

Chronological: Reserve Forces Policy Board, D.C.

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
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**Statement of Senator Daniel K. Inouye
Reserve Forces Policy Board
April 20, 2004**

*speech prepared
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Ref. Approps.
griw
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Let me begin first by thanking you for serving on the reserve forces policy board. You are the paramount experts in military manpower, in particular guard and reserve manpower.

Your dedication to the oversight of our reserve forces is one for which we are truly grateful.

With that in mind, I must tell you recently I have been giving a lot of thought to our reserves, and I have some real questions about our reserve forces. So I am hoping you will be able to clear up some of these issues.

I have been in this business a long time. Some of my colleagues say our chairman Ted Stevens and I are dinosaurs because we have been at this for more than forty years.

But, I want all of you to know we are not yet fossilized.

Still we have been looking at these issues for many years. It is very clear that times have changed since we were in the military. When I think about our reserves I think about citizen soldiers:

The minuteman that helped our nation gain its independence;

The militia that put down riots and insurrections when our nation was still in its infancy;

And, more recently, our national guard who ensured minority school children could safely be admitted into public schools and respond to natural disasters and emergencies throughout our country.

Indeed, the reserve components have a rich history. The Army National Guard was created in Massachusetts in the early 1600's long before we were a nation. I am sure I don't have to tell you the National Guard fought first against the Pequot Indians in 1636 and has been in every war since then.

But, throughout my long service, the reserve forces have been known as the force to ensure domestic tranquility, to defend the homeland, and to serve as our state militias.

Everyone recognizes that our reserve forces are available to serve in major conflicts. In World War II, I was assigned to the 34th reserve division and the 36th Reserve Division. We know that our reserves fought valiantly in Korea and Vietnam.

But things are different today. Today there are more than 125,000 reservists on active duty. We have major units in Afghanistan and Iraq. In fact 38% of our forces in Iraq are from the reserve component.

We have turned over much of the peacekeeping activity in the Balkans to our reserve forces.

Some of our reserve units have been called up several times over the past several years.

We rely heavily on the air force reserve and guard for airlift and tanker support on a daily basis in peacetime and wartime.

So, with that in mind, I want to ask exactly what are we doing and where are we headed?

Today we are relying on our reserve forces to an unprecedented degree. The concept of "weekend warrior" is certainly no longer valid.

I do not mean this to be derogatory or partisan, but one thing is clear.

This is not the same National Guard that George W. Bush joined.

I have been told that the chief of the National Guard, General Blum, has a briefing in which he asserts that our guard forces will be organized, equipped, and trained the same as the active component.

If he is correct, for all practical purposes it appears in the near future our reserves and active forces will be interchangeable.

The notion that our active and reserve forces would be interchangeable is a dramatic shift in the role of our reserves.

While it is true that the air reserve forces have been fairly well integrated into the Air Force for decades, and the Army has spoken of “the total force” and “one army” for years, the truth is there have been substantial differences between active and reserve forces.

So, if it is our intention to proceed in this fashion, I would ask all of you first to make it clear to our reserve forces that this is the case.

Individual members and their families and employers have obviously already noticed the change.

Their loved ones and employees are being called to service much more frequently than in the past, but I do not believe that a change in policy has been clearly articulated.

I don't think we have informed the american public that service in our reserve forces has fundamentally changed.

We owe it to everyone affiliated with the reserve forces to make it very clear that our understanding of how our reserve forces will be employed is different.

If this hypothesis is correct, that the roles of the reserve componets are fundamentally changing, in the future the reserve forces will not be seen as a “reserve” to be called up when there is a major conflict, but instead the reserves will be an adjunct to the active forces.

If you sign up for the National Guard you will be treated almost as if you were in the active force. You can expect to deploy overseas for long periods of time every three of four years, and you can expect to receive training commensurate with the active forces.

These changes need to be stated.

Second, if we are to proceed with this policy then it is our duty – really your duty -- to ensure that the reserve components are equipped and trained exactly as our active forces are, as the national guard chief has postulated they will be.

They simply must have the right equipment to fight.

If we do these things then we will have prepared the public and our reserves for what awaits them.

It will be up to the individual guardsman or reservist to determine whether this is a commitment he or she is willing to make. We shall then see how the reserves, their families, and reserve employers react.

