



## **National Commission on the Future of the Army**

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000  
Arlington, VA 22202

## **National Commission on the Future of the Army**

**Open meeting, September 17, 2015**

Present:

Chairman – GEN Carter F. Ham (USA, Ret)  
Vice Chairman – HON. Thomas R. Lamont (ARNGUS, Ret)  
Member – GEN James D. Thurman (USA, Ret)  
Member – GEN Larry R. Ellis (USA, Ret)  
Member – LTG Jack C. Stultz (USA, Ret)  
Member – HON. Robert F. Hale (Former USD Comptroller)  
Member – HON. Kathleen H. Hicks (Former PDUSD Policy)  
Member – SMA Raymond F. Chandler (USA, Ret)

Designated Federal Officer – Mr. Don Tison (DFO)

### **Documents received by the Commission:**

1. Joint Statement of Governor Terry Branstad, State of Iowa and Governor Mark Dayton, State of Minnesota on behalf of the National Governors Association (NGA) with five appendices of supporting material.
  - a. Appendix A – State-Federal Consultative Process for Programming and Budgetary Proposals Affecting the National Guard
  - b. Appendix B – Feb 2014 NGA Letter to the President
  - c. Appendix C – OSD AC/RC Aviation Tiger Team Preliminary Findings, Nov 14
  - d. Appendix D – Copies of Mar '99 and Jan '01 Army Full Time Support Memos
  - e. Appendix E – DepSecDef Letter to Council of Governors' Co-chairs, May 15
2. Dr. Michael O'Hanlon's (Brookings Institute) book, "The Future of Land Warfare".

Documents and audio recording for entire meeting available at [www.ncfa.ncr.org](http://www.ncfa.ncr.org)

### **The DFO called the meeting to order at 0900hrs.**

Procedures for speakers – DFO discussed Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) procedures. DFO also explained a planned appearance of the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency had been cancelled due to schedule conflicts and Dr. Michael O'Hanlon from the Brookings Institute and author of a recent book titled "The Future of Land Warfare" had been added to the meeting agenda.

Commission activities update – Chairman asked Commissioners and staff to provide short updates on recent site visits to Long Beach and Fort Irwin, California; Minneapolis and Camp Ripley (Vigilant Guard domestic emergency exercise), Minnesota; Denver,

Peterson Air Force Base, and Fort Carson, Colorado; Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania; and Fort Drum, New York, as well as Commissioners attending the National Guard Association of the U.S. Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee and a meeting with the Honorable Brad Carson, the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and former Under Secretary of the United States Army. Site visits included an open meeting in Long Beach, California and meetings with Governor Dayton of Minnesota and Governor Hickenlooper of Colorado, numerous state Adjutants General, and many other senior leaders and units from all Army components.

Subcommittee meeting updates –

- Commissioner Stultz provided an update on the Institutional subcommittee examination of Army recruiting and improving unity of efforts and efficiencies for marketing and recruiting across all the three Army components. He also discussed issues related to the One Army School System (OASS) and possible modified use of Trainees, Transients, Holders and Students (TTHS) accounts for all Army components.
- Commissioner Hicks gave an update on the Operational subcommittee activities including efforts to examine and describe the future operational environment. She also addressed a number of engagements with allies, multinational partners, the Joint Staff and other Services. She ended with a discussion of the purpose and preparations for a classified analytic exercise for the Commission coming up in October 2016.
- Commissioner Ellis updated the Commission on the Force Generation subcommittee assessments for mandatory training requirements and Mobilization Force Generation Installations (MFGI). Other commissioners commented on the need to improve training management (a lost skill) in the Army and to follow through with initiatives to give commanders flexibility in accomplishing required training in AR 350-1. Commissioner Ellis requested and received approval from the Commission to proceed with several proposals to reduce the mandatory requirements in AR 350-1.
- Commissioner Hale provided an update on the Aviation subcommittee activities and listed a number of key criteria that are being used to examine potential alternatives for Army Aviation including the Aviation Restructuring Initiative.
- Finally, the Chairman addressed the activities of the Drafting Subcommittee and discussed planning for preparation of the Commission's final report. He displayed a timeline for drafting and producing the final report.

Speakers from:

National Governors Association

Brookings Institute

DFO Closing remarks; Chairman closing remarks

## National Governors Association

Terry Branstad,

Governor of Iowa, Co-Chair of the Council of Governors

Governor Branstad stated that the Council of Governors has made good progress working with the Department of Defense to improve coordination and understanding of military issues between the states and the federal government. He commented that the Air Force implemented 40 total force recommendations from the 2013 National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force and that led to the improved relationships between the states and the Air Force. Governor Branstad asked the Commission to consider the Army National Guard's capabilities, value and strategic importance to the states and to the nation's security. He also stated that he wanted to ensure that the National Guard continues to remain an operational force as part of the total Army while still delivering on the state mission. He stated that in the last 13 years, Iowa has mobilized more than 17,000 National Guard Soldiers for combat and combat support duties in Iraq, Afghanistan, peacekeeping duties in the Balkans and the Sinai Peninsula and for other operational missions around the globe.

Governor Branstad believes that the recent efforts to cut the Army Guard force structure and remove the Guard's Apache helicopters is a step backward and would have lasting, irreversible negative changes for the National Guard. The Army's Aviation Restructuring Initiative undermines the Guard's ability to augment the Army as its combat reserve and fails to leverage the National Guard's cost-effectiveness to retain additional manpower, expertise, and attack aircraft at a reduced cost to taxpayers. He stated that National Guard personnel, equipment, and capabilities are key resources built into their state's emergency response plans and the federal national response framework. He also noted the National Guard has a unique ability to perform law enforcement functions that has proven to be valuable in response to natural disasters, episodes of civil unrest, and other national special security events.

