



Modernized vehicle systems such as the M2A2 ODS Bradley Fighting Vehicle, the M109A6 Paladin self-propelled howitzer and the M88A2 HERCULES improved recovery vehicle provide decisive tools for victory to our troops under the most severe battlefield conditions—clearly demonstrated during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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NATIONAL GUARD

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With thousands of troops deployed to places like Afghanistan and Iraq, the National Guard is busier now than it has been in half a century. However, with none of the costs of current operations covered in the president's initial spending requests, budgeting for the Guard today is more like dodging bullets than counting beans.

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Extended deployments and homefront sacrifices are stressing National Guardsmen and their families. But it's not going unnoticed. In fact, all the focus on Guard service and sacrifice may have Congress in a mood to recognize and support the Guard as never before.

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Every institution has its elders—people whose experience at the pinnacle provides them with unique insight not only into the past, but also into the future. For the Guard, this would be the five living former National Guard Bureau chiefs. All five spoke to NATIONAL GUARD magazine recently about the Guard's past, present and future.

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As leaders of their respective political parties in the Senate, Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., and Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., set much of the tone on Capitol Hill. NATIONAL GUARD magazine posed both men a series of questions about the military in general and the Guard in particular.

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