



ROATM

POSITION PAPER

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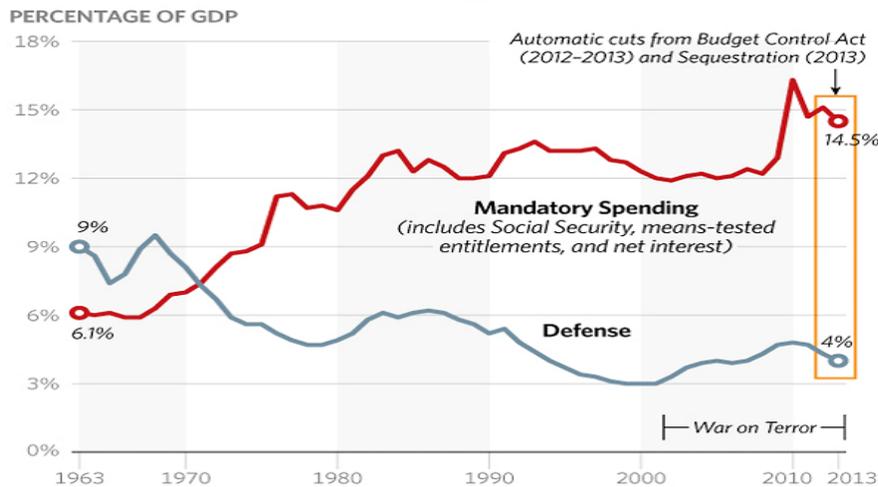
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FUND READINESS TO ENSURE AN ADEQUATE NATIONAL SECURITY

Requested Action:

- Hold Congressional hearings on cost effective ways to perform National Security missions.
- Fund based on readiness and threat analysis rather than budget constraints.
- Seek exemption or delay in future Defense Sequestration budget cuts.
- Study the impact of manpower cuts to Army and Marine Corps on National Security.
- Avoid parity cuts of both Active and Reserve Components without analyzing rebalance.
- Place capabilities into the Reserve Force as an insurance policy.
- Maintain a robust and versatile all-volunteer armed forces that can accomplish its mission to defend the homeland and U.S. interests overseas.

Mandatory Spending Consumes Nearly One-Seventh of the Economy



Source: Office of Management and Budget, *Historical Tables: Budget of the U.S. Government, FY 2014, Table 8.4, April 2013*, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Historicals> (accessed May 8, 2013).

Federal Spending by the Numbers 2013 heritage.org

Discussion:

The Defense Budget, including current war expenses, has been close to five percent of the Gross Domestic Product, yet as a percentage of the overall Federal budget is continues to decline. With defense expenses representing less than 20 percent of the federal budget, it seems inappropriate to take half of the budget reduction from National Security.

It is ill-conceived to base a national security strategy on a budget. Risk is already being accepted as It has been suggested that with sequestration budget cuts there will be a reduction up to 200,000 troops. **End strength cuts need to be taken cautiously.** The deployment of troops to Iraq and Afghanistan proved that the pre-9/11 end strengths left the Army and US Marine Corps undermanned which stressed the force.

Part of the existing U.S. military strategy is to rely on long-term alliances to augment U.S. forces. This is at a time when U.S. allies are cutting their own forces and relying on the United States to fill their security void.

ROA questions the current spending priorities which place more importance on the immediate future rather than first doing a short and long term threat analysis. The result of such a budget centric policy could again lead to a hollow force whose readiness and effectiveness has been subtly degraded and lessened efficiency will not be evident immediately. Readiness is a way of estimating whether our troops are fit to fight; whether we have the manpower, skills, equipment and capabilities necessary to perform national security missions, efficiently and effectively.

Rather than scrapping active duty capabilities, weapons and warriors should be moved into the Reserve and Guard as an insurance policy against the greater risks that the Pentagon is accepting.

In the “back end” of previous conflicts, the U.S. was able to contract our equipment inventory by shedding our oldest capital assets, reducing the average age of our systems. We cannot do this today, because the high pace and durations of combat operations have consumed the equipment of all our Services much faster than our peacetime programs can recapitalize them. We must actually recapitalize our systems to restore our readiness and avoid becoming a hollow force.

As discussions occur between Congress and the Pentagon on how to reduce the budget and the deficit, the peril of lower defense spending is that the Reserve Components will become a bill payer. As seen in the past, the risk exists where Defense planners may be tempted to put the National Guard and Title 10 Reserve on the shelf, and provide them with “hand me down” outmoded equipment and by underfunding training.

In a time of war and force rebalancing, it is wrong to make cuts to the end strength of the Reserve Components. We need to pause to permit force planning and strategy to take precedence over budget reductions.

Background

The Reserve Officer’s Association was chartered on June 30, 1950 by Congress (Public Law 81-595). “The object and purpose of the corporation shall be to support a military policy for the United States that will provide adequate national security and to promote the development and execution thereof.”

ROA was founded in 1922. The first article in the Association’s first constitution said: “The object of this Association shall be to support and assist in the development and execution of a military policy for the United States which shall provide adequate National Defense. (This is our sole object)”

ROA has over 70 National Resolutions that have been submitted by members, with concerns about national security, ranging from readiness, to equipment and appropriations, to recruiting and retention, to alliance building. In 2012, ROA members passed a resolution specifically about needing an adequate defense.

References:

ROA Resolutions: www.roa.org/resolutions

ROA LPP 04-14 Resetting and Replacing Reserve Component Equipment

ROA LPP 06-14 National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation

ROA LPP 07-14 Military Construction for the Reserve Force



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