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QDR envisions modest reductions in force, structure

The Department of Defense “proposes to make some modest reductions” in personnel and force structure as part of recently-concluded Quadrennial Defense Review assessments, said Defense Secretary William S. Cohen in unveiling the internal top-to-bottom examination of security needs through 2005.

Cohen said that these changes would continue to allow the United States to shape, prepare and respond to a range of missions and retain the capability of being able to fight and win two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts.

For the active Army, this means a reduction of 15,000 soldiers, cuts coming primarily from headquarters and staff support jobs. For the Army’s reserve components there will be a reduction of 45,000 soldiers in end strength and the conversion of some units from combat to combat support and combat service support. He said the details of which units will be converted and how the personnel cuts will be made inside the Army. This is reminiscent of what the Army did under the Bottom-Up Review.

While there were no cancellations of major spending programs — especially in tactical air, the review calls for scaled back buys of the Navy’s F/A 18 E and F and the Air Force’s F-22 with a hope that the Joint Strike Fighter program will move ahead quickly into development.

Additionally, the review is calling for two more rounds of base closures and streamlining infrastructure and outsourcing non-military essential functions.

In brief, Cohen said the review was strategy-based, retaining the capability to conduct two nearly simultaneous Major Regional Conflicts and a spectrum of operations from humanitarian missions to peace enforcement, but realistic in its budget for the future. “And I insisted that we finish it on time. We didn’t have a month to waste. No other agency

in the government is forced to think in such long-range terms as Defense,” he said May 19. The secretary was referring to the department’s six-year future defense spending projections.

The internal review was called for in the Fiscal Year 1997 Defense Authorization Act. The same law also called for the creation of an independent National Defense Panel to both assess the QDR’s work and project the nation’s security needs out to the year 2015. Philip A. Odeen chairs that panel.

In unveiling the Quadrennial Defense Review May 19 and in appearances before key congressional committees during that week, Cohen called for a “bipartisan commitment to stable defense spending and increased modernization.” He also acknowledged that securing that bipartisan consensus over reserve components’ cuts, increased outsourcing and additional Base Realignment and Closure rounds will be a long, hard process that will take several years. “These will be very contentious issues,” he said before the Senate Armed Services Committee May 20. “If you don’t give us the authority (to make the personnel cuts, outsource and close bases), we won’t be able to modernize... We’re not talking about ‘boy toys’, we’re talking about securing the most lethal weapons we can put in the hands of our people.”

Adding in a press conference May 19, “We’ve been on a procurement holiday... where we’ve seen the migration of funds out of procurement to operations and support accounts.”

Cohen and Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said they intend to send to Congress requests for additional funds for some critical programs for this fiscal year. Among those programs are additional funds for the Army’s Force XXI modernization efforts. Over the next six years, the review envisions about \$1 billion above current budget projections going into Force XXI.

Cohen calls QDR necessary self-assessment.

Defense Secretary William Cohen has often said any organization should conduct periodic self-assessments like the QDR and ask itself: "How can we do things better?" "How are we doing things correctly?" "Do we have the right strategy?" "Are the resources matched to strategy?" and "Are we preparing for the future?"

The QDR's proposals involve a balanced approach "to prepare DoD for the 21st century," Cohen said.

"DoD has downsized personnel about 33 percent, but its infrastructure has been reduced by only 18 percent," he said in explaining the three paths of the review to carry out a strategy of being able to shape, respond and prepare for the future.

In brief, Path 1 which focused on near-term demands would provide about \$50 billion for procurement; Path 2, which focused on preparing for a more distant threat with cuts of 100,000 to 120,000 in the total active force would provide more than \$65 billion for procurement.

Path 3, which focused on balancing current demands and an uncertain future would provide about \$60 billion for procurement.

Some QDR recommendations that will be proposed to Congress involve cutting military support elements, reducing the reserve components and cutting back on DoD civilian employees.

This method was chosen to preserve combat power ("teeth") at the expense of non-direct-combat capability ("tail").

Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, noted that any personnel reductions would be conducted overtime, similar to downsizing in the past.

He said the cooperation of the service chiefs and the warfighting regional commanders in chief was unprecedented in preparing the Quadrennial Defense Review.

He added that 46 scenarios had been developed to test the capability of the armed forces to respond to a host of operations and also to identify units, such as Patriot batteries, military police, civil affairs and psychological operations units that have been heavily deployed in the past.

