



# WASHINGTON UPDATE



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**ASPIN'S "BOTTOM-UP" REVIEW IS UNDERWAY** with the aim of developing guidelines for reducing and restructuring U.S. defense posture for the future. A number of policy and program reviews, to be conducted through June, will develop defense planning guidance which will in turn provide a basis for designing the FY95 defense budget and the next Future Years Defense Program (through 1999).

Referring to the FY94 budget as "treading water," Defense Secretary Les Aspin made cuts of about \$11 billion to meet a DoD ceiling of \$250.7 billion without committing any decisions on future structure changes or the development and acquisition of weapon systems. Selected groups conducting the bottom-up review will now address such major issues as service roles and missions, force structure and strength, major hardware systems and funding allocations. All this will also include a current threat appraisal and development of a new National Military Strategy.

Bringing it all together in the next two months is an enormous challenge. The future of our national security structure and its ability to meet the challenges through the rest of this century will probably rest on the decisions reached this year.

Some of the critical Army issues at stake in this review are the size and structure of the active force, the active/reserve component mix and several key modernization issues including the Comanche helicopter program and the Army's antimissile systems.

**NEW ARMY VICE CHIEF OF STAFF**, Gen. J. H. Binford Peay III, was sworn in and received his fourth star in a ceremony April 2 in the Pentagon. Peay served previously as deputy chief of staff for operations and plans; he succeeds Gen. Dennis J. Reimer (now commander-in-chief, U.S. Forces Command).

**ARMY'S 15-YEAR RETIREMENT PLANS** were announced in Military Personnel Message 93-164 on April 20. Early retirement is not an entitlement; the authority will be used to retire members whose skills are excess to the Army's short- and long-term needs. The overall target for regular Army enlisted early retirements is 1,200; for active duty officers/warrant officers the total target is 250.

Personnel approved for early retirement will receive the same benefits as individuals with 20 or more years of service, except their retirement pay will be reduced. The retired pay formula is 2.5 percent x years of service x basic pay x reduction factor (1/12th of one percent for each full month short of 240 months as of retirement date).

Active duty personnel approved for early retirement must be on DoD's public and community service personnel registry and may accrue additional military retirement credit by working in such critical career fields as education, law enforcement and health care. Those with additional accrued credit will become eligible for recomputation of retired pay at age 62.

Applications will not be accepted before May 3; individuals approved for early retirement must depart active duty no later than Aug. 31, 1993. Contact your personnel officer for details.

**NATIONAL GUARD'S FIRST FEMALE GENERAL** assumed her new rank recently during ceremonies at the Pentagon. Brigadier General Sharon Kay Vander Zyl, a member of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, was promoted by Lieutenant General John B. Conaway, Chief, National Guard Bureau. BG Vander Zyl serves as special assistant to the Chief, Army Nurse Corps, for mobilization and Guard affairs in Washington, D.C.

**U.S. TROOPS TO HAITI?** Adm. Paul Miller, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command, has reportedly been directed to begin planning for a possible mission to help restore order and democracy in Haiti. The mission is expected to be a peaceful "nation assistance" operation involving more engineers, military police and medical units than combat troops. However, should the U.N. fail in efforts to negotiate reinstatement of Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, ousted in 1991 by Col. Michel Francois, a brigade-size force could be deployed to assist in the peaceful return to power of Haiti's first democratically-elected government.

**ARMY PRESSES FOR ADVANCED WEAPONS RESEARCH** despite \$3.7 billion in cuts to its overall FY94 budget. Still high on the Army's priority list are such systems as the RAH-66 Comanche attack helicopter, Longbow radar weapon system, Line-of-Sight Anti-tank missile system and Non-Line-of-Sight anti-aircraft/antitank system. The Army intends to actively pursue new technologies for application in the upgrading of existing systems, as well as for a limited number of new weapon systems, such as the Comanche and the Advanced Field Artillery System.

**TOP DEFENSE DEPARTMENT NOMINEES** to date include **Frank Wisner**, Under Secretary of Defense (Policy); **Morton Halperin**, Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) (Democracy and Human Rights); **Graham Allison**, ASD (Plans and Policy); **Colleen Preston**, Deputy Under Secretary (Acquisition); **Dr. Anita Jones**, Director, Defense Research and Engineering; **Lt. Gen. Emmett Paige, Jr.**, USA Ret., ASD (Command, Control and Intelligence); **Edwin Dorn**, ASD (Personnel and Readiness); **William Lynn**, ASD (Program Analysis and Evaluation); **Edward Warner**, ASD (Strategy and Resources); **Charles Freeman**, ASD (Regional Security); **Deborah Lee**, ASD (Reserve Affairs); **Jamie Gorelick**, General Counsel; **Walter Slocombe**, Deputy Under Secretary (Policy); **Harold Palmer Smith**, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Atomic Energy); **Sherri Wasserman Goodman**, Deputy Undersecretary for Environmental Security; and **Ashton Carter**, ASD (Nuclear Security and Counterproliferation). So far only Deputy Secretary of Defense **William J. Perry**, Under Secretary (Acquisition) **John Deutch**, and Defense Secretary **Les Aspin** himself have been confirmed and sworn.

