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National Guard Association
of the United States

Manpower Problems Mount

MANPOWER problems topped the agendas when two important NGAUS Committees met recently—the Committee on Army National Guard under the chairmanship of Maj Gen Charles L. Southward, District of Columbia, and the Committee on Air National Guard, headed by Maj Gen Frank A. Bailey, Arkansas.

Good officers and men are hard to get and harder to hold in this time of discontent, disengagement and de-escalation.

United States combat operations are being phased-down in Viet Nam. Anti-military sentiment has grown. Draft calls are being reduced. Some Draft procedures have been changed and additional alterations are under consideration. Relegation of the Draft to stand-by status, and proposed substitution of an all-volunteer concept has attracted support from some segments of our National leadership.

As a result, National Guard waiting lists have dwindled and may disappear entirely unless present trends are reversed. We soon will face a buyer's market in our search for qualified men.

Complicating this unfavorable picture is the deep slash in military expenditures. This already has been felt in the Guard by a drastic reduction in REP training spaces for non-prior service enlistees. We can enlist only a relative handful of raw recruits during the rest of this Fiscal Year because money is not available to pay for their initial round of fulltime training. To take up the slack in non-prior service enlistments, we must lean more heavily on reenlistment of men now in the Guard, and on men being separated from active service, mostly Viet Nam veterans.

As badly as the Guard needs their combat experience and know-how, the latter group never has been a very fruitful source of new manpower. Whether we can attract greater numbers from this source through intensive recruitment effort remains to be seen.

If we are to keep the ranks of the Guard filled with competent officers and men on a sustained, long-range basis in the existing atmosphere, we will need more assistance than we are scheduled to receive from Federal sources—assistance mostly in the form of financial and equipment resources. The Guard can contribute the personal dedication, thought and effort of its members, but improved combat-readiness also requires money and the equipment that can come only from Federal sources.

There is much, however, that we ourselves can do to improve the manpower picture, primarily in the area of reenlistments and retention.

First, we can—and must—recognize the changed situation, making active recruitment and thoughtful, imaginative retention programs necessary. We must face squarely up to the fact that the Draft soon may lose its potency as an inducement to Guard and Reserve enlistments.

We can start now to teach our younger officers and noncommissioned officers *how* to recruit. This means more than recruiting and selling techniques alone. It means more effective community relations activities as well.

We can examine our entire range of training and operational activities, to identify and eliminate factors that influence men to leave the Guard after they have satisfied their legal military obligation. We can improve training, to make it more challenging, less boring. We can explain our role, missions and purposes better so that Guardsmen recognize the importance and relevance of what they are doing. We can modify procedures that harass and annoy Guardsmen without contributing much to our operational effectiveness and combat readiness.

We can reduce the administrative burden on unit commanders, so that they can spend more time on training, recruiting, community relations and getting better acquainted with the men in their units.

Through such steps as these, we can make the manpower retention process a continuous one, starting with an individual's first contact with the Guard and continuing through his entire service.

That is the way it *should* be. In today's environment, it is the way it *must* be. ♦



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MR. NIXON'S STRATEGY 2

What kinds of wars, and how many can the United States fight at one time? The questions are easy to ask but difficult to answer as the President seeks to develop a National strategy which will defend the Nation and yet be within limits of a manageable Budget.

MUTUAL SUPPORT FOR GREATER READINESS 7

Active Army, Guard and Reserve have become more dependent on each other, and should help each other more than ever before, says one-time Private in a National Guard Band, now Acting Chief, Office of Reserve Components.

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A glimpse at how "Hébert Subcommittee" of House Armed Services Committee monitors most legislation affecting the Guard and Reserves.

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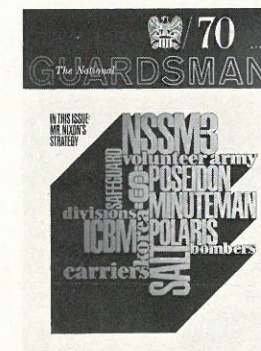
Families, fillers and infusion are some of the topics discussed by representatives of recently demobilized Army Guard units in their frank, unofficial "after-action" reports.

EQUAL TO THE ELEMENTS 30

"Southern" Guardsmen (Southern Illinois, that is) do Winter field training on snowshoes and skis.

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Artist's juxtaposition of words and acronyms indicates some of the many aspects of a complex problem of National strategy that confronts President Nixon and his advisers.

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