to NATO's defense structure in Western Europe, Pentagon officials say the elimination of these weapons will not put U.S. or allied forces at risk.

ROTC EXPECTS HARD HITS if a 1993 budget proposal to reduce the number of Reserve Officer Training Corps units is approved. The plan, currently under review by senior Army officials, reportedly calls for elimination of 100 of the Army's 350 college ROTC units for an estimated savings of \$20 million. Another \$22 million would be saved through reduction of ROTC scholarships for the Army Nurse Corps and Medical Service Corps. Proponents of the cutback plan say existing ROTC programs will produce some 1,400 more lieutenants annually than the Army needs during the drawdown.

DOD, OPM ANNOUNCE JOB REFERRAL SERVICE, to be called DORS for Defense Outplacement Referral System. It's a program to aid government civilian employees, military members and their spouses caught up in the drawdown and in base closures. DORS interacts with the Office of Personnel Management's automated applicant referral system and will provide referral lists of job-seeking DoD personnel and their spouses to federal agencies, state and local governments, and private industry. Service members, civilian employees and their spouses may telephone 1-900-990-9200 (at a cost of \$.40 per minute) to request a DORS application. Prospective employers may call 1-703-614-5322 to post available jobs.

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Col. Tom Byrne, USA Ret. - Editor
Sandee Daugherty - Assistant Editor
2425 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703-841-4300 FAX: 703-525-9039

DOD VOLUNTARY SEPARATION INCENTIVE lacks the support of many veterans' groups. The Military Coalition, comprised of 25 military and veterans' groups including AUSA, has withheld endorsement of DoD's VSI plan because many of its member organizations view the program as inadequate. AUSA and other coalition members are concerned that the VSI plan's lack of annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and health benefits coverage means the incentive will not attract sufficient eligible service members to preclude an involuntary reduction in force.

Defense officials have predicted that as many as 30,000 eligible Army officers and enlisted members (5,700 in 1992, 12,000 in 1993, 6,700 in 1994 and 5,300 in 1995) would leave the service if offered proper incentives. The \$4.9 billion cost of VSI for 30,000 people would be spread over the next 30 years. Congress complains that DoD foot-dragging has robbed it of time to adequately study the plan this year.

AUSA, MILITARY COALITION URGE HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENTS in an Oct. 2 statement to a House Veterans Affairs subcommittee in support of a bill providing for Department of Veterans Affairs demonstration projects to test the concept of sharing health care resources between the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services. The Military Coalition has long advocated reimbursement of expenses incurred by a medical facility of the uniformed services or DVA in providing health care to persons eligible for care under Medicare or the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services. AUSA's Director of Legislative Affairs, Col. Erik Johnson, USA Ret., joined representatives of other Military Coalition organizations in urging approval for the Health Care Financing Administration to reimburse DoD for the care provided to Medicare-eligible retirees in DoD military treatment facilities or in VA medical centers. The coalition further requested that the bill be amended to require DoD to conduct demonstration projects for reimbursement directly to the military treatment facilities (MTF) for Medicare-eligible DoD beneficiaries treated in the facility. These funds would provide MTF commanders and VA medical facility directors with additional resources to staff and equip their facilities based on actual workload.

ARMY RE-UP STANDARDS TIGHTENED to reduce the number of soldiers eligible for reenlistment as the service struggles to meet mandated strength reductions by 1995. Under the 1992 retention rules, announced by DCSPER on Oct. 4, enforcement of current standards of performance, behavior and physical fitness will be tightened and new screening and administrative procedures for career-oriented soldiers will be introduced. Some soldiers in overstrength skills will require permission from the Army to reenlist; soldiers in understrength skills may be allowed to reenlist only in their current specialty. Standard reenlistment periods for noncritical MOSs will be two, three or four years, with six-year reenlistments authorized only for soldiers in critical skills with the approval of their immediate commander. The eight-month period during which a soldier can reenlist will be reduced to five months, beginning eight months before his expiration of term of service (ETS) and ending three months before ETS.

HOUSE OKS \$ FOR ARMY GULF LOSSES in an emergency supplemental appropriations bill containing \$2.813 billion in transfer authority for Desert Shield/Desert Storm incremental costs. Funding will be drawn from the Cooperation Account provided by allied nations to support Desert Shield/Storm. For the Army, the bill approved \$83 million for 13 UH-60 helicopters, \$90.2 million for 12 OH-58D helicopter modifications, \$21.8 million for TOW/Stinger missile restockage, and \$63 million for procurement of 18 M1A1 tanks to replace those destroyed or damaged beyond repair in the Gulf War.

