

B-168700

November 1, 1979

The Honorable Clifford L. Alexander, Jr.  
The Secretary of the Army

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Dear Mr. Secretary:

Subject: Review of Management of Military  
Reserve Forces Facilities (LCD-80-19)

During our review of Reserve Forces facilities, we identified two situations involving leases for Army Reserve centers which we believe warrant your early attention. The facilities are located at Lawrenceville, Virginia, and Oxford, North Carolina. These facilities will be covered, along with others, in a report we are preparing for the Chairman, Subcommittee on Military Installations and Facilities, House Committee on Armed Services. We are advising you of these two situations now because information we obtained indicates that the leases should be canceled and the proposed construction projects deleted from the Reserve facilities' backlog. Details of the projects follow.

LAWRENCEVILLE, VIRGINIA

The Reserve unit, for which the facility is being leased, was formed at Fort Pickett, Virginia--about 25 miles from Lawrenceville--in July 1978 and moved to Lawrenceville in September 1979. Army officials stated that the unit was moved because Lawrenceville was a better recruiting area. In view of the following, we question that move.

--Department of Defense (DOD) Regulation 1225.5 specifies that facilities will be provided only for Reserve Forces with approved mobilization missions. The Lawrenceville unit does not have such a mission.)

--Title 10, chapter 133, United States Code, and DOD Instruction 1200.10 require that prior to the expenditure of funds for Reserve Forces facilities, a determination be made that the number of Reserve units located, or to be located, in an area is not and will

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not be larger than the number that can reasonably be expected to be maintained at authorized strength. Reserve officials said such a determination was not made prior to leasing the Lawrenceville facility.

--We believe that <sup>(2)</sup>it is doubtful that the Lawrenceville area can support the unit at authorized strength level. )As of September 1979 the Lawrenceville unit had only 71 of the 184 people authorized. Army Reserve documentation indicates that (the county in which the facility is located is currently losing population, and the Virginia National Guard estimates that the area's population will not increase through the year 2000. The Guard objected to moving the unit to Lawrenceville because of its potential adverse impact on recruiting and because the Guard's study (indicated the current population cannot support units already in the area.)

--The National Guard unit located in Emporia, about 20 miles east of Lawrenceville, had only 58 percent of its authorized strength in September 1979. In addition to the Virginia National Guard Armory in Emporia, (the area has several military facilities--an armory in Blackstone and an Army Reserve center and other facilities at Fort Pickett. These facilities are about 25 miles from Lawrenceville.

We believe the Army should explore the possibility of using the other suitable military facilities in the area on alternate weekends before it acquires additional facilities. (By terminating the Lawrenceville lease and using other facilities in the area, DOD could save \$23,150 annually.) Further, we were told the Army Reserve was planning to lease additional facilities for the Lawrenceville unit. We believe these plans should be reconsidered.

(A replacement facility is also planned for this unit. While the construction project is not programmed for a specific fiscal year, it is included in the Army Reserve's backlog requirements. We believe (this facility requirement should be deleted because) it does not meet DOD criteria for construction since (the Lawrenceville unit does not have a mobilization mission.) This deletion would reduce the facilities' backlog by \$850,000.

OXFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

This leased facility is for two Reserve units which, as of March 31, 1979, had a combined authorized personnel strength of 44 and an actual strength of 37. These units are part of a battalion located in Durham, North Carolina, about 30 miles away. According to (Reserve officials, Oxford personnel often have to travel to Durham for joint training with the battalion,) and the battalion commander travels to Oxford on other occasions to maintain command and control.

The Army has two Army Reserve centers in Durham. As of March 31, 1979, one of the centers was underused and had space for at least 119 additional people. Further, a recruiter in Durham said he would not have any problem filling the units if they were transferred to Durham. The Durham centers are within the maximum distance Reserve members can be expected to travel involuntarily between their residence and training site. As specified in DOD Directive 1215.15, the distance should not exceed 50 miles or that which can be traveled within 1-1/2 hours.

DOD Directive 1225.5 specifies existing facilities shall be used fully before leasing or constructing new facilities. By using one of the other available alternatives, we believe the Oxford lease <sup>could</sup> be canceled and the units moved to Durham at an annual saving of \$9,500. Additionally, the \$550,000 backlog facility for this unit should be deleted.

Copies of this report are being sent to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, and the Secretary of Defense. We would appreciate being advised of the Army's position on these matters and of any actions taken.

Sincerely yours,



R. W. Gutmann  
Director