Inside the QDR

- An evaluation of defense strategy and the force structure required to sustain it;
- An examination of threats to the national security;
- A list of assumptions used in the QDR process;
- The role of Operations Other Than War and peace-keeping operations;
- The way technology will affect the military through the year 2005;
- Manpower and support requirements necessary to engage in conflicts lasting more than 120 days;
- Future roles of the reserve components;
- Estimated ratio of combat-to-support forces;
- The air- and sea-lift capacity needed to support the overarching defense strategy;
- Positioning requirements required to deter conflict; An evaluation of resource shifts in the event of conflict in two or more theaters covered by the defense strategy;
- Suggestions for revising the Unified Command Plan.

Finding out more about QDR

Those wishing to learn more about the QDR should join CDI Corporation's free listserv by retired Col. Dan Smith (dsmith@mail.cdi.org); you can send a subscribe message to majordomo@cdi.org to sign up.

The Pentagon Early Bird's supplement, Early Bird Main Edition and Defense Dialogue are indispensable resources for the QDR.

Also the World Wide Web.

<http://www.comw.org/pda/>

<http://www.cdi.org>

<http://andwww.comw.org/qdr/qdrhome.htm>

<http://www.ausa.org>

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QDR highlights for the services

1. Army will retain 10 active divisions, accelerate Force XXI modernization, cut 15,000 soldiers by deactivation, consolidation and realignment of headquarters and facilities to improve overall all support to combat organizations.

2. Army will restructure its reserve components, shedding excess combat structure, accelerate conversion of some units from combat to combat support and combat service support state missions, cut 45,000 soldiers.

3. Navy will retain 12 carrier battle groups and 12 amphibious ready groups, but cut number of surface warships from 128 to 116 and attack submarines from 73 to 50.

It also will cut procurement of F/A 18 E and F from 1,000 to 548 if the Joint Strike Fighters is ready for production by 2008.

Additionally, combat logistics ships and functions will be transferred to the Military Sealift Command. It will cut active strength by 18,000 and reserve by 4,100.

4. Air Force will consolidate fighter and bomber units, resulting in 12 active and eight reserve.

7. Slow Army's Theater High Altitude Area Defense System because of technical problems and shifting deployment date from 2004 to 2006.

8. National Missile Defense will receive additional funds for research and development.

9. Increased focus and funding for "asymmetric threats," including nuclear, chemical, biological, information warfare and terrorism.

10. Retain START I nuclear posture until Russian Duma approves the START II treaty.

11. Request authority for two more rounds of base closure and realignment and for the restructuring of laboratories, research, development and test facilities.

12. Implement a series of Defense-wide program adjustments to free funds for more investment in key programs.

National Defense Panel grades QDR. The independent National Defense Panel issued its report card on the Pentagon's top-to-bottom review of national security needs and found it lacking in linking strategy and force structure.

In the Quadrennial Defense Review, the panel said, "There is insufficient connectivity between strategy on the one hand and force structure, operational concepts and procurement decisions on the other."

This is important, since the QDR addresses an even greater array of challenges than we faced in the past.

Other concerns include:

1. Did not go far enough in revamping military structure;
2. Relied too heavily on Cold War models developed with Korea and Persian Gulf scenarios that did not factor in stealthy platforms and high-tech weaponry and sensors;
3. Assumed too easily on the United States' ability to maintain a military presence overseas in both Europe and the Pacific;
4. Skipped on what to do for forces involved in peacekeeping operations.

The panel also warned that the modernization plan had more risk than acknowledged in the review. The risks comes in the assumptions:

1. Two BRAC rounds will occur and create the savings expected;
2. Congress will approve the changes in law covering outsourcing, depot maintenance, etc., and that savings will occur with those changes;
3. The Army agreement concerning the reserve components will be successful and not require more money;
4. Acquisition reform will continue to yield efficiencies and savings;
5. DoD Total Obligation Authority will remain at a constant \$250 billion despite domestic pressures.

Hill skeptical over some elements in Quadrennial Defense Review requests. While generally praising the efforts of the Defense Department in producing its top-to-bottom review of future national security strategy and needs, members of key congressional committees were skeptical about the legislative prospects of important elements of the reform package.

Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., and chairman of the Armed Services Committee and his counterpart in the House, Rep. Floyd Spence, R-S.C., and chairman of the National Security Committee, pledged to hold hearings over the next year on the review's findings and recommendations.

