

Major General Edward R. Fry, President, NGAUS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MOVING ALONG... TOWARD "TOTAL FORCE II"

In the introduction to the 1982 NGAUS RED BOOK, which is this Association's annually-published "game plan", the point is made that we see a potential for growth in the Army Guard and Air Guard as a logical continuation of the Total Force Policy. The 1982 position statement, approved at Biloxi last fall, even more specifically calls for the subject of increased reliance upon the Guard (and the Reserves) to be examined in great depth because it may be more cost effective to maintain certain forces in the Guard and Reserve rather than in the active forces. We believe that the intensification of effort to upgrade the role of the Guard and Reserve in the '80s and '90s—which we refer to as "Total Force II"—is logical and inevitable.

It was, therefore, with considerable interest that we read an article by Drew Middleton, the able and distinguished military writer of *The New York Times*. An analysis carefully timed to be released almost simultaneously with the proposed Defense Budget for FY 1983, Middleton's article was based upon an interview with a well-informed "senior Defense Department official" who estimated it would take five to six more years to "restore the military balance" between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

This official indicated to Middleton that, in the administration's view, the most present danger was the kind of situation that would involve conventional forces and that "escalation into global nuclear war was a remote contingency." He told Middleton there must be preparation for limited wars and greater emphasis on the role that the Army and Marine Corps would play in such conflicts.

Middleton's rhetorical questions echo our own thinking, to some extent: *Where is the manpower for a 600-ship Navy, five more tactical air wings and two additional Army divisions?*

We have pinpointed several of Middleton's observations of significance to the Army and the Air Force.

Army: "Two additional mechanized

infantry divisions means another 37,000 soldiers. Are they to be found in an Army some of whose divisions are 'filled out' with National Guard brigades?"

Air Force: "The Air Force... intends to add five new tactical wings. How are the aircraft to be manned? What additional base facilities will have to be installed and serviced to keep the aircraft flying?"

Finally, Middleton poses what appears to be the ultimate dilemma if the above are indeed the intent of this administration:

The senior official insisted that the Reagan Administration was not considering a return to the draft unless there was a national mobilization. So the question of how the manpower requirements of an expanded American military are to be met remains unanswered.

A possible answer lies in the careful and prudent analysis of what Total Force II might mean.

As Middleton notes, today's Army includes a number of divisions—nine in fact—which must be "filled out" with Army Guard elements (brigades or battalions) to become fully-operational combat divisions.

As noted in the 1982 RED BOOK, we are confident the Air National Guard could handle most of the required increase in the Air Force. The Air Guard system would accommodate good answers to most of the questions raised by Middleton as to who would fly, maintain and secure the aircraft. The Air Guard track record is open to examination. The Air National Guard flies more "fighter hours" as a percentage of its total flying hours than any other U.S. military air arm and in 1981 its accident rate was 1.7 compared to 2.4 in the actives. It would need some more of what the Penta-

gon likes to call "resourcing" to do the job, but the increase can be managed far more cost-effectively in the Air Guard than elsewhere.

On the Army side, the relationship between peacetime training and the wartime mission has only come into focus in the past several years with the advent of CAPSTONE.

There are a whole range of reasons for the Army Guard to continue to be concentrated in the area of combat and combat support forces. These are the forces most urgently needed (especially so if we are to raise new combat divisions) and these are also the forces most adaptable to the needs of state service in times of crisis.

We are confident that by the process of careful selection, separate brigades of the Guard could be brought together under new Army Guard divisional "flags" to increase the number of Army divisions available for conventional warfare. We believe that the states can work together to produce effective multi-state organizations—and we should learn from the mistakes of the past how to make it work.

In short, we believe the National Guard system can produce most of the growth, which the Army and Air Force needs, assuming we are not tasked beyond the willingness of Congress and the administration to provide necessary resources. But we must never lose sight of the fact that all of this is for a force which becomes woefully "thin" within a few weeks after major warfare erupts. That is why—while we believe in all of the things that we in the Guard can do to secure this nation's freedom—we continue to feel that it is essential and prudent to obtain legislation to help to build an enhanced Selective Service System. This enhanced Selective Service will be able to meet wartime situations quickly, efficiently and fairly—when and if a national mobilization becomes necessary at some future date.

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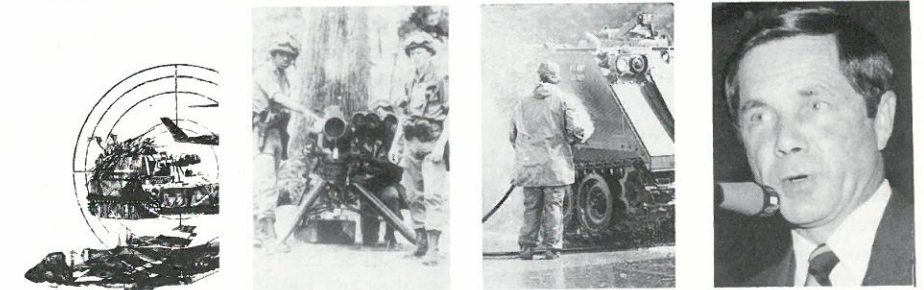
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COVER: Chemical suits for the Army and Air National Guard, such aircraft as the F-16 (right) and the A-10 are among the goals of the National Guard Association of the United States in its 1982 RED BOOK, which is reviewed in this month's NATIONAL GUARD.

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