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HIGHLIGHTS OF MOBILIZATION, KOREAN WAR

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RESUME OF ARMY MOBILIZATION DURING THE KOREAN WAR

1. Existing mobilization plans at the beginning of the Korean War, both for personnel, and materiel, were all framed in terms of all-out war. The Department of Defense had no plans for limited war. Thus, the entire mobilization process was one of improvisation. The limited mobilization undertaken had to be aimed both at providing and equipping the necessary forces for fighting a limited war in Korea and at placing the United States in a posture to meet Communist threats on a world-wide basis.

2. On 30 June 1950, the United States Army had an authorized strength of 610,900 but an actual strength of 593,167. There were 348,904 troops in the United States, 111,430 in the Far East, 88,956 in Europe, and the rest were in the Pacific, Caribbean and Alaska. The Army's force structure consisted of ten active divisions, four training divisions, and supporting troops. The General Reserve, kept in the United States for emergency assignments, consisted of five combat divisions and smaller units, a total of about 140,000 men. As a result of economy measures during the preceding years, all units were badly understrength, particularly those in the Far East. Most infantry regiments in the Far East were short one battalion and support elements correspondingly short of their normal TO strength. Equipment for the most part consisted of World War II types; much of the service support, both in the United States and abroad, was being rendered by civilians. Mobilization reserves consisted of World War II stocks in Europe and the United States mainly designed to support a war in Europe. None of these reserves had been built to planned levels and they were badly unbalanced and in a poor state of maintenance.

3. Total strength of the organized reserve corps on 30 June 1950 consisted of 217,435 officers and 291,182 enlisted men. Of these, 68,785 officers and 117,756 enlisted men were participating in paid drills in 10,629 activated units. National Guard strength was 324,761, about 25,000 below authorized levels. The National Guard had 27 organized divisions plus supporting units but its equipment was only 46 per cent of requirements. Training was hampered by lack of funds and facilities. The principal strength of both organized reserves and National Guard lay in the fact that much of their personnel had seen combat service during World War II.

4. As a result of the commitment of ground forces to the support of South Korea, MacArthur almost immediately asked for additional units and for replacement personnel both to fill his understrength units and to replace battle casualties. The only immediate source from which these units and personnel could be drawn was the General Reserve. By the end of July 1950, General Reserve strength had fallen to 90,000. Moreover, the way in which individuals and units had been pulled out left it badly disorganized. For almost a year afterward, the only General Reserve division ready for action in the United States was the 82nd Airborne Division.

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5. To rebuild the General Reserve, provide additional forces necessary in Korea, and simultaneously build up the United States Army contribution to NATO from one to six divisions, limited mobilization of manpower was begun in July 1950. It was "creeping mobilization." On 6 July the President raised the authorized strength of the Army from 630,000 to 680,000, on 14 July to 740,500, and on 19 July to 834,000. On 3 August 1950, Congress removed the existing limitations on the size of the armed forces, and future levels were set by the Secretary of Defense. On 10 August, the ceiling strength was increased to 1,081,000, on 22 November 1950 to 1,263,000, and finally, on 17 April 1951, after the Chinese Communist intervention, at 1,552,000.

6. The Army was built to this strength through four main methods:

a. Stepped up recruiting for the Regular Army and extension of all existing terms of enlistment by twelve months.

b. Use of Selective Service, Congress extending it for one year on 9 July 1950.

c. Ordering into service of individuals and units of the Organized Reserves.

d. Ordering into federal service of units of the Army National Guard. Both these steps (c and d) were authorized by Congress on 30 June 1950. The term of service in both cases was to be 21 months.

7. The first call for selectees was issued in July for induction in September 1950. Meanwhile immediate

needs had to be filled by enlistments (20,000 in July 1950) and by levies on the Organized Reserve. A call for volunteers from the reserve on 22 July 1950 produced so few that the Army soon had to resort to involuntary recall of both officers and enlisted men. In this program, a basic decision was reached that the bulk of the levies should be made on the Volunteer and Inactive Reserve and not on the units engaged in pay-status drill. This was motivated by the need for preserving the organized units as a final reserve against contingencies elsewhere. Most of the men recalled from inactive status were veterans of World War II. Selected units of the National Guard were recalled beginning in September 1950 with four divisions and supporting units. In January 1951 two more Guard divisions were ordered into service. In summary, during FY 1951, the Army recalled a total of 172,496 members of the Inactive and Volunteer Reserve; 34,225 organized reservists; and 95,000 National Guardsmen were ordered into Federal Service. During the same period the Army received 550,397 inductees under Selective Service and 176,000 volunteers. Strength of the Army on 30 June 1951 was 1,531,596.