Spence and others were concerned that Defense Secretary William Cohen's insistence that the review be realistic in terms of a \$250 billion annual budget while continuing an ambitious strategy of shaping, responding and preparing, would again delay needed modernization programs and continued a pattern of high operating tempo for an even smaller armed force.

Here are some of the issues expected to be hotly contested in the 105th Congress:

1. Restructuring of the combat, combat support and combat service support in the Army's reserve components and cutting 45,000 soldiers from the Army Reserve and Army National Guard.

2. Approving a commission to handle two more rounds of base closings.

This is potentially the most explosive issue. The 1995 BRAC round became highly contentious between Congress and the White House.

3. Accelerating outsourcing and privatizing efforts by changing laws covering public/private competition, depot maintenance work, etc.

4. Cutting an additional 80,000 Defense Department civilian employees.

Rep. Ike Skelton, D-Mo., said flatly, "I just don't see any more base closings."

Quality of life not directly addressed in QDR.

The Quadrennial Defense Review, released May 19, only addressed quality-of-life concerns for the future armed forces in broad stroke. But what emerged in a week of testimony on Capitol Hill by Defense Secretary William Cohen; Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Gen. Dennis J. Reimer, Army chief of staff; and others, was at least a glimpse at what can be expected if the recommendations of the Pentagon's internal top-to-bottom examination of future national security needs and resources.

After discussing base closures, more privatizing and outsourcing, Cohen writes in his report to Congress:

"These are stark choices... and while we must make changes wisely and with compassion for the civilians who have given years of faithful service, we must also keep faith with the men and women of the military services. Over half of them have known only an armed force steadily shrinking in size. There is great uncertainty about the future. Yet, they perform magnificently as they serve our country abroad and at home. We must take care of them, and their families and ensure that we have given them the best tools to do the jobs we ask. If we take care of them, they will take care of us."

Cohen and Shalikashvili told the Senate Armed Services and House National Security Committees the Defense Department would soon be sending to Congress proposals to extend transition benefits for civilian workers and members of the armed forces beyond Fiscal Year 1999. The proposals would again offer retirement at 15 years for some in the armed forces, separation bonuses, transition assistance, unemployment compensation, healthcare, etc.

The services will also require changes in the authorized end strengths to handle the active duty drawdown that will take place over the next few years. In addition, the services will take in fewer recruits. Reimer said he expected the Army's goal to drop from about 90,000 to 85,000.

Shalikashvili said, "We need to bring the op-tempo down... On any given day 45,000 are on those deployments, but they are really adding to an already exiting problem. That's in our training, our exercises. We're trying to get a handle on this and bring it down... We're looking at a drop of 15 percent in man years from joint exercises."

Army will work out the details of the 45,000-member planned cut in Guard and Reserve forces. In addition, the discussions will include changes in roles from combat to combat support and combat service support.

In 1993, the Bottom-Up Review called for restructuring and end-strength cuts as well.

That year, an off-site agreement was reached between the Guard and Reserve to make those personnel cuts and shift roles and mission.

Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., said he was pleased that the Army plans to give Guard units the mission of combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the United States, but asked during a hearing "What is the commitment that funding will be there?"

After acknowledging that the Army needs more to integrate its components, Defense Secretary William Cohen said, "This move to make their mission relevant will help in that assigning specific missions (to some Guard units) has been advocated for some time by former Sen. San Nunn and Rep. John Murtha" as a way of ensuring funding.

Gen. Dennis Reimer said at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing that the specific mission of combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was vital to the nation's security interests.

In answer to a question, Reimer said the proposed cuts in the Guard would not affect its ability to carry out its state mission.

QDR calls for \$1 billion more for Force XXI. The Army could receive an additional \$1 billion for Force XXI and fully digitize two brigades by the year 2003 if the recommendations of an internal Defense Department review are approved by Congress.

If the funds called for in the QDR become available, three brigades could be digitized by 2004.

Current plans call for the Army to take \$1.4 billion out of its operating budget to provide for the two digitized brigades by 2004. "The money, if approved from the QDR, would provide far less risk to readiness," the Army said.

Soldiers deployed in 100 countries. During the week of May 18, more than 33,000 soldiers were deployed in 100 countries.

They are participating in 1,229 missions. The size of the deployed forces range from 8,000 in Bosnia to one in Brunei. The totals do not include the 65,000 soldiers stationed in Europe, 37,000 in Korea and 7,400 in Panama.

