

COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY
Statement of Colonel Mark N. Campsey
U.S. Army Retired

I appreciate the opportunity to provide my perspectives to this commission and I thank you for the work that you are doing on behalf of the nation, and our Armed Forces.

I retired in 2011 after 31 years of service. During my career I was allowed to serve as an Armored Battalion Commander in support of Operation Noble Eagle, providing security to critical infrastructure, post 9/11. I was allowed to serve as a Chief of Staff during a deployment to Kosovo, providing stability and security in support of our national interests. My last assignment was commanding the 72d Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) during its deployment to Iraq in 2009.

The 72d IBCT is geographically located along the entire Texas coast, from Beaumont to Harlingen, as far west as San Antonio and is headquartered in the 4th largest city in the United States which serves as one of the world's leading petro-chemical capabilities.

Because of the brigade's location we efficiently and effectively executed multiple "hyper" or short term, high intensity mobilizations in support of civilian authorities. During many of these mobilizations our Soldiers saved lives and gave hope to fellow Texans in need. Paraphrasing one of our citizens, he said, "after the hurricane winds and rain had started to subside and we were able to come out, we discovered everything we had, had been destroyed – and it wasn't until we saw the Army trucks that we knew there was hope".

These hyper mobilizations required immediate generation of forces, often times requiring several hundred Soldiers spread across a couple of hundred miles to gather and be ready to move within 12 hours. Each time these forces quickly executed the planning and order sequences, deployed to decentralized locations, conducted on-going risk assessments and mitigations and executed actions within the parameters dictated by mission command. These were truly complex and often times dangerous missions, and our Soldiers excelled every time. These types mobilizations are only possible because our citizen-warriors have attended all requisite Army development schools and served in combat formations with relevant equipment to accomplish missions.

A few generalities about our Soldiers; I believe that many have served on active duty, about half have deployed, about half of those more than once. About one third benefit financially while deployed, about one third break even and one third are financially harmed during deployment. They work the normal American work week, reporting to training on no less than one weekend a month. They forgo vacations with families to conduct annual training periods. Most spend countless hours at training meetings, rehearsals and on phones during the week ensuring plans are synchronized to ensure that when the call comes, they are ready.

Their experiences as combat Soldiers have created the critical thinking, adaptive, and winning warriors required to do these state missions, and they remain ready to serve.

These Soldiers are supported by increasingly resilient families and employers. They and their Soldiers are the face of the Army in our communities, and they are proud to contribute to our nation's efforts. Like their Soldiers they like being on winning teams. With the resources made available to our family programs in the last decade we have dramatically improved our ability to generate more ready families, more capable of sustaining themselves without the benefit of being on or near a base with support services. Additionally, employers understand that with the sacrifices of an employee being deployed, they are getting a more improved employee in return. Several that I have visited with indicated their belief that deployments serve as the best leadership development program in existence.

To comment on training of the National Guard I would offer that when directed to deploy I believe past constraints and levels of certification for individual training have lengthened pre-mobilization and sometimes post-mobilization timelines. I believe that our formations are very capable of executing training models to deliver forces earlier than previously thought. Additionally, I realize that pre-mob and post-mob training are expensive and more importantly requires Soldiers to be away from their homes longer than required. I am glad to hear that enabling assumptions in this area are changing and I hope that the trend continues in that direction.

Regarding capabilities of the National Guard I have heard indications that we are complementary forces for our active component brethren. For me this is a disappointing view, it seems that in some cases when we have conducted Reliefs in Place (RIPs) and Transfers of Authority (TOAs) with active duty forces, we were actually replacing those forces, therefore being interchangeable, not complementary.

In closing I would like to say that I've appreciated and been humbled by the awards, unit citations and laudatory comments from active duty senior leaders about our performance and mission accomplishments, earned during mobilizations. I want to believe these statements of belief do not become inconsequential as fiscal constraints are applied during our post-war drawdown.

Thank you for your time today, and for your service to our nation.

COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY
Colonel Cynthia A. Smith
U.S. Army Retired

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. The mission you have is so relevant, and your ultimate findings so critical to the future of our Nation, that I felt compelled to travel to Killeen today, as both a retiree and a concerned citizen. I served for 21 years as a member of the Texas Army National Guard, during two mobilizations; one with a peacekeeping mission to Kosovo and the last one to Iraq. As the Red Team Leader for General Odierno with the Multi-National Force-Iraq HQ, my team participated in developing the plan for the Responsible Drawdown of Forces from Iraq, and believe that I had a front row seat to the impact of making obligatory force reductions in the face of a complex operational environment.

I recognize we are on the cusp of critical resourcing decisions and respect the role that Congress has asked the Commission to have in shaping the future of the Army. As a former Soldier, I look at the world today and it certainly seems more volatile than ever, filled with uncertainties and challenges that make a compelling case for a robust standing Army. At the same time, as a taxpayer and citizen, I understand that the National narrative prevalent today may not support the continued cost of maintaining the finest fighting force in the world, ready at a moment's notice, to answer the call.

