

Notes for Discussion.
War Reserves.

3-31-31.

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Terminology.

by Maj W B Hardy O.D.

Authorized War Reserve comprises only essential items of equipment and supply:

Essential Items are items which are necessary to the combat efficiency of troops and which are not procurable from commercial stocks or production in the time and quantity required.

The present so-called authorized war reserve is established as that required for two field armies or 1,000,000 men.

The authorized reserve of an essential item is the maximum deficit obtained by balancing the monthly cumulative requirements against the monthly cumulative production with a 30 day set back. The production figures used will be those approved by the O.A.S.W. Requirements will be those established by the General Staff and include an overhead factor.

Equipment in hands of troops is considered part of War Reserve.

Origin and development of War Reserve.

Conditions before the World War.

Stocks - no requirements - no production estimates. Crozier before Congress. France - Germany. Determinations of requirements. Rates of fire. Maintenance factors, outgrowth of War, determination of types. Essential items.

Signing of the Armistice.

Stocks were in hands of troops abroad and enroute, factories in production. Instructions for disposition of supplies and materials became essential.

Ordnance Munitions Board.

Confusion. Plants, equipment. Howitzer plant. Chicago shell
plant. Old Hickory, powder - storage depot. pyro. Size of Army unknown.
Mixed types. British, French, Russian, German. Maintenance money lacking.
Transportation lacking.

National Defense Act.

Organization of Army became known. With its components, size
of peace establishment established. O.A.S.W. created.

The Ordnance Munitions Board had helped largely in developing
methods of computing reserves, making use of manufacturing estimates and
distribution time factors. All supply services were struggling with
huge salvage and storage problems. The need of a reserves policy was
plainly evident.

Early in 1921 the General Staff issued its first tentative
6 Army plan. The reserve requirements for this plan were so excessive
that it could not be sustained.

From this time forward the supply services, the General Staff
and O.A.S.W. have been actively interested in the establishment of an
authorized War Reserve. Successive studies in rapid succession led to
1924 Mobilization Plan.

The 1923 was 3 - 6 Army Plan. The supply of last three left to
production. 1st 3 was for 1,500,000 men.

After announcement of 1923 plan the Congress enacted legislation
to protect existing reserve supplies against depletion by issue by inserting
in the annual appropriation act a proviso reading:

"Under the authorizations contained in this act, no issues of
reserve supplies or equipment shall be made where such issues would
impair the reserves held by the War Department for two field Armies
or 1,000,000 men."

The Congress left to the Secretary of War the determination of what troops constitute 2 Armies or 1,000,000 men, their rate of mobilization, their equipment, their employment.

War Department steps to comply with this provision.

First step. Lacking other data, 2/3 of 3 armies under 1923 plan was used to establish the 1st or 1924 reserve. Not reserve under 1924 mobilization plan.

After the announcement of the 1924 Mobilization Plan discussions ensued as to troop basis and other points. There eventually resulted the 1927 troop basis from which the 1927 Supply Estimate was built up. Approved December 6, 1927, it is our present authorized war reserve.

March 12, 1930 a new War Reserve basis was approved to become effective June 30, 1932. This is known as 1929 War Reserve and is based on the 1928 Mobilization Plan. It is much larger than the 1927, due to increased speed of mobilization of 1928 General Mobilization Plan over that in the 1927 troop basis.

The Congress has continued the proviso of 1924 in each annual appropriation act.

Proviso, merely prohibits free issues, it does not build up a reserve.

Each supply service has submitted a list of essential items which has been approved by General Staff; has computed the requirements for essential items, using approved equipment and supply tables and troop basis for two field Armies or 1,000,000 men as laid down by the General Staff for 1927 Troop Basis. Using production estimates approved by the O.A.S.W. the services have arrived at the required war reserve stock by taking the maximum difference between cumulative requirements and stocks on hand, plus cumulative production available for issue.

There are more than 300 items or groups of items classed as

essential.

The actual physical stocks on hand are primarily those left over from War Production.

Value of Ordnance War Reserve -

(quote from Gatchell's lecture)

To bring out views of O.A.S.W. and General Staff read corres-

pondence.

Memo. O.A.S.W. to General Staff, May 3, 1929.

Reply of Chief of Staff, June 13, 1929.

Air Corps

Coast Artillery.

Reserve Stocks other than A. W. R.

Surpluses.

Practicable War Reserves.

President Hoover, over the radio - September 18, 1929.

"But that preparedness must not exceed the barest necessity for defense or it becomes a threat of aggression against others and thus a cause of fear and animosity in the World."

General Williams.

"The sound solution to the (War Reserve) problem requires that sufficient funds be made applicable for the smallest army which we believe is necessary to the country's defense with adequate supply of essential fighting materials and supplies until production is sufficient to meet needs."

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War Department Budget (Colonel Truesdale) Lecture.

Budget limitations at present limit War Reserve policy.

What are most essential items in W. R.?

What are available?

What should be augmented?

War Reserve on hand affects character of military operations for first 12 months; an average amount is dependent upon early operations.

WBE/MS