Last year during that week, the Army was deployed in 79 countries.

NATO, Russia reach accord. NATO and Russia have reached an agreement that will allow the alliance to expand and give Russia a formal voice in the alliance's councils. Included in the agreement is a pledge by NATO that it has no plans to deploy troops in a threatening manner on the territory of former Soviet allies or to deploy nuclear weapons into those countries.

NATO is expected to vote in July to admit several former Warsaw Pact nations. Likely candidates are Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

Coalition wants increased benefits for Reservists. The Military Coalition is seeking congressional approval to give reservists unlimited access to commissaries, instead of the current 12 trips annually. This change would save the government about \$17 million annually in administering the ration card system.

The coalition (AUSA is affiliated with it) is also seeking:

- Restoring tax deductions for reservists unreimbursed travel and transportation expenses;
- Providing child care during weekend training. (This would require a Defense Department study.);
- Extending Montgomery GI Bill eligibility for drilling reservists after they get out of the military;
- Providing financial relief through long-term, low-interest loans for self-employed Desert Storm veterans who suffered hardship because of mobilization;
- Eliminating TRICARE deductibles for reservists who are activated for more than 30 days but less than 180. (This was done for reservists activated for Bosnia, but not Haiti.)
- Extending space-available travel eligibility to reservists and their families.

Woman general B. Sue Dueitt, a member of the U.S. Army Reserve, became the first woman officer of the line promoted to brigadier general June 1. Previously, women in the Army Reserve achieved general officer rank only in medical fields.

Dueitt serves in an individual mobilization augmentee position as deputy chief of public affairs for headquarters, Department of the Army.

She received a direct commission Sept. 30, 1977.

Chiefs don't want Hill help on training. The nation's four military service chiefs told members of a key Senate committee that they didn't want legislation to segregate men and women in basic training.

Gen. Dennis J. Reimer, Army chief of staff, said at a May 21 Armed Services Committee hearing that the decision on how to train recruits should be left to the services rather than have Congress impose a decision, Reimer said.

"I think this is a leadership issue and we'll solve it. This is a right-wrong issue as opposed to a policy issue."

He was referring to a series of sexual misconduct cases involving drill sergeants and trainees that have come to light this year.

The House is considering legislation to segregate training by gender.

Gen. Charles Krulak, commandant of the Marine Corps, agreed with his colleagues that no action by Congress is needed.

The Marine Corps is the only service that separates men and women in basic training.

White to leave defense post. John P. White, deputy secretary of defense, will be leaving office in June. White, who served two years in the post, had earlier served as chairman of the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces.

One name mentioned as a possible successor is John Hamre, the Pentagon's comptroller.

Hackers beware! The Army has declared war on computer hackers when it unveiled its Army Computer Emergency Response Team to solve the service's computer security problems.

The team is based at the Army's Intelligence and Security Command, Fort Belvoir, Va., is to field calls concerning computer hacking attacks, technical difficulties and issues that could affect information security.

In the coming fiscal year, Col. Halbert Stevens, director, Land Information Warfare Activity, said the Army will be fielding regional teams to guarantee information dominance. Protecting information security is critical to future success on the battlefield, senior Army officials have told Congress in a number of hearings this year. This March the service's Tactical Internet was tested during the Advanced Warfighting Experiment at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif. and preliminary results show this dominance was crucial to the 4th Infantry Division's relative success against the Opposing Force.

The response team's new quarters were opened March 17. The Navy and the Air Force have similar teams, and the three can work jointly.

Perry to receive AUSA's highest award. The Association of the United States Army has selected Dr. William J. Perry, former secretary of defense, to receive its highest award, the George Catlett Marshall Medal, for "selfless service to the United States of America."

Recognized as an educator, entrepreneur, public servant and soldier, Perry is cited by the Association for his "wisdom, honor and valor," and for the many contributions he made to the nation as the 19th defense secretary "in the tradition of that great American public servant whose memory is perpetuated by this award," Gen. George Catlett Marshall.

Born in Vandergrift, Pa., on Oct. 11, 1927, Perry received a bachelor's degree and master's degree in mathematics from Stanford University, and later a doctorate in mathematics from Pennsylvania State University.

Perry will receive the Marshall Medal at the George Catlett Marshall Memorial Dinner, the final event at the AUSA Annual Meeting Oct. 13-16.