When faced with those conflicting priorities of security and cost, I cannot reconcile the paradigm that appears to be prevalent in the planning assumptions: that the Reserve Component, specifically the National Guard, will need to make proportional force reductions along with those being called for of the Active Component. The assumption that the Guard must be smaller than the standing Army is not grounded in constitutional precedent or fiscal realities. I submit that the response in these austere times should be to Grow the Guard, not Erode the Guard. The National Guard is the best value proposition for our Nation.

As a fiscal matter, the cost of a Guard member or unit, is less than 1/3 of its active component counterpart, due to the infrastructure and retirement commitments required to support an Active Duty member. That's a compelling factor when the major driver of the discussion is how to achieve our National Security Strategy at a lower cost than what has been allocated for the past decade.

It's very evident from the participants here today that Killeen is vested in advocating for a large Army presence at Ft. Hood. Given the infrastructure investment and training capacity here, Ft. Hood will undoubtedly remain a cornerstone of whatever the active force structure will be. The National Guard has a comparable economic and social impact on a diverse number of

communities across the country, albeit on a smaller-concentration but wider distribution than Ft. Hood or other major Army installations.

Many of the Soldiers who exit the service from Ft. Hood return to communities across Texas and the Nation, to begin the next phase of their lives; as students, employees, to start businesses, and to raise their families in one of thousands of hometowns across the country. They bring with them the knowledge, skills and training acquired in the Army and paid for by American taxpayers. We encourage them to market those skills to prospective employers. The communities that they enter benefit from their leadership and experience, but only if they decide to continue their military service as a member of the National Guard or Army Reserve will the Nation continue to earn a dividend from the initial military investment. I submit that it's in our Nation's self-interest to ensure that there is a robust Guard presence woven into the fabric of this Nation so that we retain their critical skills and experience as part of our National public trust, as a hedge against inevitable future threats. While they may not consider continued military service as an essential part of their transition to civilian life, many will feel the absence of being part of a tight-knit team, or pragmatically recognize the value of earning a future retirement; in those cases, it's the presence of local Guard units, with opportunities for the skills and structure that they left behind, that bring them to military service.

My brother was one of those individuals: he served an initial enlistment in an Airborne Infantry unit, returned to Texas to work, start a family and attend school. After several years, he missed the camaraderie and joined the local National Guard unit months prior to their deployment to Iraq. Five years later, he's on his second deployment, this time to the Sinai with the Multi-National Force Observers. Had there not been a combat arms unit nearby that he could join, while pursuing his civilian aspirations, and had there not been a high OPTEMPO to keep him engaged in a relevant mission, his military service might have ended with "no-s**t, there I was in Hohenfels" stories over a cold beer with his friends. The National Guard returned a trained and valuable NCO to the ranks and made his service available to his Nation. Sergeant O'Neill is just one example; there are thousands of others who continue to pay a dividend with their military service.

Aside from offering a repository for the skills and experiences of service members leaving active duty, a robust community-based National Guard offers a return-on-investment in two additional ways:

First, it brings military service directly into the homes of average Americans. Whether they serve on Active duty first, or directly join the National Guard, a drilling member of the National Guard bridges the military and civilian communities like no Active Army installation can. A traditional Guard Soldier exposes her employer, neighbors, children's teachers, civic, political and religious leaders, to the military mission, values and sacrifices. When a National Guard unit deploys, we bring with us the hearts, minds and will of the Nation, one Main Street at a time.

Second, National Guard Soldiers bring their civilian-acquired skills to bear on military missions. It's a force-multiplier that has intrinsic value in a way that is difficult to quantify. During the KFOR 7 mission to Kosovo, our unit leaned into the depth of civilian skills our citizen-Soldiers possessed, such as teachers, law enforcement officers, farmers, public works specialists, engineers and tradesmen and women of all sorts, to identify concerns and develop capacity in the local Albanian and Serbian communities throughout the Area of Operations. These Soldiers were there because of their military duties, but they were even more valuable because of the additional attributes they brought from their civilian or life experiences.

As a citizen of this country, I expect that every willing citizen-Soldier find a place to serve in reasonable proximity to their home, in a unit that is identical in structure, equipment and standards to their active component counterparts, that their available training time is fully-resourced at an OPTEMPO level that will afford them predictability in peacetime, and a rapid transition to a relevant warfighting mission.

As a self-employed business woman, I understand the impact of what it means for the National Guard to be an Operational Reserve, rather than the Strategic Reserve of the past, and I welcome the change. I've proudly been a part of this transition, and seen the impact on Guard members, families and employers. We've achieved a "new normal", ... that the Guard is relevant, ready and available for all missions; that it's not "if" I deploy, but "when" I deploy. This "new normal" was hard-won and is now folded into the lifecycle planning of Guard service members, families, and employers alike.

This is an achievement that we should lean into as a Nation. Let's double-down on the investment rather than forfeit the gains by retrograding to a new low in force structure and resourcing for the Guard.

I reiterate that we need to Grow the Guard. For every unit that we must lose from the Active force structure, due to requirement caps or resourcing constraints, we should transition structure to the Guard, and offer a cost-effective, "warm-base" strategy to retain the people, equipment, and skills as a value proposition to the Nation and a hedge against uncertainty.

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