**SECDEF ORDERS CONUS FORCES UNDER CINCLANT** in response to recommendation from Joint Chiefs chairman Gen. Colin Powell. Defense Secretary Les Aspin has directed Powell to prepare changes to the Unified Command Plan which will place U.S.-based forces to include Forces Command, Air Combat Command, Navy Atlantic Fleet and Marine Forces Atlantic under the control of the commander-in-chief (CINC), Atlantic Command. This would give CINCLANT additional responsibility for joint training, force packaging and facilitating deployments during crises. The new command would also support U.N. peacekeeping operations, provide assistance during natural disasters, and plan for the land defense of the continental United States. U.S. Army Forces Command will no longer retain specified command status.

**NEW ARMY TRAINING CHOPPER CHOSEN**, the Army announced recently, with entries from American Eurocopter and Enstrom Helicopter losing out to Bell Helicopter Textron's TH-206. Bell has been awarded an \$85 million contract for 102 new training helicopters and nine cockpit procedure trainers, along with a \$47 million option for 55 more helicopters and three more trainers.

**CIVILIAN SURVIVOR BENEFIT CUTS** proposed by the Clinton administration have enraged those federal retirees who opted at the time of retirement to take a 10-percent lifetime pension cut to provide a 55-percent survivor benefit. The Clinton proposal, which calls for a reduction of 8-1/2 to 10 percent in benefits for survivors of federal civilian retirees who die after Sep. 30, 1993, has already been approved by House and Senate budget committees. Some legislators whose constituents include large numbers of federal retirees are scrambling to find offsetting savings in other personnel programs that could save the survivor benefit and head off what many consider to be a flagrant breach of contract on the part of the federal government. (NOTE: None of this applies to the Military Survivor Benefit Program.)

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**ARMY COLLEGE FUND INCREASE** raises the amount of money available to a qualified four-year enlistee from \$25,200 to a maximum of \$30,000. The \$30,000 includes \$13,200 from the Montgomery GI Bill, \$1,200 from the soldier and \$15,600 from the Army College Fund. To qualify, an applicant must have a high school diploma, score at least 50 on the entrance aptitude test, enlist in a designated critical job skill, have no prior military service and meet other enlistment eligibility requirements.

**AMC NAMED WWII COMMEMORATIVE COMMUNITY**, the first four-star command to be so honored. The official World War II Commemorative Flag and Certificate were presented to Army Materiel Command's commander, Gen. Jimmy D. Ross, by Acting Secretary of the Army John Shannon on March 10. Headquartered in Alexandria, VA, AMC plans a minimum of three commemorative events each year through Veterans Day, 1995.

**RETIREE COLAS AGAIN A TARGET** of budget cutters. This time the knife is wielded by the House Budget Committee who, without public hearings on the matter, wrote into the 1994 Concurrent Budget Resolution proposals that would: (1) put a \$400 cap on retirees' 1994 COLA; (2) restrict COLAs for retirees under age 62 to half the rise in the Consumer Price Index and (3) hold COLAs for those over age 62 to one percentage point less than the CPI through 1997, at which time full inflation-matching increases would resume.

In a conference between the House and Senate it was decided to reduce COLAs only for federal retirees under the age of 62, who would be limited to 50 percent of the increase in the CPI, while full COLAs would be provided to retirees over 62, to Social Security annuitants and to recipients of veterans' disability compensation.

Military retirees will carry the brunt if this proposal becomes law, since they almost always retire before age 62, while most federal civilian employees retire at about age 62. This means that, of the estimated savings of \$2.7 billion, military retirees can be expected to shoulder about \$2.3 billion.

AUSA is encouraging its members to make their elected representatives aware of the inequities of the COLA proposal.

**EARLY-OUT BONUSES OFFERED** to 10,423 Army civilians. In an effort to eliminate the need for an involuntary reduction in force (RIF), the Army has offered separation incentives to selected employees for retiring or resigning from federal employment. The separation bonus is the lesser of \$25,000 or the amount of severance pay the individual would be entitled to as the result of a RIF action. By the beginning of April, a total of 32,063 Defense Department civilian employees had been offered the separation bonuses.

