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Congress adds \$8.5 billion to defense spending bill. As a part of the omnibus spending package recently approved by Congress and signed by the president, the Pentagon received nearly \$8.5 billion additional funding for Fiscal Year 1999, including about \$2 billion for intelligence programs and about \$1 billion for missile defense. When added to the \$270 billion defense appropriations bill already approved, this add-on represents the first real increase in defense spending since 1985.

Congress provided a \$1.3 billion allocation in the funding package to increase force readiness—a topic that has recently received widespread attention on Capitol Hill and in the White House. Responding to the testimony of key military and defense personnel, the House and Senate agreed that supplemental readiness funding is necessary to reduce the risk associated with American involvement in one or more future conflicts. Provisions of the readiness allocation include:

- \$239 million for extra flying hours and spare parts for Air Force and Navy aviators;
- \$113 million for initiatives to boost recruiting and retention in the services;
- \$347 million for operational tempo relief;
- \$50 million for morale support for deployed forces;
- \$302 million for depot maintenance.

Despite the Joint Chiefs' request for more funding to sustain force readiness, this increase is commonly viewed as just the beginning of a trend in steadily increasing funds that should continue with the FY 2000 budget submissions and for the next several years.

The \$1.9 billion in emergency funding for Bosnia that was previously requested by the administration but not approved in the \$270 billion defense appropriations bills, was pushed through by Congressional leaders and included in the omnibus budget deal. Without these funds, the armed forces would have been required to continue drawing money from other accounts.

Rostker takes over as under secretary. Bernard D. Rostker was sworn in as the 25th under secretary of the Army Oct. 26, after being nominated by President Clinton and confirmed by the United States Senate.

As the Army's number two civilian, he serves as the deputy and senior advisor to the secretary of the Army.

Rostker will assist the secretary in the general management of the Department and in fulfilling statutory responsibilities for recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, training and mobilizing the Army. He will play a key role in managing the Army's \$64 billion annual budget and more than 1.3 million active-duty, National Guard and Army Reserve troops, as well as its civilian personnel. He is also responsible for management of DoD support to domestic disasters.

Former senators tapped to study future security needs. Secretary of Defense William Cohen has announced the formation and first meeting of the National Security Study Group, which will be headed by former Sens. David Boren and Warren Rudman.

The National Security Study Group, known as the Boren-Rudman Commission, will be a two-and-one-half-year effort to determine the global security environment of the first quarter of the 21st century; analyze the character of the nation during that time frame and develop an appropriate national security strategy; and recommend alternatives to the current national security apparatus and processes to implement the new strategy.

Cohen stressed the bipartisan nature of what is described as the most comprehensive review of the national security environment, processes and organizations since the National Security Act of 1947.

Boren and Rudman indicated that the work of the commission will be focused on the future with the goal of providing the next administration and the 107th Congress with a road map for ensuring a viable security strategy and structure.

Oldest unit in the Army will be at the forefront of modernizing the force. The 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment will lead the next charge in the Army's march toward modernizing its fighting force, Gen. Dennis Reimer, the service's chief of staff, said.

Speaking at the Annual Meeting for the Association of the United States Army, Reimer Oct. 13 said the regiment will be the test base for the Army's trials of a rapid-deployment emergency force.

Called the Strike Force, the unit is envisioned as one that has the strategic mobility to deploy anywhere in the world within days, enough lethality to take on a powerful enemy, but flexible enough to handle a range of missions and fight in a variety of environments.

"It's a bridge between the heavy and light divisions," Reimer said at a press conference following his Dwight David Eisenhower address. "It's based on power, speed and knowledge."

The 2nd ACR is based at Fort Polk, La. Its most recent missions was as part of the peacekeeping force in Bosnia and is the oldest regiment in continuous active service.

What would strike force do? The Army's leaders had envisioned a force entirely rearmed for threats in the next century, but such a complete force change is now viewed as prohibitively expensive. Instead, for the early part of the 21st century at least, the Army now plans to have a Strike Force to fight the initial battle of a conflict, with a conventional force much like today's following it into a foreign theater.