Governor Branstad believes the turbulence created by force structure and personnel cuts deeply impacts people, readiness, training, equipment, and facilities and comes with a cost, which the National Guard Bureau estimates would be about \$179 million dollars in its first year. He also stated that while some reductions to Army Guard force structure may be necessary, he believes that it should be done through a collaborative approach that considers future needs, limits turbulence and maintains Guard readiness. He urged the Commission to consider recommendations that will preserve the Army Guard's role as the combat reserve of the Army, resource and equip the Army Guard to meet both federal and state needs, and leverage the Guard's cost-effectiveness and operational capability as part of the total Army solution for the future. To do otherwise would risk wasting billions of dollars invested over the past decade in making the Guard an experienced, globally deployable, and combat ready force. He stated that he is concerned about the proposals and the impact that could have on the Guard going forward and that cutting across the board doesn't make sense, but instead, they should set priorities in a collaborative way to include protecting the national security of the

country. The governor hopes the Commission will help improve the collaboration and the coordination between the two groups and give the governors the opportunity to have input early on in budget planning within the Army. In response to a question, Governor Branstad said that in the past the perception has been that the Army Guard has not been treated as a full partner of the Regular Army during planning and budgeting activities.

Mark Dayton,

Governor of Minnesota, Member of the Council of Governors

Governor Dayton stated that they understand the need to reorganize, restructure and modernize the military to meet new threats with the present and future economic realities along with the imperativeness to support the most effective means to achieve these goals. He stated that the Guard is an extremely cost-effective operational force that is critical to our national security as well as to the governor's ability to respond to domestic emergencies. He stated that since 9/11, Minnesota National Guardsmen has made 26,000 deployments, some of them several times to 33 different countries including Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo and that these mobilizations have clearly demonstrated the operational readiness which the National Guard maintains across all critical military capabilities to support national needs. The governors strongly believe the Guard must remain the fully-equipped and always prepared combat reserve of the Army. This mission would be seriously compromised by the Army's proposals to take AH-64 Apaches from the Army Guard and makes significant cuts to its personnel. He stated these are all deeply troubling to governors because of their long-term irreversible nature and their effects on the states and national security. While only nine states have Army Guard Apaches, the transfer of the Apaches to the active component will affect many more states. He noted as a result of the Army's budget proposal, nearly every governor signed a letter to the President strongly opposing the proposal. Governor Dayton believes robust training of the Guard is necessary to sustain readiness and respond to the needs of the nation.

## **Brookings Institute**

Dr. Michael E. O'Hanlon,

Director of Research for Foreign Policy, Brookings Institution

Dr. O'Hanlon has recently published a book on the future of land warfare and talked about his concerns and ideas on current and future official U.S. military policies. Dr. O'Hanlon believes that the military is quite small in relative size and configuration and also harshly critiques the current policy that views stabilization and counterinsurgency missions as less central than they used to be. He stated that the current administration can and should decide how to use forces today but believes that we must be very careful in making specific force planning decisions about the long-term capacities of the nation. He noted that political winds should not drive force planning. He also stated both the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance and 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review fail to adequately acknowledge that in an imperfect and uncertain world, we don't know

what future ground force scenarios will require. He believes that the Army should focus on being able to do a wide range of missions, including both high-end kinetic missions, as well as stabilization or peacekeeping missions. Dr. O'Hanlon provided some scenarios that were derived from his book to illustrate the point including the need for a large scale UN peacekeeping force in Syria or an India-Pakistan war.

The second key point Dr. O'Hanlon discussed was how DoD sizes forces based on scenario planning and how he believes there has been a gradual erosion of the usefulness of the so-called two Major Theater War (MTW) construct. He submits that we should size the Army in a more intuitive and logical way, which means that instead of holding on to some variance of a two-war capability, we should be able to fight and win one war and simultaneously conduct two protracted (messy) multi-lateral missions to include: stabilization, counterinsurgency, disaster relief, or some combination thereof. He believes it is time to find a more useful framework to explain how to size the Army and ground forces. Dr. O'Hanlon proceeded to give a few case studies to validate his second point, including continuous rotational presence in Korea, putting an infantry battalion in the Baltic States and training the Afghans in counterterrorism capabilities for deterrence purposes in the region. He stated that in his book, he argues that the Army needs roughly a million Soldier Total Force to be able to fight one robust war plus two smaller stabilization-like missions, even though he believes a 450k active force trends toward the lower end of the safe range for the size of the Army.

In response to a question, Dr. O'Hanlon described land power as a key to deterrence and noted forward based forces in both Korea and Europe are required both to send an unambiguous message and to provide rapid response when needed. He reiterated that the Army needs a wide range of capabilities and a robust force structure, because we are not very good at predicting the future. He stated that we should increase the defense budget to make sure we have the Army we need, if that is what is required.

## **Public Comments**

Although time was allocated, no public comments were received at this meeting.

## **DFO Closing remarks; Chairman closing remarks**

The Chairman noted that the Commission will conduct a site visit to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington later this month. The Commission will also meet with US Army leaders from Korea and Japan in Washington, D.C., as well as a session with the Director of the Army National Guard. A classified analytical review will occur on 15 - 16 October, and the next public hearing will be held in Arlington, Virginia on 22 October, 2015. The DFO noted the Commission will have an open meeting from 1500 - 1700 on 25 September 2015 at the Red Lion Hotel Conference Room in Tacoma, Washington. The DFO reminded the attendees that the minutes and documents would be posted at [www.ncfa.ncr.gov](http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov) and **adjourned the meeting at 1155hrs.**