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8. The growth of the Army was thus in two stages. First, Reservists and National Guardsmen were called to active duty, both as individuals and in units, as trainers and for immediate defense missions in Korea and elsewhere. The next stage was the absorption of the volunteers and selectees and their training and organization into units. By June 1951 eighteen divisions and necessary supporting units were formed, eight of which were in Korea, two in Europe, and the rest training in the United States. After this date, there was little net accretion to Army strength. Personnel mobilization continued, however, as a result of the necessity of releasing reserves and men whose terms expired and replacing them with new trainees. This was the third stage of Army manpower mobilization during the Korean War. As part of this third stage, two more National Guard divisions were ordered into federal service in 1952 (making a total of 20 Army divisions) but in general, main reliance was on selectees and volunteers to fill the ranks. The universal Military Training and Service Act of June 1951 extended selective service until 1955, lowered the draft age from 19 to 18½ and increased the period of service to 24 months. It also provided a method for reconstituting the depleted reserve by imposing an obligation on men completing their term to continue in the reserve for six more years. At the same time, it made necessary the release of many of the Inactive and Volunteer reservists previously called to active duty by stipulating that any who had served in World War II should be released on the completion of 17 months service. The net result of this, and expiration of terms of selectees, volunteers and National Guard was a tremendous turnover in Army personnel during the last two years of the war. During FY 1952, 500,000 men entered the Army with a net increase in strength of only 65,000; in FY 1953, 742,300 entered the Army but the strength fell by 62,600. Whereas enlisted strength in June 1951 had been 45% regulars, 40% selectees, and 15% Reserve and National Guard, by June 1953, it was 41% Regular Army, 57.5% selectees, and 1.5% Reserve and National Guard.

9. Industrial mobilization ran a parallel course to manpower mobilization but because of industrial lead time, averaging 18 months to two years for major items, its products had much less significance in fighting the war in Korea than did the results of personnel mobilization. For the most part, during the first year of the war in Korea, theater supply needs were met largely from World War II surplus, either rolled-up from the Pacific islands and rebuilt in Japan or withdrawn from reserves in the United States, or from production on orders placed prior to June 1950. Without the roll-up and rebuild program in Japan timely supply to the forces in Korea would very probably have been impossible.

10. The industrial mobilization program during the Korean War was not geared primarily to the needs of that war but had the broader purpose of providing the material for general United States

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recruitment. The Department of Defense production program developed during the first year of the Korean War had a five-fold objective: (1) to support and equip armed forces of about 31 million man; (2) to replace the materiel and supplies used in the Far East; (3) to build up reserves of materiel difficult to produce; (4) to tool up and expand industrial capacity for still higher levels of production in the future; (5) to provide facilities and installations for the expanded armed forces.

11. This program was carried out largely through the existing machinery of government and without extensive enabling legislation apart from appropriations. The Defense Production Act of 8 September 1950 gave the President authority to establish priorities and allocations of materials and to give financial aid to government contractors by means of guaranteed and direct loans. A further step came on 16 December 1950 when the President declared a National Emergency and followed this by creating an Office of Defense Mobilization with broad powers to direct, control, and coordinate all mobilization activities of the executive branch of the government, including but not limited to production, procurement, manpower, price stabilization, and transport activities. This office, operating through several committees and boards, acted largely as a coordinating agency. The powers conferred on the President by the Defense Production Act and the Declaration of a National Emergency made possible the establishment of priorities for defense production, placement of contracts without advertising, inauguration of a controlled materials plan such as was used during World War II, and other emergency measures to facilitate production.

12. Planning, directing, and implementing the military production program fell to the Department of Defense and its component agencies. The rate of development was determined by Congressional appropriations and by the rapidity of tooling up of industry for the task. The dimensions of the task were not immediately apparent and creeping industrial mobilization paralleled creeping personnel mobilization. The regular appropriation act for the Army in FY 1951 provided \$4,094,258,063, of which only 7 per cent was for Major Procurement and Production. The First Supplemental Appropriation Act on 27 September 1950 provided \$3,166,403,000 for support of Korean operations; on 6 January 1951 a Second Supplemental provided \$9,161,799,000 for the Army; the Fourth Supplemental on 31 May 1951 added \$2,847,570,000. About 56 per cent of these supplemental appropriations were for Major Procurement and Production. In addition, about \$90,000,000 was transferred for industrial mobilization end research and development from an emergency fund appropriated to the Department of Defense. Appropriations, regular and supplemental, for the Army in FY 1952 totalled \$23,521,155,306 and for FY 1953, \$16,087,168,994.

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13. In putting these funds to work, the reserve of permanent arsenals and stand-by plants was of tremendous value in that they composed a nucleus manufacturing capacity for items not normally available from civilian factories. Immediately following the outbreak of war in Korea, reactivation of many of these plants was started using funds earmarked for other purposes under existing appropriations. Industrial mobilization funds were also used to facilitate conversion of civilian plants and construct new ones. New construction was limited to plants absolutely necessary for the program.

14. A complication in all phases of mobilization was the method of appropriating funds for support of the forces in Korea. Based on optimistic estimates of the duration of the conflict, those funds were appropriated after they had been spent to reimburse appropriations from which this money had been withdrawn. This occasioned withdrawals from the mobilization reserves to support forces in Korea and complicated advance planning.

15. The difficulty of properly programming requirements and scheduling production under this system combined with delays in tooling up to produce critical shortages of certain types of material during some

stages of the Korean War. The enormous demands for artillery ammunition after the front had been stabilized produced a tremendous drain on available ammunition in the United States. The result was that in 1952 reserves for contingencies outside Korea fell to a dangerously low level while the 8th Army Commander complained that sufficient ammunition was not available for the type operations he was conducting.

16. In general, however, allowing for the factor of lead time, the limited industrial mobilization program undertaken during the Korean War was successful in meeting established goals. Measured on an adjusted dollar basis, procurement deliveries of military materials during 1951 and 1952 ran only slightly behind those for a comparable rearmament period in 1941 and 1942.

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