I for one do not necessarily oppose this change, but I believe strongly that it can only be successful if the american public endorses it, and you provide the resources for it.

But I do believe it will fundamentally alter how we do business.

I am concerned who will pick up the missions that might get set aside. Who will handle natural disasters that occur when our national guard is serving in some far away place?

Who will our governors call in a domestic crisis? Who will respond if our cities are once again the scene of riots?

Will the governor of my state be able to call up the nevada guard or the active units located in colorado to respond, or will the states have lost control of their militias?

For more than 200 years our states have relied upon the national guard in emergencies.

We always understood that in times of major conflict, the guard might be called up.

But today, and in the future, our governors will find themselves without this emergency response capability on a regular basis.

Ladies and gentlemen this is a very significant change.

It is not a step that should be taken lightly. But, you are the experts. I am certain you have thought through all of these issues and so, now I stand ready to hear from you how you will handle these challenges.

I thank you for your attention and look forward to a healthy dialogue on this very important subject.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE
RESERVE FORCES POLICY BOARD
APRIL 20, 2004

**LET ME BEGIN FIRST BY
THANKING YOU FOR SERVING ON
THE RESERVE FORCES POLICY
BOARD. YOU ARE THE
PARAMOUNT EXPERTS IN
MILITARY MANPOWER, IN
PARTICULAR GUARD AND RESERVE
MANPOWER.**

● YOUR DEDICATION TO THE
OVERSIGHT OF OUR RESERVE
FORCES IS ONE FOR WHICH WE
ARE TRULY GRATEFUL.

● WITH THAT IN MIND, I MUST
TELL YOU RECENTLY I HAVE BEEN
GIVING A LOT OF THOUGHT TO
OUR RESERVES, AND I HAVE SOME
REAL QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR
RESERVE FORCES.

●

● SO I AM HOPING YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO CLEAR UP SOME OF
THESE ISSUES.

● I HAVE BEEN IN THIS BUSINESS
A LONG TIME. SOME OF MY
● COLLEAGUES SAY OUR CHAIRMAN
TED STEVENS AND I ARE
DINOSAURS BECAUSE WE HAVE
BEEN AT THIS FOR MORE THAN
FORTY YEARS.

●

● **BUT, I WANT ALL OF YOU TO
KNOW WE ARE NOT YET
FOSSILIZED.**

● **STILL WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING
AT THESE ISSUES FOR MANY
YEARS. IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT
TIMES HAVE CHANGED SINCE WE
WERE IN THE MILITARY. WHEN I
THINK ABOUT OUR RESERVES I
THINK ABOUT CITIZEN SOLDIERS:**

●

**THE MINUTEMAN THAT HELPED
OUR NATION GAIN ITS
INDEPENDENCE;**

**THE MILITIA THAT PUT DOWN
RIOTS AND INSURRECTIONS
WHEN OUR NATION WAS STILL
IN ITS INFANCY;**

**AND, MORE RECENTLY, OUR
NATIONAL GUARD WHO
ENSURED MINORITY SCHOOL
CHILDREN COULD SAFELY BE
ADMITTED INTO PUBLIC
SCHOOLS AND RESPOND TO
NATURAL DISASTERS AND
EMERGENCIES THROUGHOUT
OUR COUNTRY.**

**INDEED, THE RESERVE
COMPONENTS HAVE A RICH
HISTORY. THE ARMY NATIONAL
GUARD WAS CREATED IN
MASSACHUSETTS IN THE EARLY
1600'S LONG BEFORE WE WERE A
NATION. I AM SURE I DON'T HAVE
TO TELL YOU THE NATIONAL
GUARD FOUGHT FIRST AGAINST
THE PEQUOT INDIANS IN 1636 AND
HAS BEEN IN EVERY WAR SINCE
THEN.**

**BUT, THROUGHOUT MY LONG
SERVICE, THE RESERVE FORCES
HAVE BEEN KNOWN AS THE FORCE
TO ENSURE DOMESTIC
TRANQUILITY, TO DEFEND THE
HOMELAND, AND TO SERVE AS OUR
STATE MILITIAS.**