The Persian Gulf War, although a stunning victory, served as a wakeup call for the Army. The service was called upon to fight an enemy with a massive tank force half a world away. The equipment and doctrine of the time called for a massive sea- and airlift operation to bring heavy divisions from Europe and the United States. It took weeks to deliver as much firepower as the Strike Force is to bring in days. Also, the Gulf War force required a massive supply buildup, an "iron mountain," in the Army's words, to sustain the force. With new technologies and fighting doctrine, future forces will be lighter and easier to deploy, so less of a force will be needed to supply the same amount of fighting capability, Army officials say.

Army secretary calls upon Congress and Army leaders to maintain commitment to soldiers.

Army Secretary Louis Caldera said the service's main concern is not whether its members are up to the challenges they face, but whether their leaders demonstrate that they have the force's interest in mind.

At the opening ceremony of the Association of the United States Army's 44th Annual Meeting in Washington Oct. 12, Caldera said in his travels since assuming his post July 2, he has seen "superb young soldiers doing their jobs to the best of their abilities," family support groups helping take care of junior members and commanders stretching tight budgets to maximize training and quality of life. However, service members have questions about pay, benefits and promotion opportunity, he said.

Team approach will help Army modernize its future force. The Army will have to team with industry to give its Abrams main battle tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles a "brain transplant" of new communications and information technologies to modernize them for the battlefields of the future.

Paul J. Hoeper, assistant secretary of the Army for research, development and acquisitions, said in a luncheon address at the Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army that the Army is completing a digital revolution.

Adding the speed of digital advances make it difficult for weapons systems to keep pace. "Digitization depends on the information and communication technologies. We have all seen the rapid advances of the past 15 years since IBM brought out its first personal computer. The computer chips that these technologies depend on are doubling in power every 18 months. Our time to field for a fairly large system is about 12 years."

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'America's Army' celebrated at AUSA.

"America's Army" was celebrated at a special breakfast gathering of 200 senior leaders of the Army National Guard, United States Army Reserve, the active force and leaders of the Association of the United States Monday.

Gen. Thomas Schwartz, new commanding general of Forces Command, reminded the gathering that "America's Army" consisted of 1.1 million soldiers in all components and 18 divisions, not only the 480,000 and 10 divisions in the active force.

"A team, pulling together and making it work... We've got the leadership to pull this together."

Later in the morning, Schwartz and senior reserve component leaders, including the adjutant generals of Arkansas, Oklahoma, Oregon, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina Memorandum of Agreement to implement two active component/Army National Guard Integrated Divisions. The two divisions will come into existence and be fully operational by October, 1999.

Civilians included for first time in Total Army Analysis. No one can question whether Army leaders' talk of civilians being part of the total force is mere lip service. To highlight the importance of civilians, the nonuniformed force is now included in Army force planning for the future, Gen. William Crouch, vice chief of staff, told civilians Oct. 14 during the Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army.

Crouch said civilians' inclusion in the Total Army Analysis, the service's systematic future planning process, underscores the Army's recognition of their contribution. "There is nothing more important to the civilian structure than that," Crouch said.

The Total Army Analysis for Fiscal Year 1999, which started Oct. 1, includes civilians for the first time. Crouch credited civilians with taking on additional missions despite undergoing a forced reduction more severe than the military's.

He said missions in logistics, health care, communications and other fields now done by civilians from stateside installations to overseas theaters free up soldiers for military tasks.

Reimer, Hall optimistic about fixing retirement system. The Army's top officer and senior enlisted man were optimistic that the military retirement system would be fixed and the pay gap between soldiers and their civilian counterparts would be closed.

Speaking at a press conference during the 44th Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army, Gen. Dennis J. Reimer, chief of staff, said, "We need to fix the retirement system. ... Fifty percent needs to be in there. Either using the top three (years of base pay earnings) or highest year." Adding, "I'm optimistic we'll come up with the right formula."

Sergeant Major of the Army Robert Hall said, "We've got to fix the COLA cap as well." What Hall referred to is the federal law that pegs military pay raises at one-half of one percent below cost-of-living adjustments and allows the pay to grow each year and also reduces the base on which the retirement formula is based. "The signal (from soldiers) is we've got to fix both."

