



THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN

The magazine of . . . by . . . and for National Guardsmen



THE STATES NEED THE GUARD

IN reporting on the status of the National Guard at the recent National Conference of the US Conference of Governors, Gov Otto Kerner of Illinois, Chairman of the Conference Advisory Committee on the National Guard, made this significant observation: "Although our primary interest is the National Guard, both Army and Air, in its role as the first line reserve of the United States Army and the United States Air Force, we are ever mindful of the Guard's dual Federal-State status and the dependence of every State upon its National Guard for assistance in natural disasters and extreme civil emergencies when control and recovery is beyond the capabilities of other State and municipal agencies."

In this complex and sophisticated World in which we live, there is a tendency to overlook the principles in which the roots of an organization or an activity may lie. Fortunately, the National Guard has a dual status. Its roots lie in the States. In peacetime the Governors of the several States have considerable jurisdiction and the Federal Government is required in matters such as reorganization and troop allotments to obtain the concurrence of the State Governors.

This requirement serves as a constant reminder to the Defense agencies that a State's responsibilities and prerogatives are jealously guarded.

Here we see, in effect, the system of checks and balances. This principle has proved, at every level of government and in relationships between governmental agencies, over the years to work in the Nation's best interests. The requirement that the Dept of Defense in the recent reorganization of the Army National Guard seek in effect the "advice and consent" of the Governors of the respective States before implementing reorganization, was an example of how the principle served to modify what many considered to be an extreme proposal that was not in the best interest of National defense.

Gov Kerner makes the point that the intercession of his Advisory Committee in the controversy which developed over the Army reorganization plan was ". . . responsible in large measure for achieving modifications to the original proposals without in any way compromising the objectives of the reorganization."

STATES' NEEDS DEMONSTRATED

In a recent appearance before the Southern Governors' Conference at White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia, Maj Gen William H. Harrison, Jr, President of the NGAUS, stressed the importance of State interest in the National Guard, and warned that the Department of Defense and its

agencies should be ever cognizant of the need in every State for trained and organized forces at the disposal of the Governor in times of peace. Although no record is kept at National level of the many occasions when a Governor calls upon the National Guard of his State for such assistance, the record, if it were to be compiled, would show hundreds of instances each year wherein the National Guard was used in State status by a Governor for periods ranging from a few hours to several weeks. Duties in these instances include everything from sandbagging swollen rivers and streams to assisting in hurricanes, emergency traffic control, and even in quelling prison riots.

In nearly every instance, the State service rendered by the National Guard is critical, and each evidences the importance of the National Guard to the States.

The most recent instance that comes to mind of the National Guard performing a critical service in a desperate situation was the Guard's employment in the town of Cambridge, Maryland. The State was called upon to provide security and keep the peace in a tense racial situation that might well have gotten completely out of hand had it not been for the efficient manner in which the Maryland National Guard units carried out missions assigned by the Governor.

STATES NEED GUARD FOR POST-ATTACK RECOVERY

The development of nuclear weapons to a point of total destruction compels a consideration of the States' requirements for trained and equipped military forces in a broader sense. Although we are entering upon a period in which perhaps increased attention will be paid to the delicate matter of disarmament, the fact remains that a potential enemy possesses the capability of unleashing a total nuclear attack on the Continental US. While we are assured that this Country possesses sufficient power to retaliate and to destroy this enemy, the Country nonetheless could be devastated. The need for having dispersed in every State trained and equipped organizations to perform the tasks of recovery, is obvious. Gov Kerner made the point that in such an eventuality "any lesser force than now exists would severely limit the ability of the States to cope with the problems that would confront them in a post-nuclear attack period."

He went on to emphasize that the only force organized, trained and equipped for this mission is the National Guard.

These are compelling reasons for not reducing further the National Guard in any future adjustment of Reserve Forces that the Federal Government may feel is dictated by changes in the Nation's war plans. ♦

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DEAR GUARDSMEN: We're heartened periodically to know, for a fact, that THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN is being used as a tool for informing, educating, and inspiring other Guardsmen.

That's been demonstrated by the necessity of ordering 20,000 reprints of "Sergeants Don't Have Horns," to meet demands stemming from the article's original appearance in our July issue. Commanders have told us that "Hints from the Training Centers," in the same issue, has been helpful. "Part-time Guardsmen? or Fulltime 'Astec'?" has stimulated discussion among COs and ASTs.

The "training aid" nature of our Cambridge and Tuscaloosa civil disturbance features in the August issue already has been recognized widely. Officers of the DCARNG grabbed it up for extra-curricular training. Field training visitors from the Active Army "absconded" with copies. It's being reproduced at The Engineer Center, Ft Belvoir, as required reading for all key staff officers and Unit Commanders there.

The Baltimore "Sun" carried Mac McGlasson's Cambridge article in full. Susanna McBee of the Washington "Post" based a comprehensive feature article upon it.

Keep your eyes peeled for other stories from which you can benefit. There are some in every issue. —AGC

OUR COVER: Mud. Dust. Cold. Sweltering heat. Wind-whipped sand. Drenching rain—even snow. Those are some of the less pleasant aspects which the Guardsman may encounter, depending upon the locale and time of his annual field training. But such conditions quickly are forgotten when things break right and the citizen-soldier finds himself—like these men of the 2d Automatic Weapons Bn, 124th Artillery, Ohio—in a shaded, sun-dappled woodland setting.