**EVERYONE RECOGNIZES THAT
OUR RESERVE FORCES ARE
AVAILABLE TO SERVE IN MAJOR
CONFLICTS. IN WORLD WAR II, I
WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 34TH
RESERVE DIVISION AND THE 36TH
RESERVE DIVISION. WE KNOW
THAT OUR RESERVES FOUGHT
VALIANTLY IN KOREA AND
VIETNAM.**

**BUT THINGS ARE DIFFERENT
TODAY. TODAY THERE ARE MORE
THAN 125,000 RESERVISTS ON
ACTIVE DUTY. WE HAVE MAJOR
UNITS IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ.
IN FACT 38% OF OUR FORCES IN
IRAQ ARE FROM THE RESERVE
COMPONENT.**

**WE HAVE TURNED OVER MUCH
OF THE PEACEKEEPING ACTIVITY
IN THE BALKANS TO OUR RESERVE
FORCES.**

**SOME OF OUR RESERVE UNITS
HAVE BEEN CALLED UP SEVERAL
TIMES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL
YEARS.**

**WE RELY HEAVILY ON THE AIR
FORCE RESERVE AND GUARD FOR
AIRLIFT AND TANKER SUPPORT ON
A DAILY BASIS IN PEACETIME AND
WARTIME.**

**SO, WITH THAT IN MIND, I WANT
TO ASK EXACTLY WHAT ARE WE
DOING AND WHERE ARE WE
HEADED?**

**TODAY WE ARE RELYING ON
OUR RESERVE FORCES TO AN
UNPRECEDENTED DEGREE. THE
CONCEPT OF "WEEKEND
WARRIOR" IS CERTAINLY NO
LONGER VALID.**

**I DO NOT MEAN THIS TO BE
DEROGATORY OR PARTISAN, BUT
ONE THING IS CLEAR.**

● **THIS IS NOT THE SAME
NATIONAL GUARD THAT GEORGE
W. BUSH JOINED.**

**I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD,
● GENERAL BLUM, HAS A BRIEFING
IN WHICH HE ASSERTS THAT OUR
GUARD FORCES WILL BE
ORGANIZED, EQUIPPED, AND
TRAINED THE SAME AS THE
ACTIVE COMPONENT.**

●

● **IF HE IS CORRECT, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES IT APPEARS IN THE NEAR FUTURE OUR RESERVES AND ACTIVE FORCES WILL BE INTERCHANGEABLE.**

● **THE NOTION THAT OUR ACTIVE AND RESERVE FORCES WOULD BE INTERCHANGABLE IS A DRAMATIC SHIFT IN THE ROLE OF OUR RESERVES.**

●

**WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT THE
AIR RESERVE FORCES HAVE BEEN
FAIRLY WELL INTEGRATED INTO
THE AIR FORCE FOR DECADES,
AND THE ARMY HAS SPOKEN OF
“THE TOTAL FORCE” AND “ONE
ARMY” FOR YEARS, THE TRUTH IS
THERE HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIAL
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ACTIVE
AND RESERVE FORCES.**

● SO, IF IT IS OUR INTENTION TO
PROCEED IN THIS FASHION, I
WOULD ASK ALL OF YOU FIRST TO
MAKE IT CLEAR TO OUR RESERVE
FORCES THAT THIS IS THE CASE.

● INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES AND EMPLOYERS
HAVE OBVIOUSLY ALREADY
NOTICED THE CHANGE.



**THEIR LOVED ONES AND
EMPLOYEES ARE BEING CALLED
TO SERVICE MUCH MORE
FREQUENTLY THAN IN THE PAST,
BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A
CHANGE IN POLICY HAS BEEN
CLEARLY ARTICULATED.**

● **I DON'T THINK WE HAVE
INFORMED THE AMERICAN PUBLIC
THAT SERVICE IN OUR RESERVE
FORCES HAS FUNDAMENTALLY
CHANGED.**

● **WE OWE IT TO EVERYONE
AFFILIATED WITH THE RESERVE
FORCES TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR
THAT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF
HOW OUR RESERVE FORCES WILL
BE EMPLOYED IS DIFFERENT.**

●

● IF THIS HYPOTHESIS IS
CORRECT, THAT THE ROLES OF
THE RESERVE COMPONENTS ARE
FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGING, IN
THE FUTURE THE RESERVE
FORCES WILL NOT BE SEEN AS A
● “RESERVE” TO BE CALLED UP
WHEN THERE IS A MAJOR
CONFLICT, BUT INSTEAD THE
RESERVES WILL BE AN ADJUNCT
● TO THE ACTIVE FORCES.

