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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY—WHY IT WON'T WORK

The House of Representatives seems to have concluded that DoD's Total Force plans for 1995 and beyond are just "less of the same."

Nonetheless, the secretary of Defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff have presented, and are insisting upon, their base force strategy and crisis response and reconstitution theory as the new, post-Cold War national security policy. Their presentations before Congress and to the media have failed to address major public policy issues and have only partially addressed operational and resource aspects of the strategy.

While the strategy as proposed would provide for a national defense capability, it:

- Would fundamentally alter the current balance between the legislative and executive branches in terms of how the nation enters into future armed conflicts.
- Would deviate from the constitutional prescription for the type of balance of military forces.
- Fails to recognize the bedrock importance of public, nonmilitary involvement in national defense.
- Decreases the levels of brinkmanship or escalation available to the president.
- Reduces the American taxpayers' tangible return on their national defense investment.
- Ignores the real constraints of time, distance, transportation and the absence of a specific threat.
- Does not provide the most cost-effective defense available.

Critics and proponents of base force strategy agree that a strong national defense is essential to American interests. They differ substantially on how best to provide that defense in the constrained economy of the American democracy. The critics share the Constitution's vision of defense. The proponents of base force have focused on the operational de-

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tails of military strategy in the absence of any identifiable threat to the preservation of this nation and only hypothetical threats to U.S. vital interests.

The second major point of diverging opinion is the definition of contingency. Proponents of the strategy maintain that massive military forces equivalent to those of DESERT STORM must be on active duty to deal with contingencies.

"The base force strategy would significantly reduce the National Guard forces available to the states in emergencies and the war on drugs."

Critics maintain that a contingency within a constitutional construct is more appropriately defined as a Grenada or Panama-like operation, not an operation requiring 50,000-to-500,000 members of the armed forces and lasting six months to a year or more, as DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM did from beginning to end (with a cadre of troops still in Saudi Arabia nearly two years later).

The third major difference of opinion focuses on the peacetime role of the military. Proponents of base force strategy would reduce by one third the National Guard forces available to the states for use in the war on drugs; disaster and emergency relief; and civil and societal assistance. Critics of base force maintain that the social utility of the National Guard in its role as a state force in peacetime is a natural resource—a peacetime benefit and return on the taxpayers' investment in national defense. And, its grass-roots-America diversity exposes the population to the military and the military ethic in ways that engender public understanding and support for national defense. In addition,

it educates, through firsthand exposure, all levels of the nation's future elected leadership who may never have served a day in uniform.

The final disagreement about base force involves cost. Proponents of the strategy assert that the force configured as proposed is the best readiness money can buy.

Critics retort that more forces with equal or nearly equal readiness, or equal numbers of forces, can be structured at far less cost if the Congress continues to "raise armies" according to the provisions of the U.S. Constitution as written by the Founding Fathers. They provided a prescription for the smallest possible standing army—perhaps the contingency and forward-deployed forces—and a large citizen militia constituting the combat support and combat service support forces and the major combat forces required after the first 30 days of buildup or conflict.

Modification of the base force strategy would remedy the basic flaws noted above and at the same time maintain a national defense capability to meet the needs of the changing and uncertain geopolitical and economic environments in the post-Cold War world.

The Congress and American people are presented with the option of a high-cost, active duty military of questionable need versus a balanced military consisting of a smaller full-time military to meet our nation's identifiable threats backed up by a trained, well-equipped and combat-ready citizen-soldier force capable of being quickly fine-tuned to meet a variety of currently obscure threats.

Both options provide requisite security. The former provides a global national defense. The latter provides a balanced, capable national defense force that retains the spirit of the framers' intent and provides the American citizenry a peacetime return on their national defense investment.

National Guard

NATIONAL GUARD

APRIL 1992

Volume XLVI, Number 4

FEATURES

Structuring the Force of the Future

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What now; base force v. zero base? This is the question that has the Department of Defense and Congress working nights trying to come up with the best force structure mix to meet the future national defense needs. Where does the National Guard fit in? This question has the two arguing.

Generals Discuss Dual Role

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MG James A. Ryan, the adjutant general of Arkansas; Maj Gen John L. France, the adjutant general of Colorado; Maj Gen William Bland, the adjutant general of Georgia; and MG Richard A. Alexander, the adjutant general of Ohio, discuss the social impact the National Guard has on the community, state and at the national level.

Drawing Down the Total Army

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In drawing down the Total Army to meet congressionally mandated end-strengths by FY95, the Department of the Army will institute RIFs, early retirements, reduced accessions and involuntary separations. In addition, the Army will restructure by year group not branch.

AGAUS Conducts Midwinter Meeting

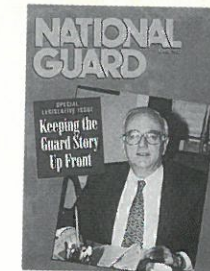
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The Adjutants General Association of the United States met in Washington, D.C., recently for its midwinter meeting. Much of the three-day session was spent listening to speakers discuss the Department of Defense's determination to cut the National Guard by more than one third. Among those speakers were GEN Colin L. Powell, Senator Christopher Bond (R-Missouri), Representative Les Aspin (D-Wisconsin), Representative John Murtha (D-Pennsylvania) and GEN Gordon R. Sullivan.

Rise and Fall of the Air Force Budget

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As the role of the Air Force evolves, it often finds that the tasks required grow larger and more complex with less manpower to work it. For the future, the Air Force must balance more efficiently the proper mix of quality and quantity.



COVER:

Representative Les Aspin (D-Wisconsin), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, discusses the future of the National Guard. Congressman Aspin's interview is on pages 36-40. Design, Johnson Design Group. Photo, Maj Jean Marie Beall.

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NATIONAL GUARD, April 1992. The NATIONAL GUARD Magazine (ISSN 0163-3945) is published monthly, by the National Guard Association of the United States, with editorial and advertising offices at One Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. Telephone (202) 789-0031. FAX: (202) 682-9358. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1992 by the National Guard Association of the U.S. All rights reserved. All members of the NGAUS receive NATIONAL GUARD; \$8 of the membership dues are allocated to a magazine subscription. Non-member subscriptions: \$20 per year. Bulk subscription rate for orders of 100 issues or more continues at \$10 per issue. The Editor welcomes original articles bearing on national defense, with emphasis on application to or implications for the National Guard. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to NATIONAL GUARD, One Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.