ARMY, AF OPPOSE A-10 TRANSFER directed by the Senate Armed Services Committee. Language contained in the conference report accompanying the 1991 National Defense Authorization Act directs the Army to replace its aging OV-1 and OV-10 reconnaissance aircraft with the Air Force's surplus Vietnam-era A-10 Thunderbolt attack aircraft. The conference report also requires that the cost of training, supporting and maintaining the transferred A-10 fleet be borne by the Air Force. Both Army and Air Force have appealed the decision on the grounds that the twin-engine, tank-killing A-10 does not meet (and could not be modified to meet) the Army's requirement for new observation aircraft.

EARLY-OUT OPTIONS ANNOUNCED earlier this month by the Total Army Personnel Command will allow enlisted soldiers with at least three years of active service to leave the Army during FY92 regardless of the amount of time left in their current enlistments. Under the provisions of the voluntary early transition plan, soldiers may also apply to leave the Army before Aug. 31, 1992, without regard to their current end of service date. Release dates approved under the program must not be later than Aug. 30, 1992.

Soldiers not eligible under the program include those with less than three years of active service and those with critical skills or those serving in high-priority units who must be retained for purposes of operational readiness.

POWELL PUSHES RESERVE STRUCTURE CUTS as Congress continues to block DoD efforts to cut reserve component strength. Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Colin Powell warned Congress last month that refusal to allow reserve structure cuts through 1992 would cost an extra \$700 million, and that the cost of keeping the reserve force at its current level through 1995 would increase to at least \$8 billion (some estimates range as high as \$12 billion). Powell argued that the current large reserve structure is "no longer linked to the needs of the active force or linked to the [present] national security strategy" and would leave thousands of reservists without a mission.

\$18.3 MILLION FOR RESERVE FAMILY ASSISTANCE has been granted by Congress under the auspices of the Persian Gulf Supplemental Authorization and Personnel Benefits Act of 1991. The grants, designed to assist families of Reserve and National Guard troops called up for Operation Desert Storm, will be administered around the nation by six private organizations — the American Legion, American Red Cross, Armed Services YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Salvation Army and United Services Organizations. Local representatives of these organizations will support youth programs, crisis intervention and family counseling services, emergency and temporary child care, budget and employment counseling, and family support group assistance to help relieve family hardships caused by Desert Storm deployments.

3.7 PERCENT COLA FOR RETIREES was announced earlier this month by DoD. The cost-of-living adjustment for nondisabled military retirees, which takes effect Dec. 1, is based on the federal Consumer Price Index for urban wage earners and clerical workers. Some 1.5 million retirees or their survivors will see the increase in their Jan. 1, 1992, paychecks. Federal civilian retirees and Social Security recipients will also receive a 3.7 percent increase, while active-duty military members will get a 4.2 percent raise.

DOD CONSOLIDATES HEALTH CARE BUDGETS. Deputy Defense Secretary Donald J. Atwood has ordered budget authority for military health programs unified under DoD's senior health official. The directive will give the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs jurisdiction over the Pentagon's \$14 billion annual health care budget while allowing the Army, Navy and Air Force to maintain separate medical programs. At the same time, Pentagon officials rejected a proposal to consolidate all military health care programs under a single command.

ILW'S MOST RECENT EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS include the three Land Warfare Papers presented earlier this month at AUSA's 37th Annual Meeting:

- *Gathering the Storm: Contingency Planning and Force Projection*, by Col. Paul Tiberi and Dr. James C. Wendt (LWP #7, September 1991);
- *21st Century Doctrine and the Future of Maneuver*, by Capt. Richard D. Hooker, Jr., Ph.D. (LWP #8, October 1991);
- *Building the Army for Desert Storm*, by Dr. Charles E. Kirkpatrick (LWP #9, November 1991).

AUSA has also released its second special report on the Army's role in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. *Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm: The Logistics Perspective* (September 1991) gives the reader a grasp of the magnitude and complexity of the logistical aspects of the Persian Gulf War.

To obtain copies of these and other ILW publications, call 1-800-336-4570, extension 308.