**GAY BAN HEARINGS OPEN** with Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Sam Nunn (D-GA) citing the moral, religious and civil rights implications of the prohibition against homosexuals in the armed forces. Nunn, who opposes lifting the ban, then stated the purpose of the hearings — to assess the impact of such action on military morale and cohesion. A review of the history of the prohibition was followed by testimony from former military officers on the nature and importance of unit cohesion. As was expected, the question of homosexual behavior versus status was the focus of considerable discussion. Despite the volatile nature of the subject at hand, the atmosphere in the early days of the hearings remained calm.

Nunn announced that the next step in the process would be a review of the experiences of other nations where homosexuals are not barred from serving in the military. The panel will then visit military bases to hear testimony from service personnel, after which advocacy groups both for and against lifting the ban will also be given the opportunity to testify. The hearings are scheduled to end with the testimony of Defense Secretary Les Aspin and other top Pentagon officials.

**COMANCHE FUTURE RESTS WITH ASPIN'S REVIEW** of weapon system and force structure priorities, results of which are expected in June. Curtailment or cancellation of the \$40 billion RAH-66 Comanche scout helicopter program, long considered vital to the Army's aviation modernization plans, are among options being considered in Defense Secretary Les Aspin's pursuit of a tactical aviation strategy. Concerned that Congress would develop a strategy of its own before his "bottom-up" review could be completed, Aspin opted to put the tactical aviation review "ahead of the queue."

**40 PERCENT OF ARMY MOVED LAST YEAR** as a result of the military drawdown, said vice chief of staff Gen. Dennis J. Reimer in a recent conversation with *Government Executive* associate editor James Kitfield. Reimer discussed some of the hardships visited on military personnel by post-Cold War efforts to reduce total Army strength, including the housing shortages facing many of the 72,000 soldiers who returned from Europe in the past year. Although “we’re not fighting the fact that we’re going to be a smaller Army,” senior officials are strongly resisting acceleration of the drawdown because “there was just too much suffering,” said Reimer. “We’ve never taken an all-volunteer Army down before. ... How do you tell someone who joined the Army because they wanted to be part of all this that ... we don’t need them anymore? ... How do we convince those soldiers who stay that this is still going to be a great Army?”

**AUSA TELEVISION SERIES** “Why An Army” has concluded, but four previously broadcast editions will be made available a second time to PBS affiliates across the country:

- May- Army role in disaster relief (MG John C. Heldstab, Director, Operations, Readiness and Mobilization);
- Jun- ROTC and Junior ROTC programs (MG Wallace C. Arnold, Commanding General, U.S. Army ROTC Cadet Command);
- Jul- Issues concerning enlisted soldiers (Sergeant Major of the Army Richard A. Kidd);
- Aug- Recruiting challenges in an era of military downsizing (MG Jack C. Wheeler, Commanding General, U.S. Army Recruiting Command).

In the Washington metropolitan area, the programs will air on the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. on WTVT-53. Check local listings for scheduled broadcasts outside the Washington area.

A new AUSA television series, tentatively titled “America’s Army,” is scheduled to premier in September. Look for details in upcoming editions of *Washington Update*.

**BASE CLOSINGS IMPACT RETIREES, TOO.** The current base closure list, if approved, will affect nine military hospitals—and many thousands of retirees who depend on them for medical care. Many retirees, secure in the knowledge that medical care would always be available to them at nearby military facilities, opted not to sign up for Medicare’s Part B supplemental coverage. Now, in order to get that coverage, they must pay a 10 percent penalty for each year after age 64 that they delayed signing up for Part B.

The Military Coalition, a consortium of military and veterans’ associations which includes AUSA, recently recommended to the White House health care reform task force that the 10 percent penalty be waived for retirees living near base closure sites. The coalition further recommended that the catastrophic cap for CHAMPUS-eligible retirees should be lowered from the present \$7,500 to \$3,000 and that physicians who accept Medicare assignment also be required to accept CHAMPUS.

AUSA is also encouraging all retirees to evaluate their personal health care coverage to ensure that they have a CHAMPUS or Medicare supplement regardless of their present access to military health care.

#### LATEST ILW PUBLICATIONS:

*European National Security Perspectives in the Era of Pax Democratica* (Landpower Essay 93-2), by COL Wolf-Dietrich Kutter, USA Ret., discusses the challenge of defining the framework and objectives for collective engagement and cooperative security in Europe.

*Army Issue: Theater Air Defense* (Background Brief #55), by MG Edward B. Atkeson, USA Ret., discusses the assignment of TAD service roles, missions and functions and whether there should be any realignment of these functions between the Army and the Air Force.

*Army Issue: Limiting Active Army Strength Reductions* (Background Brief #56) questions how much and how fast the Army’s active strength can be reduced without compromising its ability to accomplish the mission.

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