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AS WE SEE IT

POLITICAL POWER: SINISTER OR CONSTRUCTIVE?

IT'S important to see "the Big Picture." But it's important, too, not to overlook what's right in front of your nose. The Commander who keeps his eyes glued to binoculars focused on the distant horizon is likely to get clobbered by an enemy slithering to within grenade-throwing distance.

We get the feeling that the framers of our National military policy—or perhaps it's better to say those who dominate our National fiscal policy—should take a glance into the foreground more often. Putting it another way, there seems to be such preoccupation with Space and the possibility of all-out war, that the likelihood of recurring limited war fought in an unglamorous way is being dangerously overlooked. The men who would have to fight this kind of war are being pushed into a corner like poor relatives, and begrudged the means with which to do their unpleasant but vital job.

This has been mentioned before. What brings it to mind again is the annual ordeal of trying to get enough money to keep our military forces going on a reasonably sound basis. The National Guard's experience provides a fine illustration.

As most everyone knows by this time, the Army Guard and the Air Guard constitute the primary organized, manned, equipped reserve force-in-being. Upon mobilization they would provide the preponderance of the combat and combat-support units for a swift build-up, in manpower and equipment, of the Active Forces.

The Air National Guard has had relatively "no sweat" in its assurance of stabilized personnel strength. But the Army National Guard (like the Active Army, which has been Low Man on the Totem Pole for successive years) repeatedly has been the target of fiscal assaults. Time after time, the Administration has maintained that 400,000 Army Guardsmen are 40,000 more than the Nation needs, and it wants only enough money to support 360,000. (And "the scoop" is that if it succeeded in getting a cutback to that number, next step would be pressure for an even deeper cut.) Fortunately, others don't see it that way.

It's a measure of the Guard's prestige, its effectiveness, and its grass-roots strength, that once again, that pressure has been resisted successfully. For the final result of the annual Battle of the Budget has been to get, again, a Congressional mandate that the Army Guard's strength must

not be dropped below 400,000. And to get, in direct and indirect appropriations, \$84,000,000-plus more than the Administration had asked for both ARNG and the ANG.

Significant, too, is the fact that again the Army Guard, alone of all of the components of all of the Services, was singled-out to have its strength guaranteed by "mandatory language" in the Defense Appropriations Act.

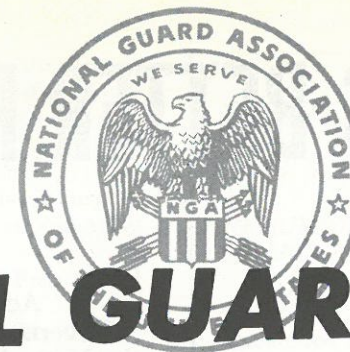
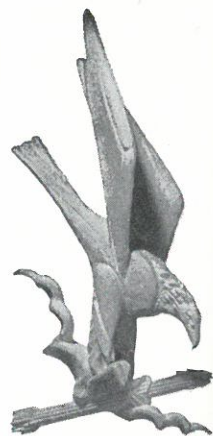
It is interesting and enlightening to note two major sources, outside the Guard's own ranks, of its strength and support. Both groups comprise individuals who (1) are intimately acquainted with the Guard, (2) able to see "the Big Picture" without losing contact with things close at hand, (3) in a position to influence action.

One comprises the members of The Congress. They've been through this strength fooforaw time and again, and didn't mince many words about the issue *this* time. Said the House Appropriations Comm: "The Committee insists that strong, well-trained and equipped reserve forces are essential to the military policy of the United States." They're "better trained and better equipped than at any time in our Nation's history, and are now participating as active members of the defense team," it went on (and specifically cited the Guard's operational manning of NIKE sites). The Senate went the vital further step of requiring that the ARNG "shall be maintained at an average strength of not less than 400,000" for FY 61.

The other group is embodied in the US Conference of Governors which again, at its annual meeting, formally resolved that the Army Guard should be maintained at that strength and the Air Guard at not less than 72,000 "for a sufficient number of years to permit effective planning and efficient operations." Their action followed a well-reasoned presentation by Georgia's Gov (and ex-Guardsman) Ernest Vandiver, who eloquently enlarged upon the imbalance in defense planning.

We're proud and appreciative of having these friends.

From time to time, we're described in some circles as "the politically-powerful" National Guard Assn of the US. There are forces at work to *tear down* American military strength; we fail to find anything sinister in being "politically-powerful" enough to help block those forces and by contrast to *build* our military strength. If it's political power that attains constructive ends, we want to build all we can.



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DEAR GUARDSMAN: At the Guard's working level, down among the Companies and Squadrons, the Pentagon rat-race is as remote as Mars and the typical Guardsman is aware of the labors of the National Guard Bureau in his and the Guard's behalf only in a vague, impersonal way. And forgetting NGB's all-important role as planner and coordinator for the entire Guard, Army and Air, it's easy to forget likewise the exertions of the officers who form the core of "the Bureau." Unobtrusively they come, Guardsman and Regular alike, give the Guard the best that's in them for three years, then just as quietly depart, going on to new assignments or returning to their own home States. Yet, unrecognized though their achievements may be, the Guard is the better for the knowledge and experience and dedication they brought to their job.

We, like most Guardsmen, quite often are not even aware that some have completed their tour at NGB until we stop in one day and find familiar faces missing, their desks occupied by newcomers. Then, belatedly, we tote-up all the hours of toil and the achievements with which the absentees rightfully could be credited and we wish we could call them back just long enough to say: "You've done a job you can take pride in. Your toil is reflected in the increased competence of Guard units across the whole Country. Well done—and good luck!"

—WDM

OUR COVER: It has been said so many times it long since has become trite—but it's as true today as ever before—no matter how many fantastic new weapons we develop, we haven't yet been able to figure out a substitute for the "Ultimate Weapon," the man on the ground who roots the enemy out of his hole and takes his real estate away from him. All over the US, Guardsmen are engaged in learning how to do just that as the 1960 field training season passes the halfway mark.

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