**IF YOU SIGN UP FOR THE
NATIONAL GUARD YOU WILL BE
TREATED ALMOST AS IF YOU WERE
IN THE ACTIVE FORCE. YOU CAN
EXPECT TO DEPLOY OVERSEAS
FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME
EVERY THREE OF FOUR YEARS,
AND YOU CAN EXPECT TO RECEIVE
TRAINING COMMENSURATE WITH
THE ACTIVE FORCES.**

● **THESE CHANGES NEED TO BE
STATED.**

**SECOND, IF WE ARE TO
PROCEED WITH THIS POLICY THEN
IT IS OUR DUTY – REALLY YOUR
● DUTY -- TO ENSURE THAT THE
RESERVE COMPONENTS ARE
EQUIPPED AND TRAINED EXACTLY
AS OUR ACTIVE FORCES ARE, AS
THE NATIONAL GUARD CHIEF HAS
POSTULATED THEY WILL BE.**

●

**THEY SIMPLY MUST HAVE THE
RIGHT EQUIPMENT TO FIGHT.**

**IF WE DO THESE THINGS THEN
WE WILL HAVE PREPARED THE
PUBLIC AND OUR RESERVES FOR
WHAT AWAITS THEM.**

**IT WILL BE UP TO THE
INDIVIDUAL GUARDSMAN OR
RESERVIST TO DETERMINE
WHETHER THIS IS A COMMITMENT
HE OR SHE IS WILLING TO MAKE.**

**WE SHALL THEN SEE HOW THE
RESERVES, THEIR FAMILIES, AND
RESERVE EMPLOYERS REACT.**

**I FOR ONE DO NOT
NECESSARILY OPPOSE THIS
CHANGE, BUT I BELIEVE
STRONGLY THAT IT CAN ONLY BE
SUCCESSFUL IF THE AMERICAN
PUBLIC ENDORSES IT, AND YOU
PROVIDE THE RESOURCES FOR IT.**

**BUT I DO BELIEVE IT WILL
FUNDAMENTALLY ALTER HOW WE
DO BUSINESS.**

**I AM CONCERNED WHO WILL
PICK UP THE MISSIONS THAT
MIGHT GET SET ASIDE. WHO WILL
HANDLE NATURAL DISASTERS
THAT OCCUR WHEN OUR
NATIONAL GUARD IS SERVING IN
SOME FAR AWAY PLACE?**

● **WHO WILL OUR GOVERNORS
CALL IN A DOMESTIC CRISIS? WHO
WILL RESPOND IF OUR CITIES ARE
ONCE AGAIN THE SCENE OF RIOTS?**

● **WILL THE GOVERNOR OF MY
STATE BE ABLE TO CALL UP THE
NEVADA GUARD OR THE ACTIVE
UNITS LOCATED IN COLORADO TO
RESPOND, OR WILL THE STATES
HAVE LOST CONTROL OF THEIR
MILITIAS?**

●

**FOR MORE THAN 200 YEARS OUR
STATES HAVE RELIED UPON THE
NATIONAL GUARD IN
EMERGENCIES.**

●

**WE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD
THAT IN TIMES OF MAJOR
CONFLICT, THE GUARD MIGHT BE
CALLED UP.**

●

**BUT TODAY, AND IN THE
FUTURE, OUR GOVERNORS WILL
FIND THEMSELVES WITHOUT THIS
EMERGENCY RESPONSE
CAPABILITY ON A REGULAR BASIS.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN THIS
IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE.**

**IT IS NOT A STEP THAT SHOULD
BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. BUT, YOU ARE
THE EXPERTS. I AM CERTAIN YOU
HAVE THOUGHT THROUGH ALL OF
THESE ISSUES AND SO, NOW I
STAND READY TO HEAR FROM YOU
HOW YOU WILL HANDLE THESE
CHALLENGES.**

**I THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION AND LOOK FORWARD
TO A HEALTHY DIALOGUE ON THIS
VERY IMPORTANT SUBJECT.**