



# The National GUARDSMAN

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of the United States

## Incentives Dead 'til Next Year

**T**HE National Guard is reaching a critical juncture in its bootstrap effort to attract and retain men in the face of reduced Draft pressures.

Although both the Army National Guard and Air National Guard ended Fiscal Year 1971, last 30 June, at authorized strength levels, the portents for the future already were foretelling a turn for the worse.

Forty-five States lost strength in the final quarters of FY 1971. Waiting lists of men available for enlistment in the Army Guard have disappeared in eight States, and stood at less than 100 names in another 17. The Air Guard situation was not appreciably better.

Between 1 Jan. 1970 and 1 Jan. 1971, waiting lists for the ARNG and ANG combined dropped from 132,167 to 88,960. Then they took another nosedive to 53,857 as of last 30 June. The lists, moreover, had become much "softer"—that is, it was necessary to call five, eight or even 10 persons on the list to obtain one who was actually willing to enlist.

The sagging strengths and waiting lists can be explained in a single sentence. Draft pressures have been eased appreciably, yet no substantial new incentives have been introduced as a substitute motivation to enlist or reenlist.

The President's induction authority lapsed on 30 June. Both Houses of Congress approved a two-year extension, along with sizeable pay raises for the lower grades, and family quarters allowances for REP trainees. Senate and House conferees have not been able to iron-out differences in their respective versions, however, so for two months there has been neither Draft pressure nor higher pay to motivate enlistments.

Congress very likely will compromise its difference sometime in September. But another factor will continue to influence enlistments adversely. That is the further reduction in Draft calls which has been officially forecast and widely publicized.

This Association and others made a strenuous effort to convey the seriousness of the situation to the Department of Defense and the Congress. In its concern over cost reductions, the Department unfortunately decided that such incentives as enlistment-reenlistment bonuses, improved retirement programs, survivor benefits and related programs for the Reserve Components would not be needed before FY 1973. Congress' Armed Services Committees, preoccupied with the debate over the Draft, went along with that unjustified assumption even though many individual members of the Committees voiced some serious doubts.

All of which leaves the Guard and Reserves holding a very large bag. No one really knows how effective the forthcoming pay increases will be as inducements to enlist, extend or reenlist.

Defense leaders have assured that they will support our efforts to obtain some of the incentives we seek, but not for implementation before FY 1973—10 long months away. There are strong indications that Congress will authorize such incentives, but not before its next session, which will not get down to actual legislation before next February or March. In the meantime, what do we do to maintain the strength levels that military leaders tell us are so important in this era of increased reliance on the Reserve Forces?

The answer: We roll up our sleeves and go to work. To attract new officers and men and to hold onto the ones now on board, we must dredge-up all the resources at our command and seek new ones. With the Active Forces being reduced to dangerously low manning levels, the strength of the Reserve Forces cannot be allowed to sag, and for a good many months, we ourselves must provide the finger to stick into the dike. ♦



A quarter-century of the Guard's post-WW II development is encapsulated in three photos. (Counterclockwise): A motley collection of hand-me-down Army uniforms clothed recruits such as this Iowa airman. . . . these "Mustangs" were being reconitioned for the Guard. . . . today, "Flying Crane" of the Alabama Army Guard totes away the last of that State's RF84Fs; the nose of a new RF4C shows in the foreground.

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AUG.-SEP., 1971

OUT OF THE ASHES OF VICTORY 2  
*Victory should be sweet, but it threatened the Guard's very existence 25 years ago. This is the story.*

THE GUARD UNDER ATTACK 25  
*It's a mixed bag of organizations — lawyers, church and dissident reservists — who are undercutting the Guard.*

ANNUAL TRAINING '71 — IN PHOTOS 26

HAWAII GUARDSMEN PREPARE "ALOHA" 29  
*The General Conference program.*

CREEK GUARDLIFT 30  
*Air Guardsmen gather steam for another mission across the big creek: the Atlantic.*

### DEPARTMENTS

WASHINGTON REPORT	14
YOU OUGHT TO KNOW	20
PENTAGON PARAGRAPHS	28
POSTING THE GUARD	31

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