Sullivan, Abrams stress cooperation with reserve components. The 110th Infantry holding back some of Nazi Germany's toughest units in the bitter cold fighting along Skyline Ridge that was "The Bulge" showed "the character that not only is America's Army, but America" and also provides a lesson for today.

In 1944, the 28th Division, largely made up of reserve soldiers fought on against increasingly difficult odds. Gen. John Abrams, commanding general of the Training and Doctrine Command, said, "The remnants of beaten units wouldn't give up. That's what you represent."

Abrams, speaking at an Oct. 10 Association of the United States Army dinner for about 100 senior leaders of the United States Army Reserve and the Army National Guard, said it was critical for the active and reserve components to have respect for each other for success.

Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, USA, ret., and president of the Association of the United State Army, said this first dinner bringing the three components together before the Association's Annual Meeting was to show that AUSA was an inclusive organization. It was also a harbinger of a new era of cooperation, he said.

Reimer: Readiness is non-negotiable. Hidden among the myriad changes the Army has faced in recent years, one thing has not changed, the Army's senior leader says.

"Readiness is non-negotiable," Gen. Dennis Reimer, Army chief of staff, told a roomful of senior noncommissioned officers Oct. 12 during the Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army.

Then, after the Vietnam War, the Army was shorthanded, had outdated equipment and "lost its soul," Reimer said.

Despite the recent drawdown and constrained budgets, Reimer said, "The Army today is not hollow and we're not in danger of having another Task Force Smith."

Industry is crucial to future military, acquisition official tells AUSA. A combination of military and industry experts are helping tailor the Army of the future under a unique wargaming process.

The idea is to develop concepts for the next generation of weapons and force structure and it is to be engrained in the military's annual training cycle, said Lt. Gen. Paul Kern, military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for research, development and acquisition. The first of the so-called Technology Seminar Games was held in July at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., home of the Army War College.

Kern said the concept evolved to bring military acquisition and training officials and private industry professionals into the decision-making cycle for weapons development. The wargaming process combines available and projected technology, known and anticipated threats and realistic budget assumptions, he said.

Among the early conclusions of participants, Kern said were the following:

- Instead of looking at near-term, incremental improvements.
- Military leaders should focus on a "system of systems" approach, that is, to view separate systems or individual soldiers as complementary parts of a whole.
- Much can be gained by leveraging the commercial sector for already-available technology.

Augustine defines U.S. dilemma in the next decade: reluctance to be 911 nation vs. unwillingness to stand idle as others suffer. The dilemma the United States may face in the next decade may well be "to balance our nation's reluctance to become '911 America' on the one hand and — on the other — our admirable unwillingness to stand idly by while others suffer."

Norman R. Augustine, retired chairman of Lockheed Martin Corp, was speaking Oct. 14 to more than 3,000 attendees at The George Catlett Marshall Memorial Dinner that concluded the 44th Annual Meeting of the Association of the United States Army.

"All too often, we Americans tend to overlook the effort needed to ensure the capabilities we will call upon in the future will, in fact, be there," he said. Adding that average life-span of an item in the military arsenal is 54 years. "I submit to you that no corporation could long survive with such an investment policy. ... And no first-rate nation should ever permit the family of even one single soldier to have to live on food stamps."

Augustine, who received AUSA's highest award - the Marshall Medal, said, "Today we stand on the cusp of a new century and a new millennium. And as we prepare for this new era, we might recall something else Winston Churchill said shortly before the outbreak of World War I. ... "War is too foolish, too fantastic, to be thought of in the 20th century. Civilization has climbed above such perils. ... (mockingly) Are you quite sure? It would be a pity to be wrong."

Sullivan terms Army 'overcommitted, underresourced and underpaid.' The president of the Association of the United States Army told a key, joint congressional committee that the Army was "overcommitted, underresourced and underpaid."

Testifying Oct. 7, Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, USA, Ret., president of AUSA, said:

"This is a great nation. It humbles itself when it breaks its quarter century covenant with the volunteer force and partly finances the nation's defense on the backs of its servicemen and women in uniform. Our peace dividend is peace, and it should not be a piece of their take-home pay."